

MY TESTIMONY

I WAS SPIRITUALLY BLIND AND DEAF UNTIL FEBRUARY 1, 1967. THAT WAS A WEDNESDAY. I WAS BAPTIZED ON SUNDAY FEBRUARY 5, 1967. I WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE.

I HAD ATTENDED CHURCH SINCE I WAS SIX YEARS OLD. FIRST I WENT TO A CHRISTIAN CHURCH ON JEFFERSON AVENUE IN DANVILLE, VA. MY FAMILY MOVED TO BERRYMAN AVENUE IN DANVILLE. AFTER WE MOVED I ATTENDED MOSLEY MEMORIAL CHURCH UNTIL I WAS TWELVE. I WAS RECRUITED TO PLAY BASKETBALL, BY BILL WHITE, A MEMBER OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH. I ATTENDED SUNDAY SCHOOL AT THE PRESBYTERIAN CENTER AND THEN WENT TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ON MAIN STREET.

AFTER GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL, I ATTENDED A PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE. I HAD TO GO TO CHAPEL TWICE A WEEK FOR FOUR YEARS, WITHOUT MANY CUTS. I HAD TWO YEARS OF BIBLE. IN FACT IT TOOK ME THREE YEARS TO PASS TWO YEARS OF BIBLE AFTER FLUNKING THE COURSE MY FRESHMAN YEAR.

I WAS MARRIED ON APRIL 8, 1961 TO IRENE BAUM, WHO HAD ACCEPTED THE LORD AT AN EARLY AGE.

I COULD SEE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH WERE COMMITTING THE SAME SINS AS MYSELF. I WAS A PERFECTIONIST AND HAD IN MINE WHEN I BECAME PERFECT I WOULD JOIN THE CHURCH.

ON FEBRUARY 1, 1967 DR. LUKE SMITH CAME TO MY RESIDENCE TO TALK WITH ME. I GAVE HIM MY THOUGHTS. HE CONVINCED ME I WOULD NEVER BE PERFECT UNLESS I WAS IN CHRIST. HE GAVE ME THE PLAN OF SALVATION AND ON THAT NIGHT, I ADMITTED I WAS A SINNER AND ACCEPTED THE LORD AS MY SAVIOR. THE LORD HAD OPENED MY EYES AND EARS SPIRITUALLY. BEFORE THAT NIGHT I WAS SPIRITUALLY BLIND AND DEAF. NOW WHEN I HEAR THE SONG AMAZING GRACE, I CAN CONFESS HE SAVED A WRETCH LIKE ME. IT BRINGS TEARS TO MY EYES.

AS I'VE GROWN IN CHRIST I'VE LEARNED THE VERSES IN MATTHEW 13:13-15. JESUS IS SPEAKING, "THEREFORE I SPEAK TO THEM IN PARABLES BECAUSE THEY SEEING SEE NOT AND HEARING THEY HEAR NOT, NEITHER DO THEY UNDERSTAND. AND IN THEM IS FULLFILLED PROPHECY OF ISAIAH WHICH SAITH, BY HEARING YE SHALL HEAR AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND AND SEEING YOU SHALL SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE. FOR THIS PEOPLE'S HEART IS WAXED CALLOUS AND THEIR EARS ARE DULL TO HEARING AND THEIR EYES HAVE CLOSED, LEST ANYTIME THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS AND SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND SHOULD BE CONVERTED AND I SHALL HEAL THEM." FROM THESE VERSES I KNOW I WAS SPIRITUALLY BLIND AND DEAF BEFORE FEBRUARY 1, 1967, EVEN THOUGH I HAD HEARD MANY PREACHINGS BUT DID NOT HEAR THEM SPIRITUALLY ONLY INTELLECTUALLY.

IN ACTS 26:18 PAUL WAS SENT TO OPEN THE EYES OF THE GENTILES. SATAN WANTS TO KEEP PEOPLE'S EYES AND EARS CLOSED FROM SPIRITUALLY HEARING THE WORD.

ON SUNDAY FEBRUARY 5, 1967 DR. LUKE SMITH GAVE THE INVITATION AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN DAVNILLE. ONLY THE LORD AND I KNEW IT WAS MY TIME TO PROFESS THE LORD BEFORE MAN. NO ONE BUT THE LORD AND I KNEW I WOULD WALK DOWN THE AISLE THAT SUNDAY. I PROFESSED CHRIST WAS MY SAVIOR AND WAS BAPTIZED THAT VERY NIGHT AT THE CHURCH. I'M SURE IT WAS A SURPRISE TO MANY EVEN MY WIFE.

FROM THAT DAY FORWARD THE LORD HAS CONTINUED TO MOLD THIS PIECE OF CLAY. HE IS STILL WORKING ON THIS SINNER.

AFTER JOINING THE CHURCH I BEGAN TEACHING SUNDAY SCHOOL TO YOUTH. MY WIFE AND I THOUGHT WE WERE GROWING IN CHRIST, UNTIL WE MOVED TO MOBILE, ALABAMA. AFTER JOINING COTTAGE HILL BAPTIST WE FOUND OUT WE HAD BEEN STYMIED IN OUR GROWTH IN CHRIST.

I CONTINUED TO GROW IN CHRIST AS DID MY FAMILY. BROTHER FRED WOLFE AND BROTHER ED KEYS WERE MEN OF GOD WHO NURTURED US IN THE WORD. BOTH MY WIFE AND I BEGAN TEACHING SUNDAY SCHOOL.

I BELIEVE THE LORD MULTIPLIES. AS A RESULT OF OUR GROWTH IN CHRIST, MY DAUGHTER SUSAN BECAME A MISSIONARY. SHE MARRIED A PASTOR'S SON WHO BECAME A PASTOR HIMSELF. MY SON HAS BEEN AN INTERIM YOUTH PASTOR. MY YOUNGEST DAUGHTER IS VERY ACTIVE IN HER CHURCH, TEACHING THE BIBLE. MY GRAND-CHILDREN ARE INVOLVED IN THEIR CHURCHES. MY GRAND DAUGHTER HAS BEEN ON SEVERAL MISSION TRIPS. I STILL HAVE TWO GRAND CHILDREN WHO HAVEN'T ACCEPTED CHRIST AS THEIR SAVIOR. THEY ARE ONLY THREE AND SIX. THEY ARE LEARNING ABOUT CHRIST DAILY.

MY FATHER'S FAMILY WAS JEHOVAH WITNESS. MY MOTHER'S FAMILY WAS EPISCOPALIAN. AFTER I HAD BEEN IN MOBILE A FEW YEARS, MY FATHER WENT TO ONE OF MY BEST FRIENDS AND ASKED "WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO MY SON?". OBVIOUSLY HE HAD SEEN A CHANGE IN MY LIFE. A FEW YEARS LATER MY DAD AND MOTHER ACCEPTED CHRIST, BOTH IN THEIR 70'S. PRAISE THE LORD. I TRULY BELIEVE IN THE LORD MULTIPLYING.

MY WIFE AND I MOVED BACK TO VIRGINIA IN JULY 2000. WE JOINED THE BON AIR BAPTIST CHURCH. I ENCOUNTERED A HAMPDEN SYDNEY ALUMNI WHO HAD KNOWN MY PREVIOUS REPUTATION. HE WAS ASTOUNDED I HAD ACCEPTED THE LORD AND HAD CHANGED MY LIFE. I HAVE BEEN ORDAINED AS A DEACON AND TEACH AN ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS.

I PRAISE THE LORD FOR SAVING A WRETCH LIKE ME WHO WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE.