

CHANGING PATHS

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'The one who hung the earth hangs on a tree; who fixed the heavens is fixed to a cross.' With these words, the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus is described by the 2nd century theologian Melito of Sardis. With solemn meditation, we reflect on this historic event through which we become reconciled to God. Through Christ's death, our debts were paid. Then, through His resurrection on that first glorious Easter morning, our salvation was assured. By grace are we brought into the Church of believers through faith in this most happy news. He is risen, indeed! Each story of every member joining the communion of saints is precious, almost more so when we learn of faith born years after the initial seed was planted. We hope the words below of a former student in Taiwan, Vicky, bring you further cause to rejoice in the new life that we have in the resurrection of our Lord:

It was my last year in middle school and my sister who is one year older than me went to Concordia Middle School that time so she knew about Friday Night Bible Study (a weekly ministry event at our local church in Chiayi, Taiwan) and she was invited to go there. After she went a few times she told me, It's fun. They sing English songs and play games and there we can learn English with American teachers. Let's go together! So I went with her. I remember they gave me a Bible the first time I went...everyone welcomed me with big smile saying hi Vicky. Then I started to go there on some Fridays...it was the first time I heard stories about Jesus. I couldn't understand everything and I was pretty shy that I didn't talk much to others there but I like the singing they always start with...that time I didn't know exactly what we are singing about or who we are singing to but I just enjoyed it!! It was the first time I saw people praying to unseen God. I have seen people praying to Buddhas and the gods in temple...it was something very new to me. I felt warm in my heart (this is a common way for Chinese speakers to express a sense of welcome and contentment) but I also doubt if that God is really there, can he really hear it. I remember I tried praying a few times when I felt lonely and it would always make me feel peaceful...then I started to think hmmm maybe this Jesus really exist. At first I only thought I was going to learn English there (at the Friday Night Bible Study) but in that year the seeds was planted in my heart I got to know there seems to be a God that i did not know before and he seems to care about me. So later when I was 16 when I was brought to church i heard sermons in Chinese talking about God and his Son Jesus and our sins...I knew I heard about this God before, he is good (and) I want to know him. (Later), I was baptized. I'm very thankful that Friday Night Bible Study introduced Jesus to me at a young age.



Matt and Dee Dee with one of the participants of the long-established Friday Night Bible Study in Chiayi, where many hear about Jesus for the first time. (archived photo)

Melito continues: 'The One hanged on a tree, The One buried in the earth, The One raised from the dead and who went up into the heights of heaven, The One sitting at the right hand of the Father, ...This One is the Alpha and the Omega...the beginning and the end...the beginning indescribable and the end incomprehensible. This One is the Christ.'



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