

Falling to Heaven

It was just another hot August night to the four men and myself who were all set to make a routine parachute jump. Flying conditions were poor, due to the combination of intense heat and high humidity. I wasn't concerned though, I was a professional skydiver and had worked in a demonstration team before crowds of thousands. Not all in the plane were as relaxed as I was. It was one man's first jump; for another it was only his fourth. Skydiving was my life - nothing else mattered. It had won my heart since I witnessed a display by a Parachuting School. The progression, from my first jump to my first free - fall, was rapid. I was obsessed - no amount of time or money was too much to spend. Eventually I was jumping with some of the world's best skydivers. I would witness to people in bars, trying to convert them to my passion... I even had a bumper stickers. Old friends were concerned that I was going overboard, but I didn't care. I was 100% committed to skydiving, and knew I was in complete control of my life. That night, with a full load of six, the plane cleared the runway, going well over a 100 miles per hour. Suddenly, without any warning, the engines totally failed. The pilot turned to me and said "We're going down!" The plane plunged towards the earth, and impacted where the wing joined the fuselage. It then spun, cart - wheeling over the wings, and I slammed into the ground. I was flung forward, smacking my face against the hard interior wall. Injured and in a shock, three skydivers escaped the wreckage and ran. A fourth also exited. He saw the pilot and myself moving and assumed that we were escaping also. As he left the plane burst into flames - the fuel tank had ruptured and, as the plane spun gasoline splashed everywhere. Terrified, he bolted, screaming, and suddenly realized that we were still inside the plane. Running back into the flaming wreckage, he saw me, aflame from head to toe, trying to free my leg which was trapped in a hole where the wing had been. He yelled for the pilot to unbuckle, and attempted to pull me loose. But I was Stuck! I was born in 1949 in Cleveland, Ohio, during the 'happy days' era, and I grew up with attitudes reflecting the mood of the society. I lived for the things I desired, and life was something that wasn't meant to be taken seriously. I went to church every Sunday (my family were Roman Catholics), so I was endowed with a knowledge of God. However I had never encountered anyone who knew him personally. As I grew older, I began to entertain concepts other than Biblical ones, relating to the universe, creation, and eternity. I turned away the simplicity of the gospel which had a relevant factor in my life (though I had never been converted), and became involved in usual teenage lifestyle of dating and sports. After graduating from high school, I talked my way into a job in a stockbroker's firm. By then I thought I was a big shot and really had it together! People were amazed at what I had accomplished. At eighteen years of age I was really going places. I worked in downtown Cleveland in a modern, progressive office surrounded with many attractive people: my job was fun, very challenging and exciting. Outwardly I was a confident, attractive young man - the life of the party. Inwardly though I was driven by fear - fear of not measuring up, of failing. I was always seeking the approval of other people. Though I appeared to have it all together, I was actually living on the very edge of desperation. I was Desperate! Ablaze from head to toe, and trapped in the wreckage, unable to wrench myself free! My rescuer's second attempt succeeded, as well as with greater than human strength, he pulled so hard he tore me loose. Dragging me from the plane, he threw me on the ground and rolled me around to put the fire out. It took several attempts as the fire kept re-ignited. When finally he'd stopped the flames, he turned back for the pilot but it was too late. The pilot had been burnt to death. I lay on the ground, severely injured. The skin on my arm and hand was falling off onto the ground like that of a fried chicken. There was also a serious cut on my face. I asked how badly I was burned and the comment was, with all the smoke, they could not tell. Actually they were convinced that I would never make it off the field. When the medics cut off what remained of my clothing, they saw that I had sustained very serious third - degree burns over a third of my body. Although I was young, extremely healthy and very athletic, the prognosis was bad: I had no chance of survival, especially as burns to the extent that I had received often lead to severe complications - and they did. In the days and weeks that followed, my entire body became infected. and I dropped in weight from 167 pounds of solid muscle to 90 pounds. My body became thin and wasted, and open sores developed that exposed my very bones. The back side of my heels rotted away and my hand was so badly infected they expected to amputate it. I was in tremendous pain. There were excruciating external ulcers and an internal ulcer from the over-secretion of gastric juices that burned a hole in my stomach. This caused a lot of internal bleeding. A third of my oesophagus was destroyed and it scarred together so that I could not even drink water. My blood was infested with micro-organisms and there were days when I had blood loss of its much as ten pints - almost the entire volume of the human body. I also had a head injury and a contusion of my brain. My body was fighting its hardest as it could against death, but it was a losing battle. Each one of my complications was enough to kill a person. I was blind in my right eye. As time went on my body became rigid, and the nerves in both my legs died. My muscles became flaccid, and my feet curled up like withered claws over the end of the bed. The doctors had done all they could - given me medicine, cleansed my sores and treated me in every way they knew how. They even called in an expert from University Hospitals in Cleveland. Several years later I read the summary of his medical examination. There were many big words describing how sick I was, and then he wrote, "There is nothing, I can offer this young man!" So finally they gave me up to die! Part of the time I was unconscious, and there was no visible response. There were other times when I was as alert as I am now. Often, I was somewhere between these two states. Most of all I remember being very sick and could actually feel my life draining out of me like someone throwing switches in a switch box. As I lay dying, my temperature reached a high of 106 degrees. I was so uncomfortable that if someone laid even their hand on the bed, I would cringe with suffering. My whole body was racked with agony, every cell stressed out; yet as I lay there I could sense that my body was still fighting to Survive. During this Time I had a life changing experience. In an instant the physical world vanished and my inner man came out of my physical body. I was no longer in the hospital room - I had entered into the realm of the spirit. Immediately I became aware of two things: that the spiritual world is the real world and the absence of the sensory perception of time. It was awesome! I found myself traveling somewhere and had no control over this. Suddenly, there appeared to be a doorway closing. A great darkness began to surround me, and I saw this was actually a point of separation. Coming through the closing space was a

beam of the purest whitest light I had ever seen. The doorway began closing faster and faster. The meaning of this separation became illuminated to me. I knew that if this door would close completely, I would be cut off for all eternity from this light. I experienced a deep hopelessness and horror. Separation is hopelessness! External separation is a torment beyond belief. I want you to know there is a place established somewhere that is eternal separation. I was permitted to not only see, but to experience the feeling of what it would be like to be in this eternal separation. And I began to cry out to God. I have been asked, "Were You a Christian when this happened?" The night they brought me into the emergency room, although I do not remember, I asked my mother to send for a priest I had known in the past. He came quickly to my side, anointed me with oil and prayed for me. A repentance process began at this time. As I was lying there, very injured, sick unto death. I cried out, "God, I'm sorry! Please give me another chance!" Many times I went through the swinging doors into surgery, not knowing if I would wake up, and this knowledge started something inside of me. I did not know how to pray, but I begged God for forgiveness. As I stood on the very edge of eternity with this door closing and the darkness beginning to envelope me. I knew that in one second I could be separated for eternity from the source of all Life! And I began to scream out the same things as I had prayed when I was awake, "God, I want to live! I'm sorry! Please give me another chance!" The grace and the mercy of God is beyond our comprehension! Instantly I was caught up into Heaven; what a contrast! Eternal hopelessness compared to eternal love and comfort. I knew now I would never die. I had a deep awareness of eternal life - and was assured absolutely that I would always be comforted and cared for. The Bible says, "in His presence is the fullness of joy and at His right hand are pleasures unveiled by the realities of this life." The glory and power of God was everywhere over me, under me, around me, vibrating through me. Then the Lord began to reveal to me future events. I saw seconds, days, weeks, months and years go by in front of me - all connected together. I did not see just one day here and there and skip to another. I saw time - I do not know how God does this, but He has the ability. I saw myself seeing people I never knew as if I did know them, it was as if I was watching something on television. Some of the events were greatly magnified in my vision: then I would go on to something else, at times I saw myself doing some dumb things that I should not be doing and wanted to call out to myself. "Don't do that!" But I had to just watch, and then the scene would go onto something else. The Lord told me that I was coming back to earth. He did not speak in a language like I'm using now, but the knowledge and awareness that I was being sent back just came to me. Immediately as if someone had strings and was reeling me in like a kite. I began to travel back to the life I had come from and as I settled into my physical body. I Could actually feel my spirit pressing through my flesh. Can you imagine what it would feel like to be the wind blowing through the leaves of a tree? This, as I imagine it, is similar to what I experienced at that time as my spirit meshed into my flesh. Suddenly, I could see again out of my physical eyes and hear out of my physical ears. As I began to return to normal consciousness. I realized that I was speaking in it beautiful language, and wondered what was happening. As soon as I had this thought the language stopped. and I became aware that I was alive: the temperature of 106 degrees was broken, and I fell into a natural sleep for the first time since the injury. When I woke up several hours I was sticking painfully to the sheets from the blood and sweat, but was resting in it sea of peace! For the first time in my life, I knew what true peace was. The doctors had no idea of my experience and so were still waiting for me to die - but I did not! I was still very sick and, by their understanding, should have died. But as the days went by my condition continued to improve. although the nerves in both my legs were still dead, and the doctors were adamant I would never walk again. The Next Year was spent almost Continuously in the hospital, followed by a further four years in and out of medical institutions. It was a very long haul! I had between 75 and 100 operations and went through some very strange things: until I learned I had the right to protest, some of the plastic surgeons did experimental procedures. But, by and large, people did the best they could to take care of me. I did not understand what had happened to me spiritually. I was saved, born-again and filled with the Spirit, yet unaware of what these things meant. There was nothing in my previous experience or understanding to help me relate to what was happening, to me spiritually. I began to heal, slowly at first. One leg began to return to usefulness; the other remained unresponsive. The nerve that ran down the front of my leg was quite dead; it would not respond when tests of electrical impulses were applied to it. The muscle was muscle was totally flaccid and the foot hung down - I could not move it. They fitted me with a leg brace, expecting the condition to be permanent. After nearly a year, this leg was instantly healed - it was marvelous! I had begun speaking to my legs every day saying, "Legs go!" and though the right leg was obedient, the left leg was continually rebellious. It never submitted to my command. Then one day as I did this, my left foot popped up, and I was walking - it was quite an experience! I took off my leg brace and threw it away, never to touch it again. I have had many marvelous healings. Around five years after the accident, sight was restored in my blind eye. Though there was a surgical procedure involved, this was still unexplainable by the doctors. They were convinced it would not be successful, and for some time even refused surgery as they felt it would be a waste of a cornea that someone else could use. It was only at my continued insistence that the surgery went ahead - and the result was sight! One event was very funny. My oesophagus had been destroyed - the food could not enter my stomach so, along with the other conditions, I was dying of starvation. So a rubber hose was placed in my stomach, and I was fed through this with blended food. To repair the condition, a procedure began that stretched out my oesophagus. Twice a week they attached a chrome bullet-like object with a long tube on the end filled with mercury, tied to a string and pulled it down my throat and through my oesophagus. Consequently, I had this green string sticking out of my nose. On the day the Lord healed my leg. I was in a rehabilitation center where everyone knew me as a guy with lots of problems. My doctor took me to every doctor in charge of every department and would say, "We did a new procedure in surgery today." Then he would pull the string and I would kick my leg out. It was hilarious! Today I enjoy life! I play with my children, run, snow ski and ride horses. This is marvelous considering I was never expected to walk again. It is incredible to have this life style now. When there was so much taken away. Due to my burn injuries I'm a pretty funny looking guy now, but by the grace of God I till relatively unself conscious, amazingly for someone who's been so vain. I'd like to take this opportunity to

note how there is a natural tendency, even among Christians, to function in our own strength. I know what it's like - that's how I used to live before my accident. But now I know what it's like to be weak, totally bankrupt of strength and devoid of any possibility of helping myself. There was no help in this world for me. There was not a doctor that could fix me: my loved ones could do nothing. However there were relatives who'd never met me, who were supernaturally led to pray for me. The strength of God was poured through their intercessory hearts, and through the power of God, death was defeated! I would not recommend my experience to anyone, yet it taught me the utter importance of living by God's strength. We all need to make the conscious decision to stop relying on our own abilities and to live by the strength of God

About the Author

After surviving severe burns resulting from an airplane crash while skydiving, Mickey Robinson had a "Death's Door" experience and spiritual rebirth that radically changed his life. During the long period of time required to recover, he not only received several miraculous healings, but also struggled with finding his purpose in life.

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