

is my Shepherd

BOISE, IDAHO

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His Mysterious Ways

My older sister Tara and I were both diagnosed with hearing loss when we were children. Surgery helped me get some of my hearing back, but Tara lost all hers. I became my sister's ears. I learned sign language and everywhere we went I was her interpreter.

During the summer after my freshman year in high school, Tara and I attended our church youth camp. We had to rough it: A four mile hike in the middle of the night was one of the activities. It was a challenge to relay the guide's instructions to Tara by signing in the darkness. But it was all worth it, because we both looked forward to the popular inspirational speaker who was going to address us at the end of the week.

At sunset on our last day hundreds of us campers rushed toward the arena, jockeying for good seats. Tara and I ended up in the last row, where the sound from the PA system kept fading. I could barely hear the speaker, I glanced at Tara, tears started to well in my eyes. My sister will never know what this inspiring man has to say.

I bowed my head. **God, we need you**, I prayed. I was at the edge of my seat trying to catch even one word. Then suddenly incredibly, I could hear the speaker's voice loud and clear. I tapped Tara on the shoulder and began to sign furiously. But she stilled my hands and looked at me in amazement.

"Shh, Carly." She whispered, **"I can hear him too."**

Carly Dawn Rogers, Boise, Idaho
Guideposts, April 1997

REFLECTIONS

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Deaths

Journey

This is a story that I have not looked forward to writing. I don't know exactly why, except that it is a story that brings back terrible memories of being burned alive. It is also a story of a beautiful experience of being able to let go of my life and embrace Jesus through death.

I have written of my experience and it is on the Internet at www.ismyshepherd.com entitled "The Day I Died" for those of you who might be interested. Maybe this story of my past is on my mind because of you, something you're going through right now. I don't know, but I write what Jesus tells me to.

The anguish that I am experiencing relates to a personal moment of almost 40 years ago. It was a moment when my life here on earth ended and my journey through the portals of eternity began. It is an experience that demonstrates the immediacy as well as the finality of that split second when living gives way to dying for the just and unjust as well. The prompting that I have in my heart is to speak to you, the Christian-to the one who has already made that decision to follow Christ. To the rest of you, the ones who know of Jesus but have ignored making a decision to accept Him, let me tell you that the end came for me in a split second without any time to make

things right. Early on the morning of September the 9th, 1969, our alarm clock went off, awaking me out of a most comfortable sleep. Lying next to me was my beautiful wife, married then for only a couple of years. I quickly shut the alarm off, so as not to wake her, and started the routine of getting ready for work.

As I made my way to the front door, I hesitated for a moment and then stepped outside into the early morning darkness. As I closed the door behind me, I had no idea that it would be over four months before I would walk through the door again.

Before the day would end I would come to that moment in my life when my eternal journey would begin. I would discover for myself that we do indeed discover life though death. Death is not the end of our existence; it is only the end of our presence on earth. Life does not stop just because eternity has started only the location changes.

I, obviously, survived my experience of death and was made to return to life. But for that moment or two that preceded death, in that moment when the death process started, that is what I feel led to talk about. Not so much about my death experience, as fantastic as that was, I want to tell you about that moment in time when time became no more.

If you are a Christian and you have doubts or fears, even apprehension about dying, then don't stop reading. If your health is failing and in your quiet times you have tried to imagine with some hesitation about that moment when your illness will shut the door behind you, don't be fearful.

That afternoon of September the 9th, at 2:30 in the afternoon, a 12-inch pipeline blew up and ignited. I was evacuating the residents out of the danger area when I was blown through the air 20 to 25 feet, screaming to the top of my lungs from the 800-degree heat, combined with the incredible blast that catapulted me through the air. By the time I hit the ground my hair was burned to the scalp, one ear almost burned away, while exposed flesh melted like cheese and was instantly seared. I hit the ground with burns over 50 percent of my body, 30 percent

Is my shepherd is not affiliated with any church or religious belief. The owner is:

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MISSION STATEMENT:

**To encourage the Faithful
To save the Lost.**

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE
GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY BEGOTTEN SON,
THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL
NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

JOHN 3:16

IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY. DO IT TODAY.

was third degree, internal injuries as well, but the pain so incredible that there was no surviving it.

When I opened my eyes to see my fingers digging into the dirt in an effort to pull my body away, but it was no use. I could literally feel my life leaving my body, not an out of body experience, but the unmistakable reality that my body was shutting down. It was in that moment that split second, that life was over for me. I had crossed the line of no return, even if I had wanted to, I couldn't stop the process.

For all intent and purposes the door had closed and locked behind me. There was no turning back; but a long time ago. I had made my decision to follow Jesus, even through death itself. If you have come to that moment in your imagination the worse about death, let me be quick to tell you that it is in that moment that you will know Him as you have never known Him before. You no longer have the capacity for fear or even nervousness. You have only the capacity for this tremendous joy. You have only the capacity for spiritual euphoria of comfort and peace. Don't worry about it, for there is nothing to worry about, I know, I've been there and I am looking forward to the next time.

I suffered tremendously up until it was time to let go. When Jesus came and loosed my grip on this fragile thing called life, I was ushered into His presence. I was filled with His fullness and I have never had a more fantastic experience before or since. You can take my word for it; it's worth dying for.

Stan