

4 THE POWERED BY FOUR SOLUTION

Start the Conversation

Read This Story, and Then Join in With Your Own ...

I grew up going to church. On Sunday mornings, my entire family would leave home in the same vehicle, share a pew, and return home together. We prayed before meals, read Scripture, and volunteered in church. In high school, my parents sent me to a Christian school where dancing was forbidden, and the girls wore skirts below the knee. I knew the lingo, I could quote scripture, and I knew hymns by heart. I knew my Christian role, and I played it well. But I didn't really know Jesus.

At night, I'd lie awake as my mind got tangled up with fear. I was afraid of the dark, afraid of things that went "bump" in the night, afraid of dying one day and being completely gone. I tried to hang on to what my parents told me about Jesus, what the minister said about Jesus, what the songs promised about heaven. But I was missing Jesus. I was putting my hope in my ideas about Jesus, and not in Jesus Himself.

Talk It Out

Don't Hide What's Inside—Open Up!

- What's the difference between relationship and religion?
- Which do you think God is more concerned about? Why?
- What does it mean to put your trust in Jesus, instead of just trusting in the "idea of Jesus"?
- Which do you trust more—Jesus or the idea of Him?

Engage God's Word

Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17

- Have you "become convinced" regarding the things you've heard about Jesus?
- When did you first start reading the bible? How has your understanding of Jesus changed from when you first began reading the Bible?
- What practical uses for the Bible are listed in these verses?

Discover Real Change

Consider How You Can Apply God's Word

It's easy to minimize the importance of having a relationship with Jesus. For some of us, it's hard to believe a personal relationship with Him is even possible. For many of us, our past experiences with church or Sunday school or family teachings about God make Jesus seem distant and hard to reach. Sometimes we might think He doesn't want to have a relationship with us. But nothing could be further from the truth.

God loves us just the way we are. He's not waiting for us to jump through hoops, or to memorize volumes of Scripture, or to fill our heads with lots of knowledge about Him, or to complete a checklist of good works. God simply wants to fill our hearts with the reassurance that He loves us, no matter what.

- What kinds of things did you learn about Jesus when you were young?
- How do the things you learned about Jesus in years past impact your relationship with Jesus today?
- Do you ever feel as if you've missed Jesus?

Go Deeper

Read These Passages on Your Own

- Jeremiah 31:3-4
- Romans 8:35-39
- I John 4:9-10