

There's more to life than I thought

By Lew Stone as told to Kirk Noonan

In college my world revolved around athletics, women and partying. Drinking a couple six-packs of beer each evening was a regular occurrence. But when the parties ended and I crawled into bed I vividly recall asking myself a recurring question: *Is this all there is to life?*

The question haunted me, especially when fellow students at the Southern California university I attended would tell me about Jesus.

Campus Crusade was huge at my school, and when Christians approached me I loved nothing more than to tell them to leave me alone. But one day two guys I respected shared their faith with me and gave me some literature. They were good guys, so I didn't throw it away.

Back at my apartment I dropped the tract onto my nightstand and tried to forget about it. But on sleepless nights my mind raced and I'd find myself reading the tract trying to figure out what it meant to have a relationship with Christ.

A few months later I met Teri Boller. She was beautiful and very different from other girls I had dated — she had high morals and I respected her immediately.

Teri invited me to visit her aunt and uncle in Portland, Ore. When I met her aunt and uncle and their children I was amazed. They all got along and everyone seemed to love one another. I didn't know such families existed.

During my visit in Portland I told Teri's uncle I admired his family and wanted to know the secret for building such a family. He looked at me and said, "Funny thing you should ask. It's the Lord."

I thought to myself, *You have got to be kidding me.*

Though I respected Teri's uncle, I was baffled that he believed in Jesus. How could an obviously intelligent guy with a Ph.D. believe in something that nebulous?

When Teri and I returned to Southern California I continued to drink and party, but I also began attending church with her. There, we met a pastor who made a point to go out of his way to speak with us.

Knowing he would probably try to convert me, I started reading the Bible so I could use the information I found against him. But as I read the Bible it began making sense. This left me perplexed, but hopeful.

As I read more, I began to consider eternal life with a loving God. Still, the plan of salvation seemed way too simple to me, so I resisted any evangelistic efforts by others.

One night at church the youth pastor gave a simple message. He said everyone had to commit his or her life to something. I agreed. Then he said some people commit their lives to athletics, but that wasn't wise because at some point everyone's body would break down. Then what?

His question immediately made me realize I needed to commit my life to Christ. That night I went forward and made a public confession of faith.

I kid you not, my life did a 180-degree turn overnight. The pastor didn't give me a rulebook. He didn't need to. The Holy Spirit convicted me. My cursing subsided. I had no desire to drink alcohol, let alone get drunk. Everything I once thought was so cool drifted from me. Suddenly I had a new perspective on life and reason for living.

I also had a peace. I knew God had a huge plan for my life. Over time I discovered part of that plan was to marry Teri, raise three daughters in a Christian home, and to spend my career working as a firefighter.

As a follower of Christ I still have trials, but to know beyond a shadow of a doubt I am in God's will is an amazing feeling.

In my 20s there were costs for my newfound faith. All my drinking buddies bailed on me, and



Lew Stone believes his firefighting career is part of God's plan for his life.

my roommate became very upset that I wouldn't party with him anymore. We eventually went our separate ways. That was 26 years ago.

A few years back that old roommate contacted me. He asked me to forgive him for his bad attitude toward my conversion and reported that he had committed his life to Christ too.

God does amazing things. **tpe**

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