

## My Story

I was raised up in a family that attended church regularly. We were pretty involved in our church. When I was 9, I remember being concerned about going to Hell if I were to die. We were taught that you had to be "saved".

I wanted to be saved of course. I had heard people talking about when they were saved. It seemed to be a life changing experience. I somehow got the impression that to be saved I need to respond to the altar call at the end of the church service. It's a tradition in some churches where you walk forward during the last song and "get things right with God", so to speak. So I did that. A couple weeks later they baptized me. But I somehow felt like whatever was suppose to happen, didn't happen for me.

I talked with my mom about it and she gave me some "gospel tracts" to read. They were little books with Bible verses and a prayer at the end. I thought that if I could just pray that prayer right, if I had enough faith, something would happen. But I was frustrated. Nothing did.

I went on with life and didn't think about it so much. As I went through my teen years, I grew more and more sinful. When opportunities for sin arouse, I took them. One day when I was 18 I remember being pretty downcast over what I had become. I felt ugly on the inside. I got down on my knees and asked God to save me from what I had become.

I don't think I was expecting anything, but I was wonderfully surprised. It was like a huge weight of guilt was lifted from me. I felt like I had become a different person. I went to sleep not knowing if this was some brief experience or something long lasting. I woke up and continued to feel like I was changed.

My sinful habits didn't all change at once. But, I longed to learn. I was suddenly interested in Christianity. I read the Bible. And I was interested in others experiencing this as well.

That was many years ago, but I think it was the beginning of a new life. I think it was an encounter with God. It's one of the things that give me confidence in the Bible, because the Bible describes this experience. It refers to it with names like being "born again", becoming a new creation, being cleansed, etc.

So, I find myself in my late 40's, and I consider, what can I embrace as truth? Though I would prefer it otherwise, I don't think I can know anything that's significant with absolute certainty, in an empirically proven type of way. But it's like when a little baby is born and it knows that milk is good. It doesn't have to figure that out first, it just hungers for it and enjoys it. So it is with me and the Bible, the God who is described in the Bible, the way of life given there, etc. I just see it as good and want to feed my soul on it.

Besides that, my faith is based on something that happened in history (the life, death and resurrection of Jesus). It's not a merely spiritual thing, but grounded in time and space. And though there are lots of opposing opinions, I don't see history or science contradicting my faith. Rather I see them all supporting each other.

So that's where I am. We all have to make a choice. We cast a vote with our lives, saying what for us is that "milk" that we feed our souls with and put our hope in. I'm happy to have something as wonderful as I do.

If you would like to know more, I'd be happy to meet with you for coffee and discuss this. Just let me know.

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