

Hearing God's Gentle Voice By Donna Mae Carrico

I have not had an easy life. My earliest memories were full of incest, sexual, emotional, and physical abuse. I am sure there are many people dealing with similar things in life. As a child, I was sent to a church and learned about a loving God from a wonderful Sunday school teacher. My understanding of salvation was that I had to be good; however, this belief is wrong. As I became a teenager, I felt dirty, guilty, and wretched. Thinking I was pregnant by my biological father, I took an overdose of pills and tried to commit suicide. I just slept them off while my parents ignored the fact that something was wrong with me. I remember thinking that there must be some reason God kept me from dying, so I just had to get on with life.

To make matters worse, I confided in my boyfriend about the abuse, and then he raped me. Then, the one time I reached out for help and tried to tell my pastor what was really going on at home, he made sexual advances as well. I was trained to be a victim. The enemy of God has a way of getting into our minds and inflicting a false guilt on children who are sexually abused. I tried to say, "No," but was not strong enough to fight off the abuse. I felt guilty because I couldn't stop the abuse. I thought that no one would have believed me if I told because my parents were upstanding citizens of the community.

There was no way to escape because I wasn't old enough to drive. My parents forbade me to hang out with friends. Like many abusers, they isolated me so I couldn't tell anyone the family secret. I married to get away from home before I began to deal with my past. I was blessed with two beautiful children. My first marriage, of almost thirteen years, ended with the last year and a half speckled with promiscuity, alcohol, and getting involved with a satanic cult. I ended in divorce and another suicide attempt. When I would go out drinking and come home, I had the Bible laying by my bed. I would search it for answers. God kept pulling at me, but I went right back out and did it again. Once again, however, God kept me alive.

On my second suicide attempt, I cut my wrists with a razorblade over and over, but God miraculously closed the skin so I could not bleed to death. I even tried to walk in front of a train, and it mysteriously slowed down. I began to realize again that it was not my time to die. I hid that insight in my heart. I knew I was a miserable, adulteress at the end of my rope with nowhere to turn; yet God loved me enough to keep me from dying.

I praise God that he watched over me and came to me when I was in the depths of despair with my life in such turmoil. Finally one day, an old high school friend of mine, Marsha, came to my business and said, "You know, Donna, Jesus is standing therewith His arms opened just waiting for you." I hung my head. "I'm too bad of a person. I've done so many despicable things. Jesus will never accept me." She still insisted I go to her church. When I went, the Lord spoke to me as I really heard the true salvation message of God's forgiveness, grace, and mercy. God spoke to me in His gentle voice and said, "Let me help you carry your burdens; you've been carrying them long enough." I heard Him and, with many tears of sorrow, was born again on December 2, 1979. I felt His overwhelming peace come into my new life. In Romans 5:8-10, it reveals that God loved us, even when we were sinners.

Then, in John 3:8-10, it explains that we must be born again. We learn we cannot work our way into Heaven in Titus 3:5 and in Ephesians 2:8-10. Two weeks after being saved, I poured out my heart to God and told him I needed a companion. The next day, there was a knock at the door. My Sunday school teacher, David, stood there. "Hello, Donna, you know I've been thinking we are in the same boat. I have prayed for someone to go out to eat with, or to a movie, and to study the Bible

with." *Those were the very same words I had prayed during the night. Could God answer my prayers that fast?* I had barely spoken to my Sunday school teacher. I didn't even know he knew I existed. In my heart, I pondered the wonders of God, and just maybe, thought it might be the answer to my prayer. It was still hard to believe. David began to share with me how he had been praying the night before. He told me, "I've always wanted a family, but it never has worked out. I was praying over Psalm 68 where it talks of setting the solitary in families. God doesn't want people to be lonely, so he provides them with families. God spoke to me and said, 'Donna is your family. Go to her and tell her.'" I am sixty-five now, and that was thirty-three years ago on March 20, 2013.

We are truly blessed. We have undeniable proof that God wanted us together. *Thank you, Lord, for giving me my beloved.* We started our ministry, Followers of Jesus Christ, Inc., shortly after our marriage to expose the darkness in cults and false religions, and to offer healing to survivors of many types of abuse. We continue to minister in many different areas, and now offer resources and have a 24/7 Internet Radio on our website. My journey of healing and restoration has not always been easy. There have been plenty of physical challenges, but serving Jesus and having Him as my friend and Savior has given me hope and an exciting life. I process my memories by writing poems and offering them up to God for closure. I praise God for saving me and for being with me through all of my continuing trials in life. I look forward to spending eternity with Him.

Although it was written by King David many years before my conversion, Psalms 40:1-17 mirrors my pleas for God to hear me. King David is often called "a man after God's heart." He simply admitted his faults, told God about those who persecuted him, and asked for forgiveness, mercy, and justification. That is still my cry today in my walk with Him. *Thank you, Lord, for sparing my life.* I challenge you, reader, to accept the grace and mercy of God and be "born again."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

DONNA Mae Carrico ministers through guest speaking for conferences, radio, TV, her Internet radio program and books. Along with her husband, David, she authored nineteen books, and they minister to the world from their website and home in the United States. She has authored several articles, a book about prophecy, and is currently compiling her next book of short stories. Read more from Donna <http://faithwriters.com/testimonies.php>

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