

## **About the Author and Founder of Selah Life Ministries Wayne Vasilenko**

I was born again in 1972, the same year I was married to my wife Vera. At the time of this writing, we are approaching our 54th anniversary. Vera was not happy about my decision at first; she feared I would turn into one of those "Jesus Freaks" as enthusiastic Christians were called back in those days. Well for the next few months guess what she called me? During that time, I shared the Bible with her and after a while, she began to listen and ask questions.

About six months after I was saved, I went on a camping trip with a friend and while I was away my Aunt & Uncle, who were instrumental in leading me to the Lord visited with her and shared the Book of Revelation with her. She described that experience as feeling as though she was strapped to the chair she was sitting in. She said that she could not move as they talked and she was listening to every word. My Aunt and Uncle assured me they had not restrained her in any way, so I assume the Holy Spirit may have had something to do with that. They shared God's word with her for hours and when they shared what Jesus did for her, she snapped!

I came home later that evening after my Aunt & Uncle had left... I came home but my wife was no longer there. There was however, someone who looked like her, but she did not sound like her... This person sounded like... A "Jesus Freak!" Tears are welling up in my eyes as I am writing this. Thank You Lord... Thank You for Uncle Joe and Aunt Deloris! Thank You for my friend, Ray, a new Christian himself at the time who also helped me find Salvation in Jesus. Vera and I were now a Christian Family because of people who were willing to do what the Lord had instructed them to do... "Go out and make Disciples." Things didn't always go smoothly for us after that but we always eventually went back to the Bible when we were hurting or in trouble, and the Lord Never - Never let us down. My God - my Savior - Jesus... This is whom I want to share with you, and show you how not only how God has worked in my life but how he can work in yours.

## **About the Author and Founder of Selah Life Ministries**

### **Wayne Vasilenko**

My road to Salvation actually goes back to when I was a child. I was raised Catholic and Russian Orthodox. Most of my exposure to religion was in the Catholic Church, which was from my mother's side. My Dad was the Russian Orthodox "occasional attendee" which only took place on Christmas and Easter as far as I can recall. My Mom took me to church often and I remember as a child sitting with her in this huge church, St Mary's in Passaic, New Jersey, I remember listening to countless Hail Mary's and sermons in Latin. I recall that with certain key words or the ringing of a bell you were either supposed to stand, kneel, or recite some words but I could never understand what the words were... the people were never in unison so it just sounded like... well... noise. Then there were the Rosary Beads... I remember watching people manipulating those beads as if counting them and their lips were moving but they were not audible. I didn't learn a whole lot but I do remember the smell of the candles, I remember the statues and I especially remember under each window there were small dioramas of what I assume the Catholics call the "Stations of the Cross." I remember my eyes being fixed on the scenes of Jesus carrying the cross. I knew his name, but I didn't have a clue as to who He was, what He did, or how it related to me. What little I was able to comprehend always seemed to be focused on Mary who I knew was Jesus' mother but that's all I knew. It seemed to me that it was all about Mary... this is what I remember.

As I grew older, I was told about catechism. All of my cousins went to it and all of them to my knowledge eventually became Alter Boys. I remember watching them participate in some of the church services. I also remember their mothers always bragging about them hinting to me that this is something I too should be doing. For some reason my mother never pushed the issue, so I believe I was the only one on my mother's side of the family that never was an Altar Boy... as a matter of fact I never went to catechism. I suppose had I gone to catechism I would have understood more about the Catholic religion but that is now "water under the bridge." What is important is that that experience I had with the Catholic Church sparked a hunger to know more about this Jesus. When I was about 12 years old, I was determined to learn

## **About the Author and Founder of Selah Life Ministries Wayne Vasilenko**

about Him one way or another. I decided to read the Bible from cover to cover. I got through a few pages and a few "begats" before I gave up on that.

This taught me later in life why God uses people to spread the Gospel. Although I gave up on the reading from cover-to-cover idea another Biblical truth eventually was fulfilled... "Those who seek God will find Him." God placed various people in my life, and over time, enough seeds were planted until some started taking root. I had many questions, but I don't recall getting any answers until I was confronted by the Bible through these people set in my path... people who said they had "Found God" as opposed to people who only talked about their religion. Most people would think that if you have "religion" you would find God. I learned early on, as I was exposed to the Bible, that that is not necessarily true. I learned that you could have one without the other; in fact, that is usually how it ends up... one or the other. Jesus' biggest adversaries were the religious people!

Becoming a Christ Follower usually comes at a cost. I found this out in a personal way after years of searching for the truth about God. As I mentioned before, my mom is the one in my family that gave me exposure to God... my Dad... he never said much about it. I remember him taking me to a Russian Orthodox Church on a few holidays... I think one was in New Jersey and we would sometimes go to one in New York. I do not remember much except for spending time with my dad. I mentioned the sermons in Latin in the Catholic Church... well try to imagine a Russian talking in Latin... In Russian! You know what I mean... I didn't have a clue what they were saying! All I know is I didn't get anything out of it at all.

After I grew older, I went into the family business with my dad and eventually became a partner. This is how I met my friend Ray, who was instrumental in leading me to Jesus. We hired Ray on recommendation from my sister who worked with the woman Ray would marry. At the beginning of my story, I mentioned Uncle Joe (my Dad's younger brother) and Aunt Deloris whom he married. My Aunt Deloris was the one who ultimately brought Jesus to the Vasilenko family. She was a Christian and lead Uncle Joe to the Lord. This caused resentment from the others on that side of the family and I remember being warned by my dad not to listen to them. However, I admit I

## **About the Author and Founder of Selah Life Ministries Wayne Vasilenko**

was disobedient... I did listen; I listened because I always knew deep inside there was something more concerning Jesus. They all seemed to have some answers and so I listened. Ray was a new Christian and a Zealous one at that. He was constantly bringing up the Bible and Jesus. He and I would go at it for hours each day, me with endless questions, and Ray with quotes from the Bible... it drove my dad crazy! If it were not for the fact that Ray was such a good and reliable worker he would have fired him.

At the same time, my aunt and Uncle reinforced what Ray was saying to me. I had lot of questions and misconceptions about God but I also had a desire to know Him too. Uncle Joe invited me to a Bible study and so I went. This was the end of the relationship with my dad and Uncle Joe for many years. After about a year of debating with Ray and my aunt and uncle, I finally gave in to Grace and accepted Jesus as my Savior. When I told my dad what I had done he replied, "I thought you were stronger than that." This also knocked me down to Black Sheep status on both sides of the family except for my mom. She seemed to be pleased in a way, but she dared not say that to my dad. Life went on... I grew in the Lord and eventually the family reconciled to a degree. My dad eventually got to a point where he would listen occasionally when I spoke of God or the Bible, but he never made any changes in his beliefs to my knowledge.

When my dad passed away, I cried like a baby... when my mom passed away, I didn't cry at all. I don't know where my dad is right now... that is why I cried. My Mom however, I know is in heaven with the Lord. I know this because she had the correct answer to this simple question: "If you were to be standing before God and He asked, "Why should I let you into heaven, what would you say?" She had the correct answer! What would your answer be? The correct answer can be found within this book among other places. If you're not sure... Seek and You Will Find It!