

Children and Marriage to Mick Taylor

We just received a newsletter from Malawi by email today telling us that our missionary friends who currently work for Starfish Malawi (more later) have adopted another child from that country; a little girl this time, to add to Daniel, also adopted from the seemingly endless number of orphans that are sadly to be found in this very poor corner of the world.

It made me ponder about the many fractured families that surround us all; and how the children of these days are learning how to survive in a world where it seems increasingly that “the love of many grows cold”.

It has been such a massive and overwhelmingly humbling experience for me to minister the love of JESUS to this wonderful segment of society since I have become a follower of HIS – to “suffer the little children to come unto ME”- has become a high joy and privilege. Especially as I have been a conspicuous failure in the parenting department in my own life.

Mick and Rose and the Rolling Stones

Since my first cold-hearted decision at the age of 15 to terminate the unborn life growing within me; and every subsequent pregnancy – the inevitable results of my drug and drink-fuelled sexual immorality –I had put myself first on every occasion. Although I experienced feelings of guilt and remorse at committing deeds which in my heart of hearts I knew were acts of murder; by then I was hardened to a terrible degree by my lifestyle, which I foolishly thought was “freedom to choose”my own way. Yet again, “my own way”!! Nothing had changed since I was 2 years old, and had pounded my little fists on my astonished mother’s knee, while declaring vehemently that, “ I will do what I want, not what you want!” My rebellion against the way of life that my parents espoused, and incidentally, GOD declared was right in HIS sight as well – to love HIM and honour my mother and father; and by the way, I had probably broken all of the rest of the 10 commandments repeatedly by the age of 18 –was having terrible consequences in my life. And I would continue this downward path to the most perilous depths of destruction ,being sucked down in a spiral to the bottom of a dreadful pit of despair, dragging others in my wake, until my miraculous rescue!!

But I digress...in a sense.

Before this culmination of disasters occurred, I had finally allowed one child of my immoralities to live. A very selfish decision, at first. No higher motive, I’m afraid, than the fact that her father was a famous rock star, and I had found a way, I fondly thought, of keeping my position in his life a permanent one. Of course, I “loved” him – he was pretty to look at, played the guitar like an angel, (if that’s what angels do??) And he had loads of MONEY...and he was FAMOUS. As my cynical gay mentor Donald solemnly told me, “Rosemary, you can finally get out of the typing pool”. So I refused all suggestions of a termination, and had Chloe, the daughter of a Rolling Stone. Out of wedlock, of course. It was the “swinging” thing to do. My poor parents – I didn’t give them a thought, as we were splashed all over the front page of

the Daily Mirror – how ashamed they must have been.. Respectable medical people, living in sweet suburbia, surrounded by scandalised neighbours.

Mick Taylor and I were not very good parents. He had his own problems with fame, and drugs, and a very low estimation of himself; and I had delusions of grandeur about myself – and nannies were there to do all the hard work with babies, weren't they??? I behaved like the Queen of Somewhere, lording it over my “servants” – poor girls – and behaving as if my baby was some kind of fashion accessory to be worn on-stage, in planes and limos – sounds familiar??? I also made the mistake of putting Mick's needs and wishes, and my own inclinations of course, before the needs of our daughter. Our selfish lives came first. Which meant late nights, dalliances and affairs, and drugs...and rock-and-roll ... and more drugs...The whole of the period we spent in the South of France while “Exile on Main Street” was being so laboriously recorded was fuelled by drugs. Our nanny's sister was the Roche rep for the area, which meant for us an unlimited supply of the mind-bending drugs that “Big Pharma” had to offer, as well as the seemingly endless supply of marijuana, and pills, LSD and cocaine. Ah, yes – cocaine .To my knowledge, neither Mick nor I succumbed to heroin at this stage – though there were many who did. Perhaps we'd have got a bit more sleep if we had! But the cocaine was the fuel to keep us up and awake throughout the endless nights of waiting for the Glimmer Twins to deign to appear in the basement recording studio. Mick and Keith had their own agendas, it appeared, and all the rest of the band just had to hang around till they put in an appearance. Waiting.... Waiting...every night just waiting....I don't care what other people say, it's a very tough way to earn a living; it certainly took its toll on Mick, and inevitably on me. There are a series of photos taken of us at that period, where two wan white faces are looking at the camera – taken at dawn after another all-night session at Villa Nellcote. So we would sleep all day, and miss out on seeing little Chloe for a great deal of the time. I bet she had more fun than us – her nanny at that period in France was a great girl!! Thank God. I shudder to think what it is like for the children of junkies with no support, no money...no stable parenting figures...

So, with an ever-increasing drug habit, Mick and I tottered on with life. We lived in France, in Jamaica, moved to Los Angeles, Ireland, and finally came back to England. By then we were both irrevocably addicted to heroin. Finally, something else was ruling my life, and with a rod of iron.

Heroin addiction leaves no room in your life, your thoughts, for any other master – it's the boss. Every thing, person, agenda, come second to keeping your supply of the drug as constant as you possibly can; and as it's highly illegal, the drug varies dramatically in strength and quality – you are at the mercy of the dealers and their whims and delusions of grandeur (to rival your own.??). This particular breed of hangers-on, of which there were many varieties, but with but a single aim in life – all seemed to kid themselves that they were an indispensable asset to you – whilst ripping you off mercilessly (often they had their own drug habits to sustain, as extravagant and costly as that of their rockstar clientele). These were desperate days, “waiting for the man” from morning till night, as these guys and gals swanned around in limos at our expense, and kept us hanging on their strings. It's a powerful feeling, I'm sure it is, keeping rock royalty waiting eagerly for your appearance. As I'm sure you can see, the considerations and needs of children were, sad to say, way down the graph of priorities. It gives me great pain to admit this, but I left the care of my daughter to

others, who I knew would do a far better job of caring for her than I could. I was only too aware of my shortcomings, and desperately tried to kick the drug habit; but failed time after time. I could not do it on my own. Nor, it appeared, could the conventional route of detox clinics (we had a season ticket to The Priory Clinic) alternative drugs (legally prescribed), NET acupuncture therapy, or love affairs with pretty boys, offer me a lasting cure for the emptiness inside me.. Even when Mick got the custody of our daughter put into my mother's hands and away from my harmful irresponsibility, I still could not help myself.

Some time later, Mick and I got married, in a last desperate attempt to salvage our family life and health and sanity - we were both injecting heroin by this stage . The whole thing was a complete drug-fuelled fiasco; with Keith Moon falling down the stairs at Tramp, the favourite nightclub of the rich and famous, and other such excesses of behaviour - I am told that I visited the Gents cloakroom, just "because I felt like it" Dear me!!!

I had arrived, finally, 3 hours late, for our reception at this trendy location - after the family registry office ceremony and party had taken place in the country earlier in the day. I remember very little about my wedding; except that I had a little stash bag sown into the petticoats of my antique lace dress expressly to keep my drug supply close to hand, and round my neck a silver cross with a tube bored out of the centre of it, to facilitate the snorting of copious amounts of cocaine.. The owner of Tramp was heard to remark that it was more like a drug dealers convention than a wedding party

The "marriage" lasted a few months, before Mick finally left me, and Chloe, for good.