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“UNSHACKLED!” - Pacific Garden Mission
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Daily Devotional

“Becoming Stronger” – Penny

ANNCR: July 10th, “Becoming Stronger.” “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.” I’m sure you’ve heard this phrase before. But is it true? What doesn’t kill us can also leave us maimed and deformed. When faced with challenges, we can easily develop unhealthy coping skills, crippling ourselves even more. Does adversity really make us stronger or simply make us more brittle – hard and fragile, ready to shatter? The truth is it can do either, but where we turn for help determines if we emerge worse than before, or stronger. Penny knows quite a bit about this, and I’ll let her explain further, as she shares with us her true story on this Unshackled Daily Devotional.

PENNY: I was number nine of twelve children, and I watched as my dad — a staggering drunk — drove my mom insane. The fighting was endless before he finally left permanently. My older siblings soon left, too. Mom’s ensuing depression led her to banish my older brother, leaving my older sister to feed and care for us. We had empty stomachs all the time. I went around to bars, begging for

small change in order to eat. Finally, a caseworker put Mom in a mental hospital and put us four younger children in a foster home.

We had four good years of affection and food in our foster home before the husband died and our whole world fell apart. The woman got remarried to a man who beat us often. Then I was molested by an older man. I felt helpless, so I studied witchcraft to gain power. Other men took advantage of me, and I vowed to become strong and independent. Instead I married a man who loved me but didn't know how to deal with my ever-growing problems. I tried suicide by drugs before I finally fled to my older sister's home, seeking help.

Her life belonged to Christ, and she reflected His peace and joy. She urged me to receive Him as my Savior. I wanted to trust Him, but my salvation was a slow process at first. Only when I surrendered completely to God did my fears vanish, replaced by laughter and joy. Jesus restored our marriage, making it alive and strong.

ANNCR: Isaiah chapter 40 speaks of God's comfort for His people. Verses 29 through 31 say, ***“He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the***

LORD shall renew their strength.” Friend, the truth is, what doesn’t kill us can make us stronger, if we allow God to work in us. If we allow Him to heal us. If we surrender everything to Him, and wait on Him to act. For it is not within ourselves that we become stronger. It is through God, and God alone. Will you receive this truth today?

CREDITS: Unshackled Daily Devotionals are produced by Pacific Garden Mission along with our Unshackled Audio Dramas. To find even more true stories of God’s saving, transforming power, visit our website, unshackled.org.

This episode was written by Jack Odell and Elizabeth Kupferschmid and narrated by Tim Gregory and Lisa Keefe.

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