

Interviewee: Caroline Richmond

Interviewer: John W. Cooper, III

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Acronyms: CR (Caroline Richmond), JC (John W. Cooper, III)

JC: Alright. Hello everybody, my name is John Cooper. Today, I'm interviewing Pastor Caroline Richmond today. So, first things first, can I ask you your date of birth and where you were born?

CR: My date of birth is eight twenty-eight nineteen forty-seven. Born in Elon, North Carolina. That's Alamance County.

JC: Alamance County, ok. So, who were your parents?

CR: John Willis and Elizabeth Miles.

JC: And tell me about them.

CR: Oh, my parents. I...they were especially my father he was a very strict past-man. But one thing I loved about my father, he really taught us very well. One main thing he taught us was to fear the Lord and I was so glad at a young age that I learned that because even after that adventuring into the world, I always remembered the things my father taught me. I was doing wrong things, I always remembered the words of my father and they-it really kept me in line. My mom, she was never whatcha call a very disciplinary mother. My father did all of that and uh yeah I had a strong, strong family life. Very, very strong family life.

JC: So your father, teaching you at a young age to trust in God.

CR: Yes.

JC: And fear him.

CR: Right.

JC: Do you feel like that correlates into your current profession as a pastor today?

CR: Oh yes because I like I said there where things-when you venture out into the world you know your young and want to experience things and for some reason, I have always been in wonder about this. Why we want to experience the world before we experience the Lord. But I did this as my personal testimony and even I would go places and if I did things, I would say, "Gosh, if my dad would see me now". You know, I always had remembrance of the things that he taught, the words that he taught and it just brought me up to this present time and I got into the Lord and even with that he, I can even remember the things he would just teach us. He was a pianist and we would get-he always get up, play his little hymns in the morning and sometimes we would get around, sing with him and you know, I just grew up in a-I had a happy family life with my parents. I really did and it led me to fear and today I still have that same fear thank God.

JC: Do you have any siblings?

CR: Oh yes. I have siblings. My mom and Dad had twelve kids.

JC: Oh my.

CR: I am the third child...and even when she had-I always said my mom had two sets of kids because the oldest set, when she was working, we were taking care of the younger set and she had, believe it or not, seven girls and five boys and nine of us are still living. But yeah we grew up as a big-we had a big family, a happy family and they taught us family values, to always stay together, love one another, and you know get along, get along and today we still do that. As the old homeplace that we have now we go there. We have dinners. Nobody staying in it right now but my nephew, he's getting it ready to move his family there. But we always go down like our Christmases, we always had those together. Thanksgiving, we always have those together and we still doing it. We never stopped.

JC: So, the homestead, is it in Alamance County?

CR: It's in Alamance County.

JC: How long has that place been in the family really?

CR: Family for when?

JC: As in how long has it been in your family? Is it generational or is it just your parents' home?

CR: It was my parent's home. Think they built that home in nineteen forty-eight. I was born in forty-seven. So, they built it the next year.

JC: {Laughs}. That's fast.

CR: So we-we love going home and its so many memories in that house. It is just wonderful you know to have that atmosphere and sometimes you go there and think, "Mom and Daddy, they gone". But you still feel their presence you know, and we really like that. We all like that.

JC: Speaking of family memories, you have any early family memories that you can recall or any kind of memories from your childhood that made an profound impact on in your life?

CR: Yeah. Now my dad's mother, she was very strong in her belief and they belonged to whatcha call, their family church was Archer's Grove and its in Burlington, North Carolina. So when we was small, we all piled up in the car and we would go to Archer's Grove every second and fourth Sunday cause even in the older days when they had church, they would visit other churches and the first and third Sundays when my mom-she was my mom's church at their service in Elon and the second and fourth Sundays, my Dad had his service so see, they were able to go together and visit one another's. So no one was missing one of their services. So we would go. We would all get in the car and I tell everybody {laugh} we had a-my dad had a-they had a seatbelt law in those days, my dad would of got a lot of tickets cause he had a lot of kids you know. But we would all get in there and go to church and my grandmother, she would-they sung in the choir and they-she always helped my dad with things if we got out a line cause at that time, people

didn't get upset if other people help you raised your kids. Nowadays, you better not say anything about correcting another person's child. Another person's child, you in trouble. But my aunt...his mother and she had two sisters and they all were the same way. Were the same way. They all discipline us if we got out of line and if we did anything wrong and they couldn't get to us, they let my daddy know and I mean he got to us too. But it was, they all help one another out. The old days in rearing children was so much better than they are today. They really are.

JC: What was your grandmother's name?

CR: Callie. Callie Miles.

JC: Well, what about your other set of grandparents?

CR: I never knew my mom's mom. She died before I was born. Her dad, he died in nineteen fifty-six and oh, we loved-Imma call him Albert. We called him Daddy Albert because my mom always said "Daddy". So, we would call him Daddy cause we were young too and say Daddy. So, my dad would answer and her dad would answer. So, we start calling her dad, Daddy Albert and call my dad, Daddy Skeeter so {laughs} we would have- because they both would answer. Because like I said we call them-we would call them daddy and we just loved him. We would get on him. He had beautiful hair and we would always be on these chair combing his hair and he would say, "Get away from me, get away". He would babysit us a lot of times when my mom and dad would go off and we was just into Daddy Albert. But like I said, he died in fifty-six.

JC: So, how far do you think your North Carolinian roots go back in terms of your family history within the state or in the area, Alamance County?

CR: I can't really tell you. They-my dad's people came from Union Ridge. There so many miles around Burlington and that area. But, his set of people came from Union Ridge. I knew my grandfather's brothers. But I never knew my grandfather's mother. So that's as far as I can go. And my mom, I knew here aunties, I knew her grandmothe-her grandfather. But that's as far I can go with her side.

JC: What was the grandfather's name?

CR: His name was Dan Simpson. He was at-he lived in Greensboro. He was from Greensboro.

JC: Oh, okay.

CR: Mmmhmm (affirmative). So I did know him. He had married twice. So I knew his last set of children. No, no, no. I knew his first set of children because they lived in Thomasville, and we used to gather up and go to-her name was Aunt Othella and Aunt Narrows. We would get up on Sunday mornings sometimes, especially when they didn't have church. We loved to go to Thomasville because they had what they call acorn trees, hickanut trees, you remember before hickanut trees. We would get a grind of sap and we would gather all these hickanuts in a grind of sap and bring them home and try to crack them cause they were hard shells. But we had, like I told you, we had a really nice child-childhood. Being young and growing up with my mom and dad, it was such a nice little childhood that I can say I really had and we grew up real close.

JC: That's good. That's good. What about schooling? Where did you go to school growing up?

CR: Growing up, I went to Elon elementary school. That really was the only Black elementary school we had in the area.

JC: Was that before integration?

CR: Yes. Ok and then for high school, people bussed to Central High School in Graham because you know the school was not integrated at that time. So-

JC: Graham High School?

CR: Central High at that time.

JC: Oh ok.

CR: And since then, they changed the name to Graham High School.

JC: And that school wasn't integrated? The one that you're getting bussed to?

CR: No, no. It was all Black.

JC: It was all Black.

CR: It was all Black. Central High. But since they integrated, now that the Graham High School that we had to pass by everyday, they go to Central High because that was a new school. So, in order for them to go to that school, they changed it to Graham High cause we had Western, we had Central, we had a Eastern, we had a Southern and they went to Graham so when they came to the school we went too, they changed the name to Graham. So, there is no more Central High School.

JC: Mmhm (affirmative).

CR: Ok then after that, I started working a little bit in the mills and I always wanted to do clerical work because even in high school, I did my typing and my office practice, and all those subjects. But I always wanted to do clerical work. So when I got out of school, I graduated from high school, I worked in the mills a little while. I worked at Cone Mill, here in Gibsonville and I worked at Cone Mill in Haw River and then I worked at Random Knitt in Graham and my husband, we married in nineteen sixty-six and he-when we married, got married March nineteen sixty-six, fifteenth of March nineteen sixty-six, he went to the air force right after he finished high school in nineteen sixty-four. So in nineteen sixty-six, we married and while he was in service, I went to further some education. I went to ACC (Alamance Community College) in Alamance County and then after Alamance County, I did study business courses I taken there and after that, we moved to Greensboro when he got out of service in nineteen sixty-eight and I took classes at GTCC (Guilford Technical Community College). While I was going there to GTCC, well as soon as I finished GTCC, I landed a job at WFMY TV working as a program coordinator. And as I had a choice and in which I'm glad I did choose Channel 2 to take a job at P. Laurel Lord in Greensboro and I had to pray and pray. I said, "Lord, which job should I take". Laurel Lord was offering more money. But I, you know money it doesn't beat satisfaction to me. So I

said which job I should take. So the Lord put-gave me my answer, do Channel 2. So I went to Channel 2. Twenty-eight years I was there and I loved that work. I met a lot of interesting people. I learned a lot of different skills while I was there. When I first went to Channel 2, we were on a manual system, no computers. We didn't have anything like that. So, we did everything manually, which was a lot of paperwork. But I preferred it over the computers, I really did. Well, because we were sold three times while I was there. Each company when the, when we had the computer system, they all had different computer systems. So, I learned a lot you know going on these computer systems. We were in a department called traffic and some people think, "Well, are you directing traffic for the station or what?". It's totally different. We were the one department in that station we trafficked our work out to every department in there. We worked with news, promotion, public service. We worked with the people in massive control because we built the daily program log and it was interesting work. Sometimes, you would be home. You see, sometimes you see the "black spots" coming on the air. You know you maybe have see thirty second. Why is there a hold there? Did I not fill that time out with a commercial or did a time this program right? I mean you would actually take your work home with you.

JC: Mmhmm (affirmative).

CR: But it was very interesting work cause we got to meet a lot of celebrities when they would come to town. They would come in and do little promotional spots wherever they were gonna be. They would invite the public if the public you know could come. But yeah, it was very interesting work. I enjoyed Channel 2.

JC: Channel 2?

CR: Mmhmm (affirmative). That's what it was, WFMY channel two and I didn't think that I would leave. I left there in nineteen seventy-nine. Excuse me, I'm wrong. I left there in two o' nine and what caused me to leave, we had started a daycare-summer camp here and when we started the summer camp, my people were always calling me on the job and I really wanted to be with them and I didn't have any...you know inkling that I would be leaving my work that early. Fifty-five years, fifty-two. I was fifty-two years old. So I had it in my mind, you gotta work till your sixty-two. Sixty-two...I said, "I got ten more years, I can't leave. I can't leave this job". But I kept feeling this urgency that something was happening and it was happening, it was taking place here. So, we were in a political year and you never take vacation at a TV station, working at traffic department and you're in a political year because of the commercials, you had to restructure programming and I told my supervisor I said, my manager, that "I'm invited and I'm going with my friends to Canada". She didn't say anything, she didn't try to stop me. She said, "Ok Caroline. If that's what you want to do". So, I went on the trip and while I was on that trip, the Lord spoke-he started speaking to me and I'm telling you now I'm having the urgency that something is going on in my life right now. That's how the Lord is. He start revealing thing to you, giving you answers. He's working your life out while you're in the process of trying to grow. So, when we went to Canada, I had this dream and I had this dream about my little church brothers and I had gone to see which was my former pastor at that time and in this dream when I had gone on to see her, I was on my way back from my job and I was running late so I was tryna get by. So to get back on time, so my little brother, the little, one of my littlest brothers, he

stopped me as I was making my way back to work and he had asked me to something as simple as tie his shoe. He said, "Caroline, would you tie my shoes?". Whew, I knew I had to get out and get on-you know get down and I said, "Antwon I said, I don't have time to do this" and I said, "I got to get back to work". So, and the dream went on and I was telling my pastor about it. She says, "Caroline, she says, you are not a people pleaser" and I said, "Why is she telling me that I'm not a people pleaser?". And I looked at her and said, "This was my brother, little Christ brother, and he asked me to do something simple as tie his shoe". I didn't have time for that. I had my, my-I was in a hurry to get back to work. And the Lord was letting me know I got something for you and you can't be in a hurry with it and I'm stopping you to make you think. You're not in this journey to please people, but you're in this journey to please me and so, I thought about that thing and thought about it. Woke up the next morning, Joyce Meyers was on TV. I never watched Joyce Meyers, but for some reason, I watched Joyce Meyers that day. She was coming out the forty-third Psalms, forty-third chapter of Isaiah and it says, "The Lord is gonna do a new thing, shall you not know it's gonna spring forth". I said, "Lord have mercy! You're telling me I gotta do something" and he was speaking to me then, "Let me know". I had to come off that job because I was trying to please people on my job. I was trying to please myself and he was letting me know "your in this to please me". I gotta work for you and so what I did, I went back to work, I walked in, and I told my manager, well she was a religious girl too, Karen. I said, "I gotta leave my job". I said, "The lord spoke to me". So I told her about everything. She embraced me as if she was happy to hear that which she didn't really want me to leave...but the Lord let me know that I had to leave my job at fifty-two and I was thinking I was gonna have to be there until I was sixty-two years old. So after that, I put in my notice in and I've been in Missionary Bible Study working {laughs} and I'm glad to be here. I'm am. I'm happy to be here and I'm glad he spoke to me. Glad I took my trip because had I stayed there, I probably wouldn't had paid enough attention-I had to get myself away from that atmosphere. I had to get myself away from all the stress all of the head-you know all the things that came with the that job because it was a detail job. But even though I loved my job, I had to listen to the Lord first. So I put my notice in and like I said, I've been here ever since, you know, working in my church and it's a full time job.

JC: Mmhmm (affirmative).

CR: Cause we started out... We built this church in nineteen ninety-five...nineteen ninety-five and I told you nineteen seventy-nine is when I left work. I left work in nineteen ninety-nine. That's when I had my vision and my dream, nineteen ninety-nine.

JC: So you left a-

CR: TV station in nineteen ninety-nine..

JC: Oh, ok.

CR: And I'm sorry I gave you the wrong-

JC: Oh, no you're fine.

CR: Anyway, I- we already built the church and all and we were going good. One thing I like about this church, we don't have a lot. That's one of my members says "Stuff" going on down here. We just try to keep our kids busy, keep them motivated. Like I said, we have a summer camp and how we started the summer camp is a lot of our parents, they have to work and I started thinking and said, "Lord, what can do for our kids during the summer?". I said because our parents can't afford to keep our kids in a day camp all summer. What can we do? So he gave me the vision to open up a summer camp. We could have our children for the whole summer. I mean the whole summer. Church would fund it. Church was able to fund it. Parents didn't have to pay for it. This is how he blessed me. I have several teachers in this church. They're out for the summer. Hey, you got your instructors. You don't have to look for anything. You don't have to look for anybody. You don't have to go out and solicit someone to work cause I had everything was in place. That's one thing about the Lord. When he give you a vision, it's already mapped out. All you got to do is walk into it. We walked into that. Got our camp started and when we stated our camp, like I said, I had my teachers. They were already in place. I still was at my job then. But I could trust them because they were dedicated workers. They were dedicated where the Lord was concerned and even though they would have to call and ask me questions; I had someone to do all the scheduling. We would keep them here 8o'clock to 12o'clock during bible lessons. They get their little break, they come back and then they have their little songs after they do their little bible lessons in the morning. Twelve noon or whatever time, give them a lunch break. After the lunch break, they come back. They learn their little songs that you know the people we had gotten ours curriculum from, we used VMI. It's UMI, I said VMI. We used them and what they did. They would give us a little song booklets, little tapes that we could play and we would let them learn their songs in the evening. Then after that, they would do pickup for the kids. We would have the parents to pick them up. And when we first started, we would always give them a free day on Fridays. That was their free day. Ok then after awhile, we started Monday through Thursday, then give them a field trip overnight. So we would start doing a field trip overnight. And then after that, we start giving- the trips would last longer. We leave camp on a Wednesday. We take a trip three days out of the week. We would invite the parents as chaperones. Parent would pay for their food and we would take care of the kids and how I came about that my secretary and myself we incorporated our church, I said we went through IRS, and we did it ourselves. And the you know, people got this myth, IRS, they're so bad. They do that. They told me at the IRS, do not get a lawyer or paralegal to do this. You can do this yourself. My secretary and I we got we got to grinding and doing all this paperwork, which we had booklet when we finish. But we were able to do all that paperwork. And we did we incorporated our church ourself. And down the problem they had, of all the paperwork we did was the overnight trip with our account.

JC: Mmmhmm (affirmative).

CR: They said the parents needed to pay for their, you know, church because they said a lot of times, churches would have write offs. For cruises, they would just write off anything. So you know, you've being a church and you exempt. Some people use that to their advantage. But we didn't want to take advantage of the IR- even though it's the IRS. We wanted to be legitimate, and we wanted to follow the guidelines. And we did that. But we started charging their parents. Not

the full pay, but most of it we will charge them, you know, some for the nights. But yeah, I got Lord, He blessed that camp. He blessed my instructors. He blessed our parents. And then after that, we didn't have a van to take them around on Fridays when they did their field trip. So I just hate it. You know, we got all these cars following and one another going up the road. We take them and Emerald Point sometimes. Sometimes we would take them to Carowinds and you know places in a vicinity. We didn't go out of town then. So we got together. And I would rent a van from enterprise about every Friday. So this particular year, I had ordered the van. So when I got ready to pick up my van, they didn't have a van. They said somewhere paperwork got lost. I don't know what it was. So here we go in Emerald Point following up and down the road following one another. I'm thinking about all my people that were following in this little caravan. So I said you know what, Lord? I said we were blessed enough. Bless us to get us a van. That weekend before that before that next Friday, this Saturday after that Friday, my brother, my husband and one of my instructors we got on the road. Started in Raleigh, went to Durham came on back. Came right back to what was Dick Shirley's at that time. Van sitting right in the parking lot and I knew the person that was a salesperson at that time. He grew up in our community and was a family friend. His name was Joseph Summers was we call him Jojo. Jojo we ran up seeing his van sitting out there, Is that van for sale? He said if it it doesn't have a tag on it is. No tag is on it Jojo. So he went out, looked at it. It is for sale. We bought that van that day. That next weekend I was prepared. We had a van for our kids. And the Lord blessed us a year or two later with another van. So we didn't have to promise to get those vans still got to do vans. But yeah, we are... we're blessed down here. Because of the Word of God. I mean, he's not slack concerning his promises. And if you do, right, you don't have to go out and beg. You don't have to have fundraisers. My kids and I were taught to pay our tithes and offering. My kids were so happy. When they started getting jobs at McDonald's, they couldn't wait to go back and drop a envelope in that box. That's how happy they was about paying that ties. And I'm so glad they started out early like that. Because when I came up, we wasn't taught to pay tithes. And my former pastor, that's what she taught us to pay our tithes and offerings. So we're not we don't depend on anybody for funding us. We don't depend on fundraising. We don't have sailings down here. So we just depend on the Lord. And like she always said, "If you don't have the money, maybe you need to leave it alone". And that's what we do. But everything we need, God supplies it. We got in this church, we didn't know anybody. Did the three renovations, you know, anybody we were able to pay for. Now, I'm not talking about what we did. I'm talking about what the Lord blessed us to do. Because we will keep in His Word. And that's, that's what we have found it on down here, the word of God. And if you come, that's what you're gonna get the word of God.

JC: You know, from you talking, I could tell it very about serving their community within the church.

CR: Right.

JC: Especially children.

CR: Right.

JC: You know, from you talking, I could tell it very about serving their community within the church. Right? Especially children, right next generation. But are there any other avenues that you, you and your church I've done to serve your community, the surrounding community, your church community itself?

CR: Yeah, we give. We support a food bank, I just don't want to name the people that we owe.

JC: Oh yeah.

CR: We do a lot of things in secret, you know.

JC: Oh yeah, you don't have to name any names.

CR: Because we don't want recognition from even the people that we sponsored the food bank is for the elderly. And some of those people that are on a fixed income. And the Lord has put some of our church members in these areas on these jobs that know that these people need help. We take care of some of their light bills, pay somebody their rent. The last project we had it was told they have some volunteers that help the elderly and they couldn't get a grant for supplying their gas. We helped. We fund their gas. I mean, it's it's just simple things you can do. We pound people people. There are people that stop in, they need help with gas, lights, food and majority of the time, when they ask, we do give. We get up the food ourselves, though, we don't do the money because you know, some people will use the church.

JC: Right.

CR: So we do the money. We do the... I'm trying to think now. How many, we bury people, families and our money to do it. We didn't know the families. But we do that. If someone reaches out to us, we try to do that we try to help. Our key is that we're going back, I was watching a promotional spot on TV, where they had some of the kids needed tools for the school. So I told some of the teachers I say, you all know what these kids need. Why don't we fund that? So we did it. I mean, it's so much help to be done in communities. And if we have the resources, we're gonna help. Sometimes people don't know who to reach out to. A lot of people know to reach out to churches, but we, we try our level best to help out whoever reaches out to us. And it's a lot of things we do, we just don't publicize it.

JC: Right, right. Absolutely.

CR: And we don't we don't demand thank you. We don't because it all comes from the Lord. You know, he's just using us as his tools to give back. He gives to us all the time. So we have to give back not just our time, our resource that he blesses us with. But that's how we help the community as a lot of people don't know that we do things and I don't like to go out and publicize it. But if they if they reach out to us, they're gonna get to help.

JC: How would you describe your church community?

CR: Here in this area?

JC: Yes. So in your church more specifically.

CR: My church?

JC: Yes. How would you describe them?

CR: Oh, they, I got a lot of people that they really work out. Not in just this community alone. They work out in the community. I have a fireman, he's, he's all over the place because he likes to be mentors for the kids at school. He picks out these schools, he goes about, he works with the kids in his church. I have one that's a professional trainer. He trains kids, he likes to do it here. And even the teachers that I have, they reach out to the kids. You know, they make sure they have what they need. I have SBI age {laughs}. I mean, we just got a lot of talent here and they got outside lives here other than here that they work. And I'm proud of them because they give of themselves. They give their time and their energy to help out and I'm just proud that they help out in with their kids here.

JC: That's awesome.

CR: Mmhmm (affirmative).

JC: So to pivot back slightly. I want to go back to more of you talked about you went to Elon Elementary and what was other high school you went to?

CR: Central High in Graham.

JC: Yeah. Could you describe your experiences or any memories being at an all-Black high school?

CR: Well, it was really great because, of course, we had all Black teachers. I don't I don't I wouldn't know what it was, would be like to sit up under white teachers per say because I never had that. I didn't have that experience and to me this is the way it was supposed to be {laughs}. I didn't know nothing else about it. But had a Black principal, she was a lady.

JC: What was the principal's name?

CR: Miss Trollinger. Lila Trollinger.

JC: Ok.

CR: And we did a lot of activities that maybe they didn't have in the white schools at the time. Mayday came. I couldn't wait to be asked to rep the maple. We did that. The teaching skills, we learned a lot and we were able to have more of our black history in those schools. Where as, it's sad to say kids today, they don't learn as much black history as we do, because they only have one day, one month, Black History Month. And my little great nephew, he had when they-when the COVID struck, I had to go virtual with him because his mom and dad work. He had Black History Month. And he was just so astonished about the Black history, you know, that he was learning. And, you know, I felt sad for him. Because I feel like this is something that should be taught all the time at school, it should be incorporated. Because Black people did some wonderful things in this nation, that has gone unheard of. And we will learn in that in our school. Even though it wasn't always written in the textbook. Our teachers will step away and teach us these things. High school, some things were a downfall. We had a typing test. I remember this.

Because like I chose you always took clerical courses. In an our typing {laughs} typing class, we only had manual typewriters. Well, we had a typing test that was given to the area schools Alamance County, and they all came to Central High School. We couldn't compete with the white students. You know why? They brought out electric typewriters in that day, they have the typing test. Type our- Miss Miss Vaughn told us at that time. She said "Do the best you can". She said, don't worry about the accuracy. Just keep your speed. And that's what we did. Which they've they've fared off better than we do because they was used to electric typewriters. We wasn't felt sad about that. Because we could, you know, I'm gonna, I'm gonna say this. And I'm gonna say this is what I really feel. I think those days when we were segregated, I think they probably miss the message we didn't really have to integrate. We just wanted the tools that they were getting, you know what I'm saying? To be able to keep up. That's all we wanted. Because when we left, you know, my jobs that I had taken after that before I went to ACC, or our Alamance. Only took those courses. When I went up to Channel 2. I went in as a rule. And this is what the rule was given to me. As a rule, we don't hire people unless they have a four year college as a rule. And I call myself as a rule person for Channel 2. But I know who opened the door for me. That was Lord. See why I have to have faith in him. I have to keep my faith strong in the Lord because he is my provider. He opens up doors that people would shut if I didn't have him, you know. And some people will give up-I'm determined because he's given me that determination. I'm just determined. I'm gonna fight because I know who's on my side. But yes, we were taught our teachers would break away. They would give us high school and elementary school. They would break away and teach us our black history. And like I said, wasn't always found in his textbooks. But thank God for those teachers.

JC: I want to go back to kind of what you said that was really interesting to me. You said that there was really no need, in a sense to integrate which you want to be able to stay on top with the white school.

CR: Right!

JC: Is that like, do you could you feel like because of course, like, historically, and traditionally, there was more funding for a white school.

CR: Exactly!

JC: Then there wasn't enough money for Black schools.

CR: Right.

JC: So Black schools had not up to date technology, textbook, school supplies. Did you feel that as a student?

CR: Did I feel it as a student?

JC: Yeah not having enough technology.

CR: Yes, I did. I did. I did. Because even job interviews, like I said, when you go out you couldn't compete against you couldn't compete against them. And I felt like there are jobs that I applied for. I didn't get because I was not a good competitor. But it wasn't because I couldn't

learn. It was because I just never had the skills to be able to perform right. Had experience, I went to pilot life for an interview. We had a test. It was about six of us. I left their place, I was in tears. I was the first person that was called after the test. I was called. And I was dismissed. Only black, first person called. And I left there feeling like maybe I was just not smart enough. I didn't perform well. I was beat myself up. And I cried, I cried. I cried coming home. And I just started talking to the Lord. And I was just saying to myself, I knew I could learn just like anybody else. I feel like anyone else I could learn. I have the ability to learn if I'm given the right tools. But this was after my schooling. I moved to Greensboro. But I didn't stop. Because like I told you, I always wanted to do clerical work. There was a job out there for me, I felt like that. And I had I landed my job and I love my job. I learned a lot on HR. I trained people. Even though I didn't have a four year degree to later they told me that I didn't have a four year degree. She just did took further educational courses. I taught college grads to do this job. I taught them. I trained them. Some of them were successful, and some of them never got it. So I didn't feel bad that they didn't get it, I just felt bad. Maybe this wasn't the job for them.

JC: Do you feel like you could speak on like if you had any like figures or like a mentor that had like impact on like, your worldview?

CR: That would have to be my pastor, my dad. Because they taught me not to give up on things. They taught me to be resilient to persevere. And I I just felt like I was somebody you know, I had first when I was telling you about school, I did have the fear sometimes or maybe I didn't perform well. But I couldn't let that hinder me from trying. You know. I had a professor that was in my husband, my husband side. She was a professor at A&T. And I was telling her how I had landed a job at Channel 2 and I said, I don't know what I was talking to her in the same doubtful that I could perform. And she told me she says look, she says I don't know why you're speaking that way. She says it can't be for your looks. It's not your looks. She says, and I know, you can perform your job. She says, so what is it? What?! She said, What? What is it? So I got to thinking about it. I said, Am I talking down as if I can't do this work. But I felt like that was the biggest opportunity that I had had to do what I wanted to do. In my work job, I felt like I'm finally getting a clerical job. I learned a lot about myself. I learned how to interact with people, believe it or not, but I don't know what it is about me being around. People and I'm the only Black. When I started Channel 2, in 1971. I was the only Black person in the offices up there. We had two Black janitors. We had one news reporter, one Black news reporter and we had one black cameraman. And that was it. I was the only one in office. But I learned so much from those people that were there like the Black, two Black janitors, the Black news reporter, and a Black cameraman. They fit in very well. They were somebody. I felt like I was somebody, you know. I could work around people that are not of my color and I can do well. And I did. I did well, because I had the help of the Lord. I knew he opened the door for me and I had enough on my side just knowing he was there. So yeah, my mom-my pastor, and my dad. My dad, he was so proud of us, in Excel and in small, even like getting out the driver's license. He thought that was a great thing for his girls to drive. You know why? Because he had to drive my mom everywhere she went. But he looked at that as an awesome things. His girls got their life, his girls don't have to depend on anyone to take them anywhere. I made something that sample. And you see That's how my dad was he built us up in a little thing we did. That was amazing to him. So you know,

you have somebody that's pushing you like that. You want to do your best. You want to strive, thrive in whatever you do, because he did that. My dad was a carpenter by trade. Went to A&T. He was a carpenter, by trade. Build anything. Lord was on his side and he kept him there till the left. So through that life with my dad, and I could see, I could do anything if the Lord is on my side. I feel that.

JC: So, as we're getting ready to wrap up this interview, I like to ask anybody I interview with just like, just one question. And the question is kind of like, because this project, you know, we're trying to document like Black history, in general, in this area and beyond digital archive, the internet is forever. So if we're looking 50 years from now, you're looking at a whole nother generation. What words of wisdom, advice, affirmation? Would you have to say?

CR: Well, I would like to say this. To the generation, younger generation, don't ever feel like you can't do anything. Don't ever feel like that someone's always better than you because you can be better. If you look at someone and you think they're excelling in something, always look at it and think I can be better. Keep the Lord on your side. Let him be your guide. Get the confidence you need to strive persevere and everything you get into. I don't care if its sorting paper, sort it right. I don't care if it's waddling paper, waddle right. I don't care if it's the way you shoe, wear your shoes, wear them right. I just think about being in the Lord, get him at your fullness. You can never go wrong. If you get the Lord at his fullness. Get the word let in dwell richly in your heart and walk up right. Keep your head up. Don't don't look down, keep your head up, because God is on your side. Keep it in that way.

JC: Thank you so much for being willing to be interviewed for this project. I appreciate it.

CR: Well thank you for having us {laughs}.