

My Testimony Tony Daly

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“And he hath put a song in my mouth, even praise unto our God; many shall see it and fear, and shall trust the Lord”. Psalm 40 v 3

I was brought up as a Catholic, and although I was told about Jesus, I did not know him as my Saviour and Lord. I felt it difficult to cope with the feeling of guilt as I waited to go to confession on Saturday night. The wonderful feeling of release, after saying so many "Our Fathers" as penance did not help, for as soon as a bad thought would enter your head, apparently another "venial sin" had been committed and you were back to square one

My childhood was painful- my parents split up when I was about ten. I ran away from home several times, and slept in fields, being picked up by the police in different places, which resulted in another good hiding. As soon as I was able I left home for good at the age of fourteen. Things were rough- after I had paid for my digs with the little money I earned I was often short of food. Without family and friends, I joined the Merchant Navy and travelled in America and South America. The food was good but I was desperately unhappy

At the age of nineteen I found myself in Claybury mental hospital as a voluntary patient and it was in hospital I that I met my wife Sheila. We were both guinea pigs in a new treatment called group therapy. After leaving hospital we started our married life, although our lives were full of crisis, we clung together in a struggle for happiness.

One day we met Nan Wright who was 90 years of age; she suffered from arthritis, was partially blind and had been confined to an upstairs room for five years. She would often remark, I don't know why God keeps me alive but I am sure he must have a purpose. As we grew to know and love her she often would say, "I pray for you"

About this time I had obtained a job as a salesman and Nan Wright bought me a briefcase. The job was a remarkable success and soon after promotions I began to surround myself with material things, yet as I worked harder and harder and the more things we obtained the less satisfying it all became. One day as we visited Sheila's cousin "June", we were sitting at the tea table when she began to witness and tell us about Jesus. Not only to tell us but also to read what Jesus said out of a well-worn Bible. "What must I do to be saved, and they said believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Acts 16 v 30, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you". Mathew 6 v 33

One text she quoted, that entered my heart was, "What if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul". Mathew 16 v 26. These words kept revolving around and around in my mind.

That night as we drove back to Sussex I did not have any peace, a big struggle was taking place, one part on me wanted to believe on Jesus Christ yet another part withheld and resisted. I have always been a strong-minded person especially as a salesman if I made up my mind that I would do something or get something, I worked and worked and struggled until I had obtained it. But from the moment June told me what Jesus said, I could not get away from it, I seemed to be surrounded by spiritual things.

On one occasion I stopped at a traffic light and looked up to see a poster proclaiming "Jesus Loves You". I would turn off the radio to hear "Thought for the day" and everyone I met would say something about God and even my letters would contain texts from God's Word. So many folk would say "God bless you"

What I did not realise at the time was that many hundreds of folk were praying for me to be converted.

All of this came to a climax one Tuesday afternoon. I had been reading a Christian book sent by my cousin June Keeble when I found myself on my knees praying to God. The prayer I prayed was a desperate prayer. I did not believe in God yet I cried out, "God, if you are God, please help me". I then started to say the Lord's prayer, "Our father which art in heaven hallowed be thy name, As I was saying this in a rather repetitious fashion a wonderful thing happened. It seemed as if my tongue tripped over and suddenly I was speaking in a strange language. What joy what peace entered my heart it was so wonderful I was full of love. Gods love. I did not understand much about speaking in tongues or about doctrine but at that moment I knew I had been "Born Again". "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit". Psalm 34 v 18.

Soon after this wonderful experience I found myself helping out at a Dick Saunders Evangelistic Crusade in Hellingly village where night after night I heard the simple yet powerful Gospel message that Jesus saves. "For God so loved the world that he gave us his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life". The weeks at the crusade were of great blessing to me as I met many Christians from all denominations who later became my friends; I had joined the family of God.

At that time I was still addicted to smoking cigarettes I had tried many times to get free of the habit but had found it impossible. Then one day Sheila and I went to a meeting conducted by Peter Scouthern an evangelist. He was holding a series of meeting in Eastbourne in the town library room. I watched a film he was showing which portrayed a young boy being healed by God of TB affliction. His parents had tried all the conventional medicines and treatments to no avail, their boy was dying.... They were told of an evangelist who had held healing meetings and who was coming to a nearby town. They were persuaded to go along and in a wonderful way after prayers the little lad was healed by God.

At the end of this meeting I found myself at the front of the hall in a prayer line. The evangelist came along praying for this one and that and when he came to me he laid his hands on my head and prayed this prayer. "Go ye forth into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature". These words spoken in prayer have proved to be prophetic, as I now travel the world preaching the gospel.

At that time they seemed to have no effect and in fact I immediately forgot about them. Nothing happened during that simple time of prayer. But when I got outside the meeting hall and entered into my vehicle I took six packets of cigarettes, gave them to Sheila and said "I do not want these". She was shocked because she had only just purchased a weeks supply and now I was rejecting them. I too was amazed because I found that I had no more desire for tobacco nor from that day to this did I ever desire to smoke. God had taken all desire for nicotine away. Hallelujah. Also I had not realised it but the Lord had clearly indicated that he had a purpose in saving me for ministry

It was soon after this that the Lord started to give me songs in the night. I did not know one note of music but the Holy Spirit woke me in the night and I found my mind full of heavenly music. The choir was beautiful and all the songs were about the love of God in sending Jesus to die for sinners. That first night I had got up and written down the first line of a song and as I wrote another line more words came and soon the whole song was complete. In the following days more music and more words came to me but as I could not write music, I sang the songs and recorded them onto to a small cassette player. Later I was to record them professionally and Gerry Page worked hard to fill in the background with a variety of instruments.

This led to the "Dalybread" Gospel Music group being formed. It came about like this. One day while shopping in Eastbourne Sheila stopped outside a newspaper shop to read the advertising board. She called me back to point out one card that had caught her eye. It was a request for help in a local hospital where the nursing sister asked for anyone who could spare time to entertain the patients or could play a musical instrument to telephone her.

I read the card and copied the details down on a scrap of paper. That weekend I prayed over this matter asking the Lord to guide me. I was willing to go but I wanted to be sure that this was God's will. Like every newly born again Christian I was learning to listen to the Holy Spirit. As I waited on the Lord I knew I had to telephone and this would be the test. What would happen? I asked the Lord to close the door if this was not the way ahead and to open the door if this was indeed His will for my life. I decided to telephone the hospital and with a little excitement fluttering in my heart picked up the phone and dialled the number.

Soon I was talking to Sister Meyer and I explained that I had seen the card and that he could play the guitar, she had asked me what sort of music I would play. There was a silence as I considered what to say, should I tell her that I was a Born Again Christian and wanted to sing my Gospel songs? I decided to bite the bullet, "It's all about Jesus. There was a silence at the other end and then, Yes that's OK, when can you come? The question was unexpected; I thought quickly, tomorrow I said tentatively. Yes please come". It was arranged that I should meet her at 3 PM in Northbourne Ward.

Talking things over that evening with Sheila she decided that she could not let me go alone and that she would accompany me. The next day in Northbourne Ward we met Sister Meyer who led us to the dayroom where we were shocked at the sight of a group of older men sitting slumped in wheel chairs. They were a sad spectacle with heads bowed, some appeared to be drugged or in a coma, most with vacant eyes and with others apparently asleep. We had said "Hello" but there had been a minimal response from the men, so we began to sing. Not being used to being in public I found it difficult to continue as the patients were not responding at all, just sitting there dozing. Were they in a coma I wondered? It seemed awful; sweat had trickled down my face as we continued to sing half frightened of stopping. A group of visitors had congregated at the door gazing in at the sight. I knew that God was dealing with my pride but did God really want me to do this? Surely not.

At the end of the singing which lasted around forty minutes we did stop singing, put the guitar away and went to say goodbye to the patients. As we took their hands there was a wonderful response. Some had tears in their eyes; they were so grateful and could not thank us enough. We left the hospital knowing that God had blessed us and that a new chapter had begun in our Christian experience, which was, some years later, to lead me to minister around the World

In the following weeks other Christians came to help with the work, some elderly ladies promised to bring some hymn books and "Dalybread" were given 60 well-worn Golden Bells hymnbooks, other Christians offered to play the piano in the foyer while some offered to help wheel the patients from the wards to the foyer, so it that Dalybread was born we called it "A Ministry of Love in Song". We were led to hold regular meetings in the hospital every Sunday afternoon then an invitation to minister in an old folk home nearby on a Wednesday evening. After perhaps two years and while I was still in my secular employment other invitations arrived and we started to sing more often filling in, almost every spare moment.

The work was to become full time and I was led by the Lord to resign my job a Sales Manager. It happened early one morning while praying and reading my Bible in my office, I had read Isaiah 30 v 20/21 "And although I give you the bread of adversity and the bread of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed any more but thine eyes shall see thy teachers, and thine ear shall hear a word behind thee saying this is the way walk ye in, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left.

I certainly had the bread of adversity. "Dalybread had been singing now for 5 years and it seemed that the more blessings I received in singing in the hospitals, the more troubles and problems I had in my job. They had built up over the last five years almost to crisis point. I was beginning to become desperate. Would God answer my prayers? Would God act and do something. That morning as I read those words again I knew God was speaking and I knew had to resign from my employment. Earlier I had been praying lying prostrate on the floor, I got up and wrote out a letter of resignation.

It was not logical; it was crazy really, to leave all that I had worked so hard to achieve. Yet strangely I had no fears. No thoughts of how would we manage paying our bills entered my mind. I posted the letter asking God that if this was a mistake that the letter would be lost in the post or burned up.

On the way home I stopped to pray at a gate overlooking farmland. It was a regular spot where on the return journey from the office I had often stopped to cry out to the Lord and tell him all my troubles. As the troubles had increased in intensity and the problems multiplied I had realised that God had heard my prayers and understood my situation and that it was not beneficial that I keep reminding him of my troubles, but that I should start to praise him.

I looked at the sheep grazing happily and seemingly without any problems. I realised that I was not alone at that gate. Like Abraham in the bible the presence of the Lord was all around me. In a moment of time, I knew that there was a better way to live my life, that God had a plan for me. That he wanted me to serve Him and to be at peace. I left that gate where I had been praying and walked the few yards to another gate. This belonged to the same farm and overlooked more contented sheep and I started to give thanks to God and praise the Lord. My heart was full of praise, I was so happy, I had been released from all my burdens and joy flooded my soul.

I do not remember how long I tarried at the "Praise Gate", but reluctantly I left that place of blessing and returned home to tell Sheila my news. Sheila was not surprised. When I had related my story and showed her a copy of my resignation letter she shared with me what God had done for her that very day.

Apparently she had been so concerned over the situation of my job that that very morning she had prayed to the Lord and told the Lord that she would not eat any more food until He did something about my job. She had decided to fast and pray. I guess she had the quickest answer to prayer that anyone had received. Isaiah 65 v 24. "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear". Here I was the same day with my resignation letter in my hand..

In the days that followed great peace filled me and continued throughout the weeks and months ahead. During the next few days it was like a great gust of wind from the Holy Spirit blowing through our lives. Within days we had sold our home and our big car. The Lord guided us to purchase a small home with no mortgage, the larger furniture was sold, and only one person came for each item, for God had his hand on all the details. I took the coloured TV and threw it into the tip I was led to burn my records and medals of my sales achievements as these had become idols in my life. I determined to leave the world and its ways and follow Jesus.

It was at this time that our neighbour came around to see me. He was upset at our sudden move and wanted to know the reason why? This led me to share my testimony and all that Jesus meant to me and how I had been saved. He wanted to know more and later he too gave his heart to the Lord. Praise God

We called our new home "Peduyim", a Hebrew word for the "Redeemed ones". During the move, God poured out a special blessing, as everything seemed to fit perfectly, people called with plants, bearing gifts, a tray full of tea. Flowers had arrived, friends popped in to see us, we were invited to dinner, and we found we had just enough money to decorate and furnish the home, it was terrific.

I learnt painfully making many mistakes how essential it was to listen carefully to the Lord, to read God's word. When I felt God speaking to me through the Word and I started to write out God's promises that I found in the Bible in a book. Some of the first were,

“Man shall not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God” Mathew 4 v 4.

And Jesus said unto them I am the bread of life He that comes to me shall never hunger and he that believes in me shall never thirst” John 6 v 35

And another “And He hath put a new song in my mouth even praise to my God and many shall see it and fear and some shall trust in the Lord. Psalm 40 v 3

John 12 v 26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

In the first year of full time work, the Lord taught us to live by faith and as we trusted him for all our needs, so they were supplied. At the end of the year our need was for more reliable transport, as the older car we had retained was failing fast. I had seen a suitable vehicle, but I needed confirmation that this was right, more especially as we did not have the money for it. I asked the Lord to show me if this was the car for us, and so laid a fleece. If the car was reduced by say, I picked a figure out of the air, say £300 without us saying anything to the garage, I would take it as a sign to go ahead and put a deposit on it. Well in a wonderful way that particular vehicle was reduced in price by three hundred pounds and I knew the Lord had indicated His will so I paid a small deposit. At that time I still needed another £960 to pay the balance. Praise God within four weeks all the money came in as gifts and we paid cash for the purchase.

Philippians 4 v 19. “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” . I had asked the Lord to keep the old car going until another was supplied and on the day that we were due to pick up the new car, a man came and paid cash for the old car, thus the Lord gave us some money for petrol too.

It is now 40 years later, the Lord had blessed us in the hospital ministry. For over twelve years in many hospitals and homes we saw miracles of God’s grace and healing, with souls being saved and bodies miraculously healed. But now it was time to move on.

After twelve years the Lord led me to preach in the open air visiting hundreds of towns and cities in England preaching the Word in the market places and shopping precincts. The Lord led me to distribute thousands of Christian tracts talking with needy people after they had responded to the Word of God. I had many "Divine appointments" and prayed with many people on the street. During this time we never had an unpaid bill as we saw the Lord providing for every need.

In 1992 I was invited to visit Poland with Peter and Eileen Richards from Norfolk who had contacts in some of the Polish Churches. They invited me to join with them so travelling with a small team we visited Bezin in the South and Olecko in the North. I drove 2600 miles on this first trip. Then Pastor Richard Andruszkiewicz in Olecko asked me to conduct a seminar the following year teaching evangelism to youth groups from all over Poland. I returned in 1993 to join a group of enthusiastic Christians some who were from the international organisation, "Youth with a Mission for Christ" I taught from the Bible in the mornings and then in the afternoons and evenings we would travel to some town to distribute tracts, to sing, witness and preach the Word. In following years I travelled to Bialystok, Warsaw, Lublin, Radzin Podlaski, and many other cities and towns. Again this became an annual and then twice annual mission, preaching in the markets places, shopping precincts and in schools prisons and churches.. The Lord touched many hearts.

In 1998 the Lord opened the doors to India when Brother Joshua Daniels of the "Laymen’s Evangelical Fellowship" invited me to join him in some of his revival meetings in Andhra Pradesh. His church in Chennai is full with 7000/9000 each Lords day, so full then after the meetings finish the crowds are so strong they stop the traffic as they leave the church. I met many pastors and taught evangelism in Beulah Gardens to a group of

young men who the Lord had saved and who were under training in the L.E.F Bible College in Madras. More recently the Lord has led me to many other cities and to the tribal regions where I have had the joy of sharing the “Good News” among the poor in villages, prisons, hospitals and orphanages. I have had the privilege and witnessed revival in India with countless thousands seeking the Lord and drinking in the Word of God repenting of their sins and accepting Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. In 2002 Lord provided funds to purchase land and to build an orphans Home in Bapatla and then two years later another home in Visakhapatnam . Pastor Raja and Pastor Nathaniel encouraged local pastors to preach the Word and they met together to pray so it was the Lord created Pastors Fellowships. Later the Lord opened the way for me to visit the tribal regions and preach in the villages there. Soon many souls were saved and as we continued over the years to preach churches grew and multiplied and convert became disciples and witnessed to others.

I thank the Lord for calling me out of darkness into his glorious light. Galatians 1 v 13 I thank God for revealing his wonderful plan for my life step by step. I believe we are saved to serve and that God has a wonderful plan for each of our lives.

Today I am not travelling so much I am busy with translating many bible truths and bible studies together with extracts from my journal “Go Near” into Telugu and I continue to support the many Pastors fellowships in India. The pastors from Orissa are interested and so the work is also being translated into Oriya for Orissa, Tamil for Tamil Nadu and Hindi which cover all India . I believe it is God's perfect will to publish and proclaim the gospel, to teach and disciple new converts, and to encourage and teach the many pastors who are out in the tribal region preaching the Good News. There is much work still to be done but I realise that the Lords return may be soon according the signs of the times Matthew 24 v 33 or / and in preparing for my home call “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” Philippians 3 v 14 .

Dear friend, Today is the day of Salvation. God has a plan for your life too. “Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord for he will have mercy upon him and, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon”. Isaiah 55 v 6/7

O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Psalm 34 v 8

Tony Daly. Saved by grace.
Email peduyim@hotmail.com
www.dailybreadmissions.org.uk

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