

The Parchment

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God the Healer of My Heart: My Easter Story

Easter Sunday is one of my favorite days of the year. While it is a major holiday on the Christian calendar, it also marks my spiritual birthday. I wrote this testimony a few years back to share how I came to become a Christian, a follower of Jesus. When I reread my testimony I feel like I am right there where it all started for me.

When I was in high school, I felt that there were three keys to my happiness and success: having a girlfriend, succeeding academically, and excelling in sports. I soon found out that as I accomplished each one of those objectives I still had a deep emptiness inside.

I believe much of my emptiness was related to my skin disease, psoriasis. Since childhood I have had a severe case of psoriasis. This condition causes large areas of my skin to become inflamed, red, scaly, itchy and at times painful. But the pain of psoriasis drove deeper than my skin and right into my heart. Because of the blemishes I saw in the mirror, I did not feel acceptable to anyone--not myself, my family, or my friends. I never wore shorts or short-sleeved shirts for fear of being

asked and ridiculed for my skin. I worked hard in school to try to please teachers and parents that they might love and accept me.

During my early teen years, my father suffered depression concerning his job situation. Christian friends invited him to church desiring to help him. Not long after, I noticed a change in his attitude and demeanor. He went back to work, gave me hugs for the first time in my life, and smiled instead of cried. Through my father's life testimony I decided to visit his church.

On Easter Sunday 1986, after a compelling presentation of the Good News of Jesus Christ, I responded to the pastor's call to put my faith in Jesus. The emptiness in my heart began to be replaced with hope in Christ. I learned that my transgressions against God were forgiven. I began my new relationship with my Heavenly Father that day and was baptized later in June.

I still have a severe case of psoriasis. But God has healed me where it counts--deeply within. I have learned that He accepts and loves me in spite of what I've done. My favorite Bible verse comes from the Apostle Paul: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). God's love and acceptance, His grace, has replaced my longing for acceptance and love from this world. No matter what I do in this world, the key and measure of success is found in Christ--not what might be added to my name. He has healed me from within; He is the healer of my heart.