

The Church of the Damascus Road Flash!

Volume 8
Issue No. 1
February 2005
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

History Forgotten

This is worth remembering, because it is true. It's familiar territory, but.... Those of you that graduated from school after the early 60's were probably never taught this. Our courts have seen to that!

Did you know that 52 of the 55 signers of "The Declaration of Independence" were orthodox, deeply committed, Christians? The other three all believed in the Bible as the divine truth, the God of scripture, and His personal intervention. It is the same Congress that formed the American Bible Society, immediately after creating the Declaration of Independence, the Continental Congress voted to purchase and import 20,000 copies of Scripture for the people of this nation.

Patrick Henry, who is called the firebrand of the American Revolution, is still remembered for his words, "Give me liberty or give me death"; but in current textbooks, the context of these words is omitted. Here is what he actually said:

"An appeal to arms and the God of hosts is all that is left us. But we shall not fight our battle alone. There is a just God that presides over the destinies of nations. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone. Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it Almighty God. I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death."

These sentences have been erased from our textbooks.

Was Patrick Henry a Christian? The following year, 1776, he wrote this:

"It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great Nation was founded not by religionists, but by Christians; not on

Continued on page two

Righteousness, Not Forgiveness

Luke 7.47— Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." - Jesus

Dear Friends,

A word on Forgiveness and Righteousness. Why do Christians turn away from their righteous pastors? Why do people turn away from righteous neighborhoods? Why do many turn away from righteous Christianity and from the Jesus it paints and the God it proclaims? Why do they turn to those who are not considered to be the righteous ones? Often, certainly, it is because they want to escape judgment. But more often it is because they seek a love which is rooted in

forgiveness, and this the righteous ones cannot give. Many of those to whom they turn cannot give it, either. Jesus gave it to the woman who was utterly unacceptable. The Church would be more the Church of Christ than it is now if it did the same, if it joined Jesus and not Simon in its encounter with those who are rightly judged unacceptable.

From Chapter 8 in Robert K. Johnston (ed.) The Use of the Bible in Theology: Evangelical Options (John Knox 1985). (article in this issue)

Martin Luther reminds us that "The Theologian of the Cross calls a thing what it is" — what a relief!

Forgiven, Pastor Arnold Flater

Dear Sponsor

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones in good health; I am fine here too. I wanted to tell you that I had a nice view from my house and I can see the sea. Besides, I like to play with my brothers and cousins.

You know, I am improving my school performance every day. I am in the sixth grade and have grown up; I am a nice young lady.

I have a cousin and I love her very much; I visit her when I don't go to school, so I play and share with her.

I thank you for all your help, because it's very important to me. Now I say goodbye; your sponsored child,

—Stefani A. Reinalds Hernandez



Stefani A. Reinalds Hernandez



Drawing by Stefani, included with her letter

Inside the Flash!

Page 2 - Lessons from Noah's Ark
Page 2 - Which Path?
Page 3 - Various articles on faith
Page 3 - Texans in Heaven
Page 3 - Tears from My Heart
Page 4 - Artworks

History Forgotten, from page 1

religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For that reason alone, people of other faiths have been afforded freedom of worship here."

Consider these words that Thomas Jefferson wrote in the front of his well-worn Bible: "I am a real Christian, that is to say, a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus. I have little doubt that our whole country will soon be rallied to the unity of our creator." He was also the chairman of the American Bible Society, which he considered his highest and most important role.

On July 4, 1821, President Adams said, "The highest glory of the American Revolution was this: 'It connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity.'"

Calvin Coolidge, our 30th President of the United States reaffirmed this truth when he wrote, "The foundations of our society and our government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible that it would be difficult to support them if faith in these teachings would cease to be practically universal in our country."

In 1782, the United States Congress voted this resolution: "The Congress of the United States recommends and approves the Holy Bible for use in all schools."

William Holmes McGuffey is the author of the McGuffey Reader, which was used for over 100 years in our public schools with over 125 million copies sold until it was stopped in 1963. President Lincoln called him the "Schoolmaster of the Nation." Listen to these words of Mr. McGuffey: "The Christian religion is the religion of our country. >From it are derived our nation, on the character of God, on the great moral Governor of the universe. On its doctrines are founded the peculiarities of our free Institutions. From no source has the author drawn more conspicuously than from the sacred Scriptures. From all these extracts from the Bible, I make no apology."

Of the first 108 universities founded in America, 106 were distinctly Christian, including the first, Harvard University, chartered in 1636.

In the original Harvard Student Handbook, rule number 1 was that students seeking entrance must know Latin and Greek so that they could study the Scriptures: "Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies, is, to know God and Jesus Christ, which is eternal life, John 17:3; and therefore to lay Jesus Christ as the only foundation for our children to follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments."

James Madison, the primary author of the Constitution of the United States, said this: "We have staked the whole future of all our political constitutions upon the capacity of each of ourselves to govern ourselves according to the moral principles of the Ten Commandments."

Today, we are asking God to bless America. But, how can He bless a Nation that has departed so far from Him? Prior to September 11, He was not welcome in America. Most of what you read in this article has been erased from our textbooks. Revisionists have rewritten history to remove the truth about our country's Christian roots.

You are encouraged to share with others, so that the truth of our nation's history will be told.

John 3:16. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life!

This information shared is only a drop of cement to help secure a foundation that is crumbling daily in a losing war that most of the country doesn't even know is raging on, in, and around them...

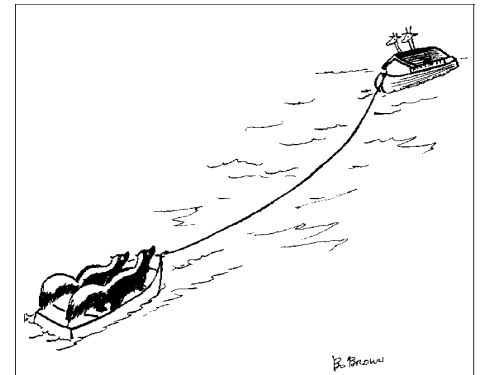
Please share this with as many as possible and make the ill-informed aware of what they once had.

—Carla Cay Krull

Lessons from Noah's Ark

1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead, it wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit when you are 600 years old someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics; just get on with that job that needs to be done.
6. Build your future on high grounds.
7. For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
8. Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
9. When you're stressed, float a while.
10. Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professional.
11. No matter the storm, God always has a rainbow waiting.

Kiddy's Korner, paper from Carroll, Iowa



King

God is King over everything, salvation is the station. To give to God the sin, that the devil tries to win. God's love is a flower that will stand through all the hour. So, please sing some to the kingdom. So that's all I have to say about the Lord and his way. Amen

Albert Cooper.

Which Path?

Two souls went forth from the cross that day,
Both dying by Jesus side.

On either side with the Lord between,
But apart how far and wide.

For one went out into endless night,
Heaven open before his eyes.

And one went in with the Son of God,
Through the gates of Paradise.

Two souls will go from your place today,
Both children of guilt and sin.

But one said "No" to the Son of God,
The other has let Him in.

And bright as the light of love and heaven,
Redeemed one, thy path shall be.

But gloom and the doom of endless night,
Poor lost one await for thee.

Winston Halstead 2003 (FDCF)



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

Volume 8.1 February 2005

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

Rev. Carroll Lang, Pastor
Albert Cooper, Editor

Anyone wishing to be on our mailing list may send name, address, and phone numbers to The Church of the Damascus Road, PO Box 834, Fort Dodge, IA 50501-0834, or by e-mail at: DamascusCh@aol.com. The Flash will be sent directly to your home.

Office at St. Olaf Lutheran Church
239 North 11th Street, Fort Dodge, IA

Increase Our Faith

Luke 17:5— The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

Faith is not what some people think it is. Their human dream is a delusion. Because they observe that faith is not followed by good works or a better life, they fall into error, even though they speak and hear much about faith. "Faith is not enough," they say, "You must do good works, you must be pious to be saved." They think that, when you hear the gospel, you start working, creating by your own strength a thankful heart which some believe. That is what they think true faith is. But, because this is a human idea, a dream, the heart never learns anything from it, so it does nothing and reform doesn't come from this faith, either. Instead, faith is God's work in us, that changes us and gives new birth from God. —Dr Martin Luther

Growing in Faith

When we don't have enough faith, we try to take over and do things for ourselves. We fail to realize that each circumstance in our lives is there so that Jesus can help us to grow in faith in Him, not in ourselves. Bonnie Ricks

Faith Doubts

Unbelief does not doubt- faith doubts. If a person never has a doubt, faith is not faith, but knowledge. Yet, so it is; belief springs still in souls that nurture doubt. And we must go to him, who will the harmful weed cast out.

Faith Is

Faith is knowing that God is who He says He is, has what He says He has, and will do what He says He will do and then putting ourselves in a position where our lives depend on it.

— Pastor Graham Steele

Tears from My Heart

Last night when I was lying in bed I dropped a tear from my eyes. I couldn't believe it was happening, 'cause I wasn't crying. I didn't have any reason to cry. Then I asked my soul what was happening to me and why. This is the answer I got: they weren't tears from your eyes, they were tears from your heart.

So now I understand we can cry fake tears but tears from our hearts are real! Pain is something you can't stop even if you try your hardest!

— Jose Rosales-

Rachel's Faith

It's sad to think that somebody had to die to show us that we have a problem. If you think I am talking about our Lord you are wrong. I 'm talking about Rachel Scott, the young girl who gave her life because of her belief in God.

Now it's up to each and everyone of us who call ourselves Christians to make sure that Rachel and the other victims did not die in vain.

I do agree with the families that the release of these tapes should have been handled in a better manner; however, maybe it took something like the inconsiderate release of these tapes to the press, rather than to the families of the victims, to bring attention to the fact that news of the victims was being overshadowed by news of the killers. If we are going to fill the news with articles about Columbine, let it be about the victims. Let's fill the news with stories of Rachel, a young woman who's life was taken because of her faith in God. Satan must have had a great fear of Rachel to have gone to such lengths to take her from this world, but once again Satan messed up. For what he took was her mortal body, not her Spirit! And it is our place as Christians to keep her Spirit alive. We can do this by telling others of her faith, and by keeping her always in our hearts.

I think Romans 8:28-30 speaks of Rachel. "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified" (NIV).

It saddens me to know that someone who was so full of hate could rob the world of one who loved our Lord so much! Although I never met this exceptional young lady, my life will not be the same because of her. For in her I have seen the faith that we should all strive for.

If I'm out of line in this statement, then I apologize. But I don't think Rachel would want her memorial to be one of hatred. Rather, she would want us to reach out even more to the ones who don't know God, so that something like this might never happen again!

It's time we welcome God back into our lives!

Jeffery Swearingen

Faith Sees

Faith sees the invisible, believes the unbelievable and receives the impossible.

—Corrie Ten Boom

This Day's Thought

We've said this before, but it can't be reiterated too many times... God makes everything that happens work to the good for those who love him and are called according to his purpose. Everything. No matter what is happening in your life right now, no matter how devastating the circumstances may seem, have faith in God. Know that his hand is working, even in what may seem to be the most horrible circumstances you could ever face. Know that his will will be accomplished, no matter how the people and circumstances in your life try to stop it. Know that his hand is on you and on your life, no matter how frightening things may be. So instead of feeling frightened or worried, feel blessed.

Bonnie Ricks, New Song Ministries

Texans in Heaven

Gabriel came to the Lord and said, "I have to talk to you. I have some Texans up here in Heaven who are causing some problems. They are swinging on the Pearly Gates, my horn is missing, barbecue sauce is all over their robes, ham hock, sparerib, and pig feet bones are all over the streets of gold. Some folks are walking around with one wing. They have been late taking their turn in keeping the stairway to heaven clean. There are watermelon seeds all over the clouds. Some of them aren't even wearing their halos, saying it is messing up their hair.

The Lord said, "I made them special, as I did you, my angel. Heaven is home to all my children. If you really want to know about problems, let's call the Devil.

The Devil answered the phone, "Hello? Damn, hold on." The Devil returned to the phone and said, "Hello Lord, what can I do for you?"

The Lord replied, "Tell me what kind of problems you are having down there."

The Devil said, "Wait one minute," and puts the Lord on hold. After 5 minutes he returned to the phone, and said "Okay, I'm back. What was the question?"

The Lord said, "What kind of problems are you having down there?"

The Devil said, "Man, I don't believe this..... hold on, Lord". This time the Devil was gone for 15 minutes. The Devil returned and said, "I'm sorry Lord, I can't talk right now. These Texans done put the fire out, and are trying to install air conditioning!

— Author unknown

Land To Land

If one community conversate reach an agreement to negotiate. It's better to give than take, believe in faith. Being righteous wanting to do good.

The Church of the Damascus Road
PO Box 834
Fort Dodge, IA 50501-0834

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fort Dodge,
Iowa
Permit #4

February 2005

Invite the Pastor to Worship

The worship services at The Church of the Damascus Road are scheduled on week-nights for two reasons. One is to enable people on the outside to worship with the inmates and not miss worship in their own congregations. The second is to make the pastor of Damascus Road available to visit area congregations on Sunday mornings. The pastor can give a brief update on the ministry, a sermon, a children's sermon, an adult forum, a children's Sunday school opening, a cross-generational class session, or any or all of the above, and is open to suggestions. All that is asked is that there be time to prepare.

Call 515-955-3579 or write to: The Church of the Damascus Road, PO Box 834, Fort Dodge, IA 50501-0834, or by e-mail at <DamascusCh@aol.com> to arrange for a visit to your congregation. The pastor speaks Episcopalian, Methodist, Baptist, United Church of Christ, Covenant, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Catholic, Evangelical, Reformed, Assembly of God, Mennonite, Nazarene, and a host of other denominations, independent, and non-denominational, too.



<http://www.dodgenet.com/~cjlange/index.html>

All Readers: Send Contributions

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

Artists' Corner



Herb Lias, FDCF, 2004

NCCF's Church Council

Marc Leonard President
Vacant Vice President
Jasper Young Secretary
Gary LeCompte Anthony Bone
David Porter John Bothwell
Brad Booher Craig Nietfeld
Todd Yaw Lyle Harris

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 Bible Study
6:30pm Thursdays Holy Communion

FDCF's Church Council

Terry Schoon, Pres Randy Elliott, VP
Albert Cooper Secretary
Fred Chapman Librarian
Derek Griffith Craig Flataker
Tony Halsrud Phillip Wells

A note to secretaries and pastors—

Copy Me, Please!

We send our newsletter primarily to congregations. It's printed on white paper so it can be copied to include all or portions of it in your newsletter or bulletin, or simply made available to members of your congregation.

-- Pastor Carroll Lang