



A Story from the Skies

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Sometimes hindsight provides great insight. On her way home from the funeral, Christina had no eyes for the beauty outside her window. The brilliant sunshine above and the shimmering sea of clouds below were lost on her as her thoughts retraced the years.

Christina's mother, Susan, had always believed that people should have a reverent attitude when sitting in church. And when her only daughter kept whispering right through her own wedding ceremony, Susan was visibly shaken. She knew her daughter had a rebellious streak and didn't care much about God, but this behaviour was outrageous. Being a church-going woman, she would have

to talk to God about her daughter; and she would have to talk to her daughter about reverence.

Two years later, Christina and her husband David decided to move to America. Susan felt very upset by this decision. She would lose her daughter, and Christina would lose the influence of her family and with it the last vestige of Christianity. Susan feared that America was even less godly than England and that her daughter was entering heathen territory.

As time passed, Christina made many friends in her new country, and through their influence drifted into new age beliefs. When Susan eventually came to visit, Christina told her with enthusiasm about the god within her and that some day she would be born again as another being. Susan was now convinced that her worst fears had been realised. She felt very disillusioned and started questioning God. Had He not heard one word of her prayers?

But then one day Susan received a phone call. "Mum, I've finally found the truth! I've been born again and am now a Christian!" "But you always were a Christian," Susan puzzled. "You were brought up in the traditions of the Church!" "Ah, but I wasn't a Christian," Christina explained. "I didn't understand why Jesus died for me on the cross. I might have been a bit religious when I was younger, but I never understood the consequences of my sin. I never knew Jesus died for me personally. Oh Mum, I wish you could see what I can now see! This is so fantastic. I'm a new person, and I walk with Jesus every day. Will you come to my baptism?"

This was not at all what Susan had prayed for; this was far too fanatical for her taste. And being baptised again, well, that was total sacrilege! All she had wanted was a daughter who would live a good life, regularly go to church, and be respectful toward God. But not this! Susan politely declined the invitation.

And then things got worse. Because Susan was a passionate teacher who loved her profession, good schooling was very important to her. So when her daughter informed her that she was going to home school her four children, she was horrified once again. They would miss out on so much! And socialisation with peers was so important! Although Susan was happy that they now had more opportunities to spend time with her in England, she continued to find fault with the way her grandchildren were being brought up. Everything was so focused on Jesus as Lord and Saviour that it made her feel most uncomfortable. She didn't like fanaticism.

And then, twelve years later, Susan died. Did she go to be with God? Christina didn't know. She was realistic enough to realise that her mother may have been purely religious, because she had always resisted Christina's faith and had never been concerned with the salvation of souls. Yes, her mother had gone to Church and had been keen on upright living, but she had never where people would spend it. She had simply believed that most Western people were Christians by birth through being baptised into the Church, and that they would all go to heaven if they lived a good life. She had even considered her husband to be a good Christian man, and yet Christina knew that her father did not see himself as a sinner, and that by his own confession he had no need for Christ. But God alone knew her mother's heart, and Christina kept hoping against hope that one day she would see her again.

On her flight home after the funeral Christina was lost in reflection. Her mother had once told her how upset she had been at Christina's wedding, and how she had started praying for her daughter to remember her Christian values. At the time it hadn't meant much to Christina but now, in hindsight, she realised that God had done so much more for her than her mother had ever hoped for. God had led her to a far away country in order to bring her to salvation - both of which her mother had perceived as disasters. He had led her own children to be home schooled, encouraging their faith, developing godly personalities, and eventually taking them to university and Christian service - but again her mother had not grasped the treasures God had provided for her grandchildren.

Had Christina's mother known the Lord personally, she would have been able to look on all these things in a different light. What she had perceived as obstacles and disasters would have become occasions for praising God's foresight and blessings. Susan would have been able to understand God's purpose for what had happened.



*"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God,
To those who are the called according to His purpose."*

Romans 8:28, NKJV

Suddenly, Christina rose out of her reverie and sat up straight. The verse had popped into her mind and taken on shape. Its meaning became real. Why hadn't SHE ever looked back over the past and realised how good God had been to her? She had been so worried about so many things, but now she realised that she didn't have to understand everything God was doing! Her part was simply to trust and obey, and God would work in all of their lives according to HIS perfect plan. She had always felt that she needed to be in control of situations, but all of a sudden she realised that God was so much better at being God that she could ever hope to be. Christina felt immensely thankful and greatly encouraged. Her mother had passed away, but her own future was safe in the hands of an almighty God. She was eager to get home. 🌸