

## STORIES OF GRACE

Members of our church family share their stories of Grace.  
*Taylor Long , Summer Apprentice*



Describing God's grace in my life could start at any point in time, but I'll start on July 2, 1990. That was the day God graciously brought me into the world to breathe on my own. I was born on this day in Warsaw, IN. My parents, Scott and Jamie, began raising me in the town of Warsaw. Both of them are believers and they faithfully brought me to church and taught me right from wrong.

Naturally, I am a rule follower. Doing good and nice things was something that I wanted to do, and tried to do. Whether that was not hitting my little sister back or doing my homework, I listened and followed my parent's orders. Church simply became one of those rules to follow and a good thing to do.

As I continued to grow up and go to school, I found basketball to be a passion of mine. After school all I would want to do was play basketball. This passion continued through middle school and on into high school. Being in a small town in Indiana, high school basketball was a community event. I was blessed to be able to play for Warsaw High School and in front of thousands of people. Mixing my natural tendency to follow the rules and be a nice guy with being in front of people worked well for me as I gained a reputation of being a good kid. I was moral and I found comfort and justification in what they thought of me. In my mind, because everyone else thought I was good, that must have meant that I was. My need for a Savior had not been realized.

By God's grace, He gave me an opportunity to play basketball at Grace College (which is within running distance of my home.) It was there when I got placed in a room with 3 other teammates, 2 of them had just finished a year of discipleship and were passionate about what Jesus was doing in their life. They were very clearly changed and I could see there was a difference. Midway through the year my other roommate came to Christ and seeing his changed life challenged me to evaluate my own heart. After a couple months of thinking, reflecting, and fighting, God convicting me of my sin. I finally saw my sin for what it was and felt a desperate need for a Savior. God's grace then met me through Jesus and His life, death, and resurrection.

God has had me on a wonderful journey. It hasn't been easy, but God has been gracious. God's grace has continually formed, shaped, and molded me into the image of His Son. God has directed me at every step. As Shai Linne says "I would talk about myself but I'm dead. God killed me and gave me His Son's life instead."

Thank you for this opportunity to be with you this summer. You have been a wonderful blessing and a great picture of God's grace. From the house, the furniture and food, to the conversations that I've been able to have, I am very grateful for it all. I have been blessed through you all and you've made this summer a great experience.

Thank you!!