

My Testimony

I did not grow up in a Christian home but I did grow up in church. I was baptized three times in the same missionary Baptist church. At the age of 17 I went into the military. I believed that if I disobeyed God I would not only die but would also go to hell. One night I went into a bar with friends where there were ladies dancing. I ran outside and waited to die. I lived in fear for the next several weeks. I did not die. So I came to the conclusion that there was no God.

In high school I had read a lot of Nietzsche and briefly fell into a period of nihilism. It was only a brief period as I did not find it to be existentially satisfying. I studied more philosophy and world religions. I came to a position of mixed spiritualism. I guess at the root I was a Gnostic seeking knowledge that would free me from this plane of existence and meaninglessness.

I got out of the military and was married. I was not a good husband. I was selfish but the woman I was married to craved drama and I could create conflict and drama. I denied God and lived an openly rebellious life.

Around 1999 I was working with a man. I admired him because he was everything I was not, namely successful. We were having a conversation one day and he shared that he had someone he knew recently die. I said I was sorry and made an off-hand comment about fearing death. He said "You don't have to be afraid to die."

The next day he brought me a Gospel tract. I said thank you. That evening when I got home I took the tract out of my pocket and put it in my desk drawer. At the time I thought it was very kind of Nicky to be concerned about me. I never read the tract.

Some weeks or maybe even months later I was cleaning out my desk. I came across the tract and threw it in the garbage. I remember how thoughtful it was for Nicky to be concerned about me. I knew the Gospel. I knew about the death of Jesus for sin. I knew forgiveness in Christ was my only hope. Even though I had "walked the aisle and prayed the prayer" I knew I had not been forgiven and my life was not changed. I knew I was guilty and judgment awaited me. I sat down at my desk and just prayed. "Nicky is right. If I am afraid to die then something must be wrong. God if I am not saved please save me."

Nothing happened. In the coming weeks I saw a need to read my Bible again like I did when I was a kid. I could not find a Bible. Then my wife told me it was under the bed. I got the Bible and began to read it. It was different this time. It seemed real. It was not just dry, cold words. I tried to get my wife to go to church. I don't know why but I knew I was supposed to be in church. She became very distant and hostile to me. Over the next few months there was a lot of conflict in our home. My wife had a series of affairs (including one with a close member of my family). This ended in divorce. The divorce was devastating. I was bankrupt, slandered and I did not see my children for almost seven years.

I did not realize it until much later that I was converted during that time.