

Baptismal Testimony of Andy Wu – June 2, 2012

I grew up going to church since kindergarten when my parents heard about a night time fellowship at a local church for grade school children on Wednesday nights. I learned about the gospel and what Jesus Christ had done for all of us, but I never had a true understanding. I had only gone to church because my parents told me so. I only read the scripture because the Sunday School teachers told me so. It was easy to act in school, as well as in church, to appear as a typically “good child”. But inside my heart, I have been constantly defying God, with no intention to glorify Him, and was always concerned about self-image and wanted my friends to perceive me as cool. I am a very ambitious person in mind and loved the things of the world.

As the years went by, I started to attend church on Sundays more frequently and became more familiar with my Sunday School teachers. I remember how I noticed the way they were so faithful in teaching the gospel to us and caring for our souls. And I remembered the nights when I thought to myself, “If I died tonight, will I go to heaven or hell?” It was hard for me to confess to my teacher, Daniel Lee, that I was not a Christian. I asked him why God had sent all of us to earth if there was the possibility that we would end up in hell. He explained to me about the good news of Christ’s purpose on earth and prayed for me. It was that day that my eyes were opened and I acknowledged Jesus Christ to be God’s one and only son who died and rose again for my sins.

Even since then I believe that God has been at work, changing me for a better purpose. There are times when I faced obstacles and moved away from God, but He shows mercy in always providing refreshment to my heart and gradually strengthens my relationship with Him. I want to be baptized today as a sinner who die to the world and rise in Christ.

Baptismal Testimony of Payton Chen – June 2, 2002

I remember when I first entered this world, no one in my family was a Christian. The majority of them believed in Buddhism, and I became part of those under their influence. But thanks to Christ, God had planted the seed in my family since I was a fifth grader when my mum was converted to Christianity by her friend, which led a tremendous change of my life.

I received some books about Christ since my mum had believed in Jesus Christ, which led me to the enlightenment stage for my spiritual growth. At first, I did not reject to believe, but I was not being faithful in Christ either. I only prayed to God before my final exams or when I was in trouble, but I just forgot to give thanks to God, to worship him, and I just did whatever I liked for the rest of my time. Before I became a Christian, sometimes I was so upset that I prayed, but my wishes did not come true. I yelled at the sky and asked why, but nothing came into my ear at that moment. But after I became a Christian, I started to think back of my life, and what amazed me was, God never ignored my prayers, not even once. He just came into my heart quietly, too quiet for me to notice, and gave me strength to overcome the hardship in front me at an unexpected moment. But I know that the help he offered for me is far more than I could think of, and he was making the best choices for me throughout my entire journey. That's a gift.

Before I became a Christian, I did not have a good relationship with my father, because I felt that he never try to understand me, and he criticized me a lot. Because of his job, we only got to see twice a week. The lack of communication brought a lot of difficult time for us, and once, I almost collided with him for just a simple misunderstanding. I was impulsive, disobedient, and self-centered. My stubborn and arrogance buried my ability to be considerate of my father. But since Jesus Christ came to me, the relationship between my father and I had never been the same. The teachings in the Bible about obedience to parents, forgiveness, and love made me realize the fault that I had committed. As the Spirit of the Lord worked within my father and me, I noticed the changes my father had made, he became

more tolerant and understanding, and at the same time, I started to realize that every criticism of my father was derived from his love and expectation for me. Now, even we still have arguments once a while, we can sit down and talk, and making more sense with each other. Credit to our Lord Jesus Christ, who used the hand of the divine, to fix the relationship between my father and I, and to help us to grow as Christian.

I used to be an exclusionist. I did not like the people who do not speak Cantonese, because I saw a lot of workers who came from the other provinces of China were very uncourteous. Some of those committed crimes, made our community dangerous. Their hair styles were crazy and hilarious, which made the majority of the Cantonese did not want to get along with them. But I did not know how ridiculous my behaviors were until God brought me to America. I was so upset that I was looked down by people here, because I am a Chinese, I cannot speak perfect English. I know maybe some Chinese people gave the Americans some bad impressions. Then I saw my shadow from those who looked down at me. I realized that was exactly the same thing as I did when I was in Canton. I was empathetic to those who were discriminated by the Cantonese. I saw and I realized God was giving me this lesson, teaching me that prejudice was evil and disgraceful. By the work of our Lord, I no longer prejudged people, and tried to justly treat anyone. I appreciated how God changed me with his sacred power, and drove me down a right path.

After I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal savior, I am living in peace all the time, since I know he will make the best decision for me. Also, God had been changing me gradually, from the one who was worldly, naive, and arrogant, to now be the one that is looking up at Jesus Christ, and put effort to pursue him.

雖然不是生長在基督教家庭,但我很早認識耶穌基督,我中小學都唸基督教學校。讀了多年聖經但並不表示我很早信主,相反對主很抗拒。在中學時學校有宗教主任,學生團契等。我們對聖經老師並不太尊重,為他們取外號渾名(當然我們也對其他老師取外號),對參加團契的同學,也取笑他們的信仰。學校每星期都有一次在大禮堂的講道集會,也成為我小睡的黃金時間。大學時期也沒有花時間在信仰上。感覺上是神不會給我A,也不會為我交學費,還是靠自己算了。

成長後在社會工作,也沒有想到信仰方面。當時的目標只想在事業上成功,找更好的工作,更高的薪金,生活上也只是追求物質上的享受,和很多中國人一樣,喜歡打麻雀,間中也到 Las Vegas 去找尋刺激,與神的距離更遠。後來結婚有了孩子,也沒有太大改變,雖然在一般人眼中,我仍算是一個及格的丈夫與父親,但在信仰和靈性上,我仍是一無所有。我對主的改變,是始於一個離校 25 週年的聚會。我目睹很多同學信主,還一起進行主日崇拜,內心有所感動。我開始思想信仰問題。

我真正嘗試認識主是始於我全家搬到加州,Flora 在學校認識了 Cariann,在她的引領下,Flora 和兩個孩子開始參加基列聚會,崇拜。我初時仍抗拒到教會,還覺得星期天早上可清靜地看球賽是最好不過。後來,平安堂成為基列鄰居,並以廣東話傳道,我開始參加主日崇拜。聖靈在這時也開始在我心裏作工,我也不再抗拒到教會,也會留心講道,思考人生的意義。這情況延續了數年,雖牧師和教會弟兄姊妹不斷關心我信仰的決定,但始終無法進一步決志,接受耶穌基督為救主。我的藉口是未有聖靈的感動。實際是信心不足,不想被宗教規條束縛。

去年感恩節的一場病,終於讓我改變。是人的弱點,人在順境是不會想起神,只有在經歷苦難,疾病之時,才會想到求神幫助。我患病和得到醫治的經過,相信在座各位都很清楚,也不再複述。我在醫院留醫期間,想起主的旨意,祂讓我由熱鬧的 Toronto,搬到加州小城 Danville,使我再度領受福音,這在 Toronto 未必有機會。祂也在我的病中保守我和家人,一路平安到達 San Diego 醫院,我終於明白這是主的美意,要我跟隨祂,接受耶穌基督為救主。於是我再沒有遲疑,在手術前,我向家人表達我決志的意願,然後一起祈禱。手術後,再有一位當地教會的杜牧師探訪,在他引導下,我再一次向主祈禱認罪,重申我的意願,我終於在多年之後,成為主的兒女。

當日杜牧師向我講解的聖經,是哥林多後書五章十七節

“若有人在基督裡、他就是新造的人。舊事已過、都變成新的了”。但願今天之後,我就是新造的人,與主耶穌基督同埋葬,同復活,為主作美好的見證。