

My Personal Written Testimony

By: Caleb Benjamin Kimmel

“Oh God you are My God & I will Ever Praise You!”

“Oh God you are My God & I will Ever Praise You!” These days anytime I hear that verse from the Song “Step By Step” a chill goes through my body. Not a cold chill you feel from a scary movie or a bitter winter breeze, but rather a warm, encouraging, and overwhelming chill that reminds me there is more to this life than just me!

I have not always paid close attention to that sense of God’s love in my life. As a young child I grew up in Fort Wayne, Indiana in what I would consider a Christian Home. However, I would consider myself a weak Christian, if even a Christian at all, through my adolescent days and into College. The thought was always in the back of my head that I knew I was not leading a true Christian Life.

From Elementary School through College I think most people would have considered me a strong individual with good leadership skills, as I was fortunate enough to excel in both athletics and academics. I had a solid awareness of the needs of people around me and built many life long friendships at each level of schooling.

But there was still something missing. Something tugging at my heart. Something tugging at my soul. I knew I had been ignoring what that “something” was. I knew deep down I did not have Jesus Christ as the focal point of my life. Was I a good person? Sure. Did I try to help others in need? Absolutely. Is that good enough? Unfortunately my conscience could give me that answer. It wasn’t an answer I was proud to admit. I knew the answer was “NO” that those qualities were not enough. I knew I needed to take a bigger step of faith in my life.

God had been speaking to me for years and I finally told myself I need to listen.

In 2006, at the age of 25, I had successfully grown my own small business that was focused on impacting lives through family and youth activities. I guess to summarize it briefly – I was a Baseball Guy. My company organized tournaments, fall leagues, camps / clinics, indoor & outdoor rentals, training seminars, etc. I had been blessed with having the opportunity to work with Major League Baseball Players and Managers as well as Professional Scouts, Collegiate Scouts, and athletes from ages 6 – 19. It was a unique situation to be in a young entrepreneur and have amazing connections so early in my business career.

On top of that I had been blessed to meet Kristen who is a wonderful, loving, and truly amazing wife.

My life was coming together nicely with a good head on my shoulders, a clear vision of the impact I can make on this world, support around me, realistic goals, the endurance – discipline – and dedication it takes to make great things happen. But that “Something” was still weighing me down.

I asked myself – “If I am being given the opportunity and the personal gifts to impact so many lives through the business and these relationships in my life then I have to be a better leader.” But A better leader for who? For Me, My Wife, My Family, My Business, My Community, or maybe my Country?

The answer was simple – It was “None of the Above” - I needed to be a better leader for My God.

I have found this scripture that really helps me understand the Gifts The Lord has given us:

In Romans 12:6-8 The Bible States: "We have different gifts, according to the grace given to us. If a man's gift is to teach, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve. If it is encouraging, let him encourage. If it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously. If it is leadership, let him govern diligently. If it is showing mercy to others, let him do it cheerfully."

In March of 2006, I followed through on my promise to myself that I need to Listen to what God has been calling me to do. My cousin, who was a Junior in High School at the time, was the Student Leader for a Missions Trip to El Salvador with The Pointe Church in Fort Wayne. I spoke with both my cousin and the Pastor about joining this outreach ministry and jumped in with the attitude that I am willing to take that next step of Faith.

The Mission’s Trip to El Salvador was an amazing experience of which I will take with me the rest of my life. The best aspect of the Trip was that it was exactly what I had expected and exactly what I needed to get myself over that hump. To immerse yourself in God’s Will for an entire week created a situation where God was able to breakthrough my stubborn barriers I had created and opened my eyes to my true potential. Now please be aware and Notice how that is worded – **God was able to breakthrough** - It was not me doing that on my own. The Holy Spirit was with us the entire time helping each of us grow spiritually on that trip! The Adult Leaders as well as the High School Students all were overwhelmed at the power of God throughout our missionary work.

Upon Returning Home My Vision Was Clear. Christ had answered my questions on that trip – What was I to do with these great opportunities He has laid in front of me?

The Bible States in Matthew 28:19 “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of The Holy Spirit.” Well there you have it – My mission in this life is to be a conqueror for Christ and impact lives in His Name!

The vision has been laid out for me and I have continued to see the opportunities be presented to help others find and follow Christ.

The more I give to God the more doors he has opened. When I say Give – that doesn't mean simply money, time, or resources. It's the more I give my heart, my **trust**, my worries, my everything to the Lord the more prepared he has allowed me to become to truly to be a leader in this world for what really matters.

Before I was focused on using baseball as a tool to further my career and now I look at baseball as the Tool God has given me to further His Kingdom. Since I have taken the steps to be becoming a Strong Christian the baseball world has quickly opened up its doors for me to create some amazing relationships and opportunities! Before I would have called all of these circumstances simply a coincidence – now it's too obvious for me to ignore what God is doing in my life. These blessings are what I call “A God Thing.” I do not buy into coincidence theory as I once did. I truly believe God has a plan for all of us and if we have the patience and courage to faithfully walk down the Path He has laid we will spend eternity with him in Paradise.

Now, being a follower of Christ does not mean that life will be easy or that path will come without hardship. In fact in many cases it makes life even more difficult because you are aware of so many sins in this world. However, it will give you the peace of mind and the peace of heart that there is a bigger picture out there for all of us. Regardless of what this world throws at us or how bad things may appear we have a God that is there watching over each of us. Each challenge you encountered is God testing you to see if your faith is focused on Christ and not on yourself. If we maintain that faith **NOTHING** can truly hurt us!

The Wonderful News is that Eternal Life in Heaven will exceed all challenges and tests God may lay in front of us in this short life. Eternal Life in paradise by His Side will be our ultimate blessing. Not wealth, a big home, health, or any luxuries we have on this Earth – its spending eternity in Heaven with Our Creator that will be our true reward. AND WHAT AN AMAZING GIFT THAT IS!

The Word of God leads us in knowing how we can secure this wonderful, gracious gift:

- 1. Genuinely Believe That God is the Almighty – Creator of the Heavens and Earth**
- 2. Accept that you are a sinner and Seek His Forgiveness of Our Sins Thru Jesus Christ Our Savior.**
- 3. Ask The Lord to Come into Your heart and to be the Leader of Your Life.**

If you take those steps faithfully, honestly, and genuinely you will see a change in your life. You will see a new perspective arise. You will see your heart being molded in a way that you could not have imagined without Christ at the center of your life.

From there we can all be conquerors for Christ! All it takes is to turn your life over to Christ and trust that he will be with you every step of the way and “you will learn to walk in His ways!”

If you took the time to read what God has done and is continuing to do in My Life and this helped encourage you in any way then that's just another praise we can give to God!

Thank you for your time.

God Bless,

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