

Li, Isabella



Hi! My name is Isabella Li, but most people call me Bella. I grew up in FCBCLA and have attended this church for practically my whole life. As a toddler, I confessed my sins and prayed with my parents; that was the first time I received Christ into my heart. Of course, as a toddler, I didn't understand what any of that meant. I probably thought that every family did this. In Sunday school, I recommitted my life to Jesus in 2nd grade, 5th grade, and 7th grade. Still, I didn't fully understand what it meant that I was saved by Christ. I knew the Bible stories and had that head knowledge, but my heart knowledge wasn't fully developed.

Something inside me changed in 10th grade summer camp - sophomore year of high school. For some reason- perhaps seeing the way Holy Spirit was moving between all of us, the worship just *hit different*. It was like a wave of realization of just how amazing God's love is came crashing down on me. I was overwhelmed. I like to refer to the song 'How He Loves' by David Crowder Band and I especially resonate with the bridge:

“When heaven meets earth like an unforeseen kiss
And my heart turns violently inside of my chest
I don't have time to maintain these regrets
When I think about the way that He loves us”

I was surprised at how accurately that described how I felt. I could physically feel my heart hurting. But it was the good kind of hurt, you know?

But even with this overwhelming feeling of God's love, I was scared to get baptized. Thoughts such as: “*What if it was just another camp high?*” “*What if*

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people start asking me too many questions and I don't know how to answer it?"

"What if I end up crying when I share my testimony?" "A spur-of-the-moment decision?" "I should wait for a big life-changing moment to 'justify' me getting baptized, right? (A brought back from the brink of death or redeemed criminal kind of thing)" I had always heard of baptism being a "big step in one's faith" and consequently thought that a big, life-changing moment had to happen first. So, with baptism on my mind, I waited for that life-changing moment to happen.

It wasn't until recently, practically two years from that summer camp, that I felt something stirring again. I always tend to quote "As the Spirit leads" as I find appropriate, so I decided to take that to heart. I was having Fosselman's with Courtney and I brought up baptism. Jenay had mentioned it at WiRe, and since we had just come back from WiRe a couple of days before, I decided, *"Let's see where this conversation goes."*

From our conversation, I realized that I don't need one defining, life-changing, written-in-the-clouds, spoken-from-the-sky kind of moment. I know now that baptism is just an outward showing of what I already know and feel inside. My testimony doesn't need some sort of Oscar-winning plotline for me to get baptized. As long as I love God, accept Jesus as my Savior, Lord, (and Friend), and want to continue to grow my relationship with Him, that's what matters, right?

So, what's holding me back? I'll trust God and His plan for me. After all,

As the Spirit leads