Fear…

I have known God (or at least about Him) all my life. It was my culture. It seems like I have always believed. I was baptized at a young age at church camp but don't remember the date. It is written in an old Bible somewhere, but it wasn't a real turning point in my life - it was being obedient to God’s commands and a continuation of who I was. I have always tried to live as the Bible instructs...I prayed, studied, always went to church virtually every Sunday even through college, but I was still afraid. I had no security of where I was going. People and the Bible talked about heaven, but I was afraid of it because I had no security that it was where I was headed.

Then God changed my circumstances. I was "forced" to pray every day at work…start the day and end the day in prayer. In doing this, I was able to witness amazing things! If praying at work every morning at 8:30 worked so well, what about outside work? I got brave enough to set an alarm on the weekends and began praying regularly on my own. I had prayed in my life, but this was different. It was purposeful, and I made a commitment to not give up. This has changed my life!

Being committed to prayer, God has graciously answered by taking away so many of my fears. The greatest was not being good enough for God's love. I couldn't believe God loved me...I wasn't nice enough, hadn't done enough spiritual things, wasn't a good enough wife, mom, whatever, to deserve God's blessings or love. This was Satan winning a battle in my mind. One night walking and listening to Christian radio, God said, "I don't need your money, I just need you." This was my breakthrough, the turning point, for which I'd been searching a lifetime.

This has led to a greater quest to spend time and fellowship with God. The more time I spend with Him, the more fears He is taking away. More and more the Holy Spirit is guiding my thoughts, actions, and words instead of me being focused on my fears. Is life still going to have difficulties? Yes. Am I still going to have trials, temptations, mistakes? Always. God's Word states in James *when* trials come not *if*, but His Word also promises peace. Philippians 4:6-7 *“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray bout everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”* I'm so thankful for the grace and mercy I've been given for the fears He has taken away.

I don't have to be who I think I should be or who others think I should be. I just need to be who God wants me to be. I can only do that by spending time with Him… every day!

*“I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in Him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.”* Romans 15:13