



MY STORY MAP

A Guided Journey Through the Story That Shaped You

Your life is more than a collection of things that happened.

There are people who influenced you, places that became part of you, moments you still remember clearly, seasons you barely remember at all, things you celebrated, things you lost, prayers that were answered, prayers that seemed to go unanswered, choices you made, choices others made that affected you, and experiences that changed something inside you.

Some of those moments may still be influencing how you see yourself, relate to others, respond to difficulty, approach God, make decisions, or imagine your future.

The My Story Map is an invitation to notice.

You aren't trying to analyze every experience or explain everything about yourself. You're simply stepping back far enough to see more of the landscape.

Take your time. You don't have to complete this in one sitting. You may want to pray before you begin, work through one section at a time, or return to particular questions later.

You are the one holding the pen.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Find somewhere you can be comfortable and relatively uninterrupted. Bring a journal or use the spaces provided.

Begin with a simple prayer:

Jesus, as I look at my story, help me see with truth, grace, and clarity. Show me what is important to notice. Remind me of what I have forgotten. Help me recognize where You

have been present, even in places where I couldn't see You at the time. Give me wisdom to understand what has shaped me without allowing my past to define who I am. Amen.

Now, instead of beginning with everything that was difficult, let's begin with **your life as a whole.**

PART ONE

Draw the Landscape of Your Life

Imagine your life as a road stretching from your earliest memories to today. Divide that road into seasons that make sense **to you.** They might be based on age:

Early Childhood → School Years → Teen Years → Young Adulthood → Adulthood → Today

Or your seasons might be defined by events:

Before We Moved → After Dad Left → College → First Marriage → The Hard Years → Starting Over → Now

There is no correct way to divide your story.

Create Your Timeline

For each season, jot down anything significant you remember:

- Where were you living?
- Who was part of your everyday life?
- What was happening in your family?
- What did you enjoy?
- What were you afraid of?
- What were you learning?
- What changed?
- What did you gain?
- What did you lose?
- What dreams did you have?
- What did you believe about God during this season?

Don't try to explain anything yet. **Just map the landscape.**

Looking at your timeline, which seasons immediately draw your attention?

Which season would you most love to revisit?

Why?

Which season are you most relieved is over?

PART TWO

The People Who Helped Shape Me

No one develops in isolation. Some people loved us beautifully. Some disappointed us. Some taught us. Some wounded us. Some believed in us before we believed in ourselves. Some were present for only a moment and somehow left a lasting impression.

Think about the people who have occupied meaningful places in your story.

Who made you feel...

Loved?

Safe?

Seen?

Capable?

Like you belonged?

Who made you feel...

Invisible?

Rejected?

Unsafe?

Like you weren't enough?

Like you had to earn love or approval?

Who taught you something about yourself that you still carry today?

What did they teach you?

Whose voice can you still hear in your head?

What does that voice say?

Who believed in you?

Who do you wish had believed in you?

Don't rush past that last question.

Sometimes what we **needed but didn't receive** shaped us almost as much as what happened.

PART THREE

The Moments That Left a Mark

Certain moments become landmarks in our stories.

Some are beautiful.

Graduations. Friendships. Falling in love. A child being born. Discovering a gift. Meeting Jesus. Someone saying exactly what we needed to hear.

Others changed us through pain.

Loss. Betrayal. Failure. Divorce. Rejection. Illness. Abuse. Disappointment. Church wounds. Financial crisis. Dreams that ended differently than we imagined.

And sometimes seemingly ordinary moments affected us more deeply than anyone realized.

What are five moments in your life that you believe helped shape who you became?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Now choose one.

What happened?

What did you feel at the time?

What did you need?

Did you receive what you needed?

What changed in you afterward?

PART FOUR

What Did I Learn to Believe?

Experiences don't only create memories. Sometimes they create **meaning**.

A child experiences rejection and concludes:

People leave. Someone experiences repeated criticism and begins believing:

I'll never be enough. Someone survives chaos and learns:

I have to stay in control. Someone discovers that achievement brings approval and decides:

My value comes from what I accomplish. These conclusions may never have been consciously chosen. They simply became ways of understanding the world.

Look again at your story.

Finish these sentences without overthinking them.

Growing up, I learned that love was...

I learned that people were...

I learned that I needed to be _____ in order to belong.

I learned that emotions were...

I learned that conflict meant...

I learned that failure meant...

I learned that success meant...

I learned that God was...

I learned that I was...

Now ask yourself:

Which of these beliefs do I still live from today?

Which ones am I no longer sure are true?

PART FIVE

What Did I Learn to Do?

We don't only develop beliefs. We develop ways of navigating life. Maybe you learned to:

- Keep everyone happy.
- Stay quiet.
- Become invisible.
- Be funny.
- Achieve.
- Take care of everyone else.
- Never need anything.
- Stay in control.
- Leave before someone could leave you.
- Avoid conflict.
- Work harder.
- Shut down emotionally.
- Fix everything.
- Become whoever the room needed you to be.

Some of these responses may have helped you navigate difficult seasons. But something that once helped us survive isn't necessarily something we need to carry forever.

When life becomes difficult, what do you tend to do?

When you feel rejected, what happens inside you?

When someone is disappointed with you, how do you respond?

When you feel afraid, what do you reach for?

When you feel out of control, what do you try to control?

What role do you naturally assume around other people?

Caretaker? Peacemaker? Achiever? Fixer? Leader? Invisible one? Responsible one? Rebel?
Something else?

When do you remember first becoming that person?

PART SIX

What Am I Still Carrying?

Some things belong to our story without needing to accompany us into every chapter that follows.

Look back over everything you've written.

Is there grief you never really had an opportunity to grieve?

Is there disappointment you learned to live around rather than work through?

Is there someone's opinion of you that still carries too much authority?

Is there something you still feel responsible for that may never have been yours to carry?

Is there a version of yourself you have been trying to prove—or disprove—for years?

Is there something from an earlier chapter that still feels strangely present today?

Don't decide what to do with any of it yet.

For now, simply notice.

PART SEVEN

Don't Forget the Good

Restoration isn't only about discovering wounds. Your story also contains evidence of strength, beauty, provision, courage, relationship, growth, and grace. So let's map those too.

When have you felt most alive?

What have you done that required courage?

What have you survived that once seemed impossible?

Who has loved you well?

What gifts began showing up early in your life?

What have people consistently recognized in you?

What brings you joy that has nothing to do with being productive?

What dreams keep resurfacing?

What parts of yourself would you like to recover?

What has become stronger in you because of what you've lived through?

PART EIGHT

Where Was God in My Story?

For some people, this section will come easily. For others, it may be complicated. You may have seasons when God felt incredibly close and others when He seemed completely absent. You don't have to rewrite painful experiences into something beautiful or pretend you understand why everything happened. Instead, simply become curious.

When have you experienced God's presence most clearly?

Who has reflected the character of Jesus to you?

Were there moments when you can now see protection, provision, direction, or grace that you couldn't recognize then?

**Are there parts of your story where you still wonder,
God, where were You?**

Is there anything you've believed about God because of what people did to you?

What would you like to ask Him about your story?

Then give yourself permission to sit with the question.

You don't have to manufacture an answer.

PART NINE

Look at the Whole Map

Now step back. Read through what you've written without trying to judge yourself. Imagine you're looking at a map from high above. Individual roads begin connecting. Places that seemed unrelated may suddenly appear much closer together.

Ask yourself:

What surprised me?

What connections did I notice?

What seems to repeat?

What do I understand about myself now that I didn't understand before?

What am I proud of?

What am I tired of carrying?

What feels unfinished?

What would I like God to restore?

What am I curious about now?

That curiosity matters.

You don't have to leave this exercise knowing exactly what everything means.

Sometimes restoration begins simply because we finally noticed what was there.

ONE MORE THING

Your story explains things about you. **It does not get to define you.** What happened to you isn't the totality of who you are. What someone called you isn't necessarily your name. The way you learned to survive isn't necessarily the way you have to live. Your failures aren't the final sentence. Your losses aren't the end of your story.

And even the chapters you would never have chosen can become places where Jesus meets you with truth, healing, grace, and restoration.

“Behold, I am making all things new.” — Revelation 21:5

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO NEXT?

You can close this map here. There is no requirement to turn what you discovered into anything else.

But if something surfaced that you'd like to understand more deeply, you don't have to explore it alone.

Talk Through What You Discovered

Bring your Story Map—or simply bring yourself—to a personal **Restoration Conversation**. We'll talk about what stood out, what questions surfaced, and where you may want to go from here.

Schedule a Restoration Conversation → Text/Call 214.301.1496 or email dr.hill@cre8vlifeglobal.org

Go Deeper Into Your Story

Continue through **Understanding My Story**, a guided Healing School journey exploring how experiences shape beliefs, patterns, relationships, identity, and the ways we respond to life—and how the truth and presence of Jesus can begin changing what we carry forward.

Explore Understanding My Story →

YOUR STORY IS STILL BEING WRITTEN.

You can honor where you've been without living there. You can understand what shaped you without allowing it to determine who you become. And you can discover that restoration isn't the erasing of your story.

It's discovering what God can do with all of it.