

Jacob's Testimony from the US

My name is Jacob Phillips and I live with my lovely wife Mary Elizabeth and our sweet little girl Abigail in Jackson, Tennessee in the U.S. I love the Lord Jesus Christ and His word, and even though I have a wicked heart (Gen6v5, Jer 17v9, Ecc 8v11), I truly desire to do "that which is well pleasing in His sight" and to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ". I love reading, (especially history), playing any kind of sports, painting, writing poetry, photography, and even though I cannot sing or play a note, music.



I grew up in a large family where we would gather and read the word of God aloud every night out of a King James Bible, and where we were encouraged to read it on our own each morning. (Deut 6v6-7, 17v19, Neh 8v8, Ps 63v1... In the interest of space, I won't write out all the scripture that I refer to, but I hope that you will look up the references in an AV Bible and let God speak truth to you by His words.)

Even in this wonderful environment, it took nearly 13 years for my sinful heart to see the need for a Saviour and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as the satisfactory payment for my sin! What an indictment against the wickedness of the human heart! The night I trusted Christ, I can remember telling my Dad about feeling convicted for my sin. Although he was a hard-working man who rarely got enough sleep, he immediately sent the rest of my brothers and sisters to bed and sat with me for several hours, showing me scripture after scripture from God's word about sin, salvation, security in Christ, etc. I don't remember anything that he said, but I remember in great detail many of the eternal words that He showed me that night (John 3v14-18, 5v24, 10v27-28, all of Romans chapters 3 and 5, Eph 2v8-9, Titus 3v5, Phil 3v9, 1 John 5v11-13 as well as some others, I'm sure). Although I had read and memorized God's word for years before trusting Christ (2 Tim 3v15), I really began to grow in my spiritual life at the age of 16 when I read God's word all the way through for the first time. The Bible really captured my imagination as I read about the importance of reading it (Deut 17v19-20, Ps 19v7-11), memorizing it (Prov 7v1-3), meditating on it (Joshua 1v8), talking about it (Deut6v6-7), praying according to it (1 Chron17v23, 1 John 5v14), sharing it with others (Acts 8v26-39, 13v16-41, 2Tim4v1-2) and being obedient to it (John 14v21).



Within a couple of years I attended Mississippi State University where I studied Kinesiology, and where the best part of my college years were the weekly bible studies that I had with my Dad. It was a great time of spiritual growth for me due to the amount of time I spent in God's word. Upon graduation, I commissioned as a U.S. Army cavalry officer assigned to the First Infantry Division where I was in a scout unit trained to conduct reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition. I also spent a year in northern Iraq, and to say that I didn't really care for my visit there would be an understatement. My time in the Army was tough for me spiritually, and I didn't grow very much. I also developed the ungodly habit of using bad language and I'm afraid that I was a poor "ambassador" for the Lord much of the time. It's interesting how many bad habits you can develop when you're not diligent to come into daily contact with the cleansing agent which is the word of God (Ps 119v9, John 15v3)!



I met and married my wife Mary Elizabeth toward the end of my stint in the Army (4 and half years ago), and she's just wonderful. One of the things that I love about her is that she has a heart that is tender toward God's word and that she wants to be obedient to Him.

In the world's eyes I've always been a "good" person, but when I compare my righteousness with God's, I see what a great sinner I am and how much I deserve the everlasting fires of judgment from the presence of the Lord. I wouldn't have known any of this except by His word (Matt 25v41, Heb 9v27, Rev 20v14-15)! I'm so thankful that He preserved it for us in order to reveal our sin to us and to introduce us to His Son, our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 6v23, 8v1)!

The past couple of years have been a time of great trial and growth for both of us. My dear Dad went to be with the Lord awhile back, and that has really caused me to go to God's word more than ever for comfort and guidance. Another big factor of this has been my transition from someone that believed that the King James Bible is "probably one of the best translations out there", to believing that it is in fact perfect-the literal and physical fulfilment of God's promises to preserve His "incorruptible" words (Ps 12v6-7, 19v7, Prov30v6, 1Pet1v23, James1v25). This transition took a while! Probably about a year and a half (remember how wicked my heart is!!? Praise the Lord that He is "merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth"(Exo 34v6) and Who continues to guide us into "all truth" by His Spirit when we open His word and ask Him to teach us – Prov 2v6, John 14v26, 15v26, 16v13, 1 Cor 2v9-10, James 1v5, 1 John 2v27)

We were attending a really worldly church at the time and different events sparked a search to know what God really says, and if it's even available to us today. One day, while wrestling with the idea of whether there is a perfect Bible or not, the Lord showed me Luke 1v1-4. This is just one of a multitude of passages that show us that God wants us to KNOW the CERTAINTY of the things that He's told us in His word. Even though I didn't have formal theological or language training, I believed that God the Holy Spirit was bearing witness to the truth of His perfect and preserved word in my heart and it has become even more glorious to me ever since. (Mary Elizabeth was an NIV/ESV/NKJV reader for a long time until we started looking at the differences in translations together. Now her vocabulary has exploded and she's using words like "lascivious" and "propitiate" in conversation! More importantly, she's growing "like a weed" spiritually, which is wonderful to see.)

The Tft team have been a tremendous encouragement to Mary Elizabeth and I since coming into contact with them a few months ago. It's just wonderful to be constantly encouraged to read and study God's word and to get out and tell people about the Lord Jesus Christ, rather than to be accused of being "legalists" because we read God's word, try to apply it to our lives, and care more about what God says than the opinions of some dude. It's not that we care what others think about us, it's just that it's great to be "pushed" spiritually rather than "weighed down."

We're so thankful for God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and we're so thankful for His word, perfectly preserved for us in the AV Bible. We're also thankful for faithful brothers and sisters in Christ like John, Donna, Dee, and Toy who are such an encouragement to us in spiritual things and who set a great example of being "valiant for the truth."

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. Jude 1v24+25