

Angie's Testimony

My name is Angelique and it is my privilege to share with you the wonderful story of God's grace and love in my life.

In April 2000, I had been married for just over a year but it was a very stressful, tumultuous relationship and after enduring verbal and mental abuse for a year, I naively listened to the advice of my single girlfriends and left my husband. One morning, I booked a removalist company, packed my furniture and belongings and left the marriage.

I moved into a house with a girlfriend and her teenage son. I was happy to be out of my miserable marriage and live in peace for a while. But I also felt guilty for leaving my husband and was very out of sorts – it takes some adjusting to live in a new home with new housemates. Up until this point of time in my life, I had been a happy, positive person. I had never experienced depression or dark moods.

The next day I drove to work and while sitting in my office, I heard a voice in my head say 'Don't be sad or depressed, just kill yourself. You will surely be happy then.' I thought, 'what a great idea'. I 'surfed' the internet, looking for an easy way to commit suicide. I found nothing on-line but I imagined I would slit my wrists, stab myself or drive my car into oncoming traffic. I bought a large kitchen knife and a few packets of cold and flu tablets, adding drug overdose as another suicide option. I added a bottle of wine for courage.

For three nights I lied to my friend about where I was going. I went for drives in my car armed with my suicide kit and tried hard to find the courage to kill myself. I wrote goodbye letters to each of my family members while crying uncontrollably. Thankfully, God had different plans for me. I felt a force pinning my hands down so that I couldn't harm myself. In frustration, I stabbed my car seat with the sharp kitchen knife. Looking back, I know God spared my life.

The next thing I remember is waking up in a bed in the Austin Hospital with my parents sitting by my bed. Apparently, a few weeks before, we had been celebrating my Dad's birthday at a restaurant. After dinner, my friend and I were driving home and I

grabbed my head and started screaming 'there is a power ball going off in my head!' She burned red lights and sped to the Austin Hospital.

I fell into a coma. I had suffered a massive brain aneurysm and over the next two weeks, I underwent three lots of neurosurgery. I was in a coma for six weeks and was placed on a life support machine. A tracheotomy tube was placed in my throat to help me breathe. I was unresponsive and in a vegetative state. The neurosurgeons broke the sad news to my parents that I probably would not survive the next 24 hours and if by chance I did, I'd be a 'vegetable'. They were advised to find me a placement in a nursing-home. But thank the Lord, my parents are both Spirit-filled Christians. They placed their hope for my recovery in the Lord and refused to believe the negative diagnosis from the doctors.

That same day, my dad telephoned our pastor and asked him to pray for funding regarding carers and a rehabilitation hospital. While they were praying, the Lord spoke to our pastor very clearly and told him that a spirit of death had lodged itself in my brain. The Lord told my pastor to cast off that spirit of death. Praise God that our pastor had knowledge of spiritual warfare. Up until this point, I had apparently been very restless - thrashing my legs and arms around. But after he prayed, I was relaxed and at peace. Coincidentally, that same day, my brother had been in a prayer meeting in his home town of Launceston and the Lord told him the same thing.

The morning before this prayer, a friend of mine came to visit me. She said 'there was something eerie in the room' and she was too scared to come near my bed. After I had been set free through prayer, she visited again. She had no knowledge of my deliverance from the spirit of death but when she came to my hospital room, this time she said, 'What's happened? The air is different now.'

The Lord then instructed my dad to stand in the gap for me and say the sinner's prayer by proxy for me. I was still in a coma and had no knowledge of any of this. There I was, in my hospital room, blind and broken. My world was very still and this enabled me to hear His voice clearly. We had sweet fellowship for hours. When I awoke, I said the sinner's prayer for myself. Looking back, I

'walked' away from my dark past and I 'ran' with open arms towards the Light of the world, Jesus!

The bleed in my brain had been in the Occipital lobe area. This is the part of the brain that controls our vision. Blood from my aneurysm had pooled behind both eyes so that when I awoke from my coma, I was completely blind. After the second operation, I was also completely paralysed on the left side of my body.

Waking up from my coma was not instantaneous. Rather it was a slow process and it took a few weeks from for me to be fully aware of my surroundings. One afternoon, I was sitting in the recreation lounge in the hospital with my mum and brother when it suddenly dawned on me - I was now a blind invalid. I sobbed uncontrollably and my brother (who is also a Christian) was quoting scriptures to me to try to make me feel better. I was a new Christian at this point and my knowledge of the Word of God was very limited. I felt hopeless. As far as I was concerned, my young life was over.

But, praise God! The Word of God really is a living Word! It has transformed my broken life and turned it into something beautiful. Praise the Lord for not leaving us here on the earth alone and defenseless. He gave us the overcoming weapons of the Word, His name and the blood of Jesus.

A couple of weeks later, I had the blood flushed from one of my eyes to enable me to see a little. One morning I switched on the TV in my hospital room and watched 'Life in the Word' with Joyce Meyer. I was very encouraged by her teaching and her knowledge of the Word. I too wanted the faith she has in the power of God.

Over the next few weeks I fervently read the Bible and other Word-based Christian books. As I was still very weak, I spent a lot of time in my room, reading. I basically inhaled the Word of God and became familiar with a lot of 'overcoming' Bible promises.

Praise the Lord for all the promises in the Bible! Many have come alive in my life and they have transformed me physically and spiritually, enabling me to grow from strength to strength. The first promise I remember is Romans 8:28, '*All things work together for good for them that love God and those that are called for His purpose.*' A huge fountain of hope welled up inside my spirit when I heard that promise for the first time. I've heard Joyce Meyer

preach on this scripture. She says basically that we can look the devil in the eye and say to him 'do your worst devil, because whatever you dish out to me, God is going to turn into a blessing'. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord for His Word.

Although I know that none of my aneurysm saga was God's doing, I do believe that He choreographed a lot of how it unfolded. I say this because if I was in my car alone, I would most probably have been killed.

Looking back, I can see God's hand and His favour on my life in many ways since that fateful night. Normally, there is no funding for rehabilitation for brain injury victims like me. But after much prayer, my parents found out about a funding package designed for young drug-overdose victims. Being under the age of 35 (I was 31 years old at the time) and blind (nursing home standard), the criteria was met and I qualified for the package. I believe that God, in His wisdom, allowed me to be blind for a while so that I would qualify for this package. What a blessing this funding package has been! It has paid for attendant carers, physiotherapy, occupation and speech therapists, as well as for any of the aids and equipment that have I needed during my rehabilitation.

If I were to include all of the miracles and blessings from God over the last ten years since my aneurysm, I would have to write a whole book - there are too many to list in this short piece of writing.

Although I am still in a wheelchair, I know for certain that I will be completely restored physically in Gods timing. I know this because 'faith comes by hearing the word of God' (Romans 10:17). For a few years now, I've been reading Bible promises aloud to myself each day. My faith in God's word is strong.

If I hadn't met the Lord when I did, I would have woken up from my coma and, after realizing that I was now a blind invalid, I would have gone home, locked myself in my room and rotted away. But praise our wonderful, omnipotent King Jesus! John 10:10 has come alive in my life. "*The thief comes only to kill, steal and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*"

I'm still in a wheelchair for a large part off my day, but I praise my awesome God - I see the Promised Land just up ahead. Thanks

to the living Word of God, His love and mercy and grace, I can walk by faith and not by sight and I'm confident that I have a bright future.

I used to think that I could not share the gospel while still being in a wheelchair because I thought people would say 'how come your God hasn't healed you yet'? I now realize that the obvious joy that I emanate while still being in a wheelchair is a bigger witness to the faithfulness and wonder of our awesome God!