

BEN BIRDSONG

With a passion for God and a passion for people, Ben Birdsong's desire is to see people awakened to the grace of God! In today's world of mixed cultural messages, God has blessed Ben with the ability to communicate God's Word clearly making truth come alive to students. Ben believes that God wants to awaken students to become radical followers of Jesus who do not just play religious games but who want to give everything to Jesus Christ! At the age of 22, God has blessed Ben with many opportunities to minister to students both through serving with student ministries and serving with First Priority of Alabama. Ben is the founder and director of Awestruck Ministries in Birmingham, Alabama and currently serves on staff at Student Life, Inc. and as the Associate Youth Pastor at First Baptist Pelham in Pelham, Alabama.



Testimony:

I grew up in a Christian home and have been going to church for as long as I can remember. In five-year-old kindergarden, one day we were discussing becoming a Christian and what that meant. After our school discussion that sparked questions in my mind so I asked my parents about what it truly meant to be a Christian. My parents then led me to Christ. I knew that I was a Christian, but at that time it really had no effect on my lifestyle and day to day life. I was like "I am a Christian and that is cool," but that is where it stopped. In junior high, we changed churches so that I could go to church with my friends. There I began to learn what it truly meant to live a life that follows Christ. I began to see my Christianity as a living and breathing relationship with a loving Savior rather than just fire insurance from hell's flames. I became actively involved in my youth group and began to spend time with Christ through daily devotions. The spring of my Sophomore year, I attended a conference that would help to change my life and perspective on my relationship with Christ. I do not remember much about the speakers or music, but I do remember meeting an organization that would become a big part of my life. The organization that I encountered was First Priority. I went to their booth to see what they did and stood for. They explained to me that they helped to support student leaders and teacher sponsors as they led student-initiated, student-led, and student-designed clubs on campuses of junior high and high

schools around the area. They suggested that I should pray about starting a First Priority club on my campus and gave me a flyer. I took the flyer home and began to pray about it. I felt like it was something that the Lord wanted me to do, but I did not want to. I was inadequate, did not like being the center of attention, and was afraid to get up in front of a group. After trying to talk God out of doing what He wanted me to do failed, I decided to listen to Him and give it a try. ! God led me to start a First Priority club at my school, and I was able to minister with people who would become several of my closest friends there for my junior and senior years. After graduation, God led me to the University of Alabama at Birmingham to study Marketing and Management. He also led me to an internship through First Priority of Alabama called Project Timothy. Through this internship I had the privilege of serving as the Campus Coach of both Shades Mountain Christian School's First Priority and Hoover High School's First Priority. I also was blessed to be able to serve in two youth groups, Green Valley Baptist Church and Mountain Brook Community Church, a Hispanic ministry through First Baptist Church of Alabaster, Alabama, and in the statewide office of First Priority. God has also given me the privilege of partnering with Awestruck Band to put on Awestruck Worship Nights for the past three summers. I have also had the privilege of serving as the Mission Team Coordinator for Student Life. I am currently leading several high school students weekly in a discipleship group, serving in a customer service and order processing role at Student Life's Clarity Publishers. In the last few months, God led me to start Awestruck Ministries to further connect my speaking ministry and the worship ministry of Awestruck Band. God has really blessed me and continues to do awesome things in my life. God has given me the opportunity to serve as the Associate Youth Pastor at First Baptist Pelham in Pelham, Alabama. I was ordained and licensed as a minister of the gospel at the Church at Brook Hills on Sunday, July 12, 2009. I will be starting seminary at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in the fall of 2009 to pursue my Masters of Divinity degree.