

startingpoint

— the series —

Something Happened

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Scripture: Acts 17:16–20, 22–33

Idea: The starting point for the Christian faith is Jesus.

Introduction

1. **Everything has a starting point**—including you. Some of you were started on purpose. Some of you were started by accident (from your parents' perspective). Some of you were started through the magic of medicine.
2. Physical life is just one of many starting points. Your **romance, formal education, marriage, parenting, and career** all had starting points.
3. **Your faith has a starting point as well.** That's the focus of this series.

I. Perhaps you were given a framework for faith as a child.

- A. You attended synagogue, temple, mosque, home, Sunday school, and camp.
- B. Or maybe you cobbled together a framework from things you heard or experienced . . .

Framework for Faith

- **God is good.**
- **God punishes evil and rewards good.**
- **God answers prayer.**

- C. I was taught that God speaks (story of Samuel and Eli). I knew that if God ever woke me up with an audible voice, my mom would need to start putting plastic sheets on my bed.
- D. **For many of us, the framework we were handed as children did not survive the realities and rigors of adulthood.**
 1. There is a good God in a not-so-good world.
 2. God loved, but apparently not me.
 3. People get away with evil, and good people suffer all the time.

One of my favorite authors says it this way: The result is that . . .

*. . . many of us have been left **stranded** with an incoherent concept of God. We learned about God at about the same time as we were told about Santa Claus. But while our understanding of the Santa Claus phenomenon evolved and matured, our theology remained somewhat infantile. Not surprisingly, when we*

