

# **I'll Go God!**

**Personal Testimony  
Of Heather Freeman**

**Saved June 16<sup>th</sup> 2010**

I was raised in the small town of Ovett, MS. My parents, my sister, and I were members of a Missionary Baptist church for as long as I can remember. My parents taught me right from wrong and always expected me to do as they had taught me. Respect and obedience were a big deal in our family. Yes ma'am, no ma'am, and thank you's were to always be used when addressing an adult. All of the "southern ways," you could say, were to be upheld. I'm very thankful for all that my parents distilled in me as a young child.

When I was around 12 years old, my preacher at the time asked me if I was ready to be saved. Of course, I wanted to be saved, so I told him "yes" and asked him how. He told me I could repeat a prayer after him and that I would be saved if I believed it with all my heart. So, I did just that. I repeated every word and believed that I was believing everything that I was saying. I was baptized the next Sunday after coming to the front and telling the church that I had been saved. I didn't understand what any of this meant except that if you were saved, you would go to heaven when you died. A few days later, I went on with my life as a kid, not thinking anything else of it.

As I got older and on into my teenage years, I learned how to balance two separate lives. My family life and my social life. I would go out on Saturday night with my friends, doing all the things that I knew better than to do. At home and around my family, I would act just how they expected me to. They would always tell me how sweet and good of a girl I was. What they didn't know was how badly I wanted to get away from them so I could be my real self with my friends. The rebellious teenager that I truly was.

On into my high school years, I remember beginning to question my salvation and wondering if I was really saved. My conscience would eat me alive knowing I shouldn't be where I was or doing what I was doing. I had a fear of my parents finding out because I was taught better. The things I was doing

didn't line up with what I was hearing in church every Sunday either. I remember being so convicted after services and gripping the pew in front of me as I would pray and ask God, "if I'm not really saved, please show me". Then one night, several of my friends decided to go to the Heaven's Gates, Hell's Flames presentation that a church in our area was putting on. I decided to go since they were all going. This scared the life out of me! At the end of it, I ended up in a room with a few men who were helping people "come to Jesus". I was frightened into another profession of faith. I went home and told my parents that I had gotten saved. They didn't say much but that they were proud of me, and I was baptized again the next Sunday.

I had met and started dating Bryan by this time, and honestly, I was at my worst. Still walking through life with no real change. I would still go to church on Sundays, wondering what was wrong with me. I remember praying again, asking God if there was more to salvation and if so, to please let me know. I just knew something wasn't right with the way I was living. I would look around at my friends and family, some doing the same things I was doing and not seeming to have a care in the world about it. I thought I must be ok if they are ok. But deep down I could never get away from this feeling and thought that something just wasn't right. One Sunday morning during church services I remember feeling so empty and felt the need to walk down to the alter to pray. When I got to the alter one of the deacons of the church was standing there waiting on someone to pray with. I went to him and told him how I was feeling. Just empty and so far away from God. He asked me if I had ever been saved so I told him that I had or at least I thought so. He told me that since I had said the prayer and asked God into my heart that I must just be feeling guilty of something that I've done and that I just needed to pray and ask God to forgive me of that. I did exactly what he said and fell on the alter and asked God to forgive me for whatever it was that I had done to feel this way. I named off every sin that I felt that I had committed in the past years. I didn't want to leave out one

sin. I wanted to do whatever needed to be done to fix this feeling I had. I wanted to know that God had forgiven me. I didn't know it at the time but that was just God's grace not letting me be satisfied with what I had or thought I had. He was being good to me even if I couldn't see it. I got up from the altar and went home as usual. Still empty.

Bryan and I got married in 2002 and began our lives together all the wrong ways. We would try to straighten things out and change our habits, but we could never stick with it. We always ended right back where we started and worse. Bryan did have a friend of several years that we would hang out with on occasion. He was the son of a preacher and tended to stay out of all the things we did. He was what we would call our "good" friend. One day he called Bryan and wanted us to go out to eat with him and his new girlfriend. So we went out with Craig and Michelle, not knowing that God himself was setting this all up.

Craig and Michelle got married in 2004, the same day I found out I was pregnant with Caden. Michelle found out she was pregnant with their first baby about two months later, and that's when our friendship really began. She became the best friend that I had always wanted. We were so different, but something about her made me want to be around her all the time. God was working the whole time, and we didn't even know it.

After I had Caden, we moved to the same apartment complex as Craig and Michelle. She had her first son soon after, so we spent every day together. So needless to say, when she told me she was hoping to move to TN for a church there someday, I was pretty heartbroken. She had not told me anything about the church other than Lighthouse was the church that she wanted to attend. I didn't question it because I was semi-religious and thought that I understood what she meant. They ended

up moving in 2005, and our friendship wasn't as strong after that. We didn't talk as much, and so my life slowly became what it was before we had become friends.

Bryan and I found out we were pregnant with Cambree several months after Craig and Michelle moved. When we had her in July of 2006, Michelle wanted to see us, so they called and invited us to come visit them one weekend. We decided to go for Bryan's birthday in September. Of course, this meant going to church with them at Lighthouse. Sunday morning came around, and I didn't have much thought of it other than just expecting to meet all of her friends and listening to preaching as normal. I'll say, it was all but "normal". It was nothing like I expected. When we first got to the church, the first thing I noticed was how friendly everyone was and how they liked to hug, a lot! It was different but very welcoming. When Bro. Greg started preaching, he titled the sermon "what is real salvation". Of course, I immediately tuned in because I was curious as to what he was going to say it was. I had never heard any preacher refer to salvation as "real" so I was hoping to hear something that would answer the questions that I had asked God so many times before. As I'm listening, I realize that I have never heard anything like this and I have none of it. That's when I hear someone say "you need to stop worrying about Bryan's soul and start worrying about your own." I literally looked around because who said that?? No one, and I mean no one knew I was worried about him. I had never told anyone that other than Bryan when we would argue. I would accuse him of not being saved and tell him that he really needed to look at his salvation because I really didn't think he was saved. Yes, I said that. The one who was always questioning her own salvation was telling her husband that he needed to look at his. As soon as I realized that no one sitting next to me had actually said anything to me I knew it was God. I knew that He was the only one who knew my thoughts and would know to tell me that. I knew I was "LOST"!!

After services, I went and asked to talk to Bro. Greg. This was way out of character for me since I didn't trust many people. I was not the type of person that would just approach someone I didn't know. But I knew I needed help and that he was probably the only person that could help me with what I had just heard. I told him what God had just told me and that I was lost. Oddly, he said, "That's good". I didn't understand how he could see anything good in this or why he wasn't trying to lead me in another prayer. Then he explained to me that until you get lost, you can't be found. It made complete sense! I had never heard anything like this, but I knew this was the truth. I was still scared to death and didn't know what to do, but I had answers!

We left that evening and drove the 5 hours home with lots of questions. That next week, I was miserable. I had so many unanswered questions. I decided to go to the church that Bryan and I had been attending in Ellisville to talk to the preacher. It was a larger church, so the preacher and the staff were there in the office every day. I walked in with Cambree in her car seat and sat it on the clerk's desk. With tears streaming down my face, I asked to see the preacher. I had to talk to someone! I started asking the preacher his testimony and when he was saved. Sadly, he couldn't tell me. He told me that he had two experiences and that he knew he had been saved during one of them but couldn't pinpoint which one exactly. Right then, I knew he couldn't help me, and I became extremely burdened for the whole church, my friends, and my family. If what I had heard was the truth (I knew it was), and this is what this preacher "knows," then I didn't see any hope for anyone I knew or loved. I dwelt on that information for a while, but then decided that I had to let that go so that I could get help for myself. We decided to travel on the weekends to Lighthouse. So for the next 3 months, that's what we did.

After the 3 months of traveling, we had to stop because we couldn't afford it any longer. Bro. Greg offered to pay our way, but we wouldn't accept it because of our pride. We watched everything go

downhill for the next eight months. We started losing vehicles, our lights were turned off multiple times, and my parents were having to buy our groceries. Bryan was working, but people weren't paying him what they owed. We had gotten worse off than we had ever been in every area of our lives. It felt like rock bottom. I just knew we were going to lose everything. Bryan and I had completely stopped talking about Lighthouse. We had stopped attending the church in Ellisville, and we had lost all hope. I remember sitting in Cambree's room one evening rocking her and just praying to God that He wouldn't take my kids too. I knew where I needed to be. I knew that what I had heard was the truth and the only way.

One morning as we were getting ready to leave our house, a lady walked up seemingly out of nowhere. She proceeded to ask us if we were interested in selling our house. We were shocked for two reasons. One, we didn't know where this lady came from, and two, our house had a tree through the roof from Hurricane Katrina. One whole end of our house was completely blocked off because we didn't have the money to get it fixed. Why in the world would anyone want to buy our house in this shape?? But as the shock wore off, we looked at each other, and it was as if we couldn't say no. We both looked at her and said "yes!" Her next question was "where will you go?"

Our response was "Tennessee". It was as if God was saying, "here is another opportunity . You better take it because there may not be another one." We knew it had to be God because we had not spoken of the church in 8 months. Neither one of us knew the other was still hoping to be there.

Within the next month, Aug 2007, we were back in TN!

The next few months were hard because I didn't seem to be hearing much from God. I began to get worried. I questioned whether God was ever going to talk to me again. Bro. Greg would tell me, "well he showed you you were lost the first Sunday you came so I don't believe He would show you

just to let you sit here.” Jer. 29:11 That would give me hope for days at least and then he would have to tell me that all over again.

Things would pick up during camp and meetings, but I would always give up when it didn’t happen as quickly as I thought it should. During a meeting with Bro. Tim, God was telling me that He was able, (Hebrews 7:25) and that’s all I could hear during the service. When services were over, I broke because it was on me so heavily. Bro. Greg came and asked me what God was saying, and I told him that God was telling me that He is able. He said He is, and you need to believe that. All I could say was “I can’t”. Bro. Greg said you can’t, but he can help you. I couldn’t get my eyes off of myself. When I said “I can’t,” it was as if God moved off of me. (Hebrews 3:19) I had frustrated God with my unbelief. Afterwards, I talked to Bro. Greg about what went on, and he asked me what was in my heart. I didn’t understand this. He told me that somewhere I was going to have to let my heart out. I knew what was in my mind but didn’t understand how to know what was in my heart. While he was talking and explaining the heart, I began to cry again, and he asked me what was going on. I said “all I know is that I am so ashamed because the God that you know and others here know told me that He was able, and I didn’t believe him.” He said “that’s your heart.” I felt like for the first time I actually understood something. Even though I was in such unbelief, God was still helping me get what I needed. That shame was needed to put me in my place. I didn’t deserve to be here with His people, but He let me be anyway.

The next couple of Sundays were hard. Every time someone would hug me and tell me they loved me I just wanted to break. I didn’t understand how they could love me like that. I was in so much unbelief and felt so undeserving.



Bro. Terry came in April 2010 before our birthday celebration for a meeting. He told us that we weren't listening and we weren't getting anywhere because of it. He explained that listening is more than just hearing the words he is saying. It's hearing and obeying. Actually doing something with what we were hearing. This helped me so much because I had never heard anything like this. The understanding that God was giving me was overwhelming. Bro. Terry then proceeded to tell the church that they were about to go somewhere and asked if they would go. He kept saying, "Will you go?" Then he asked the lost if they would go. I wanted to say "I will", but my pride and unbelief wouldn't let me. I believed that if I had just said it, God would have saved me right then. I didn't obey him, so I sat there in my unbelief and disobedience and pride...again. I told Bro. Greg what happened, and he said that I was close, but I felt so far away. I couldn't see that I was close at all. After Bro. Terry left, I could feel the church moving, and it scared me. I didn't want to be left behind. I wanted so badly to go with the church. All I could see was me sitting there for the rest of my life, lost! I continued talking to Bro. Greg about the fear, and he just kept saying, "You're close". So I asked him why he keeps saying that when I feel so far away. He said, "God wouldn't have offered salvation to you like he did when Bro. Terry was here if he didn't think you were ready." That made me very hopeful.

A couple of weeks went by and I told Bro. Greg that I didn't feel like God was dealing with me anymore. I told him that when we would leave church I would feel so heavy and want to cry all the way home. He said that that was God working on me. It was as if a light bulb came on and I said "He is working on me." I don't know how to explain the light bulb other than it was just the grace of God that he let me see that. My hope was back!

Wednesday night before June camp, Caden started running a fever, so I knew I would have to keep him home from church. I was upset because I felt like I was going to miss something. Bryan called

when services were over and said that the service was so good and that all the lost were at the altar. I thought, "Great, I missed it." He said that he had gotten the cd and that I needed to listen to it. All I could think was, "Yeah, I'll listen to it, but what good is that going to do me now?" He got home, and we watched tv for a while, then put the kids to bed. When we went to bed, all I could think about was what Bryan had said about services. I asked him what Bro. Greg preached, thinking he would just tell me about it, but instead, he told me that the cd was in there and that I needed to listen to it. I told him that I had already missed it anyway, so what's the point? He said, "If you think that, then don't listen to it, but that's just unbelief." I thought, "He's right, this is unbelief." I decided to get up and go listen to the cd. Right then, it was as if God nudged me out of bed, saying, "Yeah, you need to listen to it." I thought maybe if I sit here and listen real hard, I'll get something new. As if He was going to say something different this time.

As I'm listening to the cd the kids woke up crying and I had to pause the cd to take care of them. I came back and said well there went that. I felt defeated and like I was never going to hear anything.

More unbelief. But I decided to listen to the rest of it anyway with a little hope that I would get something out of it. As I'm listening I'm trying to work up an emotion and agree with everything Bro.

Greg is preaching. He was saying the feast is ready and everything is prepared. (Luke 14) He just wants you to come. As I'm trying to believe God showed me what I was doing. He showed me that I was trying to do something that I could never do for myself. That He was the only one that was able to save me. That he was the only one that could give me what I needed. I was tired of trying and

working and frustrated with myself so I laid my head on my knees and just let it all go. I remembered Bro. Greg saying that you're going to have to talk to God. You can't get saved without talking to Him. Then all I could think was "Ill go!" Something said "say it!" It was God! So I did. I said

“Ill go God Ill go!” And when I said it God was there! My heart started pouring out. And then, it was done! God had saved me! My heart finally believed that God was able and that he wanted me to go!

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