

Chronological Sequence Faith Story—An Example

Before: As I was growing up, I heard people talking about God and Jesus and the Bible, but it was just religious talk to me—I didn't understand what it all meant. Oh, I believed there was a God who created this beautiful world, but I didn't realize that he cared anything about me. But when I was in high school, I began to wonder about life and death and whether or not there was any purpose in life for me. One of my closest friends was killed in a car accident while I was a sophomore in high school and I remember thinking, *I wonder where he is now? Is there life after death? And, if so, how can a person be prepared for that life?* And, from some of the things I was reading at the time and seeing in movies and hearing in the music I was listening to, I began to wonder *if there was ANY purpose in life worth living for. And why were the lives of so many of my cultural heroes all messed up, if what they believe is true?*

How: And then one day, while I was a freshman in college, some guys who lived down the hall from me in my dorm invited me to a Bible study. I wasn't particularly excited about attending, but they were cool guys who had always been friendly with me, so I agreed to attend, at least for the first study. And, frankly, I was curious about the Bible and some of the things I had heard about it. When I got to the study, they handed me a Bible and a book called *The Story of Hope*. I must admit I was skeptical about the Bible because of what I had heard about it in some of my classes. I had been told that it was just an old book, filled with myths and fables and inaccuracies. But some of the facts about the Bible in the introduction of the study book caught my attention—40 authors spread over 1,500 years wrote the Bible and supposedly they all contributed to telling one big unifying story! As we went through the study, it all began to make sense to me. And, contrary to what I had been told by some of my professors, the stories in the Bible all fit together around one story. I soon found myself interested and curious as to how the story would end. And I also found myself learning about God and the reason behind the problems we see all around us. The story explained a lot to me—and a lot about me. I began to realize that God has established some moral laws for us to obey—that there IS right and there IS wrong. And I knew that I had done a lot of wrong things, things that the Bible calls sins. But, the more I studied the Bible, the more I realized that God loves me, in spite of all the wrong things I had done—He loved me enough to send His Son Jesus Christ to Earth to live a perfect life and take the punishment for my sins. And then God raised Jesus from the dead—that's what Easter is all about, something I had never understood. So, at the end of the study—several weeks later—my friends asked if I was “trusting Jesus, and only Jesus, to forgive my sins and give me eternal life.” I had to admit that I had never placed my faith in Jesus to be my Savior, but I wanted to do that—then and there. And, quietly in my heart, I did! Then we prayed a prayer thanking God for forgiving my sins and accepting me into His family.

After: Since that time, I have had my ups and downs. Life still is tough some times. But I now know that God loves me and is continually changing my life for the better. And two things I know for sure—God has a plan for me while I'm here on Earth, and I'm very confident that I am now prepared to meet Him when I die and go to Heaven to live with Him.