

Keisha Roberts: —and when this other tape stopped, you were saying that you handed over the mission?

Georgie Johnson: Oh, yeah. I was President of Mission for about 15, 20 years. After my cousin, [indistinct 00:00:15], got sick. She appointed me as her assistant before she got down, and then when she got down, I had to take over President, then we had another Vice President. And I was a missionary for 15—I got a plaque in there, they give me. I got two or three plaques in there they give me. For service that I did, in mission. I used to go different place and minister for folk. Go to Campbell, see the people down there that we knew. Give things for them, or something. Like fruit baskets at Thanksgiving, big fruit basket, or if there was somebody down there we know need clothes. Like gown, pajamas or housecoat, or [indistinct 00:01:07].

Georgie Johnson: And just visit the rest home. Sometimes we'd go visit rest homes, we'd give soap, or bath cloth and things, different stuff like that. Little gift for everybody. And we went out here, Rosemount, at Christmas for last year, we had something for everybody. We'd give them soap, or a box of powders, or a washcloth, or something that we knew they need. I don't know, what they're using up, or—so them folks got it. Because they tell me, they can't get anything new there, that ain't somebody there, they folks, or something. It winds up in the wrong hands. That's what I have heard.

Keisha Roberts: People steal it?

Georgie Johnson: I mean, they would steal it, they take it, and—yeah. Edward Glen say his daughters brought him two new pair of pajamas. He wore one, but see, the thing about it, the children should have kept them home, to wash them. Well, when it went through a cycle of washing down there, he said he ain't seen them since. Well, I bought some at a yard sale, for my cousin when he was in a rest home, up there on—going towards Chapel Hill. And Zora Lee got this ink that wouldn't come out and wrote his name in the back of the—back here. And you could wash and it wouldn't come out.

Georgie Johnson: And me and her went over there one time to see John, he had on an old top or something, and a bottom of something else, and neither piece of it was what I gave him. So, that's the way they do. And so, when Zora Lee's mama was down there, they carried a laundry bag down there. And whenever they change her, they supposed to put them clothes, her clothes in there, and they brought them home and wash them, and iron them, carry them back. That's the only way they kept up with her clothes. So they didn't get to steal her, if they stole them. And I carried to Aida an afghan down there—you know, she's sat in a wheelchair a lot—[indistinct] was the one at Duke.

Georgie Johnson: You see, when they're sitting in a wheelchair, they need some sort of gown, some kind of short. I carried her an afghan Miss Viola McCrae, crocheted, at least, she knitted it for them, and I give it to Aida. And I went over there, saw it one time after I give it to her over her lap, and I ain't seen it since. I don't

know what come of that, whether somebody took it or what happened to it. I didn't ask. That's the one that Edward Glen was at, he was at that rest home.

Keisha Roberts: Now, just a few minutes ago we were talking about the missions that you did at church. Was it mostly other women who did the mission work?

Georgie Johnson: No, we all go together. The President always go with the other group. When we go to the rest home, the President always—one President, if they couldn't go, well, the Vice President would go. And we'd go to down here at Butner. Like, that one go. We carried donation clothes down in there. Different folks bring clothes. We'd go through them and see how they is before we carry them though. We don't just grab up the bag and carry them, because we got—one fellow brought a whole lot of stuff out that somebody donate, and we went through that stuff, and we had to throw away about a fourth of it. Because I'd say, "I wouldn't give that to nobody." And you can't guess what we found in the stuff.

Keisha Roberts: What?

Georgie Johnson: A gun holster. It was a shotgun holster, or a rifle holster. I brought it the house and give it to that boy, because I know he got some antique gun. There was leather. Old belts, and literally everything. We sit down there in the basement and went through that mess. DC was living, then. He said "Mm-mm" (negative) he always shake his head. Said to me, "Nobody, I not—I give nobody nothing like this to give away." He said, "I throw that away." I said, "No, I'll take it to Ed." Ed could be glad to get that gun holster, because he got some antique guns up there on the wall. They won't shoot, but they're an old gun. And I brought it here. Ed rubbed that thing, and it was leather. I said, "Well, I don't see how in the world anybody could be stupid enough to want to send a gun holster to Butner!

Georgie Johnson: That got me. And DC, he turns to her— he dead, that poor thing. But he always made a miration at everything. And then we— we sorted it out, and all what won't fit, we let him throw it in the bag, throw it on his truck and carry it to the junk pile.

Keisha Roberts: Were there things that only the women in the church did?

Georgie Johnson: Hm?

Keisha Roberts: Were there things that only the women in the church did, and some things that only the men did?

Georgie Johnson: Well, the mens help us sometime, because women used to box up the food, that canned food. Well, DC help us box that up once or twice, and he would deliver. And some of my—I got up in church, and told that, right in the church. And I told them, I said, "Now, if you're giving somebody something, you want to give them something worth something." I said, "Somebody giving you something, you want to give them something that is good, and not bad." I said, "Some of those cans, the tops were swollen," I said, "And some of them was marked with that black stuff, where they had put out there, and was cheap." And I said,

"And been in the store a long time, is the reason they done it." I said, "I don't even buy dog food, what's been in. I don't buy my dog—"

Georgie Johnson: And so, I said, "If you can't buy but one can, buy some that's label is not done gone, done expired or something." I said, "Because you don't want to give nobody nothing like that." So, last time I went, last year when we went through it for Christmas, we didn't come across no bent cans, but we did come across some that's there was stamped the label was out. I mean, you know, it's out of date. So we didn't give that to nobody, we just divided it up and took it home. I got some in there now, I'm going to throw out. My dog won't eat it. That real old spaghetti stuff, she won't eat it. I got about four cans in there.

Georgie Johnson: And now, when you—that's another thing. Folks don't know how to give. If they read the Bible, they find out, because the Bible's tell you, said that when you wouldn't give your child a stone when they ask for bread, and that's what it means. You give good gift when you give folks something. You don't give them something you don't want. "Just like clothes," I told, I said, "When you bring clothes here, you don't give them something raggedy, or out of style, or done faded or something."

Georgie Johnson: I said, "All us can at least spare one good something we don't want." I said, I told them then. I said, "I got two or three dresses hanging up in the closet that I didn't even put on this year." And I said, "If we can sacrifice and give somebody something for good, we get a blessing from it." I said, "You don't get no blessing from giving somebody something you need to throw away. You don't."

Keisha Roberts: Earlier, did you say that you—

Georgie Johnson: But when folks want to receive gifts, they want you to give them the best. Because I know, one lady, she dead now. The Pastor's Aid thing, they was giving out—oh, they just went to extreme. I didn't even ever join that, because I said, we give the Pastor too much, now. According to the Bible, told them to go, and what'll right be given to them, but most of them, they like when you set a certain salary, and give him, promise him so much. He won't even preach. Because we had one preacher come out that one time, and we was going to pay him \$50 for a sermon, then. And this preacher preached, and they went to pay him. I don't whether they going give him a check, or going give him money. And that's been a pretty good while ago.

Georgie Johnson: He told them, "Brother, I tend to get \$100 for a homecoming sermon." Now, even though—he not no preacher. He was just man out there for money. He wasn't a Godsent man. Now, if I'd have felt like then I was a preacher, I sure wouldn't have said it. I wouldn't have told them. I just wouldn't have went to come back there no more. Yeah. Said, "Brother, I tend to get \$100 for a homecoming sermon." And the people ain't up there about 30 minutes, preaching. He's sitting down most time, and he get up most of them preach about 20 minutes, and they talk and that's about 10, and that's about it. And you're paying a person that much for - now, they get about \$100. I mean, about \$100 worth. Most of them get about \$100, I said, for five or 10 minutes. They do, for what they charge. I'm telling you, all religion that money's done—well, the Bible says, "For the love of money is root of all evil." And money is just done gone to most fool's heads.

Georgie Johnson: But it don't bother me, because God said He'd supply all I would need. And I told him all I had, I've been making it pretty good on what I had. And I haven't been hungry. I didn't get cold last winter. Had plenty of gas in the tank. And had plenty of food. And I got plenty of clothes. Got more clothes than I could wear in one winter. About saving suits, which, usually run to the store buying or nothing. I don't care if they is out of style, or ain't the newest thing on the market. I don't need the newest thing on the market. Yeah, I got a whole lot of winter suit, about four or five summer suits, and all those dresses. I don't need them. Most folk want something new or different every time they go out.

Georgie Johnson: I told them one morning there, I said, "Now, other folks done got to the place, they use church as a fashion house. They think they can't come to church if they ain't got something new to show off." I said, "I don't come here to show off my clothes. As long as I'm clean and decent, I feel like I'm all right." Goodness.

Keisha Roberts: Well, I think this might be enough for our first interview.

Georgie Johnson: Hm.

Keisha Roberts: We've been talking for probably a while, and you might want your own time now.

Georgie Johnson: Yeah. It's been a second. My daughter always says that. "Mama, you're all talked up."

Keisha Roberts: Well, it's definitely—

Georgie Johnson: She didn't want me to go to the doctor, the other doctor. I went—see my doctor down here, [indistinct 00:13:14] she was—that clinic went out of business, and I had to find me a new doctor, so I went to old Dr Hargrove, do you know her?

Keisha Roberts: Mm-mm.

Georgie Johnson: Just down here on Duke Street, you turn before you get to that place, on the right. And I went there, and seen them. I didn't like that, after. After I first went there and see, a nurse done everything. She come in there and took my pressure, my temperature, and punched my finger and got me a little blood. And then way later on, Dr Hargrove come in there and just said, talked a few words to me. And I told her, I said, "I just come down here for you to renew my prescription." I said, "Because the other doctor, she wrote for three months, and the three months is about out." And that heifer went in there and changed the prescription, and I took about a week or more before I kind of see an effect, and I told Betty, I said, "Betty," I said, "I got to find me another doctor, I don't like old Dr Hardwater."

Georgie Johnson: My son, Roy goes there, but you see, he's with a company, there, he's a more company doctor. I mean—and so I went there and I said, well, I kept calling, calling, and I said, "I want to speak to the doctor, Dr Hargrove." First time, I talked to the nurse. Next time, I talked to her, she said, "Well, can you tell

me, what your problem?" I said, "I want to talk to the doctor." I said, "She changed my medicine and I'm having problem." I said, "I told her I wanted this prescription, but I didn't need it changed. I was doing all right." I said, "And ever since then, my legs and everything been sore."

Georgie Johnson: And then I went back to Lee Miller, my main doctor. I found out where she were, because she thought they were going to leave town when her husband graduated from Duke. If he didn't find a job, she said they were going to go back home. And I found out she was on Duke Street. Now, Betty called her, my daughter, called her and got an appointment. She give me an appointment just like that. After I told them I was having problems with the medicine, give me an appointment about four or five days later. Four or five days.

Georgie Johnson: When I went down there, I carried the appointment card because what she had. I said, "Appointment card they did give me was dated on Sunday. It weren't even dated on a office day at all." It was dated for the seventh, and I said, "Now, y'all messing with my body and I don't like that." I said, "Because it's not your body you're fooling with." And I said, "The doctor changed my medicine. I told her all I wanted her to do was rewrite the prescription." I said, "And I know if she's a doctor, she knows what that prescription were." And she wrote it and I didn't know it was different until I go down here at the drug store, and go down that drug store, and the lady at the drug store, she knows me, because I go get my medicine.

Georgie Johnson: She said, "She changed your prescription." I asked her how much it would be, she said, "\$40." I said, "What?" I said, "Well, I don't see how could it be that much." She said, "It's for stronger medicine, and it's for a longer period." I say, "Shoot." And so, after I gone and checked with my old doctor, I carried her all the prescription what Dr Hargrove, and then she said she couldn't understand it, what she wrote that script. I said, "Now, I thought I kept taking that medicine she'd kill me." I said, "I couldn't have sued her because I'd have been dead."

Georgie Johnson: But darn, they kills more folk. Doctors kills that many—I heard that on TV. That doctors kill as many folk as they cure. They experiment and that. Because I - see, my sugar level was all right, it was 130. That's what the nurse told me, she had one of those machines. And I got a cousin down here, got one stay down here at out by the river, and I got another cousin across the river, over this way, got one of them things. They take their own sugar count. And so, I told her, I said, "I could have had that done without coming down here. But I had to have the prescription renewed so I could get the medicine. They wouldn't give it to me at the drug store without a doctor signing."

Georgie Johnson: So, I had Margaret to call and cancel my appointment over there at Dr Hargrove's, I said, "Don't tell her I done gone back to another doctor." I said, "I ain't going back to her no more." Next thing you know, I'll be laying on the box, still.

Keisha Roberts: Did you used to go to Lincoln Hospital?

Georgie Johnson: Yeah. I went over there and them folks got so messy I got scared of them. Some of them now, they got a new group over there, now. They said they doing—they must have caught up with a whole

lot of them. A lot of those folks over there, they go down there and get their prescriptions and have to wait I don't know how long, again. Oh, he got on a mask. (laughs) That dog.

Georgie Johnson: And you get the prescription, you get home, you find out you got somebody else's stuff. Messed up like that. Now, I had a friend, she's dead now. But she got home with her medicine—stayed right down the road about a mile from here. She got home and said it looked like something told her to look at it. And she took the bottle and looked at it, and poured the pills in her hand, and said, "This don't look like what I been taking" Said she grabbed one of her old bottles and read the numbers off of there, and it was the wrong stuff. And she called, they told her to bring it back. And she did.

Georgie Johnson: And I said, folks over there, half of them ain't got their mind on what they doing, they just thinking about that dollar they going get at pay check. They ain't care nothing about your body. And that old group what was over there, some of them just seem— well, right hateful. Woo! One used to work at the desk there, she said—my doctor's give me appointment card for the flu, and this would have been about two, three years ago. I drove over there one morning in the pouring down rain, by myself. And I got over there, and she said, "I'm sorry, we're out of flu shots." I said, "Well, how come somebody didn't call me? Y'all had my number." "They was supposed to call everybody that had the appointment for the flu shot." And I said, "Well, nobody called me." I said, "They try one time, they ought to try it again." I told Betty.

Georgie Johnson: I said, I got so mad, the woman behind had me—(laughing). Betty said, "Mama," she said, "We better stop Mama from going over to Lincoln." Said, "We going be seeing her flash up on the news." I told, yeah, I felt like grabbing that old woman, dragging her—I did tell her, I said, "A old lady, 80 year old drove way over here in the rain, you sit there and tell me you sorry." Exactly what I told her. I laid her out. I told Betty, "I wish they would have had a tape of what I said. I don't even know what all I did say." But the saying is, I saw red, just about when she come telling me they was out, when she could have called me. I said, "A old lady, 80 year old, driving over here in the rain. And you sit there and tell me you sorry."

Georgie Johnson: See, it's just poor management. They didn't—and then one time, they give me appointment. They sent an appointment card in the mail, it come in the mailbox. I said, "I ain't ask for no appointment." I looked at the card and I couldn't understand. I drove on over there, and behold, that was the—downstairs, I showed it to the woman at the desk, she said, "You supposed to go downstairs." I said, "What for?" She said, "Go to the one on the left, down there. That lady will tell you." Got down there, it was those folks were going there for something about drugs. I got mad again. I told Betty, my daughter, we call her Bet. That's when she said, "We got to stop Mom from going over to Lincoln." Said, "Because she going be in the news over there."

Georgie Johnson: I said, "Yes, sir." I said, "Whole team messing with me, over there." I had to quit going to Dr Banks, because by that time I go over there, she'd be at the hospital and referred me to some other doctor I had never seen before, didn't know. And I drove way over there, and I'm seeing, just switching from doctor to doctor. You don't do that.

Keisha Roberts: When you were growing up, and when you were younger, did you just have one doctor that

you always saw?

Georgie Johnson: Oh, folks done better than they do now. No doctor [indistinct 00:22:44] lessing there was something serious wrong with us.

Keisha Roberts: Who delivered your children, when you had babies?

Georgie Johnson: Dr Stroud. Every one of them was born at home. We had a country doctor. Now, Dutton was born in the hospital, Dr Stroud was in jail when he was born. (laughing) He performed an abortion on a little girl. They put him in jail. That's what they had him in jail for. He got out on some technicality. He didn't pull no time. Yeah. He had performed an abortion on somebody's girl. When Dutton was born, Dr Mills drove out here and delivered him. We had to pay him a dollar a mile, and then \$25 for to deliver the baby. See, and he came about—it was about 20. We paid him about \$75 or close to 100, because he charged by the mile and Dr. Stroud just charged \$25 flat. Yeah. Dr Stroud delivered all my children at home.

Keisha Roberts: Is that the way most people had—

Georgie Johnson: Yeah. Back in them days, the doctor didn't do half it. The Granny woman delivered.

Keisha Roberts: Who?

Georgie Johnson: An old woman. Granny woman, they call them— I can't think what you call them now.

Keisha Roberts: A midwife?

Georgie Johnson: Huh?

Keisha Roberts: A midwife?

Georgie Johnson: Yeah. And Mary Mack was one, and Aida Johnson was one. There was too many. Becky Parker was one. We had about three or four around here. But most of them was going out after Dr Stroud and old Dr Bahama and the one up here, they had Lena. Would come to your house. Yes, sir. I heard often, they said folks would come to the door, his grandmama, my husband grandmama, was a—I call them a Granny woman. One of them said folks come to the house sometimes, and Grandma had to get up on the horse behind and go. They come after. That's the way he carried just back to his house, the woman be in labor. And they come and say, "So and so is in labor."

Georgie Johnson: And he'd get up and dressed and get a little bag, and get up on the horse, or mule, or whatever it was behind, and go on.

Keisha Roberts: Was Dr Stroud a Black doctor?

Georgie Johnson: Hm?

Keisha Roberts: Was Dr Stroud a Black doctor?

Georgie Johnson: White.

Keisha Roberts: White?

Georgie Johnson: Mm-hmm.

Keisha Roberts: Were the midwives Black women?

Georgie Johnson: Dr Mills was a Black doctor. He was in Durham, though. His office in Durham.

Keisha Roberts: Were the midwives Black?

Georgie Johnson: Hm? Mm-hmm. Yeah, all I knew were. There might have been one or two White around. But they didn't come to Black folks' houses. They went to the White, and the Black go to the Black. Yeah. They [indistinct 00:26:06] most of the people, if they know what to do, how to cut the cord and fix the cord, and get that afterbirth that was the biggest thing to it. And a lot of women still died from childbirth back in those days, because the midwives didn't have equipment if the baby was turned and— or something, and it was coming out foot forward instead of head forward. See, if one come out head forward, he comes out, you know, straight. But if he turn, and is coming out feet or his hands, or something. A complication. When you're in the hospital, a doctor knows what to do, how to— You see sheep or cows born like that. The menfolks have to roll up their sleeves and run their hand up in the cow, and turn the calf, so it would come out right, or something like that.

Keisha Roberts: Well, I thank you for your time. We've been talking—

Georgie Johnson: Well—

Keisha Roberts: —for quite a bit. And I imagine you probably want to eat some—

Georgie Johnson: Okay.

Keisha Roberts: So, are there any questions that you have about this form that I need you to sign? I'll go ahead and stop the cam.

Georgie Johnson: No. That's enough.

Keisha Roberts: No questions.

Georgie Johnson: If you want it signed, I'll tell you what—