

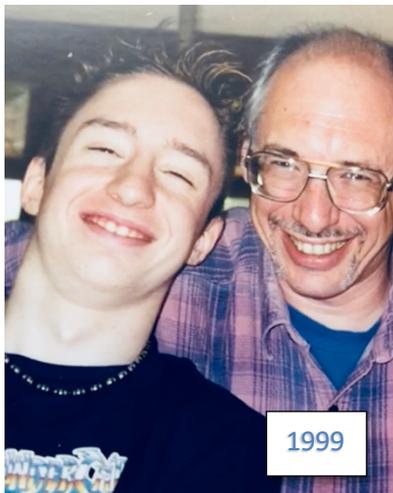
October 29, 2019
Shalom Cherverim (Friends)!

BIGGEST PRAISE EVER!!

I have waited to write this prayer letter since we wrote our very first one. 20 years ago, I got saved. I then realized that my dad was lost, and almost immediately after accepting the Lord, I went on the open road with him (he's a truck driver, and I'd go with him every summer). My dad is Jewish. If you've known us for any time at all, you've probably heard me speak of my dad's salvation being our biggest prayer request. Every minute on the road with him, my burden for his salvation increased. I gave him my testimony, and told him the story of Nicodemus in John chapter 3. The Lord was helping me to see His heart for His people, and their need for someone to tell them of the Messiah – Jesus.



At times, our discussions that summer became heated. My dad had a lot of experiences of "Christian" anti-Semitism growing up. At one point, I distinctly remember him saying *"If anyone tries to push the Bible on me, I'll punch them in the face!"*



I also remember one day (not long after that first road trip), standing in our living room, and my dad telling me *"You'd better be glad were not Orthodox, because you'd be dead to me."* He was quick to assure me that this wasn't going to happen since we weren't Orthodox, but nevertheless, it was said.

I spoke to my dad about the gospel whenever I got the chance. When I was at school at PCC my dad came to visit me. If you have an unsaved family member, you know what it's like when they are kind of forced to go to church with you. I was praying that the service that morning would be evangelistic – and it was! It even gave the gospel from the Old Testament! The invitation came. The tension (and I believe, conviction) was so thick you

could cut it with a knife. My dad held my hand, and I held back tears. He didn't go forward that day. During that visit, before he left I asked him if I could read him a Bible verse. It was Isaiah 53 (but I didn't tell him that). I asked him who it sounded like the verse was talking about. *"That's Jesus."* He said, without hesitating. I then told him that this passage was in the Old Testament, prophesying about the Messiah. I also spoke to him about the Messiah being pierced in Zechariah 12:10.

He listened to what I had to say, but was refusing to accept it. I remember that night vividly. It was the first time that I remember weeping – *really* weeping. I was sitting in my '89 F-150 in the men's parking lot at Pensacola Christian College. It had to be around 10pm. I had already hugged my dad, told him I loved him, and said goodbye. After watching his tractor/trailer leave the parking lot and pull out of sight, I could no longer hold back the tears. I sat there and wept aloud for my father.

Fast-forward about 11 years to 2015. I had continued to pray for my dad's salvation every single night, and plant seeds of the gospel whenever I could. The Lord had used the burden He had given me for my dad, to call me into full-time Jewish missions. I had realized that there were 15 million other "Michael Bergman's" on this planet (unsaved Jewish people) that needed someone to tell them of their Messiah! At this point, we had been giving the gospel to the Jews of Cleveland for four years, and were getting ready to make the move to North Carolina – as God had expanded our focus and had burdened us to come assist the ministry's leadership in reaching the Jews world-wide. Our house in Cleveland was on the market. One of my good friends from college (Adrian Burden) came to preach a revival at our home church. My dad was there.



After the message, Adrian gave an invitation. I was having a really hard time emotionally. My dad was right next to me. He must have known that he was on my mind. He leans over to me and says "Are you okay?"

Through tears, I can just barely muster out the word "No."

I then embraced him, and began weeping in his arms "I don't want to push you away." I expressed with a broken voice. He assured me that I wasn't, and couldn't push him away. I asked him "Why won't you accept Jesus as your Messiah?"

For the next ten - fifteen minutes we stood there in the pew, as my wife and I pleaded for him to trust Jesus as his Messiah. He said that he understands how all of the prophecies point to Jesus, and that he acknowledges that intellectually, but lacks the belief or faith to trust Him personally. That morning, although my dad didn't get saved, in his own words, he was closer to trusting Christ than ever before. He said that when he does it, he wants it to be real, and not fake or superficial.



As you know, we started our radio ministry in late 2017. Ever since, I think my dad has been one of our most faithful listeners! He'd call me just to say that the broadcast skipped or went down. Hearing the testimonies of other Jewish people accepting the Lord, and our answers to Jewish objections were working on his heart.

About a month and a half ago, my dad sent me a text. It was a video from *One for Israel* called "Three Reasons why Jews Don't believe in Jesus." This was a video explaining and refuting those reasons. Lois and I watched the whole video, and then I called my dad. My heart was racing. I spoke to him for about 45 minutes about the video, and was pleading with him to accept Jesus. In my dad's own words, he was "between knowledge and

faith." He is a very intellectual and analytical type of person, and found the concept of faith difficult to grasp. He also had told me previously that he didn't want his profession to be just going through the motions to appease someone. I told him to pray, and ask God to help him take that step of faith. Our phone conversation was over, but I was encouraged.



This last month, my parents *both* came to visit me for the first time since we moved to NC. After a time of shopping (left), we came back to our house. My mom wanted to take a nap before dinner. My dad was sitting at his laptop, explaining to me some stock algorithms he was building. He works with virtual stocks to test his "trading robots."

I took the opportunity to explain to him a hypothetical situation regarding buying and selling stocks, and how it illustrates taking action based on faith. My dad seemed more laid back than he usually is when we've had these conversations.

I asked him "Are you ready to take that step of faith yet?"

He became very quiet, and contemplative. When he's serious (which isn't often) he gets like this.

He makes very careful, thought-out, and purposeful statements. He looked at me and said "I don't want you to cry... Let's wait until your mother gets up."

My mom got up from her nap as I set the table for dinner. Everyone sat down. After we prayed for the meal, and everyone was situated, my dad looks over at me and asks "Are all of your kids saved?"

At this point, my mom was probably beginning to question her grip on reality. My dad has never asked anything like that. I told him that they have all asked Jesus to be their Savior. My dad then gets Seth's attention, and asks him what you call it when you show someone how to get saved. My mom starts crying. We explain that it's leading someone to the Lord. My dad then asks Seth, "What am I supposed to say?"

Seth, Evan, and Lauren (along with Lois and I) start taking turns telling him what to do to be saved (although I'm pretty sure he knew these things very well). Evan says "Accept Jesus as your Christ." Lauren chimes in "and ask Him to forgive you of your sins."

As we were all leading him through this, he was praying out loud, repeating these statements from the first person in prayer! **MY DAD PRAYED TO RECEIVE JESUS AS HIS SAVIOR!!!!**

