

ANTHONY'S STORY



“...GOD HIT ME IN THE HEART
WITH HIS GOOD NEWS.”

Hi, my name is Anthony; I am the youngest of three children born into a Lebanese Catholic family. Growing up, I always believed in GOD and feared Him, but I also believed in praying to Mary and the saints and other rituals too.

Because I grew up without a father and my mother worked so hard to provide for us, I turned to the world for the attention that I craved. By the time I was 13 people didn't even really think I lived at my mum's. By the age 15, I was living in darkness and thought God was a good man upstairs who would forgive me at my death bed.

I thought the life I was living was my dream come true - all the attention I wanted. In my depression I turned to drugs and alcohol for a quick -fix of happiness; I didn't want to be sober in life, I was trying to block out the pain. Little did I know how temporary the pleasures were. I thought Christians were weak and I picked on them. I always had to chase something new because I was empty inside. My joy kept running out. I had a counterfeit, a fake – the dead hope and fake joy and dregs on the bottom of a glass while God offered me crystal spring water. I was deceived. I realised this sinful, so-called fun was a rip off. I could not be happy or complete. Even relationships didn't cut it. I thought everyone was against me; I was scared of sleeping; I trusted no one. I was scared to drink water; even scared to go outside!

Then someone taught me about hell and told me that if I didn't slow down I would go there forever! I wouldn't be able to die and get out. It was a place where I would burn without end. That's the first time I paused and thought about

GOD as an adult. This reminder about JESUS and hell started getting to me. I decided to try living for God so I started going to my local Catholic church on Sundays. Now I felt better; I had started my tick list for heaven.

Living a life of crime and breaking the law, I almost lost my life three times but God spared me because I wasn't saved yet. The last time I came close to death, I thought to myself, "If I don't make it, will I go to heaven?" So I weighed my good against my bad and, boy, did I come out looking bad. I knew I couldn't make it on my own works. I had no power to pull myself from sin. I also knew religion wouldn't help.

An Assyrian friend of mine went to a Bible study at the Church of the East, so I asked him to take me along. They showed me that praying to Mary and the saints and doing the rosary and the other Catholic rituals were not in the Bible. I was shocked! I knew that God's Word is the truth and believe everything it says. Most importantly they told me that JESUS isn't just that man - a dead, pinned, Son of GOD statue on the cross - but that He was also GOD who became flesh, the resurrected King! They gave me a lot of knowledge, but they never showed me how to be born again or to give my life to HIM and have my sins forgiven.

Later on, I went back to my old ways. Then my cousin showed me a DVD of a Born-again preacher. GOD hit me in the heart with His Good News. You see, I always thought I would be judged by weighing my good against my bad, but this man asked me if I had kept the Ten Commandment and I knew I was guilty of all. I was expecting a holy GOD to say "No worries! Just come on in." When I heard of the free gift that was to wash me clean of all my sins, I was so relieved. It sounded too good to be true, but if GOD said it then it must be true. That day I dropped on my knees and prayed the sinner's prayer.

God has changed me so much. My mother has even noticed the change in me - I am now polite, calm and happy. The Lord took me from being lost to being found, from darkness to light, from depression to joy, from meaninglessness to having a purpose. I am a new creature in CHRIST. Amen.

Read the full version of Anthony's story at www.eternal.org.au

Have you ever thought about your Eternal Future? Does your Eternal Soul matter to you? If it does matter, you must know these fact from the Word of God...

A. DEATH IS CERTAIN

Hebrews 9:27 “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”

- Many people live their life without giving any thought to the afterlife. They live carelessly as if they are never going to die. A simple look at the local graveyard clearly demonstrates that death is just around the corner and will be knocking on your door one day. The question is: “Where Will YOU Spend Eternity”

B. JUDGMENT WILL COME

Hebrews 9:27 “...but after this the judgment:”

- The whole world has broken God’s Law – the Ten Commandments; after death everyone will stand before the Judge. The hammer will fall on those that are found in their sins on judgement day and have not fully trusted in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Romans 3:23 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”

- Have you ever lied before? If you have you are a liar. Have you ever stolen anything before? If you have then you are a thief. Have you ever looked upon someone with a lustful desire? If you have, you are an adulterer in heart.

Matthew 5:27-28 “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: **vs 28**. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”

Luke 13:3 “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”

- If you were standing in the courts of Heaven and were to be judged by God’s law, would you be innocent or guilty? – You would be guilty, of course, because you have broken God’s law.

Hebrews 13:4 “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers (fornicators) and adulterers God will judge.”

- Please read on and see God’s plan of Salvation - The purpose of Jesus Christ’s death on a Cross. It is against God’s will to see you die in your sin. God desires to save you from your sin and to place you in a relationship with Christ Jesus.

C. HEAVEN IS BETTER

2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

- God’s desire is for every person in the world to be with Him in Heaven. He desires a relationship with them. God loved the world so much He did not want to see anyone go to Hell and perish, including you. The reason people die and go to Hell is because they reject the gift of God – Jesus Christ dying in their place. God became a man to die for you on the Cross. You are a sinner, guilty of breaking the law, but God took your place and became sin (a criminal) for you that you may be free from the judgment to come and that you can be made right with God in His eyes; and, furthermore, so your relationship with God can be restored. Jesus came to give life. Life without God is not life at all. Life with God is Heaven.

2 Corinthians 5:21 “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

John 3:36 “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

- If you choose not to believe, trust and depend on God with your life then you stand condemned. Remember that you were created *by* the Creator and *for* the Creator. Life was given to you by God, and life was intended to be spent with God.

Colossians 1:16 “...all things were created by him, and for him:”

D. HELL DOES EXIST

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

- Every crime has a penalty. If you break the government’s laws, you will pay the price, whether it is a traffic fine, community service, imprisonment, or the death sentence. In the same way, God has a penalty for sin which is death – not only the physical death but also the spiritual death, separation from God forever in a place called Hell.

Revelations 20:14-15 “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. **Vs 15** And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

- If Hell does not exist, why did Jesus die on the Cross? Because the penalty for sin is death. The sufferings of Christ prove that God had to judge sin.
- Jesus died for sin, so that you do not have to die in your sin.

Hope you can make the right decision like Aothony - Repent & Trust Christ

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