

Personal Testimony - Part 1

by Milton Green

The speaker shares his personal testimony of growing up in a town controlled by the power of darkness, and how he eventually broke free from its strongholds through the power of God's grace and Jesus' love.

Duration: 14:52

Scripture: Psalm 34:17-18, Psalm 51:10, Isaiah 61:1, John 8:12, Romans 8:1, Romans 8:28, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Personal Redemption", "Gods Grace"

Description

This sermon shares a powerful testimony of grace and redemption, highlighting a journey from darkness and bondage to finding freedom and light through the grace of God. It emphasizes the impact of the powers of darkness on a tender heart, the struggles faced in a tumultuous upbringing, and the deep desire for love and compassion in a harsh environment. The speaker reflects on experiences of guilt, condemnation, and the ultimate transformation brought about by God's grace and mercy.

Transcript

You know, I was thinking a while ago what a simple thing it is just to be a carpet cleaner, just a friendly carpet cleaner. You see, you just don't have to know too much, you know that? You just have to have a lot of time to listen to Jesus, to love Jesus, and we got such a way that when the Lord, in some small way, wants to manifest himself through some man that we, you know, you just hear a lot of words, you know that, and then you don't hear the word. I was sitting over there last night, and the Lord just been with me all my life, and I'm just so convicted and so blessed, and I don't understand it, and a man brought in a little wino over there, and the door, and he particularly made come over so he knew what my part was, and I went over there, and I could just see me, and I could just see grace, and I just took him and just held him, and boy, this dynamo started, just loving, and then all I have to say is just boo the devil.

It's all him, we just try to, boy, just try to help him out, and just strive, and just love him, and he gets so busy, you don't hear him. See I remembered that the Lord just reminded me, he has to remind you, you get where you're something. He reminded me when I was in Detroit, walking through a basement of a building with another wino, and I know he pushed the cobwebs out of the way, his own drugs being destroyed by the powers of darkness, and he fed me chicken wing and neck soup.

I guess by now you know whose image we're working on. I want to share a testimony of grace, and I used to wouldn't share. I used to start my testimony and just wouldn't say because I felt like it gave so much

glory to the devil, but the Lord has showed me in his grace I can start with the powers, I can start with darkness, and brother, I can end in the light, and so I'll start in the darkness.

In the 1940s, there was articles in the Life magazine and Collier's magazine about a little town in East Tennessee where I was raised up at, and this town was just killings and wars and everything just political and of that nature, and there are four strongholds. There is darkness and forms of darkness, but I can tell you at that particular time, it was outer darkness. I have never witnessed or seen since I was a child what I saw happen there.

I have seen families and in-laws just come together, just cutting each other with knives, whole families, when I was just a little boy, and that's the kind of thing that I saw and grew up in. When I was five years old, my father was a chief deputy of a political system there in this county. I lived next door to the jail, and as five years old, I was just, had a lot of fun with me.

I was locked up in a bullpen with other prisoners and left there. I was given a nickel to go curse people at times. I was given a nickel to expose myself.

I was even given a nickel sometimes to be whipped. I picked cigarette butts up off the street and smoked them when I was five years old. I had little friends in this small town, which is a county seat, and we were, the men would stand around us and make us fight just like you would a couple of dogs.

I know this one little friend that I had was called Joe Lewis, I think he was a boxer, and I sure didn't want to do that because it wasn't in my heart to hurt. And I started to school and I knew in the first two or three grades that I was a little quicker than some of the others, by God's grace, I know I was. But an interesting thing happened.

I began getting slower and they became weaker, I was quicker. The powers of darkness was moving into my life and controlling my life through the environment that I was in. I was so rejected and so confused.

I couldn't even function in school, I couldn't even study, I never got out of high school and that's something of course I'm not boasting about. I was in terrible money. That is the darkness I'm talking to you about.

I would go around, have such a tender heart, and I later learned that I had to hide the things that was in my heart because I could relate to hurting people, hurting kids, and I would find them. And I would just champion them and love them and something would just, I tell you, I just wanted to give, I just didn't want anything, this is just, I just wanted to give and no one could understand what was happening to me, to want to give everything I had away. Now that's the interesting thing, what the powers of darkness wants to do to a tender heart, a tender heart can hear God, you know, and I'm sure the enemy will recognize things like this, but God's grace, he'd give me a tender heart.

And so I would do things like go into the drugstore and I would see, I would see back in these days, you know, the ladies would care a change in a handkerchief. And I'd see them ask for something, we only had the one drugstore, which was a bus stop, and I would watch them go up and ask how much something cost, maybe a Coca-Cola, cookies or something, then watch them turn around and untie their little handkerchief and look at their exchange and count them out to see that if they could get this Coca-Cola or something then it would just turn my heart absolutely out of me and I'd watch the men, you know, with their little pocketbooks do the same thing. And I would just have to leave there, my heart would just break and I would have to hide this because the whole system was probing me to be tough, that I had to be tough.

And I couldn't understand it, I had to just get away from it, to not let them see because this was considered a weakness in this system, to have compassion and love. As a little boy, we had a little quartet and we would go around the town and this is very significant that we would sing to, in the barbershop, maybe in the courthouse and sometimes they'd give us a nickel or a dime or something. And I remember the ones in this little quartet I was in, there was Doris Kincaid, who was a little boy, I'll tell you, they called Joe Lewis, because he was a boxer.

And then there was Dennis and then there was Billy. Now Dennis was a thief, he died a thief and Doris stole a car later on and he's coming over a hill between Benton and Etowah, Tennessee and run head on to another family and killed himself and the family of five. And my friend Billy, who I love so much, Billy finally got a law degree.

Billy was an alcoholic. Billy's in darkness and Billy's in bondage too. And I recall the last time I saw Billy, the Lord had just saved me.

I remember that I walked outside the house and I looked and there came Billy driving by the street. And I watched Billy look out the window at me and I knew he wanted to stop and I can think back now and I know that the powers of darkness, the enemy just sent him on to where I couldn't tell Billy what had happened to me. It wasn't but a few days later that Billy, who was an alcoholic, was arrested and drowned in his own vomit in a jail cell.

The pressures and everything that would come and just in my own home life, I'd get around my father and my knees would actually knock. Everyone in town was afraid of him. I would tremble, even to walk in a room where he was at times.

The pressures on me became so great that when I was about 15 years old, I finally, I just left home. I just had to get away from it. I left home and I missed my mother and I really missed my dad too.

And I, a 15-year-old boy, just couldn't do too much. But finally, I came back and they met me and my family did and got me to take me out of town and hide me from my father for a period of four months because he was going to kill me. And during this time that there was supposedly a reconciliation made with my father that I could come back, I could come back home and I recall that I was so afraid and my knees knocked as I came back there to face my dad.

They walked in the house and I walked around the house and as I came to the kitchen, I heard my dad tell my mother and my brother that he was going to kill me. And it was a day or two later that the pressures were so great that I walked out in my yard and I got down on my knees and I had such a problem talking to the Lord because every time I'd think of Jesus or try to think of Jesus, curse words would come into my mind. And I so often used to, I would, no one ever knew this, I would just take my hair and pull my hair and everything and I'd try, I'd go running and everything because I couldn't think about Jesus.

Every time I'd think curse words and I thought that was me. I always thought that was me. But anyway, I said, God, I just can't stand anymore.

God, please make him die. Please make my father die. It was less than a week that my father had a heart attack and died.

And I can't tell you how consumed I became in guilt and condemnation. And he buried my dad and I would go secretly. I would go to the graveyard and there the powers of darkness had me.

And there they were just building on that, already that brokenness and just a terror to steal, to kill, to tear down. I'd sit there and I would weep over my dad's grave. Why couldn't I ever know him? I've had dreams throughout even my 40 years of dream after dream how I'd do something that would please my father and that I never really got to know him.

I never really got to understand the man. I never knew him. I didn't even know myself.

I was in bondage. I was a prisoner. And then this guilt and condemnation followed me everywhere I went.

When I was 17, I couldn't function in school. I might as well leave. I could get in the service when I was 17 years old and I left to join the Air Force.

And I've just, I came to Lackland Field in Texas. This was back in the 40s. And I was what you would call, what today they would refer to as very rural or very slow.

I just, I mean, it's an amazing thing as I think back that they even let me. I was emotionally stunted. I was a prisoner.

And, but anyway, during this time, as the enemy was just tearing down the tenderness and the tender heart that the grace of God has given me, he was beating and destroying something I didn't understand. Because, see, I went to church as a small boy and the only thing I remembered is when the deacon wanted to take the pastor down in the basement and fight. And I didn't learn.

I didn't even know until I was 43 years old or understood anything I didn't understand about Jesus. I did not learn one thing. I did not learn one thing.

And now...

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