

Faith Of Our Youth

February 1997

"The Voice of Young Christian Faith"

Volume 4 Issue 1

Respect For Mrs. Simon

by Benjamin J Morris

Mrs. Simon, an elderly woman with a formal European background, was normally a very active and healthy eighty-five year old. After having a few spells of sickness she was admitted to the hospital for a series of test. When she entered, Mrs. Simon's belongings were quickly taken from her and put in a safe place. Her eyeglasses, house robe, and dentures were among the items taken. The explanation for their removal was cold and blunt. "Senile old people can hurt themselves with those false teeth."

Many of the comments from the young hospital staff members were similar to this. When a close relative objected to the use of the word 'senile' in reference to Mrs. Simon, a nurse replied, "She's eighty-five years old, people at that age don't have all their marbles." Comments of this nature continued to increase while Mrs. Simon's health steadily declined.

Tired of being called "Dollie," "Grannie," and the like, she reverted to speaking her native German tongue. To this the hospital asked a neurologist to visit with her. His determination was that Mrs. Simon was suffering from 'psychotic episodes' indicated by her 'unintelligible gibberish.' After a two week stay in the hospital, Mrs. Simon's physical body finally gave up the fight.

("My Name is Mrs. Simon.", LHI,

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My Walk

by
Terry Martin

My walk started at 4:00 a.m. May 19, 1993 with a one half hour drive to downtown Kansas City. I can't remember what my father said as he dropped me off. His words were soft and full of love, but hard for him to express. It was an awkward time for both of us saying good-bye.

At 5:30 p.m. the same day I and two other people were taken to Kansas City International airport. We were headed for San Antonio, Texas. We were going farther away from home than ever before. We were going where we didn't know anyone, not even each other. We were on our way to basic training, where all men and women of the Air Force have to go.

When we arrived in San Antonio it looked like any other airport, people rushing by, waiting, looking lost, hugging loved ones whom they haven't seen in some time. We were put in a holding area with both men and women from all over the United States. We were all there for the same reason, but yet with different purposes.

The time was going slowly and it was getting late. A bus finally arrived around 9:15 p.m. About 40 of us got on and were ready to go. I sat up front by a window. All I really remember is looking up at the moon and thinking about my family. How I wished I would have spent more time with them before I left. It didn't take long to get to the

base, only about half an-hour.

Upon arriving the first place they took us was to a cafeteria to get something to eat. After that we went to a different building to go through a check-in process to ensure everyone was there. Shortly after 11:00 p.m. we all got back on the bus and proceeded to our respected living quarters. As we went from building to building they all looked the same. Then my name was called "Martin." It was kind of an uneasy feeling hearing my name called, but it still hadn't hit me that I was actually at basic training. As I got off the bus with about six other guys, they told us to line up in a straight line along side each other. The building looked old and it's design was like nothing I've ever seen. We stood under an overhang that extended from the building on all four sides.

Shortly our TI (Training Instructor) came out of a door in front of us. There was the man who was going to yell at us and teach us all the things we needed to know to be in the Air Force. He didn't look at all like I had pictured him as being big and intimidating. He was a short guy about 5' 7" and not very big. Actually I was kind of disappointed. None the less, he started calling off our names to make sure everyone was there. The first guy responded, "here." The T.I. then yelled, "you all better stand at attention when I'm talking to you." He then took a moment to show us all how to stand at attention.

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After the last name was called he said, "this is your new home, this is the place where all of you will be staying for the next six weeks. Now get in line, shut up and follow me upstairs".

We went up two flights of stairs and entered a door with a tiny little window at eye level. Upon entering we took an immediate left into another room with couches and chairs on three sides of the room. We were told to sit on the floor and be quiet. It did cross my mind as to why he would tell us to sit on the floor. I didn't question it, I just sat down. At this point I not only felt like sitting down on the floor, I felt like lying down and going to sleep.

After I sat down I glanced up at this chalk board and saw written "Sir, Airman _____ (last name) reports as ordered". Just as I finished reading the sentence the T.I. threw me a book about three quarters of an inch thick. He told everyone to write down those six words on the board on top of this book and to fill in our last name. He stated, "from this point on if you need to speak you better memorize those six words. If you want to know how to do something read the book". This is similar to the way we speak to God in prayer and read the Bible for instruction in righteousness.

By this time it was getting close to midnight, and my attention span was non-existent. Then he told us to get up and to bring our book with us. As we walked out of the room, the door we originally came in was on our immediate right. To our left were two big open rooms with no doors. We went past the first one and then went about another 15 feet to the second one. We were told to find a bed and go to sleep. This was the best news I heard all day and I wasted no time in finding a bed.

The next morning the lights came on, music started playing and I heard men yelling. I sat up in my bed and looked around on both sides of me. I saw guys jumping out of their beds and standing up. Then I tuned in to what the men were saying, "get up, get up and stand next to your bed." Then and there I realized where I was and the reality began to sink in. I got up quickly and stood next to my bed like everyone else. Two T.I.'s came to our side and told us to put all of our valuables in our hands and spread everything else out on our bed. One T.I. started yelling at the first guy. I was about the 5th bed down. No one could understand him he was talking so fast. He got to my bed and rattled off some-

thing real fast. I just said, "Yes sir" and then he went on. Once all of that was complete they told us to get dressed and get downstairs for breakfast. During breakfast I tried to observe all the guys who were in my group.

After breakfast we were headed off for the traditional first day thing. Everyone must have their hair buzzed off. We lined up in four columns, about 12 people deep and started marching. It seem liked we marched for ever. Finally, we reached the building where we got our haircuts.

After our haircuts, I could hardly recognize one person from another. It's an odd feeling getting your head shaved.

"Sometimes I don't think we realize how much Sunday worship service, or any service for that matter, helps us."

I think about it now and I can compare it to being baptized. Before you are baptized, you are of the world. Once you have been baptized you are a child of God and everyone around you of like precious faith is family. Once we received our haircuts, it was like we had shed the things of this world and were isolated from the cares of this world. "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col 3:10). We were physically isolated yes, but the haircut made it evident that we were together as a team and dependent on each other. We had been transformed. We all came from different backgrounds of race, culture and families. The things that made us individuals and the way we expressed ourselves in the world didn't matter in this situation. Being a Christian we know that we must not love the things of this world. "Love not the

world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 Jno 2:15). Our Christian walk today is similar to this. We live in the world everyday, but we must remember not to fall into those things that are of the world.

After our haircuts we were issued all our clothes. Everything from socks and T-shirts to a coat and shoes and a duffel bag to throw them into. This was the last time we would wear our civilian clothes. We put on the standard military camouflage uniform, boots and all. Now we all truly looked the same from our shaved head to our combat boots. We packed all of our stuff in our duffel bags and prepared to march back to the barracks. The bag was heavy and each man had to carry his own. Paul speaks of this, "For every man shall bear his own burden" Gal 6:5. Everyone had to carry their own bag. This was a test of faith and endurance to see if every man could carry his own weight. This is another comparison how we must take care of ourselves as Christians, so that we might be able to help others in need of help.

Upon arrival at the barracks we hauled our duffel bag up the stairs and the TI instructed everyone into our training room; the one with all the couches and chairs. He explained to us how to mark and fold our clothes, everything from undergarments to our laundry bag. When everything was marked we went into one of the rooms where all the beds were. He showed us how to make a bed the military way. He stated that who ever sleeps beside you will be your partner and that you must help each other. He had a couple of us make the bed so we would understand how people must work together to get the job done. Once we were familiar with it, he told us to go make our beds and to fold our clothes. Folding the clothes was the complicated part and we had to look to each other for help. This same principle applies for Christians. In Gal 6:2 we are taught to, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Finally after three days of training and marching everywhere it was Saturday. Even though it had only been three days, I was drained from the long days. I was glad it was the weekend. The T.I. will go home and we can finally get some rest around here. It wasn't long until I realized

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