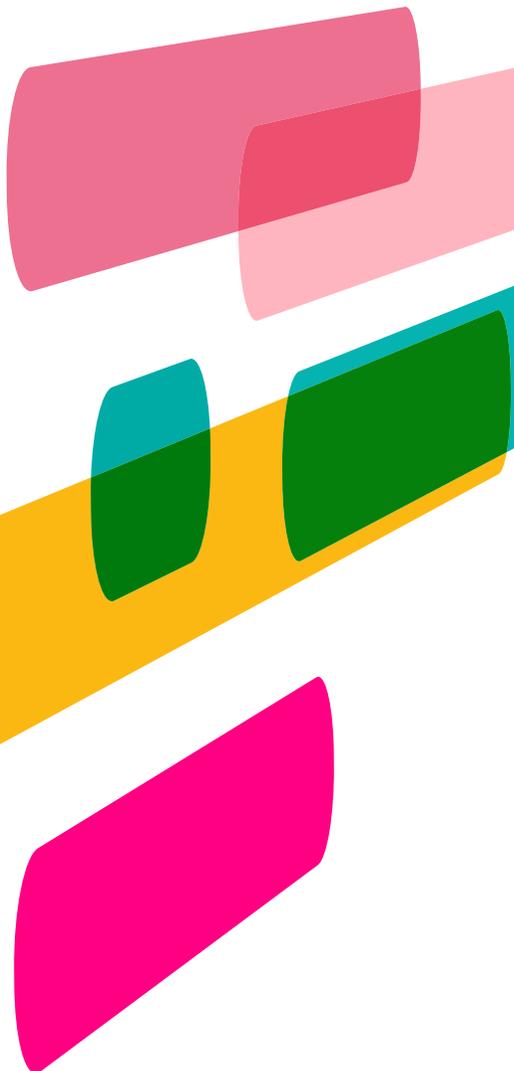


FOUND BY THE ONE TRUE GOD

God led Solomon from a childhood of polygamy and idol worship to the joy of salvation.

By Solomon Akinduro



My heart is grateful to God for His mercy toward me when I was a wretched sinner. I was born in Ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria, into a polygamous and idolatrous family; my father had six wives and more than twenty children. Life was very tough during my growing up years because of the strife and jealousy in our home among the wives.

My father was the head of the idol worshipers in our village and was very well-respected and powerful. While growing up, I saw him worship idols on a daily basis. These man-made gods had mouths, ears, and eyes, but they could not function at all. Animal blood was sacrificed to them regularly with the hope that they would help us in difficult times. Unfortunately, the idol worship created more trouble in our home than we could handle.

When I was a young boy, I wanted to be powerful and respected like my father. One day I told him I wanted to be an idol worshiper when I grew up. He said, "Any person who becomes an idol worshiper at a young age will end up in poverty and ragged clothing." With this answer coming from a man I respected very much, the idea was thwarted.

When I was in elementary school, my uncle promised to send me to high school, but before I was old enough to go, he died unexpectedly, and my hope was shattered. As a result, my perspective on life was completely changed. I wondered, if our idols were so powerful, why did they allow my uncle to die, and why couldn't they help my parents? From that point on, I realized that idols could not answer prayers.

In my heart, I always knew there was a God somewhere, but I thought the earth was just too big for Him to see what everyone was doing, so I continued in my sinful way of life for many years. Sometimes I listened to Gospel songs on the radio, and as I did, I would cry without knowing why. Later, after I learned about salvation, I realized that the Spirit of the one true God had been calling after my heart.

As I grew older, the desire to go to high school became paramount; I did not want to be a farmer or idol worshiper like my father. I heard that an education was available for free by joining the Nigerian Army, so I purposed to do so. One day, when I was working as a shoe salesman, a young officer came to the store to buy a pair of shoes. I used the opportunity to inquire about how to join the Army. He gave me the information, and the following day I went to the Army



As I entered that church on that first night, **I FELT THE PRESENCE OF GOD'S SPIRIT** and I saw the peace of God on the faces of the people.

headquarters to register. Today, I know that the Lord was with me and helped me through that process. Around June of 1970, immediately following a civil war, I enlisted and was dispatched to a military hospital in Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria, where I worked for the next four years.

After the first year, I had the privilege of starting my education with the goal of becoming a career military officer. However, as I was finishing the program that would enable me to go to the Nigerian Defense Academy, I got into trouble with the military authority and ran away to hide in a village.

While I was hiding, God cornered me, and His Spirit began speaking to my heart. I became miserable. I was burdened with a load of sin, and had no peace. Fear took hold of my life because

everywhere I turned, I expected to be apprehended. The fear and guilt that gripped my heart were so heavy that I grew tired of living. There seemed to be no hope in sight. By that time I had married and had a child, and now I did not have any way of taking care of my wife and son. As a result, I purposed to commit suicide by hanging myself. Thankfully, God, through His mercy, averted it.

In time, things worked out for me to begin attending a technical school, and I met a friend there who invited me to church. After my many excuses, he told me to just come and see for myself. He said if I liked it, I could stay, and if not, I could leave. With this statement from him, I had no further excuse and decided to honor his request. In June of 1975, I went with him to the Apostolic

Faith Church in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Revival meetings were being held during the week that I attended. As I entered the church on that first night, I felt the presence of God's Spirit and I saw the peace of God on the faces of the people. I was amazed by this. Then I heard something I had never heard before: the Gospel message of salvation from sin.

In my heart I said, "Lord, I want what these people have." At the end of the service, I rushed to the altar, confessed my sins, and asked God to forgive me. God is faithful; He came down and saved my soul that night. The load of sin that I had been carrying all those years went away instantly into a sea of forgetfulness. Oh the peace and joy that flooded my soul! It was so wonderful, I wept for joy. I was a new person and no



Edna Musgrave
Portland, Oregon

“

The Lord has given me many opportunities in this Gospel, and I am grateful. This morning, I had the privilege of being a greeter at church and met two visitors. After the service I went out to the greeter's desk to say good-bye to people, and one of those visitors said to me, "I have never been to such a wonderful church." We talked about the service and she said she was thrilled with it and plans to come back. Later, the other visitor, a young man, told me almost the same thing. I asked if he had been taken to church as a child and he said yes, but he had never been in a service like this and wants to return. I enjoyed the service as much as they did, and I was born and raised in this Gospel.

My blessings started the day I was born, because my parents brought me to this church, but all of the sermons I heard did not make a Christian out of me. For a lot of years, I turned the Lord aside and went out into the world. God brought me back in 1983 and saved me, and He put me on a road that I never expected. The privileges have been so many.

This last month, I was able to go to Romania, which is something I never thought I would experience. In some ways Romania felt like home—the area that we traveled through was very much like the Pacific Northwest. In other ways it did not feel like home—I couldn't understand anything that was being said around me. One constant, though, was that the meetings and people were wonderful, and in every service, I felt the same sweet Spirit of God that is present here. I thank the Lord for the privileges He has given me. ■

EVIDENCE



Over the last year it seems like I have had one long lesson from God in learning to trust Him more. Then, this week, I misplaced some money, and it was very stressful. I agonized in prayer over it, and I didn't see that God could answer without a miracle. I told my children about the problem, because it was something that affected them, but I didn't ask them to pray. Then I refigured one more time, and the problem was gone. Everything added up with no problem whatsoever. It was a miracle! When I told my children what happened, every single one of them said God had answered their prayer. Each one had prayed about the situation on their own. As a mom, the best part of this answer to prayer was that my children prayed, but I think I have learned my lesson now that I can trust God for anything. ■

Ann McCarville
Portland, Oregon

longer wanted to do all the wrong things I had done in the past. What a miracle!

After I was saved, my life's ambitions and desires were different. I did not care as much about education; my only longing was to please God. The Lord gave me hope, love, and a desire to follow Him. From that point on, I had a concern for lost souls, and I told my wife, my family, and fellow students about this wonderful experience of salvation.

My temperament was also different. The Lord gave me a spirit of forgiveness and forbearance. I had been keeping a journal in which I recorded the names of anyone who had wronged me, so I could take revenge someday. When the Lord saved me, He gave me a heart to forgive those people and pray for them. What a change!

Two months after I was saved, my wife and I were able to attend a three-week Apostolic Faith camp meeting in Lagos. We did not have the funds to go, but the Lord provided. People we did not know rallied around us giving food and a place to stay on the campground. The love and support that was extended to us helped convince us to stay with the Gospel.

During the camp meeting, I heard about sanctification, the second definite work of grace through the Blood of Jesus Christ. I sought and prayed for it, and the Lord sanctified my heart. The divine love of God flooded my soul, and my sinful nature was completely gone.

A few days later, I heard that God had more for me. I asked what more there could be beyond the experiences of salvation and sanctification that I had already received. Those around me said to seek for the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. I prayed and the Lord filled me with the Holy Ghost, evidenced by speaking in another language as the Spirit gave utterance.

My wife also prayed through to salvation at the camp meeting, and received the experiences of sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost as well.

Prior to my receiving the baptism, the Lord had been talking to me about making restitution to the Nigerian Army for stealing their property and then running away. God helped me to see what needed to be done. Satan did everything to stop me, but the Lord clearly told me that if I failed to make the restitution, I would not have any part with Him in Heaven. I determined to do it, and He helped me every step of the way. As a result, I was pardoned!

In 1984, I came to the United States of America with only \$120. I had little education, but the Lord granted my admission to a university and worked it out for all my expenses to be paid. God also provided a business for me. I started it with \$200, but the Lord multiplied that amount many times. He also blessed my efforts so that eventually I had businesses in several cities in the United States, as well as Africa.

Since I gave my life to Jesus, He has kept me and my family under His Blood. Many times, my wife and I prayed when our children were sick and the Lord healed them. One of those times, my son was diagnosed with a brain tumor. We prayed, handing him over to the Lord, and when we went to see the doctor again, he could not find any trace of the tumor. Many tests were performed, but nothing was found. The Lord healed him completely. What a mighty God we serve!

In my spiritual journey, there have been mountain tops of success, and valleys with trials and afflictions, but the Lord has given victory in every situation. It is my desire to share the wonderful news of what Jesus has done in my life until I see Him face to face. ■

◆ Solomon Akinduro is the leader of the Apostolic Faith group in Memphis, Tennessee.