

Could it be true? Is it possible to be completely forgiven? Can I be released from the chains of my past? That idea was like a bright light into the dark confines of my soul, a ray of hope and a healing balm.

But another voice from somewhere deep within me was whispering a very different message; “You’re worthless. You are nobody. You are too far gone for salvation.”

Every painful memory, every sin I’ve ever made, was threatening to come out into the open. My habit of hiding all the things I didn’t want to face or deal with was going to backfire. The trapdoor that had concealed my secrets was now oozing out its contents. I knew it had the power to consume and destroy me, and I couldn’t stop it from opening. I was at a crossroads...

Desperate to hold onto the hope I just heard about, but unsure I had the strength to fight against the darkness. I cried out.

“God, if you’re really there, please help me.”



Without realizing it; the church service was over. The Sanctuary and Social Hall had emptied out while I sat struggling with my thoughts. Men were now disassembling the room; gathering chairs and taking down the video screen.

The service had ended too soon! I was left feeling numb. Jesse’s message had given me a glimpse of hope; I wanted to hear more, needed to go further, before considering the possibility of giving in or giving up entirely.

At one point, I realized someone was sitting next to me; turning to look, I saw that it was Jesse. He gently put his arm around my shoulders and asked if I was doing okay.

“Can I do anything for you, Jenny? Would you like to talk?”

I had questions and needed answers. Was there a chance that I could somehow be free from a life that held me in such a death grip, causing me to fear everything and everyone?

I needed to find out before my guilt swallowed me whole.

“Jesse, remember when I first came here; when you convinced me to come to the potluck dinner and spend the night? You told me then that you were willing to drive me anywhere I wanted to go the following morning; do you remember that?”

“I remember Jenny, where do you want to go?”



It took me awhile to get my bearings; I didn’t know the area very well since the route I was familiar with was limited by foot. Once I found the correct off-ramp, I knew where I was.

Jesse slowed down as he exited the highway. I glanced over at the trio of old trailers; focusing on the middle one that had been my home for a season of time. The area looked the same as we drove past.

“Do you want me to wait for you, Jenny?” Jesse inquired when I got out of his car. “How about I give you some time alone, I can come back after a bit; would that work?”

I nodded yes, and walked down the dusty path.

I was so focused on my destination that I couldn’t tell you if anyone else was there that afternoon. I didn’t take notice of the

weather or anything else about my surroundings; it didn't matter. My total concentration was on an old well.

The bronze plaque glowed brighter than ever that afternoon; beckoning me to come closer. I didn't know why I felt the urge to return to a place that had caused me so much anguish, but my life had been radically changed because of this place and those Bible verses. It all had started here. I prayed that the answers I was searching for would be found here too.

When I read the words on the faceplate of the plaque, it was evident that I had made the right decision to come. I had an important meeting in this very spot that much I knew.

Isaiah 61:1-3 *The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and a release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve, to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.*

Falling to my knees weeping, I cried out; "Oh God, how can these promises be meant for me? I've caused so much harm and hurt to others! I've held on to all the grudges and offenses from everyone who has hurt me. I'm bound by the guilt of my past and petrified for the future. My life is already half over, yet I've accomplished nothing good or worthwhile. How can there be any hope for me?"