

My Testimony

"However, Jesus ... said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.'" (Mark 5:19)

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

"Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'" (John 3:3)

WELL, today, December 29, 2006, is my birthday. I am 13 years old! "What? You don't look like you are 13 years old!" That's what you might say. No today is my spiritual birthday. Thirteen years ago today I was "born again." I am a living testimony that "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

I want to share with you how I came to know the Lord for we ought not to forget what God has done for us for Jesus said "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you" (Mark 5:19). From my youth God was drawing me. I remember as a young boy I had a deep interest in God and I would sit down on the bed and read the gospels. I grew up as a Roman Catholic but I did not know God in my heart and this religion did not avail me in knowing God in my heart.

I fell into many gross sins as a young boy and as a young man. I rebelled much against my parents. But God extended His grace to me and His arms of mercy to me in my youth. I remember in my youth and teenage years of daily reading the bible. I came across a Christian radio station by accident in 1989 while I was in the garage lifting weights. I was attempting to listen to a worldly music station but the reception was quite poor and I kept turning the dial until I came across this Christian radio station. I was hooked on it and began daily to listen to the hymns, the sermons, and the bible reading. Every day I would look forward to listening

and hearing the word of God. God used also some Christian television programs to deepen my hunger and desire to seek and know God.

In 1993, God started to draw me much and began to convict me much of my sins. God brought conviction upon me and I ended up in misery and depression. I went through a severe depression in 1993 and the Lord removed all ungodly companions far from me. My depression became quite severe and it led to severe insomnia. I went to the doctor and told him about my depression but he could not help me or treat me for I knew it was spiritual in nature. My doctor gave me sleeping pills but to no avail it helped for a few nights.

My insomnia greatly affected my health and I dropped out of school and quit all my jobs. My parents almost gave up on me. But I started to seek God and to cry out to God. I wanted a new life of which I heard so much on the radio. I wanted that “new heart” and that “new spirit” that I kept hearing on the radio. I wanted to be “born again.” I knew I was not saved. I started to cry out to God for salvation. I would go to the park and cry out to God and rededicate my life to God. I was eager to go the Christian bookstore and bought a Giant Print bible. I was so happy and read almost the whole Psalms within a short period of time. I started to seek the Lord and cry out to God to give me a new life. I bought a Sony Walkman and began to daily listen to the Christian radio station and I would take walks outside listening to the gospel. At that time God opened my eyes to the truth and every time I would go the Catholic Church I would see the errors and the false teachings found there. I was disturbed much about the teachings of that church while God opened my eyes while reading His word.

At that time my depression and insomnia grew very severe and weeks went by without any rest or sleep. I remember in those days I used to lie in bed during the day and I always had the Christian radio on. Then one afternoon while in bed in depression and despair a Christian radio program came on called “Sharing Our Burdens” with Pastor Joe Jacowitz. I was so blessed in listening to it and I began to listen to it daily. I remember I used to kneel down and weep while the pastor was praying for the prayer requests that came in. I too felt the need for prayer and one time I was in despair and called from the park asking them to pray for me “for I cannot sleep.”

I grew much in despair of life and almost gave up on life. God delayed answering my prayer for salvation. Satan put thoughts of suicide in me. I felt I wanted to end it all. I said in my heart on December 28 that maybe the next day will be my last day.

But God had other plans that night. That night God showed His mercy and grace to me and gave me grace to sleep and rest like a baby for the first time in many months. I woke up four hours later feeling that I am a new person! I felt God has answered my prayer! I knew I was saved! I knew I was a new creature in Christ!

When I woke up I had such unbelievable heavenly joy which lasted without interruption for two weeks. Songs and hymns of praise flowed naturally from my heart and lips every day. Songs like “Thy Word” and “Blessed Assurance.” God restored my health and I began to sleep well daily. And God motivated me and after a few weeks I went back to school and I had nothing but straight A’s since then. I used to pray much and depend on the Lord before studying and before I take an exam. God restored my health and I went back to work.

Shortly after getting saved the first thing I was eager to do was to find a good church. I quickly grasped my phone book and began to search for a bible-believing church. I was happy to find one locally and I was eager to go. I was so hungry for the word of God and I began to grasp Christian literature and Christian books to feed on. I told my mom that I am not going back anymore to the Catholic Church and I did not care if I offended my parents.

I was so happy going to church and hearing the word of God. But after a few weeks I felt the Lord drawing me to go the church where Pastor Joe Jacowitz pastors. I told my mother that I want to go to that church. I was happy with the local church that I found but I was eager for the heart knowledge and deeper walk with God that Pastor Joe talked about. Within a week or so I went to the library in haste and grasped the phone book and searched for the church’s phone number. I was eager to call and I talked to Pastor Joe and he gave me the invitation to come. About two Sunday’s later I went in haste and eagerness to the church and that was on January 31, 1994.

Well this is my testimony in brief! It is much condensed and it can take volumes to declare what God has done for me. What God has done for me, He can do for you too! If you don’t know Christ, I invite you to “taste and see that the Lord is good.” God can give you a new life and a new beginning. Go to Him today! Call upon Him today “For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13).

This is a true testimony of Peter Sarkis, a member of Christ Bible Church in San Leandro, CA

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