

He Let Me In

Personal testimony
of Nathaniel Capps

I was born into a Baptist household. My dad was a pastor and was saved when I was very young. My mother thought she was saved until 2015. Growing up I was never without the truth; my dad was my pastor and only preached the truth. I just never really cared or gave it much thought. I didn't even believe God was real. There were a handful of times while I was growing up that I would ask questions, but nothing ever lasted very long. While my dad was the pastor at a Baptist church, the Sunday school teacher would try and get me to say the prayer all the time. I never did, not because I knew better but because I didn't really care. But God had given me a dad that preached against easy believism and explained to me and my siblings that it didn't work and why.

We would visit a lot of churches growing up. My dad was searching for a church that preached the truth but we never found one that did. After the services at the churches we'd visit, dad would explain to us where the pastor was wrong and show us in the Bible where it proved that and what the truth was. We began to have church in our home with a small group of friends and family that my dad pastored. As I got older, I thought about God less and less. I did not care about God, His ways, or His church. The people my age that were "devoted" to the church were always very full of themselves and cringe, which was no help to me even wanting to know God. Around the age of 13 or 14 I got deep into a lot of very bad sins. I fell deeper and deeper into it and the weight of shame and condemnation would get worse and worse. The only way I found to overcome the feelings was more sin. It would cease the condemnation and guilt for a short time and then it would hit harder than it was before. When I was 15, I was so deep in sin and the weight of condemnation, shame, and guilt of it, that I wanted to kill myself to get away from it. When that didn't go through, I started to shut down my feelings and emotions. It wasn't very long before I was a brick wall. I felt nothing, no pain, no shame, no guilt, no feeling of any kind.

In 2015 we met the Smiths. They came to our house to help build a playset for my younger siblings. Bro Scott and his family had recently moved to Florida to pastor a church and invited my family. My dad sat down with him and discussed beliefs and such before we went, as well as inform him that we wouldn't be there long. My dad was set on us moving to Tennessee. We ended up visiting them every Wednesday and Sunday evening. Shortly after attending my mom found out she was lost. A few months later Bro Greg came down to preach a meeting. In this meeting God told my dad this was the church He had for us. A week or so after the meeting my dad told us that this was the church we were to join. My dad told the home church the next service and we began going to every service and the camp meeting in Mississippi.

I still did not care for God or the church. When I was 17, I was waiting to leave. It all meant nothing to me and none of it was real to me. In the November camp of that year during a service where Bro Claude Mills was preaching, God got on me. For the first time in my memory God was speaking to me and I could not stop crying. I went to the altar and almost as soon as I got there God got on me and nothing was going on. I didn't know it at the time, but that was God showing me He was real and Him drawing me in. You would think that would've broken me. and caused me to seek, but it didn't. After that I would periodically seek but never for very long. Instead as God would show himself and his ways, I'd push away. I hated his ways. I got so hard hearted that during a meeting with Bro Claude when God was calling the lost and was heavily on me, I was fighting him. I told God to leave me alone. I don't remember the whole sermon, but a portion of it Bro Claude was telling the lost to just say thank you to God. I verbally told God "no, leave me alone". This should have been my final chance and the last time God ever spoke to me. But God chose to be merciful and longsuffering with me.

Eventually I began to seek on and off again for a few years. Every time God started to show me who I was and want me to see it and what I had done, I would stop and run. I was terrified of seeing who I was and what I had done. I was sure he would kill me if I admitted my sins. I did not want to feel the condemnation again. One day while talking with Bro Scott, I told him how I had shut myself down and that I felt nothing. He told me that I needed God to replace my hard heart if I was ever to go anywhere with Him. I began to pray for that, and that God would help me. Eventually I began to be moved during the preaching or singing at times. During a June camp meeting in 2019, God showed me that even though I fought Him and called Him a liar, He still wanted me. This shook me. I cried about it for a few hours and thought about it for a while. But yet again I went and hardened my heart. At June camp of 2021 I talked to bro Scott after the services and told him I knew I didn't believe God and that I wasn't saved, but I didn't feel it. He said that until I saw that I was an unbeliever and that I had called God a liar, I would go nowhere. I had to come to God as that man. It became obvious to me that I was an unbeliever and had called God a liar, but I still didn't feel it. I began to ask God to help me, open my eyes, and give me a new heart. I needed God more than I knew. Every day became a second chance, God let me get up again and have another day to seek him. In October of 2022 Bro Claude came to preach a meeting. That whole meeting God was on me. And He wouldn't leave me, I went to work with Him on me, I went to bed with Him on me, I woke up with Him on me. At the end of the meeting, I was not saved but I wasn't where I was before.

Fast forward to August of 2023, Bro Terry came down and preached a meeting at our church. It wasn't a revival type meeting, but I went into it looking for God to talk. In that meeting God was telling the church where they were going, and that they needed the lost people's measures. A few weeks later we hosted a pastors' conference and Bro Mike stayed to preach that Sunday. Sunday morning, he preached on what we "could" do to be saved, but that it was impossible with man and we had already failed. Sunday night he preached on Christ and how He did what we could not. He took what we deserved and gave us what we did not.

The next Sunday bro Scott preached on the lost being condemned already and that whether we felt it or not we were condemned to death. God in His longsuffering and forbearance had shown mercy to me. That He could at any day, and rightfully so, unleash His wrath on me, and or never speak to me again. I needed to fix the situation, but there was nothing I could do. No matter the evidence or truths, I still would not believe. I needed God to save me. I talked to Bro Scott that night and told him that there was nothing backing the falsehoods and lies in my mind about God. All I had was truth that He was who He said He was. But I still had not believed. He told me that God had given me everything I needed and that at some point I'd have to do something with it.

That Wednesday night, September 27th, I went into church asking God to tell me what I needed to do with what He had given me and to help me do it. Bro Scott started his sermon telling us God wanted to tell us something to do. He started in John 3 and said we were to strive. I understood what striving was, but how was I to strive? As he continued, he hit on condemnation again and said we did not feel it because we had hardened our hearts with disobedience. I started to tell God I was sorry for hardening my heart and disobeying him. I needed Him to replace my heart. I still wasn't sure how to strive. I asked God to please show me. Bro Scott said God wasn't going to move our legs for us. We had to move towards Him whether we felt anything or not. Then he made a comment about how he had gone to the altar many times before he got saved, and he didn't regret a single time. He got help each time. I decided to go to the altar even though there wasn't a whole lot going on in me. If nothing happened, I

would just get up and go back to my seat. As soon as I got to the altar God was on me. I started asking God to help me. Bro Scott continued to preach. He started telling the story of Abner and how he fled to the city of refuge. Not to the walls of the city, but IN the city. We needed to be IN the walls to be safe. He started to explain the city and how it worked. The guilty go in, they plead their case to the priest, and he could let them stay and be safe. I began to tell God who I was. I was an unbeliever, I had hated Him, I fought against Him, and I had called Him a liar. The shame, condemnation, and weight of my sin began to push down on me like a crushing weight. I told God I didn't want to do these things anymore and began to beg for mercy on an unworthy sinner. He would be right in turning me away and unleashing His wrath on me. My only hope was that He would show mercy to me. Bro Scott continued preaching on the city and said the priest would let them in and as long as he lived, they were safe. And our High Priest would never die. During this, God showed me that Christ was the Priest in the city, and all the sins I was admitting to, were against the very one that decided if I stayed or was sent away. And He did not send me away. In the middle of me begging for mercy I found myself thanking God over and over again. All the condemnation and weight of my sin was gone. He let me in, and I am safe there forever. After the service I talked to Bro Scott. I told him what happened, and he smiled and said it sounded a lot like what God did for him. Through the conversation I was in complete agreement with him. There was no conflict in me. I went home and thought back on what happened to figure out if I had gotten saved or not. When I was at the altar asking for mercy, I felt the condemnation I had feared for so long. But it was only for a moment and then God came in and removed it and left peace and rest in its place. I left church that night with no condemnation, no conflict, no fear. I had total peace.