

A Testimony of Simple Faith

This email was sent to me by my cousin Sandy's brother, Mike Pfoutz, with the request that I share it with as many people as I could. I have printed it here at his request with only Capitalization changes.

Sandy is 65 years old, the second son of my only surviving aunt, to whom I have referred often.

Please pray for Sandy and his mother and family. More importantly, please pray for the friend to whom this was addressed. Pray that God would use this email to bring many people to Jesus Christ.

Hello, my good friend Ed.

I hope you are well and happy. I think of you and pray for you often. Every time I see the Giants play on TV, I am reminded of us playing John Madden football back at the clubhouse in Chantilly (VA). What a blast that was as well as all the other good times we and the boys had.

As you may have heard by now, several months ago I was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer of the pancreas. It was pretty much a shocking blow and as you can imagine quite devastatingly depressing. The doctors have done all sorts of tests and scans, and it was determined that there was no treatment that they could perform that could keep me from dying. The cancer is extensive and chemotherapy and/or radiation would not be enough to correct the illness. The best they could do was to put me under Hospice care and try to make me as comfortable as possible as the cancer ran its course. Although they have no way of knowing for sure, based upon their test and my physical condition, the doctors estimate I may have as little as several weeks or as much as six months to a year to live.

After several days of crying, praying, and asking God "why me" it became clear to me the reason that this had happened, and I found extraordinary peace in it. Plain and simple It's the Lord's will for me. I believe the Lord is using my premature departure from this world to reach out to my friends and family and to bring to the forefront of their hearts and minds just how fleeting life on this earth really is. What initially appears to all as bad news, God can use it to reach out to us in his attempt to get our attention and make us realize that He loves us and has a plan to save us all from an eternal death without His presence. I am not afraid to die. We are all going to die eventually and spend eternity in either heaven or hell. It is the decisions we make in this life that determines where we will spend the next.

As you know, I have been a Christian for many years even though I have not always behaved like it. I grew up in a Christian home and went to church every week and was raised on the Word of God. When I was a teen, the Lord got ahold of my heart and convicted me of the sin in my life and the truth of the Bible that I was headed for hell. I prayed to the Lord that through the shed blood of His Son Jesus, He would forgive me of all my sins (past and future), and I was

saved. It was just that easy to do. Belief in Him and a simple heartfelt prayer to Him is all it takes. I believe there is only one true God (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit all wrapped up into One). He is real and I believe that the Bible is completely true and is divinely inspired by Him as a gift to us so we could know the truth of our existence and have a better understanding of Him.

The Bible teaches that sin from Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden has separated mankind from God and that the results of that sin is death and eternal separation from the fellowship that man once enjoyed with God. Someone had to pay the sin-debt. God sent His Son, Christ, into the world and through His crucifixion on the cross and subsequent resurrection would pay that sin-debt and be the Bridge that would allow us to reunite with the Lord again. The only one who could pay that sin-debt was God's Son Jesus since He had led a sinless life. Jesus states, "No one shall come to the father but through me" (John 14:6). But we must cross over that Jesus-Bridge to be saved and praying to Jesus through this simple salvation prayer is how this is done.

"Jesus, I believe in You and put my faith in You to save me. Please forgive me of all my sins in Your shed blood."

Ed, as you know from our many talks of the past, I love you and have been praying for you for many years. I pray that the Lord will give you and your family good health, keep you safe, and prosper you. However, my main prayer for you is that the Lord will speak to your heart, and you will realize the need to acknowledge Him in your life, admit that you are a sinner and accept the gift of salvation He has for you by asking for His forgiveness through the shed blood of His Son, Jesus.

One of the reasons I feel so strongly that all of this is God's will for my life is that our friend Pat Perez is now saved. He is a new Christian. He took the news of my upcoming passing hard. The Lord used my situation to work in his life and make him realize that we all should address why we are here and where we will spend eternity when we die. I have prayed and witnessed to him for years also. It gives me incredible joy to know that one day he will be with me in heaven and that my situation was able to play a small part in getting him to reflect on his own relationship with God. I would really love to see you there also Ed. I care about you, and you have always been a special person to me. I am proud to call you my good friend. I will continue to pray for you until I go and if you ever want to talk about this or anything else just let me know.

Love You Man—Sanfomanfo

Thanksgiving is remembering God's blessings to us. I know Sandy will be healed ultimately and completely in heaven. Psalm 103 reminds us: "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies" (vss. 2-4). Surely the greatest blessing is knowing you have a future secured in heaven by the blood Jesus Christ. Give thanks!

Brother Gary

