



MY CHOICE TO BE A CHRISTIAN TURNED MY FAMILY AGAINST ME

HER FATHER GAVE HER AN ULTIMATUM; TO CHOOSE BETWEEN A FALSE CHURCH AND A TRUE CHURCH OF GOD. THROUGHOUT HER YOUTH, SHE SUFFERED EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE. PASTOR THABELO MAFA SHARES WITH US, A STORY OF DESPAIR, FAITH, HOPE, AND TRIUMPH. TODAY, SHE IS A RENOWNED PASTOR BLESSED WITH A LOVING HUSBAND AND TWO CHILDREN.

Family Background

I was born in Nzhelele, Venda in Limpopo province. I come from a family of nine siblings, six from my biological mother and three from my stepmother, but one passed away. I grew up attending a false church and my father is a bishop of that church. During the Easter and December holidays, we used to perform ancestral rituals as a symbol of acknowledging the dead. We used Umqombothi (African beer), it was poured down under a tree to communicate with the dead and ancestral worship was performed. My father also used to summon the local witchdoctors to come to our home to allegedly strengthen the family. At the age of four, I contracted a deadly disease after consuming poison. My body was completely covered with sores and pimples with puss oozing out every now and then. The puss would come into

contact with my clothing, resulting in skin irritation and excruciating pain. As a result, I was admitted in hospital. My grandmother who was a witchdoctor tried to use her traditional herbs on me and cut me with a razor, but I got worse. It was only God who managed to heal me.



School Background

I attended Khakhu High School in Makuleni Village. In 1997, during my matric year, I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ into my life. I stopped attending my father’s church. This caused tension at home, more so on the relationship I had with my father and he vowed not to pay for my tuition fees for the following academic year. He felt disrespected by the fact that I had a personal choice. At times, he would ask me why I was turning my back on family traditions and culture for a “white man” like Jesus.

He used threats to try and get me to change my mind. He would say, “Your Pastor and Jesus will give you money for tertiary.” My father was so influential that he even persuaded my mother to have a ‘talk’ with me regarding my future. She too told me

I endured physical and emotional abuse

God said to me, “you are the light in the darkness. What are you doing in this darkness? The light in you must shine”. From what God said to me, I engaged myself in spiritual warfare prayers. During that period, my father was attending to more than 30 clients a day. From the day I started with my prayers, the number of his clients decreased. As a result, he consulted witchdoctors to find out what was affecting his business. He later came to me and told me that he knew that I was responsible for all the misfortunes he was experiencing in his business. He started emotionally and physically abusing me. I suffered insults and beatings for being spiritually strong. He took out all his frustrations on me. The abuse affected my studies so much that I failed some of my modules. When I told my mother about it, she just brushed it aside, shrugged her shoulders and told me to be strong.

I came to the conclusion that my father was possessed by a demon and I was really concerned about him. The last time he hit me, I was badly wounded and had to be hospitalized for a week. He had beaten me so bad that the right side of my body was numb. I was partly paralyzed and I was advised to open a criminal case against my father before

that my tuition would only be taken care of if I joined my father’s church again. I did not let go of the desire I had to be a God serving servant. That same year, the year-end school results came out and to my delight, I had passed grade 12. I started praying to God for His will to be done in my life. I was prepared to sacrifice my education for my Lord. My sister, who stayed with my father in Kagiso called me to move in with them in Johannesburg and I did. After settling in, I enrolled to study a Management Assistant course at Krugersdorp College. Life was very difficult then.

I struggled with money for transport to go to school and sometimes I would have to help my father with his clients who consulted with him for different needs. After I had accepted

being admitted into the hospital, but I refused and made excuses for his actions. After this ordeal, I was afraid to even tell my parents when I had to go to church. I hid my Bible so that my father would not see it and every time I went to church, I would lie, saying I was going to a friend’s house to do assignments. This went on for some time until one day he asked me if I wanted to kill him spiritually. He then ordered me to go back to Venda, but I refused.

During these hard times, I was attending Faith Mission Church in Randfontein, Zanzela Squatter Camp. I decided to share my experiences with fellow Christians. In 2001, the church members decided that the church needed a caretaker. This came at the right time because I was also looking for a place to stay. I was appointed as the church’s caretaker. Life was very challenging because I had dropped out of school at level N5 due to financial constraints. I stayed at the church site alone and it felt scary at times when I thought of the crime we were subjected to every day. With no financial assistance from my family, I had to sell clothes and beauty products in the ever-busy streets of Johannesburg. The challenge with that business was when people took products promising to pay at a given date, and never kept their word. I had to survive with the little

Jesus Christ, my father asked me to join him in doing traditional rituals for people who came for good luck. He would command me to kill the chickens which people brought and assist him with scrubbing their bodies using the chicken insides mixed with muthi. I refused because the bible says that my body is the temple of God (1 Corinthians 6:18-20). He would even force me to eat the chicken and I always refused because the bible says, “But Daniel purposed in his heart that he will not defile himself with the portion of the king’s delicacies, nor the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself” Daniel 1:8. My father then cursed me and said I will not succeed in everything I do.

money I was making. Sometimes things would be so hard that I would go to bed on an empty stomach.

I did not have proper clothes at the time, but that did not stop men from asking if I was available (single). They would all promise to buy me fancy clothes in return for dating them. I respected myself enough to decline and dismiss all their attempts to tempt me into fornication and sexual immorality. As a young lady, there was a time I felt as if God had deserted me. Things were very hard for me because I could not manage to take care of myself as I was not working. This carried on until God sent a certain woman to surprise me. I was praying in the church and that woman came to me crying saying that God told her to give me clothes. It was then that I saw and acknowledged that my God is indeed Jehovah Jireh. As I was still shocked at what God had done for me, He raised another God-fearing woman in Kagiso to take care of all my needs as if I was her biological daughter. I started to trust in Him with all my heart and He has been my provider ever since.

My biggest breakthrough came in 2001 when I was hired as a typist at Tsakani Primary School in Kagiso. The post was an eighteen months contract post, with a stipend of R1500 a month, which was paid by the School Governing Body.

After my contract elapsed, I offered to volunteer my services for six months where I was compensated R300 a month. Throughout this period, I was still praying to God for His mercy, and it was not long before he rewarded me with a learnership at the Department of Health in 2003. This learnership was for a six month period. In between everything I had been through and the learnership, I was determined to get employment by the end of the six months.

How I met Pastor Mukhuba

After I was ordained as a Pastor in 2006 at Christian Fellowship Church by Pastor Mafunise in Venda, a friend of mine told me about Pastor Mukhuba and gave me Unity Fellowship Church DVDs. After watching the DVDs, I was immediately drawn in by Pastor Mukhuba’s teachings and healing

How the ministry started

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How we obtained the church stand

After I was ordained as a Pastor in 2006 at Christian Since the church was still new in the area, our first service was only attended by five people and more people started attending after a while. I pleaded with my brother to extend the church in order to accommodate more congregants, but he refused. I then approached the council on many occasions to allocate me with a site for the church. They were also difficult but eventually offered me a stand to rent. I did not have money to rent the land, so I could not take the offer. The council appeared to believe that my objective was to enrich myself because churches make a lot of money. God instructed me through a dream, to go back to the council and tell them about His calling upon my life and my vision. After a lengthy discussion, the council finally

I rented a room in Kagiso during my learnership to cut down on transport costs. I was desperately applying for employment during my third and fifth month, but I was never called for interviews. I started to think I was cursed because most of my fellow learnership mates were leaving for better offers elsewhere. During my last month of the learnership, I was called to an interview at Chris Hani Baragwaneth Hospital in late December 2005. I passed the interview

services that I decided to start fellowshiping at Unity Fellowship Church. Upon arrival at the church in 2007, Pastor Mukhuba asked all the pastors to stand and I was one of those who stood up. When I came to Unity I was a travelling Pastor, but I did not have my own ministry. I came back for the second time and I remained to speak with Pastor Mukhuba. I

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accepted my plea and referred me to people who were in charge of allocating land for church establishments. I was extremely excited. However, the church needed a lot of money in order to acquire the land and I knew that my God would provide.

In 2009, I was told that the land to build churches was sold out and that only business sites were still open for purchase. I did not give up on my calling and I was willing to do whatever it took, for with God, anything is possible, as it is well said by our Lord Jesus Christ when He told His disciples that “...with God all things are possible.” (Matthew 19:26 NIV. In the middle of the storm, Pastor Mukhuba prayed with me and also encouraged me to go forward and not give up. In 2010, I contacted the people responsible for land allocations and they told me that a stand was available for new establishments and I could

and started working in January of 2006. I moved from Kagiso and rented a place in Diepkloof because it was closer to my workplace. I was not satisfied with the position, but I was reminded that even a baby has to crawl before it can walk. I worked at the hospital for a year before I was offered a permanent position at the Department of Health.

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use it to hold my church services. I was shown the plot on a map. It was selling for R98 000 before tax. This was a lot of money for me, and I could not afford it, then the devil started putting negative thoughts in my mind. The scripture from the book of Romans 1:17 gave me strength to keep going and believing that God was in control. The land acquisition process indicated that the church had to pay R4500.00 per month. I met with one of the employees, who was also a Christian to find out if it was possible to reduce the monthly payment. By the Grace of God, he agreed that I could pay a reduced amount of R2000 per month. He then drew up a binding contract between the firm and the church on the terms of payment.

Challenges when building the church

The first challenge was encountered when the council claimed that the land was not officially mine but later agreed that the stand was mine after I produced the title deed. During this exhausting time, we were congregating in a shack which was now becoming too small. We built a bigger one to better accommodate a large number of congregants who were growing in numbers. In total, we had built three shacks before we built a proper church. Towards the end of 2012, we started with our church project. The building plan was ready. We paid the building planner and his team more than R30 000. When the building activities

commenced, we started having problems with contractors. The first one left the job unfinished. We hired a second contractor who also did the same. A total of three contractors were paid but never finished the job. We were losing money on a half-done job. The council was also on our case. They requested us to stop with the building as it was not materializing.

When the church was at roof level, the council told us that the church was too big. They requested that we demolish the church, but we refused, so they took us to the High Court. The court ruled in favour of the council and we were forced to demolish the church, after spending close to R200 000 on

building materials. In September 2014, we started building again but we faced financial challenges. We needed close to R2 million to build a new church. The servants of God, Dr and Pastor Mukhuba never gave up on us. They continued to support, guide and pray for us. We visited Unity Fellowship Church often and we contributed in the overflow and Isaac offerings. The favour of God was upon us. We managed to secure a steel structure for the church building. The initial price was R800 000 but because God was working wonders, we only paid R130 000. "For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened", Luke 11:10.

The opening of the church

We completed the building of our church in December 2014. The church was officially opened on the on the 31st of May 2015, and Pastor Mukhuba, together with Unity Fellowship Church members were present. During the service, the servant of God Pastor Mukhuba ministered, and the anointing of God was flowing through her. The Spirit of God was moving on a level

never imagined. In her message, Pastor Mukhuba elaborated on the importance of giving. She made the congregants aware that there was still a lot to be done in growing the church. That day, Pastor Mukhuba's preaching touched a certain man who was a newcomer and he publicly offered to tile the floor and walls for free. There were many people in the church who were encouraged to work wholeheartedly until the work was finished. Following the anointing

that Pastor Mukhuba left behind in our church, the following Tuesday, one of our children in the church planted a seed of R15 000 for the church. This was the first time that the church received a seed of such an amount. The second one offered R30 000.00 for the church and R20 000.00 for the Pastor, after Pastor Mukhuba preached powerfully about giving at the opening of our church.

How I met Pastor Mathe

I met my husband Pastor Mathe in September 2009. I shared with Pastor Mukhuba of our meeting. I told her that I had met a man who was originally from Zambia and she asked me to bring him to the church. I did not want to question why she wanted to see him, I knew she meant well. We met with Pastor Mukhuba and she approved of our relationship.

In 2010, she was concerned that our courtship was taking too long and she persuaded us to get married. Pastor Mathe paid Lobola. On the 31st of April 2011, we had our wedding ceremony which was blessed by Pastor Mukhuba. We have since been blessed with two children, a boy, Kanya and baby girl, Thabelo Junior.

Words of encouragement , Pastor Mathe Mafa:

People must know and understand that the sufferings of the present time cannot be compared with the glory that is coming (Romans 8:18). Even when you go through difficult times, hold on to your faith for we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, and to those who are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). As children of God, we have parents, Pastor and Dr Mukhuba who helped us through counselling to conquer our fears. Today, we are following in their footsteps. All the challenges that we pass through, our parents have already gone through them and conquered. So no matter your age, you need to have a parent who can rebuke you and show you the way.

The scripture 1 Kings 18:24 has encouraged me that in each and every situation that I come across, God will answer me by fire, for He is the God who answers by fire. Matthew 11:12 also encourages me to always be strong and be committed to my calling. Furthermore, it does not matter where you come from, God can take you from ashes or mud and make you His servant. Everyone is born for a godly purpose. I come from a family that attends a false church and worships ancestors, but today, I am serving the Lord. Some of my family members have been delivered, but my father and my elder brother are still attending a false church.

