



My Walk With Jesus Christ

I am writing this so that people might hear of the truth about my walk with God. Everyone is interested in who God is so I guess I've got your attention.

I am Australian and 61 years old but now live in the UK. For the first 43 years of my life till God called me, I did all kinds of things that were not good such as drugs, lots of sexual encounters, putting money before friendship but I believed that this was the way I was naturally and could do nothing about it.

So life continued in the same way until November of 1998 when God knocked on the door of my life - He seemed to want to show me some new things. I was living in Sheffield (UK) then, studying Japanese at Sheffield University when one of the girls I was studying with asked me if I wanted to go to a local Baptist church with them that night because the pastor had the ability to explain the Bible in a way that was both up to date and personally meaningful. Having nothing to do that night and being a bit intrigued, I went along. The pastor said that those people who live their life without God was like a man stumbling along in a desert with no clear direction or purpose and with howling winds opposing him. The pastor went on to say that when you accept Jesus

into your life, you come out of that desert, away from the winds and into the calm oasis of the presence of God in your life. That night, I had the strongest feeling that (1) God is with me right now and (2), He has used the pastor to speak into my life. I had never felt anything like it before but somehow I knew that God had planned that sermon with me in mind, knowing that I would attend that particular service. Since He seemed to be inviting me to get to know Him better, I thought I would accept His invitation and see what happened. Let's run with this and see where it takes me!

The Past

I will now take you back many years to when I was a small boy. My father died when I was four years old and in that time when boys really need their fathers (from about five to twelve years old) to teach them about being a man, there was no one there for me. As a result, my whole identity, especially manly identity, stopped growing. As a result, this weakness in me was noticed by the bullies at school and every single day was hard, especially from 12 to 18 years old. I left school with a huge inferiority complex that crippled me in so many ways, such as no self-respect, the impossibility of attracting friends,

have loving relationships (marriage out of the question), it was also the deep-seated cause of trouble at work and in family life.

For the next 25 long years, I was locked into the prison of inferiority that I could not escape from. It didn't matter what I tried - the hurt, and the damage was so deep rooted and had continued for so long. I tried to find relief in counselling, hypnosis and even joined a Buddhist group but all failed.

Way Out and Up

After the one-to-one experience at the church in Sheffield, I knew that it was not religious behaviour that God wanted but rather, a one-to-one personal relationship with me. This was a new thing for me but I sensed it was the way forward. I had started to go to the same Baptist Church and joined their Bible study group. What amazed me was that I found I had become really interested in the Bible and I spent some time with Jesus every night talking about the small bit of scripture I had just read and how it related to experiences as I lived each day. I was taught that the Bible is God's true word and it is all truth. Importantly, if something is not clear in the

bible, it is not that the Bible is in error but that my understanding is incomplete.

The primary way God speaks to people is through the Bible and I often felt being drawn to the Biblical quotation, 'seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things you need will be added on to you' (Matthew 6:33). I had a lot of doubts about all this but I remember praying something like, "Lord Jesus, if you exist, I have many fears and things I cannot overcome, please bring your healing to me". So I decided that I should do what those verses say, that is; (1) I should seek the Kingdom of God and that (2), I should seek His righteousness. By continuing to go to this church every Sunday and spending time in study and prayer, I was doing the first one; 'Seeking the Kingdom of God'. For the (2), I said to myself, 'I will choose not to go to the places and meet the people that are part of me doing what is wrong in my life'. It took time because the habits ran deep but the whole point was that now, I knew I was in a relationship with God through Christ so I asked Him to help me here. I knew that if I kept my eyes on Him, I would overcome. I DID overcome!

Proof that it works

After about two months at university, I was asked to stand up and speak in front of 15 people about some topic. Normally, because of the inferiority, I would have avoided all possibility of public speaking but this time, I stood up, and spoke in a clear strong voice. I was stunned and amazed because there was almost NO FEAR. Something had happened deep inside of me because there was a strength and courage that I had never known before. This was proof, I was on the way out and up.

The fact is that after 25 years of suffering my healing started just a short time after I started to believe and obey. This was no co-incidence. I therefore knew that:

(1) Jesus exists and He was healing me;

(2) The Bible is God's Word and is all true;

(3) A head knowledge about God or religious behaviour is NOT enough, God requires that we must walk with Him in a personal relationship.

Deep Changes

After about a year, I began to notice some changes. I used to swear a lot but noticed that I suddenly did not want to use words like that, nor listen to others do it. This is not something I set about to do but which God gave to me. As I began to meet other Christians, I remarked how many men had testified to instantly stopping swearing when they accepted Christ as their Lord. I had also been a greedy and selfish man but I noticed after a while that I started to want to give good things to others with no reward back. This shocked me as greed and selfishness is a core personality trait and very difficult to remove but God perfectly began to heal me.

Being Born Again

More and more I began to see that this was really working and I could see nothing bad or fearful. I was ready to make the decision. I asked Jesus to be my Lord and saviour and to forgive all my sins. Very shortly after, as a divine experience lasting several days, I had the feeling of great joy flowing through me and being intensely loved by God, I knew I was safe, I knew I was connected to God by an everlasting bond that would last through all the ages of eternity. I had indeed become born again. Jesus

taught, 'no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.' (John 3). It is a theological truth that at this point, my eternal life began and would continue forever, even after my mortal body dies.

More and more, I found I could let Christ lead and be God in my life. It was like you agreeing to get out of the driver's seat and letting Him drive. You can suggest ways to go to the driver but it is the driver who ultimately decides. With Him driving, I experienced no more of the 'dead ends' in life that I had experienced before when I had to go back and start all over again.

God helped me to get a job!

God is interested in all aspects of our lives not just the 'religious things'. When I was in my late 40s, my job ended and there was nothing in sight. I started to worry about my future but the Bible often tells us not to fear because God looks after His children. Since He has a plan for all of our lives, I asked Him to somehow reveal to me what He had in mind for me. Shortly after, I felt guided to turn my hobby for coffee into a business and that God would help me. I prayed about this a lot and asked God to tell me if I was in error. I then went ahead to take hold of what

He had prepared for me. Now, 15 years later, I am still the owner of a successful coffee business.

Some Considerations

Creation vs Evolution

My school textbook said that, 'in primordial seas there were amino acids which united and life formed'. I reasoned that at best, these acids would react to form new chemical compounds but that there is a huge gap between these lifeless new chemical compounds and a living organism which has that certain spark of life. Surely no one but God can create life. Yet some prefer the horribleness and loneliness of a loveless evolution to a loving God that made and cares for us, forever.

Going to Heaven

Many people will say something like: "But I am a good man, everyone says so. God will accept me". However, heaven is God's home and we must satisfy His requirements to enter there (same as anyone wanting to enter your house must satisfy your requirements!). God's requirements are very clear – you must have no sins, not one. Forgiving sins is something only God can do, that is why Jesus went

to the cross to pay for ALL our sins and thereby satisfy God's requirement.

Eternal Damnation

The whole thrust of scripture is that no one goes to heaven except through His Son, Jesus Christ" (John 14). No human has the automatic right to go to heaven just because he is a human. For those who have rejected God and salvation through Jesus, they will die in their sins and suffer damnation in hell forever because God is also a God of judgement as well as love. Some liberal Christians disagree, I believe the literal meaning is true because Jesus made many references to hell in plain clear language.

<https://carm.org/what-are-the-verses-that-mention-hell>

If humans could get to heaven just as they were, then Jesus would have suffered on the cross to achieve nothing. For a good explanation, go to:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/eternal-damnation.html>

Suffering in this World

Many people cannot reconcile a loving God with evil in the world and so will not believe. Have a think about this: While God invites us to follow Jesus, we can however choose to go another way because God has given us free will. Rejecting God's ways

leads to sin and sin will always bring painful consequences. Clearly, this is not God's fault, it is ours. Remember, it is impossible for God to do any wrong. I do not have all the answers but I think that this is part of the answer.

Other Religions

Most religions include teachings on doing good in this life; be kind, give to the poor, etc. However if you look at what they each teach on what happens after death, they all separate out. Many major world religions have a good works salvation system (e.g. karma in Buddhism and Mormonism) where you are exalted because of your good works. This is frightening because they are typically vague about how many good works are required. It introduces the idea of a 'pass-mark'. You would have fears such as: 'What terrible things will happen to me if I have not done enough to pass?' or, 'What hope do I have with a past like mine, I cannot change the past'.

Christianity stands head and shoulders above all the rest as nowhere else do you have God Himself coming down from heaven to personally show us the way. Jesus Christ who was God in the flesh, did the entire work Himself to pay for man's sins because no

one can lead a sinless life. So there is no pass-mark. With their own eyes, born again Christians can see the evidence of Christ's successful work on the cross in their new lives. This evidence provides perfect clear proof. Therefore even before we die, we can see that we belong to God, our eternal future in heaven is secure and so we have no fear of death.

Interested in going further?

Start by reading the Book of John in the New Testament. Ask Jesus to be with you as you read and pray about the things in your life. Why not give God 6 months of your life and see what happens?

Finally

1. Human life can end very suddenly without warning. Not only to other people or old people.
2. It is totally too late to say you want Jesus Christ after you have died. The time to begin is now!

Where will you be spending eternity?

This testimony has been read and approved by the pastor of the Inverness Reformed Baptist Church, where I used to attend. Thanks for reading.

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