Pastor Jeffrey J. Carrier

I was born and raised in a traditional Catholic home in New Hampshire. I found myself very interested in the children’s Bible we had in our house even before I could read.

My mother would bring the stories to life by reading from specific sections of her adult Bible to my siblings and I until we were quite familiar with the overall account of the life of Jesus Christ.

Our family would attend the local Catholic Church every week and I was placed into the CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) program, or “*Catechism*", from as early as I can remember. This was similar to Sunday School. These classes not only “educated” children about Jesus and the Catholic faith but prepared children to receive the sacraments of Penance (confession), the Eucharist (Holy Communion), and Confirmation.

I began questioning some of the basic Catholic traditions (confession of sins to the priest, the worship of Mary as the mother of God, the repeating of certain prayers with Rosary beads, etc.) in my early teens as it seemed to contradict my personal understanding of the Gospels and Scriptures that I had learned. From then I simply went through the motions without sincerity.

In my twenties, I thoroughly gave up the Catholic faith while still considering myself a “Christian” and eventually moved from New Hampshire to Florida where I cautiously sought out churches of different denominations. I didn’t “feel” comfortable in any of the places I visited until I was invited by a friend to a church that was Nazarene in name but essentially a non-denominational/international congregation in practice.

I enjoyed that church primarily because of the people and family I gained there (in fact, I met and married my wife in that church). I eventually got involved in Bible studies and gained some *new* understandings, but still from the “New Testament” perspective. I went to the “alter call”, became “born-again”, and was “baptized” (by choice this time—as I was “baptized” as a baby for the first time in our Catholic Church).

After a few years, the Pastor I had grown to love as a father-figure, retired. The following Pastor (via his personal teachings and interpretations *leaning* to the prosperity movement) wound up splitting the church membership and in some cases driving them out.

My wife and I began visiting and attending a few other churches from time to time (still non-denominational), but never found the same connection to people that gave us the “feeling” of family. Don’t get me wrong, the Pastors and people there were friendly and accepting, but it just didn’t have the connection we were looking for. It was within this timeframe that I started seeing the same “doctrinal” discrepancies in these *other* churches that I witnessed back when I was in Catholicism. So, there I was again going through the motions and disappointed with what “church” was offering and, of course, my own short-comings in my faith.

Fast-forward to 2015. My family and I were not attending any church or Bible-study group mainly because of *my* frustration with how wrong church *felt*. I was fed-up with the hypocrisy of the people and myself. I was always doubting and confused about whether I was “saved” or not, what was expected of me, and what was the point of it all.

I began thinking at this time that maybe a Messianic church was the way to go because they did things (I believed) more closely to what was lived out in...the Book of *Acts!* Maybe *they* had the answers.

This is when I was introduced to the less popular Biblical topics such as the giants of Genesis 6 and end-time revelations, etc. from YouTube. There were a few compelling theories that I enjoyed watching from some equally compelling people. One day while watching one of these videos, which was a seminar by a particular favorite person of mine that was held in what looked like a church, this gentleman gave his testimony of faith and shared things that I had not heard before. He gave a few Biblical *challenges* and *warnings* by the end of his witnessing that really struck a chord in my heart and mind.

I started to critically study the passages he mentioned and I can honestly say that I had a genuine epiphany. I would read one passage from one Book in the Bible and it suddenly *triggered* a memory of another passage in another Book in the Bible. This led to hours of intense studying, day after day, and all my free time until I concluded that what I had been taught all these years was as though I had been taught from a different Bible. I saw things clear as day in passages *now* that I had read dozens of times *before* but didn’t see it. It was strange yet exciting.

I will confess that this angered me a little, how could these obvious, simple things go unnoticed by so many for so long? Had I been lied to? Was this intentional? Or were these people blind to the same things I was blind to?

Everything that was revealed to me (obviously through the Holy Spirit) and the connections that I made within the Scriptures were eventually confirmed when I returned to listen to some of the other people who also gave testimonies (from the Hebraic mindset) about what had been revealed to *them*...the message was the same!

Bottom line for me was this:

* YHWH (GOD) our Father in Heaven, does not change – He is the ROCK! This is a truth that is proclaimed throughout the Bible.
* The Father’s WORDs (like Him) stand firm, *forever,* and throughout *all* generations!
* This WORD, which Scripture says *is spirit* (the chief cornerstone of that ROCK foundation) comes *from* YHWH (GOD) and became a *man* so that He could be my perfect substitution and take the punishment for my sins!
* My *belief* in the salvation of YHWH *through* His Son is what restores my spirit-man and I am then *declared* righteous because of what HE has done.
* THEN...I am adopted *into* His People (Israel) and *into* the promises of the Covenant...which then has instructions for *living* a life in *righteousness* – this is called His *Torah*!
* THIS Torah is the *path* that Scripture, Messiah, and Paul speak of which leads to the resurrection, the Kingdom, and ultimately relationship with the Father...that is everlasting!
* The WILL of the Father is that all should come to Him in faith and *obey* His WORD – ***trust*** in His Son and ***obey*** His Torah – this is what it means to love Him!

It’s as simple as that.

Since then, I have found others to fellowship with who are of like-mind and heart.

The greatest thing about meeting others in the faith is that I have gained that *feeling* of family again, but it’s different...it’s a joy in my spirit...as though I’ve known them all my life. Maybe it’s the spiritual familiarity or some super-natural connection...only the Father knows.

Now I have an earnest desire to apply what I’ve learned in evangelizing my brothers and sisters in Christianity ***and*** Judaism. I want *them* to know what I know and gain the truth that surpasses all understanding.

Shalom