

CHANGED BY GRACE

A Personal Testimony

Since my husband's recent passing, I've found myself listening to music more than I used to. During these months of sorrow and loneliness, God has met me with so much comfort through it. Some songs remind me of His faithfulness when my heart is heavy; others lift my soul in praise.

But when I hear songs like *Thank You Jesus for the Blood*, where God's love for us is expressed through such heartfelt lyrics, I'm often deeply moved. Those moments take me back fifty years, to the beginning of my spiritual journey—a journey that would teach me that God's grace could change my life and carry me through every chapter of it.

I was raised in a religious family. I followed the church's rituals and traditions and was taught about God. Yet years later, when I heard the gospel message for the very first time, I couldn't have explained it then, but I knew something had changed in me.

As I began reading the Bible, things that had once seemed unclear suddenly began to make sense. Two passages in particular spoke deeply to me:

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

And when Jesus Himself said:

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

I remember thinking: *Why would God do that? And why did Jesus have to die? As I had been taught before and understood, wasn't following a religion, doing good deeds, and trying to live a morally good life enough?*

Then my questions began to be answered. I came to understand what God had done for me through Jesus. His perfect and sinless Son came to earth as a man and willingly died in my place. I realized that nothing I could do on my own—no amount of goodness, religious rituals, or moral living—could bridge the separation between a holy God and me.

Forgiveness of sin and eternal life were not something I could earn. They were a gift made possible through faith in Jesus—through His death on the cross and His resurrection.

That was the beginning of a lifelong relationship with Him, rooted in love. My heart and life were transformed, not because of my own efforts, but because of God's unmerited grace.

The Bible says:

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Over the years, I've learned that following Jesus is about far more than simply believing in Him. It means surrendering myself to Him, seeking to live according to His Word, and following Him wherever He leads.

That hasn't always been easy. There have been times of fear, disappointment, sorrow, and uncertainty. Learning to let go of control and trust Him with everything has been one of my greatest challenges—and at times, it still is.

But through every hardship, God has shown me that His love is unfailing. He has given me a peace that steadies my heart, a joy that isn't dependent on circumstances, and a strength that carries me through every trial.

He has never left me or forsaken me, and I know He never will. That is His promise.

Looking back over these fifty years, I can see that I have been changed—not by my own strength or goodness, but by His grace. The same grace that first drew me to Him has sustained me, shaped me, and carried me through every chapter of my life.

And now, in this season of loss, that same grace is carrying me still.

Knowing Jesus has been my greatest blessing—one I will be forever grateful for. He demonstrated His love for me in this: while I was still a sinner, Christ died for me. Nothing this world offers compares with that truth.

To you who are reading this letter—whether you already know Jesus or are hearing His name for the first time—I pray that you'll experience His perfect love and comforting presence in your own life as you begin, or continue, walking with Him each day.

If you've never placed your faith in Him, please know that the same grace that changed my life is available to you. He loves you. He died for you, and He invites you to come to Him just as you are.

I don't know what you're going through at this time in your life, and I don't know what tomorrow will bring. We're not even promised another day. But I know this: there is no greater peace and joy than knowing Him, and no greater hope than belonging to Him.

In His amazing love,

Beth♥