

Elizabeth Friedlin was at the end of her rope. She had no idea how to get out of the situation she was in. Bill collectors kept calling, her marriage was in trouble, her kids were becoming rebellious, and because of the stress she was dealing with, she was always anxious. She never seemed to know what to do how to handle her situation. Elizabeth had been overwhelmed. Her husband, Bill, and her constantly fought about everything. There was no trust and as it seemed, no love, between the two. Their 17 year-old daughter, Tiffany, was in a relationship with a guy they didn't approve of. He had a rap sheet "a mile long". He had been in trouble with the law since he was 12. In the past, he had been in juvenile hall for assault and battery. It also doesn't help that they have heard things about those he associates with, or rather. They believed that you are by the company you keep, so they did not like him at all and felt he was no good for their daughter. What Elizabeth and Bill didn't seem to realize is that Tiffany rebelled was because of her parents' in-fighting. To make things worse, her 15 year-old brother London rather hung out with his friends and avoided his parents.

Then one day she hears a knock on her door. It was Mrs. Winders, the old widow from across the street. "Hello, Lizzie." "May I come in, dear?" "Yes, Mrs. Winders, come in." Mrs. Winders was a short, petite elderly woman of about 85 years old. She had a sweet face, wore thin-rimmed glasses, and has fluffy gray hair. "Yes, Ma'am, come in. Did someone bring you?" Mrs Winders answered, "My daughter and grandchildren are going to the store to buy a few things and I told her I wanted to be at your house to discuss an important matter with you." Mrs. Winders walked in. She wanted to tell her about the rash of recent robberies occurring in the neighborhood. She began to nod, "It is terrible what has been going on lately. No one is safe in their own homes anymore. I remember when we didn't hear about all of these robberies. People believed in God more back then, too. Nowadays, people are talking about taking God out of the schools and taking the Ten Commandments out of courthouses. It is a shame, I tell you. It is a shame." After she finished talking, Mrs. Winders noticed the expression on Elizabeth's face and asked her what was wrong. Elizabeth responded, "I have been overwhelmed." Elizabeth was in such despair that her eyes began to well up with tears. "There is too much going on." Elizabeth is in the house alone before Mrs. Winders stopped by. "Bill and I are not getting along, Tiffany is seeing this boy that just isn't right for her, and London has been avoiding us lately. There is no hope in sight. I ask God to help, but he doesn't answer me."

As Elizabeth begins to cry, Mrs. Winders provided the shoulder to cry on that she needed. "Elizabeth, God hears you. He knows what is going on." Elizabeth has doubts about what is going on. "Then how come everything is so wrong in my home?" Mrs. Winders answers her questions the best way she knew how. "Lizzie, do you have a Bible somewhere?" Elizabeth was quite surprised that she would ask her this, especially since she hasn't read the large white Family Bible that was passed down to her after her mother died. "I'll get it." Elizabeth gets the dusty Family Bible she kept stored in the study next to the living room. The fact that she was holding the Bible made her nervous. Her anxiety began to grow once she walked closer to where Mrs. Winders was sitting. "I'm back. Here you go, Mrs. Winders. I hope it's not too heavy for you." After a brief laugh, Mrs Winders responded, "Yes, dear, it is a little heavy."

“Why don’t I hold it for you?” Mrs. Winders have noticed that Lizzie looked nervous. “Lizzie, what’s the matter?” Elizabeth began to confess, “I admit that I have not been reading the Bible as much. I am not the religious type. The reason why is because I don’t have such a strong faith in God is because of my mother’s death, things seem to have changed, and not for the better. My mother was a rock for me. She has been there for me in times of good and bad. She has been there for me when I was in having troubles in school, when I was in need, everything. Now she is no longer hear and I don’t know what to do. I don’t know how to move on.” Mrs. Winders listened intently, “Sweetie, why don’t you turn to the Book of Psalms. Turn to Psalms 18 and read verse 2.” Elizabeth reads, “The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.” God is a rock? What does the horn of my salvation mean?” Mrs. Winders responds, “The Lord protects us and guides us. He is the only One who can save us. He is strong and mighty. He knows all and so if you are in need, just talk to Him, just like you are talking to me now.”

“That is wonderful thing to say, but I just don’t know.” Mrs. Winders patted Lizzie’s hand and told her, “Go down to verse 30, and read to verse 32.” “30 As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him. For who is God besides the LORD ? And who is the Rock except our God? It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.” “I am beginning to understand, but I wonder why the good have to go?”

Mrs. Winders did not understand who she was referring to, but Lizzie told her it was her mother. “My mother died last year and it has been hard.” Mrs. Winders told her she could relate. Her husband, Dr. David J. Winders passed away of heart failure 15 years ago and she took his death hard. “Mrs. Winders, did you believe in God then?” “Yes I did, Lizzie. But God never said that being a Christian was going to be easy. The reason why I wanted you to read that verse is because not only is God strong, but that no matter what you are going through, God will make a way for you. He certainly made a way for me. I am at peace that David is with the Lord.” Elizabeth asked, “Mrs. Winders, you don’t miss him? You don’t grieve for him?” Mrs. Winders responds, “Of course I will always miss him. We have been together for 35 years. But giving up on God is the worst thing you can do or you will end up overwhelmed. It is easier said but it is the truth, Lizzie. You do know I will never steer you wrong.” Smiling, Elizabeth says, “Yes, ma’am, I know. I’m starting to feel better already.” “I’m glad you do. Now turn over to Psalm 92 and go to verse 15.”

“Verse 15. “proclaiming, "The LORD is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him." I had no idea about God except for what my mother taught me. She was a good Christian woman, Mrs. Friendlin, and she taught us about putting God first and that Jesus saves. But with everything that has happened, I have a hard time believing that. “Elizabeth, I am not forcing you into anything, but with God, there are no ifs, ands, or buts. Either you are with him, or against Him.”

Elizabeth was surprised. “What are you saying, Mrs. Winders?” “Lizzie, what I am

saying is your mother was right. If you want help, I am giving you help. God can help. Put your trust in Him and He will see you through. Now turn to the Book of James, it is near the back of the Bible.” Elizabeth looked through the Table of Contents and nearly flipped half the Bible over to turn to the book of James. “Have you found it?” “Yes, Ma’am, I have.” “Now go to verse 4.”

“Verse 4. “You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.” I don’t understand. What does this have to do with our conversation?” “Adulterous?” “Elizabeth, it means being unfaithful but to God. If you are not faithful to Him, then you are not with God. If you are faithful, then you truly love Him. The world is filled with sin, greed, selfishness, and hate. Jesus Christ died for us so that we might surrender to God and be faithful to Him.” The car horn is honking; someone then knocks on the door. It is Mrs. Winders’ 9 year-old granddaughter, Haley. “Who is it?” “It’s Haley.”

”Oh well, it is time for me to go. Remember everything I told you. It is life saving. Oh, I will talk to you later, okay.” “Okay, and thank you, Mrs. Winders. Have a good day.”

Mrs. Winders smiles, “I will, dear. Goodbye.” Elizabeth smiles back, “Goodbye, and thank you again, Mrs. Winders.” “You’re welcome, Sweetheart.” “Bye, Haley.”

“Bye.”

Haley and Mrs. Winders walks to the car and before her daughter drives off, everyone waves. They are going to to meet Mrs. Winders’ friend Mr. Victor Sayers.

After they leave, Elizabeth closes the door.

Then she picks up the Bible and begins to read James 4:4 again. “4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God?” “I hated God? That doesn’t make sense. But I sure was angry with Him.” Then she recalls her mother telling her, “The Good Book says, “love thy neighbor”. She also recalls her mother reading to her when she was a child,

“4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.”

She did not know what was going on, but she felt compelled, in a good way, to learn more about God’s Word. She began to look through the Table of Contents and read through much of the Bible from cover to cover. A month later, little has changed. Elizabeth still gets the calls from bill collectors, she and Bill now barely speak, and the relationship between her and the kids has grown cold. Later that night, Elizabeth began reading Acts 16. A few minutes later, she begins to read verses 29-31, “29 The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 They replied, "Believe in the

Lord Jesus, and you will be saved-you and your household." The verse that pierced her heart was verse 30. "What must I do to be saved?" "Saved?" Elizabeth recalls asking her father what it means for someone to be saved. "Daddy, what does being saved mean?" "Well, Beth, being saved means to be rescued from something. In the Bible, you know that Jesus died on the cross. He suffered so that we could be rescued. Only He can rescue us, save us." Elizabeth finished reading Acts 16, got up, got dressed, and went to bed. While she was asleep, she saw Acts 16:30, "What must I do to be saved?" Then the words continued on to verse 31, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved-you and your household." It was 2:30 am and she couldn't help but think about those two verses. "What must I do to be saved?" "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved-you and your household."

She then began to kneel beside her bed and for the first time in a long time, she began to pray, "God, I believe that Jesus saves and I ask that He saves me. Ever since Mrs. Winders stopped by, I have been reading your word and I want to know more about you. I don't know what happened and I don't understand a lot of things but I want to. Lord Jesus, I surrender my life to you. I need you. Bill collectors keep calling, my marriage is in trouble, and I don't know what to do about my children. It is as if my family is falling apart. Jesus, I need you. Your word says "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved-you and your household." I do believe in You, and I want to be saved. I want to be Your friend. Help me, Lord. I am asking for your help. I believe that You hear my prayers and I am sorry that I was unfaithful to You. I ask and thank You for rescuing me, in Your Name, Amen." From that moment, the room seemed lighter and a weight began to be lifted from her. It is as if life has started over for her.

And it did. Mrs. Winders became a regular visitor at the Friedlin Household. Elizabeth began to talk to Mrs. Winders about her new found freedom. To Elizabeth, that was what it was. To help her grow from a "babe in Christ" to a mature believer, she and Mrs. Winder attended church. They even had regular Bible studies in her home. Her husband and children began to notice a change in Elizabeth since her conversion. In time, her whole household was saved and her marriage situation began to improve. She and Bill began were growing strong in the Lord. And their love for one another grew day by day. London and Tiffany now witness to other students about the Lord. Tiffany has since ended her relationship with her former boyfriend. London no longer avoided his family but grew closer to them. God has answered their prayers and now Elizabeth and her family knows that no matter what the family goes through, they know that if they remain faithful to God, they can overcome anything.

