Collette Fink Testimony - 1126

When I was a very young child, my grandmother introduced me to "Superman"—his name: Jesus Christ. She also introduced me, along with my siblings, to Heaven and hell. I was horrified to think that some of us would go to Heaven to be with Jesus, while others would end up in hell with the devil and his demons, in a lake of fire forever. That statement burned in my brain as I grew older, so I made sure I went to church with Grandma on Sundays. I got baptized, went to Sunday school, and did everything she wanted so I felt I was good to go. As I got older, my goals were to graduate with honors, go to college, get a great job, make a lot of money, get married, have six kids, and live happily ever after. Of course, after all these good deeds, I assumed I was on my way to Heaven. I was the god of my own life. But all that time, there had been no words spoken of sin or repentance.

I entered my teenage years and was confronted with several different groups. When the subject of God came up, most of them joked about going to hell and shoveling coal with their friends. I'd laugh, but Grandma's voice was always there, reminding me about hell. They were joking about it, and I was laughing instead of sharing what she had told me. Then one day, reality dawned on me while I was sitting in class. Students were coming in crying and whispering about a terrible accident involving a fellow student. When I got home, my stepfather told me that one of my good friends had died on the way to school that morning. I was shocked and devastated. It was the very friend who had joked about shoveling coal in hell. I had been given a chance to share what my grandmother had said, but I didn't. You have to understand that this guy was extremely popular. Everyone knew him—the teachers, the coaches, the whole community. He was dead at 18, and I could not understand how God would allow this to happen.
I went to my grandmother and told her it wasn't fair. My friend did not deserve hell. Grandma was so patient and understanding of my grief. She began to speak of God's love for me and how He sent Jesus to earth in human form to become a sacrifice for my sins, so that I and others who believed in Him would be saved. I listened and tried to understand. I thought about my life and my own death, and I realized that while I knew of Jesus, I did not know Him. I hadn't even opened a Bible. I had so many questions.

Life moved forward, and I met my future husband. One afternoon, his sister—who had been my best friend for (what seemed like) about a million years—came to visit us and asked, "If you were to die today, do you know where you would go?" We looked at each other and honestly said no. My dear sister pulled out her Bible and opened to 2 Peter 3:9, telling us how

Jesus is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Then she shared John 3:16—that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. And Romans 10:9—that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the grave, you will be saved. Ron and I confessed our sins and asked the Lord for forgiveness. Jesus became real to us, and all we wanted to do was be in His will.

We got married and began making changes in our lives. In our haste, we changed ourselves outwardly because we wanted to prove to those around us that we were doing what we were supposed to do. We were following physical rules laid out for us by men, and we soon realized we were just putting on an outer, shallow show—relying on our deeds once again instead of putting our faith in God's Holy Spirit to guide us. So we started reading the Bible and we didn't fully understand all of it, but we were determined to read the whole thing. One evening, we decided to watch a two-part movie called Jesus of Nazareth, hoping to get more insight into what we were reading. By the end of the second night, we were both in tears. A light came on. It made so much sense. It wasn't about us. It was about Him—about what He did. Suddenly, my hungry soul was being filled with Jesus.. He gave me a peace beyond earthly peace. I just had to get out of the way and let Jesus lead.

I am still a work in progress. God is still molding and fashioning me for His use and pleasure. I can do nothing, but Jesus did it all. So when my life is over and my eyes close in this life, I know I will stand before my Lord and Savior. Jesus is my way, my truth, and my life. He is the God of my salvation and the keeper of my soul.