

# Gospel Gazette

Salt Lake City Mission, P.O. Box 142, Salt Lake City, UT 84110 - Phone 801-355-6310

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## *Religion to Relationship*

*Valerie Fackrell*

My name is Valerie and I am 42 years old. I was raised by a very religious mother and an extremely abusive father. The religion I was taught was based solely upon rules and never touched upon the unending love of God. I was told on a regular basis that I



would never be good enough for God to love me. So, from both aspects of my upbringing I was faced with confusion about what love really was and a future without any hope. The older I got the more intense the abuse from my father and the stricter the religion became. So, exhausted after many years of attempting to be good enough and to struggle through abuse, I gave up. At 17 years old, I ran away from home and threw myself into a life of drugs, drinking, and promiscuity. At first, this freedom was exhilarating and I was able to convince myself I was having fun. Soon, though, I found myself empty, alone and scared. Because of my lifestyle choices I was told that I was 'dead' to God. I had no hope at all and I knew I had to just live out this life the best way I could and hope it ended soon. Within two years from this realization, I found I was pregnant with my first child. My second child followed soon after. I was thrilled to have found this meaning in my life and yet, the situation became incredibly difficult as I had married an alcoholic man and I was, once again, in a terrible situation. Throughout the years, this took a toll on me so much that I was depressed, desperate and exhausted. The loneliness, shame and lack of love that I needed prompted me to attempt suicide on more than one occasion and I landed in a psychiatric hospital twice. The relief that doctors could give me were temporary and I found myself right back in a pit of depression, hate and panic so badly that doctors chose to put me on seven different anti psychotics at one time. Still, the result was the same. I was living drugged on tranquilizers just so I could function. And then God....

One day, I overheard a teacher in the school I had enrolled in speaking of God. I was angry and fought with him about what he was saying. I had a lot of Bible knowledge and used it against him when I could. Within a couple weeks I felt vulnerable for the first time since I was very young listening to what was being said and

desperately hoping that God really did love me. Within a few weeks I had approached the teacher and asked for help. I gave my life to Christ a couple short weeks after that. At that point, I stopped taking all narcotics, recreational drugs and alcohol. The process was intensely difficult but God walked with me through it all. I was shown such care, such love and wonder that I fell into Gods arms and lived for Him only. Sad to say, I walked away from it all when the person who showed me the path to God became abusive to me and let me know how much I lacked. I was "fired" from the Bible studies and groups I had been attending. It took another year and a half before I was able to find my way back to God. God, much to my surprise, welcomed me back with open arms. I made a firm decision to never leave Him again over any reason at all. God had promised me that he was right by my side my entire life calling me to Him. He told me that there is freedom from all ailments and situations. I was then encompassed in a healing process to recover from abuses I had suffered and that included God showing me how much he adores me. God wanted me to love myself and set out to teach me how. I was taught to rest in Him and take in this peace and love of God that surpasses all on this earth. Now, I know love like I could have never imagined. I am free from drugs, free from debilitating medications, free from hate and fear ruling my life. I live my life for God and each day more and more gratitude and peace fill my heart. During this process, a close friend introduced me to a wonderful man who was an ordained Pastor at the Salt Lake City Mission. From that day in May we began to get to know each other, fell in love effortlessly, and by January we were married. Immediately after our marriage, by God's Grace, I was let go from employment that was negative and damaging to me and God gave me a year of rest where I was able to heal and become closer to him. When that year was over, I wanted to fulfill my goal of working somewhere that made a difference so, I applied with the Salt Lake City Mission asking that God use me for whatever purpose he had in mind and was hired in April as an administrative assistant. I'm so happy to say that I have been incredibly blessed in this position. I am able to work side by side with my husband teaching others about the glorious promises of God and providing assistance to those in need. God has certainly fulfilled his promise in me and "with a hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11)

## *The American Dream*

An American businessman was standing at the pier of a small coastal Mexican village when a small boat with just one fisherman docked. Inside the small boat were several large yellowfin tuna. The American

complimented the Mexican on the quality of his fish.

"How long did it take you to catch them?" the American asked.

"Only a little while" the Mexican replied.

"Why don't you stay out longer and catch more fish?" the American then asked.

"I have enough to support my family's immediate needs" the Mexican said.

"But" the American then asked, "What do you do with the rest of your time?"

The Mexican fisherman said: "I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children, take a siesta with my wife, Maria, stroll into the village each evening where I sip wine and play guitar with my amigos. I have a full and busy life, señor."

The American scoffed: "I am a Harvard MBA and could help you. You should spend more time fishing and with the proceeds you could buy a bigger boat and, with the proceeds from the bigger boat, you could buy several boats. Eventually you would have a fleet of fishing boats. Instead of selling your catch to a middleman, you would sell directly to the consumers, eventually opening your own can factory. You would control the product, processing and distribution. You would need to leave this small coastal fishing village and move to Mexico City, then LA and eventually NYC where you will run your expanding enterprise."

The Mexican fisherman asked: "But señor, how long will this all take?"

To which the American replied: "15-20 years."

"But what then, señor?"

The American laughed and said: "That's the best part. When the time is right, you would announce an IPO - an Initial Public Offering - and sell your company stock to the public and become very rich. You would make millions."

"Millions, señor? Then what?"

The American said slowly: "Then you would retire. Move to a small coastal fishing village where you would sleep late, fish a little, play with your kids, take a siesta with your wife, stroll to the village in the evenings where you could sip wine and play your guitar with your amigos..."



# Mission Needs

Thank you so much for all you do to help us, help them!



## Financial Donations

Donations are always needed, accepted and greatly appreciated! We are presently in need of donations of all types. Our cupboards are nearly bare and the pantries almost empty. We must get ready

to serve the over 143,000 meals we will server this year.

## Ranch

Hay, feed, bottled water, Gator-aid, fly strips, soups, laundry soap, building materials and anything else you can imagine a working farm could use.

## Fund Raisers

*Salt Lake City Mission needs energetic people to plan, recruit, chair, organize and carry out successful fund raising events throughout the holiday season and beyond!*

## Food Drives

In addition to serving meals we will also give out thousands of food boxes that are desperately needed this holiday season. Canned goods, packaged foods and dry goods of all types our needed to fill our pantries.

## Clothing Drives

We are in dire need of **spring and summer clothing of all types**, jackets, shorts, shirts, pants, shoes, socks, underwear, sportswear, tee shirts, work clothing, etc...

## Blanket Drives

**We always have great need of blankets of all types, comforters, sleeping bags, mummy bags, tents, tarps, etc.** Winter is just two short seasons away and there is not enough shelter space for the approximately 3,500 homeless on the streets this winter. 53 homeless died needlessly on the streets of Salt Lake last year.