

**Miracles that follow the plow :: If a CJaK fell in the fOrEsT....(Aaron's Testimony)****If a CJaK fell in the fOrEsT....(Aaron's Testimony) - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2004/5/2 1:42**

My apologies for the length, but I wanted to include the primary things that brought me to where I am today (and yes...I have left alot out ;-)).

I was born, an only child, to "christian" parents, in Melbourne, Australia. Mum and Dad both raised in the Methodist church. I can remember going to Sunday school as a little kid, but Mum told me later that it wasn't often at all. Dad was always a servant-hearted man, who joined an organization called Apex, so he could serve the community, in a practical way, with his hands. Mum always knew that God was real and wanted to serve Him, but somehow let us stop her from going to church. Me, I was a spoilt brat, from day one.

One of my earliest discussions I can remember having with Mum about God was to ask her what hell was. She told me that hell was a pit of fire under the ground, where God sent bad people. I spent that whole day freaking out, that there would be an earthquake, and I'd fall in.

The only other thought I remember having toward God, was that if Mum and Dad lied to me about Santa Claus (Sorry kids :-)), then maybe they lied to me about God and Jesus. From that point, as far as I was concerned, God wasn't real. I would never commit to that statement, just in case I was wrong, but it was how I felt. I was six years old.

When I was nine, Dad was involved in a Uniting Church youth outreach called Theos (I think it was an acronym for something), in Thomastown, where we lived. Dad was threatened by some of the kids there, and decided that he didn't want to have his boy grow up in a town like that. So we moved to Greensborough.

When we moved, I quickly became involved with kids who were bad influences on me. I started smoking cigarettes, and tried to act tough. I was never really comfortable, as kids in Greensborough acted like they were five years older than the ones I hung out with in Thomastown. Even though I was in the "tough" crowd, I spent alot of time with the "geeks", because they'd let me play with my "Legos" and "Star Wars" men, and stuff, without calling me a baby or whatever.

Onto High school. I got into Dungeons and Dragons and Martial Arts. I've never been the type of guy to do things by half, spending the night hours studying DandD manuals and hours each day practicing katas and meditating.

At 17 I started smoking pot, by 18 I had a daily habit, 19 LSD and 20 amphetamines. The progression started with a simple curiosity with friends. Oh yeah...did I mention that I couldn't do something by halves? I began preaching the "gospel" according to "Cheech and Chong" (to my shame, I had 5 people let me know after I became a christian that I gave them their first pipe of marijuana). My entire conversation was, "wot ya been doing?"..."Smoking"..."What you been smoking?" Everything revolved around "the gear".

I had a close friend (I'll call him Max) who I used to smoke with a lot. Max went to an Anglican boarding school and did communion and confirmation there. We were very philosophical, when stoned, and I mixed my eastern philosophies with his limited christian knowledge. We came up with the "big toe theory". This stated that all the universe was part of a massive organism, like microbes in us. Though we had was, if we were in the big toe and it was cut off, how long would it take for our galaxy to die? (Coo-Coo,Coo-Coo :-))

At 19 I left school (after failing year 12 the second time) and, after months on welfare, got a job going door to door collecting donations for a charity. Here, I had two encounters with Christians. One a lady who gave me a tract when I gave her my literature, saying "I'll read yours if you'll read mine." It said that "just because you go to church, doesn't make you a christian." I always thought that all Christians were hypocrites (after all that what everyone said, so it must have been true). To have a "christian" tract seem to admit that really challenged me.

The second, was a guy with a van with "Jesus Stuff" painted all over it. I said my spiel to young guy at the door, and when he wouldn't give, I said "God bless" to him, hoping that would make him think that I was a christian....which he did. He asked if I went to church and I said "No". When said something I'll never forget "You need to God to church, man. God speaks in church." I thought that this was a bold thing to say, because all I had to do was go to church and not hear God to prove him wrong.

The sum of my opinion of Christianity was broken that day, as I always thought that:

Christians were all hypocrites but would not admit it.

Christians were believing a fairy tale that they could not prove was real

By the end of that year, I couldn't handle the way my life was going. New Years Eve came, and, as part of the festivities, I had my an acid trip...only I never quite came back. I started seeing demons and nothing I saw in the natural could be trusted, do to my hallucinations. I went back to the guy who sold it to me, begging him to make it stop. He gave me a place to crash (out of guilt) but after 2 hours, I decided to walk home (a 3 hour walk) a tell my folks what happened. I got home, and was saying with all sorts of irrational stuff. After 2 days, I was going to kill myself. Just before I did, I

remembered back to staying at my uncles, a pastor in Sydney, when I was younger. He'd sit me in front of "Jesus videos" and I used to worry that by thinking the "sinner's prayer" I might accidentally become a christian :-(. Anyway, I thought to myself, maybe Jesus is real after all. A thought popped into my mind, 'I am!' I thought to myself 'Imagine if that was God.' Again the thought came, 'It is!' Then it occurred to me, God was revealing Himself to me. Right then, the hallucinations stopped!!

The thought came, "Go tell your mum." I said, "Mum! I've just heard from God!" She said "Yeah right, just before you told me the cat was talking to you." Then the thought came again, 'Pray for her.' I thought 'I don't know how to pray.' 'Just say what I say.', he said. So I asked Mum if I could pray for her. So I did. Don't ask me what I said that day except that there were words of encouragement, that her prayers were being answered. Mum was bawling her eyes out (as was I) and she knew that I had encountered God...But there wasn't repentance.

The next day, the hallucinations returned, and I still had the thoughts...but it wasn't God anymore. I heard that there was more than one "name" for God, and a variety of messagers. Before long I began to believe that the "big toe theory" was reality. Over time, a very complicated, and seemingly consistent ideology was established in my mind, that was very similar to satanism, without the atheism. I found truth in music, movies and talks with other addicts.

20 years old, Christmas Day, my folks and I were staying in Taree with my aunt and uncle, who are strong christians. I was up all night talking with my cousin, and wanted to sleep in. My aunt came in and when I told her I didn't want to go to church, she looked at me, with "sad puppy-dog" eye, and said "Come on matey. I'd really like you to come." and left me to stew under the conviction of God.

I got up, showered and dressed in time to go, slept through the sermon and woke up for the altar call. I thought the preacher was asking if we believed God. I thought "Well of course. Doesn't everyone here?" and put up my hand. The preacher asked everybody to open their eyes and asked "the one who raised his hand" to come up the front. I waited for "him" to go up, when my cousin asked if I wanted to go up with him. I thought, 'Sure. If you need the moral support I'll go.' When I got up the front of the 500 people, with my cousin, the preacher asked if he could pray for me.

Now understand this. I'd never been in church before (apart from weddings, etc) that I could remember, I wanted to serve God and I was, if nothing more polite, so I said "Ok!". He led me in the "sinners prayer" and I felt the same peace I felt when God first spoke to me, so I knew that Jesus was God...but still no repentance.

Max and I had planned 2 weeks away in Anna Bay starting Boxing Day. I didn't want to do drugs anymore, but I'd put money down, and he was driving up from Melbourne to meet me. Besides, how was I supposed to get him saved if I came back all "holier-than-thou".

My aunt gave me a copy of Winkie Pratney's "Youth Aflame" before I left. While Max was at the beach, I read the book and The Book. Youth Aflame explained many things about the way of the world (humanism), in similar terms to "10 shekels and a shirt". I read until the 3rd chapter, where it gave a similar challenge to the 3rd chapter of "Revival Lectures" - This is what sin is. Now repent or stop reading - so that's what I did. I stopped!

As I read things, I would tell Max what I was reading. He started thinking about what I told him, and decided that he wanted to become a "christian" too. We made a deal to give up drugs when we got back. When we returned, we had a birthday party to go to. Our resolve to quit was tested and failed.

So as not to concern my folks with my backslidedness, I moved out of home. Before long, my life consisted of having a guitar on one side of me and a bong on the other at all times. I started taking LSD again and started using ouija boards. Eventually, the spirits (demons) we contacted told us when one of us was going to die. Max's sister was seeing a guy who had a jealous ex-girlfriend. The story unfolded, that the ex was going to take out a hit on her, and we were hearing similar things from dealers we knew. I woke up to the fact that this was all evil (remembering Mum calling ouija boards "devils switchboard"), and turned to God in prayer. One night Max pulled my Bible and (don't try this at home kids) started asking God question's about life, while randomly opening the Bible. Somehow, God revealed to God that all would be well, and everything turned out okay.

Around this time, Mum told me that a new church was being planted in their town, which was the same denomination as my aunts. I told her I would come on that Sunday. As seems to happen, when the Friday came, I decided to have my last acid trip. Some friends came around and thought it would be funny to try and creep me out, by messing with my heads, telling me that the table was flying, or just trying to confuse me. This greatly affected me, to the point that I went literally insane.

Sunday came and I went to church with Mum. Went up the front at the end to say "the prayer" again...but still no repentance. I began faithfully attending, twice on Sunday and Friday night home group. I joined the music team, paid tithes and got a real job. After a few months, I lost my job and turned back to drugs. I kept going to church, but I lived a double life, in the world. After 8 months of gripping onto God by my fingernails, I decided to read the New Testament through. I'd tried from Matthew a few times, and had given up, so I thought I'd try from Revelation backward. Even though I'd given my life to Christ, and had been attending church, there were still traces of my "big toe theory" in my belief system. As I read, God started unlocking his truth and renewing my mind.

I'd talk to my drug friends about what I read. Eventually, I came upon the verse in James that said "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more severely." and I had to

make a choice. Would I keep living, like I had been, or would I stop talking about the Bible? Luckily, God had instilled an addiction to the word of God, and it had become like a "fire in my bones" and I had to talk about it.

I decided there and then to give up. After a week of struggling, stopped taking drugs....not only that, but I quit cigarettes as well (I'd planned to give them up a month later), and I've never had one since. Finally, I was tasting repentance.

The only problem was, with the constant abuse to my brain, I had a psychotic relapse. This was the third one I had, the first when I first heard from God, the second when I had the bad trip before going to church. There were two differences between the first two and this one. The first two involve LSD where the third didn't (so don't try to tell me that there is nothing wrong with smoking pot:-). The third time I knew I had a problem, the first two, I thought everyone else had a problem.

After a while, I started having major side effects from my medication. Every muscle in my body would lock up, so my neck would be uncontrollably tilted and I'd walk around like a robot. This all began, after I asked travelling minister visiting our church to pray for me to be healed. Once my medication ran out, all this stopped, and I was healed. For the first time, I didn't have any form of hallucinations (I would always at least see strobing).

Within a month of cleaning up from drugs, I started cleaning up my life. I destroyed about \$2000 worth of CD's because these were the primary way that I formed by earlier belief system. I started to monitor what I watched on TV, and eliminated the radio completely (we didn't have any christian radio stations in Melbourne back then). My outer life was very clean, but inside...well, I had the best intentions.

I kept on like this for about 3 years, pioneering a youth group and personally discipling a number of young people (some of whom are in ministry today), but inside, my life was a void. I was thrown into ministry too early, and quickly became one of these preachers who's bible study consisted of preparing for Sunday's sermon and prayer life was what you did at the prayer meeting. I enjoyed the favour of man and was very influential in my denomination...but God was very far away. Then, all of a sudden, due to some unwise decisions, the rug was pulled out from under me. I had to step down from all ministry indefinitely (I was listening to "10 shekels and a shirt" this week, and let's just say that I was like the guy who had to hop in the trunk of the Cadillac, before I could be useful to God :-)).

Over the next 1 year. I was tested by God, as to whether I'd still serve him if he took my ministry away. I would see my youth at church every Sunday, and was unable to tell them why I had to abandon them (God has told me not to reveal publicly what happened, which is hard for me. But I have submitted it to key leaders, who have helped me through, by the grace of God). My pastor was running things, with the help of my events planning committee, so I had to be careful that I didn't paint him out to be the bad guy, who took their youth leader away. Everything that happened was the direct result of choices I made, not any decision made by another.

Around this time, I started working full time and got married to my darling wife, Rachael. Within a year of marriage, she was pregnant with our first child (an answer to prayer, as my wife was declared infertile). Just before Samuel was born, Rach had complications with the pregnancy. God had already revealed to me that he would be a boy, to name him Samuel and that he would be called to be a prophet (which had been repeatedly prophesied by a variety of people, who had never met him or us), so I began to pray for him every day, declaring the purposes of God over him.

Then the inevitable happened. I stumbled across an copy of both Finney's "Memoirs" and "Revival Lectures" and I knew that I had to buy them. I read the "Memoirs" in a matter of days, and was so inspired that I turned to "Lectures". Again, I was stopped by the challenge of "Lecture 3", repent or stop. Then I did what any "good christian" would do. I went around telling everyone else about it. Man, I was like Talkative in "Pilgrims Progress". Everyone lapped up my nice little "unproven theory" and was "challenged" by it.

I began to get opportunities to preach in churches again, and I thought, "Great! God has restored me." But, I was still spiritually bankrupt. Some of the youth that I used to lead asked me to disciple them. After all, "Things haven't been the same since you left." I allowed my pride to be stroked and agreed to mentor 3 guys. I felt pretty good, fed them a few lines from Ravenhill or Finney about how backslidden the church is and how we need to pray and change, if we want to see it change. Only I didn't apply it myself.

I gave one of the guys, who I saw as having huge promise, my copy of "Why Revival Tarries", and rather than "fire him up", it caused him to turn from God (to this day, he is cold to matters of faith). Years later I got the book back, and he had left some notes in it, that said "Man, I'm a worm. I'll never be able to please God." I had presented him with the "righteous requirement of the law" without grace, the power to attain it.

By the end of that year, I was retrenched from my job and had to make a decision. Would I get another job, or step out in to ministry? We had little to tie us down, my redundancy payment cleared out our debts and the lease on our house was about up, so the choice was ours...or should I say God's. He spoke to me clearly saying:

"Give yourself to business for five years. Serve in church as required, without committing to anything long term, but pray and bible study. Use this time to prepare yourself. If you can't be faithful to me in secular work, I can't use you in My work."

I took this as a cue to start my own business. I'm handy on a computer, so I started building web sites. After a while I worked out that was too hard to make money doing that, so I started fixing PCs.

During this time, I developed an interest in network gaming (the name CJaKfOrEsT was my MSN Zone handle - evolved

from trying to find a name that wasn't taken...now it's just a name that is UNLIKELY to be taken :-)). I poured literal hours into this pastime. Every spare moment I had, I'd log on to my favourite server and play. I'd justify it by saying to myself that it was my "mission field", but I never shared my faith with anyone.

Everything was going well, when we had our second child, Jasmine. Then everything went haywire. Sam was an easy baby. Slept through, easily occupied ... but Jaz. She cried constantly, bored easily and demanded constant attention. She was a heaven sent lesson in patient endurance. Over time, I started knocking back more and more work and cash was getting low. I decided to return to my old job, selling tools. When I left the tool game, I vowed never to come back, with all its corruption and crude characters (swearing and smut is the tradesman's tongue). The place I went to were good to me. They weren't christian, but they respected my belief and were open to biblical discussion, unlike any other place I'd worked, who'd persecute you for your beliefs. They also had a great deal of integrity, forbidding us to lie to customers (most places demand that you do).

I got to my 30th year and realised that I was not as close to God as I wanted to be. I wasn't praying regularly and I'd compromised on my arrangement with God to hold back from ministry. I'd tried and failed at running a home cell group. I was trying to mentor people again. My business had failed, and here I was where I started.

I'd been working at my job for a year, I got a job as a sales rep with one of our suppliers. It was a big step for me, as I'd never held a managerial position before. I knew the product alright, but time management was always a weak point in my life. I was still unfulfilled and getting increasingly more involved in my pseudo life as a gamer.

At the end of the year, I heard news that God told an intercessor, by the name of David Harney, to spend 10 days in prayer and fasting in Melbourne. He notified my pastor, who called the church to a time of prayer and fasting, with 11 hours a day of prayer meetings for 10 days. My first encounter with David was at a men's camp two years earlier. Dave owns a multi million dollar construction company in Queensland, that builds shopping centres and other big projects.

He was the speaker at the camp, and the blurb on the flyer talked only of his business ability. When David got up to speak, his message for the weekend could be broken down as this, "You don't pray enough", "You need to repent of all known sin" and "You don't use your money to fulfill eternal purposes" (And should I mention that he refuses to accept a love offering when he speaks?). When he talked, he hardly opened his bible, but almost nothing but scripture and application of scripture poured out of his mouth, and it was alive.

As Leonard Ravenhill puts it, "Groanings that can't be uttered can't be taught, they need to be caught." I couldn't get time off to go during the day, but I went to most of the night meetings. Because the meetings were so long and I'd get there in middle of it, I'd find myself walking into a roar of supplication raising up to heaven. The presence of God was so thick, you could almost cut it with a knife.

I talked a good friend of mine (who I was mentoring at one stage), Tim to come. At the end of one of the meetings, I was taking Tim home and as we talked, we realised that God had told both of us to stop gaming. The fact that both of us talked about it, when we would normally be talking about gaming together in a positive light. This strengthened our resolve to carry out what we had to do, and within days, we had both freed up gigabytes of HDD space on our PCs.

When the prayer times finished, Tim and I formed a pact to start praying together. We actually got together a couple of times, but then things happened and we got distracted. I started to cool off a bit, but I refused to give up on my pursuit of God. I pondered on my life and knew that in spite of my feeling spiritually bankrupt during my youth ministry days, I did have a constant awareness of God. I had always been told not to dwell on the former things, because "God wants to do a new thing". One day I had a little argument with God...and He put me in my place.

He let me know that he had already spelt out to me how to get out of my rut in the past, but I had not applied it. He also reminded me of His command, that I not focus on ministry, but on business for five years. This was all happening this year (2004) and my 5 year commitment ended at the end of 2005. He had positioned me into a place of management and my role involved a lot of time alone in a car. Essentially, God wanted me to stop feeding off of the world and trying to feed the church, and start feeding off of Him and feed the world.

I decided to unblock the "old wells" that I knew had the truth I needed. I had loaned both "Youth Aflame" and "Why Revival Tarries" out to people, but couldn't remember who to. So I started to search the net to see if I could find a digital copy of either, so I could read them. After all, I had recently acquired the program "E-Sword" (a freeware bible program), which had the full "E.M. Bounds on Prayer" on it. When I searched for "Youth Aflame" I came up with some excerpts, but when I searched for Ravenhill, I came up with a plethora of sites with mp3 downloads of his preaching.

All of a sudden, a new use for the net was discovered. I have been sitting under preaching that either lacked scriptural reference or didn't inspire me to deeper relationship. Now through sites like, SermonIndex and SermonAudio I could find preaching from the likes of Wilkerson, Ravenhill, Tozer, etc, that would help me to see God in His true nature, and inspire me to actually serve Him fully. I had to face the reality that the majority in the present day church, are content to sit under preaching that is actually pulling them back, because although it can be fundamentally scriptural, there is no challenge to actually apply it. If we don't apply the truth we know, we will be judged for working against the knowledge of God, so I had to find a way to actually apply God's truth. What better way, than to listen to people who actually lived the way I wanted to.

I started by downloading a lot of Wilkerson messages, and listening to them in my car during the day. This did two things,

It stopped me from listening to the radio, which was getting more and more antichristian as time went on, and was feeding my spirit my changing my thinking. I found that my thoughts were primarily scripture and I would, for the first time in a long while, read the Bible and have it make sense. I was deeply challenged during this time and knew that I must develop a consistent prayer life. It became a matter of urgency. I was struggling with the issues of sin making me feel like I wasn't welcome in God's presence, and not being able to overcome sin. I then started listening to Ravenhill's "Revival Series". In it, he stated that any minister, who spent less than 2 hours a day in prayer, wasn't worth much in the kingdom of God. I had already heard statements like this from Yonghi-Cho (going a step further to say that all Christians must pray 1 hour a day, ministers 3), but thought that it was too hard thing, and leadership that I would associate with would agree. But after hearing of the likes of Harney, Bounds, Ravenhill talking about his son Paul (who prayed 8 hours a day from the age of 16), Evan Roberts and the like, I thought that it must be possible. From then on, I have focused my energy toward a goal to be consistently spending 3 hours a day in prayer by the end of this year (2004) and try to find 2 people to will join me, each year (hey, I'm a big dreamer, who doesn't like doing things by halves :-)).

This all seemed impossible (and sometimes still does) as I was lucky to spend 15 minutes in prayer once every 3 months (being generous) outside of prayer times at church, before a song service or whatever. In March, I had a field day event to go to, which would take me away from home for 3 nights. I decided that I would spend this time alone, to deeply search my heart and deeply repent of any known sin I could find, by the grace of God. I got there and every night, to my shame, would get back to room exhausted, and watched the in house movie instead. On the last night, I got back and was determined to set my mind on the original task planned. I started by reading "How to overcome sin" by Finney (paraphrased by Keith Green). In it I read a profound statement:

Thus we see that the backslider and convicted Christian, when agonizing to overcome sin, will almost always try to use the works of law to obtain faith. They will fast and pray and read and struggle and outwardly reform, and thus endeavour to obtain grace. But all this is in vain and wrong. Do you ask, "Shall we not fast and pray and read and struggle? Shall we do nothing but sit down in cheap security and inaction?" I answer: You must do all that God commands you to do; but begin where He tells you to begin, and do it in the manner in which He commands you to do it. That is - in the exercise of that faith that works by love. (Gal. 5:6) Purify your hearts by faith. Believe in the Son of God! (1 John 5:10)

All of a sudden it all started to make sense. I realised that faith in God has to begin with faith in God. All this time I had been trying to put the proverbial cart before the horse. I'd neglected the fact that it is "by such grace (We) have been saved through faith. This does not come from you; it is the gift of God and not the result of works, lest anyone boast. I'd been spending so long thinking the problem was a lack of repentance, when I now had to face the fact that the problem was that I wasn't trusting God to convict and empower me to change (Rom 8:13).

This liberated me and my prayer life changed dramatically. I spend the entire time in the car either praying, or listening to downloaded sermons. Not only that, but my attitudes and actions started to become more Christ-like. For the first time I have assurance that I'm saved.....

**Re: If a CJaK fell in the fOrEsT....(Aaron's Testimony) - posted by rocklife (), on: 2004/5/2 2:20**

What an honest and profound soul-searching testimony. Thank you for sharing that. I encourage you to read (or listen on audio, etc) the words of Jesus every day and especially obey the words and example of our Lord Jesus (1 John 2:3-6). We all need encouragement to do that.

I pray God will help you grow and mature and keep you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

**Re: If a CJaK fell in the fOrEsT....(Aaron's Testimony) - posted by crsschk (), on: 2004/5/2 12:09**

I need a bigger dictionary...

Praise God brother!

What an incredible testimony, many similarities, many thoughts came back again to those drug induced days...all those things that are 'left out' in our testimonies.

Again, look at what the Lord is doing through **this site!** Oh brethren it is no small thing!

I have often wondered how the people reacted who sat under the preaching and teaching of these men like Tozer and Ravenhill at the time they were recorded. What was going on in the world at that time, often you get a sense by the world events that are mentioned. But how did they take it? Were they more serious then? Where they inspired?

All I know is, Thank you Lord! For preserving your Word in this way for us. The contrasts in teaching then and now for the most part...it almost seems like two different religions.

Let us be once again reminded to lift up the Lord's servant, Greg, who He has used so mightily in all that we are able to *free!*

**Miracles that follow the plow :: If a CJaK fell in the fOrEsT....(Aaron's Testimony)**

y hear, let us support him!

Sorry, it just kind of welled up in me...

Aaron, there is nothing so endearing than to hear the honest experiences of the Lords working in ones life. Many of us here have shared and came out of the same miry pit by Gods grace...Either the Lord has gathered quite a few ex-pot heads here or maybe the whole world is getting stoned and I didn't realize it....

Quote:  
-----Anyway, I thought to myself, maybe Jesus is real after all. A thought popped into my mind, 'I am!' I thought to myself 'Imagine if that was God.' Again the thought came, 'It is!' Then it occurred to me, God was revealing Himself to me. Right then, the hallucinations stopped!!  
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That sent chills...

Quote:  
-----I gave one of the guys, who I saw as having huge promise, my copy of "Why Revival Tarries", and rather than "fire him up", it caused him to turn from God (to this day, he is cold to matters of faith). Years later I got the book back, and he had left some notes in it, that said "Man, I'm a worm. I'll never be able to please God." I had presented him with the "righteous requirement of the law" without grace, the power to attain it.  
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I have to admit that at the time I first read this (WRT), I wasn't ready for it, I didn't go to the extreme of the person you mentioned (pray that the Lord will give him grace to understand)  
I also recall Greg mentioning at one time about reading...(?) alongside it, I don't recall now, but it was exactly that thought, that you need to balance it out with 'grace, the power to attain it'.  
It is a challenging thing, I think I miss judged Leonard Ravenhill early on, thought he was rather harsh, but I didn't understand where he was coming from until later on, after listening to him for awhile. Now I see that it was a burden he had for the Lord, for the state of the church, he deeply cared. If he was alive now....I shudder to think. Always reminded of "... and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man who was greatly distressed by the immoral conduct of lawless people- for as long as that righteous man lived among them, day after day he was being tortured in his righteous soul by what he saw and heard in their lawless actions-" 2Pe 2:7,8

Quote:  
-----All of a sudden it all started to make sense. I realized that faith in God has to begin with faith in God. All this time I had been trying to put the proverbial cart before the horse. I'd neglected the fact that it is "by such grace (We) have been saved through faith. This does not come from you; it is the gift of God and not the result of works, lest anyone boast. I'd been spending so long thinking the problem was a lack of repentance, when I now had to face the fact that the problem was that I wasn't trusting God to convict and empower me to change (Rom 8:13).  
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Awesome words, may we eat this scroll.

Aaron thanks so much for opening up your life and what the Lord has been doing through you, I believe it encourages others to do the same, to strip away all the pretenses and be honest before Him, who knows the intentions of our every thought and promises to help us, if we would just let Him.

May the Lord richly bless you brother!

**Miracles that follow the plow :: If a CJaK fell in the fOrEsT....(Aaron's Testimony)**

**Re: aaron's testimony - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2004/5/2 13:16**

Aaron, wow! Thanks for sharing! It seems many on here have come from "questionable " backgrounds. Myself included. This gives God all the more glory! Two things really stood out to me:

Quote:  
-----Then the inevitable happened. I stumbled across an copy of both Finney's "Memoirs" and "Revival Lectures" and I knew that I had to buy them. I read the "Memoirs" in a matter of days, and was so inspired that I turned to "Lectures". Again, I was stopped by the challenge of "Lecture 3", repent or stop. Then I did what any "good christian" would do. I went around telling everyone else about it. Man, I was like Talkative in "Pilgrims Progress". Everyone lapped up my nice little "unproven theory" and was "challenged" by it.  
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This is the sorry state of many Christians today. They do not live what they say. Hypocrisy-it is one of the biggest monsters in Christianity (or should I say religion?) Like you said earlier- a "teacher will be judged more harshly"- does make you think twice about living the faith out first before you can preach it.

Quote:  
-----I began to get opportunities to preach in churches again, and I thought, "Great! God has restored me." But, I was still spiritually bankrupt. Some of the youth that I used to lead asked me to disciple them. After all, "Things haven't been the same since you left." I allowed my pride to be stroked and agreed to mentor 3 guys. I felt pretty good, fed them a few lines from Ravenhill or Finney about how backslidden the church is and how we need to pray and change, if we want to see it change. Only I didn't apply it myself.  
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Can you imagine how many others (pastors, leaders, speakers) who are in the churches now, who are like you were before? This causes me great grief and concern to think of it. Not many will come to the place where you are to realize that hypocrisy will not be tolerated. Can you imagine the harm it is doing to the sheep amongst the churches now? Praise God that He has brought you this far and kept pursuing you even when you were not pursuing Him. Thank the Lord He uncovered your eyes. What a testimony of His grace.

Satisfied in Him alone, Chanin