



JAMES MUNRO'S TESTIMONY

From a young age I have been taught the Word of God by my parents. I knew the truths of the Gospel and when I showed understanding of what my God had done for me at age 9, my Dad led me to Christ. I remember it was under the plum tree in the backyard of our home in Sydney.

I was home schooled for most of my school years, and we moved around a lot. We moved to Perth and got involved with the AEF (Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship). We agreed to move to a town called Derby in North Western Australia to care-take a Bible College while it was being sold. Instead of being there for three months, we were there for two and a half years. In the time that we were there, we had a fatal accident in which my little sister died. Through her death I could see God's hand on our family. Knowing God promised us eternal life and a home in Heaven, and knowing that we would see her again, comforted us and helped us to move on.

A couple years later my family travelled around Southeast Asia for eight months. Seeing the poverty and oppression of these people, and the commitment they still had to their gods convicted me for not having similar commitment to the true and Living God. It really helped me to see how fortunate I am to have been brought up knowing the truth.

In 2006 we moved to Newcastle, and I started going to the local Christian school. I made a group of friends - none of whom were Christians - and began trying to fit in, trying to be accepted. Though I never turned my back on God in this time and still loved him, I was living for myself. I was filling all my time with entertainment and fun - just living for the next weekend. I would rarely read the Bible other than at church, and this was affecting the decisions I made and the way I would look at things. In this time I met my Girlfriend, Ruth.

After we had been going out for a while she shared with me some of her struggles, and I got to know the real person behind the happy mask she always had on. She told me about her depression, and because of this, her moods would go from happy highs to sad

lows, always changing at any time. This made her emotionally dependent and had a huge impact on our relationship. It was hard to live in a way that pleased the Lord when our feelings were so heavily based upon emotions. I wanted to please God, but couldn't seem to move forward. I didn't want to leave Ruth behind. I would talk with Ruth about how Christ can help her to overcome her pain and battles, rather than Doctors and psychologists. It seemed so simple to me, how much more could our own Creator help us! I knew that with all that was going on it just wasn't that simple for her. I would pray for her and encourage her, but I knew she had to come to realize this for herself.

My family and I heard about a Church which was starting up in Newcastle. We began attending Grace Bible Baptist Church, and then the convictions began. I was being convicted about the way I was living, and not honoring God in what I did. I decided to get right with God, and to start living for him, putting him first. Being in a Church where the people lift you up and encourage you in Christ made me realize what I had been missing out on! I Asked Ruth to come to the Easter services my church was having. She came to all three services and later told me how it had encouraged her a lot. She continued coming to Church and later realised that she was never truly saved. We prayed together and she surrendered her life to the will of God. The change I saw in her was a huge encouragement to me. I couldn't help but be jealous of how passionate she was for Christ. Seeing God work through the Church in so many ways continues to encourage me, knowing God is in control.

I have always known God desires that we as Christians should be baptized. My parents taught me this from a young age, but we have never been in a church that I felt comfortable in or belonged to. In the last couple of years I was worried about what people might think of me if I was to be baptized, and was embarrassed to stand up in front of people. When I was going through the topic of Baptism at Bible study, I knew that I couldn't keep putting off what God commands. Every time Pastor Charlie would say, "God loves quick obedience," I knew God was talking to me. I want to follow Christ in all I do, so I have decided to follow him in Baptism as well.

James Munro