

Luke Hahn's Testimony: God Had to Strip Me of Everything

Luke Hahn | *illbehonest.com*

My name is Luke. Last name Hahn. I'm from Northeast Iowa. Born and raised there. I've lived there my entire life other than a few short stints other places. But I've been asked to just give a testimony of how God saved me. So I'm going to try and do that to the best of my ability and give all glory to the God who saved me.

I was raised about as privileged as you could possibly be privileged. I had parents that loved me; parents that never fought - well, if they did, I didn't see it. It was a very happy home. I started school in Catholic school and then was taken out of that when my parents were converted. I was around 4th grade or so. So I heard the gospel from a very young age as well. I heard a good gospel. I didn't hear repentance, but I did hear the gospel of Ephesians, that we are saved by grace; that it's a gift of God. So I knew a lot of Scriptures. I didn't listen a lot. It didn't seem like I took a lot in. But it was there. My parents just lived before me as a Christian should live, and I always appreciated that.

But, as I got into my teens, it wasn't until I was about 13 or so, I had a sister that professed to be saved, and my best friend at the time who I'd been running with for the last 10 years, and within a couple days of each other, they professed to be saved. There were some Gospel meetings going on and that was the first time in my entire life that I really took something seriously when it came to eternal matters. I can remember being in that bathroom and just weeping my eyes out thinking I'm the only one going to hell. That's how it felt. I felt that alone at that time.

So that began, and the Lord was using that, but that basically led into what ended up being a false profession for me. I believe it was within a few weeks of that, and it was more out of convenience than anything. I never really felt like I had anything, but I knew enough to try and hold on; to try and make sure if anybody asked, I knew the right answers. I knew what I needed to say, and I could even kind of appease my own conscience. I did that for years, and I lived in sin. I lived terribly quite honestly. Even my friend that had professed, we indulged in a lot of sin together over the years. I just sunk deeper and deeper.

I look back on it and I can tell one of the greatest things that was very telling for me was I grew apart from my parents - especially my dad. My dad was a Christian and I didn't want anything to do with him. When I was coming home, I was hoping he was leaving. I look at that now. It's terrible. But that's darkness. Darkness wants to stay away from the light. That was me.

So that was my teen years. I look back on it, and I didn't have difficulties. I didn't have trials. I just kind of floated right through my teen years. And then when I was 21, I met the girl that is now my wife. And there were a few short months in there where we were dating. And again, I was top of the world. Everything was great. I had this girl that I loved. I loved her dearly.

But then I was in a car accident four months after I met her in March of 2003. I had just turned 21. At that point, I woke up in a hospital bed that morning, on a Sunday morning, and my dad was leaning over me. It was the first face I saw. He was leaning over me and he said, "Son,

if you had died, would you have been in heaven?" And all I could do was shake my head no. So, that was a point where I gave up my false profession.

A lot of people that know me now, they think that I'm the way I am now because of that traumatic accident. That's not the case. I've had to explain that to so many people. Even as I went through that, I know that it was God's hand that kept me because I should have died in that car accident. But He did the first thing that needed to be done. That was, stripped away my false profession, and secondly, He took my pride from me. I was very prideful. I was a good athlete. I had a lot of things going for me. And I needed that all stripped away.

So, He did that. But I'm so thankful, in His providence He kept the girl Angie - my wife now - He kept her with me. She could have left. The Lord had her stay. And then I had men that were praying for me before, but at this point, they really began to pray for me. So over the course of the next couple years, Angie and I at the time, we got engaged to be married.

I went right back to sin. I was maybe not quite as vile as I was, but I still had no desire for the things of God. But when we got engaged to be married, then all of a sudden, my fiance says, "I want to get married in a church." I thought, ah, this is annoying. I don't want to go back to church. I don't want to go to my church. I don't want to go to her church. I don't really want to go to any church.

So, now we have a problem again. So, we couldn't really come to terms. She was raised in a church that was very legalistic; very works oriented. And I was raised in this church that there were no works at all. Even repentance was borderline works. It was strictly belief in God's grace. So we began to really butt heads to the point that I look back on it now and it was God's sheer mercy that she had the background she did, and we heard about it this morning - the pendulum. She was on one far end and I was on the other end. And for us to come together, we had to dig and dig and dig and dig.

And that's what we did. The first six months of our marriage was not what most people's first six months of marriage was. There was never any fighting like we were going to leave, but it was: "I read this." "This is right. Explain it to me." I'm reading, "For by grace are you saved," and she's saying, "Well, it's works." "Read this: 'unless you have works...'" So we just went back and forth for 6 months. And I can remember it got to the point where literally all we were doing was just throwing fiery darts at each other for hours at a time. I would get home from work before her. And I'd just read ferociously until she got home and then I'd set it aside, because I really didn't want to fight with her, but we still were going back and forth. And then she'd be reading, and we'd get to time to go to bed. We didn't have any kids at the time. And we'd just go back and forth. And that went on (incomplete thought).

There were things throughout that too that maybe I should share, how God answers prayer. I had just gotten out of rehab. I still had a job, but I was on disability pay at the time. My wife had just moved down. She was trying to get a job and she was in nursing school. And we were broke. We were plain poor. And this man, dear man and his wife, we couldn't make our rent. I didn't even know we weren't making our rent, but Angie knew it. She was taking care of that. And we were about \$500 short for rent on rent that's only about \$700. So it tells you how short we were. We weren't even close. But this sweet couple that we know and have prayed for us for our lives, they showed up one evening and they left us a book. It was a Tozer book. I

can't remember exactly what book it was. I think it may have been "Men Who Have Met God." But inside that book was a check for \$500.

So that set the course of: these men have something that we don't have. These people - why are they showing up at our door? Why are they continually inviting us and stopping when it's an hour out of their way? So we knew there was something. But we were really struggling. I was asking my dad a lot of questions. My wife was asking her family questions. She was asking my dad questions. It almost came to a point where we agreed to disagree in some sense. And dad gave me a book. It was just a little book and it's called "Am I a Child of God?" And I was reading through that one night while Angie was at work. She was nursing. And I was laying in my bed, and I was reading this book. The author did it brilliantly. The Lord gave him help. He went through 1 Peter in the Scriptures and then he tied some of Isaiah right in with it in between. It says, "He who Himself bore our sins on the tree..." And then he wrote on how we owed 10,000 talents and Jesus paid them all.

And right there, it wasn't like a lightning bolt or the light clicked on, but I just felt: I get this. I understand it. It's not me. I'd been fighting for grace against my wife for 8 months or better, but I didn't understand it myself. It takes God to open your eyes, and all of a sudden, it was like this flood of: it's done. It's completely done. And what am I fighting for? I'm fighting the Scriptures myself. I'm wasting everybody's time. All I need to do is to look at Christ.

For the first time, I was able to do that. And I was overjoyed. I was joyful. My wife came home. She came in the door, and I thought this is going to be glorious. I'm going to tell her we've got this figured out. I've got it you know. She comes in the door and I told her. She was not happy. She was angry. So, for the first time again, I got, I guess, my first trial as a Christian. I got to have that joy, but yet to begin to really pray for my wife and press in. I could read the Scriptures in a different way and things started to make sense. I began to pray for my wife instead of fighting with her. And He was so kind. The Lord just continued to put people before us. Men would come and minister to us. And even when we were going to this church because we still had kind of floated between a couple of different churches.

And we made it to a church that was a very light gospel - I look at it now. It's pretty shallow, but even the men in there, the Lord used them. They showed us what love is in some sense. But we ended up going back to the church, for a little while, that I grew up in. And the Lord graciously saved my wife about ten months after me. So I look at that and I think of the patience and the forbearance and longsuffering of our God. It's astounding. It's utterly astounding to think of the sin that He'll deal with us in and the pride and the arrogance and how He'll just continually lead us and draw us and draw us until every idol is stripped away. He takes every single one of them. He did for me anyway.

And then the power of prayer. If you had asked me to do this 10 years ago, I've been a Christian for 13 years. Ten years ago, number one, I would have been nervous to do this, because there are people that are going to see this and I want to look right in front of them. I want to speak correctly. I couldn't care less at this point. But then there's also that I had no idea the power of prayer at that time. Where now I look at it and every conversion I've seen or witnessed myself, there's always prayer. There's always so much prayer that goes into it prior to and leading up to that. And I'm so thankful for that.

So, I guess if there's one thing that I would encourage anybody is to pray. And that if you're in a trial, if you're in a situation - there's days, don't get me wrong, there's days I don't want to be... There's times when being in a chair is so hard. It's never for me that it's hard. It's for others. The Lord has blessed me with four children now and a beautiful wife. There's things I can't do. There's things that they want me to be able to do. And I can't do some of those things, but at the end of the day, they know. They know and I know that the Lord is at hand.

What He says in Exodus 4:11, "Is it not I that make the mute and the deaf and the dumb?" So I can teach my children; I can teach others that trials are from the Lord, and they're for our good. They bring character. They bring joy. I have had the opportunity to tell so many people that I wouldn't trade this chair for a thing. Not one thing. Because I am fully convinced had the Lord not brought this to me, I'd be lost as could be. I'd be chasing after the things of the world. The temptation is there even as a Christian, so as a non-Christian, I wouldn't have any hope. No hope. So I'm so thankful. I'm just so thankful for Christ and what He's done.

And the blessings... We've not given up anything. We heard it again this weekend. We've not given up anything. The joy we have in Christ; the life we have; the hope we have. We need always be prepared to give an answer for the hope that is within you. There's only one true hope. Everything else is going to go, but there's that one true hope and it lasts forever. I just want to encourage everyone. Anyone that's listening and anyone that has anything going on in their lives, just to understand that it's from the Lord and He's using it for your good. If you're hearing it, if you're questioning it, pursue it until you have that relief of guilt and sins forgiven and knowing that He is the true God. Thank you.

Follow-up Discussion:

It's amazing how you can look back on your testimony and the things you say. If we did this once a year, the different things that can be important to you at different times. When you look at the providence of God and you look at the sovereignty of God in all things, and how (incomplete thought). There's always that central theme of what Christ has done for us, but as your church situation changes, as your family changes, whether it's growing or shrinking, you come more to a fuller realization all the time of what God has really done for you. That just amazes me that the longer you're a Christian, it's like He just slowly enlightens you to see that He was there; He was there; He was there. I can still remember those first couple times - you know when Bob Jennings, I'll never forget, I'd only been a Christian maybe not even a full year. And we were at the conference in Hannibal, Missouri. And Bob tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Can you give your testimony?" And I said, "I guess." I said, "When?" He goes, "Now." I said, "Okay." I don't really want to do this, but I guess I don't have a choice.

So I go up there and my wife had been converted like two weeks before. My head's just spinning. And we found out we're having a baby. There's nothing better. I got up there and bawled like a baby for like 40 minutes straight. I don't think anybody understood a word I said. So I look at that now and I'm like that was miserable. That was terrible for everybody else. But for me, that was the greatest thing ever. I got to share what God had done for me and all these great things. And then as life progresses, it's just amazing how things change. But that one thing - when we've passed from death unto life. That changes your outlook on the entire rest of your life. It's amazing. It's amazing, too, so many people - that's why I'm so thankful, too. I look at my

life. My dad has really opened the way for me to have - I don't want to say an easy Christianity, but I had good teaching right from the start. So many people have to struggle and find good teaching. Where dad had met Bob Jennings, and then through that, he gets introduced to Charles, and he gets introduced to Paul Washer. So, two weeks after my wife's converted, we go to Kirksville, Missouri and hear Paul Washer. I'd never heard anything really all that good; then we go there and what does he preach on? The true gospel. And it's like my wife and I just sat there in the front row, and we got back to the hotel room and we're like kids at a candy store. Just like at the conference, they have all these pamphlets and leaflets and everything - all the tracts. And we both get back and it's like armloads - and we sat there and read them until like 3:00 in the morning. We're like, whoa, you've got to read this one. You've got to read this one. And so just sound teaching from the start makes a difference. And then men praying for me. Valerd, and my dad, and Bob, men that really prayed. Still do pray. So that's been good.