

The Story Of
Billie Jo



Written By Rev.
John Marinelli

Copyright

10/4/2019

Rev. John Marinelli
Ocala, Florida

All Rights Reserved

Preface

This is a fictional Christian Short Story designed to capture the essence of finding “*Inner Peace.*” It is the personal journey of Billie Jo who was lost in anxiety, fear and depression during her teen years.

We will follow Billie Jo as she seeks to fill the void in her soul. We will hear the story first hand from Michael Tudor, her best friend. It’s just as much his story as hers.

Introduction

“Hurry Melody.” Said Michael. “Get the kids ready. I don’t want to be late for Church. The pastor is counting on me to give my personal testimony.” Melody responds, “OK! Ok!, We’ll all be ready.”

And so the time came for Michael to stand before the congregation of Saints to give his personal testimony. There must have been more than three thousand folks looking straight at him.

Michael begins his long awaited personal testimony as his wife; Melody and two children are seated in the front row.

First of all, let me say that Melody and I have been together for over fifteen years. We have two fine children, Bobby, age 12 and Larry, age 9. We have two dogs and four cats and may soon add a talking bird.

We've been active members of this community church for most of that time. Those of you that know us... know that we are a very happily married couple.

Well life was not so wonderful for me before I met Melody. What I am about to say has been cleared with my family so there will be no surprises.

My personal testimony is intertwined with another woman. Her name was Billie Jo. I will tell you her story as part of my testimony. It's the only way to show you how God worked in my life.

About 16-years ago, I was living alone, depressed and lost. I just couldn't figure out why things were the way they were. My life was empty and I had a lot of issues.

One cold winter's day, I received an invitation in the mail. It was actually a notification of the passing of an old girlfriend from high school. Her name was Billie Jo. We didn't date that much but were really good friends.

I hesitated to go to her memorial service because those things are so depressing. It's just one long trip down memory lane and this lane was filled with so many sorrows. I didn't want to relive the past. After all, I lived it all with Billie Jo many years ago.

My Billie Jo

Billie Jo was a suffering soul. She was caught up in one trap after another as she tried to live her life her way. The problem was, her way was a road that led to destruction.

Billie Jo was so independent and head strong that nobody could tell her what to do. She hardly took my advice. I had to argue with her over most everything to get her to see that there were alternatives to what she was thinking.

All of my friends loved Billie Jo. She was alive and outgoing, a lot of fun. However, we all felt that Billie Jo was not the marring kind. We didn't want a house of contention and miscommunication.

We were from the old school that looked at life and marriage as a partnership where friendship and love could flourish. Yes, we still believed that the man was chosen by God to be the head of the household.

However, being the head of the household, to me anyway, did not include spouse abuse, dictatorship, or an iron hand rule. I figured that God created woman because man was incomplete, being by himself. A "Help Mate" would be of great value.

But Billie Jo had her own thoughts on the subject and marched to the beat of a different drum. She was right in her own eyes all the time. There was no room for mistakes or other folk's suggestions. It was her way or the highway.

Foot loose And Fancy Free

Billie Jo was a free spirit. Yes, she was liberal and openly hostile towards men who looked "Macho" She would challenge boys to a mental duel using head games and sexual teasers to manipulate them. Most guys didn't know that they were being manipulated.

Billie Jo was, "*Foot Loose And Fancy Free.*" She wasn't afraid to try new things and do things that were considered "Taboo." That was the path that led to her eventual downfall. She had no ears to hear the sounds of danger and no eyes to see what lie ahead..

She was just 15-years old when she ran away with the bandleader of a "Nowhere" Band. She sent me a letter soon after asking me to tell her mother that she was all right. She said, "I got my man and we're going from bar to bar across country. We're going to make it big.

She was with a "Nowhere Guy", in a "Nowhere Band", in one "Nowhere Bar" after another but I guess that was ok for her because nowhere was "Somewhere" she hadn't been before.

I was Billie Jo's best friend and she knew that I would not share anything unless she said it was ok. However, I couldn't but wonder if all was really well with her.

Her handwriting was not the best and her thoughts seemed scattered. They were not clearly expressed. This was unusual for Billie Jo. She was an expert at language and always made an "A" in English class.

On The Road Again

As Billie Jo and her new found lover went from "Nowhere Bar" to "Nowhere Bar", I realized that she was on the road again in search of that illusive butterfly that was forever out of reach. She could see it but not catch hold of it. It was that inner peace that we all strive to attain.

Soon the bar hopping got old and the drugs ran out. Yea, Billie Jo was a slave to cocaine, thanks to her "Nowhere" band leader. He left her in a shabby roadside motel in Indiana with no drugs, no money and pregnant.

As usual, when Billie Jo was in trouble or needed help, she turned to the only friend she ever had, me. I received a call around two a.m. from a voice crying in the wilderness. "Please help me", she said. "I need you now more than ever."

The Drug Epidemic

The drug problem has only worsened over the years. Billie Jo became a drug addict and user of both cocaine and a derivative called crack. It was a party drug and some of the cool movie stars and popular kids liked it. However, its affect on America was devastating. Over 70,000 drug induced deaths occurred in 2017 alone.

Crack cocaine causes weight loss, high blood pressure, hallucinations, seizures, and paranoia. Emergency room visits due to cocaine incidents such as overdoses, unexpected reactions, suicide attempts, and other chronic effects more than doubled.

The Rescue

So I went to Indiana and rescued Billie Jo. But I never gave her drugs. She went right into a rehab center that I paid for in full until she was better. It took six long and terrible months with daily counseling, special medication and most of all the Word of God.

The rehab center was run by a Christian organization that believed in the Bible as the inspired word of God. They said that she could be delivered from her drug habit and set free from its residual effects. All she had to do was believe it and hang on to God's Word. That would prove to be extremely difficult for Billie Jo because she was Jewish and turned away at the name of Jesus.

I took Billie Jo to this rehab because I was raised as a "P. K." That is short for "Pastor's Kid." I grew up hearing the Word of God and being individually taught by my dad. I knew that the only real cure was God and the only inner peace Billie Jo would ever find had to come from Him.

But it was all up to Billie Jo. She had to be onboard and fight for her soul in the power of the Holy Spirit. Man's psychological counseling would not be enough. She had to put her faith in Jesus and call upon His power to be set free.

Back then, I watched many a repentant soul come to Christ but was myself, standoffish. I walked the walk because my dad was the pastor and I talked the talk so I could fit in. However, I had the same void in my heart as Billie Jo had in hers. We both were searching for inner peace.

Running Away From Love

So Billie Jo was dried out, encouraged and sent on her way. She was drug free at least for the moment. However, she lost the baby due to the drugs and stress of trying to get enough money for her next fix. She had a miscarriage.

On one hand, she was glad because of the increase of responsibility facing her and her poor parenting skills. She didn't feel up to caring for a baby when she hardly could care for herself. On the other hand, she was deeply depressed because she felt a sense of relief that her unborn child died.

She concluded that God was mad at her and punished her for her drug addiction and immorality. She and I had many talks about a lot of things. Sometimes I got through to her but most of the time she cried too much and couldn't hear what I was saying.

I loved Billie Jo. She was my heartthrob since the 10th grade and I knew that God loved her too. It made me sad to think that Billie Jo couldn't see my love or God's love. It was if some evil force blinded her eyes. I knew that it was most likely the drugs that kept her in the dark.

Well, the long and the short of the story is that Billie Jo fled the scene. She ran as fast as she could in search of that inner peace. She also ran away from God and my love. My heart was stuck on her but her heart was stuck on a habit she just couldn't kick. She thought it would fill the void in her life and bring her peace. Instead it enslaved her and drove her to the brink of insanity.

The Letter

About six months later I received a letter from Billie Jo. She was singing in a small nightclub in New Your City. She found another "Nowhere" guy to live with and she kept him in drugs as he was out of work and out of cash. Times were hard but she said she was happy. I didn't believe her because I knew that her search for inner peace could only be found in the Lord. She needed to find herself in God to be truly happy.

The Void

Telling Billie Jo about God and How He could help brought me again to the realization that I needed the same inner peace, P.K. or not. We both had a void in our souls. She filled it with drugs. I tried to fill it with Billie Jo.

My dad always said that each person has a void in his or her heart that can only be filled with God. People try to fill it with all sorts of things, thinking that in doing so they will attain happiness and peace of mind. But, as my dad said, only God can fill the void in man's soul. It was put there by God and is exclusively for His indwelling Spirit.

I shared all of this with Billie Jo in a letter but she never responded back to me. Oh, we talked about other stuff but never again about filling that void.

Lost But Not Forgotten

Billie Jo's letters suddenly stopped. She was lost in the streets of Manhattan. I never heard from her again. No letters. No phone calls. Nothing. Two years passed and I still had a deep desire to be with Billie Jo. The void in my heart was slowly expanding and Billie Jo was the only thing that could bridge the gap, so I thought. *She was always on my mind.*

Billie Jo was the first *love of my life* and why I married so late in life. Oh, I dated many other girls but just didn't feel the same with them as I did with Billie Jo. I just had to know if she was all right. The void in my heart kept growing bigger as Billie Jo was slowly fading away.

That same summer, the summer of my desire to see Billie Jo again, I hired a NYC detective to look for her. His mission was not to approach her or tell her anything about me looking for her. It was to determine if she was well and doing ok.

It didn't take long, about three months. The detective agency called me and shared the news of Billie Jo. She was living but not so well. She fell upon really hard times, went back into drugs and became a prostitute on Broadway.

Billy Jo now worked for a pimp that required her to pull five tricks a night or he would beat her up. It was like she was on the auction block being sold to the highest bidder.

That night I opened my Bible to read, asking God for an answer. Was it just too late? Could I have done anything different to help Billie Jo? I was beside myself. I had suffered so very long because of Billie Jo. She was my illusive butterfly.

Hosea, The Prophet

I opened my Bible and the pages fell exactly on the opening chapter of Hosea, one of the books in the Old Testament. As I read the pages, I began to hear from God. To understand what He said to me, you need to know a bit about Hosea.

Hosea was a prophet that had a wife that was also a "Free Spirit." She ran away from Hosea and God to find herself. Her wayward journey led her to the auction block where slaves were sold. She was a prostitute that was to be sold to the highest bidder.

God told Hosea to sell all that he had and go to the auction and buy his wife back. Though she had disgraced her husband and rejected God, God still loved her and would show mercy and love to her again.

This was a portrait of the children of Israel that went astray. They were lost in sin yet God found them and gave all He had, His dear Son, as a sacrifice. This was payment in full to redeem His children. He shows Himself to be a God of mercy and love to all that call upon His name.

Answered Prayer

I knew then that I needed to go to NYC and find Billie Jo. I needed to redeem Billie Jo as God had redeemed Israel. When I found her, she was strung out on drugs, thin and a rail and anemic. We ran to get away from her pimp and headed straight out of town to a safe house that I set up a few days before.

As she cried in my arms, I told her that it didn't matter what went down in the past. I said that I knew everything and still loved her. I also told her that God was not mad at her. He is a God of Love and has already forgiven her. He wants to restore all that the drugs took from her. Then she fell asleep in my arms.

Billie Jo was lost but I found her and now she had another opportunity to give her life to God. I figured, if God could forgive Israel, I could find Billie Jo and bless her. This was also my chance to be with Billie Jo and attain the inner peace I so desperately wanted.

We lived together for six years and she seemed happy. She even went to church with me and prayed that God would keep her free from drugs. It was a good time for both of us. We went to church but God was still not in us. That void was still there. I thought it would go away. I had Billie Jo and we were happy. But that was about to change.

Billie Jo was sneaking behind my back, buying and dealing drugs, She showed the face of innocence to me but was a totally different person to her drug clients.

One day, I came home from work and read a note left by Billie Jo. She said she had to leave me. She said it would be better for both of us if she were out of the picture. She dropped out of sight. It was like she just dropped off this planet. I looked for her everywhere but found nothing.

A Last Goodbye

It's been over twenty years since Billie Jo left. I never heard from her again until I received the letter about her death. She died from a drug overdose in a back ally of Chicago. She died alone, but not really, because God's angels were there to escort her into the presence of her Heavenly Father. She had accepted Jesus as her Savior the year she left. She was clear minded when made a serious decision for Christ.

The Story of Billie Jo was a journey through a drugs and immorality that pulled her down to the depths of despair and ended up taking her life. However, God had the final say as to her journey's end. She became a "*Whosoever*" and God honored His Word.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

Billie Jo finally found that inner peace and she also found herself in God. She became a, "*Whosoever*." The void in her soul was filled with joy and peace and love as she entered eternity.

I decided not to attend her memorial service. I wanted to remember our times together without all the sorrow.

The void in my heart was also filled. I stopped playing church and became a, "Whosoever" like Billie Jo. I began to trust in Jesus and called upon His Holy Spirit to guide me in all things. I found myself in God and he blessed me with a new *love of my life*. Her name is Melody. As I mentioned before, we have two wonderful children, two dogs and four cats.

Billie Jo will live within my memories until I see her again in Glory. We are both going to be all right, blessed of God and redeemed by His mighty hand.

The story of Billie Jo was also my story. We both suffered under false assumptions of what inner peace was all about and we both felt the pain and anguish of life's many trials. However, God didn't abandon us. He saw to it that we knew the path to His love and grace.



If He can do this for us, He can do it for all of you. You don't have to go through hardship and suffering to find God's love. You just need to become a, "*Whosoever*" and live for Him.

Well that's my story and I am sticking to it. My heart is full, my life is blessed and my prayers are answered...and above all, my wife loves me...and I give thanks to God for making it happen.

To God Be The Glory

Please visit www.christianliferesourcecenter.org for more stories, eBooks and Christian Poetry.