

Title: He Lifts Me Up

Category: First Person Essay

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Church Name: The Oaks Fellowship

Word Count: 1164

Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going? How did I get to where I am today? One would think that these are simple questions to answer about ones-self. I have come to learn in my journey of sixteen years the path is not always clear. I have matured spiritually recently which has allowed me the opportunity to reflect on my journey. I have begun to understand and recognize the moments throughout my life when God was protecting and leading me. I thought I was completely alone. I stumble I fall. He lifts me up.

In August 2010, it was another summer day before the start of my eighth grade year. When I awoke that morning I had no clue my world was going to shatter before night, and that life would take a new path. My dad was working on an RV when suddenly there was an explosion and he was engulfed in flames. I was in my room when I heard the commotion from outside. I ran to the door and watched as my dad's skin melted off his body. We lived in a small, rural lake community at the time. We did not have neighbors in close proximity that could hear the cries for help, so my mother called 911 and we waited. My dad lay on the concrete floor in our living room trying to remain calm and allow his body to stay cool. My mom knelt beside him and reassured him that help was on the way. The paramedics arrived and the decision to Care Flight him to Dallas was quickly made. The only problem was that the landing pad was in town. My mother, grandmother and I followed the ambulance to town. I was numb with fear. Because of the severity of the trauma, they were quick in their process and had him loaded for take-off within minutes. I cannot tell you how my mom was able to make the hour and a half drive to Dallas but before I knew it we had arrived at the Emergency Room. I wish I could remember all the thoughts I had during the drive to Dallas. I know I prayed for God to save my dad. I may have even tried to bargain with Him. I stumble. I fall. He lifts me up.

It was hours before there was any news from the doctors. Sometime after midnight I was allowed to dress in a sterile gown, mask, and gloves to enter the Critical Intensive Care Unit and see my dad. The hospital would become home for my parents over the next several weeks. I would be forced to start school without them. At a time when I needed my family the most, I had to remain strong for them. Also, at a time when I needed a friend the most, I felt abandoned. While putting on a fake smile, my days consisted of school and my nights were spent at the hospital. Three hours a day I spent in a car driving to and from the hospital, some nights not returning home until after midnight. It has been four years since the accident that changed my dad forever. He has both external and internal scars. I was very angry with God. I struggled with what I had been taught about God and blamed Him for everything. I listened to worship music and read my Bible, but there was something missing. I was not truly connecting with God internally; it was only surface deep. I stumble. I fall. He lifts me up.

I have begun to make peace with the moments in my life that caused such great pain, which I contribute to my spiritual growth. In those moments I truly believed I was all alone. How could my God cause such pain and despair? Why would He bring such horrible pain to those I loved? The answers were there all along. I was blinded by my grief and sorrow. It is through Christ that I have gained a new perspective. I realize that I shut down and pushed people away as my coping mechanism. I should have embraced those around me and listened harder to God when He spoke. I stumble. I fall. He lifts me up.

As I mature, I am learning that although I make choices in my life, God is truly in control. I have struggled with anxiety and panic attacks for years. My judgment of myself has caused me to avoid social situations and my anxiety has robbed me of many amazing opportunities during my life. I could write a book of excuses to avoid attending school trips,

parties and other social events. I stayed secluded within the walls of my bedroom. I am learning today to let that go. Jeremiah 29:11-14 tells me, “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.” In order for me to find peace, I must trust what God has planned for me. I have spent my life seeking the answers to my greatest problems. The only things I need to do are to stop, pray, listen, and allow God to guide me. I stumble. I fall. He lifts me up.

Within the last year, there has been a calm that has entered my life that I have never known. I attribute this to the fact that I have decided that my life is best in the hands of God. If I allow Him absolute control over my life, my days will be filled with love, peace, and contentment. I do not have to make this journey alone. The burden of my worries and the stress of my life, God will carry for me. He alone has made the greatest sacrifices for me. He sent Jesus to die on the cross to save me from my sin and have eternal life. I only have to allow God to work through me. In my moments of doubt I will stumble, I will fall, and He will always lift me up!

Who am I? I am a precious daughter of God. Where did I come from? From the very breath of power and love He graciously created me with. Where am I going? I will go where ever God leads me. How did I get to where I am today? I stumbled. I fell. He lifted me up.