

Salvation Testimony – Pastor Brian Howell

Before salvation, there isn't much to bring up because I don't recall much of my life before salvation. I was raised in a Christian home and in a Christian school. When your mom is the piano player, and your dad is a deacon and treasurer, exposure to God and the church is one of my earliest memories.

I recall making a profession of faith at home, kneeling at the couch with my mom, but there wasn't much evidence of conversion. There was no lifestyle change because the "right" lifestyle was just the way of life at home. Where I do recall there being a change was in my attitude toward baptism. I knew it was the right thing to do, but at first that didn't matter to me. I don't recall why I had such a fear of being put under the water, but the fear was real, and there was no way I was letting someone grab me and push me into the water. I knew the Lord was convicting me about it because I had been struggling with it for a few years. I surrendered my will to His and followed in the step of obedience to get baptized as a 10-year-old.

Assurance of salvation was such a difficult concept growing up in a church that taught all you had to do was repeat this prayer, and you would be saved. I don't know that I could count how many times I prayed and asked Jesus in my heart. What I do recall is how the Lord moved in my life and the lives of some friends in the years that followed. As I grew to know the Lord better, my desire to please my peers rather than God-given authority faded. The desire to goof off at the mall with my friends changed to asking people if they knew Jesus. The disdain for going to a Christian college turned into a desire. Looking back, it's fascinating to see how some of the friends I got in trouble with became the ones who encouraged me to consider pursuing ministry. Seeing how the Lord has directed some of my steps and used my missteps for His glory fills me with thankfulness.