

Ask the elder

NAME: Norman Biggerstaff

AGE: 67

OCCUPATION: Storeman (part time)

FAMILY: Youngest of three. Both of my parents had passed away by the time I was 16.

I started Artana Primary on my 5th birthday. I then went to Dromore Intermediate Secondary School followed by one year at Lisburn Technical College for one year after which I worked for the government who were paying me the £3 per week for almost three months until I got a full time job in Lisburn in September 1970. I am still employed by the same firm two days a week.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN COMING TO FIRST DROMARA?: I have been coming to First Dromara since I was four or five years old.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AN ELDER?: I have been an elder since November 1984.

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME TO FAITH?: I became a Christian on the 5th November 1980 whilst attending a Gospel Mission in Waringsford Orange Hall conducted by the late Mr Noel Grant and the late Mr Matt Boland. That night Mr Boland preached on the text, "I must increase but thou must decrease." That night I decided to accept Jesus as my own and personal Saviour.

WHAT DIFFERENCE DID IT MAKE TO YOUR LIFE?: The change it made in my life was that I had no desire to go to places that Christians should not be or use bad language etc. It also made me take more of an interest in church life.

HAVE YOU ANY WORDS OF WISDOM?: Honour God in all things and He will honour you.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE HYMNS AND WHY?: My favourite hymns are 'What a friend we have in Jesus' and 'When I survey the wondrous cross'. Those two hymns reminds us that we take everything to God in prayer and of the suffering and price that was paid



by our Saviour on the cross.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE VERSE OR PASSAGE?: A favourite verse of mine is found in Joshua Chapter 1 verse 9: 'Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid,

neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest.'

CAN YOU TELL US SOMETHING THAT WE DO NOT KNOW ABOUT YOU?: During the years I have been involved in a number of incidents. I will just mention two bomb attacks at my work on the 30th March 1972 in which I escaped without injury.

Although not a Christian at the time, the place where I work was a timber yard and bottles of gas were stored there. In between was a driveway the width of two vehicles. Unknown to myself or anyone else there was a car parked across the door of the timber yard containing a bomb estimated to be 80-100lbs of explosives.

Still unaware that the bomb was in the car, it was decided to clear the yard and move the car out to the road. I got in to the car and switched the ignition on. Someone called me to do something else and another person reversed out and parked on the road. Approximately ten minutes later the bomb exploded causing serious injury to some of my work colleagues who I had been working with before the bomb exploded, as well as substantial damage to property. I was less than 50ft from the car when the bomb exploded.

The second bomb attack was when a no warning bomb went off. Again I was in the building and escaped injury whilst many work colleagues were injured.