

Testimony

by Carroll Hill - (Mohawk)

I am Carroll Hill from the United States. Myself, I'm from the Mohawk tribe, my dad is from the Mohawk tribe. I came from Maine originally. I was born on February 13, 1939.

In the spring my grandmother came down; she had a car-- most of us didn't; just horse and buggies. She came downstate to see us; we lived in a little shack there. She came down to look in on us there.

When she drove into the yard, here my mother was hitched up to a cultivator; she had a breeching strap across her chest with the tail piece of a harness around her neck, and she was pulling this cultivator, and my dad was walking behind with a whip. When my grandmother saw that (she was a very kind woman) she just couldn't take it, and went straight into the house. She never even stopped to talk to my mom. Then my dad unharnessed my mom and brought her in, and when he came in the house, my grandmother said (she told me this herself cause I was only just months old), she said, "When he came in, I just lost it and started telling him off," which wasn't a good move because he was a heavyweight champion boxer in New Hampshire state.

She said, "I got mad and told him off. He was like I wasn't even there. He walked straight by in the bedroom came back with a revolver and cocked it, put it to my head and said, 'One more crack and I'll blow your head off.'" She said, "I never talked for about three days."

That was my introduction to the world, and it was pretty rough. My mom went through a lot. I asked my mom if the story my grandmother told me was true; she said, "It was true." So that's the way we grew up. It was really tough to hear my mother screaming and the kids being beat up and thrown against the wall and thrashed around. I was there included as well. Always seemed to be harder to watch the other ones get it than myself, even though I didn't enjoy it any more than anyone else.

I remember this one night, after I was probably 15 years old, I heard this crying and screaming going on, and I said, "This is enough of this," and so... we all, we had lots of guns in our house; I'm not against guns, when, I think, they're used for hunting. We did a lot of that, too, but I loaded up the rifle when we went to the bush the next day, and I just hid behind a tree, and I see my dad coming, I cocked the old rifle, and had it on his head, and I was following him through the bush, and I just wanted to pull the trigger so bad. But I know to this day, I know now, that it was God that kept me from doing it. I would have blown him away, no question. I can shoot a flashlight battery at a 100 yards. I would have blown him away; I had a 30/40 Craig army rifle. But I just knew this wasn't right, even though I hated him at the time. My dad was an alcoholic.

When I was growing up, I heard the gospel here and there, like, my mother always took us to church, and my dad made us go to church, and things like that. I remember going to a meeting in Bangor, Maine. There was a lot of people there and they gave an invitation, and I went forward in that meeting. I really wanted to get things right then, but the guy took me in the back room, and there were two of us. He gave each of us a Gospel of John, never explained anything, he just left us there, never came back.

For six years, from the time I was 12 years old until I was 18, I didn't know which end was up. I didn't know where I was. I wanted to be saved, but I really wasn't sure about anything. I would pray and cry, and the same time I'd be out doing other stuff I wasn't supposed to do. I didn't seem to have no power to do anything different. It was a real struggle; I got into stealing and all kinds of stuff. God was convicting me all that time. I struggled, and I knew there was something wrong with my life, but I didn't know what was wrong. I knew there were things wrong with our home, but I realized myself that I was really messed up and I needed help.

I guess, being in the place where we grew up, was a place called Jungle Town. They called it that, we were called swamp rats we were just kind of the off scour, kicked around. We were kind of rejects as far as the rest of the town. I really never understood that until I grew up and realized my heritage, but the fact that we had to work in

the woods, that wasn't a bad thing; it was probably good. I went back later to tell my dad that I thanked him for teaching me how to work, to respect my elders, and to respect God, even though he didn't.

I had the opportunity to share the Gospel with him, too. That was many years later, but just to share my own testimony, when I became 18, that's when I realized my life was going down hill fast. We worked hard, never got paid; we just worked. We worked in the woods from early morning till late at night. My mother and my sisters worked - I had five brothers and five sisters - we all worked in the woods. At 18, I turned my heart to Christ there.

I guess the struggle I went through is, I had heard the gospel here and there, I knew I needed to be saved, but I just couldn't quite get a hold of it. In fact, I heard people say they were saved two or three times, but when I came to understand, a scripture that really got to me was in 1 John chapter 5; it talks of if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. We listen to man and we hear the news, we believe it happened, but we don't really sure; we just take it for granted. But God says we should believe Him, "for this is the witness of God which He testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself, he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar because you believe not the record that God gave of His Son." That was where I had the problem. I would pray, I'd try to do it myself, but I just knew I wasn't getting anywhere.

Really, what I was doing was calling God a liar, because I wasn't believing the record He made, that He gave about His Son. John 20:31, "These are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing you might have life through His name." I'd heard that, but I didn't really come to the conclusion that I had to believe it with all my heart. Until I came to understand this, in 1 John 5:11 says "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life, that you may believe on the name of the Son of God." And when I finally got a hold of that, something inside clicked, and from that time on I had that assurance in my heart. Where it said back in verse 10, "we have the witness in our self." God opened that in my heart, that I really believed that He entered my heart that time. I had eternal life because He said so, and not because I think so or hope so, but I know He said it, He did it, Christ paid the price, I accepted that and on the base of that I have eternal life today, and I know that for sure.

I have heard more times than enough, "I used to be a Christian, one time I was a Christian, I don't understand it anymore," because that's the way I was going through, until I came to understand that being born again isn't saying being born again and again and again. When I was born again, I was born into God's family; I belong to God forever. I have eternal life. Eternal life is Christ. Jesus said that when He was praying in John 17; "This is eternal life, that they may know the only true God in Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." And so, when I received Christ, I received eternal life, and I was so happy.

We had a pastor back home and his name was Bob Dunlop, and interesting enough after all these years (I was saved 47 years ago), and he is the pastor in Rivers, not too far from us in Manitoba (wondering who is following who) and anyway, he was the one that came to our house and he came to the woods with us to visit and share with us, and he was the one I went to when I really, really wanted to get straightened out. He showed me the way and that's when I received Jesus Christ as my Savior.

From that time I never looked back. Sure, I had my struggles like anyone else, but I never, when I understood that He had given me eternal life, there was no way I wanted to go back and feed on the garbage.

I just wanted to walk with God, so that fall I went to bible school at New Brunswick Bible Institute. I was there for three years, and that's where I met my wife Kathy. Then we went to the mission field. That was interesting too. We had thought about going to different places, but the Lord led us to work with Native people, and it was interesting that we were working with Natives because I was Native. That was kind of cool.

A lot of my people are struggling; they can't seem to forgive, or can't seem to get clear of this bitterness, you know, from the past. We have to leave that behind. The only way we are ever going to amount to anything ourselves is to get away from that. People question about that too. They say, "How could God change your attitude? You seem to have such a different attitude." I say, "Only God did it," because after I got saved I had a

compassion for my dad. I hated him before that, but now I wanted to see him get saved. I didn't want him to go to hell or be destroyed; I just wanted to see him get straightened out with God.

In fact, when he left home, he ran away, actually took off and remarried out in Washington state, but I didn't see him for 23 years, but I hunted him down and went to see him. I spent four days with him, sharing the Gospel, shared about Christ, what Christ had done for me, and he seemed really open to it. I don't know if he got saved; I don't know that. My brother and I had his funeral when he was 74 years old. He died there, and that was tough.

With all that, I know that my brothers and sisters went through a terrible time; I often think though, especially today when you hear so much about abuse, I have shared this with different ones and they say, "We thought we had been abused until you tell your story." It's not how much you've been abused, it'd abuse, but the forgiveness when God forgave me, I just knew I had to forgive him too. God just gave me a peace about it, and I never have any resentment; God took that completely away. All I can say is, I had compassion for him after that. All my brothers and sisters, most of them have come to the Lord now, and God really changed our hearts; had to be God, there's no question about it.

The blessing is just unreal, to know Christ and to walk with Him, to see so many different ones from different tribes coming to trust Jesus Christ. We are doing a series on Revelation right now, and it says, "Some from every tribe, nation, tongue and people will be there," and that's what I'm looking forward to, the day when we'll see all the tribes and different people we have met all over the world, from all over the world, different tribes and aboriginals who's trust is in Jesus Christ.

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