

# Brandon Phifer

*Associate Pastor, River Valley Christian Fellowship*



I was born in Houston, TX, and almost immediately moved to Tyler, TX where my little brother was born. By the age of 5, I lived in a suburb of Dallas/Ft.Worth. I grew up there. Jason, the drummer in the worship, grew up in the same town. He's been my best friend for over 20 years. **I grew up**

**knowing ABOUT Jesus, but never truly KNEW Him.** I called myself a Christian, but hypocrisy and legalism pushed our family away from church building when I was very young.

I've always loved sports. I really don't watch any of them, but I love to play just about all of them. I'm always down for learning a new sport. However, my favorite has always been soccer. My entire life, until recently, I have lived and breathed soccer. I literally came home from school and played soccer until dark through most of my childhood. My freshman year of high school, my little sister was born. (I have a brother and a sister.)

I graduated from high school in 2001 and college in 2005. I went to McMurry University in Abilene, TX where I majored in Communication and double minored in Business and Religion. The reason I minored in religion is funny because it wasn't planned. I accepted Christ and got saved my sophomore year of college. I began taking religious courses just because I was intrigued by this God who died so I could live! By the time I graduated, **I just so happened to have enough hours to get a minor in religion.**

**My testimony was an overnight 180 degree turn.** After being dragged to a men's bible study (by Jason who accepted Christ the year before), it became clear that I was wrong...Jesus is right. The words spoken by Cody Brotherton (bass player in worship band) dug deep into my soul and **an indescribable transformation took place within me.** My entire life I wanted to grow up and be rich...suddenly I didn't feel like that mattered. The week before, I had argued with a friend about why I was convinced the Bible could not be true or accurate. But that night, in one powerful moment, I knew I must have one to teach me Truth. I skipped class the next day to go buy a Bible (obviously still had a lot to learn). From that moment on, I was passionate about knowing God more!

Right before I graduated, I met Lori and knew she was the one I should pursue as my wife. I deliberately placed myself in spots on our small campus where I knew she would walk...just so I could talk with her. After graduation, I moved back to Dallas/Ft.Worth and got a job at Fidelity Investments. I saved up enough money for a ring and in July 2006, she said "Yes" and put on the white dress!

In 2007, our home church planted another church in Keller, TX. This was closer to our home and so we had the opportunity of being part of the start up of that church. That church was much like River Valley...from contemporary music and conservative theological views to meeting in a cafeteria of an elementary school. While at this church, we lead a small group in our apartment. We learned a lot in that church in a brief time.



In 2008, we partnered with an Apartment Ministry called Apartment Life (also called CARES). The goal of the ministry was to deliberately place Christians in an apartment community with the purpose of showing people the love of Christ. We planned free events with free food and took every opportunity to share our faith with words and/or deeds. It was a big sacrifice of time, but incredibly rewarding to watch God move.

In September of 2008, God asked us to take a big leap of faith and move to Bastrop. The amount of things that fell into place to get us here would take up way to much room to write. Suffice it to say, **we knew very clearly and with confidence that God wanted us here.** From an outside perspective, this move didn't make any logical sense at all, but it's been a huge faith-building experience to go where God says to go, even when things don't make sense, and watch Him provide for His children. He truly is a loving and compassionate God ruling with all power!

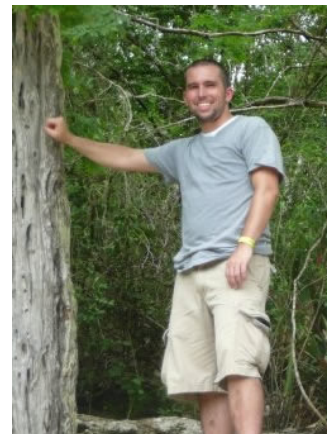
In December of 2008, we found out that Lori was a month pregnant. This was not planned, but has been extremely exciting. Our baby boy is due August 28, 2009.

## **Now...what I do for the church:**

I have multiple roles, but in a nutshell, **I lead the youth, meet with people, and do whatever I can to make Cody's job easier.** I'm very excited about the direction of the Youth group. To sum up my view of how the youth should be lead can be said like this: **I want the kids to have a lot of fun and enjoy multiple activities, but entertainment will not be at the expense of the Gospel.** Although our society does not seem to expect much from the "leaders of tomorrow" other than rebellion, I see in Scripture many young people called to be radical for God and His glory. David was too young to be a warrior when he killed Goliath and the disciples (with the exception of Peter) were likely under the age of 20 years old. So I am trying to raise the bar regarding what's expected from these kids and trusting God, by the power of the Holy Spirit to **raise up a generation of people willing to deny themselves for the Lord's glory.**

I also try to spend time with people. It is my passion and desire to encourage believers to live out their faith beyond Sunday mornings. I LOVE to get caught up in conversations about Scripture and what God is doing in people's lives!

In my spare time, I love to read and watch movies. I really only read non-fiction...like the Bible, biographies, Christian living, etc. The challenge I put on myself is to not simply grow in knowledge, but to be prayerful that the information I attain **stirs my heart and affection for the things of God!**



# A little more about Brandon Phifer ...

## Favorite Movies

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- **Action:** The Bourne Series, Equilibrium,
- **War Movies:** Gladiator, Kingdom of Heaven, the Last Samurai
- **Comedies:** Dumb & Dumber, Nacho Libre, Anchorman, Zoolander
- **Superhero Movies:** Superman Returns, The New Batman Movies

## Other Pastors I listen to:

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- Paul Washer
- Matt Chandler
- John Piper

## Books I Recommend:

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- Practicing the Presence of God by Brother Lawrence
- Point Man by Steve Farrar
- Any John Piper book (Desiring God, Don't Waste Your Life, etc.)
- God's Gift to Women by Eric Ludy
- The Overcoming Life by D.L. Moody

## Music:

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- **Christian Rap** (Hey, just give it a chance): LaCrae, Flame, Trip Lee, 116 Clique, Tedashii, etc
- **Christian Rock:** Blindside, Thrice, Emery
- **Contemporary:** Casting Crowns, David Crowder, Ross King, Burgundy Road

## TV Shows:

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- 24, LOST, The Office

## Top Sports:

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- Soccer, Tennis, Volleyball, Snowboarding, Soccer-Tennis

## Favorite Foods:

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- Mexican, American, Italian

## Favorite Scripture Verses:

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Hebrews 12:1-4

Ephesians 2:8-10

Jeremiah 33:3

1 John 4:19

Romans 12:1-2

Psalm 119

2 Timothy 2:4

John 18:6

1 Corinthians 16:13-14