

CAROLE BREWER – SALVATION TESTIMONY

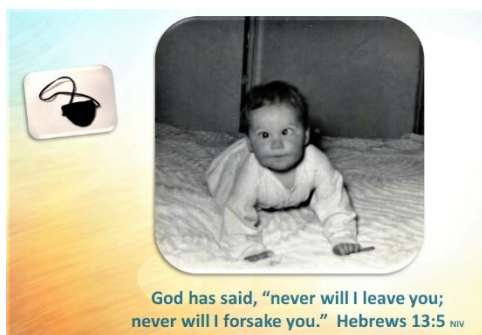
Born cross-eyed and legally blind in her left eye, Carole was made fun of in elementary school for her outward appearance. Her eyes were straightened through surgery at age nine and eleven, but her heart wasn't.

Carrying past hurts from childhood into her early adult years, Carole lacked the self-confidence and sense of purpose that only a personal relationship with Jesus Christ can bring. During her senior year of college, Carole opened her heart to the truth of God's Word, surrendered to His will, and received her esteem as an heir in Christ.



Today, using her gifts of speaking, writing, and music, Carole beautifully expresses the new life she has found in Jesus Christ, greatly encouraging the hearts of others.

CAROLE TELLS HER STORY



I was born legally blind and cross-eyed. This was before cookie-monster became popular! My early childhood was a happy one living in rural Fair Oaks since my best friends, the chickens, pigeons, and cows. Then I started Kindergarten where several children reacted to my crossed eye by calling me names. Those hurtful names became my identity.

After several attempts to patch my good eye to make my left eye stronger, my mom gave in to my cries and with the doctor, decided to let me see rather than put me through further stress. My eyes were straightened through two surgeries; first my left eye at age nine and then, my right eye at age eleven to go in sync with the left. Though my eyes were straightened on the outside, my heart wasn't on the inside and I still carried those hurts with me into high school.

Being legally blind in one eye was an inconvenience since I did run into walls on my left side and have broken my left toes several times. My greatest disability was not knowing a thing about the Bible. I didn't even know that there was a New Testament. I thought the whole book was old.

In my family's home, we had a Bible hidden under magazines in the corner of our living room. In my bedroom, I kept a little white nurse's Bible that came from somewhere. I mostly kept it as a curiosity or sort-of good luck charm in my dresser drawer. I didn't know that the Bible would tell me how much I'm loved by God and that He's gifted me with many capabilities.

During my high school years, I was on my own, trying to fill my need to feel lovable and capable.

- In PE, I was lousy playing any game using a ball! With poor depth perception, no one wanted me on their team.
- By best friend rallied others to run against me for a seat on our school council. She won and that hurt!
- Though I loved to dance, I was a barely-noticed wall flower at school dances.
- I had to wear ugly eyeglasses all through school. Can anyone else relate? When not wearing them, of course, I couldn't see as well and when tired, my eye would still turn in. Once a guy said to me when he saw my eye turning in, "Wow, psychedelic! "

Being desperate for people to like me, I thought I'd try singing, since I loved it so much. The chickens, pigeons, and cows loved my singing! Even with my heart-pounding, knee-knocking fear of failure, I auditioned and could not believe that I actually landed the lead in my high school musical. After each performance, people praised and encouraged me! My self-esteem went up from a minus 10 to a minus 5. What an improvement! This was my ticket for success! I'd go to college, get my degree, go to Broadway, become a star, and then, people would like me! I'd be lovable and capable!

HAVE YOU EVER PLANNED OUT YOUR LIFE ONLY TO GET DE-RAILED AT STEP ONE?

I was a music major at California State University, Sacramento but one of my voice teachers dropped me from choir. When I asked, "Aren't I good enough?" His answer with a sharp "No!" I had six different voice teachers over those few years. Most of my private lessons ended with discouragement and tears and I almost quit singing completely.

Some musician friends told me about their church-group and that God's love is completely free to all of us. What they were saying made no sense to me. I was sure that God had a big point system and that I didn't have nearly enough points to earn God's favor. My solution for resolving this dilemma was to forget about religion completely and it would just go away!

One day, another church group brought free Bibles to Sac State. A man with a warm smile offered me one and I walked away in the mud, with heels on, to avoid taking it. An hour later, one of my persistent friends met me in the music building holding up that little green book saying, “Hey Carole! I’ve got something for you.” I reluctantly took it and immediately hid that little book in my purse so no one would see I had one of *those* with me.



Carrying it around with was like carrying a cell phone that wouldn’t stop vibrating! I found a secluded spot, sat down, and opened it. I flipped through to the back cover and read words in the Index like fear, anxiety,... *Hmnm* Then, I saw the bold title: **“My Decision to Receive Christ as My Savior”**. I really wrestled with the idea! I mean, fought hard against it. But then, what did I have to lose? My life certainly wasn’t going as planned. So, why not? I decided to give religion a try and signed my name.

At around the same time, I met Jan Brewer, an awesome drummer, and the guy I was to later marry! We dated for a few months and then, getting more serious about our relationship, Jan asked me to go with him to a big Christian event at the Cal Expo Racetrack. What a spiritual place that was! I turned down other invitations but this time, it was Jan asking. So, I wore a big straw hat and sunglasses to go incognito. Plus, I took Kleenex since that seemed to be the thing to have for these types of gatherings.

The speaker gave an inspiring message and I was thinking about it. Then, he asked if anyone would say “Yes” to becoming a follower of Jesus Christ.

Again, I wrestled, just as I did when signing that little green book. But to Jan’s surprise, I stood up! Then, I found myself walking one foot in front of the other, down several flights of stairs, and onto the grassy area in the front of the speaker’s platform in the center of the stadium. At that moment, all the trials and frustrations went sliding out my toes and I was filled with a warmth and presence I had never felt before. I no longer believed that I wasn’t lovable or capable. My decision to follow Jesus completely changed my perspective from thinking of me to trusting in Him.

My eyes met the loving eyes of another woman who handed me a booklet. Later, as I read it, I could finally understand the connection between Jesus dying on the cross and what that had to do with me personally. 2,000 years ago, God, our Father, provided a cure for all the sins we commit today. Jesus gave his life in exchange for our sins so we could have a guilt-free and shame-free, new life with Him.

With my new understanding, I now know the persons I’m praying to! They are God the Father, Jesus His Son, and the Holy Spirit who was sent to give us comfort and strength after Jesus went to heaven. Yes, Jesus did not stay in the grave. I’ve been inside the two gravesites in Jerusalem, The Tomb of the Holy Sepulcher and The Garden Tomb. Archeologists know it’s one or the other and I can tell you, both tombs are empty! Jesus is alive!

I HAD A PROBLEM. My eyes were straightened but my heart wasn't. I grew up in a home where the Bible wasn't read or understood. Being cross-eyed was still a part of my identity.

HOW DID MY PERSPECTIVE CHANGE? After several people told me, I realized how much God loves me and that He has given me many capabilities! Singing has become one of my joys and no longer a competition to be "liked" by others.

IS THERE SOMETHING HOLDING YOU BACK FROM BEING THE BEST YOU CAN BE?

Low self-esteem, past hurts, decisions you regret, grief, loneliness, rejection? There is a cure! All these and more have been settled for you by Jesus' death on the cross. And now, He is alive and so wanting to be your best friend. His never-changing, unfailing love for you makes all the difference. Will you receive it?

A lot of people believe in God and Satan. But we must submit and receive the treatment, God's healing power, before sin can be eradicated from our bodies

You might be thinking, "You don't know my past. You don't know what I've done." It's not about good or bad. God wants to cure you of that sickness and give you a fresh new start just like He's given me. God has prescribed a treatment plan through the sacrifice of His only Son, for all who want to be cured from the pandemic of sin.

There's nothing mystical or magical about prayer. It's our chance to open our hearts to God so let's pray together:

Father God,

I realize that You are capable of all things. I've been sick at heart and I want to be healed. I'm tired of doing life on my own. So now, I give You my past, I give You my present, and I give You my future. I've believed that You exist but now, with so much gratitude, I receive Your love for me through Your Son, Jesus Christ. From this day forward, my heart is Yours and I commit my life to You. Amen.