

GUT SHOT

I suddenly woke up panting and in a sweat. I turned, grabbing my girlfriend's arm to wake her, "I've just dreamt that I'd been shot in the stomach." She didn't seem too concerned and rather casually replied, "O yeah, good on ya," and went back to sleep.

Two nights later, I had exactly the same dream and once again woke up panting and in a sweat. "I just dreamt I've been shot in the guts again," I exclaimed. This time she took me more seriously. Then things got strange.

On Christmas Eve, (another two nights). I went around to a mates place for a few beers. On the way, I was hoping I wouldn't get gut shot. As we drank and talked, my mate was playing around with a shotgun, then,

BOOM!!

I immediately stood up and saw blood; I ran outside shouting, "Phil, you ##\$?*&%, you've shot me!"

At first it didn't seem too bad, but soon, I felt blood running down my leg. I started walking toward a hospital nearby, but By the time I got out to the street, I started going down. I thought I'll soon find out where you go when you die, but I wasn't too worried.

Others came to help and after loading me into the back of their van, drove me to the hospital. I heard the doctors whispering and knew it was bad. I had pellets in my mouth, in my stomach, legs, hand, face and right ear.

After they removed the gunshot, I had an incision and staples from the top of my groin to my chest. I thought I was going to die of pain. I laid awake in agony for three days before the nurse discovered the morphine drip was improperly installed. Then, with a shot, I slept for two days. I kept wondering why I had dreamt I was going to get shot? Was it some kind of premonition? I didn't give God a thought, because to me Christians were little more than a bunch of hypocrites who just loved to get dressed up on Sundays!

I wasn't all that angelic myself.

I had started smoking cigarettes at around nine and had my first joint at fifteen. I played around with motorbikes and guns, preferring the outdoor life. I was a failing student (except in math), and left high school at seventeen. I only stayed in school that long because it was easier than carting hay or working in the wool-shed. Most of my boyish pranks were restricted to occasionally doing donuts on the local golf course or riding a motorbike through town in a slightly less than sober state..

At 30, I'd become an alcoholic and drug addict with an aversion to work; my mates were the same. I was mostly either drunk or stoned; I was your average bloke—a recovering gut-shot bloke.

After being discharged, I focused on finding answers for my dreams. I read

about Nostradamus, studied the Psychics and Chanellers, anything that claimed wisdom—except the Bible. The end of the world, Armageddon and, Eastern Religions were most interesting. However, despite all that had happened, I didn't change my life-style, and soon began believing what I was reading. Then, I saw an advertisement, "Do you want to know the secrets of the Universe?" I thought That sounds alright. So I ordered the books along with information on rituals I could perform at home. I set up a mirror with candles and an Altar, and there recited a prayer, not to the true Creator of the Universe, but to the god of the Cosmos!

At the time, it all sounded harmless enough. Later I discovered that the Greek word for Cosmos was World. So, in effect, I was praying to the god of this World. After praying the prayer I started shaking and remember thinking, This is strange!, what's going on here?' I soon became filled with pride. Everyone else was wrong and I was right. I continued drinking which helped me sink deeper into occult practices. I had become paranoid about the end of the world, even burying food in case there was a catastrophe. I was tiring from all the false predictions of dates and events that were never fulfilled! These gurus also taught me "astral projection." It was a strange experience to be actually out of my body, seeing how it was still lying on the bed!

Buddhism and Hinduism, however were complicated and unreliable, and made no sense, and none of the other religions offered and help. I was growing desperate for truth, and began thinking about God and the claims of Jesus. Of special interest were biblical prophesy contained in the Books of Daniel and Revelation, and the works of Barry Smith. I found his writings more reliable and informative than others.

When I finally stopped reading all the New Age material, something inside me started to churn! I could feel it in my guts. I became depressed, anxious and fearful and began hearing noises in my head. I couldn't think, read a book, watch television or do anything. I was a total wreck! I wondered if I was going mad and whether others suffered like this.

I picked up a Christian book that contained "the sinners prayer" I spoke that prayer and invited Jesus into my life, but felt no different. It promised that Jesus would set me free and I pled over and over for Jesus to set me free. I recited the Lord's Prayer many times; I was close to a nervous breakdown. For within me raged a struggle for control between the forces of good and evil. I needed to be released. But I was powerless. God, however was not

So it was, that at about 2 AM one morning I was awakened by the dog barking, and went outside to investigate. Probably just a wallaby or some other animal, I thought. I still couldn't sleep, and turned to a favorite mind-game. I would empty my mind and then ask a question. The first thought would be my answer. I asked for exact time and the answer came as 4:17. I thought, that's strange, why would I think that when it's only 3:30? So I tried again; this time the word "Matthew" came. I realized that Matthew 4:17 was in the Bible.

That's interesting, I thought, and mentioned it to Pos. "Perhaps God is telling me something, and maybe we should go to Church." It was something

we wouldn't have imagined, but we went. During the service, we both became quite emotional. "Half-off-our-trolleys" from smoking dope, we saw what we thought was nothing more than a bunch of weirdos waving their hands about. Yet they seemed happy enough. Although glad to get out, I still intended coming back the following week—a pattern we actually repeated for the next three months!

One Sunday the pastor invited me to the front and asked if I wanted to become a Christian. I thought, what are you on about mate; I've been coming for three months, I'm dressing up and everything. I thought I already was one. I said "Yeah, whatever," and while repeating the sinner's prayer, I suddenly began shaking.

That thing in my gut was trying to resist. Finally I made a confession and invited Jesus to be Lord of my life. The resistance stopped, instantly! I was, for the first time in my life, free!

But Then, I new struggle emerged: the noises returned, like someone had left a wireless on in the next room; an enemy was trying to drag me back into my old habits. I needed another touch.

A visiting evangelist came to our church and invited anyone who wanted a special touch from God to come forward. I went, and he asked me what my problem was. "My mind keeps wandering," I said.

He immediately he rebuked the enemy, "You lying, tormenting spirit, begone in the name of Jesus." it did! I dropped to the floor and everything went real quiet. From that moment, I knew I could fully trust God to remove all my anxieties and fears as well as the guilt and the shame of my former life. My only desire now was to share the gospel with others. After what God did for me, I just wanted others who are bound to be set free. I knew they can when they are prepared to trust God and invite Jesus into their lives.

The rewards for me were an absolute peace and joy I could never had imagined. But the greatest was the love that washed through me and has never left or diminished. And there is the expectation and excitement of Heaven!

I love God and I've become bold, telling others about my relationship with God. My heart's desire is that everyone may have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and know the same joy, love, and life He's given me.

Within 3 months of being saved, Pos and I got married because we knew that's what God wanted. We almost own our home now, I no longer live out of a bag of clothes, and there are no longer drugs or alcohol. God has made all things new, including my insides.

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GUT SHOT

THE TRUE STORY OF PETE MCMASTER



"Phil, you ##\$?*&%, you've shot me!"