

I didn't even recognize her. I had prayed the entire bus ride home, as I had always believed in God and that He could do anything, even fix up broken relationships. When I left her home, I was crying, and while driving on a back road where the speed limit was 40 mph, I was really angry at God. ***"If you're God, you're supposed to be able to fix anything!"*** My anger turned to rage, and I began screaming at and cursing God. I was hurting, and I wanted to hurt Him too! I didn't care if I lived or died. I looked at my speedometer, and I was doing 75 mph! Just then, a thought came clearly to me, ***"Take your foot off the gas. You're going to be killed."*** Just then I took my foot off the gas, and a guy in a '62 Chevy Impala pulled out in front of me. There were three teens in the front seat, and I was aimed straight at them in my '62 Rambler Classic.

I was born into a religious home in 1950, six months after my eight year old sister Nancy was hit and killed by a car on the sidewalk in front of our home. Growing up, we did all the religious stuff, and we were faithful to go to church every Sunday and every holy day that came along. As the years passed, I noticed how most people who came to church looked and acted like they were doing God a big favor by enduring forty-five minutes of who knows what.

At age nineteen, I concluded that if this was Christianity, it was a failure. **People's lives weren't being changed, and I knew it wasn't doing anything for me,** and so I left. At Penn State, I was introduced to the drug and alcohol world. I checked out other religions (Why not! The Beatles went to India, and whatever they did was okay.), which included astrology, Eastern mysticism, and anything else that came along, including other versions of what people called Christianity. I sang and played my songs at drug parties, and people encouraged me to drop out of school and try to make it in music, which I did!

I left the Philadelphia area and moved to Concord, Mass., where I got a job working in a famous restaurant, and during my time off I'd go into Boston to try to make contacts. By then, my life was going into a dive. I was a young man without direction for his future and steadily losing hope. I returned home, and got a job at the Alan Wood Steel Company as a millwright helper and general laborer. After being there for almost two years, events began happening that would change my life.

In June, 1972, on the 22nd to be exact, Hurricane Agnes was tearing up the East Coast. It wasn't the worst

hurricane, but because of torrential rains, graveyards near Hazelton, Pa. were flooded, and bodies washed out of their graves. Body parts floated down the streets and landed in people's yards or porches. It was a nightmare!



Flood damage from Hurricane Agnes

That night I had a dream. In my dream there was a tornado, and so for shelter I ran into a barn, where there was a party going on. There were women, drugs, alcohol, it was my life! I could hear the wind roaring outside, but in the barn I was shielded from the wind. Suddenly the wind stopped, and the barn doors opened by themselves. I walked outside, and the grass was a beautiful green, and the sky was dark blue. On my right, thousands were getting in line, and I joined them. The line went up a steep hill, where I saw a bright light, and I realized that Jesus had come back, and now I was standing in line to be judged. I saw a guy I knew from high school whose name, I think, was Bill. He had just been judged by Jesus, and so I asked him, "Well, did you make it? Are you going in?" He said mockingly, "Are you kidding? Of course not!" **As he walked away, I thought to myself, "You idiot! Don't you understand that you're going to hell?"** Just then my whole life shot in front of me, not just the drugs and alcohol, but also the way I treated people, my cursing and swearing, using people for my own selfish purposes, and worst of all, ignoring my Savior.

"How shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation?" Hebrews 2:3

At that moment I was damned to an eternity in Hell, and I knew it! I was a man completely and totally without any hope. Then I awoke, and my bed was saturated in sweat. I had been absolutely terrified!

Two weeks later, my father was visiting family in Cleveland, Ohio. My cousin Betsy was there and shared the Gospel with my dad and told him how she had been born again. My father said to her, ***"Would you mind coming back with me and talking to Jim? He's in a bad way."*** Betsy and I had always been close, and she readily agreed. When they arrived, Betsy came downstairs to a room where I was smoking a joint. She told me that Jesus was coming back soon, and although I was stoned, I heard what she said. She showed me Scriptures of the Second Coming of Christ, and those, along with the dream I had had two weeks previous, piqued my interest.

That night I read my Bible, and the first book I read was "The Revelation." Wow! What a book to begin with! She told me that in two weeks Billy Graham was coming to Cleveland and asked me, "Why don't you just come up?" I said that I would, and on the 22nd of July we went to the crusade, which was held in the stadium where the Indians and the Browns played baseball and football. **I don't remember the message, but when the invitation was given to receive Christ, I was ready.** As I reached the playing field close to first base, a counselor named John Hoertzel approached me with the question, "Hey man, are you serious about receiving Jesus?"

Immediately I went back to my religious background and said, "I'll do the best that I can." He replied, "Stop right there. **It's not you who changes yourself, but rather, it's Christ who changes you.**" The glorious part was that I understood a little of what he meant. I knew my life was a mess, and I truly believed that in Christ, my life could have the purpose and meaning that I had longed for. But, greater still, I didn't have to dread eternal damnation because on the Cross, Jesus took the judgment I deserved and paid the price for my redemption.

I cried out to God to forgive me for all my sins and to change me and make me the man He wanted me to be. That prayer came from my heart. Afterwards I was waiting for some kind of volcanic spiritual experience, but felt nothing. I looked at John and said, "I didn't feel anything." A girl to my one side was laughing from joy and another crying out tears of joy, and then I was wondering if I didn't do it right and needed to do it again. An older man named Norman Pratts came over to help out. He said to me, "Jim, were you sincere in wanting Jesus to save you?" I said, **"Yes, sir, I want Him and I need Him,"** to which he said, "Then believe by faith that Christ has entered your heart and the feeling you're

looking for will come. But watch out, Satan is going to hit you tonight and tell you that this is a lot of baloney.”

I had not thought much about Satan, but trusted that those men knew what they were talking about. Betsy and I left for her sister’s apartment. She didn’t yet know the Lord, and a friend of hers named Gordon showed up for the first time in six months with a bag of Colombian and asked me, “Hey man, do you wanna do a joint with me?” Out of habit, initially I said yes. I wanted to get high, but I knew that before God it was sin. Experiencing great turmoil in my heart, I looked at Gordon and said, “Wait a minute, I change my mind. I’m not going to do it.”

Just then, **the Spirit of the living God came upon me, and I began to preach to everyone in the room to turn from drugs to truly repent and turn to Christ.** Betsy stood a few feet away from me with her mouth open at watching her cousin who, a short time before, had been on the broad road to hell, and now was preaching the Gospel. When I was finished, I asked her if what I had said was correct. Even back then, I wanted to be sure to preach the truth. Today, that unction to preach the truth remains on my heart because the message has eternal consequences.

I had left off in the middle of my story of the car accident when I was mouthing off at God. What I’m relaying to you now was over in just a few seconds. The three teens sitting in the front looked horrified. We were all going to die! I slammed on my brakes, my car skidded sideways to the right, and the left rear of my car hit the right rear of his car. He came to a stop, and then my car glanced off his car and into someone’s yard, where the right rear of my car hit a large maple tree. My car bounced off that tree and went spinning down the road, where I finally came to a stop. The three guys were very kind to me, and we all apologized to one another. I think we were all just glad to be alive! That was a miracle in itself, but beyond that, no one was even hurt! The cars were a mess, but we were all okay. What’s really remarkable is that while I was screaming at God Almighty in one of the worst tirades imaginable, the **living God was saying to me, “I know you’re hurting, but wait until you see what I have for you. Now take your foot off the gas. You’re gonna be killed.”**

Two years later, I heard that voice again saying, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28.

I want to encourage anyone reading this to cry out to God to free you from the power of sin and ask Jesus to save your soul! **Jesus said, “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me, I will by no means cast out,” John 6:37.**

At this writing, I’ve known Jesus for almost 48 years. I have a wife, Beverly, who is the love of my life, and five children and five grandchildren. I hope and pray that you’ll look **“to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God,”** Hebrews 12:2. There is no other Savior but Him.

“Jesus said, ‘I am the Way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by Me.’” John 14:6

I serve a glorious and wonderful Savior. I hope you know Him or will come to know Him while there is still time. He is a loving Savior. God bless you!

Jim

This is my story! What’s yours? How does IT end? You CAN know! **1 John 5:13 says:** *“These things have I written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”*

For further explanation, contact us and ask for “The Way to Eternal Life.”

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Handtotheplov.org for music and messages
The song, “Ohio,” is about my salvation experience, is on “The Watchman” CD, and is also on our website.

Jim & Bev



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Hand to the Plow Ministries – Tract 777-01 04-20

FROM DEATH TO LIFE!

Love Called Me Home!

Jim Anderton



I was nineteen years old and sure that I was in love with this girl. It was February 1970, and I was looking forward to her coming up to visit me at Penn State that weekend. When she called, what I heard was far from anything I ever expected. She let me know in no uncertain terms that she didn’t love me or care about me. Devastated, my friends at school put me on a bus headed home, and I saw her the following day. The girl I saw was nothing like the sweet tender girl I thought she was.