

Participants:

- Russ Wigginton
- Brenda Webber
- Unknown Male

Location: Rhodes College – Memphis, Tennessee

Date: November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Wigginton: My name is Russ Wigginton. I'm 41 years old. Today's date is November 27, 2007. We're at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, and my relationship to the person I'm talking with is coworker and friend.

Webber: Hello. My name is Brenda Webber. My age is 45. Today's date is November the 27th, 2007. The location here is Rhodes College. My relationship is a coworker and a friend also.

Wigginton: Okay. Great. Brenda, let's – let's talk about our combination of your experiences growing up, and maybe a part of that is your experience here at Rhodes, and your experiences – things that you feel like you want to share, experiences you've had with those who want to know you better.

Could you start – I'd like to start with some basic things. Where are you from?

Webber: My hometown is Eads, Tennessee.

Yes.

Wigginton: Where?

Webber: I'm a country girl. Right of 64 Highway. Mm-hmm.

Wigginton: In East Tennessee?

Webber: Eads, Tennessee.

Wigginton: What's the name of the town?

Webber: Eads, Tennessee.

Wigginton: Eads, Tennessee. Oh, okay. Eads. Yes.

Webber: Uh-huh.

Wigginton: That's right. I do know where Eads is. And so did you grow up there?

Webber: Yes.

Wigginton: Did you – you said you were a country girl. Did you live on a farm, or –

Webber: Well, no and yes, because – the reason I say no and yes, no, I didn't live on no farm, and the yes is sometimes I felt like I did, because we had all the – the animals, you know, from the – you name it, the cows, the mules, the horses, pigs, ducks, chickens.

Wigginton: Yeah.

Webber: We had it all. So – but other than that, it was a good place to live, just being raised up as a country girl.

Wigginton: Yeah.

Webber: I learned a lot.

Unknown Male: So you \_\_\_\_\_ in the area, but not –

Webber: My parents.

Unknown Male: Your parents?

Webber: Yes. Uh-huh.

Unknown Male: Can you describe the home that you grew up in?

Webber: Well, the home that I grew up in was a – a one-bedroom house. We had one bedroom. We had a upstairs where my mom and my – my mother and my father made a bedroom out for the boys to live there upstairs. But the one-bedroom house was the bedroom and the living room in together. So that's how we had to live, with another room, which she made out into a bedroom, too. But we – we had a one-bedroom house. Yeah.

Wigginton: So did you have brothers and sisters?

Webber: Yes.

Wigginton: You mentioned two brothers. Is that – was that – was it three of you, or –

Webber: Yeah. Well, it's 11 children.

Wigginton: Eleven? Okay.

Webber: Eleven. Six girls and five boys. Mm-hmm.

Wigginton: And so where are you in that order of 11?

Webber: Well, I'm the youngest girl. I'm the baby girl, they call – call me the baby girl.

Wigginton: In fact, that's your nickname, huh?

Webber: Baby girl. I like that. Yeah.

Wigginton: Yeah. And so did everybody – did everybody grow up in Eads, and in that same house?

Webber: Yes. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Wigginton: And so your – kind of – what kind of work did you parents do, or your family do?

Webber: Well, the type of work that my parents did was they grow crops. And that's how my parent made the living, by growing crops, all different kind of vegetable and stuff, where they sold it for money to take care of the family and different things.

So – and cotton. Grow cotton, where they sold that as well, to make a living off of. Mm-hmm.

Unknown Male: Did you ever help them?

Webber: Yes. I got a chance to pick a little cotton, which a lot of my family members said, oh, girl, you didn't pick that much. But I picked enough to remember that I did do something I can talk about during that time.

Wigginton: What was that like?

Webber: To me, as a young girl, it was fun, because I didn't get very much cotton, but then just the idea of being out there, picking it and stuff, you know, it was something that I experienced, that I can be able to share and tell others about.

Wigginton: Mm-hmm.

Webber: You know?

Wigginton: So the – when people say you didn't pick that much cotton, are these your older brothers and sisters who –

Webber: Mm-hmm.

Wigginton: – probably picked more than you did?

Webber: Yeah. Right. Right. Right. I did – I felt like, even though we – I didn't pick a lot, to me, it was a lot, as a young girl growing up, you know.

Wigginton: Mm-hmm.

Webber: So I was able to say, well, at least I can share that experience that – the little bit that I did pick.

Wigginton: What kind of – what kind of town was Eads at the time, when you – when you think about growing up? What – how would you describe it? What was the – what was the – was there a lot of blacks there, or not that many blacks, and –

Webber: A lot of blacks.

Wigginton: A lot of blacks?

Webber: A lot of blacks. Mm-hmm.

Wigginton: And your early school, elementary school and that sort of thing, what do you remember about that?

Webber: Well, in elementary school, or growing up, Oakland Elementary was my elementary school that my parents sent me off to, and – along with the rest of the girls and boys in the family.

Wigginton: Was that an all-black school?

Webber: No. It was mixed, but the majority was black. Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Wigginton: Did you have a good experience there?

Webber: Yes. I got a chance to meet a lot of people.

Along with my age. Some was older than me. And just getting to know other people, that was a good experience for me as well, you know.

Unknown Male: Were there any teachers that stood out to you that you remember?

Webber: I can't recall their name right now.

Wigginton: Did you – and the – so you went to Oakland Elementary. And then where did you go on to the high –

Webber: Fayette-Ware High.

Wigginton: Oh, you went to Fayette-Ware?

Webber: Fayette-Ware High.

Wigginton: What was that like?

Webber: Fun. Because then, I was growing up, and I was – wanted to do more. I wanted to get involved, and – a lot more. Yeah.

Wigginton: Did all your brothers and sisters go to Fayette-Ware as well?

Webber: No. They – we all went to different schools. Some of the older ones went to different schools.

Wigginton: So – and say more about why Fayette-Ware was fun, and what kind of things did you get involved in?

Webber: Well, cheerleader. It was fun, because I wanted to be a cheerleader. But at the time, with my parents, my parents were more – I would say a little bit over – too protective on us. That a lot of things that we wanted to do, you know, they didn't want us to do it. But I got a chance to be a cheerleader for a little while, and went out for basketball for a little while. I made the team, but I never did get a chance to play. And then just getting in trouble with the guys sometimes. That was fun, but –

Wigginton: Absolutely.

Webber: That was fun. But then just –

Wigginton: How did you get in trouble with the guys?

Webber: Well, I'm always getting caught with them being around me, you know. Being stuck up in a corner or something like that, you know. Always being caught, where the teacher have to call my name out.

Brenda Granbury, get in the classroom. That's my maiden name. So Webber, that's my marriage name.

Wigginton: Yeah?

Webber: Yeah.

Wigginton: And so you – you had a good experience at Fayette-Ware. Then did you – after high school, did you stay in Eads, or did you move somewhere else?

Webber: Well, later on, I moved to Arlington, Tennessee. By then, I had got pregnant during my class year, or '81. And after school, I moved to Arlington, Tennessee, with my children's dad, so – and then from there, then I came to Memphis.

Wigginton: When did you come to Memphis?

Webber: Well, I've been here in Memphis like at least – my older daughter – at least about 25 years at the most.

Wigginton: Oh, okay. Yeah.

Webber: And I don't know everything about Memphis, because I can – places I can get lost here in Memphis, too, so –

Wigginton: Yeah. Do you like Memphis?

Webber: I love it.

Wigginton: Oh, really? What do you like – what do you love about it?

Webber: I love Memphis because Memphis a good place to live, number one. And then I have met a lot of people here in Memphis, you know, that I didn't know. So I got a chance to – I'm nervous.

Unknown Male: That's fine.

Wigginton: Take your time.

Webber: Okay.

Unknown Male: What was Memphis – what was it like coming here from the country to \_\_\_\_\_?

Webber: Well, the difference was when I met – when I came to Memphis, I got a chance to meet a lot of people here that – they talked to me, and told me about their experience here.

And I got a chance to tell people about what the country girl was like, you know. So that was the difference to me, you know. So as I continued to stay here, I learned to grow and to be able to relate to the people that are here in Memphis. Yeah.

Wigginton: So you mentioned you've been here quite a while, and originally, you – or after high school, you lived in Arlington. And you mentioned children. How many children do you have?

Webber: I have two daughters.

Wigginton: What are their names?

Webber: Tracy is my oldest daughter and Stacy Latrece is my youngest daughter.

Wigginton: Okay. And how old are they?

Webber: Tracy is 25, and Stacy Latrece is 22.

Wigginton: Okay. And do they live in Memphis as well?

Webber: Yes. Yeah.

Unknown Male: How did becoming a mother change your life?

Webber: Well, becoming a mother changed my life for a lot.

Because it was a experience that was letting me know that it wasn't about me anymore. So it was all about my children then. I have to stop focus – I had to stop focusing on myself all the time. When the children came, then I have to focus more on them, because I wanted to be a mother to be able to raise my children, and give them a good life, and to train them in the right way, you know. To teach them obedience, stuff, and how to be able to respect theirselves. So they become a big change in my life. Yeah.

Wigginton: Do you spend a lot of time with your daughter, and – growing up and now?

Webber: Well, growing up –

Wigginton: As they were growing up?

Webber: They want to do their own thing. So – but other than that, we still spend time together, but it – not like growing up. Yeah.

Wigginton: So they – when you moved to Memphis, did you – did you move here for job opportunities or friends encouraged you to go the city, or you just got – you know, what was your motivation to move to Memphis?

Webber: A change.

Wigginton: You just wanted a change?

Webber: I wanted a change. I mean, at that time, me and the children's dad begin to – things started changing in our relationship, and we started changing. So I was just looking for a change altogether, so...

Wigginton: I mean, you had been to Memphis and stuff before, and –

Webber: Off and on.

Wigginton: Off and on?

Webber: Off and on. Mm-hmm.

Wigginton: And so you picked Memphis as the place to come?

Webber: Yeah. Yeah.

Wigginton: And so you came here, and when you got here, what – and tell me – tell us about – tell me about getting settled and, you know, how did you –

Webber: Well, getting settled here in Memphis, it was kind of – it was kind of hard for me, because when I – when I came to Memphis, I had to stay with my – one of my sisters for a while, until I kind of

got up on my feet, and be able to get my own apartment, where I was able to take care of my girls. Because at that time, I wasn't working, living off welfare.

So there wasn't a whole lot of money at that time, but it was a lot to do things with, but not just to settle down. And I needed to know where I wanted to go to, you know, and try to find the right location, the right neighborhood, and stuff, you know.

Wigginton: Mm-hmm.

Webber: Where to raise my girls up at. So-

Wigginton: So do you – you mentioned you stayed with your sister. Do you have other brothers and sisters who live in Memphis?

Webber: Yes.

Wigginton: So –

Webber: Now all of us, matter of fact.

Wigginton: Really?

Webber: All of us live here in Memphis now, so –

Wigginton: So you all have left the country and come to the city.

Webber: Yeah. Mm-hmm. Yep. Everybody in different locations, some over here in White Haven, you know, some in North Haven, and North Memphis, Raleigh, and all about.

Wigginton: Yeah.

Webber: So everybody in a different location now, but everyone here.

Wigginton: So you all have a – there's a lot of you, 11. Do you have a close relationship with all your brothers and sisters?

Webber: Yes. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Wigginton: Did you have a close relationship with them growing up, and –

Webber: Yeah. I think I did.

Wigginton: Share some of those stories of being in a big family in the country.

Webber: Well, growing up, I mean, you always wanted to be the child that mom and daughter – you know, the child that your mother and your father, you know, can be pleased with, you know.

You always wanted to be the centerpiece. You know, wanted them to look up at you, you know. And not to have favoritism, you know. Just to be treated equally and stuff, you know. Well, that's the way I wanted it to be.

And growing up in a big family and stuff, we argued a lot, you know. We got into fights, you know. So – did things and said things to one another that we were sorry about later, you know, because if my father

and my mother knew about it, then that was whooping times, you know. They taught us that, you know, to respect one another, and to love one another.

So we did stuff like that, you know. And they knew about it, they whooped us for it, you know. So that was something to remember.

Wigginton: Now when you get together with your siblings now, and you tell stories about each other, what are some of the stories that they tell about you? Your getting in trouble, or –

Webber: Well, some of the stories, one of my sisters always tell, say, "Girl, you stayed in trouble. You got whooping all the time." I'm like, "No, I didn't. I didn't get no whooping all the time. I remember some whoopings that I got." But we all got whooping, you know. My mom and dad, you know, they believed in whooping you, now. But no doubt about that, especially when you did things that was wrong or something they asked you to do, and you didn't do it, you know.

Wigginton: Like what? Like work on the farm, or work on the land, or –

Webber: Anything particular. I remember one time when – when my mom had asked me to go wash the dishes.

And I took my time washing the –

Wigginton: You had some other thoughts, huh?

Webber: I took my time washing the dishes, you know. You know how we can get sometimes, going to get up when we get ready.

Wigginton: How old do you think you were at that time?

Webber: Probably around ten or eleven. You know, somewhere like that. Maybe just a little bit younger. But – and she had asked me to wash the dishes, and I didn't get up and wash the dishes at the time when my mom asked me to. And so – and before I can know it, when my mom – when I thought my mom forgot, and I got up and went and washed dishes, that was the time that she came and whooped me and said, "Did I not tell you earlier to wash them dishes?"

So what was the funny part was about it – well, then it wasn't funny, but when I think about it like now, when she came and whooped me, I broke up a lot of the dishes, so she turned around and whooped me extra for that, for breaking up the dishes, you know, so-

So –

Unknown Male: You broke them just to be spiteful?

Webber: No. I broke them because she was whooping me.

Unknown Male: Oh.

Wigginton: Yeah.

Webber: While I was washing the dishes.

Wigginton: Yeah. Yeah. Like –

Webber: "Did I not tell you to get in there and wash them dishes?"

Wigginton: And you had a plate and a cup in your hand.

Webber: Yeah. Yeah. And then she said, "That's my good plate. You done broke my good plate." Huh-uh. So she whooped me for that, too. So when I look back over my life, I mean, it was – it was fun time. We had a good life. And it was funny – it's funny a lot of times when we sit around and we talk about the old things, as growing up, you know. We just laugh.

Wigginton: Are your parents still living?

Webber: No. My mom and dad – my mom been deceased now for 16 years, and my dad eight years.

Wigginton: So what are the age ranges of you and your siblings? Like who's – the oldest is how old, and the youngest is what age?

Webber: My oldest sister is 62. I can't remember all of them's age.

Wigginton: Yeah.

Webber: My oldest sister is 62. So I'm the youngest, which is 45.

Wigginton: You're the youngest –

Webber: Of the girls.

Wigginton: Of the girls.

Webber: And my oldest brother is – I think he told me he was 58 or 59. When they start getting older, they don't like to share their age and stuff, you know.

Wigginton: Yeah.

Webber: So – and I have to my little piece of paper where I keep the date of birth and the age, and I have to look back on it, and kind of remember from there. And my youngest brother – okay, I'm 45, so he's about – I think he's 42 or 43. Because we all was like two and three years, you know, apart from one another.

Wigginton: So with that many kids – being that close in age and that many in the house at the same time, did y'all play, you know, a lot of games and stuff together?

I mean, was that – or was it – was it the – you and your brothers and sisters are your major playmates when you were growing up? Or did you have friends –

Webber: Yeah.

Wigginton: – from around the neighborhood or whatever?

Webber: Well, friends from around the neighborhood, of course. But we – it was enough of us to play a lot of games. The merry-go-round, little Sally Walton. We loved to play jump rope. And with the guys, we would get the guys to throw the ball while we played dodge ball. Yeah. So – and – what else with the boys that we did? Basketball, because even back then, you know, we had a little goal put up. You

know, and not like the goals that they have now, but the little goal put up where we played basketball and stuff. So...

Wigginton: So what were – back in Eads and that time, what was – what were race relations like there?

Webber: Racial relation.

Wigginton: Did the black families and white families get along? Did the black kids and white kids play together?

Webber: Sometimes. Some of them. Not all of them. The – either the blacks – some of the blacks didn't get along with the white, and some of the white didn't get along with the black. So it was like that, even with grown adults, as well as their children. Yeah.

Wigginton: In your family, did you have – or did you play with white children?

Webber: Yeah. Mm-hmm. But not all the time we got along together. So I – I don't know what was it at that time, so it's something – it's something just hard to explain, even to this day, you know.

Wigginton: So you said that there were black and white kids in your elementary school. Were there black and white teachers as well?

Webber: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Yeah.

Wigginton: And at Fayette-Ware, were there blacks and whites there, or just black students?

Webber: Majority are black. It was always a few white in the mix, but the majority was black.

Wigginton: Teachers too?

Webber: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Wigginton: And so then you come to Memphis, and would – how would you describe the racial situation in Memphis when you first came, and maybe then and now?

Webber: Well, then, it was like I said. Some black got along with the white, and just as well some white got along with the black. It wasn't all the time that they got along and stuff. It was basically about a racial thing, you know, so – and like now, it's the same today.

Some blacks get along with white, and some white get along with black. So I think it's still kind of like a racial thing today. But – but my thing is I try to get along with everybody, because it doesn't matter what color you are, whatever your – your race is. You know, it doesn't matter, because God love us all. And that's the way that he want us to be, to love one another. You know, it doesn't matter about what color you are or whatever your race may be, you know, so – but not all the time that happen.

Wigginton: Yeah. Well, I know you try to get along with everybody, because –

Webber: Yes.

Wigginton: – that's your reputation here at the college, and where – where we both work. How long have you been working at Rhodes?

Webber: I've been working here at Rhodes two months – two months – two years – I'm sorry, two months, and 27 days.

Wigginton: Now what makes you know it that exact?

Webber: Because I started in the month of August two years ago, 2005. So –

Wigginton: And what brought you to Rhodes? What brought you to this place to work?

Webber: I knew you were going to put me on that spot. What brought me to Rhodes? Well, at the time, I was – I was seeking for a job because the job that I last had, it was going out of business. So – so I stopped by one day and put in the application, because I – at that time, I was putting in applications everywhere, you know, just hoping that at the time, that God would rescue me, you know, by the time when the plant would close where I was working at.

And I got here at Rhodes and put in a application, and got interviewed on the spot, that same morning as I was getting ready to go to work. It was unexpected, but God was all in the plan.

Wigginton: And so you accept it, and –

Webber: Well, here, when I – I got interviewed on the spot, that was the first interview. But I actually went through three interviews before Rhodes actually hired me. Mm-hmm.

Wigginton: So had you – in your position here, could you say what your position is and – and how – had you done – the work that you do now, had you done it at the – in your other work experience before?

Webber: Yes. My work here at Rhodes is housekeeping. That's what I do. Even in my job before now, I was housekeeping there.

And before then, I had a few other places where I did warehouse job at, but housekeeping was basically what I did over the years, because some of the time – wasn't always in a company. It was private homes, you know, that I did work there. So –

Unknown Male: And you said earlier that when you first came to Memphis you were on welfare. How did you go from there to the kind of work \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_?

Webber: Well, welfare, after a period of time over the years, welfare just wasn't getting it to me. I wanted to do something more. I wanted to make it better for my girls, because like that's what – that's what I said I was more focused on the girls, when I started having children. It wasn't about me anymore. So I just wanted to give up welfare and be able to get a paycheck and be responsible, you know.

And say, this the way \_\_\_ can do it, you know. I didn't want to be that – the mother that continued to lay upon welfare, which I met a – you know, even today, a lot of women that's, you know, instead of just going forward, they \_\_\_ just lay on welfare. And I didn't want to do that. I wanted to get a job and make it better for my girls, and that's what I did.

So it's just one job to the next job, that the Lord moved me on and blessed me, where money got better and better and better. So \_\_\_\_.

Wigginton: Well, I know one of the things that people observe about you is you always seem positive and upbeat and enthusiastic about what you do, and your contribution to this community, and how you

interact with people. Is that something that you – have you always been that way? Is that how people describe you? Is that –.

Webber: Well, I believe that I always have been that way, even younger, but not more openly, like I am now, as I got older. As I got older, I began to open up more to people and stuff. And I think a big part of that, that made that change in me, was God, you know, turning towards God. You know, where I can be able to know how to treat people, and know what to expect, you know, and – and I love it. I mean, I wouldn't treat nobody no other way than to be nice and be kind, speaking to them and stuff. You know, and care for them, you know, and love them, because that's what I want to do.

Wigginton: So spirituality plays a important role in your life?

Webber: Definite. Definite.

Wigginton: Has that always been the case?

Webber: Well, I believe. I believe. Because even growing up, in my childhood, my parents always – always took us to church. And church is where you're going to be at. You know, whenever the doors of the church was open, you going. Wasn't no doubt about that. So they brought us up in church. So that part kind of like stayed in with me, you know. So –

Wigginton: What was the name of the church?

Webber: Morning View Baptist Church, Pastor Price. And still today, I'm still at that same church.

Wigginton: Is that right?

Webber: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Wigginton: So you literally grew up in that church.

Webber: Uh-huh. Yeah. Country church. Yeah. And that's located out in –

Wigginton: So you do – that gives you a way to – yeah. That gives you a chance to always return back to – to that community.

Webber: Yeah.

Wigginton: Yeah.

Webber: Yeah.

Wigginton: Every week.

Webber: Always, every week. Every week, every Sunday, I go back to Morning View.

Same church I grewed up in, and my parents took me to, even while I was growing up and stuff, so –

Wigginton: Any of your brothers and sisters go to that church, too?

Webber: Yes. Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Wigginton: Wow.

Webber: Some of them now, they – they have joined churches, other locations and stuff, but some are still there.

Wigginton: So that had a powerful influence on you.

Webber: Yeah.

Wigginton: How about your daughters?

Webber: They still go to church, too, but they kind of like in and out, you know. But they still going to the same church. Yeah.

Wigginton: So we haven't – we haven't – I can't get out of my mind, when we first started talking, you mentioned those animals. I need to hear a little bit more about those animals. What – what did – what was that like, growing up around animals, and how has that influenced you? Do you like animals today, or –

Webber: Well, yes. Because growing up around animals, I mean, it was fun.

But you also got tired of them, too, because when it came down to my dad killing a hog or killing a goat, you know, and the worst part that I hated was chittlins. We had to clean chittlins. That was yucky to me. I didn't like that. So – but the fun part about it was eating it, you know, and – and like I said, with the chicken, did the same thing.

Wigginton: So did y'all do that for special occasions, or that was just part of –

Webber: That was just part of –

Wigginton: It's time to – it's –

Webber: – the way that our living was.

Wigginton: This is food for the week, or for the month, or whatever.

Webber: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Yeah. Exactly.

Unknown Male: Did you ever have to butcher the animals yourself? Or you said to clean up the chittlins.

Webber: Well, no. Just to clean the chittlin part, because my dad would always gut the hog or the goat, and take out whatever, and we would have to clean whatever part that he keep. So he did the scrubbing of the hair off the hog, or skinning the goat, the hair, you know. So...

Unknown Male: I was going to ask you about that, too. Before we started – you were talking about food, and you said you made the best ribs in town. How did you learn to cook \_\_\_\_?

Webber: Well, I stayed in the kitchen a lot watching my mom. So –

Wigginton: When you wasn't breaking dishes, you was watching her cook, huh?

Webber: Right. Right. Right. I was watching my mom and stuff, always asking my mom, what'd you put in this, what'd you put in that. You know, learning and seeing what she did. And as time grew up – as time went on, as I got older, there was a lot of things that I just picked up and learned on my own. You know?

Unknown Male: What were some of the best dishes your mother made?

Webber: Coconut cake. Coconut cake. And I used to love when my mom made those salmon – those jack mackems. You ate those before?

Unknown Male: Salmon what?

Webber: Salmon jack mackems. You ate them?

Wigginton: Oh, yeah.

Webber: Okay.

Wigginton: Say a little bit more about those.

Webber: Well, I used to love when my mom made that, because when my mom fried that, she would always do the homemade biscuit along with that. So with the syrup, we always had like the \_\_\_\_ or either some kind of apple \_\_\_\_ or pear \_\_\_\_ that my mom been done made, you know, homemade. And that's what we ate along with it. So it was good. Yeah.

Yeah.

Wigginton: Are there a lot of good cooks in your – among you and your brothers and sisters?

Webber: I would say so.

Wigginton: Yeah?

Webber: Yeah. You know, everybody try to do outdo one another, saying, "Well, I'm the best cook." And I'm like, "Okay. Well, in some things – " You know, because there's some things that I can cook that my sister or my brother may not like or whatever, you know. And some things that they will cook, and I would say saying like, "Hmm, there's something missing right here. You needed so and so," you know, or whatever. You know?

So I'm more of a person – I think I'll tell a person, you know, try to do it in a way without hurting that person's feelings or doing – insulting that person, you know. Telling in a way –

Wigginton: With ten brothers and sisters, y'all had – you got a lot of competition on the cooking front, don't you?

Webber: Yeah. Yeah. Yep.

Wigginton: Have you passed that on to your daughters? Did they – were they – are they interested in –

Webber: Yeah. They can do a little something. They can do a little something. Yeah. They are –

Wigginton: Now what – now there – are there things about – with them, for example, or others, maybe your brothers' and sisters' children, about growing up in the city that you think, you know, is different for them, than growing up in the country like you grow up in the country, or you all grew up in the country? Do you think that there are some things that – about growing up in the city you miss out on, instead of growing up in the country?

Webber: No. It ain't nothing that I miss out on in the city. I thank God that I grew up in the country, and was raised by good parents and stuff, you know. And I can be able to share a lot to people about how it was when I was growing up, as I can remember.

And I always said that the country girl was better than the city girl anyway, you know, to me. So no. It ain't nothing that I miss out on here in the city. Not as I can remember it. Nothing.

Wigginton: So do your daughters know a lot about Eads, Tennessee?

Webber: We talk some about where we lived, showing it to them, where we lived. Because now the area where we used to live, you know, they've got it looking like Memphis now.

Wigginton: Yeah.

Webber: So you know, they done did a lot of building out there. So – but we always showed them where we used to live at and stuff, and took them around –

Wigginton: Mm-hmm. So they have a sense of appreciation.

Webber: Mm-hmm.

Wigginton: Awareness.

Webber: Right. Mm-hmm.

Wigginton: Yeah. Yeah.

Webber: Yeah.

Unknown Male: Talk about when you look back on your life, what's – what's one of the proudest moments \_\_\_\_\_?

Webber: When I look back on my life, the proudest moment I can think is thank God that I'm saved. That's the proudest moment I can say. I thank God that I'm saved, and I have a relationship with him. And that – that means a lot to me.

Unknown Male: Do you remember the moment where you became saved?

Webber: Yeah. At the age of 12, because growing up, by the age of 12, my mom – my mother and father got me and a couple – two of my other brothers, and let us know, well, it's time. They had made that decision for us. It's time, you know, that you go to the \_\_\_\_\_. It's time for you to get saved.

And – and I didn't understand it just all well then. All I knowed that, well, I'm going, you know. I got to do what mom say, you know. You have to do what mom say. It's one of them things that you ain't fixing to not do what mom and dad is not say, now, and think you fixing to get away. So that happened for me.

And I can remember just – just as plain today, growing up on the – our revival start on that Monday night. And I can remember my mom told me, said, "Baby," said, "now this the rules for y'all. No playing, no watching TV, no nothing. You ain't fixing to get ready to do no kind of activity stuff until when you get saved. And you get off to yourself somewhere and you pray, and – to God, and just say, 'Lord, have mercy,' over and over, you know."

And just saying, "Lord, have mercy," there's just something about that word, "Lord, have mercy," even then, even to now, I still find myself saying, "Lord, have mercy." Because just, "Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy." Over and over, over and over and over, until that particular time, God just showed up.

And I found myself getting up off my knees, praising God, you know, telling God thank you, and going around, telling the mothers and others and my mom, "I got it. I got it." Thank you, Jesus. (Crying) Oh, Lord, thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord. Thank you.

As I was saying, I remember just saying, "I got my religion. I got it." And just telling God thank you, you know, because having a religion is something real. It's not nothing to play with. Either you got it or you don't got it.

And if you got it, one thing about it, God knows whether you got it or not. It's real. And having a religion, it's a spirit. God's spirit. And it's something that no one can take away from you. No one. It's something that God gives you, and no one can take away from you.

So it stayed in me. And I thank God for my parents, because they was good parents. So over the years, you know, the Bible say, train up a child in the way that he should go, that they will not depart from it, even though, you know, we – as children, we strayed away. But we – we will not – that part stayed, and it's so true. We will not depart, because still, even to this day, you know, it's just been a blessing, just to know that I can just – I don't have to go around and tell nobody that I got my religion, I'm saved, you know.

Because if you saved and you got a religion, you know, God's spirit in you, I mean, people ought to be able to recognize you.

Wigginton: Oh, they know.

Webber: Yeah. So –

Wigginton: If they know Brenda, they know.

Webber: But – (pause).

Wigginton: Is there anything else you'd like to say before we end?

Webber: I just thank God for this opportunity. I just thank God for me being here to be able to just share my story, tell my story. You know, so it is truly a blessing. It's truly a blessing. And thank you, Mr. Russ.

Wigginton: Oh, thank you. It's my pleasure to be here.

Webber: Asking me, and – pretty much \_\_\_ encourage me to do that. Because you said I got – I know you got a story to tell. I'm like, I don't know. But it stayed with me. It stayed with me. Because even at night, I couldn't even rest. I'm like, tell the story. That should be good. That should be interesting. Tell the story.

And I'm like, Lord, if I wanted to tell the story, I can talk about anything. But I wanted my story to be my religion belief. And religion belief is you got to be honest. Being honest, you know. That's important. For religion, you have to be honest. That's what God spoke to me in my spirit. Religion is honest. So I just thank God for this opportunity.

Wigginton: Thank you.