

I look back on my life and experiences, and I am certain that Christians have turned more people AWAY from God than they ever brought TO Him. From the Spanish Inquisition, to the Salem witch hunts, to the abortion clinic bombings, to the snake handlers, to the protesters at rock concerts, to the sex and money scandals, to the Christians that will tell you that you are going to hell for wearing shorts, or listening to rock n roll; and about two more page lengths of legalistic rules and regulations that cannot be found in the Bible. The bottom line is that people all throughout the ages have done some horrible things "In the name of Jesus" and they were wrong! Possibly even eternally wrong...

Now, before we go any further, I must clarify that this is not a slam to any of my brothers and sisters in Christ that may fit this description. Most of these people are only acting out what they have been taught from their childhoods. I keep them in my prayers just like I hope they keep me in theirs. With that being said, let's get back to the story.

If I hadn't come to Christ at such a young age, I would NEVER have found Him if my first impression was based on the examples that I mentioned above. It is for this reason, my friends, that I composed this letter. I hope that once you have reached the end, it will give you the desire to take a leap of faith, forget about the past, and give your Savior another chance.

There are 3 types of people I am trying to reach:

1. People that truly believe Jesus walked the earth, died on a cross for our sins, and rose from the dead 3 days later but for whatever reason have NEVER asked Him into their hearts to be their Lord and Savior and to forgive them of their sins. Usually the reason is that they know there are things in their lives that should not be there and they are waiting to clean themselves up before coming to Christ. You don't

clean up before you take a shower do you? Of course not... You just jump in and that is the SAME way it is with Christ.

2. People who at some point in their lives received Christ as their Lord and Savior but walked away from Him because of a bad experience with certain churches or Christians and just gave up because they feel as if ALL Christians and ALL churches are jacked up... Because of this, you have been trying to go it alone and have discovered that you are chasing your tail in the desert and have drifted even farther away from God's will for your life...

3. The good, the bad and the ugly from ALL walks of life... Yes this means YOU!

I am a Rebel for Christ. I want to start a movement that will bring these three groups of people to where they need to be with Jesus. I am a fisherman for souls. However, I am not your stereotypical preacher. That is not my call. I am inked up, bald and prefer an Iron Maiden tee shirt over a suit any day! I am fishing for minnows...the kind of "fishing" where all you would have to do is sprinkle a few breadcrumbs on the surface of the water and watch the minnows appear in multitudes! I cast my fishing net out at bars, street corners and places that most Christians would never go. I am trying to reach the people of the world that would likely never step foot into a traditional church building. That's what Jesus did, and, as a matter of fact, He wasn't too fond of the churchgoers of his day either! He loved hanging with the lost and so do I...

To those that know me, it is no secret that I am a rocker through and through. I am also a vocalist and have rocked many stages in the Dayton, Ohio area. I am not a huge Marilyn Manson fan, but I did appreciate the Mechanical Animals CD. He was getting so much bad press, constant scrutiny and judgment by the Christian community, that

I was compelled to see what all the fuss was about when he came to Columbus, Ohio, sometime around the summer of 2006. I made a promise to God and with myself that if anything degrading to Christ were to take place at this show, I would just simply leave. I had heard all of the rumors and horror stories about his live performances, so I tried to prepare myself for the worst.

As soon as we pulled into the venue, I instantly became angered because there was a group of "Super Christians" protesting the show with mega-phones and poster board signs. They were screaming statements like, "You are going to burn in Hell for attending this show," as the concertgoers walked in. The fans were yelling back obscenities, flipping them off, and their hatred for Christianity was fueled even more.

I looked over at my friend and explained how the Christians were doing it all wrong. If I were going to attempt to reach those kids, I would have placed a flyer on every car in that parking lot. It would read something like this:

Hello my Fellow Rockers!!! I hope you enjoyed the show tonight! On behalf of the First Heavy Metal Church of Christ, we pray a safe trip home for you. If by chance you have had too much to drink, we beg of you to use this voucher for a free cab ride home! Your life is far too precious to us! If you get a chance in the near future, please check out our website at [HeavyMetalChurch.com](http://HeavyMetalChurch.com).

Get home safe and remember that Jesus ADORES you and so do we! Rock on...

KABLAM! A seed has been planted and for once in most of these kid's lives their impression of Jesus and Christianity was a positive

one... We planted the seed and the Holy Spirit will take it from there! Case CLOSED!

Now back to the story...

I walked into the venue a little cautious and with a slight feeling of anxiety. I truly did not know what to expect. We grabbed a beverage and proceeded to our seats. It was kind of comical because we stuck out like two sore thumbs. Everyone there for the most part was dressed in gothic attire and outfits that matched some of Marilyn Manson's costumes. I had a Judas Priest T-shirt on and STILL stuck out!

The show started and I sat in amazement. I was amazed at the effect this very talented, but godless man had on the fans that follow him. Before the show began, I expected Satan himself to walk out on stage and start sacrificing sheep and molesting virgins, but that was not the case. Marilyn Manson is actually a VERY talented and gifted artist who puts on one of the best stage shows I have ever seen. Now don't get me wrong, everyone; I am NOT condoning his lifestyle, his beliefs, or the fact that he is truly anti-Christ. Nonetheless, I can't stop wondering what he could have done to glorify the Kingdom of God if he had been on our side. I looked around and saw all of those lost kids searching for something in a world that has grown so dark and cold. Their "leader" provided them with two hours of escape and refuge from a society that had cast them to the side. How could we reach them? How could we undo the damage that poor parenting and poor Christian role models have created? For most of them, I am sure that it is too late... But I would bet all the money that I had spent on those tickets that there were MANY "minnows" in that crowd...

Then I began to question what would make Brian Warner, "Marilyn Manson", hate God so much? No one just grows up hating God. There must be a root cause. I would venture to say that he was

the product of one of the Christians mentioned in the first paragraph of this pamphlet (I found out later that I was correct. He was tormented in a Christian school and he attributes his success to the hatred he has for Christians). Hey, Brian Warner! If you ever stumble across this letter, on behalf of all the mature Christians in the world, I apologize for the behaviors of the ignorant. They were not accurately representing Christ...

With that being said, let's apply the "note on the car" strategy to an abortion clinic or any other situation like it. What kind of picture does it paint of Jesus, for a lady that just walked out of an abortion clinic, to be greeted by the 'Super Christians' who are shouting, "Whore, sinner and murderer?" What if a Christian simply walked up and handed her an envelope and said, "Are you ok? Do you need prayer? When you get home please read this." Once she gets home, she opens the letter and it says something like this:

"Hello Friend. I can only imagine the pain and confusion that you must be going through at the moment. I just want to let you know that Jesus loves you! There is nothing you have done or could ever do, that He cannot forgive if you will just ask. On behalf of the First Heavy Metal Church of Christ, we invite you to attend our post abortion recovery class that is held every Thursday evening at 7pm. We will feed you dinner and shower you with love without judgment or persecution. We just want to help you through this and show you God's love."

Little does this person realize that she will be introduced to the love and grace of Christ! If these women were to eventually give their hearts to Jesus, what a blessing that would be instead of filling them with hatred towards Jesus and his followers.

Can anyone hear what I am saying? There is an ENTIRE WORLD out there filled with minnows! Satan is like the big bass in the lake consuming them at an alarming rate. I want to challenge the true Rebels for Christ to grab your nets and get off your donkeys and go fishing!

I have no doubt that if Jesus were to make a surprise visit to earth for a week he would have been at that Marilyn Manson concert too. Then he would have gone to the corner biker bar and shot darts with all the people that most Christians would never hang out with. Then he would have hitch hiked to his hotel; the kind of hotel that rents rooms by the hour. The next day on his way to lunch at the soup kitchen, he would have stopped and asked the prostitute and drug dealer on the corner if they wanted him to bring them back some food on his way to the AIDS clinic. His schedule would have been like this all week, but on Sunday he would have wanted to make sure he stopped in to some of the area churches before he went home so he could say hello to his hard working Christians. He would have given all of his clothes to the homeless, so all he had left was a Judas Priest T-shirt and some soiled jeans that his new friend from the bar loaned him. He had long hair, a full beard, and dirt under his fingernails, but that's ok right? I'm sure every Christian church in the country would have welcomed him and made him feel at home, right?

If my first experience with Jesus was the "Super Christians" at the Marilyn Manson show, I would have never wanted a thing to do with Jesus or His Church. I love ALL of my brothers and sisters in Christ, but there sure are some judgmental, self-righteous and hateful Christians out there! Sometimes, I wonder if they truly know Jesus, because they are not representing him well at all. In my seasoned life, I have run across churches and Christians that have told me you will burn in Hell for the following:

- Stepping foot into an establishment that serves alcohol
- Listening to Rock n Roll music
- Wearing shorts
- Exposing your arms above the short sleeve line
- Wearing make up
- Wearing jewelry
- Swimming at the beach or pools with the opposite sex
- Dancing
- Going to movie theatres
- Getting tattoos
- Smoking or chewing tobacco
- Women who cut their hair
- Women who wear jeans
- Men with long hair
- Men with facial hair

These are just a few examples that instantly came to mind. I could easily double this list if I tried, but I think you get the point. These items are nothing more than legalistic rules that do not exist in the Bible... Sadly, people who preach this sort of doctrine have pushed hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people away from Christ. The tragedy is that most of the people who were burned will get bitter towards God and run away forever. They “copy and paste” their bad experiences over the face of Jesus and this saddens my heart to the point of tears. Once again, people have taken something so beautifully simple and turned it into something so legalistic, complicated, and hateful.

Just in the past few months I have come across so many people who believe that Jesus is the Son of God. They believe He died on the Cross for their sins and that God raised Him from the dead three days later. They believe everything they must believe to be saved from an

eternity without God but have never accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. This breaks my heart!

If you are one of these people, I beg of you to find a quiet place and say the following prayer out loud because according to Romans 10, as long as you believe the words that you are praying in your heart, you will be saved! Jesus does not care what you have done in your past. He doesn't care where your life is currently. You don't have to change a thing after saying this prayer. Why? Because the Holy Spirit is going to pick you up as if you were a baby and shower you with love, grace, forgiveness, and peace!

If there is anything in your life that shouldn't be there, it is the Holy Spirit's job to baby-step you into the place where you should be. I don't care if at this very moment you have slept with 1000 people or just chopped up a line on your dash while driving home from robbing the local mini mart! It DOESN'T matter! This, my friend, is the power of the Cross. No joke. God will transform you in time...HIS time and not the time of people who want to shove a book of rules down your throat. Accept Him now and He will clean you up along the way...

Want freedom? Find that quiet place and say this out loud:

"Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you for sending your son Jesus to die for my sins. Father, I confess now that Jesus Christ is Lord and I believe in my heart that you raised him from the dead. Please forgive me for all of my sins. Please cover them with the blood of Jesus. Please guide my steps from this day forward. I thank you and I love you and I ask this in Jesus name, amen...

If you just said that prayer for the very first time, I welcome you to the family! If you said it to re-dedicate your heart to Christ, welcome home! Either way, I would love to hear from you. Please email me



at [bsmith@heavymetalchurch.com](mailto:bsmith@heavymetalchurch.com) and let me celebrate with you! I would also be honored if you would check out [HeavyMetalChurch.com](http://HeavyMetalChurch.com)

and LIKE our page on Facebook. We post our church services every week, and we would love to have you join us...

If you didn't pray that prayer at this time, a seed has been planted in you and now watch how many times in the future God will give you a reminder of this letter and touch your heart. It's on Baby, He wants YOU! There is no coincidence that you are reading this now.

Last but not least, there are those of you that have been saved at some point in your lives but walked away because of certain people or church experiences that have left you bitter or defeated perhaps thinking that you cannot live the way a Christian is "supposed" to live or look the way a Christian is "supposed" to look. On behalf of my brothers and sisters in Christ worldwide, I apologize to you for the behavior and self-righteous hypocrisies of others...

Please do not punish Jesus for the immaturity and cold judgmental hearts of those that are getting it wrong. I beg you to start praying again. If you can't find the words, simply say that you are sorry and begin to praise Him for everything in your life that is good and ask Him to deliver you from everything in your life that is bad. Read the short book of Philippians in the New Testament, and I GUARANTEE God will speak to you. You have done nothing that God cannot forgive, and He will baby-step you back to spiritual health just like He will baby-step the new Christians who are just starting out. There is NOTHING that you have EVER done or NOTHING that you could EVER do that could make God love you any more or any less than He did the day you were born...

Praying, reading the Bible, and finding a good Bible-based church are the ONLY defenses you have against the enemy. Lacking in one of these areas will weaken you. Take the initial steps I just mentioned and watch the Holy Spirit lead the way!

The First Heavy Metal Church of Christ does not condone a sinful lifestyle. We must, however, be careful not to “throw the baby out with the bath water” before the Holy Spirit has had a chance to change someone’s heart. For some, it’s a slow process and lightning fast with others. We must be patient and let God do His thing. We will ALWAYS be a work in progress. Christ’s love and grace has set us free. We get better each and every day and so will you! If you actively seek God, He will actively seek you so don’t EVER give up trying!

If you have any questions or need help, please do not hesitate to contact me through one of the ways listed below ...

Oh, and did you figure out the meaning behind the cover photo? They are potentially BOTH Christians that are giving Jesus a bad name. Think about it and if you can email me the explanation, you could win a FREE Heavy Metal Church shirt...

Rock On In Christ!

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