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My name is Jeremy Childress, and this is my story.

Believe it or not, I was born in Pocatella, Idaho. From there, we moved to Borger, Texas. I stayed with my biological mom for roughly about three years. During that time, the people around would burn the bottom of my feet with cigars and cigarettes. To this day, my feet are very sensitive. My kids and wife know this and often playfully threaten to scratch them. I was also malnourished and had worms. I wasn't in good shape, to be honest.

My dad eventually came and got me, no matter who was around. He took me home, and that experience made me realize that, no matter what, I would always be there for my kids. I lived with my dad and my grandmother, whom I call Granny. Going to bed at 4:00 in the afternoon felt crazy to me, but she had me on that schedule because I would get up early to go to work with her.

Before that, my dad was in school during the time schools were being integrated in Texas. At that age, I didn't really understand racism. There were people of different races around, but it wasn't something I noticed. Looking back, I see that as a gift.

Later, my dad married a woman who became my mom in every way that mattered. She's not my biological mom, but she's the only mom I've ever known.

Before we moved, I was sexually abused as a young kid. That experience robbed me of my childhood, but I was threatened into silence, told that my parents wouldn't want me if they knew. So, I never said a word.

We later moved to New Mexico, where I started first grade. That's when I first experienced racism—being mocked for my skin color, hair, and clothes. The n-word was thrown around a lot. It was painful and made me feel like I wasn't good enough. Thankfully, I met a few friends who stuck by me. One of them, a redheaded, freckled girl, was always supportive, though she is no longer with us today.

As I grew older, I continued to experience racism. But I learned to look beyond the surface. If you treated me well, I would treat you well.

In junior year, I was introduced to weed and smoked it throughout the year. My senior year was when I found out I was adopted, which added to my emotional struggles. I had thought neither of my parents were my biological parents. Learning the truth that my dad was but my mom wasn't shook me deeply.

I didn't have a healthy outlet for my emotions, so I bottled them up. I thought sports were my escape, but I was still carrying a lot inside. After a breakup with my girlfriend, I reached a breaking point. I went home, grabbed a rifle, and attempted to take my life. The gun misfired, and I survived. I didn't understand it then, but now I know God was with me.

Returning to school after the hospital was hard. I faced more criticism and racial slurs. But I pushed through and graduated.

The summer after graduation, I met my amazing wife. It wasn't until we attended Celebrate Recovery that I realized we both had emotional baggage. Despite this, we stayed together, eventually having our first child. I proposed in a non-traditional way, promising that if we stayed together for a year, we would get married a month after our son's first birthday. We did, and a month later, we got married.

However, unresolved issues persisted. Drugs eventually entered our lives. What started as occasional use turned into a daily habit. Our home became a party house, with drugs and alcohol being common. We would put the kids to bed and then get high most of the night, surviving on minimal sleep before going to work the next day.

It wasn't sustainable, and by God's grace, we eventually reached a breaking point where we decided enough was enough. We quit cold turkey, changed our lifestyle, and cut off negative influences.

God's grace carried us through. We started attending church, and I began to truly understand scripture. Though our journey was far from perfect, counseling and support from mentors helped us heal. We learned to trust God with our burdens instead of carrying them alone.

Today, I can say God has been faithful. Despite my painful past, I have found hope and healing in Christ. My name is Jeremy, and Jesus is enough.