

THE RETREAT THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

Hi all, my name is Henry Lim. At first, I was very reluctant to write my testimony, but in my heart, I knew that God wants me to write it down and share with everyone who may have gone through the same situation of having depression, was once lost (now found or still in the process), and questioning themselves where is God when he or she needed him. So here is my testimony and is my battle against fear, anxiety and panic attacks as a Christian.



Since I received Christ on Good Friday, 14th April 2017, I am constantly struggling with my health, especially my heart problem which has led to fear, anxiety and panic attacks which in turn became depression and contemplating suicide. Since April 2017 till before the 2019 retreat; I was in and out of hospital for almost 2 to 3 times per month. From a medical point of view, I was suffering from Cardiophobia. I spent a lot of money for a Psychiatrist to treat my phobia but it did not work. My wife Bee Teng and 2 teenage sons; Darren Lim and Malcolm Lim has suffered because of my condition. Sometimes at wee hours of the night, I can have sudden panic attack and my wife will send me to either NTFH or NUH.

The suffering is very real and it paralyses me totally. I would be so scared to be alone that I can't even take a bath or go to toilet, cannot travel alone in a bus or even take the lift alone. The worst part is that every night I am very afraid to go to sleep and in the morning I have a fear of waking up which everyone will take for granted. This caused me to suffer from Stress type level 2 and 3. It led to health disorders like fatigue (constant tiredness and lack of energy), severe gastric problems, constant high blood pressure that damage my heart muscle, dizziness and almost every week have sore throat and flu, constant diarrhoea and poor diet. Besides these disorders, I also have a 3 cm cyst in my right brain and my left kidney, backache, torn left shoulder tendon and neck slip disc that causes numbness to my left facial muscles and limb.

All the above condition has forced me to step down from my post as an Assistant Operations Manager in my company. A lot of high-profile meetings and projects I was not able to undertake or commit. But my General Manager

was kind enough to accept my condition and retain me in his team. However, I am not sure how long this will last, if my condition doesn't improve.

My only comfort come from attending church service every Sunday and cell group meeting every fortnight on Friday evening. Every day is a real struggle. Before I have this condition I was a very confident, independent and a can-do guy. I was so confident to a stage that every difficult task was possible. Nothing is impossible to me and the more difficult, the more I like to take it up. A very competitive person, taking all things and people for granted. I was a Christian when I was young. I joined Boy's Brigade and did Bible Knowledge study when I was in secondary school. I also attended church service during my primary and secondary school years. But after I left secondary school, I stopped attending church till April 2017 as I still resent God for taking away my mother (Lung Cancer) when I was doing my PSLE. During that period of time; my heart was always hollow and was always looking for something to fill it up. I always cursed and swear at God for things that didn't go my way. I numbed myself by working hard and climbing up the corporate ladder very fast. I became an emotional eater, stuffing myself with buffet every week, smoke, lead a sinful life and prayed to idols during the Chinese 7th month festival.

Then on 29th February 2017, something started to happen. While working at my office desk, my heart suddenly beat very fast and I experienced chest pains. My colleague called an ambulance and I was sent to NUH A&E. The doctor had to inject me with morphine to stabilize me. In the A&E, I started to pray sincerely to God to forgive me and give me a chance. I promised him that I will be a good person and find a church to attend every Sunday. Three days later, I was discharged from hospital and back to normal health. But I did not do what I promised to God, I continue with my old lifestyle. Then on 31st March 2017 after coming home from a very late night of working. The same fast beating of my heart happened again and this time it was more painful than the first one. Ambulance was called and I was in NUH A&E again. I tried praying to God but I felt this time He was very angry with me for breaking my promise to Him. Nothing happened and my fast heart beat continued throughout the night till next day. From there, I started to suffer from anxiety attacks and it melted me down totally. I was warded for about 10 days and since then my health and mental condition started to deteriorate. From then on I was in and out of hospitals (NUH and NTFGH) as if it was my second or third home. Even with many prayers from church members and pastors, it did very little to help improve my condition.

Starting of this year, God in my heart told me to pick up the Bible and read it. He also told me that healing will be coming soon but at His timing. He told me

to listen to His voice and instructed me to learn and carefully study every condition that each time caused me to be admitted to the hospital. And every time, I fall He will tell me to stand up and be of courage. Certain times he told me to be still and trust in Him. But sometimes I was able to make it and at other times I wasn't able to, as the panic attacks were too intense. I continued to fall more and more. January and June this year was my worse months of suffering. I felt that Satan was playing with my mind and he was constantly breaking me down to a point of total depression and contemplating suicide. But because of Rev Anthony, Deacon Peter and my mentor Martin Cheah teaching, caring, concern and prayer, I was able to hold on. (I did not tell them I have thought of suicide and not even to my family members).

In June before the church retreat, God told me to be patient and stay strong with a word from Isaiah 41:10 and Psalm 23:1. It was also the Pentecost week 9th June 2019, I started to question myself if there really is a Holy Spirit and if there was, where is He. How come he did not help me when I needed him most? It was written in the Bible John 15:26 and John 16:5-8. What gift do I have as it was also written in 1 Corinthians 12 and why all this suffering as I have already repented my sin and was baptised in Dec 2017. I also had doubt that was I baptised by water or Holy Spirit as in 1 Corinthians 12:13. I started to question God and my mentor Martin Cheah. But in my heart; God keep on telling me to be patient.

Then the week of church retreat came, I was very eager to attend as I heard that there was teaching of healing and restoration by Rev Philip Tan. However, 2 days before the retreat I was having my medical appointment and my blood pressure for no reason went up to 200/101 mmHg. The pressure did not come down after a few more measurements and I was rushed to A&E which subsequently warded me for observation that Tuesday night. On Wednesday morning, my blood pressure still didn't come down even after the doctor changed my heart medicine the night before. I was monitored every hourly and still no improvement. I did tell the doctors that the next day I was to travel to Johor for my church retreat. They said that they cannot discharge me as I was a high-risk cardio patient and my blood pressure wasn't stable. Feeling lost and dishearten, I messaged Rev Anthony and my mentor Martin Cheah about my situation and requested prayers. I also started to pray very hard to Jesus. I spent my quiet time with Him on my hospital bed in my ward. Suddenly my heart became very calm as it seems that everything will come out fine by trusting Him. Then at 17:00hrs in the evening; the nurse came to me and said that I can be discharged. What a miracle; Hallelujah!! I was so happy that I quickly called or messaged everyone that knew my situation. My wife Bee

Teng came and brought me home. We packed everything and were ready for the retreat. I was so joyful that I couldn't sleep that night.

At the retreat, while at lunch in the hotel, Sister Se Ping brought Rev Philip and his wife to sit with us. I can sense that it was God's arrangement for us to start a conversion with Rev Philip and tell him about my brokenness. However, I dared not tell him. That night after the sermon I was told that whoever wants to do the prayer walk can stay behind. In fact, it was a miscommunication and the actual prayer walk was to start the following day morning after the service. I believe that God set up this miscommunication in-order for me to have personal time with Him by rebuilding my altar with Him. After sitting at a chair facing the wall for about 45 mins, I suddenly feel weighted down by a force with electrifying sensation travelling all over my body from the hair on my head to my toes. Then I suddenly started to cough forcefully. Nothing came out from my mouth; I quickly forced myself to wake up and get out of the chair to find my wife. I thought I was being overcome by an evil spirit. That night I was badly shaken and had a panic attack. I took my anxiety pill and after a while I went to sleep with fear.

The next morning, while having breakfast, Rev Philip Tan and his wife came to sit with us. This I believe was also God's arrangement. I related to him what happened the previous night and also my health condition. Being concerned, Rev Philip Tan said that he wanted to minister to us privately after his sermon.

That afternoon after the durian session and queuing for our turn, Rev Philip Tan invited us in and asked us how he can help me. I told him my life story from the passing of my mum, how I resented God, my health situation with anxiety and constant panic attacks and my encounter with a spiritual force the night before. Rev Philip Tan explained to me that I was filled with lots of negative thoughts and toxic feelings in my soul. This needed to be removed in order for the Holy Spirit to fill me and start His work in me. I also ask him to pray for me to have JOY and to LOVE people again.

He said that he will pray for me but I will vomit out those toxins inside me. At first, I thought it was only a normal prayer like those from Rev Anthony or Deacon Peter. But this prayer was very different, the Holy Spirit came to me with the same sensation and feeling and I started to cough nonstop. No food came out except for stomach juice and burping. This coughing happened twice. After that Rev Philip Tan continued to pray for my restoration and healing. With that prayer I can see bright light with my eye closed and the feeling of JOY and LOVE. I also started to cry with joy. Before Rev Philip Tan said AMEN; I suddenly saw a beautiful rainbow in my mind. Rev Philip Tan

told me that it was my covenant with GOD that He will give me His PEACE, LOVE & JOY. With that I also believe that my healing process has started as I continue to experience the Holy Spirit when I continue to build an altar with Him for every prayer, learning and Bible reading. The most amusing thing is that on Tuesday night which is 3 days after returning from the retreat, I had a family prayer with us holding each other's hands. During the prayer; the Holy Spirit came upon me and assisted me in prayer and both my 2 teenage sons felt the same electrifying sensation. AMEN.

Sometimes we need to learn to be still, trust His timing and GOD will do the fighting for you (Exodus 14:14). When He tells you to be patient; you better do so. (Hebrew 10:36) Be courageous (Psalm 56:3-4, Isaiah 41:10-13, 1 Corinthians 16:13 & Hebrew 13:5-6) and always remember Psalm 23. Even though my healing is still incomplete and I still experience anxiety attacks. I strongly believe that I need to walk in faith in Him and the calmness that He has given me to overcome all odds and difficulties. I also know that He will fully restore me and use me to be His vessel to help others.



I will like to give praise and thanks to GOD for giving me this salvation. Glory to Him! His LOVE for us is faithful and forever. Aside to that I also want to thank Rev Philip Tan and his wife for their prayer and love. Rev Anthony for his constant prayer, care and concern for my family and I. Deacon Peter for his wonderful teaching and prayer when I suffered panic attacks and finally my mentor Martin Cheah, for his guidance, teaching and being someone who I can relate my situation to. There are also many more people that I want to thank that are not mentioned in my testimony and in my heart, I give thanks you to all JCCIANS. AMEN.

Henry Lim