

# The Church of the Damascus Road

Volume 5  
Issue No. 6a  
November 2002  
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

# Echo!

## No More

I think of where I've been  
I think of where I'll be going  
How and when that'll be  
To spend the rest of my time  
And then be free  
No more bars, cards, or orders form guards  
No more late night chats  
With a bunch of guys  
Hearing them spread  
Awhole bunch of lies  
No more bad news, smelly shoes,  
Rotten fumes from raunchy rooms  
No more getting hustled  
By stupid rums  
Or wanting to knock-teeth  
From their gums  
Or wanting to know  
If I'm missed  
No more phone calls  
Buying stamps, writing letters  
Just thinking of when  
I'll be better  
No more wanting more  
Doing chores, locked doors  
Or waiting to score  
No more wanting or waiting  
To get home from here  
While having my family and friends  
Close and near  
When this all happens  
The one thing you'll see  
Is a smile on my face  
While in my house  
With my family  
*Chad Scheidle-NCCF*

## Things God Won't Ask

God won't ask...  
...what kind of car you drove, but will ask how many people you drove who didn't have transportation.  
...the square footage of your house, but will ask how many people you welcomed into your home.  
...about the fancy clothes you had in your closet, but will ask how many of those clothes helped the needy.  
...about your social status, but will ask what kind of class you displayed.  
...how many material possessions you had, but will ask if they dictated your life.  
...what your highest salary was, but will ask if you compromised your character to obtain that salary.  
...how much overtime you worked, but will ask if you worked overtime for your family and loved ones.  
...how many promotions you received, but will ask how you promoted others.  
...what your job title was, but will ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.  
...what you did to help yourself, but will ask what you did to help others.  
...how many friends you had, but will ask how many people to whom you were a true friend.  
...what you did to protect your rights, but will ask what you did to protect the rights of others.  
...in what neighborhood you lived, but will ask how you treated your neighbors.  
...about the color of your skin, but will ask about the content of your character.  
...how many times your deeds matched your words, but will ask how many times they didn't.

When there is nothing left but God, that is when you find out God is all you need.



*Jeremy J Lee, NCCF*

## The Presence of God

There are four levels of the presence of God in the lives of those He loves. To the carnal Christian God is a superior being living somewhere in another heaven far away. Even though the man is aware of God's existence, he does not recognize him in everyday life. At the second level a man conscious of God's involvement in his daily routine. He learns to maintain a profitable two-way communication between himself and god. The man learns more of God through the Word and through prayer. The third level enters at special times of fellowship and/or worship. A man can enter into the holy of holies and encounter such a state of bliss and exhilaration being totally engulfed in the presence of God. This can be overwhelming even to a mature Christian. However, there is still one more level. It means going one step beyond being immersed in the presence of God in the holy of holies to the point to where God's presence actually enters the man. This level of uninhibited intimacy allows God to work his righteous wonders without restriction through the life of a mature, truly spirit filled man.

*Author, Unknown*



## Inside the Echo

- Page 2 - Emergency Numbers
- Page 2 - Rainbow starts anywhere
- Page 2 - Toward Clean Speech
- Page 3 - Christmas Puzzle
- Page 3 - The Devil's Best Tool
- Page 4 - A Friend
- Page 4 - How the Internet started
- Page 4 - Thanksgiving

### Emergency Numbers

*Emergency numbers may be dialed direct. No operator assistance is necessary.*

When in sorrow,.....	call John 14
When men fail you, .....	call Psalm 27
If you want to be fruitful, .....	call John 15
When you have sinned,.....	call Psalm 51
When you worry, .....	call Matthew 6:19-34
When you are in danger,.....	call Psalm 91
When God seems far away, .....	call Psalm 139
When your faith needs stirring, .....	call Hebrews 11
When you are lonely and fearful, .....	call Psalm 23
When you grow bitter and critical, .....	call I Cor 13
For Paul's secret to happiness,.....	call Col 3:12-17
For understanding of Christianity, .....	call II Cor 5:15-19
When you feel down and out,.....	call Romans 8:31
When you want peace and rest, .....	call Matthew 11:25-30
When the world seems bigger than God,.....	call Psalm 90
When you want Christian assurance,.....	call Romans 8:1-30
When you leave home for labor or travel,.....	call Psalm 121
When your prayers grow narrow or selfish, .....	call Psalm 67
For a great invention/opportunity, .....	call Isaiah 55
When you want courage for a task, .....	call Joshua 1
For how to get along with fellow men,.....	call Romans 12
When you think of investments and returns, .....	call Mark 10
If you are depressed,.....	call Psalm 27
If your pocketbook is empty, .....	call Psalm 37

### A Rainbow Starts Anywhere

*This is a testimonial from Nate Sayre, an inmate here at NCCF. He and I were at dinner talking. While telling me this, I could see that he was speaking from his heart. His testimony brought tears of joy to my eyes, and goose bumps to my arms. I was honored that he shared this with me and I am grateful that he is letting me share it with you.*

One day after the cops went to my house, I had to get out of the county. I had some friends who were helping me out. I was real ups. I knew I was going to jail sooner or later. I have one and at the time I had one girl on the way. It was April 11th, and her mother was due on the 25th. So, as we were riding down back roads I was trying to figure to if I was going down the right path. I didn't want to run the rest of my life, but I knew that if I turned myself in I knew it'd be a long time before I'd see my kids, and I really wanted to see and hold my baby girl.

I have always known God, and we've had our share of up's and down's. So, I asked him,

"Lord, I know that I have to do the right thing, but I need to hold my little one first. I don't want to have to leave them behind that's why I am running right now. I need to know if this is the right path-I need some kind of sign."

I never expected what He gave me. There were three of us in the truck, I was in the middle (being the smallest) it was a dreary, cloudy and misty day. I looked to my right, there outside the window was the smallest rainbow I had ever seen. My friend saw the look on my face, and he saw the rainbow too! It started at the mirror and ran along the door (about a foot). Then my friend just

reached out and put his had through it! The three of us watched as we drove down the road, and it just got bigger and bigger until it filled the sky.

I knew right then that that was the answer to my prayer. To this day, I may in prison, but I am on the right path! My grandmother always told me that I was a good person. Now I know what she meant, Bless her heart.—Nate Sayre, NCCF

*Anyone wishing to share his testimony with us, please feel free, and give it to either Pastor Lang, or me (Jeremy Halverson).*



*Picture drawn by Jaremy Lee, NCCF*

### Toward Clean Speech

1. Recognize swearing does damage. It does not win friends, dates, or jobs. It is not manly
2. Start by eliminating casual swearing. So you're telling a funny story and think that swearing adds emphasis. Pretend granny's listening
3. Think positive. This has been mandated to be included on every self-improvement list for good reason, so quit complaining.
4. Practice patience. Ask yourself when in a long line: Does it really matter?
5. Cope. Consider an annoyance a challenge. Everyone is not perfect like you..!
6. Stop complaining. No one wants to hear it. Read the third tip.
7. Use alternative words. Low-class clods have used these words for centuries. If you must, substitute a less offensive word (only until you can eliminate their need totally).
8. Make your point politely. Poor language choice is not a sign of maturity. How about just saying your idea might work better.
9. Think of what you should have said. See pervious tip.
10. Work at it. Plan ahead for stressful situations or those in which you often swear and develop tricks to stop yourself.

Developed by Jim O'Connor, Chicago, Illinois—Founder of the Cuss Control Academy. Jim says, "Cussing is abrasive, offensive, disrespectful, hostile and, generally, a tool for whiners to further the decline of civility." He also shares, "because we are allowed to express our emotions more openly, we swear. When we get mad, we swear. When we're inconvenienced, we swear. Nobody is trying to deal with those emotions instead." Think about how often you swear because everybody else talks that way.

Remember, just because we are in a prison does not mean we have to lose our self-respect!!!!



Volume 5.6a November, 2002

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,

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

The Church of the Damascus Road  
 PO Box 834  
 Fort Dodge, IA 50501-0834  
 Office at St. Olaf Lutheran Church  
 239 North 11th Street, Fort Dodge  
 515-955-3579

# I'm Back

If any of you have any of the old newsletters stored away, and one happens to be from July of 2001, you will find that I, Jeremy Halverson, was the editor of the Echo and the Flash. Well, I am happy to announce my return. Well, I am not exactly "happy" to be back, I am, however, happy to be the Editor of the Echo! I am now residing at the North Central Correctional Facility in Rockwell City.

I left the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility in July of 2001. I went home to Des Moines, and here I am again. I am not going to bore you with the details, I will say that when I left I fell back into the "old ways."

I am most excited to have the chance to be with Pastor Lang, and *all* of those who are in the happy family of The Church of the Damascus Road. Now that we are able to help with the Echo!, we are going to *need all of you* to help put items into this newsletter! It is, after all, YOU who make this newsletter happen!

Stories are great,  
Poems and drawings, too,  
Anything can happen,  
All because of you.

HA! That was my two cents on poetry. *I am not a poet! So give me input* on what to include in this newsletter, it is here for all of us. Let's make good use of it.

If you are at NCCF, give your items to me or to Pastor Lang. If you are at FDCF, give your items for the Echo! to Pastor Lang and he will see that I get them.

— Jeremy Halverson

# The Devil's Best Tool

It was announced that the devil was going out of business, and would offer all his tools for sale to whoever would pay his price. On the night of the sale, they were attractively displayed, and a bad-looking lot they were. Malice, Hatred, Envy, Jealousy, Sensuality, and Deceit, and all the other implements of evil were spread out each marked with its price. Apart from the rest lay a harmless-looking wedge-shaped tool, very worn and priced higher than the rest.

Someone asked the devil what it is. "That's Discouragement" was the reply. "Well, why do you price it so high?" "Because," replied the devil, "it is more useful to me than any of the others. I can pry open and get inside a man's consciousness with that when I could not get near him with any of the others, and when once inside, I can use him whatever way suits me best. It's so very worn because I use it with nearly everybody as very few people yet know it belongs to me."

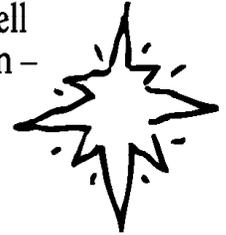
It hardly need be added that the devil's price for discouragement was so high that it was never sold. He still owns it, and is still using it.

— Religious Digest



## "Peace on Earth"... "Good Will to All"

The story of Jesus' birth is found in Matthew 1:18-2:12 and Luke 2. Fill in the boxes below with words from the verses that fit the definitions. The letters in the darker boxes will spell a phrase that we hear during the Christmas season – and all year!



Baby Jesus' bed


heavenly messenger

Mary's husband


it led the wise men

Jesus' mother



the town of Joseph's family


a gift from the wise men



Mary wrapped Jesus in these


the kings; wise men

caregiver for sheep

Final answer: Glory to God

manger, angel, Joseph, star, Mary, Bethlehem, gold, Magi, cloths, shepherd



## Thanksgiving

As November comes to an end, don't forget Thanksgiving is the 28th. We all have a lot to be thankful for. Maybe at times it is hard to see that, but be thankful for what we have, not just in here, but out there, too.

All of us have something to be thankful for, but let's not forget we ought not be thankful just one day, we should be thankful everyday! Don't get too full on the turkey, though! As the cartoon above shows, we too will be having turkey for the next three days. Bless you all! And have a great Thanksgiving. *Jeremy Halverson-Editor*

## A Friend

- (A)cccepts you as you are
- (B)elieves in you
- (C)alls your name to just say, "Hi"
- (D)oesn't give up on you
- (E)nvvisions the whole of you (even the unfinished parts)
- (F)orgives your mistakes
- (G)ives unconditionally
- (H)elps you
- (I)nvites you over
- (J)ust "be" with you
- (K)eeps you close at heart
- (L)oves you for who you are
- (M)akes a difference in your life
- (N)ever judges
- (O)ffers support
- (P)icks you up
- (Q)uiets your fears
- (R)aises your spirits
- (S)ays nice things about you
- (T)ells you the truth when you need to hear it
- (U)nderstands you
- (V)alues you
- (W)alks besides you
- (X)-plains things you don't understand
- (Y)ells when you don't understand
- (Z)aps you back to reality

Friends are very fine jewels, indeed. They make you smile and encourage you to succeed. They lend an ear, share a word of praise and they always open their hearts to us. Don't sweat the small stuff!

## How the Internet Started

In ancient Israel, it came to pass that a trader by the name of Abraham Com didst take unto himself a young wife by the name of Dot. And Dot Com was a comely woman, broad of shoulder and long of leg. Indeed, she had been called Amazon Dot Com.

She said unto Abraham, her husband, "Why doest thou travel far from town to town with thy goods when thou canst trade without ever leaving thy tent?"

And Abraham did look at her as though she were several saddle bags short of a camel load, but simply said, "How, Dear?"

And Dot replied, "I will place drums in all the towns and drums in between to send messages saying what thou hast for sale and they wilt reply telling thee which trader hath the best price. And the sale can thus be made on the drums and delivery made by Uriah's Pony Stable (UPS)."

Abraham didst think long and didst decide to let Dot have her way with the drums. The drums rang out and were an immediate success. Abraham sold all the goods he possessed at the top price, without ever moving from his tent.

But this success didst arouse envy. A man who was named Maccabiah did secrete himself inside Abraham's drum and verily wast accused of insider trading. And the young men didst take to Dot Com's trading as doth the greedy horsefly take to camel dung. They were called Nomadic Ecclesiastical Rich Dominican Siderites, or NERDS for short.

And lo, the land was so feverish with joy at the new riches and the deafening sound of drums that no one noticed that the real riches were going to the maker of drums, one Brother William of Gates, who didst buy up every drum company in the land. And, indeed, didst insist on making drums that workest only with Brother Gates' drumheads and drumsticks.

Dot did say, "Oh, Abraham, what we have started is being taken over by others." And as Abraham looked out over the Bay of Ezekiel, or as it came to be known, "eBay," he said, "We need a name that reflects what we are." And Dot didst reply, "Young Ambitious Hebrew Owner Operators."

"YAHOO," said Abraham.

And that is how it all began. It wasn't Al Gore after all.

## Home Rules

- If you sleep in it... **Make it up**
- If you wear it... **Hang it up**
- If you drop it... **Pick it up**
- If you step in it... **Wipe it off**
- If you open it... **Close it**
- If you empty it... **Fill it up**
- If it rings... **Answer it**
- If it howls... **Feed it**
- If it cries... **Love it**

## Things to Ponder

If a book about failures doesn't sell, is it a success?

If you throw a cat out the window, is it considered kitty litter?

If the funeral procession is at night, do folks drive with their headlights off?

If the stealth bomber crashes in a forest, will it make a sound?

If a turtle doesn't have a shell, is it homeless or naked?

If a mute swears, does his mother wash his hands with soap?

If someone with multiple personalities threatens to kill himself, is it considered a hostage situation?

If nothing ever sticks to TEFLON, how do they make it stick to the pan?

If a parsley farmer is sued, can they garnish his wages?

If a 7-11 store is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, why are there locks on the door?

If the cops arrest a mime, do they tell him he has the right to remain silent?

If a man speaks in the forest and there is no woman around to hear him, is he still wrong?

Is there another word for synonym?

Isn't it a bit unnerving that doctors call what they do "practice"?

When sign makers go on strike, are their picket signs blank?

Why do they report power outages on TV?

Why do we drive on parkways, and park on driveways?

Is it true cannibals don't eat clowns because they taste funny?

When it rains, do sheep shrink?

Why is the word abbreviation so long?

Can a fat person go skinny dipping?

Why do you need a driver's license to buy liquor when you can't drink and drive?

Why do they put Braille dots on the key pad of the drive-up ATM?

*Mrs. Roxanne Lang*

*If any of you have the answers to any of these...feel free to drop us a line here!, at the Echo!*

## 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