

**HOPE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

**TESTIMONIES OF CANDIDATES
FOR
BAPTISM
AND
CONFIRMATION OF FAITH**

1 APRIL 2018

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BAPTISM

HA TSHUI MUM SUMMER

Every time I think of my younger days, all that I recall was the unpleasant memories - awakened by my mom at midnight to watch the parents quarreled; saw my mom attempted to commit suicide to threaten my dad and make him obey her; witnessed my older sister trying to kill herself to stop the parents' fight, etc. We had been in such dreadful situation for almost two years. Thus, my parents eventually decided to divorce when I was 12 years old.

Getting divorced may be common everywhere in the cities, but not where I was born and raised. In such circumstances, I had to deal with high level of stress - external stress that came from the people around and internal stress from the tension between my dad and mom. For once, I thought people's first instinct would be to offer help or care for us. Instead, they began to judge and gossip about our family's misfortune - friends of my mom kept brainwashing her on ways to get my dad's money; my best friend's mom did not allow her to befriend me and even transferred her to another school; girls at school said harsh things to me about my parents' divorce; etc. No matter how I tried to make achievements, all I received was only condemnations.

All these built up my inferiority about myself. Hence, I became very strict to myself and was extremely anxious about everything I do. I forced myself to outperform in every task, just to prove that nothing would influence my performance despite my parents' misfortune. However, the cost for this is the level of

stress and anxiety that I had to deal with and that, of course, didn't make me any happier with my life.

Since I accepted Christ, my perspective started to change. I learned to disregard how people see me, as I found an even more meaningful purpose of life - to pursue God. Few months back, I took a spiritual gift test and identified craftsmanship as my dominant spiritual gift. It got me thinking about how I could use my artistic means to further God's Kingdom. But when I reflected on my life in the past one year, I realized how incredible my journey with God has been to get to where I am today. The more I commit myself into His hands, the more I see Him leading my way. Firstly, I found my area of interests in disaster resilience and serving the underprivileged communities through my Nepal trip. Secondly, I found a visiting professor who shares the same research interests and she's a friend of my boss. Thus, I was able to meet her and learn more about her illuminating perspectives in this field. Thirdly, I'm very fortunate to be given an opportunity to work with World Vision and CapitalLand on a partnership project, in which we help to build a school for the needy children in a rural area in Hanoi, Vietnam. It has really been such a blessing to be able to serve the world's vulnerable people with my God-given gift!

I then realized why there had been many obstacles put in my way over the years when I was younger, as I now learn to see it as God's way of preparing me to do things according to His will. Without once being a helpless child, I wouldn't have been able to create empathy and wanted to help the needy communities. I have come to know through my faith and love for

God that He doesn't bring me to obstacles but he does help me through my struggles. So now is the time for me to be obedient to God. I am beyond excitement to be baptized in front of my family in Christ and to continue sharing the never-ending love story of Jesus.

CONFIRMATION OF FAITH

LEE SHI YAN SABRINA

Jesus has always been part of my life. I grew up going to church, hearing my parents and friends share about Christ and serving in ministry. As blessed as I am to be a second generation Christian, you could say that initially I was “lukewarm” about my faith, neither truly believing in the Lord nor zealous for Him. However, slowly but surely, small encounters with the Lord showed me how great our God is.

Recognising that I am a fallen creature prone to sin who is saved by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ through God’s grace, is the fundamental in my relationship with the Lord. There is nothing I can do or say to claim equality with our righteous God. However, God is great in love and mercy and reached out to give us eternal life, by sending Jesus Christ for us to believe in. When I finally understood exactly how much God loves me (and all of us), it made me realize that I needed Him in my life and set me to believe in Him fiercely, with the desire to know Him and love Him too.

Our God is a personal God. My faith has become more than a religion; it is a relationship with God who is my anchor through life’s ups and downs. He is there to love me and to give me a future and a hope. I know that the going will always be tough but nothing is impossible because I have an almighty Father who is sovereign and whom I can depend on for strength and guidance.

Though I personally find it difficult to surrender my will to Him, I have also learnt that the greatest peace is found in discerning the Lord's will and then walking in His ways. As a believer, I hope to be transformed continually, desiring for him not to be just a part of my life but surrendering my whole life to Him.

Thank you, Jesus, for being my Lord, Saviour and friend. I love you.

TAN YI XUAN ASHLEE

Growing up in a Christian family, I learnt about God, what it meant to be a Christian and what I was supposed to do as a Christian. I went to Praise House every week, memorised the Bible verses my teacher taught me, tried my best to follow the Ten Commandments and prayed, all because my parents, my teachers and the Bible told me to do so. It eventually became a daily routine just because I had been taught to do it since my early years. As I got older and busier, doing these things eventually became more of a chore and I started to drift away from doing them. If I had a lot of homework, I would push aside the "chores" of doing my devotions, spending time with my family or even not going to church. This eventually became a norm as my Christian life was led with no real faith and trust in seeking God.

When I was 15, I started to mature and really ponder over my faith. I was more curious who this God I had

believed in for the past 15 years of my life was. As I started to attend church and powerhouse sessions more regularly, I found myself listening to sermons, not just with my head as I used to, but with my heart as well. I started to want to believe and have faith in this God who sacrificed his life for us and could perform the greatest miracles ever. This continued on until I was 17. In 2017, I was under an immense amount of stress from school and diving and that was the period I turned to God and sought help from him, not because other people told me so, but because I truly believed that he would and could help me. From then onwards, I decided to devote everything to God.

Now, the things I do revolve around what God wants and hopes for me to do. There is a change in the purpose and reason behind why I do things as now I truly want to please God, and wholeheartedly want to learn more about him and follow him. I no longer go to church, do my devotions and pray because I'm supposed to, but rather I do it because I want to. I have also learnt to see life in a more positive manner as I believe that every hardship, failure or success is all part of God's glory and plan for me.

YANG SZE JIAN JOEL

I cannot remember the exact day I received Jesus as my Saviour. Since I was a kid, I have attended Sunday School and heard many Bible stories. I know Jesus died on the cross for my sins. He is the Risen

Lord and believing in Him has made me a child of God.

I face many challenges in life because of a medical condition. But I remind myself of God's love by listening to hymns and Christian songs through YouTube. Even though I had to go through a few operations, I was not afraid if the worst would happen. This is because the Lord is my Shepherd. He gives me peace in my heart. One day I'll be in heaven with JESUS!

YANG SZE KANG KEVIN

I have known God for as long as I can remember. Since young, I followed my parents to church every Sunday and learnt about all the usual Bible stories. One day in Sunday school when I was in Primary 3, my teacher asked me if I wanted to accept Jesus. I did and I prayed for Jesus to come into my heart. However, there was no significant change in me. I did not understand my faith and neither did I take it seriously. Being in a catholic school, I would blindly follow and pray the prayers made (including to Mary) during morning assembly, thinking it was the same kind of prayers made in church. I also did not take the initiative to read the Bible or do my own devotions outside church.

After age 13, I started going for powerhouse since my siblings were already attending it and I had a free

ride to church. During occasions such as Easter or Christmas, or during youth camp, the pastor would invite unbelievers to accept Jesus. Every time I would ask myself if I had actually already invited Jesus into my heart since I was not living like a Christian should. It was easy to do devotions and commit myself to God during camps since everyone else around me was doing it. However, I did not have the spiritual discipline to continue reading God's word on my own.

In Secondary 3, I started to take my faith more seriously and wanted to serve in a ministry. However, serving in ministries became a routine. Outside church, I was afraid of professing my faith publicly. For the past few years, my parents have been pressing me to get baptised but I always never bothered to think about it.

More recently, I feel called to be more fervent for God, not just in church or in ministries, but also in my daily life. I am also less worried about how my friends think of me as a Christian. I hope that despite my schedule becoming busier, I can devote more time to God and that he will change me to become more and more like him.