



*You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16*

Jan Jacobs

My father died when I was six years old. My mother never remarried. She went to work, and though I needed her desperately, needed her affection, needed her reassurance that she wouldn't leave me like daddy did, she just was not there for me emotionally. She was struggling with her own emotions so desperately that she could not handle a ravenously starved-for-love child, and she constantly pushed me away from her. I remember sitting in the black dirt on a sweltering summer day in central Florida, looking out over the lake behind the house and feeling completely desolate, alone and empty. I was 8 years old.

I can't tell you the exact time that I asked Jesus to come into my life. My mother told me I was 5. I know that when I was 13 I made the conscious decision to ask Jesus to forgive my sins and come into my heart. I believe I experienced "regeneration" then. But though my sins were forgiven, it seemed I had no power to live as I understood the Word of God said I should live, and my "Christian" experience was up and down, up and down, all my life until I eventually just gave up in despair.

I was married. I raised one child. I have worked, and I have been a "stay-at-home" mom. I have lived in simple but comfortable houses and I have been homeless. I have suffered poor health, chronic fatigue, and chronic pain. I have been addicted to painkillers and I have gone through the hell of weaning myself off of them. I have struggled in my relationship with the Lord over the years, and finally walked away from Him in bitterness, anger and resentment in early 1995, tired of trying and failing, tired of all the "guesswork" involved in trying to determine His will for me and just exactly what it was He wanted from me; tired of seeing promises in His Word that never saw fulfillment in my life... tired of chasing carrots on the end of a stick that I could never quite grasp. Though I tried my best, it was not good enough. So I gave up. And I gave in. I gave in to desires I had struggled with all my life, and I entered the lesbian lifestyle with a vengeance. I was a "gay-pride", hard-core, in-your-face, make-you-squirm lesbian. I enjoyed flaunting my lesbianism, especially in the faces of Christians, with whom I wanted absolutely nothing to do. Christians had wounded me deeply "in the name of Jesus". Christians were the ENEMY! I hated Christians. I sneered at "straights", and had nothing but contempt and scorn for "bi's". Most of all, I hated men. And Jesus was "a man".

I went happily on in this backslidden state until God gave me a terrible vision of myself, standing on the brink of a black, bottomless pit and told me that if I took just one more step in my present lifestyle, I would be so lost that He would not be able to save me. It wasn't that He didn't WANT to save me, but that He had given me a free will and I could use that free will to reject Him. He was telling me that if I did not return to Him now, I would be lost forever. So there I was standing before the pit, and God was waiting for an answer.... I knew that it would be my FINAL answer, and what was at stake was not some measly million dollars, like on the TV game show, but it was my LIFE that was at stake.... my Eternal destiny.

I talked to God. I told Him that IF I returned to Him, it was going to have to be just Him and me, because I wanted nothing to do with His followers. I told Him that if I gave myself to Him, it would be 100 percent, and that HE would have to take care of me and be responsible for me, because I had already proven I could not take care of myself. (I had filed for bankruptcy in 1998 after accumulating over \$60,000 in credit card debt that I could not pay.) I told Him that He had to take my same-sex orientation completely away, that I did NOT want to have to struggle with that the rest of my life. I told Him that if I gave Him 100 percent of myself, I EXPECTED Him to give ME 100 percent of HIMself, and I told Him that He HAD BETTER BE WORTH GIVING IT ALL UP!!!!

And then, after I'd told Him all those things, I laid my lesbian lover at the foot of His cross. I laid down the greatest love I had ever known up to that point: the love I so desperately clung to. I laid down the motor home, our little puppy dog, all our future plans, and hopes and dreams, all those things which were my precious treasures, everything that made my life worth living; I laid all my "gold of Ophir" in the dust at the foot of Jesus' cross.... every single thing I held precious and dear and of value. And as far as I was concerned, my life ended that night. From that point on, if I took another breath, it had to be Jesus that breathed it, because I had no will to go on. I simply could not imagine living without my lesbian partner.

What I discovered in the painful months and days after I left my lesbian lover is that, though the pain of heartbreak was so excruciating, the agony so intense, at the same time I was experiencing the fact that THERE IS RESURRECTION LIFE on the OTHER SIDE OF THE CROSS, and JOY unimaginable!!!! And THAT life is ABUNDANT LIFE, and THAT Joy is a wellspring, bubbling up inside me that gives me strength for each new day. In fact, the cross is the only way TO that abundant Life and Joy. Because of this discovery, I have learned to EMBRACE the cross of Christ.... I have learned to love brokenness, for though it holds pain, the pain is sweet, and the result of that brokenness and pain is intimacy with Jesus, and the result of intimacy with Jesus is ABUNDANT LIFE AND DEEP, HEARTLFELT JOY.

On that night, Nov.22, 2000, something VERY DIFFERENT than I had ever experienced before happened to me and it changed my entire life. I discovered an inner rest and peace in the days that followed that I still have to this day. I discovered that I had a choice to NOT sin, and that by making choices daily that were/are consistent with the nature and character of Christ, I could walk in HIS ways rather than mine. I found HIS ways so much better than mine. I have peace and joy down deep inside me, and have had them for almost 6 years now. Never again, even once, have I been attracted to or tempted by another woman. I have no desire to sin. Jesus really broke me and I discovered that brokenness is a GOOD thing.... The Lord is nigh unto him who has a broken and contrite heart....He said, "A broken and contrite heart I will not despise." I often pray that the Holy Spirit will keep me broken before Him, that He will break everything within me that in any way would resist Him or His will.

His yoke really IS easy, and His burden really IS light, because He does the work of sanctifying us and purifying our hearts and all we have to do is to surrender completely, and walk in His ways. If I could have attained this rest and peace and joy myself, I would have done so a LONG time before I ever walked away from

Him. I tried everything. But when I surrendered completely to Him, laying down everything I loved and cherished to follow Him, He did what I could never do. I didn't know exactly what had happened to me. One of my pastors called it "entire sanctification". One called it "the second blessing, or second work of grace". Another calls it "entering His rest". All I know is that since that night, my life has been totally different and I would never, never, never go back to anything I "had" before. There is a world of difference between religion and intimate relationship with Jesus and I have that relationship with Him now. That (He) is my greatest treasure. He took me off of the emotional roller coaster I was on and has given me a steadfast spirit. He CHANGED my life completely. The decision I made that night is irreversible... and not open to debate. He IS my Lord and my God and my life belongs to Him. He can do whatever He wants to with me. I belong to Him eternally without reserve. He has fixed me eternally within His own bosom.

You know, I spent over 30 years in the deepest of deep depressions... suicidal...once was even locked up on a mental ward on suicide watch. I was on massive doses of antidepressants for more than 30 years. At times I was almost catatonic. My first husband was extremely abusive and by the time I left him for the last time, I was a total basket case. The woman in the mirror was my worst enemy and I tried to murder her (myself) more than once. But after Jesus sanctified me, it took almost a year... but one day I looked in the mirror and saw a friend instead of an enemy. I cried like a little baby. He not only gave me peace with Him, but He gave me peace with myself as well. Within a couple of months after I entered His Rest, I was completely off all my antidepressants and have never needed one since. Sometimes, when I'm worshipping the Lord, I look at the changes He's wrought, and all I can do is lay on my face on the floor and bawl and cry, "Just look what You've DONE, Lord!!!" I still remember what I used to be like, and I see the person He has made me and I am in total awe at what He has done. I never have a cloudy day any more, even when it's pouring rain. I love Him so much.

There is so much more that I could write, about the things the Lord has taught me since that night: things like why so many who leave the homosexual lifestyle often return to it, what sin really is, the difference between religion and relationship with Jesus, the vital necessity of absolute surrender, why the promises of God are often not fulfilled in our lives and what to do about it, and so much more, but time and space do not allow me to go into all that here. But I DO want to assure the reader that there really IS victory over the power of sin in our lives, and it is found when we embrace the work of the cross of Jesus Christ in our lives and become totally dependent on Him.

How I praise Him for the LIFE and JOY and PEACE and HOPE that He continually pours out on me and for the blessings of His provision and protection.

Sealed Evermore In His Own Great Love and Peace;

Jan Holmes Jacobs

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