

# Testimony

John Griffin Tells His Story

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## What can I do?

I grew up in the small town of Newcastle-west Co. Limerick Ireland. I came from a very poor family; mind you in those days most were from a poor background. The house we lived in was made of a mud substance, and we lived down near the river. Our family was very devoted to our Church, which we believed was the ONLY true Church. We attended mass on a weekly basis and also never missed any of the Holy days or lent and such. When I was 23, because there was no work in Ireland I set out for England with the promise of lots of work. After working for a while I would get homesick and saved up my money and went back home. I did the same routine for several years living half the time in England the other half in Ireland. When I arrived in England I of course immediately went to mass and also went daily to pray in the Church. My friends said to me, "John you aren't in Ireland now you don't have to keep going to Mass!" My response to them was I really believe in it that is why I go not because I have too. Even while I said this, though I knew this was only part true as I longed to really know God, but I just couldn't seem to get close although I tried as hard as I could. I always felt lonely. My friends introduced me to what I thought was the high life. So I partied away with the lads, all the while still feeling empty inside. The drink and women and such only again showed me my emptiness.

I then took one of my pilgrimages to a place called Lough Derg in Northern Ireland. There as a good Catholic I decided to do penance by walking in my bare feet over the sharp stones, although my feet got cut up, temporarily I felt good that I suffered for God. My own pride continued like this as I made frequent trips to there and also Knock. You see I had been told and believed that I needed to do my very best and then MAYBE I might get to heaven. First of course I would go to a place called Purgatory, and then after many prayers and suffering finally heaven. I recognize now that God's Holy Spirit at this time was striving with me, because I was getting even more depressed now as I found myself daily going to mass or at least saying my prayers at Church and also weekly going to confession. At this time my depression got so bad I started to contemplate suicide, my thoughts continued to think about ending it all, but I kept going to Mass. One day at Westminster Cathedral, after confession I asked the cannon this question, 'my depression is so bad I feel I am going to commit suicide. What can I do!'

His response was, What can I do!, then he said just keep coming to mass and saying your prayers, you will be alright. Even when he said this I knew that I wasn't alright. Shortly after this I went back home to Ireland. Upon arriving back in NCW again my depression got to me. One day it was so bad that I got down on my hands and knees and looked up to God, and I remember saying to God, what is the truth? All my life I have followed my religion and I still feel empty. I even remember saying even if it is the Jehovah's or protestants who have the Truth, I would be willing to follow them. You must understand, living in Southern Ireland to be anything but a Catholic would be a disgrace to my family and friends. Well nothing happened immediately, but within a week, I came home one day and my brother Dave said someone dropped this in the door today, and gave me a leaflet. My immediate thought was it was from the Jehovah's. I thought about using it to start the fire but I was intrigued by a picture of a black heart on the cover so I decide to read it. The first thing I saw was a verse from Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Jeremiah 17:10, "I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings." When I saw that verse I knew it was God speaking to me. Immediately my thoughts ran back to my prayer, "What is the Truth?" I then realized right there that God said my heart was deceitful and desperately wicked. The next verse I read from the leaflet was Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." I realized right then and there ALL I had to do was to take God (Jesus) at His word and right there I got down on my knees and cried out to him to save my soul. At that very moment of my cry I became a child of God, no longer trusting in what I could do for God, but just taking His remedy for my sins by believing in the Finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.