Mike's Testimony



As a teenager I was a typical small town boy who played football, got low average grades and drank and smoked with my buddies. At the age of 18 as a senior in high school I became interested in a Catholic girl who moved here from another state. As much as I liked her, I was torn. She had taught me about a budget, a checkbook, and actual responsibility. We broke off the relationship because I had other priorities. It wasn't long before I had changed my mind and asked her back. We went on to date over the next five years where we stayed dating through my parents divorce when I was 22. One year later we were married.

To marry her, I needed to go to RCIA and become Catholic which was a way to commit to her. During our dating period my Mom became a Christian by asking God into her heart. It was a little confusing because God wasn't a focus on our lives. We bought our first home in 1992, had our first child in 1993, and completed the family in 1996 with a second boy. My job was great and over the next ten years we had grown into a much larger house, along with a boat, 2 cars, and a camper. I had grown to love the things of the world. Ten years ago our lives all changed when we found out my wife had breast cancer. Trips to the Cleveland Clinic were going to give her the best care she deserved. As we finished the doctor bills kept coming. Work had become stressful and the hospital debt seemed too much. We continued to raise our family and we got closer to church. An enlightening question from my youngest made it clear where his mind was. "Daddy, is Mom gonna die?" As I think back about seeing my wife having Christmas with us without hair and signs of wear from the chemo, I know how worried he had to be. God helped me answer my little boy. "We're all gonna die buddy" I said with a somber stare.

Life went on and I started to pray. I would ask God to strengthen our family. We continued to church but we didn't address the financial mess we were in. Being turned over to collections led us to bankruptcy, and losing our worldly possessions like the house, the boat, and one of the cars. This took a toll on our family. After the bankruptcy we found an angel of a lady who let us purchase her home on land contract so we moved in around nine years ago. While rebuilding our lives shortly after moving in we got the disturbing news that my wife's cancer returned in her lungs…stage 4. Knowing that there is no stage 5, and that stage 4 was likely incurable I was scared. My wife went through her second round of chemo. We were determined to stay up on the bills this time and we were doing pretty good. One morning in 2013 I was finishing my 40 minute drive to work one morning and I called aa debt collector to arrange a payment that was due and was informed that my credit card had expired and no payments would be accepted. I was being taken to court. I stood outside in the parking lot on the phone and every bit of my past several years of frustration had entered the earpiece of the lady on the phone. I ignored anything I had ever been taught about manners and let her have it. Due to my outrage I had became very dizzy. I made my way into my office where first responders took care of me, where I ended up getting onto a gurney and taken to the hospital. I was diagnosed with a stroke that turned to an anyerism. Through a very rare surgery the doctor was able to stop the bleeding with minimal brain damage. My wife who was carrying around stage 4 cancer found herself by my side praying for me as I spent nearly two months in a coma. Once again my boys were faced with losing a parent. From the hospital I was released to a rehab facility. After three months in this facility I was released to come home with my walker. By this time in the recovery I could feel Gods touch and I would tell my visitors "God is with me, he has sent me an angel". The presence was so powerful I wanted to tell everyone. As I started outpatient rehab and was getting better with the speech therapy I started thinking about going to work. My rehab was going to lead me back to my job in Engineering. I joined back in June of 2014 and my rehab led me to walk in 5k events. In July of 2014 I was getting ready to start a race and found myself standing next to my 8th grade Science teacher and ex high school coach. It was clear that God placed me there as he joined me in my walk around the course. We had an incredible talk and spent more time together throughout the fall. I picked up golf again and we were playing golf together in August. As I shared my new relationship with coach we talked about God. " what does this love I have for God mean?" I asked. He looked at me and asked "Have You Ever Been Saved?" I wasn't sure what he meant so I asked. He rephrased the question; "have you ever asked God into your heart?" I paused because I was a little confused. "I think so" was my meager answer. "Do you want to?" He asked. We were in the cart driving to the green and I said "sure!". He parked the cart and pulled a small bible out of his pocket. He opened the back and started reading some scriptures to me about how God loved us so much, he gave away his only son, who suffered, died, and was buried. His Son Jesus rose from the dead to fulfill the scriptures. "Do you want to pray" he asked as he pointed to the book. I said "sure" and started reading a prayer to God telling him he is my Father and I believe Jesus died for me and because I am a sinner I am forgiven. With his hand on my shoulder my coach chuckled because he wanted to read it with me and he couldn't find his glasses. I asked "now what?" He said "you will know". " you're going to be put into places and situations God has set for you. I continued to work for four more months and got terminated because I wasn't the

same guy. I drove home in pure peace. I was going to be ok. I drove home and took a couple of part time jobs. I was a manager at our local grocery store and worked as care staff for a workshop for disabled adults. That job has impacted my life as I saw people working hard to accomplish daily tasks. Many of them Christian. I sat down and shared my experience by writing a book. The title of the book is "Were All Miracles". As I have been able to share the Miracle God placed upon me to bring me back, we need to reflect and realize we all have been given life and for those who know the Lord, we can live forever. I have been able to share through speaking arrangements as well as ministering to those who I am faced with just as coach said. God is amazing and I was missing out. In less than two years since opening my heart, it has been amazing!