

How You Can Know the Value and Importance of Family

Several months ago my three brothers and I held a reunion in the beautiful mountains of Sedona, Arizona. We try to gather once every several years just the four of us for five or six days of spending quality time together to renew our family bond. We live in separate states, from Florida to South Carolina to Washington. We are not getting any younger, as the oldest is 75, then 74, 69 and I bring up the rear at 65.

We spent hours hiking through the splendor of the red mountains, eating at restaurants and talking throughout the day. Our reflections on our life-journeys impacted my life. I interview each of my brothers, allowing them to share their experiences from birth defects to Vietnam, to our family experiences to jobs, health issues the pandemic—and lessons learned.

One of the most important aspects of our worldviews that has shaped differently from our life experiences concerns Jesus Christ. Even though we were all raised Catholic, I am the only one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God who came to die for our sins. They respect Jesus but see Him as only a man and a great teacher.

Their worldviews are limited to the physical, enlightenment perspective of the universe without the supernatural. Whereas, my worldview is dominated by the supernatural and the God of the Bible.

Until I met Jesus in my room when I was 24, I had their same worldview. My encounter with Jesus transformed my life. Jesus literally came to me in my room, much as He did to Paul on the Damascus Road.

I had been released by the Chicago Cubs organization. Success

in sports had been my god. At the time, I had no purpose or meaning in my life without baseball. The pain in my life became so great; the loneliness and emptiness became like a dagger in my heart. I could not sleep. The conviction of my sins finally moved me to cry out to Jesus, "Take my life; I do not want it anymore."

In that instant, Jesus came to me and surrounded me with His cloud of love. All my sin, all my heartache vanished. For the first time in my life, I knew Jesus was real. He was God who became man to die for my sins. He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. He is coming again soon!

Forty-one years later, I love Jesus more and travel the world to help people come to faith in Jesus Christ and live for Him. God's family is the most amazing life experience one can have!

Catch the three podcast episodes of *Awaken with Blake Lorenz* on Charisma Podcast Network to hear the interviews with my brothers. {eoa}

*Once a professional baseball player with the Chicago Cubs Organization, **Blake Lorenz** was called to Asbury Seminary after a radical encounter with Jesus, where he received his master's degree. He has pastored in the Orlando area for 33 years and has been blessed with the opportunity to evangelize globally, visiting five continents and preaching the gospel to tens of thousands. Blake has also helped plant 500 churches. He has been working in Israel for the past 20 years, includes serving on the board of the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast in connection with the Knesset. In 2020, and the Awaken podcast launched to teach and challenge others to join him on a journey of anticipating the return of Jesus. He has used the three books he's written in his seminars and conferences. He and his wife, Beverly, share three children and six grandchildren.*

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