

My Testimony

By Pastor Peter Rahme

Lebanese by birth... Australian by allegiance... & Heaven bound.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

IN 1969, as a teenage boy I was working in my summer school break in one of Lebanon's mountain holiday resorts. Two days before my fourteenth birthday - on the 20th of July, I watched with amazement the live broadcast on black and white TV, and witnessed with astonishment along with 500 million other viewers worldwide, *History in the making* - MAN WALKING ON THE MOON.

The countdown began, just few days earlier, on July 16, when ignition was established on pad 13 of the Kennedy space centre, lifting off Apollo 11 with 3 astronauts on board of 1 of the most advanced flying machines at the time. The carefully built and finely tuned spacecraft travelled 391,888 Kilometres (244,930 miles) into the uncharted space of God's great and marvellous creation.

The nature of their mission and destiny was to realise their nation's vision and dream, which was to reach the moon, and they did when the EAGLE landed at 4:17.45 Eastern Daylight Time. Neil Armstrong descended the Lunar Module, which ultimately touched down. As he stepped on the "lot less dustier than expected" surface of the moon, he described that momentous event with eleven unforgettable words: "*That's One Small Step For Man, One Giant Leap For Mankind*". Here on earth his president proclaimed that this was "*the greatest day of our lives*".

By comparison the simple choice that you make and the single step that you take, *to be In Christ*, is even far greater in impact, influence and effect than that of Neil Armstrong's. This is real because God - the King of eternity becomes your heavenly Father when you accept His only begotten Son - the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour. And as his child, you have access to His throne of grace, which takes you *from Earth, past the Moon, to Eternity*. Millions of people over the years have testified to that new and dynamic relationship with the true and the living God. Here is my story in brief.

I was born in Tripoli, Lebanon, into a loving Roman Catholic/Maronite family. The youngest of four boys, my week consisted basically of school, scooters, seeing movies and Sunday church (occasionally I rang the bells). Summer was a favourite time. For three months of the year our family went to our mountain home in Becharre, located up north from the old city of Tripoli and down from the majestic Cedars of Lebanon.

In the late sixties, Australia was seen as the land of milk and honey and migration took off. So in 1970 my dad and I followed in the steps of my two older brothers Cliff and Elie, who had left Lebanon few years earlier and prepared the way for us to live here. Our whole family eventually settled in Ashfield -an inner western suburb of Sydney. At the age of fifteen I was back in school learning English and sitting for the Year 10/School Certificate.

Growing up in my new adopted country, music was my comfort and the guitar was my companion. I began to play in rock bands, which led me to a life style of sin, self and sensuality. Usually we performed till late and then spent the rest of the night at some nightspot.

In 1976, I was seriously searching for purpose in life while sincerely seeking to find my path thru music and personal relationships. Trying to keep up with those whom I highly esteemed and looked up to as my heroes, I was turning every which way to follow closely in their footsteps. On the work front, I was carving a promising career in the sales industry and steadily working my way up the ladder of success. In short I was lost, lonely and looking.

Four months before my twenty-first birthday - on the 25th of March, a most amazing event took place that challenged my desire here on earth and changed my destiny hereafter in eternity. That blessed Thursday evening I was confronted with the eternal truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The choice before me, from the Holy Bible, was simple and clear:

In the sight of the Holiness of God, I stood eternally condemned and hopelessly lost.

But

In the light of His grace and mercy I could be redeemed, released and really set free.

That night for the first time in my life I realised a truth, which I either had never heard in all of my religious instruction days or it had not registered in my heart before. This gospel truth was simply this: *God, in HIS precious word, was graciously and mercifully extending HIS offer of salvation in exchange for my offence of sin.*

In bookkeeping terms - my debt of sin, which is an overdue unpaid account, can be immediately settled upon repentance of my sin and faith in HIS Son. I also learned that the Saviour when He died in my place on the cross of Calvary had already paid in full the debt of my sin, a debt, which I could not even service, nor take care of its interest repayment. In other words, God was saying thru His saving word that all of my sin will be put into Christ's account, and all His goodness will be placed into mine. WOW what an offer!

His eternal word assured my heart that, as I turn away and repent from sin and self and turn to and receive the Saviour in sincere faith, I will be saved. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13).

Because of my sinful lifestyle, which amongst other dark activities and destructive habits included living in a defacto marriage relationship at the time, I was easily convicted of my need for a Saviour and quickly called upon his name for salvation. That night, as the Spirit of God, through the word of God, revealed the Son of God to my heart, I trusted my soul to the Saviour's grace and mercy and totally rested in the love of Christ on Calvary. I received freely God's gift of everlasting life, as I believed his promise of eternal salvation. In short, according to God's precious word and because of what Jesus has done for me, I was accepted on the merits of Christ alone, and like millions before me, I too entered into a new and dynamic relationship with the true and Living God.

Hallelujah, Eternity was secured, and my heart rejoiced and gave thanks!

In Closing -

The Lord Jesus Christ is still inviting people, just like you, today. He says: **"Verily, Verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."** (John 5:24)

The invitation is still open to all to receive His free and forever grace. Do not delay; call on God's mercy today because the book one day will close and tomorrow may be too late. You know what is really

amazing is that once you are In Christ; His sustaining joy will continue to faithfully lead you in your spiritual journey until you reach your final destination in Heaven.

You can confidently trust your eternal soul to Jesus Christ who paid for your sins in full, provided your salvation for free, and promised your security forever.

**Your decision here and now on earth
will determine your destiny there and then in Eternity!
If you refuse and reject The Lord Jesus Christ,
you are choosing to spend Eternity in hell,
If you receive HIM you will spend Eternity in heaven and rejoice evermore.**

God invites you today to repent of your sin and receive His Son. It is as simple as **ABC**:

Acknowledge you sinned & broke God's commandments; (Psalm 32:5; James 2:10)

Because Adam and Eve broke God's first commandment in the Garden of Eden, and the entire human race broke His Ten Commandments given on Mount Sinai (*Compare Exodus 20:3 -17 with James 2:10*), we, the imperfect creatures and impotent sinners that we are now, all fail to measure up to God's standard and therefore fall short of His glory. Consequently there is death to face in this life and judgement to follow in the one to come

Believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose again ;(1Thessalonians 4:14)

Call upon His name, right now, to save you *in time for eternity*. (Romans 10:13)

The following suggested prayer is the most important request you'll ever ask God for in your lifetime!

Dear Lord God
I am sorry that I have sinned against you & broken your commandments;
I turn away from my sins.
Please forgive me, and be merciful to me a sinner.
I believe Jesus Christ died for my sins and rose from the dead.
I receive You, Lord Jesus, into my heart as my Saviour and Lord.
Thank you dear Lord, for saving me, and for giving a new and eternal life.
I invite you to live your life through me,
and make me the person that You want me to be.
In Jesus Name, I pray, Amen

*With the love of Christ
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