

Common Sense Isn't  
Presents:  
*In My Beginning - An Introduction*



Author's note:

*This is the current introduction in my latest book, "Timeline". Since it explains the origin of what I'm trying to do I thought it appropriate to include it on the website. Here, then, is why I do what I do wherever I am; website, speaking, classroom, writings, out on the street - whether anyone pays attention or not! My love for my Father won't let me quit! I hope you enjoy it, and if you feel so inclined I would love to hear the story of how God revealed himself to you. Please send it to me through the website.*

## **Introduction - In "My" beginning**

Growing up as a military 'brat' means that my childhood was a curious mixture of traditional experiences and those unique to a military post, both domestic and overseas. Life centered around 'the base' whether we lived 'on' or 'off'. My brother and I watched the store for the latest 'comic' books (which were then about heroes, values, and humor). Armed guards were a normal part of life – they kept order and helped anyone who needed it, and they made sure that only people that earned the privilege used the base (I thought we were privileged because they needed guards to keep people out). We went bowling and cooked hamburgers on a grill in the yard - the kind you put charcoal in. Prejudice had to do with whether you had on a uniform or not (still does to me!). What TV existed was black-and-white – which was fine because people didn't watch much. On base there was only 1 church. It was Protestant at some hours and Catholic at others - I think I was 10 or 11 before I ever heard the word 'denomination'. In the summer we took swim lessons at the base pool and went to vacation Bible school at the base 'nursery', as day-care centers were called back then. Actually, the only 'church' thing I remember being at the fancy 'church' building on base were formal services. Everything else was in homes or restaurants or parks or wherever. Back then 'church' was more like a community and faith seemed to be a lot more about who you were on the inside than what you look like on the outside.

Every summer there was Vacation Bible School – another 'church' thing that wasn't at the 'church'; it was at the base nursery (today called day-care center) because it was equipped to handle children and adults, for some reason, don't think they need VBS. There were games and art and activities. I don't remember much about them except that we had a lot of fun. There were lessons and stories, but I don't remember specifics about them much either. Doesn't seem to have left much of a mark, does it? Amazing how wrong appearances often are. When I was five and my brother seven we headed off to Vacation Bible School as usual. I only remember one thing that happened the whole week. Yet during that unremembered week, my five-year old life burst wide open – never to be the same again. One event is so deeply imbedded in my memory I still see it 50+ years later as clearly as the day it happened. And it has been my driving purpose since that day.

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We were seated excitedly on benches that were just boards mounted to the floor by short poles. They had no back and you had to have good posture or it became painful after a few minutes. We sang. We played a guessing game. We sang some more. And then it was lesson time. We cheered as the teacher set up a 'felt board'; a now vanished presentation tool where a large board covered in felt was displayed on an easel. Those things were like magic to us kids! You'd add pieces of felt for the sky and ground and they would stick! Trees, buildings, people, clouds, the sun, whatever would be added or moved as the story unfolded. The teacher would set it all up ahead of time, cutting and decorating felt pieces to illustrate the story they were going to cover. Layer upon layer of scenery, characters and items created amazing pictures. Things would come and go and our imaginations made it real to us! Someone who was good with the board could make it come alive, talking while they moved and changed the pieces around. Our teacher that day was GOOD! And, at least to me, the Holy Spirit was giving her words that extra push that is His unique province. I don't remember her name, but I can still see that board and hear her telling the story.

The world outside ceased to exist as that wonderful lady related the story of the Mount of Transfiguration. I can still see the figure of Jesus, with his gentle face, as he appeared on the path, followed by Peter and James and John. I can still see them climbing up the mountain that had appeared on the path before them. Bright white clouds appear above them and the angel-like figures of Moses and Elijah are in them. I was enraptured as only a child can be – totally unaware of the lightning about to strike. Suddenly there was a golden sun above the clouds, and one-by-one, bright yellow rays appeared in the clouds. Jesus now stood alone on the top of the mountain; the puffy white clouds and brilliant sunlight obscuring everything else. Then "it" happened: the teacher's mouth moved, but the voice I heard was not hers. It was a powerful, thundering, loving whisper that drove those words forever into my heart, deeper than anything else has ever reached;

***"THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED".***

Though it would take another 20 years to realize, that instant was **the** pivotal event of my life; the moment God revealed Himself clearly -unleashing a longing deep in my heart that remains the foundation driving who I am to this day. From that point I have lived for the day when I will stand before my Father and hear Him claim me as His own, and (I hope with all my heart!) tell me He is pleased with me! It was the beginning of my journey of self-discovery. And it threw the door open for a wide-eyed kid to see Jesus with the clarity that comes so easily to a child. (It comes easily to adults too - when they have faith like a child!) Less than a year later at my Grandma's kitchen table - a 5-year old would ask precious Jesus to come live in my heart.

*He did.*

*He has.*

*He does.*

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I do not know if that young boy's heart pounded or he found it hard to breathe that day. I do know he cried tears that would not stop and which he could not explain to the troubled people around him - including an older brother that would not leave his side even when ordered to by the grownups! (Big Brother Jim still hasn't left my side!) Life changed that day. And the Lord has changed life many, many more times in my 50+ years since then. But my heart still pounds, it is still hard to breathe, and my eyes still water when that memory – so clear and fresh and *powerful* across all these years – comes to mind. That little child who had not yet been taught that people don't see or hear God, saw and heard God. I still do. Everyday. Everywhere. You can too, and you should. All you need is faith like a child!

That's what this book (*website*) is about; our Father revealing Himself to each of us, because this isn't a religion – it's a love affair. This particular experience is how He chose to reveal Himself to me, but the reality of that experience is universal to mankind. It is nothing less than the Maker of everything that exists (including you!), the all-powerful God of the universe, the One who can create things simply by speaking their name, the Father who is so intimate He brings tears to our eyes - revealing Himself to each and every one of us. To you! The details are always unique, but the message is always the same:

**GOD IS YOUR FATHER WHO LOVES YOU.**

Do you believe that?

**CAN you believe that?**

Once, in a study group in Hendersonville, TN., as I prepared to pray a friend of several years laid her hand on my arm and asked me please to pray to Jesus because she could not pray to God the Father. All eyes turned to her in shocked silence asking the inevitable question such a statement would bring to mind. But she couldn't speak or move, literally paralyzed by the sheer terror of a past she had not allowed even herself to look at for over 30 years. The group- bidden by God's Holy Spirit - gathered around and held her, and her broken, shattered heart suddenly opened up like the floodgates of a dam. Over the next 45 minutes the story that had poisoned her entire existence came pouring out; an unbelievable, horrible story of years and years and years of abuse by a man entrusted with the name, father. Her earliest memories were of verbal lashings and physical beatings in childhood. Then the unimaginable sexual torment of a teenager at the mercy of a drunken predator. We could not believe the horrors she spoke of that had been hiding under the sweet, giving nature we saw. Her abuse ended only when she ran away from home at 16– never to return. She had never seen that man again, but until that moment, when the Lord poured His love into her wounds as only He can, she had remained enslaved by those terrible memories all her life.

She is healed now, because when God brings healing – it heals totally. She has not forgotten the abuse, of course, but memories no longer have the power to poison her life. And the sweet gentle nature we all knew grew even stronger – emboldened by her childhood knowledge of what the ugliness in one person can do to another when it is unleashed.

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There are many who are unable to accept the concept of God as a loving Father because of their treatment by a man who carried the title of father in their life. Others, who never knew a father, may find themselves indifferent because of a lack of any kind of paternal treatment on earth. Some grew up with someone who carried the title, but were so busy their actions served only to teach a child that they weren't important enough to rate any treatment, except maybe criticism. Still others, in trying to give their children all the 'stuff' money can buy, neglected to give them the one thing they really needed – a father's love. There are more scenarios, but they all produce the same thing; a wounded child whose personality will now include a deep-rooted certainty that they are not worth loving – a child's conclusion to abuse, neglect, or being passed off to someone else.

Wounds like that are so deep they seem to become a part of our personality, keeping us bound to the pain. Whatever the cause of the wounds that may be holding you captive, no matter how painful they are, no matter how deep they go or who inflicted them – your real Father did not cause them. God shed His own tears as you did yours, and is still hurting with you. One day He will fix it so the scales of justice (God's, not ours) will be righted. The strongest statement Jesus made concerning The Father's righteous wrath (not to be confused with our revengeful anger) is that when God gets done with them, it would be better for those who harm one of His children to have never existed. So if you carry the pain dealt out when someone you trusted and called 'daddy' failed to uphold that trust, then please hear this:

*The man who sired you is NOT your Father.  
Whether he raised you or didn't raise you – he is NOT your Father.  
Whether he blessed you or cursed you – he is NOT your Father.*

We say 'father' and 'mother' to describe the people who act (or don't) as parents. But the man whose seed began your physical existence did not design or create you. The woman whose egg became your form did not start your heart or breathe life into you. Human beings, even after centuries of study, do not even begin to understand what it takes to create a person. We have only learned a little about some of the processes and nothing about the 'whys' of those processes. You were created by a God so powerful He is beyond our ability to comprehend. It was He that dreamed you up and loved you so much He created you. It was He that sent you into the world. It was He that desired that the 'parents' entrusted with 'you' would act in ways that pointed your mind and heart to your real Father, God himself. And it is He, God All Mighty that rules the universe, who weeps every time one of us fails in that trust and wounds one of His children.

That is the message of this site. God may reveal other truths to you – I certainly hope so! But none of them will matter until you *know* this one thing so deep in your heart it permeates your entire existence: no matter what your childhood was like, no matter what your experiences have told you, no matter what life has said, no matter what events are saying to you right now:

**GOD IS *YOUR* FATHER, WHO LOVES *YOU*.**

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Why would He love you?  
Throughout history books, poems, songs, art have wondered.  
Even the Psalmist asks, “who is man that you are mindful of him?”

The answer is simple; He loves you because you are His. Literally. He thought you up and designed you, atom by atom. Painstakingly, piece by piece He made you. He didn't have to you know - He did it because He wanted to. He did it because He *loves* you. YOU! You're not just another *thing* He made, you are *His* child. Made in *His* image. No matter what situation you were born into, you are a product of love – His love.

Is that hard for you to believe? Join the club. It took me about 30 years to *begin* to understand the height and width and depth of the Father's love for me, and I started with a good family and early relationship with the Lord. But it is, I believe, the only reason the universe even exists. Abba, our Father created it to give each one of us a chance to know how much He loves us.

Remember the song, “*Jesus loves me, this I know . . .*”? We focus on, “*Jesus loves me*”. But the hard part, the part that takes a lifetime (yours) - maybe even an eternity - is, “*this I know*”.