



# See The Rainbow On The Wilderness Road

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## **From Good Times to a Deep Valley**

I got married at a very young age. When I was in my early twenties, I had been successfully offered a flat under the Home Ownership Scheme. When our family walked into the new house and looked out of the window, we saw an invincible sea view, and everything was so amazing!

But happy moments did not last long. My husband started being addicted to alcohol and treated me with violence whenever he was drunk every night. I called the police many times for help, but it still couldn't stop him from using violence. He did not take my advice to receive counselling, and blamed me instead. At that time, I just believed in Jesus and I tried to be patient with my husband, hoping that he would change, and things could get back on track.

However, one day when my husband was punching and kicking me, my primary school son suddenly picked up a kitchen knife and rushed out to the living room to stop his dad. I was stunned! At that moment, I realized that the family could not continue in this way. Really I didn't want to lose the flat, but I was more worried that my children would be badly affected by their father's behaviour, so I decided to separate from my husband and took the two children away from their comfortable home.

I rented a small flat with my two children. At that time, I needed to work, take care of children and do all the housework on my own. So I could not have much time to think about what had happened and I didn't know why my life was made in such a poor way. At night, I often could not help crying and I prayed to the Lord: If everything had been prepared by you, I would remain silent.

After our separation, a former neighbor told me that my husband often invited women and friends to home to drink and have fun. He didn't change but even got worse. So after separation for a year, I decided to divorce but we both could not reach a consensus through mediation. We finally went to the Family Court, and we were told to sell the flat and share the benefit equally between us. However, my husband repeatedly refused to do so by using the excuse that the price wasn't good enough. He also refused to pay the maintenance and it led me and my children to poverty. In addition, our divorce had made the children become extremely insecure, and their academic performance had dropped a lot too. At first, when I left with my children, I hoped that they would grow up in a healthier environment but it turned out to be a far more difficult journey than I thought.

### **Miracles in trouble**

During those days, I didn't know how to face the reality and explain to people why I was divorced, why I had become a single parent, what happened to my husband, why life had become like that and some suicidal thoughts came to my mind. Fortunately, when I was in my deepest frustration, an idea came up to my mind and it saved me from my despair – I remembered the church children and I wanted mine to understand Jesus' love. All of a sudden, I realized, "Do my children also need someone to tell them about God's love?"

So I said to myself, "I can't kill my children's future !" I needed to go back to my full role as their mother and also their father. I also needed to be their role model, so I would be set free from the sorrow of my past too!

### **Forgive, relieve and walk out of 'the valley'**

However, a refreshed heart didn't mean that my pain would leave me soon. Not long after my divorce, I faced a big deficit because the rent raised much. I appealed to the court to have my flat back and the court had ordered my ex-husband to move out. Then I borrowed some money from my relatives to renovate the flat and my children moved back there with me.

My ex-husband was very dissatisfied with the verdict, and always came to threaten us for his compensation. Whenever he came, the bad memories of his previous violence came back too and I needed to call the police to settle this disturbance. As such, he kept this up for more than a year, and then he suddenly didn't show up again. Soon afterwards, I received a notice from the social worker. I learned that he was ill, and very ill indeed. I hesitated whether to visit him or not but I didn't want to. Another piece of news came and I was told that he passed away.

After the death of my ex-husband, troubles followed. People started coming to us and asked us to pay for his debts. Totally, my ex-husband was in debt up to \$100,000 which was really an unaffordable amount to me. Actually, I had no legal responsibility to do anything for this but my ex-husband was in debt to some of our relatives and I did not want my children to be looked down upon by them and affected by the past. That's why I settled the debt and handled the trouble caused by my ex-husband. To me, my life in the previous few years was heavy-laden. By then, after his death, I tried hard to put down the charges against him because I did not want my children and I to live in bitterness.

At the funeral, the pastor brought us a comforting message. It turned out that my ex-husband had previously confessed his fault to God and repented, but he did not have the chance to express his apology to us.

## God's grace led me through the wilderness

Today I have paid off all the debts. My children have grown up. My daughter has become an outreach social worker. My son has been a primary school teacher. He married an Australian lady three years ago. By God's grace, a baby boy, energetic and cute, was born to them this year.

Jesus took my sin on the Cross and taught us: "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing." (1 Peter 3:9-10)

Life is like this. Others will let us down, and we will let others down too even though we are Christians. I used to bear all the condemnation and be treated badly and it is not easy for me "not to repay evil for evil". However, I am no longer angry because of the example of Jesus Christ to forgive sinners and His forgiveness on me. The brokenness has taken too much of my life. I should not waste even more time on any hatred. My life began with a commitment but went on with a series of difficulties. My decision to forgive left no more regrets in my life, and I am able to have my life story full of the grace and glory of my Lord. Today I will say that everything starts with God's mercy, and He grants us His grace because God knows who we are. Psalm 103: 14 says, "For He knows how we are formed, He remembers that we are dust." God has mercy on us, for we are nothing but dust. God used all kinds of difficulties to train me into a different little woman. If I haven't experienced such kinds of challenges like the wind and rain, how can I see a rainbow?

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