

A WORD OF TESTIMONY

First of all I have to say that it is only through the Grace of God that I have a testimony to the saving and keeping power of the Lord Jesus Christ in my life.

At a very early age most of us can recall hearing or learning things about God and the Lord Jesus Christ, probably by going to Sunday School, Church or some other means, and I was no exception. As a child I was brought up in an area of East Belfast where I had a very happy childhood. My parents never went to church but I remember attending from time to time a Gospel Hall at the bottom of our street where I heard that God was the creator of all things and that the Lord Jesus Christ Gods Son died on a cross for our sins, and that we were all sinners and needed to turn to Christ who would save us from our sin. I didn't understand it all too much but was happy enough to know that there was a God who was in control of all things and I seemed content about that. Many a discussion was had on the street corners with my friends debating if there was or was not a God, this confused me until one night I believe God spoke to my young heart about those questions. As I sat outside my house gazing up at the moon and stars the wonder of it all just spoke to my heart, that only God could have created all this, and I was in no doubt about the existence of God ever since. I also clearly remember across the street from the Gospel Hall painted on a wall in bright colours, and large letters these words GOD IS LOVE, little did I know that later on in life the truth of those words would impact greatly on my life.

As a young man I lived life, drinking, gambling, smoking etc. Just generally enjoying life in the world to the full with not much thought of God, even though in my own way believed there was a God but I certainly didn't know Him personally.

It wasn't until I got married to Hilda and we had two sons that God graciously intervened in our lives in a series of events. First Hilda was saved and then my two boys Jonathan and Darren at a very early age trusted the Lord as their Saviour. We eventually started going to church as a family and over the years after hearing the Gospel many times I realised that there was an emptiness and purpose in my life that only God could fill, and as a sinner my sin was separating me from God. The Holy Spirit of God challenged me many times to come to Christ the only Saviour of the soul, but I continued in my sin resisting God's offer of mercy. One night at the back of my house I was smoking a cigarette and thought of how good God was to my family by saving them and felt this need to cry out to God and said "God your Word says whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, Lord will you save me". Although I believed that this was the Spirit of God speaking to my heart and lovingly drawing me to the Lord Jesus Christ, I still resisted His gracious offer of mercy, continued on in my sin and lifestyle serving the god of this world (The Devil).

Not long after that on October 1988 and about 12 years after my wife Hilda was saved, George Bates the Evangelist held a three week Gospel Mission in the Iron Hall, Belfast. Although I attended when I could I didn't feel that the Spirit of God was speaking to me at this time, and on the last night of the mission because of my work commitments I knew I wouldn't be there. However much prayer went up to God to make a way for me to be there, You know God answered the prayers of His children and made that way.

On the last night of the mission George Bates spoke on "The Man With The Hardened Heart" and I remember thinking that this was me in my life serving the devil in my sin and resisting the Mercy of God. After the meeting I was invited into the counselling room for a chat (these invitations I resisted and refused over the years) But God was in control that night and I accepted this time. Along with George Bates two brothers in the Lord read several portions of God's Word to me and here are some scriptures I remembered.

ohn 10 v 9 "I am the door by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture"

Rev. 3 v 9 "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and sup with him, and he with me" and John 3 v 16 . "For God so loved the world

I realised the presence of a fourth person in the midst the present power of the Holy Spirit of God who once again applied His Word to my heart, revealing the Lord Jesus Christ to me, convincing and convicting me of my sin and the need of the Saviour, the only Saviour of the soul, The Lord Jesus Christ. Throwing down my puny arms of rebellion I believed with all my heart that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross at Calvary for me, bore my sins, shed His precious blood for my sins, rose again from the dead, repenting of my sins to God I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ God's Son as my own and personal Saviour. As soon as I done that I

knew the forgiveness of sins and the burden of sins lifted and that emptiness I had in my life was filled with great joy, peace and that sense of THE LOVE OF GOD in my heart and soul, that Love that can only come from God. It made me wonder why I didn't trust Him sooner. That was on 23rd October 1988 and He has kept me ever since, for He is the one that does the keeping, if it was up to us we would fail, but He cannot fail.

What about you friend have you a hardened heart like I had, is there an empty void in your life, do you need a purpose in your life, well God can break those chains of sin the devil has you in and set you gloriously free. I pray that you may in your life experience the power of those words painted on the wall God Is Love and trust His Word and promise as I certainly did. He's a wonderful Saviour friend and His promises are true. "Whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"

Cyril Moan