

TESTIMONIES ON 19 DECEMBER 2021

BAPTISM

Nur Faizah (Caroline) (fai17zah@gmail.com)



I grew up in a non-Christian household where my sibling and I were told to practise religious activities every day. Out of respect for my family, we practised it without questioning them, thinking whatever my family does was for the best of us.

As I grew older, I began to understand the importance of knowledge and understanding. That was when I questioned certain things that my family has been doing. Sometimes, they told me that they were doing it because they wanted to earn more favour in the eyes of their God. But... what is God's favour and how do we really get it?

While I was seeking knowledge to know who God truly is, I began praying quietly each day in my own way to God. I prayed, "God if you are real, let me know you and let me know how I can be your favourite."

This journey took a while as God works in His timing. Little did I know that He has always been there for me. One night, while I was working, out of nowhere a colleague turned friend began to share their faith and knowledge of Jesus. The first book that was given to me was John's Gospel.

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

After I finished John's Gospel, the God whom I thought my family knew suddenly became foreign. The God whom I found now love me even though I am not perfect.

John 3:16-17: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did

not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

How amazing is that? We do not need to earn His favour because we already have His favour when He sends His son to us. After knowing this, I began to share the good news with my family. As expected, they do not agree. But you know what? It is okay. As I begin this new journey, although initially it was tough, I will keep on trusting the Triune God (Father God, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit) and I trust it will get easier.

Pray for me as I cling to Psalm 62:8, “Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.”

Kelvin Lum (lum.kel@gmail.com)



I was introduced to Grace Baptist Church by Rebecca when we got together in 2015. As Rebecca urged me to join her for Sunday service, I came to learn more about Christ. At the same time, I began to realise that I am a sinner even if my actions do not seem so. My heart's desires were not pleasing to God. Before, I always saw myself as a good person who has not done bad things. I never thought of myself as a sinner. However, as I came to know more about Jesus, to know what He has done for us, I recognised that I am a sinner and that I should trust Him, receive His forgiveness, listen to His Word, follow Him, and grow to be more like Him.

As I interact with GBC members, I see the good works of people who have received God's grace and mercy through the gospel. I realised that as hard as I try, I am unable to do it on my own, I will need God's grace and mercy and His Holy Spirit to guide and lead me, especially in my new role as a husband, and if God may, a father.

Citing Proverbs 16:9, “the heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps.” I see the importance of having God in my life and marriage with Rebecca. I wish to put my trust in God, to worship Him, to seek His guidance, and finally to commit my work to the Lord and let Him establish my steps.

Joel Neo (joel.neo93@gmail.com)



I come from a non-Christian family and was brought up as a Buddhist. My first touch point with God was when I enrolled into a Christian day care centre near my home when I was seven years old. As I was a kid back then, I did not ponder much on religion and chose to dismiss it. However, I did feel a sense of peace washing over me whenever the centre brought us to church to attend events.

Looking back, I realise that God has never stopped pursuing me as I moved on to later phases in life and continually came into contact with Christianity; by attending math tuition organised by a church when I was 14 and an evangelical event by chance in university. Even as I unknowingly lived my life free from God, He never stopped loving me and drawing me to Him.

The turning point for me came in December 2020 when I was invited to attend an event at a friend’s church on “Finding Hope”. I was not in a good place at that time, but somehow felt led to attend. That day, the message delivered about the hope that Christians have in Christ resonated with me deeply. The pastor talked about how those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint (Isa 40:31). I wanted to learn more.

After speaking to a good friend of mine a few days later, she invited me to a Bible study. Since then, I started to attend services at GBC regularly, coming to know and love the God who pursued me all along – the God who gives hope by

sending His son Jesus Christ to die in my place on the cross so that I may have forgiveness and eternal life.

I am thankful that Christ never once gave up on me. Even at my lowest points in life, He is my anchor and hope. God is the God of all comfort, and I am certain that this blessed assurance that I've found in Him will not be shaken. "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God." (2 Cor 1:3)

Martin Tan (tgymartin@gmail.com)



Before I knew Christ, I always thought myself to be a "second generation Christian". Just like the Pharisees, or the elder brother in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, I thought myself to be "holier than thou", seemingly oblivious to my own sin. This was especially true because I felt persecuted by some members of my own family, and I only felt justified fighting back. Whilst I struggled internally with depression and self-hate, externally, I refused to accept my own weakness and sin.

I do not think that there was a specific time in my life when I suddenly realised that I really needed a Saviour. This rather, was a slow and painful process realising that I was not the god of my own life, and I needed to recognise Jesus as King of my life. What does this mean? It means to surrender absolute control over to Him, and trust that His plan is always good, even though it may not always seem like it. Granted, this is not practised in full by me, for I am a sinner, but I believe that the trajectory towards recognising and trying to avoid sin by having a heart of repentance is important. God has truly been patient with me.

For me, the journey to discovering my faith was through understanding the story of the Bible. God created the world, and created Man, and it was wholly good. But Man decided to rebel against God, and we rejected God as King of

our lives. Throughout the Bible, we see this constant rebellion against God, and His wrath as his just response against sin. God is incompatible with sin because of His holiness, and because of this, we deserve his wrath – the wages of sin is death. We must not forget God's wrath; it is His nature.

However, we have a merciful and patient God. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ to be a propitiation for our sin – that Jesus could be sin for us. Jesus came down to earth, and God turned his face away. Jesus, wholly God and wholly man, was tormented for our sins although he committed no sin! He died, and on the third day He rose again. It is amazing to me, that if we choose to believe in this loving God, and through our belief have a heart of repentance for our sin, that God will see us as sinless. Our sins can be washed away through Jesus, if we believe in his resurrection. This means that we recognise him as Lord and Saviour of our lives. This is a choice, of course, for us to make. I choose to follow Jesus and recognise him as Saviour of my life, in fellowship with His people, the church.

One of the passages in the Bible that challenged me to faith was Matthew 23. In this passage Jesus rebuked the Pharisees, calling them hypocrites for they only outwardly appeared righteous but were lawless on the inside. This passage helped me to realise my own deep depravity.

God does not only rebuke us through His word, but also gives us comfort and allows us to lament to Him, and lets us be content in Him. Psalm 23 spoke to me very personally when I struggled much with my own mental health. God is our shepherd, who uses the rod to discipline us, so that we shall not want anything more than Him. He makes us rest in green pastures and we can always rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us along the right paths even though we walk through the darkest valleys. Being a Christian means that I will be persecuted for my faith, but I can always remember His goodness to follow us all the days of my life, especially on this narrow road of repentance to Him for our sins.

I hope that my testimony can encourage you more to this faith in our good God.

Mercia Tan (merciatan84@gmail.com)



I grew up in a Christian family and attended church since I was young. Although it is a blessing to be able to hear God's Word at such a young age, deep down I always worried that all these Bible stories would just become head knowledge and not something that truly moved my heart, a struggle most Christians growing up in Christian homes would face. Attending a mission school for my secondary education meant that I was exposed to God constantly but yet I often wondered if I truly felt and understood Him. I remember going for a school camp held by the school's church and watching my friends experience God for the first time. I couldn't help but feel envious

because I wanted to know how that felt too. It always seemed to me that others could identify an exact moment when they recognised God as their Saviour and Lord and turned their life around. I was unsure if I would ever feel the same since my life felt so stagnant having grown up in church, knowing who God is to a certain extent and adopting "christian" habits since young.

Even though I was not aware of it, God constantly pursued me. Going to church often felt like a part of the schedule and it was tough to consistently attend Bible studies during my earlier teenage years due to the distractions of life but still, God was faithfully working through it all. He kept bringing me close to Him and the church so that I was able to learn more about His loving character. Even while I was disappointed at my mundane spiritual life and doubtful of my faith, God continued to use His Word through His people, the older Christians at church, to encourage and remind me of the gift that Jesus gave when He took the heavy blame for my sins and died on the cross for me despite being the perfect and blameless Son of God. I don't think that I can pinpoint an exact moment when that truly hit me but I believe that God was working in my heart over the entire period. Eventually, after many earnest prayers and Bible studies, God helped me to internalise and recognise His love for me and my need for repentance and salvation through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:4-7 says, *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”* Living for Christ has not been easy but I know that all my struggles on earth will be worth it because I serve a God who is merciful and just. I thank God for his faithfulness and steadfast love, for sending other Christians in my life to guide me and most importantly, for giving a sinner like me a chance to be part of His eternal and righteous family.

TRANSFER

Alan Kuei (alankuei@gmail.com)



I accepted Christ as my personal Saviour just before starting primary five. The two years leading up to then were extremely trying at home. My parents' marriage had been deeply tested, eventually resulting in divorce. I have many painful memories from this difficult and sad time. And yet how good our God is. His loving kindness and goodness often shines brightest and warmest when we are in our most helpless state passing through the darkest moments in life. By God's providence, my babysitter learned what was happening in my home and she bravely and kindly invited my entire family to church with her. My Mom would bring my brother and I each Sunday, and we began to learn about who Jesus is and His great love for us.

Meanwhile, I remember my Mom grieving each night leading up to the divorce. Pained to see her so brokenhearted, at age seven, I wanted to comfort her but didn't know how. I could only softly stroke her hair, wipe her eyes and tell her "everything will be ok". But that did not stop her tears. Then one day, God comforted and encouraged my Mom through a verse from 1 Corinthians 13: *"Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth"*. I witnessed God's overwhelming peace, calm and wisdom arrest my Mom's heart and take away her tears – something I could not do. That was the beginning of my experiencing God's goodness. By the time I began primary five, I knew when I prayed to God, He listened, and that God sincerely cares for us – so much so He would send His Son to die for us upon the Cross to forgive our sins.

Two years later my Mom remarried. For one of the first times in my life I saw what it is for a husband to cherish his wife, and to have a father who would invest so much time in loving and disciplining my brother and I as his own two boys. God redeemed what was broken by His grace and kindness. And He continues to work in my relationship with my biological Dad as well.

There is still much that God is growing me in. Thankfully He is exceedingly gentle, kind and patient towards me. On days when I'm tempted to tie my

value or worth to my work performance, He reminds me of how treasured and loved I am independent of what I do (Ps 139:13-16). God reminds me I am a new creation in Him (2 Cor 5:17), that His grace is sufficient for me (2 Cor 12:9) and to relentlessly persevere in His ways (Phil 3:13-14). He declares His faithfulness does not depend on me and He will be faithful to the very end (2 Tim 2:12-13). Jeremiah 17:7-8 and Proverbs 3:5-6 have also been crucially anchoring verses for me to trust in Him wholeheartedly. He is my Strong Tower – I know He will finish the good work which He has started in me.

Jolene Fong (jo.lene@live.com)



Hi, my name is Jolene, and I am a 27-year-old Christian who has been a part of various churches in both Singapore and Sydney, moving churches based on where I was living.

I grew up in a Christian home and am blessed with parents and an older brother who are also believers. Whilst I did not have a dramatic conversion to Christianity, I thank God for the many people He placed in my life who have shaped my beliefs and helped me grow to love God and His Word.

I remember as a child feeling forced to go to Sunday school and not understanding why I needed to go to Church. I heard about Jesus and His dying on the cross for my sins, but I didn't understand what that meant for me. Thanks to the weekly efforts of my Sunday school and youth group teachers, who diligently taught God's Word and walked alongside me, by God's grace, I came to recognise my own sinfulness and need for forgiveness through Jesus. Scripture says that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom 3:23) and "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom 10:9).

Having received such grace from God, one simple verse "if you love me, you will keep my commandments" (Jn 14:15) has shaped my relationship with God,

such that obedience to His Word feels liberating rather than oppressive. My interactions with other people also changed as I sought to be a good witness to them, rather than seeking their approval and favour. My motivation for going to church and spending time with God also changed from just pleasing my earthly parents to wanting to please my heavenly Father also.

Building on that, I took my faith more seriously upon meeting people passionate about God in university who were far more mature than me. It challenged me to see that I had been too apathetic about my faith and had much room for growth. I look forward to growing even more in love and understanding of Christ as I join you all as part of the family of Grace Baptist Church.

Brandon Loke (brandsloke@gmail.com)



I grew up in a Christian household being raised by Christian parents, and though I was familiar with the Bible and Christian teachings, the Christian life and how I lived was quite an afterthought for me. I was often angry and bitter, and I could never quite see how I was wrong in all those circumstances. It never hit me how far short I fell of God's standards, until much, much later.

Though much of my life wasn't honouring God, God in His lovingkindness continued to reach out to me through His Word in the Bible and the Christians around me. Through His mercy, He began to show me my unfixable flaws and how incredibly selfish I was in my dealings with both those around me and with God Himself. Despite my efforts to act rightly, it was quickly clear that no amount of effort could make me a better person. Each failed attempt only showed me how insurmountable the task was. Romans 5:8 was particularly striking to me: "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." God called me to put my trust in His Son Jesus who has paid for my sins; a gift most undeserving. I followed God's call to His gift of salvation, and it was most relieving and joyful to experience trust in

Christ's sufferings and death, which makes me right before God and God's power that promises we can live righteous lives.

Since then, God has continually blessed me by giving me the strength to turn away from sin. Day after day, He has been teaching me what it means to treasure the Gospel and pursue Him first and foremost joyfully, like in Matthew 13:44. Since turning to Christ, He has continually taught me more and more about His character, His holiness and love. He has also graciously placed like-minded Christians in my life, who have continuously pointed me to God. It is truly by God's grace that He has led me to where I am today.

Kimberly Siew (kimsiew@sas.upenn.edu)



I grew up in a church-going family, but I had never thought to question the state of my own salvation until I attended university in the US. By God's grace, I met Philadelphia Mission Baptist Church – a faithful, Bible-believing church devoted to campus ministry. In my freshman year, I was challenged by my church leader to consider whether I was really a Christian, and I had to confess that I did not have a personal relationship with God.

I had no idea how my life would change with that one confession. I spent the next two and a half years wrestling with God and my relationship with Him and His people. Though I attended church services, Bible studies, fellowships, and one-on-one mentorship, I did not delight in God, but instead grew in my fear, dread and people-consciousness. The idea of having to change once I made the decision to accept Christ scared me, as I knew I would have to yield up control of my life. God felt distant and unknowable through those long years of struggling, and every interaction with the family of God felt burdensome. When my leaders challenged and rebuked me, I only grew in my sins of pride and self-righteousness.

A turning point came at the beginning of my junior year when God began to reveal my sins to me in concrete and undeniable ways. Since I could see the love of God modelled so clearly through the church, I could also see the

wretched state of my own heart in comparison. I saw how deep my sins of pride and selfishness went, and how limited my own thoughts and ideas of love were. I realised I was overcomplicating salvation with excuses, when it boiled down to the simple question of whether I was ready to accept the love of Christ and live as a new creation.

At a fateful Bible study, for the first time I began to glimpse the simple message of Jesus' profound love, that can only come from knowing who God is. The fact that Jesus was in so much agony in Gethsemane—praying that God would remove this cup from him, and even sweating blood (Lk 22:42-44)— was because once He took up the sins of the world on my behalf, He would be separated from God His Father. I was struck by that powerful image: even knowing He would be humiliated, flogged and crucified by His own people, it was separation from His loving Father, even for a time, that Jesus was afraid of. How much more I, who had lived my whole life apart from Him, was living in agony, and how desperately I should want to be reunited with Him? What kind of love was that, that Jesus was offering freely to a sinner like me?

Praise God for His loving mercy – when a sinner repents, He promises: “And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” (Eze 36:26). Suddenly, it seemed so easy – change was less fearful, because the burden to change myself wasn't mine to bear. It was such a joy and freedom to be able to surrender it all to God and take that first step of faith. The story of the prodigal son was so fitting in my case: I only had to get up and take that first step towards God, and He ran the rest of the way to meet me (Lk 15:20).

Of course, accepting Christ was only the first step. A year and a half later, by God's divine orchestration I returned to Singapore at the start of the pandemic, and I praise Him for leading me to GBC, where I continue to experience first-hand the preciousness of the family of God. I commit to growing in this church, and receiving His glorious and redemptive promise alongside other members of the body: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you. Again I will build you, and you shall be built” (Jer 31: 3b-4a).

Rebecca Tan (rebeccahtanhq@gmail.com)



“As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for you, O God.” – Psalms 42:1.

I first attended church when I was in secondary school. I lived a typical good student life, being obedient, studying hard and getting good grades. Yet there was this emotional emptiness inside of me. I noticed one of my schoolmates Grace who was in the same CCA (handbells) as me who seemed to have an assuredness and confidence inside of her because she was a Christian. It was because of that, that I took a step of faith to attend church service near my home. I wasn't able to fully comprehend what was being preached at that point in time and stopped attending after a while.

God pursued me again when I was in junior college. My classmate, Jewel, invited me to her church and I joined her care group. At that time, there were pressures of 'A' Level examinations – getting into a good university and enrolling into a good course. To relieve the stress of studying for exams, I drew closer to God and took delight in His Word. God's unfailing love and hope of salvation and eternal life filled the gaping hole in my heart and I experienced His peace and joy. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord, seeking to live my life devoted to the Lord and praying for the Holy Spirit to guide me in His ways and submitting my weaknesses and sins to Him.

My parents objected to me attending church then as they felt that the activities took too much time away from my studies. By God's grace I prayed for and found Grace Baptist Church which I have been attending ever since. I've found a community whom I've done life with for the past 10 years, we have prayed together, fellowshiped together, studied the Word of God and served together over the last decade.

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” – Joshua 1:9

I'm taking the step of faith today to be a member of this church officially together with my husband Kelvin. As we start a family together, I pray that we will continue to give glory to God and remain committed to the body of Christ.

Robert Ryan Yap (jedi.robertz@gmail.com)



By God's grace, I was blessed to have gotten the chance to accept Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour at a young age of around 7 years old. I still remember that my brother shared with me about salvation through Christ at our house, and I accepted Him. As I try to recall further, I remember he showed me "*The Wordless Book*" (A book outlining the gospel with the colours gold, black, red, white, and green). Studying in a Christian school, there will be few other opportunities for me to receive Jesus. Some of which, I did receive Him again and again, sometimes because I wanted to be very sure I accepted Him. But I always look back to the day that my brother led me to Christ.

I believe that the Bible is the Word of God. Salvation is through Christ alone, not works so that no one can boast (Eph 2:8-9). Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sins, and then resurrected on the third day.

God has been very faithful to me my entire life. He continues to grow me, and I am happy that "... he who began a good work in me will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Phil 1:6) Without His grace, it will not be possible for me to overcome the temptations and challenges I face in life. When faced with challenges, discouragements and doubts, I find strength in knowing that "his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is his faithfulness." (Lam 3:22-23) I will always pray to Him to find strength to press on. When faced with temptations, it helps me a lot to know that in church, I have brothers and sisters in Christ who would stand with me in prayers as well as remind me of His faithfulness. I am very blessed as well that my wife would always encourage me and we pray and study God's Word together.

Anna May Yap (annamly@sbc.edu.sg)



It is hard for me to pinpoint the exact moment that I got saved. I've been so privileged to have gone to a Christian school from kindergarten until high school. My school would have events such as Spiritual Emphasis and we would have chapel time ever so often. On top of that, we always have Christian Education subjects at every level. I cannot count how many times I have raised my hand whenever there is an opportunity to accept Christ as my Lord and Saviour. At that time, I had only a very basic understanding of the gospel and I thought that if I raise my hand and recite the prayer then I will go to heaven. Believing in Jesus was only a means to get to heaven. I did not fully understand that sin is the reason I could not have a relationship with God.

It was not until my young heart was broken due to a family issue that I would begin to understand what it meant to be in a personal relationship with God. This moment opened an opportunity for my teacher to reach out and pray for me. I do not remember much of what she said during that prayer but I can remember starting to understand what it meant to pray to God and to pray for others. That was a breakthrough for me, it is as if the seed that was planted in my heart by my school has just been watered and now it has started to sprout. I started to realise that believing means that I can be in a relationship with God and that because of the Gospel I can now pray to Him freely.

I may have raised my hand a lot of times to receive Jesus to only save myself from hell but it was at that very moment that I felt the love of God. God has so graciously shown me what it means to know him personally through my teacher's sincere concern and prayer. Shortly after that, around the summer of 1999, I decided to get baptised.

From then until now, I am still on a journey to know the triune God; the Father's grace, Jesus' salvation through His death and resurrection and the Holy Spirit's enabling to continue on.

Tabitha Yeong (yeongtabitha00@gmail.com)



As a child, I knew that God was someone who was always there for me and one that I could turn to for help in times of need. However, I did not have a personal relationship with Him. While I had the idea of what was right and wrong in God's sight through Sunday School teachings. Back then, being a Christian only meant obeying Him because I knew that I had to and not out of a love for Him nor my

understanding of the gospel.

It was only through a collection of moments in my formative years when I spent time reading the Bible and listening to sermons preached in church when I grew to understand the gravity of my own sin and how undeserving I was of God's love, mercy and grace. I have grown to understand that being a Christian does not mean having a trouble-free life, but it means learning to trust in God and constantly reminding myself of the gospel. I now obey and follow Christ out of the love that I have for Him. Just as Romans 5:8 states "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us", I recognise that while I am undeserving of eternal life, God has extended His grace and forgiveness to me through His only son, Jesus Christ who died on the cross for my sins while I was still a sinner, so that I might have eternal life.