Phuong's Testimony



A Devil Got Saved

It was January 30, 2012, and there I was in the Orange County jail in Santa Ana, California. It was around 9:00 p.m. This night was becoming the most fatiguing of my life. After the inmates were locked inside their cells for the evening, I went straight to my bunk to lie down and try to fall asleep – just like on any other night. Within a matter of seconds, my bunky, Long (a.k.a. Dragon Ball), poked his head down from the top bunk:
"Wake up, you silly clown," he said to me. "We need you to stay awake to perform a live circus and entertain us. Dude, your behavior is uniquely weird. I've never seen anyone as hilarious as you! A pathetic clown who is worse than a piece of shit! Just keep in mind, you f#!!! weirdo – this is jail, not a mental hospital, so behave yourself."

"That's enough, Dragon Ball," said a tired voice. That was Dat (a.k.a. Datsun) another inmate. He was supposedly sleeping nearby. I saw Dragon Ball obediently lay down. I looked over to Datsun; he was sitting on his bunk, writing on a piece of paper. Without looking over, he addressed Dragon Ball again. "I'd strongly advise you to not disturb that crazy man; he hasn't slept for nearly five days. It's lucky you just got here. Unfortunately, this crazy dude and I arrived here at this cell at the same time last Wednesday; it was after remodeling, the entire unit was empty. Julio, who sleeps on the bunk above me, came a couple days after. He's been sleeping for most of the time. Then you arrived. I, personally, have never seen anyone acting as strange as this crazy man. It was mind-blowing. At first, I thought he was some type of comedian – a five-star actor. Frankly speaking, he had me laughing so hard for a good couple of hours. Now, I feel really stupid. Anyway, I thought he would stop at midnight on the first day; but he went on and on. I stopped laughing as I grew agitated. His behavior was

clearly out of line. All the inmates in the unit have been talking about him ever since."

"Dudes, what are you talking about?" I asked with a grin, amused at how they were gossiping. "Are you guys stupid or what? I'm not even sleeping. I've been standing right here and listening to you guys the whole time. Look at me, idiots." I waved at them.
I found the silence among us a little awkward. They never looked in my direction. I continued, "OK, speaking of crazy, I really think you guys are the wackos who have eyes but cannot see. Whatever, dudes. Do you really think I give a shit about whether you guys see me or not?"
I assumed they were ignoring me, so I headed to my bunk to lie down. Before jumping in, I looked in and was stunned to see my own body already lying there. Confusing thoughts ran wildly through my mind. I stood there rubbing my eyes as I leaned slightly forward, literally staring at my image. Then, I examined my body like a surgeon, making sure my vision was not deceiving me. Shocked, I took a long step back; my helpless body was clearly unresponsive. At the same time, I felt exhilarated about being separated from my body. I came up with an idea.
I demanded my body in the bed to twist and turn and tried to will my eyes to open. Nothing happened. "Wow," I whispered. "This is virtually impossible. How am I still able to see everything around when my body is lying there with my eyes closed, motionless? Man…this is totally awesome. If I had known things would be like this, I might have hung myself a long time ago."
For the first time in my life, the eerie question popped into my mind: "OH MY GOD, AM I REALLY DEAD?" It made my body shiver and I lost my balance. Panic overcame me.

Within the blink of an eye, standing before me was a group of beautiful naked women, waving and smiling at me. I scratched my head, dizzy with thought. What in the world… How could this be possible? This was a high-security facility. How did all these women get in here? As I looked around, I murmured, "What the hell! How did I get here? Was I not behind bars with other inmates moments ago? Where did the inmates go? Man, what is wrong with me? Why are so many strange things happening to me today?"
As I stood there lost in thought, still trying to figure out what was going on, a seductive female voice caught me by surprise. "Hey! It's OK to join us."
Despite my panic and shakiness, my hungry eyes were overcome with sexual temptations from watching the women kissing and groping each other. I mumbled to myself, "Hell, yeah! This is the golden opportunity of a lifetime. Who cares about the consequences? Why not take advantage of what's at hand and thoroughly enjoy it?"
With a smile, I nodded and began to nervously walk toward the women. Before my second step touched the ground, a sinister laugh stabbed me from behind. "Ha-ha-ha!" It echoed in my ears, sending chills down my spine. I froze like a deer caught in the flood of headlights. The sinister voice continued, "Is this what you wish? I will certainly make you a god among these women, but you must worship only me and do as I say."
The temptation reminded me of a story from the Bible. Jesus was fasting in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights on the mountaintop when He was tempted by the father of all lies. "I will give you power and all the wealth in the world if you worship only me."
Right after I heard Satan's deceitful offer, I immediately decided to stay faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ and keep on resisting even if it killed me. I knew Satan was using naked women as a lure to

trick me – perhaps Satan thought he knew me well and that it would be easy to bait a sinful man such as me.

Instantly, I threw myself to the ground, down on my hands and knees. I covered my ears super tight and shouted at the top of my lungs: "Listen to what I am saying, Satan; pay attention to what I am telling you! I rebuke you. I want you to stay far away from me. You and I will have nothing to do with each other, nor will I be tempted by you…Please, my Lord Jesus. All I want is to be in Your Heavenly Kingdom. You said that those who confess their sins and believe in You with their whole heart will be with our Father in heaven. With my whole heart and all my soul, I genuinely believe in You. Please forgive me for my dreadful sins. I am truly sorry my evil heart has never been righteous. Your merciful blessing, I desperately need You now more than ever; I do not wish to stay behind here with Satan!"
While I was praying, I was completely unaware of my surroundings. Then, all of a sudden, an incredible force swept me away through the air at lightning speed. Fearful, I squeezed my eyes tightly, and my entire body was trembling uncontrollably. At first, I did not want to believe this terror was real; I thought this kind of horror could only take place in dreams. I forced myself by saying, "Please be calm, Phuong! No need to panic; hurry…wake yourself up…snap out of it like you did before when you had nightmares!"
In that moment of crisis, I was determined to do everything I could to snap back to reality. Within seconds, I realized it would be pointless; no matter how hard I tried to calm myself, this was not a dream. I knew then that my fate was to face the harsh punishment for having lived as a sinful man.

During that darkest journey of my life, my fear intensified rapidly with each passing second. Not knowing what lay ahead, I felt as though my mind was slowly being ripped apart. Paralyzed with fear, I wept like a little boy. All that remained in my conscience was the determination to cling to my faith, constantly seeking mercy from God.
I confessed to the Lord a long list of my evil deeds – I had been living a life of hypocrisy, knowing I would only produce pure evil from the heart, especially robbing people, including my friends and family who had loved me so dearly.

At one point, even though my mind and soul cried out in fear, curiously, I opened my eyes slowly and took a quick glance at my surroundings. What I saw below me was an ocean of calm, blue water that surprisingly filled my soul with terror. I instantly closed my eyes, quickly opening them again to see if there was any land nearby. There was not a single object in sight. I squeezed my eyes tightly again, begging the Lord for forgiveness as my fear continued to rise.

Time passed. I still did not know where I was. Once again, I opened my eyes and was frozen with fear. Directly below me, I saw a massive pit with violent flares of fire. As I continued to reflect, I looked back. For some reason, the blue water was still right behind me.
When my eyes were closed, I thought my final moment had come; this was the end where I would burn in the pit of everlasting fire. I shook my head constantly, crying out to the Lord even louder: "Please not here, Lord! I am just a common thief. I do not deserve this harsh punishment. Why is it that every time I open my eyes, the situations keep getting more chaotic? Can't You see that I am already scared to the depth of my soul? Please Lord, do not consume me into the hell of fire. Please

give me one last chance. I swear I will stay sincere forever; punish me if I ever sin again!"
Right after I made the promise, for reasons unbeknown to me, I began to slow down. I opened my eyes and threw my hands toward the sky, shouting with happiness: "Thank You, Lord, for saving a worthless person like me!" I was overwhelmed with joy. The feeling of having my composure back was indescribable – a lifetime's worth peace of mind. As soon as my mind stabilized and my eyes focused, a gigantic, grayish mountain slowly came into view. As I went around the mountain, my entire body felt like a feather. Amazingly enough, I slowly began to ascend toward the heavens.
Looking down, to my right, I saw uncountable men and women indulging in a ravenous orgy around a river. Then, noises of people screaming forced me to look over to the left. At first, I did not know what all the chaos was about. Focusing my eyes so that I could see more clearly, I could not believe what I was seeing – people were climbing on top of each other's shoulders; they were trying to build a human ladder.
My gaze fixated on a woman; she was falling from above. A man extended his arm to catch her, screaming, "Hurry, grab my hand, try not to fall down and keep on building until we reach the top!"
It was heart-wrenching to see the woman screaming in pain, as she continued to climb back up. However, I was following my instincts, choosing not to feel sympathetic for those lost souls; my instinct was telling me that when they existed on earth, their hearts had stayed loyal to one singular thing – Satan's spell. Now, their fate had been sealed – the wrath of God had been unleashed upon them.
For the very first time in my life, I heard a very gentle voice. It was clearly coming down from heaven, saying, "Your faith has saved you, whatever you ask, you shall receive."
Immediately, I lowered my head and said, "Thank You, Lord, for saving a useless person like me."
Then I asked the Almighty Lord for permission to go visit my father in hell, and He permitted it without hesitation. I praised the Lord. Then, I snapped the fingers of my left hand; but I realized my other hand made a clearer snapping sound. Thus, I disappeared with a snap of my right fingers.
Miraculously, I found myself standing at the entrance of a pitch-black cave. "Wow, Lord!" I exclaimed. "Your divine power is truly beyond human comprehension. Thank You for blessing me with my desired request."
Startled, to my left was a guard sitting with a book on top of a table. "Excuse me, sir," I began. "I have come to see Dong Lap Nguyen." The guard picked up the book, skimming its pages, and said in an unfriendly tone, "Go!"
Once again, with just the simple snap of my fingers, I was standing before my father. Shocked, I saw him pacing back and forth behind prison bars. It brought me pure sadness to hear his agonized voice as he cried out over and over again—"Where am I…Where am I?"
"Dad!" I shouted, immediately causing him to stop pacing as he tried to figure out where my voice was coming from.
"May I ask…" I began nervously, "do you remember having a son named Phuong Lap Nguyen when you were on earth?"
"Yes, I do remember." He nodded. He replied with obvious discomfort, having a hard time figuring out where my voice was coming from.
Excited about seeing my father for the first time in a long time in nearly three decades, I pounded on my chest several times and said, "Dad, this is me. I am your son!"

"How did you find me?" he asked sadly, still finding it difficult to see me.
"God granted my wish come to see you, Dad." My father did not say anything; he was looking to the ground. I continued, "Dad, you should have known from the moment you saw yourself out of your own body that you had the ultimate chance to repent for your sins. But why, Dad? Why did you continue to cling on to the immoral temptation and let Satan trick you and snatch you away? All you had to do was reject Satan's temptation; you would have been automatically saved, just as I was."
"I had too much water in my system," he responded. "That was why I had forgotten all about the Lord."
There was a moment of silence. Letting out a long sigh, I continued, "Dad, I will never desert you! You still have me, your son. I am going to do my best to ask our Lord that He may set you free from this life of real misery and torture."
I could tell by my father's voice that he deeply regretted falling into Satan's devious trap. Even to this day, I have never understood what my father's statement meant – "I had too much water in my system."
After the short visit to my father, I was curious about what the inmates were doing back in their cell; the cell where my body still lay. Another snap. I found myself standing in the same place where I was not long ago. Looking around slowly, I heard an inmate say, " Look at this f##!!! weirdo. His eyes burst wide open, lying there looking up with a dead stare. He scares the shit out of me and makes the hairs on the back of my neck stand up."
I chuckled at the inmate's statement. I knew I was invisible and that no one would notice my presence.
Shortly, I grew bored of lingering around and decided to go back to the place from where I had previously risen. Before departing, I took one last look around and said, "Farewell everybody. Make me disappear now from this complicated world."
Once again, I was rising slowly to the heavens just like before. This time, as I looked around, I noticed other souls rising as well. There, down on my left, was an extremely remote desert with an unimaginable number of people standing in a straight line, waiting for their turn to build the human ladder. A moment later, I once again heard a voice coming from heaven. "Your faith has saved you. Whatever you ask, you shall receive." Giving thanks to the Lord, I asked, my finger pointing to the human ladder. "What are those people doing, my Lord?"
"They are trying to build a stairway to get up here," He responded.
"Will they ever make it, Lord?" I asked.
"Never!" The Lord said.
"Pardon me once again, Lord. Will they ever get hungry? I asked since I could see nothing around except hot steaming sands.
"These ignorant people are desperately trying to attain salvation," said the Lord. "They have forgotten about all their needs."
"Oh, I see. Thank You, Lord, for answering all my questions," I said with sincere gratitude.
A few seconds passed. Then, a voice I had heard before said from the heavens, "Your faith has saved you. Whatever you ask, you shall receive."
I praised the Lord, gave Him thanks, and asked, "With Your consent, my Lord, please permit me to my previous life so that I may share with my brothers and sisters the revelations of after death that I

have just truly witnessed."
"Go, if that is what you want!" He said in the tone that I perceived to be almost disappointed. Astonished, my eyes were now wide open. The first thing I did was pinch my cheeks and forearms to see if I was able to feel pain.
I nervously looked around to see what my cellmates were doing. All the bunks appeared to be completely empty. After I finished washing my face, I laid down and walked myself through what had just happened – a fear that could never be erased for the rest of my life. Recalling my supernatural journey down to its last detail, I came to realize that my father was corrupted by darkness. For this reason, my father had not been able to see me but had only been able to hear my voice. I was very sad for my father; my tears flowed faster than my heartbeat. Afterward, I felt exhausted, which made me fall asleep fast.

I was a conniving master manipulator, a deceiver, a cold-scandalous con-artist, and a cowardly bastard who did not deserve to live! If you want to know more about my unspeakable sins, read a full version – A Devil Got Saved – to understand my lengthy career in the criminal playgrounds.
Satan is the father of all temptations, as is known by all. So ask yourself this – Can you resist the ultimate temptation that Satan has been waiting to send you, which will take you directly to hell upon your death? Truth is the greatest tool in life. I have personally witnessed it. It is all described inside… It would be my honor to walk you through my experience; perhaps it might help you as well.

Contact Facebook/adevilgotsaved
or 480-395-9409

Anna: Deliverance from Marijuana



Marijuana Opens the Gate to Demonic Realm. Jesus Saved Me Testimony

As a believer in Christ, I would like others to experience His the most amazing love. If God could forgive me and save me, He can do it for anyone.

My Life Before Christ

I was born into a non-Christian family. My parents worked hard to give me a good life. At the age of 14 I started to rebel. I started to smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol. I was sure my looks was everything I had. I stole my mother's gold jewelry. I was having sex with people who didn't care about me. I was young and naive, I didn't have any experience and right guidance to show me that I was doing bad things. In college, I was mostly focused on looking good and partying. My life was filled with sadness.

How I Came To Know Jesus Christ Personally

In my early twenties I started to smoke weed a lot. I became interested in channeling spirits, spirit mediums, 3rd eye opening, chakra cleansing, one love consciousness, basically New Age movement. Those things are very dangerous. Combined with drugs can open a person up to spiritual/demonic attack. Drugs create weaknesses in the person's mind, allowing demons to enter. I knew I was doing something wrong smoking all that marijuana since my mother begged me not to. I didn't care, I kept smoking and talking to spirits.

Once I took a hit of weed I found myself in another plane of consciousness, different frequency world

where communication is made by thought, telepathically. It's the feeling where you do not see anything but FEEL the presence in the room. One morning, I felt really bad, I couldn't keep my thoughts straight, I felt completely as if other beings entered my own, I called my mother and told her

"Mother I lied to you, I was smoking marijuana a lot, take me to hospital"

I had voices in my head I couldn't control anymore. My sister helped me to pack and while we were on our way to the hospital I felt COMPLETELY possessed. No other word can describe that. I threw myself on the ground and started screaming uncontrollably, many people gathered, I was aware of my behavior but I couldn't stop. I no longer had power over my body. My sister cried asking me "Anna, sweetheart what is happening, Anna" she thought I was dying. I was experiencing the biggest torment in my whole life, I was yelling Jesus help me but all I heard was those demonic spirits doing anything they wanted with me. I instantly knew even subconsciously, that my involvement with the spirit realm was something very wrong. I later found out what God says about contacting the dead that it's forbidden for our own good. Ambulance was called. I was transported to a mental hospital where I spent one week, got better, was released and moved to another city to live with my mother for some time. Sadly, I didn't learn my lesson and accused her of everything.

Then one night, after an argument with her, I fell asleep and woke up surrounded by evil spirits mocking me, telling me I would burn in hell, I was a spirit in that dream, I didn't have a body, I woke up terrified, and for the second time in my life I felt other spiritual beings entering me. Those feelings of terror were so profound I couldn't stop them. I had no control over my mind. Those 2 demonic attacks, made me change. I realized I was acting like a spoiled child, not giving my mother the respect she deserved. They made me realize that there is hell for sure, Satan is alive and so is Jesus Christ. Satan lies to you, makes you blind. I was afraid I would burn in Hell so I started to go to Church. While I was preparing for my baptism I had a chance for the first time in my life to get to know who Jesus Christ really was. I realized He died for me, so I could be saved. I asked Jesus into my heart.

My Life Since I Became A Christian

The day I asked to receive Jesus Christ into my heart, all of a sudden I felt some beautiful force entering my mind, so beautiful I wanted to cry. I heard words

"I forgive you."

It was a Holy Spirit. I felt amazing peace afterwards. God knew my heart, he saw my despair and fear and my trying.

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

I am a living proof that no matter how bad you sinned, if you truly are sorry and with all your heart you seek Christ you will be forgiven. Put your pride aside, don't be ashamed, kneel down and confess

your sins to God in Jesus Christ name just now, and He will hear you. God wants to forgive you, you just need to give Him a chance. That day I decided to follow Jesus Christ for the rest of my life. He truly gave me a new heart and new eyes. I no longer put looks first. I am looking for my worth somewhere else that is in Jesus Christ. I saw how greedy I was in my past and prideful. I loved material things. I was sure I was a sinless, innocent baby, where in reality I was committing so many sins on a daily basis. That is how Satan fooled me and closed my eyes so I just couldn't see.

I believe God let me experience demonic/spiritual attacks to open my eyes and to warn others. If that didn't happen I would still smoke marijuana and mess with spirit realm. Please remember that any drug that changes our consciousness opens the gate to demonic activity. I am more than happy to answer any questions annamalaak at gmail dot com

Video version of my testimony

https://youtu.be/erSxTwaU6-I

Tajma's Testimony



Who I Was

I was Born in 1987, and ever sense I was born it was a fight for my life, you ever heard the saying All of my life I had to fight, well for me it was literal. I was fighting to be born, my mother was abusive

relation with a man that was secretly beating her behind closed doors nearly died when she was 7 months pregnant from a Brain anyerisum and the devil tried to take ME out. But the lord was Not going to let me die because of it they were able to save me after I lost 2 minutes of oxygen and they were able to save me they THOUGHT I was dead but I SURVIDED, and my mother only survived 4 days after that and she NEVER saw me because she never woke up.

Her great aunt was so moved by the lost and after court cases and family strife. She took me away from all that and she raised me as her own, and the devil kept coming after me, I was bulled all through school pushed accused abused knocked down, but I got back UP. And I kept getting back up.

When great aunt died that when I sank…

I wanted to die
The devil tried to get me to commit suicide 7 times at this point, [pills, fire, mental depression] the devil wanted me BADLY never to see the promise in my life I spired down, I found out I was adopted for a YEAR I couldn't claim the name that I life with my whole life because none of my documents were in order, and there was another name on my birth certificate and I felt RAPED of my Identify because I didn't have a secure understand of who I was.

I ended up in the wrong relationship with man that wasn't even sure whether he want to be with me or a man, so my security in being a woman was challenged, I was going to clubs with him I was Drinking {Not our of control} but I was in spiral that I didn't understand because I was chameleon and just adjusted to what ever anyone else wanted out of me I had no clue who I was and I was LOST so badly that when anyone asked me what I though or what my opinion was I didn't have one. I lost ME.

My security was in things and in people and I had no thoughts of my own because I didn't trust myself and I quickly learned these people I surrounded myself with only wanted what they could get from me or get me to do, I didn't know how to recognize it, I did see it I was Blind until… I met Him

When I found Jesus
He had been coming after me my whole life, My aunt use to pray with me as a child she taught me the LORDS prayer at 5 or 6, she would pray at rimes but I rarely saw I, I can remember going to church a hand full of times when I was a kid.

- One time when I was young
- My dad's baptism
- Maybe a Easter Sunday
- In 2005-6 in my great uncles home town
- And meeting a friend there in my early 20's

God was calling me, but I wasn't ready to obey, I would pick up my bible here and there and try to read it but I couldn't get into but each time I tried I would read a little more, but I remember my parents were divided on Christianity and there beliefs and there churches my mom wouldn't go to

church with dad so I was a mommas girl so guess what… I didn't go to church.

But what brought me to Christ I remember God had stripped me from everything, no job no money no friends and I was doing NOTHING everyday but sleeping and messing around on social media and I reach a point around the 5 time the devil came to try and take me out I was having visons and reams of burning it down I wanted to set the house on fire and walk away and never return I wanted take a bunch of pills and end my LIFE. And I called out to god and I PRAYED for help and I felt the weight come off me and I got up one day and said "I'm done" and I knew to stop, Looking top chasing after what everyone else wanted stop… and figure out who I was and I could only do that with him so I was done doing it my way it was time to do it his way. His way…. I gave it all to him and that when he started to do it. for me.

When I gave my life to god My life changed.
I began to read the word, and rough I didn't know what I was doing I just did it… and at the time I started to follow people online that were about business, and at this time I was meditating {I didn't know any better} I was praying to god
• Ask god for what I need
• Seeking god for series of things
• Knocking

I wrote a card [this is important] I wrote on that card what I wanted "to be HAPPY" something simple and what I thought would be happiness defined by me. I wrote that list of how I felt my life was supposed to be. Then he started to work in me. He started leading me to people that had me do activated that would cause me to write and release ALL the pain all the suffering all the things I had been carrying for years, and at the time I was seeing a therapist and every time I wrote our bunch of things out I would take them back to her and she would work them out and walk them out with me, when her job was done she was gone.

I started going to church and separating myself from people and going to spend time with GOD and letting him talk to me. And I learned how to hear god, and I recalibrated myself to understand what my inner voice sounded like as the holy spirit started to work on me, and that when I did my first 40 day fast. And when I came out of that experience I gave every thought Idea and perspective of my life to god and I grew and I gave my career dreams to him and not long after that I wrote. And that when I figured out my ministry and what god wanted out of me and he took the list I wrote about what I wanted and he took that and he started to have me build on that. He had prophet prophecy to me what it is that I was called to do and I RAN for that and EVERYTTHING came into order. Every gift, every talent every desire god gave me a plan for streams of living water he gave me a business, he gave me a career he gave me EVERYTHING I asked for.

• Books
• Scripts
• Missions
• Business and non-profits and corporations

EVERYTHING on that list he gave me and LAST he gave me something I wasn't concentrating on, he gave me knowledge of the NEXT relationship that will be filled with kingdom an purpose for what it is that GOD want to birth out of me in the coming years and I KNOW this is ALL because I gave my LIFE to God instead of ending my life. Even though my life has not become PERFECT god is still working and I can see him in myself and the people he has put around me the thoughts the Idea's and the joy's even the sorrows, he was IN it all

In the END, there is No end it is a BEGINNING, I am only starting, and I have created a business around HOW I came out, and I use every talent, every skill and everything I went through to help people and lead people out of that Place where they want to die and into their purpose and how to FLY. So come to Jesus and see how he will truly CHANGE your Life

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Kylee's Testimony



My name is Kylee and this is my testimony.

I grew up in a Christian family. I always knew there was a God and I knew I was supposed to follow Him. My family went to church every Sunday and Wednesday unless we just couldn't make it. When I was about 9 I "gave my life to the Lord and repented."

I really thought I had gotten saved then till 4 years later. I realized My life wasn't going how God wanted and planned it to go. I lied all the time I did things I shouldn't have and I did things I knew I wasn't supposed to. I treated people how a Christain person shouldn't treat people. Then I went on a

mission trip to South Dakota with my church Salem Heights. When we got there i went into it with a strong Godly filled heart and it was a 11 day trip and about 3 days in they asked a couple people to share there testimony's.

As people began to raise there hands i started to think what would say if i had to give mine? I asked myself do I even have one. I knew in that moment I wasn't saved because I didn't even have a testimony. What could I make up to make people believe I was actually saved that is what I kept asking myself.

I couldn't help but to think about that the whole trip. I couldn't help but to hope no one called on my name to share cause I didn't have one…I knew that if someone just called me out and asked for me to give my testimony i wouldn't be able to do it.

Then half way through the trip maybe about day 7 the youth pastor asked what repentance was and to be completely honest I had no clue.

I was in the shower one night there and I thought back to when "i got saved" But, I only got saved cause it was what was expected from me cause everyone in my family was saved but me so i felt pressured. I just broke down and cried my eyes out in the shower. That whole time I have been lying to not only myself but to my family to my church and also to God. The one that loved me so so much he gave his son to die for me and I tried to lie to him. (John 3:16) I got saved in the shower and told my mom and pastor asap.

My life has changed completely since then and I wonder all the time if I would be where I am today if it wasn't for that mission trip or these people? I have become a new person, I read my Bible more I talk to God more and I tell others about God more.

I got asked a question the other day at church it was Have you changed from the day you got saved to now? The answer was yes I am a new person.

You could be to so my question to you is are you a better person than who you were before you got saved? If I asked you right now what was your testimony could you tell me? (ROMANS 8:28)

Christopher's Testimony



My testimony of what God can do

Past time and Future time
Life of hard knock may I say
A church goer, A god believer, A Bible reader
A boy scout seeker, Summer camp doer
Camping time, Travel time, With my family time

So many stories of my life
Don't know where to start
A rough childhood of mine
So many choices, So much crime when I was kid
Never listen to my family, Ran away so many times I did
Stayed in school so I did,
A mother who loved me
And forgave me for the mistakes I did

So much fighting to surviving
So much crime I did, Crime never pays
So many lessons I learn, So much time I severed
Two and half years for the time of my crimes
One chance to change my life or 7 Yrs of prison time
At the age of 14 that was

Turned to God who saved me and changed me
No more crime, No more time, So many lessons learned

When God gave me a second chance at life
Stayed in high school until I was done, Not good grades I had
But I graduated anyways, Walked away from my faith
Because I thought I could do it on my own

So many jobs I had, So much money I made
Left home to live on my own
Joined the caravel made money, good money in the games
Made many friends, So many drugs I did
So much traveling, So many miles, So much road trips
Hard work of five years I did But hooked on drugs I was

So many times I tried to quit, So many rehabs I did
Flushed my drugs down toilet, Gave God all my life for good
He saved and healed me from my drug life
He set me free and I let God lead me for eternity
2007 was the year I was healed

Moved to a new city
A new city, a new start, So scared I was,
Knew no one from the start
But homeless may I say, So much fear in me
But I prayed it lead me the way,
Not knowing where to go anyways

Fifty dollars in my pocket, Nowhere to stay it was cold that day
A few pairs of clothes, A tent and a blanket I brought to stay
Found a tree where I stayed for 6 weeks of my stay, in my tent I lay
Without God, I wouldn't have survived
Got a job, Got on my feet, Not homeless no more
But no fear I am able to live anywhere
But God is by my side everywhere
Because God blessed me with a new life from all the drugs I did

So here I am a new person in God, Many new changes
Freedom for life from all the drugs I did
New friends and family I made
So many stories I have told
So many lessons I learned

By Christopher Scott

Jim's Testimony: Oh But for the Trees

Forward

I remember a day way back in the 1970s when our family was riding in the car on the way to a weeklong summer vacation in Washington, D.C. On this lovely summer day, my father was driving, and I was riding in the back seat of our Ford Galaxy wagon. We had a long conversation about how various mechanical things worked. Since my father was a high school science teacher, he knew a lot about things that interested me. His explanation was always preceded by just one simple word from me: "Why." I remember that after at least an hour of this discussion, my father started to become agitated as he would explain something, then I would ask "why" again. This led to an endless conversation spiral that my father soon terminated!

I began to understand that without making some rather basic assumptions of truth, nothing in the world was possible to explain. Consider this the next time you try to explain to your child why an apple came from an apple tree or why up is the opposite of down!

During my studies in mechanical engineering at Western Michigan University, I frequently encountered many concepts that initially baffled me. I spent countless hours studying the textbooks and attempting to solve the example problems to understand the concept being taught by my professors. One of the fundamental differences between what I studied in engineering school and what I learned in church was that I initially accepted the engineering concepts as accurate. When I first sat down in the classroom in front of my highly educated professors, only later on did I set out to prove my initial assumption of truth regarding what I was being taught. This was not the case with my beliefs in God. I approached my religion on the basis that even if God existed, He was under the burden to show Himself and prove it to me with no effort on my part!

Later, I set out to study the validity of God and the Bible. During this time, I came across a Bible verse that, in retrospect, I consider paramount for readers of this testimony who are seeking God for themselves. Just like I did in engineering school, I decided to accept the fundamental premise that this particular verse was true. Then, I proceeded to further prove this assumption. After I had done that over several months, I concluded that my assumption of truth was indeed correct.

I ask the reader to read the following Bible verse and accept the basic premise that it is true. The verse is in the Apostle Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians:

Study Notes for the Sunday Mass Published by Christians for Christ Ministries. We are a non-denominational Christian ministry that seeks to encourage and facilitate Christians in studying the Holy Scriptures. **"For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus."** 1 Timothy 2:5

"But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them."
II Corinthians 4:3-4

Have you ever been deceived? Has anyone ever pulled a fast one on you?

The basic premise of the passage is that an evil spiritual leader has the ability and has exercised this power to blind the minds of people whose souls will eventually perish because they do not believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This concept of good and evil is a pervasive concept throughout the Bible. The Bible records that the name of the spiritual leader of the evil forces is Satan, also known in this verse above as "the god of this age."

This takes me back to my spiritual journey that began in the spring of 1998. Even though I thought that I was a Christian, I rarely read the Bible. Even when I did, I was incapable of understanding it. My church told me what to believe in terms of religion. Because of this, my relationship with God was very impersonal. I viewed the people who showed personal love for Jesus as hypocrites and religious zealots! This is how the spiritual leaders in Jesus' time viewed Him!

I pray that through the reading of this testimony you will develop the spiritual vision to allow you to see the forest but for the trees.

Jim

Part One

In the Forest

I found myself single in my middle thirties, just another member of the human rat race. I had a good job as an engineer at Ford, excellent health and a very good life. I need to mention one more thing – I wanted revenge for some folks that had harmed me in the past.

In those days my heart and soul were not in a lot of things that

I did. I did not look at life as a blessing, rather I did things

pretty much just for me.

I was very selfish. This had led to the breakup with my girl-

friend Jeanie many years before. After that,

I focused on worldly things.

I began windsurfing, and traveled around the world to have fun.

I went to Hood River Oregon and all over the US to windsurf.

I went to Hawaii and to the Dominican Republic.

I went to Barbados, Martinique and Cancun.

- bought a boat and learned to water ski.

- learned to snow ski, and snowboard.

- visited most of the major ski resorts in the US.

- started lifting weights.

- learned to fly and bought my own airplane.

- went to church on Sundays, because I felt an obligation. When

- left the service, many times

- felt very good inside, like

- had done something for God, that I had earned His favor. But,

- drank lots of beer and developed an affinity for dirty movies.

- strived for success at Ford, and enrolled at the University of

Detroit – Mercy to earn my MBA. My heart was in the world.

- I was religious.

- I was not a bad person.

- I never hurt anyone.

- I went to church every Sunday. One more little thing:

- I didn't realize that I was lost living a worldly life and on the road to Hell.

There seemed to be a common theme in my life – **"I"** am certain of that! Let's go back a few years to see how I got into this position.

In the Beginning

I was born into a family that provided me with a very blessed life! My parents were hard working schoolteachers in western Michigan who also owned a family farm. They loved and provided very well for me and my five brothers and sisters. They even paid my way through college. My parents looked after my every need. I enjoyed learning how to work on the farm, and loved the county life.

I was raised in the Roman Catholic Church. Both of my parents were also raised there. At an early age I attended church religiously. Right from the start I did not like the Catechism classes. When I was unable to avoid attending the class, the Catechism teachers tried to drum their doctrine into my mind. But for some reason my mind simply did not allow them to do this and their words fell on deaf ears! This made my Catechism teachers angry. They taught a method of reaching up to God through a complex system of good works, church attendance, and sacraments. Their methods were very authoritarian, and it was clear that they did not enjoy what they were doing. It was as if they were robotically following a rigid script.

Grade School Years

During my grade school years in the local public school, I was a pretty normal child. I enjoyed playing outdoor sports and began writing stories about a couple of characters I called the City Mouse and the Country Mouse. I liked letting my mind wander and pretended that I was one of these characters! I got a lot of time for that to happen in church each week and at Catechism. The other kids in my class used to love to hear me read these stories.

Something came along that made my story writing stop, never to resume. The City Mouse and Country Mouse were lost forever! What, or rather, who could cause such a sudden change in my life? I was not a bad person. I never hurt anyone. I went to church every Sunday.

Beginning in the fourth grade things began to change at my school rather suddenly. Although I did not think that I was a bad boy, it seemed that my teachers did. This was especially true of my fourth grade homeroom teacher Mr. Williams. This teacher began to use all kinds of creative techniques to break my spirit. Although I do not think that this was his intent, this was the effect that it had on me. I began to think that I was a very bad child! This was back in the days of corporal punishment and small indiscretions were met with terrible public punishments. Often I was forced to stand on my tiptoes and hold me hands on a line across the chalkboard, which was barely within reach. After several minutes, I would begin to get tired and my hands would begin to drop below the line. Under the supervision of my teacher, this would be met with further punishments, like public spankings or being forced to write sentences with degrading phrases like "I am a monkey." He would assign this simply by writing the word "monkey" on the board with a name next to it and a number indicating how many times this would have to be written. Then we would write these sentences in chalk on the board. These punishments were dished out on kids that exhibited outgoing behavior and were done in front of everyone as an example to the other children. The quiet kids that just went along with things, and all of the girls, avoided these punishments.

The torment and humiliation by Mr. Williams went on for a full year, and other teachers like Mr. Sanders continued for another two years. During this three year period I was taught that I was a terrible child. During this time I learned to hate myself. And it seemed that when I went to church things were not much better since they taught me that I was a good person only if I was perfectly nice and did good deeds to make me righteous.

I am certain that these teachers felt that they were helping me. I am also certain that they were probably treated the same way as children. But how could I ever forgive what these terrible people had done to me? Who would even believe me, since by then I really knew that I really was a terrible person?

I remember that there was a man there that was the assistant elementary school principle. This man seemed responsible for much of the chaos. One of his first actions was to paint a yellow line down the hallway. Any kid caught crossing that yellow line would meet tremendous punishment. Another step that he took was to impose speed limits on walking. If you walked too fast you were met with immediate punishment. There were endless rules for everything. When I returned to my homeroom, I was met with additional torture from Mr. Williams! What was worse was it seemed that the teachers would caucus about us because we were such "bad kids." And to top it off, when word got back to my parents that I was a "bad kid" in school I was met with additional punishment at home.

I never really tried to tell my parents about what was occurring, since I thought that they would not believe me. When I finally did attempt to tell them, they listened in unbelief. This resulted in a lack of respect for my parents and others in positions of authority. Then I would go back to Catechism and hear people in positions of authority speaking lies. When I went to church on Sunday and get further confused by the ceremony whereby I was supposed to better myself with God by sitting in a church pew. I knew that I was a loser so sitting in church did not make things any better for me. I was caught in an endless cycle of pain from which there seemed no way of escape!

There was one factor that made my experiences more difficult during my middle school years. This was that my brother and I watched each other going through the same troubles. When one of us was suffering, due to the protective nature of being a sibling, both of us would suffer! So we both had things doubly bad! Both of us hated Catechism, but my brother was stronger at going along with the program, so he got in less trouble during it than I did. It is difficult for me to relate the extent to which my brother and I were harmed by the treatment that we received in school and Catechism.

During the sixth grade I began to see a light at the end of the tunnel since Junior High was approaching. My life became very difficult during these years but began to return to "normal" towards Junior High. Whereas my elementary school should have prepared me to meet the challenges of Junior High, I entered this phase of my life traumatized.

I was not a bad person. I never hurt anyone. I went to church every Sunday.

Junior High

In Junior High, my experiences at church further validated my beliefs that I was a loser. This was because everything that I was taught there revolved around things that I HAD to do. Somehow I managed to do all of the sacraments and the other things that the church said would bring me to Heaven later on when I died. I did the religious "works" for the sake of pleasing my Catechism teachers and my parents. I tried as hard as I could to meet their religious standards to become a good person, but no matter how hard I tried I always came up short!

I found myself absolutely dreading the weekly Catechism classes. The material was boring, the teachers were mean, and I felt absolutely no love from these people! Many times the teachers removed me from the class because I did not go along with their program. By that time I knew that I was a terrible person! This reminded me of the treatment that I had received back in grade school from Mr. Williams and the others. I filed away in my mind a long list of grievances against these terrible teachers and principals! Someday I knew that I would get even with them!

I found out later that my Catechism teachers were teaching religion rather than Christianity which is not a religion but is instead a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

High School

My experiences in high school were much better than what had happened during my earlier years. I still knew that I was a terrible person and not worthy of anyone's affection, but I had begun to realize that I could make up for this by clowning around. I started having fun by behaving very crazy, to get the attention that I greatly longed for. Attention that I needed to validate myself, to make me feel I was really an OK person. I longed for someone to sit me down and help me to heal from all of the things that had happened to me over the years in that useless middle school!

Along came my band teacher Mr. Wheeler. I began to experience great joy in aggravating this particular teacher! I pulled all kind of jokes on him. I remember one prank especially well. I knew that when our concert band class was over, Mr. Wheeler would lock the room and go to lunch. So I proceeded to make a slight modification to the door jam on the rear door of the room. I simply turned the lock plate backwards and upside down. Because the hole for the striker was offset, the door latch had nothing to engage into. So if the door were closed it would not latch. My friend and I waited until class was over, and then watched from down the hall as Mr. Wheeler attempted to slam the door. When he slammed it, it bounced right back open! It was hilarious! Mr. Wheeler didn't think so. There was never too much proof of who actually did these things. But both of us knew.

After a few years of this, Mr. Wheeler quit teaching. I know that I was at least partially to blame for this.

College and Beyond

During engineering school at Western Michigan University, I met Jeanie who was studying at Southwestern Michigan College to become a nurse. I accepted a job with Ford in Dearborn, Michigan as a product design engineer. My girlfriend Jeanie stayed behind to finish up school. We attended Mass together on Sunday since I traveled home to visit her every weekend. Having been raised on a farm in the country I was not into the big-city life. So I worked Monday through Friday and escaped on weekends back to my parent's farm and my girlfriend. My heart was just not in the hectic life that I was living!

No Report Card on My Life!

My life went along well, but I had a void in my heart. This is rather hard for me to describe. Nothing major happened in my life that caused me to reflect on how I was living. I never had one of those life-changing moments you hear about from others that went through hard times, like having someone close to them die or having a heart attack themselves. I remember back when I was in school that I would receive a grade report every semester. Later on at Ford I received a performance review every year. But in my personal life, I never received any kind of report card at all. It would have been possible for me to live my entire life in an extremely unsatisfactory manner,

die, and not even know the score.

I always hoped that somehow God would just sit me down partway through my life, and then I could be given a chance to fix things before I went too far down the turnpike of life. I knew that I had not lived my life for God, and that I had made many bad decisions. There was a void in my heart. I deeply wanted a loving, all-powerful God to let me appear before Him like on the popular 1970's television show "This is Your Life" and tell me something like as follows.

> "This is your life Jim. I have called you here to give you a chance to set your life back on track – to tell you where you have done good and bad in your life. You have exactly 37 years, 7 months, and 4 days left to live. I love you Jim and want the very best for you. This is the story of your life."
> Imagine then, that this loving and perfectly just Spirit told me what I was doing that was right and wrong, and gave me a plan to fix things to His satisfaction. Then I would have the remaining portion of my life to live according to what He wanted me to do! Oh how I longed for that! Nothing like this ever happened. I watched several people near to me suffer divorces and mid-life crises, including a male friend of mine that left his wife and moved in with a man. I began to feel like I was wasting my life away. Years and years went by…….

I was a good person.

I went to church on Sunday.

I never killed anyone.

I did not steal.

I helped my parents on the farm.

I worked hard at my job.

I lived my life and didn't harm anybody.

Revenge

Back in my middle thirties where this story began, I was looking to blame some people from my past for the problems that I was experiencing. Specifically, I blamed my elementary teacher Mr. Williams. I starting having thoughts and even went so far as to mentally plan taking revenge for what Mr. Williams had put me through back in fourth grade. I began to think about how I could even the score with him, to get even for what he had put me through. Even though these violent thoughts never went beyond the fantasy stage, it was apparent that I had deep-seated anger against this man. I was not a bad person. I never hurt anyone. I went to church every Sunday.

And yet now Mr. Williams and all of the other teachers and principals are forgiven, forever. How can that be? I wish them nothing but the very best. What happened to make me change my mind?

This was my state of mind when my brother starting making some changes in his life.

Brother Where Art Thou?

Before I tell the story about my brother, I need to state that he was the one that was instrumental in helping me to set my life back on track. It was through the struggles in his life that helped to guide me towards the truth. I am deeply indebted to him!

My brother was always an extremely hard worker – a workaholic really. He never really had any hobbies – his work was his life. Due to this, he began to seek methods of taking relieving some stress in his life. He was a very religious man back in 1994. He went to church every Sunday and often attended weekday church services at the local Catholic Church. At this time, I was living with him in Ann Arbor, Michigan when some of his new friends started coming around his house. My brother was living a rather extravagant life and bought a fancy new Mercedes convertible. In the

fall of that year he told me that he wanted his freedom so I moved out of his house. I found a place in Royal Oak, Michigan and moved away. This led to a string of events which resulted in him selling his home and moving to California. A few months after that, he moved to south Florida.

One evening in early 1997, my brother was traveling from Florida to Michigan for a visit. He was driving his new Mercedes in downtown Atlanta on northbound I-75 when a very strange thing happened. His steering wheel suddenly slipped from his hands and his car changed over one lane to the left. He told me that he was very surprised by what happened, but immediately after this there was a stopped car with no lights on in the lane that he had just vacated. The cars behind him slammed into the car, and he dialed 911 and continued on his way. He was saved from certain death or serious injury due to this miracle!

Have you ever had any strange events like this happen to you? In my case, this event made me reflect on my life. Maybe there were other forces at work?

My brother returned to Michigan that summer and spent time back home on my parent's farm; lounging, recovering and far away from the pressures of his work. Later he returned to work and moved into my condo in Royal Oak. Gradually he began to stop his party lifestyle and turned his life around.

What caused my brother to begin to make these changes in his life? We found out together that we had been deceived. But how were we deceived? We were not bad people. We never hurt anyone. We went to church every Sunday.

I Was the Master of My Life, Right?

I just knew that I was "better" than my brother. I did not use drugs, ever, not even once. I was in control of my life. Even though I didn't have a grand vision of what I should accomplish in my life, I still felt like I was in control. Why couldn't other folks get things figured out? Still, there was this nagging in my heart. Maybe I was not in such good control of my life as I thought.

I always thought then when a person died, God would judge them based upon their good works outweighing their bad works. I found out later, that this was incorrect. My brother was deceived in that he thought he was doing OK by dabbling in the fast lane and living a worldly life so long as he went to church on Sunday. He also thought that he would be granted entrance into Heaven because of faithfulness in going to church. I believed the same thing – that even with all the bad things in our lives, our good works evened out the score with God.

Brother to the Rescue

In early 1999 my brother approached me with some interesting material that he found on the web. He emailed me the link to the web site, and I quickly read the material. The web page was: http://www.cuttingedge.org/salvation.html. I carefully studied the information that they presented on their web page entitled "Salvation" and was very intrigued by it. My opinion of the rest of the site was that it was a bit far "right." But at that time, I was pretty far right also! In fact, I attended meetings of a gun-toting people's rights group called Justice Pro Se of Michigan. So, I read and studied the site very carefully! This far out stuff was right up my alley.

I was very puzzled by the information on the website, and began searching for everything that I could read about salvation. Shortly thereafter, my brother came to me and said that he had accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior and had been "born again." I was confused. I thought that only "good" people were guaranteed entrance into Heaven, that it was something that we earned. I wondered how my brother, a man who still occasionally dabbled in the party scene, could be "born again." I started searching for the truth. I found more information about Jesus on the Internet. I bought a dusty old Bible at a used bookstore on Woodward Avenue in Royal Oak. Here is some of what I found in my search.

"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

I always knew that I was a sinner, but I thought that due to my good works and church attendance, God would just kind of overlook my sin. I thought that what was really important was how I treated people – the Golden Rule.

I wondered how I was standing in terms of my self-imposed standards of righteousness. What was troubling me was that my church attendance had started to become more infrequent. And I knew that I was very selfish and did not treat people as well as I should. Truly, I did not do very many good works for anyone. On this basis I knew that I according to my own standards I was doomed! I began to wonder where I stood according to God's standard.

Then I came across another passage:

"For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

It started to become very clear to me that without some other method of getting rid of my sin, when I died I was going to be left with it. I asked myself, if God is Holy, which means separate, or apart from sin, how can I enter into His presence in Heaven when I die? For how could a perfectly just God overlook my sin? If He let just a little bit of sin into Heaven, would that be perfect justice?

I came across a story later on that helped me to understand the concept of justice. Let's say a person committed a terrible crime, and went before a judge saying that they were sorry, and would never do it again. Would justice be done if the judge simply let them go free? No! Sin demands punishment, and I knew that I was guilty!

I continued seeking and came across more verses in my old black King James Bible.

"Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14:6

"Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is **born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3

"Assuredly, I say unto you, unless you are **converted** and become as little children, you will by no

means enter the kingdom of Heaven." Matthew 18:3

There was that term again – Born Again! Converted? Was I born again? Converted? I purchased and read the book The Case for Christ by Lee Strobel. After that, once again I opened my Holy Bible and read both the Gospels of Mark and John. I started to understand that I had been deceived by Satan – the god of this age, the master of deception. I was deceived into believing that in order to go to Heaven, I had to earn my way there. Earn it by going to church, doing good deeds, by becoming righteous. I knew FULL WELL that I was not "born again." In fact, the Bible told me so!

"Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you are disqualified. But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified." II Corinthians 13:5-6

Was I "born again," or "converted"? My parents cautioned me about not judging people. On the other hand, the Bible said that we needed to judge ourselves – our eternal destiny was at stake here. Was I "born again"? No, I was not. Was I really blinded to the truth in the Bible? I suspected that I was, since ever since I was a child in church, none of it ever made any sense to me. In fact, reading it made me angry! I came across the following verse in the Bible that made this clear to me.

"And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has **blinded** the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." II Corinthians 4:3-6

Slowly I began to understand, and my eyes began to open. I started to understand the excitement that I saw in my brother. Shortly thereafter, my sister Kathie called and said that she had undergone a change in her life. She told me that she had prayed to accept Jesus as her personal Savior and Lord. I wanted what my brother and sister had! I was not sure how to get it though. I kept studying and reading and asking questions. I wanted this faith that they were talking about.

I found a verse that said "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans

10:17). I found more information in my Bible:

"…that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." Romans 10:9-13

Doubts and Orthodox Jews

After reading and studying all of that Biblical material over and over again, you would think that I would begin to become enlightened. Instead, the opposite happened and I began to have doubts that God even existed! I began to wonder if it was like one of my employees told me, that God was just a fairy tale.

Looking back to the spring of 1998, I had long since left Ford. I had just left my job as an engineer at an automotive plastics supplier and joined my brother's software consulting company. This company was so small that one of my first tasks was to locate some office space for him. I was fortunate to find a small office in Southfield, Michigan, which is home to many Jewish people. During my drives to and from this office I would see Jewish people walking with their funny hats and long coats. These were of the orthodox variety, which wore plain black and white clothes and had long beards.

Then it finally hit me. These were the same Jews that my Bible was written about! This was validation that there was something real to all of this. Here thousands of years later I doubted that they existed, and yet there they were walking directly beside me on Ten Mile Road in Southfield, Michigan!

Was God Calling to Me?

I began to believe that God might be real. It was at this point that I decided that if God was real, He was going to have to reveal Himself to me. I said a heart-felt prayer, saying "God, how have You revealed yourself to me in the past? I need this answer Lord to believe that You are real." Very shortly thereafter, memories of strange things that had happened to me over the years returned.

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." Hebrews 11:6

In the spring of 1999, I traveled to Beaver Island with my now Bible toting brother. It was there that I found time to reflect on everything that was going on in my life. During and after this island getaway, God revealed to me four specific cases where he had shown himself to me. One of those is too private to share. Let me tell you that this first very private revelation all by itself was enough to convince me that God existed! Someday I may share that, but for now I would have to shoot you if I told you! We wouldn't want that, so here are the other stories in which God directly showed me that He was real in my life.

In the first story I had lost a very valuable part on my car. This was during a very stressful time in my life in which I was attending college at WMU in 1983. This tiny part was a spring from inside the car stereo, my link to enjoyment and an escape from the cruel reality of engineering school. The car was a 1977 Ford Granada that we had just bought from my aunt. While attempting to repair this stereo inside the car, an extremely small spring went flying across the cluttered farm building that I was working in. I was heartbroken, since this was my only time that I had time to fix the stereo, and this part was so small and unique that there was zero chance of getting the nice Clarion brand stereo working again. So, I put my hands together and prayed "God, I am having a hard time in my life. I am struggling in school. Please show me where to locate this spring." I was near tears during this prayer. Immediately, I was compelled to leave the car and go to a certain spot in the BACK seat. Now, this was the very LAST place that I would have looked, since I knew the spring had flown across the vast wasteland of my dad's farm building. My eyes were led to the exact spot where that spring was lying. I thanked God for the miracle. I proceeded to install the spring on the next try. The stereo worked great, at least until three years later when my little brother crashed into another car that was stopped inspecting a lost horse along the street!

In the second story I almost did something very, very dumb. It was sometime around mid-1996. I was going to work on my airplane; a Cessna 172 that I had just purchased. Remember, I said that I have lived a very blessed life! It had a fuel drain fitting on the left fuel tank that was stuck inside the threaded hole. I thought that I would just take my electric heat gun and apply a small amount of heat to loosen the fitting. I was in my garage in Royal Oak, getting ready to head out there to the airport where the plane was. I wanted to make sure the gun was working, so I plugged it in and heard the familiar fan sound, and a very hot stream of air coming out. In the past I had used this very heat gun and accidentally started fires due to the extreme heat it produced. In fact, the outside of the heat gun had already been melted. It was working just fine. All of a sudden, the heat gun flew out of my hands, across the room, and onto the concrete floor of the garage. I just knew that when I plugged it back in that it would be dead. I did, and it was. I read the label on the side of the gun. It said, "Red Devil." You see, I have always believed in God. I just doubted Him at times. And I knew that this was a miracle. So, I prayed and thanked Him right then. I don't think that I went out to the airport that night!

In the third story I was preparing to fly my Cessna 172 from New Hudson, Michigan to St. Louis, Missouri to visit a Ford Motor Company assembly plant. This was sometime around the summer of 1997 while I was working as a product engineer at an automotive plastics company. Back in those days before the Word Trade Center attack, I was allowed to fly my airplane during the course of my business as an engineer. I recently had obtained my instrument rating and was still learning about flying in bad weather. I packed my clothes and checked the weather before leaving my home in Royal Oak and driving out to the airport. It was the classic dark and stormy night with light rain falling, and the weather was worse in St. Louis with large areas of thunderstorms. I had a very uneasy feeling about this trip, but I really needed to go to St. Louis to check on the launch of the new power steering reservoir that I had designed for the new Ford F250/F350 truck. A thought ran through my head as I was packing the plane and getting ready to taxi to the fuel pump that I should pray. I remember that I prayed asking for a sign on whether I should go. As I taxied the plane to the fuel pump, all the instrument panel lights suddenly burned out and the panel was completely dark except for the lighting inside a couple of the radios. Once again, I recognized the sign from God and thanked Him right then! I am certain that had I undertaken this flight that I would have flown into thunderstorms and become another aviation statistic.

The common theme that runs throughout these stories is divine protection from God. I found a verse in the Bible that explained this. In this verse, the author of the book of Hebrews was discussing angels.

"Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?" Hebrews 1:14

This simple verse had momentous implications to me. If God had indeed utilized guardian angels to protect me, this verse stated that I would inherit salvation. And I was learning that the "salvation" came through faith in Jesus, and this meant an eternity in Heaven with God.

The verse on angels made me reflect on other people whom I knew had experiences with divine intervention in their lives. I knew of two people that had such an experience. The first was my brother while he was driving in Atlanta, and he was a born-again Christian. The second was my former girlfriend Jeanie. Looking back to 1986 her story is as follows.

Seeking Good Works

During this time in my life, I began to seek opportunities for helping other people. Since I owned an airplane at the time I volunteered for an organization called AirLifeline Midwest. This organization provided a service to link qualified pilots with their own aircraft with medical patients requiring transportation to medical facilities. The patients need for transportation was predicated on the basis of financial need. I found out that when people develop a long-term illness, many deplete their financial resources while dealing with the disease. Additionally, many desperately ill patients desired advanced medical techniques available in locations far away from their homes.

Over the course of the next several years, I was fortunate to be able to provide many flights to patients and their family members all over the Midwest and Great Lakes. I began to feel a sense of fulfillment in serving others. This was occurring at the same time that I was learning about God's plan of salvation for mankind.

But some things were troubling me about owning an airplane. I found that many people identified me with the airplane, or with my windsurfing, or other things that I did. In a way I appreciated being the worldly superstar, the pilot of a fast airplane, traveling the country to windsurf. But on the other hand, I began to realize that I did not want to be remembered for these worldly things.

Would my good works get me into Heaven? I was not a bad person. I never hurt anyone. I went to church just about every Sunday. One more little thing: I was lost.

What Didn't the Church Tell Me?

I was taught, and always believed that my good works would get me to Heaven. I thought that when I died, God would see if my good works kind of outweighed my bad works, and then he would let me into Heaven. This was what both my church and my parents taught me. When I finally looked in the Bible, the one that many people died to preserve, I found out that my good works by themselves would not get me into Heaven. In thinking that my good works accounted me worthy before God, what I was forgetting was Jesus. Why did Jesus have to come and die if I could earn my way to Heaven? My parents were confused about this too. In the Bible, Isaiah said that "my righteous deeds were as filthy rags before the Lord." (Isaiah 64:6) I also found out that the primary teaching of Islam was judgment on the basis of works.[1]

I looked at more verses in the Bible.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: [it is] the **gift** of God." Ephesians 2:8-9

"Not by **works** of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Titus 3:5

I asked myself this question: If someone offered me a gift, then I went to them before I accepted it and told them six reasons why I had earned the gift, would this really be a gift? I asked myself, would the person giving the gift be insulted by the inference that I had earned it? Is Salvation a gift? Could I earn it? If so, how was I doing? Was I good enough yet? The authoritative source, the Bible, said that I could not earn it, and did not deserve it.

I kept on studying.

"Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me." Revelation 3:20 (Jesus speaking)

I began to realize that up until the present time I was on the "Jesus Plus Plan." I had a temporal belief in Jesus, a purely intellectual knowledge in contrast to having a heart knowledge of Him. To this lukewarm belief I added good works, going to church, and being a good person. In effect, I was adding to what God had said that I must do to be saved from Hell! Revelation 22:18 was pretty clear that doom awaited anyone that added to the Word of God:

"For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;" Revelation 22:18

This really made me start to think. The Bible told me that I could not be saved from Hell by doing good works or upholding traditions. If being a good person would not get me to Heaven, was I doomed to Hell even though I still went to Church?

Born Again

It was in the fall of 1999 that I finally realized that Jesus had died for my sins, as a substitute, and that He was the only way to Heaven. Salvation was a gift from God granted once I believed in Jesus.

"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

"Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14:6

I remembered what I had read in the Old Testament Bible about the Jews sacrificing lambs during the Passover. It finally hit me that Jesus was the final sacrificial Lamb, the Lamb of God, whose blood was poured out upon the cross at Calvary. Jesus said that I had to open the door – He would knock, but I had to accept and believe upon Him as my personal Lord and Savior.

Up until then, I had "**I**" trouble. I did this to get to Heaven. I did that to become righteous; or my own god. Everything was about me. In fact, I had rejected the Lord Jesus. So I took a step of faith and accepted Jesus as my Savior and Lord of my life.

"Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:3

I finally figured out that it just came down to FAITH in Jesus – the Jesus of the Bible! It began to be very clear to me that I needed to trust in what Jesus did on the cross for me NOW, before I died. I believed that Jesus died for my sins, was raised by God, and was in Heaven. I believed everything in the Apostles Creed that I prayed out loud every Sunday. But I just knew that I had never actually trusted in the Lord Jesus ALONE to save me.

What Being Born Again Meant to Me

After I made the commitment to accept Jesus as my Savior and Lord, I began to slowly yield my will to Him. I began praying to God every day and throughout the day. I came to realize that God would accept even a sinner like me through the sacrifice that Jesus made for me. I began to place my faith in what God was doing in my life and others around me, rather than what I was doing. Even though I had always respected the Bible, I began to read it daily, especially the gospels of John and Mark. I stopped praying repetitive prayers, as was clearly opposed by Jesus on the Sermon on the Mount recorded in Matthew 6:7. God began to show me through His word to yield my will to others rather than my selfish, worldly interests. I began looking for others that believed in the saving power of Jesus as I did.

After this I began a thorough search for a church that believed as I did; in the truth of God's word found in the Bible. I attended various churches over a period of six months or so and finally selected a non-denominational Christian Church. I liked this church because even though I was a Catholic, I was accepted right away. People were nice to me, and I found many other Roman Catholics were there!

My Performance Review from God

After this, I realized that the fact that I accepted Jesus as my Savior yielded a kind of ongoing "performance review" with God, through the Holy Spirit. This is very hard for me to put into words. Almost at once I lost the very sad feeling that I had, that my life was a waste, that it had been in vain. Once I began yielding to the will of God, I realized that Jesus died for my sins ONCE, and that the Bible said He was coming back to the earth again in the very same way in which He left. I realized that I had been deceived by the trappings of RELIGION.

In my mind not even my little brother had told me the truth about God and Jesus, although he had known it since he was 16 years old. In fact, after he had read this testimony letter, he told me that he had indeed told me about Jesus Christ. Yet somehow I did not listen.

The Bible says in Galatians 4:16 "**Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?**" He did tell me – even though he knew that I would get mad. I would rather that someone be angry with me in the short term, than to have them hear the following verse which Jesus said as a warning to RELIGIOUS people, like I used to be.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in Heaven. Many will say to me in that day 'Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" Matthew 7: 21-23

Was I Really Better Than my Brother?

Was I really better than my brother? No! The reason that I thought that I was better than my brother was what God calls pride. God hates pride (Mark 7:22), and I had major dose of it! I developed this pride by going to church, by doing good works for the flying charity, and by trying to earn my way to Heaven. My pride was one of many sins that I asked the Lord to forgive me of after I came to faith in Jesus Christ.

Before my decision for Jesus, I thought that I had total control of my life, when in fact; I was on the road to Hell! Two years after I accepted Jesus, I recognized that I was relying more upon Jesus as my Savior than as my Lord. I knew from the Bible that the two were inseparable, and that I could not claim the promises of Jesus without yielding my will to him. I realized that my human nature to sin was still very much with me, but that I had Jesus as my ally in fighting the temptation. Without Him I was unable to resist these temptations – I was locked in a constant struggle with sin! It was at this point that I confessed some secret sin in my life to one of the elders of my church. I found victory in accepting Jesus as my Savior, but I had to yield to his authority as Lord.

With Jesus' victory on the cross for all sin, all of us can be victorious! And what's better, we don't have to earn it. We only have to believe that God forgave all of our sins through the death of his Son Jesus. Once this acceptance is made, we are "born again," even if we don't have a spectacular feeling when this happens. In fact, in the third chapter of the Gospel of John, Jesus said that we won't have a feeling when it happens, since it is not something that WE are doing, rather the act of the spiritual birth is done by God. Many people come to faith in Jesus and then pray a simple prayer like is attached to the end of this testimony.

Forgiveness

At this point in my life I was able to forgive all of the people that had harmed me over the years. I forgave Mr. Williams along with the other teachers in my middle school. The act of forgiving these people provided a great sense of freedom for me, and a happy retirement for Mr. Williams!
Post Script: As of 2024 he is suffering with dementia. May the Lord have mercy on him and reach him through my Savior Jesus.

What about Mr. Wheeler? Would he ever forgive me for what I put him through? Whatever became of him? I found out that when he left his teaching job at my high school, he had married a lady named Linda from my hometown. Later, he enrolled and completed Bible School, then became an associate pastor at a Bible believing church in Indiana. He has a large family and is doing very well.

I was fortunate to be able to located Mr. Wheeler in the summer of 2000. I am very sorry about the way that I treated him, and he has forgiven me. You may find this hard to believe, but Mr. Wheeler and I are now friends. I have been blessed with several opportunities to visit him since I came to

faith in Jesus. Through Mr. Wheeler I have been very fortunate to meet many of his wife's relatives from my hometown.

If I can locate the other teachers, I am going to send them a copy of this testimony!

How Could I Have Been So Deceived?

How could I have been so deceived as to think that I could earn my way to Heaven? Let's look at some passages which show the facts on this.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: [it is] the **gift** of God." Ephesians 2:8-9

By definition we are saved by grace through faith. The Bible says that if we call upon the name of the Lord (Romans 10:13) then God gives us spiritual discernment, leading to a certainly of Heaven. By definition we are saved by grace through faith**!** That is the only way that we can know that we are! And the act of saving us cannot be earned since Jesus did it on the cross for us. This is explained in the following passages.

"And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace." Romans 11:6

"I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!" Galatians 2:21

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified." Galatians 2:16

Study Notes for the Sunday Mass Published by Christians for Christ Ministries. We are a non-denominational Christian ministry that seeks to encourage and facilitate Christians in studying the Holy Scriptures. **"For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus."** 1 Timothy 2:5

"For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt." Romans 4:3-4

Can a Christian presume, or be certain that they are going to Heaven? This is clearly explained in the following verses.

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God." 1John 5:13

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me **has** everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. "John 5:24

I know according to God's word that the only true church is the group of believers known as Christians, the body of Christ. I know that when I die, I will be reunited with Christians from all around the world and from all of the different churches in my hometown, whether Catholic or Protestant. But I also know that I had to answer the knock from Jesus. Mere church attendance did not make me become a Christian. This came through a personal acceptance of Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

Is God Calling You?

Have you recognized and accepted Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior? What this comes down to is your relationship with the person known as Jesus Christ. Why did Jesus have to come and die? The following verse explains what Jesus expects us to do when He calls us.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Revelation 3:20

When Jesus calls us, He expects us to listen to Him by reading His word in the Bible. Second, He expects us open our hearts and receive Him, which means a surrender of the reliance upon our good deeds or religious works for salvation.

William Faye, a popular evangelist had this to say about the other ways in which people think they are earning their way to Heaven.

"Kind of think of it this way. In my left hand is every religion other than Christianity. And they all make two consistent claims. The first claim they make is that Jesus is not God. The second claim they make is that some effort on your part; could be diet, terrorist acts, good deeds, can get you from earth to Heaven. Now, Christianity, which we will call my other hand, says two opposite things. It says that Jesus is God and that God had to come to us – we can 't get to Him. Know one logical fact; two opposites, both can't be true. Now they both could be wrong, but they both can't be true. I'll admit that if my left hand is true, it doesn't matter which of those religions you are, because they are all saying the same thing. And I'll admit that my faith would be in vain. But I am wondering if all of them would be as honest to admit that if Christianity is true, that their faith is in vain."[2]

The Bible in the book of James says "faith without works is dead." James 2:17

James (me!!), Chapter 1, verse 1 says "Works without faith is death."

"There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death." Proverbs 14:12

You see, our works will never remove the sin from our life. Our works will never erase this debt with God; it was something that only God could do. The Bible was clear that God was the one that was calling me to faith in Him. It was not something that I could earn; it was something that I had to accept. Once I accepted it; I had to let God be the Lord of my life.

"Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3

In looking at the physical and spiritual births, I could either be born once, and die twice, or born twice, and die once.[3]

"… so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many." Hebrews 9:28

The Jews, and other "religions," still practice in ways that they believe will make them righteous before God. As a Christian, I know that the only way that I will be declared righteous is through what Jesus Christ did for me by dying on the cross. This free gift of salvation was offered to me, but until I actually accepted it by responding to God's calling placed upon my heart, I was LOST! The fact that I was "born again" did not come automatically through my church attendance. I had to recognize the calling that God has placed upon my heart and accept Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

"By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified." Hebrews 10:10-14

Are you being called by God? If you died today, would you go to Heaven? If your answer is yes, then I beg you to honestly ask yourself why would God let you in? If you say something like "because I am a good person, I go to church every Sunday, I have done good things for my family, I have never hurt anyone, etc.," according to God, you would not be allowed into Heaven on the basis of your good works alone. This is what God tells us in His Word, the Bible. Would you like to be absolutely certain of going to Heaven? Are you willing to take that step of faith and accept the free gift?

What if you don't go to church – are you lost forever? NO! David Berkowitz was saved in prison. He used to be a Satan worshiper and mass murderer.[4] One of the criminals on the cross next to Jesus was saved, and he didn't attend even one single church service to earn his way there – he was too busy dying. It is not too late for you. This is a free gift which you cannot earn. All that you have to do is answer the call from God and believe that the blood of Jesus washed away your sins forever.

Frankly, most people just never hear the message of salvation. They never listen, and they never seek. They never get that mid-life "performance review" from God. They just go to their graves

simply hoping that everything will be OK with their souls. Or that their religion will save them. Or they die suddenly and just never get around to it. Many plan on "repenting on their death beds" so to speak.

Do not rely on wishing. Don't rely on what just your priest or Catechism teachers have told you. Test everything you are told against the definitive source, which is your Bible and not your feelings. Feelings lie, but God does not. You may feel that you accepted Jesus as your Savior, but do you remember this happening, or have you just always gone to church and thought you were saved? God determined the plan of salvation, not any church or religious institution. Do not assume anything, your eternal soul is far too valuable to entrust it to someone else. Rely upon God to save you.

How important is your eternal soul to you? Our lives are but a vapor and all of us will be gone soon. If you believe that Jesus died for your sins, and recognize that you need to accept Jesus as your Savior, turn to the end of this testimony to the INVITATION section.

The Teacher that Cared

Since both of my parents were teachers, many times I have heard stories about a certain teacher that positively impacted a person's life. My father had many people approach him over the years telling him that he was this teacher. My father was a very special teacher and I was fortunate to have him teach me many science subjects in my very own high school!

Earlier in my life, another teacher really put her arms around me and gave me a head start. This was my first-grade teacher Mrs. Locke. Mrs. Locke had a reputation for being very stern. This was verified my older brother who had her for his teacher several years before me. But right away she had a way of accepting me, even though I was kind of a hyperactive child. I had a speech problem which made saying words with the letter "R" difficult for me. Oh "Weally" you say! Mrs. Locke showed me great love and allowed me great latitude in my learning. She showed me special attention in teaching difficult concepts. And she allowed me to sit on the heating radiator when I had my work done!

Mrs. Locke had no way of knowing that since she showed me such special love, that this would carry

me through some very hard times in elementary school. If it were not for her kindness, I am very certain that things would be much worse in my life. And since I was contemplating taking revenge prior to accepting Jesus, things may have been worse for those that harmed me also.

I was able to tell Mrs. Locke about this during a time when I spoke at a church in Decatur, Michigan. You can listen to what I spoke about by following this link:
Jim Speaking at Decatur First Reformed Church – Christians for Christ Ministries

Post Script: Chris Locke went to be with our Lord and Saviour in November or 2021.

Kettle Point

Since I came to faith in Jesus Christ I have had several milestone events happen in my life. One of those was a trip that I took in the summer of 2000.

It was just after church on a breezy Sunday afternoon when I decided to travel to a place in Canada to do some windsurfing. Kettle Point was a place on the southern end of Lake Huron that was rather famous to windsurfers for having very large waves on windy days. This day was no exception and the waves were forecasted to be ten feet tall! Even though it was not normal for him, my brother decided to ride along to watch. In fact, I can never remember another day that he had gone windsurfing with me.

After the hour and a half journey there, I had an excellent day riding the large, smooth waves in the bay. Just before I was going to stop for the day, I came in for a brief rest. Then I decided to go out for one just more run. My brother was sitting in my truck reading due to the high wind and blowing sand. I had a very uneasy feeling as I was carrying the windsurf board back to the water. I was compelled to pray very hard for God to keep me safe on this final run of the day.

As I proceeded out into the bay where the largest waves were crashing into a bowl-shaped area to the east of the beach, I made a turn on the face of a very large wave. This was like heaven! Suddenly, my sail separated from the mast base on the board that sent my board flying one direction while my sail remained in my hands. Meanwhile the large wave that I had just finishing turning on

crashed overtop of me with my sail! I let loose of my sail and soon realized that I was drowning. For a brief instant I hated to let go of my equipment but quickly decided that the equipment was replaceable. Even though I was wearing a short wet suit, I was unable to float in the bubbly water caused by the constant crashing of the waves. I got very tired in my attempts to grab small amounts of air in between the waves. I knew that I was going to die right there, with my precious brother only a half a mile away on the shore. Once again, I began to pray.

I began to visualize my dead body washing up on the beach. This was very real, and is difficult for me to put into words. I visualized my body from a viewpoint some distance away, above me.

As I was fighting for my life in Lake Huron that day, I made the vivid realization that God was in control. He was the Lord of the universe! Somehow during the events of the past several years, I missed that point. While I was drowning, I surrendered my will to God. I accepted that He was the Lord of my life. I had accepted Jesus as my Savior, but I had never really surrendered my will to God as my Lord. This was made clear to me while I was dying that day at Kettle Point.

Somehow, I came to realize that if I pulled on my wet suit, I could create a small air bubble in my chest area that slightly increased my buoyancy. Also, I saw a white flag on a small floating buoy a few yards away. And there were some jet skiers in the area. So somehow, I managed to swim over to the buoy and break the fiberglass rod attaching the flag. This left me with a two-foot-long mast with a flag attached. Between the huge waves I was able to wave the flag. After about five minutes of waving, I had still not moved any distance towards the shore, although my board and sail had long ago washed away. I continued to pray, and as one of the jet skis approached, I was spotted and rescued. I walked back up the beach praising God to tell my brother the amazing story. My equipment washed up on the beach a few minutes later in perfect condition except for the broken mast base.

Later that evening at a restaurant in Sarnia, Ontario I had my first meal as a truly "born again" man. And although I am much more careful while windsurfing, I recognize now that God is in control of my life.

Why Did I Write This?

A few days after Christmas in 2002 a good friend of mine passed away due to a sudden heart attack. Greg Trojan, who was only 48 years old, had a wife and three daughters. This caused me to reflect even further upon my life. I asked myself "What is the purpose of my life?" My answer was, "To serve God and testify what He had done for me." Then I asked myself, is that what I have been doing for the past several years? What areas in my life do I really need to take a look at? Should I be sharing my testimony with more folks, so that they too can be transformed from the selfish person I was, into the more generous Christian that I am now?

Let me relate one final story that my little brother told me just after I came to faith in Jesus. Many years ago my little brother accepted a challenge in his Bible study class at the Bible church he was attending. Everyone was asked to select the most difficult person that they knew to pray for in accepting Jesus as their Savior. He was asked to pick a person that was so wrapped up in the world that they would require an absolute miracle from God in order to come to faith in Jesus. My little brother selected me and prayed for many years. His prayers were finally answered.

Recently my little brother told me some additional details about this challenge. He told me that he asked himself what kind of Christian I would become if I ever came to faith in Jesus. I am now standing up to my own challenge and trying to become the Christian that God wants me to be by reaching out to other Roman Catholics and people that need to hear the Gospel. None of us should doubt that the saving power of Jesus can transform our lives.

God Bless You!

Invitation

Are you are being called by God to accept Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior? Do you recognize that you are a sinner, and Jesus is the only way to be saved? Are you willing to repent of your sins, and believe that Jesus can save you without your good works? The Bible says that God calls a person to faith in Jesus Christ. You must trust in Jesus' bloody death on the cross for your sins to save you

from an eternity in Hell. God determined the method to be saved, not the traditions of man.

My Lord and my God, have mercy upon my soul, a sinner.[1] I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God.2 I believe that He died on the cross and shed His precious blood for the forgiveness of all my sins.3 I believe that God raised Jesus from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit4 and that He sits on the right hand of God at this moment, hearing my confession of sin and this prayer.[5] I open up the door of my heart and I invite You into my heart, Lord Jesus.6 Wash all of my filthy sins away in the precious blood that You shed in my place on the cross at Calvary.7 You will not turn me away, Lord Jesus, You will forgive my sins and save my soul. I know because Your Word, the Bible says so.8 Your Word says that You will turn no one away, and that includes me.9 Therefore, I know that You have heard me, and I know that You have answered me, and I know that I am saved.10 And 1 thank You, Lord Jesus, for saving my soul, and I will show my thankfulness by doing as You command and sin no more. 11

***1**. Psa. 51:5, Rom. 3:10-12, 23 **2**. Matt. 26:63-64, 27:54, Luke 1 :30-33, John 9:35-37, Rom. 1:3-4 **3**. Acts 4:12, 20:28, Rom. 3:25, / John 1:7, Rev. 5:9 **4**. Psa. 16:9-10, Matt. 28:5-7, Mark 16:9, John 2:19, 21, 10:17-18, 11:25, Acts 2:24, 3:15, Rom. 8:11, I Cor. 15:3-6 **5**. Luke 22:69, Acts 2:25-36, Heb. 10:12-13 **6.** Rom. 8:11, 1 Cor. 3:16, Rev. 3:20 **7**. Eph. 2:13-22, Heb. 9:22, 13:12, 20-2 1, / John 1:7, Rev. 1:5, 7:14 **8**. Matt. 26:28, Acts 2:2 1, 4:12, Eph. 1:7, CoI. 1:14 **9**. Rom. 10:13, Jas. 4:2-3 **10**. Heb. 11:6 **11**. John 8:11, 1 Cor. 15:10, Rev. 7:14, 22:14*

Footnotes

1. Christian Research and Apologetics Ministry Web Page, March 15, 2003, http://www.carm.org/islam/salvation_by_works.htm

2. "William Faye and Ralph Hodge, "Sharing Jesus Without Fear" video guide Lifeway Press, Nashville, TN, 1997.

3. Warren E. Berkley and Jon W. Quinn, Expository Files 9.12, Word Wide Web, April 17, 2003, http://www.flash.net/~wberkley/efdec02.html#anchor65920
New link as of 5/2025 can be found by searching: Expository Files by Warren E. Berkley and

Jon W. Quinn

4. World Wide Web, March 22, 2003, http://www.forgivenforlife.com/.

Dedication

This is dedicated in loving memory of Mr. Greg Trojan, man of God.

Jason's Testimony



Throughout my life the Lord has pulled me out of more situations than most could imagine.

The problem was at the time I was too blind to recognize it was Him. I have literally walked away from car wrecks that rarely anybody would have survived period. I looked down on drug addicts because I tried everything known to man but never got addicted. I was only a drinker.

I was a heavy drinker. In fact, I was a full blown alcoholic drinking about a half gallon of vodka daily losing everything and hitting rock bottom due to my use. When I say everything I mean my health, marriage, family, home, job, etc. I was told I would have to have a liver transplant in order to survive because it was so severely damaged from alcohol. That wasn't happening because they wont put you on a transplant list when you continue to drink. There were sick children out there who deserved another chance at life more than I did. If I was to begin taking care of myself I planned maybe two years but I didn't. I continued to drink and sin daily. That was three years ago.

After having nowhere to lay my head and nobody to turn to there was Jesus the whole time. He pointed me to "The Lighthouse Recovery Center" a Christian based recovery center in Washington, Indiana. Through their pastors and leaders Jesus began to restore me. The Lord also pointed out a few things. He said I am the one who pulled you away from those car accidents. I am the physican that healed you when doctors could'nt. I have restored your family and your life. I am taking back EVERYTHING the enemy has stolen from you. Now I need you to go and preach the gospel and teach others to open their eyes amen. Now I have an unbelievable clean bill of health (only God), been baptized in Jesus name, received the Holy Spirit and am ministering to as many people that will listen. You see, Just like me you are all part of the body of Christ having your own purpose. If not, you wouldn't still be here. Don't ever let the enemy tell you it's too late to turn around. That's nothing but a lie straight from the pits of hell. Nothing makes the devil more angry than to lose the souls of people the little crybaby worked so hard to steal and destroy in the first place. Some of our greatest pastors and spiritual leaders had the craziest past and become the strongest men of God. Just take a look at King David or some of the characters Jesus Himself hung out with. Amen?

Mike's Testimony



As a teenager I was a typical small town boy who played football, got low average grades and drank and smoked with my buddies. At the age of 18 as a senior in high school I became interested in a Catholic girl who moved here from another state. As much as I liked her, I was torn. She had taught me about a budget, a checkbook, and actual responsibility. We broke off the relationship because I had other priorities. It wasn't long before I had changed my mind and asked her back. We went on to date over the next five years where we stayed dating through my parents divorce when I was 22. One year later we were married.

To marry her, I needed to go to RCIA and become Catholic which was a way to commit to her. During our dating period my Mom became a Christian by asking God into her heart. It was a little confusing because God wasn't a focus on our lives. We bought our first home in 1992, had our first child in 1993, and completed the family in 1996 with a second boy. My job was great and over the next ten years we had grown into a much larger house, along with a boat, 2 cars, and a camper. I had grown to love the things of the world. Ten years ago our lives all changed when we found out my wife had breast cancer. Trips to the Cleveland Clinic were going to give her the best care she deserved. As we finished the doctor bills kept coming. Work had become stressful and the hospital debt seemed too much. We continued to raise our family and we got closer to church. An enlightening question from my youngest made it clear where his mind was. "Daddy, is Mom gonna die?" As I think back about seeing my wife having Christmas with us without hair and signs of wear from the chemo, I know how worried he had to be. God helped me answer my little boy. "We're all gonna die buddy" I said with a somber stare.

Life went on and I started to pray. I would ask God to strengthen our family. We continued to church but we didn't address the financial mess we were in. Being turned over to collections led us to bankruptcy, and losing our worldly possessions like the house, the boat, and one of the cars. This

took a toll on our family. After the bankruptcy we found an angel of a lady who let us purchase her home on land contract so we moved in around nine years ago. While rebuilding our lives shortly after moving in we got the disturbing news that my wife's cancer returned in her lungs…stage 4. Knowing that there is no stage 5, and that stage 4 was likely incurable I was scared. My wife went through her second round of chemo. We were determined to stay up on the bills this time and we were doing pretty good. One morning in 2013 I was finishing my 40 minute drive to work one morning and I called aa debt collector to arrange a payment that was due and was informed that my credit card had expired and no payments would be accepted. I was being taken to court. I stood outside in the parking lot on the phone and every bit of my past several years of frustration had entered the earpiece of the lady on the phone. I ignored anything I had ever been taught about manners and let her have it. Due to my outrage I had became very dizzy. I made my way into my office where first responders took care of me, where I ended up getting onto a gurney and taken to the hospital. I was diagnosed with a stroke that turned to an anyerism. Through a very rare surgery the doctor was able to stop the bleeding with minimal brain damage. My wife who was carrying around stage 4 cancer found herself by my side praying for me as I spent nearly two months in a coma. Once again my boys were faced with losing a parent. From the hospital I was released to a rehab facility. After three months in this facility I was released to come home with my walker. By this time in the recovery I could feel Gods touch and I would tell my visitors "God is with me, he has sent me an angel". The presence was so powerful I wanted to tell everyone. As I started outpatient rehab and was getting better with the speech therapy I started thinking about going to work. My rehab was going to lead me back to my job in Engineering. I joined back in June of 2014 and my rehab led me to walk in 5k events. In July of 2014 I was getting ready to start a race and found myself standing next to my 8th grade Science teacher and ex high school coach. It was clear that God placed me there as he joined me in my walk around the course. We had an incredible talk and spent more time together throughout the fall. I picked up golf again and we were playing golf together in August. As I shared my new relationship with coach we talked about God. " what does this love I have for God mean?" I asked. He looked at me and asked "Have You Ever Been Saved?" I wasn't sure what he meant so I asked. He rephrased the question; "have you ever asked God into your heart?" I paused because I was a little confused. "I think so" was my meager answer. "Do you want to?" He asked. We were in the cart driving to the green and I said "sure!". He parked the cart and pulled a small bible out of his pocket. He opened the back and started reading some scriptures to me about how God loved us so much, he gave away his only son, who suffered, died, and was buried. His Son Jesus rose from the dead to fulfill the scriptures. "Do you want to pray" he asked as he pointed to the book. I said "sure" and started reading a prayer to God telling him he is my Father and I believe Jesus died for me and because I am a sinner I am forgiven. With his hand on my shoulder my coach chuckled because he wanted to read it with me and he couldn't find his glasses. I asked "now what?" He said "you will know". " you're going to be put into places and situations God has set for you. I continued to work for four more months and got terminated because I wasn't the same guy. I drove home in pure peace. I was going to be ok. I drove home and took a couple of part time jobs. I was a manager at our local grocery store and worked as care staff for a workshop for disabled adults. That job has impacted my life as I saw people working hard to accomplish daily tasks. Many of them Christian. I sat down and shared my experience by writing a book. The title of

the book is "Were All Miracles". As I have been able to share the Miracle God placed upon me to bring me back, we need to reflect and realize we all have been given life and for those who know the Lord, we can live forever. I have been able to share through speaking arrangements as well as ministering to those who I am faced with just as coach said. God is amazing and I was missing out. In less than two years since opening my heart, it has been amazing!

Yordan's Testimony



Hello dear brothers and sisters, in Christ my name is Yordan and here is my testimony of how Christ saved me. I was sitting in my room and deeply involved in drugs and smoking marijuana. And then the devil entered my body and was moving me to jump out of my window on the 7th floor And suddenly I had no control over my body and something was moving my body to jump. Then suddenly A big light came out of nowhere and hit my body And I shook and began crying in anguish because I knew that it was Jesus who saved me because I was going to jump and suddenly He came by the holy spirit to save me. I began crying and telling God how sorry I am for my sins and that day I was born again and had peace and was freed from the domain of darkness. Now I have Joy peace and live normal live praying and communing with my Lord Jesus. *"And they overcame the devil by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony."*

Thank you Lord I hope my testimony encourages someone here. Amen

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Kim's Life: From Drugs and Alcohol to Faith in Jesus Christ



I was lost to life in the fast lane from a very early age. I came out of a a broken, lonely childhood and immediately got caught up in alcoholism, promiscuity, gambling, lying, stealing, etc. my life was a shambles almost from the start. When I was 33 I finally hit rock bottom, having shamed myself to the point I knew that I would have to kill myself if I didn't change. I just could not go on the way I had been going for so long.

I'm not one of those who changed in a minute. Mine was a slow, step by step process, but I knew there was a God and He wanted me to triumph over everything, I just didn't know His name was Jesus Christ.

For years I bounced along reading a lot of "New Age" books and eventually I began to have "psychic" experiences. I think I stayed away from Jesus because I couldn't deal with His gruesome death or understand what it meant to me and my life.

About 5-6 years ago I got interested in astral projection and bought a book on the subject, intending to give it a try. I didn't know at the time that I was opening myself up to demonic stuff, but that's exactly what happened. And I found out that all that "psychic" stuff had also been demonic activity. Cut to the chase, I began to experience demonic attacks that only calling on the name of Jesus Christ

could stop. And that's when I knew that it was Him, and only Him.

Jesus Christ is the only Son of the living Almighty God and He reigns in heaven exactly as the Bible describes. Of that, I have zero doubts. And because He left His heavenly home to come to earth and willingly submit to extreme torture on my behalf, I don't have to burn in hell as I deserve. He has forgiven my sins and will remember them no more. I am saved.

We all owe Him a debt we can never repay, but all he asks of us is to accept His gift and live as He taught. I adore Him. I have fallen in love. He is most deserving of worship. Amen.

I hope my testimony helps bring another soul to The Lord. That's the best I can hope to do for Him.