

by Courtney Sells

My family and I aren't big "lake-goers". We were the type who stayed at home and napped on Sunday afternoon. All of my friends had boats, but I'd never actually been "in the lake". This all changed one afternoon.

It was a regular Sunday morning. I got up, went to church service and then Sunday school. One of my friends, Ciara Huitt and I were sitting on a bench outside of my mom's classroom talking like friends do. I then asked her what she was doing that afternoon. Of course, her reply was "I am going to the lake". The last five words shocked me most. They were "do you want to come?" I felt shocked, surprised, excited and happy all at the same time. I had never been on more than a boat ride. At first that's all I thought it was, but little did I know that it would be more than just a ride.

I went home, ate a sandwich, put on my swimsuit, and packed my towel and sunscreen. Apparently my mom thought it was more, so I packed it all. I was ready to go right at 12:30 PM. The Huitt's arrived at our house and said they would take me to VBS (Vacation Bible School) that night. Mom approved and told me to have fun.

I got in the van and we drove to *Sonic*, their favorite place to get good cold drinks. After getting the drinks, we headed down to **Willow Grove** which was about a 45 minute drive. We arrived there, unloaded the car and proceeded to their boat slip. I must admit that I have a horrible fear of deep water. Just looking at the water terrified me. We walked by 10, maybe 12 boats, and once we got to their boat, we loaded all of our stuff and then went to the dock to get gas. Once we got out of the no wake zone, we started picking up speed. The front of the boat lifted up gliding on the water like nothing could touch it. It was silent. No one was speaking. I looked upon the water and it was one of the most beautiful things I had ever seen. As the sun shined upon the water it looked like perfectly smooth glass. I was on cloud nine, hoping it would never end. The silence broke with a question, "Are you guys ready to go tubing?" Ciara looked at me and asked if I was ready. I said "yes", out of complete and utter terror. I did exactly what Ciara had done, with no idea what I was doing. After Ciara's dad, Ron, hooked up the intertube, we went to the edge of the boat. I paused, I looked down at the water, then said a prayer asking God to not let me drown! I got in the water and swam over to the intertube. I was scared to death! Thoughts were racing through my head "What if the rope breaks and we get stranded?" "What if I fall off and get run over by a boat?" Needless to say a lot of "what-ifs" were going through my head. I gripped those handles so hard my hands were sore the next day. Once we started going, I thought I was going to start crying, I was so scared. After about thirty minutes of complete fright, I looked out at God's beautiful creation - the trees, water, and the birds soaring above. I closed my eyes and I felt like a bird flying high above the water. Look-



ing down over the scene, I thanked God for creating me. It was just like a dream, a fairy tale, and a wish - a wish that it would never stop. It was just me and the Lord's creation. It was like we were dancing together upon the beautiful water. Ciara looked over at me and asked if I was scared? I told her I was scared, but not anymore. After another hour or 2 of tubing, we got off the boat and went swimming with our other friend, Claire. We said our goodbyes to Claire and went back to the dock to park the boat. We tied up the boat, got our stuff and went back to the van. I looked out the window the entire way home. When I arrived, I cleaned up and headed off to VBS. I saw my mom and told her that I had a fantastic time. I went home after VBS, took a shower and went to bed. After turning off the TV, I closed my eyes thinking about the day and I knew I was ready to be baptized into the Lord. This was one of the best days of my life.

