

Miles and Roxanne Fisher

We have been members of Los Altos Grace Brethren Church since 1988. Our four children - Elizabeth, Wesley, Andrew, and Jesse - attended preschool through 6th grade at Los Altos Brethren, went on to Brethren Christian High School, and received their degrees at Christian Universities (Grace College, Calif Baptist Univ, and Vanguard Univ). Three of our kids and 5 grandchildren live in our Westminster neighborhood; Andrew's family with 2 grandchildren live in Paia, Maui, HI :(

Miles' story: I grew up in a wonderful family in Long Beach. We attended Presbyterian Church regularly each week, however, I do not recall hearing about receiving Jesus Christ as my Savior. I began competitive swimming on swim teams at age 8 through my college years, which led to a job as Long Beach lifeguard sargent for about 16 years. Putting my business degree to use I was an insurance broker for 23 years with Farmers Insurance.

While attending CSULB, I was searching for some answers to the meaning on life. I looked into many different ideas, religions, and philosophies to no avail. At the age of 21, a young lady I knew told me about her new experience with Jesus Christ, and she encouraged me to also accept Jesus. I remember telling her I was a Christian because I had attended church growing up (I didn't realize then that church attendance did not make me a Christian). Two weeks after her salvation experience, she and her 19 year old girl friend were killed in a car accident on the 10 freeway by a drunk driver. I was, to say the least, very shocked and distressed. I promised myself the week after the funeral, that I would attend her church the next Sunday. The Saturday before church I had bought a new stereo player and enjoyed the music all evening. Sunday morning I got up at 8:15, her church started at 9:00, but I decided to go the next Sunday instead and went to listen to records. To my shock, my brand new turntable would not work. I turned on the radio component of the stereo and went into the kitchen. On the radio was a talk-show about how people had died from car accidents and cancer, and then their friends and relatives had turned to Jesus as their Savior and Lord!!!!!! I was so surprised and nervous, that I raced to church that Sunday and made it by 9:00!

Over the next 3 months, Campus Crusade for Christ workers seemed to be drawn to me as I ate lunch on the lawn at CSULB. One young man finally told me to "quit trying to figure out the Bible - just ask Jesus into your heart and the 'light of Christ' will go on and He will reveal more to you in His time." So I did it !!! I cried with relief and happiness. Jesus answered many prayers for me right away, to show how real He was in me. I desired to serve Him wholeheartedly.

At the age of 28, I had a very strong desire to be married, so I prayed that God would "bring me a wife after Your heart, and You know what else I like in a woman". That was my exact prayer.

I had known Roxanne for several months through the singles Sunday school group and Bible study at Long Beach Brethren. Two weeks after my prayer for a godly, beautiful wife, I was drawn to her beauty and goodness, and I asked her out. She was God's answer to my prayer and I knew it in my heart.

Roxanne's story: I grew up in a large family on a farm in southwest Minnesota (cattle, pigs, chickens, field work, tractors, hay bales, the whole works!!). The central focus of that rural community was church activities, and I have wonderful memories of Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Christmas programs, Ice Cream socials, youth group hayrides and roller skating parties. I memorized Scripture passages, all the books of the Bible in order, creeds, and prayers. At that time, I did not realize what I was missing - that our church was NOT teaching about the need to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior for the forgiveness of sins.

After high school I went to Minneapolis for one year of retail merchandising school, and got a job in

Dubuque, IA, in a clothing boutique. Being far away from sheltering family and church structure - I wandered far off the path, including a failed marriage. I left my job at the store, and began working in classified advertising at the newspaper. Out of desperation, I briefly attended church, and then decided I needed a change of location. So off I went to work in display advertising for a newspaper in New Jersey and made some failed attempts to "get my life together". During this time, my sister Janice in California began writing me letters about her "new life in Christ". I answered her 6+ legal-size page letters with skepticism and reasons why I thought she was a 'fanatic'.

During one particularly cold blizzard, I called Janice and said I wanted to visit her in Calif for a vacation. February 1977 I arrived in Long Beach to 65 degree weather and sunshine and thought "I am crazy to be living in New Jersey!" My new Christian sister took me along to her church - Long Beach Grace Brethren. Never before in my life had I heard Scripture explained in detail. I was captivated by it. I went home to New Jersey with the intention of moving to Calif. Three months later I arrived in Long Beach with my carload of belongings, a new job at the LA Times, and moved into a Belmont Shore apartment with my sister.

My first Sunday in Calif, Janice said we should probably check out one of the adult Sunday School classes at Grace Brethren, so we visited "The Roaring 20's" singles class. As we entered the room, my sister recognized a couple she had been apartment neighbors to. They were talking to a man, and we were all introduced. That man was Miles Fisher and it was also his first Sunday in the class. Over the next 7 months I attended Sunday morning church, Wednesday night Bible study, Monday night singles Bible Study and weekly activities. I think everyone thought I was already a Christian because I was always involved. Finally, on a Sunday morning in November 1977, as I listened to Pastor Dave give his every Sunday invitation to accept the Lord, I suddenly realized that I had never done that, and so right then I received the Lord as my Savior. I later 'walked the aisle' as a testimony of my faith and was baptized. Two weeks later after a singles activity, Miles asked me out for our first date. He was so handsome, kind, humorous, and I was impressed with his integrity and commitment to the Lord. We were married 8 months later and here we are after 37 1/2 years of marriage.

After 10 years at Long Beach Grace Brethren, our children began attending Los Atos Brethren pre-school, and we switched over to attending here. Miles has been teaching the 5th grade Sunday school class for the past 27 years and once a month "Jr. Church", and shares the Gospel message everywhere he goes. Roxanne has served as substitute Sunday school teacher, as deaconess helping with baptism and funerals, leading women's Bible study, serving on our School Commission, and prayer ministry for the church.

Looking back, we can see God's sovereign hand in our lives from the families we were born into, the way we were raised, the experiences that challenged us, the events that led us to salvation, the relationships that guided us to both show up on the same Sunday in May 1977 at Sunday school, and how the Lord brought me to salvation BEFORE Miles asked me out.

Looking back over our married life, as we sought the Lord, He faithfully guided us through every challenge as parents, with finances, illness, decisions, extended family, etc.

We have learned many lessons together from God's Word about marriage.

1) PUT GOD FIRST- Both husband and wife need to be individually committed to growing spiritually (regularly read and study God's Word - and talk about it).

**2) PUT YOUR SPOUSE SECOND - The husband must "love his own wife as his own body". Eph 6:28
The wife must "be subject to her own husband...the husband is the head of the wife". Eph 6:22-23**

(I learned early in our marriage, that if I submitted to my husband's authority, God honored my obedience by helping Miles to make right decisions. God rewarded my obedience to His Word every

time!)

4) Be affectionate, touching, romantic, leave love notes, and each fulfill God's ordained marriage duties. 1 Corin 7:3-5

5) Treat your spouse like they are a gift from God, and thank God for them.

6) Show respect to each other. Listen with FULL attention. Put their needs before your own. Phil 2:3-4

7) Thank each other daily. Compliment each other daily.

8) Do NOT let the sun go down on your anger! Eph 4:26

9) Praying FOR and WITH each other is of utmost importance.

Especially through the years of both working AND having children at home, PLUS all the kid activities/practices/etc - it is difficult to put time and two thoughts together to pray. The prayer books by, Stormie Omartian were of great help in learning to pray Scripture. (I started with "The Power of Praying for Your Husband" - there is also "The Power of Praying for Your Wife".)

Marriage, like walking with the Lord, is often two steps forward and one step back. But God knows "we are but dust", so He looks at our heart motivation. Strive to be a man or a woman "after God's heart" and look to His guidance to grow a marriage of excellence.