

Jesus Rocks Hard-Core Buddhist's World

"I just remember when I woke up each morning, I would smell incense seeping into my room. And there were statues of Buddhas. ... "

This was a normal day in the life of young Alex Chu. His parents were devout Buddhists and trained their children in the family religion.

"I wanted to honor my parents. However, there was never a personal relationship with any of the Buddhas. It was always at a distance."

Religion wasn't the only obligation that put him under pressure.

"Accomplishments, ambitions and achievements were essentially the non-negotiables, that which we strive for. My dad was very successful academically and professionally having two doctorates, including one from Harvard. Living in his footsteps was quite a bit challenging growing up. My mom always told me that she loved me. And my dad often times would love me by telling me that I could accomplish anything I put my mind to. "

Alex lived up to his parents' expectations and followed the Buddhist customs—but there was a cost.

"The pressure made me feel like I'm only OK if I get straight A's or if I'm at the top of my class. The feedback that I would receive often times from my studies would be, 'Oh, you got a 99 percent on this test. Well, it should've been 100.' That was just the way in which they would motivate to do better. And that was pretty customary for a lot of Asian-Americans growing up."

As he got older, he started to question his faith.

“And it wasn’t probably till high school until I started to think on my own, and not only question my own faith, but am I going to take what the media says, what we hear on TV and watch as truth? Or am I going to be able to think on my own?”

Alex would eventually find the truth in college—but not in a religion or philosophy class. He witnessed it through the Christians in his dorm.

“They seemed very tightknit, very friendly. But even more so, there was a lot of joy on their faces. They didn’t seem to have a lot pressure on them.”

And he discovered something even more compelling.

“The unconditional love that is preached in the Christian faith. The relationship with God that you can have is something that was a surprise to me in many ways.”

In his second year, he asked one of the guys if he could go with him to an InterVarsity Christian Fellowship meeting.

“For the first time, I heard about the grace of God.”

But feelings alone weren’t enough to convince Alex to abandon his parents’ faith. He needed rational answers to his many questions.

“The problem of evil, or why does evil still exist in the world? I wondered about the historical reliability of Scripture and the inspiration of Scripture as well.”

His decision hinged on the most important question of all.

“Who is Jesus, and is He who He says He is?”

So Alex joined a Bible study to find out.

“Well, what impressed me about Jesus in the Gospels was the

authority with which He spoke, but also just the love that He had and compassion for all people. And so I had to discern that based off of how Jesus interacted in Scripture and His claims, and as I reflected upon it, I came to that conclusion that he was indeed the Son of God. And at that moment, I also prayed a personal prayer to God. And I was completely convinced that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died for my sins that I may have life eternally with Him. “

Now, Alex had to tell his parents he had become a Christian. It took years, but eventually they accepted his decision. After college, Alex worked as an engineer before he answered God’s call to go to seminary. He also married Michelle, a Christian, and today he and Michelle are busy raising three children.

“As an Asian-American that was always trying to seek approval and achieve things, it’s meant everything to me to recognize that He loves me unconditionally and offers an eternal life with Him.”

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