

# AMAZING GRACE

## The Storm Is Passing Over

by

**Rev. Burton Barr Jr.**

(Author of “The Hoodlum Preacher”)

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### INTRODUCTION

On a cool, cloudy evening in 1969, I sat alone in my apartment waiting for Tadpole to come by. It had become customary for us to get together each Friday after work and get high. We always met in my apartment because I lived alone, therefore, we didn't have to worry about our parents or siblings interfering with our fun.

Although my father had preached to me all of my life about the dangers of drugs, I really couldn't see any harm in smoking a little weed, popping a few pills, or snorting a few lines. Besides, I figured that since I was grown and living on my own, I should be able to live my own life and make my own decisions. So I sat there waiting for my friend.

When the doorbell finally rang, Tadpole was not alone. He had B.B. and Ronnie with him. Although I knew them, they were not guys that I normally hung out with. You see, my father had always warned me to stay away from “that crowd”, but I let them in anyway.

As we filed into the dining room and started to gather around the table, I could sense that there was something wrong. Maybe it was the blank stares. On the other hand, it could have been the way they kept glancing at each other. Either way, I could tell that there was something that wasn't right.

I looked at my friend, desperately searching his eyes for some clue as to what was going on. Although I had known Tadpole almost all of my life, it was as though I was looking into the eyes of a stranger, and then it happened.

Silently standing in a state of shock as I watched Tadpole take a needle and other paraphernalia out of a paper bag. I was so dazed that I didn't notice B.B. and Ronnie circling around and coming up behind me until it was too late. As they were holding me down in one of the chairs and wrapping one of my neck ties around my arm, I couldn't believe what was happening. My friend, my very best friend was coming toward me with a needle and an eyedropper (a make shift syringe) filled with heroin.

I was only able to utter one word as I stared helplessly at Tadpole. “Why.” He just looked at me and said, “I'm sorry, Bub, but I know that this is the only way that I can get you to try it.” Tadpole

stuck the needle in my arm and squeezed the bulb of the eyedropper releasing the heroin into my vein.

At first, all I could think about was revenge. However, when the drug began to spread through my system, a feeling of euphoria came over me.

After that night I lived the life of a drug addict. I eventually turned to a life of crime, trying to support my habit. I was in and out of trouble and in and out of jails and prisons all across the country. I was hurting everyone that loved me while blaming the ones that had started me on heroin years before, for the things that I was doing. I said, "It is not my fault. They are the ones that did this to me. It's their fault."

One Sunday morning my life took a turn for the worse. I had just purchased the drugs that I would need to get me through the first part of the day. By that time, I had become a "speed-baller," meaning I would mix heroin and cocaine together and shoot them both at the same time.

As I was walking home that morning with the drugs in my hand, I passed by a church and was able to hear the sermon that was being preached. There was something about that sermon that got my attention. It was the story of the prodigal son, also known as, The Lost Son. (Luke 15: 11-32)

I already knew the story. I had preached it many times myself. You see, I had been a preacher before I walked away from God and His church. Now I was a dope fiend that was living in a world of hopelessness. Just like the young man in the story, I had left my Father's (God's) house for the fast life of "the far country."

During that time, I had been shot, stabbed, arrested more than 30 times, been to prison three times, and had overdosed on drugs more times than I can remember.

At first, I just slowed down so that I could hear some of the sermon. Before I knew it, I found myself sitting on the church steps, crying like a baby and saying, "Lord, I am sorry. I am so sorry. Please forgive me for the life that I have been living. I am so sorry."

Although I didn't deserve it, God saved my soul and delivered me from a life that was full of misery and pain. I know that the only reason that I am alive today is because of God's love, and His Amazing Grace.



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