

For Eunice

By: Bob Lenz

Eunice was born to a less than perfect family (to say the least), in a less than perfect neighborhood. As she grew, she became the victim of her parents' shortcomings. No matter how hard she tried, she was unable to win their affection or approval.

As a teen she felt her home was no longer a shelter for her heart. Craving to fit in somewhere, she turned to her friends for acceptance. She was welcomed at first, but she found out they seemed to have even higher standards that she was expected to meet: act like this, wear this, be this... She tried hard to live up to their expectations, but she failed once again. She fell heart first into the hands of desperation.

Eunice would do anything to numb the pain of hopelessness and build a sense of purpose. She started drinking and soon moved on to other drugs. She would go to bed with any warm body that would whisper, "I love you," even though she knew it was a lie. For just a moment, she could pretend she was valued and wanted, maybe even needed. Morning would bring back the emptiness and destroy her meager attempts to build a life.

Like a thief in the night, a sense of worthlessness would always creep up on her and beat her to the ground until she seemed to have no choice but to surrender. She was not only born into an environment that delighted in stripping her of dignity, but she bought the lie that she was worthless and based her life on it.

She was ready to give up. She thought suicide was the only way out of her maze of confusion and pain. At that point, a friend at school invited her to youth group. She said, "Come along, we would love to have you." Eunice decided there was nothing to lose. She arrived at church skeptical and alone. She was surprised by the way the other teens enjoyed singing "religious" songs. Since she had never been to church, this blew all of her concepts of what it would be like. This was actually cool!

The youth director taught about love from the Bible. He talked about a love without conditions and acceptance without performance. Eunice thought this was too good to be true! This love promised rest for her soul. It brought a ray of hope to her broken heart, a tear to her eye and goosebumps to her arms.

Could it be true? Could she have meaning and a deeper purpose for her life? Did someone love her just the way she was? These questions spun through her head.

Even though most of the kids didn't know her, three people came and gave her a hug as they introduced themselves. Eunice thought, "Wow! Maybe this is true." Then they broke into groups to discuss the Bible further. She felt excited about all that had happened that night until she overheard the other kids talking in small group. "Did you hear about John and Pete? They were smoking behind the church last week." "That's nothing," said another, "the pastor's daughter was with...and I heard..." "Really?", someone else questioned in shock.. Eunice clammed up; she thought, **"If they knew about my life story, they would never accept me!"**

They went back to large group for a final song and prayer. But this time, Eunice didn't believe it.

After youth group, everyone went out for pizza; everybody that is but Eunice. No one invited her. She left the same way she came... alone. The weariness in her soul seemed even stronger. Now she felt that not even God and His people could love and accept her. Her head bowed in despair and her shoulders caved in. She never saw the car. She was killed instantly. She went into eternity not knowing that anyone was there for her at a time when she could have known that Jesus is always there for us all.

The 4-U-NESS of God

Jesus demonstrated his 4-U-NESS the night before He died. "He took the bread, gave thanks and broke it. He then gave the pieced to his disciples saying, 'This is my body, given 4-U; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after the supper He took the cup saying, 'This is the new covenant of my blood, which is poured out 4-U.'" (Luke 22:19-20)

Eunice represents troubled teenagers across this land. They need the gospel and to hear someone say:

- **Jesus was born 4-U**
- **Jesus lived a sinless life 4-U**
- **Jesus died on the cross 4-U**
- **Jesus rose from the dead 4-U**
- **Jesus is coming back 4-U**

Article written by Bob Lenz, national youth speaker with Life Promotions, a non-profit youth organization instilling hope, worth and value in youth.