

# **Lighthouse Boot Camp**

**Personal Testimony  
of Drew Allen**

**Saved Sunday, April 16, 2023**

I was born on January 3, 1980. We moved around a lot when I was growing up. My name has been on church rolls in six different states.

In 1992, when I was 12, I went on a mission trip down to Pensacola Beach, Florida. I was part of the puppet ministry; where we sang songs with puppets and we talked about getting saved, on the last night of the trip I went to the youth director, and we talked and he made me say the prayer. I then went to church and stood in front of the congregation and shortly after got baptized, went to church camp in the following years; first as a camper, then a mentor, then as a junior counselor. I graduated in 1998 that is when I started my move away from God. I went on through life with my so-called 'ticket to heaven' in my back pocket, thinking no matter what I did I could have a restart. That was my life as I knew it. I went to church on very rare occasion.

In 2008, my parents left the state, and I did not want to go with them, so I made myself homeless. I had been working at Swift Trucking as a diesel mechanic and when they left, I moved my stuff into a storage building and moved into my friends' house. My friend had been working at a shop in Memphis and there was a camper on the property, and he brought me to introduce me to his boss and we hit it off. I moved into the camper and became the shop's nighttime security guard.

I had been in the camper for about 3 months when I got online and started the hunt for my Miss Right, then I met Michelle and we hit it off. She was a churchgoer so I started to go with her to her church Bethel Baptist in Walls, Mississippi. I knew I had my ticket to heaven, and she

said she was saved too. Shortly after we moved in together. I was always ashamed to talk to the pastor fearing he would see right through and know we were living together before marriage. However, we got married just a few months later and we moved to Cordova from midtown. This moved us a further distance from church which made it a chore to go. When we had Arianna, the trip with a newborn seemed impossible, so we stopped going. Later on in Ari's life we started to go to a catholic church, because it made catholic school tuition half as much. Then when Michelle's mom had a mini stroke, she moved in with us. We sold her house, and we sold our house so we could move to a good school district in Arlington. Then Covid hit and we were in Arlington for 3 years before coming to Lighthouse.

How we got to Lighthouse is that Michelle came home one Thursday and said we are going to church, I said OK, when we got in the car, I was telling her all the other churches in the Arlington area we could go to instead. But when we stepped into Lighthouse, we knew this is where God wanted us to be. That first service, Bro. Greg preached on the new birth, and I had never heard preaching like that. I remember he said in John 3:8 "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." That very first day God started his Godly work in me. I thought I was saved, but I would cry in the shower listening to Christmas music. It got so frequent I told Michelle, "I think I'm under conviction". But I still hadn't heard enough preaching from Bro. Greg to understand what was happening to me.

After the New Year's Eve service Michelle stated that we are going to be there every time the doors were open, and I couldn't agree more. Bro. Greg asked the congregation to start writing our testimonies so they could put it on the website. I sat down one day at my toolbox and started to write about the works of God in my life and the miracles I had seen during my life. I was proud of the pages I had wrote down. I was still holding on to the hope I was saved those many years ago. But I felt drawn to talk about it to Bro. Greg. I wanted to hand in my ideas of salvation. When we had dinner with Bro. Greg. He told me that my testimony was missing times of conviction and repentance of sins. He told me I was a seeker of God, which gave me hope, and that is when I started to try to remove the sin in my life by chunking it. Some of the sin in my life was a habit from teenage years and not something to get rid of easily. I started to study devotionals and was having a hard time retaining the lesson I had just read. I thought it was because I had ADD and couldn't focus. I called one of my friends at work and asked him how to get started with studying and retaining and he said I was taking too big of a bite, and I needed to start small with a verse from anywhere in the Bible and repeat it till it stuck. When I started to look for a Bible at work one day, the devil placed my sin right in my face. I threw it away and went home and chunked all of it I could find. The next day I tried to break other bad habits and I stumbled. I was trying to do all this on my own without God's guidance. Then I tried working on my prayer life. I didn't even know how to pray. When I started to pray, the fear of talking to the Lord was so strong I thought I was messing up by saying the wrong thing. That fear started to subside, but every time I prayed, I cried because when you spend the last 30 years saying that you're saved and you're not... what can you say?! I felt like I had to make up for the blessings I'd received. I was never thankful for what I had received. I thought I was just

spinning my wheels. I wanted to move faster than God. That's when Bro. Brian consoled me by telling me Lamentations 3:25-26 "The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." I was trying to get ahead of God with every step I took.

Then one Saturday afternoon, I had the realization that I was going to die and go to hell. I pictured myself in hell and that is when judgmental fears came in and it stayed there for a while. Then God backed off and I got so confused and discouraged. I was still praying, but I was not hearing anything from God. I didn't really know how a person heard from God. I was listening for the booming voice from the sky. At this time God blessed me by moving me back to the truck shop where most of my coworkers friends worked. My boss and my friend Louie Porter, who is a pastor, told me that I need to listen to everything and hear the words God wanted me to hear wherever they come from. I thought that was an interesting idea.

Then at men's prayer meeting brother Matt said his salvation came from overhearing a conversation about a sermons points that he had not heard before and my thoughts of loneliness and that I was done for were still running rampant in my mind. I was so set on being lost and never found I had given up. During Wednesday night's prayer meeting, brother Greg preached on John 7:37 "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." I sat and dwelled on it; for the last 5 months of my life I had prayed, I had wept on trial after trial, and something so simple as a

drink was eluding me. All during the service I still wondered how to drink. Brother Greg said,

“next time, I guess I’ll tell you how to drink.”

On Sunday April 16,2023 Sunday school was back to the story of Cornelius and I needed the thirst message so I stayed with the lesson listening to the word then when we started to sing I sung then I started to get choked up on the words of good and gracious king about coming empty handed and I was thinking I needed something to drink out of then when he said my singers got anything and Mrs. Christal spoke up and sang about not being worth it but God did it anyway. I had started to realize that God had been there the whole time that God was in everything that had happened in my life before I came to Lighthouse and that was the culmination of my belief that God did it for me. Then Stephen sang his song and the spirit started moving in me; that song was describing my life for the last 30 years. Mrs. Janet sang “Where It Not For Grace” I thought I was going to bust because that had been my whole existence a life of false teachings and just going through life carefree and consequence free. Then the message came I was full of hope because I had thought the drinking process would be more complicated and Bro. Greg was going to tell me what I needed to know and when he said that he didn’t need to tell us how and to just drink. When he said that it was here for the taking that is when I threw away my plans of actions and of works and just told God I was thirsty for His salvation and asked if he could make me a honest man about my salvation and I came empty handed and walked away completely satisfied and fulfilled and redeemed and thirst and the heavy conviction went away and I sat down after the message was over and I

thanked the Lord for letting me find him and taking away the despair I had discovered in my  
life.

Bro. Greg asked us to read chapter 11 in Acts, I read it and it started to stick and then when we  
got back to church that's when we sang and then Halle gave her testimony and I had been  
going through some of the very things she had and then when Charleston got up and said his  
testimony wow is all I could say God put in some double time this last week working on us at  
the same time God is so good and this is one the first steps on my way to the kingdom of  
heaven

I titled this Lighthouse boot camp because God had to tear down all the foundation of dead  
doctrines that I had learned in the past and rebuild me to follow the true path; this is the way.