



*And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead: that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

### Colossians 1:18

The Lord desires to see His name magnified in all of the earth. We believe that the Lord uses every experience in our lives to mold us into the image of His dear Son. He wants others to see Him in our lives so they can come to know Him. God burdened my heart to share my testimony over these next few posts. I pray it's a help to you. Of course, there is no way that I can highlight every person that helped me, but wanted to name a few.

I was raised in a Christian home with my father Fred Gates, mother Kilisitina (Kris) Gates and my sister, Diana Gates. We grew in the faith in Maranatha Baptist Church of Yorktown VA under the leadership of Pastor Dale Coffey. I was far from the Lord, but I had a godly father and mother that patiently dealt with me and a sister that was a godly example.

"I pray my son David get right with the Lord!" My mom said with her Samoan accent. She would say this in front of the whole church for a prayer request while I was sitting there. Everyone would look at me! It was kind of embarrassing, but I knew she loved me. I would come home late and she was up praying for me. My mother taught me to laugh and show grace. She makes life fun and is such a giver! I learned from my father, the importance of being

actively involved and serving in the local church. I also learned what it means to be a hard worker and to sacrificially give. Both of them taught me that there are consequences to living far from the Lord. They whipped my tail when I needed it! LOL!! I also saw the Lord working in my sister's life. She listened to mom and dad and I saw a godly example.

Pastor Coffey taught me the meaning of Colossians 1:18, "...that in all things, He might have the preeminence." Pastor Coffey is patient and full of wisdom. He came to my house on more than

one occasion to show me the truths of God's word when I wasn't living for Him. Colossians 1:18 is written on the back wall of our church. Brother Doug Weed was my crazy youth pastor that taught me what it means to be a godly man. He also taught me that it can be fun being a Christian while being courteous and faithful to serve the Lord. He was the first missionary sent from our church.

All in all, these all helped me at the start of my Christian faith! There is no way that I can write in this letter all they have done for me. They still help me along the way. My father is home with the Lord, but the last thing he said to me before passing away is that he is proud of me. That was so long ago. Mom and Diana still are some of our greatest fans in the faith. Pastor Coffey helped me get to Peru to train for missions and counseled me to find the will of God. What a blessing! I look back and God showed grace and put up with my backward ways. He is good!!



Mom and Diana



Pastor Coffey



Brother Doug Weed  
my youth pastor



Old School Pic!  
Dad and Fam