

WG YA HANGOUT

Being a Christian by Joy Kitanga

I learned 4 years ago that going to church every Sunday, volunteering every day, and reciting the Bible is not enough to call myself a "Christian."

For years I struggled with that name, "Christian." I did not like anyone to call me and associate me with that name because I did not understand the meaning and the call. I just wanted to be known by my name and that I participated in "church" activities. Did I believe in it? Yes, I did, but it had not yet become "mine" (identity). Church was where my dad said I had to go every Sunday, and it was what I did and not who I was.

In 2009 as I began my journey to obtain my Bachelor's Degree in Respiratory Care, not only did I realize that I was financially unable to afford it but also that God had isolated me to have a one-on-one conversation and mentorship. God had to teach me new ways of observing life (new pair of eyes), how to serve, how to enjoy the blessings, how to bless others, how to live as His own child...as I was going down the roller coaster (I thought) I realized I was actually going up.

Christ does not want us to just go to church and fill the pews and have fellowship after the service, but more than that. He wants us to know each other, to carry each other's burdens and to rejoice at all times. He wants us to remind each other every day, as long as it is called "today," that He loves us and to encourage one another. (Hebrews 3:13 emphasis mine)

My parents scattered the seeds, some fell along the path, others on rocky places, some on thorns, and some on good soil where they produced a crop. (Read Matthew 13:1-23, maybe it will help you understand your own story of where you are coming from, where you are now, and where you are going.) It might have taken longer to fall on the good soil or to sprout, but the harvest came at the right time. Each one of us has seeds that someone has scattered and are going through different stages before they can fall in the right soil to produce the crop.

Every month I celebrate what God has given me ever since I made Church who I am and let Him be the preacher. I heard this once, "let your actions speak and if necessary use your words." I am the temple, and I let Him use the space to bring glory to His Kingdom. Wherever I go I represent the body of Christ and acknowledge that I am a sinner saved by grace.

God's grace to me was not without effect, for I am what I am because of His grace (1 Corinthians 15:10). I am not ashamed! I am not ashamed! I am a Christian.

My journey with Christ in the last 4 years has taken me from Salisbury, MD to the village in Congo, and back in the U.S. I have learned to be content in all circumstances. I rejoice every morning even when it is tough, because all things work for the good of those who love God. I have met people and made friends that I could never have met or acquired if it were not for God – and Wesley Grove UMC members are among them.

If you have not made Jesus Christ your Savior, do so TODAY. He is ready to receive you.

