

John's Testimony

I was born into a Catholic home; and, as most Catholics do, I just went through the motions of religion. I first heard the Gospel as a child through visiting Baptist cousins, and through going to church with them in Ennis. However, I didn't really listen to or understand any of it.

I definitely knew that there was nothing for me in Catholicism. When I was a young teenager, I told my parents that I wasn't going to go to the Catholic church anymore, and that I was going to look somewhere else for God. I visited a place called "The Lord's Church" in Carrigaline; and, after a two-hour session of seeing people shaking and shouting "AMEN" and "Praise the Lord," I decided that I wouldn't be going there again!



Not finding any Baptist church nearby, I left church for a while, although I still went to some youth activities with my cousins, and even to a retreat in Kerry. As I grew older, the teenage years got the better of me. I ended up getting into all sorts of trouble, and getting caught in many worldly lusts.

When my Dad was saved in 2003, he started to tell me all about Jesus. He told me that I was a sinner that was going to Hell. How angry I was! I couldn't even have a conversation with him anymore without Jesus' joining in. I thought that he was self-righteous to tell me about heaven after his getting caught up with drink in previous years. I was also masking a deep fear of being misled by mankind into a false religion. What made this religion *the* one?

On 11th September 2003, Dad asked me whether I wanted to go to heaven or hell when I die. By default, I answered "Heaven." He tried to explain that through Jesus Christ I could be forgiven of my sins and receive eternal life. I don't think I understood fully, but I agreed to "get saved" because I knew how happy it would make him.

As time went by, the fact that I still didn't want to go to church made him question my sincerity; but he was adamant that a seed had been planted in my heart. I was pretty happy with my life. I was sure that I was going to marry my girlfriend — but things fell apart suddenly. I spiralled into a deep depression for some time.

After my sister was saved, I was able to discuss a lot of questions with her; but it was Christmas of 2005 before I allowed myself to go to church regularly. A week or two before the Revival in March 2006, after a discipleship lesson, I finally surrendered to Jesus fully, and begged Him to come into my wicked heart and save me! Praise God that he accepted me!

Cameron Arnold and Buddy Blunkall, who had come over from America for the Revival, also helped me to get through some further doubts. It turned out that I was looking for a feeling rather than resting my faith on God's Word.

Since then, I've become a new person, and God has called me to be part of the ministry sometime in the future. My life has been changed so much for the better, that I want everyone to know that Jesus loves them, and can save them, too!