

Larry's Military Experience

1956-1964

I served on four ships, three destroyers and a guided missile cruiser. I became a Christian while in the navy. We had a Christian Servicemen's Center in Portsmouth. The spiritual guidance and help there was of great help to me.

While serving on one of the ships, the gunnery officer, Lt. Meining came to me and asked if I would serve as protestant lay leader aboard ship. I consented to do so. As lay-leader, it was my responsibility to conduct services on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening in the absence of the chaplain. That was an interesting experience. I also held Bible studies aboard ship. Overseas, whenever possible, I would visit missionaries. I had an opportunity to speak in a church in Toulon, France. A shipmate and I visited missionaries in Barcelona, Spain. Then protestant tracts were illegal to give out to people on the streets. We met these missionaries who asked us to help smuggle church materials out of the country to churches in the states. On a return trip to Spain we were able to take New Testaments in for the missionaries to use in their ministry.

Some of the other things interesting in my life as a sailor was a trip to West Berlin, and a conversation with Willie Brandt, then mayor of West Berlin. Then there was the trip to Kiel, Germany. Being invited to a German home, this lady looked at me and said, "Don't worry, we won't poison your coffee." I responded with a thank you. I also had interesting times with missionaries in other countries. If I wrote in detail, I could write a book. I'm not up to that just yet.

I became a Christian while in the service. I am convinced that the Lord uses Christians in the military just like anywhere else. If you have any questions, just contact me. Sorry this is so late getting to you.

Love,
Larry