

ALLOWED TO LIVE

Written by:

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FOREWORD

I have known Dr. Russell Kidman for many years. We were introduced first as preachers, second as his pastor and third as his friend. After observing Brother Kidman for many years and thinking about what is his most important characteristic that would help all of us the best phrase would be that Dr. Kidman is Loyal. Allow me to show you, Loyal to God including serving Him, Loyal to his wife including loving her, Loyal to his children including training them, Loyal to his church including worshiping, Loyal to his country including sacrificing for us, Loyal to his friends including being there for them. Dr. Kidman learned as a young preacher it is best to be Loyal in the face of opposition. Loyalty is essential in following Christ. I believe that we learn the most about loyalty when we find someone that we believe to be strong and we look up to and find that their loyalty was not found in them as we thought it to be. John 13:36-38, Peter was that example of what loyalty is not to be and Dr. Kidman is that example of what a loyal Christian and friend should be. May his life and book forever be an example of loyalty to your life. Dr. Russ Kidman, my Friend.

Dr. D. Tim McCoy, Ph.D.

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CHAPTER ONE

Starting With A Bang

Perhaps it was the way life began for me. Of course, I don't remember this, but, as just a newborn baby I was borrowed by a missionary couple so they could demonstrate to the Church how the natives from Australia would carry their children. No, I am not saying this is what saved me, but just that I was given to serve the Lord at an early age and perhaps that is why God allowed His protection on my life even when I was not saved or living a good or godly life.

There are so many things that happened early in my life it is a struggle on where to start. Like the time my nephew (less than 2 years younger than myself) split my head open with a garden hoe, or when my brother threw a blunt spear at me because I would not wait for him and hit me in the back of the head. Neither of these events were really life threatening but there are enough that I guess I'll start with the first time I was shot. Yes, SHOT, like with a gun... yeah that's right... now that the shock is over, we can begin.

First I need to set the stage a little bit to explain somewhat the family that I grew up in. I have four older siblings which makes me the youngest of the family. Three of those siblings were from my father's

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first marriage which ended with his wife passing away. My father, after returning from World War II, married my mother. Soon thereafter my other sibling was born, and then me. I am telling you this simply to make the statement that I have siblings much older than myself and, as I already noted, my nephew was just a little younger than me. Now let's get to the nitty-gritty.

Our parents both worked, so one of our older siblings would usually take care of the two younger ones (my brother and I). Our only sister was already married and living outside of the home and the oldest of the boys was in the military, so that only left one other sibling, who was the youngest of the original three children, to watch us. I can only guess that because this was forced upon him, he would be mean to us most of the time, perhaps hoping that he would be punished and not be allowed to watch us anymore. But it did not work that way. On this particular day, with our older brother watching us, we had been wrestling and just being boys tearing up the living room (sorry Mom). As my next older brother and I fought, our older brother left the room and shortly thereafter called for us to come to him. I was the first to leave the living room and as I stepped into the kitchen I was looking at my older brother as he stood there pointing a twenty-two rifle at me. I froze in place because we had been told so many times by Dad not

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to touch his guns because he always kept them loaded. I was nearly seven years old, and could not understand why this was happening, when all of a sudden there was a loud noise and a throbbing sensation along my temple. I did not know I had been shot until my brother (the one who had just shot me) came running shouting, “I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to, I’m sorry!” The bullet had entered at my front temple and stayed between the skull and my skin for the length of my little head and then exited. I don’t remember much of what happened next, only that my brother, the supposed-to-be caretaker, the shooter, threatened me not to tell Dad what had happened. He then cut my hair and said I was to say that he cut me with the clippers while cutting my hair.

When Dad and Mom came home that evening they took one look at me and called my older brother, who had been watching us that day, into the house. Dad immediately started asking him what had happened to me as my older brother gave me that look, you know the one, like he wanted to say to me, “What did you tell them?” He started to spin his story of how he was trying to do Dad a favor by cutting our hair as Dad stood there and patiently listened to him. Dad would ask a question and our older brother would do his best to make the answer fit his story. Finally Dad looked at him and asked one final question. “Why is there a hole

in the front door?” Our older brother, who up until that point thought Dad believed his tale, looked at the door and then his head just slumped down. Dad told him that I had not said anything to him but he had noticed the hole in the door when he came home, and then put two and two together once he saw me bandaged up. You see, when I was shot I was standing right in front of the front door of our home. After the bullet left my head it went through our wooden front door and the screen door too. I never had to say a word to Dad because the evidence was there all along, and Dad saw it right away.

I look back on this now and understand that God always notices when we try to cover up our sin. God not only sees what we have done wrong but also lets us try to weave our way out. Then He calmly shows us the evidence against us, convicting us of our sin with His righteousness.

Numbers 32:23 *“But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.”*

There are so many stories to tell, and yet which are the ones that are worth the telling? Although we did not farm ourselves, we lived on a farm out in the country. Where we lived was flat farm land, so in the winter we had to make do, or improvise, in order to

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have a good time sledding. Dad decided to make a sled that could be pulled behind the tractor and it would hold at least a dozen or more people at a time. It was made all out of wood with metal strips tacked onto the runners so it would glide easily through the snow. However, we got bored with that setup and took the hood off of the '57 Chevy setting behind the barn and flipped that over, hooking it to the tractor. The problem with it was, when the tractor driver turned quickly, the makeshift sled would go sliding on around and then suddenly snap back in behind the tractor. If you did not hold on tightly, it would throw you with a vengeance, usually tearing some part of your clothes or you would get cut somewhere while flying off.

During the summer our older brothers would invite their friends to bring their motorcycles over to have races on a track they built in a place on our farm we called "The Sand Pit." This was about three acres in the middle of a forty-acre field that was just sand, where nothing would grow. For entertainment they would make my brother or me lie on our back with a two by six board lying across our chest like a ramp. They would impress their friends by driving their bikes over us at increasing speeds. Their friends thought this was funny I guess, but I could only lie there and wonder what would happen if they missed the board.

One summer my oldest brother came home from the service with some fireworks to shoot off. One of the rockets he lit fell over and chased me across the front yard before it went through my legs and out into the neighbor's field where it exploded. I could fill pages with these types of stories, but I want to keep the focus on the times that I should have been killed, or died, usually due to my, or another person's, ignorance, but God spared me anyway.

The last story of this chapter is one that I share from time to time when I am preaching. You see, I had been sick with death pneumonia and missed a lot of school during the third grade. One of the things that I missed was a field trip to Kellogg, Michigan, where my class visited the Kellogg plant where they made all the cereals. My classmates all got to meet "Tony the Tiger" and I missed it. What a letdown for such a young boy. Once I got better, Mom made arrangements for us to go there as a family, and when they heard of why I had missed the field trip, special arrangements were made for my own time with "Tony The Tiger." Consequently, I received several things that were autographed by him that the other kids did not get. This made the trip extra special for me because, like I said, I had almost died that spring from pneumonia.

The real story here though is what happened the

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day before we went into the Kellogg factory. Mom made a big deal out of our trip and, even though we could have traveled there and back in one day, she got us a motel room just down the road from the factory and we stayed there the night before our tour of the factory. While we were there I asked Mom if I could go swimming in their pool to which she replied, "Of course." So Mom, my brother, and I headed down to the pool to go swimming. There were not a lot of people staying at the motel that night, so there were only the three of us and two other people at the pool while we were there. The other two people were a mother and daughter who were traveling together and the daughter was in her late teen years. I was only eight years old and my brother would have been ten. He had a pair of underwater goggles with him but he was not using them, so I put them on and did some diving around the pool. When he saw that I had his goggles on, he got upset and grabbed them as I swam by. Well, they did not come off my head but they did come off my face and filled with water. As I came to the surface to get a breath of air the water from inside the goggles ran down my face and I was unable to get any air. Unable to tread water, and being in the deep end of the pool, I sank back under the water as the goggles filled up with water again. From the bottom of the pool I pushed with all my might towards the surface, and, as I broke through, gasping for air, again

water from the goggles came plunging down across my face and into my mouth, preventing me from getting a breath. I am not sure how many times this took place but I know that I was about to give up as I could not seem to get a breath and was already in a panic mode. Although all I had to do was remove the goggles from my head and I could have gotten the air I needed, when you are eight years old and in a panic, you don't think right; you just want air. As I slumped under the water again, and just as everything began to go black, that teenage girl dove into the pool and pulled me out, placing me on the side of the pool. She ripped the goggles from my head and tossed them away as she did what she could to save my life.

I do not have a clue who this girl was or even if she would remember saving a poor boy in a pool in Kellogg, Michigan back in nineteen sixty-eight. That day God used her to give me life for another day. I tell this story over and over because it is like the salvation of God by grace through His Son, Jesus Christ. I was nothing to her, but in my wretched state drowning, she took pity on me and saved my life. Isn't that what God has done for us too? He saw us drowning in sin and despair and through His grace he saved us for His glory! What a picture of salvation, unmerited favor, grace and mercy! I have never forgotten the kindness of this stranger and hope to one day meet her again. So

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until that day happens, whoever you are, THANK YOU for saving my life that day!

John 3:16-21 *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (18) He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (19) And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. (20) For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. (21) But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”*

Please do not take these stories as a complaint against my older brothers; it is simply my desire that you see God’s hand of protection.

Genesis 50:20 *“But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to*

bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.”

SAMPLE PAGES

CHAPTER TWO

Mountain Top Experiences

Many changes have now taken place since the ending of chapter one. My parents were now divorced and both remarried. Where we had grown up was now a distant memory long gone. Our new step-dad worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and after marrying our mother he moved us to an Indian reservation in New Mexico. The overall experience of living on an Indian reservation was very educating, although it was also one of the most trying times of our lives.

My family heritage comes from immigrants who came from England five generations before me. I mention this because that makes me an Anglo-Saxon, or as most in America like to call us, “The White Man.” Being “white” and living on an Indian reservation meant that one of the first things I learned there was what it means to experience racism. Simply because I was “white” I was hated by the Indians with whom we lived, went to school, and played. For the nearly three years that we lived on that reservation I was forced to fight, or I was jumped, almost every day of my life.

Beating after beating took place and with each beating I learned how to fight. I also learned how to

hate, which replaced the love of God I had always known before. I learned to mistrust everyone; hate first and ask questions later. The Indians hated me not only because I was “white,” but because our new stepdad was in charge of the dormitory life of all the kids that were bused in from the reservation during the school year and put up in dormitories. This was necessary because of us being seven thousand feet up in the mountains and in the winter it would snow nearly every day. The other reason was because the reservation was nearly one hundred and eighty miles long. To run a daily route would take up to six hours just to pick up all the students and then another six hours to take them home. I am sure you can see how this would be impossible.

With everyone put up in dorms in the small town where the school was, there was no need to run buses. Therefore, no matter how much it snowed, we had school because we all lived and walked less than a mile to school. It was usually as I was walking home that I would get jumped, fighting off one, two, or more as they simply wanted to just beat me to a pulp. There’s one time in particular that I remember, which took place the last year we lived there. I was on my way home and was jumped by two eighteen-year-old seniors from the small school. As I was wrestling to get away from them, I noticed a board lying on the

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ground with two sixteen-penny spikes sticking all the way through. I picked up the board and began swinging it as a weapon. I can remember them laughing at me as I tried to defend myself, that is until I planted that board and the two nails into one of their backsides. As that one whimpered away in pain the second one had second thoughts about finishing me off. Just as I thought he might leave me alone he grabbed me and, well, you can guess what I did. Let's just say for the record that he whimpered away too! One of the reasons I say that living on that reservation was educating is because when I arrived there I was a coward, but when I left there I was not afraid to stand up for myself.

While living there my brother and I got into mountain climbing and camping. Because of the hatred towards us we would escape to the mountain peaks during the summer months. Once it was warm enough we would pack our backpacks on Thursday evenings and as soon as we got home from school on Friday we would put our packs on and head for the mountain tops. The only rule was that we had to be back in time to get ready for Church on Sunday. During the summer we would go up on the mountain tops for days on end, only coming down to get more food and supplies. It was a great place to get away to, and not for the faint of heart either. Once we got used

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to the thin air from being in high altitudes it still took us over two hours of steady climbing to get to our favorite camping site. From there we could see the whole town below and even the front door of our house. If the porch light was turned on it meant that we were needed at home and we would make the trip back down the mountain.

You see the town we lived in was surrounded by two mountain ranges. It was widely known that mountain lions had been spotted on the southern range, but they seemed to stay off the northern range. No one knew why this was, but at least it allowed us to camp and explore the northern range. It was during one of these week-long trips that we had an adventure most people find hard to believe. This particular week we had gone up on the mountain top and pitched our tent on ground that was shale stone. That means that you could not drive a stake into the ground because the ground would just flake apart and the stake would not go into the ground. In order to put up our tent we picked a spot that had bushes at a close distance to both sides of the tent and tied ropes from the bushes to the tent to hold it up. It did not look pretty but at least it worked and kept the tent up. After exploring, playing, and just enjoying the evening, we turned into the tent and called it a night. Early in the morning as we awoke from a restful night's sleep we found that one end of

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the tent was lying on my face. I grabbed the tent pole and pushed the tent back up into place and noticed right away that I could see daylight through the sides and top of the tent. I called to my brother as he replied, “Yeah I see it, I see it!” There were long gashes across the sides of the tent and several near the top of the tent too. We crawled out and began to survey the area around our camp. Immediately I noticed that most of our ropes had been cut with something very sharp. My first thought was that someone had come up on the mountain top that night and cut up my tent just to be mean. That is when I noticed the ground around the tent. Yes, you guessed it! The mountain lion had come up on the northern range and got tangled in our tent as it came through. I can only imagine that it struggled to get free from the ropes and in doing so tore into the sides of our tent, slicing the ropes into pieces, and then ran off. Why we did not hear this huge cat ripping the tent apart or why it did not attack us further I’ll never know, but it happened anyway.

Then there was another time when some of our cousins arrived during the night and they were amazed the next morning at how close the mountain peaks were to our house. After a little prodding we talked them into a “day climb.” That means that we would climb as far as we could for about four hours and then regardless of how far we made it we would start back

home. Well, we made it to the highest peak in less than three hours that day. Knowing it would only take about two hours to get back down we stayed up there a little longer than we had planned.

There was a rock formation on that mountain peak that looked like the “Peanuts” character, “Snoopy.” As we walked across the top of “Snoopy’s” head, our hair began to stand up on end. One of our cousins had hair down to the bottom of her back and it stood completely straight up into the air. Living on an Indian reservation we tried to fit in with the Indians and had grown our hair long down to the middle of our backs and it also stood straight up into the air. From atop the mountain we could see for miles and miles. Off in the distance we saw a thunderstorm come up over the horizon, and figured we were standing at a magnetically charged point on the earth’s crust. We decided we had better get back down off that mountain as soon as possible.

After climbing down as quickly as we could, and once able to, we began to run for the house. With just a couple hundred feet to go it began to rain and was in a full downpour by the time we made it to the house. It was already late into the evening and as night fell the storm became worse and worse. Lightning bolts were flashing with a vengeance all through the night, some so loud that it would make your hair curl

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(figuratively of course). In the morning when we looked out the front window of our house, “Snoopy” was missing half of his face and one ear. We all stood there in shock because we then realized the power of the magnetic currents flowing in and out of our planet. In this case they were flowing out like a giant lightning rod just waiting for that storm to arrive. Who knows what would have happened if we had not made it down from off the mountain that day.

Ok, one more mountain story and we will move on. This one takes place just a few days after the lightning storm as three of us decided to go back up on the mountain top and see what it looked like from up there. Once on top it was amazing the damage from the lightning strikes and shocking as we looked at where we had been standing a couple of days prior. The top of the mountain was covered with charred marks from where the lightning had struck over and over. The actual spot where we had been standing was no longer there but now a sheer drop off of a cliff was all that remained.

Our cousin wanted to explore the whole mountain range and we went with him for a while but soon we had had enough. That is when my brother and I decided to find another way down the mountain from where we were instead of back-tracking to the way we came up. This meant exploring, which was exciting to

me, so off we went heading down the mountain, leaving our cousin to go on by himself. The terrain was kind of steep but still easily passable at first. Then it got even steeper still. This should have been a hint to what we were getting ourselves into, but we were young and “EXPLORERS.” Before I knew where we were, we had found a “rock slide.” Ok, let me define what I mean by this because I am sure you’re already thinking of a bunch of rocks falling and sliding down the face of the mountain. No, that is not what I mean. This “rock slide” was a large, rather smooth rock that was like a slide from your local recreation park or playground. My brother went first and when he reached the bottom he shouted with glee that it was at least twenty-five feet long and how much fun it was sliding down it. So I sat down on it and pushed off for a quick but exciting ride down this natural slide where I joined my brother waiting at the bottom. After whooping and hollering for a spell at what a great time that was, we looked for a way to go back up and do it again. That is when we noticed that there was not a way back up and that we were stuck on a ledge with nothing but a cliff below us.

We searched the ledge heading west first and found that it ended up against a large rock that we could not climb. We then set out to search the ledge in the other direction and found a trail heading east so we followed