

God Story

(How I Came to Christ)

1. My Life Before Christ

Growing up in an agnostic home with a verbally abusive father and an emotionally unavailable mother left an indelible mark on my childhood. Although on the surface I appeared to be a funny, talented, and confident kid—inside, I faced a daily battle with self-doubt, insecurity, and the fear of failure. As a young boy, being labeled a “loser” by my own dad was both painful and confusing as I witnessed the unconditional love my friends received from their fathers. The absence of emotional support in my home life manifested itself in a lack of interest in school, a stifled social life, and apprehension about my future. The many hours I spent alone in my room to escape the verbal attacks of my father led to a great deal of soul-searching and introspection as I wrestled with the “big questions” of life: “What is my purpose?” “Is there really a God?” and “Is this *all* there is?” In college, I immersed myself in my studies, hoping that by excelling academically I could somehow refute my father’s prediction of my inevitable failure. But despite my success, the feeling that something was missing in my life remained...

2. How I Came to Christ

I realized I needed Christ and received Him into my life when I witnessed the healthy and loving relationship that my girlfriend’s (now wife’s) family had for one another and the personal relationship they all shared with Jesus. I observed first-

hand the peace and contentment that occurs when Christ is placed at the center of your life. I began attending church with her family and learned about God's unfailing love for me (Ps. 13:5) and His willingness to give up His only Son, Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of my sins (John 3:16).¹ I heard how Jesus died on the cross and rose from the grave so I could spend eternity with Him in heaven (1 Cor. 15:3-4). I realized that even though I was basically a "good person," I was still a sinner in desperate need of a Savior (Rom. 3:10). On August 25, 1985, I felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit and came forward as the invitation was given. As the pastor led me in prayer, I repented of my sins (Acts. 3:19), professed my faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:13), and invited Him into my heart as Lord of my life (Rom. 10:9). I was saved by grace (Eph. 2:8), but my journey had just begun...

3. My Life Since Then

The biggest change I have noticed in my life is the constancy and stability of God's love. I wish I could say that it has been smooth sailing since I accepted Christ—but that's not the case. Through the years, there have been many times when I have struggled with the pain of my past and the feelings on not measuring up. The difference is—I now have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the love of a heavenly Father who comforts me when I am hurting (Ps. 23:4), speaks truth to me when I doubt myself (John 16:13), and encourages me to persevere when I feel like giving up (Ps. 55:22). And although my spiritual

1. Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the New International Version.

journey has been a slow, gradual change rather than a sudden, dramatic transformation; I continue to see God refining and shaping me into the image of Jesus as I faithfully pursue His plan for my life.

4. May I share how something like this can happen to you? (Transition to a presentation of the Gospel)