

"Fifteen years ago, I was living in Hollywood, CA as a hardcore punk lesbian when Jesus convicted me of sin. I gave Him my life and He has been changing it ever since."

I grew up in Michigan in a family of 14 children. My parents had 9 boys and 5 girls. We grew up in the church. When I was in 5th grade I heard the message that Jesus was knocking on the door of my heart and wanted to come in and would I let Him in? Yes, I accepted Jesus. I really felt Him come into my heart. Although I had received Jesus, I didn't understand what the cross was all about because I hadn't really understood sin. In my early years, I experienced sexual abuse, 4 local teenage boys sexually abused me from the 3rd grade until the 7th grade.

In my teenage years, I began drinking and drugging. After barely graduating from high school, I shared an apartment with a girl from high school who introduced me to the night club scene. So we began to frequent the clubs. The clubs played alternative music which was "new" then and it attracted some really strange looking people, as well as bisexuals and homosexuals. Due to my sheltered upbringing, I had really never met anyone gay, until then. As I continued to go to these clubs, the influence of the people, and the music, took me on a path that almost cost me my life. I began doing cocaine with my live-in boyfriend. Somehow in all that mess, I ended up moving closer to Detroit and that was where my real trouble began. Proverbs 1:10 My son, if sinners tempt you, don't give in to them.

I worked as a nursing assistant at the hospital and had rented an apartment, away from my live-in boyfriend, due to his alcoholism. A few months after having my own apartment, I got back together with my ex-boyfriend. One day, my boyfriend brought our next door neighbors up for a drink. They were a punk couple about my age. The girl's name was Candi and the guy's name was Brent. Candi had a super short hair cut and no eyebrows. She told me she had shaved them off for a photo shoot. Brent had a pink mohawk and was talking to my boyfriend about cutting up human cadavers! Candi told me about the club that she worked at as a female bouncer. It was an underground punk club that wasn't advertised in the local club paper. I had heard of it before, but had never been there. She invited me to come and check it out, so I went one night after work.

I followed the directions which led me to a high rise hotel in a seedy part of town. The entrance to the club was in the back; I opened the heavy black iron door, and climbed the stairs. I could hear the thump of music, the walls and stairs were painted black and it was dimly lit on the staircase. I came to another door and opened it. I saw a huge man who was wearing makeup and was all dressed in black and sitting next to him was my next door neighbor!!! She was wearing full makeup and looked much different from our first encounter. I was scared. They were the only two in this little room before entering into the main club. Their job was to frisk anyone who came in the club; they were looking for guns, drugs, alcohol or weapons. So she frisked me. Sheepishly I entered the club, everything was painted black; there were not that many people there yet because it was too early!!! I went up to the bar and turned around and noticed a huge mural of the Last Supper. I didn't realize what that meant at the time but found out later that this club was a haven for witches and warlocks.

I continued going to this club on a weekly basis and over time my looks changed. I ended up shaving my head completely bald, piercing my nose with a safety pin and getting tattoos. My heart became hard, and things I never thought I would do I began doing. Candi got me a job working as a female bouncer in the club. It was during this time in my life that I began to experience violence and power. Candi had taken me under her wing and brought me into the group of people that ran the club. Fights were part of the scenery there and they were welcomed. Candi was small, scrappy, and mean. She was used to fighting and somehow never got hit, but did a lot of damage. She also, had a notable presence about her, and at times I wondered if it was demonic. This magnetism she had was unlike anything I'd ever seen or experienced. She had swarms of people around her at all times and they all seemed to be "in love" with her. I also saw people bow down to her. Sometimes, she would look at me in the eyes and I would get really confused, my eyes would water and I would do whatever she asked of me.

During my friendship with Candi, she took me to some New Age bookstores. My mom had always warned us of these book stores, telling us that they were of the devil and had forbidden us from ever going into them. Well, now that I was on my own, I didn't have to listen to her anymore. I remember whenever I would walk into one of these stores I would sense something. What I didn't know at the time was, I was sensing evil spirits.

Over the course of time, my employment went from a nursing assistant to exotic dancer. Candi and I danced for money for two years in Detroit. It was at this time that we became lovers. In our first months together she mentally and emotionally abused me, weaving a lie that would take us to Hollywood, California. Her dream was to be rich and famous and convinced me that it was possible. I believed everything she told me. So we packed up our things, sold our belongings and moved to California. We took two other people with us, one was another lesbian named Sophie, who was to be our body guard and the other was a straight, Sicilian guy named Frank, who funded everything.

In 1994, the four of us arrived in Hollywood on a one way ticket. The shuttle from the airport dropped us off on Hollywood Blvd. and Labrea Ave. Hollywood Blvd. is the street where all the stars have their names on the sidewalk. We had no place to live, no car, no job and no prospects of anything. So with our 12 suitcases we camped out in a motel for a month.

One night, while still living at the motel, Candi wanted to go up into West Hollywood to check out the gay scene. West Hollywood is a gay city. When you drive through the city you can see the gay flag waiving. (it is a rainbow flag) The flags are hanging up and down the center of Santa Monica Blvd. There are gay shops and gay and lesbian bars and clubs. West Hollywood is home to the largest lesbian club in America called Girl Bar.

Candi had an objective in mind and it was to find out "who was who." So, we left the other two in the motel room and set out for West Hollywood. We didn't have a car yet, so we had to walk a few blocks and then catch a bus. I had no idea that Hollywood was a dangerous city. It was around 11 pm and chilly, so, we both wore our biker leathers. We were dressed in all black; both of us were wearing baseball hats and combat boots. (We looked like two guys.) As we headed toward Santa Monica Blvd., two guys at a pay phone noticed us as we passed by them. The guy at the pay phone immediately slammed down the receiver. Both guys started to walk behind us with intent in their steps. I knew they were going to do something, and Candi seemed to sense it too. Our conversation had stopped as we pretended everything was okay. I could feel my heart pounding so loudly. I grasped the chain that was in my pocket and thought of slamming one of them in the face, but I was way too scared.

We continued to walk; they continued to pursue about a foot behind us. I felt the hair on the back of my neck standing straight up as my mind went blank. Then, out of my heart I prayed these words, "Lord, please help!" As soon as the words left my heart, a blast of heat came in between us and the two guys!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I felt the heat go down the back of my legs. The two guys turned from following us and veered off into the parking lot. We continued to walk, I was stunned, not saying a word. Candi broke the silence and asked, "Did you feel that heat?!!!" I exclaimed "YES!!!!!!" I told her that I had prayed and so both of us thanked God. Two radical lesbians walking down the street thanking God!!!

When I was a child my Mom taught us this Scripture, "Whosoever calls upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved." Joel 2:32a She said we could call on Jesus' Name in any kind of dangerous situation and that He would help us, she was right, God had heard my cry. Needless to say this didn't cause me to ask God for forgiveness for my sins because I had chosen to believe a lie and thought I was okay with God and that I didn't need to be forgiven. In my mind, when God answered that prayer, I was so sure that I was on the right path.

Time passed, as we pursued "who is who" in the gay night life. We ended up meeting women from all walks of life in Hollywood, from executives to actresses, producers to musicians, even some movie stars. We were over our heads in "who is who." The night life in Hollywood was much different from Detroit. Hollywood was a 'movie,' nobody was real, if they hated you, you never knew it because they acted like

they loved you. Acting wasn't just for the movie screen. In Detroit, if they hated you they told you and you fought about it.

We were in some movies as extras and also on TV as extras. (I was in the movies *Virtuosity*, *Money Train*, *The Crow Part 2*, *Divas* and on the TV shows *ER* and *90210*) Candi ended up with a speaking role on 'America's Most Wanted.' She played a punk, lesbian, heroine addict who had ended up robbing banks to support her addiction. The strangest part of all was that we had known the girl in Detroit and she had attended our going away party!!!! The show aired and they caught the girl!!!

Hollywood had so many 'important' people and yet it was such a shallow and empty place. I remember wanting to have a real conversation with someone. I wanted to talk to a real person but everyone had to have their "image." They couldn't let you see that they were longing for the same kind of thing too.

One night, while returning home from a club, we walked from the parking garage into the lobby to take the elevator up to our floor. Also waiting, was a couple who lived on our floor. One thing I knew about her was that she was a crack addict. A few moments pass and then, without any warning, her boyfriend grabs Sophie, our bodyguard, and throws her into the open elevator and begins to pound her in the face. He is screaming, "You \$@#% Dyke \$%%\$ Dyke!!!. His girlfriend is screaming "Stop it!!! Stop it!!!!"

Candi jumped into the elevator to help. I was left outside of the elevator, stunned. Everything had happened so fast. As I watched the blood coming down Sophie's face, I decided that I needed to help too, so I dropped my things and put myself right in the midst of the violence. I got pushed up against the side door and my elbow hit the button for the basement. The elevator doors closed, the man doing the punching, punched me in the face twice. It hurt!!! I didn't like this side of violence! Candi managed to make it through the fight without getting punched. The elevator began to go down to the sub-basement. The doors opened and we all piled out into a little room. Nobody was around. The man who had assaulted us was the last one out of the elevator. He reached into his back pocket and looked at me dead in the eye and said, "I'm going to kill you." He looked at Candi and said, "I'm going to kill you," he looked at Sophie and said, "I'm going to kill you," I knew this guy wasn't kidding. Again I prayed these words, "Lord, please help!"

As soon as the words left my heart, the man extended his hand to me and said, "I'd like you to accept my apology." I was absolutely stunned. We were all unsure as to what to do as he continued to hold out his hand to us. Finally, Candi said, "I'm not shaking your hand!" We all got back into the elevator *with* this guy!!!! A great peace came into the elevator as we went up to our floor. Not a word was spoken on the ride up. I think we were all still in shock. When we had gotten back into our apartment, I told them that I had prayed.

Again, the Lord had answered a small prayer from a lost girl. He was drawing me unto Himself, showing me He was Faithful to His Word and to His Name. Jeremiah 31:3 The Lord appeared to us in the past. He said, "I have loved you with a love that lasts forever. I have kept on loving you with faithful love."

A letter came in the mail from my sister Rachel. She was attending Calvary Chapel Bible College in the mountains about two hours from me. She had come to know Jesus as her Lord and Savior and sent the same letter to everyone in our family saying, "Just because you grew up in a Christian home does not mean that you are a Christian!" I was furious!!!! How dare she tell me that I was not a Christian!!!! So, Candi, Sophie and Frank all joined me as I went to pay my sister a visit to tell her what I thought of her letter. Upon arriving on campus, Candi began to say, "This is a cult, this is a cult." So, I believed her. We walked toward a bunch of students who were all sprawled out on the lawn reading. They all noticed us and began to whisper among themselves. They soon found out that I was related to Rachel and went to find her. She came be bopping toward us with her guitar in tow. She was so happy to see me and gave us all a hug. She joyfully introduced us to her classmates who were not too sure what to think of

us. Then we went with Rachel to sit by the lake and eat some sandwiches. She asked if we would like to hear her new songs. We said, "Sure." She begins to play songs about Jesus!!! I could have jumped out of my skin it bothered me so much. So I asked her to please stop playing so many songs about Jesus and to be normal. She began to belt out another song about Jesus. Finally, I said to her, "Why can't you just be normal? Why does everything have to be about Jesus?" (Funny how I had gone to convince her that I was a Christian but couldn't stand to hear songs sung about Jesus!!)

Afterwards, we walked over to the empty conference center and in the bathroom, I cornered my sister. I said, "Do you accept me for who I am?" Rachel had always loved me and did whatever I told her to do. Now she was faced with the question of where she stood with my lesbian lifestyle. She said, "Brooke, I believe what the Bible says about homosexuality and it says that homosexuals do not inherit the Kingdom of God." (1Corinthians 6:9-10 Don't you know that evil people will not receive God's kingdom? Don't be fooled. Those who commit sexual sins will not receive the kingdom. Neither will those who worship statues of gods or commit adultery. Neither will men who are prostitutes or who commit homosexual acts. Neither will thieves or those who always want more and more. Neither will those who are often drunk or tell lies or cheat. People who live like that will not receive God's kingdom.)

I pointed right at her face and said, "You are on my black list, I HATE you!!" We left her in the bathroom and she had to walk all the way back to campus by herself which was a few miles. She sobbed the whole way back and upon returning she got her entire school to begin pray for me.

Another night, after snorting crystal meth, Candi and I walked from the club to 7-11 to buy cigarettes. There was a man sitting on the ground outside the door to the store. He had long blonde, filthy hair and very blue eyes. Candi and I were surprised to see him crying, so we asked him what was wrong. He was holding a note in his hand from someone (it seemed like it was from a Christian although I don't remember all that it said) It also had a pin of an angel attached to it. We sat and talked with him and when I looked into his eyes, all I could think of was Jesus. It seemed as if Candi was just as interested in talking with the man as I was. She went in and bought him another bottle of vodka and then we all sat on the ground around the corner. I continued to notice that every time I looked into the man's eyes, I felt like I was looking in Jesus' eyes. It was strange, his eyes were so gentle and kind and filled with tears. The feeling I had while being near him was one I have never experienced with a stranger in my entire life. I never wanted to leave him, I wanted to go where ever he went. And I remember saying these things in my heart. Then he said some things to me, that I still wonder about to this day, I guess we had been talking about our eyebrows, we both had shaved some off and then put black pencil on to make them higher and more defined. He looked at me and said, "You are going to grow your eyebrows back." I said, "No I'm not." He said, "Yes you are." I said, "No, I can tell you for a fact that I'm not!" He said, "Yes you are." It was such a funny little thing to go back and forth about but he was certain when he said it to me, I found it kind of odd. Then, a little more into the conversation he looked at me and said, "You are going to leave her." (Referring to Candi) This time I didn't argue with him. I wasn't sure why I didn't argue with him on this point. I wondered at his words. Needless to say, Candi was furious with me for not disagreeing with him.

Some time passed after that encounter, I'm not sure how long, maybe a few weeks or a few months. Candi and I were sitting in our apartment planning on going to the nightclub. Every night of the week we were at a different club or bar. It had become more of a job going to clubs rather than something I enjoyed. She was sitting across from me at the kitchen table and said, "Let's check out this new club tonight," while pointing to the brochure she had. I said, "No, every time I have gotten one of those brochures I get the worst feeling." When the girl had handed me this brochure, a strange feeling came over me that if we went to this club something bad would happen. It was a very strong sense that we shouldn't go and I had never had anything like that ever happen before. We had been making some enemies in Hollywood because Candi had beat up a very powerful woman's ex-girlfriend. We had noticed this lady following us in the clubs...lurking.

Candi continued to press me, "Well, we owe it to ourselves to check it out, to at least see who is there." I repeated my plea, "No, listen! Every time I've gotten one of those brochures I get the worst feeling!!" She said, "Well, then, let's just sit on the fence about it."

Those words triggered something in me. The only time I had ever heard the term 'sit on the fence' was in church when I was younger. The preacher would say, "Don't sit on the fence; you are either hot for Jesus or cold, but not lukewarm!" So, as the words she said, penetrated my heart, something took place. I was sitting in my chair, and I sensed a presence enter the room. It was as if it was coming right for me. It was a strong presence and I was so scared. My heart began to pound as I frantically looked at Candi and said, "Do you feel that?" She said, "Feel what?" I turned toward the direction of where I felt it and held out my hand as if to stop it from coming toward me. My breathing was getting stronger and faster as I said to Candi, "You don't feel that?" She said, "Feel what? You don't believe there is such a thing as a devil, do you?" And then she said, "Oh yeah (mockingly) I do feel it, it's warm." But what I had felt was cold and I knew from that moment on I couldn't trust her. (Took me long enough!)

I held out my hand toward it and began to say loudly, with everything in me, "In the Name of Jesus!!!!!! In the Name of Jesus!!!!!! In the Name of Jesus!!!!!!" Candi jumped up from the table and put on her leather and said, "I'm outta here!" and she left! I got up from the table and prayed, "Lord, I don't know what You want, but I'm asking You to help me."

As soon as I prayed, another presence came into the room, this one was different from the first. This was an urgent, prompting and I heard in my heart, "Let's go!!! Let's go!!!!" It was an urgent pressing feeling, so I went to the closet to grab my hat and leather, the pressing was so urgent and so strong that I almost turned to the Invisible Presence and said, "Would you hold on a minute, I gotta get my hat!!"

I left my apartment not knowing what I was doing or where I was going. I went down 3 flights of stairs out into the night. It was a Saturday night in Hollywood and the town was jumping. Just up the street was Hollywood Blvd. with cars full of gang members bumper to bumper. I was out in front of my apartment and prayed, "Okay Lord, which way do You want me to go?" I wasn't sure what I was doing outside. Then, I felt as if my body was gently being turned in the direction that I was supposed to go, so, I walked up the hill and began to empty my pockets. I took out a Zippo lighter that Candi had given me. It had belonged to her Dad who had died and I found myself setting it on the wall as I walked up the hill. (When we did the Ouija board we supposedly talked with her Dad) I knew in my heart that she would never forgive me for this, but I had to let it go. Each time I would pray, I would feel the gentle impression to go in a certain direction. I realized I was really being led by the Lord. So I walked until I ended up coming to an on ramp that led onto the 101 freeway.

I stood at the entrance to the freeway and said, "Which way do You want me to go?" I didn't feel impressed to do anything, I turned and looked behind me and noticed a slope that went down into a dark ravine. The ravine was filled with ivy, bushes and trees and I turned around from it and thought to myself, "I don't want to go down there, there is probably someone sleeping down there." So, I stood where I was for a minute or so, and then started to doubt it all. I started thinking that I was going crazy and that I had imagined it all. That is when I heard this, (in my spirit) "Brooke, Fear not, for I Am the Lord your God," I was gently turned around to the ravine and I heard, "Though you may walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you shall fear no evil for My rod and My staff will comfort you." (Psalm 23:4)

There was a tiny little path that led down the ivy filled ravine, and I slowly inched my way down the slope. As I looked around, I realized that I wasn't scared. I also noticed that no one could see me down here either, so I just stood there not moving. Then, a gentle breeze blew by me. I thought of the Lord. Then I heard this, "Love is the most powerful Source in the universe." I was in awe of the words because I knew that my own mind didn't come up with them. My eyes focused on a tiny little tree about 15 feet away and I heard the words again, "Love is the most powerful Source in the universe." I had a desire in me to be near the tree that my eyes were fixed on, so I managed my way to the tree. Once I was under the tree, I heard the words again, "Love is the most powerful Source in the universe." I touched one of

the leaves from the tree and noticed that it was shaped like a heart, in fact every leaf on the tree was shaped as a heart!!!! I began to weep. I said to the Lord, "Okay....Love is the most powerful Source in the universe....what about Candi?"

I heard a very loud, "NO!!!!" It startled me and at that moment it felt like there was somebody down in the ravine with me, it hadn't felt that way before. It was as if a man was standing behind me. I was paralyzed with fear. I tried to turn around to see if someone was behind me but I couldn't even turn my head to look because I was so scared. In my mind's eye, it seemed like a man with a knife was getting ready to stab me. My head was swirling and my mind was confused. An overwhelming temptation came to run out of there as fast as I could. I felt like I was going to lose my mind. And that is when I came to my fork in the road. I had to decide who I was going to live for: Candi or Jesus. It took everything within me to choose and I chose with all of my heart and all of my soul and said, "Nnnnnnnnooooooooooooo.....Love is the most powerful Source in the universe, Love is the most powerful Source in the universe, Love is the most powerful Source in the universe." The presence left. I had made my decision to follow Jesus. (It seemed as if what had just taken place was that I was sitting on the fence and I was caught between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of satan. I had told people I was a Christian but my lifestyle said that I wasn't. God had drawn me to the ravine away from Candi so that I could make a decision. The evil presence that I felt with me in the ravine was satan coming for me since I had chosen to believe him and his lies over the Bible. But now I had made the decision to come off of the fence and follow Jesus.)

After my experience at the tree, I went back to my apartment to find Candi standing at the place in our apartment that had many occult artifacts, it was also known as the altar. She was burning incense and wearing my necklace. The incense was pouring out into the hallway. She was trying to use magic to find out where I was. She saw me as I sat down at the top of the stairs, not really knowing what the next step was, all I knew is that I had had a conversation with God and that I had made a decision to follow Him. I knew I had to leave but I didn't know how and the strange part was, I wanted to leave. I had never before wanted to leave her, she had been my life, my soul mate. So she came out into the hallway and was asking me where I'd been. I wouldn't talk to her and I refused to come in. She was very attentive to me and sat down in the hallway trying to persuade me to come in. I refused for a while but became so tired I gave in, however, I slept out in the living room. Candi sat next to me furiously writing a note to me. I would doze off and wake up with a startle and there she sat, writing. I tried to ignore everything she said because I didn't trust her anymore.

The next morning, I packed a suitcase and I insisted that she drive me to the airport so that I could leave her, although I wasn't sure how I was going to do that. The problem was I had no money and didn't take my parents phone number with me when we left the apartment. So, she followed me around the airport asking me over and over what I was doing. The truth was, I didn't know so I ended up going back home with her. Candi was not one to chase after anyone, she was always in control. There was a definite break between us and we both knew it but she continued to pursue me. I soon began refusing to go to the clubs with her, which infuriated her because I had always done everything she had wanted me to....until now.

One night, Candi and I went to the grocery store about 2 in the morning, we liked to shop at night, in fact it seemed like everything we did was at night! So we had finished shopping and came out of store and there was a group of Mexican guys standing around. They worked at the store. Candi walked over to them and spoke to them in such a low tone I couldn't hear her although I was standing right there. All of the guys she spoke to, looked at me while she was speaking. I felt very uncomfortable and didn't understand what was happening. As soon as we turned toward the parking lot we met a street guy with a "story." It was often we would encounter street people with a story of this or that and so we would just give them some change or tell them we didn't have any and walk on, but tonight was different. This man was noticeably faking an accent. His story was that he needed a ride to the bus station to get a suitcase out of a locker. Then he pulled out a wad of money and flips through the bills. (Seems to me if he had money like that why was he asking us for a ride?) I was planning on going right on past him as we usually did but Candi engaged him in conversation. The man said, "You must be a Christian." I immediately blurted out, "Yes, how did you know?" He said, "Cause if you weren't you wouldn't have listened to my story." Then he pulled out a small, torn, piece of paper with this written on it, "Don Bro" I

was getting scared. (my last name starts with Don and my first name starts with Bro.) He said, "I'm looking for the Don Brown motel." We both told him we hadn't heard of it. Then Candi tells me to take the groceries to the car. I was so shocked as to why she would tell me to do that. She never sent me away alone or ever engaged strangers in conversation, she was very street smart. She said she was going to help this guy look for the motel in the yellow pages. So, I took the grocery cart to the dark parking lot, my heart was pounding because I felt like she was up to something, none of it made any sense. After getting to the car, I glanced over at them and they were looking down at the yellow pages. I noticed that she was speaking to him about something and gesturing with her hand. It seemed to me that she had a lot to say to a perfect stranger just looking for a motel in the yellow pages. This went on for a while, so I pulled the car up to the curb and she was still looking down at the yellow pages with this guy and still talking and gesturing with her hand.

I was very afraid while I sat and waited in the car. All I could do in my mind was repeat the Words, "Love is the Most Powerful Source in the universe." Candi had told me once about her Dad being one of seven sons of a Sicilian family. She had told me that her Dad's brothers were in the Mafia. (maybe that is what Don Bro meant I don't know) She had told me the story of how she had met her Dad's brothers for the first time at his funeral. They hadn't known about her because her Dad had never divorced his first wife because he was Catholic and had his cousin pose as a minister for his second wedding. So up until the day of the funeral, the brothers never knew of Candi, but when they met her they couldn't deny that she looked just like her Dad. She told me that they pulled her aside at the funeral and told her that they couldn't deny she was his daughter and said that if there was ever anything she ever needed or wanted all she had to do was let them know.

The street guy and Candi walked over to the car. She got into the front passenger side and he walked around the car and started to open the passenger door behind me! (Seems to me if you are getting a ride from someone you would get in the same side of the car as they did instead of walking all the way around the car to sit directly behind the driver.) Then Candi states, "Oh, he's coming with us." I said very sternly, "Oh no he's not!!!!!!" So he is standing there with the door half open, waiting for her to tell him what to do. I said, "There is no way we are driving this guy anywhere!" So she says, "Sorry man." The man shuts the door and we go home. When we got home, I told Brent (Candi's ex-boyfriend who was still in her life). He says to me, "Why didn't you let the guy go with you?" I couldn't believe my ears!!! They were always so cautious of people and taught me, "Trust no one!!!" And now, both of them were being exactly opposite of their normal character. I had known them both for about six years now and I knew something was wrong with the way they were behaving. I was really scared and felt very alone.

A few nights later, the phone rang, I answered it and Brent asked for Candi and also asked if we were coming by later that evening. I told him we were. Then he said, "Watch out for the Mexicans." I said, "What?" He repeated himself, "Watch out for the Mexicans." "What is that supposed to mean?" I asked. He wouldn't answer me but said, "Put Candi on the phone." So I did. That night, on our way to his house, we came to the stop sign near our apartment and about 15 Mexican guys surround the car they were yelling and shaking their fists at me. I turned the corner and came to the next stop sign and again the car was surrounded with young Mexican guys yelling and slamming their hands on the car. I had no idea what was going on and so Candi yells at me to go, so I stepped on the gas and pulled out into traffic. That freaked me out. All that went through my mind was how Brent had told me to watch out for the Mexicans. I was very scared and I didn't trust Candi or Brent. But Candi still pretended to be "with" me but I could see clearly she was against me. I would notice her talking quietly with Brent and others and when I came around she would stop talking. She had never done this to me before. I was so afraid and didn't know what to do next. When I questioned Brent about it later that night he acted as if I didn't even say a word. He just started talking to someone else about something completely different.

A few days later, as this battle continued, Candi and I went for a drive to Malibu. She was really making an effort to win me back and I was starting to think I should go back with her. We pulled over to buy some cigarettes. She went into the store, as I waited. I looked over to my left and saw an older black man. He was pushing a shopping cart and looked homeless. He came up to the car and started to spray the windshield with water and wipe it with a newspaper. I wouldn't have minded if he had asked me to do that, but he didn't, so I was infuriated!!! I sat watching him while he smudged my windshield, then he

went to the other side of the front windshield and smudged it some more. Then he came around to my side again to receive his payment!!! I wasn't pleased but didn't want any trouble, so, I cracked the window and gave him a few coins. Candi opened the passenger door and got in. Just then, the man looked right at me and pointed, and said with a stern voice, "You know what you need to be doing!" The words hit my heart like a knife and pierced it, and immediately Candi snarled, "Don't listen to him!!!"

I was absolutely amazed!!!! Here is this perfect stranger who says one thing to me, and she reacted to his words as if she knew that he was telling me that I needed to leave her. Her reaction to his words showed me that the Lord had spoken through that stranger and that the devil was speaking through her. I knew from that moment on I had to get out and get out soon!!! Hebrews 4:12 The word of God is living and active. It is sharper than any sword that has two edges. It cuts deep enough to separate soul from spirit. It can separate joints from bones. It judges the thoughts and purposes of the heart.

The rest of that day didn't go well between us because my heart had heard the Lord and I wanted to obey Him. It was either the next day or day after that I made my decision to call my parents home. I sat in front of the phone, nervous and wringing my hands. What was I going to say?? My parents had taken a stand against the way I lived and we didn't have much of a relationship, yet, I knew I could call and they would help me. So when Candi was out, I called home, my Mom answered. "Mom?" I said. "Can I come home?" "Sure, how long do you want to stay?" she asked. "No, Mom, I mean can I come home? I think my life is in danger." Immediately my Mom knew she had to act quickly. A few years earlier my Mom and Dad had received a Word of Knowledge concerning me and it was this, "If Brooke tells you she wants out, you need to act immediately!!!" (A Word of Knowledge is a gift that the Holy Spirit uses to tell people things that they could only know by the Spirit of God) So my mom had remembered this and immediately began to call all of her praying friends. "Pray!!!!... Brooke is coming home!!!" So the Body of Christ began to pray for me. Then my Dad called my brother Tim in California who lived two hours from me, he explained the danger and my brother willingly accepted the challenge to drive into Hollywood. He brought with him an ex-police officer, who was carrying a gun. My Mom made an emergency phone call to my sister Rachel who was at Bible College which was in the same city that my brother Tim lived in. She brought her fiancé Tim along too. Rachel was the one who had gotten her whole school to pray for me months earlier. So my mom calls me back and tells me that my brother and sister and two others were coming to get me.

I frantically began to pack. In my room, lying next to my bed, was an illegal, loaded, assault rifle. Brent had given it to us for protection, but now I was very aware of it. That morning, for the first time in our relationship, Candi yelled at me and knocked me down. All my suitcases were in the living room when Candi walked in. "Where do you think you are going?" I had determined not to say a word to her. "Who is coming to pick you up?" she asked. "You aren't taking the car anywhere" she stated with authority. I just stayed quiet. I was scared but calm. The phone rang, I ran to it and quickly answered it. My brother was down the street. (It had been a few hours since I had made the phone call) He and my sister were going to remain in the Bronco because Candi knew what they looked like. So I buzzed the ex-police officer and my sister's fiancé Tim, into the building and they knocked at the door. As soon as I opened it, I began handing them suitcases. They took them quickly (it was amazing that two men I had never met before risked their lives for me). Candi was demanding, "Who are you? Then she asked me, "Who are these people?" She had been taken off guard. It had all happened so quickly she didn't have time to do much. I got out safely and into the Bronco and she walked out of the apartment building with something in her hand. It was a statue of Baby Jesus that I had wanted to give to my Mom but never did, she threw it into my half open window and said, "Don't forget to take this!!!" That was the last time I ever saw her.

I left Hollywood so very fragile and broken. I had been in such deep darkness for so long, that coming into the Light was a slow and delicate process. My life had been directed by a woman who had practiced witchcraft and had read the satan bible. I had been her prisoner. But now, for the first time, I had been released from the prison of my sinful life, and I was brought into the light. It took time to heal and allow the Lord to restore what the devil had destroyed. Colossians 1:12-14: As you give thanks to the Father. He has made you fit to share with all his people. You will all receive a share in the kingdom of light. He has saved us from the kingdom of darkness. He has brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

Because of what the Son has done, we have been set free. Because of Him, all of our sins have been forgiven.

A few weeks after being in South Carolina, I was reading the Bible but I couldn't understand it. I read this Scripture, Then Jesus spoke to His disciples. He said, "If anyone wants to follow me, he must say deny himself. He must pick up his cross and follow me. Matthew 16:24

I actually thought that I had to literally pick up a cross. Which I did! I hadn't wanted to do it but because I didn't understand what it was really saying, I figured I *had* to do it. All I knew was that Jesus was the most important Person in my life and I was going to do whatever it took to follow Him. So I made a cross out of my sister's walking sticks and carried it on my back down the street of the small town that I had just come to. Needless to say, a neighbor called the police and I was then arrested and taken to the police station. At the police station they questioned me regarding my name, but because the Scripture said, "deny yourself", I wouldn't tell them my name. So they took me to be mentally evaluated and then put me in the state mental hospital. (for two weeks). I was put in the worst wing and with the help of the Lord made it through those tough days.

I was so new to everything and just out of a world of great darkness that I trusted no one. When I read the Bible, all I would read was the red words that Jesus spoke. I didn't trust anything else. Isaiah 42:3: He (God) will not break a bent twig. He will not put out a dimly burning flame. He will be faithful and make everything right. I was barely hanging on to life.

Six months after returning home, after reading God's Word on a daily basis, I went with my Mom to a women's Aglow meeting. The woman that spoke asked if anyone would like prayer for anything. I thought, "Sure, I could use some prayer." So, I walked up to the front (I was the only one) and the speaker came toward me with her hands outstretched, she hugged me and began to pray with the gift of tongues. (This is another gift that the Holy Spirit gives to believers) I began to cry, then I began to sob, then I began to wail. She was still hugging me and wouldn't let me go all I wanted to do was hold onto my stomach because it hurt so much from the pain. The only thing I could do was wail. Every breath coming out of me was an agonizing wail. All the pain of the years of sexual abuse, and the betrayal of the one I thought had loved me. It all came out that evening in that little town in South Carolina. All the ladies gathered around me praying in tongues and waiting for the Lord to finish the work He was doing inside of me. It went on for about 30 minutes and I was in so much pain all I could do was hold my stomach and cry very loudly. Inside of myself, I was crying out to Jesus, knowing He was the Only One Who could get me out of the pain I was in, then, I felt something leave my body. It was as if Candi had left my body. (That is the only way I can describe it.) Something left me!!!! And in its place was a great peace. I have never been the same since. John 8:36: If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Jesus set me free from lesbianism, witchcraft, drugs, and alcohol. Never to return again. I also am not on medicine anymore, for depression. Jesus my Lord, has paid the price for my freedom and He has gently and faithfully healed my broken heart. Through His Word and forgiveness, He has enabled me to forgive those who have wounded me. Matthew 6:14-15: If you forgive those who sin against you, your Heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Coming to the cross of Jesus as a broken person and asking for forgiveness has been what has changed my life the most. I have come to know that His Arms are always wide open to me and He longs for me to come to Him on a daily basis. When Jesus died on the cross, the old Brooke died too. All of my sin was put upon Him. He has forgiven me and He has taken my punishment. When Jesus rose from the dead, the new Brooke was given new life!!!! I asked God to give me His Holy Spirit. He has baptized

me with His Spirit which has helped me to understand His Word. His Holy Spirit continues to give me courage so that I am able to share Jesus with people. I want to share His Love with the world!!! No one is too much of a sinner for His Tender Mercy. Will you pray for Candi and Brent to come to know Jesus? It has now been 15 years since the Lord brought me unto Himself.

My hope and desire is that others would come to know His Love, His Power, and His deliverance from strongholds of sin. HE IS THE ONE WHO SETS PEOPLE FREE!!!!!! Praise the Name of the Lord Jesus!!!!!!!!!!

God doesn't have any favorites, His heart is that all men would come to know His Love. You may have read this story and maybe you have never given your heart and life to Jesus. Maybe you have experienced some of the same pain that I have. If you would like Jesus to fill your heart and life you can pray this prayer, and He will. The secret to the effectiveness of this prayer is that you pray it with all of your heart.

Thank You Jesus, for Your willingness to come to earth even though You knew that men would reject You and kill You. Thank You, for giving all that You are for me. Thank You for laying down Your Life on the cross for me, a sinner. Thank You, Father, for raising up Jesus from the dead. Father, I have sinned against You and against others, I have gone my own way. But now, Father God, I lay my life down at Your feet. I ask that You would take my broken heart and life and give me a brand new one. I ask that You would forgive me for sinning against You and wash all of my sins away with Your Blood that You shed. I ask that You would come and live inside of Me. You are welcome in my heart. I ask Lord, that You would give me strength to lay down the sins that I have held onto. I believe that You, Jesus, are the Son of God and I surrender my all to you. I ask You to be my Lord and Savior, Thank You for giving Your Life in exchange for mine. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

If you prayed this prayer, you are now one of God's children!!!!!! Praise the Lord!!!! The Bible says that the angels rejoice in heaven over one sinner that repents. There are a few important things you need to do now.

1. Tell someone that you believe in Jesus.
2. Ask the Lord to put you in the right church. (You want one that teaches from the Bible.)
3. Get a Bible that you can read and understand and find a Bible study group. You want to surround yourself with other believers who will encourage you as well as hold you accountable.
4. When you begin to read your Bible, look for the Character of God as you read....remember you have just begun the most awesome relationship of your life!!!!

Here is a personal note: I began reading the Bible in the book of John—
Love, Brooke