

# My Story

## Growing Up

I went to church every week. I thought I was a Christian because I believed the Bible. I was pretty sure I would go to heaven if I died. I thought I was a pretty good person. Sure I did some things I knew were wrong, but I figured that I was better than I lot of people I knew.

As I grew older I gave little thought to God. My number one focus was obtaining other people's approval through the way I looked, dressed, and acted. I was restless and empty, trying to squeeze as much pleasure out of life as possible. I was never at peace, always searching for what was missing in life.

At the age of 17, I was hit with a personal crisis. I decided I better get serious about God. I began to read the Bible, and I started to obey what I read. However, no matter what I did, I had a constant sense of failure. I never felt like I had done enough. Isaiah 64:6 says that even all of our righteous acts are like filthy rags to God.

## Giving Up

I no longer felt like I was a good person. I knew I could never measure up to God's standards. I went to sleep each night with the fear of dying, knowing that I still had not done enough. I tried everything I knew to get a clear conscience, but nothing worked. I finally came to the point of despair.

Romans 3:10-12 says "*no one is righteous –not even one. No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one.*"

I felt like I had no choice but to give up and accept the fact that I could never be good enough to make it to heaven, I was doomed to hell.

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## Looking Up

I started to read Charles Stanley's "The Wonderful Spirit Filled Life." This is the book that opened my eyes to the Truth of the Gospel! For the first time I understood that the purpose of the law was not to save me, but to show me my desperate need for salvation. Romans 3:20 says "No one can be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are."

I finally understood that I could have peace with God. I could even have the assurance that I would be in heaven one day, because my assurance was not based on my own goodness but on God's gift!

Ephesians 2:8 says "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this in not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

I turned from trusting in myself and believed that God had made a way for me to be saved through the gift of his Son. I now read the Bible with new eyes. I was amazed that my desires began to change. The things I could not resist before began to lose their power over me.

That was many years ago. Life still has trials and difficulties, but now I have a peace that does not change based on circumstances. I have no fear of the future because I know that I belong to God, and I have no fear of death because I know that I have eternal life!

God wants everyone to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth, but there is only one way to God and that is through Jesus Christ. Romans 10:9-13 says "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved." As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved."

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