

# Share of My Faith

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One day in middle school Geography class, our teacher talked about the three main religions around the world: Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity. He mentioned that Christianity has different branches, including Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, and Eastern Orthodoxy. At that age, I was interested in exploring spiritual matters and the purpose of life, so I asked my mom to help me find a church to visit. At that time, I didn't understand the difference between a church building and the body of Christ. My understanding was very shallow; I thought the church represented the belief of Christianity.

That weekend, she drove me to a local church. As we walked in, we saw many brothers and sisters kneeling down, praying with tears. This was so strange to me because I thought only cults exhibited such behaviors. I turned around and saw a big national flag and some political slogans on the wall facing the audience. I had never seen anything like that in a Buddhist temple. My mom and I felt so out of place and were ready to leave. Then, a sister approached us and told us about underground churches in China, where brothers and sisters open their homes to host Sunday sermons for believers. We did not know that Christianity was persecuted in China at that time, but despite our doubts, we decided to go and take a look. That is how I found a church and started to get to know about God.

Whenever I think about that experience this verse comes to my mind “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”

I started attending this underground church regularly every week. Six months later, the pastor's friends, a Taiwanese couple, hosted a church summer camp for teenagers around my age. Since there was no one to take care of me during the summer holiday, my parents decided to send me to this camp. A group of high school and college volunteers from the USA had come to China to evangelize to Chinese kids. They prepared songs, games, and plays to introduce God to us. One activity left the deepest impression on me: when they talked about how Jesus washed the disciples' feet, they did the same thing to us. While they were washing my feet, I thought, "Who is this God? He is so different from any other god I know." This made me seriously consider my faith. Six months later, I was baptized and accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

My family learned about an opportunity to study abroad in the US at a church high school from the pastor, whose son was also studying there. My parents decided to send me abroad for my studies, which completely changed my life. However, after entering college, I stopped attending church and prioritized schoolwork and other activities over my faith. I felt very lost, and when COVID struck upon my graduation, I couldn't stay in the US and had no choice but to return to China.

I felt a strong need to return to church and study God's word. I asked my high school friend, whose dad is a pastor in China, to help me find a church to join. Despite COVID and severe persecution by the Chinese government, most underground churches were not open to new people. But again, God made a way for me. He prepared a church and a small group for me to join, giving me the opportunity to study God's word every week. As I started working, I gained more life experience, which deepened my understanding of God's word. Experiencing real struggles and trials in daily life helped me better understand what Jesus meant when he said we need to carry our own cross to follow Him.

After four years of being back in church, I have grown significantly in spirit compared to before. I hope God will prepare me not only to fight the battle of faith but also to serve in the church, helping other new believers just as other brothers and sisters helped me.