

Called by Name

Personal testimony

of Kelsea Moffitt

Saved October 1st, 2010

Fear not, I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name. Isaiah 43:1

My name is Kelsea Fondren, and you're about to read about how God works in, changed, and saved my life. I was born April 20, 1992 in Memphis, TN to Ronnie and Beverly Fondren, I'm the youngest child of 3. My birth came as a surprise to my family as my parents were a little bit older than most when I was born.

I have been in church my whole life, Bro Greg Moffitt came to Arlington Baptist Church in 1994 when I was just 2 1/2 years old. So this also means I have been in the truth for as long as I can remember. I had no idea how much Bro Greg and his family would be a part of my life when they came. People talk about all of the works of God and other things that happened in the church in the beginning, but I do not remember as I was too young and I was probably sleeping or coloring underneath the pews. I can remember feeling God at a young age, and knowing the difference between real, true salvation and just saying the prayer. Sometimes I would cry during church services and not even really know what was going on, but I thank God for these times.

As I started growing up my disobedience and rebellion became worse. I always wanted my way and to have things my way and would do anything to get it, and if I didn't I was mad. For a while we didn't have any Sunday school classes, but once we started back I was in the youth group. Bro Scott Smith was my youth pastor. He would sometimes take the things Bro Greg had preached on and explain it to us to where we could understand it, I remember many times that God helped me get something through him. When I was around 15 some things happened that really hurt me and not many people besides my family knew about it. I started hanging out with friends outside of the church, and thoughts of leaving entered my mind frequently. I stayed out of fear, I had seen people leave the truth and not come back, and saw what their lives had turned out to be when God left them to their selves. I knew God didn't owe me anything and would not have to be gracious to me and let me come back if I did decide to leave. Even through all of this, I know God has His mind and His hand on my life. I got to the point where I didn't want to be at church and only went most of the time because my parents made me. When I got around 16 and 17, I had a really good friend outside of church who I hung out with most of the time, who I really was started to show. I quickly became a hypocrite, I was one way in front of the people at the church and the opposite when I was around my other friends. By the grace of God, I never committed any what the world would call big outward sins, but it was still in my heart to do those things.

I started dating someone outside of the church, it was around this time I could feel myself and my heart getting colder, harder and more distant than ever. My mind was always on that relationship and never on God or His church. I finally began to realize what was going on, and that I would never get anywhere with God if I stayed with him. I broke up with him and things really began to start changing. I really never understood why my heart and really why I had gotten so cold during this time until later when I talked to Bro Greg, he simply told me, because all you talk about is worldly things, never anything spiritual. This obviously made sense.

In October of 2009 I started dating Bro Greg's youngest son, Joshua. I didn't find this out until later, but God had told Josh that he could help me, and he'd always tell me he never really understood what all that meant and how he would do that.

Things sort of skip to 2010, in April Bro Terry Owen came and preached a meeting at our church, he preached a lot that week on the church going on the perfection and growing up. My 18th birthday happened to fall in the week of that meeting. I had always wanted to be grown up, until it was time for me to actually grow up. I was then faced with a decision that I did not want to make, I was either going to go on with the church and God, or I wasn't. I made the choice to go on with God, but I only made this choice based on my fear of losing Josh. I didn't really choose to go on with my heart until a little later.

In May we always had our birthday celebration, to be honest I don't remember a lot about it, but the Sunday after, Caley Moffitt got saved. This is someone who I had become very close to over the past few months. I was so happy for her but so jealous at the same time. The night she got saved Bro Greg was preaching on pride. I knew I was prideful in fact and in my head, but I didn't truly know it in my heart, and I couldn't make myself have feelings or emotions towards this fact. I went and talked to Bro Greg the next day, I told him I felt like I was contradicting myself. He told me I was, that there was a battle going on inside of me, my heart was fighting the truth. I really just didn't want to see myself and agree with the truth.

The following Wednesday night Caley gave her testimony, I had never felt so left out or left behind in my life. The same night Bro Greg was preaching and he went to a verse and it said something a long the lines of, if you knew who was speaking to you, you would have obeyed. I broke, I started seeing that I was just rebellious and disobedient.

A series of events happened soon after that service where I really began to see myself. One service Bro Greg told the saved to exhort and encourage the lost, then he said that some may even get mad. In myself I said, I wouldn't be the one to get upset, that I wanted it. Then just some 2 or 3 hours later, Josh told me God had told him to tell me something. He started talking about my pride and how it was always about me and what I wanted. Guess who got mad, yep, me. It stayed on me though, I was really starting to see my pride. I didn't sleep well that night and felt uneasy all the next day. I had my wisdom teeth pulled and I wasn't able to go to church the next Sunday. So I got the CD and listened to it, everything that Bro Greg said in his sermon was everything that Josh had told me just a few nights before that. I couldn't believe it. Something came up between Josh and I not long after that time, I found myself doing something I said I would never do, I hurt him. It killed me. I was really starting to come to grips of who I was, someone who was prideful, a liar, someone who thought they were better than everyone else, and I truly only cared about myself. I had always tried to blame what I had done on other people, but I couldn't do it any longer.

In September of 2010, Bro Tim Rutherford came and preached a meeting at our church, this was something regular in our church, not because Bro Greg or Bro Tim just wanted to, but because God did. Sunday night he preached on, "who is man that that God would be mindful of us." and that was another shot to my pride. Then Tuesday night he preached on the story of blind Bartimaeus, really I just remember from this is, how it says when he cried out, Jesus stood still. Amanda McDaniel, a woman in our church, cried out and fell right in front of me in the floor. Bro Greg got up and began telling her what God had told him to tell her. I had never seen anything like this in my life, even with Bro Greg being at the church for 16 years. Wednesday night Bro Tim preached about taking the word of God lightly. I thought to myself, "I've done this." but couldn't make myself feel sorry over it. After he got done preaching, Bro Greg got up and rebuked the lost for doing this, and for not believing that

when Bro Tim or whoever is up there preaching that it is God talking, and that this hurt God. This is really what I needed to see, that this was worse than any sin I could commit. I broke, and for the first time I was really agreeing with what he was saying, a light bulb went off in my head, it was as God was saying, this is what you've been doing, now stop. I was not happy, mad, nor sad, just mood-less. I felt like the emotions had literally been drained from me. Josh and I talked a lot that night, Josh would always try to talk to me before and most of the time I didn't want to hear it, and most of time, he probably knew that, but this time was different, I was actually listening to what he had to say. While we were talking he asked if I believed that God loved me and wanted to save me, I said no. Josh then told me that was just the devil telling me that and I could either fight it, or just sit there and believe his lies. The night I was a little scared, Bro Tim got up and said he was preaching on "be not afraid." I started getting some hope, in his message he started talking to the lost men of our church and telling them how they needed to get saved, immediately the devil started telling me, see, God's not here for you, he's here for them. I started remembering what Josh had told me the night before, and what others had said, and I simply thought, you are wrong, yes they need to be saved but I need to be saved just as bad, actually worse than they do! Then Bro Tim when to the verse, Isaiah 43:1 where at the end it says "Fear not; I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." I fell to the altar, I believed that God knew my name, and that he cared about me. This was not saving faith, but when I got back up in my chair I was not discouraged, I had so much hope and that verse stayed on me all night.

I woke up Friday morning, October 1st, with that verse still on my mind. I thought to myself many times that day, "What if I got saved tonight?" This is something I had never done before, my salvation was always somewhere in the future. We came into church that night and Bro Tim preached on Romans 5:5 "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." He said don't be ashamed in expecting something, I got more hope as he preached. He called my name and said he was surprised to have seen me go to the altar the night before, and God told him that everyone doesn't always know where He is working. God had been working on me a while, showing and proving how much He loved me and wanted to save me. Bro Tim then used the illustration of his cat rubbing against his black pants, shedding on them, then he acted like he was picking hairs off, and saying different things about the love of God. He acted like a cat, rubbing against the person next to me like he was shedding, this person was lost as well. The devil started telling me again that it wasn't for me and once again I told him it was for me just as much as it was for her! Then he used another illustration, saying he used to call his wife late at night and she wouldn't want to talk to him because she was tired. He started saying, you come into church not wanting God or God to talk to you, and He still does. I'm not sure how long it was after that, but he said he wanted to sing a song, and he sang "God loves me like I was his only child." It really broke me, I felt like I had thankfulness in my heart, but just couldn't let it out because of my pride, and the whole time Josh is sitting next to me saying, just thank Him for loving you and I couldn't. After he got done singing, he got up and said he didn't have anything else on him. I immediately put my head back down, and started to cry thinking this could not be it, and this it was over.

Then Bro Greg got up and read 1 John verses 9 and 10 "9) In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. 10) Herein is love not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins." He started to say, you have to see who God loves, I don't remember what all he said. Honestly, he could've named the worst things and I would've agreed with everything that he

was saying because it was all the truth. It is crazy and really ignorant to think we fight a God who knows everything, who already knows who you are! Bro Greg then said, what if I told my life I loved her and she didn't say anything back, how would that make me feel? I started feeling like someone was literally pressing me to the floor to fall down at the altar, ultimately at Jesus' feet. I started thanking God for loving me when I was unlovable, thanking him for not killing me when I deserved it. Then I remember Bro Greg saying the sweetest words, "All you have to do is love Him back." I just started telling God that I loved him, I just kept saying "I love you too."

Soon after i just stopped crying, I felt at peace, but I still just laid there on the ground thinking "what just happened?!" I got back up in my seat, and just kind of thought about what had just happened. I wanted to smile, and just laugh but still wasn't sure. After that a friend from another church who had come up for the meeting that night, prayed, at the end he started telling God how much he loved Him. Something started welling up in me and I thought to myself "what in the world is this?!" I knew I needed to talk to Bro Greg right after, I asked if he could just tell me what happened and he just kind of smiled and said, why don't you tell me. As I began to tell him I could feel it welling up in me again, but I still wasn't sure. He told me I could think about it if I needed to, well I thought about it for maybe 5 minutes, a few people hugged me, and after I hugged my brother in law, who also had gotten saved that night, it just hit me. I started crying again and couldn't hold it in any longer. I went to hug Josh and then he asked "Do you have something to tell me?" and I replied "I think I just got saved." I couldn't help but to laugh, cry and smile all at the same time.

That night, it was all I could talk about, really it's all I wanted to talk about. I stayed up late talking to my mom about all that had happened. Once I got in bed, I still just laid there and thought about what had happened that night.

I woke up fairly early for me on a Saturday morning and I was just happy and had peace, still. You don't even realize how much of a struggle you are going through until you're on the other side, but now I felt that everything was okay for once. God saved me on October 1st, 2010. Isaiah 43:1 " But now thus saith the Lord that saved created thee ; O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; For I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."