

Be sure to save a copy of this immediately after the download is complete!!!

To save,

1. Click on "**File**" in the upper left hand corner,
2. Click on "**Save a Copy...**" in the drop down menu
3. Click on "**Desktop**" to find it easily

The information (*text & photos*) contained in this eBook is protected under the copyright laws of the United States and other countries. This eBook is intended for personal use only. The copyright owner expressly reserves all other rights. Any copying or distribution is strictly prohibited and may subject the offender to severe criminal penalties. (*Title 17, United States Code, Sections 501 and 506*)

All of the copyrighted materials are property of Electronic-Media-prints (*DBA EMprints*). No material from this eBook or any EMprints eBook, web page or video may be copied, reproduced, republished, uploaded, posted, transmitted or distributed in any way, except where permitted under a written agreement from an authorized representative.



My "Severe Base of the Brain Stroke"

- Easter Sunday, 1994 -

I began the day just like I did every other year, constantly complaining while getting dressed. You see, every Easter Sunday for years, we would go out to eat breakfast at a nice restaurant with my wife's family. We never went to church, only out to eat. I never wanted to go, so I would never feel good or if necessary, even fake an illness. Sometimes it actually worked.

That year, we went to Perkins. After ordering, I began to get sick, and started complaining to my wife again. She said, "Shut up, you pull that stunt every year. But, this year it isn't going to work. You're not leaving!" In fact, I had done it so much, that I wasn't even sure myself. Although, I was dizzy and felt like visiting the rest room, I hung in there. We ate; then went home.

When we got home, I felt much better. I promised my wife that I would spend the day with her, because I rarely did. After an hour or two, I became increasingly bored and started thinking about the week. I was a fairly successful, workaholic sales rep. for a very large international food company. I was addicted to stress, money, prestige, lifestyle and social status. My wages were based on straight commission. I was very similar to a compulsive gambler. Only, I couldn't lose. It was legal, honest, and best of all very rewarding; and besides, we had bills to pay! I had a lot of bookwork to do. So, I went to get some.

Upon returning my wife said, "No you don't mister, you promised." I replied something to the effect, "I'll sit here on the couch, and work on the piano bench. That way, I can get some work done while being with you." She didn't bother arguing because she knew me.

Then suddenly out of the blue, wham it hit me. I fell off the couch onto the floor wallowing in paper. I was really sick now! I tried to get up, but kept falling. I was trying to get to the hallway where I had two walls to hold me up. But, I couldn't. I kept laughing telling my wife I didn't know what was happening. After a visit to the bathroom, we headed for the emergency room. All of the way there I had a towel over my head because I couldn't tolerate the sunlight.

Upon arrival, I could no longer see or walk. I was carried to the emergency room where I was examined. I was told that I had an inner ear infection. "To go home and get to bed and stay there. That, it would take at least a week to get well;" and that, "I would get worse before I got better."
(At least, he was right about the last part!!)

After a week of living hell, doing exactly as I was told, I woke up in a different hospital, where I was informed that, "I had experienced a severe base of the brain stroke; and should have come in much sooner! On a scale of one to ten, my stroke was an eleven".

Later I heard a doctor tell a nurse, "That my brain was swelled. So, tomorrow they may have to drill holes in my head to relieve the pressure to reduce additional brain damage!"

Then I heard the nurse ask, "Why they were waiting until tomorrow?"

The reply was, "He is in critical condition and needs to stabilize. He may not even live through the night". **That got my attention!**

A few weeks later, another doctor told me that Richard Nixon died the same week with a stroke, but it was like comparing a peanut to an elephant. He was the peanut. But, I was the one that lived. **"I was very lucky to be alive!"** I didn't feel lucky! In fact, I was **very** bitter! **Why me???**

Years later, while seeing Dr. Vincent, my umpteenth psych., still trying to get a respectable answer I asked him the same, simple question that I had been asking preachers and psychs. for years,

"Why ME???!!!!"

He just smiled and softly replied, **"Why not you? What makes you so special?"** Do you think that you're the only one with problems? We all have problems. **It's our attitudes and choices in life that make the difference.** You can continue to blame the first emergency room doctor and take it out on the world for what you have lost: Or, thank God for what you have left. You could be on dialysis or an iron lung, blind, deaf, mute, lost your sense of feel, taste or smell, or even be brain dead! **Not everyone is as lucky as you!!"**

He continued, "Many people don't get a second chance. We are all given only so much time here on Earth; **We need to use it wisely!** And that, you of all people should know that! You can continue to waste time wallowing in your pride and self pity; Or, make the most of the time that you have left. It's your choice; and besides, you are already on rock bottom anyway; and the only way from there is up."

This guy was good! He talked to me, not down at me in a way that I understood. Not like others up until then, or maybe I just wasn't listening. (*when the student is ready*) Anyway, **he struck a nerve!** It was then and there, after wasting years at "rock bottom", carrying a tremendous grudge, that I finally broke down and let go! (*It wasn't pretty; and to this day it is very difficult for me to talk about without getting emotional*) I stopped hating, and realized that God, friends & family, health and time here on Earth are the only truly important things in life! (*Also, the most abused!*) Instantly, life took on a new meaning.

I was warned several years before the incident, "I would have a heart attack or stroke within ten years if I didn't slow down and change my ways". Believing that it only happens to "someone else" and "old people" Now, I am permanently impaired both mentally and physically, but I have become aware enough to know that **I should have listened**, and considering the possibilities, **"Yes, I am a very lucky person!"**

Believe me, I am living proof that it can happen to any one at any time! I was in rehab for months with stroke victims twelve years old and up much worse off than myself, that believed that they were healthy too!

Lessons I've learned - (the hard way)

The clichés are true!!! We are only here for a very short time; there are things that are far more important than money; attitude truly is everything; life is a journey not a destination, so slow down and enjoy the trip; if you can't do it in public, you probably shouldn't be doing it, problems are opportunities in disguise, and when the student is ready, the **Master will arrive!**

I spent my youth, sacrificing my body to acquire wealth. Now, I will spend the rest of my life using that wealth trying to stop the pain! Live each day to the fullest, and treat it like your last! It just might be! So, get right with your family and God. Spend time with them while you still can. **You may not be as lucky as I am!!!**

* * *

"Life is a coin. You can spend it anyway you wish, but you can only spend it once."

It's your life; spend it wisely!!!

Riches do not always come as wealth!

Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!"

Count Your Blessings

Count your blessings instead of your crosses,
Count you gains instead of your losses,
Count your joys instead of your woes,
Count your friends instead of your foes.

Count your courage instead of your fears,
Count your laughs instead of your tears.
Count your full years instead of your lean,
Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.

Count your health instead of your wealth,
Count on God instead of yourself.

~ Author Unknown

The Rest of the Story

I was not a religious person. All of my adult life, I only had two prayers. The first, God when the time comes, give me a second chance; the second, please don't take me until my children are grown. Never really believing, I said these prayers every once in a while, just in case. You know what I mean. Little did I know that both prayers would be answered on the same day, **Easter Sunday, 1994.**

I had one of those near death experiences that we've all heard so much about. They were coming to take me away. (*ha-ha, ho-ho*) I saw the light tunnel, while looking down at myself. The whole scenario; You know the bit. The twist, it was not pleasant, and I was definitely not going to Heaven. While I appeared to be sleeping peacefully, little did anyone know that there was a tug-of-war going on. I was desperately pleading for my life!!!

The night before, I was feeling rather cocky. I was lying in bed thinking, "Man, I'm really doing good. I have a wife of 23 years, a daughter graduating from college as a civil engineer in two weeks, another in the national honor society going into her final year at high school. I make an above average income, drive a nice car, live in a nice home, money in the bank, yada yada. I don't think any body can mess with me now." As if all that wasn't vain enough, I couldn't stop there, I added, "Not even God."

During the experience, I wasn't cocky anymore! I was pleading and begging over and over, "God, please give me another chance; then I remember saying, "At least let me say goodbye." Suddenly, I felt a sense of relief. A moment later, one demon conveyed to the other, "Come on, let's go. He's fighting too much, we can get people like him anytime."

After recovering from my stroke, I was embarrassed to tell anyone for fear that they would think that I had "lost it". I became totally obsessed with the Bible. I bought several versions of it on CD Rom and began looking up, reading and watching everything that I could relating to my experience.

For years I wondered if I was actually going to hell or was it a **"very vivid dream"**? Finally, I swallowed my pride and began going to church to confide in preachers, telling them about my experience. Instead of compassion, counseling and guidance, I was ridiculed. Twice, I was actually asked to leave. I was always asked, **"Why you? What makes you so special?"** Only Jesus can arise from the dead. (*Special? I never died!!! It felt more like a curse!*)

Later, when Dr. Vincent, the psychologist mentioned above said the words, **"Why not you? What makes you so special? It's our attitudes and choices in life that make the difference."** It all became very clear to me. I instantly realized that I had a choice to make! I could choose to believe that my experience was a dream, that my brain was starving from lack of blood as I've been told, and continue to worry about what others think; or that my prayers were answered and I was granted my second chance.

Suddenly, my mind was flooded with memories of past experiences that led up to this event! I began to experience a sense of relief that I had never felt before. The bitterness and contempt just melted away. **I actually wanted to live again!** I understood that God does love me; and that I was given a second chance for a reason. My mission is simply to tell **"You"** this story. Within man, God has placed a divine seed. A seed of his self (*A seed of choice*). Just like me, you need to make a choice (*Satan owns the fence*).

I am not special and have never claimed to be! I believe that we can all [take up our cross](#) and be modern day Disciples (**Christian Soldiers**) if we will take the time to listen and unconditionally do as we're told. In fact, it seems strange to me that many of those that say "God has no beginning

and no end, He can do miracles, and that He is with us always" seem to be the ones that have the most trouble grasping the concept that Christianity is not some out-dated, two-thousand year old, institutionalized religion. But that God is here and now. We ask for His guidance, then if we don't like what we hear simply ignore Him because of fear of ridicule, rejection and pride.

I still have trouble understanding how people that tell me, "God must really like you," "He must have a purpose," and that, "He isn't through with you yet;" but if I explain my experience they shun me, begin to treat me in a condescending manner, and are embarrassed to be seen around me.

After reading this, can you imagine being my wife, child or friend? Now, try to imagine how difficult it must have been for the original twelve Disciples. He came to many of them in dreams too. **What made them so special? Maybe it was their attitudes and choices in life that made the difference.** We read about the twelve Disciples that "[took up their cross and followed Him](#)", but could there possibly have been others that simply chose to write Him off as a **"very vivid dream"** that we will never hear about?

I have literally seen the light! Quite frankly, now I am terrified not to believe. Whenever in doubt, I just look in a mirror. I still enjoy life, only now my priorities have changed dramatically! I have absolutely nothing to gain; except the next time I hope not to be begging, but to go peacefully knowing that **I used my second chance wisely!!!**

So many times we hear about others that lead sinful lives. Then, they have a near-death experience. Word spreads through in the media how exhilarating it was; creating the belief that you can get away with anything and still go to Heaven.

Please remember, that lucifer is the "angel of light" and the "father of lies". He can be very convincing and deceiving. The "light" may not always be what it appears.

The single most important thing that was made crystal clear to me during my ordeal is that contrary to popular belief, **"there will be a judgment day!"** I truly believe that God wants me to remind you about that. Don't worry about what others think. **You and you alone** will be held accountable in the end!

"Be a first rate version of yourself, not a second rate version of someone else." – Judy Garland

Before you there are countless doorways, all leading to new and different hallways. So you wonder and think..... calculate and worry and stress out over whether or not you'll open the "right" one. But what you can't see is that all of the hallways beyond all of the doorways eventually lead to the same great room, in the same great house, with the same great party; with the same guest of honor. I look forward to seeing you there!

My choice is obvious - Now, it's your turn!

It's your choice! - (Don't take too long, **You may not be as lucky as I am!!!**)

Jesus said, "If you are ashamed of me, I will be ashamed of you, before My Father."

(Please refer this story to **everyone** that you care about. Let them be their own judge. This is a **very personal** matter; and eternity is at stake.)



This grainy picture was captured from a video taken while I was home on a daytime visit from the hospital during my many weeks of therapy. If you look close you can see the elastic glove on my right hand to reduce swelling, my drooling mouth and my hospital wrist band. I was not wearing a shirt because my brother was going to try to cut my hair with a Flowbee using the vacuum in the background by our garage. *(I was still too embarrassed to go to my barber.)* I couldn't maneuver my wheelchair inside our house, so my visits were restricted to the outdoors. I lived in sweat pants because it was very difficult to dress myself. *(still isn't easy)*

I really don't mean to nauseate you, but this is the prettiest picture that we could find!!!

*I would rather live my life as if there is a God,
And die to find out there isn't,
Than live my life as if there isn't,
And die to find out there is.*

I've done my best to explain my ordeal as accurately and honestly as I am able.

By now you too probably think that I'm crazy; and I can't really blame you.

Sometimes I wonder myself!!!

If I am crazy, I'm not alone

Judge Gently, " I am only the messenger!!!"

(I can't rewrite the truth)

Isn't it strange how we send jokes in e-mails and they are forwarded right away, but when we are going to send messages about God, we think about it twice before we share it with others?

Isn't it strange how everyone wants a place in heaven, but they don't want to believe, do, or say anything to get there?

Isn't it Strange?

* ^3α3^*:»§«:*^3α3^*:»§« > † † < »§«:*^3α3^*:»§«:*^3α3^*

Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;

Joshua 24:15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. "

Written with/for my husband Rick

If you have a problem getting links to work, you can view this page at <http://www.christiansoldierscross.com/> at click on "**About Rick**"

Or, go to:

http://www.christiansoldierscross.com/Count_Your_Blessings_and_The_Rest_of_the_Story.htm

To view more articles visit my Digital Download Library at <http://www.emprints.com/>