

A NEED TO CONTROL EVERYTHING

My family started going to church when I was seven. We went to church on Sunday where we pretended everything was fine. Then went back to our out of control life the rest of the week. I knew about God but didn't understand the point or why. Church was a fun place to go and see people each week.

As I started to get older and life got even more crazy at home the church was my safe place. The place I could hide from my home life and be around loving people. I started to volunteer in order to spend more time away from home. I started helping teach kids when I was in 6th grade every Sunday and Wednesday. I helped serve food on Saturdays and anything else I could do throughout the week. I trusted God to protect me but I didn't fully understand how to leave it all at his feet. I still needed control. I needed to know everything in order to feel safe.

When I became an adult I wanted more. I wanted to wake up on Sunday and wanted to go to church, but not do it out of obligation. So, my then boyfriend and I decided to look at other churches. We were invited to The Way so we decided to go to Fall Fest and started attending the Saturday night services. Each week we would have hours of conversations after church. We learned so much more in the first month than I had in all the years of growing up in church. It sounds crazy, but I never knew before attending The Way that I was supposed to read the Bible on my own outside of church. I didn't know anything about tithing or even what a Bible Study was.

I began to build a relationship with God and other believers. It was amazing, but I still struggled to let go of that control. Growing up in a home of multiple divorces, abusive fathers, and abandonment from many different people made me need to control everything. I wanted so badly to be all in but it was hard to let everything go. After a short time I saw myself doing what I had always known. Put on your Sunday face then go back to chaos at home. I had to make a change, I had to be all in for Jesus.

I decided to listen to what God was telling me for weeks I needed to do, but I told myself I wasn't good enough. I couldn't lead God's children because I was too broken, not good enough and I didn't know enough. But God didn't give up on me and after 9 weeks of persistence I stepped into what he asked me to do. It didn't stop there. God changed relationships in my life, he wanted me to go back to school, and had me and my now husband take many classes.

We changed our home life, seeking God in every area. We talked to everyone we could to learn how we could be better/do better for God's kingdom. We try to better ourselves every day and there are days I fall back into needing to have everything in my control. But God reminds me that he is in control and even if I try to take it into my own hands I fall because it is not mine to hold. He shows me time and time again that His plans are so much better than mine and it is for good.

Still there are days I struggle and that is where God put this amazing village around me. The staff at The Way, the people I have met in Bible studies, classes and small groups. They always have hugs and smiles to share on a Sunday. They don't play church; they are really there when I am struggling, to tell me what I need to hear. They are willing to share their struggles and help me to stay on the right path in giving God control. I wouldn't be where I am without the amazing people God has given me here!