

My Story

Update January 2012: Be sure to check out my fiance's testimony as well! Just click on "[Kali's Story](#)" in the top navbar.

Before I begin to tell my story, please know that my goal is not to cause anyone to leave the Oneness Pentecostal movement. This site is for me to share the reasons why I left the movement, but I sincerely hope that I will not cause division. However, I do hope that my story will motivate others to engage in their own search for truth, regardless of the denomination to which they belong! Whether you're Pentecostal, Baptist, Charismatic, or Mormon, I hope that reading this story will motivate you to search the Scriptures just like the Bereans did in Acts 17:10-12.

With that said, here's my story.

In the last week of May 2006 (while I was still in the UPC) I was visiting a church that I used to attend for their 25th anniversary services. During the last service the pastor gave tongues and interpretation. In the message he asked, "Can [God] trust you with truth?" Since I had been feeling a calling for several months to teach, this message really spoke to me. I had always felt that what I believed was biblically correct, but after the tongues and interpretation I became obsessed with making sure that what I was teaching was correct.

I should point out at this point that many people think it is incorrect or even sinful to examine what they believe in order to make sure that it is correct. This view is the antithesis of what the apostles said to do! The apostle John instructed the church to "test the spirits to see whether they are from God" (1 John 4:1), and Paul ordered Timothy to "accurately [handle] the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). Luke recorded that

the Bereans were "more noble-minded" than the church at Thessalonica, because they "[examined] the Scriptures daily" to see whether or not what they were being taught was true (Acts 17:10-12). To put it bluntly, God is pleased with us examining what we believe to see whether or not it is true. After all, everyone believes that what they believe is correct, but not everyone can be right! How do we know whether or not what we believe is true? We study the Scriptures.

With that said, I began to pray daily to be in truth. I prayed regularly that God would not let me lead people astray. At the time I still thought that what I believed (the Oneness Pentecostal doctrine) and what the Bible said were synonymous. I was not questioning what I believed at this point, I was only letting God know that I would follow Him above everyone else.

Throughout the month of June God began to show me little-by-little that my faith was not in Him. He showed me that my faith was in the dogmas and creeds that I had been taught. This caused me no small amount of heartache! Every time that I read something in the Bible that conflicted with what I believed I felt guilty for even beginning to question. Finally, in the last half of June, it clicked with me that my faith must be in the Word of God. My belief system must be based upon His Word. I was at work when this concept finally "clicked," and I immediately told God that I would follow Him and His Word even if it meant giving up everything that I believed—even if it meant "eating humble pie" with all the people I used to debate with, and losing the respect of everyone that I held dear. After all, is this not what Jesus called people to do (cf. Luke 9:57-62)?

During this whole time (the months of May and June) I had been reading through the New Testament for a college course. I was not reading in any particular order, I was just reading through the NT a book at a time. In June, almost immediately after committing myself to following God's Word, I read this

Scripture:

*“All do not have the gifts of healing, do they?
All do not speak with tongues, do they?
All do not interpret, do they?”
– 1 Cor. 12:30*

This is not the place for a discussion of Tongues, but those familiar with Apostolic doctrine know that they teach that speaking in tongues is required for salvation. They believe that it is the evidence of receiving—or being filled with—the Holy Spirit, but Paul is saying that all do not speak in tongues! Again, this is not the place for a discussion of Tongues, but the point is that I eventually decided that Paul was right and the Apostolics were wrong. I studied tongues in the Greek, I looked up every Scriptural reference to tongues, and the only conclusion that I could come to was that there is no difference between Tongues in Acts and Tongues in Corinthians.

I guess the best thing to say is that God was testing me. Would I commit myself to Him and His Word, or would I explain Scripture away in order to hang on to my personal belief system? When faced with that choice there was only one answer I could choose: I must follow Christ.

By the time I sorted Tongues out it was July or August. Even though I no longer believed that speaking in tongues was required for salvation, I chose to stay in my UPC church for a time because I still believed many of the other doctrines taught by the Apostolic movement.

But little did I know that God was going to hit me with another whammy.

It was sometime in July or August and I was driving to Tennessee when it happened. I was still reading through the New Testament, so I was listening to Romans on audio Bible

while I drove. It got to Romans 14 and what Paul said hit me like a ton of bricks. I recommend that you read the whole chapter, but I will cite the appropriate verses:

(1) Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.

(2) One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only.

(3) The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.

(4) Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

(5) One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind.

– Rom. 14:1-5

Paul is saying several things in this passage, but—when read in context—he is basically saying that there are some things that people think they need to do to be saved, and so they need to do them. He tells the other ones (the ones who do not have “weak faith”) to stop judging the ones with weak faith and to be careful to not lay stumbling-blocks in their path...but he also tells the ones who are weak in the faith to not pass judgment on the ones who are not! The reason that this passage struck me so forcefully is because I realized that I was the one with the weak faith! I was the one who was demanding that people follow certain dress codes that are not in the Bible. I was the one telling people they had to pray to receive a special experience (tongues) and a special revelation (Oneness) to be saved.

Paul said it best: *“Who are you to judge the servant of another?”* (Rom. 14:4).

I realized that I was sitting off in the corner of Christendom, judging the rest of Christianity, convinced that I was the only one that was right, when in reality I was the one who was wrong. Like Paul said later in Romans 14, “[T]he kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 14:17). In other words, Stop fighting over “disputable matters” (Rom. 14:1 NIV)!

As someone once said (I think it was Charles Spurgeon), “The cross gives enough offense...let’s be careful to not add to it.” Unfortunately, I realized that was exactly what I had been doing.

Could people have turned away from Christ because of man-made rules and traditions that I had demanded they accept? That thought causes me to shudder with fear.

I determined to search out everything that I believed.

And that brings me to here.

I finally had to make the choice to leave the Oneness Pentecostal movement. After months of in-depth studying and prayer I came to the conclusion that the movement is so far off base now that it is borderline heretical.

The Oneness Pentecostal movement is not the only movement that is this way, many other denominations in the USA are in the same shape. But I had to make a choice: Do I stay and try to reform the movement while people are being lost, or do I leave it in the hands of God and hook up with a church that I feel is on the right path?

I chose option B.

The movement needs reform, and I pray that God will raise up leaders who will do what needs to be done. However, after much prayer, I do not feel that is what God has called me to do.

That's the basics of my story. The rest of this site is organized topically. There are sections dealing with Holiness Standards, Salvation and more. I have covered all the major doctrines of the UPC and associated movements in this site, and I show the reasons why I no longer agree with those doctrines.

Of course, there are some doctrines that I do still agree with—or at least I'm undecided on—but I feel those doctrines are trivial. If I am undecided on something I will say so, and I will say why I don't think it's important.

Once again, it is my sincere prayer that this site will spark a personal search for truth in the heart of the reader. My goal is not to lead anyone astray, or to tell members of the Oneness Pentecostal movement that they are going to hell (I think there are plenty of members of the movement, maybe even the majority, who are saved). However, I do feel that members of the movement can draw closer to God and be more effective soul-winners by searching the Scriptures daily to find truth (Acts 17:10-12).