

My God

A true testimony

By Michael E. McPherson

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Dedicated to my Lord, my wife, my children,
my family and friends. May God be with you.

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Missing

I remember that day as it were yesterday. Looking around and wondering - is this all there is? There was something missing in my life and I knew it. Working, striving for the American dream, trying to make it seemed to be my fate. I worked the ground like a farmer, toiling into the night, each day and thereafter. Is this all there is to life, and then ashes to dust we go? Throw in a tombstone and memories for my loving wife and children. I pondered the meaninglessness of it all. In the pit of my soul something was missing and I looked around, wondering where to go.

Then I remembered

Then I remembered a time in church, maybe 20 years ago when I sat in a pew. I was there as always, not from desire but as a spectator. And a spectacle it was, the ceremony and the religious actors from the pulpit and the pews. And then there was the altar call, “whoever wants to receive Jesus come to the altar,” was the cry of the pastor. Something in me wanted to lunge forward; something in me was stirring to make the walk. But fear and shame seized me. I was too embarrassed to walk that aisle, in front of all those people. Now 20 years later I remembered that day and wondered about that silent whisper, that compelling urge. Was it God that was missing in my life? After rejecting the call 20 years ago was this the hole in my life and cause for my valley of despair?

Pastor Chip

I decided to summon the courage, to let go of my shame, and make the walk. I had to find out if God was the missing link. So to the pastor I would go, perhaps there I might find some clue. Pastor Chip was a tall man with sandy blond hair, a surfer in his younger days. He was a carpenter by trade but had the looks of a movie star. The pastor's office was down the hall from the sanctuary and across from a kitchen. Quite convenient as we sat down and drank freshly brewed coffee. I took a sip from my cup then described to him my dilemma. I had questions, did he have the answer?

The gap

Pastor Chip listened then he drew on a sheet of paper two mountains separated by a valley. Man on one mountain and God on the other. And then he drew a cross in the valley and the arms of the cross touched both mountains. It was the cross he said that would bridge the gap between man and God. The cross of Jesus Christ.

Bride at the altar

It was Christ that was missing in my life, Pastor Chip would say. I was not in his office by chance, “It was by the will of God!” Then he asked, “Are you ready to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?” He said it would mean surrendering my will and life to become God’s servant. I was caught off guard by the question, so I sheepishly responded with a “Yes,” but my mind said “No!” In my thoughts I was taken aback. “Become a servant, surrender my will?” It was unnatural and I was uncomfortable but the word “Yes” ushered from my mouth. I was like a bride at the altar, wondering aloud, “what am I doing here?” Caught up in the rush of the moment, seeing the ring slip on my finger but not sure if I was ready to jump the broom.

The journey

As I left Pastor Chip's office my thoughts were swirling. Inside a stirring within became more determined than ever to seek God. You see I was a science major in college, an Ivy League college, and I had a mind not subject to religious fervor. I needed the facts, I was a thinking man. In truth, here I was amongst a people that I had mocked for their zeal. Who was this Jesus Christ to whom I said "I do?" Over the next eight months I read everything I could get my hands on. I read books on the origin of man to see if the story of Adam and Eve could be true. I read the Bible and stories of various faiths. What was the evidence that God truly existed? Who was this being whom I would serve? I wanted to find truth no matter where it led.

August 23 2007 – 2:30am

It would be eight months of searching, looking for truth and meaning until that day, August 23, 2007. I was in the shower, warm water streaming at my feet. The room was filled with steam, and a small bulb over the sink was lit. In the dim of the room I was alone in my thoughts, and eyes were closed. How or why I don't recall, but suddenly a revelation came crashing into my soul. After eight months of searching facts, testimonies and examining articles of science and faith, I came to a conclusion. The God of Israel, Jehovah, was as real as my flesh and blood mother! It was a deep revelation that flooded my mind and spirit. Then what happened next is hard to describe.

I understand

I began to cry and dropped to the bottom of the shower, sobbing uncontrollably. My mouth opened and I began nodding my head, saying “Yes Lord.” My God, my Lord was talking to me, deep within my soul. I kept saying “I understand, I understand.” I still weep when I think back to that moment. I cannot tell you what was being said to me. I just kept saying “I understand.” My God Almighty is real! The tears and sobbing kept my limp body from slumping to the floor. And in that moment his Spirit entered me, filling my body with life. There were no more thoughts or logic considered. There were no words except the ones I have described. And as the clock struck half past the hour, I surrendered to him. My will for his will, my life for his life, my soul for his eternal promises.

Redemption

I then left the shower, my body suddenly alive and aglow. Time had raced ahead it seemed and it was near 5:00am, but I wasn't weary. So much power was flowing through my body I felt compelled to write a letter and describe what happened. But what I wrote was more shocking than I expected. The Lord not only blew his Spirit into my nostrils, mind and soul, he tore the fabric of my reality. A curtain was pulled back and I saw my true self. I was an adulterous, lying, cheating, greedy, lustful rebel; a criminal in the Kingdom of God. My sins were revealed and I saw what a wretch I had been. Then humbled beyond measure, a tender hand led me to confess my sins. And I confessed them in a letter to a complete stranger.

Public confession

It was a public confession to the CEO of a company I was pursuing for a job. And in this letter, that I faxed that morning, I said I was a sinner among sinners. But precious was his mercy and grace to redeem me. Praise to God for loving me. The Spirit of Christ touched my soul, he witnessed to me and now I would be his witness to the world. Needless to say I never heard from that CEO, but I knew this confession was wrought by the Lord. “I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.” *Psalm 32:5*. My God had just proclaimed me innocent and just.

Born again

It would be a few days later and even more so as the weeks went by that I realized something else happened. That night my very nature had changed. People, places and things I had enjoyed, I no longer desired. Let the reader understand, I did not make a decision to change my lifestyle or to live a holier than thou life. Something inside me was different. My tastes changed, my view of the world changed, I was a new creature in Christ! When the Spirit of God entered my body that night he did something beyond description, a miracle had occurred.

The supernatural

The supernatural things of God in the Bible were not myth but reality. And every year thereafter I became convicted of one thing then another. I was being molded like a potter's clay. And as my desire for things in the world changed, so did my desire for God. My spirit yearned for Him. I was so tender that almost every week I was in tears, weeping over the word of God. The Lord himself was teaching me, giving me wisdom and understanding. I began to grow in an intimate knowledge of God. And this wisdom would reveal the hypocrisy of religion.

The sheep of Jesus Christ

The sheep of Jesus Christ I found in the hills and valleys, not in any religion or building with a pew. His sheep hear his voice, and heed the call of the Shepherd. The church of Christ was led by Jesus himself, not by a pastor or a denomination or a religion. This was a spiritual thing, a supernatural thing that only eyes opened by God could see. The voice of the Lord was speaking to me and I started writing, filling up notebooks. I would be driving in my car and sermons came pouring out my mouth. Praises to God were spilling from my lips and I could not stop it. I didn't want to stop it. I felt like I would burst as the Lord my God kept filling me with the Spirit of Christ. God the Son was praising God the Father through my earthly body. God was yearning for God. Deep was calling deep.

A life for a life

But my God was not done with me, this was only the beginning. The Lord's purpose was not just to change my nature and to fill me, but to break me. The scriptures say a broken spirit is a pleasing sacrifice to the Lord. It must be his will and not my will that divines truth and direction. He must live and I must die for his Spirit to shine forth from my earthly shell that was decaying and defiled. And so the breaking of Michael McPherson began with a prayer. A 26 year old woman at a church I was attending had been battling cancer for several years. But now the end seemed imminent so I prayed to the Lord for a miracle. But I wasn't just praying - I began to demand the Lord act. Then his voice came to me, after my last bold plea. He said to me, "Are you willing to trade your life for hers?"

Little faith

I was stunned when he asked. Then I felt ashamed because I could not say yes. Here I was, thinking I was a good Christian and in favor with God. Yet in one moment the Lord revealed I had little faith. He showed me that I was yet to be humbled and broken. For six days I was haunted by the question and fact I could not say yes. Who would take care of my family if I was gone?

Broken for God

Then on the sixth day, while driving to work, the weight of the question bore on my conscience. It was like a knife was thrust into my side. I began to cry feverishly and moaned down the highway. My teeth were gritted, my jaws clenched, and my hands gripped the steering wheel. The moment was intense and I wailed, “Lord, what are you asking me to do?” It was a rhetorical question, since I already knew the answer. And with dripping tears and blurred eyes, I cried “Lord, take my life and do as you will.” My God had broken my spirit. I was now truly his.

Revelation and miracle

The heavens opened to me after that day. I experienced the miracle of answered prayers, the unveiling of God's Kingdom I could see. What looked like circumstance or chance events, to the naked eye, I saw the will of the divine. The Lord was steering me from situation to situation, guiding me, covering me, and protecting me. I had entered the Kingdom of God while on earth. But there would be more work for me. The Lord was not through with me and there was no honeymoon on the horizon. You see the Lord's servant must work while there is daylight. For when the darkness comes, no work can be done. And with my will broken, God could now use me to be the hands, feet, mouth and eyes for the Lord Jesus. I was about to find out what that actually meant.

Prison

Like a soap opera, I was enmeshed in a court case with no end. My first marriage had brought forth a beautiful child. But the certificate of divorce yielded something else. Child support arrearages that had accrued over the years were now due. And judgment was affirmed with contempt found. Justice, the judge would say, demanded payment. Fail to pay and the confine of prison was my fate unless some way, somehow I paid what was due.

Divine appointment

Every option I looked at was fruitless. Every effort I made to raise the funds ended in frustration. It was like looking through a file drawer for a document you think is there, somewhere. You keep thumbing and thumbing, without success. And soon hope fades as you realize all is for naught. Nothing I did could get me out of this pending fall. And finally contempt was declared and the sentence was given - 15 weekends in prison. But I was unusually calm that day in court; something said God was in charge. If this was his will then let it be. And so it was. This was not happenstance, as I would later learn, but a divine appointment.

Orange jumpsuits

The first day I entered prison I was processed like any other inmate. I was in the midst of offenders accused of assorted crimes. The roll call listed drugs, domestic abuse, DUI, parole violations, resisting arrest, assault, rape and other alleged offenses. But my spirit was high; I felt I was on a mission. I did not know how or why, but all would be made clear. Once assigned to my bed and given a blanket, I asked for a Bible. I then sat down at a table in the community area with book in hand. I was in the midst of bright orange jumpsuits, a sea of alleged villains awaiting their fate.

The book

We were all one and the same, except I had the book. I had a sense that the book was the key to this mystery. The book would make all things clear. Then a man sat down next me. He looked at me, then looked straight ahead, then looked back at me. He then asked me a question about what I was reading. The plan of God was about to unfold.

Darren

Darren was awaiting trial but could not afford bail. And thus became an inmate of the state. As we talked I saw he was a man struggling with demons. Eventually he became a drug user, then theft and burglary followed. He talked about his mother and that she was a believer in Christ. He himself knew the plan of salvation but was unable to find his way. Now the only thing on his mind was his mother and the anguish she was going through. Darren was desperate to raise bail. He wanted to go home, get a clean shave, some fresh clothes and to prepare for his day in court. He wanted the judge to see him as a clean man. If only he could get some clean clothes, and get home... things would be better.

The ungodly man

After that first weekend I called Darren's mother. She pleaded that Darren was "a good son" who had lost his way. Dorothy had been praying for him, praying for his deliverance and she wanted him home. Bail was set at a \$1,000 but it could have been \$100,000. It was a shelf out of reach for this mother and son. I knew in my heart I was called to this man, so I offered half the bail – if she could raise the other half. The next weekend I saw Darren he mentioned a friend he had worked for, a rich middle-aged man that could help. In the same breath that Darren described him as a friend, he also said "the man doesn't know God." He was an ungodly man, but he had the funds to help and would be willing to help.

Divine intervention

Prior to the weekend Darren was to be bailed, his mother called - there was a new plan. The friend, the ungodly man, would fund the entire bail. And not only would he bail Darren, but drive him home from prison. "Great," I said to myself, Darren would be free. Upon my next weekend I was therefore surprised to see Darren was still there. An inmate still clothed in orange and remanded to despair. I asked, "What happened?" He said "Didn't you hear?" The Saturday morning his friend was to post bail, the very morning of Darren's release, the man had a heart attack and died.

Touch not the unclean

Chills went down my spine as I heard the news, something was uncanny. Even Darren thought the events strange. I knew then, without any doubt, that God had ordained the ungodly and unclean would not touch his holy things. Whatever is set apart for the Lord is called holy, his children are holy, and Darren was at the center of the Lord's will. This was a divine appointment I could not break. I then spoke with my wife and we agreed to bail Darren and deliver him home. What I didn't know, was the Lord was going to deliver Darren as well.

Deliverance

When Darren was called from his prison cell to the bailiff's office he was surprised. His hopes had been dashed and he had been consigned to his fate. With energy anew, we hurriedly processed the certificate of release and with belongings in hand we drove to his mother's house. I pulled into a parking space in front while thinking what to say. I then asked if I could pray for him. I laid my hand on his shoulder, closed my eyes and began praying. And when I opened my eyes, Darren had a mournful look. Tears that welled up began to flow and then sounds of sobbing and weeping rushed forward.

An awakening

The Spirit of the Lord was coming upon him. Something stirred his spirit and declared him right with God. I then hugged him and he was released. He would later describe that moment as “an awakening.” God had reached down and touched his soul. And on the day of his trial, the prosecutor made a case for long term imprisonment, just punishment for a repeat offender he would say. But my God had a different plan and mercy was on his mind. And merciful was the judge, releasing Darren to parole and redemption.

Servant of the living God

After that weekend I knew in my spirit my time was up. My mission was accomplished. By the grace of the Lord I appealed to the judge and my sentence was suspended. My God had used me to deliver this man from the bonds of destruction and demons, into his hands. I saw the power of God at work to control human events so that his will be done. I saw the deliverance of another human being by the Spirit of God. I learned what it is to be a servant of the living God, to go where I did not want to go, but where I had to go, so that his will be done.

Redemption song

It would be about 4 years later when I saw Darren. He had been clean for the last two years, was attending Bible study, was expecting a newborn and was singing thanks and praise to almighty God. He had a song of redemption and freedom in his heart. He had a testimony to the grace and power of the living God. There was now no doubt this was a divine appointment set by the Lord.

The last weekend

My time in prison ended after 6 weekends, but that 6th weekend, my last, was the worst. Because of crowding, I could not stay in the low security area which had bunk beds spread across a large room. I was now forced to go into the high security area. I would be in a small prison cell with no heat, and thick steel prison doors. My heart was racing as the doors shut in my face and claustrophobia set in. My breathing became short and as I gasped for air anxiety bound me. I was like a rat in a cage and I thought I would lose my mind. I had no choice but to get on my knees and cry out to the Lord for help. And after praying passionately, I used sleep to escape the panic and paralysis that besieged me.

The peace of Jesus

When I awoke the next morning something had happened. I had a peace and calm about me that was not natural. I was in a bubble looking out into the world. Inside the bubble I was strangely and amazingly peaceful and calm. All my anxiety had left, but I could see the prison walls and knew the discomfort they held. I knew where I was, but was separated from the pain. “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” *Philippians 4:7*.

Divine power

Imagine being in a war zone, bombs bursting on all sides, and you are floating in the midst, protected in a bubble, free within. You see all the trouble on the left and on the right. Destruction is all around, but you are separated and protected and peace is on you. “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” *Psalm 23*. Once more the Lord was showing me divine power and giving me a testimony. I would see more of this power when I met Bob.

Bob

Bob is a man not much to behold. Some teeth were missing and his pants often drooped. Over six feet tall, white haired, and somewhat burly, time and a hard life had left him scraggly. There was usually a pack of cigarettes in his truck and the smell of tobacco in his coat. Bob had a limp and was blind in one eye; the result of holding a .22 caliber pistol to his temple, pulling the trigger and having a bullet bounce around in his head. The doctor said it was a miracle that he survived. A man in so much pain that he tried to take his own life.

The love of God

But when we met it was a divine encounter. We were physically so unlike each other, but I was drawn to him. He would later tell me that we were brothers in the womb of the Spirit, known to each other before the foundations of the world. It was Bob who God brought to me and said, “This is my servant.” He was a man broken for the Lord. A man death could not snatch from the love of God.

Bondservant

I saw firsthand what a consecrated servant of the Lord looked like. It wasn't the pastor, the elders of the church or the supposed learned men of the Bible. No, it was Bob that God had exalted. Bob would talk to me and what I began to see was he preached from the mouth of God. Bob gave me vision and understanding. Simple words, nothing complex but truth flowed from his lips. And this was truth; the Lord thy God loves those that are his and cares for them, never forsaking them. The Lord thy God gives power to all who ask, to carry out his will.

The treasure

It is the Lord my God who is an unmeasured treasure, a pearl unlike any other. The prosperity man is to seek is not a house or gold, health or wealth, but God's Kingdom. Bob would say, "You don't need a Bible to call on him, you can be in a tree or by a stream and gently whisper his name. He is worth more than all the money in the world." And Bob's message never changed.

Power to spread the gospel

Through Bob I learned how the true church of Jesus Christ worked. Our high priest delivers his word to his people, through his people. “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying...restore his sight,” *Acts 9:11*. Bob was a man who the religious would dismiss because of how he looked. You see the religious like their pews to be of a certain appearance and dress. Folks like them in their talk and walk. But Bob was a man God had given power to spread the gospel. Bob told me stories of how he proclaimed Christ to a Muslim who cursed him, with vile and vigor. Then months later that man came to Jesus. How he shared a written hymn with a stranger who began sobbing. Then weeks later she too would come to the Lord.

Living for Christ

Power and authority was in his bones to do God's will. Bob shared with me words of wisdom; he said "When the doctor told me I was a miracle, I got to thinking about God. I wasn't a Christian or anything at the time but I got to thinking. And when I came to Christ, I found he was the answer. I couldn't live for myself anymore, so I decided to live for Christ. And the Lord told me that's the way it was supposed to be. Me living for Him." "And that he died for all, that they who live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again." *2 Corinthians 5:15.*

Sin and Hell

And as the revelation of God became more embedded in my life, so was the reality of sin and Hell. Oh how I've cried and prayed for those God has burdened in my heart. When the heart and love of the Lord Jesus was revealed to me, I saw that God weeps over those that perish. "Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" As a righteous judge the Lord has declared that the "soul that sins shall surely die." And all have sinned. There is not one righteous among us. Not one the scriptures say. But we have a merciful God and he commands us to seek him, to believe, to surrender, and to fear him.

The fear of God

“The beginning of wisdom is the fear of God,” the Lord declares. This became a reality for me one night after listening to a message by a dear brother, Paris Reidhead. For the first time in my walk with Christ I got a revelation of the consequences of sin. A trembling and feeling of dread came over me as I realized the hand of God, the shadow that covers me, is lifted when I sin. I became conscious of my nakedness and saw the darkness and terror that awaits if sin abounds. That night I understood what it means to fear God and despise sin. Thus dear son, it is the fear of God that keeps me from sin and the love for God that strengthens me to do his will. Glory to God, my Lord, my refuge and my shelter.

The Redeemer

Man has become an enemy of God because of sin. And when he became an enemy a curse was placed upon the land and the people. A body of death that brings tragedy, horror, war, murder, disease, famine and oppression. But for salvation to appear, for mercy to abound, a redeemer must come. A life must be given for a life. A man may give his life for a friend but who would die for an enemy? What kind of love is this, who has heard of such a thing?

The cross

As his arms stretched from end to end,
nailed to the tree, Lord Jesus was judged in
place of you and me. But what human eyes
saw was not the weight of the matter. What
you could not see was that behind the cross
at Calvary sat the throne of God and a court
of angels all hushed. The temple of God was
on earth unseen and the cross that held our
Savior was on the altar. And it was the hand
of God that rose up and plunged the spear
into his only begotten son. An act so
astonishing it caused the hosts of Heaven to
gasp in disbelief. For God so loved the
world that to save man from the Hell to
come, he crushed his only Son, the Son he
loved. Oh son of man can you not see the
love and mercy the Father and the Son
showed to you and me?

A candle that is lit

God's purpose for the redeemed is to mold each into the image of Jesus Christ. For we can only love what is like us. And God has decreed that all his sons and daughters will be like Jesus of Nazareth. This is not a physical thing but a spiritual reality stated here. The work he has begun in his children the Lord has said he will complete. And the more we surrender to God, the more the Spirit of Christ grows within, crushing the flesh, bringing us closer to God's will. It is the Spirit that is shaping, trimming and refining my soul in the fire of God. And as this fire molds me into the image of Christ a new fire is lit. I am becoming a candle for God and a candle that is lit cannot be hidden. It will shine in dark places bringing truth and glory to God.

The phone call

As my candle was lit, the Lord opened my eyes to see the birth of others, confirming to me his word and faithfulness. And faithful was he when I got a phone call from my mother. I could sense the excitement in her voice when she said, “this is me, this is me!” She was referring to a scripture in the Psalms and a vision she had the night before. When I read the scripture, it wasn’t clear what she meant until I came to the last verse.

Sister in Christ

It was a word of redemption, of sins forgiven. Mom had been through heart problems and surgery for cancer. And as in past times of distress, she called on the Lord for comfort. But this time, at 83 years of age, he witnessed to her that she was his daughter and he was her God. She received a vision of who she was in Christ and it was glorious. The vision she described saw her as a youthful, beautiful princess. The Lord had adorned her in jewels and fine cloth and seated her in his chariot. Her sins were forgiven and she was righteous and pure. After that day I saw her candle light and a heavenly glow was about her. My mother in flesh had become my sister in Christ.

Born twice

Can a person be born again after the womb?
This is the crux of the matter, the principle upon which all Christianity stands. I speak of a supernatural thing that only God Almighty can render. The act of taking what was dead and making it anew and pure. Our Lord says only those born of the Spirit will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Oh how I must tell this story of the new birth.

Beloved, the Kingdom is a spiritual realm, not of flesh and blood but of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. In this realm I sit at the right hand of the Lord Jesus, amidst angels that see the face of God Almighty. I walk in in his robes of white, adorned with his crown of gold. Praise to God, patient and steadfast in his love and covenant.

Heart of Christ revealed

The more I walk with Christ the more revelations of God and his kingdom I receive. One night such a revelation brought me to tears. I had come from a sermon at Times Square Church in New York and was meditating on the message. And as my thoughts brewed, all of a sudden the shade of Heaven was inched upward. In my spirit I saw a glimpse of the width, depth and height of the love of Jesus Christ. I cried out loud, "Oh God" and began sobbing, holding my sides with arms crossed. Then strangely I started to mourn. I mourned when I saw Lord Jesus weeping over those he wanted to gather, to love and care for - if only they would come and be healed.

Mourning

As my mourning continued I pleaded “Mercy dear God!” for those I saw perishing. First my sister, I pleaded, “Dear God have mercy on her that she may live to serve you and glorify your name.” Then other names and people came to my heart and I pleaded mercy for them. Oh how I wept that night. And I knew then what a true follower of Jesus Christ looked like. It was the person who had the heart of Jesus. He did not chastise, but interceded, testified, mourned and prayed for the sinner. As our Savior says, “It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” And he calls them with the mercy and love of God Almighty.

I desire mercy not sacrifice

“I desire mercy not sacrifice,” our Lord declares. In this verse alone we see the heart of Christ revealed and the revocation of religion. “Sacrifice” represents the rites and ceremonies of religion that some consider a sign of godliness. Yet our Lord says sacrifice is not his desire. “I desire mercy,” is the message to mankind. “Be merciful as I am merciful,” is the cry of the Lord. “I am kind to both the righteous and the wicked,” is the proclamation of Christ. This is the desire of the King to give mercy for he is merciful.

Cups of water

But what does it mean to be merciful? What does it mean to have the heart of Christ? Perhaps this story will illustrate. There was a gay rights march down a street that passed by two churches. On one side was a southern Baptist church and on the other was a Methodist church. As members of the Baptist church came out of their service, they did everything to avoid the marchers. On the other side, the members of the Methodist church were handing out cups of water. Now who showed the heart of Christ?

Who can please God?

“I desire mercy not sacrifice, go and learn what this means,” commands the Lord thy God. “Be merciful as I am merciful. Love your enemies. I am kind to both the righteous and the wicked. Give freely without expectation of return. Be holy as I am holy.” But who can bear these commands of God? The only person who could bear these commands without fault was Jesus. Only Christ was without sin while all else was vile and defiled. The problem for mankind, therefore, is if all fall short of the glory of God who can please God? How can I love my enemy and be merciful when prejudice abides in my heart? Who will rescue me from this body of death?

The true Christian

“You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” *John 3:7*. No profession of faith, declaration, baptism, pope, priest, preacher or religion can save a man. To become a true Christian is a supernatural event that only God Almighty can render upon men. It is a change in nature formed by God himself. And it begins with the piercing of the soul.

Witness of the Spirit

First his spiritual scalpel opens your body and the heart of Christ is sown like a seed, regenerating the dead who were without God and hope. And then the Spirit of God quickens the soul, causing the converted to cry "I am a witness to the living God!" Oh son of man, fall on your face and plead to the Merciful for mercy. Seek his face with all your strength and then turn to receive the heart of Christ. You see beloved, a person does not become a Christian - a follower of Jesus Christ - when he professes Christ. It is when Christ professes him. "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." *Romans 8:16*.
Praise God Almighty.

The gift

It is the Spirit that is the gift to the follower of Christ. It is the Spirit who brings a man into the Kingdom of God while the body walks among the dead. It is the Spirit that gives power to the believer to do God's will, that comforts, that intercedes, and fills the soul with living water. It is only the converted that can walk in the Spirit of Christ, and overcome the world. It is only the converted that can be a vessel for Christ, and a candle bringing healing and God's light to a world in darkness. Plead to God dear son and daughter, without ceasing, until you have received this gift.

Tombs

Dear friend, I have witnessed this gift and it is God's seal and sign in the sheep of Jesus Christ. But today's man-made brick and mortar church denies the power of the Spirit. Many are rich and beautiful to behold but they are tombs without God in the midst. They trap men by saying "receive the Spirit by faith," and then declare them saved by virtue of this "faith," even though no change is evidenced in the man. Beloved when the Spirit of God, the same Spirit that resurrected Jesus from the dead, that hovered over the earth and created Adam from dust, enters a man there will be a change. A supernatural thing occurs in these God calls his elect. All else is vanity, pure vanity.

Vanity

“It is in vain for a man to plead that he believes the testimony of God in other things, while he rejects it in this. He that refuses to trust and honour Christ as the Son of God, who disdains to submit to his teaching as Prophet, to rely on his atonement and intercession as High Priest, or to obey him as King, is dead in sin, under condemnation; nor will any outward morality, learning, forms, notions, or confidences avail him.” *Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*. My sister and brother run from these churches, false teachers, pastors and preachers the Lord calls blind. Run from these roadblocks to eternity and them that deny his Spirit and power eternal. They are shipwrecks of the damned.

Watchman

Oh what a burden has been placed on me to be a watchman for God's people. "Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required," says the Lord. And so with the wisdom and understanding given to me and the revelations of Christ received, I must share the Gospel. Oh what a tremendous honor has been given me to watch over God's people. It is both a burden and honor. For he has said, if a man in danger of the wrath of God dies, because I have not warned him, that man's blood will be on my hands. But if I warn the man of danger, and he does not turn to be saved, then that man will perish but my hands will be clean. Oh what an honor that God Almighty has chosen me to be a watchman.

Comfort the dying

God's watchmen are vessels for the Lord. When his word comes in the day or night, in season or out of season, we must proclaim what we have heard. Thus when Gina told me her mother-in-law was dying of cancer and in much pain, the Lord compelled me to send her a letter. I had never done this before, console a complete stranger, a person I had never met. But it was the hand of the Lord that wrote and I was but a messenger. It would be a message from Psalms 42. After I signed the letter, "Your brother in Christ" I sealed it and asked Gina to deliver it by hand. Now Gina was a co-worker, someone I knew for only a few months and this seemed like a strange request. When Gina returned to work she recounted what happened.

Psalms 42

After giving her mother-in-law the letter, this dear woman read it and was deeply moved. And then her son, who was standing by her bedside, read it and he was deeply moved. Seven days later, on the Sabbath, she died and left to be with the Lord. In the letter, the Lord knew she was questioning in her trial, “Where was God?” But then the Lord said to her in Psalms 42, “Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.”

The face of God

“Why are you in turmoil within me?” was a reminder she was enveloped in Christ, in his bosom, and there was no reason to grieve.

“For I shall again praise him,” told her she was about to see the face of God. In this she found comfort and hope. Our Lord Jesus was faithful to his word that he would never forsake those who love him. I wept quietly and my soul was stirred as I praised the Lord for his faithfulness. Oh what a tremendous honor it is to stand watch over God’s people. How beautiful and sweet it is to serve the Lord, with joy overflowing.

The duty of the people of God

“That is the duty of the people of God to look at the bright side of things; to think of the past mercies of God; to survey the blessings which surround us still; to look to the future, in this world and the next, with hope; and to come to God, and cast the burden on him.” *Barnes*. The letter to this sister in Christ was a reminder of the hope in Jesus. No matter what pain she was going through, her response in this hour was to praise God Almighty. Raise your eyes to the hill and give thanks in all things, for I will again trust in the Lord my God. Praise to the Lord for this honor and privilege. And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

The voice of the Lord

There are many voices in my head. The voice of my own thoughts, voices of the past and the voice of the ruler of this world, who seeks to deceive and destroy. Like radio signals they transmit over the airwaves of my mind. However, when I am still I hear his voice above the others. The Holy One of Israel I hear. And it was his voice that would now pull me from a well without water – a church emptied of the Spirit of God. A place with a form of godliness but led by the ways of men - where the Spirit of the Lord stood on the outside, knocking to be let in.

An open field

I started at this church as a new, naïve convert, eager for the word of God. And I met true sons and daughters there. But I remember the day I could not enter the sanctuary any more. Something was terribly wrong and my spirit was warning me. Like a flame set before a gate, a spiritual force was literally preventing me from opening the door. I was physically unable to enter. The Lord then gathered me and moved me to a field. An open field where there were sheep, goats, wheat and chaff.

The chaff and the wheat

There are two types of people who profess the God of Israel and Jesus Christ to be Lord. In the Bible they are called chaff and wheat. Those called wheat sit at the right hand of Jesus in his Kingdom, while the chaff are destined for damnation. The problem is the chaff and wheat look the same. Both come in the pulpits and pews of every church, denomination and religion. However, it is the chaff that are never converted, and always learning but never coming to an understanding of truth. They fill the churches and pulpits across the land, singing hymns and prayers that fall on deaf ears. People unaware they are fit for the furnace of Hell. My heart mourns over these because of their shock and dismay when the Lord tells them "I never knew you." And this day, is The Day of Judgment.

The Day of Judgment

For many professing Christians, the Day of Judgment will be a shock that takes the breath away. Their hearts will come to a standstill and silent screams will pierce the air. And after the screams, comes the thick darkness of an everlasting Hell. The words of warning are so clear: “Unless you turn and become like little children...unless you are born again...a pure heart shall see the face of God...abide in me and I will abide in you...to receive eternal life you must love the Lord God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength...if you believe in me you will obey me...if you love me you will follow me...you must consume my flesh and blood...you must love me more than father, mother, son or daughter...I will turn their hearts of stone into flesh and cause them to love me so that they may be saved.”

The unconverted

Only the hand of God can turn a heart of stone into flesh. It is he that regenerates the dead. And all are dead without Christ. The unconverted may see him as myth or biblical prose but dear friend it is the Spirit that brings life. It is the Spirit that does the supernatural. Many can tell you the day and hour when they were converted, and cried “Abba, Father.” The Spirit witnessed to these that their sins were forgiven, and they were his and he was theirs.

The hour of trial

The time is coming, has come and will come when the whole world plunges into darkness. It came when the world was without form and devoid of light, when Satan was cast into the earth. Woe to mankind, for the devil comes like a roaring lion looking to devour, destroy and to kill. It is coming, as darkness creeps into nations that have rejected the God of Israel and His Son Jesus Christ. And the darkness will come, when the Spirit of God is lifted from the world and all hope of salvation is gone for those that remain. Then the Day of Judgment, a terrifying time that will come upon the earth.

Lightning in the sky

The scriptures tell us the Lord Jesus Christ will appear like lightning in the sky and His angels will set out their sickles. They will gather the ungodly into the furnaces of Hell and the children of God will be gathered unto the Lamb. That hour is upon us and we are closer to that Day than ever before. My heart feels it and my soul aches and mourns. It motivates me to pray and intercede and to plead “mercy Lord!” May the Lord have mercy on these and bring them to repentance. It is why I write this for his sake, for his heart mourns, but also for their sake, for they are my brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, mothers and wives. Praise God the merciful.

Narrow is the way

Broad is the path to destruction and narrow is the way to life. Few find the narrow way while most stay on the broad way with its bright lights and pleasures. “Each does what is right in his own eyes,” the Lord says of those on the broad way. Each creates their own logic that justifies their name in the Book of Life. And this is the crime of man, the anarchy of the ages, and the tragedy of too many to bear. Many who profess Christ will perish because of self-righteousness and the blindness of pride. Therefore, I pray and mourn.

Seek his face

It is only the man or woman who loves the Lord with all his heart, soul, mind and strength that will see the face of God. And only a man or woman with the heart of Christ can love like this. But how can you love that which you do not know? And how can you know that which you have not seen? Seek his face, oh son of man, for he says he will reward all that diligently seek him. Seek him my dear brother, sister, friend, son, and daughter. Seek him while he can be found and there is daylight. Seek him for he is worthy. And the evidence that you have found him, is that you will love him. And you will know you love him, because you will love your neighbor as yourself. Praise God.

Epilogue

I began this journey in Christ asking myself “What legacy would I leave to my children?” I found that it was not money, a house, a business or fame. But my legacy would be the knowledge of Jesus Christ and God Almighty. The scriptures say, “...but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.”

Jeremiah 9:24. This is what I pass to my family and friends, my witness in the living God and his Son Jesus Christ.

Benediction

Praise to God, everlasting Father, counselor, high priest, comforter, and friend. Praise and thanks dear Lord for you are worthy to be served and loved with all my heart, soul, mind and strength. Halleluiah to the Lamb of God, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

May the living God have mercy and grant you repentance. May he bless you with all wisdom and understanding so that you will know him, fear him, serve him and love him. Oh dear Father I pray for these before me, love them and keep them as you have kept me and loved me. May the Lamb that was slain and resurrected receive the reward of his suffering. To God Almighty, and in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen and Amen

A poem

He clothed me in his robes of righteousness and necklace of faith. He clothed me in a robe of white linen and adorned my head with gold. Righteousness and faith were his treasures of old. These he gave me so I was beautiful to behold – perfect he called me, pure and without sin I was told.

He confessed me before the Father – God Almighty, Jehovah. The Lord of Hosts is his name. Praise to the Lamb of God who suffered my shame. Yet he called me beautiful, when I was in his robe of white and crown of faith. Who am I that God would love a scoundrel – but a man broken of spirit and will, given to Christ the King on Calvary's hill. Given to him who rose again with mercy and grace filling the earth, by God's will.

Come ye, come ye and be healed, turn ye, turn ye and behold the God from Bethlehem, born of a virgin and God, Son and Lord, comforter and friend, a Nazarene to men.

Love him saints, give unto him all his due,
life itself all in you, for tis his. But a reed he
will not break, a sound he will not cry,
gentle is his yoke, rugged is his cross but
bear it you must to gain the glory of the just.

Faith and righteousness mercy and faith,
dipped in patience and forgiveness – for sin
must come but woe to them, my God
forsake them not but call to repentance,
hasten them to thy bosom to be kept for your
glory in Jerusalem.

The river of life will flow from within, its
source the Spirit of the Lamb and God the
king. I am overwhelmed in tears and feeble
constantly – his Spirit filling me within.
Words of God spilling from my lips,
praising, fearing the glory of God the king, I
cannot hide behind the cleft of a rock and
peer between a slit. I am left open, naked,
barren, to surrender my will.

I am not fit to battle, but yet I did, as a rebel
to the king. Merciful lord turn me to a
servant and son for the glory of Him. Great
is our lord, beauty unforeseen, deeper than

the ravine without measure is the love of God for things that matter.

The price is fair to all who hear, a life for a life – yours for his, his for yours – a seat at the throne and a name to behold, cast in a stone given by the lamb – God Almighty and Lord of Hosts.

A watchman's burden I bear, the weight of God's will persevere – the blood of them called I handle, warning, exhorting, the voice of God uttering clear, turn and be saved, stay in your way and be slayed. My hands must stay clean of their blood, so I persevere. A watchman's burden I bear.

Dear Lord, merciful God and Savior, I come broken under your will to make a sacrifice for them, my life for theirs so they may live to worship and take their fill of your Spirit everlasting.

Oh that they may know thee and tremble with fear while being overthrown in thy presence, shaken in tears, obeying you in all their years. I pray for them, Maya, Khory, Sommer and Michael, Sonia, Andrea, Passion and Richard, Gene and them their

names you know – that you give to me to intercede and pray.

Forgive them for their sin, dear Lord, grant them repentance and knowledge of their king. Break their will and let your Spirit grow within like a seed that grows and overthrows the devil in them. Have mercy on these for what is man but dust. Oh God, merciful from generation to generation, patient, loving and kind, may your name be glorified in them. Sons of Adam, daughters of Eve.

Goats in the kingdom on earth are many: preachers, teachers, priests, elders, crosses around their necks, professing the lord and Christ the king. Never does God know them, placed by the enemy, deceived and destined to be cast into the fire that never quenches the justice of him, that separates the chaff and the wheat, the deceived and the deceiving sliding down the path of doom, adorned with pleasure, gods of stone and rubble, lusts, pride and desire that end in the lake of fire.

I shout, pray and write that they may see that light break the darkness, closing on them

near the pit, Oh God have mercy on these so they may see before they enter the pit and never be heard again by the living and the just. Oh Lord I mourn for these false teachers, clergy and them in the pew, at work and at home thinking they are safe in a faith they never knew. May God be with you.

A hymn

Fall on your knees, stretch your arms wide
and receive my Christ inside
The savior of man born under the stars of
Heaven bright
Fill me oh Lord as a fountain near a spring
never ceasing joy inside
Praise and sing the kindness of him who is
merciful to the weak and the blind
Make me see oh Lord the night sky as your
star shines bright
Praise to the King of Israel, the prince of
peace and counselor of the most high
Glory to God and the Lamb for his sacrifice
Glory to the newborn king,
His face was not much to behold and his
head was marred in thorns
By the grace of God he hung on that tree, for
you, you and me.
Fall on your knees and worship the most
high, glory to God my Lord and king of
kings
His truth is light in darkness that travails
But in birth we spring forward in light that
prevails

Have mercy oh Lord on the rebels that reject
and blaspheme thy name
Have mercy on them that are blind and
travel the broad way without shame
Be kind oh God, that your name be lifted by
the wretches that now see
I plead for them, have mercy dear God, my
father and friend
Glory be to God our everlasting king
Glory be to God our everlasting king

Finis

