

Biography of the Executive Director

Martin Allen Baker was born on December 16, 1951 in Denver City, TX where he lived to age 18. After graduating from Denver City High School in 1970 he attended Sul Ross State University from 1970 to 1972 when he transferred to Stephen F. Austin State University to major in Forestry. (There are not very many trees in far west Texas.) On March 10, 1973 he married Mary Skerkowski. (52 years and two wonderful children later, they are still married to each other. Their son, Paul, was born in 1976 and their daughter, Amanda, was born in 1980.) Martin graduated from SFA in 1975 with a B.S. in Forestry.

Martin had made a profession of faith in Jesus early in his childhood but did not fully surrender his life to Christ until he transferred to SFA and met Bro. June and Phil Metzinger and began attending Fredonia Hill Baptist Church.

Martin joined GODTEL's Board of Trustees in 1975 and after a few years became the Treasurer. When the Old Redland Hotel was purchased in January of 1977 to house GODTEL's first homeless shelter, Martin, Mary, and baby Paul were some of the first occupants.

In 1978 Martin established a welding business, "Martin's Welding," which he operated in East Texas and then in West Texas until 1989 when he and his family moved to Lufkin where he and Mary became co-directors of the Lufkin Mission.

In the 1990's Martin became the Vice President and Secretary of the Board, in which capacity he served until 2021 when he became President of the Board and Executive Director of GODTEL.

Martin Baker was one of the founders of GODTEL Ministries back in 1975 and has been affiliated with the ministry since that time. When Bro. June, our President/Executive Director for 45 years, went to be with the Lord in September of 2021, the Board of Directors unanimously voted for Martin to take his place.

God's Open Door To Eternal Life, Inc. d.b.a. GODTEL Ministries, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in East Texas. GODTEL operates three homeless shelters, or missions, (in Nacogdoches, Lufkin, and Livingston, Texas) which share "Practical Christianity" by meeting physical needs (temporary shelter, food, and clothing) while proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We do not seek nor accept funding from government sources.

GODTEL also operates two Christian Help Centers, which provide clothing and other assistance to Nacogdoches and Polk County residents.

This article is a personal testimony. To obtain additional copies, order by Title. For more information about other literature, preaching tapes by Bro. Gentry, or the ministry in general, write us at one of the addresses below, or give us a call.

We are on the web at www.godtel.org.

Email: godtel@minister.com

Facebook: [@GODTEL.Ministries](https://www.facebook.com/GODTEL.Ministries)

GODTEL Ministries

1902 Douglass Road
Nacogdoches, Texas 75964-3817
(936) 569-7914

323 Moody Street
Lufkin, TX 75901-0445
(936) 637-2520

1607 S. Washington Ave.
Livingston, TX 77351-4047
(936) 327-8863



Garland's Rules

by Martin Baker

Garland was my grandfather. His full name was William Garland Baker, but he went by his middle name. The rules are about being a man. I learned these rules one at a time during my "growing-up" years. I would do something that did not fit into Garland's ideas of manliness and he would give me the rule that expressed what he considered manly behavior.

Sometime, before I was ten, my two uncles and I got involved in some nefarious activity. We thought we were so clever and that we would not be discovered. Well, all of us thought this way when we were younger, only to find out that we weren't clever at all and everyone knew what we had done. Garland and I were alone when he confronted me with our misdeeds and asked me what part I had played in the planning, execution, and covering up of the thing we had done. I went into a long explanation of how I was innocent. Garland just looked at me and said, Martin, a man does not lie."

My father reinforced this rule sometime later. I was riding my bike when I saw a bunch of kids on bikes on a loading dock and I went to join them. As I approached, one of the boys pushed a girl off the dock, bike included. The girl ran toward her house and the other kids scattered. The girl came back and asked me to

push her bike to her house. I picked up her bike and followed her as she ran ahead. The girl's father came out and drove to where I was. He threw her bike into his pickup and drove back to their house. Before I could get home, they came up behind me and he took me off my bike and proceeded to put me and my bike in the pickup. He took me to my house and got in my dad's face about me pushing his daughter off the dock. Dad asked me if I had done that and I said, "No." Dad was fixing to go to "war" with that man when his daughter jumped out of the truck and told her father that I hadn't pushed her. I was helping her. When it was all over, my dad told me that he would fight for me to the death, as long as I did not lie.

One day, my uncles and I were caught stealing from a small store in Morton, Texas. The owners knew Garland and they called him. Garland came to the store, saw the items we had tried to steal and he paid for them. He gave each of us a whipping. After the tears had stopped flowing, he said to us, "A man does not steal."

When we had family gatherings or when all of the grandkids were at Garland's house, all of us kids would play games. It seemed to me that I always lost. I did not like losing, so I started to cheat. Of course, I was also not good at cheating. My sisters, cousins, and uncles told Garland what I was doing. Garland took me out of the game and forbade me from playing for a period of time. As he escorted me away from the game, he told me, "A man does not cheat."

When I was in my early teen years, my aunt told me to stop what I was doing and to go do what she needed me to do. Being a teenager, I began to give her some sass. This went on for a few minutes. During my sass, Garland walked up behind me, turned me around suddenly, and said, "Martin, a man is always respectful."

These four rules have to do with my incorrect behavior. The last rule is about his behavior. Garland accepted Christ as his savior, the same week my dad was saved. Both were

Garland's Rules

A man does not lie.

A man does not steal.

A man does not cheat.

A man is always respectful

A man is willing to help

born again in a revival meeting there in Morton when my dad was seventeen. I came along in 1951 and began to know Garland when I was about seven.

I noticed through my growing-up years certain things Garland did. He had taken a boy named MacAllen Beard into his home and raised him as one of his own. Garland also took in Charles, his nephew, for some years when Garland's sister could not care for him.

I was around Garland's Auto shop a lot growing up. From time to time, someone who could not afford to get it fixed would come into his shop with a broken car, but if he did not have a car, he would lose his job. Garland

would fix it at no charge so that man could keep his job.

Morton had no motel, so, if a traveler broke down, they would have no place to stay. Garland, being a deacon of his church, would open the church and let them stay there while the car was being repaired.

One of Garland's friends had a medical emergency at Garland's shop. Morton did not have a hospital for treating that kind of emergency, so the ambulance was going to transport the man to Lubbock. The man had no family and he was very afraid. He stated that he wished Garland could go with him. Garland responded, "I can," and he climbed into the ambulance and went to Lubbock. The shop was left unattended for the rest of that day.

There was an old couple in Morton, Mr. and Mrs. Mills. They were extremely poor and uneducated. No one would help them except Garland and Reba.

Whenever Garland found out someone was in trouble, he would drive miles to check on them. Whenever Garland found out someone was hungry, he would take food from his freezer and pantry and deliver it.

As I watched Garland's actions, I wondered why, so I asked him one day, "Why do you do all of these things?" He said, "Martin, a man is always willing to help."

The Five Rules that Garland gave me made me understand that to be a MAN, I could not be a liar, a thief, a cheat, or disrespectful, and I had to be willing to help others.