

**Personal Testimony
of
Rev. Richard A. Baker**

I was born on April 25, 1964. I was raised poor, with five siblings and an alcoholic father. My mother was always angry because of the treatment, and nonsupport of our violent father, who she divorced – but soon lived with a man who was even worse.

I was kicked out at an early age, and adopted by a poor woman, with little or nothing at all to eat. My first experience with God was when I was very young. I somehow visited a local church, and was one of a couple children who came forward to accept Jesus. I remember praying for things, even though I didn't understand.

Then came my teenage years. I tried to come back home, only to find more violence, guns, beatings, etc. So I turned to the one thing I hated – alcohol – at the same time trying to get my siblings out of the very troubled home. Later, at the age of 21, I got married – a disaster that resulted in a baby boy, and another broken home. Later, a girl that I had dated in high school called me, but I really had no interest in a relationship. We lived together, then eventually got married and had a beautiful daughter. Life was not so bad at first – I loved my wife and kids, but then that old nature that I experienced during my upbringing returned. We divorced – this was it. I had had enough.

Finally, in 1992, I cried out to God. Then something happened. I kept getting this feeling – and indescribable something happening within me. It was on me all the time. I remember telling Wendy, my soon-to-be wife (again), that God was trying to tell me something. “God?” she replied. We had never talked about God. He was not in our lives.

“Praise God!” In 1992 He gave me so many things to know that He was calling me, so I began to search out this God. Believe me, this was no easy task – it took me in so many directions and to so many churches – some were legalistic, and some teachings were wrong. But through it all I kept looking and praying until, through the Holy Spirit, He showed me more truth.

In 1995, my wife and I attended a Christmas service at a large church in Tipp City, Ohio. In May of 1996, we went forward to dedicate our lives to Jesus Christ. Then, in 2002, we were baptized in a swimming pool in California. This was another important time – the Lord was blessing us in so many ways. I now have a family, and relationships I could never have imagined that I would have. Jesus has changed everything...

“...to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”
(Ephesians 4:23-24)

Now I serve my Lord in everything, because now I know that He is everything.

He has allowed me to preach, teach, counsel, work with a homeless shelter, and play in a praise and worship team. Lord willing, in the future, I hope to minister in jails and prisons. God has also laid upon my heart the desire to write a paper for outreach in local coffee shops and small businesses. All I know is that this Jesus and His Gospel of Love has to be preached.

In the love of Christ,

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