

In Control

I went through life by always having to be in control; being in charge. I was the disciplinarian at home and was the one who did all the "grounding". When it came to my job, I'd be the one to organize and get social events happening. If there was a party or a function to plan - get Donna Leah to do it. Even now, people will still say, "Well Donna Leah, why don't you join the social committee or start up a social committee, or whatever?" But that's not what I want to do all the time. I want somebody else to do it for a change. Everybody seemed to be counting on me; depending on me. But I wanted to depend on somebody.

My husband Dale is a good husband, a good provider and he is kind, and considerate, but usually he just lets me take charge and do whatever is needed with the kids, the house, planning holidays, etc.

When I was 24 years old our third child was born. He was born with birth defects and lived only fourteen days. At that time we never attended church regularly. We went for baptisms, weddings, funerals, important things like that. Yet even though I didn't attend church, I always believed in God. I believed there was a God, and I always prayed every night.

I turned my back on God and took control of my life
When our son died, I decided I didn't need God in my life - I turned my back on Him and I took control of every area of my life for the next twenty-one years. During that time I didn't feel great sorrow. I didn't feel great joy. I kind of had an emptiness in my life. There was no real fulfilment.

In April 1994, I got a message in my mail slot that said, "Ladies, we'd like to treat you to breakfast at a Women's Forum, sponsored by Women In Leadership." "Yes," I thought, "Women in Leadership – that's me - ladies in control." And the gals that invited me were paying for breakfast, so this was a real plus, a real bonus, so I thought, "Yes, let's go and see what these Women in Leadership do at a Women's Forum." So, I got up and scrubbed and polished and curled the hair and away I went. I happened to sit at a table with a couple of gals who had put the breakfast together.

By the next week I received a phone call. They said, "We have a Bible discussion group with these Women In Leadership. Would you be interested in attending?" I thought, "Yes, okay, Women In Leadership, I'll attend that. I'm in real estate, I know what I'm about - I'm a leader." So I started going. Only I wasn't in with the same group as everybody else. One of the leaders took me through a four-part video series on "Knowing Jesus Personally". After about our fourth meeting, I was ready to know Jesus personally. So I prayed a prayer and invited Him into my life.

Last fall I received word that my uncle was diagnosed with cancer and it was terminal. I knew that if Uncle Norman was going to get to heaven I would be the one to help him. My husband and I travelled to Salmon Arm, and the evening we arrived I spent time alone with my uncle and two of his daughters. The whole family believed in God but they weren't Christians.

My uncle was at the stage where he understood everything but he couldn't talk. So I went through a booklet that showed him how he could have a personal relationship with

Jesus. He prayed a prayer at the end of the booklet and invited Jesus into his life. He passed away the following evening.

My father was admitted to hospital in January this year and like my uncle, he believed that there was a God, but he wasn't a Christian. I had tried talking to him about God before and left him information, but he wasn't ready to talk about it. Every day he was a little worse than the day before and I just couldn't get the courage to make my dad listen to me.

On January 25 after much prayer, I went to my father and told him that I wanted to go through a booklet with him. As we went through it, my dad had tears in his eyes. At the end he prayed the prayer and just simply said, "Thank you, Don." I think it was the closest moment we ever shared. He passed away on February 12.

I discovered inner peace

It wasn't like bells were ringing and angels were singing after Christ came into my life. What I felt was an inner peace. I now knew I had somebody I could lean on. Someone I could count on. Somebody that would take control of my life and lead me and direct me as to where He wanted me to go.

What about you? Are you feeling like there is no fulfilment in your life? Do you, like Donna Leah, desire to find somebody you can depend on?

God wants to be our leverage in living, empowering us to feel better about ourselves, more excited about our future, more grateful for those we love and more enthusiastic about our faith.

Credit – Donna Leah Warren