

# How I Met Jesus Christ In New Delhi, India

## *Personal Testimony of John Glass*



1976

It was during my first year at Syracuse University that I began to question the purpose of my life. These questions soon affected my studies.

I was not taking school seriously enough. My pony tail was getting longer and pot and hashish were becoming a regular habit. I was involved in some unhealthy relationships. Something was not right in my heart. After months of wrestling with my feelings, I decided to take a year off from school and reevaluate my life and goals. I began by planning a long trip.

It was to our home in Geneva, Switzerland that I first returned. After being there for a month or so getting prepared for the journey before me, I finally bought a backpack and put in a few necessities including sneakers, jeans, a toothbrush, soap, passport, and of course, money. My journey officially began June 23, 1976. My budget was \$3.00 a day. I left Geneva by train with an ultimate destination of India.

For the first month I traveled from Switzerland through Germany, Austria, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Greece. Amongst the hundreds of islands in Greece, I sought and found several spectacular palmed beaches on which to contemplate the meaning of life. There I was, living the life of a king. I had friends, freedom, and a tan! And yet, to my bewilderment, with time even the "good life" became old. I began to feel unfulfilled and lonely. I thought a job would fill that void within my heart.

I flew to Israel, and there volunteered my services to work on a farming Kibbutz. Although excited over this new adventure at first, within three weeks again a feeling of un-fulfillment invaded my heart: Picking olives dally at 4:00 a.m. was simply not my thing!

I left the Kibbutz, and went to Jerusalem. It was in Jerusalem that something very significant happened to me. One early morning I set out to tour the city. Following tour directions, I was led to a place called the Garden Tomb, where it is believed Christ was laid after being removed from the cross following His crucifixion. I was all alone. Crouching down, I entered the dark, humid tomb. My hands could feel the cold rock ail around me. As my eyes adjusted to the darkness, I came to my senses as to the significance of the place in which I stood - I was in the very tomb where Christ had been buried two thousand years before. Chills ran down my spine; perspiration formed in the palms of my hands. Overwhelmed by emotion, I walked out of the tomb. I strolled along a lonely path, thinking. And then, like a hand stopping me in the middle of my way, Golgotha stood before me! An engraved caption informed me concerning the place where I stood: "And when they came to the place called Golgotha, there they crucified Him..." I began to weep. What did all this mean? I plowed on forward, my eyes focused on Asia. I headed for Istanbul, Turkey. There, seeking a ride to go further east, I finally found a small group of travelers taking an old bus to Nepal.



Today

Paying my fee of \$40, I joined them on what was going to become the most thrilling bus ride of my life: six weeks through Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India! I was fascinated by every inch of territory I saw! And yet, as before, a continued sense of emptiness and lostness invaded my life. Especially in Afghanistan, my soul was pierced as I witnessed abject poverty and disease. Drugs became a way of life on our bus, and I could not help noticing the abundance of aimlessness and purposelessness all around me. There we were, hundreds of young people looking for answers, but finding none.

India was finally in sight. Once in New Delhi, I parted company with those with whom I had shared an incredible journey. India, like the other places, was fascinating and intriguing. Yet, like in Afghanistan, it was difficult for me to face the rampant poverty and despair I saw. I wanted to flee. I prepared to return home. I purchased a plane ticket with last of the money I had. But God had another plan.

I met a Dutch missionary on the street and we talked for about two hours. Those two hours changed the course of my life. Every time I asked him a question concerning the meaning of life he kept opening his Bible and reading the answer from its pages. Finally, he shared John 3:16 with me. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..."* It was at this point that my heart began to pound as my mind flashed back to the tomb in which I had stood in Jerusalem a few weeks before! I knew then that historically I could not deny the reality of the Person of Jesus Christ. He read on, *"...that whosoever believes in Him, should not perish but have everlasting life."* Chills ran down my back again as I knew what was being read was true, that I needed forgiveness of my sins, and that Jesus Christ had come to offer me that forgiveness. Although reluctant, I finally bowed in prayer right there on the street, confessed and repented of my sins, and invited Jesus Christ to come into my heart as Savior and Lord and give me everlasting life. Immediately a sense of relief flooded my heart. It was as if a load had been removed from my back! I headed straight back to my hotel and read the Bible that had been given to me. As I began to read it, the words made sense! My heart KNEW that what I was reading was indeed true! I began to pray, and to thank God for what He had done for me.

I wanted to know more. The next day I miraculously ran into other missionaries going to Goa in southern India. I teamed up with them for the next month. They began to teach me God's Word, to help me memorize some basic Scriptures, and to teach me how to obey Jesus Christ as one of His disciples.

Drugs and cigarettes were swept out of my life. I felt for the first time a real sense of purpose: To know and worship the only true God. How thrilling was this new time of growth. God completely changed my heart. Even my desires changed. The sin I so loved before knowing Christ slowly became repulsive. The holiness I so disliked before knowing Christ became my greatest desire!

It was evident from that first day in New Delhi that God had called me to follow Him at all cost. Today, 41 years later, I thank Him more than ever. I have been a missionary in Paris for 10 years, and now back in my home town of Geneva for the last 20 years. God has given me a wonderful wife, Meg, and we have been married 35 years. We also have three adult children.

As I look back, I can hardly believe how drastically God has changed the course of my life! All I can say after experiencing His love and faithfulness for these years, is that "I count all things but rubbish...in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (Philippians 3:8).