

## My Personal Testimony of Conversion to Belief in Christ

GLA 10.1 – APOL 500 – Dr. Moreland

-By *Brian Blackburn*-

I have known Christ for most of my life. He is my Savior, my Counselor, my Comfort, my Strength, my Hero, my Example, and my King; in short, He is my Life. Being raised in a Christian home, in and around the church and sheltered from much of the evil in the world, I was privileged to learn about Christ in an environment that made it very easy for me to accept the simple truths of Christ and God's Word, the Bible. Some people will complain that someone like me does not have a radical, dramatic or extraordinary conversion experience and that somehow, my experience is less significant than theirs is. Well, I heartily disagree with anyone who suggests that my shelter from the world's evils somehow diminishes the power of my conversion experience and the radical change that God has worked in my life. Rather, I believe it is more extraordinary that God's power could not only save me, but also do so in a way that would keep me from so much heartache and suffering that so many go through prior to entering into a relationship with God.

And so at the age of 5 ½ years of age, on the last day of Vacation Bible School at my small Baptist church in central Ohio, I responded to a simple invitation to walk down an aisle if I wanted to receive Christ as my Savior. I do not remember all of the details of my experience, but I do remember the counselor going to find my mother who was working at the Bible school that day. With my mother as witness, on that summer day in 1977 I prayed to God the Father, agreed with His Word that I was a sinner by nature and that Jesus Christ, as God, had died on a cross and rose from the dead for me. I thanked Jesus for loving me, and asked Him to come into my heart as my Savior. I responded to the following truths and passages of Scripture that I had heard many times, both in church and from my parents. Namely that I was a sinner (Romans 3:23), that

I would go to Hell forever if something didn't change (Romans 6:23), that God loved me and had made a way for me to go to Heaven (Romans 5:8, John 3:16) and that I needed to pray and ask for forgiveness of my sins and salvation of my soul (Romans 10:9-10, Acts 16:31). And so I did.

I have not always lived a lifestyle consistent with my belief in the Bible as God's blueprint for my life. But I am thankful that his grace not only saved me, but keeps me (Romans 8:1, 37-39) I am able to live and serve the Lord wherever I am. And wherever I am, there He is. As a full-time minister of the Gospel since 1995, I have found great joy in leading people to Christ and discipling them in the truths of the Bible. I have found that being in ministry is not easier, as many think, but harder to stay pure in action and especially motive. However, I have done my best to be faithful in using the gifts of leadership and administration in conjunction with the God given talents of music and communication I have been given to serve the Lord.

And so I live, day by day, with heaven in view. And being reminded of the suffering of Christ on the cross I look for ways, both small and great, to show God my appreciation for the work He has done in my life. Two passages of Scripture have become very special to me in my walk with the Lord. Philippians 3:10 and Hebrews 12:1-3. It is my prayer that God would now use me to help many to find a saving relationship with Christ and that those would in turn be disciplined to continue the heritage of faith that has been passed on to me by so many before.