

## Chapter Two

### *The Journey*

I was born in Wilmington Delaware in 1967. I was raised as an only child in a nice family, but in the absence of God. My parents had religious backgrounds, but chose to let me decide for myself later in life. There were several reasons for this but they are not important to the story. Modern aspects of religion had turned them off. I grew up not even thinking about or really hearing of God or a “god”. We did not attend church, discuss the Bible, or talk about God. God was abstract, distant, unknowable, and irrelevant to everyday life. The world testified to this in every way.

My maternal grandmother was my only occasional experience with God, but it was extraneous and without real meaning to me. This was not her fault since I simply did not understand. She would pray before holiday meals to “Heavenly Father”, but that was the extent of it. I do recall a Bible being in the house and even paging through it, but I really didn’t know what it was about. She would talk now and again about the Lord, but I did not understand. When I was bad she told me “The good Lord will punish you.” I cannot recall ever going to church. In fact I considered it normal not to go since this was all I knew. She went all of the time though leaving us at home on Sunday mornings.

As the years passed by I had a great childhood with many friends, a nice house, great parents and *The American Dream*. God was not on the scene in anything I heard, saw, or learned from the world. I graduated high school in 1985 some eighteen years later. In my senior year I went on *The Ski Trip* with a friend. It was with a Christian group but I didn’t know it. I thought I was going skiing. Everything seemed normal until the first night when we got to the ski lodge. My friend and I were separated and I was suddenly surrounded by about six people. They descended upon me in a very uncomfortable way. At first I didn’t know what was happening. It was really weird. They were asking me about my religious beliefs, but I really didn’t have any.

We ended up debating Genesis. I fought it tooth and nail. I knew I was right since I was taught evolution for years in school and I was going to have a biology major in college. I had written a term paper on evolution and *Lucy The Missing Link* between man and ape. If man had been created and had not evolved I would have been taught this in school. If there was even a controversy then both theories would have been presented. When we studied evolution in school no one ever mentioned creation. There was never any talk from a single student that there was another theory or that they objected. This was also the case later in college.

The sudden poof-poof creation of Adam and Eve was ridiculous anyway. The trip ended with me thinking these people were a bunch of kooks and I was glad I was not religious. I would now stay away from these people in the future. I went home and told my parents who confirmed that some people were religious fanatics and a little crazy and aggressive. I then dismissed it and went on with my life. God was not even on the radar screen.

I can truly say I never thought about Him. My best friends were Jewish and we did not discuss religion at all. I don’t think religion or even “God” ever came up in my school years except for that

one episode. We were all too busy studying, having fun, and living our lives. God was clearly portrayed as irrelevant in school since He was never mentioned. Silence is not neutrality. I never saw anyone reading or talking about the Bible either. "God" might be mentioned but never Jesus Christ.

I knew people who went to church but there was no mention of Jesus Christ or the Bible. I never saw a single person in school ever reading or possessing a Bible. If Jesus was a part of their lives he was never mentioned or discussed in any public situations. People went to church and it was all about going to church. This included people who went to Christian schools. The connection between church and daily life was never manifested to me from others not even once. This does not mean it didn't exist but I simply never saw it. The things that went on were far from Christian.

I attended many summers at a Christian summer camp but there was no religion or mention of God at all. On Sunday there was a generic worship service that the campers suffered through. Once again the things that went on there were far from Christian. The Bible and Jesus Christ were never mentioned.

I then went to college at Penn State University. I transferred in one year to the University of Delaware to be closer to home. God was still not someone who ever entered my mind. I was a biology major planning on medical school. I do specifically recall one specific event when I did think about God. I have never forgotten this event even though it was only a blip in my life. I was in a cellular molecular biology class studying a simple form of regulation for turning on and off a gene in the DNA that made a simple protein. The design of how this worked even on a simple organism was awesome. For at least two to three days I thought it must be an intelligent design. The process was too calculated and engineered to be explained by evolution or chance.

If you would have asked me about God before or after this event I would have had the same response. God was someone I thought existed in an abstract way. It made sense that He existed somewhere and likely had a hand at least starting life and then evolution took over under His guidance. There was nothing more tangible or concrete than this in my mind. God was not knowable or active in our world. In a sense He was not real. If He was I would have heard about it. If the answer to God had been found then the news, school, or something would have made it known to me. Instead it was all religion with many groups fighting and believing different things so that everyone lost and no one was right. I never saw or heard of personal relationships or the Bible being important except on *The Ski Trip*, but they were kooks.

During my college years I did attend church two or three times with a girlfriend and her family that I would visit. We went to church and I felt very out of place. I didn't know how everyone knew what to chant or say at the same time. I really didn't even know what was going on beyond praying to God. I just went with them and got through the service and that was that. It was the proper thing to do, and I had great respect for her father and family. I did notice most of the kids just went through the motions.

I remember once a disheveled bearded man with a giant cross on campus. He was yelling and screaming at the students as they walked to class. He said we were all going to hell unless we let Jesus Christ save us. No one listened. He was a kook. I think campus police took him away.

In my senior year of college I took some drama classes. I had a theater minor which I enjoyed greatly. I went to see the play *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder. I went alone. For some reason I cried

during the play and part of the way home. I did not know why at the time and thought I was weird and didn't tell anyone.

Two of my room mates in college were religious and went to church regularly, but we did not discuss the details of their faith. They were sincere and reverent but I simply blocked it out. I didn't really think much of it since most people were recovering from hangovers on Sunday. Again it was really out of my mind. I just didn't think of the world related to God in anyway, shape, or form. I was living my life, having a great time, and preparing for medical school. There was rarely a sense from anyone I encountered that was religious that God was real and alive. It was just a belief system that they chose to follow and this made sense.

College had also clearly taught me that God was abstract and unknowable. No single religion could be called correct. The answer was unknowable and thus we should respect what everyone else believes. I agreed with this philosophy and even took a course on philosophies of religion. There were too many religions in the world for there to be an answer. If God was real and tangible then man would have figured it out over the centuries instead of dividing himself with many different theories.

My summers were spent at the beach during college. I was a life guard and disc jockey. I still never thought of God. He did not exist in my world, since I was busy living life. This consisted of going to the beach, partying, drinking, chasing women, and working. It was all about me. I did very well in college and graduated Magna Cum Laude. I entered medical school in 1993.

My four years in medical school were pretty much the same except the beach, drinking, partying, and women were gone for the first three. I was in a book twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. I did very well in medical school. I had a great memory and was able to read very quickly with great retention. I graduated first in my class. I remember being disliked for my success in medical school. This was foreign to me since I never experienced this in college. I recall being able to tell people where in the book, in what chapter, and on what part of the page information was.

I was learning about how the human body worked. It was awesome and absolutely amazing, but it did not trigger thoughts of God in any concrete way since I believed in evolution. Evolution does not bring to mind any connection between man and God. Medical school is all about the human body, but there was no mention of God or creation in anything ever taught or read. If God had any role in the human body then He was left out of the one place you might expect Him to come up. He was irrelevant in medical school. Silence is not neutrality. I didn't realize how much of an impact so much silence was really having for all these years as *Engravings On The Heart*.

My thoughts were natural because any connection was an abstract, distant, or unknowable God. I was too busy studying all the time to become a doctor and I lost my college girlfriend I mentioned earlier to these studies. My life was so busy with things I had to do and learn I had no time even if I wanted it. God was the last thing on my mind. If you would have told me I needed him I would have laughed and told you to take a hike. There was nothing I had seen or experienced in twenty four years that made God necessary or desirable. Everything that the world had shown and taught me from school to the mass media had etched this into my view of the world.

I did have friends who went to church and I knew them well enough to know what really goes on and is important. There was never any mention or appearance of a Bible. No mention of the Lord,

prayer, God, or any impact of church on daily life. Once again the things that went on were far from Christian. Church was something that was done on Sunday and that was it.

I met my wife in my third year and was married a little over one year later. We got married in a church. We met with the pastor twice for “marriage lessons”. The pastor was a very nice man. Church to me at this point was a place to worship God, and learn some lessons about life but nothing more. Again there was never any indication of a reality to it all. I had never read the Bible. I only knew of Jesus from Christmas stories and music.

We were married in 1993, and I began my internship in Internal Medicine. I was basically annihilated for one solid year with nothing but work, work, work. There was no time to think about God. I never even considered Him and He never came up in the hospital. Even though people were dying no thought or discussion of God or an afterlife ever took place among doctors or nurses that I witnessed. God for all intensive purposes did not exist. In the hospital dead was dead.

Why would I have thought about God at this point in my life anyway? My only two experiences were negative. I was doing well and on my way to a successful career. I was married and had a great wife with a great family. What would ever make me think I needed God or even think about Him? My parents were proud of me and life was going great! Society certainly did not embrace God or send the message that He was real and alive. College taught me there is no absolute truth. Truth was relative to your belief system and society was absolute.

The answer is nothing that I had experienced my entire life pointed towards a need for God. The thought of intrinsic sin causing a separation from God unless somehow removed and fixed I had never even heard of from anyone except the kooks on *The Ski Trip*. Even the unknowable and abstract God that society said might exist had no place in our modern culture. God was portrayed as irrelevant and optional with many choices none of which were right. God was at the top of a mountain far away and man was climbing from all sides via different paths to try and reach him. Somehow we were all climbing towards the same thing but even climbing was a choice.

In 1994 I became a resident in Dermatology at Duke University Medical Center. I worked very hard for three years fully consumed by learning Dermatology and being married. Once again things were going as planned. My life was consumed by marriage and residency training. God had no place, time, or thoughts with me. The modern paradigm of life was to be successful and do as well as you could.

Now my wife was raised Christian, but she had not been going to church either. She was busy with a pharmaceutical job. She tried to get me to go a few times but I refused. Why should I go? What did I need? Church was something that they wanted me to do, but the ultimate truth behind it was absent. I wouldn't have believed them anyway about “being saved”, but it's an important point that even my own family and wife never brought it up. It all revolved around getting me to go to church. Church was the focus with its religion. Most of my friends who did go to church viewed it as a chore or something they just did. It was clear to me that man was just being religious and it served no purpose to me. I could do something much more useful on my Sundays like sleep in, recover from a hangover, play golf, or mountain bike.

We moved to Apex North Carolina in 1995 and bought a house during my residency. My wife tried a church one day. The next week she got a call from a woman she met. The woman wanted to meet

with her. They went on a walk in the woods and the woman tried to corner her about her beliefs and Jesus Christ. My wife thought it was really weird and got out of there.

“I told you they are a bunch of kooks.” I said. This turned her off as well. God was still not even on the radar. He was further away if anything.

I graduated from Duke in 1997 and joined the faculty as a skin cancer surgeon and fellow. In 1998 we took a trip to visit my wife’s father in *Marco Island*, Florida. We had our first son. Her family was concerned about the child and we had questions about the baby being baptized. It was our understanding that a child should be baptized or it might go to hell if it died. Baptism could “save” a child by this ritual.

We met with the minister of her parent’s church who told us it wasn’t necessary and did not save the child anyway. He said this idea of salvation from baptism was completely unbiblical but a common misconception. If it is performed at all it should be an outward sign of a commitment to raise the child Christian and nothing more. I recall very specifically asking him about what his opinion on the millions of people in the world that do not believe in Jesus Christ. Did he feel they were wrong and he was right? I had a real problem with these questions. I was convinced that no loving God would condemn these people. I thought maybe everyone was right and we all believed in a God and that no one had the right to claim truth. This is what society had taught me in the age of tolerance. His response was that they were in fact wrong and lost. That is why there are thousands of missionaries all over the world. I didn’t buy it and this reinforced my viewpoint that it was all foolish nonsense.

My wife’s father had two members from his church come to talk with us that night. I knew they were coming. I will never forget the knock on the door. I didn’t at the time understand, but when I heard the knock and saw the door open I had an intense feeling that God was knocking and coming to see me. I didn’t know why I felt this way but it was real. When the door opened it was like something entered the room. It was very strange but real. For about two days I thought that maybe this was a sign. I had no reason to think or more importantly feel this but I did. Whatever happened made me agree to buy a Bible and start reading it when we got home. My wife bought an NIV study Bible; we were supposed to read together every night.

It started off strong three nights in a row and then it faded, at least the together part. I did, however, keep reading at night while she slept. Something was drawing me to it, but I quickly hit a road block with the creation story of Adam and Eve. I didn’t believe it for a second. It must be a parable, a made up story meant to teach about how life in general formed. I was a doctor, a scientist, and I knew the laws of nature. There was no way anybody could ever convince me that this was true. In fact those that held to it I thought were fools, idiots even for believing such a ridiculous thing. They were blinded by the need for religion in their lives and foolishly accepted this story.

The same thoughts occurred when I got to Noah’s Ark and the parting of the Red Sea in Exodus. These were just ridiculous fairy tales invented by simple people thousands of years ago who were ignorant and didn’t know any better. The intelligent man of 1998 knew for certain that such things were impossible. I would have debated this with anyone to the death. I had all the proof and they had nothing except their belief that it was true. No proof at all. Fools!!! I had science on my side and they had faith.

That same Sunday we tried a nearby church. People were singing and holding their hands up in the air. This was weird. I was out of that church, and the whole thing ended right there in 1998. I was now certain I had made the right decision. I had found more weirdoes, foolish fairy tales about miracles, and people appearing from nothing by some God. I was done with it for good. I knew I was right. I was a doctor, #1 in my class, a scientist, a scholar and I knew better than these fools. I wouldn't sit in church to appear good or follow society's definition of righteousness. I refused to do it just to meet people or make business contacts even though *many* people encouraged me for this exact reason. They were giving me the honest off the record "side benefits" of church.

It's important to note I still knew nothing about Jesus or the New Testament. My wife agreed the church was a bit strange and so we were happily in agreement. After all, we were successful, making good money, had a nice house, a son, and great jobs. We had no need for church or religion especially since all of our experiences were weird. Religion had been tested out and it failed for us. We had some friends that had found "more normal" churches that delivered a "low key" message, but we were not interested in any of it at this point. We had no real worries with a bright future ahead of us. We were good people in a nice neighborhood, and I was then very busy starting a new private practice. It was all quickly forgotten.

Our newborn son had very bad colic, and it consumed us for nine months. My new job was very busy and all of our time everyday was completely filled. There was no time or reason to think about God or life's purpose. We were just living one day at a time, and life was great. Our neighbors and friends were outstanding, and our life was on the right track. Religion never really came up again even with our neighbors or friends. Some of them went to church but so what. Again no Bible, no outward relationship, no mention of God or the Lord, or any sign of anything but church. It doesn't mean it didn't exist but there was no sign of it.

Once again many things that went on were a far cry from Christian and make you wonder. You see the outsider sees no signs of any meaning to church in daily life. When you really get to know someone then you can see if their beliefs impact their life. Is it carried out into the world as a guide or map for daily living? It's easy to appear holy with a suit in church but another thing to actually live it out.

In 1999 we moved into a much larger house. Things were going great since we had all we needed. Money was not an issue, and life was without stress except for our kids. By this time we now had a second son, and our life was busy managing two young children. My goal was to work hard and save as much as I could for retirement and my family. Money could buy security and some degree of control over life. I had achieved what our society taught was the goal for life. I had solved the maze of life.

The neighborhood we moved into was different though. In my old neighborhood everyone was friendly and nice. They were always outside, talking, and interacting like one big family. This was not the case here. When taking a walk some people would ignore you or barely give an acknowledgeable hello. I was in a neighbor's driveway once chatting and a woman came up I had never seen before. She completely pretended I wasn't there. I later found out she was Christian. I had known it all along hadn't I! ; another one. I was offended at first but really didn't care. Friends had told me that the more expensive the neighborhood the less friendly it was and they were right.

At work there was no talk of religion. Our society had also invented privatization, where you were not supposed to talk about it in public. There was one very nice woman who was a great employee and I liked her a lot. She was labeled “very religious” by another employee and I. We even mocked her reading the Bible every morning at work. “What nonsense” we said. There was one time she went on a retreat of some kind and that was also mocked. It was a waste of vacation time in our minds. She should have done something fun.

She was the only person I ever met who outwardly walked in her faith. She read the Bible everyday and talked about it. She mentioned “The Lord” and talked about a relationship with Him. It wasn’t simply about church but the Lord in her life. She would quote scripture and talk about the Bible and how it applies to life. Her light was out on a lampstand and everyone could see it even if you didn’t believe it. Of course there are many people who simply choose to keep it private but I can only tell you what I observed in life. This woman had something different than I had ever observed before even though it did seem weird. Why? Because I had never seen it in action before. If God is real and personal why hide it? Hidden and secret comes across as non-genuine or ashamed.

Time marched on until the spring of 2003. I began to become aware of what I viewed was hypocritical behavior by some Christians. If love is the goal then it was nowhere to be found. The details are not important and many situations in life are not seen with a full three hundred and sixty degree view. When you interpret something in a particular way it’s real to you even if you are wrong. I think people forget this in life. I heard a child even told another child that she was not a “real Christian”. Now this bothered me. When I heard this it was the last straw. The important aspect is that this behavior led me to get mad and decide to read the Bible seeking ammunition against hypocrisy.

I asked the woman at work about it. She was very sound in her biblical knowledge and she raised her eyebrows without comment. She didn’t have to say anything I knew what she meant. I went out and bought a study Bible right away. I felt like an alien in the Christian bookstore. I even thought about a disguise but just got in and out as quickly as I could. I did wear a hat and sunglasses. I announced it to the lab and said if my children and I were going to be judged then I wanted to know on what basis. I knew I would find the ammunition to refute them if needed and prove the hypocrisy of their own faith. I didn’t know much, but even I knew “love thy neighbor as thyself.”

I will never forget the day I told the woman in the lab I was going to read the Bible. She just looked deep into my eyes. She might have said “good” I cannot recall, but I do remember the look though. It was not negative in anyway so don’t misunderstand. It’s also critical to understand several things at this point. I had no idea what I would read about other than that Jesus, Mary, and the wise men would be in there. None. I went in with a clean slate with no preconceived ideas about the content. I was on a personal mission. No one else knew except my wife, but even she didn’t really know what was going on. I was only in search of ammunition with no interest in Christianity itself. I wanted to read the legal document to find clauses that would support my case.

I also bought a PC Bible for my computer of the same version. I decided to read the New Testament this time, since the Old was a failure. I was a bit embarrassed so I would hide my Bible from plain sight when not reading. I mainly used my PC Bible so no one would know what I was doing. If you knew me which I’ll explain later I wouldn’t be caught dead with a Bible. I began to read. This is where it gets interesting.

I read the first two books into about four days (Matthew and Mark). I turned back on my old medical school and residency brain that had been inactive for a while. Luckily it was still there. Both books were pretty similar in their story. I didn't get it. Why tell the same story twice? I wasn't really impressed except a few of the parables were difficult. I had to slow down and really think about their meaning. The miracles I just simply did not believe.

Luke was next and again the same old story. Why? Several things caught my eye this time though. He was a physician like me and was noted to have been an excellent historian. Luke also made a strong statement at the beginning that he really researched the story and made sure he got it right. This gave it more validity to my scientific mind, and now I read a bit more intently. I thought more deeply and read slower but still no real change.

The next book was John and I was immediately taken in by the strong language. I was drawn into what the words of Jesus were much more this time. His claims were very strong. In no uncertain terms he was claiming to be God visiting His creation called earth. This was also true in the other three Gospels but it was more powerful here. This thought was fascinating to me. I never really thought of it that way before. If it were true then it would be the most remarkable event in all of human history. I did not know a lot about religion but I knew no other religion ever claimed that God Himself came to earth to interact and teach His people in person.

As I read on the words seemed alive. It was more than just reading a story. They seemed to be talking to me directly. I was reading on a plane trip to New Orleans, and I must admit I was holding back tears for some strange reason. Yes I was almost crying reading the Bible. I was glad no one was around. The words had power and did something to me I cannot fully describe. They even made me dwell on them when I was not reading the Bible.

The other thing that grabbed me was the meaning behind the words. It was deep with many layers. The level of understanding of human nature was profound. I kept thinking what human could come up with such words, lessons, or revelation. I had to stop and really think about what was being said.

When Lazarus and the little girl were raised from the dead I was awestruck. I can't say I believed it for certain but I was captivated. I could not put it down. The real zinger came at the end when John said I was there, this is an eyewitness account. My heart sank. I was really pondering this. The implication was that he was there and witnessed God on the earth. I kept thinking this man walked, ate, and talked with God if it was true. What a fascinating concept. I had no idea the Gospels had this information because I had absolutely no prior knowledge about Jesus.

I had no idea that two were from eyewitness accounts. I did not know that the basic concept was that God had visited earth. I wasn't sold at all though, but captivated by the concept. I also had the feeling that the writings were genuine. Who would lie about such a thing? I investigated a bit and found out that no one ever claimed any of these events to be lies. This included the Pharisees.

The other aspect that caught my attention was that Jesus left no room to call Him a great moral teacher or a mere wise man. I had heard this before and even believed it myself. There was no room for that now though, since I had read all four Gospels. Even I the greatest skeptic of all time could not make such a claim when somewhere deep down inside I wanted to. There was no room for such a theory and I was trapped. He was either God, a liar, or the greatest lunatic of all time. I had to either reject or accept but not yet. Not even close. I was going to sit on the fence which was really

rejection. By this time the search for ammunition and any thoughts of the neighborhood were gone. I was in search of truth if it existed.

During this period the woman from work said to me one day “I pray the Holy Spirit will reveal Himself to you.” I thought about this comment a lot. What did she mean? At times late at night when I was reading I would look around the room and at the ceiling. I wasn’t sure whether something might jump out. I just had no idea what this meant and didn’t ask. Once again I had never heard the Holy Spirit ever mentioned before. What Holy Spirit?

I then proceeded to read the rest of the New Testament in about a week. I just wanted to get through it and see its breadth. By the time I was finished I was impressed but far from believing it all, certainly not all of the miracles. There just seemed to be too many discrepancies and problems from a historical standpoint. How did the writers remember what was said thirty to sixty years later? If the words were not exactly what Jesus spoke then Christianity falls apart. I then examined every one of these discrepancies with a microscope, since I was a scientist and scholar. I would not make a decision without checking out the evidence and answering all of the difficult questions. I won’t elaborate but when I say all I mean it. I looked at both “sides” of the arguments. For about three weeks I was lost in a battle of minutia and arguments. I was genuinely in search of the truth, a skeptic not an unbeliever. The arguments against were rather weak which was unexpected and intriguing since the world had led me to believe the opposite.

I took two to three steps backwards when I ordered some lectures from two University professors. I figured where better to turn than listening to lectures on the New Testament than from college professors of major universities. They were heads of their departments with many degrees in their field and were teaching our students. I could relate to them, and I was sure anyone with a Ph.D in the New Testament would know and tell the truth.

I started listening to both of these professors, but I quickly found a profound sense that they didn’t believe any of the New Testament as true historical events. They did not come out and say it but I could tell. I was very troubled by this since the hope I had somewhere deep inside was fading fast. I had a sick feeling inside. They were professors at major universities and must be right. The more I listened the worse I felt. One of the professors presented the characters of the New Testament like they were fictional characters in some sections. One of them was even a bit sarcastic a few times. It was very subtle but I caught it. This professor even claimed Jesus did not claim to be God!!

These clues were critical, since I was close to packing it in. I had proven to myself it wasn’t true by their wisdom and trusting in their education, degree, and stature in society. It was now becoming just a bunch of nice stories people manufactured to promote their cause. Some truth was mixed with fiction and impossible supernatural acts. Sure the authors believed in what they wrote but truth is relative right?

I then searched a lot more. I found very sound rebuttals to these professors. I read a few more books that refuted their arguments very soundly. These two professors would immediately claim though that those individuals were not objective. Their religious beliefs affected their view of historical reality (e.g. because they were a Christian they believe that Jesus rose from the dead). They neglected the parallel though that our beliefs about historical reality affect our religious beliefs (e.g. because I believe Jesus rose from the dead I am a Christian). Without historical reality, our religious beliefs are unfounded; thus, our religious beliefs cannot be said to be creating our historical reality.

It seemed that that they felt if you were objective you could not believe in anything for certain, agnosticism. Truth was unknowable since supernatural events were invoked.

This did not seem logical to me. Why did they think this? Why was tolerance so prevalent? The idea that no one can claim to know the truth. It's not politically correct to say I am right. This also made no sense. It was the easy way out to avoid political trouble. I knew that only one set of historical events has occurred on this earth. No where else in history with a lot less evidence and documentation was this viewpoint taken. Many events from the ancient world were accepted as fact and doctrine on substantially less evidence and documentation. Since religion was involved now a microscope was suspiciously brought out. Historical events are no different and should not be judged different because of their subject matter. I knew something was wrong but couldn't figure it out. Remember I was just honestly in search of the truth and ran into this interesting changing of the standards.

There is historical reality. If I gave a multiple choice question:

How did Julius Caesar die?

- A. He hanged himself
- B. A heart attack in bed
- C. Stabbed to death in the Roman senate
- D. Chariot accident.

C is the correct answer. A,B,D are false. The correct answer excludes the others. We don't as a society say well you can't say which is right or it's ok if you believe A and I believe D and another B. It's nice we all have different opinions. Something was wrong I just didn't know what. I even emailed one of the professors and debated back and forth a few times and this professor was gracious enough to do so. This professor had ended it by concluding they could not decide in any direction. This again did not seem logical to me. Jesus and miracles changed the way history was evaluated and I had no idea why, but I was determined to find out.

Right around this time I had *The Patient* who worked for a church. He was odd in a way I could not put my finger on. Right before he was about to leave he said to me out of the blue "Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord & savior?" This was when I was struggling. He took me completely by surprise. I said "Oh yeah yeah" and quickly moved out of the room.

*The Control Freak* in me caused me to read a list of books a mile long both for and against Jesus Christ and His resurrection. I examined every detail of every argument you can imagine. The amount of material I read against Him outweighed that for Him. I read the best of the best on both sides. It's important to realize I was very skeptical due to my upbringing and had no real need for him in my life.

I next read "The Case for Christ" by Lee Strobel. In this book he visits many top notch well respected scholars in all areas. In every area he answered all of my questions. The professors he interviewed were excellent. I sensed no bias even though they were arguing that Jesus is God. I trusted them. I suddenly had hope again. As I read on, all of the most difficult questions had an answer. Sure there could be counter arguments but the answers were sound. Even the pickiest of detailed questions that I had were somehow in there. I could have escaped by unbelief but I was in search of truth instead of disproving evidence no matter how convincing it was.

I was now really thinking about “I hope the Holy Spirit reveals Himself to you.” I will have a hard time putting this to words but I could feel something in the air especially when I was alone. It was like something was there just like that night in *Marco Island*. It was swirling about me in a strange aurora I could only feel and sense. I didn’t tell anyone, since I knew they would think I was crazy. A tug of war then ensued in my mind between the two sides. Two particular verses kept popping into my head:

**1.** I know very well how foolish the message of the cross sounds to those who are on the road to destruction. But we who are being saved recognize this message as the very power of God. As the Scriptures say,

"I will destroy human wisdom  
and discard their most brilliant ideas."

So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world's brilliant debaters? God has made them all look foolish and has shown their wisdom to be useless nonsense. Since God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never find him through human wisdom, he has used our foolish preaching to save all who believe. <sup>1</sup>

**2.** Instead, God deliberately chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose those who are powerless to shame those who are powerful. <sup>2</sup>

I stared at this for a while, since I thought I had wisdom. I was already almost convinced by Lee Strobel. Then like a ton of bricks it hit me. The small apparent “discrepancies” and minutia arguments were there on purpose. God designed it to be a leap of faith to some degree. If I wanted to reject the entire message of God on earth to rescue mankind because of these questions then God provided a way out. I forgot IF the story is true then miracles are nothing and God giving man the words thirty years later is nothing either, but I wasn’t doing that. What seemed foolish was wise and what seemed scholarly and brilliant was foolish. My own wisdom had me caught up in minutia as a reason to reject the larger message. God intentionally chose things that mans wisdom deems foolish.

Never once from the start did I ever consult or tell anyone what I was up to, thinking, or feeling except the woman from work but only very vaguely. I did it all alone in secret. At this point it was all intellectual knowledge of events and a basic moral doctrine to live by that I could believe and try and follow. I thought “Ok I believe. I can intellectually accept Christianity. Now I can go to church and my wife will leave me alone.” I knew it wouldn’t kill me but I didn’t think there was anything else to it.

It was late at night and I was in my office a few days later. Then something strange happened. I started thinking about all of my bad habits, character flaws, and many things that I had done that were wrong. I started remembering things from childhood to adulthood. My heart was sinking as I realized how I had many bad qualities like bitterness, jealousy, hostility, arguing, a short temper, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition and feeling like I was always right. Everything I had ever done was racing through my mind. I hated myself as I reviewed it in my mind. I was crying alone in the office. This now took on a life of its own. The real me that everyone including myself knew would never be doing such a thing. I could not stop it though.

I saw myself as dead in my sins before a Holy God. I had broken all of the Ten Commandments and knew I was guilty before God’s judgment seat. I briefly sensed how fallen man is and felt afraid. I then just let it all out sobbing and crying harder than I ever have in my whole life. I went to the bed

and pleaded to God (I had never prayed before and didn't know I was praying). I do not recall the exact words but it was something like: "God please help me. I am sorry. I was so wrong so so wrong about the world. Please help me. I believe in Jesus Christ your Son as Lord and Savior. I believe he died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me. I don't want to be like this anymore. I want it to all go away. Jesus please help me. Please make me the person you want me to be."

This prayer and what I said and did will become very important later. The words just came out. I really did not know what I was saying or doing. I did not expect God to hear me, but I was on autopilot. I had not planned to have such an emotional episode and certainly didn't want to as a proud adult male. Something just came over me that made me apologize, surrender, and beg for mercy. I had no concept that I was accomplishing anything other than a private emotional meltdown.

I must have gone on and on like this for at least fifteen minutes. I was crying so hard the words were disjointed. I had surrendered. I had thrown myself at the mercy of God and begged like a timid animal to be forgiven. I could somehow feel His power which made my cry harder. Then I slowly re-gathered myself. Nothing happened. Then I felt really weird and embarrassed. I got into bed and went to sleep. As I laid there in bed I felt an immense sense of peace. I slept like a baby. I thought I got it all out through a good cry. After all, don't you feel better after a good cry?

Now let me digress for just a bit. I was never an evil person. I never physically abused anyone or my family. I did have many bad qualities that a lot of people have. I had a short temper with outbursts of anger at times even over stupid things. I was bitter and resentful at times. I wasn't nearly as loving and caring to my wife as I should have been. I was self centered and wanted it my way now with no delay. I thought I was always right. I was jealous at times and had materialism and a competitive pride. At times I wanted to have more or something nicer than other people. I was impatient which really equates to selfishness. I felt better or ahead of others by my achievements or possessions. I enjoyed pushing people's buttons at times and would dig at what I knew hurt them in a subtle way. It was all about me and what I wanted to do. In my defense I had many good qualities too though.

In the morning when I woke up everything was completely different in every conceivable way. I will never be able to explain what it was like. If you were born blind and lived this way your entire life and then suddenly you could see is the closest analogy to capture the magnitude of what I was experiencing. Everything was that dramatically different. I first thought I just needed a cup of coffee to wake up. I was very relaxed and peaceful with the normal feeling of stress gone. Over the course of the day I began to realize all of the bad qualities were simply gone. It was like someone had drugged me. It took me about three days to realize I wasn't dreaming. In fact on day three I started waking up scared. I was afraid I would go back to my old self. I kept waiting for it to return, but it never did.

I first thought it was some kind of self induced euphoria but it was too radical of a change to make sense. I did not know what had happened nor could I understand it. I didn't even consider any relation to my emotional meltdown since how could it be related anyway? Even if God was real and somehow Jesus died for people's sin almost two thousand years ago how could there be any direct relation to me in the year 2003? The mind cannot consider what it does not think is even possible. I did feel great in an indescribably peaceful way. The only way to describe it is by these nine qualities: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Overnight I had traded the old self for this ?!

I felt all nine of these qualities, and I looked at everything differently. I did not get mad or angry. I was patient in lines and traffic jams. I had no desire to snap or mock anyone. Everything I had described earlier was simply gone. I felt love for others that I never had before even those who were unlikable. This is a very strange feeling to have overnight. It's a feeling of compassion and love that is coming from you but somehow you know it's not you. This was especially the case for me. Trust me on this one.

I didn't get frustrated. I had more wisdom to analyze things. All of my thoughts were different. I looked at everything differently. It's like being born blind and suddenly having your eyes opened but not even understanding what having your sight is. I will discuss this in detail later but it's very difficult to put to words without losing the tremendous magnitude of what had happened. Those first few days were some of the strangest days I have ever lived. A man comes to know what he is like and how he feels after thirty six years. I had experienced some good cries in the past but this was something far beyond description or comprehension.

What had happened? I was too busy enjoying it to even think about that. Then my physician, analytical, scientific mind began to work. This was no self induced psychological job. Not even infinitely close. I had known my self all of my life, and I was blown away at what had happened even though I did not understand. I then began to analyze it all. I had to piece it together since I had no expectations that anything like this could or would happen. I had no answer and couldn't tell anyone or they would think I was crazy. They might suspend my medical license was a real fear. I did not even tell my wife. I also feared maybe something was wrong with me physically. This scenario has many facets to a proud doctor who thought he understood the human body and the world and many of them were not too pleasant when you simply do not understand what has happened to yourself.

This was not just an experiential or emotional occurrence in the slightest. I was different in everyway. I did not have an experience but a transformation. The very nature of my existence had been changed. Religion, emotions, feelings, desires, and even the deepest yearnings cannot produce this. All of this from *Just A Bible?*

## Chapter Three

### *The Analysis*

*The Analysis* of what happened to me, and how I arrived there is critical. The starting point and assimilation of facts that followed deserve careful illustration and attention to detail. I want to review the circumstances preceding my transformation and then carefully analyze my thought process as God put the pieces together. I began *The Journey* to find ammunition against hypocritical Christians which I felt were not practicing what they preach. I was looking to find evidence of hypocrisy in their own Bible. I was not out to prove Christianity true. I repeat. I was not out in any way, shape, or form to prove Christianity true.

I was the biggest skeptic of all time, and had no reason or need for religion in my life. I wanted to use the Bible, the book that was so revered by others, to illustrate their own failure to follow it. I would vindicate what I knew was true all along. Church people act holy one day a week without carrying what is preached into their daily lives. A charade of righteousness and social morality that only exists in the pews and the mind but not in the real world. The light is put on its stand for all to see but is quickly placed back underneath the bowl. That was the goal and nothing more.

My starting point was as close as possible to zero experience or knowledge of religion or the Bible. This is an important distinction I would unknowingly discover later. I maybe believed in a god somewhere, but only in an abstract way. The idea of a real and active personal God at work right now in the present day was not even a possibility in my mind. I was the gemstone of a modern society permeated with and reverent of tolerance, relative truth, evolution, and God as unknowable.

What happened next was a gradual and unnoticed entrapment into the subject matter. The search for ammunition quickly became a quest for truth with the artillery long forgotten. I did this alone with almost no outside influences, *Just A Bible* and commentaries on it. My fallacious traits brought a strong conviction of guilt with an unplanned surrender to Jesus Christ in my room one night. Self-condemnation took on a life of its own that caused a confession, repentance, and plea for help that unknowingly triggered a transaction of immense proportions with unforeseen eternal implications. What internally was a weird and embarrassing occurrence would prove to be the most life changing and eye opening event I will ever see as long as I am alive on this earth. I had no idea of what I had done. None. The thought of finding Christianity tangibly real was absent and replaced by hiding this embarrassing tale from friends and colleagues in the depths of my memory. I had in a moment of weakness turned temporarily “soft” and planned to bury it forever.

As I went to bed that night there were no expectations simply because they did not exist in my mind. The best case scenario consisted of regular church attendance. People that knew me might say “that boy needed a little religion in his life anyway”. I had found a religion that was believable, but any premise of proof, reality, or tangibility was not a consideration. I only expected church because this is the only thing I had ever seen except from the woman at work. As I went to sleep my universe created by the modern world did not include anything more.

I remember reading Josh McDowell's testimony which described his anger dissipating over time after accepting Jesus as Lord and savior. I distinctly recall not understanding how this was possible. How could his personality change from prayer? My medical degree and knowledge of science precluded any link between a single prayer and complete change of personality and emotions. These are deeply wired within the brain and nervous system in biochemical pathways that are poorly understood. Socialization from the modern world eliminated any ability to understand the relationship between the two. In my mind it had to be a self induced psychological change powered by a religious belief, a self induced euphoria.

I had found a God I could believe was real by faith, but not the real answer of the universe. Society had taught me that such an answer was unknowable in the age of agnosticism, tolerance, and relative truth. Nothing I had ever seen or heard in the world even came close to a knowable reality of God. The Bible was basically non-existent in society, school, and daily life. I saw religion and not relationship. I had even talked to people who said "It's not too bad. It's just a few hours on Sunday and you're done." It was the "right thing to do" as a responsible parent.

Growing up in the absence of God in a society dominated by these views does not lead to any expectation other than religion. All future beliefs would be based on faith alone. A faith that was no more real than anyone else's claim to faith. The Bible had to be trusted as true since the evidence pointed to that conclusion *for me*. My faith would be based on my own personal journey comprised of the detailed examination of the evidence, since I trusted my own judgment. I could not, however, make a public affirmation that Christianity was true. Faith is not proof, but an internal belief of what cannot be seen and millions of people had other faiths culminating in present day agnosticism. I was perfectly willing to accept this since real hard evidence did not exist anyway. What difference did it make what anyone else believed as long as I was personally happy?

Any significant preconceived notions were absent, since I had no experience or interaction with anyone during my journey. I had planned to tell my wife that week "Ok. I'll go to church. I have examined the evidence and it seems to be believable." The outline for the future was comprised of a weekly church service, learning from the pastor, and a few hours of quality family time. I was even glad it was all over so I could catch up with my other hobbies. I never did.

The fact is I awoke a completely transformed and new person in every way. My brain, personality, emotions, thoughts, and wiring were changed in an overnight one hundred and eighty degree turn. This was a fact that I had to sort out. I knew something was indescribably different, but I walked around for at least three days not knowing what had happened or how. It didn't enter my mind that there could be a relation to my surrender since it was just a weird experience that night. Remember to me any proof or reality of God was not possible. This had been ingrained in my mind for thirty six years. The mind cannot consider what it does know exists or is possible. As a physician and scientist the "supernatural" was impossible anyway. The miracles in the Bible would have to be overlooked and my real thoughts hidden from public knowledge, since I knew I could not believe them. Was it the miracles I could not believe or their implications if they were true?

A temporary euphoria after a good cry seemed the most logical explanation at the time. The euphoria did not end though and further reading led to the most startling realization of my life. It went far beyond my concept of reality and the universe that I had known, studied, and lived in for thirty six years. Somehow, somehow, a majestic illustration of the power of God came into that room and

changed my entire being with His own Holy Spirit. *He Heard Me* and acted upon it! I found in the scriptures what I had missed the first time through. The Holy Spirit of God Himself is put into the body to transform the spirit and entire human with a tangible reality that can be felt. Yes real proof that Christianity is reality not religion. Faith becomes based on proof and not trust, reading, or beliefs. This was shocking and completely unexpected to me in today's age of reason dominated by tolerance, agnosticism, and naturalism.

I kept thinking "You mean God is *that* real and knowable?!" I literally could not believe it, but this was just the beginning of *The Analysis*. I had stumbled into this and still had a lot of sorting out to do. The realization became evident that I was a walking miracle and proof of Christianity. It was quickly evident that many people didn't want to see or hear about such proof either. This was especially prominent in people who go to church which was beyond perplexing for me at the outset.

Now I completely understand why. The implications of that kind of reality to God and the implications are staggering and difficult to a world that is largely raised so far from this paradigm. It's much easier for God to be distant and Jesus a fact that happened almost two thousand years ago. My mind was saying "Whoooo! I didn't expect Jesus Christ to be *that* real and present. No one told me that His Spirit is put inside you at salvation." Everything I was doing in life and had ever been taught were so far from this that I understand why it is naturally avoided. Church on Sundays is much easier. I had no choice though since it was too late. For some reason my mind thought of all the selfish sides to *He Heard Me* instead of the many blessings and promises that are on the other side.

There is no way to escape the absolute truth of this testimony without calling me a liar. A simple call to my office will provide evidence that is undeniable. This awesome display of power cannot be denied or escaped except by unbelief, a refusal to believe. An unplanned, uncontrolled, and unknowledgeable acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and savior that occurred without expectation proved to be the most life changing and incredible revelation I could have ever even dreamed of. Dazed and confused I had to put the puzzle together on my own since society had me convinced and brainwashed with reason that there is no truth. The fact that I had never heard about this proof with so many Christians all around was *A Clue* to what I would find.

Why wasn't everyone as excited as I was? What were the implications and logical deductions from being the unexpected soul left to figure it out on his own? I now know what the apostle Paul must have felt like in some way. Paul didn't see Him coming either when he was on the road to Damascus. I carefully thought this through step by step.

1. The God of Christianity is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. I mean everywhere. He hears and knows all. This had to be the case if *He Heard Me* in my own bedroom. How this worked I didn't know.
2. The Bible is true cover to cover from every word to every sentence as the inspired and authoritative word of God as it claims to be. One part is not true and others false. Anything less is an internal contradiction with the definition of God. If He is alive and real then His book claiming to be His word must be so. Omnipotent God can certainly make sure a book is exactly the way He wants it. This has many consequences and would lead to a plethora of other questions needing resolution.
3. Jesus Christ is the answer to being made right with God as the New Testament states.

4. All other religions about God are false in ways that they contradict the Bible. Truth is exclusive by nature. This is a strong statement but there are no other logical conclusions.
5. Heaven is a real place. This was exciting.
6. Hell is a real place. I was on my way there and had no idea. Thank God.

At this point that was all I could conclude. I did not know how it worked or how *God Heard Me*. Each conclusion would lead to many more difficult and complex questions that had to be reconciled. The most profound aspect that I thought a long time about was that *He Heard Me*. *He Heard Me* and acted upon it! **I think people really need to stop here and think of the implications this has for what we think of as reality.** The world is a very big place. Let the implications of this sink in.

This one undeniable fact began to change the way I thought about everything past, present, and future. The implications would change the very nature of everything I would think about, do, and say. It's not like I pushed a button saying "Ok listen up now because I am going to talk to you God." I did not fire a flare into the air or go up on my roof and scream for God to listen. The reality of the world changes by an infinite degree from this one fact. I still think about it everyday.

I also quickly understood exactly why this is a God that man doesn't want to be real. All secrets go away and full accountability instantly appears when you realize just how profound the implications of *He Heard Me* are. I could not reject or escape by unbelief because it was already proven to me. I had to deal with it even though it was a very uncomfortable thought. I think this one aspect can tell a lot about why Christianity has been rejected and why stories like mine are explained away. These six points will now be reviewed in detail.

1. The God of Christianity is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. This means God is aware and active over the entire earth for all people at all times. Yes billions of people. He heard my prayer and acted on it. What if one thousand people over the whole world were doing the same? How could He hear and act on all of them or be aware if another five hundred would do it ten seconds later? I was not told to call back because the line was busy. What does this incomprehensible truth mean?

Our concept of reality is far from what really exists. God is infinitely more complex than our minds can even begin to comprehend. The converse of this is then also true. Humans are infinitely less complex than God. Mankind thinks he knows and has mastered a lot about the world, the universe, and science. I quickly realized I knew nothing at all. Nothing.

What kind of power could be alive and aware of every aspect of the earth at once? The thought of this is stunning and beyond comprehension. God is aware of my words, thoughts, actions, and everything I do as well as every other human and life on the planet. How did He know the heart behind the words? This is even more profound.

My initial self elevated status went from near the top of intelligence and knowledge about life, the earth, medicine, and science, to a creation of God who is infinitely more complex than my "complex" brain could ever imagine. I had been rewired at the cellular level. I knew the human body inside and out, and somehow my brain and neural connections were completely rearranged. What did this mean? It was a miracle, a real present day act of God miracle. I was walking and living proof that Jesus Christ existed and was right there in the room when I prayed that night. Suddenly I believed all of the miracles in the Bible.

Any God that is able to rewire a human being can do whatever He wants like walk on water, part the sea, and heal the blind. Give me “In the beginning God” and *He Heard Me* and all miracles disappear for they are nothing. A vast and endless universe suddenly shrank down to nothing. Man went from being master of the universe to a creation of an awesome power called God. The human race went from being the intelligent scientists running the experiments to the amoeba in the water being observed. What was my reaction as I reasoned through this?

Joy, excitement, and a mesmerizing euphoria that goes beyond words all filled my body since I was now a creation of God. Before this I was convinced of being nothing more than a cosmic chance event that evolved from a Big Bang into cosmic soup and finally from apes into a human. This signifies a transformation from the definition of meaningless to a divinely created and valued being. I was awe struck. My life suddenly had so much more meaning and importance. I wasn't just cosmic dust that lucked out in organization over billions of years as I had learned in school and believed with a vengeance. Suddenly, I was a creation that was important to Someone awesomely powerful.

The four big questions were answered:

1. Where did I come from? 2. Why am I here? 3. Who am I ? 4. Where do I go when I die?

The answers now had meaning instead of the emptiness and fear of being a random event in space with no purpose, afterlife, or intrinsic value, which has death as an uncomfortably simple, cold, and insignificant event that leads to nothing more than the recycling of matter. Somehow this was always troubling especially when I hugged my children and watched them lay innocently asleep in *A Moment of Silence*. I wondered how my intense love for them could only have meaning and origination from my own mind. If they tragically died the source of this love would become matter without life that would decay back to its pre-evolved state. How does a child that inhabits the heart and soul only represent evolved matter?

This was another *Clue* that I had overlooked for so many years after being indoctrinated into evolution. Now my entire family was the creation of God who promised love and eternal life. This revelation alone fills so many cold and empty rooms that reside in the heart. I had the proof given to me overnight. If this doesn't cause a rush of jubilation I don't know what does. It was too good to be true and yet it was true.

The Bible suddenly made sense. What seemed like a toy world of foolish nonsense to my advanced internet world of 2003 was reversed. We really are living in a world made by God as billions of his creations. I was the fool. What seemed foolish was actually true and what seemed wise was foolish and false. Yes the genius doctor knew nothing about his world, the universe or existence for one third of his life. I had been living in *The Matrix*, a false sense of reality. A dream world where what I knew day to day was all there was. This shook me to the bone. I walked around wondering how I could have been deceived my entire life. *True Vision Comes From Seeing The Light*.

The whole earth was suddenly much more interesting and exciting. I didn't look at anything the same. What was taken for granted is now an awesome creation. It was designed and made sense. Somehow I knew that everything in the world being a cosmic accident didn't make sense but an entire education had cemented this into my brain.

I suddenly realized I know nothing about reality and was still excited about it. As a physician I really felt knowledgeable about the earth, science, and the human body. The modern age of genetics and scientific advances signified mans' conquering of his world and I was proud to be part of it. Knowledge of anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, and genetics cause man to have a sense of solving his own puzzle. The level of sophistication in current medical research is stunning. God, however, changes the infinite wisdom of man to a mere drop of intellect from the source. The very mind that masters its own body and engineering with a venerated pride loses its stature when the mind itself comes from God. Our level of perceived achievement and sophistication pops like a large balloon and becomes relative on a scale that cannot be comprehended and herein lays the problem.

Some of the scientists and scholars of the world who derive their stature, respect, money, jobs, and sense of pride and self worth do not want to admit to God for this exact reason. Can you now see how they reject God not based on truth or logic but on moral issues of pride, money, prestige, control, and self worth? This is the same reason 2000 years ago Jesus was rejected by the Pharisees. They could not deny His miracles or awesome power.

God and the Big Bang is an insulting attempt to merge oil and water. God does not need evolution over millions of years to make His divine creation. This theory which I will explain later also contradicts the basic doctrine of the entire Christian message, the resurrection. If *He Heard Me* then I am created in His image period. This presented absolutely no problems for me at this point. I also began to ponder do people really believe in evolution because it is logical or because evolution destroys the creation event and the power and accountability of *He Heard Me*? As I thought about creation and *The Ski Trip* incident I had to admit to myself this was true. I rejected this story in part because the creative power behind it spoke of ownership, sovereignty, and accountability that I did not want. I always hated admitting that I was wrong, but I was about to splurge into being wrong in every aspect of my life as I worked my way through *The Analysis*.

The next logical step led to a more difficult and frightening conclusion. Could money, power, and prestige motivate not only the creation of evolutionary theory but the suppression of creationism? The nature of man proclaims an astounding and horrifying yes. This was very troubling because my entire education and framework for understanding medicine and life on earth was being turned upside down. How could I have lived for thirty six years and have been taught evolution as the only theory from grade school through medical school if creationism was true? Man wouldn't really do this on purpose or would he?

I was always the biggest defender of evolution, carbon dating, and Big Bang theory of the universe since it was the foundation of what I had studied my entire life in route to becoming a doctor. All of it becoming a lie will rattle the very core of a persons past, self identity, and meaning from hundreds of hours of study. What I would find would do just that but on a grander scale than I could have ever imagined.

2. The Bible is the inspired and authoritative word of God – God by definition would not have a revelational book for His creation that contained any errors or truths that only modern man could figure out. How did God hear my prayer? What if thousands were praying all over the world at the same time? Would we have to wait in line? No. The complexity and power of God who sustains and is in intimate contact with all life at once is light years beyond our

comprehension. Does a God of such infinite power and control inspire a book that is not exactly the way He wants it?

The Bible clearly states it's the inspired word of God. A lot of arguing goes on about the word inerrant. It must first be carefully defined by those debating the issue. This is beyond the scope of this book but there are many texts which illustrate how accurate the Bible is. The Bible has been carefully examined and found to be 99.5% accurate making it the most reliable ancient text of all time.<sup>1</sup> A lot of people enjoy finding discrepancies that do not really exist on closer inspection. An illogical argument is also made where one apparent discrepancy equals the entire text being false once again redefining the standards for evaluation of ancient manuscripts. This is natural and a trap for the unbeliever who does not want the truth. God provided a gnat to be strained on and sustain their unbelief. I know all of this because I did it all. I wanted something to make it not be true to hide from the implications.

Give me the existence of God who hears one man in his bedroom and a paper back book inspired by God is nothing. I began to realize I ran from this fact because of its implications to my life and not the implausibility of God making a book. I had never in the past really thought about it this way. If the God of the Bible is true and real then He made the whole universe. If this is true then why would I reject the possibility of a book? This is completely ridiculous but I had thought this way in the past anyway.

I slowly realized and had to admit to myself it was because I didn't want it to be true. I tried to hide behind it all being a "matter of interpretation" but I couldn't. Most of the Bible is very clear and written in plain language. The more I tried to explain it away the more I began to see what I was really hiding from. I think if my conversion was not so radical it might have been a lot easier to hide or begin to try and make the accountability go away but I couldn't. The Bible true means God hears me in my bedroom and everywhere else and this means a level of accountability that goes against the ideas of an entire world.

The world that has developed over the past twenty centuries wants no part of such a reality. This is so profound that some people who want to believe are caught in *Catch 22*. I never gave the logic of the book a chance due to unbelief disguised and rationalized with *The Mask* of skepticism and the hat of scientific knowledge. I was an arrogant fool trying to hide the secrets of my heart.

3. Jesus Christ is the answer to being made right with God as the New Testament states. It's critical to realize that when I surrendered in my room that night I did not know I was performing what the Bible says is necessary to be saved. I never expected that there would ever be a chance of knowing which if any religion was the reality of earth and the universe. What to me was a emotional meltdown was fulfillment of scripture with eternal and spiritual consequences that stagger the mind. I had to go back and study, search, and read the New Testament to figure this out. I really don't think if I had intentionally found these verses I would have ever believed them. The mind does not even consider that being saved or the Holy Spirit are a hard core reality. Today it's left to the realm of pure faith or religious belief. This is a major reason that modern day Christianity is so confused and misguided on these topics.

The converse of this leads to great hope though. Many people will come to Jesus Christ when they are told He's real and not just an intangible dream in another belief system. Proof of reality draws attention. If someone would have explained to me that God is real and offered proof I might have listened. Why this never happened was puzzling to me in my analysis. It was yet another *Clue*, however, to a more startling reality I will review later.

4. All other religions are false in ways they contradict the Bible. This was a very difficult fact that I was forced to swallow. I researched other religions and found they were not all the same and were not all worshiping the same God. The all were exclusive at many points and filled with internal contradictions. I did not understand how this could have happened at first. I had always viewed a world of religious pluralism as proof there is no answer. If there was an answer then man would have not run off in so many directions. A world of religious pluralism perfectly reinforced my notion that the real God was unknowable and manifesting Himself in many different ways.

I had a lot more reading to do but I kept coming back to *He Heard Me*. I quickly began to realize that if man didn't want such a scenario but felt a need to be religious and quiet his conscience I just might have reversed the logic. We must be seeing the results of man running from the truth or inventing his own. I spent a lot of time here since Jesus Christ made a completely exclusive claim.

Truth is exclusive by nature as Ravi Zacharias taught me in his books. All worldviews when carefully studied are exclusive and cannot all be right. This is applied in every setting except God by our society. There is only one reality and set of true historical facts for this earth. Tolerance and agnosticism have been designed and implemented by societies for moral and political reasons seeking to exclude God. Truth is now relative and the structures that hide, deny, and make God unknowable absolute.

5. Heaven is a real place – I had always worried about and feared death. The peace, relief, and comfort that emanate from an absolute certainty of eternal life cannot be described. The fear, uncertainty, anguish, and lack of meaning that characterize death in today's world all vanish. No single question has plagued mankind more than death. Conquering death with a tangible heaven does more for the human mind and spirit than anything else conceivable. Life itself and daily living are now viewed from the eternal sense and not the worldly.

A lot of the stress from our society revolves around a single exclusive earthly perspective. "This is it so make the most of it" originates stress, authenticates selfish behavior, and leads to the emptiness of death without meaning. Make as much money, acquire as many things, and experience as much as possible before death is the motto. A liberation from stress and worry cannot be found anywhere else except in the eternal realm of the Christian message. Trials and tribulation in life are certain but handled and perceived in a completely different way under the illumination of God and eternity. This is why being dependent on God is liberating not incarcerating as some fear.

6. Hell is a real place –

I never considered while growing up the possible reality of heaven or hell. They were imaginary places created in the minds of humans seeking a meaning that did not exist. God proved the

Bible and Jesus Christ are real in one mighty demonstration of power and healing in my bedroom that night. The Bible clearly mentions both eternal places that thus become an instant reality. Jesus spoke more about hell than heaven when I looked at the Gospels. I remembered hearing about pastors who did not believe in hell, but this made no sense to me since Jesus so clearly talked about it many times. They had better inform Jesus about their modern interpretation.

The reality of hell is crucial for several reasons. First it rightly should scare many readers into at least examining the evidence. The stakes of eternity in hell are too high to be ignored without a proper and thorough investigation of the premise that it is founded upon. Anything less is treacherous gambling. Surprisingly, this is equally important even for the Christian reader since salvation is misunderstood on a massive scale. This is so true that it's often easier for the "unreligioned" to accept the truth of salvation.

What would happen in a world or place where everyone is eternally separated from God knowing they made the most colossal mistake of all time with no second chance? Millions of people now realizing earth was just a warm up and they never knew it. Earth and all of its apparent majesty with things to do and events to attend is only the beginning. Imagine the strife and anguish this must cause from realizing a past life of certain reality was not reality at all. Anger, violence, rage, revenge, bitterness, hatred and cruelty become magnified in a world with no order or rules. Man is left to rule himself in this place since he chose to rule on his own on earth. If heaven is infinitely better then hell is infinitely worse. A lot of very wicked and inhumane people have walked this earth throughout the ages. This should scare people into being certain what the real basis for their beliefs is.

The next area that needs explanation is the transformation itself. How does it work? What happens to someone who is saved by accepting Jesus Christ? How did God hear my prayer in my bedroom that night? How could a human be transformed in such an unimaginable way? Without this radical transformation of my very being I would have awoken the same person the next morning. I would have nothing but faith to go on which is exactly what I had expected so it wouldn't have been a surprise anyway.

What exactly did happen? I have already described the premise for my initial inability to discern what had taken place. A lot of thorough reading and guidance was required to ascertain the answers. The complexity and reality of the transaction cannot be understood by man except in the simplest of terms. When such a prayer is spoken from the heart several critical things occur as God hears and answers by His grace. First is the forgiveness of sin which leads to a new verdict of "not guilty" with God. Jesus Christ now pays your penalty for sin and this enables you to be reconnected to God as His Holy Spirit enters your body and joins with your spirit to make you spiritually alive. This aspect is the rebirth of the spirit. The results can be dramatic and immediate like I experienced or more commonly a gradual process that occurs over time. The Holy Spirit has fruit which characterizes the new person:

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. NIV

The Holy Spirit brings the power by which a person is changed. Being made righteous with God and having His Spirit dwell inside the believer is what had happened to me and I didn't even expect it or

know about it at first. What I was feeling for the first three days as I was trying to figure it out was the work of the Holy Spirit. Once I found and read about the fruit of the Spirit it explained exactly how I was feeling.

Not only did God want to save us from eternal separation from Him, but He wanted to reestablish the power for the believer to overcome sin that came from the curse Adam had caused on the earth. God in His awesome plan knew that simply forgiving sin would not be enough since the same individual making the same mistakes would remain. In my case the same Greg Viehman would roam the earth with all his bad qualities still in place. God knew that help, guidance, and power were needed, since we couldn't change on our own. The Holy Spirit is the answer to this problem. The Spirit takes the blinders off helping reveal the world and the Bible with clarity. He takes one out of *The Matrix* making it visible from inside its own walls.

The Holy Spirit proves the Christian message is real and the only true answer. This is one of the most incredible and awesome displays of infinite power. He is *The Forgotten Evidence* and unknown evidence that God and Jesus are here, alive today, and real. It should be a stunning revelation about the earth and our universe but it's not believed by many people in our modern world. What other world view has the Spirit of God dwelling in the body as evidence?

Today's culture not unlike Jesus' time demands miracles but doesn't realize the miracles are real and alive today via the Holy Spirit. Entire personalities are changed with the reversal of lifelong outlooks and desires. Radical alterations of character are occurring that are not possible or explained except by divine intervention. Emptiness is quickly filled with a deep sense of warmth and peace felt inside your body. This is a test that begs every skeptic to be very careful about rejecting.

At this juncture I knew God was real and alive and the Bible His word. I was a completely different person in everyway. I knew that people prayed, but I didn't really understand the reality of it even though my own prayer was somehow heard. I did not comprehend that God was personal and desired communication. I thought God listened to enable people to be saved but He was otherwise too busy and not interested in dealing with one mere man. I thought prayer had to be in lofty Elizabethan type language. God was always portrayed even by Christians I knew as just some distant "God" and Jesus was someone who died. He was never talked about in a personal way.

What I discovered went far beyond what my imagination could have ever dreamed of. Prayer is real, effective, and can be very powerful. God wants to interact with those who have faith in Him and believe that He is real and alive. He is willing to provide assistance when appropriate. We were made to interact with God the creator through prayer and depend upon him as Lord. This really blew my mind. I knew that God had healed and saved me, but nothing more was expected after that. A daily ongoing personal relationship to provide support and guidance through prayer was unimaginable at the outset. I had also heard many people talk about "God" like He was a genie in heaven granting wishes and satisfying our desires but I knew this was so far from the truth and wrong.

I thus started praying all the time for my friends and family. I was worried many were like I was or had lost the reality of God in the modern agnostic society. My prayers focused on a chance to give my testimony to those who might want or need to hear it. Religious beliefs are very personal, but a story like mine is always helpful to the ear that wants to listen. The results that I have seen from prayer in the past six months are staggering to the imagination. The orchestration of all lives and

events by God has been made very clear to me. Ultimate coincidences and specific results have both been observed in direct relation to prayers for specific individuals. Things began to happen to people whom I prayed for to such a degree it made them stop and think.

To go from no concept of God's existence to God in my bedroom with His Spirit in me overnight because *He Heard Me* will stop the heart. I spent a long time pondering this as my world was turned upside down. Many thoughts raced through my mind. The Bible just made no sense in any way shape or form to anything I had ever seen, heard, or experienced in thirty six years. Very quickly my foundation and paradigm of life was changing in very unsettling ways because now the world didn't make sense in any way shape or form. Not just the world but a lot of what I knew about Christianity also made little sense when held up to the Bible. I recall thinking "Oh My God why are we still here?" There was a lot of joy and a lot of confusion, sorrow, and even fear. I was *Knocked Off My Throne and Made Court Jester*.

I also felt innocent. How was I supposed to know? Why did I never see the Bible anywhere or ever talked about? Why was it just church? Why was the behavior always so far from Christian? Why had no one ever talked about the Holy Spirit in you? Why did no one talk about how real God is? Why did everything I had ever seen ignore God in daily life? Why was no one talking about Him? Why wasn't anyone talking about Him working in their lives? Why no outward relationships? Why just religion and hypocrisy? Why did it seem like a secret no one wanted to hear about?

At this point an unexpected dichotomy developed in my life that would cause great anguish and consternation in the very midst of ecstatic joy. I had found the key to the meaning of life, but then a sudden realization swept through my mind right into the heart. The train was still charging at full speed towards the cliff, and some of my family, relatives, and friends were unknowingly still on board like I had been. They were still living in *The Matrix* that they are certain is the true reality of earth and human life. Now the horror began. They were headed straight to eternal separation where those that never acknowledge God spend eternity without Him.

I was sick to my stomach and not really sleeping much at all. Everywhere, I looked I knew there were multitudes in *The Matrix*. The potential harvest was even greater two thousand years later than when the first apostles and Jesus surveyed the fields. I knew so many were caught up in the daily rat race and grind of the modern world that demands all of our time to the point where life and reality can be a foregone conclusion.

The next questioned that plagued my mind with a never ending torment was "How did it get this way?" How did mankind lose sight of the nature of his existence and intended purpose? How did we set a course where the majority would grow up and live in a false sense of reality? I only had to look in *The Mirror* to see my old mind as a faint reflection denying God with a smile that was justified by independence and success.

I had lived in a world so filled with busy lives, jobs, kids, movies, school, money, and activities that one could live and never even think of God. The answer is found in my own account of the first one third of my life. Life itself as constructed in the modern era is the problem. The fact that money was not an issue didn't help the matter. What worries did I have? What else did I need? Money could buy anything I needed now that I had a nice family. I didn't need God, didn't know who He was, or have a need to search for one. I finally knew why Jesus said:

Matthew 19:24

Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." NIV

It's not the money itself but the fact that money allows you to be blinded from the truth by its security and comfort. Money severely decreases the reason to seek or feel the need for Jesus Christ as Lord in the heart in an ongoing relationship. Money allows you to go to church and quiet your conscience without surrender and repentance. I was not going to go to church to do the right thing or make business contacts. Salvation comes from grace and not the works of man.

I had some Christian friends. Thank goodness they would all be saved, and I didn't have to worry about them. They had been religious their whole lives, believed in the Bible, and went to church. What a relief right? I could certainly take them off my list. Well I called one of my friends who is Jewish and married to a Christian. I figured he would think I was nuts, and she would help me convince him to be saved. I had to approach him no matter what he thought, because he was my buddy. We had lived most of our lives as good friends and he was first on my list to help. I knew if I could convince him that his family would follow. Thank God I could count on his Christian wife for assistance right? You can see it coming, I was wrong.

She basically said "I don't see what the big deal is. Why are you bothering him with this? We believe in God. You are just stating what the Bible says. I went to Christian high school, and I believe in Jesus and the Bible. My husband believes in "God". What is this Holy Spirit and being saved business? I know the trinity but so what?" I was speechless and didn't even argue. What she said says it all. This illustrates one of the most critical problems facing Christianity today that was totally unexpected to me.

She didn't get it. She was a "Christian" and still didn't get it. I was going to have an easier time with him! She did not understand her own faith at its most crucial point. The one that meant the difference between two very different places and eternal life. How could this be? Jesus Christ came to earth to save mankind. Christianity without salvation is useless. I thought maybe she was alone, a lost sheep in a flock. She wasn't.

I was so excited I started talking to a lot of people. I quickly noticed that many people who had received Jesus Christ had done so later in life and many had spent a lot of years in church before they accepted Christ as savior. In fact many of the people I met had "A Story". They thought they had salvation but then found out they really didn't. Something had to happen in their lives to bring them to salvation and not just church attendance. By now a very common link was emerging. Wherever there were problems with salvation the Bible was absent. All of these people had been in *Churchianity*.

One person thought they had salvation from joining a church. Another was convinced for a while that his baptism at birth and official ceremony of joining his faith earned him salvation. One person decided to join a faith and took some classes and was told he was now "good". One lady spent many years in church and was never even taught salvation so it was just assumed that she had it. One person thought because they thought of themselves as Christian and were raised going to church that this defined being a Christian. Another man recited a sinner's prayer and thought he was saved.

They were totally blown away when they discovered Christianity is not a moral social club a person decides they join. These were all people who could now look back and realize they were *Mislead and Deceived*. They thought they knew Jesus Christ but didn't. They "believed" in Him and understood who He was but never received Him.

I began to meet people who read and studied the Bible and had relationships with Jesus Christ and not just religion. Most of them used to be in church with no Bible and no relationship. It was all about church and even more interestingly the Bible was avoided. Many people told me the sermons had little to do with the Bible at all. They were just going to church and trying to be good and nice but were in retrospect deceived. To me it made no sense to be a "Christian" and not read and study the Bible anyway. How could you know anything without it? I began to learn many people had false professions of faith because they did not truly repent and understand how to be saved and what they were being saved from.

What was going on here? How could all these people who went to church their whole lives, listening to sermons, and intellectually believing in Jesus be so close and yet miss the mark? They all knew exactly what I was talking about since they had been there. They told me many people like to go to church but didn't want God to be that real. You will read their testimonies.

Rituals and traditions are not harmful in any way unless salvation is put in jeopardy. My total absence from religion for thirty six years was actually an advantage. I wasn't caught up in years of religious rituals made by man, traditions, or preconceived ideas. I had a clean slate and it saved my life. *Just A Bible*.

I asked other Christians who were saved about this problem and they were very familiar with it. Why did no one explain it to these people? I was told it's a very touchy subject that is often poorly received. I was told you really can't even use the word saved without people getting weird. I had read the Bible and the word saved was used all over the place. I was simply floored to find out that people who believe in Jesus do not want to hear what the Bible says about being saved in favor of what mankind has invented. There are no faiths in the Bible except Jesus Christ. The message of salvation is crystal clear. Some people told me that when they got saved people whom they knew and went to church with avoided them! It actually caused problems?!

I felt and still do that this is the stupidest thing I have ever discovered in my life. For God to be real and the necessary *Reconnection* of salvation to not be made by all "Christians" is ridiculous. I just simply didn't get it. If someone considers themselves a Christian why in the world would they not have salvation that Christ died for? Do people forget hell is a real place in their worldview? Eternal life and *The Reconnection* to God are easy and those who sit in church get upset when talking about it? This just didn't make sense to someone who never really went to church. It's like a bunch of people who won the lottery sitting in the claims office but never redeem the tickets. Why? I just never thought I would discover something so strange. If God is real why not rejoice over it? If salvation is a real event and transaction why get upset over it?

How could anyone trust a man over God's word? If the Bible is the basis for Christianity why would any Christian get angry or defensive about what the Bible says? After all, the entire Bible is God's word. I would slowly find that even many Christians do not like what the Bible says except when it talks about love and grace. Even pastors and theologians try to escape the word of God by saying it's

not really God's word because it came through man. They do not want to admit to the supreme omnipotence of God totally inspiring and guiding the Bible for secret reasons they will never admit.

I also began to realize that I had humbled myself and literally cried out for mercy and grace that night. A lot of people are not willing to humble themselves out of pride. Asking for salvation is like being a beggar who admits being a helpless failure in the eternal sense. I didn't realize the power of God's word that makes the heart ready, the faith sufficient, and convicts the soul. This is the trinity of salvation and the reason that the Bible is the power of salvation.

As you will see many people are victims of churches in *The Great Defection* which make people feel good and "Christian" to quiet the conscience by watered down doctrine. Maybe if these teachers realize the true implications of *He Heard Me* they will teach the truth out of fear. Many people are trying to do the right thing with sincerity and honesty but are not being taught the truth. Christian religion is probably the most dangerous risk factor for missing heaven. This is sad but true. This is wrong and I hope my story helps those people who simply don't know.

The big picture in this book will develop and explain the many problems that exist. I never expected them to exist but want to help those who simply don't know. Those who are sincere and in search of truth should be encouraged by a scoffer and scientist turned evangelist almost overnight. People in church who are victims of *Churchianity* without the Bible instead of relationship will be helped by testimonies of those like them and the truth of how real God is. The skeptic and former rejecter of Christianity can look at this big picture and realize Christianity is a huge mess but Jesus still real.

## Chapter Four

### Looking Back

God had been with me every moment of my life, but I was unaware He even existed. Did my past have meaning, *Clues*, and evidence for His purpose for me? Was my life orchestrated and arranged to lead up to this day? Everything I had recently learned explained that God is teaching lessons in life even to those unaware of His reality. This meant my past was still relevant as an educational tool and thus began the search for *Clues*. Once I started searching my memory banks the past became crystal clear, and everything took on a whole new meaning and outlook.

#### **Lucy. The Missing Link?**

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade I wrote my first term paper. By no coincidence it was on *Australopithecus afarensis* or LUCY. This form of primate was the missing link in the evolutionary tree from ape to human. I remember visiting the Natural Museum of History and seeing diagrams of man evolving from apes. I cannot go into any detail since it is far beyond the scope of this book, but let me say this. I have investigated evolution and its basis in great detail. The more I learn and study the more astonished I am at just how far man has gone to hide the truth. I cannot begin to tell you the damage that this does to the heart, faith, and self image of a young child. It's playing itself out all over the world today.

#### **The Ski Trip**

Remember *The Ski Trip*? God sent me on that trip and was there watching me debate eight people at once about Adam and Eve. I knew I was right and had won the debate in my mind. The indoctrination of evolution is a hard thing to overcome. My friends and parents agreed with me that they were religious fanatics trying to brainwash me. "Save me from what?" I thought from inside *The Matrix*. I was wrong and another chance was blown. I still to this day think they were too aggressive, but the "fanatics" were right. What seemed foolish was wise, while my own wisdom was foolish.

#### **The College Cross Kook**

He was right! This man knew we were lost and living in *The Matrix*. His call was to the many lost students caught up in the struggle to get ahead in the world and make more money someday. Isn't that the general outline for success that is taught by society? Study hard, get into the best college, get a great job, and make lots of money since it can buy security and happiness. This provides control over ones destiny as you become your own god. This man was dismissed as nuts by college geniuses like me, but he actually knew more about eternity than we did if the majority had any knowledge of eternity at all. He had given up his life to preach the Gospel and would go to heaven while I was on my way to eternal separation. I was getting a good education though and would be a doctor. How ironic. Who was the fool?

#### **The Tracts**

I did not mention this in my biography, but I can recall on several occasions being given handouts that said: "Are You Saved?" I always threw them directly in the waste basket after a brief glance revealed their religious content. It was garbage from religious freaks right? Wrong. Salvation is clearly explained in an era when even many church attendees don't understand it due to biblical illiteracy. These little slips of paper dismissed as rubbish explain the key to eternity, but I didn't listen. I graduated number one in my class and was an educated doctor. They were nuts with this Jesus business. How many of you now remember these slips of paper? What seemed foolish was actually wise. A pattern is emerging.

### **Going Off The Deep End**

I have had several friends and family members think this about me. I will clarify up front there is a distinction between "Christian" religious practice and following Biblical doctrine through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I used to think that anyone that suddenly became really religious was *Going Off The Deep End*. I always thought they must have some problems or have done something really seriously wrong and were hiding in religion or using it as a shield. They make a quick and sudden turn towards God and Jesus Christ, we immediately attack them and talk about *Going Off The Deep End*. Why?

First, it's both threatening and convicting at the same time. This can be magnified when the right person *Goes Off The Deep End*. When the epitome of anti-religion makes an about face and radical conversion it sends a strong message that many people will not want to face. This person has either found a life changing truth or has lost their marbles. The dramatic reversal is something that is not understood and somewhere deep inside you know they have found something foreign to you. The decision on which theory is chosen becomes more difficult and convicting when it's a friend or close relative. This is heightened when close inspection and analysis overtime reveal it's not a whim and the joy is both real and stable.

I have found this to be exactly the case with me. People who know me must genuinely ask "Why have I chosen this path?" "What could have possibly turned him one hundred eighty degrees on the dime in a flash?" This is a very strong case for truth which triggers fear and releases a natural defense of pride. This is a great way to feel better and avoid the conviction and reality of what has really occurred. Who gets to define what the deep end is? Maybe the deep end is really where the best swimming is, while the rest of the world dives into the shallow end of destruction.

It's much easier to attack and dismiss someone as nuts than admit you just might be wrong about life's most important question. The people that lead the strongest criticism are often those with the least biblical knowledge. Notice I said biblical and not religious knowledge. I know this because I was one of these attackers and did it many many times. My own competitive pride would not accept that I could be wrong. Did I ever ask or investigate? No. I just assumed I was right. Correction, I knew I was right.

My message to you now is that these are the people who are figuring out the reality of this world. It seems like they are *Going Off The Deep end* because the rest of us are living in *The Matrix*. You see people jumping off the train and think they are the crazy ones. The problem is they are born on the train and it's on the wrong track. I had my kids and family on this train and this still haunts me and always will. Get yourselves and your family off today. Be very careful because church and religion are performed on board the train every Sunday. Just because most of the world is on board with you doesn't mean they are right. Remember most of the passengers will agree with you if you ask them.

Try talking to someone who has gotten off the train unless you really don't want to hear what they have to say. What appears foolish is really wise in today's world of *The Matrix*.

### **The Marco Island Visit**

Revelation 3:20

Here I am! 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. NIV

I had described something in the air that I could sense and feel like the wind. This was the same feeling I was experiencing right before salvation. It's like something is in the air and all around you. I heard the knock and somehow knew He was coming. My wife's father opened the door and let them in. I started to make some food after that but never ate it. I pushed Him back out the door and locked it for a while. Thank God He patiently waited for me.

### **Reading The Old Testament**

I had stopped reading the Bible as described earlier due to the miracles. My sound knowledge of science and the limitations of our natural world clearly made these events impossible. If these events were false why read the rest of the book when in the first two sections there were clearly tall tales? Everything I had ever learned, heard, or seen from national museums, science class, college, and scientific journals clearly never mentioned anything consistent with creation or "supernatural" power. If it really existed it would be endorsed and taught, and for this reason I dismissed it all with absolute certainty. The timeline of Genesis and the Old Testament also didn't make sense. People were living for nine hundred years, parting of the sea, it's impossible! I was done with it. Here is the *Clue* I thought it was foolishness.

Instead, God deliberately chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose those who are powerless to shame those who are powerful. 1 Corinthians. 1:27 NLT

Whenever you think it's impossible or foolish be careful. Don't get caught in the trap. Remember *He Heard Me*. How impossible is it to completely change a human being overnight from one prayer? Every aspect of his mind, personality, and way of thinking transformed in an instant? Pay attention to the word "deliberately". God wanted some faith built into the human acceptance of His kingdom and gift to mankind. If man decided to use the very mind that God gave him to reason and conclude that God and His miracles were not believable then he had all he needed to feel confident in His decision. When a mind which cannot explain its own existence is used to eliminate the possibility of interventions into a world that it cannot also explain then blind arrogance is at work.

This is exactly what I was doing. I also forgot that if God exists then miracles aren't really miracles and are easily explainable. The only way to prove miracles are impossible is to disprove the existence of God which can't be done. I arrogantly never considered such simple logic in the past. The scientist in me dismissed miracles as foolish.

Why then when applied to our world does it offend many of us? Why does it cause such intense anger and debates in the world? Is it really the miracles or what they represent? Are miracles rejected because our society does not want God and Jesus Christ really to exist? This question goes to very heart of the issue when someone rejects and dismisses the miracles. Many times the rejection of Jesus Christ is disguised as an intelligent argument against the "supernatural". The motive is paramount.

This is also not surprising for other reasons that are the source of human wickedness and self induced destruction that are relevant to many aspects of life. Pride is a major culprit, the cancer of the soul<sup>1</sup>. Many of us are brainwashed from the very beginning as we are taught only evolution and the agnostic dogma in a society of relative truth and tolerance. It is human nature to dislike being wrong about anything. Pride takes over our reason and heart to fight for its own existence. When pride is combined with a desire to avoid and shut out a God that represents accountability and rules, in a society of independence and free choice for anything and everything, it's easy to see why miracles are rejected.

A world that largely rejects these events also has a silent but profound effect on the church attendee. When the world, museums, scientists, news, and teachers all dismiss these events as religious or "supernatural" it has a profound effect on the heart and mind. Silently it erodes faith and makes Christian religion a lot easier to follow instead of the real relationship. It's easy for someone to not *really* believe and simply practice religion and attend church. They believe in God and the basic story but not the profound reality of *He Heard Me*. This is very dangerous.

### **#1 In My Class**

I graduated #1 in my class in medical school and was proud of this achievement. C.S. Lewis described competitive pride as "cancer to the soul"<sup>2</sup>. He called it the greatest sin. I had this one and so did most of my medical school. This kind of pride strives to do well in order surpass and rise above others rather than the best you can achieve for yourself. The goal is to be ahead of others and somehow gain an advantage over them. This basic motive is very pervasive in medical school. It becomes the measure of many students success. I had won! I could stand on top of the mountain as king. My friends and family were also proud. Guess what? I was on the train and had absolutely no idea.

I was first and headed to end up last at death. Sure I would live a great and comfortable life here on earth with the security of money and a stable job. Finding and living the *American Dream* was a trap and formula for eternal disaster without Jesus..

Look at my life: born into a good and prosperous family, attended private school with "A" average, graduated Magna Cum Laude from college with biology major and Phi Beta Kappa, graduated Summa Cum laude from medical school with scientific publications and Alpha Omega Alpha membership, chief resident in Dermatology at Duke University Medical Center, fellowship in Mohs Surgery from Duke, married with a wonderful family, started a successful private practice in Dermatology. I had reached the pinnacle of success as defined by society and would finish last in the end.

Philippians 3:4-9

Yet I could have confidence in myself if anyone could. If others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more! 5 For I was circumcised when I was eight days old, having been born into a pure-blooded Jewish family that is a branch of the tribe of Benjamin. So I am a real Jew if there ever was one! What's more, I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. 6 And zealous? Yes, in fact, I harshly persecuted the church. And I obeyed the Jewish law so carefully that I was never accused of any fault.

I once thought all these things were so very important, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. 8 Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ 9 and become one with him. I no longer count on my own goodness or my ability to obey God's law, but I trust Christ to save me. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. NLT

Mark 8:36

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? NKJV

### **The Expletives**

All of the bad words were a part of my everyday vocabulary. I used these words as verbs, adjectives, & nouns. If something went wrong even something simple like dropping a glass, the first thing I said would be either to profane Jesus' or God's' name. I did not even think about it. It just came out of my mouth without even thinking about it. Why was this?

I can't say I still to this day understand why. It was likely learned from the rest of the world. I have never said either of those words in that context ever again. This was another thing that vanished that night. I can't explain how except the desire and natural utterance is gone. It is not that I am holding them back simply because its wrong and against the commandments. It's not that at all. This was part of the rewiring of my brain that occurred that night.

Now that I look back it seems weird. Why was I saying Jesus Christ when I stubbed my toe or broke a glass? How strange? Did I somehow expect Him to do something? I didn't even believe or know Him. I should have called out "Donovan McNabb". This may seem funny, but it's true. I believe in this Eagles quarterback and I respect him. Why did I always immediately invoke the creators name even in trivial situations? There is no magic answer. In fact this is one of the hardest questions that I have tried to answer.

One day in my lab I recall a nurse that came to me and said "This patient is angry, since we could not find his biopsy site." "When I told him I had to come get you he said "Jesus Christ".' I asked her why he invoked this name and she began laughing and so did I. Why? It was ridiculous that's why. What bearing on the situation could Jesus Christ possibly have?

The key question though is why millions of people do this everyday. They have little knowledge or belief in God or Jesus Christ and yet utter their name all the time. The context is that of blame and not help. That is the first *Clue*. We are blaming Him for the occurrence. We are saying if He was real or true then this wouldn't be happening. I don't know, but I think maybe it's a cry for a longing that we really desire. Are we saying I wish there was a loving God. Somewhere in the bottom of my heart underneath all of my armor that I wear in society I really want there to be a God and heaven. Internally we are angry that we don't have this and lash out from that discord.

The truth is getting closer.

This behavior in man is a mass yearning for God, a lost race looking for its Father. Think about it. Millions of people say these things every day. Millions really want there to be a God in the depth of their mind and hearts that lie beneath the armor that must be worn to fit in and protect against our modern society. Why? God created us. It's programmed into our minds and spirits. Remember we were created to run on His fuel. Once you know He's there and you feel His peace and love you have no reason to say these things and it ends. Maybe not all at once like it did for me but slowly over time since you now realize they are wrong.

### **Our Town**

Why did God send me to this play in 1989? Why did I cry? What did Emily Gibbs realize? She discovered that her entire life was lived caught up in the day to day routine. The hustle and bustle of daily existence prevented her and her family from seeing and living the truth. No one stopped to really enjoy mere existence and the miracle of life itself. The fact that humans exist with a mind and

emotions such as love is a miracle. If you miss this then you are missing big *Clues* which I'll explain later. This colossal mistake in her case was only realized after death. Does this sound familiar?

*Our Town* was describing the mistake many of us are making right now both personally and eternally. Many of us are so busy with life we don't stop to love each other and also to make sure we have the eternal questions answered. *The Matrix* and the maze of life distract our attention away from meaningful interaction with family and friends and from God. A dualistic truth applies both to the individual household and the grander scale of our eternity.

*The Matrix* of life is hiding mankind from the truth about God and Jesus Christ. Luckily it's not too late. God was teaching me about the lost state of our world and warning me to value my own personal life at the same time. *The Matrix* can cause the very moment to moment joy and wonder of life to be lost in addition to the universal truth of God. Life is suddenly over and not only was the essence of relationships squandered but eternal separation from God is the ultimate consequence.

*Our Town* is a play that is a must read for everyone. The story and piercing moral truth are unforgettable. The reason it stings so badly is that it is true in a world that says this life is it or we don't really know. If now we are shown by Emily Gibbs that we even squander this away without knowing it then the tears begin to make sense. The reality of Emily Gibbs and her lesson about day to day to life remains even for the person who denies God. It changes the way you live and cherish each moment; even the ones that seem trivial become immensely full of meaning. In *Our Town* there is no hell except the realization of her mistake in day to day life, but in the real world we have both. *Our Town* is a literary gem and a very important *Clue*.

### **Jesus Christ**

There are a lot of misconceptions about Jesus Christ because the Bible is not read and studied in many churches, *The Lost Foundation*. Many people think of "God" and then a man He sent to earth named Jesus who died for our sins. It's almost as if they are considered two different Gods and not different manifestations of one God. There is also a common belief that there is the God of the Old Testament and then Jesus in the New Testament again like two different and separate beings. This Jesus was the one who died for the sins and was kind of a man on a mission sent from the real God. This I have learned from talking to many people who have spent many years in churches of all different denominations. At the outset I had no preconceptions about who Jesus Christ is and so I just let the Bible form my concept of Him. This was the safest thing I could have done and I never even realized it at the time.

I also could not understand how Jesus Christ dying almost two thousand years ago was tangibly significant to me today. Many people are taught that becoming a Christian is a social and cultural decision culminated by intellectually accepting the basic doctrine and then going to church. This then defines you as a Christian based on your decision to become one. You thus capitalize on the work of Jesus by going to church and signaling to God that now you are in the right camp. He then sees you at church and doing good deeds and then says ok this guy is a believer he's in. This is so far from the truth. I have met quite a few people who were taught this and were then quite angry and upset that they did not have salvation. Many people were taught Christianity is a belief system or a way to live life by being and acting "nice" instead of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ that is as real.

The importance here is that disconnectedness from the work of Jesus Christ has developed in many churches today. Jesus died almost two thousand years ago and that gets believers into heaven but in the modern world there is no real access to Him since He was here so long ago. I could never understand even after a lot of reading how He would impact my life and personality today two thousand years later. The reason is mainly from the modern dogma that “the supernatural” just does not happen. I thus could not conceive of God changing me or my life. The idea of the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ coming to live inside of the saved believer which is Christ in you is a mind boggling concept that many Christians today do not understand or maybe even believe, *The Forgotten Evidence*.

Jesus Christ is the living Son of the living God fully equal to the Father. He is God as part of the trinity. He is the living solution to being made righteous with God and receiving the Holy Spirit to help live a new life. He is the gateway to the program that fixes the connection and kills the virus as described in *The Machines*. This program is everywhere in all places always waiting to be let in. He provides the supernatural power to change your life and provide eternal life. It is critical to understand this. I always felt I didn't need Jesus Christ in my life. He was a man who lived almost two thousand years ago and even if He was the son of God what could He do for me? That is the key! I did not understand because society teaches the reality of knowing God is impossible.

I must also share a warning to remember. I have found every cult denies the full deity of Jesus Christ. If you pin them down and ask them is He fully God equal to the Father who always was and always will be they will deny it. They will play on the word Son of God and all kinds of wrangling schemes. They don't realize they are blaspheming the work of the eternal God on the cross for you. Run from them.

### **The Patient**

A man came in for surgery in room number four a few days before I received Jesus Christ. I will never forget him for several reasons. First, he was very strange and worked for a church which I noticed in his chart. I was thinking about *The Journey* all the time and his background caught my attention. We did not talk about religion at all and he really said almost nothing. His eyes looked glazed like a blind man, and he laid on the table just staring at the ceiling. There was something very peculiar about him. Just as I was about to leave the room he sat up and asked me out of the clear blue “Have you accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as your savior?”

I almost fell over as he took me by complete surprise. I have never had a patient unprovoked ask such a question. I quickly exited to escape his question. In the lab I kept thinking about why in the world he asked me that. His cancer was gone in one small stage and so he left very quickly. Little conversation ensued after his one comment. I kept trying to figure out what was different about him. Was it just a coincidence that this man came to my office just days before I made my decision? I have taken care of and met many church related men and have never been blind sided like that before.

I later went back to find out who this man was especially since something was odd about him. I figured I would call him and let him know I was saved about two days later. Our office keeps impeccable records with a photo of each patient, a database, and all of the old actual schedules used in the clinic for each doctor. I knew the approximate date, the room he was in, and exactly what he looked like. I will never remember a patient more than this one.

I started by pulling the old schedules for the month of October. I knew he was a male and in room number four. All of this information is on the old schedules. I scanned every day and made sure none were missing. I found about four males seen in the right range of dates, but none of them were him. I then checked all of the other doctor's patients in case a mistake was made but still to no avail. I then checked September through December for all doctors with males in room four with no result. I was both perplexed and frustrated.

The schedules are used in the back of the clinic by nurses and doctors so I could not miss him. I then searched the database without success. That was the last straw. I called our programmer and had him build a search engine to show me the photo of every single surgical patient by sex, doctor, and date range. Even if a photo is absent or missing it will show it. I searched every patient for a six month period any sex or doctor and still cannot find him. He is gone from the system and even the records. The most memorable patient I have ever seen does not exist. I took every precaution and checked every loophole conceivable. I spent at least ten hours on this. If a photo was missing I pulled the chart. I even checked all women. The billing and scheduling system also had no results. Draw your own conclusions. It's a *Matrix* and *He Heard Me*.

## Chapter Five

### Looking Forward

What now? I live a dichotomous life. On the one hand I feel joy and excitement from having found something I never dreamed could be true. Having certainty of God and eternal life through a tangible proven reality is beyond the greatest revelation I could have ever expected. The other side is full of fear, guilt, and horror.

The horror I speak of comes from seeing the train of deception tearing down the tracks everywhere I go. I cannot escape the truth. It has become part of my consciousness everywhere I go. If I could sit back and just live a good private Christian life I would, but I cannot. I hear the whistle blowing and rattling of the cold steel tracks in my dreams. Now I see the train from the ground though. I see family, friends, and strangers on it. Never assume anyone is unlikely to accept the Christian message. Many times the apparent least likely are the most likely.

Does anyone not want eternal life for themselves and their friends and family? The rejection of this by the world is the greatest mystery of the human race. The answers begin with *He Heard Me*, accountability, and a selfish nature of all men. *The Machines* have shown us that the reader should forget the message of mankind and focus on the message of God Himself.

#### **The Paradigm shift**

Paul described the first paradigm shift almost two thousand years ago. Once you realize that you will live forever and that earth is just a training ground for eternity everything changes. Paul was a very educated Jewish Pharisee. He had lots of accomplishments and things going for him in life. Then suddenly he considered them all worthless. Why? He went from the earthly perspective to the eternal one after he was shocked out *The Matrix* on the road to Damascus. He realized that awards, stature, money, accomplishments, power, glamour and the other things that man has made important are worthless.

One of the first things I did was take down my wall of fame in my office. I had a wall with all my plaques, awards, honors, degrees, and accomplishments. I would sit in my office and subconsciously think how great and smart I was. These framed and hanging trophies proved it. I could worship myself and my great achievements with a competitive pride. Now my walls are filled with artwork that my children make in school and their photos. The awards are in the closet.

I thought I had made it in the world by reaching the pinnacle of the worlds definition of success and happiness. I studied very diligently for years and became a doctor. I had a good job, prestige, and a wonderful family. I had security and was set for life. I used to think all of my hard work had paid off. If you just put your nose to grind stone and persist you can make it like I did. I was assured a good and happy retirement and my kids would be secure also. I had figured out how to win in the world. What else could I ask for? I was living the *American Dream*. This is why it's almost impossible to *Ride The Camel Through The Eye of The Needle* and out of *The Matrix*.

I must say I am much more relaxed now. Saving for retirement, dying, and all of the other things of this world that we make important are seen in a different light. Priorities and decisions are made from a completely different perspective. How I interact with people and strangers is completely different.

2 Corinthians 4:18

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. NIV

Matthew 6:19-21;28-34

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

28 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. NIV

### **My Parents**

Once I figured things out I had to tell my parents. I reasoned since they had left me to make my own decision they would be glad I finally did. I thought about how excited they would be that I had found Jesus Christ to be real by accident. After all, I was telling them that Jesus really existed and that heaven and eternal life were easy to obtain. They had Christian backgrounds in their past which would make it an easy sell. You would think since I was number one in my class and they had celebrated my intelligence they would believe me. I am not some stranger but their son, and not some person handing out flyers on the street. What is there to lose but pride? I told them my story.

They didn't believe me. This was one the hardest things for me to comprehend. I lost many hours of sleep and suffered dehydration from crying. What could possibly be stopping them from taking the final step? What reason is there not to? There is nothing to lose and everything to gain. They love me, my wife, and especially the grandchildren and yet it was not enough. The answer to this question is one of the most important ones of all for mankind. I don't have the answer. I hope everyday I'll get closer to it. I prayed they would take the final step and then give me the answer later looking back. A simple five sentences from the heart is all. A flip of the tongue for rusty Christians could make an eternal difference and yet no dice. Why?

I prayed and begged God everyday to help me and got friends to do the same. The answer came one month later and four days before Christmas. Both of my parents accepted Jesus Christ within a few days of each other. This was the best Christmas present I had ever received. It was also the first present that had the real meaning of Christmas.

They admitted in retrospect that they were a little skeptical at first. There was a slight thought that I had done a psyche job on myself. Even they cannot provide a logical reason for not wanting a message that is nothing short of incredible other than our evil friend pride. Why did they finally do it? It was God acting on prayer from others and my parents seeking Him from reading the Bible. I had them start with the book of John. Again notice the Bible linked to salvation. They read the Bible

seeking with an honest heart if it was true and if they had salvation. There is something about God's word that makes it the power of salvation. The words are a trinity of salvation that build faith, convict the spirit, and prepare the heart.

The most amazing thing was when I saw them for the first time. For thirty six years there was always a slight tension I felt in the family. An indescribable subtle tension that was silent but real. Something was always missing and seemed wrong. In the first ten seconds when I picked them up from the airport I knew it was different. The tension was gone. I could feel it in their presence without saying a word. I knew they were saved. There was a silent harmony, warmth, and peace that had replaced this silent rift. It feels like a unifying peace. It is indescribable and wonderful. I have seen an incredible difference in their personalities already. They can feel it too, the proof of the Holy Spirit, *The Forgotten Evidence*.

### **The Cross on the Necklace**

I used to see crosses on people's necks and wonder why they had these. Now I have received one from my wife for my birthday. It's a heavy thick gold cross. I wanted one like this for several reasons. First, I can feel it all of the time. Whenever I move I can feel it against my chest. It's a reminder to me of what God has done for mankind. It reminds me of what I used to be like and that my entire family was on the train. It represents that I have to start over and live a new life now.

The cross symbolizes the power to transform lives. It nudges me to try and get others off the train. It embodies the basic inherent wickedness of mankind without God and Jesus Christ. It reminds me He conquered this evil while enduring evil. The cross is God's glory and victory over death that is foolishness to men but the wisdom of God. It is the way to hope, peace, and freedom that He has provided for us. It is a *Mirror* of who I really am and what I really need to be doing.

If the cross only stood for the forgiveness of sin I probably wouldn't wear one, but that's not the case at all. The cross is the power of God to set you free and have eternal life as a free gift. It stands for the immeasurable and inconceivable love of God that marks the most important event in human history. The cross is the definition of agape love which is unselfish giving. This is the opposite of religion which is selfish giving to get something from God without commitment and surrender. It's the power to conquer sin that no other worldview or religion even begins to address. They have rules and regulations and many laws with no inner way of keeping them.

You see I never mentioned it as a sign to others of my own Christianity because its not. Most of the time it's not visible anyway. It's for me lying there heavy right close to my heart. People frequently say I see you have turned religious and I correct them and say "No. I follow Jesus Christ and the Bible. He is The Word." I get the strangest looks especially from people who attend church. This is a big *Clue*.

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. NIV

### **The Matrix**

What is *The Matrix* that I have allude to so often? The matrix is the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century we live in. A world that has so many things, places, responsibilities and issues of daily life that the eternal

nature of our existence has been lost. The matrix makes you think it's all about this life here on earth and so enjoy it while you can. The matrix is the pinnacle of the age of reason that defines its glory in tolerance, relative truth, and God as unknowable.

*The Matrix* takes the basic human defect of separation from God and capitalizes on its resultant selfish nature. The Matrix is a way for fallen, sinful, and, separated man to live without the need for God and to forget his fallen state while happily existing in it. The matrix was built by man as he struggled over the centuries to live without God. The matrix has done exactly what man intended it to. Man decided a long time ago he could live on earth happily and be independent living life without rules or consequences forgetting his eternal nature. The Matrix is the story of *The Machines* that constructed a world overtime that successfully shut out God from mainstream culture.

*The Matrix* is a complex all encompassing world of distractions and time consuming events like jobs, school, entertainment, computers, sports, mass media, material things, vacations, technology, religion and everything else that composes the rat race of life today. It is a false reality that keeps us from discovering our real purpose and the truth of our intended form of existence in fellowship with God. It's an all encompassing and all distracting maze of life that from every corner speaks that truth about God is unknowable and relative. You see if all of the props, comforts, and securities were stripped away it would be a different story. The matrix is part of *The Great Deception*.

*The Matrix* has made a lullaby to sing itself to sleep and live in *Dream Reversal*. It uses a world of religious pluralism to make truth relative when religious pluralism is a natural product of building a matrix to escape a God of accountability that hears you speak every word just like *He Heard Me*. This arrogantly takes the result of the matrix and uses it as a justification for the cause and the lullaby of relative truth that opens the door to let us define and do whatever we please. The matrix puts ear plugs on *He Heard Me*.

This is what my entire life was like. I never even thought about God for thirty six years. It was all ancient Bible nonsense that I had no use for. You see mankind got exactly what it wanted in the matrix. I was a shining example of mission accomplished. Not only was God out of the picture, but I even fought against the concept of Him to support the matrix. When I first realized what had happened to me I was dumbfounded because nothing I had ever seen, heard, or experienced really spoke of this truth in daily life. I just couldn't believe it.

*The Matrix* has even twisted truth by making religion quiet the naturally religious conscience of man created by God for God. The final escape door to freedom of the will was opened when Christianity became *Churchianity* in the age of false, soft, and watered down doctrine that seeks to please or manipulate but not save. A lot of the church is a part of *The Matrix* with *Toy Swords and Sour Milk*. How ironic. One day a week in Sunday school can't compete with The Matrix which has either shut Jesus Christ out, made a generic "God of love", or God unknowable altogether in the world of religion.

Everyday I see the world filled with created beings made in the image of God that have forgotten they are created, images, and also fallen. The rat race of life and paradigm of families, school, and jobs has almost everyone convinced this is what human life is supposed to be about. The fallen state of *The Machines* can be seen everywhere from the arguments in the home to the disease in the hospitals. It took a few thousand years but finally man in his broken, disconnected, and empty state

has built a modern world to keep him busy and hide the true nature of his existence with the many props and daily distractions that compromise *The Matrix*.

The weird concept has now been reversed for me. I used think Christians in fellowship with Jesus and always reading the Bible were weird like *The Ski Trip*, but now everyday life around me is weird. Man has veered so far from the truth and built a nice comfortable world that has forgotten about our true intended purpose and the very nature of our existence. You have been born into this era and it is one of the most difficult era in all of history to escape from.

### **Infinitely Blessed**

Since starting this work the Lord has infinitely blessed my life. Everything from my mind to my heart has changed for the better. My wife and I have even recommitted our wedding vows now that we know the real officiator of weddings. My life is exciting because I never know what the Lord will do. Every day is an adventure when you give your life to the Lord. People think its boring or religious bondage but this is no where near the truth. It's the greatest way to live. You get to watch the eternal God work through you to do things of everlasting significance. He has set me free! This is awesome.

## Chapter Six

### *Just a Bible*

*Don't read books about life. Read the book that is life.*

I began a journey reading the Bible to search for ammunition against hypocrisy. I did not believe it nor ever intend to. *The Journey* was *Just a Bible*. Ironically this proved to be the safest path. Even once I “believed” in Jesus Christ I never even considered that there was tangible proof that He was real and the stories I read were true.

I went into it with the view that many people have today including church attendees. I thought the Bible was a religious book written by men describing their beliefs about God and what they claimed to observe. The stories in it must be metaphorical and relative to the times and by no means actual history. God was relative in my mind and defined in many ways by a world of religious pluralism.

I then found my self completely transformed from a prayer of repentance to Jesus Christ asking for forgiveness and help. My mind was so ingrained with the ideas of society I didn't even realize what had happened. I found out the answers were in the Bible and salvation is a real event causing real changes with proof from the Holy Spirit just as the Bible describes.

Now I have found the Bible to be the most fascinating and challenging book I have ever read. It has the depth of the universe and the interconnected layered messaging system of DNA, which interestingly is also a very large word with a triplet (trinity) code. It is my daily bread, light for my path, and a never ending *Instruction Manual* for life. It is ironic for the same book to have been ancient religious nonsense just one year ago. I have never read and studied anything even close to it.

Today there are many arguments about the Bible. Is it the word of God and fully inspired by Him? These arguments have only divided people and caused division instead of unity. Simply look at what happened to me and what the implications of *He Heard Me* are. They answer all of them. The Bible proved to be true that night at least from a salvation point of view and the fact that Jesus is alive, omniscient, and omnipresent. He heard exactly what I said and acted on it by His grace. There is no other conclusion to draw.

If God is real and the infinitely powerful creator of the entire world and universe who is everywhere at all times then why would anyone think He cannot put a book into this world that is His word? Is there any logic in believing in God that is omnipresent and yet unable to make a book say what He wants it to? The Bible does claim to be the word of God. After what happened to me is there any reason to doubt the book? I cannot even as a scientist rationalize how a creator of that power would not make certain His creation had an *Instruction Manual* when He took the time to come to earth and die for His creation. The logic behind such a belief is simply not there. God has either revealed Himself exactly the way He wants in the Bible or He has revealed nothing at all.

I will tell you the truth because I was chief executive scoffer. People reject the Bible and Genesis because of the implications it has for their lives. This creative power brings absolute accountability to every aspect of our life that I hated and didn't want. I hid behind all kinds of arguments and luckily had many scientists and evolution to give me the escape door I wanted. My heart knew the truth but I would never admit it. Remember I did not start out to find God and really didn't even know it when I did. I had to accept the accountability and implications of Genesis and *He Heard Me*. It was too late for me to argue since suddenly I stood before a throne so unimaginably powerful I could do nothing but lay in silence face down.

If you consider yourself a Christian then you believe God came to earth to die for your sins so you can go to heaven. The basic initial goal is to "get into" heaven and live forever, but you need to know two things: how to obtain eternal life (salvation) and the definition of sin. You can't understand what Jesus died for and why this had to happen without understanding sin.

How can you ask for salvation without understanding how to be saved and what you are being saved from? If the Bible is relative, metaphorical, and mainly teaching stories and not God's word how will anyone learn about these two essential points? Does man get to define salvation and sin? If Jesus said something in the Bible about salvation or sin how can it be trusted?

Does it really make sense to believe God came to earth to die for us and not leave mankind with exactly what He wants us to go by? How can anyone be certain they have eternal life? Do we really want to trust what a modern man tells us or what Jesus said? How can we know what God says being a Christian is about and how to become one? You see Christianity falls apart without the Bible as God's word.

Why is someone a Christian? Is it to have the certainty of eternal life or just practice a religion with good moral teachings and simply hope heaven is real? If it's just religion and another belief system that has been chosen then I guess the Bible is not important. If Christianity to some has become a religious social experience of spirituality based on parables and metaphorical stories from long ago then what really is it? If someone wants to base eternity on man made doctrines and traditions they have every right to do so.

Why would a Christian object to the Bible as the word of God and basis for their belief system? If Jesus quoted scripture all the time and the Bible claims to be the word of God and Jesus the Word then why would this be rejected? If it claims to show the way to eternal life why not study it intently? If it is made relative or rejected then on what basis is anything known? Do we really believe God died on the cross for mankind and then decided to let man decide what to believe and hope he would make wise choices about obtaining what He died for?

No, none of this makes sense. The majority of the Bible is crystal clear and has to be twisted from what the words simply say. It was written for everyone not just "the modern man." If this is the case then why is it becoming so popular with books, churches, pastors, and college professors proclaiming it? There is a very popular movement to make the Bible relative, all interpretation, only a response of man to God, and metaphorical. There is only one common thread and reason that makes sense. They don't like what the Bible says. The Bible holds people strictly accountable to a standard imposed by God and one that today stands against most of the world.

The Bible is not politically correct today and this presents a major problem for many people in their careers and the politics of them. If the Bible can be made relative and no longer God's word then these rules don't apply, moral law is relative to the times, accountability is eliminated, and our secret lives are justified in our mind. This is exactly where the answer lies. Man has by modern reasoning and intellectualization replaced God's divine revelation.

The Bible is a historical document and has more documentary attestation than any other ancient document by leaps and bounds. Man has tried to make it a parable and metaphorical for moral, personal, political, and selfish reasons. Jesus is rejected today for the same reasons He was two thousand years ago.

These scholars and teachers who basically say the Bible is a parable, metaphorical, and not an accurate account of history destroy the resurrection and Christianity right along with it. If the Gospels are simply tradition, historical memories of men, perceptions, metaphorical narrative, and a sketch of Jesus and what believers claimed happened then what do we have? This destroys the hope of the resurrection. If the resurrection is not a real historical event then Christianity is a hopeless belief system. Even the Bible makes this claim.

1 Corinthians 15:16-19

For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; 17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. NAS

They can call this Christianity but it's not. Jesus Christ came to save people and if you don't believe this as a "Christian" what do you have? This has gotten so ridiculous that some people even claim Christianity is not exclusive in its claims. A college professor in the New Testament said it's not even about believing or Christianity but simply about a generic "God". Religious pluralism has by "common sense" mandated that there can't be one way.

The modern age can make the Bible relative to the point where the claims of Christianity are not exclusive but then what do we have? On what basis do we know anything? I think people forget if Jesus is who He said He is then He is the Word and is more than capable of making the Bible exactly the way He wanted it. They also forget that their own view is a truth claim.

The problem is all religions are exclusive at some major point and when you line them up they can't all be right. We complain about one way instead of rejoicing that there is a way at all. I look around and see a lot of people seeking God and yet they don't want the real God that is seeking them.

There is also a deep seated fear of simply rejecting the Bible so man has tried to make what God said fit what we want to do. Scholars, college professors, pastors and many others have come to the rescue embracing a relative read of the Bible that fits in with our selfish desires and political agendas that are hidden behind degrees and historical analysis. Ironically the Bible predicts that this very thing would happen.

The modern world is moving away from the Bible because truth about God has been made relative to justify the self defined generation. Today's culture wants the individual personal tastes, morals, and values to define truth for that person. It's an escape from *He Heard Me*. I have been kicked off the executive committee of this self defined generation by a unanimous vote for finding and telling the truth.

It's also important to remember Christianity is a relationship and not a Bible study of facts and doctrines. The Bible is God's living word that has revealed Himself to man so we can know Him better and understand what He has to say to His creation. Salvation is the goal of this book and is only the beginning of Christianity. Salvation is simple but is a major problem exactly because the Bible is not being read, taught, studied, and preached like it needs to be. If Biblical salvation is not taught then people will assume they have it or think they can work for it. They will also be subject to false doctrine and a poor understanding of what Jesus their own savior said about salvation.

There are major sects of Christianity that have taken the power of salvation and given it to man while claiming to 'believe' in the Bible. They claim man can earn his way into heaven by using water or completing a certain list of deeds on a checklist. This is completely unbiblical and in contradiction to the early church and the words of Jesus Himself. Christianity is a huge mess today and it can't be explained away.

You see my task is much more difficult than I ever imagined. I thought it would be to convince people that Jesus Christ is the answer, and never dreamed the toughest audience would be people sitting in church! It is easier in many cases to convince someone with no religious background to receive Christ than someone who regularly attends church, because he doesn't have to unlearn anything.

*Churchianity* is Christianity made into a religion and this is the biggest problem. It is *The Great Deception*. There are many Christians with good hearts that have been taught Christianity is church attendance and following a moral code of ethics instead of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The world in many areas is being taught to "play church". There are also quite a few hiding from God in "official" Christian religions. You will read the testimonies from people who were either hiding or *Misled and Deceived*.

Luckily the voice and politics of the world, media, and universities don't apply to the average family or individual. It's not about being right or wrong but truth. Truth does mean many answers are incorrect. Our world is founded upon truths at every level of our existence. Does it make sense for God to be relative in a universe founded upon truths? You get to decide on your own. *Simplicity* is the answer as you will see. The book is long because man has spent two thousand years complicating things.

There is a lot you can learn from simply looking in *The Mirror* at what really stands in front of you. Spend some time staring at a loved one when they don't know it and let your heart speak to you. All of the lofty arguments about topics like evolution and textual criticism of the Bible are not the way to find God. Most of these topics exist because man has tried to avoid God. Be careful you can get lost in the details.

The more time I have spent addressing topics like evolution, creation, the flood, religious pluralism, and Tarzan in the jungle who has never heard the gospel the more I have heard a little voice echoing in my heart. The voice keeps pointing me to the basics of life like mere existence and love. *Love is a Solitary Apologetic Argument* to find the truth. This will encompass the next section, which starts the body of the book. Follow your heart and the simplicity of life and you will find life.

What has happened to me is so unmistakable the reader should search deep into their hearts before dismissing what I have to say. I have gone from the least likely person to ever believe in Jesus Christ and the Bible to a committed servant of The Truth. This not a whim or adventure of the mind but a reality of the air I breathe. Has a successful doctor with everything going for him in life that the world says is the goal of the maze of life been hoodwinked into a religion he wasn't searching for or has he stumbled into something far from religion, the availability of having a relationship with God through Jesus Christ? Read and decide for yourself.

John 6:63

The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. NIV

***The Bible is called extreme because we are afraid of being extremely wrong.***