

## **David Murray.....Testimony**

I was born in the Gorbals, a very poor area of Glasgow in the summer of 1953. My father was a hard working shipbuilder and as there were three children, my mother was a housewife. The Gorbals at that time was rat infested and the tenements were falling down, so we moved to the *new 'tenements'* which at that time were the biggest housing project in Europe, Castlemilk. It was great we had an inside toilet, a bath and a small garden, but no shops, no swimming pool no anything, but we had lots of fields and open spaces to play football in.

I supported Celtic because I went to a catholic school. I had a very happy childhood, and we never wanted for anything, we always had good shoes and good clothing. I worked hard at school but failed my eleven plus, so when I went to the secondary I found myself at the bottom of the achievers pile and for the next three years we were neglected by the teachers and the school. So I left school at fifteen and started work straight away and have been working ever since.

I tasted my first beer when went to the pub on a Friday after work with my work mates. I was a painter and decorator for three years before I joined the Army. I joined the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in April 1972. I loved the Army, and after being 'best recruit' at the depot I decided I would stay in the Army for the whole of the twenty two year engagement. I took part in three tours of Northern Ireland, and went to France, Cyprus and Germany.

I started drinking quiet heavily, at weekends and in the barracks, and when I had a lot to drink I would always want to fight and do really stupid things. While I was on four days leave during one of the tours of Ireland I met a woman who lived just up the road from me in Castlemilk. I was twenty and she was twenty two, she had a three year old son and she lived with her mother. I was a virgin and she, well let me put it this way, she knew where her power lay, and before long I only ever had one thing on my mind and she used that to manipulate me.

We were married on August 1974 while I was on leave before we were due to be posted to Germany, and on my wedding night I went into the bathroom and swallowed some tablets, I think what saved me was the fact that I washed them down with a bottle of champagne someone gave us and I brought the whole lot up a few minutes later. One month later I was in Germany and because I had just got married there was no army houses available, it didn't matter because my new wife wrote me a letter telling me she didn't want to be an army wife she wanted to stay with her mother and I should get out of the army as soon as possible. This was a blow to me, I loved the army and I planned to stay as long as possible, but I couldn't see a way around the problem so I left the army in April 1975.

As soon as I left the army I joined the Parachute Regiment TA in Glasgow, and at the same time I got a job in the shipyards in Govan. The following year we had a baby girl Tracy, and our own council house in Castlemilk, and I was only twenty three. I think it was all too much for me because after a while I started drinking more and more at the weekends, and with the drinking I started chasing women especially at the weekends with the TA. It didn't take me very long to become a real lying two faced drunk of a father and husband. I was two different people, in the house I think I was a normal guy but outside I was different, I became a thief a liar a cheat fighting in and outside pubs, not the way my parents had brought me up in fact the very opposite, at one stage in my life I hardly knew myself, and I just got worse and worse.

I don't want to put any blame for my behaviour onto anyone but since I got married I always felt as if I had been trapped, I never loved my wife and always knew it wasn't going to last, but it went on and on. My father died in 1985 after a long illness with cancer, and I think that triggered something in me, I left my job in the ship yards and I got a job as a truck driver with a wine and spirit company in Glasgow. That is when I met Kay, and I knew from the first minute that I loved her, I don't think I loved anyone before Kay, but I was married and loved my children and they were happy and I was ill with worry as to how all this would resolve itself, so after some time and to my shame I left the family home, I thought it was the best way for me but I made everyone else very unhappy, I thought I could live my life away from them but at the same time still see my children at any time but it didn't work out that way.

It was very strange, I was very happy with Kay and very unhappy separated from my children, it didn't take long before they wanted nothing to do with me altogether. Some time later and after an operation we had Linda, I was still in the TA. And drinking heavily at the weekends, suddenly Kay met someone from the Salvation Army, and they invited her to a meeting, and she went and after a while she came in one night and told me she had become a Christian, well at that time I thought everybody was a Christian. I immediately started to see a change in Kay she looked and acted happier than before and started going to all the meetings and she joined the band and songsters, and she really threw herself into it in a big way. Kay would invite her Christian friends up to the house for bible study and I would run upstairs when they came into the house.

Then I hurt Kay very badly, and I deserved to be thrown out of the house, but instead she said that she forgave me, but I didn't feel as if I had been let off the hook. I knew her reaction was something to do with her being a Christian, and it shook me a bit, I deserved to be punished but I was forgiven. A short time after that I was hill walking with my old army mates up on the Three Sisters a range of mountains across from Ben Nevis, it was a warm sunny day, half way up and right out of the blue I started to recall all the rotten things I had done in my life, the drinking, the women, the fighting, the stealing, the lying, and I really hated myself, I knew I was a dirty rat bag, I always knew it, all the stupid things I ever did came flooding into my mind and I really did hate myself. It seemed all my guilty life came to a head. That night we went to the pub as usual but instead of

getting drunk I phoned Kay and told her what had happened to me, I told her I would go with her to the Salvation Army meeting on the Sunday.

So I came home the next night and put my suit on and went to the meeting with her and Linda, I sat through the meeting in a daze, the major taking the meeting that night was a guy called Victor Ross, and he was talking about two paths the broad path and the narrow path. He said the broad path is where most people are and this path if we stayed on it would eventually lead us to eternal separation from God, and the narrow path is where Jesus is and his path would lead us to Jesus who loves us and died for us. I had never heard this before, but I knew I was on the wrong path in fact I always knew I was on the wrong path, and after the major had finished speaking he asked if there was anyone in the meeting who was on the broad path and would like to come to the narrow path where Jesus was, and he invited people to come to the front of the platform, without any hesitation I jumped up and went to the front, to tell the truth I had no idea what I was supposed to do there all I wanted was to get off that broad path, the major came down and spoke with me and told me all I had to do was say sorry to God for all the wrong I had done in my life and turn from my way of living and come on to the narrow path were with the help of Jesus I would become a new man. That night I became a Christian, that night my life changed.

I started going to the Salvation Army, and very soon I was going round the pubs not to drink or get drunk but to tell the people about Jesus. I would sing the Old Rugged Cross, in the pubs and clubs of Port Glasgow, telling the men in the pubs how I was a changed man and I know was following the way of Jesus. Soon the wee Mission Halls in Greenock would get me along to speak and sing along with Kay and Linda, I started to sell The War Cry, the Salvation Army paper in town and had some great opportunities telling the local folks about Jesus. God moved me from the Salvation Army to the Baptist Church in Gourock, were I met Derek Watt who was leading the Prison Fellowship in Greenock he asked me if I would join the team, after prayer I said yes, so I started going into the prison to talk and to listen to the young men. I visited the prison on a Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday, and I did that work for seven years.

When the Gulf War started I suddenly felt in my spirit that God wanted me to go and tell the young soldiers in the Army about Jesus, so I contacted SASRA, Soldiers and Airman Scripture Readers Association, Kay and I went to Aldershot for the interview and I had to sit a bible exam, I passed the exam with one mark, and they accepted me into full time work. We came home and sold our house, I left my job, and now I am in Edinburgh Garrison spreading the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This has all been the work of God I know this to be true, and real, God has been with us all through this journey, I want to stay close to him all the days of my life.

GOD BLESS.