

Adopted

Personal testimony
of Marc Capps

It was February 12, 1970 at 5:08 PM when my biological mother, at the age of 15, gave birth to me. Three days later, my grandmother received a call from the doctor who delivered me, informing her that her daughter had decided to place me up for adoption. My grandfather and grandmother immediately went to the hospital. My biological mother had already left and I was released to the care of my grandparents. Upon arriving home, my grandparents found my biological mother there. My grandmother was convinced, that given the chance she would raise me. Her twin sister had given birth 2 months before, married the father and was raising her daughter. She just needed time. Three weeks went by and my grandmother awakened to me screaming. She entered the room that my biological mother and I had been sharing to find me screaming and the window open. My biological mother had left sometime in the night. It would be several years before I would meet her again.

The first memory that I every recall having, was sitting on my biological mother's twin sister's lap at the viewing of my uncle. He was 19 years old and tragically killed in a motorcycle accident with his best friend. I was scared and only peeking through squinted eyes. My grandmother was sitting beside us and very emotional to say the least. At the end, someone had the bright idea to take me to open coffin so I could say goodbye. Not a good idea! I begin to scream and climb over whoever was holding me and had to be removed from the room. The following day was the funeral and that memory was burned into my mind.

Nine months had passed by and my grandmother received a phone call and we urgently got in the truck and headed at high speeds up the road. My grandmother was upset and my grandfather was as well. My grandmother was crying. I had no idea what was happening. At some point, I new we were headed in the direction of my aunt Marilyn's house. She had gotten married a few months before and was expecting a baby. Maybe the baby was coming. Suddenly there was a lot of cars on the side of the road, a police ca and an ambulance. My grandmother leaped from the truck and ran across the road to the ambulance. I had seen my aunt Marilyn in the crowd of people and she was still pregnant but she was crying. Later I had learned that my aunt Carolyn, Marilyn's twin sister and been hit and killed by a drunk driver. She was 13 years old. It was time for another viewing and funeral. This time I was not nearly as freaked out and even went to the open coffin by myself to say goodbye. It was official, I was a big boy.

In the next few months, my grandmother left. She was gone for a period of time that seemed like a long time to me. She had been through a lot in the past 9 months. She had lost my uncle, my aunt, and my other aunt was 13, pregnant and married. One of those incidents is enough to cause great stress but all three seems too much. When I saw my grandmother again, she was being released from the hospital. She had major stomach surgery and I could not sit on her lap because of the drainage tubes. I was very disappointed.

The time had come that my biological mother had returned into my life. She had married a man by the name of Johnny Adams. We were going to be a family. My bags were packed, I had said goodbye and did not understand. Home was a trailer in a trailer park in Jacksonville, Florida. I did not know Mr. Adams very well but he did not like me. Each day that my biological mother would leave for work, he would lock me outside of the trailer on the steps. He told that if I left the steps, the gypsies who lived in the park would take me away and do bad things to me. I would sit there afraid without food or water until it was time for my biological mother to come home and then he would make me come inside. He threatened me with bodily harm if I told anyone. One day my biological mother came home

from work early and found me. She was not happy. Mr. Adams was not happy. I was not happy. Later that day, my grandfather and grandmother arrived and took my biological mother and I back to my home. It had been three weeks.

Before long, my biological mother was gone again and I was back at the place I knew as home. She would come and go through the next several years and something always eventful happened when I was with her. One time she took me for a ride with her new boyfriend and suddenly bullets were flying through the rear window of the car. I was in the back seat. Not fun. Another time she arrived with another boyfriend and we headed to the beach. What a fun day at the beach. If no one has told you, you must watch children. If you don't they will find trouble or get hurt. I managed to get run over by a car. I did not get hurt, thank goodness. My grandmother was not glad to hear that news. And again my biological mother was gone.

In December of 1979, we moved from Sanford, Florida to Floral City, Florida. In July of 1980, I stepped onto the church bus for Fort Copper Baptist Church. We had gone to the Salvation Army church for a little while after my uncle had died. I had gone a couple of times to the Church of God but our family was not church going people. That Sunday I was escorted to my Sunday School class. I meet Larry, who become my childhood best friend. Lucky me, there was no children's church this Sunday. We were taken to the Big Church. Those of us who were bus kids, sat on the back pew with adult supervision. I do not know what was preached but I do remember there being an invitation. Pastor Ronnie Vice had invited anyone who wanted to get saved to come to the altar. I became very emotional. I walked forward and by the time I reached Pastor Vice, I could not be consoled. He did try and it got worse. Since I could not speak and all the good Baptist were beginning to stare, he sent me back to my pew. It was a long way to the last pew. About midway down the aisle, I turned back toward the front of the church and screamed, yes screamed, I needed to be saved. I ran back to the front of the church and one of the good Baptist took their Bible and lead me through Roman's Road. I listened and said the prayer. Then they confused me. The good Baptist man said that it was not my prayer but my belief that would save me. None the less, he marched me to the preacher and they announced to all the good Baptist, who moments before thought I was a crazy maniac, that I had been saved. I went with it. Everyone came by and shook my hand and said welcome to the family. All that was missing was a few verses of Kumbaya, marshmallows and a bon fire. I went home and announced to my grandmother and grandfather that I had been saved. Two weeks later I was baptized. I became a very faithful bus rider. I was even bus captain.

The summer I turned 12, my biological mother returned. She brought with her the "man she was going to marry" and they wanted me to move with them to Pennsylvania. At 12 I thought we should give it a trial run. It was agreed that I would spend the summer with them. They were truck drivers. His parents lived in Pennsylvania. They did not actually have a home outside of the truck. A lot took place over the next 3 weeks. It ended when I was sent in the bar to find her boyfriend. He was there with his ex-wife. They were not acting like a divorced couple. I reported this to my biological mother. She entered the bar and I stayed in the car. I do not know what happened other than the fact that we left Pennsylvania in hurry. It was just her and I, future husband was a thing of the past. She kept saying we had to get out of Pennsylvania or he was going to kill us. I wanted to know how a state line was gonna prevent someone from killing us if they really wanted too but I did not ask. I was afraid. What would happen if I died. Would I go to heaven? I started repeating the sinner prayer over and over and over. Somewhere

we stopped and she called my grandmother and grandfather. She had no money, we were out of gas, and someone was trying to kill us. They wired us money and we made it home.

Once she left again, I asked my grandfather and grandmother if they could adopt me so that I would not have to go on anymore family trials. They agreed and I went before the judge to be adopted.

Once back at church, I had sought help with my doubt of salvation when being faced with death. I was assured that I had done everything right and it was ok to doubt your salvation. When that happens, just repeat the sinner's prayer and God has to save you. Just an FYI, God is God and he does not have to do anything. So that is what I did. I am pretty sure God got tired of hearing that prayer.

Over the next few years Larry and I become best friends and were inseparable. We were on the quiz team. Won state trophies. Would memorizes up to 8 chapters of the Bible. We could quote them forward and backwards. Bill, Larry's father, who was our Bible quiz coach, told us that you only knew the verses if you could say them forward and backwards. We would quote the chapter forward and then start at the last verse and go back to verse one. We were impressive. I was still lost and saying the sinner prayer. God had to be pleased with me. I was living right, memorizing scripture and was a good kid.

At age 15, I surrendered to preach. I would preach in children's church. I was working regularly on the bus. I would invite people to church. If you called our house and I answered the phone you were greeted with "Jesus Loves You". I got a lot of hang ups. I was becoming a religious freak. I still doubted. Still said the prayer and worked harder. Church was not enough. I became involved in Fellowship Christian Athletes at school. We meet every Tuesday morning for Bible study. I wasn't even an athlete. That was ok because the athletes never showed up anyways. I needed this service.

High school came and went and I was tired of the battle. Larry and I went separate ways and I found new friends. These were not church friends. People always told me I needed to have fun. I started to live different. I stopped going to church. I stopped praying the sinner's prayer. I just started doing what my new friends were doing. This went on for 2 years. On a Friday night in March 1991, Melody and Wolly, two of my new friends were killed in a car accident. We were very close. Wolly's funeral was open to whoever wanted to go. There were hundreds of people and I did not go in. Melody's funeral was closed to family members only. It was her mother, her father, her sister and I. I was not family but they treated me as such.

This was a major blow to me. Memories of when I was four in the funeral home came rushing back. I realized it could have been me. I had to work that Friday or else I would have been in the car with them. I thought God was punishing me for my choices so I again repeated the sinner's prayer. Nothing happened but I banked on that prayer. I went back to Fort Cooper Baptist Church and spoke to the preacher and told him I had asked Jesus to save me and I wanted to be baptized. He asked me if I had told my mother (formerly mentioned as grandmother). I told him no. That did not stop him from baptizing me. He even announced, while we were still in the water, that we could have another quiz team and I could head it up. He went on about how God had used me before and how he could do it again. I was a little overwhelmed. I just never went back.

In 1992, my cousin and her husband invited me to Croom-a-coo-chee Baptist Church. I finally gave in and went. It was a very exciting church with good music. People seemed to enjoy themselves. I felt very comfortable. It was here that I recommitted myself to preaching God's Word. I became involved in Sunday school, bus ministry, children's church and the youth ministry. It was here that I meet Amanda Felty and her mother Darci. I had decided to go to seminary and told Amanda that I would find her a husband and she should find me a wife. We found each other.

We were married March 22, 1996. We spent our honeymoon in Texas so I could learn to be the principal of the Christian school. Spending 14 hours a day in a classroom and having homework every night will never been in bridal magazine's list of the most romantic places to go on your honeymoon. It did not matter because we were doing what God wanted us to do. That is not true. We were doing what other's wanted us to do and they were using God as a reason.

I become associate pastor, principal of the Christina school, and youth leader. In 1997, we welcomed our first son, Evan. He was such a blessing, especially since we were originally told that my wife had a brain tumor. We were told it would be a simple snipe of the tumor through her nose and she would be home in no time. When the doctor called with the report, wrong report, it was not simple, it was major and she likely was not going to live. I was devastated. I did not understand. The next day we were told that the wrong report had been called and that she was actually pregnant. Ten and half months after the birth of Evan, we welcomed our second son Nathaniel.

During this time I had gone to a small church in Ozello, Florida to candidate to be their pastor. I meet with the pulpit committee after preaching several services for them. They said they would take it to a vote and let me know. The church voted. We had all the votes except for four. Those were four of the six pulpit committee members. We moved to Ozello. At this point I became very frustrated with the Roman's Road way of salvation. In seminary, the six weeks I stayed, we were taken to hear Dr. Jack Hyles preach. He was telling us how he would set numbers on how many people he wanted to see get saved when he went out on visitation and would not stop until that number was reached. He told a story of how one night he had set his number at 10 and it was getting late. He could not find anyone out and about. He had nine converts, I use that term lightly, but could not find number ten. He stopped at a red light and saw a guy on the phone. He yelled from his car to get the guy's attention and asked him to say Jesus. The guy accommodated his request and he bragged to us that is how you get'em saved. He used Romans 10:13 Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, as his justification. The sinner's prayer had not worked for me but this was taking it way to far for this lost preacher. My preaching stayed the same but I forbid anyone to lead anyone in prayer. If they had, they would not be baptized. We were not easy believism. The only problem was that I had no other way to teach. I would tell it is about believing not saying a prayer. We stayed at Ozello for 3 ½ years.

We left Ozello to become missionaries to Honduras. We were really working for God now. We had added Emily to our family in 2000. Amanda, Evan, Nathaniel, Emily and I were living the good life in a run down RV going church to church begging for money. In addition to deputation, I was going to school fulltime and working 30-40 hours a week. While on deputation, something amazing happened. I heard Brother Charles Boyd speak at a mission conference in Deland, Florida. He preached from Romans 14:22-23 – Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. I was lost. I knew it. God had revealed it to me. I would

not tell anyone. How could a lost man gain support to go to a foreign country to win others to Christ? We went to every mission conference that Brother Charles was preaching and any that he would recommend. I needed more of what he had and did know of anyone else who had any help for me.

On November 29, 2004, our family left for Honduras. We had Samuel added to our family in March of 2004. I was still lost and still keeping it a secret. Brother Ronnie Doss was in Honduras and he knew the truth. I had hope for my soul. While we were there, I spent church services reading my Bible. We were in church 5-7 days a week. Church usually lasted about 3 hours. I did a lot of Bible reading. In addition to church, I was ill or injured and spent a lot of time in bed. I did more bible reading. I would underline every verse in my Bible that I felt had anything to do with God. As the weeks pressed on, I became more depressed and discouraged. Amanda thought I was homesick, and she was partially right. On Monday April 14th 2005, she left to take the kids skating at the gym. It was the one night we did not have church unless there was a special service. I had opened my Bible and began to read. A few moments later Brother Ronnie was at the door. He came in and sat down and told me that Amanda had told him that he needed to come and see me because I was going back to America. I immediately began to cry. I told Brother Ronnie that I was lost and needed to be saved. He took my Bible and opened to Isaiah 53:6 – All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. I knew this verse. It was underlined in my Bible. The whole chapter was underlined. I was still crying. I was still lost. He went to I John 2:12 – I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake then I John 3:5 – And you know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Then I John 4:14 - And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world and I John 5:11 – And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life and this life is in his Son. I was deeply intrigued at the verses that I had seen and read many times. God had my attention. Next we turned to Revelation 1:5 –And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. The Lord showed me his salvation in two letters e and d. God had loved me and washed me from my sins. My tears turned to joy and I began to thank God for saving me. Brother Ronnie wanted to go on but I told he I had it. Yes those were my words. He took me to one more verse in Isaiah 32:17 –And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

It was settled. The doubt was gone. The guilt was gone. The sin was gone. God came for me and was not going to let me go. Of all things that God had shown me in his word, nothing spoke louder than the letters e and d. I was loved and washed. The doubt had been with me for so long that I waited to see if it would come back. I would say in my head and out loud that I was lost or I had not done the right thing and immediately His Spirit would bear witness with my spirit that I was His. This is why the song He is mine speaks so loudly to me. I know He is mine but I am also His. I have been adopted twice in life. Once by my grandparents, and once by God.