

# Maggie's Story





My name is Margaret Wallace. I am from East Belfast. Addiction was always a part of my upbringing. Many of my family members have been damaged and broken by alcohol and drugs.

My mum and dad had their own struggles with alcohol. But when I was around 10 years old my mum gave her life to God. My dad continued to drink alcoholically for a further 12 years then he too got saved. From the day my mum got saved our family life began to change. My mum started taking both me and my younger brother to Sunday school and different kids meetings in the church. I come from a big family and have lots of cousins we are a close family, and all grew up

together. Our cousins are more like our brothers and sisters. At the age of 13 I had my first drink of alcohol and by the time I was in my late teens drink and drugs were my main priority. I thought I'm only messing about with my friends at the weekends I'm not doing any harm, but realistically it was slowly taking over my life. I met my husband Ricky when I was 17 and he was just like me he loved a drink and he would have taken drugs as well so that became the basis of our relationship. When I turned 18 Ricky and I got a house together, but our lives revolved around our addiction. We would have worked all week and drank all weekend. We would have started drinking on a Friday and not finished till a Sunday then we would suffer a

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hangover the rest of the week, then come the weekend the cycle would begin again. I truly thought that's what life was all about - all my friends drank, most of my family apart from my mum drank, so I thought what I was doing was normal. Ricky and I got married in 2005 but by this stage we would have both been addicted to cocaine as well as alcohol. Again, I never thought any of this was a problem. I thought I was just enjoying myself even though most weekends were chaotic. We fought with each other and everyone else. We didn't trust one another and by this stage we were both drinking and taking drugs most nights.

We had our first daughter in 2006. Having our first child was a big change for me. I had

went from having all this freedom to having this little person who totally depended on me. I could no longer sleep when I wanted or go out when I wanted or to drink and take drugs when I wanted. Now not only was I making a mess of my life, but I was also making a mess of my daughter's life as well. It was hard for me to accept that I had responsibilities. Two years after having our first daughter we had our second daughter. My mum would have looked after the girls for me at the weekends so that I could have a break, but once the kids were gone this was just my freedom to get drunk and party.

I remember my mum and her friend Janet bringing the girls back to me on a Sunday morning before they went to

church, and as usual I was suffering with a hangover. My mum and Janet came in and I remember thinking how clean they were and how they seemed to have this peace about them. This really made me jealous to be honest I was lying there a mess from the night before. I had two beautiful daughters to bring up and I really wasn't fit for it. I knew about God as both my mum and dad were Christians and as I mentioned earlier I had gone to Sunday school and children's meetings when I was younger. I can remember the change that God had made in my dad's life. I was too young to remember my mum before she was saved but I remember going to see my dad get baptised and was so shocked at him standing up in front of a whole church full

of people and telling them all about how God had changed his life. Before my dad got saved he was quiet and would hardly speak to anyone, so I could see how much God had changed him.

The struggle I had with becoming a Christian was that I didn't think I was good enough. How could I come to God in the mess that I was in? My life was filled with drink, drugs, guilt, depression and fear! The list could go on, but the bottom line was my life was filled with sin! I had spoke to my doctor and had gone for counselling, but nothing seemed to bring me peace. My mum and dad knew I had been feeling down but they really didn't know the half of it. Thankfully, they had no idea about my drug addiction. My

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mum suggested that I speak to Janet who worked for Stauros at the time about how I was feeling, in my heart I knew that I had to give my life to God because nothing else was going to work. I had tried it all and I just kept going back to my old ways. Every weekend I would have been dying and thought I'm never drinking again but then by the

Tuesday I would have started to recover a bit and thought I'll maybe have a wee glass of wine and that would have been me back on it again. I met with Janet and she shared with me about how God had healed her she explained how God was pursuing after me and how I didn't need to have it all together I could come to God

in the mess that I was in and he would sort out the rest. That was the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2010, that was the day I gave my life to Jesus. From that day I was totally healed. My addiction to alcohol and drugs was gone. I had no more depression. God just totally transformed me from the inside out. I wish I could say all my troubles were gone but I can't. Ricky carried on drinking and our marriage broke up. We were separated for about 6 or 7 months and this was a really hard time for all of us. It was the hardest thing to do to take my girls away from their dad, but I really felt I had no choice.

Through the hardest days and in my darkest nights God really helped me. I can look back now and see how God

totally carried me through. He was with me when I felt lonely and overwhelmed. He totally comforted me. Then thankfully Ricky gave his life to Jesus, too. Now we could, with God's help, start to rebuild our marriage. Our family is now totally transformed. I'm so thankful that our girls now live in a home where there is no drink or drugs where they are our main priority where they can feel loved, wanted, and accepted. I pray that now the chain is broken, and our addiction is gone that our children will choose a different path. So, because of God and only Him our lives have been transformed. We are filled with grace and hope. Hope of a God who loves us and sent his only son to die for us. I just want to say that our lives are far from perfect



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we still have problems to deal with, but the difference is we face them with God by our side. It took me 30 years to find hope my only regret is that I didn't do it sooner.

If you have been touched by reading this testimony, and wish to know Christ, whom Maggie 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

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