

*Freed*  
INDEED!



# *Freed* INDEED!

MY JOURNEY FROM OCCULTISM TO CHRIST  
(A SPIRITUAL ODYSSEY)

DR. RON TYLER



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# DEDICATION



To all those sincere seekers caught in the web of cultism and the occult. God will set you free—if you surrender to Him

*So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*

(John 8:36)

## **Odyssey**

An “epic voyage” from Greek mythology involving the wanderings and supernatural adventures of Odysseus for “ten lost years,” including his time as “a captive of the beautiful nymph Calypso.” He traveled “to the ends of the earth and . . . to the land of the dead . . . the underworld . . . before returning home” from the Trojan war. (Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia)

A “spiritual wandering or quest . . . a series of experiences that give knowledge or understanding to someone.” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)



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# PREFACE



This book is an object lesson in how one can be deceived by Satan and then delivered and used by God in spite of spiritual wounding, wrong choices, sinful reactions, and involvement in the occult. It is also about another realm of reality inhabited by demons, angels, the spirit of antichrist, and the Holy Spirit of God and how Jesus Christ supernaturally intervenes in the lives of those sincerely seeking spiritual truth.

I have tried to be as accurate as possible about the details of my life, to the best of my recollection, as they relate to my being drawn into a New Age cult (called The Gurdjieff Foundation), my life in that cult, and my deliverance from that cult. However, I am now 84 years old and some of the details are admittedly fuzzy in my memory. Therefore, the facts as I remember them

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may not all be exactly one hundred percent accurate. Nevertheless, I believe they are substantially correct overall and my story is therefore true in its essence.

# PROLOGUE

## *The Lookout*



The narrow wooden catwalk had been badly weathered by blistering Northern California heat as well as drenching thunderstorms and winter snows. This four-foot-wide deck surrounded a twelve-by-twelve glass encased observation room on the top of Hirz Mountain in the Shasta National Forest. There I worked, ate, slept, read, exercised, and meditated, during the summer of 1961.

As always, when I stood on this narrow walkway, I felt a little dizzy. I grasped the iron-pipe railing and leaned over, looking almost straight down for about a mile at the sparkling blue waters of Shasta Lake. The shoreline was a neat red-orange hem around the dark green skirt of the pine forest. The night before, lightning had flashed and exploded around me while I stood nervously in the middle of the small enclosure on a thick rubber mat.

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But now, in spite of the dizziness, I was feeling a comforting warmth from the early-morning sun and a peaceful sensation from the shining white clouds floating below me, some loosely stuffed like giant cotton balls into the steep canyons around the lake.

Inwardly, however, all was not so tranquil. I was thinking about the problems in my marriage, about the fact that my wife of nine years had been unfaithful but had promised to continue going for counseling while I tried to sort things out up here, and about the anger and emptiness I felt over her betrayal.

My summer job on the lookout tower was at best a mixed blessing. On the one hand, it was a break from correcting mounds of English papers at the college where I taught. And the peaceful solitude had helped to calm some of my inner turmoil. On the other hand, this isolation meant I was constantly confronted with thoughts of the battles and bitterness I was trying to escape.

Earlier, I had done my weather readings and lightning strike sightings and reported them by radio to the ranger station. Then I had climbed down the winding stairs to the concrete tower pad and fed crackers to three delicate, graceful does that had learned over the weeks to nibble from my hand. By now, they were even letting me pet them—very slowly and carefully.

So, there was beauty and a certain communion with nature, perhaps even an upward tug toward something

spiritual, which I tried to capture in my crude paintings of rocks and trees and mountain flowers. But there was also a downward drag toward depression, discouragement, and the dissatisfaction with myself that had been slowly growing in recent years.

In many ways, this interlude on the mountain epitomized the opposing forces in my life, pulling in two directions at once: the visible natural world, momentarily beautiful but becoming increasingly painful and hopeless, and the unseen supernatural realm with its vague promise of something better.

I had been seeking the latter, both within and outside the church, but without guidance or discernment. Consequently, I had made some bad choices, partly from ignorance and partly from desperation, and had become involved in various strands of Eastern religion and occultism. I had tried what I thought was Christianity (in a very liberal church) but gave up on it because I hadn't found the spirituality I was seeking. So I began looking elsewhere—at things like Rosicrucianism, yoga, and Zen meditation.

The result was an encounter with supernatural reality of a different sort than what I had been seeking. Nevertheless, it enticed me with the possibility of emotional healing and self-improvement.

With a sigh, I turned from the iron railing and the pristine scene below, feeling a tinge of well-being and at least a glimmer of hope. Going inside, I stretched out

on the narrow cot, closed my eyes, drew several deep breaths, and consciously relaxed my body. I'd been practicing a form of meditation which produced a kind of serenity. So I thought this would be a good time to try again.

Centering on my solar plexus, I put myself into a passive mental state. In a few minutes, I began to feel a faint tingling. This started in my toes and increased as it moved up my feet and legs until it became an intense vibration. Then—like a high-voltage current without the pain—it went up my spine to the top of my head, finally engulfing my body in waves of ecstatic energy, flowing from the soles of my feet and filling my head with a dazzling light. This lasted for what seemed like half an hour but was in fact only a few minutes.

As the sensations subsided, I felt that I had been totally cleansed in every cell of my body. I was refreshed, energized, and convinced that I had found something incredibly positive and good.

From my later readings on yoga and Zen, I learned that my experience was what yogis call the “kundalini serpent power” and the Beatniks of the early New Age Movement called “grace waves.” I had had occult experiences before, but nothing like this. For me it was absolute confirmation that the supernatural was real, that I was in touch with a higher reality that could provide the answers I was looking for, the solution to my problems, and the way of becoming a more effective



person feeling better about myself and gaining the power and control I needed.

What I didn't understand was that I was really seeking restoration for my wounded spirit that only God could provide. And I didn't realize I was entering a psychic whirlpool that would eventually suck me into the spiritual bondage of an esoteric cult.

I also didn't know that I had been deceived by a demonic counterfeit of the Holy Spirit. Nor did I have the spiritual discernment to tell the difference. I didn't even know there was a difference! I just swallowed everything whole because I believed that whatever was supernatural was "of God" and, therefore, it must be good.

I was ignorant about myself and about the things of God. Therefore, I was spiritually naïve, gullible, and primed for occult involvement.



PART I  
THE CALL



# THE WOUNDED SPIRIT



My journey to this seemingly enlightened, but in fact deluded, state began with the death of my mother when I was two and a half years old. My earliest memory is of myself crawling on the kitchen floor, playing with a coal bucket next to an old-fashioned cast-iron stove.

My mother was a reassuring presence. Then later, she was gone. I knew she was in a place called the hospital and that she wasn't coming back. And I dreamed that a big black gorilla had climbed up the outside of the building to her room and carried her off.

The security of her love had been taken from me forever. Why she had left I didn't know. But subconsciously, I sensed a need for someone or something to take her place.

This was the first of a series of “abandonments” in my life which eventually left me feeling like a victim of unfair treatment and betrayal. Other hurtful experiences, in which I felt I had not been properly considered or had been falsely accused, reinforced my sense that something was wrong with me, that I was unloved and maybe unlovable—and that I needed fixing.

As time passed, my father was less and less often at home and spent very little time with me. When he was there and paid some attention to me, it was usually to show me off to his friends.

“Come here, Ronnie,” he would say, “and let the people look at you.”

“Oh, isn’t he cute!” “What a fine looking little man,” they would say and then look at me expectantly as though I were supposed to perform some clever trick.

At such times, I shrank within, trying to make myself small and inconspicuous, wishing I were invisible but feeling exposed, vulnerable, and exploited. Of course, these feelings were still undefined and not verbalized until much later. But they were there, burned into my young soul.

At age four, I was taken outside one day by my father in the middle of a raw Utah winter. He played briefly with me in the snow and then let me stay there while he went inside. He had forgotten about me, as he confessed years later, and had left me alone in the freezing cold most of the day.

The result was bronchial pneumonia, and I almost died. This produced pulmonary weakness that made me prone to upper respiratory infections for the rest of my life.

Another traumatic memory from this period (about age five) involves images of my drunken father threatening suicide with a revolver and bloodying his head on the corner of a dresser as he stumbled and fell to the floor.

Then there was the time (I was about eleven) that he accused me of something I hadn't done (I don't remember what) and beat me, as I recall, with a wooden rod of some kind because I refused to confess to it.

There were other frightening and painful experiences involving my father during my childhood. But the most hurtful came when he abandoned his second wife (my first stepmother whom he married when I was about five) and his children to go off with another woman. This left me at about age twelve to take care of an invalid stepmother and a rebellious four-year-old half-brother for several years. We were forced to live in a low-income housing project, where I did the cooking, laundry, ironing, housekeeping, and nursing.

Of course, I was unprepared for and incapable of properly handling such responsibility. Not only was I functioning in the roles of father, elder brother, housekeeper, and caregiver, I was also, by age thirteen, attending high school and working part time to help make ends meet.

It appeared that I had no choice in all this, and therefore I did my best. But the feelings of utter loneliness and inadequacy I felt during these years of hardship still rise to the surface when I hear one of the old songs that were popular on the radio in those days before we owned a television. I used to listen to them late at night, alone, while finishing up my chores or doing my homework.

Obviously, I had no time to be a teenager and so missed this important part of growing up. However, I did have a girlfriend—or at least I thought I did.

Janet was my first love. I met her in the fifth grade in Stockton, California, where we lived before my father left us. He was a career army officer and was therefore transferred every year or two, so we moved around a lot. But Janet and I wrote faithfully to each other from the time I was eleven or twelve until I was about fifteen.

During these years—toward the end of World War II—my father had served in Europe, returned home, met the other woman, went to live with her, and got his marriage annulled, without providing anything for our support.

My stepmother, Florence, had stayed in touch with friends in Stockton, so with nowhere better to go we moved back there. By this time, I was about fifteen, my romantic feelings for Janet were blossoming, and she seemed to reciprocate.



Then, suddenly, fate dealt another devastating emotional blow: enter the rival! Janet found herself pursued by Will, a “college man” who seemed to have everything I lacked: money, sophistication, maturity, a healthy family life, emotional stability, and the time to properly court his beloved.

Needless to say, I didn’t stand a chance. Janet dumped me for Will, and eventually they were married. Once more, I was abandoned by a central person in my life, feeling alone, unloved, wounded, and heartbroken.

When Janet informed me that she was no longer my girlfriend, I was crushed, totally bewildered about how she could do such a thing. After all, we had written “love” letters to each other for several years and then spent every spare moment with each other that we could for another year or so. How could she just discard such a major part of our lives?

I had saved every one of her letters, neatly bound in bundles with string. I didn’t know what to do with them. I couldn’t bear the thought of throwing them away. And, even more, I couldn’t bear the thought of keeping them. They would be far too painful a reminder of what I had lost and how my dream of true love and living happily ever after had been shattered.

So, what to do? There was only one solution. I wrapped them up in a neat package and took them back to her.

She seemed totally surprised when she unwrapped it, even shocked, that I should do such a thing. But she accepted the letters without saying a word. Her mother, however, was furious. I believe she thought I had done it out of spite, as a way of showing my contempt for both the letters and Janet as if it say, "Here, take your worthless, lying letters! This is what I think of them and you!"

But that wasn't it at all. I simply returned them because I was suffering from an extreme case of emotional wounding and self-pity, and I didn't know what else to do. I believe I thought I was making a final gesture of love, saying, "See? I am giving these back to show you how much I cared for you by keeping them all this time."

Now, in hindsight, I believe what I was really saying was something like this: "I see, Janet, that you never really understood me, but, for some reason, I still want you to. I feel that would help somehow. These letters symbolize our love and the promise of our life together. I see now that it was not real, so I am returning it to you."

For her, it was just a passing phase, I believe. For me, it was the most important thing in my life.

Thankfully, at this point, we moved again, this time to the home of Florence's brother, John, who learned of our plight and took pity on us. Uncle John lived in a mountain community of the Sierra Nevada, ironically named Paradise.

In Paradise, Florence became totally bedridden from her disease (multiple sclerosis), and I kept on in my role as caregiver, while working and going to school. John was unable to continue his help, so we lived in a variety of makeshift conditions, including “a foster home” with a Seventh Day Adventist family.

I persevered in my various responsibilities, including my studies as a junior and senior at Chico High School—to which I commuted daily by school bus, thirty miles down the mountain on a tortuous, narrow two-lane road known as The Honey Run. By focusing on my studies, I compensated somewhat for my lonely and helpless feelings and ended my high school days as valedictorian of my graduating class.

However, like so many things in my young life, this too was a mixed blessing. I received praise from friends and teachers. But not a single family member (except step-uncle John) attended the ceremony to hear my speech or see me graduate. My father was stationed in Japan after the war, and my invalid stepmother was in the county hospital, requiring constant nursing care. My new stepmother (the other woman he eventually married) and my younger half-brother were living in northern California within reasonable driving distance, but they did not come to the graduation or contact me.

Thus, it appeared, I was once more “abandoned” by those who should have been there for me. What

recognition I did receive for my scholastic achievements seemed hollow and meaningless.

One other event, which occurred earlier during this period, bears mentioning. For it left a lasting scar which I believe seriously restricted my eventual profession as a writer.

“Did you write that yourself?” the teacher asked angrily and loudly enough for the whole ninth grade English class to hear. She was standing over me, scowling down at the paper I held in my trembling hands.

“Yes, I did,” I said weakly, feeling like I had been kicked in the stomach.

“Well, I know you copied it from a magazine or book, and I’m giving you an F!”

This false accusation and unfair treatment left me feeling sick and totally humiliated.

The class had been required to read their compositions aloud, and I had just finished reading mine. I was proud of it because I knew it was good. It was a vivid description of an erupting volcano, in which I had felt inspired to express the beauty and drama of nature’s power. I had worked hard on it, perhaps influenced by articles I had read in *National Geographic*. But I had not plagiarized. All the ideas and words were completely my own.

English had always been my best subject, and I felt this was probably the finest writing I had ever done. Perhaps its quality was above that normally expected of

a ninth-grader. But instead of giving me the benefit of the doubt, talking to me about it privately, or considering the possibility that I had some natural writing ability, the teacher crushed my enthusiasm for creative writing with her cruel outburst and unfair grade.

Fortunately, shortly thereafter we moved again to another town where my father had been transferred. So I didn't have to endure the outrage and disgrace I felt in the presence of that teacher and her class.

I went on, many years later, to earn a Ph.D. in English because of my love for good writing and great books. And I taught the subject on all levels from junior high through university. I also earned a sizeable portion of my livelihood as a journalist and technical writer and editor. But I could never again find the motivation or self-confidence to succeed as a creative writer.

What did this experience and its aftermath mean in terms of how I saw myself and felt about my worth as a person? Once again, I subconsciously processed a painful event as further evidence that the important people in my life didn't care about me, that I was somehow the victim of hostile forces whose purpose was to put me down, hold me back, and interfere with my success.

I have recounted these painful experiences to show how we can believe the lies we tell ourselves (and Satan reinforces) based on the bad things that happen to us. I realize that many people have grown up in much worse circumstances than mine. And many have responded

in much more positive ways than I did. But I believe there are many others, like me, who have been seriously wounded in their spirits and become victims of their own negative reaction patterns.

As I did, they feel the need for some special kind of inner healing. And, since they could not find it in the church or other standard sources of help, such as psychotherapy, they are ready to seek it elsewhere or have already begun to do so. They are looking for something “other” to provide them with what they need—even though they have no clear idea of what that other is or what that need might be.

This was my situation on Hirz Mountain when I thought I had found the first clear evidence of what I was looking for.

Before I recount how this led me into a cult and deeper into occultism, I need to describe some other key experiences. These were spiritually positive and prepared me to accept the reality of a supernatural world. They therefore provided the upward pull that started my search for something better than what I had found in the natural world of my ordinary life.