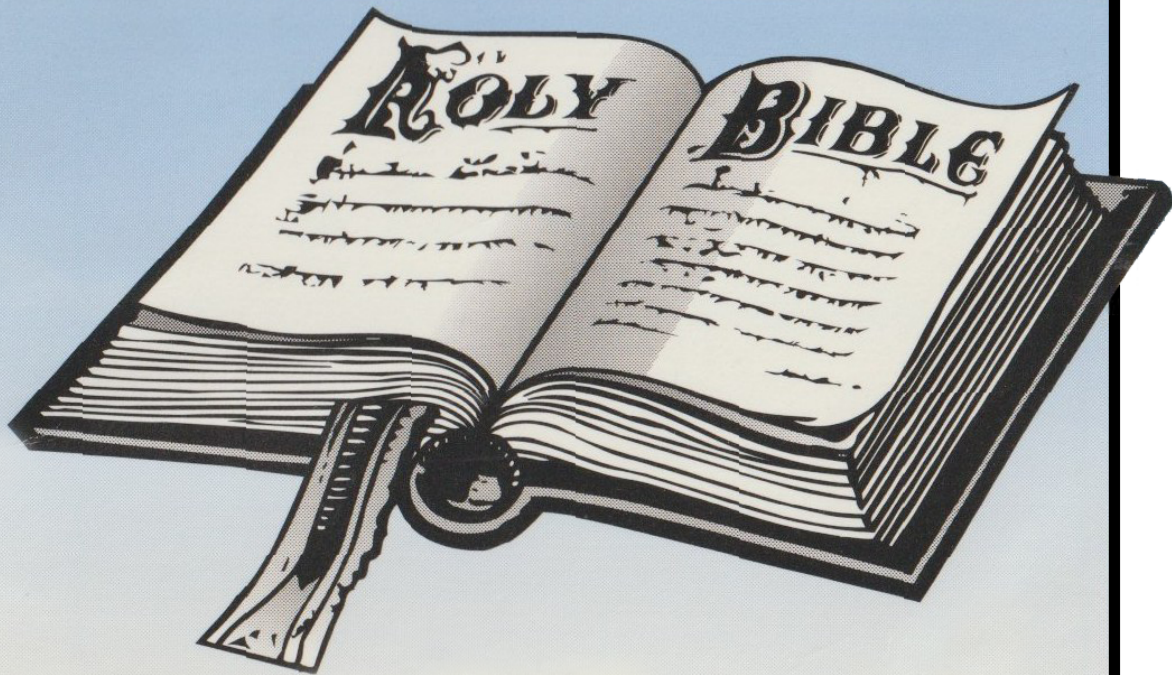


My Faith Has Found



*These things have I written unto you...
That ye may know that ye have eternal life.*

1st John 5:13

A Resting Place

By: Larry J. Wise

*A Testimony of a Roman
Catholic's Search For Truth*

My Faith Has Found A Resting Place

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A Testimony of a Roman Catholic's Search for Truth

For twenty-eight years I was a dedicated member of a well-known Catholic church in Louisville, Kentucky. As a former Roman Catholic, I am well aware of the fact that many sincere Catholics believe that the Catholic church is the one true church of Jesus Christ. I too believed this.

While attending the Catholic church, I was an altar boy, sang in the choir, attended the Living Rosary, and prayed to the Virgin Mary. I had all my trust in what the pope and the priests were teaching me.

In 1975, I saw the movie "The Late Great Planet Earth," written by Hal Lindsey. The movie connected world events with Bible prophecy, indicating the present generation may very well see the second coming of Christ. Israel and Jerusalem were together portrayed as the key to the prophetic puzzle in the book of Revelation. The "rapture of the church" was shown as a time when born-again Christians who are alive on earth will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Seven years of Tribulation follow the rapture. During this Great Tribulation, millions of people left behind at the rapture will experience many horrible things.

The Lord used Hal Lindsey's movie to touch my heart. I began to think more seriously about prophecy. After seeing the movie several more times, I bought the book and read it twice. It was exciting to me to think that Jesus might be coming back during my lifetime. As my interest in Bible prophecy increased, I began to read the Bible.

Meanwhile, I began searching for a television program that was geared towards Bible prophecy. I started watching Jack Van Impe. His motto was "Reaching the World for Christ." He taught prophecy and the book of Revelation. He compared the current world conditions with the prophetic predictions preceding the second coming of Christ. Van Impe concluded that the second coming of Christ may very well occur in our generation.

Van Impe also talked about the true believer who will go up to meet Christ in the rapture. He emphasized God's plan of salvation from the Bible. He preached "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." I believed Jesus was a real person, so I thought I was included as a believer. I was convinced that we were already living in the last days.

God was using prophecy to draw me to Himself. I felt that something was missing in this "prophetic puzzle." I began comparing what I had learned about the Bible with what I believed about the Bible. For example, I figured that if we were living in the last days, then our world would be like the world in the days of Noah because the Bible tells us that "*As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man*" (Luke 17:26). In Genesis 6:5 the Bible states that "*God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the*

thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” I believed that in the last days before Christ’s return, that only a few people would truly be Christians. But to me, the people of the world did not seem to be that bad. I did not know that I was spiritually lost and blind.

I had been reading and hearing about the true believer in Christ. Only the true believers in Christ or those who have been born again, will be caught up in the rapture. Those who profess to be Christians but have never been born again are false believers. The false believers will be left behind at the rapture. They will have to go through the seven-year Tribulation. I began to question the difference between the true believers and the false believers. I knew that the Bible says that in the last days there will be false prophets and teachers that will deceive many who follow them. I wondered if I was one of the many who would be deceived. I knew that only the Bible could answer my questions. I began seeking God in His Word, looking for the missing piece.

Jack Van Impe began advertising a guided tour of Israel. I wanted to see the place where Jesus was born, the hill where He was crucified, and the empty tomb where He rose again. I thought that this trip might be my only opportunity to see Israel before the rapture took place. I did not have the money, but I felt that God was calling me to go to Israel. I decided to go, trusting God to provide the money and to remove any obstacles. On September 28, 1981, I began my trip to Israel. Because I was searching for answers and trying to show God the sincerity of my heart for a closeness with Him, I kept praying the rosary to Mary.

During the Holy Land tour, someone gave me a gospel tract regarding the doctrines of Roman Catholicism. I found it difficult to believe what the tract said about the Roman Catholic church. But the Scriptures in the tract made an impact on my heart. As a Catholic, I was taught that the Bible is the Word of God and that God does not lie. I read the tract through several times, hoping to find what the Lord was saying to me. A key Scripture that stuck with me was *Proverbs 16:25*: “*There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*”

In Israel, Jack Van Impe once again emphasized God’s plan of salvation from the Bible. He quoted *I John 5:13*: “*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.*” Then he asked, “would anyone like to know that you are going to Heaven when you die?” I raised my hand. He pointed out several of the pastors with him and told me to see one of them. He told me that they would show me how I could know from the Word of God. But I did not go to them because I knew they were Baptists and I was a Roman Catholic. However, later that night, one of the pastors came to me and asked if he could show me how I could know I would go to Heaven. He shared some Scripture with me from the book of Romans and then asked me to pray a prayer. I prayed the prayer, but it didn’t mean anything to me. I decided to go ahead and get baptized, mainly because everyone else was planning to get baptized in the Jordan River.

On October 5, 1981, I was sitting on top of a rock, waiting my turn to be baptized in the Jordan River. I felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit telling me I was lost. My spiritually blinded eyes opened and I began to understand the truth of God’s Word. I saw my need to be saved. I did not know what to pray, but I knew that all I had to do was accept Christ as my Savior. When it came my turn to be baptized, Dr. Van Impe asked me if I had accepted Christ as my Savior. I knew that that was my prayer. I told him yes and was baptized. As I came up out of the water, I was filled

with joy. I felt as though a weight had been lifted from my shoulders. I finally realized that to believe on Christ meant to trust Him to save me. I had found the missing piece of the prophetic puzzle.

Even though I had always believed in Jesus, I trusted in myself and in what I was doing to save myself. When I realized that I was lost because of who I was trusting, I repented and put my faith and trust in Jesus Christ and what He had done on the cross of Calvary to save me. After I was saved, I stopped praying the rosary. The Holy Spirit began to show me the difference between Catholicism and the Word of God. I began to see the difference between false doctrine and Bible doctrine. The Bible became my only source of authority for spiritual truth.

Soon I began to think of my family. Were they lost? I knew the answer to my question, but I wanted someone to confirm my belief that they were lost. At first, I was angry with my family for teaching me a lie and almost leading me to hell. But my anger quickly turned to compassion as I realized that they too were ignorant of Scripture. They only believed what they had been taught.

The first Sunday after I returned home from Israel, I went back to the Catholic church. As I looked toward the statues of Mary, Joseph and the others, the Holy Spirit reminded me of the Scriptures that I had read in the tract I received in Israel. *“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images” (Exodus 20:4)*. Then I thought of the rosary, and I remembered another verse: *“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus” (I Timothy 2:5)*. As I sat watching the priest, I recalled other verses that I had read.

“A bishop (pastor) must be blameless, the husband of one wife...one that ruleth well in his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?” (I Timothy 3:1-5).

“Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your father, which is in Heaven.” (Matthew 23:9).

As I looked around the congregation, more verses came to mind:

“In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Mark 7:7).

There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 16:25).

I realized that I was in a congregation that was blind to the truth about the Biblical plan of salvation; a salvation in which we may know that we have eternal life. Because *“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life. 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” (I John 5:12-13)*.

These people were actually gambling their eternal destiny upon what seemed “right” to them. They believed that they would go to Heaven because they were “trying” to be good people. But the Bible says, *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lets any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9)*.

My thoughts then turned to my life. I also had trusted in my own good works. But because of the Bible, I had realized that I was, in reality, a lost sinner and that I needed to place my trust in Jesus. I had asked Him to save me and already I was aware of the changes He was making in my life.

Now I realized that I could no longer participate in a church where the teachings were so contrary to sacred Scripture. The Bible says *“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers...for what fellowship hath light with darkness”* *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, sayeth the Lord”* (II Corinthians 6:14-17). The next Sunday, by the leading of the Holy Spirit, I went searching for a church. I asked God to lead me to a church that preached the truth from the Word of God. He led me to Faith Baptist Temple in Louisville, Kentucky, and I have been there ever since.

When I was a child in school, no one ever took the Bible and showed me Scripture that said I should pray to Mary. No one ever showed me a verse that laid the foundations for infant baptism, the rosary, or purgatory. But more importantly, no one ever showed me how to be born again. The study of the Bible was not one of our subjects in school. No priest or nun ever encouraged me to read the Bible. My family never stressed the importance of reading Scripture on a daily basis. My family believed that the pope and the priests were teaching spiritual truth. So why read the Bible.

From the book of Genesis to the book of Revelation, the main theme of the Bible is salvation by faith in the finished work that Jesus Christ had done on the cross. Jesus purchased our redemption by shedding His blood upon the cross. The Bible tells us *“it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul”* (Leviticus 17:11). *“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”* (Hebrews 9:22) I John 1:7 says, *“The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.”* By dying to pay the wages for our sins, He purchased for us the gift of eternal life.

The gift of eternal life is ours when we receive Jesus into our heart by asking Him to be our personal Savior. We must trust Him by faith, believing that He will keep His promise to do what He said He would do. *“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 whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”* (Romans 10:9,13). You must acknowledge that you are a sinner who needs to be saved. Ask the Lord to forgive your sins and become your Savior. Trust Him by faith this very moment and know the peace and assurance of salvation that comes only through Jesus Christ.

My faith has found a resting place not in device nor creed; I
trust the everlasting One, His wound for me shall plead.
My heart is leaning on the Word, The written Word of God,
Salvation by my Savior's name, Salvation through His blood.
My great physician heals the sick, The lost He came to save;
For me His precious blood He shed, For me His life He gave.
I need no other argument, I need no other plea. It is enough that
Jesus died, And that He died for me.

You have read the testimony of another Catholic who has chosen to accept the Biblical plan of salvation after studying God's prophetic Word. God revealed to him through Scripture true peace, joy and love comes only through having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This relationship begins by acknowledging and trusting Christ's preeminent work of redemption on the cross of Calvary for personal forgiveness and for divine power to live the Christian life.

The fact that God raised up Jesus from the dead and exalted Him to the position He now holds is God's confirmation that the one sacrifice Jesus offered was the perfect, completed and finished sacrifice for your sin.

Dear friend, realize and accept that Christ came into the world specifically to die for your sins and that He paid the full price for all your sins; past, present and future (II Corinthians 5:21, I Peter 2:24).

Will you, therefore, turn from all dependence upon self and the traditions of man and place your faith and total reliance in Christ's all sufficient sacrifice on Calvary's cross?

Turn to the Lord Jesus and realize when He died on the cross, He accomplished forever the work of redemption necessary for your salvation. God requires that you acknowledge this one time never to be repeated sacrifice by receiving Jesus Christ, by faith alone, as your personal Lord and Savior. May God grant you the conviction and grace to do it this moment.

I want to accept God's loving offer of salvation. I now realize I am a sinner in need of salvation. I put my full and complete trust in Christ's sacrifice on the cross to save me. I now believe Christ is the only mediator between God and man. I open my heart's door and receive Christ as Saviour and Lord of my soul. I repent of my sins and ask Him to take full control of my life and help me to live for Him from this day forward. I want to unite with a Bible believing, Christ honoring New Testament church in my community. Please send Christian literature to help me learn more about Christ and the Christian life.

Name _____

Address _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Date _____

If you have made this decision for Christ, sign and mail this form to the address below so that we may rejoice with you and send Christian literature.

Write to:

Missionary Outreach to Catholics
P.O. Box 17453
Louisville, Kentucky 40217-0453

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