

## **Testimony – Mary Ravetta**

I grew up with an active and spiritual Episcopal mother and a non-active Methodist father so I had no doubt about being Protestant. My Dad didn't care for the unfriendly environment of the Episcopal and agreed to my mom raising us Episcopal, being confirmed, Sunday school, and church on Sundays. My Father had a coworker in the Air Force invite him to become a born-again Christian and attend a Baptist church. I followed him in saying the sinner's prayer to become a born-again Christian and got involved in church then at 13 in 1972. My parents found a church on base for all of us and then at 18 I moved to California to attend college.

I kept a hand in spirituality by listening to Christian leaders, reading the Bible, praying, knowing I was a Christian but not having people I trusted to follow, never having a church to trust getting involved with. I call this time period my 40 years in the desert. Then in 1989, I got into some premarital counseling with a Christian therapist who helped me break through some trust issues and with his help I recommitted my life to Christ. I was baptized in August that year, got involved and disciplined at Bethany Baptist in Long Beach and from then on I have put Christ at the center of my life.

I've since attended Mariners for 3 years and now Parkcrest since 1999. I had a women's group in Celebrate Recovery for women with relationship issues for 4 years and have attended and helped out with the singles. I've attended their singles retreats, and the women's retreat 4 times now. I've been helping out once a month with the babies for 6 months now. I've worked with the babies at Bethany and Mariners also. It's a good way to feel connected to the families at church and the church.

I've worked with the singles with Mariners where I taught a bible study and Bethany where I met friends that I am still friends with. I've also worked with Billy Graham's ministry at Greg Laurie's church doing telephone counseling, bringing people to commit to Christ.

I have a Master's degree at Hope International in Marriage Family and Child Counseling and stopped short of my 3000 hours. It got too difficult to keep a full time job at Boeing as an engineer and see clients. I'm in a few Bible studies now; have been looking for a place to use my gifts; this group seems like a great place to use them. My gifts test out to be shepherding, encouragement, mercy and teaching/exhorting.