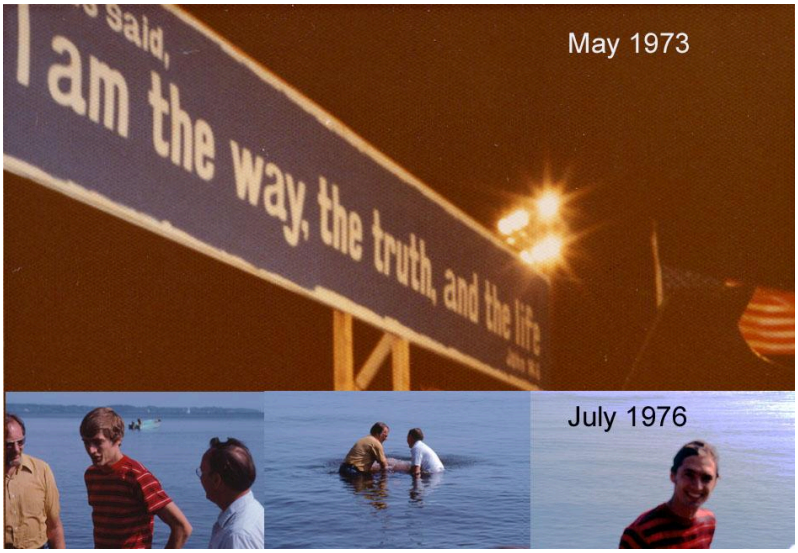
Becoming Christian

Until first grade, I was Catholic, because my father was. After he died, I was Methodist because my parents went to a Methodist church. In high school, I joined a youth group and went to a local Methodist church on my own (where I met my future wife, Pat). In college, God was not part of my life. After college, in 1969, Pat and I moved to Vermont and looked for a church to attend, but never really did. It wasn't until 2 years later when I was at Navy Officer Candidate School in Newport, RI and Pat was in St Louis having our first child that we both began to wonder if there was more to the Christian life than we had experienced growing up.

After OCS, we ended up in Guam where an officer I was replacing happened to be leading a Bible study. We both started attending. Eventually, Pat realized her need for Christ and accepted His will for her life. Me? Well, it took a little longer. Initially, during the group study, I sometimes hid another God-related book inside the Bible I was holding. I didn't understand the Bible enough for its words to make sense to me. Besides, how would I know if what it was saying was true? The stuff about turning away from your sinful life and freeing yourself from guilt or the consequences of your sins didn't make sense. For one, I didn't think I had a sinful life. And second, I didn't feel guilty about anything. Why should I bring God and Jesus into my life?



"There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death." Proverbs 14:12

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life.'" John 14:6

As I searched for reasons to believe, one thing that stood out was the resurrection. Surely anyone who can rise from the dead must be from a "creator" level of existence – from the same source as the God who created me. But, I couldn't believe that just because the Bible says it's true. So I started reading anything I could find to validate the resurrection. Everything I read was about those who tried to disprove it and ended up believing it, including scientists and doctors using historical and medical data. I was convinced it happened. So in May 1973, I publicly declared my faith at a Grady Wilson crusade on Guam.This photo of the crusade on Guam and my later baptism in Lake Champlain (along with its caption) have been a mainstay on my bulletin board, reminding me of when my "new life" began.

So now I believed, but what do I believe? The Bible became the source of my knowledge about God. The more I read about Jesus, the more I saw his superhuman insight and love. His thoughts were beyond mortal. After more Bible study, I began to see the big picture woven throughout the Bible: how God created us to love him and others, and what our response should be. I'm still learning and growing.

After Pat died, I began to jot down some of my thoughts regarding being a Christian. What is that central theme running through the Bible? How might this theme play out? How do we love? Perhaps my thoughts at vtpierces.net/God could be useful to someone else wondering like I did back at OCS: *There must be more to the Christian life than just going to church.*

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