

My Testimony

by Pamela

God at Work: Three Friends Become Three Sisters

PAMELA'S PERSONAL TESTIMONY



Getting Settled in Life

Growing up, my family and I had moved around at least fourteen different times throughout three different countries. I have had the chance to meet so many people and learn about so many different ways of life, but over those 21 years of my life, nothing can compare to October of 2009.

A Christian in Name Only – Not a Real One

Though I did not have a very religious upbringing, my mother had instilled in my brother Spencer and me that a God did exist, and we were His creation. I considered myself a Christian simply because I celebrated Christmas and Easter. But when it came to Jesus, I never understood what He did, or who He was. When I tried to read the Bible, it seemed almost foreign to me. When I tried to make an effort to pray, my prayers seemed empty; I didn't believe they were being heard. I hesitated a lot with my purpose in life. Because of all the moving, I always had a sense of instability and I thought of this as the blame for the emptiness I felt inside.

Emptiness and Heartbreaks

I considered myself good - morally and ethically. I tried my best to do what I thought was right and I always felt a need to please others. I yearned badly for people to accept me into their lives. While I made friends at each place I moved to, nothing seemed enough. I encountered more heart-breaks with friends, more rejection from my family, and more failure from myself. My priorities bounced from friends to school, but my priorities always seemed insufficient.

The older I got, the more I understood I needed something to fill the emptiness I had in my heart. I felt unsatisfied and alone, even when I was surrounded by people who cared for me. I felt depressed at times, and hopeless. I depended on material things to bring joy to my life. Though there were plenty of times that I thought life was great and I had everything I needed, yet I knew it wasn't enough.

Searching for God and Thinking Religion Was the Answer

I began to search for God, but I just didn't know how to get to Him. I searched for Him through meaningless prayers, different churches - even different religions. I was seeking for an answer - an answer to my question: "What should I do?" Little did I know then of what He had done for me and what He was doing for me.

My two best friends, Alejandra and Johana, began to attend a Friday Night Light Bible study at the Pennsauken Gospel Hall in New Jersey. During this time, I was in the process of converting to another religion. I believed that I finally had it! I found God. I thought that by converting to a religion and practicing the religion I would have a link to God. I didn't feel a need to go to the Bible study. But I wanted to know *why* my friends spent their Fridays at a Bible study, so I went to find out.

Totally Confused at a Bible Study

It was at the Bible study that I sat through one of the most confusing times of my life. Nothing made sense... written on the white board was just one word, SALVATION. Throughout the whole Bible study I kept repeating to myself in my head that I didn't have anything I needed to be saved from! There was no way that my little sins would cause me to go to hell. I started to compare myself to people who I thought were worse, and in a way, I was

looking for explanations to confirm that my sins were not as bad as the sins of others. I never did any wrong to anyone. I went home that night saying to myself and to my friends that I had no plans to return.

Unsettled and Unsure

A week followed and I began to question myself. I began to feel that I wasn't so sure about the path that I was on. What if I were to end up in hell? And how does Jesus fit into this? Why did they say that Jesus died on the cross for me? I never understood what Jesus' purpose was and why He was crucified. I didn't understand why, at the Bible Study, people were speaking of Jesus as their Savior. I began to read the Bible again, but now I was reading it to learn about Jesus.

During this time, I was reading two different doctrines that both claimed to be the Word of God. But slowly I found myself reading the Bible more and asking more questions about Jesus. After a couple of weeks, I knew which path I needed to follow. I knew that I needed salvation, but I struggled with how I would become saved.

Really Wanting to Be Saved

My prayers were constantly pleading to God to show me what to *do* to be saved. I was frustrated, but then the week before my 21st birthday in 2009, I realized that I did not have to *do* anything; it was already *done* (John 19:30). I learned that because of sin, we are born separated from God, but through the sacrifice on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are able to receive the greatest gift - one that we can't even place a value on (Romans 6:23). Christ had died on the cross for MY sins. He endured all the pain on that cross to provide me with salvation. Salvation saved me from my sins and allows me to have a personal relationship with God - one that I had been constantly seeking, but never found, until I opened the Bible, the only Word of God (1Peter 3:18).

Almost Missed the Greatest Truth and the Greatest Gift

It amazes me how close I had come to turning away from the greatest truth of all time. The exact month that I had decided to convert to a religion that completely rejects the truth of Christ, God brought me to a place where, for the first time, I was told of who Christ was and what He had done for me, and for all others who would receive Him.

All along I thought I had been searching, but the Lord had been working at my footsteps. My life went from a life without meaning and loneliness to a life with a purpose and a personal and eternal relationship with God.