**God is a God of Change!**

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The God that created this universe and all that is in it is the business of **CHANGE!**

I want to tell you about a friend of mine. I will never forget the first time I met him. He was broken, he was at his end and I’m sure he was terrified. I will let him share his testimony with you if you are given the opportunity to meet him. You will be blessed by it. His life has CHANGED and he is not afraid or ashamed to tell anyone!

My wife and I lead the Newcomer’s class in our church’s Celebrate Recovery program and we generally see people when they are at a low point in their life and some of them, at the lowest point in theirs. This man had come to Celebrate Recovery (CR) that particular night seeking answers and healing. He admitted he was addicted to pornography (a very common wicked and evil scourge in our society). He also said he wanted help and had confided with his wife that he was addicted. Instead of loving him and working with him to find a solution, she filed for divorce.

Now, a year and a half or so has gone by. My friend has gotten deeply involved in CR and has been working on his recovery ever since the night I met him. He has also given back into other men’s lives who are struggling and hurting with life’s hurts, habits and hang-ups. The CHANGE that God has wrought in his life will continue until the day that he enters into his Heavenly home! It will also continue to plant seeds into other people’s lives.

My part in all of this, came about many years ago by God making a CHANGE in my life!

When I was in Junior High school, there was a great revival in our school and many of the students accepted Christ as their Savior! A former football player from Rice University, David Stockwell, came to our school and preached a message of salvation in our gymnasium! Isn’t it a downright shame that schools cannot do that any longer?

Our Baptist church had a revival a few months later and I accepted Christ as my Savior. I was baptized in water a week following. The Bible began to make more sense to me but there were so many things I didn’t understand and I felt pressured to keep on living the same way I had with my same old friends. After a year, I fell back into the same old lifestyle I had lived before.

When I was 18 years old, my 21 year old brother was in the hospital, dying from cancer. We had talked about the Lord and whether or not God could heal him. Looking for SOME KIND of hope, I found in James chapter 5, where we are told to have the church elders pray for the sick for healing. I immediately called our pastor, told him what I had read and asked if he would bring the elders and pray over my brother. His response, "Well, we don't believe that." I made a conscious decision that from that moment on, if I was going to believe some of the things in the Bible, I would believe all of it.

My brother's sickness and eventual death drove me seek truth in God's Word. Just a few short months later, the Holy Spirit did a magnificent work in my life! I was 19 years old, wasn't a "BAD" person but I needed Jesus in my life and I knew that. I did NOT have the assurance that if I died of where spirit and soul would go!

I was alone in my apartment one night and all I wanted do was smoke some pot, listen to some music and go to bed. Then my mother and father came by. I could not smoke pot with them there! When they left, a good friend of mine stopped by and he did not smoke pot. I kept wishing people would leave so I could get high! While my friend was still there, here came another buddy but something was different! The only way I know to describe it is, he was on fire! He explained to me and my other friend that he had gotten saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit. He was bouncing off the walls and he was encouraging me and my other friend to give our lives to Jesus also. The Holy Spirit really convicted my heart and we all held hands to pray and I gave my life back to Lord right then. After the prayer, I dumped all my liquor and marijuana down the toilet. This made my buddy bounce off the walls even more!

A couple of weeks later, I was driving in my 1976 American Motors Pacer, my little "upside down fish bowl" as my friends called it. I was driving east on 9th Street and turning north onto Main Street in Perryton, Texas, when Jesus CHANGED my life! I had been praising the Lord in my car, just basically minding my own business when it was like a lightning strike! The only way I know how to describe it is, I felt like I had ice water poured all over me and then had thousands of volts of electricity attached to me!

I was praising the Lord, crying my eyes out and talking and singing to our Lord. I was praying out loud in English and then I began to pray in tongues too. I would do both as I continued to worship God. I had never experienced such power in my life! God made Himself COMPLETELY real to me that day!

That was in early 1978 when Jesus Himself took my spirit and soul and He baptized me INTO THE HOLY SPIRIT just like we see in Acts chapters 2, 8, 10 and 19! I had always thought this stuff was wrong and not of God but later as I read my Bible, I found it IS ABSOLUTELY TRUE and so many churches DON’T believe it for really silly reasons. When this happened, the Holy Spirit immediately took away any desire for alcohol and pot!

God CHANGED me!!!

God CHANGED my friend!!!

God CAN CHANGE YOU!!!

The Holy Spirit has continued to change my life over these years. We are like plants in His garden. When we give our lives to Him, it is a like a seed being planted. That seed germinates and grows slowly but ever so gently the Master Gardener gives the tender little plant just the right amount of water and fertilizer and makes sure to keep the plant safe as it grows. The Master Gardener is so patient and finally, one day, when we are full grown we begin to bear fruit and that pleases our Master!

If you are like everyone else and need help with life’s hurts, habits and hang-ups, find a Celebrate Recovery in your area and get involved.

**CR Group Locator Page**

<http://crgroups.info/>

**The Three Baptisms of the Believer**

1. Baptism into the Body of Christ

<http://www.jaymc.com/FOF/bap1.htm>

1. Baptism into Water

<http://www.jaymc.com/FOF/bap2.htm>

1. Baptism into the Holy Spirit

<http://www.jaymc.com/FOF/bap3.htm>

1. Testimonies of People Who Have Been Baptized in the Holy Spirit

<http://www.jaymc.com/FOF/baptest.htm>