



Salvation Stories

SALVATION IS A "BEFORE AND AFTER" EVENT!

I am Vini. Before I go into my story, I would like to tell you briefly about my background. I was born into a Catholic Christian family of 12 children. Yes, I have five brothers and six sisters. I am the eighth child of my parents. My father was a fisherman and a witch doctor. When I was in 8th grade, my parents received their salvation experience with Jesus and started to attend my uncle's church. Since I was small, I went along with them. Towards the end of my 9th grade, I had a question if I die, where will I go? This question leads me to take baptism.

Till my 12th grade, everything went well. However, Once I completed 12th grade, my brother told my parents not to allow me to study further. He started to accuse me of many things which were unknown to me. Sadly, the church we attended didn't focus much on a person's change of heart; instead, they emphasized a person's outward/external change (like wearing a white dress and removing jewels) more than his/her relationship with Jesus. I saw many believers who were always judgemental towards others instead of loving others. So I rebelled against my family eventually I rebelled against God. Though I had faith in God I was not able to fully commit my life to Him. I went through a period of stress which gave me suicidal thoughts. I wanted to listen to those thoughts, but nothing succeeded.

When I was 20 years old, my parents started to find a suitable marriage partner for me (In India, arranged marriages by parents are common). But I thought I wasn't ready for marriage. Then, I realized that marriage could be the way for me to escape from my current situation.

So I started to pray that I should go and live in a place far away from my native town and that the person who would say yes to marrying me should not ask or demand any dowry from my parents. God fulfilled my request! PTL. God answered many of my prayers, So I started to see God as a magic man. After my marriage, my husband helped me grow spiritually and understand the Bible.

Those days, we conducted Sunday prayers in a small house church and were struggling to meet our daily needs. It was hard for me to accept our financial situation, but my husband was without any worries about our family's needs. He used to quote apostle Paul's words that we read in Philippians 4: " I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the

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circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well-fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:11-13). Initially, it wasn't easy for me, but after two years, I submitted to God and trusted him for our financial matter using the same verse. And till today, God is helping me to live without financial worries. I praise God for that!

Well. Is this the end of my story? Definitely No. Though God helped me overcome my fears about financial problems, there were still many issues that I could not overcome. Since I could not study as I wanted, I had emotional trauma and struggled with an inferiority complex. As I said earlier, I married just because I wanted to escape from my hometown; I had not fully understood what marriage was. God knew what to do when we had crises in our marriage life!

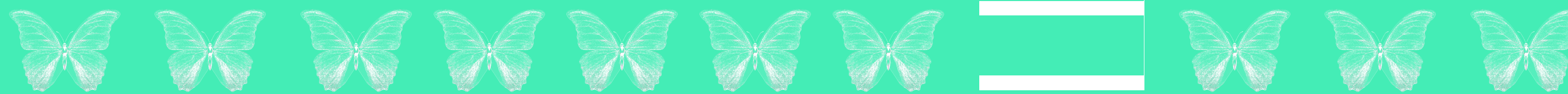
At the same time, God prepared my husband and led him to join a seminary as a student. After coming to the college, God started to work within me. It wasn't a quick process, but the process that God began in me also brought good fruits. I was able to come out of my stress of comparing myself with others, and I was able to understand what is all about family (So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate. Mat 19:6). God taught me not just finish my experience with Him through the wonders and miracles but hold on to Him in all situations. The moment I start walking with God, I cannot explain the joy that He gives, but you have to experience it. I am now able to say that more than my education or status, having Christ is the most precious thing!

Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. Psalm 34:5

This verse became true in my life!

Here is the poem which God enabled me to write when I came out of comparing myself with others:

With whom I compare myself
Who do I want to be like
Whom I want to see in me
Should I compare myself with others
To be jealous of how they are
Mere comparison with the human world
Will make to be a fool
Want to see the image of others in me
This leads me to feel like
I am imageless.



Will I gain anything by comparing with others
That I am staring at
Anything, Nothing.
Oh Lord my God, help me to compare
And to see the image of my creator in me!

If I want to say all the goodness and faithfulness about God in my life, it is
inexpressible in words. So I will stop here. The story I shared is not my story; it is
HIS story. All praise to Him alone. May God be glorified!

