

Iain A MacSween Testimony 4.3.18 evening

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Date: 04 March 2018

Preacher: Iain A Macsween

[0:00] And I was asking David who he had planned to speak tonight at the fellowship after the meeting, and he said, Innesian and yourself. No such thing as a free lunch.

So, yeah, I remember when Shona gave her testimony, Shona Davidson, she said, I stand here with my Lord and I stand here for my Lord. So that's hopefully what I'm doing tonight, I'm standing with my Lord and for my Lord.

1 Peter 3.15 says, Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you, to give the reason for the hope that you have. So my testimony consists basically of two parts.

I hope I don't bore you. I know I've given my testimony a few times, so I'll try and fly through it.

Pre-conversion, I came from a Christian home. I went to Sunday school. I knew my Bible inside out. I believed in God.

I have always believed in God. And the first thing I'll say is how important it is to teach our kids about Jesus. Proverbs 22.6 starts children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it.

[1:04] So I knew all about Jesus. I knew all about Christ. But in my teenage years, I discovered music. And I joined a band. And my focus shifted from God and Jesus into that kind of scene.

I left home and I went to Glasgow to study. I was there. I joined a lifestyle that wasn't healthy. Going out to pubs and drinking and getting involved in that kind of thing.

I enjoyed the buzz. I enjoyed the crack. I embraced the lifestyle. And slowly, gradually, I pushed all thoughts of God out of my life. I'm not going to go into details as to what I was doing or what kind of things we were getting up to.

But needless to say, whatever was going on, I was right in the middle of it. In 2010, my dad suffered a stroke.

And it was a catastrophic stroke. And at his bedside, my sister was singing Psalm 23. And there was a very powerful presence when she did that. And I felt that. And there was a change even there in the word when my sister was singing that.

[2:06] And I remember my father staring at the ceiling. And my brave, strong dad, who had never seen cry, had tears flowing down his cheeks. What was he seeing? I didn't know.

And I never will know when I'm in time. But he was seeing something. And it had a profound effect on my thinking, on the supernatural, and on what happens to us after we die.

He died on November 8, 2010. And life would never be the same again. Now, instead of going to God, I sought solace in the bottle. And I started drinking much, much heavier than I had been drinking before.

But something was different this time. Because when I was coming home each night, I was ending up crying in bed. I was empty. Nothing was satisfying me. I was alone. I felt dreadful. I was killing myself physically.

But I was already dead spiritually. I went to church, basically. I started going to church just to keep my mum quiet. Because she was giving me a hard time.

[3:11] And the minister who was preaching at the time was the Reverend Roddy Morrison, who is with us today. And you know this. I really enjoyed his preaching.

I didn't expect this. I really enjoyed going to church and listening to the message of God. But then one weekday I rebelled. And I said to my mum, you know what?

I'm not going to go to church anymore. And she protested. But I was adamant. But I went up to my room. And I stuck on Billy Graham. And it was just amazing.

At the end of the Billy Graham service, it was as if he was coming out of the screen and talking to me. He said, and you, go to church on Sunday. I couldn't believe it.

So I went to the church on Sunday. And under Roddy's wonderful preaching. And now firmly under conviction of sin, I was very aware that the Holy Spirit was working on me.

[4 : 09] One verse Roddy referred to particularly affected me. And that was Matthew 10, 32, 33. The two verses. Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.

But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven. And I thought to myself, that is absolutely terrifying. I prayed.

I asked Jesus to come into my heart. I said I was sorry and that I wanted to live for him. There were no flashing lights. There was no hole of thunder. But I felt peace and I knew that God was hearing me.

And I knew that I was saved. So E&A; was now a Christian. And now I was going to have to tell everyone. I was going to have to acknowledge God before men.

This was going to be very interesting. But God was ahead of me. And if you step out in faith, you'll find that God is always ahead of you. Kenny Bakes here tonight.

[5 : 11] He was my boss. And we went across Europe together following Scotland at football. What a futile exercise that was. And we got up to the usual Tartan army shenanigans.

So I had to tell Kenny. How am I going to tell Kenny? So I prayed. Summoned up a bit of strength. And I told Kenny. Kenny called me into the conference room. And he said, you know, I've been going to Analfa Cush.

And he is here tonight. And it's incredible. I'm a member of the church. So that was the kind of thing I was experiencing. When I was telling my friends that I had been converted, God was just leveling out all the rough paths.

And he was smoothing them. It was just incredible. But we do have an enemy. And the enemy is always at work to prevent us coming to Christ.

And here in the islands, if you say that you're a Christian, it means that you've got the kurum. It's as if it's a disease, as if you are now plagued.

[6 : 12] And there's a really popular movie called The Usual Suspects. And there's a good line in it. And it says, the greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist.

1 Peter 5.8 tells us, be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. There's a heaven to be gained, the Bible tells us, and a hell to be shunned.

I was naturally worried about what my friends would say. Being the singer of a rock band, you put yourself out there every single week. So I knew a lot of people. And I knew that people would laugh at me.

But I remember someone telling me very wisely, your friends can laugh you into hell. They can't laugh you out of it. I have no more friends than I ever had.

I have a Christian family of all ages. My attention span is very small, so I get bored very, very easily. And, you know, thinking to myself, how could I possibly continue being a Christian?

[7 : 18] If I'm going to go out and say that I'm a Christian, how am I going to keep it up? But it's so encouraging that the psalmist David, who God called a man after his own heart, he had the same question. And he said, where on earth is my strength coming from?

Psalms 121. I lift my eyes to the hills. Where is my help coming from? It comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. If you are willing to give your life to Christ and to live for him, he will pick you up and he will carry you.

He's the one who sustains me. He's the one who puts the wind in my sails and drives me forward. I am so conscious that I'm weak. But Philippians 4, 13 is my favorite version of the whole Bible.

And that says, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. John 15, 5. I am the vine and you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit.

Apart from me, you can do nothing. Do you think you're not good enough to be a Christian? Well, nor am I and nor is anyone. And that's why we need a saviour.

[8 : 26] And that saviour is Jesus. I wander sometimes. I drift. But God always pulls me back. And he's always merciful. He doesn't punish me for my sins and my wanderings.

Because he's punished Jesus for my sins and wanderings. We sang trust and obey for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey. And the first time I heard that, I thought it was a nice quirky little hymn for the kids to sing.

But as time has gone on, it's so true. If we trust and obey, we experience the joy and the blessing that Jesus gives us. And if we wander, then there is a separation.

The Bible tells us that. We will be drifting and we won't experience God's presence. But if we trust and obey, there is blessing. I remember Steph McLeod famously said when he was converted, he didn't realise how much blessing there was in surrendering to Christ.

I'm learning and I'm being corrected and disciplined every single day. In God's rich mercy, I no longer drink alcohol and I no longer smoke. I take up running and I love it.

[9 : 32] I'll never beat Mo Farah. But I love the way that I can see that my fitness improves over time. But when I'm on the treadmill, the time is always ticking away way too fast.

I think I'm going to beat a previous time and then before I know where I am, the clock has caught up with me and I'm over my best time. And that tells me that time is ebbing away. It waits for no man or woman.

You know, there's big news in the sporting world today because a footballer, an Italian national footballer, was found dead in his bed this morning. He's only 31. He's a Fiorentina captain.

And it shocked the world. And they're saying we just can't understand it because he was tested. He had a perfect cardiac result just a few weeks ago. You know, nobody, nobody knows when they're going to be pulled from time into eternity.

You can never be too old to come to Christ and you can never be too young. But you can be too late. As one preacher said, when God looked at Christ on the cross, he saw me.

[10 : 36] Now because of the cross, when God looks at me, he sees Christ. And Dan Marig is here with us tonight. And I remember Dan preaching one night. And he said, when I stand before God at the seat of judgment waiting to be judged, Jesus will stand in front of me and he'll say, I died for him.

If you are hearing God tonight speaking into your heart and calling him to you, please do not delay. John 10.10 says, I have come so that you may have life and have it to the full.

And Psalm 95.7 says, if you hear my voice today, do not harden your hearts. Going back to my dad in his deathbed, what did he see?

I'm not sure, but I think he saw Christ. Thank you. Thank you.