

This Old Guitar

I was just thinking...

I don't really have any hobbies. The only hobby that I really have, I guess, is playing the guitar. I haven't been hunting in thirty years. I haven't been fishing in quite a few years. But, I have been playing the guitar for a whole lot of years. I grew up in a family of guitar players, mandolin players, and banjo players and I can remember just one fiddle player.

At every family picnic or holiday occasion there would always be live music playing during the whole time somewhere in the yard or in the house. In the living room of my Uncles house or the backyard of an Aunts house the greatest of memories were made singing together the many hymns, Christmas carols, and country songs that we all knew.



This old guitar was bought when I had just turned eighteen years old. I purchased it at Schubert's music store which was located in Cockeysville, MD in 1976. That would make this guitar thirty-eight years old. I was attracted to the harmonious ring of a twelve string guitar. It had such a nice sound to it and nobody else in the family had one.

This old guitar has spanned the ages and the transformations of my life. I have played many styles of music on this guitar but mostly in its early stages was country and bluegrass music. I could sing every John Denver song that he ever recorded with this old guitar.

I played in many bar rooms in the area where I lived. My cousin and I would walk into the establishment and I would tune up the guitar and start to sing and we would never have to pay for a single drink the whole night long. I did this from the age of eighteen to around twenty-three. This old guitar was always in the trunk of the car and traveled with me wherever I would go. Wherever I went the guitar was and wherever the guitar went I was. I had travelled all the way to Nashville, TN in 1979 to record a record with a small recording company and used this old guitar to audition for the part.

This old guitar has weathered the storms and trials of life. I can remember in particular one evening when we were playing music under the stars and I had set the guitar in its case on top of the car and forgot about it and drove down the road and then I heard the noise of the guitar sliding off the roof and down into the road. I stopped and jumped out of the car and picked the case up and threw it in the backseat and was back on my way.

It was during the time of my life when the Lord was moving and speaking to me that this guitar played such an essential part in my conversion. It was in the songs that I was writing at that time where I could feel Him working in me. I was all of a sudden singing songs about God and changing my life. In one song I had written lyrics that I wanted to live in the country and to be born again and that was before I ever knew what the phrase born again meant. Here are those particular lyrics, "Not wanting to go back from once where I came. Just wanting to stay here and be born again. Not wanting to go back to those tempting ways. Just wanting to stay here and spend the rest of my days feeling free". Those words were written six months before I ever knew what the phrase "born again" meant. Pretty amazing isn't it. It was the Lord that used this instrument that I loved to reach into the heart that He loved. Through the music of this old guitar He spoke to me and changed me. I look back now with such fondness from the year of 1976 to this year of 2014 and see how this old guitar was used as an instrument over that expanse of time for Jesus Christ to reach into the heart of me.

This old guitar has played around campfires, picnics, barbecues, family reunions, pool sides, backyard gatherings, drinking establishments, and

nightclubs. But today I am glad to report that now this old guitar plays in the sanctuary of God. Now the wood that was taken from a tree that had praised God in the winds now gives praise once again according to the divine plan of God. Little did that craftsmen know when forming and bending the wood of that tree, that made this guitar, that an instrument that he created, would be used by the Creator, to make a new creation out of me. How amazing is that?

So now I can see the plan of God going all the way back to 1976, even farther than that, going all the way back to a seedling being planted in the earth, that grew to be a tree, and then using a woodsman to cut down the tree, then the craftsman who made the guitar, to the truck driver that delivered the guitar, to Schubert's music who stocked the guitar, to the salesman that sold me the guitar, to the music that was played on the guitar, that influenced me through the songs that were written using this old guitar to soften my heart. That's how wonderful, all knowing, and forever caring, Jesus Christ is.

This old guitar now will go with me through the rest of this journey praising and worshipping the God that created the tree that changed the heart of me. I owe a lot to this old guitar. We have been through a lot together. We have written over sixty Christian songs and numerous country songs over the expanse of years. I am grateful for that.

The Lord used a simple hobby to reach me through the music played on this old guitar to completely change my life.

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