

I started to work in the service of the Lord while still very young, gathering up the songbooks at camp meeting after the meetings were dismissed, and distributing them again in time for the next service. I found out that doing things for others and helping in God's work brought real joy and happiness. I continued doing Christian work as I grew up, finding time to work for the Lord even after I had a regular job. Today I am privileged to give all my time to Christian work.

I went into the military, and as a soldier, I had the privilege of living for God on the island of Guadalcanal. One night, a soldier came to my bed after the others were asleep and talked to me through the netting. He couldn't sleep because he felt guilty and condemned because of his sins. He said he wanted to be a Christian. I was glad I could pray for him and tell him how to get saved.

As a Christian, I would sometimes be called to go to the bedside of a soldier who was very sick, or who was on the operating table. What a privilege it was to help make him as comfortable as possible, and also to tell him about Jesus. One young man asked me to take his Bible from his jacket and keep it for him. He treasured it as a keepsake because his mother had given it to him. After the operation, he prayed and God saved him. When they came to take him back to

the United States, he pointed to the stump left in place of his hand and said that even though he had lost his hand, he was thankful, because he had been saved through coming to the hospital.

A few years after returning home from military service, I was sent to Africa as a missionary to tell the people there, both young and old, of the Gospel of Jesus and His love for them. Though I saw many new and interesting places and things during my travels, the most beautiful and grand scene was the people there on their knees praying. They had left their worship of wooden and clay idols and were bowing before the true God, seeking His forgiveness and salvation. The greatest joy on earth is to tell others about Jesus.

After many years of being a Christian, I can say that the best choice I ever made was that of choosing to serve God while still a schoolboy.

George Hughes was instrumental in establishing the Apostolic Faith work in Africa. He passed away in 1953 while returning from his second missionary trip to the continent.

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FROM A MINING TOWN TO FAR COUNTRIES



My boyhood days were spent in a little coal-mining town. Our family was little noticed, but God saw us. I had just had my sixth birthday when a Christian paper came into our home. My mother and grandparents read it and found out that Christians could receive greater blessings and more power for God's service. My folks began to pray for those experiences. Every morning and night the Bible was opened and read aloud, and we would all get on our knees and pray. I remember that my grandparents told me that I should pray for God to save me and take the desires for sin out of my life.

Instead of listening to them, I started out to do the things that other boys did. I tried to smoke, hiding out in the berry fields with some of my friends. We made cigarettes out of discarded stubs that we had picked up. However, my heart condemned me. I knew that Jesus would not want me to smoke. I knew every time I said a bad word, became angry, or did any sinful thing, that it hurt Jesus. I knew better than to do those things, but something inside me just made me do them in spite of myself. I tried to do better, but without Jesus in my heart, I couldn't help myself.

One day, my mother and I packed our suitcases, boarded a train, and started on a 300-mile trip to Portland, Oregon. We were on

our way to an Apostolic Faith camp meeting. I shall never forget arriving in the city. We were met by my aunt and cousin, and had only been there for a little while when I said a bad word. My cousin turned and looked at me and said, "When you are saved, you won't say bad things like that." I felt miserable then. When we came to the campground, I noticed how happy everyone was there, and when the church services

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began, I was surprised at the way the people sang—they sang with all their hearts. I knew I was far from being a Christian and I prayed that God would save me, too. God answered my prayer and made a real Christian out of me. He made a complete change in my life, and then it was not hard to live right.

I had been taught that I must read my Bible and pray every day if I was to stay saved. My mother gave me a Bible and also some Bible storybooks. I would set aside a certain time

each evening when I would read some chapters or pages in each.

God kept me true to Him all through my school days even though I had no Christian friends for a long time. Sometimes the boys would tease me, and even the teacher would speak as though she thought it was foolish to be a Christian, but Jesus was a true Friend. He never failed to answer my prayers. When I would get lonely, Jesus helped me to know what to do. I was only seven years of age when I was saved, and I never spent a day in sin from that time on.

As I grew older, I thought I should be more helpful to my mother. I felt that I, too, should help with the expenses. I worked after school and earned money for my clothes and for part of the expense of our yearly trips to the camp meeting. When I did not have work, I would pray and God helped me to find it and to do it well.

Sometimes we would get sick in that little mining town. We had no one to come in and pray for us, so we prayed alone, and God heard and answered our prayers many times. One winter, one of my friends became sick and I thought that if we prayed for her, as I saw the ministers in Portland pray for the sick, God would heal her. I told the others about it and several of us prayed at her bedside. God honored our faith and healed her.