

Rick Mann Story

(Revised Sep 4, 2023)

“Rick, do you want to go to church with us on Sunday,” Linda asked me when I was 18 and just getting ready to start my freshman year at Miami University. “No, I don’t think so.” I did not grow up going to church. Instead, I had been in all kinds of trouble from a young age until I was arrested in high school. When Linda asked me again, I said, “Yes.” I wasn’t really interested in church, but I was interested in her.

That Sunday, I walked into a big church in Dayton, Ohio with Linda and her family. As the pastor gave the message, he talked about how you could find forgiveness for your sins through Jesus. To this day, I still remember looking around and thinking, “This is not a great deal for these nice church people, but for me, this was good news because I had truckloads of sin in my life.”

At the end of the service, when the pastor invited people who wanted to find new life in Christ to come forward, I was out of the pew and up to the front. While I wonder if Linda’s family was a bit confused, the whole thing made perfect sense to me. My life has never been the same sense.

The next week, I was back at Miami University. My freshman year had just started a few weeks prior to the eventful Sunday service. The phone rang in our room and when I answered it, the person said, “We are calling about the Bible Study you wanted to attend.” I said, “Wait just a minute.” I turned to Chris who was my roommate, “Do you know anything about a Bible study?” He said, “No.” I said to the person on the phone, “You must have the wrong number.” He asked, “Is this Rick Mann?” I said, “Yes.” He said, “I have a card here signed by you that says you want to be in a Bible study.” I said, “Well, I just became a Christian last Sunday, so a Bible study is probably a good idea.”

A couple of weeks later, I was talking with Chuck down the hall. We lived on the first floor of Stanton hall. I said, “Chuck, who were you talking to outside your window?” He said, “A couple of Christian girls from Emerson Hall across the street.” One of those girls was Cheri. We have now been married for over 40 years.

Becoming a Christian in college changed my life, but it didn’t heal all my brokenness. I had grown up with an alcoholic father. In middle school, I drank so much that by the time I got to high school, I gave up drinking, so I didn’t die. From that addiction, I turned to pornography as an attempt to deal with the pain and brokenness in my life.

Eventually, I learned that the pornography addiction in my life had roots in my emotional life, spiritual life, intellectual life, physical life, and relational life. Brokenness in these five areas needed healing. The great commandment said we are to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength and we are to love others as ourselves. From this commandment, I began to see the need for healing in all five aspects including my emotional, spiritual, intellectual,

physical, and even relational dimensions. Over time, I experienced newness of life in these five areas and the power of pornography gradually dropped away.

If you struggle with addictions of any time or brokenness in your life, through Jesus, you can find freedom and healing.

My hope and prayer for you and others is that you too can find new life in Christ as well as healing and wholeness for your soul. A simple ABC process can be a great place to start.

First, we must **admit** that we have sinned and ask forgiveness. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Second, we must **believe** that Jesus died for our sins and is the savior of the world. Romans 8:28 says, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Third, we must **confess** that Jesus is Lord and commit our lives to him. Romans 10:9 says, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (ESV)

If you have read this today and have given your life to Christ or desire greater healing, feel free to email me at info@clarionlife.org or text me at 615-268-0596.