

Super Struggle for a Soul: My Conversion

It was a Sunday evening, the closing day of a weeklong series of evangelistic meetings in our small Russian-Ukrainian church in the wooded outskirts of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada. At age fifteen, I was already baptized and a member of the church.

But, probably only the Lord and I knew I was a Christian in name only. I knew the essentials but I didn't possess The Essence.

I managed to do and say the right things to keep me in good standing with my family, church and community. This way of life was not intentional; I was sincerely doing the best I could do. The best I could do.

So, there I sat in the center of the long pew, second row from the back, surrounded by my friends. But, at that moment, I wasn't aware of people; I was dealing with supernatural beings. As soon as the evangelist began his invitation, the Holy Spirit initiated his own – to me, personally. And it was no surprise when Satan also got into the act. The struggle was so intense, so real, my entire body began to shake. In order to control myself, I held on – with both hands – to the wooden pew in front of me.

The struggle for my soul intensified. God's Spirit was saying one thing; Satan was presenting his own arguments and claims. Both were persistent. Finally, the Holy Spirit made it clear that if I rejected him that night, there was no guarantee he would ever battle on my behalf anytime in the future. That got my attention. I knew that, on my own, I was no match for Satan.

Finally, I told the devil I owned him nothing and Jesus everything. The invitation was coming to an end, and I was ready to begin my new life IN CHRIST. I went forward, dropped to my knees and tearfully received Jesus as my Savior and my LORD. As I prayed, the weight, the power and the guilt of sin fell off like heavy metal chains. I felt it happening. When I resumed a standing position, I actually looked down to see if I was really three feet off the ground.

The phenomenon continued; I walked on holy air for two weeks! I never asked for or anticipated this passionate spiritual affair. I would have been satisfied with a sense of forgiveness and acceptance. The Lord himself determined I should have an extended spiritual "high." He must have known I needed it.

Well, there you have it – as it happened. It was long ago, and Jesus has been with me constantly, as he promised. He has never failed me. Even today, overwhelmed with tears of joy and gratitude, I thank him profusely and profoundly for not passing me by that night.

I've never regretted my teen-age decision for Christ. Although I do not understand the mercy and grace of God, I accept and embrace his love. Maybe in heaven Jesus will tell me why he loved me, died for me, lives in me and wants me to live with him eternally.

But, even if he doesn't tell me, it will still be heaven. ◇◇