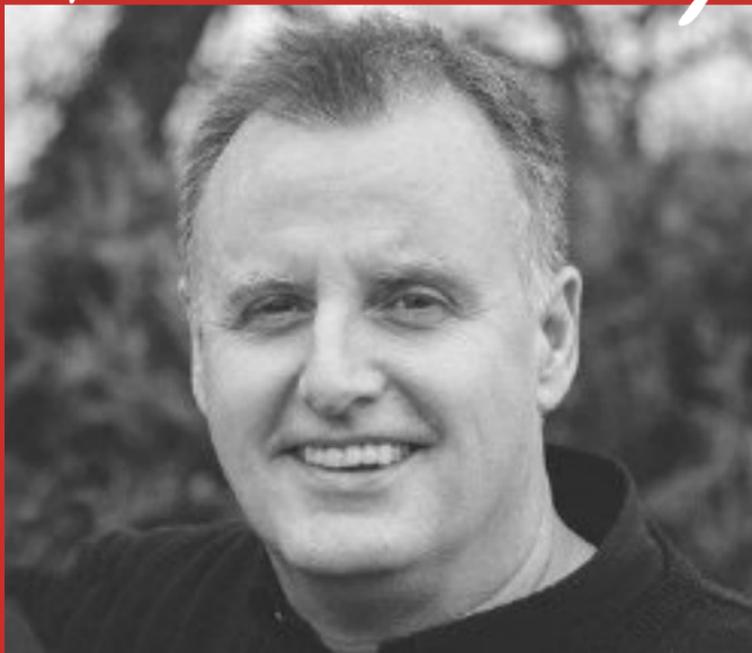


# Gordon's Story





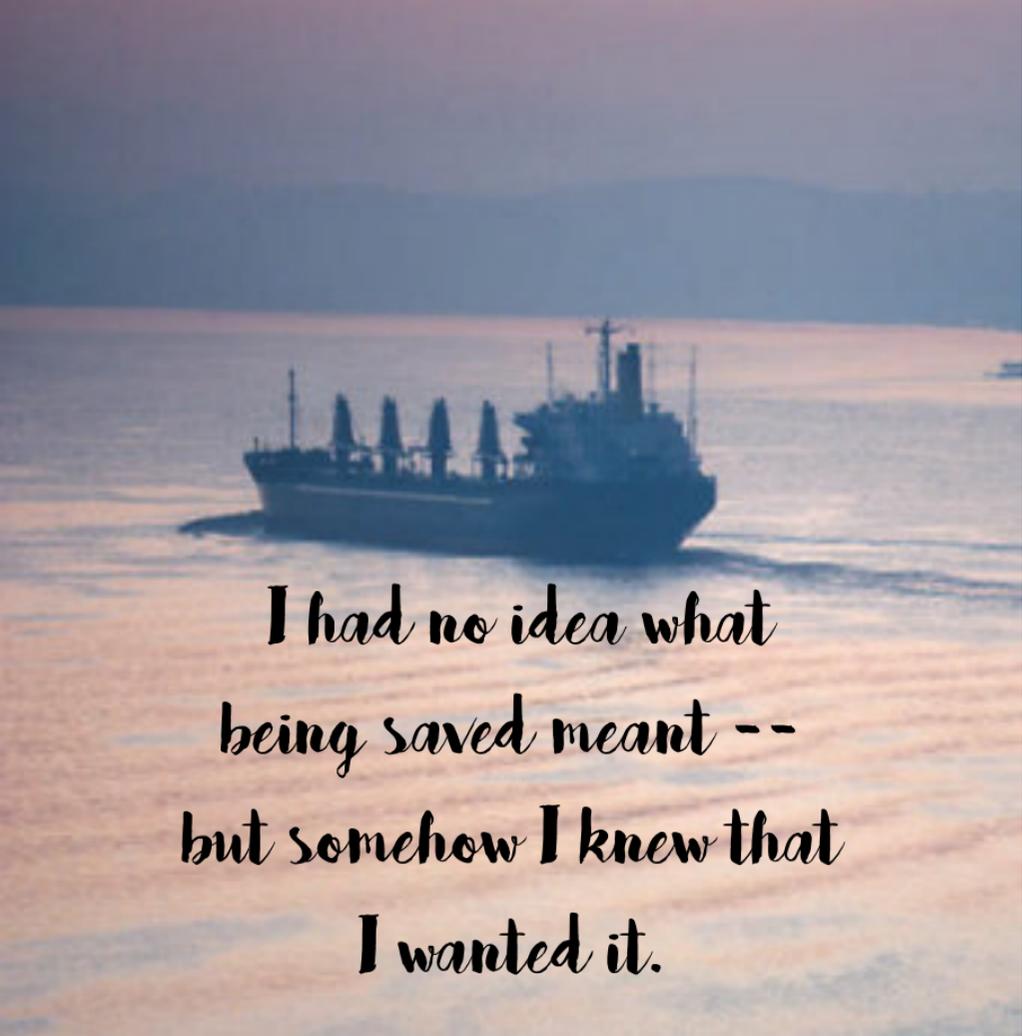
I was born and raised outside Glasgow in Scotland. My childhood in the 1960's and 70's was fairly uneventful. Faith was seldom mentioned in our home, perhaps because my mother was a Roman Catholic and my father a Presbyterian, and Glasgow was at that time a sectarian city. My brother and I were well looked after and loved – always food on the table, 'runs' in the car at the weekend and family holidays.

My father came from a large family, five brothers and two sisters, and toward the end of my primary school years it seemed to me that many of my uncles and aunts became sick and died. As one after another, year on year, many died prematurely (two while still in their 40's), I began to feel insecure and morbid, which wasn't helped by my dad's insistence that he'd be next! A sense of dread began to grow in me.

When I was around 14 years of age the sudden realisation of my own mortality produced in me a rising anxiety and sense of panic. I resolved not to think about it, or to mention it, to anyone. Shortly thereafter I began to drink in the park with school friends, and I felt relaxed from the background nervousness. It was as if I'd found the cure to my problems.

Almost from the start alcohol 'took' me differently than the other lads, and seemed to set up in me the desire to have more and more. This continued as I left school and went to work, although it remained largely unnoticed, amid the prevailing drinking culture at that time.

When I was 17 years old I got my then girlfriend pregnant. We married and she gave birth to our daughter Karen. For a while all went well enough. I had a job and

A large cargo ship is seen from a distance, sailing on the ocean. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The ship is dark against the lighter water and sky.

*I had no idea what  
being saved meant --  
but somehow I knew that  
I wanted it.*

we had a decent place to live, but I would drink as often as time and finances allowed. By the time I was 21 we had two daughters and our marriage was rapidly failing. Needless to say my drinking, which had worsened over time, added to the tension and friction within our home. All through my marriage, as it became more toxic, the deaths in my family circle continued, and a sense of unreality and impending doom grew steadily, until eventually my father also died. I had some kind of breakdown or brainstorm after my father died. I quit my job, left my wife and family and began to drink all the time. My mother called the doctor and I was put on anti-depressants and referred to a psychiatrist, but, since I continued to drink unabated, nothing helped and nothing changed.

I left Scotland and went to England, Canada and eventually

settled on the Isle of Man, where my brother had moved earlier. On the island my drinking, and by now my drug taking, was my lifestyle. It was a daily and nightly routine and the only way I felt I could get through life. I cared for no one and nothing. I didn't see my family for over a year, and when I did see them, it caused upset and concern. My life drifted on that way for another year. I had become and out and out alcoholic and drug addict, using speed, cocaine and heroin.

In 1985 I was smoking pot and drinking cans of beer in someone's flat, I don't even remember where. An acquaintance came in and said, "Did you hear about John P.? He's got saved!" I had no idea what being saved meant -- but somehow I knew that I wanted it. I was sick and tired of the life I was living, even though some would have said I had made it. I was exhausted, depressed and

ashamed. I made a point of finding out where John got saved and discovered it was at an Elim Church on Park Road.

I persuaded a couple of mates to come with me to the church. I experienced the presence of God and touch of the Holy Spirit more or less instantly. In a few weeks I braved asking God into my life in Jesus' name. I was baptised in water and then more dramatically in the Holy Spirit of God. At that time amazing words of knowledge and answers to prayer were happening regularly. I got a job and girlfriend then was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer of the bladder. The consultant told me it 'didn't look good', but I told him not to worry that God would heal me. Just a few months later that same doctor was amazed to be giving me the 'all clear'. I have remained all clear for over 30 years. Despite the miraculous things that happened over the

next couple of years attending the church, I drifted back into my old world, little by little. When I went to sea, hard drinking, drug-taking workmates surrounded me, and I was soon back in the thick of it. I spent years working all over the world, getting into scrapes and taking insane risks, but it seemed that God still had his hand on me.

I went to Canada and then to Yorkshire, and while I was living there I got a job working on the ferries travelling to and from the Isle of Man. In a sense I had come full circle, but I remained indistinguishable from any worldly person, except for one area. If conversation ever came around to religion, and if anyone began to run God down, I had to insist that Jesus was real and alive. I wasn't in any way a decent witness, but I did remember all that he had done for me, and I couldn't deny my Saviour and my King. I stopped drinking for 4 years while living in

*I resolved to pray until something did happen, and something did. I sensed God bringing to my memory all the wonderful things he had done for me.*

Yorkshire, but resumed when I moved back to the Isle of Man (old haunts and old friends). But things weren't the same. Life didn't satisfy and I wasn't happy at all. Nevertheless life dragged on but my choices were beginning to have a drastic affect upon me.

One morning I went to work with a hangover, indeed it was more than a hangover; it was the beginning of the disintegration of all that I was. I sneaked off to an area of the ship where there were showers

and toilets. I went into a cubicle and prayed. I prayed for about an hour, tears running down my face, asking God to take my hangover away with all the physical, emotional and mental symptoms that went with it. I also asked him to take away the lifestyle I had, I asked him to take it all away. After my hour of prayer I felt worse! Nothing had changed, except my hope began to fade as well. I had to show my face at work, so I returned to the control room and to my colleagues. I was

going to pieces and I had the whole day stretching out before me.

I returned to the locker room and prayed for another hour, still no change. I resolved to pray until something did happen, and something did. I sensed God bringing to my memory all the wonderful things he had done for me. I felt he was trying to impress on me that he was real. I prayed, 'Lord I know you are real, its all my fault, I'm so sorry, I deserve the way I feel, but I'd rather you take me home than me going on living like this.' At that moment it was as if a tap was opened on my heel and all the rubbish drained away. At the same time it was as if a cork had been removed from the top of my head and warm oil poured in. By now my tears were really streaming. But now the tears were not for me, they were in awe and wonder and appreciation of God's grace.

I stopped short of making any promises to God that I couldn't keep, but I prayed saying, "Lord with your help I'll never drink or take drugs again". As I went back to the control room I prayed one more prayer, "Lord with your help I'll tell others where to find love, grace and power to overcome". I had no idea what that would look like.

I went back to the church where I had found faith in God and been baptised all those years before, to some familiar faces and some new friends. I didn't drink and I had stopped smoking as well, but I felt the need for someone I could relate to in my recovery, someone who'd been there. I prayed, "Lord, in a church of over a hundred souls, there must be somebody who would understand, conversationally and circumstantially, please lead me to that person". On the next Sunday I went to church and Dewi Lloyd Humphrey was there doing a deputation on

*"Lord with your help I'll  
tell others where to find  
love, grace and power to  
overcome"*



behalf of the Stauros Foundation. We chatted after the service and I knew God had sent this man into my life. This was about three months after my prayer on the ship. That next Thursday I attended the Stauros meeting for the first time back in 2004. Soon after that I worked alongside Dewi for 18 months as a volunteer in Stauros, and when he left the island, with some other people, we kept the Stauros meeting going. Eventually I left my work on the ferries to go full time for Stauros Isle of Man back in 2009 and I have never doubted God's hand in all of it, nor regretted moving into the work.

If you have been touched by reading this testimony, and wish to know Christ, whom Gordon has been speaking of, you may begin by praying a prayer such as this,

Dear Lord, I feel as though my life is without hope: I have come to accept that my future holds no

joy for me. I feel guilty at the thought of the life I have lived so far, and I feel hopeless. But I believe Jesus holds the key to my life. I believe that he can set me free from my addiction and from my sin. I want to know Jesus for real. So Lord please reveal yourself to me. Please forgive me for all the sins I have committed and for the times I have done things that break your rules. Please cleanse my heart from all my sin and save my life. Help me to come alive in Christ and please send the Spirit of Christ to live in me from this moment on and for the rest of my life. Lord, I know you have something better for my life; you have a plan and purpose for me. I surrender myself to you now and ask you to take control of my life. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen

*Deception to Truth*





Want to know more?  
Please contact us:

Stauros Foundation, 29 Straidhavern Road  
Nutts Corner, Crumlin, BT29 4SN

Tel: 028 9082 5058

Email: [info@stauros.com](mailto:info@stauros.com)

[www.stauros.com](http://www.stauros.com)