

From a Nun's Convent to Biblical Conversion

Jacqueline Kassar

Fortyfive years of my life were spent as a Roman Catholic, twentytwo of them as a nun in an enclosed convent dedicated to adoration, reparation and suffering. I believed it was a nun's calling to be a miniature savior of the world like Jesus Christ.

My Decision to be a Nun

After attending Catholic elementary school for eight years and memorizing catechism, which is the Roman Catholic textbook, I believed in my heart that a family having a son or daughter become a priest or nun would receive God's favor and special blessings. I decided to enter the convent when I was old enough to leave home. This was my goal while I was still in my teens. On my twentyfirst birthday, 1954, I entered the convent against my parent's wishes. My belief in my calling to be a nun superseded my parent's vehement opposition.

Even though it broke my heart to leave my parents, I consoled myself in the fact that I was doing God's will by making this sacrifice for the salvation of my family and all those outside the Catholic faith who I believed were doomed to hell.

Convent Life

At first, I was in awe of the solitude, structural beauty and peacefulness the convent seemed to have. I was taught to do penances such as sleeping on a board, prostrating myself at the door of the dining room as an act of humiliation and beating myself as a means of appeasing God's wrath. This taught me to believe in a punishing, unapproachable and unloving God. I feared Him at every turn of my life. As time went on, emptiness filled my heart and hopelessness engulfed me. I became depressed, often crying while I raged with anger at authority and hatred for the rules and customs in the convent that were so very cruel. My body developed all kinds of illnesses and I found myself with a tremor that only Valium could help. All the time the medication was dulling my mind and taking away my ability to think and reason.

My Yearning to Know God

I was so hungry to know that God loved me and so wanting to know Him that I started reading mystical writings which taught that you could attain mystical union with God, thereby achieving supernatural knowledge of Him which lead to total holiness. This path directed me to supernaturalize not only the Bible and Jesus, but anything to do with my religious life. Step by step I lost my ability to reason and deal with reality, for reality was too painful for me to face.

Answered Prayer

Still feeling hopeless and so despondent, I cried out to God. In His mercy and grace He heard my prayers. In 1975, a distant cousin who had become a Christian brought an evangelist, who was visiting New York, to the convent. He was holding a street meeting at a nearby Catholic parish. I received permission to go and for the first time I heard the true Gospel. It certainly was Good News! "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). I learned that Jesus died for my sins, past, present and future. When I accepted Him as my Lord and Savior and repented of my sins, He made my dead spirit alive and began a personal relationship between the Lord and myself. This is the gift of God to those who believe, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2: 8, 9). How important to know that we must individually trust and believe in Him. "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" (Romans 10: 9).

My Life After Hearing the Gospel

After personally accepting Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, I started to read my Bible and pray directly to God. In 1977, I left the convent and started on my quest to know the truth. God's Word became my only authority and everything else was measured against the Bible. But this was just the beginning. I did not realize the serious harm false doctrines and beliefs had created in my body and mind.

Through a friend I met a Christian who helped me see that being a doer of the Word brings healing to the body and clarity to the mind. For through the new birth we can have the mind of Christ. It has not been an easy road, but it has been one filled with God's love and blessing.

God's Faithfulness

The Lord has been faithful to me in the promises of His Word. He promised to "restore the years that the locusts have eaten" (Joel 2:25), enabling me to begin a new life filled with joy and a true inner peace that neither the world nor religion can give.

"The Lord is faithful day by day"

It is my hope and prayer that I might have the privilege of sharing the love and goodness of God by telling all who will hear that He has a plan for each life and He is faithful to accomplish that plan when we receive the gift of salvation by believing in His Son.

" Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him ." (1Cor. 2:9)

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