

My New Life

By Kieran Mac Court

I was driving from Birr to Tullamore in County Offaly one summer day during the year 2000—I was thirty-five years old at the time. I wasn't doing anything special that day, I was just going about another day's work. Somewhere around Kilcormac, whilst driving about sixty miles per hour, I suddenly suffered the most intense chest pain I have ever known. I immediately thought, "Oh-oh, heart attack. This is it. I might die now." I pulled over to the side of the road and developed that thought further. "I may die now. Hope my wife and children will be O.K."

The pain passed after a short time. It was probably my first (and only) ever case of heartburn, albeit a severe one. I continued on that thought. "I wonder what it'll be like when I die? Ah well, there's nothing I can do about it right now." I then geared up and drove home. I didn't even tell my wife what had happened. To be honest, although I had had a little scare, it had zero effect on me. I didn't really care what might happen to me after I died.

Having since been born again to new life in Christ, I often look back in wonder at this particular episode and think, "How could I have cared so little about my eternal welfare?"

Since I have trusted Jesus Christ as my only means of salvation, I have looked back on other dodgy situations in which I have found myself over the years. There was that time in 1991 in Majorca. I looked the wrong way whilst crossing a road, and the biggest, whitest tank of a coach came within a whisker of knocking me into eternity. It seemed to take an age for that massive slab of white metal to pass by me—at a hair's breadth from the end of my nose. I sometimes reflect on car accidents, near misses, stupid pranks that nearly went wrong—(I was bungee jumping with a friend in Celbridge, County Kildare in 1979. Other tribes claim they invented it, but we were doing it then)—and all the time I reflect, "If any one of those incidents had taken my life, I would even now be in a Christless eternity."

Thank God, He prevailed with me, and sent a Gospel-carrying missionary to my Maynooth home in March 2002. This missionary, who was pastor of the local Baptist church, showed me that the Bible is God's love message to mankind. He showed me that I can stand on the promises made in that Book.

Following this, I went through an intense period of assessment and evaluation. I thought about what this pastor was claiming—that I was a sinner in need of salvation, and that Christ could save me to the uttermost. I knew I was a sinner, all right, but I had not realised the awful penalty for my sins. That penalty is an eternal separation from my Creator in a place the Bible calls hell, where those who die in their sins spend eternity paying for their sins.

But there was a solution to my sin problem. If I would repent (not only be sorry for my sins, but have the heart desire to turn from them) and trust Jesus Christ to do what the Bible says He has already done (that is, He nailed my sins to a cross, having lived a perfect life well-pleasing to God, and having made a perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world), then I could claim that hard-won salvation for my own. Jesus paid it all, and all I had to do was trust Him and accept salvation as a gift! So the story does have a happy ending. By faith, I trusted Christ as my Saviour, and He did the rest.

Secure now in my salvation, I no longer wonder what awaits me on the other side of a heart attack or a car crash. I am standing on the promises in the Word of God. I know my God is faithful, and that He has done what He claimed He would do. God's Word says in Romans 8:30b: "...and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

My salvation is not something that will be accomplished when I eventually die. It is done, it is real, and in God's eyes, according to this verse in Romans, He sees me as already glorified. I don't exactly feel glorified, as I struggle on in this world and all its temptations, but I believe God. He never lies. So if God says I'm glorified, Amen! God looks not on the outside. God sees the heart, and He knows that I have trusted Him.