

The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!

Volume 6
Issue No. 6a
November 2003
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA



Another Side of Jesus

Our mental images of Jesus of Nazareth, walking and talking on earth with his disciples usually are of a very kind-but-serious, dedicated man who, because he did not sin, rarely has a smile on his face. After all, the Bible never says, "Jesus laughed," but it does say, "Jesus wept."

Consider for moment, though, that Jesus took the little children in his arms and blessed them. Doesn't that imply that he would be less than serious and maybe even a little jovial and playful? After all, when you have a child in your arms, isn't it irresistible to tickle and be playful?

As is usual on the worldwide web, authors and artists are often unknown. This unknown artist has certainly captured the humanness of Jesus when he took the children in his arms and blessed them.

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Some Words of Wisdom

You always hear the usual stories of pennies on the sidewalk being good luck, gifts from angels, etc. This is the first time I've ever heard this twist on the story. Gives you something to think about. Several years ago, a friend of mine and her husband were invited to spend the weekend at the husband's employer's home. My friend, Arlene, was nervous about the weekend. The boss was very wealthy, with a fine home on the waterway, and cars costing more than her house.

The first day and evening went well, and Arlene was delighted to have this rare glimpse into how the very wealthy live. The husband's employer was quite generous as a host, and took them to the finest restaurants. Arlene knew she would never have the opportunity to indulge in this kind of extravagance again, so was enjoying herself immensely. As the three of them were about to enter an exclusive restaurant that evening, the boss was walking slightly ahead of Arlene and her husband. He stopped suddenly, looking down on the pavement for a long, silent moment.

Arlene wondered if she was supposed to pass him. There was nothing on the ground except a single darkened penny that someone had dropped, and a few cigarette butts. Still silent, the man reached down and picked up the penny. He held it up and smiled, then put it in his pocket as if he had found a great treasure. How absurd! What need did this man have for a single penny? Why would he even take the time to stop and pick it up?



Throughout dinner, the entire scene nagged at her. Finally, she could stand it no longer. She casually mentioned that her daughter once had a coin collection, and asked if the penny he had found had been of some value. A smile crept across the man's face as he reached into his pocket for the penny and held it out for her to see. She had seen many pennies before! What was the point of this?

"Look at it." He said. "Read what it says." She read the words "United States of America."

"No, not that; read further."

"One cent?" "No, keep reading."

"In God we Trust?" "Yes!" "And?"

"And if I trust in God, the name of God is holy, even on a coin. Whenever I find a coin I see that inscription. It is written on every single United States coin, but we never seem to

notice it! God drops a message right in front of me telling me to trust him. Who am I to pass it by? When I see a coin, I pray, I stop to see if my trust IS in God at that moment. I pick the coin up as a response to God; that I do trust in him. For a short time, at least, I cherish it as if it were gold. I think it is God's way of starting a conversation with me. Lucky for me, God is patient and pennies are plentiful!

When I was out shopping today, I found a penny on the sidewalk. I stopped and picked it up, and realized that I had been worrying and fretting in my mind about things I cannot change. I read the words, "In God We Trust," and had to laugh. Yes, God, I get the message. It seems that I have been finding an inordinate number of pennies in the last few months, but then, pennies are plentiful! And, God is patient...

— author unknown

Put On the Whole Armor of God

Listen Up! As Christians, our walk includes a spiritual warfare and we need to be aware of Satan's strategies or he can take advantage of us! If we are ignorant of his devices, Paul tells us, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might" (Eph. 6:10). All who belong to the kingdom of God's dear Son have the forces of the kingdom of Satan against them, so they need to be covered with the whole armor of God. As good soldiers, let us stand and defend our faith. Let us maintain the honor of our calling. The Scriptures lay out practical guidelines by which we can defeat the devil. The first decision to be free of Satan is to accept Christ in our life and trust God. Although Christ has given us authority over Satan (1 Jn 4:4), we can exercise it only as we submit ourselves to God and resist the enemy (Eph. 6:11; Jas. 4:7; 1Pet. 5:8-9). Believers find themselves subject to Satan's attacks because they are no longer on Satan's side. So Paul tells us to put on the necessary clothing for a Christian soldier. We are to use every piece of God's armor to resist Satan's attacks and to stand true to God in the midst of them. Every piece is important and will give us balance. The Christian is never supposed to run from his enemies but fight the good fight of faith, and pray always! Paul told us how we can be prepared for spiritual warfare (Eph.6:10-18): by putting on the whole armor of God:

The Belt of Truth. Most important, and holds the armor in place. Satan uses deceit to maintain his power, and he fights with lies and sometimes his lies sound like the truth.

The Breastplate of Righteousness. Any sin in our life leaves us open to Satan's attack. Even though we are given the righteousness of Christ (2 Cor. 5:21), we still ensure protection by holy living. Satan often attacks our heart—the seat of our emotions, self-worth, and trust. God's approval is the breastplate that protects our heart. He approves of us because we have trusted Christ to save us and cleanse our hearts from sin.

The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace. With our feet firmly planted on the truth that we are at peace with God and that he is on our side, we can stand firmly against Satan's attacks and stand ready to spread the Good News. Satan wants us to think the Good News is a worthless and hopeless task, but the "shoes" God gives us are the motivation to continually proclaim the true peace that is available in the God-news everyone needs to hear. The peace of God is the foundation of our life. With the peace of God we can go through all the battles and difficult situations. We can't be moved by anything. The peace of God is the empire, the rule in our heart! The peace of God will crush Satan!

The Shield of Faith. The shield of faith protects us from Satan's flaming arrows in the forms of insults, setbacks, and temptations. With God's perspective, we can see beyond our circumstances and know victory is ours. We can trust God in every area of our life!

The Helmet of Salvation. Satan wants us to doubt God and our salvation. The helmet protects our mind from doubting God's saving work for us in Jesus Christ. This is the confidence that in the future a great victory celebration is coming. It's also referred to as the hope of salvation (1 Thess. 5:8). This helmet protects us against Satan's two-edged sword of discouragement and doubt.

The Sword of the Spirit. Since the Word of God is the basis of our faith, we need to learn how to wield it with authority. Scripture is our best offensive weapon against the devil, (Matt. 4:1-11). When we are tempted, we need to trust in the truth of God's Word!

After he described the various elements of the armor, Paul said that we are to be in constant prayer. Prayer expresses our dependence on God. We can fight against Satan only "In the strength of the Lord and in the power of his might," (Eph. 6:10).

Listen Up! Young men and old, please! Only in the power of Christ, dressed with the whole armor of God in the Spirit can we be victorious in the battle that faces us when we leave prison. Don't fool yourself into believing that you can do it alone. Doing it our way got us here in the first place. We have only ourselves to blame and not God for the "fiery trick darts" that he attacks us with. So mount up as soldiers prepared for battle, pick up the cross, press on with the Word, go down in prayer, fight the good fight, and keep checking yourself from time-to-time to see if you are wearing the whole armor of God.

—Victorio DeLance 2/28/03

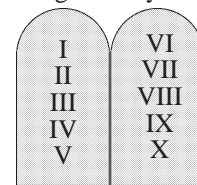
Cowboy 10 Commandments

USA Today in its 3/10/03 edition had a large article on two Cowboy Churches in Texas. They printed the Cowboy's Ten Commandments posted on the wall at Cross Trails Church in Fairlie, Texas. It was too good not to pass along to you.

Think if we all used these instead of the one with all the "shalt not's" in it, we could probably understand and live up to them a lot better! Guess cowboys just kinda tell it like it is!!!!

- (1) Just one God.
- (2) Honor yer Ma and Pa.
- (3) No telling tales or gossipin'.
- (4) Git yourself to Sunday meeting.
- (5) Put nothin' before God.
- (6) No foolin' around with another fellow's gal.
- (7) No killin'.
- (8) Watch yer mouth.
- (9) Don't take what ain't yers.
- (10) Don't be hankerin' for yer buddy's stuff

Y'all have a good Day.



Cajun Ten Commandments

(Keeps it REAL Simple)

1. God is number one... and das' All.
2. Don't pray to nuttin' or nobody... jus' God.
3. Don't cuss nobody. 'specially da Good Lord.
4. When it be Sunday... pass yo'self by God's House.
5. Yo mama an' yo daddy dun did it all... lissen to dem.
6. Killin' duck an' fish, das' OK... people - No!
7. God done give you a wife... sleep wit' jus' her.
8. Don't take nobody's boat... or nuttin' else.
9. Don't go wantin' somebody's stuff.
10. Stop lyin' ... yo tongue gonna fall out yo mouf!



Volume 6.6a November, 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.

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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Did God Create Evil?

Did God create Evil? This will make you think for a while. At a certain college, there was a professor with a reputation for being tough on Christians. At the first class every semester, he asked if anyone was a Christian and proceeded to degrade them and to mock their statement of faith.

One semester, he asked the question and a young man raised his hand when asked if anyone was a Christian. The professor asked, "Did God make everything, young man?" He replied, "Yes sir, he did!" The professor responded, "If God made everything, then he made evil." The student didn't have a response and the professor was happy to have once again proved the Christian faith to be a myth.

Then another man raised his hand and asked, "May I ask you something, sir?"

"Yes, you may," responded the professor. The young man stood up and said "Sir, is there such thing as cold?" "Of course there is, what kind of question is that? Haven't you ever been cold?"

The young man replied, "Actually, sir, cold doesn't exist. What we consider to be cold, is really an absence of heat. Absolute zero is when there is absolutely no heat, but cold does not really exist. We have only created that term to describe how we feel when heat is not there." The young man continued, "Sir, is there such a thing as dark?"

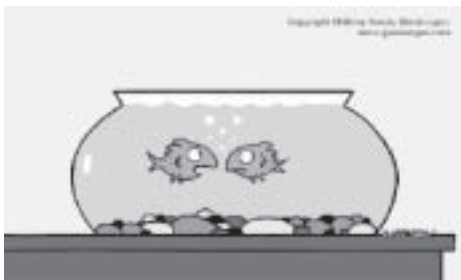
Once again, the professor responded "Of course there is." And once again, the student replied "Actually, sir, darkness does not exist. Darkness is really only the absence of light. Darkness is only a term man developed to describe what happens when there is no light present."

Finally, the young man asked, "Sir, is there such thing as evil?"

The professor responded, "Of course. We have rapes, and murders and violence everywhere in the world, those things are evil."

The student replied, "Actually, sir, evil does not exist. Evil is simply the absence of God. Evil is a term man developed to describe the absence of God. God did not create evil. It isn't like truth, or love, which exist as virtues like heat or light. Evil is simply the state where God is not present, like cold without heat or darkness without light." The professor had nothing to say.

-from the web



"You don't have to say HI every time we pass each other!"

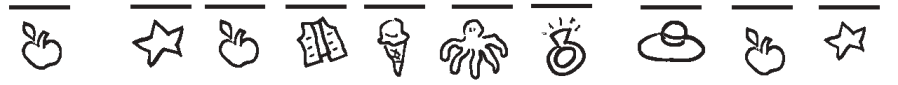


The Shepherds and the Angel

What did the angel of the Lord say to the shepherds?
(Luke 2:11)

Write the first letter of each picture on the lines.

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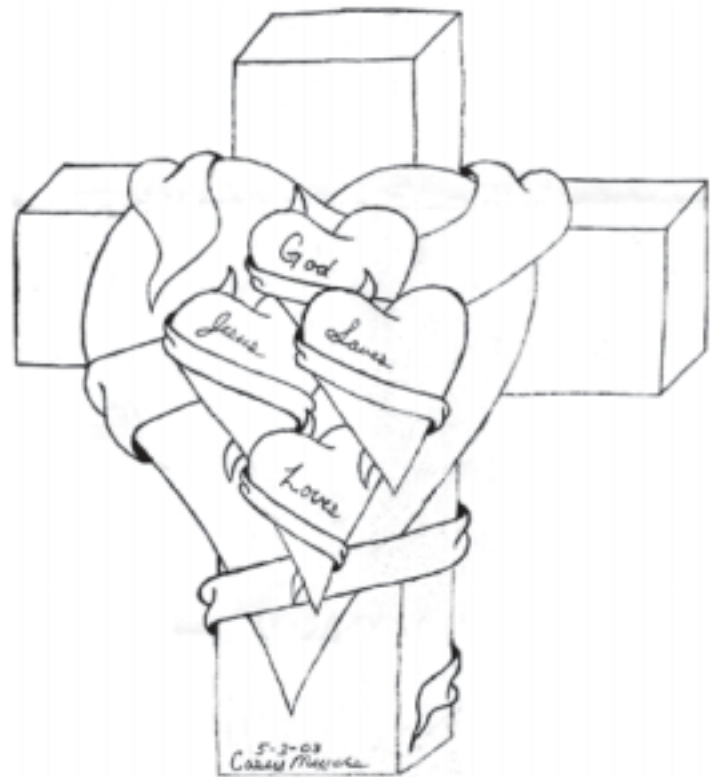


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Answer: Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you.



Drawing by Joel Seguro '03, FED Detainee, FDCF



Drawing by Casey Meyers '03 FDCF

Lessons from Noah's Ark

Everything I need to know about life, I learned from Noah's Ark...

- One: Don't miss the boat.
- Two: Remember that we are all in the same boat.
- Three: Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
- Four: Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really
- Five: Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
- Six: Build your future on high ground.
- Seven: For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
- Eight: Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
- Nine: When you're stressed, float a while.
- Ten: Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
- Eleven: No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.

Words on drawing: *Oracion a la Virgen. Señora tu me has dada todo. Y yo en mi persona no te he dado nada. Te pido perdón por el orgullo y el egoísmo con el que me he comportado ante ti madre del uniberzo. Señora hazme instrumento tuyo y no me des bienes naturales, sino una verdadera personalidad, como la que tienes tu perdonanos los pecados. Amen*

Translation: *Prayer to the Virgin. Lady, you have given me everything. And I in my person have not given you anything. I apologize to you for the pride and the egoism with which I have behaved before you, mother of the uniberzo. Lady, for me your instrument, do not give me natural goods, but by your real personality, such as you have, excuse us our sins. Love*

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.

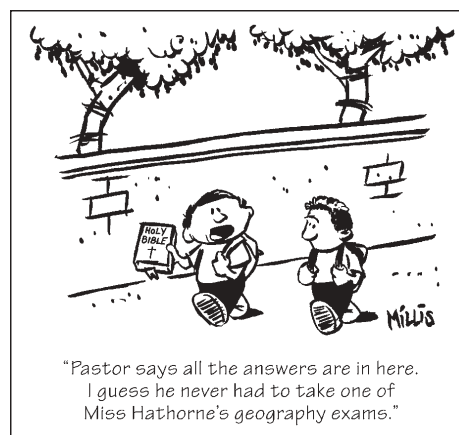
Worship & Bible Study

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



Drawing by Dale Jones '03, NCCF