

HeartCry

MAGAZINE



**"LET THE REDEEMED.
OF THE LORD SAY SO..."**

TESTIMONIES OF SAVING GRACE

HeartCry

MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Welcome to the Spring Edition of the HeartCry magazine. With the budding of a new season comes the yearly reminder of God's renewing work in the creation that surrounds us. With this in mind, we desire that this spring magazine be a reminder to you of God's renewing, redeeming grace, not simply as it is pictured in the world around us, but as it is gloriously portrayed in the lives of men and women across the globe who have embraced the Gospel of the Lord Jesus.

In Psalm 107, the psalmist writes, "Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the adversary and gathered from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south." The imperative that is charged to the redeemed is a gradual unfolding of praise to the God of our salvation: "Give thanks to the Lord!" Why? The psalmist answers: "For He is good!" Why is He good? Again, the psalmist replies: "For His lovingkindness is everlasting!" Further prodding of the psalmist asks, what has He done for these redeemed? His answer: "He has redeemed [them] from the hand of the adversary and gathered [them] from the lands!" From where then are these gathered ones

that make up this redeemed congregation? The psalmist informs us, they are "from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south!"

As you flip through the pages of this magazine, it is our hope that your hearts would be lifted up in Psalm-107-type praise as you encounter truths and testimonies of God's never-ending, world-encompassing love. You will find, first, an excerpt from Paul Washer's second book in the "Recovering the Gospel" series, *The Gospel Call & True Conversion*. Second, you will read testimonies from all over the world of God's continual redemption of sinners through the preaching and proclamation of a crucified, dead, and risen Savior. Finally, you will hopefully get a good idea of what the men which you labor to support are doing in Indonesia.

We not only hope that the Christian reading these testimonies would be encouraged by hearing of the Lord's work in claiming souls for the Kingdom, but we also greatly desire that every man, woman, and child consider the condition of their soul in light of a holy God that offers free grace through the Cross of a crucified and risen Messiah.

Sincerely,

The HeartCry Staff

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"BELIEVE AND CONFESS"

AN EXCERPT FROM
The Gospel Call & True Conversion
by Paul Washer

"But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: 'Do not say in your heart, 'who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down), or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' -- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."

Romans 10:6-10

This is arguably one of the most eloquent and important passages in all the Scriptures regarding what a "man must do" to be saved.¹ Throughout the centuries of Christianity, it has served as a source of comfort for all who believe and as a wall of defense against the almost constant barrage of every false teaching that would seek to mingle works with faith as the means of salvation. Salvation is not won by any valiant deed or noble pilgrimage on the part of man, but by calling upon the Name of the Lord in faith.

A NEAR WORD

In the verses immediately preceding our text, the apostle Paul demonstrates the great theological error of the greater part of the nation of Israel. Though they had a commendable zeal, they did not seek a right standing before God by faith in the atoning work of His Son. Instead, they sought a righteousness through a rigorous and excruciating obedience to the Law.² Paul counters their false view by declaring that the perfect saving work of Christ marked the end of all attempts to establish one's own righteousness before God through human merit or effort.³

The Law places demands upon fall-

"the perfect saving work of Christ marked the end of all attempts to establish one's own righteousness before God through human merit or effort"

en man that he cannot accomplish any more than he can "ascend into heaven" or "descend into the abyss." However, faith is entirely different. It requires no heroic feat or impossible religious conformity. Instead, it calls a man to acknowledge his "helpless estate"⁴ and to rest upon the person and accomplishments of Christ. For this reason, the apostle Paul assures the Christians in Rome that everything they required for a right standing before God was appropriated to them through their faith in the "word" of the Gospel that had been brought "near" to them⁵ through the apostolic preaching. They could rest assured of their salvation because they had believed in their hearts the Gospel message which was preached to them, and they were openly confessing Jesus as Lord.

1 Acts 16:30

2 Romans 10:1-3

3 Romans 10:4

4 The phrase is taken from the beloved hymn, "It Is Well With My Soul," by Horatio Gates Spafford (1828-1888).

5 Had been made readily available to them.

THE MISUSE OF THE TEXT

This passage has rightly become one of the most popular and most employed among modern day evangelists and all who seek to share their faith with others. However, what does it truly mean, and what is its proper application in evangelism? Have these biblical requirements of “believing and confessing” been fulfilled merely because someone has made a decision for Christ, prayed the sinner’s prayer, or confessed Christ before a congregation of affirming believers? To answer these questions, we must consider Paul’s words in their proper context, and determine the precise meaning of his language. We must be wary of “assuming” that a text means a certain thing or that it should be used in a certain way merely because it is the prevalent interpretation and application of the text by our contemporaries. We often assume that we understand a text simply because it is the interpretation we received without question from those who received it without question from others. In the same way, we often use or apply a text simply because it is the *modus operandi*⁶ of all those around us. However, this naïve chain of unquestioned trust is often broken the moment someone actually studies the text “to see whether these things are so.”⁷ Having said this, we would do well to ask ourselves the following question: “Did the apostle Paul write this text with the purpose of giving us a model for the “sinner’s prayer” or did he have an entirely different purpose in mind?

In contemporary evangelicalism, the “sinner’s prayer” has become the foremost means of inviting men to Christ and granting them assurance of salvation. It is found on the back of most evangelistic tracts and heard at the end of most evangelistic sermons. It usually includes the following: The seeker is led to confess that he is a sinner and to acknowledge his inability to save himself. He is then directed to confess that Jesus

died for his sins and rose again from the dead. Subsequently, he is encouraged to ask Jesus to come into his heart and to be his Savior. Afterward, he is promised that, if he prayed this prayer sincerely, he is now saved. Finally, he is directed that if he ever doubts his salvation he should stand upon this one moment in time when he prayed the sin-

Have these biblical requirements of “believing and confessing” been fulfilled merely because someone has made a decision for Christ, prayed the sinner’s prayer, or confessed Christ before a congregation of affirming believers?

ner’s prayer and confessed Christ.

Although there is some truth in these various elements, there are several serious objections that should be raised to this methodology of inviting sinners to Christ: First, it has no biblical precedent. It was not employed by Christ, the apostles or the early Christians. Secondly, it was unknown to the greater part of the church throughout history. That is, it is a recent invention. Thirdly, it has the danger of turning the Gospel into a credal statement. Countless individuals who show no biblical evidence of conversion believe themselves saved simply because one time in their lives they made a decision for Christ and repeated the prayer. Although this is not the intention of those sincere Christians who use the sinner’s prayer in evangelism, it has been the overwhelming result of this methodology. Fourthly, it has almost entirely replaced the biblical invitation of repentance and faith. It is astounding that the biblical examples of inviting men to Christ are virtually ignored in favor of a modern-day construct. Fifthly, it has become the primary, and oftentimes, the only basis of assurance. That is, countless individuals, who bear little or no ev-

⁶ Latin: A manner of operating or working; a distinct pattern or method of procedure (Webster).

⁷ Acts 17:11

idence of God’s work in their lives, are convinced or assured of their salvation only because one time in their lives they prayed the sinner’s prayer sincerely.

This popular application of our text to the seeker is contrary to Paul’s logic and purpose. It distorts one of the Scriptures’ most powerful teachings on *sola fide*⁸ and one of its most powerful promises to the people of God. It has also turned the text into an empty creed that has been used to give a false assurance of salvation to a countless multitude of individuals who bear little or no fruit of conversion. For these reasons, it is imperative that we take a thorough look at this text in light of its grammatical and historical context.

To grasp something of Paul’s meaning and purpose, it is helpful to understand that he is referring to both a one-time event in the believer’s life and to the result or fruit of that event which continues throughout the entirety of the believer’s life. In other words, he is speaking of a person’s conversion experience and of the on-going fruit of that conversion which validates it or demonstrates it to be genuine. A man is justified and reconciled with God the moment he truly believes in the person and atoning work of Christ. However the evidence that he truly believed and was genuinely converted in that one moment of time is that he “goes on” believing and confessing all the days of his life. This is not to say that the true believer will be immune to doubts, free from failure, or unhindered in his growth to maturity. However, it does mean that the God who began a good work in him will continue perfecting that work until the final day.⁹ Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone.¹⁰ However, the evidence of saving faith is a genuine and enduring confession of the lordship of Jesus Christ throughout the life of the believer.

Herein lies the problem with the modern day use of this text. Whether it

has been our intention or not, no one can deny that there are countless individuals in the street and in the pew who believe themselves to be “saved” because one time in their lives they supposedly “believed in their heart” and “confessed with their mouth,” but there is little or no abiding fruit. They live the full course of their lives in carnality and worldliness without any real evidence of the enduring power of God which Scripture teaches will always accompany salvation. Yet they believe themselves “saved” and are even adamant in their convictions because one time in their lives they “made their decision” and/or “prayed the prayer.” The problem is further exasperated by the fact that countless evangelical ministers validate the salvation of such individuals. They base their confirmation upon a “supposed” conversion experience, but neglect to consider whether or not there is any evidence of an on-going work of sanctification or the bearing of fruit. It seems that they have forgotten a foundational truth of the Gospel: That genuine saving faith is validated by its perseverance and fruit;¹¹ that the evidence that we have been saved from the condemnation of sin, is that we are currently being saved from the power of sin.

BELIEVING WITH THE HEART

In our text, the apostle Paul tells us that we are saved if we believe “in our heart”¹² and “with the heart.”¹³ If our salvation depends on such faith, then our consideration and correct interpretation of these two phrases are of utmost importance. Before we begin any discussion regarding faith, we would do well to remember that the demons also believe and tremble, but not unto salvation.¹⁴ When Jesus began preaching in Galilee, the demons who had possessed a certain man in the synagogue cried out, “I know who You are – the Holy One of God.”¹⁵ The Gerasene demoniac spoke in even greater detail when he confessed that

8 Latin: faith alone; it refers to salvation by faith alone in the redemptive work of God through Jesus Christ without any mixture of human merit.

9 Philippians 1:6

10 Ephesians 2:8

11 Philippians 1:6; Mark 13:13; James 2:18

12 Romans 10:9

13 Romans 10:10

14 James 2:19

15 Mark 1:24

Believe and Confess *Continued...*

Jesus was the “Son of the Most High God.”¹⁶ From these examples, it would not seem beyond the bounds of Scripture to suggest that Satan and demons have an acute knowledge of the person and work of Jesus Christ, and that they accept them as absolute realities. They know He is the Son of God, that He died on Calvary for the sins of His people, and that He rose again on the third day. However, all their knowledge and recognition of the realities of Christ do not lead to their salvation. They are not saved by what they know to be true, but rather they are condemned by it. This same malady is found among men!

Any honest evaluation of contemporary evangelicalism will prove that there are countless individuals walking the streets and sitting in pews that have “received a faith of the same kind”¹⁷ as demons. They know something of the person and work of Christ, and they will make something of a confession when it is convenient. However, there is little evidence of an ongoing reality of the saving work of Christ in their life. Their hope of eternal salvation is founded upon the sincerity of a decision they made long ago to “accept Christ” by means of a simple prayer. Their hope was confirmed by ministers of the Gospel who should have known better. Like demons they are lost. Yet, unlike demons they do not know it!

Having given this warning regarding the dangers of a heartless faith, we are now ready to examine a true faith of the heart: A faith that not only recognizes what is true about the person and work of Christ, but relies upon these realities and is transformed by them. In the Scriptures, the heart refers to the very core or essence of a person. It is the seat of one’s intellect, will, and emotions. In one sense, we may say that it is the control center of all that we are. What happens there affects everything else about us. Therefore it is absurd to think that a man could believe something “in” or “with” the heart without it

also having a dramatic or even drastic effect upon the totality of his person.

To believe in our heart that God raised Jesus from the dead is to believe with our innermost being that everything Jesus said about Himself is true. This may not sound too radical until we consider some of the things that He actually said:

He is the eternal God and the Creator of the universe.¹⁸

He is the Life and Light of all men.¹⁹

He is mankind’s only Savior.²⁰

He is the absolute Sovereign of the universe.²¹

He will determine the eternal destiny of all men.²²

He is more valuable than the combined wealth of the world.²³

The promotion of His will and agenda is the purpose of the universe and of every individual’s life.²⁴

He is to be loved above all other persons and things.²⁵

He is to be radically followed and obeyed no matter the cost.²⁶

He will judge His people’s service to Him and reward them accordingly.²⁷

These radical claims of Christ do not leave much room for a nonchalant response. Nor can they be believed with the very core or center of our intellect, will, and emotions without having a radical, drastic, or even devastating effect upon our lives. It is impossible for a rational creature to embrace these truths and not be noticeably changed by them. The very nature of the claims themselves demands a cataclysmic change in the character of one’s person

18 John 1:1-2; 8:58-59

19 John 1:4; 6:35; 8:12; 11:25

20 John 8:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12

21 Matthew 28:18; Acts 2:36

22 Matthew 16:27; 25:31-46

23 Matthew 16:26

24 Luke 6:46; 12:47

25 Luke 14:26

26 Matthew 16:24-25; Luke 14:27-33

27 Matthew 16:27; II Corinthians 5:10

16 Mark 5:7

17 This phrase is borrowed from 2 Peter 1:1, where the genuine Christians are referred to as “those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours [i.e. the apostles].”

and the direction of his life.

Therefore, true saving faith is not a passive or partial reliance upon Christ, but a reliance that is active and growing. Through the continuing work of sanctification, it eventually encompasses the entirety of the believer's life. The proof of saving faith is not that once upon a time we merely "accepted Christ" through a prayer repeated by rote, but that since the moment we first believed the Gospel, Christ's claims about Himself and His claim upon us continues to be a greater and greater reality in our lives.

CONFESSING WITH THE MOUTH

Having taken a brief glance at heartfelt faith, we must now consider what it means to confess with the mouth. The first thing we should notice from our text is the specificity of the confession. It is not merely a confession of faith in Jesus Christ, but a confession of His absolute and universal lordship. Thus, the evidence that a man has believed with the heart and is trusting in the saving virtue of the person and work of Christ is that he is also confessing Him as Lord.

The long history of Christianity proves that nothing could be more radical or costly than to confess, *kúrios Iesous*²⁸ or "Jesus is Lord!" In the Roman world, there was only one Lord and his name was Caesar. Even to mention the possibility of another was political treason, resulting in exile or execution. In the Jewish religion, there was only one Lord and His name was Yahweh. To give the title of Lord to another was blasphemy and worthy of death. The renowned Greek scholar A. T. Robertson writes: "No Jew would do this who had not really trusted Christ, for *kúrios*²⁹ in the LXX³⁰ is used of God. No Gentile would do it who had not ceased worshipping the emperor as *kúrios*."³¹ Again Robertson writes:

"One is reminded of the demand made to Polycarp that he say *Kúrios Kaisar*³² and how each time he replied *Kúrios Iesous*.³³ He paid the penalty for his loyalty with his life. Lighthearted men today can say 'Lord Jesus' in a flippant or even in an irreverent way, but no Jew or Gentile then said it who did not mean it."³⁴

We are saved by faith alone in the person and work of Christ, but the evidence that our faith is genuine is our confession of the lordship of Jesus Christ and our allegiance to Him, even when such a confession costs us dearly. The early church suffered and died because it faithfully proclaimed Jesus as Lord and refused to worship Caesar. At this very moment, Christians suffer imprisonment, torture, and death because of the same confession. Even in the Western world, where there is little or no physical persecution to speak of, the true believer is the one who submits to the lordship of Jesus Christ rather than live by the standards of this present evil age.³⁵ This is the meaning of the apostle Paul when he writes:

"If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."³⁶

True faith in Jesus shows itself in a real submission to and an open confession of the lordship of Jesus, which deepens as the believer matures, and grows stronger even in the most adverse of circumstances. The great evidence of salvation is not merely that a person made a decision for Christ and confessed Him as Lord at the end of an evangelistic meeting, but that he continues on to maturity in this same faith and confession. Commenting on our text, the renowned Scottish Baptist Robert Haldane writes:

28 Greek: "Jesus is Lord!"

29 *Kúrios* is the Greek word for "Lord".

30 The abbreviated symbol representing the Septuagint – the Greek translation of the Old Testament Scriptures.

31 Word Pictures, Romans 10:9.

32 Caesar is Lord.

33 Jesus is Lord.

34 Word Pictures, 1 Corinthians 12:3

35 Galatians 1:4

36 Romans 10:9

“A man becomes righteous, perfectly righteous, through believing God’s record concerning His Son. But the evidence that this faith is genuine is found in the open confession of the Lord with the mouth in everything in which His will is known. Confession of Christ is as necessary as faith in Him, but necessary for a different purpose. Faith is necessary to obtain the gift of righteousness. Confession is necessary to prove that this gift is received. If a man does not confess Christ at that hazard of life, character, property, liberty, and everything dear to him, he has not the faith of Christ. In saying, then, that confession is made unto salvation, the Apostle does not mean that it is the cause of salvation, or that without it the title to salvation is incomplete. When a man believes in his heart, he is justified. But confession of Christ is the effect of faith, and will be evidence of it at the last day. Faith which interests the sinner in the righteousness of Christ is manifested by the confession of His name in the midst of enemies, or in the face of danger.”³⁷

CONFESSION IN ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In order for us to understand what Paul meant when he wrote of the necessity of confessing Jesus as Lord, it is helpful to consider what it meant to the Christians of the early church. In the following is a portion of a letter written by Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia to the Roman Emperor Trajan who reigned from A.D. 98 to A.D. 117. It briefly describes how those accused of being “Christian” were interrogated and how the charge against them was either proven or dismissed:

“An anonymous information was laid before me, containing a charge against several persons, who upon examination denied they were Christians or had ever been so. They re-

peated after me an invocation to the god’s, and offered religious rites with wine and incense before your statue, and even reviled the name of Christ... I thought it proper, therefore, to discharge them.”³⁸

Pliny writes of several persons who were obviously falsely accused of being followers of Christ. In proof of their innocence they called upon the Roman god’s, offered worship to the emperor, and reviled the Name of Jesus. According to our text, they did the very opposite of what a Christian would do.

Although the content of Pliny’s letter provides us with only a negative example, it does give us a solid foundation for supposing how the scenario would have turned out differently if the accused had truly been Christian. Imagine that a small house church is discovered and brought before the Roman official. In order to prove or disprove the accusation against them, they are led to a small altar where they are commanded to perform a few simple rituals. First they must call upon the Roman gods. Secondly, they must participate in a form of emperor worship to prove their loyalty to Caesar. Finally, they are told to revile Christ, either to deny His lordship or to declare Him accursed.³⁹ To the horror of the small fellowship, two of their own promptly take their place before the altar and do as they are commanded. As they are discharged, another is forced to his feet and commanded to obey. Though full of fear and trembling, he not only refuses to venerate the Roman gods and Caesar, but he replies *Kúrios Iesous*⁴⁰ or “Jesus is Lord!” He is taken away by force to await either exile or execution. One by one, the rest of the fellowship makes the same faithful confession and their fate is sealed. Though the scenario is scripted, the archives of Christian history prove that a countless multitude of believers have faced such testing and prevailed at the cost of their own lives. Their testing proved that they believed in their heart unto salvation,

³⁷ *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, p.508; Robert Haldane (February 17, 1764 - December 18, 1842).

³⁸ New Testament Times, Merrill C. Tenney, p.329-330.

³⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:3

⁴⁰ Jesus is Lord.

because they confessed Jesus as Lord even unto death.

A PROPER APPLICATION

In light of the true significance of this text and what it has cost so many followers of Jesus throughout the ages, its popular use in modern-day evangelism is nothing short of repulsive. To even hint that this text is the biblical foundation for the sinner's prayer found at the end of countless evangelistic tracts and sermons is a gross exegetical fallacy. Yet due to this popular belief, countless multitudes of unconverted men, women, and children have an almost impenetrable assurance of their eternal salvation simply because one time in their lives they affirmed a few biblical truths and repeated a model prayer. Afterwards, there was no transformation, no continuing work of sanctification, no rejection of the world, and no desire for Christ. Borrowing from the pen of the apostle Paul, it is proper to ask, "You foolish evangelicals, who has bewitched you?"⁴¹

The text before us teaches that we are saved by faith alone. Salvation is not earned by some heroic feat or exhausting endeavor on the part of the Christian, but it is received by faith in the person and work of Christ. Those who truly believe have long given up any and every attempt to establish their own righteousness. They have fallen upon Christ, and upon His virtue and merit they stand!

However this faith in Christ is neither temporary, static or undetectable, but persevering, dynamic, and evident. This is ensured because salvation is the work of God for the glory of God.

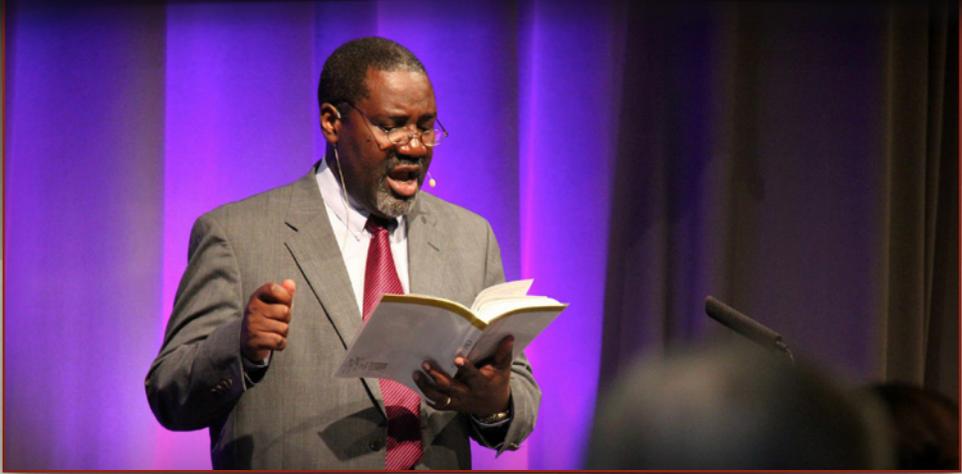
He who first wrought saving faith in the heart of the believer will see to it that that faith perseveres, deepens, and manifests. One such manifestation will be the confession of the lordship of Jesus Christ through both word and deed, and regardless of the cost!

How then should we employ and apply this text? With regard the believer, it should be a constant consolation and warning. The consolation is that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone. Our right standing before God is not the result of our strenuous efforts or mighty deeds, but the result of Christ's great effort and mighty accomplishment on Calvary. The warning is that one of the chief evidences of saving faith and true conversion is the growing reality of Christ's lordship in our lives and our willingness to follow him even at the greatest cost. With regard to evangelism and our treatment of the seeker, our text should be used in a three-fold manner: First, to prove to the seeker the uselessness of works, and admonish him to lay aside all hopes of gaining salvation through personal virtue or merit. Secondly, it should be employed to encourage him to look to Christ alone and to believe in Him unto salvation. Thirdly, it should be used as an on-going litmus test for the genuineness of his profession. He should know that if he is truly converted, the lordship of Jesus Christ will become a growing reality in His life. Although he will pass through great struggles, and suffer many failures in his faith, piety, and confession, throughout the years of his life, his identity and purpose will be increasing bound up in the mastery of Christ over him!

41 Galatians 3:1

A VIEW FROM THE FIELD

TESTIMONIES OF SALVATION AND MISSIONARY UPDATES



Africa

A PARTNER'S TESTIMONY

CONRAD MBEWE

Conrad is the preaching pastor of HeartCry's primary partner in Africa, Kabwata Baptist Church in Lusaka, Zambia. We have partnered with Kabwata Baptist for almost 13 years in helping to underwrite the support of their missionary pastors. The following is Pastor Conrad's account of his conversion to Christ and his subsequent calling into the ministry.

CONVERSION

I was brought up in a religious family; hence, I always thought I was a Christian, as I went to church most of my life. The first time a person ever confronted me with the Gospel was while I was at Chiwala Secondary School. I refused to believe that I was not a Christian – especially because the student witnessing to me lived the same worldly and sinful life that I was living.

Soon after completing school in December 1978, a friend of mine by the name of Fred Simposya, wrote me a let-

ter in which he told me about the need for me to turn to God in repentance and put my faith in Jesus Christ. The contents of this letter hit me like a blow between the eyes. I recall that as I read it, I felt so convicted that I knew I needed to do something about my life. Instead of doing what the letter said, however, I convinced myself that all I needed to do was change my friends and become more regular at church.

For three months, from January to March 1979, I tried to do this and failed lamentably. During this period, I was at Zambia National Service (ZNS) doing my compulsory military training. I discovered that sin was so much a part of me that I could not quit it on the whim of my will. While at ZNS, I was in the same block of residence as Fred and saw how, whereas I was trying and failing to live the Christian life, his Christian life just flowed “naturally”!

Fred's testimony was complemented by my elder sister's. She was converted towards the end of 1978, and I was able to see the amazing change in her life. This was at a time when we were having a very difficult time in our home. My sister was ever joyful in the midst of our troubles, while I was always upset. I figured that this difference was because my sister had received something in her conversion experience that I did not have. So, these living testimo-



“...my old sinful desires were gone, and I had new godly desires. I hated sin with the same intensity with which I once loved it.”

nies set me searching for salvation despite my religious upbringing.

It was not until the end of March that the search came to an end. On March 29th, I left ZNS for home with the express purpose of sorting out my relationship with God once and for all. On the way home, I bought myself a Bible. The following morning, when everyone had gone to work and school, I got Fred’s letter out and read it again. I noticed that he had directed me to pray to the Lord Jesus Christ to forgive and cleanse me. I looked for a prayer among the tracts in my sister’s room and found one that seemed to represent my plea. I knelt down and prayed that prayer twice over. Feeling no change, I threw it aside and cried to the Lord from the depth of my heart.

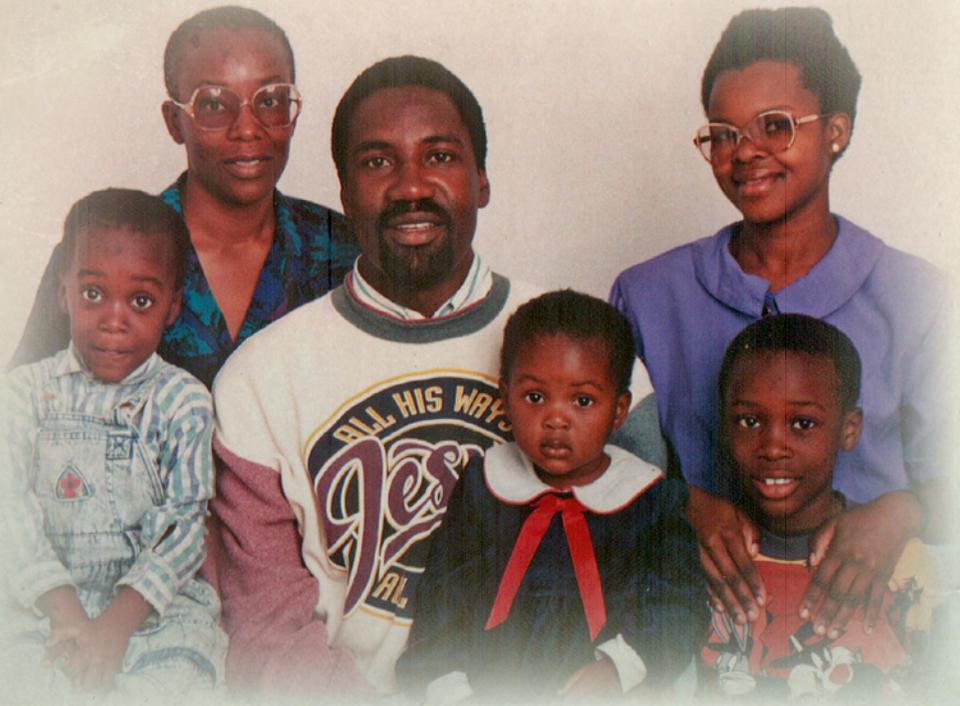
It was not long before I felt the urge to pray disappear. I got up from my knees and wrote down in my new Bible: “*Today, the 30th of March 1979, I, Conrad Mbewe, have accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour.*” Then I opened to the book of Ecclesiastes and read it from beginning to end. I was completely amazed that the Bible was so sweet to read. I went back to ZNS with a desire to tell everybody that Jesus saves. I found that my old sinful desires were gone, and I had new godly desires. I hated sin with the same intensity with which I once loved it.

Exactly one year after my conversion, on Sunday, March 30th, 1980, I was baptized at Lusaka Baptist Church by Pastor Joe Simfukwe. As I came out of the water, I thought I could hear the angels singing, and I excitedly prayed, “Lord Jesus, from now on, I’m gonna fly all my flags high!”

CALLING AND MINISTRY

That is how I became a Christian. But how did I sense God’s call to the preaching ministry? Soon after my baptism, I began to have a strange experience. Often during my personal devotional exercises, especially while praying, I would feel a strong urge to go and preach the gospel to all who needed to get saved. At first I tried to overlook this feeling, but it grew with time until I finally decided to seek counsel. At this time, I was studying for my Mining Engineering degree at the University of Zambia. I went to the room of a Christian whom I admired for his godly life and his knowledge of the Bible, and I confided in him about this experience. I was hoping he would immediately tell me to quit my studies and go off to Bible College, but he did not. He counseled me that it was one thing to know the Lord’s call upon your life and it was another to know when it was that the Lord would have you to fulfill his call. So he advised me to get back to the Lord and respond to this growing burden upon my heart, and then to wait prayerfully until He opened the door for either training or ministry. That is precisely what I did.

It was not until 1987, seven years later, that the Lord finally opened the door into pastoral ministry. It was in July of that year that Kabwata Baptist Church issued a call for me to become their pastor, and I commenced ministry there on September 1st of that year. The seven years of waiting were not spent looking into the sky wondering what to do with myself. I was involved in private theological studies and a growing



preaching ministry, and my leadership gifts were exercised and developed in various ways. I recall one day a fellow student coming into my room during my last year of studies at university, looking at my bookshelf, and saying, "Conrad, tell me, what are you studying at this university? Looking at your bookshelf, one would think you are doing a Major in Theology and a Minor in Mining!" He was right. I had invested all the money I could spare on the kind of books I felt were recommended textbooks for theological students. These books were not just decorations on my shelf; I studied them, especially during my vacations and after I finished university and went to work in the mines.

My leadership development largely took place at university. During my last two years of studies there, I was chosen to lead the University Christian Fellowship (UCF), which at that time had a membership of about 400 students on a campus of about 3000 students. Due to the different denominations represented in this group, I was stretched to the limit in terms of my leadership skills. During my last year at university, I was also chosen as the national student chairman for the Zambia Fellowship of Evangelical Students (ZAFES), which brought together an evangelical student witness in the uni-

versity and college campuses across Zambia.

Outside the university, I was also involved in the life of Lusaka Baptist Church, especially in leading the Bible study group for university and college students. (I also secretly was understudying the life and ministry of my pastor, Joe Simfukwe, seeking to learn from the way he managed his personal and ministry life how I would go about my work as a pastor when my turn came). I was also involved in the planting of Kabwata Baptist Church. We used to go out on Saturdays to evangelize door-to-door, and then invite people to church on Sunday. When I graduated in 1984 and went to work in the copper mining town of Mufulira, the church I joined immediately made me leader of the youth work. By the end of my first year in that church, the leaders had decided that I would preach every Sunday, as long as I was not working! Other churches began to call on me to preach for them too, so that by 1987 (the year I left to go into full time ministry), there was hardly a Sunday when I was not preaching somewhere. So, when the call came to pastor Kabwata Baptist Church, I was more than ready to throw aside my hard-hat and hold the plough with both hands.

Asia

A MISSIONARY'S TESTIMONY

SAMUEL B.

Samuel B. is a pastor and missionary leader in South India who HeartCry began partnering with in February 2013. He is married and has two children. Together with his father, Samuel oversees a missionary organization that is currently supporting and training 12 pastors who labor in the villages surrounding his church.



My name is Samuel B. I am 33 years old, and I got married to Vijaya in the year 2006. We are now blessed with two children, Shane (4 1/2 years) and Shireen (2 years).

Let me start my testimony with my childhood. My sister and I were born into a Christian family where my father was a Baptist minister. This was a miracle in and of itself as we look at the countless Indians who do not have any clue whatsoever about Christianity. We were exposed to the Scriptures and to Sunday School right from the beginning. As a child, I could clearly remember how I used to pray to God when I couldn't find things I lost, and when I eventually got them, I used to thank the Lord. We had a Gospel meeting in school when I was 12 years old, and the speaker emphasized the topic, "Giving one's life to Jesus." This was something I never pondered upon, but it would soon vanish from my mind.

When I was 16, I had to go to junior college in a city called V_____ from the year 1994 to 1996. Those two years were the worst years in my life as it was a residential college and the principal was a hard taskmaster. Against my will, I was forced to join mathematics, physics, and chemistry when I knew I was no good at mathematics. For these two years, I would have to stay away from my family. In addition, endless exams, constant humiliation for being a Christian who belonged to a lower caste, and regular beatings by the principal left a very deep and very

sad impression in my life. I used to pray to God to let me come out of this jail-like life as soon as I could, and I felt as though my prayers seemed to have been unheard. I was not given permission to go to church on Sundays, and during this time, I was introduced to the sinful world of my friends.

By the year 1996, I was able to pass in math, physics, and chemistry, and I decided to say a permanent goodbye to the sciences. But my father insisted that I should pursue a B.S. in electronics at a time when I wanted to do anything but the sciences. Education plays a very important role in India. Unless you are educated and highly successful, you cannot even get married. If you were to get a decent job, you would be competing with countless other people. Although I was told by my dad that I was to become a pastor later on, he always insisted that I should at least earn a Bachelor's degree in sciences as he thought that would fetch me a job. So I was left without any choice. From the year 1996 to 1998, I went to do my bachelor's degree in electronics, but I was very unsuccessful. During these two years, I would not go to college; I would skip classes to go to movies. But during this period also, I would not be absent from going to church on Sundays.

In the year 1998, I decided I could not go ahead with my studies. Those were the days when I was nervous even to speak to my dad. But somehow I told him that this sci-

ence thing would not go well with me. In those days, I constantly prayed to God, asking Him to give me a new start to my life, as I was tired of living as a hypocrite. And not only that, I was also a failure in the eyes of society, because I was unsuccessful with my studies. This is when the Lord broke through my life and opened a way for me to do my Bachelor studies in English literature.

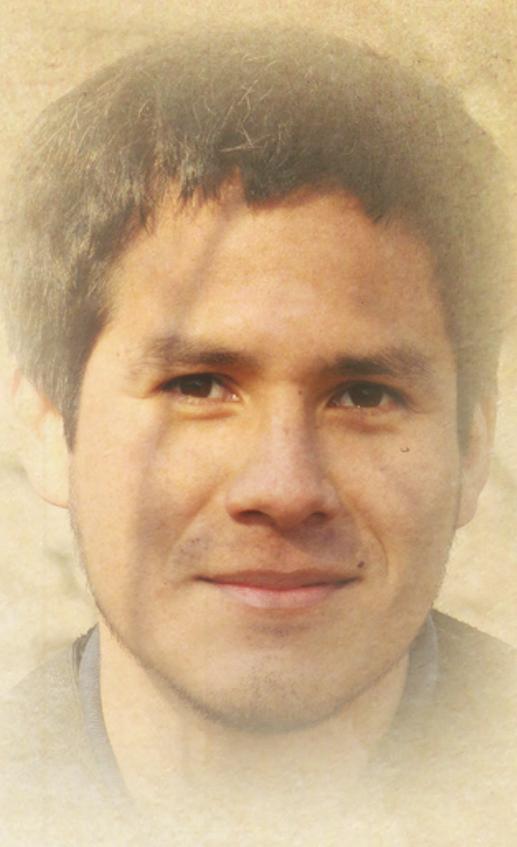
From 1998 to 2001, I worked on a B.A. in English literature. During these three years, I was constantly reading God's Word and praying and trying to live a good Christian life. To live a Christian life without Christ was impossible. When my dad approached me with the option of studying at the London Theological Seminary right after my bachelor's program, I was delighted for the fact that I would soon be leaving for London. I applied for the two-year program at LTS and soon got admission into it.

Everybody believed I was a good Christian, including my dad. He thought I would come back to India to help him serve the Lord. Deep down in my heart, though, I knew something was seriously wrong with me, and I knew I needed to get right with God. As I boarded an airplane for the first time in

my life in October 2001, I started thinking, "Why did the Lord choose me and pick me out of millions of people to do His service? What's so special about me?" (I must tell you that I was overwhelmed with the fact that the Lord was actually taking me to the distant land of England to let me know who He was).

On my first Sunday, I went to the Metropolitan Tabernacle, as I would continue to do throughout my two-year stay in London. As I sat in the evening Gospel Service, Dr. Peter Masters was preaching the Gospel and pleading with sinners earnestly to come to Christ, who was punished on the Cross. I could not stop myself from beholding the glory of God. The Gospel came to my heart more clearly than ever before in my life. For the first time in my life, I saw the Lord Jesus dying on the Cross for my sins, for my transgressions, and my heart melted, and immediately I rushed to my room and started weeping. Tears ran down my cheeks as I understood that I had sinned against my God and I had hurt Him so badly all through my life. Suddenly I could see, and the Word of God became more meaningful to me, and prayer became all the sweeter. Later on, I was interviewed and was baptized at the Metropolitan Tabernacle.





Please pray for us.
Pray for God's help so we can
display His glory and power
through our lives so that many
people will come to Christ, to
worship and praise Him.

MISSIONARY UPDATE

LUIS R.

Luis R. has been serving the Lord in Japan since 2004. He is a native of Lima, Peru, and was once a member of the Church of the Savior in Lima, Peru. He met his wife Nicola in Japan and they were married in 2005. They are primarily laboring among the large Latin American community in Tokyo. Japan is one of the most Gospel-hardened places in the world. The following accounts are stories of God working through Luis's ministry.

Praise God for continuing to call with mercy and patience numerous people who reject Him and fail to believe the Gospel.

Toshiro is an unbeliever who has been attending our services and Bible studies for almost two years. Even though Toshiro attends all the men's Bible studies with other Christians, he professed that there is no God. This

month, problems with his relationship with his son brought him to my office to ask God's advice for his son. Toshiro said that something changed his beliefs and now he believes that Jesus is God and in the reality of heaven and hell. In spite of this, he said he feels sad because he acknowledges now that he is a sinner, but he does not feel repentance in his heart – only short remorse. He asked prayers because he said he wants to come to repentance and be like other Christians, but that he can not fake repentance and love for God.

We don't know how God is working in Toshiro's life, but we can praise God because this problem with his son is bringing him closer to God. Praise God because Toshiro recognizes now the need for a Savior and the problem of his sin. **Please pray that God continues calling him patiently, so he will come to faith and repentance.**

Miriam is a lady who came two years ago to our church as a Jehovah's Witness. After attending our Bible studies for these years, she ended up rejecting the doctrine of the Jehovah's Witnesses, believing in the Trinity. Sadly, she doesn't want to repent and surrender to God. Two weeks ago, we received a phone call because Miriam could not move. We took her to the hospital, and she remained there because the doctors found she had two strokes. Miriam lives only with her daughter and grandson. They live always struggling financially because of unemployment, and now they are facing many challenges. We are also praying for her recovery, as she sometimes



cannot understand conversations, and, with the help of rehabilitation, she is trying to walk again. Please pray that Miriam would be lucid again so that she might be able to listen to the Gospel and that she would heed the voice of a merciful God calling her to reconciliation. Please pray for Miriam's rehabilitation and for her daughter as she tries now to support the family as a single mother.

Kenji is the husband of Aya, a lady who was baptized in our church one year ago. He is not a Christian and never comes to services, but he came to the service with his wife and kids as a family for the first time last Sunday. He came asking prayers because his friend, a mother of four kids, had an aneurysm. Kenji was shocked and wanted to get close to God. Please pray that this situation would help Kenji to hear the calling of God and that he will come to Christ. Please also pray for the family of the lady with the aneurysm; she passed away, leaving four kids in a Buddhist home.

After a long time of persecution and attacks against Sister K___, one of our Japanese church members, God has mercifully ended all the conflict. Though Sister K___'s husband does not want to return home or be reconciled to her as a Christian, God has ended all his violence and persecution.

Sister K___ does not want to live in the past, remembering the persecution and costs as a result of her faith. Now she is asking for prayer as she reconciles her broken relationship with her mother. She also wants to praise God because her son also used to hate and reject God, and now he has been reading the Bible and praying with her for more than one year. Please pray for her son to come to Christ.

Please continue helping us to pray for our desire to go to Peru so our family there can meet our three kids for the first time. We are patiently waiting for God's timing, but it is our prayer to go as soon as we can.

Please pray for our church: for God's help so we can display His glory and power through our lives so that many people will come to Christ, to worship and praise Him.





A MISSIONARY'S TESTIMONY

PETER SCHILD

Peter is working to plant biblical churches in Germany. Throughout the week, he and his co-worker Nathanael Armisen are teaching, preaching, and evangelizing in the streets. Peter is a member of the Reformed Baptist Church in Wetzlar (Hessen). He and his wife Priscilla have one son, Josiah.

This testimony was written to give glory to Christ alone. It is not about me but about the sovereign grace of the Lord. He shares His glory with no one else, so we do not proclaim ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord.

According to God's providence, I was born in Germany in 1985. I experienced a godless and consequently, sorrowful childhood. I grew up in an atmosphere of complete neglect, in a house where all of the rooms, including my own, were trashed with piles of rubbish. My mother left me when I was about 9 years old and fled from Germany. Some days later, I was found alone. My father was rarely ever at home, as he worked as a truck driver. I was sent to various psychologists, but none could help me. I had already seen and experienced too much, and there was nobody who could heal my deep wounds.

My life did not change. As a matter of fact, it was quite the contrary. My stepmother was a strong alcoholic,

and this brought my life even further into the pits. Having no rules and no purpose in my life, I started drinking and doing other things to daze me. Rage was burning like a fire inside of me, and those around me had to suffer from it. I became a criminal, and while still a child, I carried weapons. I stole things, rioted, and got involved in fights. At school, I humiliated and threatened my fellow students on a daily basis. I hated my life, the people around me, and God. I thought that if He existed, He must also hate me and must have cursed me.

At the age of 16, I lost all desire to live. I decided to commit suicide; yet my destructive plans never became a reality. One night, I visited a Filipino friend whose parents were Christians. At his house, I found a tract about Jesus Christ and His work of salvation on the cross. I did not know the Gospel, and my Filipino friend also did not consider the message of Christ important enough to believe it with all of his heart and share it with others. Except for the fact of God directing things according to His providence, I cannot explain why I took the tract with me and read it when I got back home.

In His incomprehensible love and grace, it pleased the Lord to do a great work for me. Though I was an enemy of God worthy of damnation, He opened my eyes to see by faith Him who can save the greatest of sinners. Through the Word of God, the Spirit of God noticeably convicted me of my great sin, and I saw how much I needed

Jesus Christ and His work of redemption on the cross. His call in that night was so real and irresistible that I had no other choice and no other desire than to fall on my knees and ask Him to forgive and save me. He gave me new birth; granted me repentance and faith; and declared me righteous, not on account of my works. I had nothing to show, but solely on account of Christ's blood and righteousness. It was He who in grace drew me to Himself even though I did not seek Him.

That night, I experienced how He took away all my rage and set me free from all my chains. He filled me with a peace that passes my understanding and changed my heart so that I now hate sin and love Christ. I could not keep this incomprehensible grace that I experienced to myself. Instead of beating people, I now began passing out

tracts and telling people about Christ. I bought myself a Bible and would often read it all day long.

Through studying God's Word, my desire to be baptized and become part of a church became increasingly greater, so that I asked the Lord daily to lead me to Christian brothers and sisters. I knew no Christians who would invite me to visit their church. After some months of solitude, my longing for baptism became especially great. I stopped in front of a big church. Thanks to God's providence, my heart was beating wildly, and it seemed to me that the Lord forbade me to enter that church. At that time, I did not understand why, but I wanted to be obedient. Today, I know that this church, like most churches in Germany, is liberal and does not preach the crucified Christ. I thank the Lord for having protected me.

A BELIEVER'S TESTIMONY

ANITA KUPFERMAN

The testimony of Anita Kupfermann is sending shock waves through the churches in Germany. As you will discern later in her testimony, both Peter Schild and Nathanael Armisen were instrumental in her coming to Christ. Her complete testimony was published in German in "Bibel und Gemeinde" in the October 2011 issue.

My name is Anita Kupfermann and I would like to tell you about my time studying theology. It is my hope that this little account of my experiences will serve as a warning

and an encouragement to you. I would like to warn you of how the so-called "Higher Critical" (Historical Criticism) method left my relationship with God,

and therefore my entire life, severely damaged. Yet I equally hope to encourage you! I can testify with great joy and thankfulness that the Lord Jesus Christ, during my time at university, healed my unbelief and called me to follow Him.

I hope and pray that God will be glorified through these pages and that you, the reader, will be encouraged to fully trust the Word of God.

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE & THE HIGHER CRITICAL METHOD (HCM)

Through my parents, I was confronted with the Christian faith at an early age. I regularly went to Sunday School and was baptized at the age of 14. A full ten years later, whilst working at a nursery, I was gripped by the desire to do something else with my time, something equally meaningful. I wanted to submit myself to the Word of God and reflect on my walk with God.

Although I had been baptised, I realised that I did not know the Bible. I couldn't say I had a living relationship with God. I longed to know God better, to better understand what being a Christian meant. So, I decided to attend a theological college for ten months. My hope was that these ten months would



supply what was missing in my faith.

Right from the beginning of my time at theological college, I was confronted with Biblical criticism in the form of the "Higher Critical" method (HCM). The HCM is the current philosophy of understanding and explaining Bible passages at German universities, as well as at many free-church theological colleges. According to this philosophy, the Bible is not understood to be the inspired Word of God but a contradictory, mistake-prone, human work. Just like any other piece of literature, it must be critically questioned and examined. This method of approaching the biblical texts normally leads to rejecting the historicity of the Bible - in other words, the historical accuracy and reliability of the Bible is questioned. Simply put, the Bible's stories are just myths that never happened.

An example of this technique may help explain what it looks like in practice:

Mark's Gospel has its origin dated back to roughly A.D. 70. According to the HCM, it is categorically denied that it was possible for Jesus Christ to have seen the future. However, Mark's Gospel reports that Christ predicts the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. This prophecy was perfectly fulfilled: in A.D. 70, the Romans razed the temple to the ground. The majority of critical researchers believe that the prophecy in Mark is a fake prophecy (vaticinium ex eventu). Only after the event, they assume, was Jesus' prophecy added to the text. The Gospel of Mark cannot have predicted the future destruction of the temple; therefore, it must have been written afterwards.

With this fixed, faithless presupposition, the Holy Bible is critically evaluated until all her reports are questionable. A few more short examples give a fuller picture of the results of this modern critical scientific approach to the Bible: Adam and Eve never existed; Noah and the ark is a legend; the first five books of the Bible were not written by Moses; the Ten Commandments did not come from

God; the conquests, such as those that are recorded in Joshua, never happened; Jesus' words and deeds in the Gospels were often invented later by well-meaning Christians; Paul was not the author of Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, or Titus; and nor did Peter write the letters ascribed to him. These are just some of countless examples.

The theories of the HCM were not taught at this theological college, or in my later studies, to merely acknowledge them. Instead they were taught and proclaimed with conviction. Under the influence of such teaching, the reliability of the Bible was increasingly questioned. I became more and more convinced that the Bible is not the infallible Word of God, but a jumbled collection of human (*i.e.*, imperfect) thoughts about God and life.

An unavoidable question mark was now next to every person and event in the Bible. Moreover, as well as my new discoveries about the unreliability of the Bible, my ethical convictions were also brought into question. At the college, we discussed themes such as homosexuality and sex outside of marriage. Were these perhaps permissible after all? In short, I felt my doubts about Christianity and the Bible grow and grow. If everything is not as it was written then, how could I be sure of anything I believed?

My scepticism blossomed as we took up the theme of world religions in our classes. Faced with a deep crisis of faith, I seriously considered giving up Christianity. My lecturers were so certain that it could only be good for me to give up the fundamentals of my former faith. Only such a "deconstruction" would give me a new mature and responsible faith. Such was their conviction for my life, and I desperately hoped that they were right.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

After these ten months, I returned to my old job for a year. During this time, I toyed with the idea of furthering my education. As the questions raised by the HCM still occupied my thoughts, I was keen to further study

theology. In addition, I rather liked the thought of becoming a pastor. So it was that 2007 saw me begin to study theology at the Theological Seminary of the German Baptist Union. I received no call to this by God, although I tried to talk myself into believing this was the case. I talked with many people about my plans, but not with God Himself.

In the meantime, I no longer sought to question the HCM, as I was well familiar with its teachings from my previous time at college. However, the criticism of the Bible was to increase dramatically over the next few years.

I can still remember, for example, a lecturer leaving a lecture hall, stopping at the doorway to say, "*Tomorrow we'll kill Moses!*" He meant that the following day we would be taught that historically, Moses never existed as the Bible taught. Furthermore, I learned that many of the Old Testament accounts were nothing more than myths and leg-

ends, far removed from history and reality. The Jewish worship of Yahweh - the temple system, services, festivals, and commandments - was mostly copied from the religions of Israel's neighbours at that time. Over hundreds of years, the biblical texts were added to, changed, and consciously manipulated by numerous unknown authors. This is why the Bible is (apparently!) so full of contradictions. If given room to do so, the HCM swiftly gains power, tearing through every point of doctrine like a hurricane, until assurance of faith lies shattered.

I heard many students say that these "academic" discoveries were a great help for them; at the time, I agreed, or at least talked myself into agreeing. In reality, I was beginning to reap the bitter harvest of my new, "mature" faith. At the end of the second semester, I came to the firm conclusion that the Bible was totally unbelievable; and thus, I laid it aside at the bottom of my bookshelves. I had

THE CHANGE!

A few weeks later, the preacher's prayer was answered. On December 6th, 2008, the Lord opened my eyes to see my guilt and godless life.

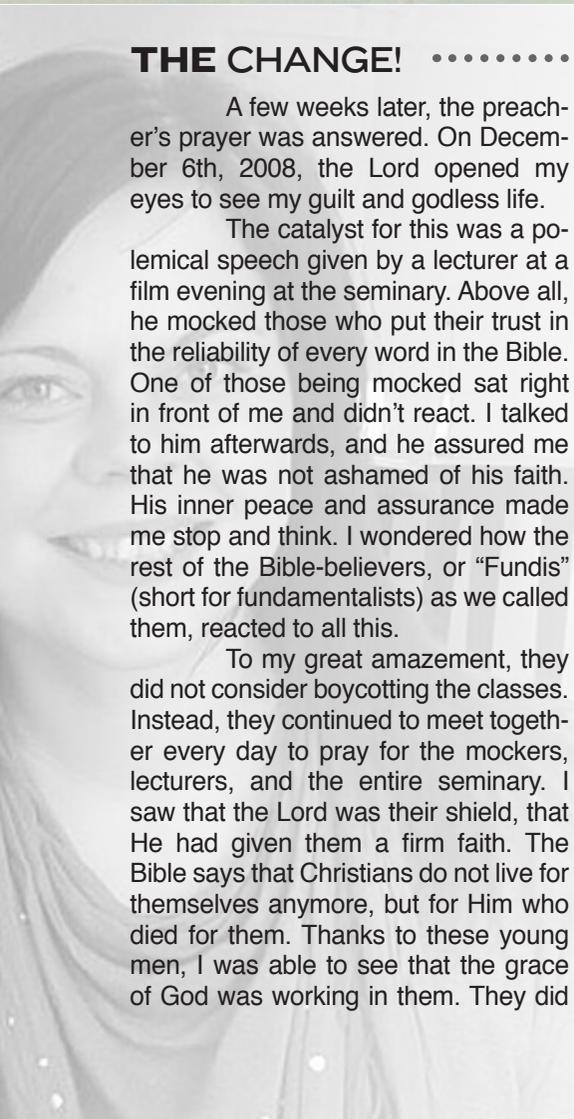
The catalyst for this was a polemical speech given by a lecturer at a film evening at the seminary. Above all, he mocked those who put their trust in the reliability of every word in the Bible. One of those being mocked sat right in front of me and didn't react. I talked to him afterwards, and he assured me that he was not ashamed of his faith. His inner peace and assurance made me stop and think. I wondered how the rest of the Bible-believers, or "Fundis" (short for fundamentalists) as we called them, reacted to all this.

To my great amazement, they did not consider boycotting the classes. Instead, they continued to meet together every day to pray for the mockers, lecturers, and the entire seminary. I saw that the Lord was their shield, that He had given them a firm faith. The Bible says that Christians do not live for themselves anymore, but for Him who died for them. Thanks to these young men, I was able to see that the grace of God was working in them. They did

not feel forced to defend themselves. I did not think this was a normal reaction to such a situation, and I was greatly impressed. They simply passed the humiliation that they suffered on to Christ, so that anger or a desire for revenge simply had no hold on them.

After all these events, I drove home to spend Christmas with my family. There I recognised even more that I had despised God through my embrace of higher criticism. I had denied God's Word, rejected God's grace, and mocked God's servants. Worse than all, I had called myself a Christian and cared nothing for the atonement Christ bought at the cost of His life. This I realized to be an unbearably dreadful mistake. Over Christmas and with many tears, I repented of many things, seeking God in prayer, and rejoiced to know His full and free forgiveness. With a glad heart, I bought a new Bible and began to read it eagerly and joyfully; today, I enjoy this Book as much as I did then.

I called on the Lord Jesus Christ, humbling myself before him. I entrusted my life to Him and told Him that from now on I would believe His



no more desire to read it, let alone to try and live according to it. I did not pray any more, nor did I ask God for help or wisdom. I was just too confident of my new critical attitude.

Despite having no inner relationship with God, I continued with the outward appearance of wanting to be a pastor. I preached and seemed religious - at least while in church! It was a different story when I was with my fellow students. There I did not hold myself back, increasingly getting drunk at parties and losing my distaste for lying and cheating. I especially enjoyed gossiping and slandering the other students. In this case, I had a specific target, a group of young men who annoyed me beyond all else. They wholeheartedly believed in the Scriptures as the Word of God. There was a small group of students in my semester who defended the trustworthiness of the Scriptures - even in our classes. This greatly irritated me and other students, and we thus delighted to spread rumours about them.

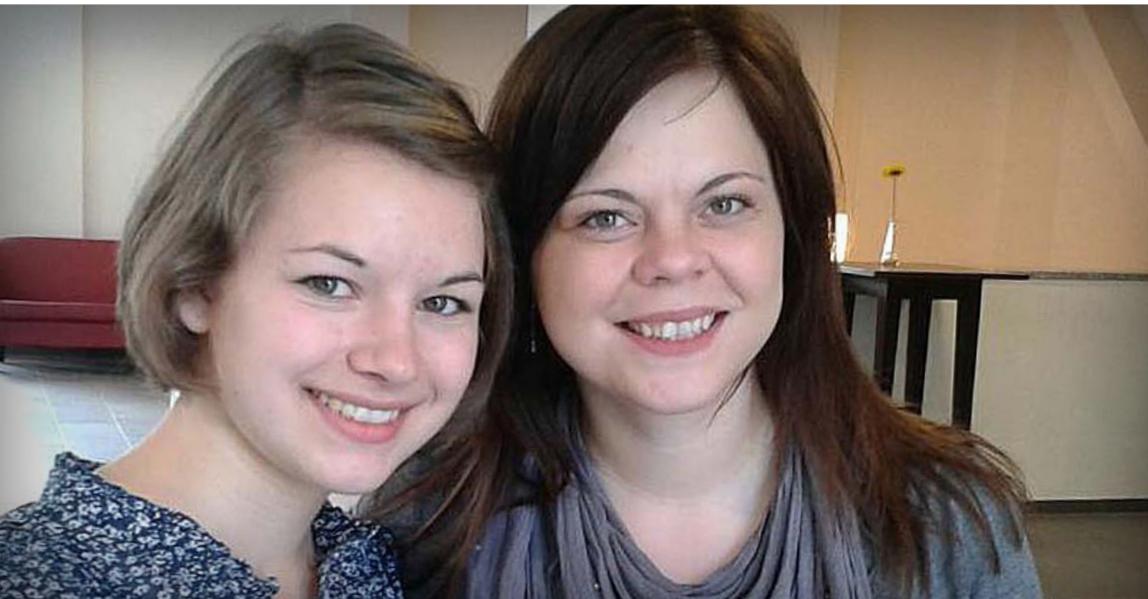
In doing this, I was not in the least bothered by my conscience. I had long lost any fear of God or an eternal punishment. The words of warning in the Scriptures weren't important to me. The god I had discovered through my studies did not get angry, respected people's doubts, and forgave everyone everything. What did I have to be afraid of? Why not have fun and live life to the max? This was my new philosophy for life, and this was how I lived. However, once the initial euphoria had left, life became worse and worse for me, until I felt there was nothing for me to stand on. An inner emptiness made it increasingly clear that I had no true life or peace. In books critical of the Bible and in conversations, I tried to find what I was missing, but to no avail.

Finally, I asked an evangelist I met at a church event to pray for me. I longed for a real relationship with God, but felt unable to ask Him. It was as if I had lost any ability to pray.

Word, no matter what questions I might have. To this day, I do not have an answer to everything; but I am fully convinced that the Bible is completely inspired by God, inerrant and infallible in all that it teaches. I thank God from the bottom of my heart for the sovereign grace that He poured over me in letting me see my sinfulness and the Saviour who has given me such forgiveness.

Dear Reader, I am so happy that you have read my testimony to the end. God has richly blessed my life, and

by His grace I believe that His Word is truth. (John 17:17) It is very precious to be able to believe with childlike faith; I do not bother myself with any doubts or so-called academic discoveries that call into question the trustworthiness of the Bible. Instead, I find in Christ, the true subject of Scripture, all the riches of wisdom and insight. Let us trust our Lord and Saviour, for then He will bless us. My prayer is that you too will be saved from unbelief and that your faith in God and His Word will grow from strength to strength.



MIDDLE EAST

A MISSIONARY'S TESTIMONY

ANTHONY S.

Anthony S. is the pastor of a Russian-speaking church in Israel. Throughout the week, he and his partners lead evangelistic tours, while he also witnesses to Muslims, Jews, and anyone else he meets. Anthony's giftedness is most clearly seen in his burden for the lost and his boldness in sharing the Gospel with them. Pray for Anthony, his wife, and their three children. The following is an account of his conversion to Christ.

I was born in Manchester, England to Jewish parents, from an early age attending Jewish schools, where I learned about God. I was taught that He was omnipresent (present everywhere). Jonah thought he could escape from God but found that it was impossible. The Psalmist declared, *"If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there"* (Psalm 139:8). I sensed God's presence everywhere I went, but I was not taught about a Holy God who hated sin.

We celebrated all the festivals, such as Passover, the Day of Atonement, etc. We went along with all the traditions, but I did not see God, just as the prophet said: *"...this people draw near with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men"* (Isaiah 29:13). Once, I asked my father what happens after death, and he said that we all go to heaven. This satisfied my curiosity about life after death. But in my Jewish schools, I was never con-

fronted with: *"your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you"* (Isaiah 59:2); all my *"righteousnesses are as filthy rags"* (Isaiah 64:6); and *"there is no man which sinneth not"* (2 Chronicles 6:36). I was lost and did not know God's forgiveness.

God said that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness: *"it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul"* (Leviticus 17:11). Rabbis contradicted God's Word by substituting mitzvahs (or good works) such as repentance, giving to charity, and saying prayers for the atoning blood. Little did I then realize that all my good works could never measure up to God's requirements for atonement.

As a youth, I had ingrained in me a contempt for all non-Jews who I believed to be Christians. Eventually, this attitude got me in trouble when, at age eighteen, I went to work for a month in a kibbutz in Israel. There I met a Christian named Terry. I mockingly nicknamed him "John the Baptist," which he did not appreciate. He even





ISRAEL

complained to the director, who reprimanded me for it. I complied, but my attitude did not change. Providentially, God had arranged a Jew who believed that Jesus was Messiah to be my roommate at the kibbutz. For some reason, he never spoke to me about his faith during my first stay in Israel. God was to use him later.

After a few months in England, I returned to Israel to live in another kibbutz. There I met a girl I knew in Manchester, and she told me there was a Christian on the kibbutz whose name was Charley. She said, "Be careful, because he might try to convert you." I replied, "Not me; I'm not interested." God had other plans, however. My roommate, it turned out, had a terrible problem with snoring and agreed to move out. While I looked for volunteers to change rooms with him, my former roommate from the first kibbutz came to visit. When I learned that he was a believer, I introduced him to Charley. God used this acquaintance to move Charley into my room.

We started discussing prophecy and the Scriptures together. Through this time, I had not read the Bible apart from the book of Esther. Charley did not tell me about Jesus until one day he referred to a chapter which read like this: "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? ... I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my*

heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death ... they pierced my hands and feet ... all they that go down to the dust shall bow before Him: and none can keep alive his own soul ... They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." After hearing this I said, "I am Jewish; I don't want to know about Jesus." I shocked to find out that this passage was not in the New Testament, but was written by David 1,000 years before Jesus came (Psalm 22:1, 14-16, 29). These and other prophecies – such as Zechariah 12:10, Isaiah 53, and Isaiah 7:14 – led me to believe that Jesus was the Messiah.

I got so excited about these new discoveries that in my exuberance I went around the streets telling everybody. I also went to see a Rabbi in a place called Kfar Habad to discuss Daniel 9:24, 27, that the Messiah needed to come and die before the Second Temple was destroyed. This Rabbi told me that it was King Agrippa that had fulfilled this prophecy. His answers from a commentary were so absurd that I was convinced even more that Jesus was the Messiah. Yet I did not believe in Him at this time. I only knew about Him. Another believer at the Kibbutz named



ISRAEL

James often took me to Christian meetings in Haifa. One day he asked me, “Who do you believe Jesus to be?” My answer was emphatic: “The Son of God, the Messiah of Israel!” On this day, December 24, 1982, at the age of 18, I found peace with God: I was born

again. I repented of my sins and trusted Christ as my Savior. Now I can say like David, “*I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever*” (Psalm 23:6). My prayer today is that other Jewish people will also come to believe and trust for salvation the Messiah of Israel, Jesus Christ.

MISSIONARY UPDATE

DR. ANDREW

The following is an account from the work and ministry of Dr. Andrew, an evangelist and church planter working in an unspecified country in the Middle East. Dr. Andrew's primary calling and gifting is in evangelizing Muslims and working to see churches planted among them.

Muslims here and across the Arab world. He was curious and thirsty to know more of the Christian faith, but had many questions and simply needed a willing person to risk and take the time to share with him. One day, Ahmed met an Arab Christian man who was willing to open up to him about his Christian faith and answer some of the questions on Ahmed's mind. They talked for hours discussing Islam and Christianity but there were some questions the Christian man was unable to answer due to his lack of knowledge of Islam. That led the Christian man to refer Ahmed to some local contacts that he knew could answer all of his questions. I was one of those local contacts doing my 'under-

I wanted to inform you that we have a new brother in Christ! Below is the story of Ahmed and how he turned from Islam and began following Jesus. This story is one of many illustrating how the Lord is faithfully working in the Arab world...

Ahmed's story begins with a curiosity and thirst, like many other



“He was curious and thirsty to know more of the Christian faith, but had many questions and simply needed a willing person to risk and take the time to share with him.”

right way the Bible teaches.”

After this meeting, I, along with other staff members working in the south of my country, continued meeting with Ahmed, building a friendship with him, and being readily available to answer any questions he might have along the way.

One day, after a long conversation about the faith, Ahmed looked at me and asked me: “If I want to pray to God – your God, not the god of Islam – what should I tell Him?” That was such a shocking statement for me! Ahmed was able to recognize that the God of Christianity is different than the god of Islam without me saying a word!

I then explained the Gospel, that all humans are sinners by nature. I explained the necessity of the cross and the crucifixion of Jesus, and that without the cross and the death of Christ, we are left in our sin and unable to stand before a Holy God. I showed him how Jesus is the only One able to meet the requirements of the justice of God.

We continued to meet with Ahmed for months, watching him struggle between the new discovery of the cross of Christ and the faith of Islam that he had always known. In the midst of this constant struggle, I gave Ahmed a Bible and a commentary to be able to read and dive deeper into the Christian faith.

One day, Ahmed had to travel home to stay with his family for two months and leave the city he had been working in. (Many Arab men leave their families to work in another country to provide and only come home to visit for a short time). He was worried that during his stay, his family would discover he was reading the Bible, which would guarantee major trouble for him. So he

ground’ work nearby.

I and two other people met with Ahmed last year on January 12, 2012 for the first time. We talked for two and a half hours and answered all of his questions. His two main questions dealt with the following:

- The reason for the cross
- The language the Bible uses in Song of Songs

To help you understand the second question, Muslims struggle and misperceive greatly Song of Songs and the description of a woman’s body parts, which in Islam is considered shameful. In order to clarify this misperception, we, as believers, have to explain and show them what the Bible teaches about women overall. We showed him that women are not conveyed as sexual beings in the Bible, but they are to be loved, honored, and respected. My question to Ahmed was, “Why is it shameful for the Bible to mention the body parts of women, and it’s not shameful to mention the body parts of men? The answer simply is because Islam has been teaching you to see women as sexual content only. So, before reading Song of Songs, you need to understand and see women in the

took his Bible and hid it in a drawer that he knew his wife rarely opened. After the two months had passed, he began to pack his bag to return to work. Suddenly, his wife began frantically searching in his bag until she found the Bible and took it from him.

Ahmed looked at her with eyes wide open, in shock, wondering how she knew that there was a Bible in his suitcase. Ahmed's wife told him, "You are not taking this book, 'the Bible,' with you. I have been reading in it for the last two months, and I can't stop reading." Ahmed's worry of his family finding the Bible turned out to be the door of salvation for his entire family to know Christ!

In December 2012, Ahmed called and asked to meet me at 11:00 PM. He shared with me the challenges of becoming a follower of Jesus and all the persecution from the government he would face when they found out about his conversion. He understood for his conversion to be official, it meant he had to go to the government office and ask for his religious status to be changed, which is what is required in Islam. I explained that God does not require permission from the government to be His child, only to know your sin and believe in His Son as the Savior from your sins. After this, God would do all the changes inside of you, within your heart, through your faith in Christ. Ahmed was amazed

and shocked at this answer!

A week later, at 12:30 AM, Ahmed asked me how to pray to be saved through the blood of Jesus. Ahmed prayed exactly as follows...

*"God, thank You for Your love to me.... (silence for two minutes)
Ahshado an la elah ella Allah and
ashhado anna Yasou' ebn Allah."*

His prayer translated means, "I testify that there is no god but God and Jesus is the Son of God." Usually, Muslims say this sentence to testify their faith in Islam, but they say Muhammad is the prophet of God instead of Jesus as His Son. Ahmed knew this sentence and had quoted it for years and years as a Muslim, so he modified it to affirm Jesus as the Son of God, denying Muhammad as the prophet of God.

Ahmed now considers himself a follower of Jesus and has decided to live his life for Him despite probable persecution. Ahmed is going through a discipleship process and will soon be baptized when we are sure that he understands the full meaning of baptism and the meaning of being a follower of Jesus.



Russia

A MISSIONARY'S TESTIMONY

ANDREY DANILOV

The following testimonies are from HeartCry missionary Andrey Danilov and his wife Liana. Andrey is a graduate of the Samara Center for Biblical Training. He pastors a young church in Omsk, Siberia which he helped establish in 2008. Andrey is a man who has been radically transformed by the grace and power of Christ. He is committed to being a godly husband and father as well as shepherding the people of God.

My name is Andrey Danilov, and I was born in 1972 in the city of Omsk, Siberia into a working class family. Before I was born, my father had already been in prison twice because of theft and drug use. The most vivid impressions I have from childhood are the beatings of my mother by my raging, drunk father; many tears; fear; and longings for a happy family.

In our house, the criminal lifestyle was glorified and looked up to. After eighth grade, I started hanging out with corrupt people on the street, looking for meaning and belonging in life. By the time I was sixteen, I was sent to a prison for juvenile offenders. There I started to dream of being a crime boss. I started to gather around me a group of like-minded young men whom I could organize for criminal activity and defense against other criminals.

After the juvenile prison, I became the crime boss I had dreamed of. In the midst of the many damaging and wicked things that I was involved in, I developed a very strong addiction to drugs and narcotics. To experience the next high, I more than once betrayed the people who were closest to me. I lived as though I were the only person on earth who mattered. During this dark time of my life, I served three different prison sentences. The last time, I was sent to prison on drug-related charges. Of course, at that time, I was too blind to see the abyss

"After the juvenile prison I became the crime boss I had dreamed of... I lived as though I were the only person on earth who mattered."



of death that lay before me, but my hopeless and meaningless existence began to terrify me. All my plans had been dashed. I was alone and helpless.

My problems were aggravated after I began meeting with a pastor who would regularly visit the prison. I thought I could use these meetings for my own selfish purposes (to alleviate my loneliness, etc.), but it was through these meetings that I began hearing the Gospel of the holy, merciful, loving Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. This affected me deeply. I began to see my depraved, desperate spiritual condition. Despite my tough veneer, everything inside was corrupt. I always remember that there was something about the pastor that drew me to him. He had a beauty in his dedication, genuineness, and selflessness. These were qualities that I had never seen before.

One day, still without the proper motivations and desires, I repeated a prayer of repentance. As I look back, I marvel at the mercy of the Lord. He did



"I eventually saw that in my own strength I was incapable of overcoming my sinful desires, my fear of man, or my fear of God's eventual judgment."

not neglect me, but He used all of my evil to bring good to me and glory to Him. After I prayed this prayer, I told everyone that I had become a Christian, and I began to do the outward behavior that a Christian should do. I quit smoking. I started reading a Bible which was given to me. But the more I focused on outward appearances, the further I ignored the need for true regeneration, which only God can give. Yet by God's grace, I began to realize that being a Christian was more than just quitting smoking and reading the Bible. I eventually saw that in my own strength I was incapable of overcoming my sinful desires, my fear of man, or my fear of God's eventual judgment. I feared death. I was embarrassed to be around other Christians, fearing my hypocrisy would be exposed.

One evening, while still in prison, I punched another inmate for laughing at me. I realized at that time I had no true Christianity. I withdrew to my cell shattered, but thoughts about Jesus flooded my mind. I began to reflect upon the Jesus I had heard about from the pastor and from my reading of Scripture. I saw the great contrast between His life and mine. I saw the great reason for His death on the cross. I kept thinking that what Jesus did on the cross could not be applied to me. But the thought kept returning that what happened to Christ on the cross was indeed for me! He died for me! I fell asleep with this thought pounding in my mind.

When I woke up the next morning, I was a new man. I had great joy and the deep conviction that what happened to Christ on the cross was for my own salvation. It seemed that my joy had no end. I had a very clear realization that now I was in the hand of God the Son. I had a strong sense of freedom from sin and fear of man—even though I was behind

bars.

My life then truly changed from the inside. I began persistently talking to the other inmates about the Gospel. News about my conversion spread throughout the prison, and people started to say that I had lost my mind. I began to meet with two other inmates who also had become Christians. Nothing brought me greater joy than to pray, read the Bible, fellowship with these other believers, and testify about the forgiveness of Christ.

Today, now that I have been out of prison for a good number of years, these very things are what I now spend most of my time doing. My life has changed completely. I very much believe that God called me to the ministry very soon after He saved me. The most joyful and satisfying things I did after my conversion were witnessing about the person of Christ and sharing the Gospel, and then later, preaching God's Word. I started testifying and calling sinners to faith and repentance back in prison, and I tried to do it everywhere. Not only did this bring me joy, but I also felt a great responsibility before God to give to others the great treasure that I saw and received in Christ. After I was released from prison, I started to witness about Jesus to my old friends and family. Christ, His truth, and His will have become the center of my life. Today, I think about His glory. It is not that I never struggle with doubts. But I can say confidently that to this day these doubts have never once overcome my faith. This is because I believe that on the night in prison when I fell asleep with that dominating thought of Christ's death, filled with tears from pain and the sense of my own insignificance, God by His grace granted me saving faith in the righteousness of Christ and His substitutionary death for me. To God be the glory!

A MISSIONARY WIFE'S TESTIMONY

LIANA DANILOV

My name is Liana Danilov. I was born in 1981 in the town of Labinsk in the Krasnodar region of Russia. Our family had a lot of kids. My parents told me about Christ when I was a child, but their lives did not seem like an example of Christianity. We often had arguments in our family, and we were very poor, which made it all the more difficult. I came before God in a prayer of repentance for the first time when I was 11 years old. I thought I did everything I needed to do on my part to be able to call myself a child of God and to go to heaven. I thought that I had to read the Bible since I was a church member. One evening, while I was reading the Bible (out of obligation), God touched my heart, and I was broken before Him. I prayed, wishing to devote my whole life to serving Him.

Soon after that, my parents got divorced, and my mother took me to Siberia. We did not have a permanent place to live; so my mother, my younger brother; and I went from relative to relative. I missed my hometown very much. I was bullied at school because of my faith. Living in poverty and having no friends only grew me closer to God. I found in Him the only and most loyal Friend. However, it was very difficult for me at times. There were moments of despair when I begged God for different circumstances or when I struggled with resentment toward my

parents for having brought me into this world only to be preoccupied with their own problems.

As time passed, I decided that if I had no need for my life, then I should give it to serving God by serving others. I wanted to spend my life in hospitals, nursing homes, and orphanages among those in need. I told my mother that if I were ever to marry someone, it could only be a minister of the church, so that our doors would always be open to those whose souls ache, the needy, and the poor. Time went by; I continued attending a Baptist church. I was happy to serve God, as I knew I would see Him one day face to face. I really wanted to do as much as I could for Him. In 2002, I married Andrey. At that time, he served in a rehabilitation center for people with addictions. God blessed us with two kids.

I believe that the most important shift in my life as a believer happened when my husband went to study at the Samara Center for Biblical Training. Each time when he would come home from his time there in Samara, he would tell me things about God that I had not heard before. I began to better understand God's holy character, that He was both great in judgment as well as in salvation of sinners; that He was great in His provision; and that He was the only One worthy of praise and worship. I saw all the religious veils that had been hanging over me that prevented me from seeing the truth. God continues to reform my heart, and this is true happiness! I am grateful to God for His kind providence in my life, and the only thing I long for is to remain faithful to Him until the end.



South America

A MISSIONARY'S TESTIMONY

GILBERTO NOLE

Gilberto lives in northern Peru where he serves as a church planter, pastor, and associational missionary. God has used Gilberto to plant many churches throughout the mountains of northern Peru. There are more than forty churches in the association that Gilberto serves.



I remember that when I was about ten years old, my mother told me that she had heard of a book called the Holy Bible. She had heard that it said that the Day of Judgment was going to be awful. After that, when I was a youth, I always had an interest in finding a copy of the Bible.

Then I became friends with the local priests, and I went on to do secre-

tarial work for them. Once, I heard one of the priests mention the Bible. I asked him what he knew about the Bible, and I told him that I had been trying to get a copy. The priest told me that it was not in my best interest to read the Bible; instead, he took me to the bar to drink.

When I was twenty-two years old, my neighbor told me that when he died, he had a book that he wanted me

A MISSIONARY'S TESTIMONY

ARTURO MARIN

Arturo and his family live in the northern jungles of Peru in the department of San Martin. He pastors the Baptist Church of San Rafael and also leads the training of a dozen pastors throughout the San Rafael region.



My name is Arturo. I was born in the jungles of San Martin, but I came to live in Lima when I was very young.

I came to know Christ when I

was twenty years old. Before that time, I did not want to know about Christ. I was a young man seeking after all the vanities of this life. I would have been lost, but God had me thrown into one of the worst prisons in South America – the prison of Lurigancho in Lima. One Sunday (7:30 PM, May 29, 1988), after being beaten by the police, I received Christ as my personal Savior. I was filled with joy, and my life began to change immediately. Nine months later, I was pardoned and let out of prison, fully exonerated. I had been arrested because I was in the wrong place at the wrong time. My sister-in-law had been doing some kind of illegal business, and I happened to be in her house the day the police arrested her; so I was taken as an accomplice in her crimes. After nine months of investigation, my name was cleared, and I was allowed to leave as a free man.

Immediately after leaving prison, I began to attend a Baptist church where a missionary named Carlton was pastoring. His life and preaching had a great effect on my life. Through brother Carlton, I met a pastor named Jonas,

to put in his coffin. I asked him what book it was. He told me that it was called the Holy Bible. I told him that that was the very book I had been looking for! I asked him if I could read it, and he let me begin to come over to his house to do so. A few days later, he showed up at my house with two copies of the Bible. I kept one for myself, and I gave the other one to my father-in-law.

Once I had my own copy of the Bible, I began to read it every day. I became consumed with it, and I even stopped going out with my friends. As I read the Bible, I found the part that my mother had told me about. Yet I was still not a Christian.

Then one day, I came to the city of Sullana on some business. While I was in town, I saw a Baptist Church, and I saw that the door was open; so I decided to go in. When I went in, I was surprised to find a friend of mine there. He asked me what I was doing there and if I had come to get converted. I

thought about it for a little bit and then said, "Yes, that's exactly what I want to do." So, my friend directed me to talk with the pastor, a young unmarried man named Angel C.

Angel shared with me the Gospel, and I repented of my sins and believed in Christ. After that, I invited Angel to come to my home to share the Gospel with my family and friends. He did so, and five more people were converted. I also took him to another community nearby where several other people were converted. We then began starting mission churches in each place.

In 1974, we planted the church where I am still pastoring. Our church has gone on to plant ten more churches; and including churches that were planted by those ten, there are now a total of forty-four churches in our association! I continue to pastor, and I also serve as an associational missionary within the association of churches.

who also helped me greatly in my spiritual growth. In 1993, the church where I was a member started several new works, and I felt a call to serve as a pastor; but again, God had other plans. The very night that I was to preach at the new mission, I was stopped at a police check point and asked for my documents. The police immediately detained me. At first, I thought it was because of my past jail record, but then I discovered that the police suspected that I was personally involved with a gang of drug dealers! The year before, my documents had been stolen and used by terrorists and drug dealers to falsify their own identities. As God would have it, I once again found myself in prison. I told myself that I was dreaming and that it could not be possible. I was in seminary and looking forward to pastoring, but once again God had me thrown into one of the worst places in the world.

For the first forty-seven days of my imprisonment, I was in the prison below the Governmental palace. As I look back, this was, after my salvation, one of the best experiences of my life. I was able to see first hand how so many

people need the Lord and the salvation that only comes through the Son. I was able to witness to four of the main leaders of the "Shining Path" terrorist movement. One of them was an engineer, another one was a professor in the university, and the other two were students. They were desperate because they were going to be in jail for thirty years to life. When they saw me in the prison preaching to sixty or seventy men every day, they began to see their great need for Christ. One of the men approached me and told me that Christ could not forgive him because of all the terrible things he had done. He was second in command in the "Shining Path" terrorist movement. I sat there and spoke with him until five in the morning. Finally, he broke down and began to weep. God saved him. He later introduced me to others that were in jail for the same reasons. Some of them were saved, and some rejected the message. Some of these men were allowed to leave prison under the law of repentance afforded by the State. I never knew anything else about them.



I had never before had the opportunity to speak with men like these. They were intellectuals and terrorists, but God changed some of their lives. There were days in which I stayed up until the early hours of the morning sharing the good news with these men. During those days, I did not know much about what was happening outside the prison or with respect to my case; but after forty-seven days, I was put in the Lurigancho prison again, the worst prison in Peru. In Lurigancho, you can see dead people every day. Most of the inmates are filthy and sick with tuberculosis

Before going to prison, I had always doubted God's care for me. I had seen other pastors suffering and doubted His care and provision for my life. In prison, I learned that I would never have to doubt God's faithfulness. I entered prison weighing 145 pounds and left weighing 190. I always had enough food to give to others in the prison because of loving brothers that would come to visit me and bring me food. I was able to evangelize many people with the Gospel and even started a church in one of the sections of the jail.

Prison turned out to be a blessing for me. God transformed a living hell into a blessing that changed my life. I was able to preach day and night and experienced the joy of seeing the lives of men changed. What beatings and bars and years of prison could not do, the Word of God was able to accomplish in the lives of men. Many of those who were converted are now preaching the Word also. Time went by very fast because I was preaching and ministering around the clock. Before I knew it, a year had past.

In the prison of Lurigancho, the

authorities are very corrupt. It does not matter if you are innocent; you have to pay to get justice or nothing will happen. The authorities asked me for \$3,000 in exchange for my freedom. They told me that my lawyer was being paid by the drug traffickers so that my case would remain hidden and I would stay in jail. For these reasons my case would not move. After six months of prison, my church and my family could no longer pay for a lawyer. It was then that a missionary friend of mine found out about my situation and was able to pay a new lawyer to keep my case open. I thank God for this, because I would have been in prison for twelve years if HeartCry had not helped me.

The day that I was released from prison, I was preaching an open-air service to the men in prison. I did not know that I was going to be released, but after my sermon, the authorities came and told me to leave. I could hardly believe my ears! As I said before, there are innocent people who spend years in jail because of the corrupt lawyers and authorities who use the innocent as a way to make money. Through all this, God showed me that He does provide for everything.

While I was in jail, I had been praying for the jungle region of San Martin where I was born. After prison, I traveled there and saw that there were no evangelical churches and that the Word of God was not preached. There were many cults moving into the area, and it broke my heart because the true Church was not doing anything. I presented the project of starting a mission in San Martin, and my church told me they could not support me or be involved in this type of work because they were focusing more on the city area. After that, with the help of a friend who was already being supported by HeartCry, I presented my project to Paul Washer. I knew that brother Washer was very interested in reaching people with the Gospel, especially in places where it had not been preached before. With support from HeartCry, I am now serving in the jungle.

This is my testimony, and if God gives me many years of life, I want to use them all for His glory! I know God will use me and that He will carry out His will in my life. May God bless you!



MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT

MATT & AMANDA GLASS

As a conclusion to this issue of the magazine, we have included a letter from Matt and Amanda Glass, who are currently living and ministering on the island of Java in Indonesia. Matt serves as the Coordinator of Southeast Asia for HeartCry. He and Amanda, together with their three young sons – Aidan, Elliot, and Owen – have also been serving as missionaries in Indonesia since July of 2011. We hope that this update will help you to know a little of the work God is doing there and that it will stir you to pray for this family as they seek to serve the Lord in this dark country!

ENGLISH LESSONS IN THE VILLAGE

Matt has been waiting for several months for permission and the right circumstances to begin teaching English lessons in Utep’s home village south of our city. (Utep is the only one from this village who has ever believed). A few weeks ago, Matt and Utep traveled there by motorcycle to conduct their first lesson, and around forty children showed up! Matt was encouraged by the turnout and that the students were very participatory and eager to learn. There has continued to be a good turnout every week, usually with twenty or thirty kids in attendance. This week, Aidan and Elliot went along

with Matt and helped with the lessons and games, and they really enjoyed it!

Traveling to Utep’s village has also given Matt the opportunity to meet new people, especially Utep’s family. Before teaching each Thursday, Matt and Utep usually drink coffee with Utep’s brother and father, while sitting on the floor in front of a fire in their family’s kitchen. Pray for these two men. In the past, they took part in the persecution against Utep when he came to faith in the Lord, but now they seem very open. Matt has also met an ustad (Islamic teacher) from a neighboring village. He had many questions for Matt and Utep when they first met. This gave them the opportunity to not only answer questions about their faith, but also share with this man. He wants to begin meeting with Matt in order to learn conversational English. Pray that these would be fruitful times of sharing the gospel with this man.

MATT’S VISIT TO PAPUA

Matt came back from a visit to Papua on January 12th. The trip, although brief, was very profitable. There are three evangelists with whom HeartCry partners in this Indonesian province (Yulianus, Jimi, and Perin), and Matt had yet to visit them in their native place. Yulianus is from the Fuau tribe, and Jimi and Perin are from the Dani tribe. Matt also visited Trevor Johnson



and Paul Snider, both of whom are working with World Team among the Korowai tribe. Here is a brief summary of the trip in the words of Trevor Johnson:

Praise God that last week we preached or taught at three villages in the Mamberamo and three coastal locations to almost 1,000 people; passed out more than 2,000 tracts/booklets/Bibles (easily over 700 in outdoor evangelism and over 1,300 inside the church to build up believers); preached or taught eight times in seven days for about eighteen hours cumulative (mostly on distinguishing the new birth from a mere external religiosity); and yesterday, I had visitors finding my house to come and tell me that they were greatly moved.

Also, here is the brief update Matt sent out while he was still in Papua:

Today (Sunday [January 6th]), we worshiped at a church comprised mostly of people from the Fuau region (where we're flying to tomorrow). Most of them have come out of the interior jungle for educational purposes. Some are studying in a local Bible college, and others are pursuing various other occupations. Yulianus helps them in different ways, including providing scholarships for those who show the most potential. His desire, though, is for them to return to the interior in order to be a blessing to their own people; so he made them promise to return before ever giving any sort of scholarship. One of the men there today,

also supported by Yuli, is Bastian Guani. I met him in Jakarta in 2010 when he was studying at Kartidaya (SIL's linguistic training). He and Yuli are in the process of translating fifteen key Bible stories into the Fuau language, after which they will begin translating the New Testament. They didn't feel prepared enough to directly begin with the New Testament, so they decided to start with the stories in order to at least get something in the hands of their people, while also getting some good practice/training for the bigger project. You can read more about the Bible story project at www.theseedcompany.org (their language is technically called "Abawiri").

I preached in the service in Bahasa, Indonesia. I felt like the Lord helped, and I'm beginning to feel much more comfortable preaching without any notes. Trevor also gave a couple different strong exhortations to the people. There's such a great need here for people who call themselves Christians to be born again. They live like the world, many coming to church on Sunday mornings and then getting drunk a few hours later. HIV and prostitution are also big social problems, indicative of the spiritual darkness of those who profess the name of Christ but deny Him with their lives. So, much of our teaching and exhortation centered around the new birth and what it means to be genuinely saved. After eating lunch, we went to a local market to pass out Gospel tracts and share the good news with the people there. Together we were able to pass out



perhaps 400-500 tracts, and I got the opportunity to share the gospel with dozens of Papuans, along with many Muslims. There is a much more open climate to do this sort of thing in Papua compared to where Amanda and I live in Java. Please pray that God would use the words spoken and the literature given in order to save many souls.

After leaving the coastal area (where the above update took place), we flew into the Mamberamo River Basin, visiting three different locations - Fuau, Taria, and Kasonewega. The first two are small villages with very little ethnic diversity. Sometimes Danis from the highlands or brown-skinned Indonesians come down to these lowland villages in search of sandalwood or other natural resources. All the people in both Fuau and Taria would claim to be Christian. But, similar to the paragraph above, there are very few who have genuinely experienced the new birth. Generally speaking, the two tribal groups have a Christian identity, but they understand very little about the gospel. It's perhaps hard for many Westerners to understand, but just like there is a "cultural Christianity" in America, there is the same among these tribal peoples. They claim the name of Christ, but His reality has affected very little about their lives. They may not share all the same vices as the Papuans living near the coast (since they have less available and less opportunity), but they share the same spiritual problems. Please pray for these people. Pray that God would use Yulianus to continue to evangelize his own people. In the last two or three

years, it seems there was an awakening among a small minority of the people. However, there are still so many who have no saving knowledge of Christ. Pray that God would prepare Yulianus and Bastian to translate the Bible into Abawiri. Pray that God would also prepare Yaber Faboisa and his team to translate the Bible into Diebroud (the language spoken in Taria). Pray also as Yulianus recruits other translators for the eighteen other languages spoken in the Mamberamo.

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

Over the last few months, there have been several opportunities to share the good news with people in our province in Java. Although we can't be open here like Matt was able to be in Papua, the Lord continues to lead and open doors to speak truth into the lives of others. Last night, two young men who are university students came over to our house. Both are Muslims from the Sundanese ethnic group (the primary ethnic group in our province, which is considered the largest unreached people group in Indonesia). One of them is really seeking to know the truth and had a lot of good questions. The Lord gave us (along with our friend Vira) the opportunity to answer his questions while also sharing many other gospel truths. Please pray for these two young men. It really does seem like the Lord is at work, and we hope to meet with them again soon.

With much love,

Matt, Amanda, Aidan, Elliot, and Owen

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