

## My Testimony

I had been forced to go to church in my youth not really knowing what church was. It wasn't until I moved to the upstate and began attending Rock Hill Baptist Church in Inman where I found fellowship in the youth. As I grew up in the church, I began to grow closer and could see how God worked in people's lives.

As I was preparing to get married, the pastor explained about being equally yoked and how my now wife and I are supposed to traverse our life together with God. At that time, I knew I wanted to be saved and knew my responsibilities with her and hopefully eventually a family would be. In simple terms, I did the ABC's with him;

**A**dmit I was a sinner.

**B**elieved in Jesus.

**C**onfess He is Lord.

I thought my life was good and I was living the way I thought I should. I had a good job and great friends but grew apart from the church.

It was around the time my first child was born that we started going back to church. Something drew me back as I had talked with one of our chaplains from the office; they rode along with officers from time to time.

About the time my son was born, I felt the pull to publicly profess I was saved and was baptized in August of 2013. I was nervous as now everyone would know and was scared of the judgement which would be passed if I fell into temptations of sin.

So as I have been on this journey called life, I don't think it was the judgement from others as much as being held accountable for my actions. It's so easy to place the blame on others and not take the blame myself. What could I have done differently or what could I have done to prevent 'x' from happening? I would complain about sitting in the pew and hearing the pastor preach what I felt was always about tithing. So I looked inward at my fault. I was choosing what I did and didn't want to hear and I started tithing more. This "more" to me would match the amount we are called to give. Shortly after adjusting my giving, at work an opportunity opened up for me to combine jobs, and I got a promotion with it. It was amazing to see God's hands on things in my life.

So why include my testimony in my presentation for running for Sheriff? Even if you don't believe in God, the Bible is a pretty good instruction manual on how to live a righteous life. I want you to know what I've learned and have taken away from studying it. Now do I know all the verses or memorized where they exactly are? No. That's me.. a work in progress! I know it does hold me accountable. It steps on my toes and pushes me to get back on the right path when temptation hits and when I fall short.

In the end, I should be held accountable for my actions and how I react to things. I feel everyone should do the same. Self-auditing from time to time is refreshing, and forgiveness is key; forgiving yourself and others.