

Kali's Story

Admin's note: This is the testimony of my fiance, Kali. She is also former UPC, and we actually met through this Web site. God truly does work in mysterious ways!

Preface: This is my testimony. I am a completely fulfilled and God-loving individual who has found so much joy after leaving the UPC. It has been a tough journey but I am thankful for the pastors (in the UPC) I had and still admire them and have no hard feelings towards them. I believe they are wonderful people. I also believe people in the UPC are saved and have a truly wonderful relationship with God. I ask that you read this testimony and find either hope or understanding in what I have gone through. This is my personal life story and I hope it speaks to those who are seeking to renew their faith or identify with someone who has been through something similar. (That is what I needed more than anything when I left. I needed to know others felt or had felt the way I did.) I pray you never lose sight of God and what He has in store for you. He will NEVER leave you or forsake you. You are His child forever.

My story with the UPC lasted about four years. But before we get to that let me give you some back story about me. My name is Kali Rasmussen. I was born and raised in Renton, WA, by my wonderful mother Lisa Rasmussen. She supported our family by living out her passion of painting beautiful pictures of animals. (designsbylisa.com) My family was not your conventional family. (Take that back, pretty conventional, with 50% + parents divorcing these days). Anywho, my parents divorced when I was about 3. My younger brother and I had mediated visits with my father up until I was about 6. I told my mother I no longer wanted to have the visits because they caused me a great amount of stress. I think this was one of the best decisions I made in my younger years. Now my dad, my brother and I have dinner on occasion and have a good

relationship. I am happy to say everything worked out, but obviously it took time.

My mom remarried when I was seven to a man I thought was the best thing since sliced bread. Turns out the illusion he portrayed was just that and about 2 months into their marriage it all crumbled. I was in shock at the kind of man he was and the kind of strain he put on my family. My mom eventually divorced him when I was about 16.

Now a little bit more about me. I had to grow up quickly, like any oldest child in a divorce. I was the adult my mom leaned on, the one who relayed messages, the one who told the truth, the one who lied, the one who protected her younger brother, the one who tried to make things go as smoothly as possible. I'm no martyr but I sure as heck can identify with children of divorce. It is tough and heartbreaking, but most importantly it made me the strong God loving person I am today. I consider it a testimony to how God works in mysterious ways. I was an outgoing and energetic child. I played sports, had friends, and did really well in school despite all the hardships in my family life. (I thank my mom and grandma for this. They kept me positive and supported me.) Hated math though, loathed it!

I stayed extremely busy when I was able to get a job, get a car and participate in EVERY extracurricular activity possible in high school. I did this to avoid my home life. Looking back it was those positive decisions to do something with my time that kept me out of trouble. I always tell my mom that my brother and I could have made a turn for the worst but we didn't because of how much she loved us and how proud she was of us. We used our time to our advantage and always strived to make ourselves better.

And onto where this story collides with the UPC. Here we go! I was raised Catholic but didn't practice much except Easter and Christmas. You know those crazy C&E Christians. (I think there is nothing wrong with them, just a little humor) On weekends

when I was with my grandmother when I was very young she took my brother and I to mass and I played with that thing that you kneel on to pray. I was always bored out of my mind. My mom took us to a non-denominational church through elementary school off and on. Eventually we stopped going. In high school I visited friends' youth group meetings during the week but never really got involved. I have always believed in God. I even read the Bible cover to cover a few times in my middle school and high school years. I read Christian books and always considered myself a good Christian. I never really thought I had to be defined by a church. God knew my heart and that was the most important thing to me.

Here is the low down. When I was 16 my mom was going through her second divorce, which I was thankful for, but it caused a great amount of stress. My step-dad was controlling, manipulative, emotionally and verbally abusive. I never wanted to be home. Instead, I worked, was on the drill team, was in a business club and was getting A's on top of that. One day I was approached by a classmate to get some help with an assignment in history class. He proceeded to ask me to church and eventually I went and we began dating. As you can guess it was a UPC church and I cried my eyes on the first service and thought every song and everything the pastor said was straight to me. I was hooked. I was in an extremely vulnerable state, with my home life in chaos and living a busy, busy life. Church was one more thing that I could throw myself into, so I did. I was in the choir and I went to prayer at every service. I felt so connected and loved by everyone there. I didn't want to ever leave. I was getting support and appreciation. I felt so satisfied with all the attention I got and I loved when people would tell me: "Good for you coming to God and being saved even without your family. Just keep praying your family will eventually be 'saved' too." Thank the Lord God almighty this never came to pass. I was in the UPC for four years and I prayed for my family daily thinking they were going to hell. Even though I knew they were Christians and loved God, they

weren't saved like "the rest of us." They didn't have what I had.

After high school I went off to college at Western Washington University. This was another God intervention because I prayed to hard to get into University of Washington to be close to my boyfriend and still be able to attend church. After I went to college we broke up and I attended a home mission church 30 minutes away from my campus. I attended every Tuesday night, Sunday morning and Sunday night. I even attended an all night prayer one time. I was still devoted to God and all the UPC stood for. Even though it took a great deal of time away from school and caused me great amounts of stress I did it all for the 'love' of the Lord.

I left that church 30 minutes away when I started to question doctrine. I also started to step back and figure out why I was feeling so depressed and miserable. I talked to my pastor back home and explained my need for a new church. Every sermon was so negative and made me feel like a filthy sinner when I wasn't. I left the church in peace but was told that "it may not be the church that has a problem, just you." I drove home in tears and for the next few weeks couldn't muster up the courage to try another church. Eventually I decided to go to an independent apostolic church which again was a home missions church. I enjoyed it but started noticing the same trends. I felt my confidence slowly ripping away the longer I stayed in the UPC and I stayed until it was completely gone. Down to the core I wanted so badly to please God and live up to all the expectations of being a girl in the UPC that people looked up to. I wanted to meet that mark of what they expected when they put every single women on a pedestal. I wanted to be perfect in their eyes, in my pastor's eyes, his family, the congregation, my friends outside of church. This was so demanding it sent my into a severe depression and I started questioning everything. That's when I left. I was in my Junior year of college. I had just declared my major in Human

Services, hoping to live out a dream of helping others in a field of social work. I started my first course and was asked to expose who I was. This is where everything changed and I found that I was not who I wanted to be. I was miserable. Much of my misery came from being in the UPC. I felt I couldn't measure up. I didn't have family in the UPC, I didn't have close friends around me, I didn't have anyone to turn to, and I found no solid foundation in many of the "key" scriptures in the UPC. I wanted to be Christ-like and love people but instead I found myself judging and condemning people for not being like me. I was sick of myself and the person I had become. I left.

For a month I was a wreck. I had left my identity with the UPC and had now nothing to stand on except the faith that God was still with me no matter what. I started praying more and seeking clarity in scripture. I wrote letters to God in a journal everyday to help me find closure after leaving. It was one of the toughest months of my life. After that I started visiting various churches and learning about how others loved God and those around them. It was eye opening and painful too. I normally came home crying, feeling like I was still missing the mark. Old feelings would bubble up quickly of things I felt in the UPC. The urge to cry uncontrollably at music and the sermon. I am still so thankful for a close friend who went to different services with me. We were accountable to each other about going to a new church each Sunday. It was an amazing experience and I wouldn't trade it.

Today, I am now a happy 22 year old woman majoring in Human Services and graduating this Spring. God brought me together with my future husband, Joshua Spiers. Which I prayed about by the way when I was in the UPC. Overall I am doing wonderfully. We are now members of a church in Kirkland, WA, and happy as can be. God really did a number on me. We will be posting our sweet love story soon. (I bet some of you can guess how it went!) lol

Please, please don't hesitate to send me an e-mail at kalirasmussen@yahoo.com with any questions you have. I am going to try to keep up on posting on here on some issues that I feel really impact women after they leave the UPC. I pray daily for those looking for clarity after leaving the UPC.

Thank you for reading my testimony!

An Important Note On Terms

This site is written *to*, not *at*, apostolic Pentecostals. For the purposes of this site I define *apostolic* the way it is defined on the [Apostolic Friends Forum](#):

There is One God. This one God reveals Himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

The Son is God himself in a human form or "God manifested in the flesh" ([1Tim 3:16](#)) [sic] ((This is a copy and paste. All typos and spelling errors in this section are from the AFF. Errors in the rest of the page are, as always, mine.))

Every sinner must repent of their sins.

That Jesus name baptism is the only biblical mode of water baptism.

That the Holy Ghost is for today and is received by faith with [sic] the initial evidence of speaking in tongues.

The saint will go on to strive to live a holy life, pleasing to God.

((<http://www.apostolicfriendsforum.com/showthread.php?t=35>))

My personal background is not just apostolic, it is holiness Apostolic. I was raised in a combination of independent holiness apostolic, UPC, and ALJC churches. Because of my background I sometimes use the terms "UPC", "apostolic", and

“Oneness Pentecostal” interchangeably. However, I would like to stress that this site is not related to the current split going on in the UPC. I do not identify with the Oneness Apostolic movement at all, so please do not mistake this for an anti-UPC site!

Contact Me

Over the last couple of months my fiance, Kali, has started helping answer emails and moderate the Web site. She also has a background in the UPC. The easiest way to reach both of us is to email webmaster@whyileft.org. Messages sent to that address will come to both of us and either one of us may reply.

If you would like to reach one of us specifically then please use the email addresses below. If for any reason you would prefer that the email not be shared between us then please be sure to say that and we will keep it private. Otherwise we may share it with each other for feedback or even forward it to the other person if we think they may want to respond to it.

There are no other moderators besides us, and emails are never shared beyond the two of us.

My email: jmspiers@gmail.com

Kali's email: kalimarias@gmail.com

If you would like to contact us then we'd love to hear from you! All comments are welcomed. There are just two things that I request:

1. No fights, please. If you have a question then we would love to hear it, and we will do our best to answer it.

If there is something that you would like to discuss or debate with a peaceful, humble spirit, then we are open to that. But if you are just looking to argue then there are plenty of forums out there that have people ready and waiting :)

2. If your comment is public then please post it in the comments section of the appropriate article so that others can benefit from it as well. Feel free to e-mail us too too, though! We love feedback!

Other Helpful Web Sites:

[Christian Challenge International](#)
[Departing UPC \(Support Group\)](#)
[Spiritual Abuse](#)
[The Writings of Jason Pound](#)

About

My name is Josh Spiers, and I am 31 years old. I have an A.A. in Religion with Honors from [Liberty University](#). My hope is to continue my education at Liberty with a double-major in psychology and religion, but things are temporarily on hold until after I get married. I currently work full-time as a network engineer. I'm not sure how networking plays into religion and psychology, but they're three things that I've always had an interest in, and I'm confident that before my life is over I'll look back and be able to say, "Oh, so THAT'S what God was thinking!"

Update January 2012: *I met my beautiful fiancee, Kali, through this Web site last year, and I moved out to Washington in July*

to be closer to her. She also has a background in the UPC, and she's been kind enough to post her testimony [here](#) (or just click "Kali's Story" on the top navbar). I highly recommend it!



This site is a place for me to express the reasons why I left the Apostolic movement (I left in November 2006, when I was 26). I originally intended it to be for friends and family, but people who I have never met discovered the site before my family did. Please understand that my goal is not to persuade anyone to leave the movement. My only desire is to open the door for honest and sincere discussion for everyone who visits—regardless of their religious affiliation. It is my prayer that people will [read my story](#) and be challenged to examine their own beliefs, and to “get into the Word” to see if what they have been taught is correct!

I have tried to set this site up so that you can jump in wherever you like and just start reading, but I recommend starting with [My Story](#). In it I tell how God began dealing with me about Truth back in May of 2006. I go on to tell why I eventually made the decision to leave the Oneness Pentecostal church. It is assumed that most readers of this Web site will be familiar with the Oneness Pentecostal (“Apostolic”) movement. If you are not familiar with the movement then you

may want to read through the [doctrinal statements of the UPCI](#). That might help you to better understand some of the articles on this site.

I Am Apostolic

Last Friday night I went to the final service for the UPC National Youth Congress 2007, held in Charlotte, NC. The worship leader who started the service got everyone “fired up” by telling the story of a conversation he had with a Muslim friend. He said that the Muslim friend asked him why all of the UPC women had long hair. His answer to his Muslim friend was, “Because we’re Christian!!” Of course he also told his Muslim friend that he believed in just one God, not in the Trinity! (The implication being that everyone who believes in the Trinity believes in three gods; belief in three gods is actually tritheism—a belief held by the Mormons—, not Trinitarianism, but that’s a discussion for a different article.)

So, that happened last Friday night. Then on Monday or Tuesday night I got in a long discussion with a Mormon. It was a very one-sided discussion since he didn’t give me a chance to talk. He just sat there and talked over me and just kept raising his voice when I tried to say anything. Interestingly enough, the Mormon gentleman also claimed to have “apostolic” doctrine. He claimed to believe what the apostles really taught. I’m not comparing the UPC to Mormonism, I’m only pointing out that quite a few groups with very different doctrines all claim to believe what the apostles really taught.

So where does this leave me? It leaves me with the belief that I am apostolic. The reason? I believe what the apostles

taught. It's really quite simple. It only becomes complicated when people try to come up with "new" revelations or new ideas that convince them and their followers that they alone really have truth and that everyone else is part of the "great falling away."

Anyway, I believe what the apostles taught, and that makes me Apostolic. Here's what they taught, and here's what I believe:

***Note:** If this article looks like it's really, really long then don't worry; it's not! A good portion of this article is composed of Scripture citations. I've pasted the Scriptures at the end of the article so that they will be easier to read. I have also put hyperlinks next to the Scripture references; you can click on them to be taken to the passage on-line.*

Christ:

I believe that Jesus was and is Immanuel, God with us (Mat. 1:23¹) and that He was born of the Virgin Mary (Mat. 1:23¹). How was He both God and man? Frankly, I don't know and I really don't care. All that I know is that there is only one God (Deu. 6:4²) and Jesus is Him. Any attempt at explanation beyond that is nothing more than the mind of finite man trying to understand the workings of an infinite God. It will only result in useless debate—something which we were told by Paul to abstain from (1 Tim. 1:3-7³).

I believe that Jesus was the incarnate Word of God (John 1:1-2, 14⁴). I don't know how God incarnated His Word, but He did. I guess being all-powerful lets Him do stuff like that.

I believe that Jesus "died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3-4⁵). I believe that Jesus rose bodily from the dead, just like He

said He would in John 2:18-21⁶.

Justification (e.g., Salvation):

(Note: The word “justified” means “to be made righteous.” It’s what we mean today when we say salvation or being saved. To be justified means to be made acceptable to God [7].)

What do I believe about justification? I believe what the apostles John and Paul said about justification. This makes me Apostolic.

John said that those who received Christ were given the right to become children of God (John 1:10-13⁸). Paul wrote that no person would be justified by the works of the Law (Rom. 3:20⁹). He went on to say that a person is justified as a gift by the grace of God (Rom. 3:24⁹), and that the justification comes by faith, not by works of the Law (Rom. 3:28⁹). He said that since we have “been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1¹⁰), and that since we are “justified by Christ’s blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him” (Rom. 5:9¹¹).

Paul made it abundantly clear that a person is justified by faith in Christ (Gal. 2:16¹²). Interestingly enough, He also made it clear that it is only faith, and nothing else, that justifies us (Rom. 3:28⁹; Gal. 2:16¹²). This means that if a person has faith in anything other than Christ for their salvation then they are trusting that thing for their salvation, not Christ. So, let me ask you: Where’s your faith? Is it in your baptism? If you believe that you are saved because you were baptized the “right way” (I.e., in the Name of Jesus or in a Mormon temple) then that means that your faith is in your baptism, not in Jesus. If you believe that you are saved because you spoke in tongues then that means

that your faith is in your tongues, not in Jesus.

Sanctification (e.g., Holiness, or Ongoing Righteousness after Justification):

I believe that Christ rose again so that we can live for Him (2 Cor. 5:15¹³). I also believe that “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Cor. 5:17¹³). This means that sin does not have dominion over those who are saved (Rom. 6:11-15¹⁴). Notice that I did not say sin should not have dominion, I said that it does not have dominion. We all slip up and commit sins, but the apostle John made it clear that when that happens “we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation [covering] for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world” (1 John 2:1-2¹⁵).

I believe that if anyone claims to be saved but they continue to live a lifestyle of sin without true repentance then they have turned “the grace of our God into licentiousness and [they are denying] our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (Jude 1:4¹⁶). The word licentiousness means, amongst other things, “debauchery, sexual excess, absence of restraint, insatiable desire for pleasure, arrogance, insolence referring to words, wantonness, lustfulness, excessive pleasure, perversion in general (“G766”, The Complete Word Study Dictionary).

With this in mind, I believe that a person is known by their “fruits” (Mat. 7:16-20¹⁷). Jesus said that, not an apostle, so I guess that makes me “Jesus-tolic.” Just so there isn’t any confusion, Paul (who was an apostle) clarified what the deeds (or fruits) are. According to Paul, the fruits of the flesh

are: “immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these” (Gal. 5:19-21¹⁸). Unfortunately, I’ve known a lot of “One God Apostolic tongue-talkin’ Holy Rollin’ Born Again Believers in the Liberating Power of Jesus’ Name” who faithfully grow the fruits of the flesh.

On the other hand, the fruit of the Spirit (notice that the word fruit is singular, not plural) is: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal. 5:22-23¹⁸). One of the things that caused me to first start questioning Oneness Pentecostal doctrine was the sheer number of Oneness Pentecostals filled with the deeds of the flesh and the sheer number of Trinitarian Christians who were cultivating the fruit of the Spirit. The Oneness Pentecostals would tell me that this is not sufficient evidence for salvation, but unfortunately the apostle John (note the emphasis on the word apostle) disagrees with them when he writes, “By this we know that we have come to know [Christ], if we keep His commandments...The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected...By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked” (1 John 2:3-6¹⁹).

So it seems that growing the fruit of the Spirit and “walking like Christ walked” is valid evidence of a true relationship with God. On the other hand, growing the fruits of the flesh is valid evidence of the lack of a true relationship with God. That should scare a lot of Oneness Pentecostals. Especially when they see “big name” preachers speaking at rallies and initiating “mighty moves of God,” but they know that those same big name preachers are filled with jealousy and pride and

that they are causing division, and that they have a real shortage of patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control in their lives. Some would say that I am being too judgmental at this point, but I disagree: the apostle John told us to “test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1²⁰). Unfortunately, every movement that produces great emotion and tongues is not of God. (Here’s an interesting bit of trivia: The Mormons regularly spoke in tongues years before Azusa Street; see the article “[Speaking In Tongues And The Mormon Church](#)” from Berean Christian Ministries for more information.)

Please understand that I do not say this to pick on Oneness Pentecostals. There are plenty of Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, etc., who grow the fruits of the flesh too. There are also plenty of them who are truly saved and who grow the fruit of the Spirit. I am only pointing out that true Apostolic doctrine has nothing to do with speaking in tongues, and everything to do with trusting Christ for salvation and showing the evidence of that salvation by the fruit of the Spirit that grows in our lives when we are branches attached to the Vine (John 15:4-5²¹).

Summary:

Now you know what I believe. I am Apostolic. I believe in One God Who’s Name is Jesus; I believe in justification through faith and sanctification by ongoing grace through faith; I believe that the evidence of salvation is shown through the fruit that grows in a person’s life. Furthermore, I believe that we all make mistakes and display our old unregenerated nature occasionally, but that the sign of salvation is that a person becomes more and more like Christ as time goes on. Furthermore, I believe that this Christ-like nature can only be produced by the grace of God when a person (branch) is

grafted into Christ (the Vine) (John 15:4²¹; [Rom. 11](#)).

Now, let me ask you: Do we really need more than this? In a nutshell I have summed up Apostolic doctrine. Moreover, I've done it on the spur of the moment at work and in less than two hours. I'm not saying that to brag about my biblical knowledge, I am saying it to make the exact opposite point: Apostolic doctrine is simple! A person doesn't need a "new revelation" and they don't need 16 gazillion Bible studies on why the Trinity is wrong and Oneness is correct (or vice versa). (For that matter, if a person believes that they are saved because of their belief in Oneness doctrine or Trinitarian doctrine then their faith is in the wrong place anyway). There's One God, Jesus is His Name, and our faith needs to be in Him, not in how He accomplished the Incarnation.

That's it. That's the gospel. It's Apostolic doctrine, and it's what I believe.

I am Apostolic.

Oh, and one more thing: Here's what I don't believe. I don't believe that Christians should divide and fight over non-salvation issues such as what's said over you in baptism, the meaning of baptism, the nature of the Godhead, whether or not individuals are predestined, whether or not a person can "lose their salvation," or what color the bathrooms are painted. I told that to a UPC friend one time and she mockingly asked me if I was just saying that we should all love each other and throw doctrine out the window. Well, I'm certainly not saying to throw doctrine out the window, but I am saying that we should hold fast to primary doctrines but avoid turning molehills into mountains (or unity into division) when it comes to issues that have absolutely nothing to do with a person's salvation (such as eternal security or the color of the bathrooms).

And I am also saying that yes, we should love one another. Read [Romans 14](#)...especially the part where Paul says, "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" (4²²), and then skip down to verse 17²³ and read, "for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." When I read the New Testament I find that Paul brings up the subject of love and unity more times than I have tried to count, so it sounds to me like Paul considered it a lot more important than most of the things that Christians fight and divide over.

*In Christ,
Josh Spiers*

References:

All Scripture references are from the 1995 edition of the NASB text unless otherwise noted.

Words that are in all capital letters are printed that way by the NASB editors to show that the author is quoting from an Old Testament text.

Words in bold print are words that I have bolded for emphasis.

1. Mat 1:23

(23) "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US."

2. Deu 6:4

(4) "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! Note: Lest a Oneness believer thinks that the NASB has "Trinitarianized" this passage, I would like to point out that the JPS (Jewish Old Testament, who's translators firmly do not believe in the Trinity) translates this passage the same way.

3. 1Ti 1:3-7

(3) As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines,

(4) nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.

(5) But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

(6) For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion,

(7) wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.

4. Joh 1:1-2

(1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

(2) He was in the beginning with God.

(14) And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

5. 1Co 15:3-4

(3) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

(4) and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...

6. Joh 2:18-21

(18) The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?"

(19) Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

(20) The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

(21) But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

7. "G1344". The Complete Word Study Dictionary

8. Joh 1:10-13

(10) He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

(11) He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

(12) But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

(13) who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

9. Rom 3:19-28

(19) Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God;

(20) because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

(21) But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

(22) even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

(23) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

(24) being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

(25) whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

(26) for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

(27) Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what

kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.

(28) For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

10. Rom 5:1

(1) Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...

11. Rom 5:8-9

(8) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

(9) Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

12. Gal 2:16

(16) nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

13. 2Co 5:14-17

(14) For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;

(15) and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

(16) Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer.

(17) Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

14. Rom 6:11-15

(11) Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

(12) Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,

(13) and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

(14) For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

(15) What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!

15. 1Jn 2:1-2

(1) My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

(2) and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

16. Jud 1:4

(4) For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

17. Mat 7:16-20

(16) "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they?"

(17) "So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit.

(18) "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.

(19) "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

(20) "So then, you will know them by their fruits.

18. Gal 5:18-24

(18) But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

(19) Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,

(20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

(22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

(23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

(24) Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

19. 1Jn 2:3-6

(3) By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.

(4) The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

(5) but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

(6) the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

20. 1Jn 4:1

(1) Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

21. Joh 15:4-5|

(4) "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

(5) "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

22. Rom 14:4

(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.

23. Rom 14:17

(17) for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Mission Statement

“Go...and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Why did I choose Matthew 29:19-20 for a mission statement? The reason is simple. I did not choose it to make some statement about the Trinity or against Oneness theology. I did not choose it to make some statement about baptismal formulas. No, I chose it because it is one of the central commands from our Lord and Savior. The command to “go and make disciples” is the central purpose of our Christian life.

The goal of this Web site is to help people develop a deeper walk with Christ. I don't say that because I think I'm some sort of super spiritual person (I'm not) who has some super special relationship with God (I don't). My goal is simply to offer people tools and resources that can help them “rightly divide the Word” and make accurate, informed decisions about their relationship with Christ.

In other words, the purpose of this Web site is to help people learn the commands of Christ.

You see, there are a lot of things that apostolic people do that they think are commanded by Christ, but really are not.

Then there are a lot of things that Christ commanded that most Christians, including apostolics, do not do. If I can help people learn what Christ commanded, or if I can give them tools that help them study those commands for themselves, then I have helped fulfill Matthew 28:18-20. I will have done my part in helping make disciples.

With that in mind, let's break down Matthew 28:19-20, and you will see why I chose it for a mission statement.

Go

The beauty of the Internet is that it can go almost anywhere.

Make disciples of all nations

I will write more on discipleship and on what it means to be a Christian in the future. For now I am going to give the definition of a disciple from Easton's Bible Dictionary, since his definition is the best I have ever read: A disciple of Christ is one who 1) believes His doctrine, 2) rests on His sacrifice, 3) imbibes [soaks up, drinks] His Spirit, and 4) imitates His example ((Easton's Bible Dictionary, "Disciple")).

Baptizing them in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit

I have several articles planned on baptism. For now suffice it to say that I do not care if a person is baptized in the Name of Jesus or in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. I doubt that Jesus is going to send people to hell for obeying Him when He commanded people to be baptized in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The UPC and other Oneness organizations have turned a non-issue into a heaven-or-hell issue. Again, I plan to write more on baptism in the future. For now I recommend reading these five articles in my "Frequently Misinterpreted Scriptures" section of this

Web site:

- [Matthew 28:19](#)
- [Mark 16:16](#)
- [Acts 2:37-38](#)
- [Acts 4:12](#)
- [Colossians 3:17](#)

Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you

Discipleship involves more than head knowledge. It involves heart knowledge as well. The UPC and other holiness organizations try to force holiness in from the outside. That just doesn't work. One of the missions of WhyILeft.org is to help people learn the commands of Jesus and internalize them so that holiness flows out from the inside. (Also see my article "[What does the Bible say about holiness?](#)")

And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age

The UPC (and all Pentecostal and charismatic groups) put people on an emotional and spiritual roller coaster ride. They have taught people to have faith in an experience instead of having faith in Christ. When Pentecostals have a "feeling" then everything's OK. But when the feeling is gone then they often feel that they are not good enough for Christ. Pentecostalism (especially holiness Pentecostalism) is a constant struggle to "do more." People feel that they are never good enough for God when they are in Pentecost. One of the goals of this site is to help people understand that they really are *never* good enough for God—at least, not on their own. *But when they are in Christ they are **always** good enough for God.* This does not mean that people can go out and do whatever they want and still be saved, of course! What it means is that their right-standing with God is based on the

work of Christ, not on an emotional experience or a feeling.

[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).