

Tina's Testimony

I'm not even sure where to even start. All I can say is that V.C.C. has done so much for me personally and for my marriage. Before I can tell you what all Vineyard has done for me, I have to tell you a little of my story.

My husband and I have been married almost 17 years. We were high school sweethearts. I was 16 when we got married. I've struggled for about the last 6 years at not knowing who I was or where I belonged. I knew I was a wife and a mother, but that was it.

In Oct. 2007 I got myself involved with some very bad things. I was already depended on smoking marijuana. I had been smoking it for 20 years. I smoked daily. From the time I got up till the time I went to bed. I never did anything or went anywhere without smoking first. In Oct. 2007 I met this woman who I thought was the greatest person ever. She introduced me to some things I never had thought I'd ever do in a million years. I started doing a lot of cocaine as well as drinking myself to the point that I'd black out every night. During this time, my husband who is in the Navy was deployed for 6 months. We have 3 beautiful children. They were 13, 11, and 8 years old at that time. I was so into my own little world that I was leaving them home alone every night, while I was out being selfish, only thinking about Tina and what Tina wanted to do. I wasn't thinking about how my poor choices and actions were affecting my children and everyone else around me. After about the first 6 weeks into hanging with this woman I started an intimate relationship with her. I thought I was in love with her. I thought I had finally found myself.

After 4 months of parting and being with this woman every day, my husband came home from deployment. That was Feb. 4th, March 9th I told him about all the things I had been doing and told him I was not in love with him anymore, I was in love with her and I wanted to be with her. So I moved out. I left everything I knew. I left the man who had loved and took care of me for 17 years; I left my children devastated, my parents wouldn't talk to me. Still after hurting every single person in my life, I still didn't realize I had hit rock bottom.

While I was gone, my husband found V.C.C. When I came over to the house one day to visit the kids, I noticed his Bible on the table. He told me about finding the church and how wonderful and different it was compared to all the other churches we had been to in the past. I went with him to take the kids to IYC middle school night. He showed me around, I had even met a few people. I really didn't know what to think about all of it, but I can tell you for the next week, it was all I could think about. I had noticed that even though I had hurt my husband and my kids so terribly bad, somehow I saw that they were at peace. And I wanted that peace. Although I was on my own, doing what I wanted when I wanted, I was still not happy.

Later I had learned that Chris was praying for me. Not for me to come back home, but for me to find the same peace in my heart that he had found. Well 4 weeks after I had moved out, I woke up at exactly 4 a.m. on a Sat. morning. I laid there for a few moments wondering how I got there; asking myself what was I doing? Then the light bulb went off and I knew I did not belong there. I immediately got up and with in 30 min. I had all my stuff in my truck. And let me tell ya, I have a lot of stuff!!!

After I left from where I was staying, I drove around for 2 hours. I was talking to God. Although I believed in Him, I did not know him, but I was thanking Him for waking me up that morning and making me realize I was somewhere where I did not belong. Finally I got

the courage to call Chris and ask him if I could come back home. And without hesitation he said absolutely!!!! But he did ask me to promise that I would not bring any drugs with me because he never wanted them in the house ever again. I was so happy and just could not believe he still loved me after all the pain I had caused him.

We sure do serve an awesome God!! I didn't know at that time, that it was all God. It wasn't until mid April 2008 when I surrendered my life to Jesus, that I learned it was all the good works of God. God led my husband to V.C.C. and God woke me up that morning and led me back home. That first Sunday I was back home, I went to V.C.C. and gave my life to Jesus. Then I found who I was and where I belonged. I learned that God really does have a plan and a purpose for all of us. Even someone like me, who had done so many terrible things and was so lost, so broken and needed lots of forgiveness. I also found that same peace in my heart that Chris had found. God does answer prayers. He answered Chris's prayer for me.

Since starting at V.C.C. I am so proud to say that my husband and I and our daughter were baptized down on the ocean front. We found a great small group. I believe with all my heart that being apart of a small group helps you to grow with Christ with other Godly people. Our small group and the leaders have helped Chris and I become who we are today in Christ. Through Bible studies and constant prayers and fellowships our marriage is stronger today than it has ever been. Our family has a special bond, it has never had. Our children have come to know and trust the Lord. I am so thankful to our small group. They have been a tremendous blessing in our walk with the Lord.

We have also taken the 101 class, we have went through the Alpha Course, we volunteer when we are needed, and now we are a part of Recovery for the City. I do not know what I would do with out Recovery for the City. The leaders and the program itself has been a major blessing to me. Doing the 12 Biblical steps and making them a part of my every day life has changed me completely. I am proud to say that as of today Jan. 12th 2009 I have been sober for 4 months and clean of the drugs for 9 months. Through all the things we have participated in that the church has to offer, we have met some really great new Christian friends. I truly believe that is what we all need is to surround ourselves with Godly people. They truly have made a positive difference in our lives.

V.C.C. and all the wonderful things she has to offer has been a huge blessing in our lives. I cannot say enough about the church and her leaders. I don't know where I'd be today. I know I wouldn't have my intimate relationship with Jesus and I surely wouldn't have my family. So thank you V.C.C. and all the leaders for helping me find and full fill God's purpose in my life. You will never be forgotten and forever will be in my prayers...