

## Testimony of Catherine Tian

My name is Catherine Tian and I will be sharing my story with God with you. I came to know God when I was six years old, attending my first Sunday School in Massachusetts. I was completely confused and didn't know what to expect. I had no idea what the Bible was or who Jesus and God are. Every Sunday, I simply followed my parents to church and listened to the children's sermons, learning that sin was bad and how Adam and Eve were the first humans.

A few years later, I unexpectedly experienced something that I would never forget. It was April 2013 and I was planning to go to the Boston marathon with my dad on Monday. However, my family was planning to go to Canada that same week and on top of it all, my Chinese school was planning to have a circus trip that Friday. I was given the responsibility to choose whether I wanted to go to the marathon or the circus since we couldn't attend all three in one week. Ultimately, being a young eight year old, I wanted to go to the circus. This meant that we would leave for Canada on Monday, the day of the marathon. On Monday night, my parents saw that the Boston Marathon had been bombed. This realization shocked us all. Back then, I didn't realize that God had practically saved me and my family from something horrible, but looking back on it now, I can't even imagine what could have happened if we had gone. This was my first experience with God, and definitely one of my biggest experiences.

On a more positive note, my brother is also a huge experience and blessing in my life. I had wanted a brother since around age six, so my family decided to pray about it. God didn't give us an answer until two years later in late 2013 when I realized he was coming. I was so excited and was once again given a first-hand account of God's love and promises. This experience also taught me that God's answers through prayers are not always answered right away. Not long after, we moved to Pennsylvania. I am a relatively stubborn person so this wasn't exactly great news for me, but God had his plans and decided to bring me to PVCCC to continue my journey with him as well as make new friends. However, throughout this whole time, I have sometimes not wanted to go to church, not because I wanted to displease God or upset anyone, but because it sometimes felt boring listening to sermons that I often couldn't understand or just didn't find interesting. Slowly, I began to understand God more and pray towards my wanting to be fully immersed with him. In the summer of 2017, I went to my first church camp. I was one of the oldest children there and being with a bunch of second and third graders, the lessons were more suited for younger children. One night after the sermon, when we could stay and worship God, I felt something different and desperately wanted to find God and trust him. The counselors and pastors there helped me find God and that night, I felt God's presence. Then, this year not long ago, Pastor Huang told me and my family that there was a baptism on Easter Sunday, and that a baptism class would start. We had been thinking about my baptism so this was the perfect opportunity. These classes have helped me think about God in a way I have never thought

about as well as help me start a healthy devotion with God daily. I am so glad I can be baptized on this special day, Easter Sunday.

I am thankful that I have already started to grow my faith in God and experience him at this age. Through times of hardship, I try and let Jesus take over my life and cast my worries on him. It's not always easy for me since often I ask myself *why is God making me go through this*, but I know that his actions are planned accordingly, and I should let him take over whatever I'm going through. I sometimes don't realize all the blessings he has provided me and I too often take things for granted, but I'm glad Jesus is here to help me and I am thankful for the things he has given me. I am also so grateful for his huge sacrifice on the cross and the path he created for us so we could have eternal life with him. Jesus has shown me the wonderful life we could all have and that has changed my life. I am, however, still trying to discover more of God and to give my life to him throughout all kinds of situations, good or bad. I have doubts and hesitations towards things I shouldn't have, but I will pray and try my hardest to fully let God take over my life, do what pleases him, and remember that he is the creator of the world and he has a special plan for me.

I want my baptism to be the beginning of a new life with God; one I can be truly happy in, not because of earthly pleasures, but because of Godly pleasures.