

Joy Villa Leaves Church of Scientology and Returns to Jesus After 15 Years

For singer Joy Villa, walking away from Scientology marked the end of a long chapter and the beginning of something she describes as far more important.

Villa spent 15 years inside the Church of Scientology, living at the Celebrity Centre in Hollywood, training at the highest levels, and becoming one of the organization's most visible public figures.

"From the outside, my life inside Scientology looked like a success story," she wrote in an op-ed for the magazine *Evie*. "Inside, it was slowly destroying me."

Villa said she gave everything she had to the organization. "I had given my time, my labor, my voice, my platform, and my influence." Her image was widely used. "My face was everywhere. Posters of me lined Scientology churches. I was used as proof that it 'worked.'"

During that time, Villa says her career reached heights many artists never experience. She walked the Grammy Awards red carpet multiple times, had Billboard No. 1 hits, and appeared on national and international news outlets.

"I was visible, successful and influential," she wrote. "And Scientology took credit for all of it."

Villa says she was raised Christian and loved Jesus. She says Scientology told her she could keep Him. Over time, she wrote, the framework around success changed.

"Every achievement was attributed not to God, not to talent, not to perseverance, but to auditing, donations and loyalty to

the organization.”



Order Jennifer Bagnaschi's New Book, "The Devil's Greatest Fear" on !

She says the financial toll was significant, estimating she was drained of nearly \$2 million by the time she left. She also described an assignment working for the organization in the United Kingdom that left her “deeply depressed” and ultimately led to her decision to leave permanently.

Her assessment of the experience is direct. “Scientology is not a self-help system,” she wrote. “It’s a control system.”

After Villa made her departure public, the Church of Scientology released a statement responding to her claims via the Daily Mail.

“When Ms. Villa came to the Church, she was grappling with profound personal difficulties,” the statement said. “She was given counseling and community support to rebuild her troubled life.”

The organization also accused her of financial motives. “She now seeks to exploit those who supported her during her darkest moments in hopes of making a buck,” the statement read. “How un-Christian.”

The church urged Villa to “move forward with her life and cease these false claims.”

Villa closed her essay by reflecting on what leaving ultimately meant for her.

“Leaving cost me years I will never get back,” she wrote. “But it gave me something infinitely more valuable. My soul. My faith. My freedom in Jesus Christ. And I will never go back.”

Her words frame the story not as a dispute, but as a

testimony. She describes a return to faith, a reclaimed sense of purpose, and a renewed commitment to Jesus Christ.

Villa does not present her decision as a temporary break or a personal rebrand. She presents it as a permanent turning point.

And in her own words, it is one she has no intention of reversing.

James Lasher, a seasoned writer and editor at Charisma Media, combines faith and storytelling with a background in journalism from Otterbein University and ministry experience in Guatemala and the LA Dream Center. A Marine Corps and Air Force veteran, he is the author of *The Revelation of Jesus: A Common Man's Commentary* and a contributor to Charisma magazine.