

Walk of Faith Leads to TV Ministry For Charismatic Couple in Georgia

Russell and Dorothy Spaulding—who carried a cross across the nation for eight years—now own a TV station in Augusta

Russell and Dorothy Spaulding walked across America for eight years carrying a wooden cross and telling people about Jesus. During this time they lived completely by faith. When they were hungry, God provided food. When their shoes got holes in them, a stranger would bring them a new pair.

The same tenacious faith they used to minister on the streets has enabled them to acquire and operate a Christian TV station in Augusta, Ga. For five years they ran the station using an all-volunteer staff. Even now there are only a few paid workers for this ministry that is making a major impact on the local community.

“I can’t go out to any store anywhere in this town if I’m in a hurry because people will stop me and tell me how this station has ministered to them,” Dorothy Spaulding said. “When I hear how people say this station has changed their lives, I just rejoice in the Lord.”

People on the verge of suicide call in almost daily, she said. Once, a caller said his mother and brother had killed themselves recently and that he had a gun to his head when he found their station while channel surfing. A phone counselor tried to pray with the man but he hung up.

The Spauldings immediately went on the air to encourage the man to call back. He called again, and Russell said God prompted him to ask Angela Court, a Christian singer who was a guest that night, to sing to him.

“As she started singing, the anointing of the Holy Ghost came down, and he started crying,” Dorothy Spaulding said. “He gave his heart to Jesus on the phone.”

The station has been on the air 24 hours a day, seven days a week since the Spauldings opened it in 1995. It features a two-hour block of live programming every night.

Dorothy was a producer for an ABC-TV affiliate in Gainesville, and seeking career success—when she rededicated her life to the Lord in 1985. During times of stress, she called The PTL Club and The 700 Club TV shows regularly for counseling.

Christian television also was a source of ministry for her husband. Russell Spaulding gave his life to Christ in 1986 after calling the PTL Club.

Dorothy said she felt called of God to carry the cross in 1988. Russell, who was then just a friend of hers, joined her.

Their first trip took them from Jacksonville, Fla., to Washington, D.C. Russell carried the cross, which was fitted with a wheel at the bottom, and Dorothy pulled a small red wagon filled with tracts. A driver would go ahead of them, informing churches of their coming and seeking sleeping accommodations.

Dorothy and Russell married in 1989. The cross they carried is now displayed in the lobby of the television station.

Because they both had training in video production and management, a friend urged them to start a low-power station in Augusta, Ga. The moment they arrived in town, they jointly discerned that God had called them there.

"The Spirit of the Lord just came on us and said, 'This is where I want you,'" Dorothy Spaulding said.

They found a building they knew was meant for them, but the owner wanted too much money. Convinced God would give them the building they set a date for an opening reception and sent out 1,000 invitations. Three days before the reception, the owner lowered his price.

They now face the challenge of complying with a Federal Communications Commission mandate to install digital high-definition equipment, an expensive proposition.

"If you can [fulfill] your vision, it's probably not a God vision," Dorothy Spaulding said. "When it's bigger than what you can do, then God has to do it—and He will do it."