

## Five Years that Took Me to My Knees!



by Johnnie Gayle Sloan

Although I was raised in a parsonage and heard thousands of messages about being saved and sanctified, it wasn't until I was 20 years old and suffered a health crisis that I experienced God in a life-changing way.

While working at a Safeway grocery store in Oklahoma City and putting myself through school at Bethany Nazarene College, (now Southern Nazarene University) my health failed. I suddenly found myself at home unable to carry on with life. No school, no work and no dating. Over time I slid into a deep depression and had no hope. I wanted to die. Little did I know it would be 5 years before I would be well.

Even though I accepted Jesus as a child, I called on God and asked Him to save me again - just in case. After some time, I knew I needed God to sanctify me. God began to speak to me and I recognized His voice. One Sunday night, I walked into a revival service at Lakeview Park Church of the Nazarene in Oklahoma City. The evangelist preached on sanctification and God spoke to me and said, "Johnnie, this is your night." When the altar was opened, I was there. God gloriously sanctified me and as I drove home, His presence was so powerful in the car that I've never forgotten that moment.

A couple of years went by as I was still living at home and by then, able to work part time. This was when God told me that from start to finish, I would be ill for

5 years. It was exactly 5 years before I could resume my life. I still read the Bible daily and hung onto every word. He began to tell me things to do and I would obey—apologize to someone, stop hanging out with a friend of many years who was a bad influence, quit my job, whatever He said, I did. My faith in Him, love for Him, and trust grew. I was obedient and He blessed me so richly. As a side note, 3 days after quitting my job, an absolutely perfect job opened up to me. He gave it to me.

I had an insatiable desire to read the Bible and would grab onto scriptures that spoke to my situation and need. When asking God why my life had shut down, I read Hebrews 12:7 which affected me in a powerful way. "Endure trials for the sake of discipline. God is treating you as children; for what child is there whom a parent does not discipline?" That answered my question and I simply accepted it and thanked Him. Walking into church one Sunday morning and not feeling well, I picked up the worship folder and the scripture for the day was Isaiah 40:31 - "but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up

with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Of course, that was written for me at that time. I cried for joy believing He was right beside me and had that scripture in the worship folder just for me. I just snuggled into His love.

Toward the end of my time "in the desert", I applied for a job that would be better with higher pay and was told by the girl who set it up that I was the best candidate of the two being interviewed. When the other girl was hired, I was very puzzled and disappointed and couldn't understand why God didn't give me the job. Shortly after that I moved to California and met my future husband and was married. God blessed us with 5 children. If I had gotten that job, I wouldn't have met and married my husband, Glenn, and would not have had my children. I thank God for every day of the 5 years that took me to my knees and taught me to love and trust God. My faith is cemented in Him and I have not been the same since.

Published by

**The Center for LifeStory Writing**  
Electronic Group September 2008

College Church of the Nazarene  
2020 E. Sheridan  
Olathe, Kansas 66062

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