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After the birth of my second child, life just didn't seem to hold any lasting joy anymore. With all the weight I gained in my pregnancy, my spouse's increased work hours, and all the attention and time invested in my little ones, I felt like I didn't have an identity any more. Not only that, but I felt alone. The loneliness grew. I thought my spouse was to blame, but he wasn't. There was a huge void filling up in my life, and it was taking over. I couldn't

figure it out. This beautiful family God blessed me with...where was my joy? Where was my happiness? Where was my peace?

Things got really bad. I left my husband and moved back home. But home found no comfort for my mind or my situation. I became despondent and hopeless, and then lost my job because of an illness. It took years to figure out that illness. In the meantime, that illness paired itself with severe hopelessness, anxiety, sleeplessness, pain, and despair. I became fearful for my children, when you can't see your way out, sometimes you think everyone being gone is the solution.

I was lost, hurting, desperate. I moved back with my husband but I was so miserable when I moved to Florida, misery was comfortable...happiness and joy had been fleeting. I was afraid of trying to attain it because life experience had showed me that happiness and joy were fleeting. That was a LIE! I am so glad that when I was yet a sinner, HE saw me and loved me in spite of all my missteps in life that had brought me to this point.

Christ's birth, death and resurrection had already paid the price for me to live free, but I had to take steps to walk across that bridge, the one the cross made possible between me and God. He sovereignly placed me across the street from my pastors.

They reached out to me, they drew me in, and they led me to a place where I came to know the Lord Jesus Christ for myself. Through their love and patience, God freed me up from the prison I was in. It was this love and kindness that drew me in, that let me know I had found a house of refuge, and that I was safe in His arms. Under this leadership have I grown and come to know who God is, why He loves me no matter what, and that I have a right as His child to every good and perfect thing He has for my life. Today I live free from those chains that had me bound! I've been with my pastors now for 20 years!

I owe Him everything, thank you Lord for seeing fit to forgive a sinner like me and set me free, hallelujah! He not only freed me, but He increased in me and raised me up to where I can stand! Today I stand free of that illness, free of hopelessness, free of anxiety, free from sleeplessness, free from pain, free from despair, and definitely free from misery! Glory to God!!! His love is real, HE is real!

