

ANSWERING THE CALL



My Calling into the Lord's service came on August 12, 1990, while serving in the U.S. Air Force during the Persian Gulf War. I heard the voice of God, as I was reading Ephesians 2:8-9..." For by grace are you saved through faith, it is the gift of God; not of works so that no man can boast. As I remember seeing a light that radiated at the sound of God's voice and experiencing a warm feeling all over my body, and tears on my face. The Holy Spirit kept saying... for by grace are you saved through faith. I kept saying, but Lord I don't deserve it. The Holy Spirit said "It is by grace, the undeserved favor of God is upon you". That was the first time that I recognized God's voice. You see, even though I had read the Bible many times completely through and attended church services regularly, you would have thought that I knew Jesus, but I didn't and had never recognized His voice before that day. Even- though I had heard it before. This time I knew it was God speaking to me through the Word and the Spirit and I discovered that my walk with Christ was not about knowing the Bible, but about knowing Jesus. Not about Christianity, but about Christ and what He has done for us and developing an intimate relationship with Him.

The scriptures say: "My sheep know my voice and a stranger, they will not follow. My attitude in life was all about me, but gradually the love of God changed me into a person with a new heart and mind. He created in new a clean heart and renewed a right spirit within me. Now, my life now has a new purpose and direction. My ministry started as an outreach to provide food, clothing and shelter to the sick, poor and elderly in Sumter and Kershaw Counties of South Carolina in May 1992 the same year that I reluctantly enrolled in what was then called the University of Biblical Studies, which later became American Bible College and Seminary. You see, I didn't want to be just another preacher with a piece of paper. I wanted to have a real relationship with God, one that would show itself to others through love for faith works by love. I didn't want to be just a hearer of the Word; but a doer. I graduated in December 18th 1998 with a Bachelor of Theology (B.TH) and later went on to receive a Masters, and several Doctorate degrees in Ministry, Education, and Counseling.

I was serving on staff at a local Baptist church and in September 2000, while on vacation in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, I approached the top of one of the mountain peaks, which was covered by a cloud so thick that I had to pull my car over. The wind started blowing fiercely and I heard the Lord's voice again and said... "Destroy the Yoke in Roanoke". For two years, I fought the call to go because I was secure with my job, family and friends. But, finally I submitted to the will of God and went where God said, not knowing what may lay ahead. You see, when God decides that He wants to do something through you, it is then up to us to obey and be blessed or disobey and be cursed, because God does not force Himself on us. During those years God developed me and the vision of God. I realized that God was pruning me and there were some things that had to be rearranged in my life: my allegiance to family, friends, career, possessions and self. Christ had to have first place in my life. God didn't just want part of me; He wanted all of me: mind, body and soul.

Today, I understand what it means to ask for and receive forgiveness and to be restored into a right relationship with God. I respect God as the true owner and I thank Him for all that He has blessed me with. I dedicate myself and all that I possess to Him. If you are struggling with your past and can't seem to forgive yourself, I pray that you will realize that God isn't looking at what you have done or where you have been. He is looking at where He is leading you. That doesn't mean you won't have set-backs, but it does mean that God has a plan and purpose for your life. Just allow Him to finish what He has

started in you. We never really reach the place of total fulfillment, because God is never through with us. As long as we are here we are constantly being molded and shaped into the image of Jesus. Let me tell you, there have been many battles lost, but praise be to God we overcome to the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony. I'm here to tell you, God can give you beauty for ashes. Just don't keep yourself in bound by not accepting the forgiveness of God. Regardless of how many times you have failed, there still the choice ... to get back up again. Just because you have failed at something, that doesn't mean you a failure that means you are human... there is no failure in God. Remember this... no test... no testimony. You can get back up again! I'm a witness to God's Amazing Grace... through failure, defeat and lack: to joy, peace and righteousness in the Holy Spirit, being brought out of the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of His marvelous light...O God, I can't tell it all, but I just can't keep it to myself... I have to tell somebody... Glory to God! Today, by the power of the Holy Spirit, I am continuing to walk after the things of God heeding His voice and being perfected by the Holy Spirit, for His Word shall not return unto Him void. My Two-Fold Anointing God gave me two Old Testament characters to reflect His anointing upon my life and ministry: (1) Ezra, who restored worship of the One True God and (2) Nehemiah, who rebuilt the lives of God's people. Know that God has something special in mind for you! I would love to meet and connect with you to share more of the good news of God's Amazing Grace!

My Favorite Quote:

“I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has had to overcome while trying to succeed.”

- Booker T. Washington

My Testimony Song

www.amazinggracemin.bravehost.com/God%20Favored%20Me.wma

In His Service,

Bishop Lyndon B. Hutcherson