

True Joy In Christ!

Mrs. Santhosha Vani Houghton

I praise thank and worship the Lord Jesus Christ for the opportunity to remember His goodness by calling me out of darkness into His marvelous light. Thank you Vijjipedamma for encouraging us to write down our testimonies.

I am Mrs Santhosha Vani Houghton, previously Nuthulapati. Most people call me Vani. I am the first daughter of my parents Mr Sundara Rao Nuthulapati and Mrs Ganta Devakrupavaram. I have a sister Mrs Sudeepa who is married to Mr Ignatious and they have a beautiful daughter Keerthana and I have a brother Ravi Kumar.

Memories of my childhood start from my first day in school when I almost got lost but remember standing in a long line and learning some of my first songs, 'God is so good....'

My parents brought me up in the fear of the Lord taking me to Sunday School, Mass in the Catholic Church, Catechism and regular family prayer times and some very interesting conversations which helped me understand God the Father, His son Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

However, I must confess that my life was not sin free. Far from confessing them publicly I want to glorify God who washed my past shame in His precious blood. But I thank God for allowing me to go through that because for whom much is forgiven more gratitude arises.

The Lord has touched my heart in many special Jesus Calls meetings and talks and sermons in the course of my life. He has inspired me first through His word and through the examples of many people of God like Mother Theresa and my aunty Dr Vasanthamma garu.

But the beginning of my life from when I consider myself saved was when I attended a Vacation Bible School in Rosser Baptist Church in Safilguda, Hyderabad. There a teacher called me aside and asked me in person if I was saved and what I needed to do to be saved. I also remember confessing my heart out in one service by the 'Celebrant Singers'. My joy was unspeakable and the power and the love of God flooded my heart. I remember unable to sleep that night knowing for sure that that will be a night I will never forget.

Life has never been so blessed after that. My scores in my studies increased and I stood first in class after a long time. God blessed me with great joy and victory. He enabled me to be a doer of His word in small ways. He helped me to bear the fruit of His Holy Spirit. He enabled me to love my family and everyone around me. He gave me joy unspeakable in every aspect of my life. I cannot forget experiencing the anointing of the Holy Spirit in many occasions.

Simultaneously my life was blessed in my studies and work and in marriage with a believer, Koresh Daniel Houghton, whose mother is a Muslim convert. I was baptized in immersion baptism when my husband encouraged me and explained to me its significance. God brought us to Australia and is using us and helping us to bloom where He has planted us. He has blessed us with a beautiful daughter, Joyce Princess Houghton.

I would like to conclude by thanking God for my father who taught me about knowing God, trusting and having faith in Him who is Jehovah Jireh, the God who provides and for my mother who first showed me how to pray at all times and thank and praise God for good and bad alike. My sister's faith in spite of all her circumstances showed me the light in the midst of darkness as her name Sudeepa suggests. Ravi's life has taught me how prayer changes things.

But most of all I thank and praise God the Father who created me and knows me by name, whose plans are much higher than mine, whose thoughts are much higher and ways much wiser. I thank Jesus my Saviour who cleansed me in His precious blood, healed me by His stripes from a dreadful disease and made me what I am today, a much loved and happy person. I worship the Holy Spirit because of whom I have this life of joy to share.