

Mike's Story

Hello my friend. It's about 2 a.m., and I'm wide awake thinking about someone I met yesterday. His name is Mike; a very nice older gentleman who was smoking his cigar at the park and was cordial enough to sit with me to take our church survey.

Here's his story... and I tell it very candidly on how it all went.

Mike ended up being a "recovering Catholic", no longer being a member of that church because of certain complaints about their ways. But when I asked if he was a believer in God and Jesus, he said "yes".

When I asked him the final question of our short survey: "if you were to die tonight, where do you think you're going, and WHY?", he replied he thought we were living in Hell now and death will mean peace.

I let him know that Jesus said Hell is actually a real place of "fire" and "outer darkness", and that Jesus Himself warned about Hell much more than He spoke about Heaven. That is why He came.

Mike seemed surprised at that. I told him we're all going to one place or the other, and that the Bible says we're all born at odds with God and facing judgment. He had no reply.

I said: "Who is innocent?! Who hasn't broken His commandments?!"... and he agreed.

I proceeded to let him know that you're not saved by belonging to a certain church, but that God sees the heart. He looks at the heart, according to the Bible. I then asked him "what do you believe in your heart? God can see it anyway."

Mike said: "I believe in being good to people".

I replied "well that's good, but do you think that's what will save you from your sins?... do you think it's like a scale, and your good has to outweigh your bad?"... He had no reply.

I then let him know, "I'm not out here talking to you for my own health... I care what's going to happen to people." - He seemed to appreciate that.

"We all have to make a decision, my friend... do you trust in yourself to be saved, or trust in Christ to be saved?"

He thought for a moment and with a seemingly satisfied smile he said "self".

I thought *UGH... there it is, the human pride that we're all born with, being born in sin. And I used to think the same!*

I said to him in reply: "That's a big mistake. That's exactly what Satan wants you to think." (Satan deceives the whole world, according to the Bible)...

... "I know that's a harsh statement, but he wants you to think you can save yourself. If we could be good enough to save ourselves, then why did Christ come and willingly die on the Cross??"

Mike thought about it. He seemed a little perplexed.

"If any of us could have been good enough to please God on our own, then why did He choose to be judged for our sins??"

"Mike, it's ultimately between you and the Lord. You have to make a decision; are you going to rely on your "self" to be saved, or on Christ alone??? It's one or the other my friend. Do you see what I'm saying??"

He said: "Yes, thank you, I appreciate it." (Phew! :)

"You're welcome sir... please go home and think about it, will you? And take this pamphlet to read. I hope you'll take it to heart. If you want to be saved, there's a certain surrender that needs to take place in your heart. Jesus said *Repent and believe the good news!* (**Mark 1:15**) - Turn to the Lord Jesus and you will be saved!"

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This, my friends, is why Jesus said **one must be born again to enter the kingdom of God** (Read **John 3**). There's a very real conversion that needs to take place in one's heart, and only God can do it, by grace through faith in Christ alone. (even faith itself is a grace gift from God, **Eph 2:8, Rom 12:3**)

Even though Mike was a nice guy, he was deceived about where he was going and how he would get there, just as many of us are, or have been!

If you're reading this and you're sort of like Mike, go to God with a humble heart, as I also mentioned to him.

The Bible says **God gives grace to the humble, Jam 4:6, 1Pe 5:5**. Go to Him and ask forgiveness for your sins and look to Christ, and see what He does for you. :)

My hope is that Mike's story helps people see the fullness of the Gospel and why we must compassionately explain it to people. Just because people say they're a believer doesn't necessarily mean they trust in Christ alone as their Lord and Savior from their sins, as in this story!

Please consider this prayerfully, both for your own soul, and for the sake of your witness to others. If there are some of your friends or family who might benefit from hearing Mike's story, PLEASE pass it on.

God is good, and He has provided the Lord Jesus as "the Way" to be saved from our sins (John 14:6), but He will not violate the free choice of man to choose for self or for HIM. And it's a very real decision.

In Christ's love,

Scott

* To "believe" in the Lord Jesus, ala **Acts 16:31**, means to "entrust" yourself to Him, see the original Greek language of the New Testament.

** For more information on God's salvation plan, please visit our website at www.christsavesministries.org/salvation/