

Writing Prompt 1: Tell a story from your childhood – or early faith development – that sticks out to you as being important or impactful in your relationship with Christ. And explain why.

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When I was a child, my parents took my brothers and I to church every single week. In my life, I have heard countless sermons, Sunday school lessons, and devotions. I went to VBS, participated in service opportunities, went on mission trips, and read many books on the Christian Faith. Nothing impacted me more, though, than seeing how my parents expressed their faith through their lives.

Yes, I saw them active in the church – serving as Deacons, volunteering at workdays, cooking meals, teaching classes, and singing in the choir. But I also saw them feeding those who were hungry, cooking food for a coworker who was sick, and caring for so many who had need. Most visible, though, in my mind, is a memory of playing on the floor of our living room, while they sat at our dinner table, with adults I had never seen before, sharing their faith and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was co-workers, other parents, neighbors... you name it. My parents invited people into our home, fed them, and shared why Jesus meant so much to them.

Their kindness, generosity, boldness, and eagerness to see others find salvation in Jesus Christ shaped me more than any sermon that I have ever heard. It modeled to me what discipleship looks like. And it impressed on me just how valuable Jesus is. He is a treasure that is so unique, so holy, and so worthy that we cannot keep him for ourselves. Once we have him, we want others to have him too. Once we know him, we cannot help but to introduce him to all of our friends.

This memory is important to me because, looking back, I can see how blessed that I am to have had this kind of Christian faith and faithfulness modeled to me. It opened my eyes to a God who is bigger than the Bible, bigger than any book on theology, and bigger than all of our religious actions that we participate in at church. He is alive and out in the world, in the faces of our coworkers, friends, and peers. And that image of his, that is in each of us and that he gave us Jesus to redeem, is worth the pain of rejection, the cost of being generous, and the risk of love that I saw in my parents and hope to live up to today.

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