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FROM MARTIAL ARTS TO JESUS CHRIST (Quest of Faith)

Testimony of Vitold Jordan, 6th Dan Black Belt

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Vitold demonstrating Aikido throwing technique in the Green Mountain Aikikai Dojo, Poland, 1993

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.
For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world,
but to save the world through Him.
Whoever believes in Him is not condemned...
Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life”.*

- JOHN 3.16-36

The central theme of the Gospel is God’s love for you as an individual. This love was revealed to us through the coming of Jesus Christ into the world and living among men, His dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead. Trough Christ’s death God offers you forgiveness of your sins, and through His resurrection the promise of everlasting life. Jesus died and rose again for the whole world, but for you to become a Christian is an individual matter. The only way to establish a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is to accept His offer of forgiveness and eternal life.

JOURNEY OF FAITH



“The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step”

- CONFUCIUS

My story is a journey from Martial Arts to Jesus Christ who is, first and foremost – The SAVIOUR!

The Chinese wise man, Lao Tsu, said in his great philosophical poem “Tao Teh Ching” – ”The further you go the less you will see”. He was absolutely right; the truth you search for is close to you, “within the reach of your hand”, as the Prophet Jeremiah declares. You can’t imagine, my friend, how close. Stay with me when I share my testimony, please be patient, open your heart – and may the Spirit of Jesus Christ speaks to you.

My name is Vitold, originally I’m from Poland but living in the Yukon, Canada, and I am a professional instructor in Martial Arts. I wish to share with you my testimony of the existence of God, His power, love and Grace.

Before I become a Christian my life was filled with passion for Japanese combat skills, and the samurai’s way of life.

Since I was 13 years old, I strove after both physical and spiritual strength, so I started the classes of self–defense in Judo and Ju-jutsu and much later in Karate. Although I was raised with Catholic principles, I become more and more indifferent towards God. My search led more towards Eastern traditions, philosophies and religions.

At age 17 I began training with Japanese masters in Aikido and Iaido. I was looking for non-aggressive Martial Art, where philosophical orientation would embrace harmony, peace and ecology. Aikido seemed very suitable for me.

Aikido is a perfect weaponless self-defense for non-aggressive person. As the founder Morihei Ueshiba said, “The power of the attacker is used effectively against him”;

Iaido/Ken-jutsu is a traditional samurai Art of drawing and cutting instantly with the razor-sharp sword (katana). Both Martial Arts emphasize the importance of cultivating warrior spirit and virtues, such as: tradition, self-discipline, courage, responsibility, etc.

Since 1979 I have had the great opportunity to practice in many countries with the best Japanese masters in the world. In both martial Arts, I have received a high master rank, 4th Dan (in 1994), and was internationally recognized as a Yudansha (Black Belt holder) and licensed as a Sensei (Master) in Tokyo, Japan.

I thought that praying and relying on God was something for weak people, those who are warriors should rely on themselves. I was caught up with self-satisfaction and pride about the position I found myself in: as the Vice-President and Technical Advisor of the Polish

Aikido Federation Aikikai (1989-91), the director of the private School of Aikido (ca.200 students), and being the Instructor of self-defense for officers and policemen in the Special Forces Dept. (West Poland). I thought I had everything!

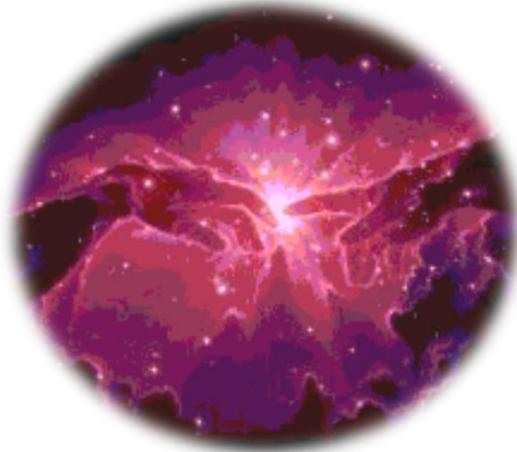


Vitold demonstrating the samurai art of Iaido in the Green Mountain Aikikai Dojo, Poland, 1992

I considered Aikido to be an exceptional martial art, which leads to spiritual development and enlightenment. So, I searched for the truth in the philosophy of the O'sensei (the Founder of Aikido). Later, however I enlarged my circle of interest in all possible Eastern philosophies, teachings, and religions, including Zen-meditation and Misogi (breathing method); yet, I still felt as I was only at the very beginning. Although the training gave me some skills, strength, confidence, and courage, I felt in my heart an increasing restlessness and emptiness. My Sensei only stated, "You must practice more and more and more". How many times I heard these words!

Well, after many years of training and despite my truly dedicated and persistent searching for the truth and meaning in this life I had no peace, my heart become harder and colder and irreconcilable. I knew something was missing on my warrior's pathway.

THE ANSWER CAME



"Call to Me and I will answer you and tell you the great and unsearchable things you do not know".

- **JEREMIAH 33.3**

In March 1993, I have decided to go to a meeting with an American Evangelist Billy Graham, who came to Essen (Germany). For the first time I heard the Gospel preached in the power of love and conviction of sin. I was shocked, then I struggled against the truth, but I realized the necessity of my salvation. So, on the forth evening I have decided to put my life in the hands of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Savior of the world. I went forward and gave my heart to Him. When I prayed with the Evangelist I was deeply moved and felt very strange physical sensations. Ignoring this feeling and went home, but from that moment on my life began to change. I felt the “strange spirit” more and more intensely. I felt God so closely, so clearly that I looked behind me many times, thinking that somebody was standing behind there. Sometimes even I felt tears running down my cheeks but I fought against them, and tried to play the ‘tough samurai’.

I didn’t know what kind of power it was, that I felt, but it was like the wind blowing around me. Through many days I felt company of the same wind again and again. As time passed by I wanted to know more about Jesus, so I started to regularly read the New Testament. But, because I couldn’t find satisfaction by the reading, I asked God to do something exceptional in my life, like in the lives of prophets I just read in the Book, so that I wouldn’t have any doubts about His existence and power. I was really desperate; I didn’t feel like having one more Eastern religious search. I wanted to know whether I was stepping in the right direction or once again going a wrong way.

THE DUEL



“So Jacob was left alone, and a Man wrestled with him”.

- GENESIS 32.24

*“Joshua looked up and saw a Man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand.
‘Are you for us or for our enemies?’ – he asked.
A Man with a sword replied – ‘Neither, but as Commander of the Army of the LORD I came now’.
Joshua fell face down to the ground in reverence, and asked Him,
‘What message does my LORD have for his servants?’”*

- JOSHUA 5.13-14

One day, given that I am a warrior, I provoked God to a duel, to fight with me and to reveal to me His power and will. Following my training with a samurai sword in the forest, I cried with despair in a loud voice: “Jesus... if You are really so mighty then show me your power!”

It was all I could possibly do at that time. From that moment on I had no peace and a “Strange Spirit” who followed me began to make me weep. I started to feel a deep compassion to people and suffering around the world like never before. It was a heavy burden I couldn’t bear. Now my heart, which was very hard, grew softer.

On the 17th of May 1993, at 4:00 p.m., I experienced the most shocking event of my life. As I was laying down before going to the Aikido Club, I felt this “wind” blowing into my room. I knew that it was this same Spirit which had been following me for many days. I resisted and didn’t let Him come close to me, but He swiftly approached to me when I was resting on the sofa. Then something incredible happened.

Suddenly, in a second, I felt down as if lightning had struck. I felt on my knees and unexpectedly I began glorifying God in different tongues, which both amazed and terrified me. I cried and sung aloud in many constantly changing languages, which sounded like the trumpet and waves of the sea. It was wonderful, amazingly indescribable sounds. Then I sung passages from the Bible, which I had never read before, and later I danced madly because of joy that was all over me. Several times I tried to stop my tongue with my fingers but without success. I even ran to bathroom and poured cold water on my head, but nothing could stop it.

I knew I had sung and danced for Jesus, my Master, and it lasted for almost 2 hours. Then I fell exhausted on the floor and lay for some time as dead and the brightness surrounded me. When I finally stood up I was as light as a feather and happy like never before in my life. I shouted: “I am free and clean, He took away all my sins!” Tears of joy and love ran down my cheeks. My heart – my tough “samurai heart”, along with pride and power that I had always believed in so much – was broken into thousand pieces by the power of God’s Spirit.

For the first time I experienced real power; yes, the power that is beyond the comprehension of a martial artist, the true power which I had sought for so long, the power of God’s presence, His unconditional love. Now I was truly able to tell Jesus that I love Him, that I will follow Him, and if necessary, die for Him.



Vitold demonstrating Aikido technique (Tachi-dori Koshi-nage) at the Baltic Sea, Poland, 1986

I HAD BEEN DEFEATED...!

But this, my Friend, wasn't the singular event, because for the three consecutive days I wasn't able to supervise training at my Club. The Holy Spirit came on me when He wanted to, and then like an exploding bomb I prayed again and again in different tongues. What I experienced was the baptism in the Holy Spirit, which is mentioned a few times in the Bible (Is.28.11-12; Mark 16.17; Acts 2.1-13; 10.34-48; 19.1-7; 1 Cor.12; 14).

I think, maybe for some of you such experience do not fit your theology or understanding of the supernatural, however my testimony is true. Inevitable, this was the most powerful action of God in my life. He defeated me in an unusual way, so that I wouldn't have any doubts about His existence, as to the way I should go.

Immediately after, the one thing I've understood, that the old warrior in me - must die, and the new warrior in me - must come to life. And this is not an optional choice. The Holy Seed was planted into my heart by God's own hand.

So, my journey on the new Way had begun, with a New Hope and vision, and under much better direction. Since that time I have been following Jesus Christ, the greatest Master and Warrior in our history, who won the victory for human souls on the Cross of Calvary. For me, no warrior, master or guru ever made that more obvious than the gentle and meek Carpenter from Nazareth. However, He closed the books of the Bible riding on the white horse as the God of War, the General of the Armies of Heaven, with the drawn sword. He is the ultimate Peaceful-Warrior-King, who will destroy Satan and all evil, and will establish true peace, and harmony, and New Kingdom on the earth.

Dear Friends, as I presume many may doubt my divine encounter, but I assure you, my testimony is true. I would never dare to cheat or mislead anyone using Jesus' holy name, nor would I be able to make up such a story.

FINDING THE TRUTH



*“Jesus answered ... ‘I came into the world, to testify to the Truth.
Everyone on the side of the Truth listens to Me.
What is truth? Pilat asked”.*
- JOHN 18.37-38

*“Jesus said: I’m the WAY and the TRUTH and the LIFE.
No-one comes to the Father except through Me”.*
- JOHN 14.6

“Friend, there is many lamps but only one Light. Go and find it”.

- *CONFUCIUS*

“It is better to light a candle than curse gathering darkness”.

- *ZEN Saying*

In this corrupted world when evil often prevails, we can hear a lot about different “truths” and “ways” to salvation, happiness, peace, and harmony. Almost on every corner of the street or on TV show, someone tries to offer a new cult, religion or philosophy to improve your life. People are confused, since they received so many contradictory answers. Surely you may ask, which way is right?

I think you will agree with me that only God is good, and perfect and everlasting. If we speak about the perfect way that is to change you and your life, it must be God’s Way, which leads to Him through His testimony and revelation. And that’s why today God is speaking to us directly through His Son. Master Ueshiba searched for such a Way, but did he found it? Before his death he said to his followers; “I am at the beginning of my path and still searching for it”. His best students, today’s great Aikido and Iaido masters (8th-10th Dan) repeat this same statement in relation to their lives. Amazingly, Buddha also, before his death said; “I didn’t achieved the truth yet!”. Since Master Ueshiba and his disciples and even Buddha didn’t achieve the true Way, what sense is in following their ways or accept their teaching without question (?) Unfortunately, today many people still follow the same paths as their predecessors and are able only to glimpse from afar God’s Way of truth, freedom, and salvation.

The very TAO (Way) that Lao Tsu said, “No-one in the world is able to understand”, is revealed to us in Jesus the Christ, who said, “I Am the WAY”. He didn’t say that He would show us way to God. No, He said I am the Way, on which you should walk and live. What others could only see as a poor reflection and welcome from afar, we can now “see with our eyes, and even touch with our hands”, says the Apostle John. That’s why the message of the Gospel is so important and most urgent to announce.

God in the person of Jesus Christ made possible the Way of Truth for everyone. Maybe it may seem strange to you, but Jesus is the only Way. He is the only Son of God, the true God, who promised to free every man from his/her emptiness and endless searching on many pathways. He has already paid the highest price for that, so that you do not have to endlessly search and get lost. Jesus, through His death on the Cross, canceled all the barriers which separate us from eternal life and happiness with God. It was He who built a new bridge over which we can cross to the glory of our Creator. This bridge is an undoubting faith in Christ and the truth about His redeeming act, which was achieved at Golgotha for the remission of the sins of the world.

Jesus didn’t come to give us some philosophy or a new system of power over one’s mind. He even didn’t give us a sort of Christian religion, He gave us Himself. Nor was Jesus a teacher of meditation, a great guru who came to explain to us how our “inner abilities” could be trapped in order to save ourselves. No, as I stated earlier, He was and is, first and foremost – The SAVIOR!

We ourselves are not able to merit salvation through our good deeds or through our daily meditations, religious ceremonies, rituals of cleansing from guilt, sin, etc. WHY? Because all of it invokes in us feelings of religious pride and conceit, that we are good, even perfect in our own efforts. Unfortunately, every man inherited corrupted nature of Adam, so we all are sinners, and nothing can save us from this old nature, even cleanse us from sins... except the precious Blood of Jesus. Therefore, whatever we do by our own

efforts and capabilities to reach salvation, but independently from God's Grace is imperfect, thus insufficient. You can meditate, increase knowledge, practice spirituality or religion throughout your whole life, but if you reject Jesus and chose to go your own way, you will never achieve the knowledge of God, either Truth or Eternal Life. It is not religious presumption to say these words; they are truth about God's Son and His salvation. The testimony of God that Christ is the only Hope and Eternal Life is for everyone who believes.

Jesus is the Gate and the Door you search for all your life. Even today, you can open it yourself by inviting Him into your heart. Thus you will achieve salvation of your soul, forgiveness of sins, true freedom, love and harmony, peace and joy.

He is the **WAY** you search for,
He is the **TRUTH** you are waiting for,
which your heart is missing,
and He is the **LIFE** through which
your spirit can be re-born.

Think, no Buddha, no Philosopher, no Sensei or Guru, nobody on the earth made such sacrifice for you as Jesus did. Mentors and sages are looking for the right way of freedom and salvation, but the true Way of God was revealed to mankind a long time ago.

THE INVITATION



“Have you ever wondered why God put you on earth, what is the purpose and meaning of life?

It is to know Him, and to know His love...

I have only one goal in life –

Calling each person to make decision to follow Christ, and to do it today”.

- *BILLY GRAHAM, the Evangelist*

*“He has taken me to the banquet hall,
and His banner over me is love”.*

- *SONG OF SONGS 2.4*

*“I hear and forget;
I see and remember;
I do and I understand”
- ZEN Proverb*

I think there is no man, who being conscious of blessings and the true Way of Life coming directly from God would consciously turn toward darkness. Jesus said that everyone who comes to Him won't be rejected but joyfully accepted to God's family, like a sheep that was lost. This calling is still relevant today. Jesus assures us that He is the Light of the World and that everyone who follows Him will not walk in the darkness, but will receive the assurance of salvation and eternal life even now.

If you decide sincerely to come to Jesus Christ, everything can change for you instantly, or just step by step. Finally, uncertainty will disappear. I'm not saying that at once you will be happy and rich. Even though He promised to care and provide for you, the true Christianity is not in the first place a Gospel of prosperity. I want to stress, that to be a Christian is not an easy way, this is the way of the warrior who is invited to the most excited journey with God Himself. On this journey you will see the true enemies and understand through learning how to fight them. But also, being a Christian, which means, “to be like Christ”, will cost you almost everything. However, again God has promised to empower you through His Holy Spirit, and will help you to lead a victorious life, and will reward mightily your commitment and faithfulness. Rewards are so great that even if you'd meditate about them whole life, still you won't be able to comprehend it.

My friends, I considered as my duty to share with you my testimony and what God did in my life. As you read these words, and as I believe isn't a coincidence, Jesus is standing by you now, knocking at your heart. If you invite Him by faith, He will come in and will stay with you. He is the best Friend you can have, whom you can fully trust, and He has a new plan, even a great future for your life.

If you have not been born again as a child of God and wish to receive Jesus as your Savior and Master, pray with me this simple prayer:

LORD JESUS CHRIST,



**I believe You are the Son of God and the only way to God;
That You died on the Cross for my sins and rose from the dead.**

Thank You for all You have done for me and I accept it by faith.
I came to You with all my sins, addictions and heartaches.
I renounce all contacts with the occult (if you practiced it).
I confess my blame and ask You to forgive, to cleanse and
To sign me with Your Blood which was shed for me at Golgotha.
Break the chains of sin, curse and Satan in my life and set me free.
Jesus, I believe in my heart what I confess with my mouth
That You are my SAVIOR, LORD and GOD.
Accept me now and make me God's child.
From this moment on I believe that I belong to You and thank You for that.
I ask You to guide me with Your Holy Spirit,
And lead me to the glory of the Heavenly Father.

AMEN

If you prayed this prayer with faith in your heart, you can be sure that your life will begin to change. Millions of Christians throughout the centuries started to follow Jesus in just this way and experienced the New Life that only God gives. However, this prayer is not a magic formula for being a born again Christian, not at all. As I stated earlier Christianity is not easy way, and definitely not a membership in some church. It's most like the training in Martial Arts, requires a self-denial, discipline, persistence, courage, mindfulness, fellowship, and submission to the will of God. In one word – it is a continuing process of growing into perfection. Of course, you are saved now by your declaration of surrendering to one Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, and willingness to take upon himself His Holy Name, that's why you are now called a Christian. However, the Apostle Paul exhorts us saying, "Workout your salvation", which means we have to be active, and always aware of our godly conduct and choices.

If this process is to continue, you will need a help to grow into Christ. May I suggest something to you?

You should find a vibrant Christian community – a Church where God's truth is taught in fullness, without compromise. There you will find friends who will help you to grow as a Christian. The Apostle Peter was saying in his letter, "We are like new born babies who need pure spiritual milk, so that by it we may grow up in our salvation", and also, "We are like a living stones, who gather together into a living Church of God". If you become independent (type of lone ranger) from brethren, you won't be able to resist difficulties, pressures, temptations, and doubts. Like in a good army, the unity of believers is essential for surviving. Without the church and working of the Holy Spirit in us we all are destined to fall, and the wonderful work of God, which was manifested in us by the new birth will cease to exist. So, the seed of Divine Grace, which was planted in your heart with love and care requires nourishment, have to be watered and protected. That's why, my Friend, you have to grow together with others, becoming a part of vital Body of Christ.

Another very important thing for a personal spiritual growth is asking God to fill you and to lead you daily with His Spirit. Just as we need water and fresh air for our minimal existence, the Spirit is needed for our constant fellowship or union with God the Father and His Son. Let me put this way; no the Holy Spirit - neither available God's spiritual power nor His gifts nor His love in your life. Read as well the Bible, because there you will find the truth and important guidance. However, the Bible is not our first bread; reading is important but not sufficient. The true maturity is coming through disciplined

spiritual life, such as; prayer, thanksgiving, praise, worship, and ability to hear personally God's voice. These essential five will build a strong communion with God. And only from our hunger for Him finally will spring up in us a spiritual fountain of inner joy and unshakable faith that can move a mountain. Therefore, the Christian life is not a church membership, a religious stagnation based on occasional participation in some activities or Sunday service. It must be living and loving relationship with the Almighty God who created the whole universe, the communion with the One who invites us to share and to participate in His heavenly glory. This is the most excited journey that will never end. The journey starts as the fellowship of a mortal and carnal man with the Eternal, and as long we travel together we become changed into His likeness.

If you received Jesus into your heart today, I rejoice with you; you are my brother and my sister. I pray that God will keep you and bless you, and give you a heart of faith and deep understanding of who He is. May He also help you to grow victoriously in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Remember, the earth is the Lord's and everything on it, now you are the co-heir with Christ and the prince of God, crowned with glory and honor, ready to manifest His character and dominion.

Act wisely, love fully, and fight bravely.

“Fight the good fight. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses” (1 Tim 6.12).

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"Christ is not valued at all unless He is valued above all !"