

Shirleen's Testimony

I was Christian-schooled from pre-nursery, that started my 30 year journey with God. I was a good kid who took pride in doing things myself and life was good! So, I placed God on a shelf. I thought I knew Him, but He wasn't my savior.

In my teens, I rebelled against God and wanted nothing to do with Christians. I started to hang out with the wrong crowd and did things I'm not proud of.

Later, I met a friend who would start a Christian ministry serving in Thailand, and through them, God started reminding me of my long-silenced dream; "saving the world". It's also where I got to know people attending RHC. I started attending RHC 4 years ago. But I sat in the back, ran out the moment service was over. My guilt, pride and fear of Christians, kept me at a distance.

In 2012, I started to serve full time in my friend's Ministry. But I was still far from God., I was extremely self-critical, had ridiculous expectations of myself, working myself hard to earn God's forgiveness. Then I fell very ill for months. My self-condemnation was at its peak. For the first time in my life, I couldn't physically or mentally do the work that I had been able to previously. I finally realized, my good deeds were but filthy rags before a holy God, I was in need of a savior. I was unable to save myself.

(Ephesians 2:4-8 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. For by grace you have been saved, through faith. And this is not by your own doing; it is a gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast)

Coincidentally, an advisor of my ministry was telling me about our identity in Christ. I had heard this throughout my life but it never clicked the way it did till now. That day God opened my eyes to how I can have a new identity in Christ. It is in Christ that I can be made righteous. (2Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.)

I repented for my sins of pride and perfectionism that kept me from experiencing the full grace of God. I believed in Christ and trusted completely in his work on the cross to save me. Jesus bore my sin and judgment, so that I can be forgiven by God. And Jesus gave me his righteousness. Depending on Jesus and knowing him as my Lord and Savior brought such joy and relief. I did not have to prove myself through my own works anymore.

I'm now able to work in His grace, to do my part and trust God with the outcomes. I still struggle with fears, still learning to put my fear of God above all else. For I know, my freedom was bought with a price – the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Shortly after, I felt God urging Ivan and I to get more planted in church. Although we were a little wary at first, and still shy at times, we joined Pastor Eugene's community group. The people of RHC have truly been a blessing, a true community that loves and serves one another., I still can't believe I missed out on years of community life in RHC! So I now come to be baptized and publicly identify with Jesus Christ and his body, the church.