

This is a story of God's healing and restoration following a childhood trauma. Initially there was no recall of the victim's assault. It was only hinted at through reactions in her life. Views were opened into the spiritual realm exposing what was hidden. These encounters led to her healing.

His Treasured Possession

by Terrie Reed

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His Treasured Possession



A True Story of How God's Love Restores, and Heals

Terrie Reed

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ISBN: 978-1-63263-627-0

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Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., St. Petersburg,
Florida.

Printed on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc.
2018

First Edition

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CHAPTER 1

WHEN I WAS A CHILD

When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. (I Cor.13:11 New Living Translation).

Quietly, the nightmare stole back into my sleeping mind. My heart thrashed inside my chest as the familiar terror gripped me, and I watched again, in vivid detail, the dream which haunted me night after night. Uneasily, I peered over my shoulder. An evil form lurked behind me inside the darkness of the barn. Something moved. It snorted...a heavy body rushed towards me. I fled in panic just as a rhinoceros lunged out of the doorway of the barn. Breathless with fear, I fell and stumbled repeatedly. At times scrambling on all fours, I desperately attempted to widen the distance between myself and my pursuer. Added to bizarreness of the nightmare, my mother and twin sister sat perched upon the board fence which enclosed the pigpen. They seemed to enjoy watching my frantic efforts. Over and

over I raced up to the fence, pausing momentarily to entreat them for help.

“Help me, help me,” I would beg, panting for breath. My anguished pleas appeared to add to their enjoyment.

Merrily, my mother responded, “You better run. Here he comes again!” I darted off with the rhinoceros close on my heels. I jerked awake. The real world was back.

Burrowed deep beneath my pillow and blankets, I waited until the tension eased. Afraid to go back to sleep, I questioned myself. Why was a rhinoceros in my nightmare? Why didn’t my mother and sister help me?

Soon, I drifted back to sleep. My six-year-old intellect was unable to discern the symbolism produced by my subconscious mind. However, the daylight hours were no better, because anxiety tormented me in even greater degrees.

My identical twin sister often looked worried as she observed my compulsive habits. Pangs of humiliation pierced me while she watched, but the necessity to be soothed propelled me onward. I loved the couch. Comfort enfolded me amongst its soft pillows. It

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represented safety, a small part of my world that felt secure. I sat for hours and slammed my back against the cushions. With my eyes closed, the repetitive motion soothed me and allowed my thoughts to drift off into a Cinderella dream. Frustrations gripped me if interruptions came. Often, I was chastised for abusing the furniture, but when left alone, I grimly resumed the slamming, rocking movements. Many nights unable to fall asleep, I'd beat my head against my pillow. The tension, anxiety and darkness in my mind remained at bay if I could only soothe myself with these behaviors.

* * * * *

Often during the day, I had to compulsively touch something. I must touch that table corner ten times, if I don't mom will die, I'd say to myself. Incidents like this left me sick to my stomach. I felt out of control... crazy. I was obsessed with the fear of my mother's death. Through my compulsive behaviors I experienced a slight relief. Somehow, I momentarily prevented harm from coming her way. The summer months during those childhood years were the blackest. A foreboding presence engulfed me as the sun set each day. The presence gripped hold of me so powerfully that I wanted to die.

At dusk, I performed an evening ritual. I carefully prepared a running course. Ceremoniously, I'd mark a spot at the front steps just outside of the kitchen door. Then I would sprint around the house. Once, two times, three, four until I'd attained my pre-set number of times...all the while saying over and over, nothing will happen to mom, nothing will happen to mom... My sister would ask me what I was doing, and I would just reply that I liked to run. But she knew, she knew something just wasn't quite right about what I was doing, that it was peculiar like all the other peculiar things I did. My brothers, and sister often played in the barn located on the farm where we lived, but I developed an intense fear and dislike for the monstrosity. Gradually, I refused to play within it or in the adjacent barnyard. The very sight of the red and white building produced anxiety and dread. Evil seemed to emanate from every square inch. My family attended church occasionally while I was growing up. Through my Sunday school attendance, I learned about Jesus. I loved Him. Jesus loved me. He was my close friend. Strangely, my feelings toward the Lord seemed to change. I told Him I hated Him. "I hate you God, I hate you, hate you, hate you." Immediately my heart would twist with horror. I didn't mean it. Anxious to repair the damage, I reversed the declarations, quickly expressing

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love twice as many times as with my former pronouncements of hatred.

My first-grade year proved to be a difficult one for my whole family. I watched for the school bus. As soon as its yellow nose appeared over the hill, I scurried to the bathroom, locked myself in and refused to come out until after it left. My parents finally removed the lock on the bathroom door. Assuming that my behavior was due to a separation anxiety from my mother fostered by my first year at school they struggled to deal with my over the top behavior. Many mornings they dragged their crying six-year-old out to the bus. Each day of the first semester I cried all morning. Why? I believed that in my absence, someone would come and take my mother's life. I wouldn't be there to prevent it from happening.

My parents really did not know of my inner thoughts and intense anxiety. Every time I tried to share what I was thinking my head was patted, and I was told that all was well and that I shouldn't worry about anything. My siblings either teased me or didn't want to talk about my strange thoughts, because those thoughts scared them. So, I quit trying.

Belatedly, I finally settled into my routine at school. The activities provided some respite from my fears. As the years passed though, my fears continued to travel with me. There was no escaping them.

Many times, I tried to talk to my mother, but when I approached her for help I still couldn't bring myself to discuss my problems with her. Maybe it was because I knew she still would not understand or be able to help in a productive way. I learned early in my life that my loving mother would not really examine negative feelings and would not admit there was a problem. She seemed to deal with life by ignoring real problems and encouraging us to look at the sunny side. Even though I loved her I thought of her as an ostrich. An ostrich was a perfect picture of ignoring what she couldn't do anything about and trying to be positive no matter what. As a result, I lived my life daily with a dark dread and intense anxiety. I knew that I must be crazy and that I needed help desperately. Over and over I would ask myself, what is wrong with me? Why do I do these things? Why do I feel this way? There were no answers.

Eventually, I was so overwhelmed with my thoughts that suicide seemed to provide the only answer. I made numerous attempts to slit my wrists. A few times

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I succeeded in breaking the skin and drawing blood. Shame would hit me after my feeble attempts to end my emotional suffering. I knew that doing myself in was not what I really wanted as my solution.

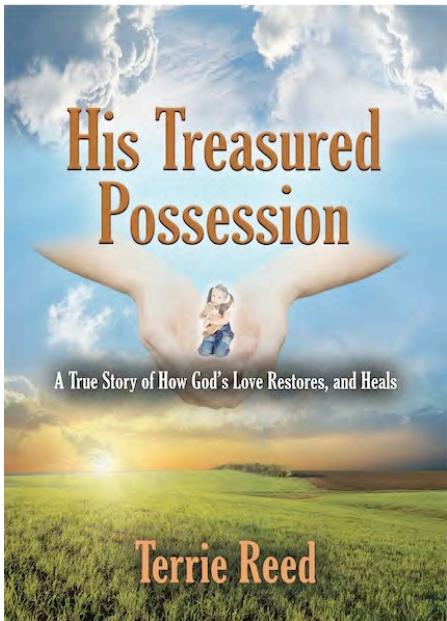
Finally, when I was twelve years old, I started to search for some answers. I had to know what was wrong with me. One day unexpectedly, I found a partial answer. While visiting some friends, I picked up a health text book. I opened it up to the section on mental health and read about obsessions. Realization dawned...here was a label, a name for what I did. The text related how a person might rid themselves of obsessions. By not allowing the thoughts to anchor themselves in the mind, a person could control his thoughts and behaviors.

Through concentrated effort over a period of several months I refused to allow the thoughts to gain entrance. Relatively soon my disturbing thoughts and behaviors faded. Yet, I wasn't free. By the time I entered high school the thought patterns and fears had been squelched. I dropped most of my soothers and picked up a new one, cigarettes.

No one ever realized the totality of my problems, except the Lord. He watched and understood. For years

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the Lord waited until I had matured enough to bring me to a place where He could answer the questions of my childhood.



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