

WHY WE NEED A SAVIOR

MAN

GOD

IN THE BEGINNING . . . The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, were created by God and enjoyed perfect fellowship with Him. They were without sin and lived peacefully in a beautiful garden that supplied all their needs. God gave them only one rule, which was not to eat the fruit of a particular tree. However, Satan tempted them to eat the forbidden fruit by saying it would benefit them. They ate it, and that act of disobedience against God was the first sin. It severed Adam's and Eve's relationships with God because He is holy and cannot have fellowship with evil.

MAN

SIN

GOD

OUR CONDITION TODAY . . . Since we are all Adam's descendants, every child in the world has been born with his fallen nature. Instead of coming into the world desiring to do right, we are all born with an inclination toward sin and evil. Proof of this natural downward tendency is abundantly evident anywhere human beings are found. Our sin results in tremendous pain, sorrow, and suffering. The consequences of sin reach far beyond this life because those who reject God and die in a sinful state will go to Hell and be separated from God eternally.

MAN

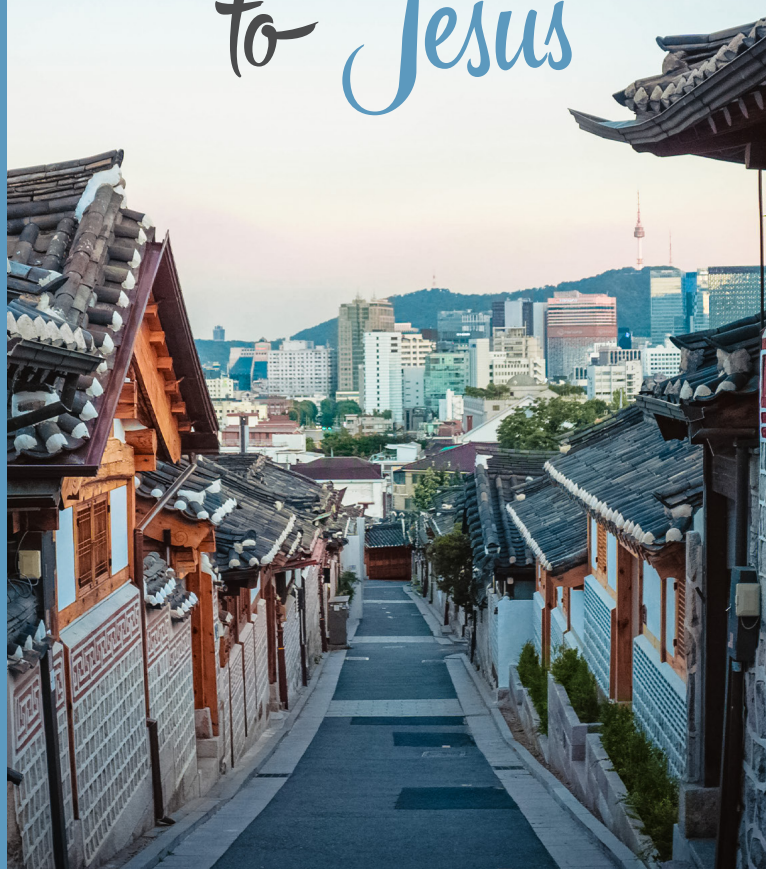
JESUS

GOD

GOD'S PLAN . . . God wants to remove sin from our lives so that we can have a relationship with Him and spend eternity in Heaven. However, the penalty for sin is death, and that penalty must be paid. Out of His great love for us, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Savior. Jesus lived as a man and died in our place for our sins. Because of that, if we follow the steps that God has laid out in the Bible, our sins can be forgiven. God will change our desires and give us power to live without sin so we can enjoy eternal life with Him in Heaven one day.

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My Journey to Jesus



MY JOURNEY TO JESUS

Step by step, God led this young Korean man from ancestor worship to a life centered on Jesus Christ.

By Taiwoo Park

Growing up in Seoul, South Korea, my only early childhood memory of hearing about Jesus was at a nearby church at Christmas time. The people at the church gave away small gifts and candies to neighborhood children, and there I heard the name of Jesus in Christmas carols. At some point, I also heard a few Old Testament stories like the walls of the city of Jericho coming down, though I didn't know why that happened. Now, I believe God was preparing something in my heart, even way back then.



Like most other families in my home country, our family's religion was a mixture of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shamanism, which includes worship of ancestors. We were taught respect for elders and how people should respond to the challenges and tragedies that happen in their lives. From a logical perspective, it seems great. But the problem is, it is not the answer people need in life.

My parents tried to teach my sister and me to live the right way. My father was a police officer, and he really wanted us to do everything right. He taught us to be honest and to be blameless in our behavior. As a good son, I tried to be diligent at school and study hard the way he wanted me to.

When I was twelve years old, my mother passed away from an illness. Two years later, my father married again to a woman who was a widow. She had a Christian background and my dad worried about the impact of Christianity on me and my older sister. Before they married, he told her, "Don't talk about Christ to my kids."

LEARNING THE TRUTH LITTLE BY LITTLE

The following year, my sister was invited to a church by some of her friends and she started attending with them. After that, I also started going to church with some friends I met playing basketball. They did not even invite me—I just noticed that they did not come to play on Sundays, so I asked them where they had gone. They told me they went to church, and I decided to go too. That all happened without my stepmother saying anything to us about Christ. Although I did not grasp the message of the Gospel at that time, I established a pattern of attending church regularly and learned more and more about the God of the Bible.

During my high school years, I decided to move away from my family for college. My parents were a little too strict from my perspective, and I felt I could do well on my own without adult guidance. I really wanted to plan my own life. I had an engineering school in mind that was located in Daejeon, which was about ninety miles away. The fact that it was a prestigious school gave me a good excuse to move away from my family.

Once I moved to Daejeon, I was happy to be able to make decisions on my own, and things went well for the first two years. I attended a church near the college, but the Gospel message continued to go over my head. I could pray “in Jesus’ Name,” but I didn’t really know what that meant. When I prayed, I just listed all my wishes to God through the Name of Jesus. I didn’t understand that the only Son of God gave His life to save all mankind, including me. I still had no idea what it meant to repent and receive forgiveness of sins.

A LIFE-CHANGING PRAYER

Two years into my college career, my life seemed to fall apart—my relationships, plans for the future, schoolwork—everything came crumbling down at once. I was miserable! The only good thing was that in my distress, I looked to God. In July of that year, the church I had been attending held a youth retreat. One night, the preacher led a few songs and then said, “God wants you to give your heart to Him.” I didn’t know what that meant, but I felt like I had no other options. I knew my own way was not the answer, so I just started to talk to God. Though the preacher’s call had been, “Give your heart to God,” I ended up praying, “I give my life to You, Lord.” I didn’t realize it at the time, but that prayer was life changing. It was a couple years later, after I understood more about

Christian doctrines, that I was able to look back and realize, *Ah! That was my moment of salvation!*

From then on, my life changed drastically. I enthusiastically started attending the Bible studies and prayer meetings at my church, as well as activities with the Christian groups at college. I joined outreach programs and began helping to support missionaries. It brought me such joy to participate in those activities.

The following year, God allowed a distressing situation at my church to lead me to the experience of sanctification. I was participating in ministry work and conflict came up among the workers. I thought to myself, *They’re all saved, so why is there conflict?* People started to blame each other and to argue with each other. It got to the point that the team of workers was breaking apart, and my heart broke too.

I couldn’t understand how this situation could happen, but at the same time, I realized that I had the same unholy nature as the people who were fighting. I cried out to God, “Please do something,” and God did do something in my heart—He sanctified me. After that, it was a lot easier for me to handle trying situations and ungodly thoughts that would sometimes come. I could just dismiss them from my mind! Temptations that had been challenging before became easy to resist. I was so grateful that I was getting deeper in the things of God. A couple years later, God also baptized me with His Holy Spirit.

STEPPING AWAY FROM TRADITIONS

I had not been home very much since leaving for college, but during my master’s program I returned to let my dad know that I would not be participating in family worship with him ever again. It was a very difficult conversation because I knew

my dad would be hurt by my decision. He felt that my birth mother’s illness had happened because he had not honored his older brother’s spirit well after that brother passed away. So, after my mother passed away, our family faithfully went to the Buddhist temple every year on the anniversary of her death to worship our ancestors’ spirits through Buddha. It was very important to my father that we all go and serve my mother’s spirit correctly. After I was saved, I joined my family at the temple once, but I felt the spiritual warfare between the two beliefs and knew I could not continue going.

During that trip home, I told my dad, “From now on, I want to worship my own way.” He asked me what I was going to do on the anniversary of my mom’s passing and I told him, “I will do a service with my God on that day.” He was not happy. He said, “Why are you going to do that? Your mom passed away because of spiritual faults. I don’t want anybody in my house to get sick again and die.” Then I told him, “Dad, there is Someone greater than those spirits, and He is God. And through the Name of Christ, He can help us. I will ask Him for the health of our entire family.”

Finally, my dad agreed. God helped me to step away from our family traditions in a way that was still respectful of my father. Every year since then, on the anniversary of my mother’s passing, I hold a godly remembrance for her.

Through everything, God has been with me and has added to my testimony piece by piece. I am so grateful to God for what He has done, and I want to continue to serve Him for the rest of my life.

■ *Taiwoo Park is an Apostolic Faith minister in the United States.*

STEPS TO DELIVERANCE

ACKNOWLEDGE

Admit that you have sinned and need God’s help.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

CONFESS AND REPENT

Be genuinely sorry for the sins you have committed and ask God to forgive you.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. (Luke 13:3)

FORSAKE

Determine that with God’s help you are going to turn away from all sin in your life.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him . . . for he will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55:7)

BELIEVE

When you have honestly and sincerely taken the steps above, then believe that God will hear your prayer and save you.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

RECEIVE

God will let you know that the work is done in your heart.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. (Romans 8:16)