

## Cornerstone vs. Constants Devotional - 28July2007

Ben Yim's Testimony (Condensed)

I attended church sporadically since I was about four or five years old. It was not until I was in high-school that I started to attend more regularly, but even then it was a very social event and at best a "religious" activity, as opposed to a sincere time (of worship) with God. This was evident in the fact that I seldom went to church once I started university, as I felt my studies were more important than attending church. University was my priority, and to put more simply, my god.

However in my fourth year of university, my world as I had perceived it was challenged beyond anything I would wish upon any person. Let me begin by providing some background information to help put things into context. I had finished my third year of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Toronto and I was on my internship/coop-work-year (PEY). It was during this time, while I still seldom attended church, that a very concerned, caring and old friend made me promise to attend their church for four straight weeks.

I attended three straight weeks as promised and on the fourth week the church went on a camp trip (or retreat), which I also attended to keep my promise. It was during this retreat, God put me through the toughest test of my life, literally! As many of you know, and some of you may wonder, I have a lot of scars on my body. It was during this retreat that many of these scars were formed. I was involved in a very serious boating/Sea-Doo accident (*I was the only person to survive a Sea-Doo accident that Civic Holiday Weekend out of three separate incidents*). While doubling on a Sea-Doo, I flew into a boat. I had a compound fracture on my right arm, Coraco-acromion Ligament (CL) separation on my right shoulder and a minor skull fracture, just to explain some of the visual scars. I went into a level three coma and for the first week I was in the ICU (Intensive Care Unit) during which time the doctors were not sure if I would survive. Through many prayers and more importantly by God's grace and mercy I survived the accident and was out of the ICU in just a week!

I don't remember anything other than waiting for my turn in line for the Sea-Doo and then waking up three weeks later in a hospital. It wasn't until about a month after the accident that I discovered the full extent of my injuries, beyond the obvious physical disabilities. Due to the head injuries I sustained I was unable to properly read, write, speak, let alone perform math functions. All of these were very serious concerns as I still needed to complete my final year of engineering, which is impossible without these skills.

This was very difficult and stressful time, but all these physical traumas were minimal in comparison to the Spiritual struggles I faced. Although the accident occurred at a church event, in my opinion, many unchristian words and actions were performed. My beliefs were greatly challenged because I could not understand how key church leaders could act so ungodly. My sinful human nature easily allowed me to turn my back on God and refuse to believe that He existed. I then felt very angry and cheated. I thought that I had wasted many of my weekends and tithes at church. This same sinful nature caused me to not only be angry at the church leaders, but to despise their very existence.

Ironically, a good friend who did not attend church at the time said something very profound to me. He asked, "How can you stop believing in God because of one person?" God graciously began to reveal Himself to me through specific circumstances, all of which I believe to be personally miracles from God. God very, very, very patiently and graciously showered me with His love, through fellow Christians, as I slowly tried to reevaluate Christianity and what it actually meant. Praise God that He has guided me back into His loving arms; that He did not let me go even when I refused to believe in His existence. I thank God that He put key people in my life to steer me back to Him. It is only by His amazing grace that I am alive and now attend CGC (Chinese Gospel Church); a very God focused and Biblically grounded church.

Due to the time limit I cannot go into the full details of what was involved, but a key lesson that I learned was that your faith must be solely in God, by the saving acceptance of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit; not on church attendance or participation in church programs, and not even on the people in church, regardless of how sincere they may be, because all humans are sinners and ultimately fallible. Key verses that helped me cope with my ordeal were *Matthew 7:21-23*, where Jesus says, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" Now I do not know if I misinterpreted the actions or words of the church leaders involved, but it was reassuring to learn that nobody is perfect and even very significant church members, such as church reverends and pastors, may be wrong.

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We need to base our faith and beliefs on the infallible Word of God, which God has graciously left behind for each of us to study. For *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."* (2 Timothy 3:16-17). I truly believe *"...that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."* (Romans 8:28)

I praise God that by His amazing grace my relationship with Him has grown through this experience. I praise God that by His grace I was provided with an experience that, as difficult as it may have been, forced me to reassess life and in turn and grow closer to Him. I praise God that by His grace I have been provided with this opportunity to share my testimony with all of you and given the time to reflect on His abundant love in my life as I prepared my testimony. Most importantly, I thank God for the gracious gift of **Jesus Christ** that He has provided to an undeserving sinner such as myself as means to reconcile to Him for all our sins and transgressions and for the gift of the **Holy Spirit** which is evidence of being a part of His family, and for **His Word**. I thank God for His grace!

I understand that my testimony may sound extreme to some of you, and even fanatically to others, but to you I ask, **"How many of you can honestly say that you know what you are living for? How many of you are truly happy and content with what you do and/or do not have?"** Would it not be amazing to know and experience the answers to these life fulfilling questions and to be fully content with the blessings (not necessarily material riches) that the Lord abundantly provides to each Christian? If your answer is yes, I invite you to inquire more about God and Jesus Christ. I invite you to read *Romans 5:9-11* and *Ephesians 1:3-10* to get a glimpse of the great promise that God has made to all those who are willing to believe in the saving grace provided through Jesus Christ. I hope that you can keep an open mind.

Please do not think that becoming a Christian will make everything better and all your problems will suddenly disappear. God warns us that *"...everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,"* (2 Timothy 3:12). At the same time God assures us that *"<sup>1CO 10:13</sup> No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."* (1 Corinthians 10:13). Although becoming a Christian may be more difficult, I am confident that it will be the most important, glorious and joyous decision you ever make. Keeping this in made, please feel free to contact me or any of your Governors if you have more questions about Christianity.

Thank you once again for time and patience.

### Additional Verses for Consideration

- *RO 5:9* Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! <sup>10</sup> For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! <sup>11</sup> Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (Romans 5:9-11 NIV)
- *EPH 1:3* Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. <sup>4</sup> For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. <sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. <sup>9</sup> And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, <sup>10</sup> to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. (Ephesians 1:3-10 NIV)