**Jennifer's Story**

When she walked into the small Louisiana church for the first time, she cautiously looked around as she gripped her four-year-old daughter’s hand. She hesitantly made her way to the back of the church and sat quietly, thumbing through her Bible avoiding eye contact at all costs. When just as she was wondering if she really belonged there; a warm, friendly woman sits beside her and begins to make conversation with her four-year-old daughter. The young mom is certain the woman notices her empty ring finger and she hangs her head in shame.

As a former, unwed, teen mom, Jennifer Maggio can tell you that many years ago when she began her journey, she didn't know where she fit. Jennifer says, "I was ashamed and fell away from church. For almost seven years, I hung my head in shame. I did not feel like I belonged anywhere. Consequently, I struggled. I wandered around desperately searching for the love of my King."

You see at 19, Jennifer Maggio was pregnant for the fourth time, living in government housing on food stamps and welfare. She wondered how she ended up in this place. Suffering through the death of her mother, years of sexual and physical abuse, and homelessness had culminated into an almost unbearable plight.  How could she take care of her children? How could she survive? The next several years of financial distress, parenting woes, and overwhelming stress led to her crumbling to her bathroom floor one day, certain no one could understand and crying out to the God that she was certain couldn't love her.

But He did! I cannot wait for you to hear the rest of Jennifer’s story this summer. It is the evidence of God’s grace. He redeems, He pursues, He loves perfectly, He heals and He even makes all things new. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 it says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

If you have not met Jennifer Maggio at our past Life Bible Study Rally or at the Oasis Single Moms Conference a few years ago, you will have a chance this summer! We are hosting her ministry conference this year here at Houston's First. Jennifer and I would both love for you and your children to be a part of our time together! The gospel of Christ and what God did in our lives changed these two ordinary girls forever! And we know He will do the same for you! He will! Enjoy church, the SPF ministry and The Life of a Single Mom Conference this summer! You belong here!

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