

Story of a Changed Life—George Hritz

My name is George Hritz. When I was thirteen, my father died. When I left for college four years later, I stopped going to church. I saw that as evidence of my independence and intellectual "growth." Another four years passed and I arrived in Manhattan as a stubborn skeptic to go to a law school not known as a home for believers. After graduation and for the next thirty years, I worked as a litigator in Manhattan and Washington, collecting worldly credentials, both as a partner in a major international law firm and in government and humanitarian positions. Something, however, was always missing.

For those thirty years and sometimes still, worldly learning and wisdom were my idols. The kingdom was not on my radar screen. Although I certainly did not think so at the time, I was pretty unteachable, despite my professed interest in learning.

About ten years ago, my wife Mary Beth told me about a men's bible study group, which I joined, partly because I thought it would be good for my own self-improvement but also because I thought it might even be good for my career. A couple of years into that, one the members of that group, who also happened to be a member of another men's group called the New Canaan Society, told me about a men's breakfast lecture series taught by Tim Keller that focused on the "wisdom literature" of the Bible. The idea of that appealed to me and so did the lectures themselves.

Initially, this was not much different from my other intellectual pursuits. From these lectures, I learned of Redeemer and I thought it would be fun to attend services with my wife Mary Beth. Next we both became eager consumers of Redeemer's classes and seminars and soon found we were spending most of our Sundays in church, class and our Fellowship Group. During the week, I also began to get and receive even more Christian men's fellowship support.

All the while, God has been moving from my head to my heart. I am now starting to experience the difference between depending on myself and depending on Him, quite a change for a New York City litigator who is also the oldest of four boys. That hardly means I am always teachable -- just ask Mary Beth, although she says I am becoming more reachable every day. Nor does it mean that life is always easy. After two mergers of my law firm, I was less-than-voluntarily "retired" on December 31, 2010. That taught me how much I really need God and have always needed Him, despite my pretensions of self-sufficiency. It took that much of a wake-up call to one of the idols of my heart, my career, to get my attention and for me to notice Jesus walking alongside me. All the time, I thought I was walking alone. What a miracle! God is now much more than an intellectual concept to me -- He is the change that fuels my marriage, my career, my joy and my peace!