

I was raised in an alcoholic home. My father died 3 months before I was born. That left my mom with 5 boys under the age of 7 and a 6<sup>th</sup> on the way. To cover her sorrow, my mom turned to drinking. One by one all of my brothers got into drugs, drinking and each one did jail time. My mom remarried a man who also was an alcoholic. At 13 I went to church with a friend, and heard the Gospel for the first time. A few weeks later the pastor of the church and another man came to my house on visitation. After presenting me with all the Bible evidence of Hell, telling me it was a place that was prepared for sinners; he asked me if I was a sinner. I knew I was, and I knew Hell was the place I deserved to go. He then went on to explain that Christ died for me, and paid the price for my sin. I could not comprehend that a great and loving God would actually want to die for me, a sinner, and a poor girl from a broken home. But the pastor assured me that God did indeed love me, and I just needed to repent, and believe that Christ died for me. Right then and there, I accepted the gift that was offered to me.

However, I did not do any spiritual growing. I wandered from church to church looking for a place to belong. At 18, I met my future husband Michael Ireland. We started to attend church together, and our relationship grew serious. He was from a strong Catholic upbringing. Not having done any spiritual growth, I didn't recognize the difference between churches, so I joined the Catholic Church thinking they were Christians too. After we were married, my husband was challenged at work about the Catholic Church. He told his friend he was dead wrong about the Catholic Church, and he was going home to read his Bible to prove him wrong. It turned out that we discovered the truth together. We left the Catholic Church and joined a Bible Believing church and started serving the Lord together.