

The Peale, Baltimore

Out of the Blocks Storytelling Series

Recorded by Aaron Henkin; Photographs and Music by Wendel Patrick

Produced for the *Out of the Blocks* website, created by the Peale, <https://ootb.thepeale.org/>

Out of the Blocks is supported by PRX and produced with grant funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Cohen Opportunity Fund, The Hoffberger Foundation, Patricia and Mark Joseph, The Shelter Foundation, The Kenneth S Battye Charitable Trust, The Sana and Andy Brooks Family Fund, The Muse Web Foundation, and the William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund, creator of the Baker Artist Portfolios



Nat Rice ([00:12](#)):

(singing).

Yeah. I'm Nat Rice, and sitting here right now and having a interview with Brother Aaron at Solomon Temple Christian Church, 4717 Liberty Heights Avenue near Gwynn Oak. When I cut to the chase, God delivered me. One night 29 years ago, I was at a friend's house literally getting high all night long. Come out of the house about 3:30 in the morning, and my car would not start. I called my wife up, and asked her to come pick me up. While she was on her way I begin to walk up this dark road, and something just prompted me to look up to the stars, and say, "Lord, please use me better than I'm using myself." At that point, I felt this warm feeling come over me, so when the wife picked me up she never even looked me in the eye. I got in the car. Now understand something. I had told her a thousand times

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before I'm not getting high anymore. This particular time I said nothing. I think if she had looked at me, she might've seen the halo. I have never gotten high since. That's deliverance.

I go back to my office, because at the time I had an insurance agency with about 30 agents. I'm managing all these people, secretary, big office. I go to my office the next day, and I'm sitting behind the desk, and God spoke to me in my spirit. People say, "Wait, man, how you know God spoke to you?" Well, once you have a relationship with him, you can recognize his voice in your spirit. Okay? And he said in my spirit, "Give it all up. Give this all up, and go out and start this ministry." I say, "Lord, you done lost your mind. I got two cars in the driveway. I got a mortgage payment." At the time I was making \$100,000 a year selling insurance, but after I paid the mortgage and all the bills, I mean, I done spend \$800-900 a week freebasing cocaine. Okay? So, I gave it up, and I'm saying, "Well, what do I do now?" Then a song come to me.

(singing).

So, he showed me my spirit. "This is what I want you to do. Don't worry about it. I will supply your needs." 29 years later, I'm signed with a Christian record label out of Oklahoma, I have my own independent label, have about 18 CDs up on iTunes, I'm getting downloads all around the world. I went out and bought all this sound equipment and keyboard. I didn't know a cord, nothing.

Brother Aaron ([03:28](#)):

So, you got called for a purpose? You asked the question, "What should I do?"

Nat Rice ([03:28](#)):

What should I do?

Brother Aaron ([03:34](#)):

The question was a song.

Nat Rice ([03:36](#)):

Right.

Brother Aaron ([03:36](#)):

And the song answered your question.

Nat Rice ([03:38](#)):

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It answered my question. There's a halfway house up there, transition house. But a lot of guys up there have come to services. One guy told me out there one time, he said, "I love what you're doing, because we go out and do ministry on the streets sometimes, and we give away everything free, snow [inaudible 00:00:03:56], hot dogs, everything. They don't have to come to the church, but that's ministry. You planting seeds. [inaudible 00:04:01] it's all about. One guy came up to me. I was singing outside one time. He said, "Hey, bro, I love your music [inaudible 00:04:07]," and you know what? He looked down [inaudible 00:04:11]. He said, "I'm going to come to the church when I get my self together." My response was a question to him. "You say you're going to come to church when you get yourself together, right?" He said, "Yeah." "Let me ask you this question. If I pulled out a gun right now, and shot you in your leg, would you wait to fix it up before you went to the emergency room?" He said, "No." I said, "That's what the church for, sin, sick folk. Come as you are."