

The Church of the Damascus Road

Echo!

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One of the Chosen Ones

As I look back beyond the horizons to where time began for this one, the road was always cluttered with a broken heart; many a reason for tears without reason. I have always had this feeling inside; a special compassion for others, the love of nature, happiness in helping others. If the tracks had ran through my hometown, I would have been raised on the wrong side of the tracks. It was always a challenge not to be swayed the wrong way, but I would walk with the gangsters, the lawless, and the immoral from time to time. I would flirt with disaster but never fall into destruction. I can never remember a time I didn't stand alone. At age five I was witness to a murder, at age eleven I was put on the street to fend for myself, at age 15 the jailer at the county jail filled with cons and criminals alike. From age 19 into adulthood I was sent 300+ miles from home to a town where I knew no one—alone—alone to learn higher education. College was easy, but that higher education—wow!—drinking, drugs, fighting, women. Always stepping away before complete disaster—without knowing, without trying—my soul always being the “Chosen one.”

Always knowing right from wrong, always ready to toe that fine line and from time to time crossing over for crime. But being the chosen one (few were shown so plainly as I) it left me wondering, “Why Me?” But now I know my path was never walked alone, so I was given a special lesson to let me know. And now so many years have gone by. Do I even realize that they weren't lessons of punishment, but a special gift of love?

Just one brief story of a special gift as I can now see it. Living life as I did, fast and free (the faster the freer), always playing and

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The Blood

One night in a church service a young woman felt the tug of God at her heart. She responded to God's call and accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior. The young woman had a very rough past, involving alcohol, drugs, and prostitution. But, the change in her was evident.

As time went on she became a faithful member of the church. She eventually became involved in the ministry, teaching young children.

It was not very long until this faithful young woman had caught the eye and heart of the pastor's son. The relationship grew and they began to make wedding plans, this is when the problems began.

You see, about one half of the church did not think that a woman with a past such as hers was suitable for a pastor's son. The church began to argue and fight about the matter. So they decided to have a meeting. As the people made their arguments, and tensions increased, the meeting was getting completely out of hand.

The young woman became very upset about all the things being brought up about her past. As she began to cry, the pastor's son stood to speak. He could not bear the

pain it was causing his wife to be. He began to speak and his statement was this: “My fiancée's past is not what is on trial here. What you are questioning is the ability of the

blood of Jesus to wash away sin. Today you have put the blood of Jesus on trial. So, does it wash away sin or not?” The whole church began to weep as they realized that they had been slandering the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Too often, even as Christians, we bring up the past and use it as a weapon against our brothers and sisters. Forgiveness is a very foundational part of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. If the blood of Jesus does not cleanse the other person completely, then we are all in a lot of trouble.

What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus... end of case!



Whose Hands

A basketball in my hands is worth about \$19. A basketball in Michael Jordan's hands is worth about \$33 million. It depends whose hands it's in.

A baseball in my hands is worth about \$6. A baseball in Mark McGuire's hands is worth \$19 million. It depends on whose hands it's in.

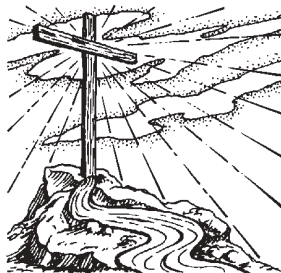
A tennis racket is useless in my hands. A tennis racket in Venus Williams' hands is a championship winning. It depends whose hands it's in.

A rod in my hands will keep away a wild animal. A rod in Moses' hands will part the Red Sea. It depends whose hand it's in.

A sling shot in my hands is a kid's toy. A sling shot in David's hand is a mighty weapon. It depends whose hands it's in.

Two fish and 5 loaves of bread in my hands is a couple of fish sandwiches. Two fish and 5 loaves of bread in God's hands will feed thousands. It depends whose hands it's in.

Nails in my hands might produce a bird-house. Nails in Jesus Christ's hands will produce salvation for the entire world. It depends whose hands it's in.



As you see now it depends whose hands it's in. So put your concerns, your worries, your fears, your hopes, your dreams, your families and your relationships in God's hands because... It depends whose hands it's in.

Surrender

At the loneliest moments in your life you have looked at other men and women and wondered if they too were seeking—something they couldn't describe but knew they wanted and needed. Some of them seemed to have found fulfillment in marriage and family living. Others went off to achieve fame and fortune in other parts of the world. Still others stayed at home and prospered, and looking at them you may have thought: "These people are not on the Great Quest. These people have found their way. They knew what they wanted and have been able to grasp it. It is only I who travel this path that leads to nowhere. It is only I who goes asking, seeking, stumbling along this dark and despairing road that has no guideposts." But you are not alone. All mankind is traveling with you, for all mankind is on this same quest. All humanity is seeking the answer to the confusion, the moral sickness, the spiritual emptiness that oppresses the world. All mankind is crying out for guidance, for comfort, for peace. Surrender to Jesus and you will be saved.

— Billy Graham



Celestial Freedom

Bold in nature, set me free
 Soaring with the eagles, my soul should be.
 Faith is the splendor of
 Strength and courage,
 And freedom is the desire
 That lies within that keeps on growing.
 Give me courage not to doubt nor worry
 While I'm gliding through the realms of
 Peace in the heights of total glory.
 Magnificent is the flight
 That leads to the realms of wonder.
 And when my spirit finally
 Reaches the realms of splendor,
 I want my spirit to be without excuse.
 For I have seen and enjoyed
 The divine and magnificent.
 Beauty of nature, in it's
 Total majestic glory...

T. Radar

In His Arms

A local county sheriff got a disturbing call one Saturday afternoon a few months ago. His six-year-old grandson Mikey had been hit by a car while fishing with his dad. The father and son were near a bridge when a woman lost control of her car, slid off the bridge, and hit Mikey at a rate of about 50 mph. When the sheriff got to the hospital, he rushed to the emergency room, where he found little Mikey conscious and in fairly good spirits, considering what had happened to him.

"Mikey, what happened?" the sheriff asked. Mikey replied, "Well, Gramps, I was fishin' with Dad, and some lady runned me over, I flew into a mud puddle, and broke my fishin' pole and I didn't get to catch no fish!" As it turned out, the impact propelled Mikey about 500 feet, over a few trees and an embankment, where he landed right in the middle of a mud puddle.

His only injuries were to his right femur bone, which had broken in two places and needed surgery. Otherwise the boy was fine. Since all he could talk about was that his fishing pole was broken, the Sheriff went out and bought him a new one while he was in surgery, so he could have it when he came out.

The next day the Sheriff sat with Mikey to keep him company in the hospital. Mikey was enjoying his new fishing pole, and talked about when he could go fishing again as he cast into the trash can. When they were alone, Mikey matter-of-factly said, "Gramps, did you know Jesus is real?" "Well," the Sheriff replied, a little startled. "Yes, Jesus is real to everyone who believes in him and loves him in their hearts." "No," said Mikey. "I mean Jesus is REALLY real." "What do you mean?" asked the Sheriff. "I know he's real 'cause I saw him," said Mikey, still casting into the trash can. "You did?" asked Gramps, the Sheriff. "Yep," said Mikey. "When that lady runned me over and broke my fishin' pole, Jesus caught me in his arms and laid me down in the mud puddle."

Author Unknown



Drawing by Don Wise

An Unworthy King

I am an American. When the white men first came to these shores. I was already here. The Native American already knew me; he used me medicinally. He was never my slave; I was his servant.

How times have changed. I am King now, and what a King! I rule my subjects with a tyranny greater than that exercised by the Pharaohs and Caesars. I am King—an absolute monarch.

I take food from the mouths of babies so fathers and mothers can have me. I steal the keen intellect of young men and old and make them dullards. I steal the beauty, modesty, and self-respect of sweet young and old women. I befoul and litter every cafe, hotel, and public building in the land.

Woe also to that person who is not my slave. I burn his eyes, I sear his lungs; I befoul his clothes; I make his journey a nightmare. If you are my slave, I defy your power to break my chain. I am your master, you are my slave. I am TOBACCO.

—Source unknown

Shared by Victorio DeLance 3/20/03

The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!

Volume 6.3a

May, 2003

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.

Gary LeCompte, 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:

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Thoughts

If I had the day to do over
Wouldn't have hid my face,
I wouldn't have discarded my life
To years of waste.

If I would have thought of the
Consequences of my actions,
Then I would not have thought
With in a fraction.

If I would have known the meaning
Of life, I would not be living in
Painful strife.

If I would have thought of the
Heartache and pain, then I wouldn't
Have put my family through all this pain.

If only I would have changed my ways
And lived right, then my life
Would have been bright.

Albert Cooper



Moving Mountains

When God wants to move a mountain, he does not take a bar of iron, but he takes a little worm. The fact is, we have too much strength. We are not weak enough. It is not our strength that we want. One drop of God's strength is worth more than all the world.

Dwight Moody

What Is God like?

God is Spirit-(Deut. 4:15, Psalm 139:7)

God is Light-(Isa. 60:19)

God is Love-(Prov. 6:16-19) (Isa. 43:4) (Jer. 31:3)

God is a Fire who destroys what is Sinful- (Deut. 4:21; 9:3,19)

God does not change-(I Sam. 15:29)

God is all Wisdom-(Psalm 104:24) (Dan. 2:20)

God is all Powerful-(Jer. 32:17)

God is Holy & Perfect-(Deut. 32:4) (Psalm 18:30)









God is Truth-(Isa. 65:16)

God is the one who brings everything into being, keeps it, and ends it-(Col. 1:17)



An Easter Message

Mary went to the tomb and found it empty! Find the words that an angel spoke to her. Write the name of each picture on the lines. Transfer the letters to the other spaces to find the verse.

			<u>31</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>34</u>	
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>		
	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	
	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>		<u>35</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>37</u>
	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	
	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>
	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>		<u>42</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>44</u>

“
18 42 14 31 3 14 17 7 13 3 17 34 15 17 20

8 42 10 16 25 38 25 23 30 36 35 3 23 29
44 42 19 31 27 43 31 ? 42 19 25 4 23 3 9
42 10 24 19 ; 42 28 42 36 5 24 25 5 27 23 !”

Luke 24:5

EXERCISE DAILY –

– WALK WITH THE LORD.

Answers: cross; butterfly; flower; sunrise; egg; duck; man; vine; hat. “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen!”



Don't Quit

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
 When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
 When the funds are low, and the debts are high,
 And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
 When care is pressing you down a bit,
 Rest if you must, but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns,
 As everyone of us sometimes learns,
 And many a failure turns about,
 When he might have won had he stuck it out;
 Don't give up though the pace seems slow,
 You may succeed with another blow.

Success is failure turned inside out,
 The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
 And you never can tell how close you are,
 It may be near when it seems so far;
 So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,
 It's when things seem worst,
 That you must not quit.

Prayer:

Things are going to be OK if I just let you take over, Lord. Take over me, my decisions, and my actions. Help me to be patient when it seems easier to get angry and fight back. Help me to turn the other cheek. Everything I do today is part of my life of servanthood; I am living for you, Lord! Amen



"Relax mom...it's macaroni."

Continued from Page One

game for more. Anyhow, I found myself the driver in a drug store burglary—as soon as the light of day struck, I knew I had crossed the line. I only now can see God was carrying me then—days of pill gobbling, abuse, shook down by the police, fighting and drinking. My first trip to jail. There was no escape from the guilt I felt. Then, four months later, the accident. I always thought it was punishment, but now I know that I was forgiven, being a Chosen One. I was trapped in a basement on the wrong side of a gasoline fire. Knowing what I know today, God came just as I was about to die, I slipped and fell in the pool of gas. I could never remember the fire as I went out to the snow—it was a tremendous snow storm, and it put out the fire burning on my clothes. Gasoline. It was, as I can see today, a gift from God. He carried me from that fire and placed me in the snow, and it was not punishment, for I punish myself. It was his love and passion for, a Chosen One. This has happened time and time again through my 44 years. If I had more ink and paper I could fill many more pages. I could fill many more sheets of this fine paper because I definitely have the time.

Always quick with a good deed or a helping hand to a stranger or friend, all are brother and sister human beings. Then, as a Chosen One without really knowing so, I was guided without thought or direction. I was all of a sudden where I was needed; a smile on my face and a hand to help, ending with the soul warming grin. To this day—it happens without wanting or trying, even in this cross-bar hotel.

Now, knowing, as you do, in this writing of our's (God's and mine), you must wonder why I am a Chosen One (one always thinks of a golden boy, with a silver spoon). Fairy tales and myths are a way of learning. I could only learn from living, for fairy tales and myths were for children. I was a kid, but never really a child. I learned from the struggles, sometimes for just the next breath. I learned my special lessons on a path just chosen for me, years of alcohol and drug use and abuse. I walked on streets that only demons walk, danced with those most evil, disguised as the finest ladies in the crowd, given the worst of the best or the best of the worst. Have you ever wondered as I have, "Why me?" Addiction will always keep me within it's grip, for there is no cure. When I am deprived of one or more, my mind will find a replacement. Most people's addiction leaves them with no money, no drugs. Mine always found me with all the drugs and all the money. Now most would go "Wow!" but, I must say, how I lived through the craziness of the other end, drugs and money, never having to quit. For my addictive nature, I'm always wanting, wanting more, wanting more. I'm always wanting something and hardly ever is it anything to do with my needs. If there was a time, wanting

for one of my needs, I can't remember. Usually my feelings are so strong, so sensitive—I'm craving for something to hide them or make them go away. And this is as a "Chosen One," not one as in only, but many of ones, "Chosen Ones."

I can't tell you when or even how I know, I just do. Why I was a "Chosen One" most likely won't be answered until long after my day has passed. I guess my sharing this knowledge is just the beginning of my real work. I know the lives I've touched. They never knew my name, but my face is remembered; sparkling eyes, and that grin.

Here I sit, being told I'm facing "life without parole," knowing the lady I love has put me here. I'm neither angry nor worried. My heart is still overflowing with love for this beautiful lady of mine. I can find myself sad and lonely being away from this one I love as no other. And my little "Daddy's Girl" — she's another "Chosen One." She knows she is, and I've shown her that she is. Now, okay, I know you want to know, "Why am I facing life without parole?" I can't tell you all, but the Federal Government now allows witnesses to have pending time reduced for turning state's evidence. I've been pointed out by many. For what reason I don't know. Perhaps because an addicted person is twisted in sickness, or because of greed, or because of jealousy, or because of envy, or just because they wanted to be the nice guy. I'm not sure why, I just am the one chosen for the fall.

My freedom of choice of being where I want is gone, but my freedom in my mind was given back when placed where I can't practice my addiction. My heart can be sad and lonely when I allow, but never has it been stronger. I know what is to be, will be. I know and accept that, being a "Chosen One." My path wasn't chosen by me, but I do know that the path that has been chosen can only be walked by me, wherever that path takes me.

God needs me there, for I'm a "Chosen One." Never will I walk alone again, for God lives within me, guides my path when I allow, waiting patiently when I don't, and forever loving me, a "Chosen One."

— Kelly Mahler May 2002

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
 6:30pm Fridays Prayer Team
 7:00pm Fridays Bible Study

NCCF Rockwell City

6:30pm Tuesdays Prayer & Bible Study
 6:30pm Thursdays Holy Communion