

2.1 I Started Out As a Child!



Kidd's Climax

Leatherwood Dahlias

Maggie Valley/Waynesville, North Carolina

Romans 8: 28

“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.”

I Started Out As a Child!

“We stand on the shoulders of giants!” Sir Isaac Newton

Indeed!! There have been so many giants who have gone before us, who have brought the message of Jesus Christ from His day, now over 2000 years ago to our generation. The question today, “What shall we do with it?” The answer is the Great Commission, given by Jesus Himself: “Go into ALL the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature!”

Not only do we have giants in the faith, of which I have attempted to list a few on this website, there are so many more that are not generally known to the historians of the faith and to us today! But these unknown messengers of the gospel were known and indeed ARE known to the Lord who called them and inspired them to do His work.

In addition to these giants of the faith, we all have our OWN giants who have guided us in building our own lives, inspiring us to do more than we believed we could ever do. There comes a time that, if we really want to be heard, we must tell our story of what the Lord has done in our lives. Then OUR story can become a part of HIS story, that the world is crying out to hear. This then, is my story.

Although I have lived most of my life in Florida, I was NOT born in the Sunshine State. In fact, I remember living in the very COLD city of Chicago! Dad had a very close friend named Doc Moore, who was a physician who had previously moved his practice to Winter Park, Florida. Doc had been corresponding with Dad on a regular basis, sending him weather reports from Florida. One cold day in Chicago, Dad drove his car into a snowbank, parked the car, and decided to move to Florida. We arrived on October 12, 1949. America used to celebrate this day as a holiday every year, even closing the banks and post office to celebrate our arrival in Florida. Personally, I'm SO GLAD Dad drove into that snowbank! It's not likely that I would have ever found my Florida girl, my Martha, the woman of my dreams, my lovely wife and partner of over 50 years, in cold Chicago!

On my first day in Florida, we stopped at the “Three Lakes Lodge” on Lake Eustis in Tavares. I had never seen a lake before, and I got away from my family long enough to take a closer look! I got a closer look all right. There were these ducks just floating on the water! So I walked out on the dock and tried to catch some of them.

A few minutes later, my family missed me, and Dan Winn, the owner of the Lodge knew where to look! They found me floating face down in the water. Dan pulled me out and handed my limp body to Dad. This was in days before CPR and 911, but Dad had been teaching pressure-prone, artificial respiration in the Boy Scouts. He used this on me, revived me, and saved my life! Thank you Dad! You saved my life on that day! You have always been, you will always be, my greatest hero!

So, I grew up as a child in Tavares, Florida. We all attended the Methodist Church in Tavares. Under the ministry of Paul and Sylvia Stewart, who were ministers in that church, I remember looking at the cross in that old yellow brick church and thinking, "Jesus died on that cross—for me! He loved us all. He loved ME so much that He allowed Himself to die on that cross. Jesus died for ME!" At the age of 11, I joined the church, publicly answering the question, "Did you accept Jesus as your Savior and Lord?" I trembled as I said, "Yes, I do!" Even as Dad saved my life a few years before, now Jesus saved my soul. I remember having a very happy childhood, blessed by a wonderful family, and knowing there was a God who loved us and who died on a cross for you and me!

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