

My baptism as a Christian took place on September 20th 1975, in the river that flows past my pa. My family were around me, and Christian friends from all around the country came to share that day — the rain — the mud — the love and fellowship of those who travelled the bad roads.

Jesus has done so much for me. A loving and forgiving God, Whose hand reached down and touched me. In John 8:12 Jesus said: "I am the light of the world, he who follows Me, will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

I have so much to thank the Lord Jesus for — my heart is full. I know that He loves me and nothing can separate me from His love, because of what He has done for me on the cross. He loves you too!

Written by Liz Gray in 1977



***Christ
Changed
My Life***

Liz Gray

It seems so long ago now. I look back to the person I was — the biggest and only sinner walking. I had been told that by my people; they also said I was bad, bold, a fool and a rebel most of all. A lot of years went by and I reveled in my own misguided world of living.

I grew up in a Wanganui River pa, with a Catholic church set on the hill, and a convent school behind it. My primary school education was gained there, along with basic church teachings by the nuns and priests. I also had secondary education at a Catholic school.

As a Catholic I was taught to fear God and Hell, confession and repentance. I got so that I wouldn't go to the confessional, because I didn't want to tell all my sins to the priest. My life after that was avoiding one thing and another— the truth most of all!

I had gone through a marriage that didn't work out; lived with another man for a number of years, and that did not work out either. I now have 12 children to show for the two lifetimes I had. It was just an existence for me.

In 1972 I started to see things differently. About 15 years before, I had been told not to participate in the sacraments of the church. I knew my way of living was wrong, because it bothered my conscience. I wanted to be accepted back into the church and be the sort of person I was taught to be. But something went wrong there.

I got myself involved in another kind of religion. I can't put a name to it because now that I look back I do not know what it was.

About 1973 a Christian preacher came up river to show films and give a message from the Bible to

our children. I attended one of these services and **I got the message instead:** "Jesus died on the Cross for you." Meaning me, of course! It bothered me, because I had always been taught, "Jesus died on the Cross for everyone." The message was so personal to me.

A newspaper Bible text from Hebrews 12:5-6 also spoke to me: It referred to the discipline of the Lord. I owned a Bible, but it had never been opened to read. Now I started looking at some of the verses I had recently heard. One in particular got to me from Revelation 3:20. It was very thought-provoking.

The preacher's wife — who later became my friend, counselor and confidant — spent a few days with me, sharing her readings from the book of Ecclesiastes — particularly chapter 3, verse 9. As I turned the pages of my Bible I became aware that I didn't like what I was reading, and so continued to flip the pages; but no matter where I turned in the Bible I was still seeing things I didn't want to see. O.K., so I went back to the page that struck home to me: Colossians 3:5-10. It was like my complete life-story unfolded in front of me. It's there to remind me of things not to do.

It was not long after that my personal life started to change. I evaluated all my miseries, problems, worries; wallowed in my own self-pity, had a big cry; then I spoke to the Lord, committing myself to Him just as I was.

Now the months and years I have spent reading and sharing the Word of God with those that God has sent to help and reach me, is something I always thank Him for. I thank God that He spared me to find His love for me; His plan of salvation and redemption that Jesus died for my sins, and to know and acknowledge Jesus as my loving Saviour.