

## My Testimony



Dear brothers and sisters, children of our Heavenly Father, scattered in different locations around the world, it is a great privilege for me to share with you my personal testimony. I've been asked so many times in the past, by Pastor Jack to send him a record of my sermon but I was so hesitant because as you all know, English is not my first language. But this time, I believe is the right time, seeing the world as it is today, I believe that it is the duty of every sincere children of God to bear a living testimony on how the Lord has led them in the past, how He is leading today, and the sweet assurance that He will continue to lead us until we reach that golden shore, our heavenly home prepared for the good and the blessed.

Before we pray, allow me to read what the Inspiration tells us, this is taken from the book, *The Desire of Ages*, page 347 and paragraph 3.

**"Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world.** We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but **that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience.** We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked by our own individuality. **These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christ-like life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls."**

So today, as we have read, I will be sharing my personal testimony. And though it is my testimony, let me say with the Apostle Paul:

"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." **1 Corinthians. 2:2.**

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." **Galatians 6:14.**

My testimony though it is already a history will remain to be **His Story**. This is all about the One who had called me out of darkness into His marvelous light. So today, it is my prayer that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ be the center of what you are about to hear and only His name will be glorified, honor, and exalted.

Let us pray:

*Our great, holy, and loving Father in heaven, today, we come to exalt You, to praise, and to worship you. Dear Lord, be upon us as I speak the wondrous things You have done for me, and as we listen, I pray that the power of the Holy Spirit would inspire more faith and more confidence in You as we wait for the soon return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Speak through me, my dear Lord, and let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight. This I ask and pray in the mighty name of our Lord, Savior, and Friend, Jesus Christ. Amen!*

First of all, you may be hearing my name from Pastor Jack's past sermons. You might be wondering who I am, and you might be interested to learn more about me. So before anything else, let me give you a brief introduction about myself. I'm Brother Robin, I'm 29 years old, and I'm from the Philippines. I got acquainted with Pastor Jack and Sister Cindy for more than about 12 years now. And it's been a great journey heavenward to have them as my spiritual parent and mentors, and to be a part of their spiritual home. I haven't met any of

them face to face yet, and that's what I'm still looking forward and praying for. And my hope and faith, is that, if we all remain faithful until the end, through the grace and power that come from above, we will have the chance to meet each other, and most specially, to see, to meet, and to be forever with our Lord Jesus Christ. Let me also take this opportunity to thank you all for your support to the Gospel Workers Ministry, specifically for your help in sending funds for literature to be sent and distributed here in the Philippines.

I was born and raised as a Catholic until I was 11 years old, though my family professed the Catholic faith and beliefs, our home wasn't religious. I remember that the only time we attended mass as a family, was during special holidays. But there was something in me, I knew it myself, my family knew it, that I wasn't like other kids. I was quite interested in collecting "idols", prayer booklets, the rosary, attending mass as often as I could and even joining the children's choir. My family and some acquaintances thought that I would become a priest should I remain to be a devoted Catholic. I believe that it was my grandma's influence why I was this way. But I believe more firmly that it was the Holy Spirit who was working in me though I couldn't recognize it yet.

I remember the story how the Lord called the prophet Jeremiah when he was still a child. Though I wasn't called to be a prophet like him, I believe, that I was called, at least to be His child, that alone is a great privilege, what more greater privilege it is to be a co-worker with Him in this end-time work!

The Bible says, ***Jeremiah 1:5-8:***

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD."

The home where I grew up was just a simple one. I'm the eldest among the two brothers. My mom was a plain housewife and my dad worked as a carpenter. Life wasn't plenty at all but we could survive through the grace of God and we were happy. It wasn't long after my conversion to Adventism; I was 14 years old, when my dad passed away. From that moment on, my mom had to work and life wasn't like before. My brother and I had to learn all the household chores we could possibly learn to do. The sickness and ultimately, the death of my dad was truly a great trial for me, it shattered my future dreams and plans but the Lord, my heavenly Father, had a greater, broader, and wider plan ahead for me in the future as you will see later.

The Bible's assurance is this:

"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."  
***Psalms 37:25.***

Since that time up to this day, the Lord has been a merciful and gracious Father to me, more than an earthly father could be.

Now, the next question you might have in your minds is this, from Catholicism, how were you converted to Adventism?

As I have mentioned a while ago, I was a Catholic until I was 11 years old. But even then, I was familiar with the Seventh-day Adventist, my grandma's 2 younger brothers and their families were all Seventh-day Adventist and during summer vacations, they would invite me to join the Vacation Bible School that they held at their church. I really enjoyed it and I believe that it was the starting point where the Holy Spirit was planting gradually the seeds of truth in my heart.

When I was 11 years old, that's when I got more interested to learn deeper what was written in the Bible. One day, I met a lady from the Jehovah's Witnesses that sells a Bible story book, I purchased it with all interest and I was invited to go to their house so she could discuss what was in the book. After weeks of studying, I started asking questions, some really deep questions that a child at that age would never ask. Then I ordered a copy of the Holy Bible. I never had a Bible before; so I had to sneak in at my grandma's bedroom just to read some portions of it. It was an "expensive" book that my family couldn't afford to buy for me. Then my dad found out about it, so he talked to his uncle, my grandma's Seventh-day Adventist younger brother. Then I was asked to go to him to get my very first Bible, though it was old and torn out – that book was the most precious book that I ever had.

Now, since I had the copy of the Bible, my grandpa as I call him, my dad's uncle. He would invite me to visit him every Sabbath afternoon, the first few weeks, we just had Bible stories, and then, when I started asking questions, our studies went deeper. I was able to memorize the 10 Commandments, the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7, and Revelation 13 and from these studies, I understood at that young age; that the church I belong to was the harlot and Sunday keeping was unbiblical, and many other truths that I couldn't refute nor refuse to accept. From then, I started attending church services every Sabbath and about after a year later, I got baptized.

My conversion to Adventism wasn't really hard at all, my family supported it or should I say, it didn't bother them at all since religion was never been their interest. Though the process wasn't hard, I had to face the mocking and persecution from those who knew me. The greatest persecution I had to face was the accusation that my dad got sick and died because I changed my denomination/religion. I couldn't forget it that's why it was my firm, resolute, determination to prove them wrong not by my words but by the way I live.

I was an active member of my local Seventh-day Adventist congregation. Not long after my conversion, I started preaching, teaching Adult Sabbath School class, I participated in various evangelism projects, and was the youngest among the deacons. Church life was really important to me until I noticed that something was still missing, I couldn't feel the Holy Spirit as if there was no leading. I wasn't comfortable with the sermons I was hearing, I couldn't see the peculiarity that God wants to see in His people, the Sabbath wasn't being kept according to the commandments and the Spirit of Prophecy wasn't being promoted in all its areas.

My grandpa, who was a faithful and conservative Seventh-day Adventist until his last breath, taught me to love the standards, to follow the Lord faithfully and to study His words diligently. It was his influence that made me search for more. It was his example that prompted me to be firm to what is written both in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. It was just sad that he wasn't able to see the light about separation from apostasy because the Lord took him to rest before I even knew it.

I've been hearing from the leaders and pastors about the reform and offshoot / independent/ self-supporting movements. They warned us about how dangerous these groups are and that we should stay away from them. It ignited my curiosity as to why these groups are to be shunned as if they were having a contagious disease. I thought to myself that something must be really important that they were trying to hide from the members. I kept my search secret until I came in contact first with, the SDA Reform Movement, then the Davidians SDA, and finally with a group of different ministries that constitute the self-supporting independent SDA movement.

That's how I came in contact with the Gospel Workers Ministry, it was September of 2008. Pastor Jack and Sister Cindy were the Lord's chosen instruments so that I could see the greater light of His words. I'm so thankful for the patience and kindness this couple had shown me, answering my questions and providing me materials that I could use both for my personal study and for my personal evangelism.

For about 2 years before my separation, I continued to stay at the conference church though I've been learning and practicing the truths I've been hearing. My purpose was to share the light to anyone who was willing to listen. I took the opportunity to preach the "law and the testimony", to open the minds of the people about the importance of the 3 angels' messages in all its areas. I tried my best to present, by the help of God, the necessity of accepting Christ as our righteousness and to live holy lives while the probation lingers, before the Lord's return. Though these truths have been firmly established long, long time ago, it was like these were new to them.

Pastor Jack's sermon entitled "An Inconvenient Truth" made me realize that I had to leave. So on March of 2010, I wrote a letter requesting the church to remove my name from the roll as an act of obedience to the Lord's command to separate from any false/apostate churches.

The Bible explicitly commands us: **2 Corinthians 6:14-18:**

**"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers:** for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. **Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate,** saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Separating from the church I loved dearly, where I grew up, where my relatives and friends were attending was such a painful decision that I ever had to make. But the truth, and nothing but the truth was dearer and more precious to me than all these associations and sentimental values.

Allow me to read some of the many statements from the Spirit of Prophecy that Pastor Jack quoted on that particular sermon.

**Review and Herald, January 2, 1900: "It is impossible for you to unite with those who are corrupt, and still remain pure.** 'What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?' God and Christ and the heavenly host would have man know that if he unites with the corrupt, he will become corrupt."

**Early Writings, page 125: "I was shown the necessity of those who believe that we are having the last message of mercy, being separate from those who are daily imbibing new errors.** I saw that **neither young nor old should attend their meetings;** for it is wrong to thus encourage them while they teach error that is a deadly poison to the soul and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. The influence of such gatherings is not good. If God has delivered us from such darkness and error, we should stand fast in the liberty wherewith He has set us free and rejoice in the truth. **God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go; for unless He sends us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the power of the will, He will not keep us.** The angels cease their watchful care over us, and we are left to the buffetings of the enemy, to be darkened and weakened by him and the power of his evil angels; and the light around us becomes contaminated with the darkness. I saw that **we have no time to throw away in listening to fables.** Our minds should not be thus diverted, but should be occupied with the present truth, and seeking wisdom that we may obtain a more thorough knowledge of our position, that with meekness we may be able to give a reason of our hope from the Scriptures. While false doctrines and dangerous errors are pressed upon the mind, it cannot be dwelling upon the truth which is to fit and prepare the house of Israel to stand in the day of the Lord."

**Review and Herald, May 9, 1899:** “Even though you may not feel able to speak a word to those who are working on wrong principles, leave them. Your withdrawal and silence may do more than words.”

After this event, it was apparent that the Lord wasn't finish with me yet, the Bible says in **Proverbs 8:18**, “But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

Before leaving the conference church, I had to make sure that there were like-minded believers somewhere around here in the Philippines where I could fellowship and work with. It was my fervent and sincere prayer that I might find at least one. So the Lord brought me to a particular group to work with. For about 5 years, I was working with them until I decided to leave, it wasn't because of the doctrines but because I felt I was being controlled. I wasn't happy with that kind of environment where I couldn't do as the Spirit tells me to do unless the leaders approve it.

I met another group of believers; I associated with them for a couple of years, until I found out their true colors, so I had to leave them. I couldn't work and stay in a group where the spirit of the devil is openly at work.

After this, I received an invitation to work somewhere in the northern part of the Philippines where I was able to start a small congregation of a few present truth believers. It started well and flourished but the enemy was at work, it didn't last long because the other elder who was ordained besides me was not fully converted to the present truth. So to make this long story short, in order to get rid of me, he started making lies about me, accusing me of something I couldn't even imagine doing. So, the Lord knows me and my heart, I remained calmed and I didn't even try to vindicate myself, knowing that the Lord Himself would do it for me. And the Lord did! Now he's back to the SDA Conference church along with his children.

At first, I couldn't understand why I had to suffer all these experiences. The Lord knew that my heart's desires were good but the devil was ready to discourage me. He was like telling me that the denomination I left is more united than these separated groups who professed to believe the present truth. But, again, the truth is dearer to me than anything else.

The Lord, through these experiences allowed me to see more clearly that my hope is in Him alone, that salvation is in Him alone – not in my association with certain groups or ministries, but by His grace through faith and trust in Him alone, as my personal Lord and Savior. I understood and experience personally that church membership in any self-supporting churches neither can guarantee my salvation.

“Church-membership will not guarantee us Heaven. We must abide in Christ, and his love must abide in us.”  
**Review and Herald, June 3, 1883; par. 13.**

“A Christian is Christ-like. Membership in the church does not make us Christians.” **The Paulson Collection, page 153; par. 3.**

With these statements, it is pretty clear that it is our personal union, personal relationship with Christ that matters the most. And Christianity is not about church membership. Let us have a clear conception of what or who the church is. Unless we understand this point completely, we will remain blinded and in bondage with apostasy.

The pen of Inspiration tells us who or what the church is:

**“God has a church.** It is not the great cathedral, neither is it the national establishment, neither is it the various denominations; **it is the people who love God and keep His commandments.** ‘Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them’ (Matthew 18:20). **Where Christ is even among**

**the humble few, this is Christ's church, for the presence of the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity can alone constitute a church.** *The Upward Look, page 315.*

Though many of us have none to fellowship with, we are not alone, and we are not to be discouraged, though we are all separated by distance and by the language we speak, as long as we love Jesus, as long as we strive to obey Him, through the all sufficient grace He provides, we are part of His church! And take note that God's church is not just by the name it calls herself, but by the way she bears fruits. The Bible clearly says in

***Matthew 7:17-20:***

"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore **by their fruits ye shall know them.**"

Brothers and sisters; please don't get me wrong. I'm not discouraging you to join a group or a church organization that preaches, and teaches, and lives out the truth as it is in Jesus. Why? Because the church is:

**"...God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world..."**The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to 'the principalities and powers in heavenly places,' the final and full display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10." ***The Acts of the Apostles, page 9.***

What I'm simply trying to say is this, church is not the savior. There's only one Name that has the power to save us and that is Jesus!

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for **there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.**" ***Acts 4:12.***

My experiences taught me that it is not safe for us to put confidence in any man no matter how knowledgeable he or she is. ***The Ministry of Healing, page 486*** tells us:

"We are prone to look to our fellow men for sympathy and uplifting, instead of looking to Jesus. **In His mercy and faithfulness God often permits those in whom we place confidence to fail us, in order that we may learn the folly of trusting in man and making flesh our arm.** Let us trust fully, humbly, unselfishly in God. He knows the sorrows that we feel to the depths of our being, but which we cannot express. When all things seem dark and unexplainable, remember the words of Christ, 'What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.' John 13:7."

Truly, the Bible says in ***Psalms 118:8,*** "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."

**"Salvation is not to be baptized, not to have our names upon the church books, not to preach the truth.** But it is a living union with Jesus Christ, to be renewed in heart, doing the works of Christ in faith and labor of love, in patience, meekness, and hope." ***Selected Messages, book 2; page 381.***

Knowledge is not gained by reading books alone, most of the time; the Lord allows experiences however dark it may be; however painful it may be, to teach us valuable lessons. And these lessons would help us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Experience is knowledge derived from experiment." ***Testimonies for the Church, volume 5; page 221.***

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." ***Romans 8:28.***

I'm so thankful that the Lord allowed me to experience what I had shared with you. I couldn't see its blessing before but now, it is pretty obvious that God was at work and still working with me.

Brothers and sisters, time won't allow me to share other experiences that could be a blessing to any of us. But I pray and I hope that the testimony given will produce more faith and devotion to Him who is our strength. Truly God leads His children along –

*“Some through the waters, some through the flood,  
Some through the fire, but all through the blood;  
Some through great sorrow, but God gives a song,  
In the night season and all the day long.”*

Let us be encouraged that in whatever situation we may be in right now, the Lord is with us. We just need to keep our eyes focused on Him so that we can see clearly the way He is leading us.

And here's His promise to keep:

*“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”*  
**Isaiah 43:2.**

To finish this testimony, I'd like to personalize a familiar statement taken from the book *Life Sketches, on page 196*:

*“In reviewing [MY] past history, having traveled over every step of advance to [MY] present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. [I] have nothing to fear for the future, except as [I] shall forget the way the Lord has led [ME], and His teaching in [MY] past history.”*

Let us pray:

*Once again, dear Father, thank You so much for this wonderful privilege You have granted me to share my testimony. This is about Your Son – this is HIS STORY. I pray, dear Lord, that You may put Your Spirit upon those who have heard this message and that they too, may also experience the same power that worked in me. I pray for Your special blessing upon each one of us. This I ask through the mighty name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!*