

God Can Lead a Blind Man

**Testimony of
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The first grace of God in my life is the parents that He let me be born to. God had been working in my parents to get them where they were before I was born. We were going to Victory Baptist Church at the time. I don't remember much about the church except for Brother Jim Grapp coming to be our pastor. A few years later my parents felt God calling them to come be a part of Lighthouse Baptist Church in Arlington Tennessee. This church was not like the one we came from. I remember everyone waving checkered hankies and shouting and Brother Russ running around the church thanking God. I liked this church better because everyone was friendly, and I had many friends at this church.

As I grew up, I became very rebellious. I hated my parents and didn't even know it. I would tell them I loved them then turn right around and disobey. My parents would get on to me so much that I felt like they didn't love me and just wanted to be mean. They would tell me that if I would just listen and obey things would get easier. I thought I was listening and that they just didn't understand me. I couldn't see that I was the problem. I wanted to do what I wanted and not what they wanted.

When I finished 8th Grade, my parents gave me a choice of either staying home schooled or going to public school. I chose public school because I thought it would be a fun experience to meet new people and try something different. By this time what was really in my heart had already been getting out on me and going to public school didn't help it. I became a huge hypocrite. My heart loved the things of the world, but I would hide it at

church and act like it wasn't so. It wasn't long after that my parents started to catch on and find me out. I would lie to them to hide it, but they knew something was up.

My parents kept asking me questions till I finally confessed and told everything that had been going on. It was on my mind all day every day. I couldn't take it anymore. I was scared to death because my dad told me we were going to have to talk to Brother Greg. I broke down crying when we talked to him because I could see how disappointed and upset, he was at me. He said that he was going to bring me before the church Sunday and tell them what I had done. This scared me even more. We came into church that morning and Brother Greg told me and my parents that God told Him not to do it and just move on. I started crying because I was just thankful that I wasn't going to have to experience that.

From this point in my life, God started working in me to keep me here and not go after the world. The things that I was going after and consumed with now I didn't want at all. I started seeing things that my friends at school were doing was wrong, but my heart still desired it. I would still sneak around behind my parents' back to go be with friends I shouldn't be with. I wouldn't do what they were doing but I was still around it. I just wanted people to like me. I wish I would've realized that I have a church full of people that love me.

When I turned 16, my focus was then on girls because I was finally old enough to talk to them. But definitely not mature enough. I didn't care though because that's what I wanted.

My mind throughout most of high school was consumed with girls, friends, and work. Very little thought was given to what was going on at church. I thought I cared about God and my church, but my actions showed I didn't. God had to stop both of my relationships with girls in high school because he knew they would've pulled me away. I didn't see this as God protecting me, but rather got upset because I couldn't have what I wanted.

The first 3 years of high school were spent giving very little attention to God or church. I was so set on what I wanted, and it consumed my mind. I remember times when I didn't care what anyone thought. I was going my way with my friends in high school. I wanted the world and loved everything about it. I saw what everyone else was doing and how fun it looked. But the grace of God kept me from doing what I really wanted to do. Don't get me wrong, I did many things that I regret to this day. But it would've been much worse if God would have given me what I wanted.

My senior year I started to get more serious about things. High school was about to be over in a year. After that it was either stay with the church or go on my own way. So, by the grace of God, I wanted to stay. God help me see how empty the life that I wanted was and how it was not a good life at all. My friends' lives were so messed up and everyone at church had a life that was good. I started to talk to Brother Greg about everything. I wanted to make sure I was doing the right thing with my life.

I then became very prideful because I was now "seeking" after God and His things. All I was really doing was cleaning up the outside and not letting God clean out the inside. I didn't even know it, but I was becoming a Pharisee. I thought I was doing everything right. I was faithful to church and wouldn't let anything get in the way of me coming. I didn't see this as a work of God in me to choose His things. I thought it was by my own decision that

I wanted God and His things.

Over the next 2 years, I would feel God working on me off and on. I would get stirred by some preaching or some meeting and try to move towards God then after a week would go right back to where I was. I wouldn't get much out of the preaching because I soon forgot what was preached in those meetings. God would work in me during camp meetings, but I never believed the preaching which left me without God.

After November Camp Meeting in 2017, Brother Charlie was coming to preach a meeting. I got hopeful because I knew God would be around. When he came, he immediately started preaching very hard on sin. Sermons like this have always left me sick to my stomach. Not because I was seeing my sin, but because I felt God's anger and felt like He didn't love me. I still tried to believe and do what was preached but I couldn't. It's hard to trust someone if

you don't believe they love you.

Brother Greg told us after this meeting that God was not done. He said that there was no reason to be discouraged just go from here. This gave me hope that God would keep

working in me. On a Sunday evening a few weeks after, I was on the way home from church and Brother Greg called me and asked if I could come back because he needed to talk to me. When I came back he told me that Bro Terry told him that we needed to postpone the wedding. At first, I was very confused because I did not know what was going on. I thought me and Katelyn were doing fine. Brother Greg told me he didn't know all the details and told me to just call Brother Terry. When I did, he told me that we would have to postpone it for a year. This absolutely messed me up. After talking for a while, he showed me that the root problem was I was still lost. I was prideful and only cared about myself. So, I agreed and went on praying that God would please help me.

A couple of months went by, and I was still struggling. I knew I couldn't seek God for salvation just so I could get married. So, I kept throwing the thoughts of getting married to the side and tried to go on but couldn't. One night stopped by Stephen Moffitt's house to ask his opinion on something that wasn't even related to God or spiritual things. But somehow, we ended up talking about where I was. I told him how I was struggling, trying not to think about getting saved so I could be married. He told me "God may use that desire for marriage to get you to start really seeking Him. You won't get saved because you want to get married but why not let your motivation be that if you don't get saved, you'll never get married?" That helped me to stop focusing on fighting my thoughts about getting married and just go after God.

It wasn't long after this that I got in a mess again. One day at work I was on Facebook and saw a car for sale. It was the car that I had been wanting for a long time. I sat down and figured up my money and I could afford it! But I did not go and talk to Brother Greg. I thought I knew what he would say and ask because I've talked to him so much. I just went ahead and bought it. About two weeks later I started to get in trouble about it. It was costing more money than I thought it would. So, I called Brother Greg and told him what was going on. He rebuked me because I did not seek counsel from him or God. He told me this wasn't just a bad choice I made but it was a sin. My own pride and selfishness is what got me in this situation. The only way to fix it was to follow what Brother Greg said and get back in the will of God which was to sell it. I listed it for sale and prayed that God would sell it. I just wanted to get back where God wanted me to be.

On the Sunday before the youth left for their ski trip Brother Caleb came and preached. He told us we were blind and had an evil eye towards God. Everything Caleb used to describe an evil eye was me. Brother Greg preached out of Deuteronomy 16 to show us what God said He would do in the next days. He said that we were coming up on a time of harvest. This made me both hopeful and fearful. Hopeful because I know God would be working, but fearful because there have been many services and meetings in the past where I have been close to salvation but never made it. But this time God gave us a promise this time out of Isaiah 42:16. "And I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." He said God will do this within these seven weeks of harvest between the Lord's Supper and birthday

celebration. I thought I believed this promise when it was preached but it was revealed in the coming days that I didn't.

The first Sunday of the harvest season I came into church nervous and expecting God to work. Brother Greg was about to leave that week to go to Haiti. He preached that we didn't have to wait till he got back to look for salvation because God was going to use the other preachers to lead us while he was gone. This gave me more hope to know God was going to start working now. Over the next couple of weeks, I was expecting sermons about sin or salvation. But God knew there was things we needed to know to prepare our hearts for the days ahead. Then when Bro Greg got back the sermons were the same. More preaching about the promise and why we could believe it. This really confused me because I thought God would immediately begin preaching salvation. But God knew I wouldn't have been ready because I was still trusting my own thoughts.

The Friday night of our first three-day meeting Brother Greg preached very hard on sin. Not things that we have done but who we are. He told us that all hell dwells inside of us. The whole time he was preaching I was looking for a feeling of Holy Ghost conviction. I've always heard how people felt the weight of their sin. So that's what I was looking for instead of just listening to the preaching and believing it. I was very messed up after this sermon because I didn't think I could see my sin because I didn't feel it. I prayed that God would please show me. The next day I asked the men on GroupMe to pray that God would

show me my sin. When I did that, Brother Greg saw it and knew I was thinking wrong because God just preached very hard on sin.

When we came into church the Sunday after, I was still praying that God would show me my sin because I knew I needed to see it. I wanted to be ready for when Brother Claude came that night. Brother Greg preached that morning about our thinking being messed up. He said we were looking for a feeling instead of just going with the preaching and letting God work. There was no doubt this was exactly what I was doing. It made sense why I didn't think I saw my sin. I wasn't blind and wasn't letting God lead me.

Brother Claude preached that night about the lady who had a daughter that was grievously vexed. He said that the church is the mother, and the lost is the daughter who is vexed. He told us that God said he has heard the church's cry and will do what they asked Him to do for us lost. It greatly helped my faith to hear from two different men that God would do this for me. Monday night he preached on repentance and what ingredients were in it. He started preaching about us being God haters and I did not want to be one. I tried moving towards God and tried to repent but didn't get very far and didn't know why.

Tuesday night he preached on why we haven't been saved yet. He said that he had like seven different points on why we haven't yet. But God told him to only give us one because fixing that one will fix the rest of them. He preached about the spirit of slothfulness. We try to move towards God but as soon as it gets hard, we stop moving instead of striving. He

then preached on pressing into the kingdom. Slothfulness is what is keeping me from crying out and pressing on. Wednesday, I expected another sermon about salvation because of the night before. But Brother Claude preached to the church about travailing. He used the verse that says, "As soon as Zion travails she will bring forth child." Some people tried that night, but nothing happened. Brother Greg explained after that we could try as much as we wanted to but if it's not time it won't happen.

The next preacher to come was Brother Caleb. He started out preaching Sunday night about the preciousness of the law. He used the part of pilgrim's progress that talks about the room unswept. He told us that we were not letting God sweep our heart. God would start and we would stop Him because we wanted everything to stay right where it was. I did not think this was me at all. I've been going to Brother Greg for everything. I've been praying that God would continue working in me. There's no way I would be stopping God from sweeping my heart. I went to Brother Greg after and told Him where I was and all he knew to say was "Just go on like you are the one who he was preaching about even if you aren't. Ask God to sweep your heart." So, I went home and did that. All day Monday I was praying that God would please sweep my heart. I didn't want to stop Him.

Monday night God did exactly what I asked for and I didn't even know that it was going on. Caleb preached about exactly what I just did the night before. I was arguing with God that I wasn't keeping Him from sweeping my heart. He told us that the reason for us doing this was pride. How prideful must I be to tell God that's not what I'm doing? He said that our

pride was robbing God of His glory. Not only do we argue with God about what he says about us, but we take credit for the works of God in us. God was showing me that I have taken credit that I have changed and chosen to come this way. I would've never told anyone that because I truly thought that I believed God did it. But my heart said differently. I would look at others who are out in the world and think "How could they talk like that?" "How could they think like that?" I still was not moving. I just sat there in my seat. Then Caleb said "You are fighting something right now. You are either fighting God or fighting yourself with God." When he said that I realized that I was fighting God because I was resisting the truth about myself. I went down to the altar and started telling God that I didn't want to fight Him anymore and I was sorry that my pride had robbed God of His glory. The more Caleb preached the more I hated my pride. All I could see was how my pride was offending God by taking credit for what he has done and telling him I know better.

At the end of Caleb's sermon, he started preaching that this sin of pride was worthy of death and worthy to be laid at the feet of Jesus. I just wanted it gone. I didn't want to be prideful anymore. I kept thinking of Brother Claude's sermon on slothfulness and I did not want to miss it again. But I couldn't seem to get any further. Brother Greg got up after Caleb finished preaching and preached the story of Achan. He said that there is sin in the camp tonight. And God told Caleb to come find it and he has. There was no doubt I was who he was talking about. He said God wanted us to confess and give God the glory like Achan did in the bible. So, I started confessing and telling Him everything he was showing me. He got to the part in the story where

they stoned Achan and his whole family for what he did. Brother Greg said that our pride has not just affected us but the whole church. I saw myself as worthy of death. I could feel it so much that I told God that if he killed me, I wouldn't fight it or argue. I know what I deserve. But he didn't stop there. He said that there is now a door of hope in the valley of achor. Someone to take our place. So, I started trying to believe that. Brother Greg kept preaching about what Christ did for us, but I could not believe it no matter how hard I tried. The only thing left I knew to do was to ask for mercy. So, I decided that I was going to ask. But right before I did, I heard Brother Greg say, "Asking God for mercy isn't believing He's had mercy." When he said that something inside of me said "He has already had mercy!" and I rested in His mercy. The weight of my pride that was just on me was gone. The fear and guilt of robbing God of His glory was no longer there. Part of me was worried because I thought I had missed God again. The peace and rest happened so fast it felt like God just left me. I knew He was just here but now I didn't feel Him. What just happened? Somehow by the grace of God I trusted His mercy.

Brother Greg came down to where I was when he was finished preaching to ask me what was going on. I told him that I don't know what just happened. God was just here talking to me about my pride and how I have robbed Him of His glory, but I don't feel that weight anymore. He asked me "Well did you rest in His mercy?" I wanted to say yes but I was still hesitant about saying anything. I've had experiences in the past and I didn't want to say that's what happened if it didn't. Brother Greg just told me to go home and think about it. On the way home some songs started coming to mind so I played them. The first one I played was "Christ is Enough."

I've listened to this song many times before, but it was different this time. I could sing it and actually agree with it. It was so good to be able to say, "Christ is enough for me!" Then

I played the song "Reckless Love." God showed me again that He loved me when I was growing up and wanted to leave. He loved me all the way to salvation where I would trust in His mercy through His Son. Thank you, God, for loving me and having mercy on me!