**2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “If anyone is inn Christ he is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come.”**

I can remember my elementary years and how rambunctious I was. I had no problem instigating fights, hitting my brother in the knee with a dull axe, stealing, and manipulating people, etc. When all 5 of us, my 2 brothers, 2 sisters and myself, would walk down the street together the other kids would run to the other side. Now, fast forward to today. I work with the Navigators to make spiritual generations of laborers that will live and disciple among the lost. What happened in the between years? Christ’s transformation.

My mom died when I was 9 or 10 years old. This changed my world. I became a broken child longing for love and acceptance, but it was hard for me to find in a lasting way. My dad was a drug supplier and user so I went to live with my Aunt Kim. It was a difficult year for me; I bullied other kids, and fought every time someone made a derogatory statement about my mom, and would distant myself from my aunt. After a year, she re-evaluated if living with her was the best thing for me and sent me to live with my other aunt Suganna where my oldest brother and sister lived. I began to believe from this experience that I was a burden to the world. I vowed that I would never be a burden again and thus set out to be morally pure.

Throughout middles school and high school, I became a gentleman and tried to avoid conflict. Some people thought that I was a Christian because of my behavior and manners. However, it wasn’t until my sophomore year of high school that I began to learn that I could have a personal relationship with God. A good friend of mine invited me to his youth group. I had no idea what was a youth group, but was hooked after he mentioned I could play basketball. Once I arrived I experienced the longings on my heart; love and acceptance. I was curious to know their source and continued to be involved.

I attended the youth group for 2 years before I accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior. Travis, my former youth pastor, shared a message from Ephesians 2:8-9 and I finally understood that my works could not get me into heaven. **Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your doing. It is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one may boast.”** I had believed that my morally good works would get me into heaven, but was relieved to know that it was only Christ’s death on the cross and resurrection power that could save me from the penalty of my sin; eternity separated from God.

In my 15 years of walking with Christ I have increasingly grown to trust in Him and his promises. Travis discipled me and helped foster a God given hunger to make disciples. I later attended Moody Bible Institute to better equip myself for disciple-making. I got married in 2010 to my beautiful and godly wife Emma Sumrall. We now have one son, Daniel Sumrall, who is a delightful blessing. We were involved in our local church before joining the Navigators in 2014. Furthermore, throughout the years and much more recently I have learned to believe that God would reside with me and fulfill His promises. Some of the most meaningful promises for me over the years have been Matt 6:33, Joshua 1:8-9, 2 Cor. 12:9-10.