

# A Life *Poured Out*

The Story of Barbara Johnston

1928 – 2024 · Miami, Florida

*"I have been touched by Christ to touch the world."*



*"If she were the only person on earth, Jesus would have come and died just for her. He also loved all the boys and girls everywhere."*

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON THAT SHAPED A LIFETIME



*This is the story of Barbara Johnston — a woman who heard one truth at age six and spent ninety years acting on it.*

*It is also the story of what faithful stewardship looks like when a life is truly surrendered to that vision.*

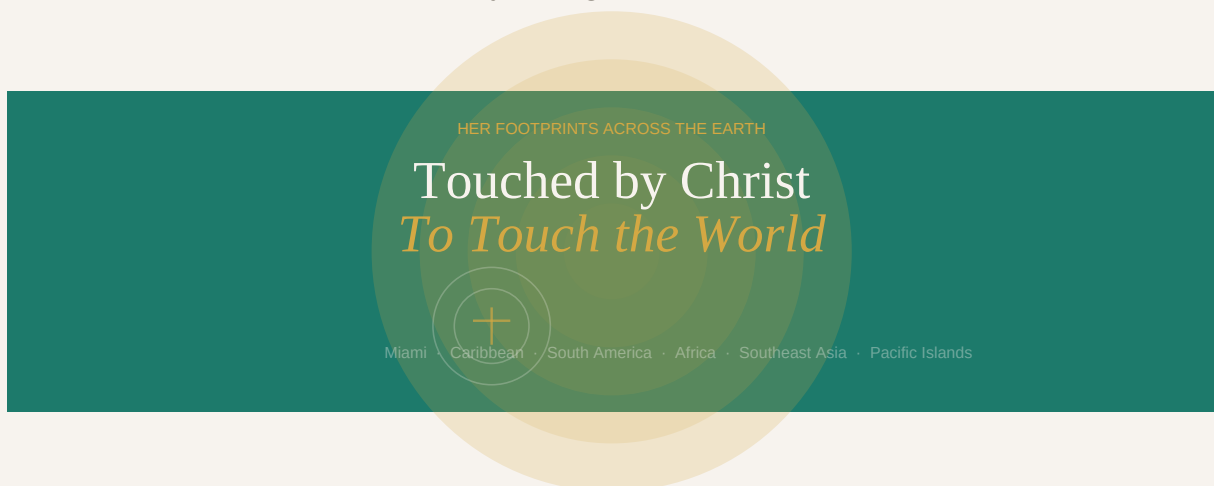


## *The Early Days of Her Call*

### CHAPTER ONE

From the moment Barbara first heard that Jesus loved her and every child in the world, a single thread began to run through her life: a God-given desire to see the gospel and compassion go “all around the world.” As a little girl in a Florida Sunday School classroom, her teacher told her that if she were the only person on earth, Jesus would have come and died just for her. She learned that He also loved all the boys and girls everywhere. That truth settled deep in her heart and shaped her imagination. She began to sense that her life, her work, her travels, and eventually her resources were all to be part of God’s plan to reach people across the globe. The thread “I have been touched by Christ to touch the world” would guide her steps for nearly a century.

In her early adult years, Barbara stepped into the world of travel, first working for a major airline in Florida, then leading group travel experiences in the cruise industry. She came to understand through her work that she was not just booking tickets; she was shepherding people, organizing experiences, and quietly carrying that childhood conviction that there were boys and girls, men, and women, everywhere who needed to know that Jesus loved them. Through her travels and work, she embraced the touch of Christ in her life by leaving a mark on those that she encountered.





## CHAPTER TWO

## Giving Today and Forever

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Barbara was not a billionaire nor a celebrity, but the Lord had blessed her with steady work and, with wisdom, to begin investing in her twenties. Over time, through diligent saving and careful management of her own investments, the Lord multiplied what she had.

Even as she traveled the globe for work and pleasure, she valued experiences, she loved people, and she saw her growing resources as something God had entrusted to her, not something she owned. God had given her resources not just for her, He had given her the resources to touch and impact the world.

Years later, that God-given stewardship impulse led Barbara to pick up the phone and call the Florida Baptist Foundation to ask a simple question: “Do you write gift annuities?”

*That call connected her with Mike Morgan, and what began as a technical conversation about charitable gift annuities quickly grew into a friendship and ministry partnership that spanned more than a decade. Barbara loved that gift annuities through the Foundation were structured not just to benefit one organization, but to bless multiple ministries that were dear to her heart. One gift annuity led to another, and then another, as she discovered a way to receive income in her later years while also creating a future stream of support for gospel work.*



## *Stewardship That Matters*

### CHAPTER THREE

Over the years she would call Mike to ask about the financial markets, to seek counsel, and to talk through ideas. Through those conversations, it became clear that her generosity was not an afterthought, it was an essential expression of her love for the Lord and His work.

As Barbara aged, she recognized that faithful stewardship meant more than giving during her lifetime; it meant getting her house in order so that the resources God had entrusted to her would continue to serve His purposes long after she went home to be with Him. She began to wrestle with how to align her estate plan with the same vision that had guided her since childhood: a heart for the world that Jesus loves.

*In conversation with Mike and her attorney, she asked for something extremely specific, who can serve as her trustee. A person or organization that she could trust, who shared her values, and who would carry out her God-given wishes. By God's grace, this led her to name the Florida Baptist Foundation as successor trustee of her revocable living trust and to establish a charitable endowment within her plan.*

She appreciated that, as her charitable priorities evolved, she could update her charitable endowment through the Foundation without repeatedly rewriting her entire estate plan, making her generosity flexible and responsive to the Lord's leading overtime.

In God's kindness, Barbara lived a long life and continued to travel and to give generously while she was able. Even after the documents were signed, the phone calls continued, and the relationship deepened. Near the end, as she lay in a hospital bed close to the church of her childhood, Mike was able to sit with her and pray with her just days before she stepped into the presence of the Lord. In those final conversations, she reflected again on that Sunday School lesson. She reflected on the Savior who loved her personally and loved the children of the world. And it was evident that the same thread that had drawn her across oceans was now directing her final acts of stewardship.

## IV

*Full Circle Surrender*

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## CHAPTER FOUR

Barbara's estate plan reflects a life fully surrendered to that vision. Her desire was not merely to send a one-time check, but to "endow the kingdom." This endowment strategy establishes ways that ministries would receive ongoing support, year after year, "until Jesus comes back."

Through the charitable endowment she established with the Florida Baptist Foundation, multiple Baptist ministries will receive annual distributions in perpetuity (until Jesus returns). Ministries that channel support to missions and church planting around the world. The funds will also go to organizations that serve single mothers, foster parents, foster children and orphans, both in Florida and beyond.

*In this way, Barbara's story comes full circle: a young girl, moved by the love of Christ for children everywhere, now sends resources to spread the gospel and provide compassionate care throughout Florida, across United States, and around the world.*

For those of us at Florida Baptist Foundation, Barbara's life is a living illustration of what it looks like when a believer understands that everything they have belongs to the Lord and then chooses to align both their living and their dying with that truth. There are many Christians that are faithful in their tithing, supporting their church and other ministries during their lifetime but never take the step Barbara took to bring their end-of-life stewardship into that same obedience.

Scripture reminds us too, "Get your house in order," not because we are people of fear, but because we are stewards who do not know the day or the hour. Barbara did that work. She reviewed, adjusted, and refined her plan as the Lord led, treating it as a living document while she lived and a living legacy after she was gone. Now, the Florida Baptist Foundation has the privilege of stewarding her trust and praying over the checks that will be written in her name, we see clearly what she saw by faith: that a life touched by Christ really can touch the world until He returns.