

# Charo Washer's Testimony

Paul Washer's Wife

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I guess I can only start by saying what I've come up here to say to you, and that is that, while I was... while I was in Texas, the Lord saved me, and... And I just want to give Him thanks and the glory for that. I know it is a shock for most, it's been a shock for a lot of my friends. And I guess, after saying that, I have to give you a little bit of a background before I go even back to this. When I was 14 years old, I attended a Christian school, and I was asked if I wanted to have Jesus in my heart, and of course I raised my hand, because in our school if you didn't raise your hand, you were going to be brought up, forward somehow. So I raised my hand, and of course, you know, in those days, no one raised their hand because they wanted to go to Hell, willingly at least, so, ya, you know, wanted to love Jesus, and you wanted to be good, and you wanted to do good things. I grew up in a moral home, like, I guess, most of us, and my parents taught me right from wrong, so, going to this school was neat. You know, it was just, lets read about the Lord, and learn Bible stories, and I simply prayed a prayer when I was 14, I didn't have any form of repentance in my heart, I didn't have any hurt in my heart for sin, I didn't have any pain for what I had done. I mean, I was 14, I was not a "bad kid" by any means, I hadn't done anything "bad," you know, by the standards of the world, because, you know sometimes people put sizes to sins, and colors, almost like jokes And there wasn't any of that, it was, "Ya, sure I want Jesus," just like "Why not?" And, I remember just thinking, "Great" you know, I had a lot of good friends, and mostly I just hung around with missionary kids, and my friends were Christians, and so it was easy to dress like a Christian, it was easy to look like a Christian, it was easy to go to church. That's what all the kids did. I pretty much did what all the kids did, and that's what we all did. We didn't go drinking, or doing this or doing that because nobody did. And so, so to speak, it was pretty easy for me to fit in that mold.

Eventually... you know I guess I compare that to the camp--the youth camp syndrome. You know, everybody all hyped up about doing this, "Oh let's all go do it." It wasn't necessarily bad, but it was just doing things, it was just being nice, being a good person. And when I was 16, I felt that God was calling me to missions, to serve Him. Like a lot of the kids at youth camp, you know, you'd throw your stick, and "God has called me," and ya a lot of us felt like God was calling us. And, well a lot of them are not even in church anymore, you know, and here I am, but

you know, at 32 I come to know the Lord. And it's amazing how it was just truly God in all of this, because I would be active in church, I would read— well I wouldn't say reading the Bible, but— in our church we weren't really taught how to read the Word, how to study the Word. So the youth would always, you know, we would talk amongst ourselves and things: "Are you reading the Word?" And we were like, "Ya." "So how do you do it?" "Well you just take the Word like this, and you flip it around, and wherever you put your finger, that's where God wants you to read that day." So I thought, "Okay." So that's what we did, we had no earthly idea, we had no discipleship whatsoever, as far as knowledge of good as God sees it, knowledge of wrong as God sees it. Not what you think or even what your parents think about—but the Word of God.

So I just grew up in my own imagination of what was right and wrong. Or just catching a little here and there from preaching. It wasn't true desire to read the Word, that was another thing that was lacking in my life. And at 20 years old, I marry a missionary, and I did have a love for missions, I had a love for people, and I wanted to evangelize, I had evangelized some people, I'd witness. And to that, I guess the only explanation is that God can speak through a mule, He can speak through anyone. And some well-meaning friends that I told this to—what just recently happened, They're like, "Well it's not that you were not saved, it's just that you know, sometimes we kind of grow cold in our love for God, but it's not that, because I mean, look at you, you've been a missionary for 12 years." And I'm thinking, for a minute I was like, "Wait a minute, you know, I live here, I know what happened here. It's not, it's not what I've done, because then you're saying that it's all works. I've earned my way to heaven or something? Or is it that... You know, well then, you're saying that a lot of people that have done good things have made it to Heaven that way. It's not that, I know that I've been empty for years, and it's almost like I'm doing the right thing. Ya, I go and do this, I go and do that, but there's no zeal, there's no heart, there's no desire to read the Word; it's almost like, "Check, I've got to do that." You know, like your devotions, because, "Check," you do this, "Check," you do that. That's what good people do. You know, and all of a sudden it's like God was confronting me as years would go by with the fact that I was resting out, because good people can do so much, and still, all of a sudden they're at the end of the rope. But it's not natural. Like for a Christian it's natural to love someone, or to desire to witness to someone, or to— just to want the Word, even when you get up and you think, "If I don't read the Word of God, I'm just going to be a mess today." Or all of a sudden you feel a void in your heart, like I do now, for example. It was a thing of "Well, I haven't done that; I need to, I need to." It wasn't "I want to; I desire to." Or even praying, you know, before I would-- "I'll pray for my dad to be saved, I've got to pray for my grandparents to be saved." It was this, "Check, check, check" of a list of to do, it wasn't a desire, there wasn't a

spirit desire in me. It was just my to do list.

Another thing I realized was there was no power in my life to overcome sin. I would see things in my heart that were wrong, see things in my life that were wrong and just go, “Man, I just need to get a grip and do this, I just really need to buckle up and do this, or stop doing this.” And I would just beat myself up all the time, “I cannot overcome this in my life, why am I having so much trouble with this?” And I would see other Christians that I knew, and think, “Ya, they have problems, but it’s almost like... they overcome. Why is it that I am stuck on this one thing, or on this other thing, why is it that it’s hard for me to forgive? Why is it that it’s hard for me to stop doing this, or not do this, or whatever? Why is it so hard?” And I’m not painting a picture of a Christian that is, you know, walking on a cloud that doesn’t have problems, but there is that power to overcome, and I could not see in my life that it was that. It was just struggle, and struggle, and I felt like I was getting worse, that I was just even struggling to appear... to APPEAR godly. And I’m thinking, “A Christian does not have to struggle for that. I mean, at least I knew enough from preaching and years of, you know, at least hearing my husband, and hearing other preachers. You know, and other things, I would wonder.

When preaching was going on, I would just—my mind would be on the grocery list. It was like my mind was somewhere, it was always wandering. And I would, if I saw something that applied to my life, I would think, “Well, it’s just that... blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.” You know, excuse after excuse, or even the fact that I would think, “Oh, that person can do that, but that’s because they are emotional, I’m just not an emotional type of person.” You know, “they cry and they go to the altar, but well, I’m just not that kind of person.” It was always an excuse for my ways, it was always, “Well, so and so is ministering, oh that’s because she wants to be nice and show off.” It wasn’t anything about me, it was always an excuse for what was going on in my heart to make me feel better. But that wasn’t even working anymore. It wasn’t about anyone else, it wasn’t about what so and so was doing, what so and so wasn't doing.

It was all my heart, and I remember hearing Paul, and even here in Texas when he was preaching, he had been preaching on ‘How do you know if you’re a Christian’, and every time he preached that, I would squirm in my seat, because it was like, “How do I just go through this test and feel okay at the end,” because every time it would just make me cringe, it’s like, “I’m not passing, and if I’m passing I’m barely passing.” And then all of a sudden I’m thinking, “Wait a minute, you either do pass these tests of 1 John, or you don’t. You don’t barely make it like you’re barely making a D. You know, you either pass because there is some... someone in your life that has, you know, carried you through this. It’s not this, “Oh, you know, am I—well, It’s not that, it’s not that I don’t love someone, it’s just that, well, we just don’t get along. It’s not hate,

it's this." Or, "It's not that I love the world, it's just that, I mean, everybody likes to shop." I mean, it was just crazy little things that I could always excuse, it wasn't ever a hard look at my sin. And God—and I could feel that God was saying a lot of times, you know, you need to get alone and think about this. You need to think about this. And I was like, "Oh no, I'm just, I don't know... PMSing, maybe that's what it is," I said, "I'm just having a bad day, it's not that I'm not a Christian." I had to run from that. And all of a sudden it was like, "I'm putting off something that could mean, you know, eternity for myself, and I can't do that anymore." When we were in San Antonio, Paul had to preach there, and he had been preaching again on it, and oh, I just would totally squirm in my seat, and think you know, "I can't—I'm not, I'm not a Christian." I mean I finally had to admit it to myself, "I am not a Christian. I cannot struggle so much and just literally have no life, no desire to do this, I just make myself." I mean, even in Peru, when I was a missionary, you know I guess at the beginning stages of mission work, and everything is pretty, and everything is nice, and you get along with people, and everything goes good... But when those things start to wear out, then you really see if you're there because of God, or if you're there because you're doing the right thing. And I came here and, oh man! I had such a struggle when I came here. I didn't want to be here, I didn't want to be in the States, I wanted to go back to Peru. And I thought, "Well, I'm just not ministering because... because of this, and because of that, and... excuses. And eventually, it was like God said, "No, it's not about the place, it's not about someone, it's not about this, it's not about anything but you, it's about your heart, it's about the fact that there's nothing in your heart. And it was a very, very hard look when we were in San Antonio, like I was saying. We were sitting outside, there was a tent, because the church is too small and it was hot. And there was a prostitute going up and down the road... And I remember looking at her, thinking, "I'm no better than her! I mean someone can see, can take a look at her and see, 'Oh my gosh,' you know, 'she's a prostitute,' you know exactly what's wrong with her, you can see it, it's just in your face. And all these people sitting around me don't have a clue; they have no idea. It's so easy to look pretty and "churchy," and to wear a long skirt, and to not wear this kind of thing that will give you away, but the heart—God can see the heart," and I had, I mean, I had done, I guess, all the gymnastics I could possibly do to even appear godly at that point. And it was wearing out. I mean, I could see all of a sudden, "I am no better than that woman at this moment, and nobody can see that." And God could. And at least God opened my eyes at that point. I literally wanted to run out of there screaming, I was like, "If I hear another sermon, I am just going to blow up and die or something. I just know, I know, it's like, I know, know I'm not a Christian. And it's not about what I do, because no one can tell. It's not about anything else—and my heart, and you can see my heart." And it was just such an awesome thing,

and it was a freeing thing because first I thought, “Okay, if I admit that I’m not a Christian, then oh man, you know,” “what a testimony, the preacher’s wife has not been a Christian for 12 years, or plus, or whatever, more. That’s pitiful.” And here I was struggling with all that stuff, and I’m like, “You know, I don’t care. Someone’s going to get mad at me because I’m not really wanting to go to Hell willingly? Ok. And it was really something. Another way that God showed me that I really wasn’t a Christian: I was becoming so critical. Even in my own heart, I was becoming so hardened, and first you know—it’s so wild—I used to think, “Well, it’s because of this, because of that.” You have no idea, I guess, the ways in which your own heart will even deceive you. When you want to give yourself peace, you will try and try and try and try to tell yourself every possible thing you can, but when there’s no peace, there’s no peace. And if you belong to the Lord, there is peace. I mean, there can be struggles, and there can be trials, and there can be things, but there is peace at some point. And there is an end to things. And there wasn’t one for me. When I told this to Paul—because I hadn’t told him, and... I hadn’t told him. I had been struggling with this for about 3 years. We were driving back from a little thing that we went to do with Ian, and Paul was sitting there and he said, “You know, I don’t know what’s going to happen with our lives, I mean, I don’t know why the Lord has us here in Texas or anything, but all I delight in is just being in God’s will.” And I literally wanted to jump out of the car, I was like, I was like, I cannot even, I cannot even hear His name without just feeling like “I am in deep trouble here. I am not delighting in anything, I am in real trouble,” And I think—and I told him, I said, “Ok, here goes.” I told him everything, I said, “I really feel like I don’t know God.” And I told him everything. And he just listened and he said, “You know, from what you’ve told me, I cannot tell you that you are a Christian.” And that’s the only thing I needed to hear. It’s almost like, if someone would have just told me that at some point. I guess if I had shared that with someone... Just to hear that was enough, it’s like, “Thank you, I needed to hear that, I needed to have someone else say, “Yes, on the basis of what you’re telling me, I can’t tell you you’re a Christian, because, ya what you’re saying is, pretty, you know, evident that that’s what’s in your heart. And we got home that night, and I just sat there and read the book of 1 John, and I started going through each verse. And I just saw one thing, it’s so amazing, the book of 1 John, because it’s not like, you know those crazy magazine quizzes that you take: “Are you a friendly person?” You know, “If you score from 1 to 10, well you need to work on your personal people skills, If you score from 10 to 20, well, sort of, and then, you know, or ya, you’re the greatest, you’re the friendliest person in the world.” It’s not a thing of score, you know, it’s a thing of if you’re failing at one of those tests, it overflows to the rest of your life. If you’re loving the world, it’s going to overflow to the other areas of your life. If you’re hating someone, it’s going to overflow to the

other areas of your life. If you acknowledge God with your mouth, and you deny Him with the rest of your being, then it's all going to overflow, and it's going to be evident that you're not a Christian. And it was so amazing, after that, I just confessed, it's like, "God, I have never known that I am a sinner until now." I mean, I've said it, you know, "You're a sinner, I'm a sinner, everybody's a sinner," but, you know, I've never been-- It's never been so specific in my life, I've never had it this close to my face." It's always been a generality, you know, "We're all bad." But when it comes down to pointing out the specifics of your life, and when God is the one that does it, it's a whole different story. And I just prayed that night, and I was just like, "God, I really... I really am at the end of my rope, I really don't know how to be better, because I can't be better. I don't know how to do any of this, and I can't, I don't have the power, I don't have the desire to do it." That was the hardest thing, it's like, "God, I have no desire, and even if I go ahead do it, and someone can see me and go, "Oh, that's really nice, what she did." It's like, "God, there's no desire in me, there's just nothing!" It's like I'm dead." And that night, I just cried out before the Lord, and said, "God, save me, I've never seen myself as a sinner like I'm seeing myself now. It was like, "Oh yeah, sure I want to go to Heaven." But it was never about that, it was all about God. And it's amazing how He's taken 12 years of allowing me to be a part of the ministry, and everything else, and all of a sudden opening my eyes and showing me who I really was. And I just praise Him and thank Him for that, and just wanted to share that with all of you.

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