

Sandra Royal  
Autobiographical Paper

My family heirloom Bible lists that my great grandfather was born in slavery, April 1861. His daughter, my grandmother raised me from birth until I reached adulthood and was the first generation born free African American in my family's history. I was born in Norfolk, Virginia, however, I grew up in Ahoskie, North Carolina. Although, the seventh child out of ten children I was raised alone by my grandmother. As learned in class I had qualities of the oldest child, receiving favor, attention, a high sense of responsibility and academic motivation.

Like most Southern families we attended the Baptist church, however, I was able to attend lively services at church occasionally with my aunt who was Pentecostal. Because of segregation, I attended an all-Black school from first through eighth grade until integration began in high school. Presented with the opportunity to go to college I became the first-generation college graduate in my family's history. Like others in my culture and family, I migrated from the South to New York finding employment with the City of New York for over thirty years. Not only did I find employment but more importantly I found salvation for my soul when I was directed by the Holy Spirit to attend Bible School.

Currently, I am a member of New Jerusalem Worship Center in Jamaica, as a minister in training, a member of both the Missions and Evangelism Ministries (ministering to those in the nursing homes that are unable to attend a local church). In addition, I am the leader of the Justice Ministry that serves the incarcerated and their families. As a Community Volunteer for the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision I go into a state minimum security facility to bring the word of God and the plan of restoration and hope. I also minister to women in a homeless shelter to offer words of encouragement and support. The knowledge I gained from hands on experience in the shelter was confirmed in class lectures through the education of different cultures. My desire to reach these two populations is based on Luke 4:18.