

George's Story

Each time someone is baptised at Welton, they are asked to give a testimony usually with a short talk, about how they first became a Christian and why they want to be baptised. George Bidmead agreed that his story or testimony could be shared again here.



Thank you everyone for coming and sharing this day with me.

I'm here today to do as Jesus commanded to repent and be baptised, as a

symbol of my faith as a Christian and a declaration of my love and obedience to the Lord.

My name is George Bidmead, son of Michael and Rosalyn, younger brother to Sarah and James, who I love very much.

Occupationally I am a groundsman at the Fosseyway golf club, which I enjoy as I'm glad to be outdoors amongst nature. I'd describe myself as an active, creative and sensitive individual, and not the world's greatest conversationalist, so speaking in front of you today is an important step out of the boat for me!

Growing up in a Roman Catholic tradition meant God was always part of life's equation for me, maybe someone I feared more than loved. I had a wonderful childhood with a strong moral

foundation. Attending mass, Serving at the altar and going to confession were rituals I accepted and took for granted as part of my religion. Speaking as someone who stands here today living in FAITH, I'm not sure how much of that was faith.

As I grew older, I drifted away from God, Jesus and the Bible, it began to make less sense to me and just seemed more and more absurd the stuff of fiction, of myth and legend.

But looking back this was quite a naive conclusion to come to, and in drifting, I learnt some pretty tough lessons.

In Galatians 6:7 it is written "Do not be deceived, God cannot be mocked, a man reaps what he sows, The man who sows to please his sinful nature from that nature will reap destruction.

The man who sows to please the spirit from the spirit will reap eternal life".

I began to live to please myself, giving in to temptation when it came my way and facing the world without God. This led me to an extremely destructive place.

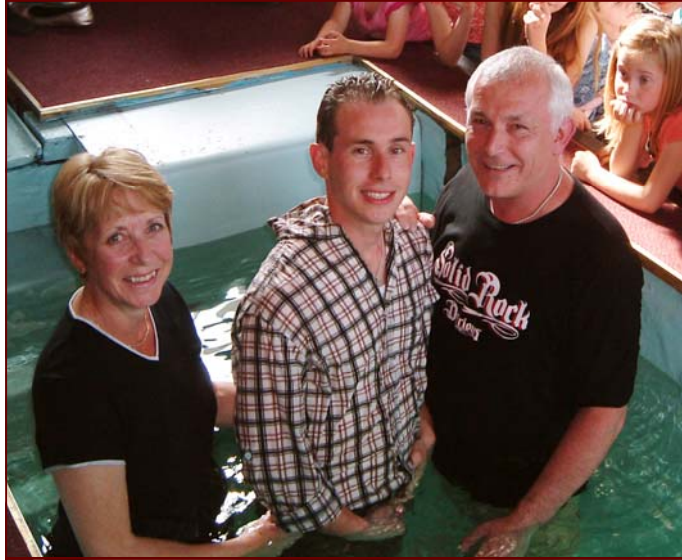
"...While in this world I want to be the best I can be, to fulfil the purpose you have for me in your all POWERFUL, all KNOWING, all LOVING presence."

I don't want to dwell on the negative details but for a long period of time, life for me became a meaningless task filled with quick fixes and artificial pleasure to punctuate my existence, abandoning commitment and responsibility. I had adopted a selfish attitude to

assert power and a desperate sense of control over the world around me.

I know from my own experience, that to face the world without God and an acceptance of the salvation Jesus gave us, leads to a hellish landscape that's cold and fruitless, one that's lonely and without love.

By 2007 I can frankly admit that I felt really broken, I had developed some very destructive coping mechanisms and made myself very ill, deeply numb and apathetic. To sum it up concisely, I was regretful of the past, paralysed in the present and fearful of the future.



George being baptised by Jim and Coral Ironside

I was presented with evidence for the life of Jesus that I found impossible to dismiss as our Saviour and only Hope. I continued to come to Church, and was welcomed in to a rather wonderful home group. Each week I could feel the hurt and damage gradually being repaired and healed.

It took me the best of a year to make my commitment to the Lord. I had to be sure of my faith, no one can believe for us.

During an evening in November 2008 where I believe I was compelled by the Holy Spirit, in the presence of a close friend-I said the sinner's prayer and became a Christian.

Amidst this darkness came what I can only describe as a Godly intervention of light in the shape of the Alpha Course.....

A course I was introduced to by a friend, a real blessing, an opportunity to ask questions regarding Jesus, Christianity and life in general, in a non threatening and civilised environment.

I remember asking myself such questions as,

"Why if the natural world is so complex and intricate, have I stopped seeing the beauty around me?"

"Why if we humans have the ability to love and be loved do I feel so full of hurt?"

What did I have to lose ? so I went.

It was a huge turning point.

The best way I can express the feeling of being filled with the Holy Spirit, is like this:

It comes at me with a gentle ferocity, a deep blend of joy and peace unparalleled by any other feeling or emotion, this a deep knowing, where all my doubts evaporate.

For me, these moments are occurring more frequently now, through WORSHIP, PRAYER and SHARING OF GODS WORD.

There are some extremely informative signposts to God and powerful channels of His Almighty Love here at Welton, and it's important for me to mention and give thanks to the Fellowship here. I have received all the encouragement anyone could possibly hope for as a new Christian. My Friends at Alpha, my friends at Home group who last week I had a lovely weekend away with, and all the other

friends I've made at Church- led by an inspirational Pastor and Assistant Pastor. Everyone has had such a positive impact on my life.

Since making my commitment six months ago, where there was despair there is now HOPE. I'm growing and changing from the inside, showing that as I walk forward with Jesus dwelling at my centre I'm finding I'm more able to reflect Gods character- HIS LOVE, HIS PATIENCE, HIS FORGIVENESS, HIS KINDNESS, HIS FAITHFULNESS AND HIS PEACE.

Ultimately, I'm more confident and that confidence comes through knowing God's faithfulness to me. The more time I spend with God the more confident I am.

I was given a study application Bible to help me know Gods word more closely and to help me apply his wisdom. It was given to me as a present, with a dedicated verse, by two friends who are here today to immerse me in the water, like they have immersed me in their open hearted generosity and

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Friendship.

This is not an easy walk. There are down days and dark days in this chaotic world. A world that fell into sin a long time ago through an act of disobedience to God. On these days, during the enemy's futile attempts to



sabotage my peace, I always recall this dedicated verse to give me strength.

In Deuteronomy 31:6 it is written;

"Be strong and courageous, Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you, He will never leave you nor forsake you."

I'm here Lord, I am obedient and my heart belongs to you. I believe in your HEAVENLY KINGDOM, an eternity with you. While in this world I want to be the best I can be, to fulfil the purpose you have for me in your all POWERFUL, all KNOWING , all LOVING presence.

Thank you for listening.