

# **By His Grace, for His Glory**

**Personal Testimony  
of Josh Thompson**

**Saved October 27, 2021**

I was born in Florida on April 13th, 1997. Growing up, it was clear to anyone that my parents loved me, but it was equally as clear that their marriage wasn't doing well. As a child, I was ignorant to the severity of what was going on and what the ramifications would be for me and my little brother if they continued down the path, they had found themselves on. Inverness, Florida was all I knew, and it was my home, but my parents understood that their marriage was failing, and they were desperate to save it. They decided that their best option would be to pack everything and move to Maryland because my mom's younger brother was a pastor, and he agreed to help them repair their marriage. We lived with my Uncle Charlie and his family for a year, and through the grace of God, and his faithfulness in preaching God's word, my parents' marriage came to be in a much better state than it had ever really been. My dad appreciated what Uncle Charlie had done for them, but he hated living in Maryland and wanted to move back home. He believed that since he now knew how a true man of God sounded, he could find one in Florida. When we eventually left for Inverness, he realized that wasn't the case. Due to this and my mom's fervor to be around God and his people, my dad decided we needed to move back to Maryland, and this time, it would be to stay.

God eventually saved my parents, and I grew up in Beulah under Brother Charlie and his preaching. In my early teenage years, I respected him as my uncle and tried my best to follow in the footsteps of my dad, the men of the church, and the young men I had come to be close with at Camp Liberty. I wanted to be seen as good, I wanted to do right, and I wanted to be someone my little brother could look up to; but every year that passed that sentiment became more and more trivial until it

eventually disappeared from my heart completely. Throughout my teenage years, I became more rebellious and adamant in my ways. I constantly questioned Brother Charlie's direction and authority over me, and I inevitably came to resent him altogether; and because my parents were the ones who allowed Brother Charlie to rule over my life, I resented them as well. I hated the life God was gracious enough to give me. I had eventually come to the evil conclusion that Brother Charlie was the reason my family moved to Maryland, so everything bad that had happened in my life since moving to Maryland, happened because of him. My hatred for him grew, and so did my hatred for God.

I was around 19, and at this point in my life, Brother Charlie and I had many conversations in his office after church services; but because I was prideful and thought I knew best, they almost always devolved into arguments. My hatred, my anger, my pride, all eventually culminated in a discussion I was having with Brother Charlie after service one night. I disagreed with every contention he made, and I made it known until I eventually stood up and walked out. I never went back after that, and I suffered for it. I threw away everything I was brought up in, in favor of my lusts and desires for the things of this world. I partied every weekend with friends I made at the college I attended, I started drinking, and experimenting with drugs. The more of it I did, the more empty I felt, which only led me to do more in an effort to feel alive. It was a vicious cycle, and my lusts only grew. They were never satiated. I was drowning in my desires and became ravaged by my sin. To the world, I was severely depressed, so the doctors I met with told me medication was a necessity, and I began taking anti-depressants. I couldn't sleep most nights; I just laid in bed and wept. I was stuck and felt like I was being crushed by everything that was falling apart around me. I hated my life and all of

the evil I had done. At my lowest point, I wanted to kill myself, but by the grace of God, I gained some clarity before I had the chance to.

An opportunity had risen for me to move to South Carolina, and I took it. I knew I needed to get away from all of the evil I was inundated by. I wouldn't be able to quit the things I became addicted to, and dependent on unless I moved hours away from it. Again, this was the grace of God working in my life. I moved to the town of Rock Hill, where my dad's sister and her family lived. While I was there, I had quit most of what I was doing; No more drinking, no more drugs, no more medication. Physically, I was doing better, but spiritually, I was still dead in my sin. At this point in my life, I was working as a baker to make a living. I would go into the bakery at 9 at night and be the only one there until 9 in the morning. I sat most nights thinking about my life and how I ended up in the position I was in. I would think about my childhood and my early teenage years. I'd think about Beulah, Camp Liberty, and the friends and family I had thrown away in favor of my own sin. I became so heavy with these thoughts that one night, I called my Uncle Charlie weeping, apologizing for the things I had done, and asking how I could make things right. Before I could even explain all that, I was sorry for, he assured me he had already forgiven me for everything, but he needed to pray and seek direction from God for my life. He told me he'd call me in a week if God had given him anything... and by the grace of God, he called me the next week with direction. He told me I needed to find a new job and maintain it, save my money, and live honorably with the people around me, all while getting online with Beulah for every service. Within the next few months, I had followed all of the directions he'd given me to the best of my ability. At points, I'd stumble and call him for help, and he would pray for me and share his wisdom. I had finally started viewing Brother

Charlie as my pastor instead of just my uncle, and I had a respect and love for him I never had previously.

It was the beginning of September, and it seemed my time in South Carolina was coming to an end.

I had maintained my job and saved the amount Brother Charlie had directed me to save. I was about to drive up to Beulah for the preacher's meeting and get more direction from brother Charlie on what needed to happen next, for me to be able to move back up to Beulah, but nothing went as I thought it would. Preacher's meeting was canceled, Uncle Charlie was hospitalized, and I was left in South Carolina without a pastor. I was in a really bad way. I was scared and didn't know where to go for direction. This was until Brother Greg Moffitt decided to go up to Beulah and stand in Brother

Charlie's stead while he was in the hospital. I was in desperate need of direction and decided I needed to call brother Greg. He helped me during that call, and every other call I made to him during the weeks, Uncle Charlie was really sick. Eventually, brother Greg had to head home and be with his church, but by God's grace, he had it on his heart to stop in South Carolina to see me. I took him and Mrs. Janet out to dinner, and we talked. I explained how I was doing and expressed how grateful I was that they came to see me. Brother Greg understood the difficulty of the predicament

I was in and proposed that I come to Tennessee and attend Lighthouse until Uncle Charlie got better. I happily accepted the invitation. I was excited about the prospect of getting to be around God and His people again; something I had squandered in my youth. Sadly though, Uncle Charlie's health took a turn for the worst, and he passed just two days after that meeting with brother Greg. I was heartbroken, of course, but encouraged by the fact I wasn't left without direction. I drove up to Maryland and spent some time with my family and Beulah while everyone prepared for the funeral.

The day of the funeral eventually came, and it was difficult, but it blessed me. It was an amazing

service. After the funeral, I drove down to Tennessee and prepared to start a new life. I attended services at Lighthouse that Sunday, and I was happy to even have the opportunity to hear God's word and be able to see my friends again.

That Tuesday after, I attended men's prayer meeting, and God opened my eyes to how gracious and merciful he's been in my life, he showed where I was and all he brought me out of. I recognized it was only by His grace that I was able to sit in His house among His people. I couldn't help but to start worshipping and thanking him. I didn't deserve an ounce of God's grace, but he poured out an ocean over my life. The next night, Wednesday, October 27th, brother Greg preached out of John Chapter 9 about a man born blind. As he preached, I saw myself in every word. I cried out to Jesus so that he wouldn't pass me by, God showed me he had opened my eyes to his goodness the night before and I was filled with thankfulness for the grace he had shown me throughout my whole life, but I had yet to fully believe on him. Brother Greg continued to preach and eventually reached John Chapter 9 verse 36 He (the blind man) answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And in verse 37, I heard God's voice speak to me directly 37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And I jumped from my seat and shouted, "I believe!" and began to worship Him, and when I sat down, I felt in my heart, His work was finished. Thank you, God, for seeing a blind man. Thank you, God, for the grace you've poured out on me. Even as I write this, I am astounded by His goodness and mercy. Thank you, God, for the work you did in my life.