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Carly Viland Life Story

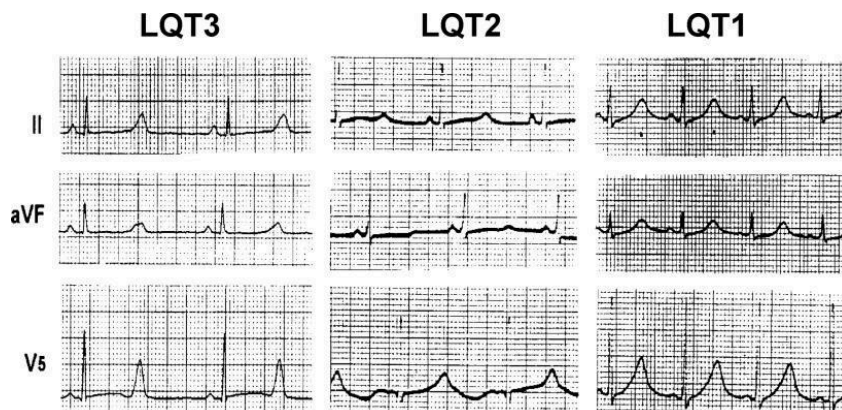
Life stories differ from person to person, but to focus on the Christian life story, Carly has one that is unique to her. One may want to think that most people come to their faith and do not have any bumps or bruises along the way that make them question their faith. But in all honesty Carly goes into deep detail about what her life was like growing up and how it has changed and what she is hoping to see for the generations to come.

To start off one has to realize that Carly grew up on a farm in the small town of Hector Minnesota. She states that this is a third generation farm, and that she grew up with her mom, dad and her younger brother Ross. She goes into detail on how she loved being able to make friends easily and that they still are here to this day. One perfect example is when she states, “My best friend Leah is still my best, best friend and I’ve known her since I was three” (Viland). Carly uses her small town roots still to this day here in Fargo as she works at 97.9 Life radio station as one of the outreach leaders.

One major part of her story is her faith, she was and is a Christian. Born and raised, growing up going to Shalom Baptist (now Crosspoint) in Hutchinson Minnesota. She has had many bumps and bruises along the way that have made her question her faith. One major bump

was when her mom was diagnosed with cancer when she was a sophomore in high school and then later died while she was in her sophomore year of college. Another one is when Carly was diagnosed with Long QT Syndrome. Which is a heart disease that does restrict her exercise levels.

Long QT Syndrome; this is not something that is common, but Carly found out in one of the saddest ways; “When I was three, one of my cousin, he is my oldest cousin on my dad’s side. He died really randomly and he had just been playing baseball and just passed out and then passed away and we found out that he has a, had a heart disease called Long QT Syndrome and my whole family got tested and there probably 25 of us at the time. I don’t know for sure, but when I was nine I found out that I had Long QT Syndrome too.” Her and her brother I believe are the only two in the family besides her cousin to have Long QT Syndrome. To further the research on Long QT Syndrome and how it affects people one can look at Ilan Goldenberg article on Long QT Syndrome. This article states that long QT syndrome is a genetic disorder that the life of the person that has this can lead to sudden cardiac arrest. And that the diagnosis of long QT syndrome is reliant on the ECG(Echocardiogram). It goes into strict detail on what long QT syndrome is and how it affects the life of the individual (Goldenberg, 2008).



Long QT syndrome is usually seen in families and is stated to be a familial disease. Besides the ECG, one can have genetic testing or straight up a clinical assessment. It is all based on what the doctor wants (Goldenberg). Although Carly was diagnosed at a young age, there is still no cure for this disease and her extracurricular activities were not possible for her. She stated in her interview that if she gets her heart rate too high, she has the chance of cardiac arrest and overall death. So Carly has never truly been able to participate in any sports that were considered high intensity, the only one that I know she participated in was golf.

As Carly was growing up she went to public school in Hector, which is a small town in southern Minnesota, and was going to church in Hutchinson Minnesota. She grew up with her faith being a big part of her life, but when both of her parents ended up getting diagnosed with cancer at some point in time, she started to question her faith. Although her dad did beat prostate cancer, her mom on the other hand died four years after she was diagnosed. What helped Carly through these hardships was her bible and the fact that she had a support system behind her at home and at church.

In the book titled *Bodies of Belief: Baptist Community in Early America*, Janet Lindman goes into detail about how the Baptist community has changed over the years. One main thing that the book focuses on is the Baptist religion and how many people were converting from other communities into a Baptist. As for living a life for God back in the early nineteenth century Lindman states, "Religious belief without pious behavior, or the reverse, was insufficient; both were required to live a godly life." She later states in chapter five of her book that the Baptist body was part of the evangelical body (Lindman, 91). Knowing that the church that Carly grew up going to was actually a Baptist church before its remodel in the recent years, makes the

history of the Baptist church help me understand where the Baptist community is truly coming from and how far from the “original” paths we have strayed.

Carly stated, “and so I grew up in the church and was pretty involved with music and like I said, Awana, VBS, youth group to a point. And um, when I was in 10th grade, um, my story kind of changed again because then my mom got sick with cancer and I really, really doubted God,” (Viland). Which brings how her story has changed into perspective, knowing that in the early times of Christianity you would have been punished for straying from God and his truth. But now in reality one can stray from their religion and become a complete atheist and just doubt God completely. And in some countries it is not even possible for people to believe in God because of where they live, instead they get persecuted for their beliefs and yet they still live each and every day believing in Jesus Christ and his truths.

Knowing that Carly is one of many Christians that question their faith, put a lot of ease on her story, she later went into detail about how when her mother died she was mad at God. But then she states that she realized that she could not do life on her own without God. Life without God in Carly’s life was something that was hard for her and she felt pain and suffering the farther she drifted from her faith. And that is true for most people, I know we had discussed faith and how hard life can be if you drift from your faith roots, but once you overcome that fear you can start to realize how easy life can become.

Going from religion and how her faith helped with her parent’s farm, there was a time in her life when her parents almost lost the farm due to poor financing. But her family kept their faith strong and eventually found someone else to do finances with. When Carly told me that her

family almost lost their three generation family farm, I could tell she was on the verge of crying. Her family does still have the farm to this day, she stated that her and her husband Marshall both have the opportunity to get their family farms down in southern Minnesota. She however did not go into detail about who's family farm they are going to start a family on. I do know that in the interview Carly stated that she does want to raise a family on a farm instead of up here in the Fargo area.

In my research on agriculture and faith, I found this book titled; *Food Farming and Faith*, in chapter three of Gary Fick's book it focuses on ecology in the bible. Although this chapter goes into very controversial issues about religion and agriculture. He states, "Holistic or ecological thinking that includes the perspective of religion should help us see our environmental needs more completely and by touching the basis of motivation should help the person of faith act for the good of the environment," (Fick, 42). In the book, it goes into tremendous detail about how the Bible lays out ecological views and then it goes into the normal person way of thinking. Faith plays a big role in Carly's life and so do her farming roots. In further research I have found multiple books on religion and agriculture in the twenty-first century.

In further research on the agriculture side of Carly's life and how it has changed over the years, specifically in the twenty-first century. In the book written by Vernon Ruttan on agriculture in the twenty-first century. In part three of this book it is focused on the major sources of agriculture and how the twenty-first century. On page seventy-three Ruttan states, "The two major sources of growth in agricultural production have been expansion of area cultivated into land that was not previously cultivated and more intensive production on lands already cultivated," (Ruttan, 73). This goes along with Carly's life due to the fact that her family is still

having a farm that is being run in the twenty-first century. Knowing that the research on the farms and agriculture has now helped me understand more about farming and the life that it provides for the farmers.

Moving back into Carly's faith walk and all of the road blocks that came in her way when she was trying to live her life for Jesus Christ. The last few research topics that were found are mainly aimed towards religion and how faith is defined. Specifically her role in the youth ministry at Hutchinson, "Then when I moved to Hutch in 20, what was it, 2014. Then I would help with the youth group. I got plugged in right away and I really got close to a lot of kids, like, you know, as a mentor and I still stay in touch with them," (Viland). Although this was after I had moved to Alexandria when Carly started to get involved with the youth ministry back in Hutchinson. I know and could feel that Carly was very happy that she got involved with the youth ministry but, at the same time moving here she doesn't have the same feel at church that she did.

In the article written by Karen Choi on youth ministry, she goes into detail about how the youth ministry field is changing and how youth ministry is helping to shape the lives of the younger upcoming generations. Under the heading Precedent Research, it is stated, "studies have demonstrated a positive relationship participation in YM and their faith maturity. Studies have also demonstrated that faith maturity of adolescents is strongly tied to the characteristics of the congregations they belong to," (Choi, 2012). Knowing that Carly was actively engaged in the youth ministry at Shalom Baptist Church in Hutchinson Minnesota for about a year and a half,

she had a major influence on the upcoming generation and the faith walk that they are going through.

In the last few research articles that I have found they all deal with faith and some go into more detail about what Jesus is and what the youth ministry is coming to be. Carly since I have known her has been strong about her faith, even when she was planning her wedding without her mother's help. She ended up getting married in 2016 to Marshall Viland at Shalom Baptist Church. They met through a church and some help from Carly's uncle. To this day, Carly has been living every day to the fullest that she can. In my last few articles on faith I plan to go into much more detail about what faith is and how it has changed.

In Philippa Strong's article he goes into detail about how we are changing the way youth are being raised and are not being forced to go to church and have a strong faith. He states in his introduction, "The article focuses on the problem of the use of behavioral modification techniques in order to try and change the youth's behavior instead of genuine spiritual transformation that needs to take place," (Strong). Knowing that the youth are not being forced to have a spiritual guideline in their life makes a lot of sense with the way that times have changed. The twenty-first century has brought upon a lot of changes to the Christian world, some good and other not so good.

To continue my research on faith I found this book entitled *Was Jesus God?*, in part one of the book under the nature of God it states, "God is also a source of moral obligation in that his command to us to do some action makes it obligatory for us to do that action when it would not otherwise be obligatory," (Swimburne, 2008). Basically the meaning and way that this connects

to Carly's life is that she went to question her faith and was wondering who God was and why he was taking away the people that she loved the most. This quote just brings it to a reality that God is a moral compass and he has a path that is paved for us all to follow and we have the choice if we want to follow it or not.

From there Carly went on to discuss her future and the unknown of that. She wants to start a family with Marshall, but she also wants to wait a few years to see what the future holds. In the book titled *Faith* the author uses this quote, "A Hindu saying: Dream life is the present, waking life the past, dreamless sleep (void) the future," (Elgen, 121). This quote fits perfectly with Carly, the future is unknown, we can always dream about what is to come. But in reality we never know what is at the end of the road for any of us.

Overall Carly is in the stage of life where she is trying to figure out the plan that God has for her and whether or not she wants to continue with the way she is living now. She ended the interview with talking about her end of life wishes and where she would like to see herself and the impact that she has on the people around her. She states, "like on my deathbed, I would like to just pray that I'd be excited to go to heaven and be with my mom again and like anybody else who's passed that knew the Lord," (Viland). Basically overall Carly wants to have a huge impact on the people around her and she wants it to follow her to the grave. The interview was conducted at Carly's house in a place that was comfortable for her.

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