



Hal E. Mortonff

January 21, 1955 to April 26, 1981

Hal's Testimony.

Graham Family Reunion, July 1980

"As I've been looking at all the faces here, I remember a lot of things while I was growing up. What I think I remember the most is how the scriptures talk so much about being a doer of the Word and not a hearer only and how this family was such a portrayal of Christ. While I was growing up, I was pretty rebellious as most of you know, and I really didn't take heed to a lot of what was being shown to me.

One day, I was out hitch-hiking in New York and I surrendered my life to Christ. When Christ came into my life, cleaned me up, and gave me a new spirit, one of the first things I thought of was, 'Wow, I am really a part of the Graham family now.' It is not just a temporal family, because so many of you know the Lord in such a deep, personal way, and you have been showing me all my life what it is to be a Christian and what it is to be a part of the eternal circle. I saw an album cover that said, 'A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To Hell ... I Got Saved.' It is really neat to know that I am going to be with my family up there. I really wanted to share that."

Written by his wife, Verna, after Hal's passing. (April 26, 1981)

Around ten o'clock Sunday evening, April 26th I was getting ready to retire for the night. Hal had decided to go jogging before going to sleep that night. After he left I had a desire to look at our wedding pictures and to read from the scripture before going to bed. Around one-half hour later we received word that Hal had collapsed and the EMS was rushing him to DeKalb Hospital. We rushed to the hospital and Hal was pronounced dead a little before eleven that night. The Doctor in charge could not find any medical reason for his death and even after the autopsy which was performed the next day all they could say was that his heart just stopped working.

I want to share my gratitude and appreciation to the community for their concern, their sympathy and their acts of kindness that have been shown.

To all those who responded to the accident, I give my deepest thanks.

When I had opened my Bible that night to read the Lord shared something with me. I would like to share that with you. Psalm 30:11, 12: "Then He turned my sorrow into joy! He took away my clothes of mourning and gave me gay and festive garments to rejoice in, so that I might sing praise to the Lord instead of lying in silence in the grave. Oh Lord my God I will keep on thanking you forever!

Hal's death has left an empty spot in my life. His love was so rich and full for me, our daughter, and others that it cannot be measured. The reason I can have joy in this time is because of the hope that is given to me through Christ and His promises to all who believe in His name. The hope is one of eternal life, life after death; the promise is that the strength of Christ and the comfort of God is available for me at all times. We are learning to lean on Him.

Because of Hal's love for Jesus Christ, God's Son, He anticipated the day when he would meet his Savior. I know that Hal is filled with gladness and is giving thanks forever to God in heaven. He would want you to know about the great love he had for the people of this community. Many times I heard him say, "I want these people to know how their lives can be changed by the love of God through Jesus Christ His Son." God loves you all very much and with God's love Hal loved you all.

Verna Mortonff