

Jesus, You Are Quite the Fellow

By

Tyrone W. Cobb, M.D.

An Answer to a Father's Prayer

On the night after Justin's death I became overcome with grief. My grief was not just for the physical loss of my beloved son, but even more for the possible eternal loss of his soul. Justin had never acknowledged Jesus Christ as his Savior as far as I knew. In agony, I prayed that I be given assurance that he had accepted Christ.

While sitting in the family room the next morning after a sleepless night, I was drawn to go upstairs to Justin's old room in which he had not lived for three years. Walking into his room slowly, I looked around. There on his bed was the Creature from the Black Lagoon poster which he got for Christmas the year before and had not yet brought it home to hang up in his computer room as planned. I looked at the dinosaur picture on the wall and remembered how much he liked dinosaurs as a child. Next, I looked at some of the artwork he had done while in art school.

For some unexplained reason I then opened the top drawer of his bedside table. Among a bunch of junk in the drawer was a Bible. It was the Bible that was given to me for my high school graduation by my mother. There were numerous yellow post-it note bookmarks. Inside the Bible, folded unevenly twice and with a corner torn off, were several notebook pages. Picking up the Bible, the folded paper fell out and I could see a great deal of Justin's writing.

Since I never knew Justin to read the Bible on his own and would not expect him to spend time writing, I opened the folded pages being a bit perplexed. I unfolded the paper and there were several pages which had apparently been ripped from a notebook. The torn corner of the pages

was also present. I then read the first sentence of the top page. It read, “you are quite the fellow.” Who would he be writing to in that manner? After locating the corner of the page that had been torn off I positioned it against the rest of the page and read the first sentence again, “Jesus, you are quite the fellow.” It was a letter written to Jesus as if written to a friend.

Could this be the assurance of Justin’s salvation for which I had prayed just the night before? The thing I needed most to provide some measure of comfort in a time of crushing grief and heartache. As I continued reading, it became apparent that this was a journal Justin had written in the form of letters to Jesus. From the content it appears to have been written over a relatively short span of time, perhaps three to six months during his last year at art school in 2000. Why only a few pages of an apparent larger journal were the only ones present, and why it remained in the drawer three years after he moved out of our house I will never know.

In the journal he talks about events in his life, both good and bad. Much of the writing exposes the inner pain with which he lived. It also demonstrates his kind heart and concern for others. Most importantly, the journal reveals a close relationship with Jesus and his desire, but inability, to let others know about his faith.

Yes, indeed, this was the assurance that I desperately needed to know that Justin did not die in jeopardy of the consequences of sin. And it wasn’t simply a suggestion that he might have accepted Christ as his Savior, there was absolute proof. My two prayers had been answered. First, my 26 year old prayer that Justin would accept Christ, and second, my prayer of the previous night to be given assurance of his

salvation. This was truly a miracle. Why would Justin do something so out of character and spend time to write down such intimate thoughts? Why would only the few pages of an apparent longer journal be the ones left; the very pages that unmistakably showed his desire to be close to Jesus? Why was that portion of the journal left behind when he moved out? On another note, why was his journal not found when Justin was alive? Found when his mother and I could have rejoiced with him and which would have allowed him to reveal his faith which he so much wanted to do. Only God knows the answer to these questions, and there must be a purpose.

I cried uncontrollably as I read through the pages of his journal, making it difficult to read through the tears. Then another miracle occurred. Nearly all of the bookmarks in the Bible had specific verses written on the bookmarks. There was also a separate 2x2 inch notepad paper on which multiple verses were listed. Since the separate paper listed verses but not a book, initially I was not certain that the book in which it was found was the right one. I checked every book in the Bible with the corresponding verses and confirmed that it was for the book in which it was found. I confirmed it was indicating verses in the book of Job.

Reading the verses that had meant so much to Justin that he had bookmarked them aroused in me an overwhelming sense of sadness, but also a sense of relief, and one of awe when I realized the message that had been given to me by God through His holy word. The Scriptures provided a clear window into how Justin viewed his life as one of suffering and despair, a veiled prediction or premonition of his early death, and yet his hope for an eternal future free of suffering caused

by his inner pain, and confidence that he would see God.