Bruce Ding 12/31/2018

Born and raised in Communist China, my life was never close to God, and I used to consider the Holy Bible just as a book with philosophical stories and myths. I thought everything is in the physical world and every problem has a physical solution. But as I grow up and learn more, I begin to see there’s something we call miracle or supernatural or we consider coincidental that’s just beyond the human comprehension.

I first came to know Jesus through my colleague, Taehwan. I remember that he tried to explain that we are sinners and how we can receive redemption and forgiveness from God through Jesus Christ, His only Son. My first reaction was: I am a good person; I might be mischievous sometimes, but I am not a sinner for sure, so no thanks. After I met my girlfriend (name hidden) and witnessed her baptism, I felt her joy through Christ, and I was so happy for her and beginning to think if I can receive that joy too. After she moved to Purdue University, I experienced a long period of depression, and also frustration from my research. I came to the church, seeking consolation. And through the praise and prayer, I did feel my heart being comforted, and I wanted to know more about Christianity, so I started to take Bible studies with Pastor Kim. Through the lessons, I realized that we are born with sin, separated from our Father, and no matter how hard we try to reach Him, it is always futile. But He loved us so much, so He gave us Jesus, the One and Only way to come back to Him, not because of our effort, but His grace.

I still remember so clearly the moment I was asked if I would receive Jesus as my Lord and Savior: I closed my eyes for a few seconds but suddenly I had this feeling that I should say yes, and then I did, and from that moment, I have been saved. As I continue my journey with the Lord through my daily prayer, by studying and reading the Bible, I started to recognize how perfect and holy our Lord is, and also wanted to grow spiritually. And my growth in spirit can also be reflected in how I behave as a person in this physical world, because I try to live a life following the Lord's commands.

Nowadays, I am having perhaps the hardest challenge in my life. But I always have hope, because the Lord said: For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jer 29:11). As I receive baptism, I publicly profess my faith, and that will give me more strength to face and overcome the hardship. I hope I can keep walking with Christ, and He can allow me to understand more His teaching and keep living a faithful Christian life. Thank you.