

Living for MYSELF

As a young teenager, I thought satisfaction came from fulfilling my own desires and being accepted by those around me. I enjoyed my friends and was heavily involved in athletics. My weekends were spent working at a neighborhood convenience store which was the local "hot spot" for excitement.

Working there, I got to know the owner, whom I began to greatly admire. While he was seemingly a successful businessman, a professional baseball scout, and a family man, I witnessed business neglect and marital unfaithfulness. Slowly I saw his life fall apart, piece by piece. First, he lost his family because of unfaithfulness to his wife. Then, because of years of neglect, his business almost went under. Remembering the encouragement of a friend, he called out to God to forgive him of his many sins and straighten out his twisted life. God responded to his plea almost instantly by providing the money he needed to save his business from bankruptcy. This was just the beginning as this man dedicated his life to following Jesus Christ.

Because of the complete turnaround in his life, I began listening to the good things he told me about Jesus and even went to church with him occasionally. Through him and at church, I heard for the first time how terribly I had broken the laws God had given man. I had sinned, gone my own way, and grieved the heart of God who had created me to be one of His own dear sons. The good news was that although I had gone my own way and deserved judgment and death, Jesus, who lived a perfect life without sin, actually took the punishment for my sin on Himself at the cross. Jesus did this to rescue me from God's coming wrath.

The knowledge of God's plan to save me was so real I could no longer ignore Him. Deep inside I knew Jesus was God's son and He was calling me to turn from my sin and place my trust in His work on the cross. I was facing the most important decision of my entire life. Would I turn from my sin or would I continue to live for myself?

After thinking hard, I cried out to Jesus to forgive me as I confessed my sin to Him and to take control of my life. It was then that I felt such an overwhelming sense of God's pleasure because I had humbled myself and cried out for His help. It was as though a hundred pounds had lifted off my shoulders (the weight of my sin), and God's peace entered my heart. I knew I had found why I was created: to know, love, and worship God.

My life took on new meaning as I fell in love with Jesus. I could tell you of many incredible blessings of God's kindness since 1972. Even though sometimes the way is hard, I have found this to be true again and again -when I live to please myself, I am empty and unfulfilled, but when I live to please the Lord, joy floods my heart.

How about you? Have / you turned from your sin and put your trust in Jesus? You can today. Just cry out to Him. The scriptures declare, "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call on Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him, for He will freely pardon." Isaiah 55:6 and 7. Now that is Amazing Grace!

If I may encourage you further, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Michael White
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