

WHY WE NEED A SAVIOR

MAN

GOD

IN THE BEGINNING . . . The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, were created by God and enjoyed perfect fellowship with Him. They were without sin and lived peacefully in a beautiful garden that supplied all their needs. God gave them only one rule, which was not to eat the fruit of a particular tree. However, Satan tempted them to eat the forbidden fruit by saying it would benefit them. They ate it, and that act of disobedience against God was the first sin. It severed Adam's and Eve's relationships with God because He is holy and cannot have fellowship with evil.

MAN

SIN

GOD

OUR CONDITION TODAY . . . Since we are all Adam's descendants, every child in the world has been born with his fallen nature. Instead of coming into the world desiring to do right, we are all born with an inclination toward sin and evil. Proof of this natural downward tendency is abundantly evident anywhere human beings are found. Our sin results in tremendous pain, sorrow, and suffering. The consequences of sin reach far beyond this life because those who reject God and die in a sinful state will go to Hell and be separated from God eternally.

MAN

JESUS

GOD

GOD'S PLAN . . . God wants to remove sin from our lives so that we can have a relationship with Him and spend eternity in Heaven. However, the penalty for sin is death, and that penalty must be paid. Out of His great love for us, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Savior. Jesus lived as a man and died in our place for our sins. Because of that, if we follow the steps that God has laid out in the Bible, our sins can be forgiven. God will change our desires and give us power to live without sin so we can enjoy eternal life with Him in Heaven one day.

APOSTOLIC FAITH WORLD HEADQUARTERS
5414 SE Duke Street | Portland, Oregon 97206 USA
WWW.APOSTOLICFAITH.ORG
TX028-0624

DELIVERED FROM THE OCCULT

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Kris' skepticism about the occult turned into fascination, and then to terror.

By Kris Scholz

Up, up, up they came, like little cat feet, starting at my toes and creeping up my back until they stopped at my shoulder. A horrifying, evil snarling emanated from my visitor. This was no dream or mere imagination.

That night I discovered there are two real powers in the world—God's and Satan's.

How had I become involved in the occult? It had begun very gradually without my realizing what a dangerous thing I was getting into.



During my early years I was taken to Sunday school.

But even as a young child I felt there was something missing in the church my family attended. When I was a little older, one day my best friend burst into the school library, her face glowing. She exclaimed, "I was saved last night!" I looked at her skeptically. "Saved? From what?" She said she had attended a church service the night before and had given her heart to Jesus. Now she was a Christian. I was not impressed. Instead, I did everything possible to talk her out of Christianity and make her give up what I thought was only foolishness.

LOOKING FOR MORE THAN EMPTY RELIGION

My family moved from a small town near the West Coast

to Vancouver, Washington, when I was entering my teens. This move to a larger city had a devastating effect on me. In my hometown I'd been active in school events and had many friends. After the move, I was a nobody in a large high school. I became shy and withdrawn. To make matters worse, my family began to have problems too. My parents began to argue constantly and the tension at home was unbearable. The insecurity was terrible. There seemed to be nothing stable in my life.

Then I met a young married couple who set out to "help" me. They knew my family and the pressures in my home, and they let me know their door was always open. I didn't realize the couple's intention was to introduce me to the occult. We built up a friendship and after a while, they began talking about communicating with spirits and visits from extraterrestrial beings. At first I was skeptical about it all, but since my mother's family was said to have a strong "sixth sense," I was interested in psychic phenomena.

Before long I was totally involved—communicating with spirits, having prophetic dreams, transferring thoughts, doing astral projections. I thought, This is what I've been looking for! This is something real, not just an empty religion that never would do a thing for me! I became fascinated by astrology and followed every horoscope I could find. I had never used any drugs outside of smoking marijuana a few times, but by meditation and playing around with my mind, I found that I could attain a high that was so strong I didn't need drugs. I read every book I could find on anything to do with the occult, and I believed everything I read.

What we were doing was full of power, but I didn't realize it was Satan's power.

AN EYE-OPENING EXPERIENCE

Then came the experience which opened my eyes. I had just gone to bed that night and was still awake when a strange feeling came into my room. Our home was by the freeway and traffic noise was heard constantly. But my room became still—as quiet as death itself, and icy cold.

I was an avowed atheist, a scoffer against God, but I began to pray, 'Oh help me, Jesus!' I prayed it over and over.

It seemed as though I was caught in a vacuum in space. It was then I felt the little cat feet creep up my body and heard the snarling. I knew that if I looked over my shoulder

I would be possessed by the demon. I was terrified—absolutely paralyzed by fear. Even though my mouth was wide open and I was screaming in my mind, not a sound came out.

I was an avowed atheist, a scoffer against God, but I began to pray, "Oh help me, Jesus!" I prayed it over and over. Gradually the sounds from the demon became softer until they stopped altogether. I felt the little cat feet retrace their way down my back. My room became warm again, and I could hear the trucks on the highway rumble by. Everything was back to normal but I would never be the same. I'd had my first encounter with the power in Jesus' Name. And I would never doubt His existence again.

ENCOUNTERING POWER FROM HEAVEN

Sometime after this experience, I met and married my husband, Don. Since I now believed in God, I thought I was a Christian. But Don had seen true Christianity. He told me, "I know what real Christians are like, and you are not a Christian." What a revelation that was!

God began leading us to Himself. Always having been a rebel, I resisted. Don started listening to the radio broadcasts of the Sunday worship services from the Apostolic Faith Church, but I always made sure I was off reading a book or doing something else when the sermon came on. One Sunday Don confronted me, "Come and listen. It will do you good!" I started listening just to make him happy, but soon the words I heard began speaking to my heart.

Not many months later, we came to church. At the end of the service when the altar call was given, my husband

started forward and pulled me along. We knelt to pray. God helped us humble ourselves and repent of our sins, and that day He saved us and changed our lives. Finally I was a "real Christian"—not someone who just believes God exists, but someone who lives according to His ways.

The years since then have been the best of my life.

God has blessed my life abundantly. I still have problems—everyone does. But now I have Someone to help me through them. There was an emptiness inside when I did

There was an emptiness inside when I did not believe in God, but now I have the solid foundation of knowing Christ is real.

not believe in God, but now I have the solid foundation of knowing Christ is real. He is the constant, steady Presence I had always been seeking. Christ has truly been my best Friend. ■

STEPS TO DELIVERANCE

ACKNOWLEDGE

Admit that you have sinned and need God's help.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

CONFESS AND REPENT

Be genuinely sorry for the sins you have committed and ask God to forgive you.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. (Luke 13:3)

FORSAKE

Determine that with God's help you are going to turn away from all sin in your life.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him . . . for he will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55:7)

BELIEVE

When you have honestly and sincerely taken the steps above, then believe that God will hear your prayer and save you.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

RECEIVE

God will let you know that the work is done in your heart.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. (Romans 8:16)