

## Cel's Testimony

Ever since I can remember, I believed there was a God, but I did not have a personal loving relationship with Him. I finally came to know the Lord when I was in high school, which was, a pivotal point in my life. I remembered longing to know more about the Lord, and to know more about how to live the Christian life. During this time, I attended Bible studies, youth groups and Sunday evening services. I thought that I was a good Christian, but often I found myself thinking and doing things I should not. I know that as long as I am alive, I will be tempted in every way, but I praise God for salvation and for Jesus' righteousness permeating my sinful nature.

A major step in my spiritual walk came when I got to know my friend, Jonathan Murphy. Jonathan was Christ's light to me; he loved the Bible and kept me accountable. One day in January 1995, my cousin and I went free-diving with Jonathan. It proved to be one of our last times together before the Lord called him home. Christianity took on a different meaning for me; it became real. From that point on, the affairs of this world and my ambition to make something out of myself became secondary.

God led me to the Salvation Army where I worked with men in recovery from drugs and alcohol, with the homeless, and with inmates. I realized I enjoy helping people, especially when I see people come to know the Lord. This experience led me to decide to go into full-time ministry.

As I look back, it is clear to me that this is the path God wants me to walk. God has gone before me, preparing the way for me to serve Him for His glory, not mine.

I have taken what the Apostle Paul wrote as the foundation of my testimony: "Whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him."

(Phil 3: 7-9).