

July 2006

Charles Edward Graham

Born: August 1956

Born Again: July 1966

Surrendered to Full-Time Ministry: September 1976

Still Serving our Lord at “50” in 2006!

It seems 50 years of living has gone by so quickly. How I praise God for His faithfulness, His love, and His promises to me. As I reflect back over my life, I think of one of my favorite scriptures, “Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don’t try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God’s voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; He is the One who will keep you on track. Don’t assume that you will know it all. Run to God! Run from evil! Your body will glow with health. Your very bones will vibrate with life! Proverbs 3:5–8 (Message Bible translation)

I was 5th of the 13 children born to my parents, Mr. Willie Graham and Mrs. Ollie Graham. Not knowing much surrounding that day 50 years ago, I know I was born surrounded by cotton fields in the community of Boydell, Arkansas. Wow! It seems like a lifetime ago! I was blessed in my childhood to have Christian parents. I have an early childhood memory of God and church as they were a vital part of my parents’ lives. I remember with fondness Saturday evenings polishing our shoes with my father. I also remember Sunday mornings to be painful as our father would force the comb through our hair prior to Sunday School!

Meal times were exciting as we all had designated places around the table where we enjoyed home-made biscuits prepared by our mother, who to this day is an excellent cook. I remember once my brother, Stanley, and I racing to the table aiming for the same seat, a lard can which occasionally served as a seat at the table. I arrived first, but with such force that the can gave way and I ended up wearing a fair amount of lard on my seat area. I’m sure you can get a mental image!

I’ve gathered many memories over these 50 years. I praise God that the good ones outweigh the bad. God has been so faithful in so many ways, for which I am grateful. My father went to be with the Lord in December of 1975. There were 8 children still at home for my mother to raise. My mother looked to God for His help and strength and He was so wonderful to her. Isaiah 41:10 has been my prayer over my mother’s life since my father’s death. This passage of

scripture tells us that God will strengthen us, help us and uphold us. Praise God, He has done just that in all of our lives.

As I get older, I realize that the call to ministry did not start the day I surrendered, but rather the day I was born. God has used the very early days of my life to position me where I am today. It is amazing to look back over my life and realize, there has not

been one day without God's presence and His ability to make whatever I was going through work towards His will for my life.

Having started life in a small community, a house (some may call a shack), extreme humble beginnings, to parents with very little in their hands, but with a lot of God in their hearts; my journey in this life has been a blessed one. It has been an extreme privilege to witness firsthand the transforming power of God's love in the lives of men, women and children around the world. It has been particularly awesome to see the small children in Africa who have suffered the tragic loss of their parents, regain trust and hope in both God and man. I would love to be able to thank each of you personally for your contribution to the success of my life and the joy of ministry, but that is not possible; so please accept my heart felt gratitude. I pray this letter encourages you to reach out and continue to touch lives in your world.

I elected not to have a big birthday celebration, as I don't need one to KNOW in the depths of my heart that I am a very blessed man. Thanks to all who would have been willing to join me were that the case. I truly thank God that you love me and support me. I would simply ask that you would please pray for me, that I would always know the will of my Father and that I would have the strength and health to do it. Also, maybe on the 23rd of August, find someone you don't know and ask God to show you how you could bless them. That would make me very happy!

I leave for the United Kingdom and Africa on the 31st of August, returning the 1st of November. Please pray for me as I will always pray for you. I love you all!

Bless you,

Charles Graham