

Nigel Currie: Testimony of Salvation



I grew up in the northern suburbs of Adelaide in a middle-class family. Like most Australian families of that era, my father worked, and my mother kept the home. We were not rich, but we never lacked any necessities, and I appreciated finding mum home when I came back from school. We never attended to church, nor were my parents Christians, but due to some Christian influence from their families, my mother taught all her children to say a bedtime prayer and we always said grace before the evening meal. The daily saying of grace stopped in my youth when one day I refused to say grace at a family meal when I was asked by my father. I claimed to be an atheist, but that prayer to the Lord Jesus I learnt as a young child always made me wonder whether there was a God. I was really an agnostic skeptic. In my middle teenage years, I would quite often go out in the evening into a vacant paddock near my house and in the quietness sit and ponder the meaning and purpose of life. As I looked around and into the night sky, I found no answers. I regarded the Christian faith as unscientific superstition and its followers as weaklings who needed a crutch to live life.

I had no answers to the meaning of life, nor did I have any answer to my quick temper. I remember being accidentally bumped by a student at high school and within seconds I had my hands around his throat threateningly for him daring to bump into me. My temper also showed up in football. I realised I could play football or fight, but not both. I self-righteously retired from football at eighteen years of age so I would not be provoked into losing my temper. All was going well for a few years until one day a fellow I knew was drunk. He insulted me, and I patted myself on the back for being so self-controlled. But when he threw the dregs of his drink into my face, I lost it and grabbed his shirt around the neck and attempted to drag him outside for a fight. Thankfully my response surprised him and all I did was pull him off his chair on to the ground and mutual friends were able to separate us and prevent a fight.

At University I had a friend Mark who was a Catholic who became a born-again Christian during our years at University. I loved to debate religion with him. We shared his family home together when I worked for a year between university degrees. With an income and away from my family I lived it up. I bought a car so I could go where I wanted when I wanted. I took up drinking alcohol and socialising. What liberty, or so I thought! I remember going to the University bar to socialise and hopefully pick up a girlfriend. At one stage I left the bar alone and the next thing I remember was being woken by the night watchman and finding myself on the cold concrete floor of a toilet block. As the night watchman disappeared, I thought, 'What am I doing here? I came out to have a good time and this is all I get'. There had to be more to life than this!

Mark married at the end of the year, so I moved into a flat with my older sister as both of us were back studying at the University at the start of the year. During that

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year I went on a holiday to NSW and Queensland to socialise, hike and clamber through caves. I came back from the holiday with a lot of excess energy and stimulation. What could I do with the excess energy? In my arrogance, I thought that I would use it to finally destroy the Christian myth once and for all! But what did Christians believe? How could I destroy it unless I knew what they believed. So I read a book by a skeptic about Jesus Christ and that made me angry. It gave accounts of supposed errors in the Bible and disgusting holy relics of Jesus Christ worshipped by Catholics which reinforced my belief in Christianity as superstition. I was angry and my friend Mark sensed it, so he offered me a book on Christian evidences called, More than a Carpenter. You beauty I thought, now I can find out what Christians believe and use it against them. However, as I read through the book, I became convinced that rather than being full of errors the Bible is the most accurate ancient history book the world has ever seen. The book claims that a person called Jesus Christ claimed by what He said and did to be God. What a crisis! Jesus Christ had to be Lord and God. Or He was a liar, claiming to be God when He knew He was not. Or He was a lunatic, deluded into thinking He was God, but was not. One verse of scripture quoted in the book stood out to me. It was 1 John 5:13 which states, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God". How could anyone be so sure that you can have eternal life? It was written with such confidence that it had to be right or wrong. When I thought about Christians I knew and how honesty was so important to them, only one option made sense to me. There is a God, the Bible is His Word and Jesus Christ is God the Son! I opened the Bible given to me by my friend and read the book of Matthew in one sitting. I could not remember a thing, but it was fantastic. It was the first time in my life that I had opened and read the Bible. I told my friend that I believed that Jesus Christ was God. He almost did a cartwheel and then blurted out a big list of things that I would be doing. Hesitantly, I agreed to go to church with him the coming Sunday where I heard the gospel presented from John 3:7 where Jesus said, "Ye must be born again".

The next evening, I was working late at the University. Everyone else had gone home and the building was in darkness apart from where I was working. There in the quietness a deep sense of conviction came over me. Under compulsion I went into an inner office and sank to my knees. I acknowledged that I was a sinner and needed Jesus Christ to be my Lord and my Saviour. I invited the Lord to come into my life and take control. When I rose from my knees and walked through that darkened building, I knew the reality of the Lord's presence with me. I drove home and went to sleep. In the morning I woke up and it felt like I had a smile twice as wide as my face. I remember thinking, I am saved! I am saved! I don't know what it means but I am saved! The Bible says in Romans 10:9-10, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation". I had

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acknowledged Jesus Christ to be both Lord and God, and that He had died for my sins, was buried and rose again. On that basis God had forgiven my sins, declared me righteous and saved me. I now had eternal life. What is eternal life? John 17:3 records the Lord Jesus saying, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent". Eternal life is a personal relationship (intimate knowledge) with God the Father and God the Son. You enter this relationship and become a child of God when you believe on Christ and the Spirit of Christ comes to indwell you and give you a new enabling power to live the Christian life.

From that time of confessing Christ, I have never doubted the Bible to be God's inspired Word and that I had received eternal life. I am learning to draw on the inner enabling to live for God in this life. God did a wonderful work in my life and gave me a new power to deal with my quick temper and anger. I now also have a clear purpose in life: to love God, to serve Him with all my heart and to help others know Him.