



Firsthand: Ditching Secondhand Religion for a Faith of Your Own

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Join us on a journey to find a faith of your own.

A faith that isn't your parents' or your youth pastor's or your church's.

Start from scratch, question everything, and get hold of a faith that's real.

We call it firsthand faith.

Firsthand: Ditching Secondhand Religion for a Faith of Your Own Details

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From Reader Review Firsthand: Ditching Secondhand Religion for a Faith of Your Own for online ebook

Jennifer Wilson says

FTC disclosure: I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Firsthand is a quick but engaging read. What Ryan and Josh Shook have done in this book is take a look at how many Christians don't "own" their faith, instead they rely on the faith of others. The surprising thing is many people don't realize this. They have gone to church, participated in mission trips and everything else that "good Christians" do.

I wish this book was around when I was younger, because this was me. In fact one chapter is entitled "Trashing the Checklist". When I was in high school, I literally had a chart where I would tick off each item as I did it and gave myself a grade each week as to how I preformed as a Christian. Thankfully God doesn't rely on what we do or don't do, but Grace is His measuring stick, and He doesn't grade on a curve but it's a "pass/fail" as to if we have asked Him for that Grace in our lives.

One of the things I enjoyed most about this book was at the end of each chapter there was a section entitled, "Making it Real" where it helps you apply what you just read. I especially enjoyed the "Other Voices" where people from around the country told their experiences with that part of making faith real. Some of these mirrored my experiences. I could relate so well to some. I grew up in church, spent three years in a Christian school, went on mission trips, taught Vacation Bible School, memorized entire BOOKS of the Bible, but it was just what I felt I was supposed to do to earn God's love. That's where some of these people were. Others I didn't really connect with their experiences, but it was interesting to see how people are different in their faith.

Another thing I particularly liked about this book is they encouraged people to question. I asked lots of questions in my search for truth. I had one pastor tell me, "It's a waste of my time to talk to you." when I was asking him questions. Being told it's okay to doubt is something I rarely see in Christendom. I particularly liked the quote in this chapter, "God is no less with you in your doubts than He is with you in your certainties." (Page 123). Often I have been made to feel the opposite. Not sure about something? Doesn't that mean you're backslidden and need to make a trip to the altar? Not always. We're human, and God understands that. Thomas was with Jesus, saw Him with his own eyes, and Thomas still doubted. It's unnatural to assume we will never have doubts when we haven't seen with our eyes.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone who is disillusioned with church (or God. Many times we say we are disillusioned with God when it's the church we have become upset with the inconsistencies in "rules".) I also would recommend this to anyone who even grew up or has been in church for a while. Even if you once had a firsthand faith, it's still easy to replace it with a secondhand one. While aimed at younger people, this book has value to all ages.

FTC disclosure: I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Jennifer Clausen-greene says

About the Book:

After years of going to church, following the rules, and trying to replicate the faith of their parents, pastors and the church, Ryan and Josh Shook realized something was fading fast in their souls. Firsthand is the disclosure of how they found faith on their own.

It's a raw and honest confession that will challenge your students, young adults and church to start making their walk with God personal.

My Review: Fantastic and insightful book for those who are tired of the religion of their parents and want to embrace a relationship with God on their own. I never thought of myself as having a second hand religion until I read this book and my eyes were opened. Too many times do we go willingly into accepting what our parents believe and make it our own without ever knowing why. I really liked the personal stories at the end of each chapter that gave further reflection to really make it personal and drive the point home. When it comes down to it the only thing that will help you during your life's struggles and trails is a faith that is your own. A personal relationship with Christ that you have, not one someone you know has.

I highly recommend this book to those searching for their own faith or to use in your Youth Group. Please go to www.firsthandbook.com and www.waterbrookmultnomah.com to look at it and purchase it if you would like.

About the Authors:

Ryan Shook is a filmmaker and blogger. A graduate of Baylor University, he is married to Sarah, and they live in Los Angeles, California.

@RyanShook

Josh Shook is a musician, a song writer, and a graduate of Belmont University. He lives in Nashville, Tennessee.

Disclaimer: I received this book from WaterBrook Press free of charge. All opinions expressed are my own.

Debra Ham says

I listened to the audiobook and I'm sure that the book would have been much easier to digest and listen to and if not been for the authors reading as if they were "reading". in my opinion, they read much more slowly than normal and it didn't flow as well as it could have. I've listened to several audiobooks over the passes few months and those that I enjoyed most had a conversational tone, S of you were talking to an old friend. I can't even comment on the content because it was so difficult to listen to, that's why I have it 2 stars.

Now that I'm passed that...What I did take away from the content was nothing new, but rather served as a much needed reminder to make my faith my own and real in my daily life. I would recommend this book to newer Christian teens & young adults who are still resting on the laurals of their parent's faith. You can own your faith and amazing things can be done through you.

Patricia says

Firsthand by Ryan and Josh Shook

Brothers Ryan and Josh Shook were raised in the Church, sons of a preacher. All they knew was their family's Christian faith. Somewhere in their teens they began to question the authenticity of their personal beliefs. Did they really believe or were they simply worshipping God with their parents faith, a secondhand faith?

What followed was a time of searching, doubting, drifting, and lots of questions. They tell some stories about themselves during the time they were sort of wandering in the wilderness that are open and honest. They realized they were not going to be satisfied with anything but firsthand faith. Not just the faith of their father but faith they owned, firsthand faith.

The book is written primarily for teens and young adults that are Christian but questioning the validity of their beliefs and the basis of their faith. The book asks the questions young people, and many older folks, are asking themselves and gives insight on how to find the answers. With personal reflection and comments from other young people the brothers don't answer the questions directly. They do point the reader in the direction of the answers with "Think about It" and "Might Try This" sections of the book.

This is a good book for anyone looking for faith that is not just a mask but one that is real from the inside out. Personally, I liked chapter 5, "Trashing the Checklist" and chapter 6, "Question Everything" the best. The Shook brothers make what may seem to some like radical suggestions. But if read to the end none of it is really radical but it is really solid. The key is to not stop reading; you must read the whole to understand the parts.

I think this would be a good book for a teen group study. It is written in an easy conversational style that will lead to discussion. It has good honest feedback from young people who looked for answers to their questions and doubts and found what they needed. Overall a book worth reading.

This book was sent to me by WaterBrook Multnomah, as a gift, for participating in an online survey before the book was published.

Joel Jackson says

Ryan and Josh Shook have hit on an experience that I believe many have when truly experiencing faith. Many people have life crisis or challenges to their beliefs that cause them to doubt, turn away, or question the validity of their faith. It is then that people either realize the importance and value of struggle and doubt or just give up completely, never becoming true believers in Jesus Christ. What "Firsthand" provides is the assurance that it is alright to enter into periods of doubt and struggle. It also provides the encouragement to come out on the other side. Ryan's and Josh's personal stories as well as all the stories they touch on from

people they interviewed prove that this is a common experience. I really like how they conclude the book talking about the value of community. This book illustrates the value of the community of Christ when we all come to terms with our faith -- do we own it as our own, keep leeching from those who believe before us, or turn away completely. The community represented in this text offers the example of common ground. The real reason that this book does not get a 5 star rating is because I feel that it fails to bring in the reality of philosophical doubts and struggles brought on by our society's primary belief systems and life crisis. There are many people that could readily identify with the stories shared here-in. Yet, there are many people who would turn away from this text because it does not offer the depth of knowledge that exists within their own crisis of faith. I received this book as part of Multonomah's blogging for books program.

Kevin Sorensen says

I'm having a very difficult time knowing just what to say about this book. There are points I agree with. I realize many, within a church, are disillusioned with their church. In the words of the authors, they are living a second-hand faith. Also, not every Christian is living a dynamic, radically driven, purpose-filled life, thus further disillusionment. True, there are many who read their Bibles and seem to get very little out of it. I appreciate the brothers Shook in their efforts to stress the relational side of God. Christianity is not a philosophy. It is not a mere mental exercise, otherwise it would be just like Buddhism. There is a real God and He longs for us to know Him. Chapter Five focused upon this a great deal. It requires 'trashing the checklist' of our faith in order to zero in upon the relationship of our faith.

And yet there's just something about this book that troubles me. I can't quite lay a finger upon it, however. In the above mentioned chapter, these two brothers encourage those stuck in a 'second-hand faith' existence to throw out their checklists. The 'checklists' are those things which drive us, demand complete loyalty and obedience from us and yet do not feed the relationship. One example, Ryan speaks of going to a Bible camp and returning home all fired up by his experience there. He promised to read his Bible, pray and witness more. Before he said another word, I knew where this was going to end up: the experience waned, his commitments flagged and before long, he wasn't doing any of it. Here's what he says, 'After camp my intentions were good. What I didn't have was a solid relationship that could serve as a foundation for my spiritual discipline. The checklist on its own made things worse, not better. What a mess!' Ryan goes on to counsel those who make such checklists the driving energy of their faith to toss them out. Stop reading your Bible slavishly. And yet, because of this statement, it seems like they stumble over their advice just a few pages further on in telling you the one way to know God, to enhance your 'firsthand' faith experience is to...read your Bible. Absolutely. It is the only way you get to know anything at all about God. We don't know God through dreams. We don't learn of God through creation alone (despite the way in which the authors stress the worship they have when out in creation; wonderful, but unless you have the Word and the Gospel, you'll still come up short of God's ultimate glory; just read Romans 1).

Jesus said, in John 8.31–32: “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” Where must we go if we want to abide in Jesus? To the truth. Where will we find the truth? In His Word. Granted, the Jews who hated Jesus had the Word, but they stopped believing it.

And I wonder if this isn't where the problem begins. Both Shook brothers seem reticent to ever say that these who are stuck in a 'second-hand' faith simply are not truly believers. Their faith is not really second-hand; it's non-existent. What they have is not faith in God or Christ or the Word. It is in themselves and some experience they've been told to have or maintain. Yes, they need a 'firsthand' faith. One that trusts Christ alone by grace alone through faith alone. They need to be saved. From there, they need to be taught what it means to 'abide in Christ.' Jesus Himself says, 'Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have

spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.' That's first-hand faith. I want to like this book. I want to understand it better. However, I think, in the effort to be encouraging to those of the 'second-hand faith' category, the brothers Shook come off just a bit too accommodating for me. I, along with them, long to see those living a 'second-hand faith' come to a true saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. When I was thirteen years old, I was made greatly aware of my attempts to live off my parents faith, the faith of my church and Sunday School teachers, the merits of my Bible memorization awards and perfect Sunday School attendance for twelve years. What made me aware of the need of firsthand faith was not an encouragement to ditch all that, but a call to come to saving faith in Christ; to look to the cross alone and not myself or my experience. So, I had to confess my sin, repent of my sins and trust Christ for everything. That's what firsthand faith is all about.

Laura Bowman says

Firsthand by Ryan and Josh Shook is a book for any person who is concerned with why the young people are leaving the church after graduation. I had the privilege of being one of the persons surveyed for this book, about a crisis time in my life.

Josh and Ryan are PK's, Preachers Kids, raised in a minister's home with the usual expectations of behavior and faith, how things were supposed to be. In time they realized they were going through the motions, following rules, keeping up appearances but were hungry and desperate for more.

They did like many so many other young people. They ventured out and began to look for something else to fill that void, they lived as if God didn't exist. Ultimately they realized they were even more restless and discontented than before.

Barna Group, after research, found this generation is dissatisfied with traditional Christianity. Josh and Ryan, after talking to other kids who grew up in church, found they often lack a firsthand meaningful relationship with God.

Wanting to help others get a Firsthand faith of their own, is the purpose behind this book. Thus the title which comes from Job 42:5 (Msg) "I admit I once lived by rumors of you; now I have it all firsthand."

Rick says

"Who wants some pizza?"

Since the dawn of time, every youth pastor has proclaimed these words to their youth groups. But once the dodge ball game was over and the pizza was gone, the youth pastors would say something else.

"You must own your faith!" To be clear, this probably originated when Aaron the priest said this to Joshua.

"You will have to own your faith, Josh. After all, Moses goes along with too many things that his brother and sister do. It's gonna get him killed."

Every youth pastor has said things like....

Your parents can't believe for you.

Someday you will move away from home. Then what will your faith look like?

Your childhood Sunday School answers won't suffice for real life.

Any youth pastor could have written a book about this. But it was Ryan and Josh Shook who did write this book. And they did a great job of making the case for a firsthand faith, which is where the title comes from.

Firsthand: Ditching Secondhand Religion for a Faith of Your Own.

The title really does say it all and sum it up well. Ryan and Josh banter back and forth, sharing their real-life stories of doubt and finding their faith. They describe the benefits of this faith throughout the course of the book. But they do better than that. At the end of each chapter, they share the mic, in a manner of speaking, and offer many quotes from other people who have been in the same place.

I feel like a bit of a voice-over for an infomercial, but that's not all they have done. They offer follow-up discussion questions which, admittedly, have become the norm for many recent releases. Ryan, besides authoring this book, is also a blogger and filmmaker. Using those gifts, he has provided several videos that can also serve as follow-up and facilitate small group discussion.

They couch all of this seeking and finding in a setting of relationships. The other thing every youth pastor has said, forever, is that the best way to do all of this seeking is in the context of relationships. They have done more than just say it, ensuring that this book is set up perfectly for a small group setting, really of any age group.

So while I could have written this book, I'm glad that somebody did. If you have the setting, or lead a group, I would recommend this book. I was not held at gun point to write something positive, but I was given this book by my good friends at Waterbrook Multnomah.

You can find the book here - <http://waterbrookmultnomah.com/catalog...>

You can find the authors here - [Firsthand Facebook page](#) for authors Ryan and Josh Shook.

Anna says

Read this in my youth group at church. Took us quite a while to reach the last chapter, but the timing was perfect.

This book taught me that my relationship with Jesus is much more than a mere religion. Growing up as a church-kid I was surrounded by God's love and constantly heard the stories from His word. But there comes a time when your own personal beliefs and convictions separate from your parents. A time in which you must take your faith in your own hands, so to speak, and have a firsthand experience on your own.

It's okay to have doubts. Doubting leads to wandering, wondering creates questions, and questions turn to answers. The important thing to remember is where you find the answer. What better to search than the ultimate handbook of life? The Bible.

Having an accountability partner and a healthy group of friends who are encouraging and moving in the same direction as you had an everlasting impact.

One of my youth pastor's stories that stuck out to me the most was about a dishwasher.

A guy walks down the sidewalk alongside his apartment, he notices another man struggling with something large in the opening of his door. The guy who was walking, stopped and asked the man grunting if he needed assistance.

"Man, that'd be great. Please help me move this thing."

For a long time they both had difficulty getting the dishwasher through the doorway. After several minutes the man who decided to help said, 'I don't think we're ever going to get this out.'

"Out? I need to get it inside."

To summarize that short story, being with someone who's going in the opposite direction as you, will get you nowhere.

J.A.A. Purves says

Tired, old, stale, trite "your faith isn't yours if you don't make it yours" schlock, with constant nonstop repetition of 1970s "Jesus movement" era cliches. This book doesn't allow for any depth or sense of historical proportion or tradition. Instead it just means lots of self-referential talk and obsession (and also lots of insistence that, if you just follow their easy "Making It Real" action steps at the end of each chapter, your faith will really be relevant, authentic and ... real.

This is not what the church should be teaching. The Shook brothers write this book as if the idea that you ought to think for yourself is a revelation (that they never realized until going to college). The problem is that they then apply this to conclude that if you're accepting something that is old, then it is not "yours" - not worth believing. Only in our contemporary culture would this be an insight considered worthy of turning into a book.

Instead of reading this book, I'd highly recommend reading instead Thomas Guarino's recent *Vincent of Lérins and the Development of Christian Doctrine (Foundations of Theological Exegesis and Christian Spirituality)*.

Do that and you'll see the opposite point of view. For example, Vincent wrote (commenting on I Timothy 6:20 and Proverbs 22:28) in his "Commonitory":

"The deposit is that which has been confided to you, not that which you have discovered; it is that which you have received, not that which you invented; it is something not of your own personal ingenuity, but of doctrine; not something that is private, but which belongs to public tradition; it is something which has been given to you, not created by you. You are not the deposit's author, but its guardian; you are not its initiator, but its follower; you are not its leader, but its disciple [non ducens sed sequens]."

Now there's a teaching that modern pop psychology would frown upon.

Chris says

This book presented a view of the Christian faith that is often missed by mainstream elements of the faith. It describes the phenomenon of young people, raised in the church, who leave the church during the years

transitioning from adolescence to adulthood and it provides guidance and recommendations for how such young people can discover their own firsthand faith. I like the fact that this book encourages young Christians to explore their doubts, because by finding the answers to their doubts, they are providing a firm foundation for their faith. Still, I think the book is too quick to accept the authority of religious tradition and scripture. How can the ideas laid out in this book be extended so that they speak to people who are completely unchurched, and who might not accept these authorities so readily? It seems to me a companion volume is needed in order to reach these others.

Erin says

Many months ago I was alerted to a new book in development, challenging those who have grown up in church to not settle for secondhand faith, but to boldly grasp for a deep and personal faith of their own. We're all aware of the statistics that show many young people are leaving the church and their faith after high school and college. Ryan and Josh decided they would try to address what is likely the root of this problem: young adults who know the "right" words to say and the "right" way to act, but have never formed a knowledge of God on their own. Merely following a path doesn't bring joy or fulfillment, and now these are left seeking something more.

Very early in the book the Shook brothers address emptiness, and how often God allows our emptiness to be a gift that draws us to Him. We have to know we're empty before we can treasure being filled by Him. I thought this was an excellent point! I also enjoyed the chapters on divine disturbances (when God puts something on your heart) and community (relationships with other believers in the local church). It's so true that a good church is vital to a believer's life. I loved the following quotes on this subject:

"What should young people be doing with their lives today? Many things, obviously. But the most daring thing is to create stable communities." - Kurt Vonnegut

"...We're prepared to make this claim: You can try to live out a firsthand faith on your own for as long as you want, but until you live out that faith in a community, you will never realize your full potential in Christ." - Ryan & Josh Shook

I thought this book was written with every good intention, and was very pleased to find encouragement for myself right where I am now. I enjoyed the short films online that accompanied some of the chapters, particularly the one called "Control." That's a reminder I need every day! To be honest, though, because I'm not in the book's target audience and have already developed a firsthand faith of my own, I couldn't tell you how well this book will be received by its intended audience. The goal would be to reach inside and stir something within the reader, and I join the Shooks in praying it will. As I said, it was a blessing to me.

I received a copy of this book in exchange for participating in a survey by the authors while the book was in its final writing stages. This review is entirely my own honest opinion.

This review originated at <http://reviewsbyerin.livejournal.com>

Tiffany Nottingham says

What we hunger for perhaps more than anything else is to be known in our full humanness, and yet that is often what we also fear more than anything else.- Frederick Buechner- page 46

pg. 51 when we refuse to get real with others, it is unloving to them. When we hide who we are from the people closest to us, it just downplays our relationship with them. When I try to stay at the surface level with my friends instead of going deeper and trying to find out what is really going on in their lives, I am essentially telling them, "I don't love you enough to risk awkwardness and get real with you."

pg.,71 Every church is filled with broken, messed-up people, by default. It's just that many Christians like to project the image that everything is neat, tidy, and under control.

pg. 73 When people hear that Christ has called them to radical inner transformation and nonconformity with the world, they often think one of two things. First, some think that being set apart by Christ means they have a free pass to ignore people they don't like or don't want to be associated with. Being set apart makes us different, but it definitely doesn't make us inherently better than anyone else.

Jesus was always more concerned with heart issues than surface appearances. If our idea of being a Christian is being better than everyone else, then we aren't ready for radical transformation, and any changes we undergo will probably be no more than skin deep. The second reaction some people have when they hear that they are called to radical change is to cringe. They've experienced the pain of being excluded from a Christian group or maybe have seen how some people in church turned their backs on those who are lost and hurting. They see this abuse of power and decide it is better to fit in with the sinners of the world who are honest about their struggles than to pretend they are somehow different from the world.

pg.76 We've noticed that these times of major internal change often coincide with major external changes: go off to college or grad school, move, serious health challenge, relationship comes to an end

pg. 78 Movement keeps our minds and bodies active, but it also keeps us from focusing on our souls and God's truths.

pg. 83 He cannot begin transforming our lives until we admit we have control problems and we hand the problem over to Him instead of relying on our own power.

For me this is a daily struggle. I start the day telling God how much I need Him and acknowledging His control. Only minutes later I am trying to figure out a problem through my own wisdom, trying to handle a situation that seems out of control, or relying completely on my strength to get through the day. I may acknowledge God with my mouth, but I often function as if I were an atheist. Can you relate? Real change is a daily decision followed by a continual process in which I allow God to restore and remake my life one day at a time.

pg. 84 the myth of the "happily ever after" Christian life is common in some religious circles. the weird thing is, some people want that myth to be true so badly that they act as if they are really living "happily ever after" as if they've got it all together and everything is completely perfect in their little Christian worlds.

pg. 86 We have to decide, moment by moment, if we want to act changed or be changed.

pg. 93 It is more important to live one word of Scripture than it is to memorize volumes. Tim Hansel

pg. 99 Rules and discipline are important, but when they suck the life out of a relationship, they can become destructive. Once you make a relationship all about rules, it becomes almost impossible to drive joy from it.

Legalism

pg. 106 Most of us could probably read the same verse for a year and still not completely integrate its truths into our lives.

pg. 115 Doubt is not the opposite of faith'; it is an element of faith- Paul Tillich

pg. 133 Socrates- True knowledge exists in knowing that you know nothing

pg. 151 YOU haven't encountered Jesus' firsthand grace if you have no compassion for the least of these.

pg. 155 It's easy to have an opinion or believe in a cause, but we have to allow our hearts to be disturbed if we are going to act in love. Viewing injustice as a black and white issue is crippling to a firsthand faith. I'm not saying we should ignore biblical principles or abandon our convictions. I'm advocating the opposite. We have to allow ourselves to be disturbed by the human experience. Jesus came to love, and we are called to do the same.

pg. 157 We we feel uneasy about the way things are done or not done, we should view them for what they are- unmet needs. The world and unfortunately the church are too full of critics and people just waiting to cut others down. This is the opposite of what we are called to do. We are to encourage one another and build each other up-. Yes there are times we are called to accountability, and everything we do must be grounded in God's Word. But we must learn to recognize inaction. James tell us that faith without works is dead. The most creative way to go back to living secondhand faith is to refuse to act up the Holy Spirit's movement in your heart, a divine disturbance. When you do not respond to a divine disturbance, of the Holy Spirit, you get bitter and you criticize. You are called to serve and to love with your actions. When you dont' respond to a divine disturbance in your life, you become the greatest obstacle between an unbelieving world and a loving God- a judgmental Christian.

pg. 161 Making a difference in the world has nothing to do with how talented you are or how much money you have. Your eternal footprint- the impact you make on this earth- will be determined by whether you respond to the calling of the Spirit of the Lord in your heart to love a broken world, to step into the gifts and passion the Lord has blessed you with to meet the needs that others overlook.

pg. 162 At the end of our lives God will ask us " What did yo do with the divine disturbances I put in your soul? Your time, talents, treasure- I gave them all to you. Now, what did you do with them in the areas where I was trying to get involved?

pg. 186 I had a wonderful mentor who was an older Christian woman. Her words of wisdom stick with me even now. She was able to impart wisdom to me that I couldn't have gained any other way.

Sarah says

Did you ever feel like you were alone? Like you were the only one that felt like you were faking your faith? You are not! This book was such an encouragement to me. These two brothers remind all of us that have grown up in a Christian home that we are not the only ones who have struggled with our faith. They give practical advice for ditching our secondhand religion for a firsthand relationship with God.

I highly recommend this book.

Elle says

Your parents raised you in a Christian family, they have shown you what a truly authentic and genuine relationship with God is. You follow their example, attend church, volunteer on the weekends, but something is missing. You can't quite figure it out, but you know that something is missing.

Many of us live with a hand-me-down faith, we live the faith our parents have passed down to us, the faith that we have learned from each other, we know how we are supposed to act, how to look the part but have not taken the steps to make our faith our own. We rely on the faith we were taught, going through the motions on Sunday and acting like everyone else on Monday.

In Firsthand Ryan and Josh Shook are tackling this issue, our twenties are some of the toughest years we face, leaving home, discovering who we are and during those times we begin to question the faith we grew up with. In Firsthand each chapter will provide you with first-hand accounts of people who have asked the same questions, as well as questions that promote discussion and reflection and will challenge you as well as some challenges to help you take the first steps of defining your faith and making it your own.

Firsthand is a great book to help you stop going through the motions and following tradition to help you define and build a personal relationship with God.
