A Spiritual Journey

INTRODUCTION

- This lesson comes from my own personal experience with people in my own extended family, more than one.
- It describes the process of someone who begins with a fairly strong faith, but over time allows that faith to erode.
- I'm not trying to vilify and I'm not trying to caricature. I'm certainly not trying to glorify this process, but I want to be fair to those who are taking this path.

1 It Begins in a Conservative Religious Childhood

- The narrative in our case begins in a conservative religious home, whatever that means to you.
- Things like God's wrath, depravity, lostness of sinners, the reality of judgment and the reality of hell and all were taught as true.
- Within this restrictive oppressive environment, a young person, if they buy in, feels an insecurity that they can't measure up, leading to fear, guilt, anxiety, and depression.
- It has been my experience that this kind of a reaction to an early childhood experience will exist in one child but not in their siblings.
- Somehow we tie that to some national political positions. Brethren, run away from that. the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.
- The whole world lies under the sway of the evil ones. And I believe that includes both parties.

2 Leaving Home and Entering the Real World

- Eventually, I left the protective care of my parents and my religious community. And I entered the real world.
- It became clear that the world was more complex than the simple right versus wrong, black and white beliefs of my childhood.
- So, I hope you're listening carefully. How is God bringing about repentance in this case? How is he revealing truth?
- That is, if I don't know somebody, befriend somebody, understand the fullness of their life circumstance then I can't condemn them.
- The world is way more friendly than I ever thought. And guess what about the church? It's more evil, more hypocritical, than I ever thought. You see how those go together to create a kind of a super doubt.
- There is a teeny tiny bit of truth in almost all of this.

3 A Period of Enlightenment and Freedom

- Now I'm going to have this period of enlightenment and freedom. This is phase three. It's the end of the journey.
- In fact, it isn't a journey to any place in particular. It's a just a journey to be free.
- It can end in raw atheism. It can end in some kind of spiritualism, which has a God that doesn't say anything or do anything.
- It's a little difficult to refute this because it doesn't really have an end point.

MY NOTES