

Milton Haack Testimony

by Milton Haack

Milton Haack shares his powerful testimony of coming to know Jesus Christ and finding assurance of salvation, leading to a life of purpose and service as a missionary.

Scripture: John 3:3, Romans 10:9, Ephesians 2:8, Philippians 4:19, 2 Timothy 1:12

Topics: "Personal Testimony", "Faith And Grace"

Description

Milton Haack shares his journey from religious upbringing and uncertainty about salvation to finding assurance and peace with God through a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Despite facing challenges and opposition from family and peers, he stands firm in his faith, leading him to missionary work in the Philippines with his wife Marge, where they establish churches and share the Gospel. Through moments of doubt, ridicule, and unexpected blessings, Haack's story exemplifies the transformative power of God's grace and the importance of unwavering faith in the face of adversity.

Transcript

I was raised in a religious family and baptized as an infant, sent to Parochial school and taught the Catechism and the doctrines and practices of the Church where all my ancestors belonged and were totally committed. At twelve years of age I was confirmed and re-instated my vows and affirmed that when I was baptized as an infant, I became a child of God and member of the true church. I was taught that to abandon the denomination I belonged to, which was said to be, "the only true church," I would have little chance to get into heaven. I never questioned what I was taught because I knew the catechism from cover to cover, but was a stranger to the Bible.

My father was a dairy farmer and by the time I was a teenager I knew the farm was not for me. It was too early in the morning, too late at night and too hard in between. It was in the late 1930's when World War II was brewing and I was elated when my "1-A draft" classification, came. My mother cried. The draft board told me, because I had farm experience they would give me a deferment if I would take a job on another farm. I told them, "no thanks, when do I go?" - My mother never found out about this.

I volunteered for the Navy and in Boot Camp the first day after induction a rough cursing chief came storming into our barracks and said, "you guys are no longer your own bosses; UNCLE SAM is going to tell you when to go to bed, when to get up, and what to do in between" - By that time I was thinking, maybe the old farm wasn't so bad after all. I remember leaning on my bunk and listening to all the cursing and filthy language, something my religious parents wouldn't permit in their home. I thought, if something

happened to all of us and we died, surely I would go to heaven because I tried to be good and I was baptized and a member of what I thought was the only true church. The fact is if 100 of the men would go to heaven, I would not be one of them.

From there I was sent to the east coast for further training; I had volunteered for PT Boats and was enroute to Melville Rhode Island with a temporary stop over in Boston. In the barracks I saw a young man my age about 18 or 19 sitting on his bunk, reading a book which looked like it, could be the Bible. I knew no one would have the courage to read the Bible in an environment like that. I decided I would walk past to check him out. It was the Bible all right but I kept going because I didn't want to associate with someone like that. I decided, well I have some training in religion; maybe we could get into a religious debate.

The first question he asked me was, "Are you saved?" - This angered me, so I told him. "no one can know he is saved, because how do you know God wants you in heaven?. He told me how he was, "born again:" and had assurance of salvation and peace with God. I said to him, "we have been arguing for 45 minutes and you have left out the most important part of salvation, "baptism", you know that is the way of salvation. He handed me his Bible and said, "Please show me where to find that" - I made a mistake by taking his Bible because I didn't know Genesis from Revelation. I had to admit I didn't know where to find it but I said, "I have a minister back in Minnesota, he knows where to find it, and that's good enough for me" - I flung his Bible onto his bunk and walked away in a huff.

That night I prayed my first un-memorized prayer because I couldn't find it in my prayer book. The prayer was, "Lord this barracks isn't big enough for the two of us, please get one of us out of here quickly" - The Lord answered that prayer; the next day I was on the train going to the PT Boat training center in Melville RI. - Was I glad to get rid of that fellow.

While at the training center on a weekend liberty pass, I visited a recreation park in Massachusetts and while there I noticed two girls handing out papers to the troops. As she handed one to me I could see it was something religious, and she said, "are you saved?"

I thought, Oh no, here we go again. I said, "yes I'm saved" and then changed the subject. When I was finished she said, "you told me you were saved, I would be interested to hear how you got saved" - I was in deep trouble so I mimicked the testimony of the fellow I just got rid of in Boston. She thought it was a good testimony, and it was but it wasn't mine and it only added another lie to my already long list of sins. She invited me to their chapel the following Sunday evening to a testimony meeting. I went and there were four men who gave their testimony and I observed each one had a conversion experience and had assurance of salvation. By this time I was thinking, "if these people are right, I am on my way to hell because I have baptism and religion but no assurance of salvation". From there I was sent to the west coast and then to the Philippine Islands where a real war was going on. I watched twelve American ships sink with many of my buddies dying and I would ask myself, "Suppose that would have been me, where would my soul be?" - My religion and baptismal certificate brought no peace when the bombs were falling and my buddies were dying. I attended a Bible Study on base where the Gospel was clearly presented. They said they have "a Bible study each morning after breakfast and would welcome me to attend" so I went the next morning and about five of us went to our knees to pray; and each one thanked the Lord for salvation and assurance. I was the only one left to pray and how could I thank God for salvation when I didn't have it? - There in a thatched-roof chapel, built by the US Navy on Samar Island on my knees, I quoted the words of a chorus I sang and memorized the night before. "Thank you Lord for saving my soul, thank you Lord for making me whole, thank you Lord for giving to me Thy great salvation so full and free:"

- I stood to my feet rejoicing with the assurance of sins forgiven and peace with God.

I went back to the PT Boat and wrote a letter to Mom and Dad about the good news of salvation in Christ. They wrote many letters but never responded to my conversion experience. After the war when I went home I found out why. My dad said, "you have gotten caught up in a cult that says you can know you are saved before you die; you will have to make a decision; either give up that strange religion and return to the only true religion or get out of my house" - I said, "dad, I will go but I am taking my Savior with me" - I didn't see mom and dad for six years, though we corresponded. Many of our Christian friends were praying and 20 years later dad and mom got saved and were in an assembly in Minnesota.

The girl who handed me a tract in the park in Massachusetts is Marge; we corresponded during the war and some years later we were married.

After getting saved in the Philippines I got acquainted with the Filipino people and learned to love them and almost immediately prayed about the possibility of one day returning as a missionary to tell them about the Savior I met in their country. Marge and I got married with this thought in mind. Twelve years later the Lord opened the door and we took our two children with us to share the Gospel, teach the Word and establish local churches. We returned to the states, 31 years later, for medical help and now reside in Minnesota, but I make yearly visits and keep in close communication with them by mail and phone. The assemblies are indigenous and are doing better now than when we lived there.

Back to the Philippines; after I got saved I tried to attend all the Bible studies on the base. I was on my way to the Bible study with my little pocket New Testament in my hand and on the top deck the skipper and the crew were celebrating. The skipper announced in a loud voice, "Hey, guys, put your beer away, Rev. Haack is coming through" - Everybody laughed and they said, "pray for us Haack so we won't get too drunk" - More laughter; I stood on the bow of the boat and preached my first unrehearsed Gospel message. "Men if you don't repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are on your way to hell" - More laughter; and then I turned back and said, "And skipper, that goes for you too" - More laughter; but I was uncomfortable with that because I knew I could be in big trouble with insubordination. That night when I returned, the guard on duty told me, "the skipper wants to see you in the state room at 08:00 tomorrow. Now I was sure I was in trouble.

The skipper was waiting for me and said, "I want to talk to you about what happened last night" - I said, "yes sir, I know" He said, when I was a teenager I went to a Christian camp and I professed to receive the Lord as my Savior.. then I joined the Navy and something happened... I guess you would never have guessed I once professed to be a Christian, would you?" - I said, "no sir" - He said, "I want you to know I am sorry for the way I treated you last night... and I have been looking at your records and noticed it has been a while since you got a promotion... so I am sending to headquarters a recommendation for a promotion... it will be about a month and you will wear another stripe... and I want you to know I am glad to have a Christian on board who isn't ashamed of Christ." - I said, "thank you sir" -

Now, back on the mission field in the first term. It is a known fact that the first term is the most challenging as far as material support is concerned, because from the human perspective, few people know you. We had two children who needed school tuition as well as other material needs. We considered food, rent and tuition legitimate needs. We figured out that we needed \$49.50 cents by the end of the month to pay those bills. We didn't have it so we prayed that the Lord would supply. We went to the Post Office to pick up the mail and there was a letter from some folks in Canada whom we didn't know. They wrote a note, "we

noticed you are new on the field and my wife and I decided we would send you the enclosed, \$50.00 for you to use as needed". - Our God has proven many times through the years that He supplies our needs without sending out begging or hinting letters. He is our Father and doesn't see us as beggars but heirs to His great estate.

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