My Testimony
by Peter Mitchell
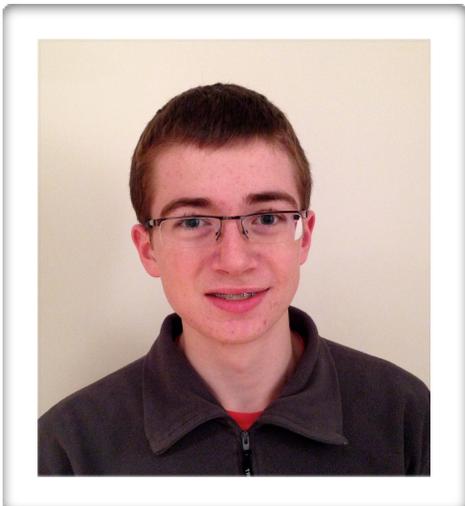
I was born in May 1997 into a family where mother and father were saved long before I was born. In that Christian environment the Bible was taught to myself and younger sister as mother and father sought to see my sister and I saved.

From early days we were taught we were was not fit for God's heaven as revealed in the Bible. I knew I had done things which were wrong and the Bible informs us: 'For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God' (Rom. 3:23). Although I knew all I needed to know about becoming a Christian, I never got round to getting serious about my sin and the wrong things I had done. Although I hadn't done anything morally bad, the small things I had done were enough to keep me out of heaven, and I still knew I needed God's salvation.

Sometimes God has to 'shake the boat' in order to wake us up while we drift through life. That is what he had to do with me. I remember it distinctly; while sitting and eating breakfast together in the kitchen my father told my sister and I that my grandmother's Aunt Agnes had died and that because she was a Christian, as she had accepted that Jesus had died on the cross for her and had said sorry to Him for her sin and asked Jesus to forgive her, she was in heaven.

Although I had never met this aunt, the fact that somebody related to me had died but was in heaven because they were saved, spoke no end to me. I wanted to escape the punishment that I deserved because of my sins and I wanted to have peace with God. Once everybody had left the room and as I sat at the table, very simply I said sorry to God for my sin and I thanked him that Jesus had died on the cross to take my sins away. I thought, 'Can that be it?' but I knew I was saved, because the burden of my sin was lifted and was ready to meet God when Jesus comes back as he promised he would.

Although I became a Christian when I was five and would have gone to heaven if I had died from then, Jesus was only the Saviour but not the Lord of my life. As a young teenager I became careless in my Christian life. It was not massively different from those around me, but it was after going to secondary school and beginning to shy away from my faith that I knew at the age of thirteen/fourteen that I would have to make a stand and start to live for what I believed in. In other words, I was a backsliding Christian and it was only after I began to have a Quiet Time and read my Bible and pray to God that I really began to get to know Him. I committed my life to God and asked him to lead and direct my life, one wherein I would be baptised to show I was a follower of Him and join the fellowship at my local church where my parents are in order to worship God in a company with other Christians who are there to help and support.

Things have changed, I now want to go to meetings such as the prayer meeting or Bible studies that I otherwise would not have wanted to attend. I now have a purpose in life in serving Him and not just aimlessly drifting as I was before I was saved and even before I sought to serve God fully. I am no longer motivated by what this world could offer, such as money or fame, (although it can be tempting)! but I try to do those things which will glorify God, such as tell others about what he has done in my life and what he can do in theirs.

John 3:17 is one of my favourite verses:

**"For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world;
but that the world through Him might be saved."**

I love it because it shows us that Jesus Christ is a loving Saviour who came, not to punish us or condemn us, but to open a way back to God that sin has destroyed. It reminds me to never see God as benevolent but that he wants everyone to know Him because Jesus Christ paid the price on the cross to take away the barrier of sin that was between God and I.