

The "Old Me"

John 17:4



DAY FIVE



Judy Ortega

My name is Judy Ortega, and I'm a grateful believer in Jesus Christ. I prayed for a church home, and in 2012 I was invited to BCF. I've been here ever since. I glorify God by serving with the BCF prayer team, as a greeter, a seasonal small group leader, a Celebrate Recovery leader, food server, and missionary.

"I brought glory to you here on earth by completing the work you gave me to do."

John 17:4 (New Living Translation)

A few years ago, when I wrote my testimony, it felt like I was writing about someone else. Judy of the past is nailed to the cross and I am not anything like her anymore. The "old Judy" felt unworthy and ashamed. She had listened to Satan's lies and feared people, and was overcome by self-guilt and agoraphobia (extreme or irrational fear of crowded spaces or enclosed public places). "Old Judy" would seldom leave her bedroom.

When my sister and husband died weeks apart, I decided suicide was better than living. God had a better plan. He reminded me of what my mama used to say, "God sent His only Son to die on the cross for you because He loves you. He has victory over death, rose on the 3rd day and is King of King over all creation. Just open the Bible and see how much God loves you." Distraught, and clutching my Bible, I cried out to God. I opened my Bible and read Psalm 139. It reminded me that God created me, loved me and had never left me. I memorized all of Psalm 139 because God spoke powerfully to me through it. I fell to my knees and repented of my thoughts of suicide.

I began to pray to see people through Jesus' eyes, so I could share his love for them. God has led me to serve him as his missionary three years in a row, and hopefully I will be able to go on my fourth next summer. "Old Judy" would never have been able to go on a mission trip. God has given me strength and boldness only He can give.

On Christmas we celebrate God's love for us. Because of His love, the "old Judy" no longer lives, but Christ lives in me. I no longer spend my days locked in my bedroom. God has given me a life full of His people whom I love, and the strength and boldness to serve Him daily in many ways, and yearly overseas.

- 1) Have you given your "old self" to Jesus?
- 2) Do you look to God for strength and boldness?
- 3) Are you glorifying God in serving Him?