

# **St. Patrick** **An Extraordinary Man**

**Single Message**

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**“Scripture quotations taken from the Amplified Bible.”**

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## **Introduction**

Ancient writings tell us that a priest who lived in ancient England, in modern Ravenglass in Cumbria England today, had a son by the name of Calpurnius.

The year is approximately 380 after Christ. The place is Roman Britain. A Roman couple had found love and although they were British they were Roman citizens. His name was Calpurnius and she was Conchessa. How they loved each other. They made their home in Scotland and some writings suggest they could have lived in Wales as well.

I remember when I was last in Britain, I was impressed to find the Roman ruins of the Ceasars still visible in London.

Calpurnius and Conchessa had been converted to Christianity through the writings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and through the teachings of his Father and men

and women of God that had missioned around the world bringing the Gospel to thousands. Their love of Christ had caused them to become involved with the church, and Calpurnius became a deacon.

Their love produced a boy, Patrick. His birth year was about 385 after Christ. He grew up in ancient England, learning all that there was to offer about the land, farming, and gospel from his parents. As he reached his teen years, Patrick, however, became an inactive believer.

In modern times, there are only two writings left that were penned by the hand of Patrick. One of them is called "The confession of St. Patrick". It gives us a glimpse of the life of this extraordinary man.

At around the the age of 16 in approximately 396AD, while he was about his own business, Patrick was captured by some Irish Pirates marauding in the area of the region he lived. Calpurnius and Conchessa must have been beside themselves with grief at the disappearance of their son. No warning, no idea where he might be. The local authorities, towns people, and neighbors must have scoured the countryside looking for this young man. Conchessa becoming more hopeless at the recovery of her son as time went on.

Just like Joseph, they sold him into slavery. The raiders brought him to Ireland where he became a slave. During this time, he must have gone through some devastating times as he was abused and forced to work, in cold, wet, and difficult circumstances. In his writings, it was clear that this time was the wilderness for young Patrick, causing him to reach out to God. The hard times forcing

him to the Lord to search for his solace and help in his desperation. His memory searching for the love of God that his parents served searching for the scriptures he could barely remember. It was a time critical to his spiritual development.

He explains that the Lord had mercy on his youth and ignorance, and afforded him the opportunity to be forgiven of his sins and converted to Christianity. While in captivity, Saint Patrick worked as a shepherd and strengthened his relationship with God through prayer eventually leading him to convert to Christianity.

After six years of captivity he heard a voice telling him that he would soon go home, and then that his ship was ready. Fleeing his master, he travelled to a port, two hundred miles away, where he found a ship and with difficulty persuaded the captain to take him. After three days sailing they landed, presumably in Britain, and apparently all of the people left the ship, walking for 28 days in a "wilderness", becoming faint from hunger before encountering a herd of wild boar; since this was shortly after Patrick had urged them to put their faith in God, his prestige in the group was greatly increased. After various adventures, he returned home to his family, now in his early twenties. How amazing the celebration must have been for Calpurnius and Conchessa. Just like the prodigal son returning home, they must have rejoiced and seen the community come together to celebrate this return. After returning home to Britain, Saint Patrick continued to study Christianity.

Patrick recounts that he had a vision a few years after returning home: Here is a couple of lines from the writings of St. Patrick in his own hand.

I saw a man coming, as it were from Ireland. His name was Victoricus, and he carried many letters, and he gave me one of them. I read the heading: "The Voice of the Irish". As I began the letter, I imagined in that moment that I heard the voice of those very people who were near the wood of Focluth, which is beside the western sea—and they cried out, as with one voice: "We appeal to you, holy servant boy, to come and walk among us." Focluth is near the modern village Killala.

Soon after this vision a Bishop St. Germanus of Auxerre ordained Patrick.

Acting on the vision, Patrick returned to Ireland as a Christian missionary in about the year 433 he was about 48 years old. According to J.B. Bury, his landing place was Wicklow, Co. Wicklow, at the mouth of the river Inver-dea, which is now called the Vartry. J.B. Bury suggests that Wicklow was also the port through which Patrick made his escape after his six years captivity, though offers only circumstantial evidence to support this.

Tradition has it that St Patrick was not welcomed by the locals and was forced to leave to seek a more welcoming landing place further north. He rested for some days at the islands off the Skerries coast, one of which still retains the name of Inis-Patrick.

The first sanctuary dedicated by St. Patrick was at Saul. Shortly thereafter Benin, son of the chieftain Secsnen, joined Patrick's group.

In early writings something can be seen of St. Patrick's mission. He writes that he "baptised thousands of people". He ordained priests to lead the new Christian communities. He converted wealthy women, some of whom became nuns in the face of family opposition. He also dealt with the sons of kings, converting them too.

St. Patrick's position as a foreigner in Ireland was not an easy one. His refusal to accept gifts from kings placed him outside the normal ties of kinship, fosterage and affinity. Legally he was without protection, and he says that he was on one occasion beaten, robbed of all he had, and put in chains, perhaps awaiting execution. Patrick says that he was also "many years later" a captive for 60 days, without giving details.

After 40 years of living in poverty, teaching, traveling and working tirelessly, Patrick died on March 17, 461 in Saul, where he had built his first church. He was about 86 years old.

St. Patrick depicted with shamrock in detail of stained glass window in St. Benin's Church, Kilbennan, County Galway, Ireland.

Legend credits St. Patrick with teaching the Irish about the doctrine of the Holy Trinity by showing people the Shamrock (Three leafed Clover), using it to illustrate the Christian teaching of three persons in one God. This story first appears in writing in 1726, though it may be older.

The shamrock has since become a central symbol for St Patrick's Day.

What can we learn from this man.

Several things stick out to me.

- 1) Rebellion
- 2) Pain
- 3) repentance
- 4) Surrender
- 5) Great works

I would like us to look at one aspect today.

Surrender

This world is a battleground. Since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden

### **Genesis 3:17-19**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

17 And to Adam He said, Because you have listened *and* given heed to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it, the ground is under a curse because of you; in sorrow *and* toil shall you eat [of the fruits] of it all the days of your life.

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth for you, and you shall eat the plants of the field.

19 In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you shall return.

The world God created has been in conflict with Him

## **Romans 8:20-22**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>20</sup> For the creation (nature) was subjected to frailty (to futility, condemned to frustration), not because of some intentional fault on its part, but by the will of Him Who so subjected it—[yet] with the hope

<sup>21</sup> That nature (creation) itself will be set free from its bondage to decay *and* corruption [and gain an entrance] into the glorious freedom of God's children.

<sup>22</sup> We know that the whole creation [of irrational creatures] has been moaning together in the pains of labor until now.

Satan is called the "god of this world"

## **2 Corinthians 4:4**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>4</sup> For the god of this world has blinded the unbelievers' minds [that they should not discern the truth], preventing them from seeing the illuminating light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ (the Messiah), Who is the Image *and* Likeness of God.

...and due to Adam's sin, we are born on his team

## **Romans 5:12**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, as sin came into the world through one man, and death as the result of sin, so death spread to all men, [no one being able to stop it or to escape its power] because all men sinned.

When we reach the age when we can make moral choices, we must choose whether to follow our own sinful inclinations or to seek God

### **Joshua 24:15**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>15</sup> And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

God promises that when we seek Him with all our hearts, we will find Him

### **Jeremiah 29:13**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>13</sup> Then you will seek Me, inquire for, *and* require Me [as a vital necessity] and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

When we find Him, we have a choice to make: do we continue following our own inclinations, or do we surrender to His will?

*Surrender* is a battle term. It implies giving up all rights to the conqueror. When an opposing army surrenders, they lay down their arms, and the winners take control from then on. Surrendering to God works the same way. God has a plan for our lives, and surrendering to Him means we set aside our own plans and eagerly seek His.

The good news is that God's plan for us is always in our best interest

### **Jeremiah 29:11**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts *and* plans that I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts *and* plans for welfare *and* peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome.

unlike our own plans that often lead to destruction

### **Proverbs 14:12**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>12</sup> There is a way which seems right to a man *and* appears straight before him, but at the end of it is the way of death.

Our Lord is a wise and beneficent victor; He conquers us to bless us.

We are not able to surrender in our own ability. We do it as a choice. When we give it to Him, he is able to do it in us.

There are different levels of surrender, all of which affect our relationship with God. Initial surrender to the drawing of the Holy Spirit leads to salvation John 6:44, Acts 2:21.

When we let go of our own attempts to earn God's favor and rely upon the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf, we become a child of God

### **John 1:12**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>12</sup> But to as many as did receive *and* welcome Him, He gave the authority (power, privilege, right) to become the children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name—

But there are times of greater surrender during a Christian's life that bring deeper intimacy with God and greater power in service. The more areas of our lives we surrender to Him, the more room there is for the filling of the Holy Spirit

### **Ephesians 5:18**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>18</sup> And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but ever be filled *and* stimulated with the [Holy] Spirit.

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we exhibit traits of His character Galatians 5:22. The more we surrender to God, the more our old self-worshiping nature is replaced with one that resembles Christ

### **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>17</sup> Therefore if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh *and* new has come!

### **Romans 6:13**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>13</sup> Do not continue offering or yielding your bodily members [and faculties] to sin as instruments (tools) of

wickedness. But offer *and* yield yourselves to God as though you have been raised from the dead to [perpetual] life, and your bodily members [and faculties] to God, presenting them as implements of righteousness.

Jesus said that His followers must deny themselves another call to surrender.

### **Mark 8:34**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>34</sup> And Jesus called [to Him] the throng with His disciples and said to them, If anyone intends to come after Me, let him deny himself [forget, ignore, disown, and lose sight of himself and his own interests] and take up his cross, and [joining Me as a disciple and siding with My party] follow with Me [continually, cleaving steadfastly to Me].

The goal of the Christian life can be summed up by

### **Galatians 2: 20**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ [in Him I have shared His crucifixion]; it is no longer I who live, but Christ (the Messiah) lives in me; and the life I now live in the body I live by faith in (by adherence to and reliance on and complete trust in) the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Such a life of surrender is pleasing to God, results in the greatest human fulfillment, and will reap ultimate rewards in heaven.

## **Luke 6: 22-23**

Amplified Bible (AMP)

<sup>22</sup> Blessed (happy—with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, apart from your outward condition—and to be envied) are you when people despise (hate) you, and when they exclude *and* excommunicate you [as disreputable] and revile *and* denounce you and defame *and* cast out *and* spurn your name as evil (wicked) on account of the Son of Man.

<sup>23</sup> Rejoice *and* be glad at such a time and exult *and* leap for joy, for behold, your reward is rich *and* great *and* strong *and* intense *and* abundant in heaven; for even so their forefathers treated the prophets.

Wrap up and Close