

Would you like to hear the Good News?

God still loves you. He never stopped loving you. He loved you so much that He sent His Son Jesus to bring you back. All you have to do is let Him bring you back. Will you pray with me?

"Lord Jesus... I want to stop trusting in myself...and what I can do...and start trusting in you...and what you have already done...when you died for me on the cross. I know that! am a sinner...and I am sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me...I believe you rose again...and I invite you to come and live inside of me. I want you to be my Savior and Lord...which means being #1 in my life. I want to repent and turn away...from everything you and the Bible call sin...and I totally commit myself... to obeying you...every day, for the rest of my life. Lord Jesus baptize me in your precious Holy Spirit. Thank you Jesus."

Now that you have made peace with God, He is ready for you to begin to grow in a personal relationship with Him.

Receiving More of Jesus? "The Baptism in the Holy Spirit"

Who is the Holy Spirit? He is God. You might ask, "If the Holy Spirit is God, and Jesus is God, and the Heavenly Father is God, are there three Gods?" No. There is only one God as stated earlier. But God is unified as One and exists in the three Persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This threefold nature of God is exhibited even in creation. Humans have a body, a mind, and an eternal spirit. Our mind is not our body. Our spirit is not our mind. Are we then three people? No. We are just one person with three manifestations.

After we receive eternal life through confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior, we can also receive what the Bible calls the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The purpose of this Baptism is to be anointed like Jesus and do the works that He did. Through this Baptism we receive the power of God, the supernatural fruit of the Holy Spirit, and the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). We receive these supernatural capabilities in our lives when we receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Some of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are listed in 1 Corinthians 12. Through the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, God distributes these great gifts to each one individually as He wills for each situation (1 Corinthians 12:8-11).

Would you like to receive this great gift? Yes No

Throughout the New Testament, the Bible shows the manifestations of the gifts that may be received after receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Initially the gift of utterance, a language not previously known to the person may be received, or interpretation of tongues, or prophecy. The gifts of power are faith, healings, or miracles. The gifts of revelation are also available: word of knowledge, word of wisdom, or discernment of spirits, or any combinations of these gifts. The Holy Spirit will manifest His presence differently at different times depending on which gift or gifts are needed at that time.

Do you believe these things? Yes No

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is received by faith just as salvation is received. Pray the following prayer or one similar to it.

Dear Heavenly Father. I believe You are the source of all love and power. I ask right now for the gift of the Holy Spirit. I have faith in You, and that You will give me this great gift. Because I have asked, I believe I have now received the Power of God, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit in my life. I have received all these wonderful gifts by faith. I also ask that You will show me how to use these gifts for Your glory by Christ Jesus. I pray now thanking you in the name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen. Luke 11:13

Do you believe you have received these great gifts? Yes No

You have received these gifts. You should begin to use these gifts now that God has given you.



Hearing His Voice

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"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." Revelations 12:11

EVERYONE THOUGHT I COULDN'T HEAR THEM



Martin Pistorius

People often ask how I found God. I was never taught to believe in Him. I didn't read books or go to church to discover Him. I simply knew He was with me. My path to faith may not seem so unusual if you know the miracle of my life—a miracle of survival that could only have happened by the hand of God.

I grew up in South Africa, a normal, healthy child, until I came home from school one day in 1988, complaining of a sore throat. I was 12 years old. From that day on, my parents fought for a diagnosis from doctors who couldn't explain what was happening to me. First I stopped eating. Then I stopped speaking. I lost all sense of time. The bonsai trees I had once tended grew dense as I lost mobility in my limbs. My body weakened as I stopped using it.

Test after test was run, but doctors couldn't say what had happened to me. They concluded I had suffered profound brain damage due to a degenerative neurological disease, and that I would soon die. I spent my days in a center for children with severe disabilities, and my parents cared for me at home at night.

For the first four years after I fell ill, I was lost in a dark, unseeing world, unaware of anything around me. I was awake but unresponsive. I have no memory of these years. After the medical profession had washed its hands of me, my parents were left to care for me, having exhausted every avenue in search of a cure.

Then, when I was around 16, I started to become aware again. It was flashes at first, moments of awareness that left me almost as soon as they appeared. It took time for me to realize that I was completely alone in a sea of people.

Since my limbs were unresponsive and my voice was mute, I was entombed in my own body. I couldn't tell anyone that I had returned to life. People knew that I had become more responsive, but they still believed I was severely brain damaged. And so I was fed and cleaned while being sat in front of reruns of Barney. I dreamed of smashing the television screen.

People looked around me and through me. However much I tried to beg and plead, shout and scream, I couldn't get them to notice me. I had woken up as a ghost.

Angels Beckon

Soon after I started to become aware, God came into my life.

One night I suddenly "awoke" from sleep. It felt as if I were floating far above my bed. Instinctively, I knew that I was not breathing. I could see angels with me, a male and two females. They were comforting and guiding me, and although we did not speak, I could hear their voices. They wanted me to come with them.

For a moment, I wanted to go with them. I had nothing to live for, no reason to continue my journey. But I couldn't leave behind the family that loved me.

The next moment, breath filled my lungs.

As I became fully aware, the only certainty I could cling to when so much didn't make sense was that God was with me. Without understanding the rules and structure of the church, without a concept of sin, the Bible, or repentance, I simply believed in Him. I can't explain it, other than that, on the fringes of human experience; perhaps I was in a place in which I didn't need theological teaching to understand faith. The people around me didn't know I existed, but God did. And I knew He existed. It was instinctual, not intellectual.

I could see angels with me, a male and two females. They were comforting and guiding me. They wanted me to go with them.

I started praying to God. I couldn't clasp my hands or kneel, of course. But as I lay on a beanbag or sat strapped in a wheelchair to keep my useless torso upright, I started to talk to him. I prayed for someone to come and move my aching body. I prayed for Him to keep my family safe. I prayed for some sign that one day I would be rescued from my silent world.

Sometimes my prayers were answered. Sometimes they weren't. But when I felt disappointed and powerless, my conversations with God taught me that gratitude could sustain me. When the smallest prayer was answered, I gave thanks to the Lord. Caught in perhaps the most extreme isolation a person can experience, I grew ever closer to God.

I lived for nine years without anyone realizing there was intelligence trapped inside me. During this time my family occasionally took me to church, but formal worship meant little to me. Visiting my grandparents, I would watch as they said grace but felt no connection to the words.

One day, my father pushed my wheelchair into a shop where a woman, seeing my broken body and staring eyes, prayed for me as she touched my head. But all I felt was confusion that a stranger would do this. My faith was so tightly locked inside me that seeing people practice theirs together or in public seemed strange.

Then, in 2001, my most central prayer was answered.

Finding Love and Church

A massage therapist at the care center I attended became convinced that I could understand what she was saying to me. After she persuaded my parents to have me assessed, I was taken to a specialized communication center. I sat on one side of a transparent screen, praying once again for God's guidance and grace. An expert sitting on the other side asked me to identify pictures of everyday objects with my eyes. Seeing that I looked at the correct pictures on command, she told my parents that I could learn to communicate.

The intelligence that had been trapped inside me soon became apparent. I quickly learned to use flashcards and switches to communicate. Then I mastered an advanced computer software. Within 18 months, I was able to speak using my "computer voice." I started to lecture about alternative communication and to volunteer. In the years since, I have graduated with honors and set up my own business as a web developer, all the while communicating via computer.

During this time, my faith remained an integral part of my life, but I still didn't feel connected to the church. On New Year's Day 2008, I met someone who did. My parents and I had Skyped with my sister, who was living in the UK. Her friend Joanna was in the room. She captivated me. We started to exchange emails and chat online. Joanna was talking and I was typing. We quickly fell in love.

Joanna had been brought up as a Christian and I understood much about the church. As we talked and discussed faith, I began to understand more. Six months

After we met online, I visited Joanna for the first time in the UK. One of our first activities together was to attend a church service. There, for the first time, I understood that, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor; for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up." (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)

That December, I moved to the UK, where Joanna and I taught a Bible study class together. I began with a child's Bible before moving on to an audio Bible that I could listen to alone. Six months later, Joanna and I were married. The Lord had brought us together, and now He was with us as we were joined in His presence.

Joanna and I continue to attend church. My life, like that of so many people, has become so full of work and commitments that it is sometimes hard to find the time and space to connect to God. It is the time and space that I had so much of during my enforced silence. Now I find peace in worship.

In many ways, my relationship with God looks the same as it always has - quiet, private, and intrinsic to my life. Without the Lord, I would not be here today. I have no doubt that it was only his intervention that saved me. It is only through God that I have found my voice.

Martin Pistorius has written about his experience in *Ghost Boy* (Thomas Nelson).

OUR VISION is based on a vision that God gave to a businessman- a dairy farmer. In that vision, he saw hundreds of despondent men who felt they had no chance of making it in the world. Then they heard a message of hope and they came alive! Their heads held high; they were transformed into productive men with dignity and purpose.

GOD'S PURPOSE FOR OUR FELLOWSHIP

- To reach men everywhere for Jesus Christ with the same social, cultural or business interests.
- To call men to God: to help men become born again, baptized in the Holy Spirit, operate in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- To mentor young men who have never had a positive male role model by being a spiritual father to them.
- To provide a basis of fellowship among all men everywhere, regardless of church affiliation.
- To bring about a greater measure of unity and harmony in the Body of Christ.
- To train and equip men to succeed in the business world.

Learning about Business

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