

## Ivan Roman – Testimony

As I remember back to the day the Lord saved my life, I can still feel the fear and excitement of that night. It was a Friday night, and a few of my friends were going to Philadelphia to do some bar hopping. We all chipped in that night to get a limo so we would not have to drink and drive. We arrived, got hammered, and at 2 a.m. received a call from our limo driver. He was stuck in traffic and asked if we could walk to a major street so he could pick us up quicker. The street that we were walking to happened to be located in a rougher section of the neighborhood. Across the street from where we stood, there was a group of Hispanic guys pushing one another around. Then, the action escalated as the police showed up, and the guys took off running.

As I stood at the end of an alley way, I passed out on a yellow post that was at the end of the curb. The yellow post came up to my hip, and the alley way was directly to the right of me. I passed out and was suddenly startled by a loud noise that sounded like a loud fire cracker. I felt as if something had grabbed the back of my shirt and pulled me back. I felt fire go by my forearm, and instantly, I could hear weeping in the distance. As I looked around, I saw people lying all around the sidewalk crying. I ran to check on my friends, and they were all on the ground. Then I heard, "My hip! My hip! I'm shot in my hip!" I ran over to see what had happened and saw an African American guy holding his hip. Then, I heard someone shouting my name and realized the limo had arrived so I ran to it as fast as I could, and we took off. All of this happened in a flash. I was so overwhelmed that I couldn't cry or laugh. I just put my hands over my face.

I was taught my religious background from my grandmother. She was a Jehovah's Witness and taught me that the only way to Heaven was by knocking on doors. But, to be honest, I didn't buy into it. My uncle Charlie loved God, but he was what we used to call a fanatic - a "Jesus freak." He had told me about Jesus, Heaven, and Hell so I had acquired some knowledge in the field.

When I had my hands over my face, I heard an inner, audible voice that sounded like a very loud thought, "Where would you go if you died right now?" I responded, "I would die and go to hell. I'm drunk." The next thought came, "Where was that man shot?" I answered, "In his hip." Then, I saw what would be like a video in my mind. I saw myself lying down on a yellow post. I watched as a bullet was going directly for my head, and something pulled me back so the bullet went right over my forearm and hit another man in the hip. Something had saved my life. I had an encounter with God. The more I thought about it, the more it blew me away. Why me? I wasn't doing anything right; I was just a karate teacher. I'm sure there were other things He could have been doing for people that were way more important than me. I gave my life to the Lord two weeks after that incident. Later, I learned that the guys that were arguing scattered when the police arrived and came back to finish the job with a drive-by shooting.

After I gave my life to the Lord, I served my local church in any way I could. I walked on and off with the Lord for the next six months until an evangelist by the name of Todd Bentley came to my church. To be honest, I watched in amazement and with some doubt as he called people out by name, told them things about their lives, and the healing that was waiting for them in Jesus. To my amazement, he pointed to my Aunt Doris and told her things that I knew there was no way of him ever knowing about. Then, to top it off, the Lord healed her right before my eyes. I was so overwhelmed. I went home, laid on my face, and prayed, "Lord, if you can use me the way you use that man, have him invite me to travel with him." Not expecting it to happen, the very next day that evangelist invited me to travel with him! I traveled all over the world with his ministry witnessing with my eyes: the sick, blind, lame, and deaf be healed

Today, it's been about five years since I first got saved. Since then, I have been launched in youth ministry all over the United States and Canada. Why me? Why not you? The pattern in the Bible is and still remains: *God uses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.* He used Moses who had a problem with his speech. He used Saul, who murdered Christians, to write almost half of the entire Bible. If you are like me and feel like a failure, then you are just the right one for God to use. Romans 6:8 says, *"While we were yet sinners, Christ died on the cross for us."* God loves you just as you are. He wants to draw you to Himself, fill you with His spirit, and use you as a testimony to the world of His great love. Let him!