MOLLIE STREET

My Personal Testimony:

**I was blessed to grow up in a loving, Christian home and to attend a private school until eighth grade. My parents have flipped roles, so my mother works 24/7 and my Dad took care of four children, of which I am the youngest. I was content as a child, but I always wanted to come first, which is hard when you’re number four in the birth order.**

**When I was in preschool, we went to a Chapel service every Wednesday morning. It was during one of those services that I asked Jesus into my heart. I wanted to mean it, but I didn’t understand what I was saying. That marked the beginning of my belief in Jesus, but I didn’t begin to know Him until my first year of college.**

**During my childhood and teenage years, I always tried to do the right thing. I memorized my weekly Bible verse for school and shouted WWJD at other kids on the playground. I could act the part, but my spiritual life wasn’t connected to my real life. God was someone that you talked to, but never heard back from.**

**When I was sixteen, I left the church I had grown up in. Throughout high school, I kept praying and I tried to read my Bible, but I felt like I had hit a wall.**

**My relationships during those years reflected the state of my heart - that I felt empty and lonely. I had friendships, but they never lasted. I tried to understand why, but inside I was the same little girl seeking to be loved. Culture kept pointing to romantic relationships as the solution to my problem. All I had to do was fall in love with someone and I could be happy. I prayed and acted selfishly based on those desires.**

**I spent my freshman year at a small, private university and still felt like I didn’t belong. As I prayed for God to change the people around me, He changed me instead. He opened my eyes to my immaturity and to the shallowness of my relationships, and I realized how broken I had become. I reached my lowest point when I lost my relationships with best friend and my brother at the same time.**

**There wasn’t an exact moment or prayer, but in the darkness of pain and insecurity, all I could find to hold onto was Christ. My belief in Him, though an afterthought for most of my life, was really the only constant I had. When I felt the least loved by the people around me, I was able to feel God’s love the most. In the summer of 2014, I asked the Lord to forgive me for not living my life for Him and for Him to change the desires of my heart to better seek Him.**

**When I prayed for God’s will, He directed me to UGA and to Athens even though He knew I was afraid to come. He led me to Living Hope and surrounded me with an incredible group of believers who quickly became my friends. I have experienced a dramatic change in my relationships over the past two years that would not have been possible without my relationship with Christ coming first. Having friendships that are based on a mutual love for Jesus has been a great blessing and source of encouragement.**

**This past Easter, as I reflected on my first year in Athens and at Living Hope, I thanked Jesus for all of the ways He has changed me. In the past year, I have prayed to receive the Holy Spirit, and experienced joy every day walking with Christ. The phrase “true love” is used to describe one person being perfect for another, but I have found that people are too imperfect to enact this kind of love by themselves. To me, "true love" is the love that God has for us. He sacrificed everything to know each and every one of us, and to give us the opportunity to know and love Him.**

**My prayers recently have focused on the role that my search for love and companionship has affected my relationships and my behavior. It occurred to me that if I have to give my heart to someone, then it should be God. Romans 10:10 says “For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.” If my heart hadn’t been broken two years ago, I may not have run to Jesus. And without Him, I would not know the love and acceptance that I spent so long looking for. I realized that I would go through it all again, the loneliness and sorrow, if it meant that I could have my relationship with Jesus.**