

I Would Look Up

When I was at university, I went through a period of depression where I lost my self-confidence and any sense of self-worth. I went to church and saw all these Christians who seemed to be self-confident, talented and outgoing. I thought this is what you had to be to be a good Christian. How could I be a good Christian when I was the complete opposite, no self-confidence, no talents and introvert.

I became very angry with God. Why had a so-called loving creator been so perverse as to create someone like me. I told Him I was giving up on Him and would not go to church any more.

I don't know why, but I went to church the following Sunday. The sermon was based on the hymn 'I Would Be True'. The minister came to the line 'I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift'. I don't know why, but that line seemed to hit me like a thunderbolt. It was as if God was saying, if you will just look up, I will show you things you can do to make a difference in people's lives. The hymn didn't specify conditions like you must be talented or extrovert to do this. The only condition was the need to look up. This changed my outlook on life.

I have not always remembered this line of the hymn, but when I have, I have found opportunities to laugh, love and lift. This is what is important in life.

There is a post-script to this story. A few years ago, our church introduced a 'Mission Prayer' and encouraged us to live this prayer daily. The prayer says, 'God, where will your Spirit lead today? Help me to be fully awake and ready to respond. Grant me courage to risk something new and become a blessing of your love and peace. Amen.'

I was immediately struck by the fact that the message of this prayer was essentially the same as the line in the hymn that I have been talking about. This confirmed to me the truth of my original experience. It confirmed that we can all make a difference, no matter who we are, as long as we are just willing to look up and be ready to respond to God's Spirit.

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