

MY SEARCH TRUTH

I had always been taught that there was no such thing as God, but I decided to find out for myself.

By Peng Hua

Having been raised in a competitive and non-religious Asian country, I have always had a great desire to become a successful person, but I didn't have any eternal principles or truths to guide me. In my country, "successful" meant being rich and powerful.

My parents always taught me that there was no such thing as God. For them, religion or God was a bunch of nonsense and only for weak people. For a long time I considered myself atheist. They taught me that I shouldn't trust anyone but myself. So from a young age I have used my high ambitions as motivation to study and work extremely hard.

My parents had high expectations for me. They wanted me to keep my grades high at all times. It made me sad to see their disappointed faces or to hear them argue with each other when I got a bad grade. Along with my regular schoolwork, I would also have to do extra homework on the weekend so I could keep an A average.

Even after accomplishing goals I had set, I still felt that there was something more in store for my life. Deep in my heart, I knew that surely there had to be more to it.

One day I decided I was going to find out for myself if there really was a God. If He did exist, I wanted to know what He wanted for me or if religion was just a bunch of nonsense created by the imagination of human beings. I was not afraid to receive either one of these two answers. I just wanted the truth.

Around that same time, I became close friends with one of my basketball teammates named Taylor. One morning

I asked him for a ride to school. He said yes, but I would have to get up an hour earlier to go to seminary with him. I reluctantly said yes, not knowing what it was. I enjoyed seminary, though more because of what I felt than what I learned.

Soon after that, Taylor asked me to go to church with him. At first I thought church was a little boring and weird, but eventually I was moved by the warm and peaceful feeling that I felt at the service.

However, I still wasn't persuaded that the good feeling had anything to do with God. How did I know that it didn't come from myself? How did I know that I didn't make myself feel that way?

After many internal debates, I went to Taylor's mom in search of answers. She told me that I could receive my answers by reading the scriptures and praying about the answers that I was looking for. I prayed without receiving any answers and struggled to obey the rules and commandments that I was learning about. I became frustrated many times. I expected a marvelous and dramatic appearance of God or some sort of miraculous event to prove that God was real. Basically, I wanted an unshakable testimony all at once. The truth is, the more I prayed, the more clarity I felt in my life. The more I followed the commandments, the happier I became. The more I read the scriptures, the more revelation I received. Gradually, my testimony increased, like the rising sun in the morning.

It took me two years to decide to be baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



WE CAN CHOOSE TO BELIEVE

“Belief and testimony and faith are not passive principles. They do not just happen to us. Belief is something we choose—we hope for it, we work for it, and we sacrifice for it. We will not accidentally come to believe in the Savior and His gospel any more than we will accidentally pray or pay tithing. We actively choose to believe, just like we choose to keep other commandments.”

Elder L. Whitney Clayton of the Presidency of the Seventy, “Choose to Believe,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 38.

Though I lived many good moral standards and principles before, I can now say that I have found the eternal and ultimate truth: God lives. Jesus is the Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. The heavens are open. A prophet of God walks the earth today. The Atonement of Jesus Christ is real. God really does forgive all repentant sinners. I may not be as smart or as gifted as other people, but the knowledge I have is priceless. ■

The author lives in California, USA.

