



*“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.” - Jeremiah 1:5*

The son of famed civil rights attorney Carroll Rhodes Sr., and being dedicated back to God by his mother Doris Rhodes when he was almost one year old, C. Edward Rhodes II exhibited exceptional, visionary leadership from an early age. While in high school he was elected tenth grade class president; singlehandedly composed a new constitution and bylaws for the student government in the eleventh grade; and during his senior year served as the city school board's first student representative.

Affectionately called CJ by family and friends, the gifted orator frequented churches and civic organizations delivering motivational messages and famous Martin Luther King, Jr., sermons. CJ later received his call to Gospel ministry in July 2000, two months after graduating with honors from Hazlehurst High School. Under the spiritual mentorship of Bishop Arnold Stanton, pastor/founder of New Life Cathedral of Worship in Hazlehurst, he initiated a life of devoted witness to the Gospel.

CJ continued to lead during his time at the University of Mississippi. There he served in various positions in the student government (e.g.: co-founding the Department of Minority Affairs); worked with the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation; and was appointed to the Chancellor's Committee for Respect and Sensitivity. CJ also co-founded two college ministries and was an associate minister to youth and young adults at Clear Creek Missionary Baptist Church and Mt. Hope Baptist Church, respectively. Though originally pursuing a degree in International Studies, CJ graduated in 2004 with a BA in Philosophy.

After serving as religious affairs coordinator with Free the Slaves, a Washington, DC-based human rights nonprofit, CJ continued his education at Duke University Divinity School as both a Dean's Scholar and a Fund for Theological Education Ministry Fellow, earning his Master of Divinity in 2009. There he served as Vice President of the Black Seminarians Union, was elected by his peers to preach the coveted New Seminarians Orientation sermon, and ministered as a chaplain intern for Duke Divinity School's Goodson Chapel and Wake Medical Hospital. Respected by his peers, the young preacher earned the nickname “Bishop” for his charisma, character, and mentorship of fellow seminarians. Upon returning to his native Mississippi, CJ worked for Mission Mississippi, a statewide Christian movement demonstrating and promoting racial and denominational reconciliation.

In 2010 Rev. Rhodes became the youngest pastor of Mt Helm Baptist Church, Jackson's oldest historically African-American congregation. Under his transformative leadership, Mt Helm regained its local and statewide status as a flagship church, became more engaged in evangelism and advocacy, and modeled adaptive paradigms that made the nearly two century old church more relevant and visible for 21st century ministry. In 2014 Helm Place, an 88-house community development, broke ground.

In 2013 Rev. Rhodes was one of fifty persons selected to participate in the Inaugural Institute of Black Theology and Leadership at Princeton Theological Seminary. That same year he was employed by Alcorn State University to lead religious life of the campus and to also teach a course in Ethics. Presently, CJ is a candidate for the Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Leadership for Transformational Ministry at Wesley Biblical Seminary.

Licensed into Gospel ministry by Bishop Arnold Stanton (New Life Cathedral of Worship- Hazlehurst, MS) and ordained in 2009 by Rev. Dr. Maurice Wallace (Cornerstone Church- Durham, NC), CJ's passionate preaching and global Christian vision have been shaped by Christ's prayer for unity among all his disciples. He is a popular instructor in the General Missionary Baptist State Convention Congress of Christian Education and serves as the Convention's Liaison for Ecumenical and Civic Affairs. CJ has also taught in the National Baptist Convention Congress of Christian Education. On the national level, CJ was a member of the Campaign to Elect Jerry Young President of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., and was asked by Dr. Young to preach for the Mid-Winter Board Meeting the year he was inaugurated the Convention's 18th President.

A global citizen and man of the Word, CJ has traveled to two Latin American countries, and ministered throughout the United States. He has published columns that have appeared in the Clarion Ledger, the Jackson Free Press, and the Mississippi Link, and is a much sought after leadership consultant and strategist. Civically, CJ serves on the Alignment Jackson Governing Board, and has been a prophetic voice advocating for payday lending reform, youth empowerment, and excellence in education. He is the host of The CJ Rhodes Show on WRBJ 97.7 FM and is the author of *Thy Kingdom Come: Reflections on Pastoral and Prophetic Ministry*.

Above all, Rev. Rhodes is a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ and is the loving and blessed husband of his beloved Allison Rhodes. Together they are committed to glorifying God and raising their twin sons, Carroll Edward III ("Duke") and Cornelius Josiah ("Jozy").