

My Faith Journey

By: Jayla Hastings

As a person who follows Christ, I know how important it is to have Him in your life. I have reached a point in my life where I am starting to make a lot of decisions by myself, so it is very important that I consider what choices God would want me to make.

I gave my life over to Jesus when I was about nine years old. Growing up, my parents had a big part in my faith journey. They always encouraged me to pray about everything, including things that upset me or made me happy. I have participated in AWANA since the first grade. As a kid I didn't really know a lot of Bible verses so when I learned John 3:16 it really stuck with me. Then growing up as I started reading the Bible more often, it started becoming something I did almost daily. I started going to Lake Beauty Bible Camp when I was ten years old, and have gone ever since. I really like connecting with different people and hearing how they came to know Jesus. Recently my youth pastor, Adriana, helped me in my faith journey. It meant a lot to me to have someone else I could talk to when I needed to. Recently, I have struggled with who I want other people to view me as, rather than living up to who God knows I can become. I am focusing on reading the Bible and trying to put its lessons into practice.

They asked us in confirmation to pick a life verse. I wanted to pick one that I felt I could really relate to. I see myself as a loving and caring person at heart. I found that in 1 John 4:11-12, "Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us." I feel that I can relate to this verse because each day that I wake up I try to love everyone as though I was loving God. It means a lot if I can be the reason that someone smiles. God loves every single person no matter what they have done in their past, no matter how popular they are, or how much they have sinned. We are all sinners, saved by grace. My parents remind me, "the closer I am in my walk with Jesus the more Christ-like I will become." When we sin it separates us from God, but if we repent from that sin we will be forgiven and our relationship with God will be restored.

When I stop and think about my future, I hope to go to Lake Beauty again this summer. Next school year, I'll be transitioning to high school which can bring even greater challenges. For some people, high school can bring a lot of pressure but I think that with family, friends and the Lord's help I will make it. I've committed to praying daily, worshiping and attending church. Worshiping through song and music has always brought me closer to God. Throughout my life I would like to become closer to my church family and find my roles in the church. As I grow up I will continue to stand up for my faith when it is being questioned. All of this can only be made possible through God and His plan for my life.