

Sue's Testimony:

When I met my husband in 1990, I did not know God. I now believe that God knew me. I always wondered about things like who God is , where's Heaven and why did this man Jesus die on a cross.

I grew up as an army brat. We moved a lot, so my parents never were much on going to church or speaking about religion. My brother and I were born in Germany - - my father had met my mother while stationed there.

I was always of a curious nature, seeking life's big answers. When I was older my Dad and I would talk about things like science, the stars, and infinity. We spoke a little about religion (my father was Italian and raised Roman Catholic). I do remember Dad saying, "I know there was something very special about this man Jesus. People have been talking about him and questioning his nature for 2000 years."

My life prior to meeting my husband was void of religion. I resisted church, reading the Bible, and just plain fought dedicating any time in finding "religious" answers. I had lived on my own since 18 years of age. I led the usual secular life of a single woman. I worked hard and I played hard.

One of my favorite stops before meeting the gang was at my married friend's house, Terry. We would sit at Terry's bar early on Saturday evenings to talk about my exciting single life (not). The conversation ultimately always led to God. Terry was Catholic. As I remember it, she fought about defending God and I fought for proof. I never fought against the existence of God or what Jesus had done, but I was never satisfied with the answers I was receiving. (funny, today I witness to Terry every chance I get)

This feeling of something missing went on until I met my husband. We dated for approximately a year and married in 1991. I was 32 years old and lived in Matawan, NJ. We stayed in my apartment after marrying and my husband started to attend a church in town. He would tell me how great this Pastor Mel was and wanted me to meet him.

Despite my husband's many attempts at getting me into church or even to speak to the pastor, I resisted. Instead, I became angry and felt it was some kind of weakness to give in. The strange thing is I knew there was something about my husband that I didn't possess--things like kindness, trust, patience, calmness and much love. I felt that, generally, people were self-reliant. I used to say ridiculous things like "God helps those who help themselves," which I told myself was in the Bible.

One evening Pastor Mel called our home to speak to me. I couldn't believe the nerve. I was ready to tell that Pastor where to go. When I took the phone, BAM! Don't ask me what happened, but all my anger went away. He tapped into an issue I had about death and dying. It was a good conversation.

My first day in church with my husband was Easter Sunday (had to make it an official holiday). I was amazed people attending were not losers but good, decent people--people with good jobs, mothers, children, grandparents, all walks of life. I felt a bit ashamed for my ill thoughts. That visit changed everything. I went with my husband to Pastor Mel's church on a regular basis.

One night in the parking lot all my questions finally put the pastor over the edge. He said "Sue, you have two choices. You can accept Christ and go up to heaven when you die or you can decide to go the other way." "Personally", he said, " I would choose up, they're the only two choices you have." I drove home and started to cry, couldn't stop. I wasn't sad or happy, just couldn't stop crying. I chose Christ.

We eventually moved due to my husband's work as a golf professional. That meant finding a new church. Well, that didn't happen right away. I still had some secular living to do; and, besides, I was such a baby at this faith, I didn't realize then how much I had to grow and learn of God's Word. We found a new church--a Lutheran church. I gained more knowledge and met more Christians.

A Couple years down the road we moved again--back to the old neighborhood. It was several years again without a church. Although we occasionally attended a large church in the area, it never felt right. Too many people and I felt lost.

We had some Christian friends in our life, but I continued to weave in and out of sin and faith. Now my new battle with God was suffering—especially suffering children. I developed a new emotion: anger with God. I spent the next year or so trying to figure out God's plan, to find the sense in it.

We moved once again into Laurence Harbor, buying our first home. My husband found a new church right across the street. It took a bit, but I joined him. We have been at Harbor Bible about three years. This church is where we belong, as family among our new brothers and sisters in faith. My faith has strengthened and I'm knowing God more and more, finally. I don't ask as many questions as I used to, and I found that the Bible has all the answers I need. Now, the only questions I have are about how to please my Lord and Savior, how to live for Him. Lucky me.