

Jose Bello's **Testimony**

Come and hear, all you that fear Elohim and I will declare what He has done for my soul. **(Psalm 66:16)**

I've always wondered how is it that for some people it is too hard to believe in a creator. There may be more than one answer for such a question. If someone was to ask me how can I believe in someone I can't see or how can there be a loving God with all the evil around us. Well I would have to talk about my life and how I came to find all that I ever wanted in my creator, that is not to say that I have everything I wish I did. What it means is that in Him I found a purpose and a hope. I'm not a Bible scholar so there are many things I just can't explain, however my life is a testimony to the scripture that reads; The judgment of Elohim is righteous....in keeping His word there is great reward. (Psalm 19:9,11). If I am, a better person its because of Him. I can honestly say that my life began the moment He and His mercy reached out to me!!!

I know I am not the only one who had a bad childhood; in fact, I've met some people that had it worse than I did. Raised by a single parent (mom) who was hardly at home because she had to provide for seven children, I grew up wondering why all my friends had a DAD, but I didn't. Needless to say I always had this "void" in my heart, I felt alone and rejected, back then I thought it was normal to feel like that and as I got older I became a very isolated kid. As I

look back, I realize that I had no concept as to what life was about and how one is supposed to live it. I was never taught any values nor was I ever given any type of affection, things that are essential for a child.

I don't blame my mother nor the adults that were around me for not giving me the attention I needed. I know now that they did what they could with what they knew; I wish all parents would take the time to be with their children that would definitely make a big difference. The Bible says that: Children are a heritage from God (Psalm 127:3) and they should be cared for as such – a heritage – the Bible also says that if you: Train up a child in the way he should go, when he is old, he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6). As I mentioned earlier "there's great reward in keeping His word".

Eventually I turned to the streets as many do to find attention and to be a part of something; I got into a gang. I must say that I was a scared kid trying to fit in. I found that by using drugs and drinking beer I would feel like I could do anything and so I stayed high to feel "good". My new life style kept me from really knowing what was going on around me; it kept me from functioning as a normal person and numbed me as well. This went on for years. I didn't graduate from high school. I never dated as normal teenagers do; my way of having fun was getting high and getting into any kind of trouble to be looked as someone that didn't care. Now I realize that the friends I was trying to impress didn't really care. In fact, they were doing the same thing. Some

of them didn't get the chance to change because they are dead and others are doing life in prison as I am.

My family was not a religious one, so I never went to church although I did hear of a God, but didn't know anything about Him. At the age of 17, I got shot in both legs; after that, my life really became unmanageable. I completely lost myself and a year later, I was in the county jail facing two life sentences. My thinking was so messed up that I actually thought I was in the place all gang members belonged, however when I begun to think about what I had done I felt so ashamed. I got into a lot of trouble. My family seemed not to care about what was going on and it finally hit me that I would be spending the rest of my life in prison. Although I was familiar with loneliness this time, I felt so alone like I had never felt before. Somehow, I found myself going to church. I would hear these people talk about how God had changed their lives and I would hear them say that God loved me.

One day not caring who was around me I began to cry in church and to be honest I don't remember how I prayed but I just knew that I had to ask God for help. To my surprise, He didn't reject me. I didn't know then but I know now that He heard me and not knowing much I begun to read the Bible. Those that have had such experience will understand the feeling of peace that somehow makes all things right. I thought God would get me out but He had other plans and He's always right, although we don't always see it. I ended up with a life sentence. Had I gotten out I would not have

come to know Him as I know Him now. I've been in prison for 11 years. I am almost 30 and I can honestly say that even though I'm in here I have lived, really lived more and better than when I was out there.

No, it hasn't been easy nor have I gotten use to this place, but if someone knew the person I was and the person I am today they would agree that "what Satan meant for evil, God changed it for good" (Genesis 50:20). I don't mean to say that God sent me to prison, my actions got me here, however He had compassion on me and although I didn't deserve it He forgave me. You see, all my life I had wanted to be loved; I desired to be accepted, I wanted a father, He has been all that and much more!!!! He has raised me to be the man I am today, with His word He has taught me how to live. He has given me a family of believers that care for me and accept me for who I am. I don't have to impress them. I wish you could see and feel the joy I have.

Today, "I know in whom I have believed and I know that He is able to keep me till the end" (2 Timothy 1:12). I have learned so very much. I've gotten my GED and I am now in College. I'm involved in many self help programs. I am even a facilitator in one of them! I've learned to respect people and now I love talking. I've learned to play the guitar and write worship songs. I've been part of the choir in the chapel, I have made some good friends, and they trust me. I have also established friendships by mail with people that I respect and actually care for in a selfless way. My dream is to one day get out and become a youth counselor. I have no idea

how that is going to happen but I know that it will, if my Father grants me that desire of my heart.

I know that a lot of people have accomplished a lot more things but you see had I not been rescued by God I would still be living life like a wave tossed by the wind with no purpose and still living a self destructive life. It all begun with Him. I don't take any credit, "He brought me out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay and set my feet upon a rock and established my steps. He has put a song in my mouth... (Psalm 40:1-3). So that is why I believe in Him, because He has indeed changed my life. I have seen His word come to life but if I was to put it in a few words I would use the following statement: **I WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE!!!!**



I hope this testimony has been a blessing to you. If you would like to read how others in similar situations have experienced the life transforming power of God please write to me at the address below. We now have over 60 testimonies of those whose lives have been transformed by God's amazing Grace. We also have over 40 tracts created by con's; Con-tracts. Send us your testimony as well. We also would like artwork and poetry to share with others.

**Bro. Otto Ball C/o
Crossroads Ministry
P.O. Box 363
Hyde, PA 16843**

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