

Testimony of Tad Kruse: **Be Responsible With the Little, and *He Will Give You More***

I grew up here in Cowlitz County, Washington. I was born into a good home, but tragedy took things for a turn. My brother, who was enlisted in the navy, was killed in Vietnam in 1968 when I was seven years old. As a result, my father began drinking heavily. He was an angry drunk and I remember feeling scared.

The first thing I ever drank was a bottle of vodka when I was eleven years old. My father had slid it under their seat, and I just grabbed it and poured some in my soda cup. My parents, sitting up front, never even noticed, and I remember thinking, "Wow, this feels pretty good."

From this point on my use just escalated. I began stealing medication out of medicine cabinets, such as valium and sleeping pills. By the time I was seventeen I was hooked on narcotic pain medication.

From that point on things just spiraled downward. Criminal activity began, with a lot of stealing to support my habit. By the time I was in my early twenties I was into heroin. I discovered that it was both cheaper and more effective than pharmaceutical opiates.

I ended up getting arrested by Multnomah County Narcotics for delivery of heroin and ultimately was sent to prison at Oregon State Penitentiary. After my time served there my behavior just stayed the same. The heroin abuse continued and I ended up getting even more charges in Washington State.

At this point I could not, in and of myself, get out of the downward spiral I was in. I couldn't have stopped if I had wanted to. (And I did try many times.) I completed several different treatment programs: in-patient treatment, out-patient-treatment, AA meeting, NA meetings, seemingly never-ending. All to no avail.

This entire time I knew that God existed and knew of Jesus. I believed all of my life in a heaven and hell. I knew that I was an addict, and had had given up on being able to change my lifestyle, thinking I would die using. I remember praying in hopes of saving my soul, and asking that when I died that He wouldn't send me to hell: "Lord, you have to do something, because I can't."

It wasn't more than a couple days after I prayed this prayer that I first heard about Mountain Ministries. At that time the program was only offered to men. Upon entering the program, I came with the understanding that I had no other chance.

Once here, God gave me a new lease on life, and I sensed it. Out of love and awe for what He had done for me, I promised on that day that I would obey and serve him to the best of my ability. This hasn't stopped yet.

The Bible says, "but seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matthew 6:33)." As I surrendering my life to Him and continued to remain I became increasingly more involved in the ministry. I began working at the Victory Center in Kelso and by 6 months into my program had become the director. Shortly thereafter, God revealed His vision for the program to include women. This eventually expanded into a women's and children's discipleship program. I am now the director of this program; currently we have 30-35 (it varies) women and children on site. God has also added on to me a wife that adores Christ and two beautiful young daughters.

One scripture that stands out to me now is to be faithful in the little and He will do much. If you have a willing heart and are willing to be obedient, there is much to be done in His kingdom. He will just keep adding to you more and more. At that point, it doesn't matter who you are or where you came from; God will use you.

-Tad Kruse, April 2010