



### ***People Spot Missile: My Witness***

This is the 14<sup>th</sup> year for the Missiles. I have shared thoughts on whatever seemed important to me at the time. I shared information for pastors and churches. This past week it just seemed important to me to share my own personal witness.

I had the blessed privilege to be born in a Christian home. Levi and Daisy Moss were my parents. They lived the Christian life and participated faithfully in the Parkway Church of God as I was growing up. Going to church was not an option for me through high school. Because of the Christian atmosphere in my home, I made a commitment to Christ when I was 5 and felt a call to ministry when I was 7. I do believe I knew what I was doing. I was baptized at the age of 12 in a small creek in Free's Meadow outside of Frederick, Md.

In the 9<sup>th</sup> grade I was struggling in school, barely surviving. Mr. David Barr taught core which was English and History. He forthrightly challenged me to give my best. He did so in a manner that helped me understand I could do better and did. I will be eternally grateful to him. Without the substantial push he gave, ministry would not have been an option for me.

Though I continued to go to church regularly, years 13-16 were a challenge. I didn't smoke, drink, steal, or go to jail, but the best I can say is that this segment of my life was troubled. My faith was shaken and ministry was not in the picture any longer. One Saturday night I went to a Youth for Christ meeting held at the People's Church on 4<sup>th</sup> Street in Frederick. That night a prominent speaker was supposed to present. He never showed and later I was grateful. A simple, retired pastor was asked to speak off the cuff. He took out his small pocket New Testament and spoke softly and clearly. I was so touched that evening and renewed my commitment to Christ and felt again a call to ministry.

I need to express my deep gratitude to the Parkway Church of God for the nurture and care they gave me while I was growing up as a child through high school. I owe a special thanks to Mrs. Evelyn Sullivan. She was a Sunday School teacher at several levels, choir director, and encourager. I'm not sure that I could have made the journey without her help which also included encouraging my Church to give some scholarship money for me to go to college. I am grateful to Rev. C. O. Sullivan and Rev. F. P. Brose who served the church while I attended.

I am the 5<sup>th</sup> generation of my family to be a part of the Churches of God. However, I am not a Christian because my family was also. I am a Christian because I accepted Jesus Christ as my

personal Savior. There are no second generation Christians. You are either a first generation Christian or you are not a Christian at all.

I believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God. It is the norm for our faith. I know that the Holy Spirit continues to speak today. His instruction today will be consistent with His word in the Bible.

I had the privilege to attend Findlay College and Winebrenner Seminary in Findlay, Ohio. Though FC was small when I attended, I felt I got a good education. I deeply appreciated the teaching of Dr. Wilfred Black in History. The seminary was also very small and had the privilege of close relationships with the faculty, especially Richard Kern, Gale Ritz, Jim Nye, Hilliard Camp and others.

While in College I married Gwendolyn Deiss and we had 5 children and now 5 grandchildren. We were married nearly 48 years.

I began serving as a minister in a very, very small country church when I was 18 years of age. I was at the Jackson Bethel Church of God near Hoytville, Ohio for three years. Then I moved to the Mt. Pleasant Church of God near Mt. Victory, Ohio for the next three years while still a student. The next step was the Ohio City Church of God where I served four years. The next move brought me to Maryland and for two churches that had been split. They were the Carrollton and Westminster Churches of God. I had the circuit for 5 ½ years and then Carrollton alone for an additional 4 years.

I learned much at each spot. I had gracious elders such as Ivan Brubaker, Carl Spencer, Pete Spencer, and Carroll Tinkler who shared their wisdom and helped guide my ministry.

In 1977 I became an Associate Conference Minister for what is now the Eastern Conference of the Churches of God where I served for 31 years. It was my privilege to assist Ken Boldosser, Gail Dunn, Ed Rosenberry, Interim Tom Lucas, and Kevin Richardson on my journey. I had a variety of tasks including 10 years in youth ministry for the Conference, Christian Education and eventually serving with responsibility as the Associate for Renewal and Church Planting.

This past conference I was honored for being a credentialed pastor for 50 years. In addition I was given the first annual "Apostle Paul Award" for my commitment to church planting in a very moving ceremony conducted by the Commission on Church Planting.

I am not boasting but humbly sharing the story of my faith in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and of a lifetime of striving to be a servant of Jesus Christ and His church. I am so grateful to my parents and family, to Ken Boldosser who hired and mentored me as a staff person, and so many people far too numerous to name, for the privileges that have been mine.

*I am now available to present "The Role of the Church in the Civil War", "Starting a New Service", "Churches Have Personalities", "People Spots", "Does Your Church Really Care About People?" and "A Christian Perspective on Leadership Skills." "Stewardship and Managing Debt" jm*

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