

The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!

Volume 8
Issue No. 3a
May 2005
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

God's Way of Caring

I just had one of the most amazing experiences of my life, and wanted to share it with my family and dearest friends:

I was driving home from a meeting this evening about 5, stuck in traffic on Colorado Blvd., and the car started to choke and splutter and die. I barely managed to coast, cursing, into a gas station, glad only that I would not be blocking traffic and would have a somewhat warm spot to wait for the tow truck. It wouldn't even turn over. Before I could make the call, I saw a woman walking out of the "quickie mart" building, and it looked like she slipped on some ice and fell into a gas pump, so I got out to see if she was okay. When I got there, it looked more like she had been overcome

by sobs than that she had fallen; she was a young woman who looked really haggard with dark circles under her eyes. She dropped something as I helped her up, and I picked it up to give it to her. It was a nickel.

At that moment, everything came into focus for me: the crying woman, the ancient Suburban crammed full of stuff with 3 kids in the back (1 in a car seat), and the gas pump reading \$4.95. I asked her if she was okay and if she needed help, and she just kept saying "I don't want my kids to see me crying," so we stood on the other side of the pump from her car.

She said she was driving to California and that things were very hard for her right now. So I asked, "And you were praying?" That made her back away from me a little, but I assured her I was not a crazy person and said, "He heard you, and He sent me."

I took out my card and swiped it through the card reader on the pump so she could fill up her car completely, and while it was fueling walked to the next door McDonald's and bought 2 big bags of food, some gift certificates for more, and a big cup of coffee. She gave the food to the kids in the car, who attacked it like wolves, and we stood by the pump eating fries and talking a little. She told me her name, and that she lived in

Kansas City. Her boyfriend left 2 months ago and she had not been able to make ends meet. She knew she wouldn't have money to pay rent Jan 1, and finally in desperation had finally called her parents, with whom she had not spoken in about 5 years. They lived in California and said she could come live with them and try to get on her feet there. So she packed up everything she owned in the car. She told the kids they were going to California for Christmas, but not that they were going to live there. I gave her my gloves, a little hug and said a quick prayer with her for safety on the road. As I was walking over to my car, she said, "So, are you like an angel or something?"

This definitely made me cry. I said, "Sweetie, at this time of year angels are really busy, so sometimes God uses regular people." It was so incredible to be a part of someone else's miracle. And of course, you guessed it, when I got in my car it started right away and got me home with no problem. I'll put it in the shop tomorrow to check, but I suspect the mechanic won't find anything wrong.

Sometimes the angels fly close enough to you that you can hear the flutter of their wings...

Psalm 55:22 "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee. He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." This prayer is powerful and prayer is one of the best gifts we receive. There is no cost but a lot of rewards, let's continue to pray for one another. Here is the prayer:

"Father, I ask You to bless my children, grandchildren, friends, relatives. Show them a new revelation of your love and power. Holy Spirit, I ask You to minister to their spirit at this very moment. Where there is pain, give them Your peace and mercy. Where there is self doubt, release a renewed confidence through Your grace, In Jesus' precious name. Amen."

Being blessed is GOOD...being HIGHLY FAVORED is best! Don't settle!



Birth of Mother's Day

Anna M. Jarvis (1864-1948) loved her mother dearly. It was Miss Jarvis who first suggested a national day to honor all mothers. At a memorial service for her mother on May 10, 1908, Anna gave a carnation, her mother's favorite flower, to each person in attendance. Within a few years, the idea to honor mothers gained popularity, and Mother's Day was soon observed annually in many large cities of the United States.

On May 9, 1914 by an act of congress, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday of May as Mother's Day. He established the day as a time for "public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country." By then it had become customary to wear white carnations in honor of departed mothers and red carnations to honor the living. The custom continues to this day.

Ever Thought about This?

It's always too soon to quit! No matter how dark things look. No matter how insoluble the problem- how impossible- how imponderable . . . despair is never justified. Because to despair of self is really to despair of God! It is to count God incapable to measure God by human standards- to ignore the clear Word of God. Nothing is too hard for God! With Him all things are possible! This is a truth men have tested and tried again and again to their satisfaction. Not once has God failed to help the man who called on Him for help. Not once have His promises been found wanting.

Dr. Richard Halverson

Inside the Echo!

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Charles Miller II FDCF 4-13-05

The ABCs

Are not perfect
 Because of trial or pain
 Continue in thanksgiving
 Do not begin to blame
 Even when the times are hard
 Fierce winds are bound to blow
 God is forever able
 Hold on to what you know
 Imagine life without His love
 Joy would cease to be
 Keep thanking Him for all the things
 Love imparts to thee
 Move out of "Camp Complaining"
 No weapon that is known
 On earth can yield the power
 Praise can do alone
 Quit looking at the future
 Redeem the time at hand
 Start every day with worship
 To "thank" is a command
 Until we see Him coming
 Victorious in the sky
 We'll run the race with gratitude
 X alting God most high
 Y es, there'll be good times & some bad, but...
 Z ion waits in glory...where none are ever sad!

Labels

Convicts in prison are easily influenced by others who may or may not know something about someone.

A jacket of false assumptions is common in all prison systems. Most men are generally wrongly labeled, until the paper work is seen or a word from a solid inmate sets the record straight.

"Jesus received sinners," Pharisees murmured, "this man hangs around with sinners." Jesus came into this world to find lost, labeled people. Many people in prison have lived very bad lives, in most cases they are even guilty for things that no one knows about.

Jesus is holy, but being holy does not separate him from the most common man. Jesus' compassion brought him into the nitty-gritty, get-your-hands-dirty togetherness with the lowlifes and outcasts. We all have crimes, we all can have "Christ." Jesus took the label "sinner" from all of us who ask and places the label on himself. He places the "newman" label "saved!"

Kevin Rex

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!

Keep on Walking

If we are facing in the right direction, all we have to do is keep on walking. (*Buddhist proverb—we believe can be applied to our Christian faith*).

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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.

Rev. Carroll Lang, Pastor
 Albert Cooper, Editor

Who's in Heaven?

I was shocked, confused bewildered
 As I entered Heaven's door,
 Not by the beauty of it all,
 By the lights or its decor,
 But it was the folks in Heaven
 Who made me sputter and gasp—
 The thieves, the liars, the sinners,
 The alcoholics, the trash.
 There stood the kid from seventh grade
 Who swiped my lunch money twice.
 Next to him was my old neighbor
 Who never said anything nice.
 She, who I always thought
 Was rotting away in hell,
 Was sitting pretty on cloud nine,
 Looking incredibly well.
 I nudged Jesus, "What's the deal?
 I would love to hear your take.
 How'd all these sinners get up here?
 God must've made a mistake.
 And why's everyone so quiet,
 So somber? Give me a clue."
 "Hush child," said He. "They're all in
 shock.
 No one thought they'd see you!"

The Right Time

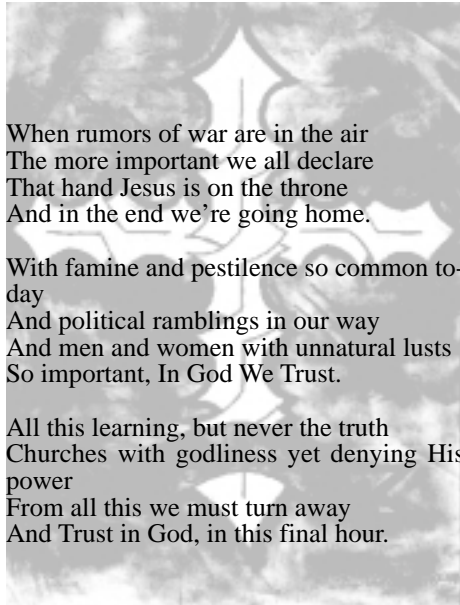
Your Father knows your gifts, your hindrances, and the condition you're in at every moment. And He also knows something you can't possibly know- every single person who's in desperate need of receiving His touch through you. God will bring you to that person at exactly the right time and in the right circumstances.

— Dr. Bruce Wilkinson

To










To look around is to be distressed, to look within is to be depressed, to look above is to be blessed!

Jane Flataker



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>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	
							
						<u>38</u>	<u>39</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

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!"

Blessings

The blessings of this world
Come from God above.
The gift of each passing moment.
The gift of His precious son.

Forever I am thankful
For what Jesus did for me,
Bearing all my sins
That day on Calvary.

Even though I am not worthy,
Jesus paid the price.
His blood covers all my sins,
giving me eternal life.

Each day I shall praise Him
For His love that is so true.
Take the time to seek Him.
This is my advice to you.

For when my time is over,
With Jesus I will be
Wrapped in His gracious arms of love
Throughout eternity.

Robert L. Johnson II 3-11-2003

Works in Progress

My heart is so full of many things that can make me weep or want to sing, so please be patient with me when I grow, since being human makes progress slow. Please don't sit in the judgement seat, for I'd be condemned for my clay feet.

Clay feet would'nt be quite so bad if that were the only fault I had. Th Bible states that our Lord was meek, (in driving out money changers he was'nt weak) when you are slow growing in spritual strength, he'll hold you up whatever the length.

From helpless in the cradle, we learn to crawl and then learn to walk after many a fall. From falls while walking, we progress to a run and to often think of nothing but fun. Faith and grace can set our heart aflame and open our lifes for "god" to claim.



The Middle Wife

I've been teaching now for about fifteen years. I have two kids myself, but the best birth story I know is the one I saw in my own second-grade classroom a few years back.

When I was a kid, I loved show-and-tell. So I always have a few sessions with my students. It helps them get over shyness and, usually, show-and-tell is pretty tame. Kids bring in pet turtles, model airplanes, pictures of fish they catch, stuff like that. And I never, ever place any boundaries or limitations on them. If they want to lug it to school and talk about it, they're welcome.

Well, one day this little girl, Erica, a very bright, very outgoing kid, takes her turn and waddles up to the front of the class with a pillow stuffed under her sweater. She holds up a snapshot of an infant. "This is Luke, my baby brother, and I'm going to tell you about his birthday.

First, Mom and Dad made him as a symbol of their love, and then Dad put a seed in my Mom's stomach, and Luke grew in there. He ate for nine months through an umbrella cord." She's standing there with her hands on the pillow, and I'm trying not to laugh and wishing I had my camcorder with me. The kids are watching her in amazement.

"Then, about two Saturdays ago, my Mom starts saying and going, 'Oh, oh, oh!'" Erica puts a hand behind her back and groans. "She walked around the house for, like an hour, 'Oh, oh, oh!'" Now the kid's doing this hysterical duck walk, holding her back and groaning.

"My Dad called the middle wife. She delivers babies, but she doesn't have a sign on the car like the Domino's man. They got my Mom to lie down in bed like this." Then Erica lies down with her back against the wall.

"And then, pop! My Mom had this bag of water she kept in there in case he got thirsty, and it just blew up and spilled all over the bed, like psshheew!" This kid has her legs spread and with her little hands are miming water flowing away. It was too much!

"Then the middle wife starts saying 'push, push, and breathe, breathe.' They started counting, but never even got past ten.

"Then, all of a sudden, out comes my brother. He was covered in yucky stuff, they all said was from Mom's play-center, so there must be a lot of stuff inside there."

Then Erica stood up, took a big theatrical bow and returned to her seat. I'm sure I applauded the loudest. Ever since then, if it's show-and-tell day, I bring my camcorder, just in case another Erica comes along.

—by an anonymous 2nd grade teacher

A Blessed Look

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Why

For the ills of the world I Sigh and cry and try to fathom why so many must die. Why should so many go without supper when others could'nt care less who may suffer?

Sometimes it's hard to understand gods plan and know it includes the suffering of man. By learning to understand a trouble or fault we gain wisdom and strength to withstand assault. Only through learing to act as we should can we begin to love what is truly good. When we see the plan and beauty of life, we begin to understand the purpose of life.

Taking Risks

If we need to have all our bases covered before we move into action, then nothing exciting ever happens, but if we dare to take a few crazy risks because God asks us to do so, many doors that we didn't even know existed open before us.

Henri Nouwen

Artwork & Articles 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