

## *The Biography*

### *Of*

*Rev. Howard Ricketts*

*By: Sal Baldino. C.E.O. of Christian Musician United  
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*“Joy, unspeakable, warm, richly alive, and deeply anointed,” is the words that describe the ministry of Rev. Howard Ricketts. I had the privilege of speaking with Rev. Ricketts up close and personal. The following is the path road by Rev. Ricketts as he came to acknowledge the call of God no his life.*

*It is a ministry blessed with a steadfast hunger to reach as many people as possible with the gospel of Jesus Christ. As Rev. Ricketts states, “We intend to constantly go into the highways and byways, seeking to win souls for God’s kingdom. “The Soul Patrol” was well chosen.*

*In spite the solidness of my spiritual convictions and fear of the Lord (which originated from my childhood days singing gospel music on the Church of God of Prophecy); I severely strayed from the straight and narrow path. I started singing Gospel Music at the very tender age of five back in my homeland of Jamaica. As Rev. Ricketts explains, “I grew up and went to live in Kingston where I got a real taste of the world.”*

*I indulged myself in alcohol, reggae music, rock & roll and many other temporal pleasures that I could not bring myself to go back to church. This brought on a feeling of guilt and betrayal because I half turned away from the truth. Yet throughout all of this, the voice of God was there. There was always that voice that I tried to block out. I tried not to listen because of the commitment. I was scared because I knew that once I was baptized, I could never find out a legitimate excuse to turn back.*

*In 1970, I went to work for the U.S. Navy in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I then migrated to New York in 1972. In 1974, I owned and operated a nightclub. I gave it up and went to work for Gimbals Dept. Store as Executive Manager for the maintenance Dept. Then to Alexander's Dept. Store and finally to Fordham University as Executive Assistant Physical Plant Manager.*

*It was my daughter Marion and my wife Gwendolyn who first decided to go back to church. Finally, through their urging and encouragement, I went back to church and I was convicted by the spirit and was converted. On October 20<sup>th</sup> 1985, I received water baptism. There weeks later, I was baptized with the divine baptism of the Holy Ghost.*

*It all started one Friday morning as I was on my way from the bathroom heading toward the kitchen. As I entered the foyer, I felt the touch of a gentle pair of hands on my shoulders, and in that same instance, I heard a soft whisper unlike the sound of a human voice say to me, "Go and pray."*

*I paused for a few seconds and said to myself, "Why should I go and pray when I just got done praying a few minutes ago?" Then I thought to myself, "The devil would not tell me to go and pray." The hands were still on my shoulders. I looked over to my left and right shoulders and I didn't see any hand, yet it was still there.*

*I was a little afraid, but I was not frightened. Only a fear came over me. The hand gently turned me and guided me to the living room and set me upon my knees in front of the couch nearest the door. That's where the Lord purged me until I was sanctified. I was out matched and out class because I was up against a superior power.*

*During my transition, the Lord took me up to Calvary. There I knelt at the cross with Jesus hanging there with his head bowed having the crown of thorns there on in the same manner as it was described in the Bible. What I saw I find very hard to explain or describe. He never seemed like a stranger whom I did not know. He felt like one of my own brothers, some family member, or close friend.*

*One thing I knew, it was a human I saw hanging there. It doesn't matter whether it was a family member or not, what I felt was not emotion,*

*it was beyond human feeling. It was total compassion coming out of my bowels. My heart melted. I was physically helpless. I was stricken and paralyzed.*

*I wept uncontrollably as I cried out, “Lord, look at what they did to you because of me. Forgive me Lord for my sins.” The Lord said, “Forgive all those who you don’t see and those who you don’t see and those who you are no longer in touch with?” The Lord said to me, “Forgive them from your heart and I will do the rest.” I knew I had to forgive so it was not hard for me to do.*

*I knew that I forgave and I was forgiven that very instant. Finally, I was filled with the Holy Ghost. During my consecration prayer to the Lord, crying out on bended knees. I remember asking the Lord to let some of his blood fall on me. Instantly, with my mouth opened wide, I spoke in another language that I was not familiar with. This went on for several hours on and off.*

*Sometimes it intensifies and sometimes moderately calm. I was so filled joy and fear. I was just overwhelmed. My whole being was changed. I felt strange and completely different. I was happy to know that my creator had a special interest in me to have visited me and given me the greatest gift that anyone could ever imagine. It is indeed a heavenly experience. One that will stay me for the rest of my natural life, as it remains fresh in my thoughts. I felt a strange, unfamiliar feeling of satisfaction. It stimulated and inspired me. Yes, I felt total relief. I was refreshed. No more burden of guilt.*

*How I got there I don’t know, but I found myself kneeling down with my head bowed. I saw three people, two sitting and one standing (I still did not see any face). Meanwhile I saw other people dancing and clapping their hands while going around in a circle counterclockwise. It was then that I realized that I was in the presence of the Lord and his angels.*

*Then I remembered the scripture that says, “Angels rejoice over one sinner that repented...” Again I found myself standing on top of a mountain covered with cloud. I looked out over to my left and saw the Lord Jesus standing a little way off. His feet were covered with cloud up to*

*his ankle. He was fully clothed in white, holding a staff as that of a shepherd in his right hand.*

*His hair was as white as milk, shoulder length and wavy. I could not see his face but I got a view of his right side and his back. He was tall (close to seven feet) and had very wide shoulders; this is an experience I wish that everyone who seeks the Lord would encounter such vision. All of my life, I have loved the Lord, but having this personal encounter with him has caused me to fall in love with him.*

*The Lord gave me this warning: “DO NOT DEFILE YOUR BODY OR I WILL DESTROY YOU.” This voice sent a shockwave throughout my entire body. This voice was calm, yet so powerful. It brought fear and quickening all at the same time. Each time I remember it, I tremble and sometimes cry. I know that this is a charge that I must keep until death.*

*I befriended the late Bishop Findley, (the overseer of Triumphant Church of God), who became my mentor. He was also the founder and President of Triumphant Bible College. In as much as I had the opportunity to become a student at the above named college, I strongly refused to go because I kept telling myself that God has all ready anointed me and fully furnished me with the proper equipment needed to fulfill his divine will. Bishop Findley, who discovered that I had a direct calling after hearing me preach, ordained me as a Pastor and asked me to serve under him.*

*I turned the offer down and explained to him that I must wait until the Lord assigns me to the purpose that I was called to serve. He respected my decision and was very supportive. I started evangelizing and preaching in local churches in the New York area. Finally, one day the Lord said to me, “I call you to lead and not to be led.”*

*I spoke to Bishop Findley about it. Without hesitation, he helped me to establish Mount Calvary Pentecostal Healing Temple, and ordained me this as a Bishop. I started the church in the living room of my home. The church started out with less than eight people. Today, we are in a bigger place with an ever-growing congregation.*

*The Soul Patrol started out with three members of my family; Wife Gwendolyn, daughter Marion and myself. We struggled and suffered*

*many set backs, discouragement and everything that the devil could dish out. Through it all, I maintained a positive attitude. I refused to surrender to pressure. My faith became stronger day by day through prayer, fasting and meditation.*

*Today, the Soul Patrol Gospel Music Ministry is nine members strong. We travel extensively to various parts of the U.S. preaching in crusades and ministering in music.*

*I have learned a valuable lesson; God did not call me because of my educational background. He never asked me for a resume. The Lord said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden. He called the learned and the unlearned. (Matt. 11: 28-30). I am sure that God is no respecter of persons. I was a wretched sinner needed to be saved. I could not trade in my education for salvation, of a doctorate degree.*

*The Lord called me not as an educated or righteous man. He said, "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, and cease to do evil." (Isaiah 1:16-19). I admitted my sins. I confessed them because I regretted and was sorry for them. My mission is rescue and win souls because, "he that winneth souls is wise." (Proverbs.11-30-31). The Lord uses me to win souls through preaching, music and healing. "I now forget things that are behind." (Phillip 3:1-21).*

*My first experience of healing by prayer was with my second to last daughter Roxanne, who was 21/2 year old. My last daughter O'Zelle came a year later and started talking while Roxanne could not as much as make a sound. This caused deep concern in the family. Although I was worried sick, my faith told me that she would talk. How soon? I did not know. The human side of me was angry and anxious, yet I was calm and patient in my spirit. I was silently grieving and occasionally cried.*

*Many times I watched Roxanne desperately trying to speak but not a sound would come. I watched her closely as the dumb spirit held her prisoner. I myself felt like a prisoner, but I refused to surrender. I continued fasting and praying that her condition would change so she could speak and speak normally. Nothing was happening. Once again, the human side became frustrated and disappointed, but the inner man felt strong and confident. Through this, I was able to remain hopeful.*

*One day my wife took Roxanne to see her Doctor. The Doctor told her that Roxanne was mute and would not be able to talk and that she would have to go through speech therapy. I angrily replied, "No way, no Doctor is going to turn my baby into any guinea pig. No Doctor is going to get any credit."*

*I said to her, I trust God to loosen her tongue and she is going to talk and God will get the glory. It was about two weeks later, early on a Friday morning: I went in my prayer room while everyone was fast asleep.*

*I got on my knees and started to pray until I was lost out of my physical body (similar to when I was getting filled with the Holy Ghost.) I was completely transformed. I received utterance as the Holy Spirit came upon me. I went into the kids bedroom, picked up Roxanne, held her a little above my head with both hands, while I was speaking and praying in tongues with tears running down my face, I then cradled her in my left arm.*

*The Lord had me to use my right index finger and my thumb. Gently, I held her tongue, (This went on for close to an hour) still crying and praying in tongues. Finally, the spirit released me. When I came back to myself, I put the baby into her bed. Three days later, Roxanne started talking.*

*My oldest daughter Marion was the first to hear her speak. The evening of that faithful day, I came home. By the time I got through the door, Marion greeted me with a broad smile on her face. In an excited tone of voice she said, "Daddy, daddy guess what?" before I could reply, her next words were, "Roxanne is talking."*

*Marion was beaming with excitement. I was excited but in a calm way. It took me a little time to absorb it. Then she said to me that the baby was speaking with a lisp tongue. I asked her, "What more do you want from God? She is still a baby, she will grow it out. It will also go away. God started it and he will finish it." I picked Roxanne up and gave God thanks. I said, "You have answered my prayer. You came through for me again.*

*I know that this child's speech will be fully restored. In a matter of months, Roxanne was able to speak clearly. Oh, I remembered telling*

*Marion, “You have to be careful about what you say or do now around Roxanne.” We both laughed. The following day, I went out and came back home in the evening.*

*When I got home and came through the door Roxanne came running to me. She said, “Daddy, Mayon fone.” I laughed and picked her up as she pointed towards the phone. Marion was laughing as well. I said, “Remember what I told you.” You have to be careful about what you do from now on.*

*The gift and calling is really without repentance. (Rom. 11:29). I remember a strange miracle that took place before I accepted the Lord.*

*My last baby O’Zelle (who was under one year old), one morning was struggling to breathe. She started turning blue. My wife Gwendolyn started to panic, as she called out to me, “Howard, Howard, come quickly.”*

*The baby isn’t breathing. I said, “Don’t panic. Give her to me.” I took the baby from her and held her up a little above my head and looked up to heaven and started talking to God. For some reason, I stopped talking, but within I was asking God to heal the baby. Then I said to my wife, “Go and open the bedroom window.”*

*She then opened the window and I put the baby through the window as I held her. It was on May of 1985 and for some reason, that day (as I recall) was very cold. In less than five seconds, the baby yelled out and started breathing again normally. There is no doubt this was God’s doing. I was scared; I was calm and very grateful for the instant response from God. Yes, God certainly answered this sinner man’s prayer.*

*I knew all along that know matter where you go, you would have to come back to the Lord. Out of all my nine children, you were the one that was completely different from the rest. You have been blessed form the womb; I was always hoping and praying to see the day when you returned to the Lord. Now, I can die in peace. Then I replied, “You don’t have to worry because I’m never turning back. You see the Lord has installed his spirit as a reminder deep in y heart” (Matt.12:43-45).*

*In all thy ways acknowledge him and he will direct thy path. (Proverbs.3:6). The fifth verse said, “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. (Ps. 119:9-18 & Ps.37: 97-107 & 135). My son, give me thine heart and let thine eyes observe my ways. (Prov. 23:26). I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eyes. (Ps. 32:88).*

*But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and he shall also remind you. (St. John 14:26)*

*I walk by faith and not by sight. (II Cor 5:7). I just don't trust in my own sight or ability. All my confidence is in God. (Is, 8:3). When Jesus asked Peter, whom do men say that I the son of man am? Peter was the only person that gave the correct answer. Jesus said to him, flesh and blood did not reveal it unto you, but my father which is in heaven. (Matt.16:13-20) & (St. John4:23-24).*

*The anointing which I have receive of Christ, abides in me and I need no man to teach me. (I John 2:27) & (St. John 14:15-17). But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our lord and savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever, Amen. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before; beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. (II Pet.3:17-18) & (Heb. 2:1-4).*

*There are several scriptures among many that inspire and strengthen me. (Job 32:6-22), (I Tim 1:6-7), (Jer. 1:3-12), (Ezk. 3:8-10), (St. John 15: 1-11), (Matt. 17:14-21), (I Cor. 2:1-14) & (Gal 1:6-20).*

*God did not arm me with titles, diplomas or doctorate degrees. He armed, certified and sealed me with the Holy Ghost and fire. (Matt 3:11-122), (II Tim 2:19), (Eph. 1:13), (Zech. 4:6) & (Eph. 6:10-20).*

*The Salutation of Rev. Howard Ricketts and The Soul Patrol*

## ***FYI***

The Soul Patrol is the winner of the Gill and Pat Bailey Caribbean Gospel Music Award; receiving four awards for the years 2004, 2005 & 2006. Karl Moore, one of New York's top gospel D.J.; dubs the Soul Patrol New York based Caribbean number one gospel group.

The Soul Patrol is a genuine, original, Christian group that believes in originality and not formality. We are not about popularity; we are all about sincerity, inspiring people on a whole in music, songs and spoken word. We are not about keeping up appearance. We have a vision and we are guided by faith in order to fulfill this vision. Wherever we go to minister, we do it in humility leaving the audience with a full satisfaction. We are available for Gospel concerts, Crusades, Revivals, or any gospel related function 100%. The Soul Patrol strives only for excellence because God is excellent and awesome. We can be reached at MSoulPatrol@aol.com. Telephone # (home) 718-601-0809.

P.S. Rev. Ricketts is the executive director of the group. He is also an accomplished song writer, composer and producer. We also own our on digital recording studio located at 3425 Boston Rd (Bet. Fish and Seymour Ave) Bronx N.Y. 10469. We do our recording with live music. For booking, please call the above number. We look forward to hearing from you.