

Spiritual Journey

My spiritual journey began in earnest when I became a Christian in high school at age 15. During this early part of my journey I was learning things like how to be myself and how to make my faith my own, not just something I believed in because my friends did or because I liked the church I went to. In college, I was involved in the Christian Fellowship and encountered Christians from a variety of backgrounds who were all committed Christians but who approached God, the church, and the Bible a bit differently than I did. I began to understand God as bigger than just my experience, and I became more serious about my faith and more committed to following God.

Once I graduated and was in the working world, my questions developed around what does God want me to do and how does my faith integrate into and influence my work. In the working world, it is easy to fall into the trap of thinking, "I must not be doing the right things because my life is not changing." I felt I needed to "do these things" [whatever they were] so that God would work in my life to make me more like Him. In talking with and listening to other Christians I respected, it became clear to me that being a Christian was *a relationship with a person*, a living being, and not a formula to follow ("If I do this, I will get this in return"). I understood that I needed to treat God like a living being, one that couldn't be manipulated or trained or tamed. In a way, I needed to come to God like I would another living being, with respect for God's uniqueness and integrity, knowing that God is not a static concept but a living and not-always-predictable being.

I came to learn that my relationship with God was more important than the circumstances in which I found myself. Whether my situation was great or terrible, I learned to look to God and ask question like, "What do you want me to learn from experiencing this?" "What can I learn about you or myself?" and "How can I know God better through this?" rather than "Help me out of this situation!"

My work life and spiritual life came together when I realized that I would rather be working in the church than in the secular marketplace. I was always an active volunteer leader in any church I attended. I started working in a small church as the senior pastor's administrative assistant, and the Spirit started a new aspect of his work in me! A few years later I got a job working in a much larger church as the Associate Director of a newly formed adult department. Many people asked if I was going to go on to seminary to become a pastor (more of the Spirit's work). When, because of budget constraints, I was let go from that position I was praying for the Lord to show me the direction I was to go, and it was on to seminary at Regent College and the ministry.

I have found several aspects of Green Hill Presbyterian Church to which I am drawn. Some are concrete such as a good range of age groups in the congregation; a staff I can partner with; people active in outreach to the community; a growing congregation. Some are less concrete such as their interest in studying the word of God; a desire on the part of the congregation to reach out to the neighbors to invite them to church; and their joyous traditional worship. Since I have experience as a pastor in small churches, plus experience as a worshiper and employee in churches in larger cities, I see Green Hill as a good mix of both.