

Yanting's Testimony

I wasn't born into a Christian family, but my siblings and I had early exposure to Christianity, thanks to an aunt and uncle that occasionally brought us to church, as well as in my primary school where I was taught how to pray and sing hymns. I learnt about how God created the world and that Jesus was crucified on the cross for mankind, but the reality of it did not sink into my heart.

In secondary school I started attending church with my older sister. It was then that I learnt the magnitude of my sin, about the person of Jesus Christ and how He willingly took up my sins and died on the cross on my behalf. I felt loved by God, and loved God in return. However, this love was anchored on how He had promised longevity, prosperity and success in life for me on earth. Or so I thought. I was wrongly taught that the blessings promised in Deuteronomy held for anyone who had faith and that Jesus wanted no less than success for His people in this world. When I prayed, the bulk of the prayer was spent praying for longevity, good grades, prosperity and success. When I gave to the church I expected to God to reward me with financial benefits of many folds.

For years, I believed in the prosperity "gospel" – that implies God's ultimate sacrifice for humankind, and the security of the blessings we can receive is conditional upon whether we possess enough so-called "faith". Whenever I read about harm and poverty that befell believers or missionaries, I often felt troubled but brushed off those feelings by convincing myself that terrible things only happened to them because they didn't trust in God's provision. When things didn't go my way even though I'd prayed fervently, I got discouraged and often blamed myself for not having enough faith.

This continued for years, until a message preached at RHC completely challenged my belief. The passage that day was from John 15, about Jesus as the true vine. There was a verse that mentioned: If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. It was preached that the promise of getting whatever I wished for came with one condition: that God's Word truly abided in me. But that premise would completely change my desires on earth –my desires and wants would no longer be for my earthly enjoyment. Rather, they would be for God's glory. Only with my desires closely aligned to God's for furthering His glory would He then grant me everything I asked for.

I realised I had completely missed the point of the Gospel. The point of the Gospel was Jesus and how He died on the cross for our sins. It wasn't about the promise of prosperity or blessings on earth. Instead of praising God for His finished work on the cross, I had been attempting to make use of Him to satisfy the sinful desires of my earthly life. Suddenly the endurance of missionaries and Christians who were persecuted for their faith started to make more sense.

This realisation has fueled in me a greater desire to learn more about Christ – and the more I read about the perfect work of Christ, the more I want to praise Him for the merciful God He is. The Gospel is a selfless one – it's all about God, not about myself. I was convicted of sin from God's Word as I attended church regularly. I chose to repent from sin and put my faith in Jesus Christ, who died for me on the Cross that I may be reconciled to God forever. In December last year, I was baptised and became a member of RHC. Baptism is a public profession of my faith in Christ and new life in Him as part of His body.

Admittedly I still struggle with sin on a daily basis. But I'm thankful that God has chosen to open my eyes to His wonderful truth. Looking back, I'm thankful for the journey of discovery that He has carried me through. Pray that God can continue to guide me on this exciting journey as I yearn to live my life for His glorification, not mine.