

Good Morning everybody!

My name is Ashley Schmitt and I can't believe I have been here at Mosaic for four months now. In those four months, I've felt better than I have in a long time. Now I'm happy to say, I am and have been getting closer to God. It wasn't always that way. When I was in seventh grade, I went through a period when I wasn't making very good choices. I wasn't hanging out with the right people, I was doing things I shouldn't have been doing and getting busted by my mom a lot too. On top of that, I was fighting with everyone, getting 3 D.R.'s in one week at school, and having major problems in my relationship with my dad as well. I was only twelve at the time and I'm not afraid to admit I this was a very dark time in my life. Some of the decisions I was making at this time could have resulted in serious consequences for my brother and I as well as our whole family. My problems came to a head when we received a visit from DFAC'S on Christmas Eve of 2003. I realized that both my brother and I could be pulled out of our home with no clear way back because of the fighting that was happening between my dad and me. At that point my eyes were opened just a little to my troubled thoughts. I couldn't believe how crazy things had gotten and how out of control I felt.

About a month or so after that, things got a little better and I started to hang out with Mandi, a girl who really understood me. I felt I could trust her with anything. It wasn't long until we got a note book to write letters back and forth to each other during school. However it didn't take long until I started making stupid choices again. I started talking about committing suicide to Mandi, changed to

wearing dark clothes, and secluding myself from everyone around me including my family. It took Mandi a few days to realize that I was serious about suicide and she took the notebook to the guidance office. Later that day I was called up to the guidance office and they asked me about it. I tried to make them think it was just a joke but they saw straight through that lie and called my parents. When my parents got to school the counselor read them what I had written in the note book:

“Mandi, don’t worry if u don’t see me in school on Monday. This Friday night I am going to kill myself. I’ve got the whole thing planned out; both my parents have a party to go to for my mom’s work and my brother will be at his friend’s house. I know where a gun is and I will use it. That way it will be short and simple.”

After my mom had read that, all she could do was hug me and ask, “Why?” I just couldn’t answer with anything other than, “When I’m gone, no one will have to worry about me and I won’t be causing trouble for anyone. Every one will be a lot happier with me gone.”

It took about a month or so for me to get my feet back on the ground when DFAC’S finally decided to close the case on my family. I was very happy that this issue in my life was finally over. It hit me that if Mandi hadn’t taken the notebook up to the office, my life might have been over right then. I wouldn’t be standing here today. Realizing what I would be missing made me appreciate my friends and family a lot more than I did before. I can proudly say that I have a family that is awesome and a lot of fun too! I mean ho else has a dad that likes to scare people

with his electric-car-starter in the BI-LO parking lot? Who else has a mother who would wear her robe, slippers, and hair curlers to her kid's graduation? Who else has an awesome brother who actually looks after me and sticks up for me when I'm being talked badly about? Who else has an aunt who tries to sing just like Terri Clark? Who has the four most awesome grandparents in the world who tell me what they did when they were my age. With all of these questions, it only takes one word to answer them; NOBODY. They are one of the best things that I have going for me and are the reason I'm here today with you. This family was there when I needed them. If it wasn't for my Terri Clark singing aunt, I would still be sleeping or at the mall with my friend, Caiti, getting into trouble by stealing things I didn't even need. Thank God that Caiti became a Christian and stopped stealing. Now that I am in church and Jesus is with me I am now able to admit that I had a serious problem with stealing things and have a good Christian friend in Caiti that helped me to overcome that temptation. About four month ago, Susan, my aunt, asked me to go to church with her the next morning. At that time I was scared of going. I had thought that this church would be just like all the other ones, the people want you to dress a certain way, talk a certain way and be there every time the doors are open. As soon as I walked into Mosaic, I knew right away that it was different. Mrs. Carolyn was the first person I met here and she was ecstatic to see me there. Susan told her a lot about me like she usually does to all of her friends. Mrs. Carolyn started talking to me about what I believed in and asked me if I had accepted Jesus in my life. I told her I was saved when I was nine and she was

happy for me. About a week later after talking to her I decided I wanted to be baptized. Ever since April 09th, 2006, I have felt renewed to Jesus and felt like I actually found my place, as if Jesus had put me where I needed to be. Ever since then I have been working twice as hard to get where I want to go in my future. Hopefully God will bless my efforts and help me to become a Forensic Scientist. Now that I have given Jesus more control of my life, I want Him to help me make the right choices in life. Jesus has already started doing that by leading me to Mosaic. I started to think the other night about something that Susan had said right before we started coming here. She had mentioned that she wanted to move back to Alabama, but had decided to stay and brought me to this wonderful church. God showed Susan and I so much of His love and grace by leading Susan to get me to come to church with her and see what she sees.

Thank you!