

Putting an End to Three Years of Awkward Seeking

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I still remember that in elementary school, I would often go to church with my mom or grandma. I would sleep on the long pews in the church sanctuary, or I would run outside and buy snacks at the food stands next door. Whenever I look back on these memories I feel happy because they were bright spots of color in the midst of studying.

Over Three Years of Life as a Seeker

During my sophomore year of college, I once again encountered the gospel. Two young men from America were leading a Bible study in the home of a university professor. At the time, I knew nothing about the contents of the Bible. However, since I had heard of the Bible before, I was not opposed to it and was willing to participate in the Bible study, even though I had to take an hour-long bus ride to get there. Perhaps I was bored with college life and wanted to get to know people who lived a different life than mine.

This was my attitude for over three years, participating in the group as a seeker. I liked that the weekly Bible study was in English. Later I also went to church to listen to the pastor's preaching. The first time I attended a church service in Beijing was when a university professor took me to Shouwang Church. It was also my first time hearing a pastor preach on the book of Acts.

However, when it came to what Jesus meant to me personally, I didn't have much understanding. Once when I was discussing God and faith with another seeker, and I said that God is love, light, and the source of all goodness. According to my understanding at that

time, God is the source of all wisdom and goodness, but those are very abstract concepts.

During those three years, I never desired to be baptized, neither did I wonder if I should be baptized. Perhaps my lack of interest was because I didn't consider baptism to be something urgent. In order to maintain the image of a proactive, diligent student among my circle of Christian friends and seekers, I persisted in going to the Bible study. I thought that, little by little, people would ignore the question of whether I was truly a Christian.

At that time, there was a lot more freedom and diversity at my university. One time there was an English lecture at school, where a black teacher shared from the platform. After the lecture, he discussed western culture with the students, and inevitably, the conversation turned to Christianity. Since I was familiar with the topic, I interacted with him for a while. Near the end, he asked me in front of many students, "Are you a Christian?" I wanted to show off my unique experience in front of other, so I answered, "Yes."

Later, I was asked twice more if I was a Christian. I have forgotten exactly how I answered, but I remember that I admitted I was Christian, but I did so out of pride. I even quoted Romans 10:10 to comfort and defend myself, "For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."

I always liked to ask questions and challenge authorities, and perhaps I would simply have continued being a "seeker" the rest of my life. However, looking back now, I am amazed by the wonderful work God has done in my heart.

Frustrated in Cognitive Dissonance

During the winter of 2010 was our final winter break before graduation, and all my classmates were looking for jobs. At the time, we had three main choices: taking part in the civil service exam, working at a law firm, or working at a state-owned company. I took part in the civil service exam for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I got a high score on my written exam, and in the end made it to the second-round exam and the interview. During the last round of the interview, I had about seven interviewers, each of whom belonged to a different department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There was a clerk there, as well.

For the first fifteen minutes or so, the interviewer sat in the middle asking questions such as, “tell me who has influenced you the most, and why.” I sincerely answered every question. But unexpectedly, at the very end of the interview, the interviewer asked me, “What is your opinion towards faith?” I was stunned, totally not expecting a question about faith during the job interview. I didn’t lie about my past experiences, but answered honestly, “I believe in God.”

As soon as I finished my sentence, the whole room exploded. The other interviewers besides the main interviewer all began asking me questions. I remember clearly that one of them asked me how I viewed the contradiction between Marxism and Christian faith. I shared with them my perception of faith and God based on my emotional understanding. At that point, the interview ended, with the interviewers looking at each other in silence and the clerk in total confusion.

After failing the civil servant exam, I experienced many difficulties

in finding a job early in 2011. I faced pressure from my parents, competition from my peers, and anxiety from deep within my heart. But it became more and more clear to me that I didn't want to cover up my identity as a seeker by calling myself a Christian: My heart was certain that there is a creator and savior, and yet my mind wasn't sure that Jesus is that one.

Such cognitive dissonance made me hide my true thoughts in front of Christians. However, in front of non-Christians, I acted as if I had grasped the truth. The contradictions within and the tension without made me feel frustrated and helpless.

Tasting the Goodness of the Lord

Just before the May holiday when I was about to return home, I asked my uncle, who was a church elder, if I could be baptized. Being baptized was the one thing that I was hesitant to do during those three years, but it was also the one thing that I could do through my will at that moment.

That day wasn't a Sunday, but my uncle immediately asked several people from the choir to be my witnesses. Therefore, on April 30, 2011, I accepted Jesus Christ as the lord of my life. The moment I was baptized, I fell apart sobbing. I never thought that baptism would draw out all my tears. It was as if the burdens on my heart were lifted suddenly. In that moment, I tasted the saving grace of Jesus Christ. The Lord knew the pressure on my heart.

On May 2, at the end of the day as I was leaving my internship, I received my first job offer.

After my baptism, for many years, the transformation of my life was very slow. My selfish pride and my own reasoning were resistant to the

work of the Holy Spirit. However, the Lord is a faithful shepherd, and he has never abandoned any lost sheep.

After my baptism, I slowly started to realize the impact and the hurt I felt from my family. By reading the Word, I started to form a new worldview and a new understanding of myself. I also realized how much power sin had over me. I was never one to actively share the gospel. I always thought I was not ready yet, and I was also afraid that others would reject or judge me. However, God used a small thing to help me understand the great commission that he gave to all his disciples.

During the winter vacation in 2016, I went to Taiwan to attend a Christian conference. For the first time, I strongly felt the work of the Holy Spirit, which brought great change and breakthrough for me—someone who had been trapped by her own reasoning.

God Is Always with Us

I returned from the trip to Taiwan just before Spring Festival. I was taking the subway, which was quite empty. One stop after I got on, a couple and their child got on as well. The child was about seven or eight years old. He sat on the other side of the subway car. A voice came into my heart, telling me to share the gospel with the child. I was confused, and thus ignored the voice. But then the voice came again and repeated the same thing. Yet I continued to ignore it. The boy was sitting so far from me; I certainly would not walk over just to talk to him. It would be too strange.

As I was pondering this in my heart, the child suddenly stood up and came to sit by me. I was very surprised, wondering why he would come over. He saw me holding a book in my hand and asked me what I was reading. I told him that the book was travel notes

written by a girl who was studying in a seminary. I also took the opportunity and asked him if he knew Jesus, who was the main character of the book.

I didn't expect that the boy would become super chatty. He said he knew about Jesus, and he also knew about Pangu and Nüwa from Chinese mythology. I told him that throughout human history, people wrote down many stories about so-called gods, but Jesus is the one true God, who created the world and oversees all creation. The boy seemed to be uninterested in this statement and started to talk about the education he received from his school and some problems there were at the school. I sympathized, but also talked more about Jesus and made the best of the opportunity that God gave me.

I have no way to know if the boy would remember this conversation on the subway, and yet ever since that event I have known that God is with us every moment, and he wants to use us to fulfill his plans on earth.

After being a Christian for many years, I still can't live my life fully according to the teachings of the Bible. I can't even love my family and friends in a way that meets my own standard. However, the Lord's grace is sufficient, and he helps me through every moment of weakness. He teaches me to rely on him at all times and helps me to praise him through both the good times and the bad. May his will be done through me.

Conclusion

Life isn't about accomplishing every task or achieving every objective, but rather it is about recognizing the ultimate goal and striving to reach it. This striving is the process of learning to be a

disciple of Jesus. The Lord Jesus once said, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” (Mark 8:34).

Looking back on how I was baptized and believed in Jesus, I can only give thanks and praise to God. I praise him that he chose me and gave me a purpose for my life on earth. I thank him especially that he helped me understand that I was an undeserving sinner who was given all good things because of his grace. And that in all my actions and thoughts, I need his mercy and protection. As Paul said, “So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air.” (1 Corinthians 9:26).

May the gospel of Jesus Christ spread in China, especially among Chinese young people.

More about the Author

Xiaolu (pseudonym) was born in Henan, China in the 80s. Currently, she lives in Chicago, USA. To her, the greatest blessing is to follow the Lord, who is forever faithful. Her gifts are being a listener and her sense of responsibility in fulfilling others’ requests to the best of her ability. Her dream is to write a fictional drama.

This testimony is found on pages 60–64 of 《无问西东 因为有你》 (The Reason for You II: Tsinghua Testimonies) available from [ReFrame Ministries](#).