

JIM FREED'S BIOGRAPHY / TESTIMONY

My name is Jim Freed. I was born in Abington Pa. in 1950, the eldest of four boys, and son of a sheet metal mechanic. I attended a Presbyterian Church, where I was dropped off regularly by my parents with my numbered collection envelope, on Sunday morning. When I missed a week, I was missed. In fact, they immediately seemed to want to find out where my numbered envelope was from the week before. My fondest thought of God and the Bible was my grandmother reading hers' at six in the morning, while drinking her coffee. She had been given to much beer drinking during the great depression, I heard tell, and she fondly referred to it as poor man's champagne. But those days were over now, since God had made her different.

My family seemed normal to me, although that sense of normalcy would disappear in my later teens. Looking back, I realize that alcoholism and adultery were the factors that lead to my parents' divorce, and the strokes that would leave my father disabled for the last twenty five years of his life. When it all came undone, I took to drinking because that is what every working man did, including my dad. I joined the US Naval Air Force to try to find some sanity. It didn't work.

Instead I found the drug culture in San Francisco and served my country as an air crewman over Viet Nam. These were the sixties, and the drug culture that came with it was something to believe in, or so I thought. My drinking increased to extreme proportions, although I never remember drinking without the intention of getting drunk. I thought that getting married might help. I was wrong. Next I tried the geographical cure, driving my wife and daughter to Colorado in the Sunshine truck (a sky blue 58 Ford panel truck with a big yellow sunshine painted on the side). The insanity continued, as our family lived in the mountains in mud huts, adobe cabins and even a teepee for a spell. We had six children by 1990, when we decided to head back east. Oh yeah, there was also an eight year nightmare involvement with the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, better known as Jehovah's Witnesses. By the time I was finished with those boys, I was furious with religion and God, and full of rage over the offenses committed against my family.

Making our way across country, we had left all of our worldly possessions, except those that we could fit in our van, and in my 71 Chevy pickup. Life was unraveling fast, as I was addicted to alcohol and pain medication and moving full speed ahead.

We wound up living in a campsite, until we could find a home. It was on the doorstep of that house, on October 18, 1990 that our world would change. With tears in her eyes, my precious wife Carol Ann, who had put up with far more than any one woman should, said to me "Jim, I can't live like this anymore." After all that she had endured for seventeen years, I told her that she wouldn't have to and that I was going to do whatever I had to do to stop. I truly believe that she "overcame evil with good." By the grace of God I have not touched a drink or a drug since that day.

It wasn't easy mind you, because I was angry at God, so angry that when she got saved she was afraid to tell me. You see that when I went to AA she went to a neighborhood bible study, where her and her Christian friends prayed me into the kingdom. On July 24, 1992 after hearing a message by Reverend Billy Graham, I prayed to receive Jesus Christ as my Savior. Life has never been the same since that moment. God has used my life to impact many other lives that were as catastrophic mine and for that I am eternally grateful. To God be the Glory great things He has done!