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Hi, my name is Noel Okasako.

I am in recovery. I'm a recovering alcoholic and addict, and this is the story of how God changed my life and intervened.

It was October 10th, 2010. It was a Saturday night going into Sunday, and I can remember it was raining. I'm from the island of Oahu in the state of Hawaii, and my addiction story is not unlike anybody else's story.

You know, I had lost everything. My addiction took everything from me—my house, my family, my finances, my transportation, my job—everything. That's basically everyone's story, right? We find ourselves at the bottom.

It was October 10th, 2010—a Saturday night going into Sunday—and it was raining really, really hard. Man, I was cold. I was wet. I was dirty. I was trying to keep warm under some playground equipment at my old elementary school, but I was failing. The playground wasn't meant to keep the elements out.

I remember there was this cat. I woke up and it was by my head, trying to get into my backpack because there was an empty jar of peanut butter inside. I was so furious at this cat. I was so mad for some reason. So, I got up and started chasing it like a madman.

This cat was funny—it would run ten feet and look back at me like, *"Really, dude? You're not gonna catch me."* I kept yelling at that cat and chasing it. I felt like it was teasing me.

After I realized I couldn't catch it, that moment just broke me. I went back to my backpack and started crying. That's when I cried out to the Lord:

"Lord, I know You're there. I've been raised to believe in You all my life, but I've gone so far away. If for some reason You still find favor with me, see me here. See where my addiction has taken me. I'm so sorry that I've run so many million

miles away. Just save me. Please save me. I've got nothing left to give. I'm cold. I'm wet. What else am I going to do? I'll just continue to sit here in my misery. I'm ready to do whatever it is You want me to do."

Just then, there was this pulling in my spirit. It wasn't an audible voice—just this urge that said, *"Open your backpack."*

I knew what was in my backpack: a dirty undershirt, an empty jar of peanut butter, and my Bible. I reached in and grabbed my Bible. As I did, it fell to the ground, opened to a page, and I picked it up. It was 2 Samuel 7. The heading said, *"God's Promise to David."*

My middle name in Hawaiian is *Kavika*, which means *David*. I thought, *"What in the world? Okay, You have my attention."*

2 Samuel 7 says:

"After the king was settled in his palace, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, he said to Nathan the prophet, 'Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.' Nathan replied to the king, 'Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you.'"

Just those two verses completely blew me away. Here were two verses about *shelter*, and here I was—homeless—asking God to save me from homelessness and addiction.

Nathan the prophet was speaking with David—and Nathan is my brother's name. So, I was completely struck.

Then a little further down, it said:

"Now I will provide a place for my people and will plant them so they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed... I will give you rest from all your enemies. The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you. I will be your father, and you will be my son. When you do wrong, I will punish you, but my love will never be taken away from you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me."

Man, that gave me renewed hope. I felt that God heard my prayer. That spark of hope ignited within me. I said, *"Okay, Lord. What do You want me to do next? I'm here. I'm listening. You have my attention."*

That same pulling in my spirit said, *"Go to a bus stop."*

So, early that Sunday morning, I made my way to the bus stop. The sun was just coming up. I wasn't sure why I was there—maybe to catch a bus—but I sat there and said, *"Okay, Lord, I'm here."*

Then again: *"Look in your backpack."*

I thought, *"Man, this is stupid. I know what's in there."* But I looked anyway. In one corner was a crumpled piece of paper. I pulled it out—it was a one-way bus pass. Another miracle.

So, I said, *"Okay, I'm going to get on a bus."*

I got on the next bus and waited for instructions. The bus took me to the east side of the island. I sat in the back, not knowing what I was doing. Eventually, the driver stopped for his break and said, *"Buddy, this is where I take a half-hour break, then I turn around."*

So I thought, *"Okay, I guess this is where I'm supposed to get off."*

There wasn't much there—just a big intersection, wooded areas, and across a parking lot, a large building with no name. I started walking. I walked for miles. Before long, one of my rubber slippers broke. I threw them both away and walked barefoot, aimlessly.

As it got dark, I realized where I was: at the bottom of a hill leading to a tunnel and a lookout point—famous and *infamous*—for its beauty and for people taking their lives.

I thought, *"God, I thought I heard You right. Maybe I didn't."*

I started walking up the hill, praying, *"Lord, I might do something stupid. Please stop me."* I saw a sign that said, *"Emergency? Pick up the phone."*

I thought, *"Yes, this is definitely an emergency."*

It was a highway phone for accidents. I picked it up.

"Hello, this is tunnel control. Are you in need of assistance?"

"Yes, please send help."

"Hello? Hello? Are you there?"

He couldn't hear me. Then a mechanical whirring sound—out popped a keyboard for the hearing-impaired. Across the screen: *"Do you need help?"*

I typed, *"Yes. Please send medical services."*

It replied: *"Ambulance is on its way."*

The ambulance came and took me—to the very same building I had seen earlier. It was a hospital, with a detox unit. I stayed there for fourteen days—three meals, a bed, warmth. God was keeping His promise.

It was His way of saying, *“Noel, if you’d just trusted Me, you were right there. You didn’t need to wander all day. I brought you where you needed to be.”*

After fourteen days, they discharged me—with a one-way bus pass.

This time I knew what to do. I got another bus. It led me to another hospital. After two days, they told me I had to leave. I begged to stay—they said, *“We get it, but we’re not a hotel. We’re a hospital.”*

So I left—again, with a one-way bus pass.

Now I was sitting at a bus stop in downtown Honolulu, a busy hub. I prayed, *“Lord, I know I messed up last time. I’ll stay put until You tell me.”*

Shortly after, a bus pulled up—and the driver was my next-door neighbor.

“Dude, what are you doing here?”

“It’s a long story, man.”

“Come on, get on the bus.”

I thought, *“Okay, Lord, this must be the one.”*

I rode with him as he circled the island. I settled in and fell asleep.

Suddenly, that same inner pull woke me—stronger, urgent. I felt danger. I looked around. I was in a rough part of the island. I felt the Lord say, *“Get off the bus—now.”*

So I did.

It was almost dark. Shady characters everywhere. Then a man approached—obviously using meth. He set down his bike and sat next to me. I thought, *“Oh man...”*

To take control, I greeted him first.

“Hey, brother—you got something for eat?”

“Why, you hungry?”

“Yeah, bro. Hungry.”

“Oh, I get some food, bro. I know where I get food—right over there at the grocery store!”

He cracked himself up laughing. I wasn't amused.

"All right, all right. What about a place to stay?"

"Probably just sleep on the beach, man. Sand is warm from the sun, showers over there."

I thought, *"Hmm, not a bad idea—but that doesn't line up with what God told me about shelter."*

We sat there in silence until he said, *"You need a place for stay, bro? Come—I'll take you someplace."*

Apprehensively, I followed. By then it was dark. He led me down a dimly lit driveway to a two-story house. He stopped at the entrance, pointed, and said, *"Go down that driveway, knock on the door, and ask for Pastor Virgil."*

I thought, *"What is this—a church?"*

Halfway down, I looked back—he was gone. Disappeared. Maybe an angel.

I knocked. A young, bubbly girl opened the door.

"Hi!"

"Uh, hi... This is a weird question, but is Pastor Virgil here?"

"Yeah, hold on."

Moments later, a Filipino man in a white shirt appeared.

"Aloha, can I help you, sir?"

"Are you Pastor Virgil?"

"Yes, I am."

"Do you possibly have something to eat and maybe a place to stay?"

He paused, looked me up and down, and asked:

"By any chance, is your name Noel?"

My breath caught.

"Yeah... how did you know that?"

"Come inside, brother. I've got some food."

I went inside, ate, and stayed for the next year and a half.

Ohana Family of the Living God is a church and homeless shelter on the east side of Oahu. The backyard faces the beautiful Ko'olau Mountain Range; across the street is the vast Pacific Ocean. It's a peaceful place.

Through their program—**Muane Hemle Pika** ("Communing with the Holy Spirit")—Pastors Sage and Virgil helped me get clean. They nurtured my relationship with the Heavenly Father. That program continues today, helping countless homeless people.

One of the running jokes there: I'd always say, "*Pastor Virgil, I hungry.*" He'd reply, "*Boy, boy—you don't need to be hungry. Get plenty food!*"

And food they had—over **2,000 lbs a month** distributed to needy families across the island.

Three times a week, we'd cook a massive pot of soup and go to Ala Park in downtown Honolulu to feed 100 plus homeless people. To be on the serving side instead of the receiving side—that changed everything. Serving others nurtured my recovery.

Every day at 6 AM and 6 PM, everyone—pastors, family, residents—gathered for prayer and worship. It was family.

Through my time there, I regained my family's trust. I regained sanity, sobriety, and purpose. I completed rehab, became a deacon, and helped Pastor Virgil with daily operations. That time truly taught me what it means to serve God and others.

That first night in the shelter—it was raining, just like the first night of my story. But this time, I was warm, dry, in bed, crying tears of joy.

What a journey He brought me through. He called me by name—literally by name. He took my hand, led me step by step, taught me to know and trust His voice. Above all, He never breaks a promise.

A lot happened since October 10th, 2010.

Now, I'm part of an organization that runs clean-and-sober housing, helping people new in recovery navigate their newfound sobriety.

Shout-out to Pastor Nolan and Catalyst Church. From day one in Artesia, I felt like family. Pastor Nolan and his family brought me into the fold.

I give back now. In order to keep what we have, we've got to give it away. One day at a time, I try to give of myself to keep the blessings—and you keep it by giving it away. Isn't that a beautiful cycle?

God intervened in my life. He can change yours too. Give Him a try. Let Him.

Also, big shout-out to **Voice of Freedom, My Ashleah**, and **The Bridge**. This recovery community is going to do great things. Thank you to My Ashleah and Voice of Freedom for sharing these testimonies. More are coming—I'm excited to see what God has next.

Closing Message:

Thank you so much for tuning in to this story of God's amazing grace. The beautiful thing about God's grace is that it's available to every single one of us.

God's grace can be part of *your* story too. You can do that simply by placing your faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior—believing He died on the cross and rose again for your sins, and confessing that with your mouth.

This isn't a magical prayer—it's your *faith* that saves you—but this prayer can help you affirm that decision:

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for loving me so much that You sent Your Son Jesus to die for me.

I believe He died on the cross and rose again on the third day.

I believe He is Your Son, and I want Him to be Lord of my life and forgive my sins.

I place my faith in You for salvation and for eternity.

Thank You for loving me.

In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

If you prayed that prayer and placed your faith in Jesus Christ, welcome to the Kingdom of God! You've now inherited eternal life.

No matter what your past looked like, your story now includes eternity with Jesus Christ.

The next step is to find a Bible-believing local church where you can grow, be encouraged, and walk with other believers.

This is the most important decision you'll ever make. **Congratulations—welcome to the Kingdom. God bless you.**
