

# Pastor's son fulfills toddler prophecy to preach

BY BEA L. HINES  
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Eric Deon Readon was 3 and in kindergarten when he announced to his father, "Daddy, the Lord has called me to preach."

"We thought that was wonderful. Then, he got kicked out of kindergarten," said the Rev. Irvin Howard Readon of his son.

It was the beginning of what would become a habit for the young Readon.

"We kept moving him from school to school, because he was hard to manage. He took to the streets when he was only 14. We couldn't do anything with him. He was incorrigible," the father said.

But, just as the prodigal son of Bible fame "came to himself" and returned to his father, so did the reverend's son.

The prophecy he spoke as a child recently came to pass when Eric Readon preached his first sermon at New Beginning Baptist Church, 2775 NW 183rd St. in Carol City.

He preached at his father's



NURI VALLBONA/HERALD STAFF

**TWO PREACHERS:** Eric Readon stands with his father, the Rev. Irvin Howard Readon. The younger Readon recently preached his first sermon at New Beginning Baptist Church.

church on Pentecost Sunday, the birthday of the Christian church. His sermon: "They thought I was gone, but I'm still here."

Among the congregation were Readon's godmother Julia Vickers Smith of South Dade, who has been instrumental in guiding Readon in the right direction.

Readon, now 24, says he wants to show other young people headed down the wrong path that they can turn their lives around with the help of the Lord.

Looking back on the nearly 10 years he spent on the streets, "making money anyway I could — stealing cars, robbing, whatever," Readon said he believes

the prayers of his father and his mother Meral Carter helped get him through that tough period.

"I got tired of the fast living and having to look over my shoulder," he said.

The change couldn't have come soon enough for his parents, who were divorced when Readon was a youngster. Both have remarried.

"I was constantly praying that the Lord would change Eric and bring him back. He used to come back to the church once in a while, and even sang in the choir, but he wouldn't stay too long," the elder Readon said.

Then, four years ago, Eric Readon was arrested in a drug sweep in North Carolina. He was convicted of drug conspiracy, served four months in jail and was put on three years' probation.

"That was my wake-up call," Readon said. "Now, I feel like I want to help somebody else so they won't have to go through what I did to get to know Jesus."

The elder Readon said he noticed a difference in his son

almost immediately.

"When he got out of jail, he started cutting loose all his old friends. Seven of those friends are now dead — all had violent deaths. I believe God will use my son to help bring in other youngsters from the street."

Eric Readon's goal now is to get the message across to other youngsters that they shouldn't be impressed with the fast life, the easy money and fine cars and jewelry that can come from doing unlawful things.

"I want to tell them not to sell their soul to the devil."

Readon, who is single, is the youngest of three siblings. His elder brother Phillip Readon, 38, is pastor of Salem Baptist Church in Tampa. Charles Irvin Readon, 36, is a Miami-Dade County corrections officer.

Eric Readon already has his high school GED diploma and hopes to enter Smith Chapel Bible College's extension campus, 1899 NW 64th St. in Miami.

"I know God has his hands on him. That boy is serious," said the elder Readon. "If he wasn't, he wouldn't have given up all his old friends."

**READON, REV. IRVIN H.,** 74, Minister, died October 23, 2011. Survivors include: sons, Charles (Shantonill), Rev. Phillip (Janice) and Rev. Eric Readon (LaKeisha); daughters, Sammiah Walker and Rachael Sneed; grandchildren. Prayer Service, 7:00pm., Wednesday at New Beginning Missionary Baptist Church, 2125 NW 155th Street. Visitation Friday, from 4-7pm., with Memorial Service at 7:00pm at New Beginnings Missionary Baptist Church. Service 11:00am Saturday at New Birth Cathedral of Faith. Interment: Dade Memorial Park.  
**Gregg L. Mason Funeral Home**  
Miami Shores (305) 757-9000  
View this Guest Book at www.MiamiHerald.com/obituaries.

Thank you again for your assistance in this matter.

**Windsor, Jerry M.**

Regards

**From:** Hepburn  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 26, 2011 9:01 AM  
**To:** Windsor, Jerry M.  
**Cc:** FBHSPT1 - Penny Baumgardner  
**Subject:** FW: death notice

For your information

**From:** Gary Johnson [<mailto:garyj@mbachurches.org>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 25, 2011 4:09 PM

Dear Pastors and Friends:

This week, a dear retired pastor died from cancer. Pastor **Irvin Readon** has been in the area most, if not all of his life of 74 years.

You may not have known him, but he has two sons who are pastors in the Miami Baptist Association.

Pastor **Phillip Readon** has been at Bible Baptist Church, 9801 NW 24<sup>th</sup> Ave for more than 6 years. Pastor **Eric Readon** started the New Beginning Missionary Baptist Church, 2125 NW 155<sup>th</sup> St about 8 years ago.

The Viewing for **Rev. Irvin Readon** will be held at New Beginning Missionary Baptist Church from 5pm – 8pm, with a service at 7pm on Friday, October 28. The Funeral service will be held at New Birth Missionary Baptist Church, and Bishop Curry at 2300 NW 135<sup>th</sup> St at 11:00am, Saturday, October 29.

I wanted you to know. Please pray for these guys and their families. Also, if you get a chance to send them an e-mail, I think they would appreciate it too.

Of course, you are welcome and invited to be with them at these service times as well. Thanks.

In Christ  
gary

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