

A WORD OF TESTIMONY

I count it a joy and a privilege to give a word of testimony and was very pleased when Cyril asked me if I would like to give my testimony for the Church Bulletin.

I was brought up in a non Christian home my mother and father being members of Tobermore Church Of Ireland, at that time. I was one of a family of six, one older sister and three younger sisters, and one brother. We were all sent along every Sunday to Sunday School, then stayed for Church, home for dinner and then all out again to a Sunday afternoon Sunday School, then home again for tea and then my mother, older sister and I went to church in the evening. That was how a Sunday was spent in our home.

After I left school I went into the building trade, and stopped going to Sunday School or Church.

When I was about 18 years old I was in Maghera one evening when I met the local Police Sergeant whom I knew. We had a chat and he asked me if I would like to join the Police Force. I told him I would think about it and let him know. I later called into the Police Station and told the Sergeant that I would like to join the Police. I was accepted into the Force in 1957. My first station was Castledawson, and was there for two years and was later transferred to Coleraine. During my time in Castledawson I was invited to a party in Magherafelt, it was there I met Norah who later became my wife. After a short while going out with her she asked me if I was a Christian. I said I was not, and she told me she was. I started to attend Tobermore Baptist Church under the ministry of Pastor Boggs.

After a while I started to go to the Gospel meetings in Megargy Orange Hall most Wednesday nights along with Norah, her mum and sister, and it was there that I heard the Gospel being preached by different preachers.

The Lord started to speak to me at those meetings, and at one of those meetings on the 7th November 1958 I accepted Christ as my own and personal Saviour.

In 1963 I left the Police Force and started to work in British Enkalon, I was still keeping company with Norah and on the 9th March we got married in Magherafelt Baptist Church.

My wife and I went to live in Antrim, as there was no Baptist Church in the town in those days, we went to Ballyclare Baptist Church. There was a number of families living in and around Antrim. A meeting was arranged with all the families to see if a Baptist witness could be started. We started off with Gospel Meetings in a local hall every Thursday evening and later a Church was formed and a few years later we had our own new Baptist Church built in the town.

In 1972 I left British Enkalon and rejoined the Police Force again. At first I was stationed in Antrim and after four years I was transferred to Coleraine. I went to live in Portrush and later Norah and I joined the local Baptist Church.

My father was very ill in 1975, and died in March. Pastor Boggs visited my father very often while he was in hospital and told me that my father accepted Christ as his own and personal Saviour a week before he died.

Shortly after that my mother, two sisters and my brother all accepted Christ as their Saviour.

Time has not been smooth since we came to live in the Coleraine area. Firstly my second youngest sister May died in April 1987 aged 42 years. Then my wife Norah died in February 1998 aged 59 years, and then my mother died in March 2002 aged 89 years. I still have two sisters and their husbands and families, and two daughters and their husbands and families all not saved.

All I can do is still keep praying for them all, and hope and pray that they will come to my Saviour very soon.....Yours in Christ

Matt Laird.