

Account of Primitive Baptists and Providence from Martin Onyoni

Written by Martin Onyoni

Monday, 12 August 2019 17:25 - Last Updated Monday, 12 August 2019 18:16

An Open Letter on My Brief Account as a Primitive Baptist and Divine Providence

By Elder Martin Onyoni (2007)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the mighty name of our Lord Jesus Christ. May praise, honor and glory be to Him for His grace for us to serve and worship Him in Spirit and in truth. I know many might have expressed a desire to learn more about me and the Primitive Baptist Churches here in Kenya—Africa. If anything, let praise, honor and glory be to God, for I am just an unprofitable servant of God.

I had been having a desire of sharing my account with you all, on how through God's grace I've come to belong to His true church—the Primitive Baptist Church, which Jesus built up on the rock. I love this church which Jesus built upon the rock, I love the Primitive Baptist Church which is the true church of God. The Lord willing, I request that you share this with other sister churches. This is not to praise or glorify myself, but in glorifying God who has wonderfully delivered me from the great darkness into His marvelous Light, for I do not want anyone to think of me in any way other than being an unprofitable servant of God.

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Born in a poor family, under a remote part of Kisii-Kenya on 18th day of October 1972, I led a sickly lifestyle throughout my childhood stage, but our God who is sovereign and full of mercy and grace has a purpose upon His chosen ones. His grace was upon me during all this rough times of my life. I'm a second born in a family of 6 (six). The first 4 (four) are boys while the last two (2) are girls. I'm married and my wife's names are Annah Nyanchoka. God has blessed us with two children, I e. a boy aged 7 (seven) years and a girl 6 (six) years respectively.

Thankfully, the Lord has given me a dear and faithful wife who had been so close to me during our rocky times of our marriage, and also putting a strong effort in seeing that I've stood up as a strong Primitive Baptist believer by giving all the necessary support as a child of God. The Lord has given her grace to give me the necessary support in serving and worshipping Him. I've come to discover one of the wonderful Bible truth that it requires one to have a faithful and humble wife who is full of God's grace in order to serve and worship God peacefully. And this gift of blessing comes from God alone, for He teaches His people in their hearts on what to do in order to serve and worship Him. What we only need to do is to trust Him and obey His commandments, and that is when we can lead a peaceful and blessed life here in time.

I was brought up in a religious family, whereby my both parents were Seventh Day Adventist believers. My wife's parents were religious and my wife was also religious. Funny enough, I never had interest in religion at all.

This is a great lesson for us that a man in his natural state doesn't receive the things of the spirit of God, since he sees them as foolishness unto him, as the Bible says in 1Cor 2:14. A man in his natural state doesn't love God.

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I had no desire at all unto spiritual things. Whenever radio stations played gospel music or had preaching programs, I could just switch them off immediately or tune in to other stations playing worldly music. And that was when I could get comfortable. But I asked the Lord to forgive me for all these. But I feel it in my heart that this was a persecution to the Lord. Until I got born of the Spirit of God (which I don't exactly know when it happened to me), that was when I started seeing myself as a wretched sinner before the eyes of the Lord. I now started developing a great desire to know more about God and His Bible truths. Long before, I can recall my father giving me a Bible, after having tried to preach to me in order to be saved, but all was in vain. Whatever Biblical things he was telling me in order to be saved, but all was in vain.

He opted to give me a Bible so that I could read it by my own, at my own time, but I never had interest at all in it. This greatly teaches me a lesson that man has no power at all in bringing new birth or saving another eternally. It is not with the help of man that we attain eternal salvation. There is nothing we can do to save ourselves eternally, no matter how good works we may do to our God! We have been eternally saved by God's grace. It is by His sovereign will that we are born of His Spirit, and not by any other man's help or our will. In my lifetime, I've never thought or imagined of myself standing before a single person preaching to him or a multitude. I thank the Lord that by His grace, has He given me a gift of sharing Bible discussion or teaching others. May praise, honor and glory go to Him.

Before God had called me, I had a very rocky marriage. I had quarrels and fist fights with my wife, as this seemed to be a way of solving problems after a heavy drink or beer. When you have not been born again, the works of the prince of air are manifest in our flesh. I never felt a conviction in my heart of all that I used to do. This kind of life went on, until our marriage nearly broke down. One day after I had severely beaten my wife, that was in 2004, my wife ran to take refuge in her parents' home for two months leaving behind my children with me.

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I really experienced rough times during these two months, as my children needed my attention as well as I was required to attend my duties in my place of work. I was working in a small organization as an electrician. I vowed never to admit my wife back to our home. Drinking more beer was the only solution of forgetting all these conditions I was in, but all these were in vain.

I was forced to hire somebody to take care of my kids while I attended my duties. Our both parents tried to reconcile us but in vain. Later on my elder brother teamed up with our both parents to put an effort of uniting us, and thankfully God's grace started working upon this effort and eventually there was a breakthrough.

Later on I started having queer feelings within me as to why all these had to happen and yet I was the one who was causing all these problems. My drinking habits reduced and eventually faded away. I started having a feeling of conviction within me, as to why I was becoming very unfair to a woman who could show all her love to me and yet innocent to all accusations I could lay on her! I could recall how care some she could be to me when I could come home drunk and muddy!

She even used to cry over the conditions in which I was in when drunk. She could withstand all these conditions and bear with me in every step. The Lord's grace had worked upon her and I'm fully convinced the Lord's Holy Spirit was in her evidenced by her actions towards me. I now started feeling a sense of loving my wife. Slowly by slowly, things started changing in me, and I had no idea at all why all these were happening by then.

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One day, that was earlier 2005, my parents and I attended a wedding of which we were invited by a relative far away from home. We spent three days at the party. On our way home, something strange happened to me, I was directed, I believe by the Holy Spirit to attend an open air meeting of Pentecostal church to listen to a man who was preaching. I realized that the Lord had prickled my heart long before attending this open-air meeting. There had been many open air meetings held back home, but I had never developed an interest at all to attend or listen to them.

After my arrival at home, I shared the great experience with my wife who rejoiced to hear this good news. I want you to notice that nobody prayed to me before, or gave me the information about this open-air meetings or invited me to attend.

I started conducting prayers and Bible study with my wife and my two little children. The search for the truth had now started. As days moved on, we extended the fellowship and the good news to our neighbors, how through the guidance of the Holy spirit showed a good response to join us. The fellowship was conducted in my small house, and we could meet twice a week. The number grew into eight (8) members. We went asking, seeking and knocking at the Lord's door for the truth. We had only one Bible between ourselves (The New Testament Bible) which was not of the King James Version.

As we continued our studies, we discovered that we were getting more confused in understanding the Lord's word. We kept praying that God may show us direction into His truth. One day as I was doing the Internet search in our local town, I landed into a website of Christian denominations. There were so many Christian churches, but I saw the Lord's hand working upon our asking, seeking and knocking. The Lord directed me into a Primitive Baptist website and I finally landed into Denton Primitive Baptist Church, whereby I contacted Elder Vernon Johnson, informing him who I was and I requested for spiritual guidance on behalf of our study group.

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I didn't know by then as to why I had to choose the Primitive Baptist Church among the many other orders of faith, but I came to learn later on that it was due to the Lord's Divine providence upon His children. Getting them out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Brother Vernon Johnson's response was greatly and gladly received by all of us here. We thanked the Lord for having heard our prayers. I want you to notice that there were so many churches of other orders near our village and in the whole of Kenya, but nothing inside us moved us to contact any or join any for searching the truth.

The Lord had a purpose for this, to bring His truth to His children in Kenya and the whole of Africa. For the Bible tells me that God has His children in every nation, kindred, people and tongue and that includes Kenya and Africa. The Lord wanted to shine His Light upon His children. I rejoice to learn these good news of the Gospel truths. I'm thankful to my Lord that by His gracious mercy He has given us His light to me and my brothers and sisters here in Kenya. It is my desire and prayer that God continue to deliver His children throughout the world from their ignorance and from trying to make themselves righteous with God by keeping the Law, without knowing that Jesus finished all these at Calvary when He died for our sins. It is just by the Grace of God that we've been saved! May Honor and glory go to Him alone.

Brother Vernon Johnson started furnishing us study materials, and a study guideline on which we were to follow in our Bible study. Later on he sent us the King James Bibles and Hymnbooks. More light was shed to us through the Bible and these study materials. I have

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come to understand one of the Bible truths as that, the Bible has no spiritual life giving power in it but gives us a spiritual light unto our salvation here on time. It also gives us a testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ and many other things into our lives. It is the spirit of God which gives us life and not man's preaching. I started experiencing God's divine providence working upon God's children here in Kisii, Kenya. After sharing Bible discussions and the study materials with some individuals within and beyond my village.

Some of these individuals received these Good News of Jesus Christ gladly in their hearts. Some of these individuals had led a similar life to mine, and some a worst life than mine. Through these individuals more study groups started emerging and the number increased to six (6) with an average number of 15 regular attendants each.

During my services unto the Lord, I have undergone some rough experiences, but not at any time have I forsaken my Lord who by His grace brought me out of darkness into His marvelous light. I rejoice to serve Him always. Like one time when I lost my job as an electrician in an organization here in Kisii (where I had worked for many years after graduating from college) many of my friends thought I had gone mad. They started wondering how 'smart' my brain could be when I had made a decision of serving the Lord fully and flee a 'well-paying' job/career. Most of them started laughing at me, saying they will wait and see on how I will survive with my family. These occurred when most of my time was on serving the Lord's people here in Kisii-Kenya, rather than attending my duties in the organization. It was and it is still not an easy task to ensure that all the members in all study groups are going on well with the Bible studies. All this requires faithfulness and self-denial and above all God's grace to overcome this.

This situation of not attending my duties in the organization drew the management's attention and resulted into me not receiving my monthly allowances. They were not happy with me, and they eventually gave me an ultimatum on whether to embark on my regular attendance or continue serving the Lord but miss my monthly pay. I went into asking the Lord to give me

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direction, which will please Him and be according to His will. My wife proved to be worrisonome at first when she heard the news, but the Lord gave us strength and courage to master this situation. Finally the organization and I parted ways, without my benefits for the years I had been with them. And this is when people started seeing me as going mad when I had deserted the well paying job and turned to be the Lord's servant. I'm thankful to God for all that has happened to me, for all these situation have proved to be strengthening my faith. Honor and glory to be to God, for I know that I'm unworthy before His eyes, but He has made me to be worthy in Jesus who died for my sins.

Movements between our study groups had been one of the greatest problem for me, but I'm very much thankful to my Lord that by His gracious mercy, He has provided a means of transport for me for He has made it able (through my brothers and sisters in America) for me to purchase a (used van) 14 seater Toyota Hiace, which is able to carry as many study group members from one group to another whenever we gather altogether for worship services. This will also be very helpful to other American preachers and Elder Obey Mwakalonge of Tanzania (who is our pastor) whenever they come to preach for us here in Kenya. Reaching out of other study groups will be easier for them.

I know the Lord has touched your hearts and that is why I'm experiencing the Lord's hand in me and my family, and in other brothers and sisters in Kisii, Kenya. I love God so much, for He loved me first, I love the Primitive Baptist Church to which I belong, which is the true and the only living church of Jesus Christ, which He said that He will build on a rock I love you all Primitive Baptist brothers and sisters in America and we do keep you in our prayers. We love you all. I have never experienced such a great love, which you the American Primitive Baptist brothers and sisters have shown to us to devote and deny yourselves for us here in Kenya, just for Christ's sake. May the good Lord bless you all for your services unto Him.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation for your interest in prayers with us and all the

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assistance (both spiritually and materially) you had been giving us when we had been in need as pertains to our spiritual growth, through Elder Vernon Johnson, who had been linking these actives. I know Elders Vernon Johnson and Obey of Tanzania (whom we regard as our spiritual fathers, and who have been so dear and close to us) and those others they are teaming up with in nourishing God's children (here in Kisii and Kenya) with spiritual food and the establishment of Primitive Baptist Churches, have a hard task in this kind of labour in God's vineyard. It is therefore my sincere request that we keep them in our prayers and more so give them all the necessary support in their laboring unto the Lord. I will appreciate if the Lord happens to touch your heart (as you read this), and have a desire to pray for us that the Lord might open His doors for us in knowledge and understanding in His word, as we endeavor to seek His righteousness and grow in Him.

May the good Lord bless you all as you endeavor to serve and worship Him in Spirit and in truth.

Your brother and servant in Christ,

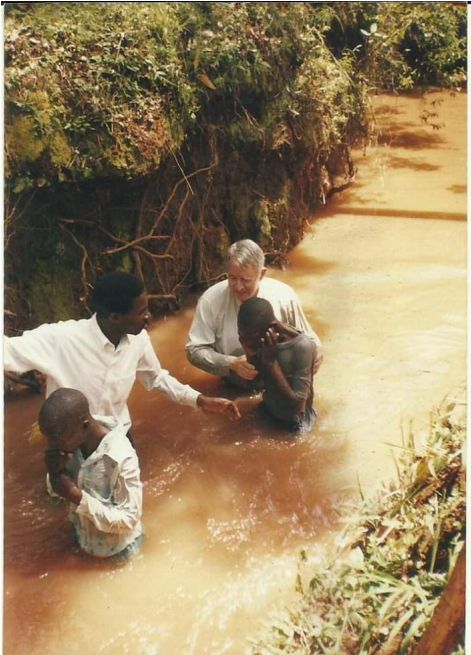
Brother Martin Morara Onyani

December 2007

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Brother (now Elder) Charles Kenyanjui (left) and Brother (now Elder) Charles Kenyanjui (right) performing a baptism in a river.



Brother (now Elder) Kezala (left) and Brother (now Elder) Kezala (right) preaching in Mumbwa, Zambia while Brother (now Elder) Kezala