

DELENA'S STORY



“I CANNOT DESCRIBE THE JOY
GOD HAS GIVEN ME...”

Hi, my name is Delena; I grew up in a Christian home where church played a major part in my life. When I was seven years old I prayed with the pastor's wife after an invitation at church. It was a very overwhelming experience, one I will never forget. Even though I may not have understood everything, I did understand that Jesus had died on the cross for me and was calling me to accept Him. I cried with such huge relief knowing that from that point onwards my whole life had changed and now I was going to heaven. I never questioned that until some twenty years later.

Despite having been taught strong values, I had no real concept of the world. When I reached university age things started to take a different turn. My parents moved overseas, and the church I attended had been falling apart for years in so many ways that many members left. All of a sudden the support I relied on growing up was diminishing and for the first time I felt I was all on my own.

The rift in my church left a bitter taste in my mouth so that I felt betrayed and resentful. I foolishly decided that the most hypocritical and fake people could be found in church, that organized religion was a snare in itself, and I left the church.

Out in the world I made new friends who questioned my behaviour as it was clear I stood out no matter how much I tried to 'fit in'. This really bothered me so I decided to prove that I was more than what they labelled me. I decided that I would go out and search for truth myself, setting aside all that I had learned in church and from my parents.

During the next several years, I studied, travelled and pursued new ideas, beliefs, and relationships, all the while indulging more in selfish pursuits. While they all led to some form of pleasure, I still knew that it was all futile without God. My heart would sometimes tell me that I was going against everything that was right and true, but I immediately suppressed it. I couldn't deal with it at that time. I was enjoying having a new kind of fun, and what seemed at the time a new freedom I never knew before. In my heart I knew I wasn't prepared to fully commit my life back to God.

I became depressed and desperate and rather than turning away from the world I only fell deeper into it. I attempted to block out everything that would allow me to think of God. My guilt grew so great that I sought every form of escapism I could just to avoid the reality of the burden I carried.

The more I tried to leave God out of my decisions the more I fell into a self-destructive cycle of self-loathing that hurled me further into a downward spiral. Everyone else seemed to be able to get by just fine in the world yet I was constantly going from one problem to the next. Rather than responding with remorse I remained too stubborn to change. I was consumed with hurt, anger and confusion about what I believed. I was determined to find some other answer, any answer, except the one right in front of me.

Many times I would question how it was that I'd been brought up in a Christian home and yet had become this way. Why had my heart become so tainted with wickedness? What was wrong with me? Why couldn't I just be a true Christian? When I would try to get my heart right with God I'd fail so that as the years went by a frightening question came into my mind, "What if I'm not actually saved?" Eventually I reached a melting point where I felt overworked, unappreciated, stressed and incredibly hopeless. I finally gave in and He brought me to my knees. It was a simple decision that I made to finally let go of everything and just let Him lead. And He changed me dramatically. I feel stupid now realising that I held back for so many years when all I needed to do was make that one simple choice.

What a wonderful God we have! I am truly thankful that He loves me even though I deserve nothing good. I blamed church, Christians and my parents, but in truth I can only blame myself for looking at all of them instead of looking to God. I cannot describe the joy He has given me. He didn't take all my

problems away but He most certainly gave me a peace, even joy amidst it all that I would never have found out in the world. God's grace saved me early in my life, yet I still crumbled and became useless to God. Praise God that despite my sin, He never left me. I learned many hard lessons and am still paying the consequences; however I am so thankful that God chastens His children and calls His own back to Him.

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

✓ Have you ever considered what happens to the thousands of people that step into eternity?

Please take a moment to consider your Eternal Destiny!!!

1. LIFE IS BUT FOR A MOMENT

The Word of God compares our life to the mist or the fog that comes in the morning; it appears and then vanishes away.

James 4:14 "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Look around you. There are elderly, sicknesses, accidents, war and earthquakes. These no doubt prove to us that life is but for a moment. Have you been to a cemetery lately? Death is not a respecter of persons; all age groups appear on the tombstones.

Psalms 103:15-16 "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. vs.16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more."

Let's face it. You and I are not getting any younger, and none of us have the power to avoid harmful things happening to us. Time is running out for you and for me!

2. TOMORROW MAY NOT COME

Many people live their life without giving any thought to the after life. They live carelessly, as if they are never going to die. They give more thought to their physical fitness than to their spiritual health. Tomorrow may not come, but Eternity is coming for sure. Time is running out!

Proverbs 27:1 Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

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

Everyone has one thing in common; they will each die one day and stand before a Holy God. Are you prepared to meet your maker? **Amos 4:12b** *“...prepare to meet thy God...”*

3. LIVING WITH PURPOSE

Have you ever wondered about your existence? Have you ever asked the questions like: What is the purpose of life?

Colossians 1:16 “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:”

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. He is the “Purpose to Life”

Psalms 100:3a *“Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves...”*

If you stop to think, you may realise that there must be more to life than just working, eating, sleeping, marriage, having children and then death. Well, there is. (God loves you and desires an intimate relationship with you!)

Matthews 6:25 *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*

4. TIME IS RUNNING OUT

God gave us life, and God takes life away. Many people continue to live without God and His Word (The Bible), as if they have plenty of time ahead. The choice we make right now on earth will determine where we will spend eternity.

God's choice is for every person in the world to be with Him in Heaven. God loved the world so much He didn't 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 and living in rebellion, but God took your place and became sin (a criminal) for you that you might be free from the judgement to come and that you could be made right with God in His eyes. God cannot force you to make the decision to come back to Him and love 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.”*

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