

I Was at the Pentagon on 9/11

Where were you on Sept. 11? Most of us can remember precisely where we were and what we were doing when we heard of the terrible events. Sept. 11, 2001, is a day that will live in greater infamy than Dec. 7, 1941. On the latter day, nearly 1,500 Americans, mostly sailors, were killed in Pearl Harbor by imperial Japanese forces. On Sept. 11, twice as many, nearly 3,000 civilian men, women and children were killed by men in a suicide attack. They believed they were martyrs—doing the will of Allah and on the fast track to heaven.

I was at my desk at the State Department in Washington, D.C., when my associates alerted me to horrible unfolding events on TV. An aircraft had hit one of the Twin Towers in New York City.

As an aviator, I immediately thought it was some sort of unfortunate mishap. I thought that perhaps a small aircraft with an inexperienced pilot goofed up instrument flight conditions around New York. I was puzzled by the blue sky in the background as I watched the TV coverage. Then the second aircraft hit. There was no doubt now. We were under attack. I was stunned.

It was not long before we received word that smoke was rising from I-395 in Virginia, and that the Pentagon had been hit by another aircraft. I immediately headed to the Pentagon.

As I was leaving, security realized that the State Department was also a likely target and evacuated the building. I walked briskly towards the Pentagon. All the traffic on D.C. streets stopped, and it was very quiet as everyone was in shock. I walked by the Lincoln Memorial and across Memorial Bridge to get to the Pentagon. Thick black smoke was rising from the building. At this point, I had no idea what sort of damage had occurred. I imagined thousands could be dead. I just had to

get over there to help.

Perhaps it's my Navy training, but with a fire like that on a ship, you just turn to help. It would never occur to us to go out to the parking lot and watch the ship burn, hoping the fire department would show up and take care of it.

At the time, I remember having surreal feelings, like I was in a Tom Clancy novel, watching some epic event unfold of deadly reality. I arrived at the river entrance of the Pentagon. There where medical people handing out masks and going in to the inner courtyard to help. I followed. I had many friends and associates in the burning building. I was hoping to see them alive and well.

I soon found myself in the inner courtyard (what we used to call ground zero during the Cold War). There was white smoke all around that made it very difficult to see. Visibility was minimal. The inside walls of the building were intact. The fire was raging out of control on the other side of the concrete walls. Black smoke was forcefully and noisily billowing up into the sky. Fortunately, the fire fighters were on the scene and heavily engaged in fighting the fire. The courtyard was being used by firefighters as a staging and rest area.

I was on a stretcher team with a Navy Chaplain (Captain), a USAF general, and a State Department special agent who happened to be driving by when the plane hit the building. We were one of several stretcher teams who were directed to pull out injured personnel as the firefighters found them.

Hours went by as the fuel fire continued to rage, and our hopes to rescue some individuals turned more likely into a recovery of remains effort. We stayed nearly 12 hours until we were relieved by a group of National Guard soldiers.

During my time in the smoke and haze while in the center of the Pentagon, I had many hours to consider the ramification of

this day. I was struck by the evil of the events. I was not exactly sure what evil was, but I was sure this day was an example.

It had never made sense to me how the Nazis could have systematically murdered 6 million Jews during WWII. Similarly, the heavy hand of murderous oppression by Stalin, murder by the Kymer Rouge in Cambodia, genocides in Bosnia and Rwanda in the last decade, and the murderous unabated tyranny of Saddam Hussain using Stalin as his hero were just so hideous. How is it possible for men to justify the murder of millions of people like this and actually commit these heinous acts? Are these men just getting up on the wrong side of the bed in the morning or perhaps they just needed to spend a session with Dr. Phil and everything would have been alright. No—this was evil with a capital “E.”

On that day, I also pondered a few other standard big life questions like: Is God real? And, if God is real, then how could He let something horrible like this happen?

I was raised a Catholic, but I had a pathetic and really almost non-existent relationship with God. The events of Sept. 11 shook my feeble beliefs to the core, and I began to question everything about religion(s) and war. For the first time in my life, I really began to seek the truth about the very existence of God and the beliefs and practices of various religions and denominations.

I began to seek the Lord with everything in me and He began to answer me.

What I found was that God is real!

In my search over the last three years, I have witnessed the miracle-working power of God with my own eyes. I have felt the power of the Holy Spirit in my own body and I have seen it manifest in others.

I have experienced a healing miracle myself. I was diagnosed with severe sleep Apnea. I would stop breathing when I was asleep each night every few minutes until the lack of oxygen would wake me up. God healed me from this directly and I no longer suffer from this condition. There is no mistake that I was healed by God's power. As I received prayer by the power in the name of Jesus, I was immediately healed. I have felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in my body and have felt it transfer into other people.

My wife and I have participated with several healing ministries over the last three years; we have traveled to several countries and have witnessed hundreds of miraculous healings. I have seen deaf ears hear again, blind eyes regain sight, cancerous tumors shrink up and disappear, skin diseases clear up, bones grow, curved backs straighten and countless deep emotional inner healings by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

God is real. This is not just a philosophy of how to live by some obscure human being.

The Bible is God's Word, and it is a book full of miracles. God validated the ministry of Jesus with miraculous signs and wonders. As Nicodemus said, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher who has come from God. For no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him" (John 3:2).

God is the truth. God's word is the Truth. God's own Spirit, the Holy Spirit, is the Spirit of Truth. God is who He says He is, and His Word is trustworthy and true. He cannot lie. Jesus is who God says He is. The Holy Spirit is who Jesus said He is.

The healing miracles I have witnessed were done by the power of the Holy Spirit by the power which is in the name of Jesus of Nazareth as described in the New Testament.

There are fundamental core truths found in the Bible: "Jesus

said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'" This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets'" (Matt. 22: 37-40).

It is impossible to talk about justice or what is just or unjust unless we have a standard to measure what is morally correct. The truth of God's Word is the standard for what is just. Things that are just, conform to fact or reason, reasonable, correct, proper, morally or legally right, upright, honorable and honest. Justice is the administration of what is just.

We are righteous when we are aligned with God's Word and act or are in accordance with what is just, honorable, upright, virtuous, noble, moral and ethical. Good governance and ruling justly is God's idea.

Evil is that which opposes the will of God. It is both personal and structured oppression that takes place in societies. Moral evil affects human beings and their relationships with each other. Examples of evil and injustice include: unjust governance, tyranny, genocide, slavery, sex slaves, corruption, graft, oppression, exploitation, torture, false imprisonment, organized crime, hate, murder and religious persecution.

God has created us in His image; this includes a free will. The Lord says: "I lay before you life and death, choose life." We can choose to believe God, love and worship Him for who He is and live as a child of God or not. This is our choice. I am testifying to you that God is real, and Jesus, His Son, is the way to the Father. Yet the decision to seek the Lord is yours alone.

The freedom to choose God and worship Him as we see fit is the

most fundamental freedom that we exercise and the most empowering.

Inviting the Holy Spirit to dwell in you is a life-changing event. It is being born of the Spirit of God. It is the way God intends for us to live, in an intimate relationship with His Spirit. "Now the Lord is the Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17).

Our commander in chief often states that: "Freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is the Almighty's gift to every man and woman in this world." Freedom of religion is important because it enables people to be able to choose God and not have imposed on them "a specific religion," "no religion" or "a spirit of religion."

This is a very serious hour. The world as we know it will never be the same again. It is time for Americans to intimately seek God. We are part of a changing America and a changing world. A world where God was, is and always will be the Most High God and only by believing in Jesus shall we not perish. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be given to you" (Matt 6:33).

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