

I didn't see him again till he was 15. The only good thing in my life was my Gran . When she died I fell apart and left home.

I began clubbing and got pregnant again, got bored & carried on clubbing. Then I moved to Birmingham, met another man and got pregnant again & again. Well, what else was I good for?

My partner was a gambler & he told me I had to earn money and took me to see 2 women. They were prostitutes. He told me to watch them & learn the ropes. I didn't want to but he began to emotionally blackmail me, saying ' If you loved me, you would.....'

Many bad things happened to me during that time. If I didn't earn money he said he would find me & beat me, even when I was pregnant.

One day while I was hustling for business, a policeman stopped me &

said he was taking me in. He told me to get into the car & drove me towards the police station but then he said, 'If you give me what I want, I'll let you go'. He drove far out - away from anywhere. When he'd finished he walked off saying, 'Find your own way back'.

I was virtually an alcoholic & smoked 40 fags a day. Then, I had a nervous breakdown. I was full of guilt & self-hatred.

15 years or so later, after my children, 7 in all, had finally grown up, I was alone. Next door there were some friendly people. They didn't seem to mind me being rough & out of control. They invited me to go to church & I went because I had nothing else to do. There I had an experience which changed my life. An incredible sense of peace came on me and for the 1<sup>st</sup> time ever I knew I was loved and valuable.

I thought about this afterwards but

I still didn't understand. How could I, a woman so degraded as I was and coming from my background, feel like this? The answer is that Jesus loves me so much he died an agonising death for me so that I could feel so deeply loved it makes me weep. Why did those things happen to me? Well, there's evil in the world, but God saw my pitiful state and pulled me out of it. Now I see people every day walking around with pain, fear, guilt, depression and I want to tell them it doesn't have to be like this.

I'm not asking anyone to believe some airy-fairy idea about God but we all believe in the idea of love, freedom and respect and Jesus is all these things. Without him we only play blindly at these ideas. You don't have to take my word for it, ask Him to reveal Himself to you. If He did it for me - he'll do it for you too.

Below is a suggested prayer which you could pray out ALOUD from your heart.

Heavenly Father I come to you now. Lord, I am a sinner. I have sinned against you, even this day, but Lord, I come and ask you in the name of Jesus that you will forgive me for all my sins, that you will wash me in the blood of Jesus and I shall be cleansed from all sin. I thank you now for saving me. Come into my heart and into my life and Lord, lead me by your Spirit and help me to live for you from this day forth. I thank you now in Jesus' name, Amen.

To continue as a true believer you must follow the Lord Jesus Christ. This involves regularly:

1. Reading the Bible;
2. Praying to God in Jesus' name;
3. Fellowshiping with other born-again believers.

For further information, please contact:-

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## A TRUE STORY

Hello, my name is Thelma and this is my story.

I was born in Liverpool in 1939. That makes me just old Scouser, right? Read on.

My Mom and Dad were not married - quite a thing in those days! I never knew my Dad - me & my 3 sisters all had different dads. My Mom & uncle sexually abused us all. The family told me I was no good - an outcast & I believed them.

When I was 18 I fell in love & got pregnant. My man told me that the baby wasn't his because I wasn't a virgin when we met. Well, my Mom had taken it, hadn't she? My man left me. The idea that I was no good went even more deeply inside me. When I had the baby my granddad refused to have him in the house and he had to go to Dr Barnardos.