

The RIDE

For
Jr/Sr
High

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youth perspective

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My Boring Testimony

Q. During youth group, I've heard many people tell dramatic testimonies of when God became real to them or they felt his love so strongly that it changed their hearts. I've never had one of these moments. I don't have a dramatic conversion story. I've just always believed. I'm starting to wonder how well I really know Christ if I've never felt these things. What can I do?

A. I know so many Christians who are in the same situation you're in. And I'm one of them. Sometimes when you don't have a dramatic story of finding Christ after a life of sin and rebellion, you wonder if you've really come to Christ at all.

If you're waiting for some feeling of euphoria or instant knowing that's supposed to accompany a conversion experience—and if you're like me—you may wait a lifetime. But that doesn't mean your faith isn't real.

Let me ask you a couple of slightly different questions: Have you ever felt bad about something you've done and tried to make it right? (Like apologizing to your sister for saying something mean.) Have you ever realized

something you were doing wasn't good, and you decided to go in a different direction? (Like procrastinating on your homework and finally realizing you need to work on it consistently.)

When you make a course correction like that, does it always feel really, really good immediately? Probably not. But it's still the right decision. And it may be awhile before you experience the benefits.

In Matthew 3:2, Jesus preaches: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" (NIV). Lots of people think the word repent means a tearful conversion experience. But actually, the word means to turn or head in a different direction. It means to make a midcourse correction and head in God's direction.

And repentance isn't a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Because we constantly are making bad decisions and our lives are often heading off in selfish directions, we need to keep making midcourse corrections, repenting and realigning ourselves in God's direction. That's what it means to follow Jesus.

Sometimes we experience lots of emotion when we repent and realign ourselves with Christ, and

other times we don't. The feelings aren't what matters. What matters is that we've made a decision to make Jesus the Lord and Savior of our lives (see Romans 10:9-10 and John 1:12). If we've made that decision, Jesus welcomes us as one of his followers.

Marshall, a former pastor, is editor of Leadership, a magazine for pastors.

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/iyf/advice/faithqa/7.8.html>



Worshiping "in spirit" means that you mean it; that you're worshiping inside out, not just going through the motions.

Worshiping "in truth" means that you're worshiping the true God and

not some idol you've created. And it means you're being truthful with your words and thoughts that you bring to worship; you're not trying to put on a religious act to impress someone.

Are there right and wrong ways to worship? Certainly. But what makes worship right or wrong is not your posture, your music, or whether you raise your hands, clap your hands, or fold your hands.

When a woman asked Jesus about different ways of worshiping, Jesus replied, "A time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth" (John 4:23, NIV).

For entire article go to <http://www.christianitytoday.com/iyf/advice/faithqa/19.12.html>

May 2010 MEMORIZATION Recite all from memory & get 50 RIDE points

(or do one at a time and get 5 points each)

- 1 Peter 2:2-3 "Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good."
- 1 Peter 2:9 "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."
- 1 Peter 2:15 "For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men."
- 1 Peter 2:21 "To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps."

**OUR PLACE OF
WORSHIP**

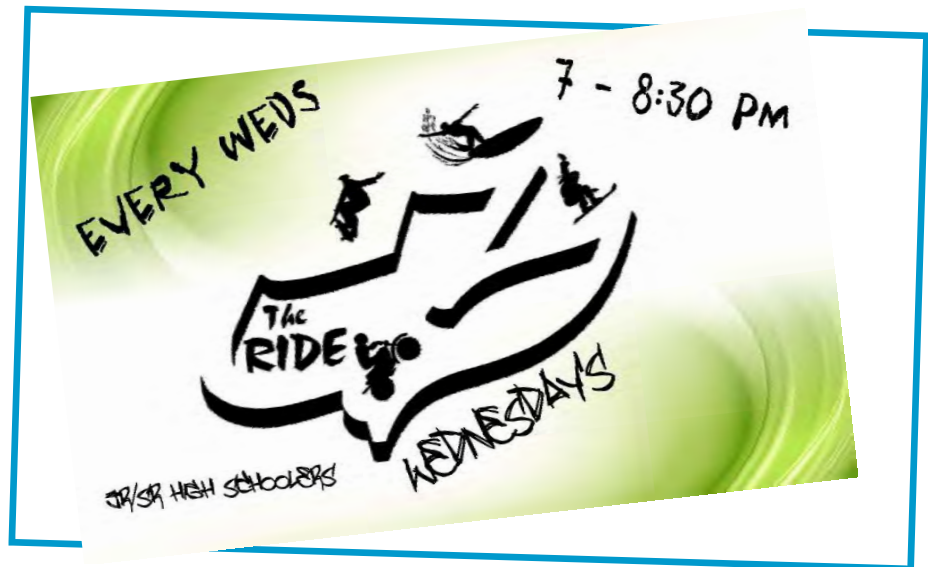


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90 Percent of Teens Admit Stronger Likelihood of Drinking and Driving on Prom Night

An important reminder to parents on the increased temptation of drinking and driving as we head into the prom and graduation seasons...

Each year, spring school rituals - prom and graduation - begin with so much excitement and promise yet end in tragedy for hundreds of teen drivers and their passengers. New research from Liberty Mutual Insurance and SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) suggests this season could be no different. According to a national survey of more than 2,500 eleventh and twelfth graders, 90 percent of teens believe their counterparts are more likely to drink and drive on prom night and 79 percent believe the same is true for graduation night. Yet, that belief does not translate to concern, as only 29 percent and 25 percent of teens say that driving on prom night and graduation night, respectively, comes with a high degree of danger.

There were 380 teen alcohol-related traffic deaths during prom and graduation season (April, May and June) in 2007, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. And the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports 1,009 total teen fatalities (alcohol and non-alcohol-related) in motor vehicle crashes during those same months in 2008.

Information brought to you by: <http://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/Liebelt/11628771/>

A Prayer for Graduation By Kelli Mahone—About.com Guide

It's the start of a new era, and saying a graduation prayer can help you overcome the nervousness and anxiety you may feel as you enter something unknown. God will be there with you as you enter this new time in your life if you ask. Here is a simple prayer you can say:

God, thank you for all you do for me. You have stood beside me, carrying me all these years, and I pray that you continue to be with me as I head into this new time in my life. I know there is a ton of activity with graduation, the parties, and more, but please never let me be distracted from

what has really gotten me through high school - you.

I pray that I continue to feel your presence and have your strength with me as I head off into my future ventures. I ask for your guidance and discernment as I face complicated decisions and grow into the Christian you desire me to be.

I also ask that you bestow your blessings and love over my friends and family as we go through a time of transition. I ask that you keep us safe. I ask that you make sure we feel loved and protected. Lord, I ask for the words to say that let them know they are cared for and that I appreciate



them.

And Lord, I thank you for being here with me in this time. I do not know what the future brings, but you do. I pray for the confidence to go after your plans for me with all my heart. I thank you for giving me the opportunities to fulfill those plans.