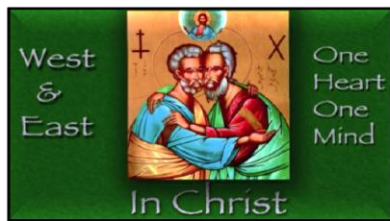


How the Lord Delivered Me from a Religious Spirit and Bigotry

There Are No Bigots In Heaven

June 8, 2015



Tonight, after many hours of worship the Lord asked me to share my journey to Him, and the many twists and turns He has brought us through. Oh, does He ever write straight with crooked lines!!!

My earliest memories involving religion go back to my high school years. I attended South Shore High School in Chicago, in the early 60's and was one of the few gentiles in a school dominated by Jewish students and teachers. I also happened to be one of the very few

latchkey kids, because my mother worked full time as a make-up artist. She was divorced, so I didn't have a father, sisters, brothers or any relatives of any kind for that matter.

I'd come home from school and let myself in, fend for myself, sometimes until late at night when she had to work or went out with friends.

Well, it seemed everyone in the school was well off, and we were just below the middle class. But since mother was in the beauty business she always managed to dress me well. A lot of the kids in the school had fairly well-to-do doctors, lawyers and professionals for parents. My mother worked predominantly with upper middle class Jewish women and mafia wives.

That's an important point: she intensely disliked the Jewish women and looked down on Catholic mafia families and was totally disgusted with Pentecostals. In other words, she had strong opinions and was basically a bigot.

Around thirteen or so, I started to have a very, very strong draw to knowing who God was. My mother went to a Congregationalist church at Christmas and Easter. She believed in God, but didn't know what happened to you when you died. I longed to have real answers to real questions and ended up totally frustrated after talking to the Congregationalist pastor. I came out of the office thinking, "He doesn't know who God is, either. Maybe there is no God."

I became best friends with a Russian Jew around the year Kennedy was assassinated - we were together when it happened. And she had a strong intellectual bent, so we talked about Ayn Rand, searching for answers to life. But it bothered me terribly that my mother thought when I died I just ceased to be.

My friend Nina and I never talked about the faith. Oh, looking back now, I wish we had. I probably would have become Jewish, because they at least knew God.

After I dropped out of high school, totally frustrated with the environment, I decided to become a nature photographer and dove right into the hippy era - really glad for the freedom from all the social restraints my mother was bound by. But, I never became a hippy, just countercultural and agnostic. Since my searching for answers to spiritual questions was not satisfied when I was in high school, I ended up being an atheist. Still, I was very much bothered by the existence of the supernatural. I looked at my life, and the lives of others and said to myself, "There must be more to this than meets the eye." And so my journey into the New Age began.

I held strongly to my mother's bigoted opinions about organized religion and was intrigued with Buddhism and New Age teachings. When I moved to San Francisco to begin my career in photography, I found the ideal atmosphere to explore the supernatural. I had a healthy fear of Satanism but delved into the iChing, Transcendental Meditation, Astrology, Palmistry, Native American Medicine Ways, Scientology and other New Age studies, including Numerology.

As I explored these spiritual realms, I became more and more disenchanted following their rabbit trails and never ending circles, where I learned all kinds of things but still never knew who God was. The last place I expected to find Him was in Christianity.

Well, He finally revealed Himself to me one night while I was meditating on the Mayan Tarot underneath a copper pyramid. As I was trying to connect with the meaning of one of the cards, my eyes were closed and I, of course, saw nothing but blackness... until a crack in the blackness happened. It got bigger and bigger and bigger and suddenly a dove on fire like lightening descended from Heaven and came to rest in my body, setting off a physical bliss like nothing I'd ever experienced, for 45 minutes. I knew nothing of the Holy Spirit but when my former husband, who was sitting with me said, "Your body is on fire! What's going on?" I answered him, "I'm having a visitation from the Holy Spirit."

Inside, I was being convicted of all my sins... and I had a lot. But, at the same time I was being inundated in a love like I have never felt in my life. I knew I was a sinner. I knew I was loved and forgiven. I knew Who God was and He was nothing like the darkness I had been dabbling in. You see, I was so proud, and such a bigot that I couldn't recognize God in Christianity. My opinions were so overpowering and based on falsehood. So the Lord did to me what He is doing to many Muslims today - He overpowered me.

Through this experience, I just knew I must conform my life to the Bible's standards. That was the beginning of my Christian journey. I got rid of all my paraphernalia, bought a Bible and began studying it. The Lord began to speak to me through the Scriptures. The three He gave me at my conversion were: Moses and the burning bush, Esther and the call of Jeremiah.

At one point, I was delivered of 70 different demons from my illicit life before. I found a non-denominational church, was baptized in water and received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

Well, I thought I had arrived home. But what I was learning about Jesus was at times very different than this so called, 'Christian' lifestyle. It troubled me that Jesus was meek and gentle and preachers were loud and powerful. It troubled me that I was vain and proud and I didn't see that being addressed in the church. We left that church because of a serious scandal and a lack of opportunity and support to grow in ministry.

We visited many other churches and for seven years continued to look for our home in the Christian community. Nothing felt right. Same sins, every church we went to: materialism, vanity, pride and no resemblance to Jesus in the ministries. My husband at the time kinda followed along with anything I did, but I was passionate and not finding the faith that mirrored Jesus, I was deeply troubled and frustrated. Eventually, he left me with our four children because I was committed to a very pure lifestyle.

Right around that time, John Michael Talbot had become a popular Christian musician and when I heard his music, deep called unto deep. So, I began to research the Catholic Church and the Franciscan order.

What I found shocked me. The very first thing I discovered was that I was a religious bigot. Just like my mother, I had strong opinions based on hearsay of other people or bad examples of lives lived in the Catholic faith. I discovered that almost everything I had heard about the great 'harlot' and how they practiced their religion was a lie, and totally unfounded in reality. I discovered that the people most ignorant of their own faith were former Catholics. That perplexed me, until I realized the Illuminati, Masons and other Communists had infiltrated the church since the 1950's to destroy the faith that began with the apostles in Jerusalem.

Looking back, I am personally convinced that the whole mess with Rome and Constantine A.D. 300 was the Devils plan..."Can't kill them by opposing them, let's infiltrate, fill them with rules, regulations and courtly manners, turn it into a political machine and destroy it from the inside out."

Well, that worked and now the institution is indeed the Harlot. But what about the roots? What about Jerusalem, the Apostles, the hermits and desert Fathers?

And that's what I discovered - that there was still a very pure strain of Christianity in the church... in monasteries. I won't go into doctrinal variances, but I will testify that Holy Spirit is at work, hidden away in very simple little Christian communities that live the same kind of lives the early apostles lived in the book of Acts.

Right around that time, (5 years after my first husband left) the Lord brought Ezekiel into my life and through serious prayer and fasting, the Lord told us that we would be a sign of the unity of the Body of Christ. That we would go to the Catholic, Russian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Syrian Antiochian, Pentecostal, Charismatic, Church of God in Christ and so called 'non-denominational' churches and find Holy Spirit at work in them all, and bring unity by stressing the Love of Jesus and the faith of the Apostles at work in them all!

In the liturgical churches, especially Russian Orthodox, angels would be seen and heard during the worship! Here, we had come to believe that the ONLY way to worship was the non-denominational way, and singing in tongues. But, we were lifted right out of ourselves in ecstatic joy, even seeing Jesus and ministering angels in these different churches with worship that was so foreign to us and that Evangelicals had condemned as evil. Wow, what a revelation!! I also learned that the form for that worship originated in 50 A.D. and was written by James, the brother of the Lord.

And so for thirty years, Jesus led us to the leaders of many, many different monasteries and churches and we lingered there at each one long enough to get a deep and authentic sense of what the Lord was doing in their worship, their prayers, and teachings, springing very purely from apostolic roots.

We were totally amazed! Jesus would show up in many, many different places, and we observed so many totally dedicated to the Lord, with a sweet spirit and profound humility, who had left behind mother, father, sister brother, all their worldly possessions, to be free to live only for Christ.

The Divine Mercy Chaplet was one of the sweet discoveries we made and we experienced the power of intercession with a formal prayer. We had NEVER prayed "formal" prayer before, it had been only tongues in the nondenominational churches, and loosely formed spontaneous prayers in home groups and the Catholic Charismatic groups, where we'd be singing and praying in tongues. The peace and joy we felt in that chanted prayer was something totally foreign to us. We thought, "Wow! This is so different! You can really sense the Holy Spirit in this!"

In the Catholic Charismatic groups we were able to minister in song, prayer, healing and in yet another dimension we had never experienced - and that was the profound closeness to Jesus as we meditated on His passion. We began to spend hours in worship and prayer, meditating on His life and the meaning of the things He did. On His mildness, meekness, profound tenderness with the most wretched of sinners and His complete disgust with the religious professionals - the Pharisees, Sadducees, religious bigots and hypocrites. The closer we go to the Lord, the more black and white it all became. We realized that we would experience this persecution, too.

We began to recognize these characters in every single church we visited. Religious spirits who quenched the Spirit of God. Bigots who had strong opinions based on error and lack of personal experience and research. We found that we, too, were bigots, who had all kinds of obnoxious ideas that pushed people away from Jesus instead of drawing them tenderly to His bosom.

That is when we resolved that we would no longer allow those traits in our ministry. The Lord had taken us on an odyssey into different cultures and revealed to us that they sincerely worshipped God in Spirit and in truth. We wanted to live on Earth as they do in Heaven - without bigotry and divisions, just loving and worshipping Jesus as His Bride - in Spirit and in Truth.

So, if you sense different forms of Christianity in our teachings, you'll understand why. We went wherever we were led by Holy Spirit, and whatever He had sown in those churches that was consistent with Scripture, we embraced and made our own. Because we believe with all our hearts, *this* is the true atmosphere of Heaven. We are not church dwellers, we are Heart Dwellers, dwelling in the heart of Jesus... a Heart that embraces all expressions of love and worship from His Creatures, whether they be Russian, Greek, black, white, anglo-saxon protestants, holy rollers, or Catholic... whatever. If they love Him in Spirit and in Truth, He rejoices in their worship and receives it unto Himself with tremendous joy.

In conclusion, I would ask our family not to bring criticism of other Christian faiths into our channel. That is more appropriate for apologetic and theological channels than for Heart Dwellers.

I felt the Lord tonight convicting me of religious bigotry in my past...and even the temptation to judge what I do not understand in the present. So I looked up the word Bigot:

1. A person who is intolerant toward those holding different opinions.
2. A person who strongly and unfairly dislikes other people's ideas,
3. A person who is utterly intolerant of any differing creed, belief, or opinion
4. 16th century ... a superstitious religious hypocrite
5. "sanctimonious person, religious hypocrite,"

I have seen this behavior in my mother, myself, and in every church I have ever set foot in. It just takes on different forms that seem less apparent. Bigotry and a religious spirit is a very, very subtle thing. It looks all squeaky clean and righteous on the outside, but in fact it separates, divides and promotes pride and self-righteousness and quenches the Holy Spirit of God.

One can hardly live this kind of life and still expect to be taken in the Rapture. The Rapture is for those who are ready for Heaven. People who are still critical of others because they worship differently than they do, are not ready. Heaven is filled with those who worship in Spirit and in Truth, in the ways Holy Spirit has led them.

What did Moses say..."Let them prophecy...I wish all of Israel would prophecy". What did Jesus say, "Leave them, they cannot do miracles in My Name and be against Me."

Lord, forgive us for judging others based on our own opinions and not Your opinion. You alone are qualified to judge. You alone are Holy, Righteous and know all truth. By Your blood, cleanse us of religious spirits and deliver us from the evils of pride and self-righteousness. Amen

Then the Lord said,

"I will work wonders in My Bride to bring her into agreement, that she may worship freely with all the hosts of Heaven in the days to come."