



A Second Chance

Hi, my name is Ali, I'm 20 years old and 9 months pregnant with a girl.

Let me begin when I was 12 years old. I was raped by an older gang member. He told me all the things I wanted to hear and then he told me he would kill me and my family if I told the police. After that I started running away from home. Every night I would go to the Beaverton Transfer Center to drink, do drugs, and fight people for no reason. Now that I think about it, the reason behind my actions was that I wanted a man/dad relationship, even if I got it in a negative way.

When I was 14 ½ I was locked up and put in the Whiteshield Cottage Program. I did really good for a couple of months and then ran away again because I thought I was missing out on the fun I used to have. I did go back and it took me 2 years to graduate. I was so proud of myself and was doing really good.

I went back to live with my mom and 3 months later I was pregnant with my son Gabriel. I was 16, young and dumb. I stayed clean while I was pregnant and for about 3 weeks after he was born, but then I started using meth again. I would leave him with my mom for days. After 3 months my mom said I should sign my rights over to her and give him up for open adoption. I was mad, hurt, sad and angry inside. I gave him up so I could do drugs and not care. After he was gone things got worse. I was doing and dealing drugs, ripping people off and fighting guys. My actions gave me a free ride to prison at age 18. I was in prison for 14 months and decided to look at it in a positive way; I was alive, clean, safe and supported, for a time.

4 months after being released I hooked up with Daniel and we started doing everything together. Meth addiction reappeared. If he didn't eat, I didn't eat; if we had no place to sleep, we would wander the streets together. It didn't take long before he was put in jail, and I found out I was pregnant with his child.

Now here I am, 4 months later, pregnant with a girl who is due on March 4th. Daniel and I can proudly say we are clean. It was coming to Saint Child that changed our lives (all three of our lives). When I first moved in, I was just trying to get by, but you can't do that here; it's so real and so powerful here. My relationship with God is wonderful and I have faith and believe that God has put me here for a reason. I'm so thankful that I get the chance to be here and can grow and mature. I've also realized that I have an army of support.



Last week at church, Daniel and I both got baptized. It's amazing how much we have changed. I look at my life with hope now. I have choices and I know that I'm a child of God. Everyone here wants to help me and Daniel and our baby. I'm not angry anymore. I am humble. Now I'm able to deal with my issues rather than putting them on the back burner. I even get to have an awesome relationship with my son, Gabriel. His adoptive mom and dad are such wonderful people and are such a blessing.

I have been given a second chance at life and Saint Child has helped me start it!

