

THROUGH IT ALL!



**By Noel Pitre
As Told By Eleanor Grace Armstrong**

"THROUGH IT ALL"

Where am I? I felt my face - bandages and tubes covered most of it. Tubes were coming out of my stomach. What happened? I looked around the room with the one eye that had no bandage over it. I recognized the company medic in the bed beside me. Then the whole scene passed before me. It was war time in Viet Nam. I was on the front line with the 25th infantry division in the U.S. Army. We were sent out on a search and destroy mission scanning the fields for mines and booby traps.

**The man in front of me hit one of the traps.
It blew up, blowing him all to pieces.
I picked up a lot of the flying shrapnel.
The blast picked me
up and threw me. I passed out.**

When I came to I was being loaded onto a helicopter. I couldn't see a thing as blood had covered my face. I was told I was being taken to a hospital along with seven other wounded men. Pain began to strike me. I passed out again. Now I was lying on a hospital bed, surgery had been done. My left eye had been removed. Shrapnel had destroyed it. Two pieces of shrapnel had cut through my stomach and intestinal tract. There was a hole in my leg clear through to the bone. Shrapnel had been removed from my left hand. I was in pretty bad shape, but I was luckier than some - I was still alive! I still had a chance to make some things right with God.

A nurse came in to see how we were doing. I asked her what happened to our company medic. She told me when he was coming down to help the guys he stepped on a mine and blew both legs off to the knees. I later learned he was coming to help me when he lost his legs. I felt so bad, I didn't know what to say.

I had lived such a rotten life, why would the Lord allow others to be hurt for me. I sensed the Lord was doing something in my life.

I had a lot of time to think as I lay on that hospital bed. I thought about how the Lord had spared my life about a month earlier. We were on a three day stand-down where we went back to one of the bases in Viet Nam. There we were given beer and a little show was put on by a band they had shipped in from Korea. Most of the men got drunk that night, including me. I had done a lot of drinking in my years and getting drunk and passing out from it was nothing new for me. But this time was different. When I woke up I found myself under one of the bunk houses with a couple of the other guys. I couldn't figure out how I got under there. I moved myself out and one of the sergeants, a buddy of mine, was standing there. I asked him what happened. He said, "You're lucky a couple of us managed to stay sober. About 11:30 last night the enemy started throwing some rockets at the bleachers where we were sitting. I pulled you and a couple of others out of the bleachers and stuck you under the bunk house so you wouldn't get killed." From that day on I made up my mind I was going to stop drinking.

The Lord was really starting to work on me, now that I was flat on my back where He could talk to me. I recalled a time when my brother and I were young boys living in a rough neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York. My mother and step-father had gone out, leaving us alone one night. After they left, a man banged on our door and tried to get in the house. When my mother returned home, I told her what had happened. My mother told me that she had prayed over the door before she had left and when she had closed the door she turned around and looked back. She said she saw two angels standing in front of the door. Both angels were holding fiery swords. She said the reason the man didn't come in was because the angels

wouldn't let him break the door down.

I remembered how time and time again the Lord had spared my life. He had been faithful to me but I had not been faithful to him. I buried my head in the pillow on that hospital bed in Viet Nam and cried tears of repentance.

I confessed my sins before the Almighty God and I felt the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ shed for me on Calvary's cross, wash away the filth and deception from my heart. Inside I felt brand new.

My mother and step-father brought my brother and me up in the church. But my step-father hated us boys and would beat and abuse us over the slightest things. I became very confused about the Bible teachings and religion because of the way my parents lived. I started running with the wrong crowd and drinking and smoking by my tenth year of high school. I figured if my parents could be Christians and fight and curse at each other, then I could also be a Christian and do a lot of other things too.

But as I tried to live two lives, I became more and more confused and soon I wasn't interested in God. As soon as I was drafted in the service, I completely turned my back on God.

I hung out in bars and in unmentionable places. I jumped right off the deep cliff and into a rut that I couldn't climb out of. But now my wild days had come to an end. My eye was gone, but I still had my voice. "Lord, teach me your ways. Unravel my confused mind. Put the puzzle together."

Bit by bit the Lord has answered this prayer. When I got back to the states I spent six months in a hospital in New York City. I was given a glass eye and then sent to my parents

home on Long Island. I began to date a girl I had met at church one night during my short furlough before I was sent overseas. I began to have real feelings for Debbie and in September 1971 we were married.

**We have had our rough times, but
I praise the Lord we have been drawn
closer together and to our wonderful Lord
through these rough times.**

It has been hard for me to keep a job as I've been very nervous since I've been out of the service. But now I have a good job with a Christian man and I've been advancing myself slowly. Recently the Lord has provided us with our own house and a nice piece of property. The Lord is blessing me spiritually, physically and mentally as I draw closer to Him. He has seen me through the thick and the thin and I just want to praise Him for His goodness to me!

I'm active now in the church. I belong with a program which works with boys, leading boys to the Lord. I hope the Lord will use me and be a testimony through me. I pray that I may be a living light to bring people to the Lord because I truly love the Lord. My wife and her mother go with me after church on Sundays and minister to people at an old age home. These people have nobody to care for them, but I know we get through to them because we show love. The Lord is Love!

**I want to thank the Lord for bringing me
through the hardships. I know the Lord is
Good and He is true. He never leaves us.**

A lot of times we get into a rut and things seem too hard and we find ourselves saying, "Lord, why have you forgotten me? Lord, why did you let this happen to me?" But the Lord never leaves us. Maybe he lets us wait sometimes because he wants to teach us patience. Maybe he wants to teach us discipline. But he is always

there to help.

I hope this testimony has some meaning to someone's heart and will lead somebody to the Lord, because the Lord is GOOD! He is truth and He always keeps His word and I PRAISE HIM!

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