

## How I became Christian

I would say that ever since I was a small child I read the Bible, and I loved God. Maybe because my parents had sent me to a religious school, and there they talked a lot about God and Jesus. I was always interested about what the Almighty God could be like. I loved God, and deep down, I knew that He was good. When I was young I also used to think about what it would be like if I died. It would be dark, and I wouldn't feel anything. This scared me, and made me afraid of this instance. In this religious school we also learned about Jesus Christ. I learned to love Him, too. I remember how we learned about Him during the last week, before He died. I was really sad when I heard about how the Romans nailed Him to a cross, and how He died. But the teacher said that we have to be happy for the day that He died, but I really didn't understand why. This should be enough about my childhood.

Afterwards I slowly grew up, but then slowly forgot God, He wasn't in my life. I gave Him signs of outward respect when I heard about Him, but no more. I believed that I was a good person, and that because of my good intentions, I would be able to go to Heaven. But I didn't know that God's standard was total perfection. But I didn't notice how sin crept into my life as if unnoticed. I became worse, slowly and surely. I started swearing, although not like the way kids on the street do. Also, I often fought with my brother which made our mother quite sad. Only my own goals interested me the best. I lived for myself, as all people do.

After we moved to Hungary (from the United States) we started attending high school. Awful years came. These years were the worst in my life. The people at the high school humiliated me, forgot me, looked down upon me, insulted me, and was taken advantage of me, because I was from another country, I was different, and I was too smart and too dangerous. I tried to be friends with the favourite students of the teachers, and join their gang, but more and more I ran into the swamps of sin. They almost destroyed my brother, because they started insulting him, intimidating him, and attacking him (physically), even before my own eyes. But I didn't have the strength to step in between and stop this mess. The literature teacher humiliated my brother in front of the whole class one time. My brother then had to go to a mental institute for 3 months. They made his life hell, literally.

One time, during school, I was going home. I had had enough of the gang. I wanted to go into my room, but then I saw the Bible on the shelf near the wall. Then I opened my Bible up, and read Proverbs 15, 17, and read: „Better a meal of vegetables where there is love than a fattened calf with hatred.” God was talking to me from the Bible: „Go away from the gang that you want to be in, because it won't do you any good!” There was also this kid, who they sometimes made fun of, but every stupid, childish thing that they did to him didn't bother him at all. Sometimes I did too, but he always used to greet me, and didn't act so condescending to me like the others, so I decided to join him, if I needed any friends, anyway. So we became good friends. He was a gift of God to me amongst sinners. We are still friends today, and we sometimes meet. But he went to the Technical University in Budapest.

But when I attended Mass during high school, I always prayed to God to help me during the class and during the tests. He did. So much so, that at the end of high school, my grade average was 4,85 (5,00 is the best). Also, through the glory and grace of God, I managed to get enough points to attend 3 universities, ELTE TTK, JATE TTK, and medical school. Medical school was a separate blessing, because I was the only one who made it there amongst 80 people. Which was exceptional because I came from the U.S. and had to learn Hungarian when I came to Hungary.

But my conscience attacked me for two years. This sin was a load on my soul. I kept on thinking: if I was such a good person, then why didn't I help my brother out? I remember lying on my bed one time, thinking about the evil that I did. I felt the cold going down my back for a few moments. It was awful. I wanted to be free of this.

During the summer we went to a Christian camp. I remember that when we arrived I stepped up with a spirit of pride at the registration table. My heart was hard from inside. I remember that when I first sat down to eat at the lunch table, I looked around quite meekly at the other people. I felt that these Christian people were quite strange. Those people who were sitting across from me acted quite naturally. They poured tea for me in quite a friendly manner. They did what they had to do. They shined Jesus, who was within them.

I was lucky since I knew a few people who had already been to the camp before. It was good that we had a few acquaintances. They were also Christians. They told me about Jesus Christ, and how you can come to know Him, personally. They told us a few interesting things, we argued about a few things, but they shined Jesus by their deeds. I was a bit afraid, but still I talked with them. This one guy hugged me. This is how he wanted to show the love of Jesus. Which was good for me, since I didn't have too many friends at that time, after 4 tough years of high school. This one guy told me about he came to know Jesus, he said, it was a kind of love that was similar to the way one would love a girl. This blew my mind. This was a kind of thought that I had never heard before. He told me that they also picked on him during high school, even the smaller kids. I thought about how similar this was with me, too. We were going along the road somewhere, and then I remembered somehow that Jesus died on the cross for sin. I also remembered what had happened to my brother, but I didn't have the strength to say anything more, I just mentioned to him how I was weak in respect to my brother. My voice failed, and tears came to my eyes. I could see how sorry he was.

As the camp drew to an end, on Friday, I felt drawn to tell my brother about my sin against him. I stepped up to him and told him, „...my brother, forgive my frailty.” I then felt something which had somehow fallen off of my heart. Some great load. I could walk upright again. I wrote in my diary, that I had laid down my sins today at the cross, and that I had met Him, my Lord. I felt that my heart had become soft again, from being hard. Had a change of heart during the week. On the last day of the camp I was the one who poured tea to the people who sat across from me.

After the camp I joined a college group, and learned more and more about Christianity.

I am happy now to Jesus Christ that my life is now different: I have eternal life! No death, from which I was so afraid of previously. From being led by God's word in the Bible, I am now more open to people. This I know from the leading of the Holy Spirit. My conscience didn't attack me as it did before when I thought about my sin against my brother. I also know that God is keeping somebody for me to be happy with for the rest of my life, too. It is my desire to give glory to God for everything good that happens to me. I am also one with other Christians in Hungary and over the world.

What can we learn from this? Four important things:

- 1.) God is always willing to help you, no matter what kind of troubles you might be in, you only have to *ask* from Him. Jesus says that whatever you may ask in His name, God will do it. For example, I remember how honestly I prayed for God's help during the Masses. Only a mustard seed of faith is necessary...
- 2.) I am a believing Christian. This is very different from „religion”, what those people practised who were at my high school. They were hypocrites who rushed to judge me on baseless charges. Believers don't judge but forgive. It is very important to notice that a religious person „has faith” only in himself and his religiousness. The believing person has a relationship with God, and places his faith not in himself, but in God and his act of salvation. It is sort of like a barrel of wine: the outside is of no interest, if not filled with the tasty wine inside.

- 3.) What is also important: you cannot „lead a good life”, and then wait to go to Heaven. There will always be a point in a person’s life when he must be honest with himself, that he wasn’t good at all. A true life cannot be lived without a relationship with Jesus Christ. One must be reborn, since we are all sinners.
- 4.) If you want to go to Heaven, then you can pray to Jesus Christ to be your personal Saviour and Lord, who died for our sins in our place, in order to take away the wrath of God. This opens the way to a personal relationship with God, and on to everlasting life.

The last point is what makes it worthwhile choosing the path that I myself chose, and to which God called me. My best wishes to the reader.

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