

Tuesday - April 9

Let all you do be done in love.

1 Corinthians 16:14

I grew up in the church and enjoyed learning about God, Jesus, and the love they show us. My parents were wonderful people who always showed their love to me and my sister. They disciplined with a light hand and full heart.

At age 12, I was caught shoplifting a .25 cent bottle of modeling paint. I had the money to buy the paint, but the temptation to steal was stronger at the time. The cops were called. I was taken across the town square to the police station. Then they called my mom to tell her the news and asked her to come to the station. Mom walked in very calm. She looked so sad. I had never seen her look so disappointed. I felt terrible. I knew I never wanted to make my parents sad or disappointed again due to my actions. That evening, I prayed to God with greater conviction than I had ever prayed before. I told God I was sorry for my actions and prayed for Jesus to enter my heart. I confessed that I was a sinner and wanted and needed Jesus to be the center of my life. That is the day I was saved. I don't recall being yelled at or lectured by my parents. They encouraged me not to do that again and that I was better than that. My parents again showed love and gentleness to me just as I have seen God do many times in my life and in the lives of others I know. God never gives up on us, even if we give up on him. What if I continued down the shoplifting path? Would that have led me to a life of crime or just a path farther away from God? I'm glad I decided to turn to God instead of turn away. God's grace saves – give God the glory.

Bill

Prayer: God, thank you for your wonderful love and grace that you so easily give to us. Help us be forever mindful of your presence in our lives so that we can reach out and share that love with others. Amen.