

**NBC Devotional**  
**May 3, 2023**  
**“My Educational Journey”**

My name is Clifford Allen Kuhn, I was born July 21, 1956, in Madison W.Va. I was brought up in my early childhood by my mother to know and depend on God, since my father passed when I was not quite four years old. I still have fond memories of our Sunday School classes when I was a young lad. I continued to go to Church until I got into Jr. High School and then, sadly, I drifted away from Church and its blessings that God had for me. Although God continued to bless and take care of me in more ways than I can explain, I never came back to Church until after I had endured a painful divorce, which I had no control over and had spent ten years alone. I finally met the woman whom I knew was going to be my new wife. We commenced dating and she ultimately moved into my home, and we lived together. Well, coming home from work one evening, the Freewill Baptist Church that is less than a mile from my home had put out a sign announcing a revival in September. When I got home I told her that I wanted to go and hear this preacher because I had worked with him underground in the mines. She agreed and we went that first Monday night, we set in the back and the service had barely got started until both of us were in tears, under conviction and holding on to that pew with both hands. We left the church that night without Jesus and we had to miss Tuesday’s service due to going to the wake of a dear friend. You know we were drawn back to that Church every night and every night we were under the most powerful conviction, but still would not surrender to Jesus. We were afraid we could not quit the drinking and we were living together, I was using snuff and we would have to separate and not live together. Well, they held that revival over, said they was going to extend it one more night. You know we went that last night and like the other nights before, we were under powerful conviction, so much so that as the service ended, we realized that we could not walk out of that church without Jesus in our hearts, so we went to the altar and surrendered to Jesus and our lives have not been the same. Yes we got married and realized very quickly that it was not us who took away our sinful desires but God who was working in us to clean us up to be a Temple for His Spirit to dwell in.

Very early in our journey, I felt the need to read and study the word, like I could not get enough of it, I am still the same way today, I love learning about God and everything about Christianity. Within a year in my home Church, which was Freewill Baptist, I began leading our services and almost immediately I began receiving comments concerning preaching. My new wife and I would go to the nursing home every Sunday and sing and minister to the residents. If the Preacher did not make it, I would fill in for them. There were folks that were set against me preaching because I had been divorced, and we ended up moving to Greenbrier County and not for that reason, but in searching for a Church, we found a Freewill Baptist Church, and they are far and few between in Greenbrier County, so we started going there and after we were there about four months, the Pastor resigned and retired. The preachers that were sent there from Cornerstone Church in Beckley every Sunday continually asked me why I did not take the Church, I did not have an answer, but when I did suggest me Pastoring this Church, we were met with opposition. So we left there about a month later and while en-route to another Freewill Baptist Church, God turned us around and sent us to Greenbrier Valley Church of the Nazarene. We had visited this Church once and liked it, and we had friends there. And so our calling comes to reality. As time went on, the Pastor, Glen Thaxton and I were spending quite a bit of time together helping others and during those times I shared my story with him. He immediately gave me an opportunity to preach about once a month in our Sunday Night services. He retired and Don Armstrong took over as Pastor.

He, along with the board, issued me a local license and in the fall of 2018, I entered the W.Va. South District School of Ministry. I got down to where I had only four classes left in the summer of 2022. I found out in my visit with the District Advisory Board in 2022 that only two of the four classes I needed for ordination were going to be offered the following year. I was devastated, thinking I was going to have to wait another year to be ordained. I felt let down and betrayed because before those classes that students needed to be ordained were offered first. I felt like they did not want me to be ordained and that they were trying to discourage me. Anyway, we put satan behind us and pressed forward for we knew it was God's will, and Pastor Sonny Williams of Teays Valley Church, give me the name of a man to call at N.B.C., his name was Will Mackey. It was he who assured me that N.B.C. could fulfill my need for four classes so I could be ordained this summer at our District Assembly in Summersville, W.Va.. Well, I got started in August in an orientation class, and by the third day I was ready to quit. I had gotten covid that night, I was running a fever and felt awful, but I persevered. I knew I was driving Aaron crazy and everyone else, because I was literally lost on a computer. I was ready to fold on Wednesday of the first week, and then the N.B.C. Chaplain contacted me and we talked for a long time. He encouraged me so much and gave me so much confidence, that after that day, I never had to aggravate anyone else. He was such a blessing to me and I will never forget him and our conversation. After our discussion, God took hold of me and literally pulled me through four classes, all with "A's". So now I am taking my last class with our D.S. teaching, which will allow me to be ordained this summer, Praise the Lord. The faculty and staff at N.B.C., I want to thank each one for their contribution to my education. I learned a tremendous amount which is being passed on to our congregation every week. I just want to thank everyone at N.B.C. for their help, encouragement, and patience with me. Again Thank You N.B.C., I will always be grateful and thankful.

Clifford Kuhn