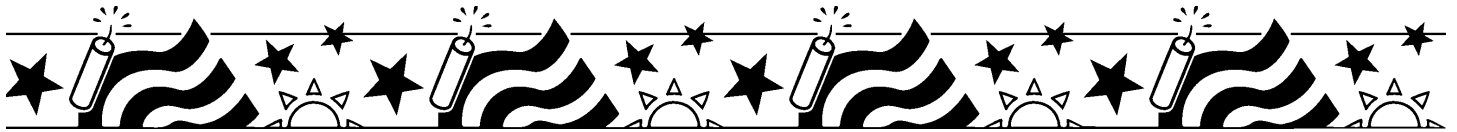


# The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!

Volume 4  
Issue No. 4a  
July 2001  
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA



## Church Signs

No God, No Peace. Know God, Know Peace.  
Free Trip to heaven. Details Inside!  
Try our Sundays. They are better than Baskin-Robbins'.  
Searching for a new look? Have your faith lifted here!  
People are like tea bags—you have to put them in hot water before you know how strong they are.  
When down in the mouth, remember Jonah. He came out all right.  
How will you spend eternity—Smoking or Nonsmoking?  
Come work for the Lord. The work is hard, the hours are long and the pay is low. But the retirement benefits are out of this world.  
It is unlikely there'll be a reduction in the wages of sin.  
Do not wait for the hearse to take you to church.  
If you're headed in the wrong direction, God allows U-turns.  
If you don't like the way you were born, try being born again.  
This is a ch\_\_ch. What is missing? (U R)  
Forbidden fruit creates many jams.  
In the dark? Follow the Son.  
If you can't sleep, don't count sheep. Talk to the Shepherd.  
Jesus Is Coming...Don't miss him for the world.  
People who wait until the eleventh hour to call on Jesus, die at 10:30.

## Inside the Echo

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## Jesus

He was born to the Virgin Mary, his mother, and his father, the carpenter Joe. The wise men came to worship him, they said, "This is the King of the Jews, we know."

John the Baptist preached of Jesus' coming and warned the people to turn away from sin. When Jesus was older, John baptised him, and the Lord said, "This is my Son, I am pleased with him."

40 days and 40 nights he went without water or food. And Satan kept whispering into His ear, "Come on and sin, Dude." Finally Satan gave up, like the wussy he is, and went back to where he came from. And Jesus kept his faith in the Lord because one thing he isn't is dumb.

Jesus heard of John's arrest and left Judea to return to Nazareth in Galilee. From then on Jesus would preach to the people, "Turn from sin, to God, the Kingdom of Heaven is near for you and me."

Jesus cured many sick people and helped the blind to see. Jesus also told many parables to show how to live properly.

Jesus performed many miracles, He even waled on water as if it were land. He fed 5000 people with a couple loaves and fishes and healed a mans deformed hand.

But one day his own disciple, Judas, betrayed him for a small amount of change. Of course, Jesus knew this day was coming, so he did not percieve this as strange.

Jesus was mocked by all of the Jews and was condemned to be crucified. Little did evryone know, it was for OUR sins that this man died.

Yes, it is true, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. He let him suffer and be crucified so we'd be cleansed of the sin's we've done. But, 3 days later Jesus rose from the dead, and met His disciples in Galilee. Then Jesus ascended to Heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Lord of eternity.

Soloman Alaska Smith

## Perseverance

Persevere- To refuse to give up; to keep on trying; to continue in one's actions or beliefs in spite of problems. The word that is used in Ephesians 6:18 is used in connection with prayer. The theological doctrine of the perseverance of the saints holds that the truly regenerated cannot ever fall away from Christ so as to lose their salvation. Both Calvinists and Armenians seek support for their view in the Scriptures, both sides often using the same passages, but interpreting them differently.

Perseverance is also found in over 20 other scriptures, and Matthew 24:13 describes "endures"—to hold one's ground in conflict, bear up against adversity, hold out under pressure, wait calmly and courageously. It is not passive resignation to fate and mere patience, but the active, energetic resistance to defeat that allows calm and brave endurance. Another word for perseverance is suffering, which is found in over 65 scriptures.

I end with this, "But you, O men of God, flee the things that are opposed to Christ, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience and gentleness."

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." 1 Peter 6:11-12

And last, but not least, "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong!" 1 Corinthians 16:13

by Kevin Franklin



## America the Good Neighbor

This Canadian thinks it is time to speak up for the Americans as the most generous and possibly the least appreciated people on all the earth.

Germany, Japan and, to a lesser extent, Britain and Italy were lifted out of the debris of war by the Americans who poured in billions of dollars and forgave other billions in debts. None of these countries is today paying even the interest on its remaining debts to the United States.

When France was in danger of collapsing in 1956, it was the Americans who propped it up, and their reward was to be insulted and swindled on the streets of Paris. I was there. I saw it.

When earthquakes hit distant cities, it is the United States that hurries in to help. This spring, 59 American communities were flattened by tornadoes. Nobody helped.

The Marshall Plan and the Truman Policy pumped billions of dollars into discouraged countries. Now newspapers in those countries are writing about the decadent, war-mongering Americans.

I'd like to see just one of those countries that is gloating over the erosion of the United States dollar build its own airplane. Does any other country in the world have a plane to equal the Boeing Jumbo Jet, the Lockheed Tri-Star, or the Douglas DC10? If so, why don't they fly them? Why do all the International lines except Russia fly American Planes?

Why does no other land on earth even consider putting a man or woman on the moon? You talk about Japanese technocracy, and you get radios. You talk about German technocracy, and you get automobiles.

You talk about American technocracy, and you find men on the moon - not once, but several times - and safely home again.

You talk about scandals, and the Americans put theirs right in the store window for everybody to look at. Even their draft-dodgers are not pursued and hounded. They are here on our streets, and most of them, unless they are breaking Canadian laws, are getting American dollars from ma and pa at home to spend here.

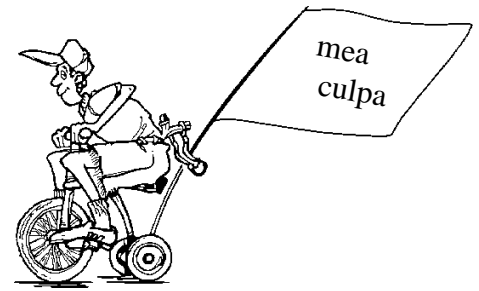
When the railways of France, Germany and India were breaking down through age, it was the Americans who rebuilt them. When the Pennsylvania Railroad and the New York Central went broke, nobody loaned them an old caboose. Both are still broke.

I can name you 5000 times when the Americans raced to the help of other people in trouble. Can you name me even one time when someone else raced to the Americans in trouble? I don't think there was outside help even during the San Francisco earthquake.

Our neighbors have faced it alone, and I'm one Canadian who is damned tired of hearing them get kicked around. They will come out of this thing with their flag high. And when they do, they are entitled to thumb their nose at the lands that are gloating over their present troubles. I hope Canada is not one of those."

Stand proud, America!

*by Gordon Sinclair, a Canadian television commentator, as printed in the Congressional Record*



## From the Editor

It seems that in the May issue of The Flash, I so foolishly left out the name of my good friend, Glenn Wooten. Not only did he help me in my times of great trial while trying to figure out what it is that an editor really does, but he's been there to help get me out of the messes I seem to get myself into while trying to be an editor!

Without his persistence, I am positive that I would not have gotten the newsletters done, and without his contributions, I am sure that news letters wouldn't be as enjoyable as they are.

I feel very badly for omitting Glenn's name, from The Flash. I hope and pray that he will pardon me for being so thoughtless. And incase anyone is thinking that doing that was my way of trying to "take over", that I can assure you is not the case. Filling the shoes of Glenn Wooten is something my 5 foot 10 inch body, and size 10 shoe, could never do!

So, Glenn, and everyone else who was wondering, "Where is Glenn's name?", I AM SO SORRY! He is still VERY much alive, well, and still the Regular Contributor- and still my good friend. I thought about leaving MY name out of this issue....then I thought better of it!(HA!)

*Jeremy Halverson-Editor*

## Bible Study Correspondence Courses

American Bible Academy  
P.O. Box 1490  
Joplin, MO 64802

Forgotten Man Ministries  
3940 Fruit Ridge, Nw  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Spirit of Freedom Ministries  
P.O. Box 6648  
Metairie, LA 70009

United Prison Ministries International  
P.O. Box 8 Blue Creed Rd.  
Verbena, AL 36091

Christ Truth Ministries  
P.O.Box 610  
Upland, CA 91785

Set Free Prison Ministries  
Rehab By Regeneration  
P.O.Box 5440  
Riverside, CA 92517

Ten Mile Bible School  
P.O. Box 85  
Burlington, KY 41005

Prisoners for Christ  
P.O. Box 503  
Kirkland, WA 98083

Lamp & Light  
26 Road 5577  
Farming, NM 87401-1436

Inside Journal  
P.O. Box 17429  
Washington, DC 20041-0429

Insight for Living  
P.O. Box 6900  
Anaheim, CA 92817-0900

Voice of Prophecy  
P.O. Box 55  
Los Angeles, CA 70053

Gospel Echoes  
Chaplain Calvin Yoder  
Imcc P.O. Box A  
Oakdale, IA 52319

*Submitted by Michael Nellist*

**The Church of the  
Damascus Road  
Echo!**

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The official publication of The Church of the Damascus Road, a Christian Community of Reconciliation, serving the inmate population of the medium security units at Rockwell City and Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Jeremy Halverson, Editor, And Good Guy Glenn Wooten, Regular Contributor, And Guy who really rocks! Go Wooten!:)

If you are reading a copy of this letter that is not yours, you can subscribe and receive your own copy by writing to:

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To the Editor:  
Dear Echo

I am sitting in the hole (maximum lockup) for fighting and obviously I was not thinking about God or the consequences of my actions at the time. To be honest, God has not been on top of my priorities lately. I was trying to go through my life daily with only prayer at night before bed and before meals. I thought that would suffice. As I sat here and read the articles on the front page, I began to cry. I'm not sure why, exactly, only that I know it has made me a lot happier as well. As we all know, our lives cannot prosper or even go as well as we want without Jesus, but I have tried to do just that. I did not share my problems with God, nor did I attempt to share my blessings. I feel that my selfishness has brought about maybe another stage of growth I had not expected to occur, and I want to share my blessings with you in the congregation.

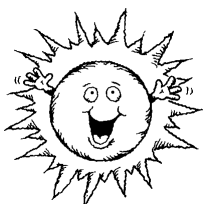
I had not been attending church, nor had I been talking with other Christians. I was back on the path to destruction. I thought that no matter what I did, my life just would not turn out right. All things have seemed to get on a good path for me, then WHAM! I was right back at the bottom again.

I figured that I did not need fellowship, or even to be around other people. I tried to be a hermit, if you will. I did not want or need anybody's help, not even God's. Although I prayed daily, maybe out of habit, I thought that at least I do not want to let go all the way, just in case I needed God come tomorrow.

I was so wrong for even thinking that way! I sit here and think of the hardships that Jesus went through just so I wouldn't have to suffer, yet I make myself suffer all the more by not asking God for help and giving my problems to him. As I spoke with Pastor Lang, God reassured me that if my faith is strong and my obedience is given, life will only get better from here on for me!

I believe that is so, and stand firm on God's word, and continue to pray for each of you! I know as my days and time get shorter here, that God does not give me more than I can handle. I have made it through all the lessons so far, and pray that God will continue to teach me, so I may help others through their times of need and or want. I thank God for my trials and pray to be blessed with many more. Thank you for making the Echo!, it has helped me tremendously.

Sincerely, your brother in Christ,  
Charles Nicolls



Most people in the world today can move from one place to another easily. We can hop in the car, catch a bus, ride a bike or fly in a plane!

*The missing parts are in the list below. Read the story.*

In Bi\_\_\_\_\_mes tra\_\_\_\_\_ was diff\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ow. A full day's \_\_\_\_\_ney was \_\_\_\_\_nty miles. The \_\_\_\_\_ual way to \_\_\_\_\_vel was by \_\_\_\_\_king. \_\_\_\_\_keys were some\_\_\_\_\_ used. Ox c\_\_\_\_\_ car\_\_\_\_\_ hea\_\_\_\_\_ads. Ca\_\_\_\_\_ were used for \_\_\_\_\_ade cara\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_oss the \_\_\_\_\_ert. The mili\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_thy \_\_\_\_\_ple and ro\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_sengers used ho\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_lots. Bo\_\_\_\_\_ were used once in a while.

Answer: In Bible times travel was difficult and slow. A full day's journey was twenty miles. The usual way to travel was by walking. Donkeys were sometimes used. Ox carts carried heavy loads. Carts were used for trade caravans across the desert. The military, wealthy people and royal passengers used horses and chariots. Boats were used once in a while.



## Musings

I often find myself thinking about how we are truly blessed to be living in these modern times. It was not too long ago that many of the things that we take for granted did not even exist.

Tasks that our ancestors did with great difficulty are today so minor that we don't even think about them. The way that we look at our world and the way that the people of Jesus' times looked at the world are as different as night and day.

Today, as children of God, each of us can spread God's message without near the effort that the disciples in Jesus' time had to put out. In today's ever shrinking world, we are able to worship in one place in the morning and then be able to worship many miles from there in the afternoon, and then worship many more miles away that evening.

Children of God in Jesus' time endured such hardships it's a wonder they continued to have faith. No wonder God loved these faithful children of his so much that he not only communicated with them directly, he sent his only Son to live among them.

Today ministers can travel great distances with very little effort. They can sit back in the seat of an airplane or other modern form of transportation, study the word without being disturbed, have practically all of their needs met, whether it be in the way of satisfying physical or spiritual hunger, especially with the ability to carry a laptop computer. Many new innovations, such as the ability to log on to the internet, never ceases to amaze me. In just a few strokes of the keys one is able to open so many doors for the modern Christian.

Today's child of God does not have to deal with the many dangers and hardships that the Christians of old had to confront. When was the last time you heard of a child of God losing her head for her beliefs?

Today's Christians are able to spread the Word of God in as many ways as we as receive it. We have so many forms of media to use in our Christian walk that there is no reason we aren't able to enrich our spiritual needs. We take for granted the freedom that we have to practice our religion.

Even though we still may receive a degree of persecution, we seldom have to risk our lives for what we believe.

We are truly blessed by God for all of our modern comforts. Thank him for being able to turn a radio or television on and access a Christian station. Thank him for the many Christian books, tapes, magazines, or newsletters we receive. We receive these by his grace, for without him, none of these wonders we take for granted would exist.

Through our modern media we are truly blessed to be able to worship and fellowship with so many other Christians. We modern day Christians have no excuses as to why we cannot reach out with God's word. We do not have to gather in secret behind closed

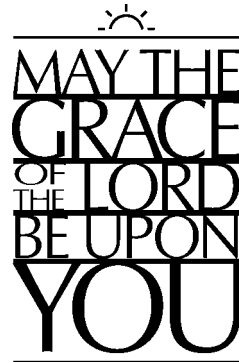
doors to worship like many of our ancestors did. In Jesus' time it would take many days and a lot of physical effort, stamina and discomfort to do what we can do in a few hours.

So I say: reach out, spread the word, seek the word, and learn the word. Do not allow the modern conveniences we have turn you into a lazy Christian who puts very little effort into his spirituality. Use these conveniences we have to reach out to our many brothers and sisters in the world.

These conveniences we take for granted are a never ending source of living water that quenches our spiritual thirst. Go to libraries, Christian book stores. Read Christian newsletters, Christian magazines. Listen Christian radio stations and watch Christian television programs. They are there for us if we put forth a little effort.

Why not obtain a cassette or a C.D. that allows you to have the bible read to you? Listen to these during some of the time you spend behind the wheel of your automobile.

What are you waiting for? Seek the word of God. It is everywhere if you take the time to look. I hope that this gives you something to think about. Go in peace, seek the word



## This Day's Thought...

Grace does not make everything right. Grace's trick is to show us that it is right for us to live; that it is truly good, wonderful even, for us to be breathing and feeling at the same time that everything clustering around is wholly wretched. Grace is not a ticket to Fantasy Island. Fantasy Island is dreamy fiction. Grace does not cure all our cancers, transform all our kids into winners, or send us all soaring into the high skies of sex and success. Grace is rather an amazing power to look reality full in the face, see its sad and tragic edges, feel its cruel cuts, join in the primeval chorus against its outrageous unfairness, and yet feel in your deepest being that it is good and right for you to be alive on God's good earth. Grace is power, I say, to see life very clearly, admit it is sometimes all wrong, and still know that somehow, in the center of your life, "it's all right." This is one reason we call it amazing grace.

— Lewis Smedes

## Pastor Lang,

I just wanted to write you a short letter to thank you for sending my cross from the Brothers in Blue weekend, and all you have done for me. I don't know if you remember or not but I got to leave the day after the Bro's in Blue weekend. I didn't spend a lot of time in Ft. Dodge, but the time I did spend there was a life changing experience. I fought God all my life up to the time my life was at it's worst. I am very lucky because I was raised in a Christian home. But I rebelled against my parents and God. I think I was sent to prison to wake up. And I did.

I know being a preacher in a prison has to be difficult, and discouraging at times. I just want to let you know that I did grow spiritually under your teaching, and God did use you to help me in the area I needed help the most. (or wake me up)

I am in the real world now and doing well. I am also involved in the Christian community and really enjoying it. Thanks a lot.

Your Brother in Christ, no longer in blue.  
Rusty Carpenter



We'd like to hear from you!

This is our Fourth issue of "The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!" It's published between issues of the Flash, and is for distribution inside the two prisons in Fort Dodge and Rockwell City. Tell us what you think about it by writing letters to the editor and giving them to Pastor Lang or Glenn Wooten or Darrel Pennel. We want the Echo! to be yours.

## Contributions invited

The editor of this newsletter is inviting ALL READERS to contribute articles, poetry, art work, and opinions for the newsletter. So don't be bashful.

## Worship & Bible Study

FDCF Fort Dodge  
7:00pm Wednesdays ..... Holy Communion  
7:00pm Fridays ..... Bible Study  
NCCF Rockwell City  
6:30pm Tuesdays ..... Bible Study  
6:30pm Thursdays ..... Holy Communion