

Personal testimony

June 17, 2009

Of course, I couldn't comprehend the implications of that commitment. I understood the basic facts and mechanics of becoming a Christian: Even though I was a child, I already was a sinner and, like an off-course arrow, had "missed the mark" of God's aim for my life. But Jesus died to save me from my sins. And if I sincerely repented, believed in him and accepted him as Lord, he would forgive my sins, save my soul and provide everlasting life.

So, I gave all of myself that I could know to all of Christ that I could comprehend.

And God said, "That's good enough for starters." Thank God.

Ever-changing journey

I'll spare you the details (after all, this is a blog and not a book), but turning points of my life have involved knowing more about myself and comprehending more of Christ. Sometimes, that's joyful and amazing. Other times, it's frightening and overwhelming. Always, it's an adventure.

And it's a journey that is new and changing every day. I wonder if many Christians get this. They describe their salvation, and it has all the timing and movement of buying a car or a house. It was exciting and maybe a little scary. But it's over. Done. Transaction completed. Now, they're getting on with their lives, which, when you hear about them, don't sound much different than the lives of anybody else, no matter what they believe about God and Christ.

Salvation's process

Somewhere along the way, some soul taught me the Christian life is much more vibrant and moving and ever-changing than all that. Salvation isn't a tidy, completed transaction. It's a process.

The Apostle Paul gets at this. Twice, he refers to Christians as "being saved" ([1 Corinthians 1:18](#) and [2 Corinthians 2:15](#)). He also urges Christians to "continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling" ([Philippians 2:12](#)). Theologians call this "sanctification," which happens in the process of living the Christian life between the time a person accepts Jesus as Savior and physical death.

Ideally, it means becoming more like Christ each day. Realistically, it involves continual progression and regression, successes and failures. Practically, it means engaging in a real, life-altering ongoing conversation with Christ.

Faith and ... everything

The thing I've learned is my relationship with Christ impacts everything that's truly important in my life: Not only how I think about death and the hereafter. Not only what I do on Sunday or think about in church. But how I love my wife. Relate to my kids. Use my time. Spend my money. Do my job. Care for my friends. Listen to or read the news. Vote. Drive. Talk. You name it.

One of my favorite aspects of my relationship with Christ is its durability and applicability. Christ has been present and sufficient for every challenge, joy, heartache, victory, disappointment, question and "new thing" in my life.

Lately, I've experienced Christ's abiding peace as our family has walked through the death of my sister. I'm also feeling the tangible expression of his grace through the care of Christian family and friends. And I'm encountering the wonder of his matchless creativity as my *Baptist Standard*

colleagues and I consider how to extend our ministry into the future.

And guess what: Tomorrow things will be different, with new things to learn and experience alongside Christ. I can hardly wait.

Your turn

So, what's your personal testimony? *Standard* reader Michael Corzine of Farmersville, Texas, recently [blogged](#) about his personal testimony and sent an e-mail suggesting I ask readers to share their own faith stories. So, have at it. Write your testimony—300 words or less, so we don't get bogged down—in the comments section of this blog. It's your chance to inform and inspire.