

## 1969 - The Year That ...

- Apollo 11 landed on the moon and Neil A. Armstrong became the first person to walk on lunar soil.
- Woodstock happened – 500,000 attended a 3 day rock concert in Upstate New York, making it the largest rock concert ever.
- Senator Edward M. Kennedy drove off a bridge after a party and Mary Jo Kopechne drowned.
- Sesame Street made its debut.
- Charles Manson cult members murdered five people.
- First ATM (automated teller machine) installed in Rockville, New York.
- The Beatles' last recorded album, Abbey Road, was released.
- The Brady Bunch premiered.
- Richard M. Nixon became the 37th President of the United States of America.
- Rev. Ian Paisley was jailed for three months.
- Peter Ramsay struck it rich!



# 40 Years on the Road to Heaven!

June 2, 1969 I started.

You can research world events for the year 1969 and you will not likely find any reference to what you are about to read. I want to share with you my personal story of how I became wealthy. To me it is the single most important event not only in 1969, but in my entire life.

## **Living a Good Life**

It was quite a shock for me to discover that I had no chance of ever making it to Heaven based on personal merit. Somehow, I thought I would qualify. After all, my parents read the Bible to us every day. As far back as I can remember, reading the Bible and praying to God was an important daily activity for my parents as they raised the six of us.

If attending church improved my chances of being accepted by God, my score would have been very high. As a minimum, several times a week our family attended meetings and listened to messages from the Bible. My father, once a big-time party animal and fiddler, was a Gospel preacher. His life had been completely changed. I could see reality in the lifestyle of my parents. But as for me – I was empty. No peace.

I memorized verses from the Bible; I attended Sunday School and for the most part, behaved reasonably well. If getting to Heaven was something like accumulating air miles or personal merit points, I had a head start on most people. But something was missing in my life. I had no personal relationship with God. The connection that real Christians had just was not there for me. So often, when I was alone I would think about where I would be in a hundred years' time.

### **Worried and Vulnerable**

I was worried about my future. I felt vulnerable and exposed when I thought of God. He could see right through me. As good as I appeared on the outside, He knew what I was really like. I didn't like the uneasiness, the lack of peace, the bad conscience, and the absence of joy and security in my life.

I tried to ignore my spiritual problem. I tried to cover up my emptiness and hide my worries. I enjoyed my friends – our common ground was music and general neighbourhood fun. I did well at school and my home environment was stable and loving.

Despite all the positive things in my life, I was hounded and haunted by the fundamental question of my status with God. I was not willing to cross my fingers and take a chance. 1969 was the year I stopped running from the question.

### **Alone in the Attic on my Knees**

I will never forget the evening I climbed the attic stairs of 32 Gerald Street, in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island – our homestead. I had just eaten a special bed time snack of lobsters! With pressing matters on my mind, the lobsters didn't seem to be quite the delicacy they usually were for me. I was preoccupied with spiritual matters.

I bowed on my knees beside my bed. I knew I had to be honest with God, but it was so hard that night! I told Him I was a sinner but I wanted to qualify the admission of guilt - "Yes I have done some wrong things, but I am not bad enough to go to Hell. There are many people who really deserve to be there – but I don't."

On my knees, I opened the Word of God, my Bible. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23. I read every relevant verse I could think of. "By grace you are saved, through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest anyone should boast." Ephesians 2:8-9

### **No Personal Merit Points**

The Bible was clear. I could not get to heaven on personal merit points. I had none. I was a sinner. I could not hold anything up to God and tell Him to accept me because

of my parents, or my decent behaviour, or my religious upbringing. The very last thing I wanted to do was to let go of the things that I thought earned me favour with God and gave me a special status. That night, on my knees, I learned from the Bible the only status I had with God was that of a helpless sinner.

Up until that time, I was completely occupied with myself; but things changed quickly. When I discovered I was stripped spiritually naked before God and I had nothing to offer Him for my sins, I was devastated. The last thing any human being wants to admit is 'helplessness.' Even a person at a beach, swept out by a rip tide, will desperately try to save themselves before they yell for help.

### **Cry of Helplessness**

On June 2, 1969, I cried out to God words to this effect: "I am helpless. I am a sinner. I am going to Hell. Lord, save me." For the first time, I looked away from myself and looked to the Lord. That night, I appreciated why Jesus died. He died for me. He took upon Himself my sins and was punished on the Cross in my place as my Substitute. "***But God commendeth (proved) His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.***" (Romans 5:8)

There was nothing I could contribute towards my salvation. When Jesus cried on the Cross: "It is finished," He announced to the world that He paid for our sins in full. The debt was fully paid by His death. It was up to me to either accept or reject His payment.

### **God is Satisfied**

How could I be sure that God was satisfied with Jesus' death as the full payment for my sins? I read in Romans 10:9 words like these: "***If you shall confess with your mouth, Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.***" The proof that God was satisfied with the death of Christ as the payment for my sins was the resurrection. He raised Him from the dead, indicating His full acceptance and satisfaction of the death of Christ as payment in full.

### **I am Satisfied**

That night by my bed, I thought: "If God is satisfied that Jesus paid for my sins, who is a little pip-squeak like me in Charlottetown, PEI, to not be satisfied!" For the first time in my life, with joy I thanked God for sending His Son Jesus to die for a sinner like me. I too was satisfied with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Historians probably don't rank my life-changing, destiny-altering experience very high in their analysis of noteworthy events in 1969. That's okay. It may never make it to the history books of this world but the Bible tells me my name is recorded in God's

book in Heaven and will never be erased.

### **Spiritually Wealthy**

I can lose my health; I can lose my home; I can lose my friends but I can never lose Christ. He is mine forever. I am a possessor of eternal life. In 1969, I became wealthy for eternity. I have been enjoying peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ for 40+ years. I am absolutely sure of Heaven. I am secure for eternity.

No matter who you are or what you have done and regardless of your beliefs or religion, Christ is available to you. The inner peace and permanent joy for which you are seeking is found in Christ alone.

Jesus said: "***Come unto Me, all of you who are weary and over-burdened and I will give you rest.***" Matthew 11:28. God loves you. Jesus died for you. Christ is available to you right now. Will you trust Him as your Saviour? Will you accept Him? Without such a moment of acceptance you will never be in Heaven.