

## Sample Post-Module Reflections Paper

### Part 1

My life began on December 8, 1981 in Corvallis Oregon. My mother had a difficult labor with me. If my mother had not had a cesarean, they tell me I would have been born wrong side down and backwards. Ironically, from that point on my life seems to have been that way anyway.

My life has been a trip through a complicated maze. It seems like I've always been seeking to find the light at the end of the tunnel. I have sometimes wished that life offered do-overs. Unfortunately, the fact that life does not let us undo our mistakes has been a major determining factor in my journey on the discovery of faith.

My mother, Brenda, was my life preserver while I was growing up. I will always know that she will be there for me when I need her. I often get a silent cry in my heart when I think about the life she has been through. Her life was full of misfortune and hardship. My father died when I was very young. I was so young that I do not remember him. It makes me heartbroken that I never knew him. I wish I would have had the chance to make him proud. Sometimes I look back and think: "Well, maybe. . . maybe, I would have made him proud."

Shortly after the death of my father, my mother remarried. She married Dick who already had a son, Nathan, from a previous marriage. Unfortunately, Nathan was only six months younger than I. My new stepfather Mick was not a very nice person. The phrase "not very nice" is somewhat of an understatement -- if you know what I mean. My mother tried to accept the man she married; unfortunately, she just did not realize whom she was marrying.

My entire childhood was a battle. I felt that I had to compete with my stepbrother. Everything I did or tried to do was never good enough for my stepfather. He was always making negative comments

and running me into the ground. He was verbally abusive towards me. He was always putting me down while praising his son. Personally, I believe he consciously did this to ruin me. He did not realize that this made me stronger. I used his angry remarks as fuel. This fuel allowed me to be stronger and better. I excelled in school.

Sure, his remarks hurt. If I said they didn't, I would be lying. They hurt the most when I was younger. Fortunately, as I grew, I learned to let the comments roll off my shoulders.

When I was thirteen, my stepfather wanted to move to Oklahoma. In my opinion, I think he moved to get us away from my mother's family. My stepfather bought a ranch and lived there away from us. Eventually, my mother and stepfather divorced. That was for the best. My mother, sister, and brothers did not realize at the time how big of a boulder had been lifted off of our shoulders. We had been freed.

After the divorce, our family started to go to church. My stepfather Mick had never become devoted to a certain church. Before he divorced my mother, we bounced from one church to another; he never found a church that came up to his standards. I do not think we ever would have found a church that met his expectations. Anyway, after the breakup of my parents' marriage, we started going to Calvary Baptist Church. My boyfriend at the time (he's now my husband) was also going to church there.

Calvary Baptist Church was warm and inviting. It felt like a home full of friendly people. My mother, David, and I attended this church through most of my associate degree college days. Once I graduated and became a licensed RN, David and I – who had been high school and college sweethearts – married.

Then, we packed up and moved to Moore where we bought a nice little beginner house. It was in a perfect location. David could attend the University of Oklahoma while I could go to work at OU Medical Center in the trauma intensive care. Moore was the halfway point in driving distance.

We got caught up in being newlyweds. We both worked full-time. David went to school full-time to become an electrical engineer. Because we were both extremely busy, we never looked into finding a new church. Then, a miracle happened. Our former preacher of Calvary Baptist Church, in Tishomingo, moved to a church in Moore. That meant that the preacher who married us a year earlier now lived just two miles down the road. He started to preach at Regency Park Baptist Church. We began attending occasionally when we had time in our busy schedules.

As I mentioned, my stepfather Mick was not a positive father image in my life. I do look back and wonder what my childhood would have been like without him in the picture. I often have pictured more smiles and happy memories instead of tears. Still, though he was on the harsh side, I do think our relationship helped shape me into the person I am today. I believe that I am determined to be successful just to prove that man wrong -- wrong in sense that I will be somebody and make something of my life. I think I have his stubborn streak in me.

My mother is very kind, warm, and sincere. She could win the "best mother of the year award". She is dedicated to her children and making a better life for us. She is helpful and strong. She is supportive of all my good decisions. She also tries to steer me in the right direction. She has now found a wonderful man. He is completely full of love and kindness. He is a Methodist minister. I feel very comfortable asking him questions about the Bible and about God. I wish she would have met this man a long time ago.

## **Part 2**

I was absolutely terrified of starting this Biblical Perspectives class. I had no idea what to expect. So, as can be imagined, I was assuming we would have to talk about our philosophies of our personal beliefs. That made me cringe. I do not have a real strong religious background. Basically, I only knew popular child's condensed versions of various Bible stories. I came to this

module expecting to be judged on my knowledge of the Bible. With that concept in mind, I was expecting to do poorly in this class.

I was expecting to cover the Bible in detail although I did not know that by the end of five weeks we would have looked at it from cover to cover. This course was very time consuming. At first, I was dreading it. I just knew the Bible would be difficult to read. Once I started the process of reading the text and several Bible passages. I figured out that the Bible was not that bad. I did feel we had to cover the whole Bible in too little of a time frame. It would have helped to have a longer length of time to concentrate on what we were reading.

I really enjoyed the class discussions. At first, it was not easy to openly talk about my own personal beliefs. At first, I felt like any response that I gave would be graded wrong. After the first class session, I realized that the environment was going to be more relaxed and comfortable than I had imaged. It made it easier to talk about my feelings and ask questions. It was enlightening to talk openly about all religions and denominations. It was informative to talk about all the broad topics.

It was also a delight to be able to write down questions. It was reassuring that no one knew who asked the questions. It took the stress off by making the questions confidential to the author. It made it easier to ask the questions that you really wanted to ask. It made it interesting to hear some of the questions of my fellow classmates.

I loved our expensive, exotic field trips. The videos were not only educational, but also fun. They all were associated with what we were learning in class. I could watch the video and link it to what I had just read. They were fascinating and at times almost unbelievable. I was completely amazed about the water tunnel that supplied water to the Southern kingdom. It shocked me that the Assyrians failed to capture this kingdom because of this amazing water

supply.

I was also shocked and appalled at some of the videos. I knew that the Israelites fell from God and had worshipped Baal. However, I was almost traumatized to learn what actually took place at those rituals. I learned that Baal was considered to be a fertility god. I was a little surprised at how they tried to induce Baal to provide rain for their crops. The child sacrifices and temple prostitutes totally amazed me. I could not even imagine how they could do such things.

I was impressed with the variety of teaching methods used to cover this portion of the course. I value conversational teaching. I learn best when able to discuss openly what we are learning. I also learn by visual aid. The videos and power points really help me to focus on the subject at hand. The class projects are also a plus. I benefited from placing the major topics of the bible in chronological order with the pieces of paper.

A question we have to ask all of our patients is "How do you learn best?" One of the multiple-choice answers is doing, seeing and hearing. That would be my answer to the question. I learn in combination of all of those methods. This was really beneficial to my learning experience.

### Part 3

I have learned so much in this module. It has helped me understand what the bible is about. I feel I have the whole picture, and not just bits and pieces. Reading the actual text of the Bible has answered many questions. I came across a proverb that I love. It states, "He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers." (page 1106 of the NIV study Bible) I want to continue to learn and grow from the bible. It offers good advice for all situations. It is the golden standard that I need to use as a guide.

I had many new insights that will impact and shape my life. As I mentioned before, I

knew very little of the Bible. I thought, prior to this class that being a Christian was strictly going off of faith. I learned that the Bible is a history book in a sense. It has documented history throughout the entire Bible. That is amazing to me. Prior to this module, I thought that the bible was just stories that people wrote down over the years. This was an eye opener for me. I feel like I am starting to see light at the end of my tunnel.

Another great area of insight was the geographical understanding of the bible. They have actual maps of where all these events took place. We can say that these kings once lived here. They have actual places, mountains, and rivers where these great events took place. I was completely shocked by all this evidence. They have coins, objects, and actual scripture that they have found dating back hundreds of years. I am still in awe.

I needed this biblical perspectives class although I did not realize this at the beginning. This class helped me put my focus back on God. It helped me realize that it is ok to ask questions. I needed a little shove to get me back on track with my walk with God. I have a renewed interest to continue to learn about God. I am not just writing this because I think that this is what you would like to hear. I honestly have a feeling of being whole again. I believe this class helped me get my priorities straight.

From this point of introspection, I have come to affirm the following theology: I believe that the way to heaven is through God's grace. I believe that I was saved by grace when Jesus died on the cross for my sins. I believe that I am saved by grace while trying to live my everyday life the way Christ would ("trying" being the key word in that sentence). I believe that I will be saved by grace as I continue to grow in my spirituality.

I believe that the way to live a Christian life is to do for others. God does not want to know how much wealth we accumulated, but how much we gave away to help others. God

wants us to love others and to help those in need. God will be looking to see if we were able to forgive our enemies; if we were able to love the people that have hurt us, because they are hurting. We need to help the sick and needy, no matter how dirty they are.

Regency Park Baptist Church has a new bible school class. I am very excited about this new class. Our preacher informed my husband and I that they have started a new class that is for young married couples without children. It was very surprising that they have this new class that is perfect for my husband and I. It was like God helping us to get involved again in the church. I feel like I have a new view of my life and how I need to live my life. I still have tons of questions and my quest for knowledge is ever growing. I pray for wisdom and strength to endure the hard times that make me want to give up. Through my trials, I feel my faith grow. I foresee a journey that will take me on a tough road. I pray I will be able to stay on the path that the Lord has chosen for me. I know there will be dark times, but I hope that even then I will be able to see the light.