

***Born Again***  
**at**  
**Cooley Avenue Church of God**  
**by**  
**Rey Maldonado**

The purpose of this writing is to share my experience on the way God touched my life. All began when I visited the Cooley Avenue Church on a Sunday Service in April 7, 1991. In that particular Sunday my wife asked me to visit the church with her. I was reluctant to go but she convinced me to accompany her. After the service we were planning to go visit other places nearby the church and it would have been a waste of the time returning to pick me up. Anyhow, it was already late, and by the time we arrived to the church the service was almost over. The Pastor already had preached the sermon and was about to minister to the people.

After the Pastor finished praying for the people, he then asked his wife to continue singing. He said: "*God is not done yet! The Holy Ghost is dealing with someone.*" At this point I was somewhat concern. I questioned, is it I? But I quickly said to myself: "No, I cannot be the one."

The Pastor then made a second call as my wife reached to my cold hands and whispered "it is for you." I replied: No! The altar call is for somebody else just watch and see, I quickly replied to her. I was right one more time. Now about three people went to the front and one of them was my sister-in-law. The Pastor went on to pray for each of them as his wife continued to sing.

Finally I thought it was over but the Pastor for the third time said: "*God is not done, the Holy Ghost is dealing with somebody here.*" He asked his wife to continue singing. This singing business was getting to me and was melting me inside. The reality is that the Spirit was preparing my heart to receive God's greatest gift. Suddenly something very unusual happened. It was very unusual to me because I have never seen anything like this happening. The entire congregation got silent. It was like God told everybody to shut up and be still. In the same side of the building where I was sitting a person started to speak in an unknown tongue. The voice was clear and firm. The message went for about thirty seconds more or less. Then all went quite again. Seconds later another person in the other side started to speak but this time it was in English. As she spoke, her voice was communicating to me. God was trying to touch my life through his people. God spoke, and this is the meaning of the message that I remember: "**I am real, just listen to me. I would like to help you, just believe in me. I am real. Just come to me.**" Every word spoken was making a connection within me. I believe right there. God revealed his presence to me. Salvation became real in that split second.

The Pastor followed up God's message by making the last altar call. My wife touched me and asked me to go forward. This time I did not hesitate but went to the front. Something within me compelled me to go. When I got to the front, the Pastor asked me: "what do you want?" I looked at him and whispered: "I have been in church since I was a little child but I have never known Jesus." I noticed that he marveled about my statement and he went on to comment to the congregation. He said to me: today you will know Jesus. He then asked me to repeat the sinner's prayer and at the end

of the prayer he put his hand to my chest and said: "Received Jesus now." Instantly, something came inside of me as something left out of me. At that moment joy overflow my life and I started to cry and laugh. Have you experience a laugh that brings tears into your eyes? It was something real and different. It was God's love manifested through my life. I experience the love and joy of God! I felt a deep desire to love and hug everybody. Keep in mind that this was a place full of strangers but because I was born instantly into the family of God they no longer were strangers but brethren through the work of the Spirit. My head knowledge did not know anything about it but my NEW re-created spirit was well aware. Praise God!

Oh! How wonderful is to be born again! . . . not from an incorruptible seed but from the seed of God. Now that the Greater One dwells in me, I can do all things through Him who empowers me and gives me inner-strength. How wonderful it is to know that I passed from death into life! You too can received Jesus today and become a member of the Body of Christ.

Since the born-again experience my desire has been to know more of Him. No devil could persuade me -- I AM SAVED, by faith in God! I confess and believe in my Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. He is the door and without Him no man can be saved. We need to understand that our spirit is re-created by God when we become born-again but our mind will remain unchanged until all filthiness, deception, and bad manners are washed away by the renewal of the mind through the Living Word. Keep in mind that the dead letter kills but it is the Spirit that makes alive. A dead church will raise dead people but only the Spirit of God could bring the real revelation. Before been born again I had head knowledge about God but I was blind to the reality of Jesus. Don't be caught with head knowledge; it could cost you your life and the life of many that surround you.

It is through the Word that we understand the work that Jesus did on the cross. Jesus purchased my life in Calvary and brought spiritual life, health, and prosperity to me and to those that believe in Him. He did it all. Nothing was left out. He destroyed all the power of the enemy. By the sin of Adam man felt into sin and death but through the sacrifice of the Lamb Jesus all things are restore back into man. Praise God! He thought about you and me even before the foundation of the Earth.

You too can come up into a higher understanding of God. God wants to treat you as a son or daughter but religion and unbelief may be an obstacle for you. Breakthrough! Let the blood of the Lamb clean you from all the things that hold you back and experience the work of the Holy Ghost. Accept Christ today! Born again now!

It is time to make a choice. Would you like to continue in the current path or would you like to reach out to our Maker? The Word says that all have sin and have come short to the Glory of God. It is not by our deeds, not by works, nor by power but by my Spirit says the Lord. It is time to make a choice. Life and death are in the power of the tongue. I exhort you, choose life! The time is now. Salvation is now. It is all up to you . . .

I would like to leave you with this thought in mind; God is real and born-again is real; just as real as the lake of fire. Jesus said: "I am the door no one goes to the Father but by Me." The time is now -- go through the door that God provided - GO TO JESUS!