

Why I left SGI and Turned to Jesus



– By Andrew Fisher

Forward by the Webmaster:

I was very surprised when my cyberspace Christian friend, Andrew from the UK, told me he was with Soka Gakkai for nearly 25 years! I asked him to write up his story. I met many Soka Gakkai people from time to time when I lived in Japan and can tell you they are some of the hardest people to share my faith in Christ with. For one thing, they try to proselytize me when I'm trying to convert them!

I have received the Lord Jesus Christ into my heart.

For almost 30 years I was a practising Nichiren Buddhist and a local leader in the UK of the lay Buddhist organisation Soka Gakkai International.

As many people are aware, Buddhism is a godless, atheist religion. To understand why I gave up being a practising Nichiren Buddhist and member of SGI we need to examine why I turned to Buddhism in the first place.

Until I was about 21 years old I was a Roman Catholic. Like many other young Catholics I had bit by bit relaxed my religious practice to the point where I never attended church regularly, took communion or made a confession. The pagan, maybe even Satanic, influences of rock music in the late 60s and 70s such as Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath had slowly entered my consciousness and had begun slowly, but surely, to dull the soft words of the Lord.

As a child I recall speaking happily and directly to the Lord about everything in my life. But now as a young man I found myself one day in the confessional box. As I confessed to some minor sins, the priest absolved me as usual and gave me a small penance of 10 Hail Marys. As I silently recited the prayers, I was struck by the ludicrousness of the situation. Here I was chanting away to the Virgin Mary while in my heart of hearts I no longer believed in a God. The steady chipping away of my soul by Satan had finally worked...at least for a while.

I thought that Nichiren Buddhism held the answers to inner peace for me and

began many years of sincere practice. I began to notice as I taught many people about Buddhism that I was saying something that no other Buddhists said (or at least dared to say):

"If this practice fails to work for me personally, then I will immediately give up the practice of Buddhism."

Nichiren Buddhism essentially believes that everything can be achieved (all earthly desires are considered as enlightenment) by chanting Nam Myoho Renge Kyo (devotion to the mystic law of cause and effect). The universe is subservient to this law and adjusts everything in harmony with the desire of the chanting Buddhist. Little did I know that there were challenges ahead of me that chanting could not overcome. As I slowly realised this was the case I began to acknowledge that chanting had not achieved my "earthly desires".

So what happened to me? Simple! Like Paul on the road, but less painfully, I woke up one morning and I believed again in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord had filled the spiritual vacuum. I was that little boy once again being talked to in a comforting way with his dear heavenly Father. A natural and painless rebirth had occurred in my heart.

Now I found that there was a power infinitely greater than I had ever known before. Jesus was alive!

Over the next weeks and months, as I walked about in my new body, I determined to ask as many people as possible about their experiences of the Lord in their daily lives.

One of the first people I spoke to was my dentist. He told me that his grandfather had been a Methodist preacher in Argentina. He felt that, although many professed to believing in Jesus, in reality they lived godless lives.

A local young Muslim man who runs a grocery store near my home in Marbella and who has trouble finding the monthly rent and health insurance for his sick mother and brother showed me a YouTube video he was watching the as I walked in to his shop. The video was about the daily life of Jesus.

An experience that affected me profoundly and showed me I was truly walking with Jesus occurred one day as I spoke to my wife. My beloved wife is a practising Nichiren Buddhist. She often talks painfully about losing her dear brother to cancer when he was only 12 years old. For the 34 years of our married life I have often watched the tears roll down her face as she talks about the suffering of her brother as he died and of the pain of her parents as they cared for him in his last days in this world.

For years, answering as a Buddhist, I often spoke about her brother's karma and reincarnation. Now, as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, and for the first time in all those years, the correct words came into my mouth: "Don't worry, my love. Your brother and your mother and father are in Heaven now. At rest and at peace."

Her face lit up and said, "Thank you for that." For the first time in our

years together, I saw a peace finally descend upon her.

Praise the Lord and thank you!