

My Faith Journey

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Scripture: Mathew 6:25-31

My faith journey began the day I was born. Every Sunday, my loving parents took me to church where we sat in the first pew to be involved in the worship service. In Sunday school I learned stories of Jesus, prayer, the meaning of the Ten Commandments, and sang in the choir. As a little girl, I remember saying the offering prayer. "What can I give him poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I'd give him a lamb. If I were a wise man, I'd do my part. What can I give him? I'll give him my heart. Bless these gifts dear Father. Amen." It wasn't until later that I truly found out the meaning of this prayer. It doesn't matter how much money you give in the offering basket as long as you give back to God what He has given you. So if all you have is love, all He wants is your love. Every Wednesday night after dinner, my family would have devotions. My parents answered all of my questions, as well as my brothers and sister. After devotions we would all rejoice and sing songs to Jesus. Later, I attended confirmation classes, became a member of the Luther League and went on various camping retreats. I was one of the first female acolytes at my church, which made my family very proud.

When I began a family of my own, my dream was to raise my children with Christian values. I began this by getting married in a Lutheran Church and having three beautiful children. After my father-in-law passed away, my husband began abusing alcohol every day and night and then became physically and mentally abusive to me. I began to realize that this is not the way I dreamed of raising my family. I still remember the day (May 1981) I left my home with my three children, five months pregnant and only having the clothes on my back. With the support of my parents and God, I went into hiding at my aunt's house for two weeks. It took a long time and belief in God to give the strength and courage that I needed to survive. Every night I prayed for guidance and support to help me get through each day. I realized that I could provide for my children with the help of God and not have to stay in an abusive relationship. I started reading the Bible and came across the passage that changed my life. Matthew 6:25 states "Therefore I tell you do not worry about you life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than clothes?" This passage made me realize that as long as I have Christ in my life I can get through anything in life. This

experience gave me the true meaning of faith. I had no money to pay the bills and no food to put on the table, but I knew that everything would somehow work out.

Every Sunday, my children and I attended church. When the offering basket came around I didn't have money to put into the basket, I remembered the prayer I use to say as a child. I decided to become a Sunday school teacher to give back to God. As a parent, I raised my children in a loving Christian home. Even though I was unable to give my children all materialistic things in life, I was able to give them love and teach them about Jesus. This made my children and I realize that with Christ in your heart you can achieve anything in life.

Today, I am remarried and my children are beginning to start their own lives. I am confident that they will have God in their lives and pass their values onto their families. Through out the years, my children have also given to the church by being Sunday school teachers, acolytes, and even camp counselors at Lutheran camps. Carolyn is married, with two children and works as a social worker in a nursing home. Mickey is married and is an ironworker. Christine is married and is a math teacher at a middle school. Walter is a chef. All of my children have become successful and have their values due to my faith in Christ.

When you are going through hard times in life, remember that you were splashed by faith in baptism and you are a child of God. Listen to these words as Cindy Markus sings "Child of the Waters" from Dakota Road.

Refrain: "You're a child of the water, child of the word,

Guided by promise and stories you've heard.

God of the wounded knows you by name and carries you home everyday.

1. From you're first breathe to the last step all of the dance;

Down deep in your laughter whatever your fears,

Try to remember...

Refrain:

2. Life is a gift, time carries on and you will grow;

A midst your believing and throughout your doubt, something is sure....

Refrain:

3. We journey together as children of God, sealed by the cross...."

Refrain: