

Charo Washer's Testimony

by Charo Washer

Charo Washer shares her testimony of how she came to know Jesus and experience a new life in Him, despite her outward appearance of being a good Christian.

Duration: 32:08

Scripture: Luke 13:3, John 16:33, Romans 3:23, Romans 8:37, 1 Corinthians 2:14, Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 John 4:4

Topics: "Personal Transformation", "Repentance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of personal transformation and the overflow of one's actions and attitudes into other areas of life. He highlights the need for repentance and accepting Jesus Christ as the only way to have the love of God in one's heart. The preacher shares his own experience of going through the motions of religion without true joy or peace until he was convicted of his sin and experienced a change of heart. He also mentions the common phenomenon of youth camp enthusiasm fading away for many individuals, but emphasizes the importance of staying committed to serving God.

Transcript

Chato Worcester is going to come and share with the church this evening, so I pray that you will give her your undivided attention as she speaks to us, and also as she comes up here and before she speaks, we want to have a word of prayer for Chato this evening. Lovely young lady that I have grown to love and appreciate through the years. Amen.

Come on up here, girl. God bless you, honey. You're not nervous, are you? No.

No? Okay. Would you pray with us? Father, would you bless my sister with your grace and love, and would you put the right words in her heart and mind, and would you express through her the work of God? Even tonight, through her testimony, would you bring someone to Jesus? Would you this night be glorified and honored in everything that's done? And may the name of Jesus be exalted. Give her comfort and rest that she can simply rest in the great God that has brought her to himself.

And Lord, may you give her a perfect peace and rest and an unspeakable joy as your servant. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Put it there. I don't drop it or something. Can you hear me with that? Is that okay? Well, since Brother John has got me all teary-eyed already, I guess I can only start by saying what I come up here to say to you, and that is that while I was in Texas, the Lord saved me.

And I just want to give Him thanks and the glory for that. I know it's a shock for most. It's been a shock for a lot of my friends.

And I guess, after saying that, I have to give you a little bit of a background before I go even back to this. When I was 14 years old, I attended a Christian school, and I was asked if I wanted to have Jesus in my heart. And, of course, I raised my hand, because in our school, if you didn't raise your hand, you were going to be brought up forward somehow.

So, I raised my hand. And, of course, in those days, no one raised their hand because they wanted to go to hell willingly, at least. So, yeah, you wanted to love Jesus, and you wanted to be good, and you wanted to do good things.

And I grew up in a moral home, like I guess most of us, and my parents taught me right from wrong. So, going to this school was neat, you know. It was just, let's read about the Lord and learn Bible stories.

I simply prayed a prayer when I was 14. I didn't have any form of repentance in my heart. I didn't have any hurt in my heart for sin.

I didn't have any pain for what I had done. I mean, I was 14. I was not a bad kid by any means.

I hadn't done anything bad, you know, by the standards of the world, because, you know, sometimes people put size to sins and color. It's almost like jokes. And there wasn't any of that.

It was, yeah, sure, you know, I want Jesus. Just like, why not? And I remember just thinking, great. You know, I had a lot of good friends and mostly I just hung around with missionary kids and my friends were Christians.

And so it was easy to dress like a Christian. It was easy to look like a Christian. It was easy to go to church.

That's what all the kids did. I pretty much did what all the kids did. And that's what we all did.

We didn't go drinking or doing this or doing that because nobody did. And so, so to speak, it was pretty easy for me to fit in that mold. Eventually, you know, I guess I compare that to the camp, the youth camp syndrome.

I mean, everybody all hyped up about doing this all. Let's all go do it. It wasn't necessarily bad, but it was just doing things.

It was just being nice, being a good person. And when I was 16, I felt that God was calling me to a mission to serve Him. Like a lot of the kids in youth camp, you know, throw your little stick and God has called me.

And yeah, a lot of us felt like God was calling us. And well, a lot of them are not even in church anymore. You know, and here I am.

But, you know, at 32, I come to know the Lord. And it's amazing how it was just truly God in all of this. Because I would, I would be active in church.

I would read, well, I wouldn't say reading the Bible. But in our church, we weren't really taught how to read the Word, how to study the Word. So the youth would always, you know, we would talk amongst ourselves and say, are you reading the Word? And we're like, yeah.

So how do you do it? Well, you just take the Word like this and you flip it around. And wherever you put your finger, that's where God wants you to read that day. So I thought, okay.

So that's what we did. We had no earthly idea. We had no discipleship whatsoever as far as knowledge of good as God sees it, knowledge of wrong as God sees it.

Not what you think or even what your parents think about, but the Word of God. So I just grew up in my own imagination of what was right and wrong. Or just catching a little here and there from preaching.

It wasn't true desire to read the Word. That was another thing that was lacking in my life. And at 20 years old, I marry a missionary.

And I did have a love for missions. I had a love for people. And I wanted to evangelize.

I had to evangelize some people I'd witnessed. And I guess to that, the only explanation is that God can speak through a mule. He can speak through anyone.

And some well-meaning friends that I told this to, what just recently happened, they're like, well, it's not that you were not saved. It's just that, you know, sometimes we kind of grow cold in our love for God, but it's not that because, I mean, look at you. You've been a missionary for 12 years.

And I'm thinking, for a minute, I was like, wait a minute. You know, I live here. I know what happened here.

It's not what I've done. Because then you're saying that it's all works. I've earned my way to heaven or something.

Or is it that, you know, well, then you're saying that a lot of people that have done good things have made it to heaven that way. And it's not that. I know that I've been empty for years.

And it's almost like I'm doing the right thing. Yeah, I go and do this. I go and do that.

But there's no zeal. There's no heart. There's no desire to read the Word.

It's almost like, check, I've got to do that. You know, like your devotions. Because check, you do this.

Check, you do that. That's what good people do. You know, and all of a sudden, it's like God was confronting me, as years would go by, with the fact that I was rusting out.

Because good people can do so much. And still, all of a sudden, they're at the end of the rope. It's not natural.

Like, for a Christian, it's natural to love someone, or to desire to witness to someone, or to just to want the Word. Even when you get up and you think, if I don't read the Word of God, I'm just going to be a mess today. Or, all of a sudden, you feel a void in your heart.

Like I do now, for example. It was a thing of, well, I haven't done that. I need to.

I need to. It wasn't, I want to. I desire to.

Or even praying, you know. Before, I would pray for my dad to be saved. I've got to pray for my grandparents to be saved.

It was this check, check, check of a list of to-do. It wasn't a desire. There wasn't a spirit desire in me.

It was just my to-do list. Another thing I realized was, there was no power in my life to overcome sin. I would see things in my heart that were wrong, see things in my life that were wrong, and just go, man, I just need to get a grip and do this.

I just really need to buckle up and do this. Or stop doing this. And I would just beat myself up all the time.

I cannot overcome this in my life. Why am I having so much trouble with this? And I would see other Christians that I knew, and think, yeah, they have problems, but it's almost like they overcome. Why is it that I'm stuck on this one thing? Or on this other thing? Why is it that it's hard for me to forgive? Why is it that it's hard for me to stop doing this? Or not do this? Or whatever.

Why is it so hard? And I'm not painting a picture of a Christian that is walking on a cloud that doesn't have problems. But there is that power to overcome. And I could not see in my life that it was that.

It was just struggle and struggle. And I felt like I was getting worse. That I was just even struggling to appear godly.

And I'm thinking, a Christian does not have to struggle for that. At least I knew enough from preaching and years of at least hearing my husband and hearing other preachers. And other things.

I would wonder, when preaching was going on, my mind would be on the grocery list. It was like my mind was somewhere. And if I saw something that applied to my life, I would just think, well, it's just that blah, blah, blah.

Excuse after excuse. Or even the fact that I would think, oh, that person can do that, but that's because they're emotional. I'm just not an emotional type of person.

You know, oh, they cry and they go to the altar, but well, I'm just not that kind of person. It was always an excuse for my ways. It was always, well, so-and-so is ministering.

Well, that's because she wants to be nice and show off. It wasn't anything about me. It was always an excuse for what was going on in my heart to make me feel better.

But that wasn't even working anymore. It wasn't about anyone else. It wasn't about what so-and-so was doing, what so-and-so wasn't doing.

It was on my heart. And I remember hearing Paul, and even here in Texas, when he was preaching, he had been preaching on how do you know if you're a Christian? And every time he preached that, I would squirm in my seat. Because it was like, how do I just go through this test and feel okay at the end? Because every time it would just make me cringe.

It's like, I'm not passing, and if I'm passing, I'm barely passing. And then all of a sudden I'm thinking, wait a minute, you either do pass these tests of 1 John or you don't. You don't barely make it like you're barely making a D. You either pass because there is someone in your life that has carried you through this.

It's not this, well, it's not that. It's not that I don't love someone. It's just that, well, we just don't get along.

It's not hate. It's this. Or it's not that I love the world.

It's just that, I mean, everybody likes to shop. It was just crazy little things that I could always excuse. It wasn't ever a hard look at my sin.

And God, and I could feel that God was saying a lot of times, you know, you need to get alone and think about this. You need to think about this. And I was like, oh no, I'm just, I don't know, PMS-ic, maybe that's what it is.

I'm just having a bad day. It's not that I'm not a Christian. I had to run from that.

And all of a sudden it was like, I'm putting off something that could mean, you know, eternity for myself. And I can't do that anymore. When we were in San Antonio, Paul had to preach there.

And he had been preaching again on it. And I just was totally squirming in my seat. And think, you know, I can't, I'm not, I'm not a Christian.

I mean, I finally had to admit it to myself. I am not a Christian. I cannot struggle so much and just literally have no life, no desire to do this.

I just make myself. I mean, even in Peru when I was a missionary, you know, I guess at the beginning stages of mission work and everything is pretty and everything is nice and you get along with people and everything goes good. But when those things start to wear out, then you really see if you're there because of God or if you're there because you're doing the right thing.

And I came here and, oh man, I had such a struggle when I came here. I didn't want to be here. I didn't want to be in the States.

I wanted to go back to Peru. And I thought, well, I'm just not ministering because of this and because of that. And excuses.

And eventually, it was like God said, no, it's not about the place. It's not about someone. It's not about this.

It's not about anything but you. It's about your heart. It's about the fact that there's nothing in your heart.

And it was a very, very hard look when we were in San Antonio, like I was saying. We were sitting outside. There was a tent because the church was too small and it was hot.

And there was a prostitute going up and down the road. I mean, someone can see, can take a look at her and see, oh my gosh, she's a prostitute. You know exactly what's wrong with her.

You can see it. It's just in your face. Pretty and churchy and to wear a long skirt and to not wear this kind of thing that will give you away.

But the heart, I mean, I had done, I guess, all the gymnastics I could possibly do to Godly at that point. And it was wearing out. I mean, I could see all of a sudden I could at least run out of there screaming.

I was like, if I hear another sermon, I'm just going to blow up and die or something. I just know, I know. It's not about anything else.

And it was a freeing thing because first I thought, okay, if I admit that I'm not a Christian, then, oh man, what a testimony. The preacher's wife has not been a Christian for 12 years or plus or whatever more and that's it. I don't care.

Someone's going to get mad at me because I'm not really wanting to go to hell willingly. Okay. It was another way that God showed me that I really, even in my own heart, I was becoming so hardened.

first, you know, it's so I used to think, well, it's because of this, because of that. You have no idea, I guess, the ways in which your own heart when you want to give yourself peace, you will try and try and try and try when there's no peace. There's no peace.

And if you belong to the Lord, there is peace. I mean, there can be struggles and there can be trials and there can be things, but there is peace at some point. And there's an end to it.

When I told this to Paul, because I hadn't told him, driving back from a little thing that we went to do with Ian and Paul was sitting there and he said, you know, all I delight in is just being in God's will. I cannot even hear his name without just feeling like I am in deep trouble here. I am not delighting in anything.

I am in real trouble. And I think, and I told him, I said, okay, here it goes. And I told him everything.

And he just listened and he said, you know, and that's the only thing I needed to hear. It's almost like if someone would have just told me that, just to hear that was enough. It's like, thank you.

I needed to hear that. I needed to have someone else say, yeah, what you're saying is pretty, you know, evident if that's what's in your heart. And we got home that night and I just sat there and read the book of 1 John.

And I started going through each verse. And I just saw one thing. It's so amazing, the book of 1 John because it's not like, you know, those crazy magazine quizzes that you take.

Are you a friendly person? You know, if you score from 1 to 10, well, you need to work on your personal people skills. If you score from 10 to 20, well, sort of. And then, you know, or yeah, you're the greatest, you're the friendliest person in the world.

It's not a thing of score. You know, it's a thing of if you're failing at one of those tests, it overflows to the rest of your life. If you're loving the world, it's going to overflow to the other areas of your life.

If you're hating someone, it's going to overflow to the other areas of your life. If you acknowledge God with your mouth and you deny Him with the rest of your being, then it's all going to overflow. And it's going to be evident that you're not a Christian.

And it was so amazing. After that, I just confessed. It's like, God, I have never known I am a sinner until now.

I mean, yeah, I've said it. You know, you're a sinner, I'm a sinner, everybody's a sinner. But, you know, I've never been, it's never been so specific in my life.

I've never had it this close to my face. So it's been a generality. You know, we're all bad.

So when it comes down to pointing out the specifics of your life and when God is the one that does it, it's a whole different story. And I just prayed that night and I was like, God, I really, I am at the end of my rope. I really don't know how to be better because I can't be better.

I don't know how to do any of this, and I can't. I don't have the power, I don't have the desire to do it. That was the hardest thing.

It's like, God, I have no desire. Even if I go and do it and someone can see me and go, oh, that's really nice what she did. And seeing myself as a sinner, like I'm seeing myself now, it's like, it was never about that.

It's amazing how He's taking part of the ministry and everything else, and all of a sudden opening my eyes. I just praise Him and thank Him for that and just wanted to share that with all of you. It doesn't matter how many sermons we preach, sometimes it seems to just fall on deaf ears.

And once again, how good it is to hear from another individual about the wonderful grace of God, that God won't leave us alone. It doesn't matter. I've seen preachers saved, deacons saved, deacons' wives saved, evangelists saved.

I've always said, because a mouse gets in the cookie jar, that don't make him a cookie. And that is never more evident than it is in the lives of individuals who were in the cookie jar and then come to know the Lord. What a tremendous blessing and what a joy and what a time to rejoice in so great a salvation that God has worked in Charo's life.

I've always loved her and now I love her even more. And thank God for the work of grace that He has done in her life. She talked about peace and in Romans 5, verse 1, I just want to look at some things very quickly.

It says, Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings because we know that suffering produces perseverance and perseverance character and character hope.

And hope does not disappoint us because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom He has given us. You see, at just the right time when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.

But God put His love on demonstration for us in this. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Oh, I tell you, Chato, bless my heart tonight.

The Lord has blessed my heart so much through her testimony this evening. As I sat there and listened to her, I could identify with her as a young man in First Baptist Church in Brookport, Illinois, going through all the motions, knowing all the right words, crossing all the T's, dotting all the I's, knowing all the right things

to say, knowing all the right things to do, and yet absolutely empty inside with no joy and no peace and no desire to serve the Lord or to live like a Christian. And what a freedom it is.

I remember when, as I sat in church that night and I remember as God, the way He did, Chato, convicted me of my sin in my life. And let me say this to you tonight, my friend. When God convicts an individual of sin in their life, their sin becomes personal.

As Chato said this evening, I knew that all had sinned and I knew everyone were sinners and this and that and everything else. Well, I knew that too. After all, I was raised in church and taught Sunday school.

But now it was my sin. And it was my sin that nailed Jesus Christ to that cross. And it was my sin that Jesus Christ died for.

And it was my sin that He gave His life for. And it was my life that He went to the cross to save. And all of a sudden, everything that I'd always known and everything that I'd always knew become absolutely personal.

And I realized that my greatest need in this world was to have a Savior. My greatest need in this world was to be redeemed from my sin. And I remember as I wanted to go up so bad that night in the church.

And I remember sitting there and thinking everyone will laugh at you. And everyone will think you're a fake. And that's what I was.

And I didn't go forward. And I remember through that week, what an agonizing week that was as Chata went through the same experiences in the conviction that God had placed on her and the same battle that was going on within her. But let me ask you something, friend.

If God was not good enough to convict us of our sin, would we ever be saved? No, not ever. Hundreds of thousands of people who have their name on a church row, who have been baptized in a baptistry, or sprinkled with water, or have joined some church somewhere, or have been placed on the membership of the church row, would die and go to hell thinking they were saved. You see, everything God does is good.

Everything God does is good. For our good and His glory, He does not leave us alone. It doesn't matter if we're 13 or 32.

It doesn't matter if we're 32 or 68 in our life. When God brings us to the point that we realize it's our sin, and we are sinners, and if we had been the only person on the face of the earth, Jesus Christ would have went to the cross and died for us. That it becomes personal, and we realize that I need to repent.

I do not need to repent because I'm bad, which I am, but I need to repent because my sin nailed Christ to Calvary. And my sin has killed the Son of God. And for my sins, the wrath of God has been poured out on His own Son.

The Bible says the goodness of God will lead us to repentance. The goodness of God has never been greaterly illustrated than the cross of Calvary. For someone to even think that God is not good, I carry them back to Calvary 2,000 years ago, look into the face of the one hanging on the center cross that died in my place and yours, that shed His precious blood and died for us.

No wonder the Bible says that God commands men everywhere to repent. It is the responsibility of man to repent because the Savior has come and the Son of God has died and He has paid the price for every

person that they might repent of their sins and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord of our life. Another illustration of the sinfulness and the darkness of man apart from God.

Even in church, we do not realize how lost we are and what we need to do in our own life until God brings us Himself to that point. Once again, we are reminded and shown not only the grace of God, but the goodness of God to reach down to us where we are. To meet us at our greatest need and to lead us to the place of repentance and then thank God to bring us to the place of rejoicing.

To bring us to the place of rejoicing in our heart and life because we have that which was dead has been made alive and we are now alive in Christ Jesus. Where there was no love and grace and desire, now there is grace and there is love and there is desire within our heart and the old heart has been taken away and the new heart has been put in and we have a joy unspeakable because of the work of God that has been wrought within our hearts through grace of God and the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. My friend, I say it and I say it again.

It is an absolute miracle every time someone is born from above. An absolute miracle when someone is born from above. I don't know that I can add anything to what Chato has shared tonight.

Once again, God has put on display saving grace. Saving grace and the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ and the change of heart that comes when someone is truly born again. I'll quit preaching that people need to repent and give their heart to Jesus when there are no more people to repent and give their heart to Jesus.

But until that day comes I will give my testimony and my witness and stand upon the Word of God that every person on this planet that's never been born again, I don't care what church you join, how many times you've been baptized, what someone told you, if you don't have the love of the Lord Jesus Christ in your heart, something is wrong. Something is not the way that God meant for it to be. Do you have troubles as a Christian? Every day.

Every day. The Bible says in this world you will have trouble. But I tell you this, my friend, greater is He that is in me than He that is in the world.

And even in the midst of my trouble and despair there is victory in the Lord Jesus Christ.

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