

My Journey To Jesus

My journey to Jesus has been one of many trials, tribulations, heartbreaks, and fight against all odds. I was born to a mother and father who divorced back when divorcing was very unheard of. I come from a family with three siblings, two sisters, a brother who has passed away, and myself. From my parents remarrying, I ended up with some half siblings who I still am in contact with. Others are strained relationships. I think it's because of not knowing how to show emotions or solve problems in our family very well. My parents didn't really give us the greatest examples of conflict resolution or forgiveness. Even though my parents hadn't shown the way to stick it out in a marriage, I later married a wonderful woman who gave me two beautiful children. Our marriage was some of the most precious years of my life. Today, I am still grieved by the way she left my life and this earth.

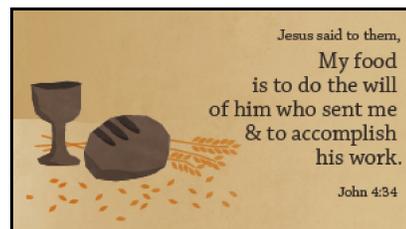
One day, when our children were still very small. One was still in diapers and the other just coming out of diapers. I had gone to work on my 24 hour shift the day before she died. We spoke that morning of our usual check-ins before she headed off to work. The kids were fine, she was good, and I was on my way home. Little did I know that this would be the last conversation with my beautiful bride and the day before was the last time I would ever kiss her good-by. I had kissed her the day before and told her "see you later" over the phone before she was on her way to work. On her way in to work, the "see you later" would turn into much later in heaven. She was taken from my children and I in a tragic car accident that morning on her way into work. I still remember where I was, those around me, and each moment of that day as though it were just yesterday. Now, I had to endure being widowed early and horrifically then try to figure out how to be a single father to two very small children. Having to explain that their mommy wasn't ever coming home just about took the air from my lungs.



One of my children barely remembers who she was because he was still yet too young. It seemed like the weight of the world was on my shoulders during that time. I really don't think I have ever gotten over those dark times because my heart grieved so much and I had to keep going for my babies. One might even ask "Where is God in all of this?" I know I at least thought it more than once. One more tragedy struck not long after my wife was taken. My babies were taken from me too, but I'm still trying to heal from that heartbreak, also.

After these losses, one might ask if life is worth living. I asked myself that very question, but alcohol helped keep me comfort and numb from the pain. We—alcohol and I became the best of friends. I suppose those events and the events during my service in the Vietnam War helped drive me closer and closer to alcohol and death. I was at the end of my rope one day and ready to end it all when God sent someone to me from the Salt Lake City Mission. He told me about the program and Jesus. That was more than seven (7) years ago. I remember some time ago when I was out at the Second Chance Ranch. I had been there about 1 ½ months and I was walking and talking with the Lord. I was asking Him what I was doing wrong, what did He want me to do. I was in the middle of the field talking to Him and to myself when I heard a message from our Lord. He said "keep on keepin' on." That's when I knew I needed to serve Him for the rest of my life. "Keep on keepin' on?" I would ask. The Lord said, "Yes." Every time I have considered leaving the new life He gave me I distinctly hear the message, "Keep on keepin' on" then I know for sure that He wants me to be still for a while longer. So, here I am. I have been through the program at the mission, served as a mentor, and eventually was hired on as a staff person. Currently, I serve our military veterans as a liaison through the mission helping them to navigate the VA system and receive the benefits they deserve for their service to our country. I also serve the mission as the direct assistant to the program director where I'm often called to be "permanently flexible" or PF. I don't know what God has in mind for the rest of my days on this earth, but I do know that He wants me to always serve Him. He answered my cries for help and continues to remind me to "keep on keepin' on. Thank you, Jesus!

— James Beckham



Philanthropic Bites

Estate Planning:

While planning the distribution of your estate, many complicated questions arise. Our desire is to take this complex process and simplify it for you. To discover resourceful ways you can be a good steward, visit us at www.saltlakecitymission.org/pcx.html and click on the link to read our pages on What Do Other People Do?

How we steward the assets God has entrusted to us matters a great deal to Him who owns it all. To discover creative ways you can be a good steward, visit: www.saltlakecitymission.org/pcx.html and click on "Secrets of Giving Wisely" section.

Did you know that by establishing a gift arrangement now you can obtain current tax benefits, create a stream of lifetime income and provide a future gift to **Salt Lake City Mission**? To learn more about **life income gifts**, please visit the "www.saltlakecitymission.org/pcx.html" pages of our website and click on "Secrets of Giving Wisely."

Did you know that with a **retained life estate** you can donate your residence, vacation home, or farm to **Salt Lake City Mission** and retain full lifetime use of the property? Not only are you establishing a future gift for **Salt Lake City Mission**, you will receive an immediate income tax deduction for a portion of the fair market value of your property.

To learn more, visit the "www.saltlakecitymission.org/pcx.html" pages of our website and click on "Secrets of Giving Wisely."

You can maximize the positive effect of the dollars left in your **tax deferred retirement accounts** by specifying **Salt Lake City Mission** as a contingent beneficiary (after your spouse). Simply obtain a "change of beneficiary designation" form from your account administrator, and list **Salt Lake City Mission** on the form as the sole contingent beneficiary, or as one of several charities you care about, in whatever percentage you desire. To learn more, visit the "www.saltlakecitymission.org/pcx.html" pages of our website and click on "Secrets of Giving Wisely."

Avoid **capital gains tax** on your property - steward all or a portion of it to **Salt Lake City Mission** either as an outright gift or in exchange for a lifetime of income. To learn more, visit the "www.saltlakecitymission.org/pcx.html" pages of our website and click on "Secrets of Giving Wisely."

How to Inherit Eternal Life

²⁵ And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?"

²⁷ So he answered and said, "'*You shall love the LORD* your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and '*your neighbor as yourself.*'"

²⁸ And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."

Parable of the Good Samaritan

²⁹ But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

³⁰ Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. ³³ But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ So he went to *him* and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' ³⁶ So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?"

³⁷ And he said, "He who showed mercy on him."

Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Mary and Martha are Contrasted

³⁸ Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

⁴¹ And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. ⁴² But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."