

GRANDPA AND THE GERMAN.

A TRUE STORY
ABOUT
VICENTE R. FLORES
(1911-2007)

ROBERT H. FLORES



*This story is dedicated to my Grandfather. Thank you
for sharing this story with me and handing my father a
heritage he could pass onto me.*



GRANDPA ^{AND THE} GERMAN.

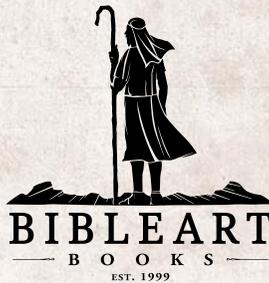
Grandpa and the German: A True Story about Vicente R. Flores (1911-2007)
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My Grandfather was born Vicente Romero Flores in Cuenca, Ecuador on April 5, 1911. His mother died when he was 3 years old, so the only family he grew up with was his father, brother and three sisters. Throughout his life, my Grandfather had all kinds of occupations— everything from a boxer to a mechanic to a miner in a gold mine. For many years, he worked for 50 cents an hour. He had also been an accomplished welder and this is where my story comes in . . .

While still living in Ecuador, he was working as a welder in the automotive industry. One day he met a German who liked his work and actually taught Vicente some things about welding. The German liked Vicente's work so much that he hired him to be a welder on airplanes. Vicente went to work for the German and their friendship grew and they both respected each other a lot. The only thing, though, was that the German only knew how to speak German, so he spoke through a translator to my Grandfather and the others. Vicente was a hard worker. If something needed to be done, he did not need to be told twice; he just did it. During this time working for the German, he was really making the money. He was, in his own words, a "big wheel". And yet he had a longing desire for more out of life.

It was one Sunday, in 1938, that Vicente and a bunch of his friends were outside a Catholic Church, though not for religious purposes. No, they came every chance they could and stand on the steps and watch the young señoritas walking into church. Vicente was there with his friends, having a good time, when suddenly, he saw his German boss walking up the stairs to go into the church. Vicente quickly moved behind his friends so the German wouldn't see him. And the German didn't see him, for his head was bowed in humble reverence as he was entering the church. Vicente watched the German's every step. The German walked up as far as he could (for every Sunday the church was packed solid with people who wanted to hear the priest as clearly as possible). The German, with his nice navy blue suit, kneeled down in the dirt of that church, took out his prayer book, and

began to pray. He prayed in German, even though the mass was celebrated in Spanish, and celebrated in his own private, personal way. The German never saw Vicente, but Vicente saw his every move. At that moment, when Vicente saw the genuine faith of his German boss (whom he so respected), he turned his life over to Jesus Christ. He decided to no longer live the sinful life that he had grown accustomed to and turned his life over to the Lord. It is because of the witness of that German that Catholicism and a genuine relationship with God were made possible for Vicente.

It was a few months later that the War started in 1939 and the Americans came down to Ecuador to “tighten the reign on democracy”. They began rounding up Germans. For, in those days, if you were a German in Ecuador, you were caught, had your hands tied and lead away somewhere for questioning. That German, my Grandfather’s boss, was one of those Germans rounded up and my Grandfather never heard of him again. Vicente stayed in Ecuador for over a decade before immigrating to the United States in 1953. His wife and kids followed a year later.

So why do I bring all this up? Well, my Grandfather’s decision to turn his life over to Christ, allowed him to raise his children Catholic (including my Dad), which allowed me to be raised Catholic, which planted the seed for me to accept Christ as a 15 year old in 1994— 56 years after my Grandfather did.

My Grandfather passed away on May 28, 2007. That was a great day for him. For it was on that day that Vicente finally met “my Lord” of whom he so often talked about.

Sometimes I wonder what would have happened if my Grandfather would have never met that German. Would he have ever come to Christ? Would my Dad have ever been raised Catholic? Would I have been brought up knowing who Jesus was? Would I even be doing Christian comics today?

I thank God for bringing that German into my Grandfather’s life

many, many years ago. And I thank God for His awesome grace throughout all the generations.

Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

—Psalm 145:13

May 30, 2007



THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST



What is the Gospel?

The gospel is the undeserved salvation of all mankind from sin and eternal death, accomplished only by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ of which is made real to an individual's heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. In other words, the gospel is God's plan to rescue us, sustain us and grow us up in Him for all eternity. The famous passage John 3:16 explains the gospel:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

The gospel's foundation is only based upon what Jesus has done; not what we have done. It is God's free gift to us. Heaven is for those who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior. People think that getting to heaven is some long, drawn-out process in which you have to try and follow the Ten Commandments or be a do-gooder or go to church or something. But it's really not complicated at all. See, salvation isn't about getting to God on our own terms or pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps, it's about God reaching down to us and offering us salvation free of charge.

Paul says in Ephesians, *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)"* —Ephesians 2:4-5

Our sins won't allow us to get to heaven on our own terms; it is only God's rich mercy that He has made a way for us. God demands no less than perfection, and only perfect people get to go to heaven. Based on works, none of us would make it; only Jesus would. But, God has provided a way to give perfection to us through Jesus. Jesus is the exclusive, one-way to the Father. He says this in John 14:6:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Either that statement is true or it is not. Every Christian knows that it is absolutely and irrevocably true. Ask Christ to reveal himself to you today. It's your choice.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Robert H. Flores has been telling stories since early childhood. He is a graduate of Riverside Community College and has worked as a graphic designer for almost 20 years. He enjoys writing stories and sharing the gospel in creative ways. He is the author several books, booklets and tracts. He lives in Southern California with his wife, Jennifer, and three children.



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