

Dr Jose Lagapa will be ordained a minister of the gospel at the Filipino Bible Fellowship's 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary thanksgiving service this Lord's Day, 26 July 2020 at 3pm. Join the live stream at <https://youtu.be/gBI7ujGct5c> Here is his testimony of how the Lord called him to salvation and service:

## **MY CALL TO SALVATION AND TO SERVICE**

### **Jose Lagapa**

I was born and raised in a devoted Roman Catholic family. Throughout my childhood I never knew of any other church except the Roman Catholic Church (RCC). During my secondary days I wanted to enter the priesthood. In my university days I served the RCC through the different Catholic students' organizations. In spite of this, I was guilt ridden for I know that secretly I was living in sin. This pushed me more to get closer to the church for I was taught that salvation is only through the church.

Then I got into the charismatic movement within the RCC. There I thought I was already a true Christian because I considered myself closer to heaven than others as I spoke in tongues, led in the praise and worship services and a leader in the charismatic group in our locality.

It was not until the Lord took me out of my comfort zone and brought me to Japan in 1997 for further studies, few months after marriage, that the Lord showed me how wretched and wicked I am. There came a point where I had sleepless nights, and scared to die because I knew that if I died, I would be thrown into the fires of hell right away. I tried to do all my Catholic rituals of daily attending the masses, praying the Rosary and even going into the confessional box to seek for the absolution of my sins.

Providentially, the Lord allowed me to meet a Filipino who was a Pentecostal. He shared to me God's Word that gave me comfort and peace. I received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour and joined his Vineyard Church. This slowly distanced me from the RCC but I did not leave the RCC altogether because I still believed at that time that both churches had the same Jesus.

Then the Lord made a way for me to cross paths with Rev Robert Kluttz, an old American missionary. It was through this ministry that I was grounded in the Word of God. I finally confessed the Jesus Christ of the Bible and left the RCC. Praise God for when I was to be baptized, the Lord was so merciful to save my wife also (who for a year opposed my being a Christian) and we were baptized together in the Sea of Japan.

When the Lord brought me back to my home country in 2002, he led me to be actively involved in the work of the Fundamental Baptist Churches. However, the Lord called me back to Japan to help Rev Kluttz in the ministry when he was put in the hospital for 8 months. The Lord provided for me a grant in 2005. As I worked in the ministry, the

Lord gave me the burden to serve Him and continue the work since Rev Kluttz was already old. However, he strongly recommended me to be trained if I was truly called to full-time service. At first, I declined being afraid of the future without any work. Thank the Lord for His clear biblical call to me and my family. I have to leave my profession and follow Him.

The Lord brought me to FEBC to study in 2009, with the plan of finishing the MDiv and then go back to Japan. The Lord has His plan and now I have been in Singapore for more than 10 years. I am very much thankful to the Lord for leading me to FEBC for the training I have received here. The Lord gave me the burden for the Filipinos in Singapore as well as to do missions in the Philippines. I am burdened by the trend towards compromise and apostasy even among fundamental churches in the Philippines. I still have the burden to go back to Japan. However, with my limited Japanese language, I felt the Lord is leading me to go back, start a Bible College and plant churches in the Philippines, if He wills.

I believe the Lord will enable me to contribute to His kingdom through the faithful teaching and preaching of His Word. This must be my foremost contribution to the advancement of God's Church. I thank the Lord for many opportunities to learn God's Word and I pray I can preach and teach continually to the edification of the saints and for the salvation of the many lost souls especially among the Filipinos here in Singapore. It is the burden that God lay upon my heart to have a church for the Filipinos here in Singapore. To continue nurturing the believers once they go back to the Philippines, there is a need to do church planting in the Philippines. Since it is not easy for Filipinos to come and be trained here in FEBC, the Lord also lay in my heart to start a Bible College in the Philippines to train Filipino co-labourers for His harvest.



*Dr Jose Lagapa is in charge of the FilBF at TLBPC and teaches at FEBC. He and his wife Celeste have two daughters Theya and Thessa who are FEBC students. Their son Biboy is in his final year of high school.*