

After reading the Bible for the first time at 22 years of age (particularly John chapter 14), I perceived that Jesus was not speaking just to his disciples, but to me also. Many people would argue oppositely but I learned later that my first impression was correct:

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." - John 17:20

In other words, I WAS the person, "which shall believe on me [Jesus] through their word", therefore Jesus was praying for me also. Obviously, this would also necessitate that Jesus had that ability to operate beyond the grave if he were to give assurance that he would effect events after his time on earth. Here are the key words which I could test to see if Jesus possessed such abilities:

"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." - John 14:15-18

I really liked Jesus' character (as presented in the Bible), so loving him would not be too difficult, but keeping his commandments might. Nevertheless, I thought I would give it a go and see if some sort of spirit (the "Comforter" or "Spirit of truth") would come to me. The last verse said Jesus himself would come to me. I didn't have much to lose if nothing came of it so I thought I would give it a go. The events that transpired after I made that decision were so profound that I could not explain them to myself outside of what Jesus had promised: "I will come to you." That was 37 years ago. Since then, so much has accumulated that if I were to record it, an encyclopedia of books would not suffice. I can now tell people without the slightest reservation that Jesus is alive and well and more relevant than my wife, children, friends, or any other temporal thing that we experience on earth.

Shortly after my conversion, I was confronted with a lot of opposition from friends & family. My grandfather told me that I needed to be cautious because too much "religion" made people crazy. Professor George McNelly (Purdue University) told me that all of Jesus' miracles could be explained naturally so there was no need to take Jesus or the Bible literally. My roommate who was involved in all types of debauchery was alarmed that I was becoming increasingly distant to him. I remember he had even shaved his beard off when returning from a holiday because his aunt told him he "looked like someone from the Bible". He didn't want to be associated with ANYTHING from the Bible. One evening he related to me all of his girlfriend's faults. Having a new perspective about life caused me to question his judgment and consider that he might be the problem rather than his girlfriend. I prayed that God would send someone in his life to help him see himself as the source of his own problems. About 15 minutes after that prayer I went down the hall to the dorm bathroom to take a shower. As I was standing under the shower washing my hair with my eyes closed, my mind was flooded with thoughts about my roommate's relationship problems with his girlfriend. The thoughts were completely foreign to

me. I felt like I was receiving a lesson in psychology by an outside source that touched on every point of my roommate's problems. I remember asking myself, "Where is all of this coming from?" The volume and detail was so great that I feared I would forget it if I didn't write it down. When I returned to the room with my roommate in it, a voice within me said, "Tell him." I resisted that voice because I felt that doing so was not my place. The voice then told me, "You prayed that I would send someone to talk to your roommate. You are that person. Talk to him." I became fearful because I thought I would lose him completely as a friend if I sided with his girlfriend, spoke critically of him, and delivered a huge Bible-sounding psychoanalysis of additional details that "God" had revealed to me. I remember that my voice quivered when I spoke to him. After about an hour of talking, I realized even more that the words that came out of my mouth were not my own, my prayer had been answered, and I was the chosen vessel that brought Christ to another person. I had risked losing a friend but gained another in doing so (Jesus) and my roommate respected me for it:

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." - Proverbs 27:6