



January 12, 2021

Journey to New Beginnings

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“Tell us about the beginning of your journey.”

That was the question posed by my Immanuel lay support team as we marked the approaching one-year anniversary of our first meeting.

The “beginning” of my journey is something I do not remember. It was always a part of me. But there is a crucial event that is a marker in time.

Christmas Eve 2008 I collapsed at my home parish in Irmo, South Carolina, in the middle of singing *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. My health was poor, affected by years of relentless overworking. As a single parent, my focus was to provide for my sons; priorities revolved around them – a home, health, school, and church. My well-being was not part of the formula.

The Lord had been nudging me for quite some time to reorder my priorities and put my relationship with the Lord as the starting point for everything in my life. Instead, after my collapse at church, I started with months of tests and medication which did not guide me to the required life changes.

And yet, a line of scripture kept appearing in my mind: "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:26)

Perhaps some of you have had a life-changing experience like this when life is out of order. During a test in the hospital in September 2009, I had a life-ending, adverse reaction and crashed. The medical team worked for twenty minutes to revive me. During that time, I had a conversation with the Lord. I was so unhappy and tired that I asked the Lord to not send me back, that I knew my sons were young, but I simply could not go on. The response was "You have work to do." I revived and woke up. In an instant, the Lord changed who I am physically, spiritually, and emotionally.

That day, the Lord told me to start again. Like the Wise Men seeing the Bethlehem Star, I had been shown the way to life and it began with Jesus Christ. Like the Wise Men, reordering my life in Christ took a long time and was a step-by-step journey.

Life began that day and it has had many beginnings since. Births, deaths, rain, and sunshine are all are markers of beginnings, outward and visible signs of the love and action of our Lord.

When my journey in this life began, I cannot tell you because it has always been – the Lord our God has always been. I have work to do and through the love of our Lord know that everything begins with Jesus Christ.