



Joanna's Testimony

I was born into a Christian family and was saved when I was about four. I don't remember much about it because I was so young but I know that I would have understood and accepted that Christ came to earth, died and rose again to forgive me from my sin and save me from spending eternity without Him.

Even though I accepted Christ at a young age there are still many things that I struggle with, but God is working in my life and helping me day to day to overcome the many challenges that I face.

As I grew up, I went to a Christian School, and had a great Church, Sunday School and kids club to go to but there was no growth in my life. I remember my sister talking to me about the fact that I didn't spend time with God every day. I would become very annoyed and angry at her because I knew that she was right but I didn't like her pointing it out and telling me what I should be doing. A couple of times I tried to read a little of my Bible everyday but I soon became lazy and stopped again.

Then, when I was about 10 years old, things started to change in my life. My grandpa (my mum's dad), who I was close to, past away and my nanna (my dad's mum) was placed in a nursing home with Alzheimer's and I would never see her again. These things shook me up and I got very angry. I can remember very clearly, talking to God one night and asking Him why these things had happened to me and why He had let it all happen. All of a sudden I thought to myself, 'Hang on, who am I to be questioning what God has done'. He is the Almighty God and I was just a child, how can I question His wisdom? At that moment, I knew that things needed to change and they did. But only after I had confessed and forsaken my pride and anger and asked God to help me.

The next few years were basically uneventful. I still had times when I would fall back into sin but my Heavenly Father would pick me back up and show me the right path to take. When I was about 14 a friend who had recently received

Christ challenged me about getting baptised. I knew that Christ had commanded that we follow Him in a picture of His death burial and resurrection so all I needed to do was to obey.

I have had many struggles and life has not been easy and care free but I can say that my burdens are lighter because I have help carrying them. Even as recently as just a few weeks ago, I had a heavy burden that I had to bear. I was very upset about what had happened, and those around me could comfort me to some degree but it was only when I walked out of the room where I was and sat alone that I was truly comforted. I could feel God's hands around me lifting me up, a bit like a mother or father would for their child who's fallen over. It was only then that I could say, 'Ok Lord, You know what You're doing and I am ok with that, but You will need to help me through this.'

There is a poem that has been a real blessing to me and I would like to read it to you, it's called 'Footprints in the Sand' by Mary Stevenson.

*One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord.
Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky.
In each scene I noticed footprints in the sand.
Sometimes there were two sets of footprints, other times there were one set of footprints.
This bothered me because I noticed that during the low periods of my life, when I was suffering from anguish, sorrow or defeat, I could see only one set of footprints.
So I said to the Lord, "You promised me Lord, that if I followed you, you would walk with me always.
But I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life there have only been one set of footprints in the sand.
Why, when I needed you most, you have not been there for me?"
The Lord replied, "The times when you have seen only one set of footprints, is when I carried you."*