

Ground Zero Masters Commission has done so much for me in the past two years. Spiritually, emotionally, and physically GZMC has helped me grow, and become more mature. I came to Ground Zero Masters Commission my first year with a lot of baggage from my past. I had been saved for about five years when I came here, but I did not have the greatest past. I had a lot of hurt, and unforgiveness in my life. I was afraid to open up to people, because I was afraid that if I did I would only get hurt once again. I didn't want people to see that junk that was in side of me, so I remained distant and quiet for a few months. I got to know the team; however I wore different masks when I was around them. I was too afraid to remove my masks, because I couldn't handle them knowing my past. I was hurt from a bad relationship with my father. I was hurt by bad relationships with guys. I was hurt by my past mistakes. When I was around people I had appeared to be a quiet girl, but really I was hurting inside, and screaming for help, but was too afraid to open up to people. People would say something to me sarcastically and at times I would take it so seriously, because of it being negative, and I was so used to only hearing negative things.

Growing up, my dad and I didn't have the greatest relationship. He would find every reason to yell at me, and curse me out. You see, my family and I were not saved until I was a senior in High School (in 2001). My father never told me he loved me until I was in my first year at Valley Forge Christian College. My dad would only point out my flaws, and would never point out my strengths. He was so quick to tell me that I was never going to college, because in his eyes I was not smart enough to go. He looked and talked so highly of my brother, but thought so lowly of me. I was nothing compared to him. However, things changed once we got saved, he stopped telling me all of those lies,

and started telling me he loved me, and told me that I was smart, and he wanted me to go to college and make something of myself. He became the father I always dreamt of, and wanted for the longest time. My father and I slowly in time had the father daughter relationship that I had wanted for so long. Even though I finally had the relationship with my father, I hadn't gotten over everything that had happened in the past, with all of the negative comments though. In the back of my mind I was constantly replaying all of those times when my dad would tell me that I wasn't good enough, or that I could never make anything of myself. I loved my dad, but it was just so hard to believe that he truly loved me for the longest time, because I couldn't get over the past.

Due to me not having the greatest relationship with my father, when I left home after high school, to attend college (I went to College for two and a half years), I carried all of that junk into college with me. I ended up getting myself into a bad relationship with a boy. The guy and I dated for about 9 months, and during that time we made a big mistake. I ended up losing my virginity. I began to get very depressed and insecure very quickly. I was trying to fulfill the longing to be loved by another guy, instead of by my heavenly father. I wanted so badly to hear someone tell me that I was beautiful, smart, and intelligent, I wanted someone to love me. My boyfriend at that time was doing all of the above, so I thought he had to love me, and that he was going to marry me one day. My old boyfriend was the type that was good looking, studying to be a pastor, attended church with me every Sunday, and the type of guy that every girl would love to date. We both ended up losing our focus though, and messed up. We lost sight of God, and who He was, and fell into temptation.

When I came into Ground Zero Masters Commission for my first year, I was bringing all of the previously mentioned baggage in with me, and didn't know what to do. I thought I had gotten over all of that stuff, but I hadn't. All I had done with my past baggage was lift up the rug and dust it under. When I came into Masters Commission, Christine (one of my directors) told me that my first year was going to be about me becoming a princess. My first year was all about me realizing how much God truly loved me, and overcoming my past mistakes. Within a few months of being at Ground Zero, God was slowly starting to bring the past back into my memory. I started to feel called into talking to teenage girls about purity. I had started to get such a longing and a passion about studying about purity, and talking to other girls about it, however before I could do that, I needed to overcome my past mistakes. I spent several nights in my room crying myself to sleep because I felt so worthless, and I felt as if I had a 300 lbs brick on my chest. I would go into the sanctuary every morning in worship and devotion, not being able to lift my hands because the weight was so heavy on me. I would go to the alter and cry my eyes out before God, asking God for forgiveness. What I didn't understand though, was that God had already forgiven me and I just needed to forgive myself. I could not understand how such a strong mighty and pure God would ever want to forgive, accept and love me. I couldn't understand why God would still choose me to speak to girls about purity, a girl who does not have the greatest past.

One day, another Masters Commission team came to New London, to meet with us. We had a chapel service with them, and during that time they had us come to the alter and say what our struggle was, what was holding us back from God. We then said what was holding us back from God, and then had to make it from one of point of the stage to

the other with people grabbing our arms and legs trying to keep us back. Once we got to the other side of the stage we started praising God, to show that we were breaking free from the junk that was holding us back. I had told the team that my past with my father was holding me back, the team then grabbed on to me, and tried to pull me back, but I kept pushing through them to get to the other side. The moment I broke free and got to the other side, I felt free. For the first time in the longest time I had felt as though I was truly free. A little later that night, Christine came up to me and said there was a peace and a glow about me that she had not seen in me before, and she believed it was God. I truly believe her. I felt God's presence so real and so strong all over me that day, that I felt as though God was walking hand in hand with me comforting me. For the first time in my life I knew and understood what it meant to be free. I felt though, that what happened there was only the tip of the ice berg. The next few days God really started to speak to me and heal me more and more with my past. I spent the majority of that time crying out to God, and in His word. I clung to the Bible, and dug into His word more than ever before. I was so hungry for the truth, that I could not do anything without reading the Bible. I began to understand how such a strong, powerful, and pure God could still love a sinner like me. I understood more the call that God had placed in my life. I realized that God had called me to talk to girls about purity because I now had a testimony of having gone through the struggles of not being pure. God would be able to use me even more because of what I had gone through in my past, with my father not loving me, and with my mistakes from my ex boyfriend. The healing process had started to take place, and I loved it. I began to feel so free, and I began to fall in love with God all over, and I began to love myself, for the first time.

My first year of Masters Commission was all about me knowing who I really am in Christ, and falling even more in love with God, and being able to love myself. I wanted to be the princess of God that I truly am, that every girl is. During my first year, I quickly learned about all of the above listed things, and then began to put them into practice. We were going to a youth conference, and during the youth conference we had a workshop on purity. Pastor Mike and our other director Christine O'Connor both thought I needed to share my testimony at the workshop. This was going to be my first time sharing my testimony in front of both guys and girls, and boy was I nervous! I kept hearing things in my head such as who am I to do this, I can not do this, they'll never listen to me, etc. I knew that they were just coming from the devil and I needed to avoid them at all cost, and not listen to them, and just pray against them, and claim who I really am in Christ. As I began claiming these things slowly but surely everything just went away and the moment that I went out there and spoke out my testimony suddenly all the nervousness, all the fear, all the doubt just left, and I felt filled with God's spirit and love in me. I was relying solely on God and because of that He helped me through and spoke through me and used me to do what He was calling me to do, to speak in to the lives of teenage girls. At that moment I felt once again another tip of the ice burg fall and leave me. After the workshop all I wanted to do was to cry, but this time it was not tears of sorrow, but tears of joy. I had a peace in me and I loved it. For the first time I knew this was the calling that God had laid on my heart. I knew that I was supposed to speak to teenage girls and help them through their relationships, because I didn't have anyone to help me through my relationships. From that moment on all I wanted to do was talk to girls about purity and how they needed to wait on God's time to date.

Last year was not only a year of healing for me but it was a year for me to get out of my comfort zone. I had never gone on a mission's trip before until this past year. The team and I went to Monterrey, Mexico. There we went into the poverty filled area's right outside of Monterrey and we painted churches, cleaned them up, and did a few youth rallies there. We spent a week in Monterrey Mexico and I loved every minute of it. That week God kept on speaking to me. I remember one day I was cleaning the outside of this one church, and all of a sudden this girl comes over to me out of no where and kept wanting me to play with her, she didn't speak a word of English and I did not speak a word of Spanish, but that did not seem to matter, all that mattered to her, was that I would play with her. So I stopped what I was doing and played with her for the rest of the afternoon, and my heart began to break. I realized that here this girl was barely living in a house, who yes attended school, but her parents could barely afford it, yet she was happy. Even when she came over to me, her face just had a glow to it. She was not upset because she didn't have all the coolest and latest styles of clothes, or because she wasn't living in a house, but instead she was happy. Through everything she was or is going through she still found reasons to be happy and to smile. That broke my heart. Later that night when we went back to the place we were staying at I could barely walk, let alone make it up to my room, all I wanted to do was to cry. I had realized for the first time how we (as American's) are so spoiled. Here we are with a nice house to live in, tons of food to eat, nice warm clothes, yet we are still not happy or satisfied with the things we have, and here was this girl who was poverty stricken and was still happy. I prayed that night that God would make me happy with the things I have. That I would never be satisfied in

my relationship with God, but I would be satisfied with the things I had and the things I owned.

Another time that week the team and I had gone to a park to do a youth rally. We got through the first drama perfectly fine, and then came the second one. During the second drama called ragman, we needed to use two stages, because the one was not big enough for the drama. The only problem was the stages were two different heights so we needed to be extra cautious that we did not fall or hurt ourselves. Well, my part came and God healed me of being blind, so I turned and went to the back stage so my part could be over. However, when I was done with my part my leg ended up falling in between both of the stages, everyone thought I had broken it and were starting to freak out. We stopped the music, and after they got my leg out of the whole they checked it, and could tell it was incredibly swollen. All of the kids had rushed up to the stage to see what was wrong, and the team said they had no idea how this had all happened, because before I fell there was hardly any kids there, and when I fell all of these kids that we had no idea where they came from rushed to the stage. I could move it a little, and it was not hurting too much, so I knew it could not be broken, so I told the team to finish the youth rally without me, and I sat down on a few chairs in the park until the youth rally was over. At the end of the youth rally we had an altar call, and all of the kids, teenagers, and adults that were there came up to either receive Christ, or to rededicate their lives! It was a miracle.

After that week of being in Mexico the team stopped calling each other a “team” and started calling each other “family”. We had gone through so much in Mexico that everything had brought us closer and closer together. We had a lot of bonding experiences and grew so much closer together. Mexico was a time in our lives where, God

kept breaking us of different things, and kept changing us. One of our first year guys had gotten really sick in Mexico and we had to rush him to the hospital, because he was not speaking to us, and was breathing very hard. The doctors said he was just dehydrated, but when we came back to the US and he had food in him, and tons of water in him, he would still freeze up, and get these symptoms again. Between his situation, my problem, and the whole team being broken that week, we quickly became a real family. We knew that if anything was to happen to any one of us that the nine other people on our team would quickly be there for us, to help us, as much as they possibly could.

When graduation came my first year in Masters Commission, I was sad and happy at the same time. I was happy because I knew everything that God had brought me through, and I was happy that God had delivered me transformed me. I was happy that I was no longer the person that I came into Ground Zero Masters Commission. I was leaving a different person than I came in as. I was leaving knowing that I was God's princess, and knowing that God had given me a promise that was so strong, and so true. God had told me that I am His princess, and that He loves me, and that I am pure, and whole in His eyes. God had told me that He has so many plans for me, just as it says in Jeremiah 19 "Plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope, and a future." God has so many plans for me, and I could not wait to see how everything was going to unfold. I was sad at the same time though, because I knew that after graduation the "family" was never going to be the same. Some people were going to leave and get a job, some people were going to another master's commission, and some were going off to college, I knew that we would always be a family, but I knew that next year the team would never be the same and that saddened me. However, I knew that God was going to

use everyone so much in every area of their lives, and I could not wait to hear all of the stories about what everyone was doing, and how everyone was doing.

During the summer of my second year I got so much closer to my dad, and we would hangout all the time. Every wed. Morning we would get up early and go to the driving range. I had picked up golf two years ago because I wanted to get closer to my father. After hitting a few balls, we would then proceed to a restaurant and have lunch. Then we would do a little shopping and come home. This past summer we would always spend time together when I did not have to work. My mom had told me that she thought I had a better relationship with my father then with her at times. I felt that because of everything that I had gone through my first year of Masters Commission, that my dad and I had a better relationship because I had truly forgiven him of everything that was holding me back before. My parents were constantly telling me that my second year was going to be one of the hardest times of my life. They said that they both believed I would make it through the year, but it would be by far the hardest year. I didn't understand why they would say that, but I kept praying about this year, and left it in God's hands. I knew that if God was calling me to do a second year, that He would give me peace, and provide the strength I need to get through everything.

I found out that my parent's were right because this was one of the hardest years for me. Within only two weeks of Masters Commission, my father had a stroke, and within three days went home to see the Lord. I will never forget the phone call I received from my mom that night, telling me that my dad had just been rushed to the hospital due to a stroke. It was one of the most unexpected and terrifying calls I had ever received. Earlier that day, my dad was out looking for a laptop for me, because my old laptop had

too many problems with it, and it would cost too much to get fixed. I was talking to him earlier that day, and nothing seemed wrong at all. It was a Sunday that he had gone to the hospital, and everyone at church including my pastor said he seemed perfectly fine, and in fact better than ever. No one expected him to get a stroke, let alone pass away. The next few days were spent in the hospital praying, and watching Him just lie there like a vegetable, only being able to breathe because of being on a breathing tube. My dad had been in the hospital before due to two heart attacks, but since then he had changed his eating patterns, was no longer stressed out, he was better and healthier than ever. When I found out my dad was not going to be able to survive I lost it. I wanted to run away forever, from everything and never return, but I knew that was not going to solve anything. I knew that was not going to heal me from the pain, I knew that would just be a temporary solution to the permanent memory in my life. I called up one of my directors that night (Christine O'Connor) and told her about my father, and she and the director Pastor Mike came out to see me, my dad, and my family. They did everything they could think of for me that week. When my dad had past away, September 5th, all of the second years and staff came to my house to be with me for the day. I realized just how much of a family we all really were. I realized then that what my dad had told me that summer was true; I knew that this was truly going to be one of the hardest years of my life. I had lost my father, who had just recently become one of my best friends. I kept clinging to the promise that I will see him again one day, because he was saved and a Christian and loved God with all his heart.

When my dad past away I remembered one thing that he always told me, and that is how much he loved me, and how excited he was for me to be in masters commission,

attended college through m.c. and getting my bachelors degree. After he had gotten saved he wanted me to make the most out of my life, and wanted so badly to see me go off to college and get my degree and get involved in the ministry. He loved the idea that one day his youngest daughter might become a pastor, or at least have the pastor in her name. When he past away, I looked at him, crying, and told him that I was going to make him proud, and I was going to finish school, and get my bachelors degree no matter what it took. After a few days at home, I returned back to school, with a stronger determination to finish off the year strong, and to see teenagers come to Christ then ever before. I was not willing to just sit back and let life pass me by, I wanted to experience life better then ever before. When the first years arrived Sep. 1st, they all could not believe that this girl who just lost her father was back in M.C. for a second year. I kept telling the girls though, that I needed to make my father proud of me. I also knew that I needed to be healed, and I knew this would be the best place for me to grow, and get stronger again. Satan might have been trying to use this in my life to hurt me and harm me, but I was not going to let him get the glory, I was giving all the glory to God, because now my father is in Heaven, and is healthier then ever before. I continued to press into God, and yes, it hurt and still hurts thinking about the loss of my father, but I had God right beside me each and every day. I feel stronger then I once was because of going through all of this, and I now know that I can survive and do everything through Christ. There have been many times this year when I have come into the sanctuary for worship and devotion time, and all I can do is cry, because it's been a hard few months for me. All of the girls and the whole team had told me time and time again though that they have been so impressed by how strong I have been. I thought for a few months that

I wasn't supposed to allow people see me cry, because I thought that crying was a sign of weakness, but the team quickly told me that it was a sign of strength. Christine O'Connor has told me a few times this year that she has looked at me and has seen God holding me and carrying me through this year. I know I could not have done this past year of Masters Commission if it was not for God. By myself I am incredibly weak and fragile right now, but with God's help I am strong and I am able to get through each and every day.

Another thing that has helped me this year has been scripture memorization. Every week we have a certain amount of scriptures that we are to memorize and then we are tested on them every Tuesday. Memorizing the scriptures has helped me a lot in this healing process because it has helped me to continue to stay in God's word. We also have to do a character analysis, and write a sermon based off of that character once a week. These two things have been a great help to me, because they have helped me to dig into God's word and to go deeper into my understanding and knowledge of the Bible. I have honestly loved doing these things because it has helped me to get so much more out of the Bible. Every week has a specific theme, one will be surrender, the next Submission to Authority and so on, some of the weeks have really helped me to get through and I have used several scriptures that I had to memorize in my every day life, especially when I am depressed and feel like I can not make it through the day, I quote one of the scriptures and I suddenly start to feel better, it is in a way medicine for my soul. Through these things and also the classes I take through Chesapeake Bible College I have been able to heal and become stronger. I honestly think that if it was not for me

coming back to Masters Commission this year I would still be dealing with depression, and everything else that comes with losing your father.

The youth rallies this year have also helped me to get through this year. There has been time when I had the chance to talk to girls about purity even more than last year. In fact, a month ago the team and I went up to New Hampshire to do a youth retreat there, and at the youth retreat another girl and I got to put together a purity seminar for girls! It was so much fun, and I learned so much about myself when it comes to speaking. Earlier I had said when I gave my testimony during my first year of m.c. I just wanted to cry afterwards, well this time I felt the same way. Even before I started to speak, when I was planning everything, and putting everything together I felt so humbled. I was humbled because I knew that God had called me, a person who does not have a squeaky clean past to speak to these girls. I felt humbled because God could have chosen anyone He wanted to speak, and He choose me, out of everyone in the world God choose me to speak to this group of girls. I could not believe I was getting a chance to finally do what I had wanted to do for the past five years now! During the seminar I felt like I was a different person, I did not feel like I was the same old girl that I usually am, I felt different. I could tell that God was using me and speaking through me to speak to the other girls. I was excited because there was a girl in the room who I had talked to for a little bit earlier that day, and she was having problems with her boyfriend, and had made a mistake and knew something had to change, but she didn't know what she should do, so when the girl and I were speaking I was praying for her, that God would touch her, and reveal what He wanted her to do. I did not get much of a chance to talk to her afterwards, but I looked at her a few times during the seminar and it really appeared as though she

was taking in every word that the other girl and I were saying to the girls. After I was done with the seminar I just wanted to go back to my room and pray and cry, and seek God. I was so happy, and so humbled that I didn't know what to do. I knew that I had areas that needed to be worked on and fixed for the next seminar that I would do later that year, but at the moment all I could focus on was God, and His love for everyone, and how He loves everyone so much that He wants to heal us of our past. Knowing what God had done in my life my first year of Masters Commission, and knowing the calling of God on my life, speaking to the girls at the youth retreat was one of the best and most humbling times in my life. It was great being able to say this has happened to me, this is what I have gone through, and this is what I have overcome, and then being able to teach them how they can either avoid the situation all together, or how they can heal from their past mistakes. It was so humbling to me, because in the back of my head I kept saying to myself, who am I to be teaching these girls about purity, I am a no body. However because of my past and how I have overcome my past, God is using me now and allowing me now to talk to teenage girls.

Speaking of purity works shops, God has continually opened up several doors for me left and right this year when it comes to being able to speak to teenage girls. I have gotten an invitation through this one program called "Pure Love Works" which is based out of Pottstown, PA. I ran into them one night at a conference we were helping out with called "Jesus Fest". They had a table, and I saw what they were about, so I walked over to them and began speaking to them more about their program, and everything, and God just kept speaking to me, and showing me how in this program God could use me. He gave me a passion for Pure Love Works, to help them, and work alongside of them this

summer. I have also been given the opportunity this year to speak for our youth groups retreat. Every year Ground Zero Youth Ministry goes on a spring retreat, and they have several work shops to attend. The workshop that I did for the youth retreat in New Hampshire the G.Z youth staff wanted me to do again, so I get a chance to speak for that this year to. I can not believe that finally all of the prayers that I have been praying for my future ministry are now finally starting to unfold. I still feel as though I have another year or two before I fully step out into my own ministry on my own, but I love learning and getting to practice stepping out into the calling God has placed on my life. I love the idea of being able to be the woman of God that God has called and created me to be.

I love being apart of Ground Zero Masters Commission. It has been a hard few years with being on the team; however God has given me the strength to get through everything. I could not even begin to imagine my life if I did not do M.C. There have been times in the past two years, even in the past month or two that I have felt like quitting and giving in, and leaving the team, however that is not what God wants me to do. God wants me to continue pushing on, and to stay in the ministry, until He tells me to leave G.Z.M.C. Through everything from my fathers' death this year, to other personal struggles that I had gone through in the past two years, I can honestly say they have not been the easiest years of my life by far, however with God I have gotten through everything. I constantly quote Philippians 4:13 which say's, "I can do everything through Him who strengthens me." That has been one of my many favorite verses for awhile now, because it's such a great verse to quote when life does not seem to be going your way. I keep saying how hard these past two years have been, but at the same time the past two years have been two of the best years of my life. I have loved being a part of

Masters Commission, and have enjoyed being a part of a “family”, not just a team, but a family. I love the concept of being part of a program that I can get my college education plus being disciplined, and sharpened. I love the fact that now that I have come to Masters Commission I can never be a “normal” Christian. In Masters Commission we always say how we are ruined for life that is so true. I can never be the same person I once was. I do not feel I could possibly be the same person I once was. I have become so hungry and so passionate for God in the past two years that I never knew a person could be. I feel that if I left Masters Commission this year after my dad past away that I would not be the girl that I am now. I would still most likely be dealing with the pain twenty times as much as I am now. Yes, I still would be able to heal from my dad’s death, but it would have been harder for me to heal. From having such a great group of girls, and guys on them I have been encouraged and strengthened each and every day. When I have been weak and felt that I could not make it, the girls have stepped next to me and have pushed me along. I have such a love for this ministry, and this group of amazing on fire for God people. I love this team, this family then I have ever loved anyone else. The team last year was amazing and incredible and I still remain in contact with them, the girls more so then the guys, simply because I am still in master’s commission and can not talk to a guy for another year, but I still remain in contact with them, and love them, and miss them all. Ground Zero Masters Commission has truly transformed my life, and I will never be the same because of this ministry. I will always be grateful for what this ministry has done for me, and how because of this ministry doors have been opened up for my future ministry. God has blessed me through this ministry and God has blessed this ministry immensely.