

## Through The Years: My Testimony By Ramona Hollan

Yes, through the years I've tried to follow the Lord, one step at a time, and live so that He may be glorified. From the minute we're born, we're all on a journey. It can be a happy journey, because happiness is a choice, just like the choice we make in the journey or path we take. There are only two, the narrow, upward path that leads to Heaven, and the wide, downward path that leads to you know where. When Pastor asked if I'd give my testimony, my first thought was to say, "NO". He immediately said, "You can say no if you want to". I've always been shy. God can't use you if you're not willing to say "YES". During my years of schooling, grade school, that's what the ole' folks called grades 1 - 8, high school, college, teaching 30 years—I've done lots of assignments and given lots of assignments.



Ramona Hollan pictured with two of her grandchildren, Blake and Brooke

This was one of the hardest. It wouldn't have been so hard, but Pastor said, "Tell your testimony in five minutes." Wow! Seventy seven years rolled into five minutes...here goes! I was saved when I was 10 years old, not under a brush arbor; I'm not that old, but under a tin-roofed tabernacle at the Baptist Church in a little town called Dripping Springs, 25 miles from Austin. Our family of seven lived four miles from town on a 1000 acre ranch where Dad was ranch manager. Our family was poor, but God always beautiful small creek in the hill country. I'm still saved! One might ask, "Have you ever done anything wrong, sinned or backslid?" Haven't we all? Just ask my kids, Dena and Bevin. One of them might tell you some tall tales. It couldn't be the truth that THIS mother would tell her little boy that I had his favorite 'chicken-fried steak' for supper and when he took a bite, he discovered it was really 'chicken-fried liver', which he hated. He just took a look and assumed it was his favorite steak by looking at the outside. He learned a lesson. It's the inside that counts. I was 20 when O.C. and I married and we started the daily walk together, following God one step at a time. God gives us all gifts and ministries. The dictionary's meaning of ministry is preacher, chaplain, pastor, to meet someone's needs, to serve, tend, care for, or cater to. During our almost 56 years, we probably served in every capacity in the church (except pastor), even though I've preached a lot. Ask Bevin, our son. We've served with some wonderful people and had some wonderful experiences. We spent our summer vacations cooking at Christian teen camps for 8 or 10 years. I remember one time O.C. was in charge in the kitchen of fixing lunch for 350 teens at a camp near Big Bend. He left 'me' in charge of the kitchen and said, "I'm out of here, I have to go run the deer off the runway so Brother Dave Roevers, the camp evangelist, can land his plane. I was not a 'take charge of the kitchen' type person, but I tried. We tried to follow the Lord wherever He led and do His will. Many times, I know we were not fully equipped, but we were willing vessels and that's what the Lord uses. God uses His Word to talk to us. Every promise in the Book is mine and yours. If you don't know the promises get into the Word to find them.

I don't intend this to be a morbid testimony, but on March 10, 2009, O.C. and I would begin walking down the same path, just different speeds...he'd go ahead of me. If you don't believe God speaks through His Word, listen to the titles of our Sunday School lessons the month of March 2009, two days before O.C. died...."Prepare", Seven days after, "Don't Despair", then "Clear the Air" and "Hang in There". We must keep the JOY on this journey upward. Jesus first...Others second... YOU (last). My favorite scripture: IN all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths. I believe our church is on the move for the Lord. With our great leadership.... Someone's leading....someone's following. So we must: LEAD, FOLLOW, OR GET OUT OF THE WAY!