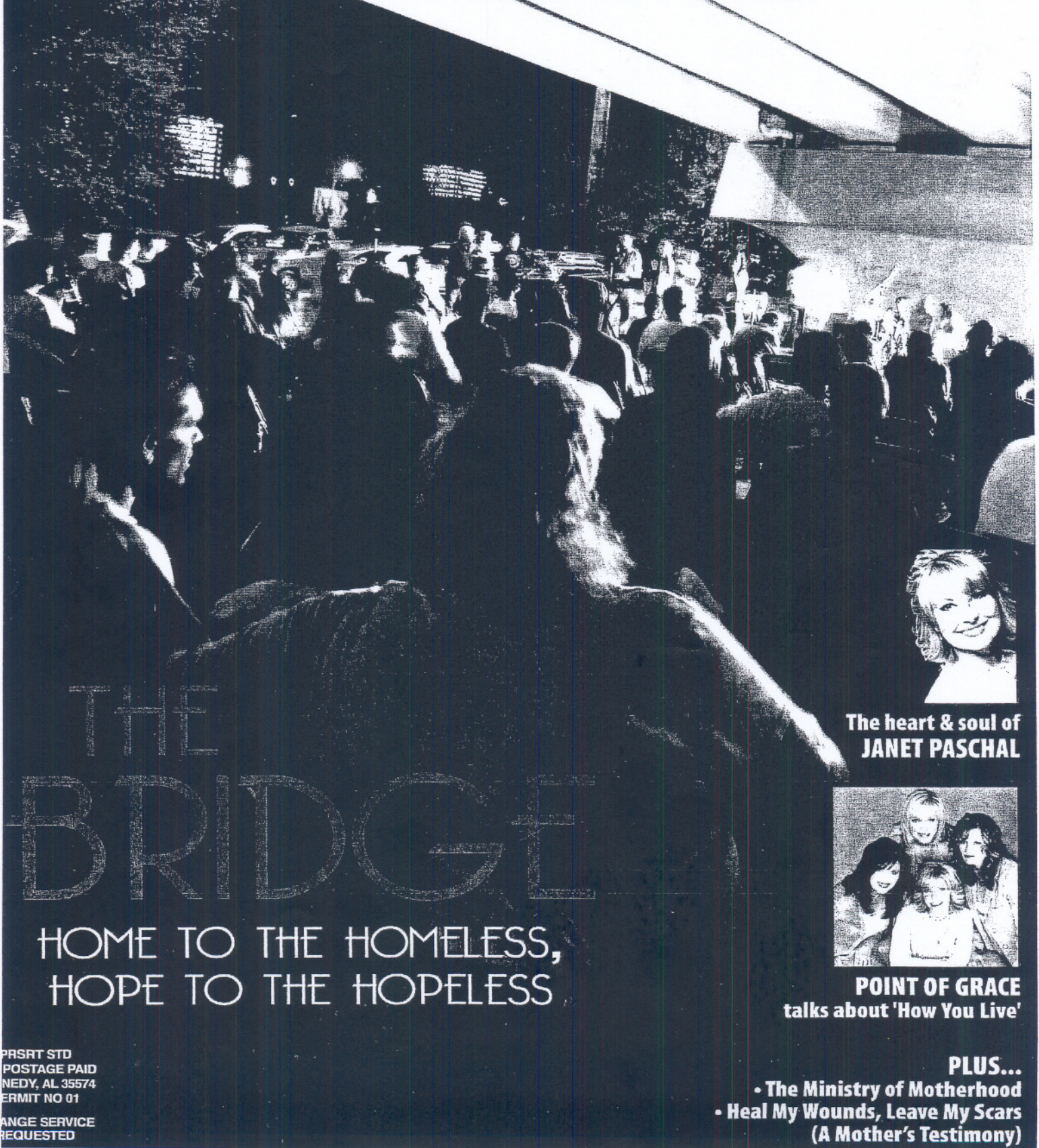


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Heal My Wounds, Leave My Scars

A Mother's Testimony

By Lorraine Whoberry

Scars can be physical, emotional or spiritual. Each of us has a scar with a story to tell. It's only by God's grace and glory that I can share my story. It is my prayer that this testimony will offer others peace, hope and comfort through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

With time, our physical wounds heal, but our emotional and spiritual wounds can last a lifetime. When I think about my wounds, so deep and so brutal, God graciously gives me His Word and truth in *Isaiah 53:5*, "*But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.*"

How gracious is our Lord and Savior to suffer for our sins. As God watched, His one and



This photo of my daughter Stacie was taken only three months prior to her untimely death. She was a freshman in high school and is wearing her NJROTC uniform. Her hair is short because she took a dare and shaved it as the Navy does their recruits. It was her dream to become the first female Navy Seal with the US Navy, which she took pretty seriously. She had just turned 16.

only son Jesus Christ was crucified on a cross at Calvary. As a parent, how excruciating it must have been to watch His son be murdered by the very people He created. Although, it was written long before Christ came to earth.

As I reflect on my own tragedy, I recall the notification, the denial and the anguish that tore my heart into. "Who? Why? What did my girls do to deserve this? What kind of

person could ravage this kind of anger and rage upon their young, innocent lives?" The brutality was beyond my comprehension as a parent.

"Who? Why? What did my girls do to deserve this? What kind of person could ravage this kind of anger and rage upon their young, innocent lives?"

My eldest daughter, Stacie, 16, was brutally stabbed in the process of an attempted rape in our home by an acquaintance, while trying to fight him off. After killing Stacie, he waited for my 14 year-old daughter Kristie to return home. She was bound, raped,



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strangled, wrists cut, stabbed twice in the stomach and her throat slashed repeatedly, all while still bound.

These events invaded my thoughts, all hours of the day and night, constantly replaying over and over again in my mind. Satan was attacking me repeatedly. I was fair game. "Where is God in all my agony?" It drove me to thoughts of suicide: I won't have to feel the pain any longer or relive the torture. I was living hell on earth every day.

God gently reminded me through the pain that I was still a mother to Kristie who, by the grace of God, survived and she needed me now more than ever. Kristie survived the attack, with no disabilities. A miracle! What a testimony! God laid his hand upon her and told Satan, "She is mine!" Praise Jesus! As He revealed this to me, my life changed! I've rededicated my life to Christ and He has never left my side as He promised.

Each day is a new day, fashioned just for each of us by God. Each new day, Kristie awakens and there, every morning, is this beautiful girl with big blue eyes, a laughing smile, with gorgeous features and long blonde hair that accents her face, looking back at her from the mirror. What she doesn't see are the scars, so clearly visible.

Kris doesn't hide her scars. They are there for all to see. She has given me the strength to live each day as she

does. That can only come from God. Just as Thomas didn't believe Jesus had risen from the dead, He asked Jesus to prove himself. Jesus showed his scars. Thomas believed.

We begin to speak to Law Enforcement Officers, Victims, Political Science Students and Inmates. God continues to lead us to incredible places, and brings extraordinary people into our lives.

I began to realize over the years that God was teaching me something I couldn't possible begin to fathom. It had been nine years and one day and, out of the blue, (so like God), He ever so gently asked; "Can you forgive a murderer?" I almost did a double take. "Me? Forgive him? NO! NO! NO! Never!" For years, I couldn't speak his name.

How can I ever forgive such an act of malice and brutality? "If you know the plans I have for you, would you still trust in me?"

As I read His word, God revealed His truth. *Romans 12:19, "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is*

written: It is mine to avenge; I will repay, says the Lord." And *Isaiah 35:4; Say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to*

save you."

God lead me to Acts: 16:16-40 and the story of Saul, whom God renamed Paul. The man, who committed this horrific crime, is named Paul. This story touched me deeply. God knew my heart!



Here's a snapshot of me (right) and my daughter Kristie (left), who is now 23 years old. Having survived the brutal attack on her life at age 14, she is a miracle - a living testimony of God's grace.

Though my scars were not physical, but emotional, God has graciously healed my wounds and left the scars. Just as Thomas didn't believe Jesus had risen from the dead, He asked Jesus to prove himself. Jesus showed his scars. Thomas believed.

God knows our hearts and our souls and through Him, by our faith, love, prayers and reading His Word, *everything is possible*. He's filled me with His Holy Spirit. Forgiveness, by the grace of God, has been granted to the person who tragically took Stacie's life and attempted to take Kristie's.

At last, I'm free from the pain and suffering. By the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, I'm Free! Glory be to God!

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