

Personal Spiritual Autobiography

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Since the beginning of time, God has made humankind to be a creation that worships Him. We were created in His image and to point all living creation back to Him who made all things good and for His glory. However, as a result of disobeying God's command in the Garden of Eden and eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, Human creation changed until the day He is to come and receive His church, clean and pure. We have heard hundreds of stories from the beginning of creation, till present day on how each individual in Christ has come to accept Him into their lives. If we live, and we have accepted Christ, then there is a story, a testimony, and so much to speak of on how we got to that point and how we continue to build from there. In my personal experience, there has been an encounter with God, as well as factors, circumstances, and spiritual disciplines that have influenced my spiritual development and closeness to God.

I am aware that we were all created equal in the eyes of the Lord and that we all serve as individuals with an assignment on earth that shall be brought together as the body of Christ, with each of us assigned to specific tasks, God given gifts, and talents. I like to think that my story is special, and that God has been intricately working in my life to point others towards Him. My first encounter with God was at the age of eleven. The memory of that day is so vivid and tattooed in my heart. One Sunday afternoon, after the morning service, as I layed in bed with my mom, a conversation sparked and I began to desire a personal experience with God. There was this sudden interest in knowing what it felt to feel His Holy Spirit and for God to listen to us and speak to us personally. That same night, we stepped foot into an unknown church and as an altar call began, I'll never forget when a man with spiritual gifts called out the

name Alexa. It was me, an eleven year old girl, whom God took interest in that day. God did not need to say anything else on that first encounter with Him. Till this day, it brings tears to my

eyes, knowing that God found importance listening to a curious eleven year old, not knowing that it would change my life from there on out and begin my journey towards Him. He called me by my name, He knows my name, he marked my life to be lived for Him and His glory alone. After that, I have experienced so many special moments with God, from Him speaking of His desires for my life, to a special calling I am to do. There have been encounters where He just redirects me back to Him, to moments where He just wants to reassure me of His love, purpose, identity and comfort me in troubled times.

There have been many factors that have influenced my spiritual development. Many of them or may I even say, majority of it, have been painful factors. From a young age, there are various memories of being outcasted from groups, specifically in the church, to even being bullied by them while growing up. The bullying went on for years, and it was done so by the children I grew up with, to adults, and leaders inside of the churches I attended previously. This bullying did not stop until I took myself out of the situation just at the beginning of the year 2018. I still deal with bullying but because I have taken myself out of the place of pointing fingers and judgement, I am now in a place of motivation and lifting up. Another factor that has influenced my journey with God has been a sexual trauma i deal with shortly after my first encounter with God, which led to rough years ahead of me and desperate need of healing. It became a tug of war with my heart in doing the right thing or the wrong thing, taking a toll on my sexual life and future relationship I was to involve myself in. As God has called me to sing and worship Him, I became so involved in church from the age of 16 and have not slowed down since. While trying to be a young girl who only desired to worship God, I still struggled, as bullying and pain was a part of my everyday story during those next 10 years to come. At the age of 20 I married someone, expecting that person to lead the household, and be a faithful, loving servant of God

and husband. However, that ended up not happening. Instead I was forced to go into a cult-like church, be silenced and not sing or be able to do anything without the permission of my husband or his parents who were the pastors of this unhealthy, monarchy church. From the age of 16 to 26, those 10 years, were dark, scary, confusing and a true desert as I battled against my depression, anxiety, self-hate, self-harm, bitterness and unforgiveness in my heart. In a very odd way however, as I continued to work on myself and allow the Holy Spirit to convict me, even though I fell short so many times, I still held unto God and His promises for my life. There was hope and light at the very end of the tunnel, but I knew God would make a way, and that I would come out stronger because He was with me and was my comforter. As I continue to grow in God, I have also had to create spiritual disciplines for myself. In order to defeat sexual addictions and battles I dealt with from the age of 7, I had to give myself over completely in mind, and spirit to God. I have had to rewire my brain. I had to Make a commitment to pray daily to God, whether through journaling which has helped me draw close to God and see how I've progressed in Him as well as realize that it is my main way of speaking to Him and showing intentionality. My daily thoughts and all that runs through my mind, goes directly to Him. There is not a moment where I wont bring him into my personal thoughts.

I measure my journey through journaling. I like to look back and see where I was at 2 years ago, one year ago, to a month ago, and from there I look at what has changed in me and what I need to continue to work on. I have been working on not putting myself down and just

having faith in God. If I measure myself to human standards I would not progress at all. I try to stick to the Bible and what it says and live according to that. I am aware we all fall due to our sinful nature, but I also know that the Lord gives us instruction on how to live and He gives us all the Spiritual gifts and talents to go forward and live a life that is worth living for Him. I will

always try to live up to God's standards and not my own, for His understanding of life is far better than mine and He will always know what is best for my journey. I will continue to ask for discernment and for the Holy Spirit to convict me at all times.

My life has been a whirlwind in the last 5 years, from learning how to move past my divorce and understanding that it does not define me. I've learned to be a loving mother to my son and I've learned what it is to raise a child in the ways of God. I returned to college in hopes to make a better future. I left my childhood church. I went from an unhealthy church to a new church. All of this was done with a faith place solely on God. He has given me faith and so much strength to be able to heal, learn to love, and to learn to live a life full of purpose. He has given me Faith to be able to sing and touch other hearts, Faith to tell my story, faith to do things I thought were not possible. Currently, I practice my faith by forgiving others, and showing so much love towards my church community and everyone I encounter inside and outside of church. I try wholeheartedly to live out the fruits of the spirit and show empathy and share with others in faith. I pray to God, read my bible, study it, journal, listen to so much worship music and sing my heart out. Serving in the church through worship has given me a way to glorify Him and it allows me to pour my heart to Him in ways I cannot describe. It is a true blessing to serve in the worship team and sing just about anywhere, and see how the lives of others are changed through Christ and to hear the testimonies that come from others simply by just being who God has made me to be. I simply try to serve God with all my heart. My life is still a work in progress but He is such an amazing father and a good God that I cannot picture living a life without Him.