

## ***What I Believe & Why***

***Samuel Smiles (1812-1904) — “The greatest results in life are usually attained by simple means and the exercise of ordinary qualities. Great results cannot be achieved at once, and we must be satisfied to advance in life as we walk step by step.”***

***This is my path to discovering what I believe about God and science. I know both are real.***

***A much younger me thought God and science were in conflict. They are not. Both play essential roles in understanding our world, who we are, and where we are going. My path may make sense for you, too.***

***The Bible encouraged me to create this document.***

- ***Jeremiah 30:1-2 “Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you.”***
- ***1 Peter 3:15: “To those who ask, be prepared to explain why hope lives in you. Respond with gentleness and respect.”***

### ***Timeline Events***

***I enrolled at the University of North Carolina, hoping to obtain a Bachelor of Science in pre-dentistry. I loved all science courses: biology, botany, anthropology, geology, psychology, everything—except organic chemistry and math.***

*My grades could have been better, and I needed more discipline to power through, but I did take or audit a lot of science. I listened, learned, and partied my way out the door. It took two years to admit to my family I was wasting their money and failing to reach my goal.*

*I dropped out of UNC at the end of my sophomore year in 1971. I had not yet met my best friend and future wife, Terri. I was 19 and proud to label myself an atheist despite attending church every week with my family for as long as I could remember.*

*UNC had created an atheist who liked to party. Tune-in and drop-out were things during the late 1960s and early 1970s.*

*Science and having a good time had become my religion. It explained the world I lived in and where I stood in it. I dropped out of UNC and focused on the physical world. Things unseen were not part of my awareness.*

*Family members had worked on a different plan long before I went to UNC. My grandmother Alexander (1892-1992) told me several times that the Lord allowed her to keep living to pray for me and all her grandchildren. My sister Oleda told me she heard our mother (Ruth Godfrey Alexander 1932-2004) praying for me by name.*

*Meeting Terri in August 1971 and marrying her in 1975 were my first steps back to God. This was not understood or known to me or Terri at the time.*

*Her love was unconditional. We didn't relate our love to God or anything spiritual until many years later. We wanted to be better for each other and our children. The Bible tells us repeatedly that God is love, love comes from God, and God's love surpasses our knowledge and understanding.*

*Terri's love opened the door to a closer relationship with my mother and father (Clyde Bayne Alexander 1929-2015). I think Ruth saw Terri as an angel. She told me multiple times she no longer worried about me after Terri came into my life. Her prayers had been heard and answered.*

*In early January 2004, my mother was placed under hospice care. She was dying from breast and bone cancer. Her mobility was gone, and she lived in a hospital bed for about ten days in the family room. This allowed her to visit with family and friends who stopped by to see her.*

*I took time off to stay with my parents. The hospice nurse explained the coming timeline of death, what to look for, and how to administer pain meds so she would not suffer. She died the evening of January 9th while I was holding her hand. My family was with her, singing old hymns when she died. Seeing her faith,*

*acceptance, and death was another step back to God. Things unseen were actively influencing my life.*

*I saw God's grace in my father and my son, Chris. My father had a stroke in 2007 that left him unable to speak or control the right side of his body. His mind was clear, and he still could understand and laugh at jokes. He could respond to yes/no questions, and he read his Bible daily.*

### *A Little Science*

*Before my father's stroke, I read a synopsis of a National Institute of Health study showing shorter hospital stays for patients prayed for. The double-blind, randomized study used about 4,000 adult patients with bloodstream infections. They measured mortality, fever duration, and length of hospital stay.*

*Mortality was about the same for both groups, but the intervention group (those prayed for) had significantly shorter lengths of stays and fever duration.*

*This gave me an idea. On a visit to see my father, I privately told him about Chris' addiction to alcohol. I asked my father to pray for Chris. The year was 2009 or 2010.*

### *More Timeline Events*

*Within a year or two of this request, Chris entered a treatment program and overcame his addiction. I*

*entirely credit my father's prayers and the self-determination they created in Chris. This happened in January 2012—more evidence of unseen steps back to God.*

*In February 2013, I had a heart attack. A stent was placed in an artery feeding my heart. My doctor said I had additional blockages and might need bypass surgery. That decision was to be made after I recovered from the heart catheterization.*

### *More Science*

*Luckily, Terri recalled a book I had purchased a couple of years earlier: How to Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease by Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn. We had moved into our Rabun Gap home in July 2012 and still had packed boxes in the garage. Terri found the book within hours of my release from the hospital.*

*We both switched to the diet recommended and lost over 50 pounds each. I was able to avoid additional heart surgery. A year after my stent, the doctor could no longer find evidence of heart arterial blockage. God's grace healed my heart and allowed me to avoid additional surgery.*

### *More Timeline Events*

*In late 2013 and throughout 2014, Terri and I realized her father and mother (Joe Andrews, 1929-2015, and Joyce Wood Andrews, 1932-2022) were struggling with*

*health issues. Joyce had been slowly succumbing to dementia, and Joe was her caregiver. This was a heavy load for Joe, and he told us something happened to him in 2013 that hurt his health. We eventually discovered he had several mild strokes that continued into 2014.*

*In September 2014, we helped Joe and Joyce move into an assisted living facility near their home in Charlotte. Joe died in January 2015, and Joyce was forced into the memory care area of the same facility.*

*Before Joe's death, his health steadily declined to the point of living in a wheelchair and having trouble talking. Sitting outside or looking out his room window were his favorite activities. We often witnessed him looking up toward the Sun with his eyes closed. Sometimes, he'd hold his arm up as if reaching out.*

*That same year, in December 2015, my father died. He had been in the hospital for about three weeks trying to recover from pneumonia. None of the treatments were working, and he began getting weaker. He eventually was moved into the hospital's in-house hospice unit.*

*Several times, we saw him communicating with unseen people or things. He would smile and chatter away while looking up toward the corner of the ceiling and wall. We could not understand what he was saying.*

*We asked him if he was talking to our deceased mother or grandmother. He indicated no.*

*After my father's death, Terri heard a similar story from one of her friends. The friend's father had recently died, and he, too, said he had debates or conversations with angels. He wanted to die, but the angels told him it was not time.*

*My younger brother Ray died of lung cancer in May 2020. I was able to talk to him the day before he died. His wife Faye was with him, and just before dying, he asked Faye if she could see our mother, Ruth. Faye told him she could not but was glad Ruth was there with him.*

*My mother-in-law Joyce died in October 2022. She was in an assisted living memory care facility in Charlotte. She was calm and kind but struggled to remember where she was and who her daughters were.*

*In early October, she took a turn for the worse. Her needs required skilled nursing or hospice. We were exploring multiple options. During one of our visits, Joyce was lucid and talked about a recurring dream; she kept seeing a little boy. She was unable to give us details. We suspect she was dreaming about her fraternal twin (a boy) who died during childbirth.*

*More unseen steps back to God's unconditional love and grace.*

### *Near Death Experiences*

*NDE videos helped me understand what I had witnessed as family members died. I began collecting and saving NDE videos found on YouTube. Many had similar stories that included some or all of the points below.*

- *They met family members, guides, Jesus, or someone unknown as they were dying.*
- *They communicated with those they met.*
- *They were unafraid.*
- *They felt an overwhelming sense of love and peace.*
- *They had complete understanding.*
- *They had life reviews.*
- *They didn't want to return to their body.*
- *They had no fear of future death.*

*Paulo Coelho - "Rarely do we realize that we are in the midst of the extraordinary. Miracles occur all around us, signs from God show us the way, Angels plead to be heard."*

*Sir Walter Scott - "Is death the last sleep? No, it is the final awakening."*

*Elie Wiesel - "Eternity's the place where questions and answers become one."*

*Several examples can be found on YouTube. See below.*

*Life After Death Experience (NDE) with Steve Gardipee*



*All of a sudden, I saw Myself Lying There - Julia Fischer.*



***I Died, Went to Heaven, and Came Back! Dr Mary Neal***



***How A Woman Found Faith Through Her Near-Death***



## ***More Timeline Events & Helpful Books***

***In late 2017, I was diagnosed with follicular non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. After my diagnosis, I purchased the book Radical Remission Surviving Cancer Against All Odds by Kelly A Turner, Ph.D.***

***Yoga instructor Kelly Turner volunteered to counsel cancer patients while in graduate school. Having just read the book Spontaneous Healing by Dr. Andrew Weil, she became curious about the frequency of spontaneous remission. She wondered if these magical remissions had any common factors. She found nine common factors in spontaneous cancer healing. They are:***

- ***Radically changing your diet,***
- ***Taking control of your health,***
- ***Following your intuition,***
- ***Using herbs and supplements,***
- ***Releasing suppressed emotions,***
- ***Increasing positive emotions,***
- ***Embracing social support,***
- ***Deepening your spiritual connection and***
- ***Have a strong reason for living.***

***Turner found several of these factors present in every radical remission she researched. I had already modified my diet after my heart attack. I added herbs and supplements, started meditating, and tried to deepen my spiritual connections. I began praying and reading my bible every morning.***

*I modified my prayers to focus on others: those I love, those I know, extended family members, and those suffering from disease or fear. Like my grandmother and mother, praying for my family gave me something to live for and increased my positive emotions. God was finally back in the forefront of my life.*

*I began chemotherapy in May 2018 and continued treatment through the first quarter of 2020. Currently, there's no cure for my cancer, but it remains in remission as of February 2026. I still see my oncologist every six months.*

*Another book I read during this period was The Case For Christ by Lee Strobel. Strobel has a Master of Studies in Law from Yale and spent most of his career as an investigative journalist for the Chicago Tribune.*

*Strobel used criminal investigative techniques while examining all the evidence about Jesus Christ. The book analyzes Jesus' claim to be 'the Son of God' and researches everything about his life, miracles, crucifixion, and resurrection. The best chapter is the last: Conclusion, The Verdict of History. This book has changed many lives. I highly recommend it.*

## *More About Science*

*The second law of thermodynamics says entropy (decay) increases with time. Things wear out; we all grow older and weaker. Everything seen in our world will pass away. Us, our property, our story, all of it is temporary.*

*We can create offspring, new stories, new monuments, and new adventures, but each, in turn, gives way to entropy. Many stories and monuments have existed for thousands of years. Ancient ancestors spent hours, maybe years, carving messages and images in rock. But even rock is subject to entropy. Rock turns into sand.*

*Quantum physics has something called the Observer Effect. At its core, the Observer Effect means observing a quantum property changes that property. It's as if photons and electrons somehow know they're being watched. They immediately stop or change their behavior.*

*Perhaps this is why a young man or woman can feel connected to a member of the opposite sex with a glance. This may be why complimenting strangers can change their lives or lift their spirits. Our bodies relax, and awareness grows when we focus on gratitude and love instead of envy, hate, or fear.*

*Philippians 4 tells us to focus on things that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent or praiseworthy. When we do, the God of Peace will be with us.*

*Looking at what we want or like, is where we go. It's what we create. Focus on something, and you'll expand it. If it's terrible, you'll make your life and the world a little worse. If it's a good thing, your life and your world will get a little better.*

*Everything we do affects the world, the people we love, and those who love us. Small gestures can have significant impacts, and they can also have negative consequences. A Bible verse from a friend or a sister can open a door or lift the spirit of someone with cancer.*

*Proverbs 27:17: "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."*

*2nd Corinthians 4:16 & 18 say, "Do not lose heart. Our outer self is wasting away, but our inner self is being renewed day by day. What is seen is temporary. What is unseen is eternal. So fix your eyes on what is unseen."*

*These verses sound like science. They explain exactly how my life progressed. A younger me focused on the temporary 'seen.' Despite this, my family called on power beyond my physical reality to change my heart and move me in a different direction. Year by year, prayer by prayer, my awareness shifted toward the*

*eternal unseen.*

*My outer self may be wasting away, but my inner self is being renewed day by day, step by step, prayer by prayer.*

*In Matthew, Jesus said: “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”*

*So I pray: I can endure anything, Lord, as long as You are near. Give me the wisdom to seek You in every trial and the courage to follow wherever You lead.*

*John 1:4: “In Him (Jesus) was life, and that life was the Light of men.”*

*John 8:12: “I (Jesus) am the Light of the world. He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life.”*

*1st Thessalonians 5:4-5: “You brethren (us) are not in darkness.....You are children of Light.”*

*Romans 8:38-39: “Neither death nor life—nor things present—nor things to come—shall be able to separate us from the love of God.”*

*Psalms 56:3: “When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You.”*

*Elisabeth Elliot - 2014 Lord, give me a quiet heart That does not ask to understand But confidently steps forward in the darkness guided by Thy hand.*

*Psalm 31:5: "Into Your hands, I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth."*

*I pray that you, too, find peace and strength in God's eternal truth, love, and presence—where Light came into being.*

*Wesley B. Alexander*