

The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!

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Miracles

Miracles in scripture are never random, pointless infringements on natural law. Miracles are not violations of cosmic order. They are not acts of God denying his own natural laws. Miracles occur when God sets natural law aside. When God sets it aside, he does it to say to those who encounter the miracle that people mean more to God than the mere observance of natural law. God split the Red Sea not to amaze the Egyptians but to say to Pharaoh, "I care more for the lives of the poor trapped Israelites than I care for buoyancy and gravitational laws. I therefore make the waters of the Red Sea misbehave that I may prove how much Israel means to me.

— Calvin Miller

Seed for the Day

I thought waiting on the Lord meant marking time till healing came. I've learned that it's the wait itself that creates the healing, far beyond anything we ask.

— Unknown

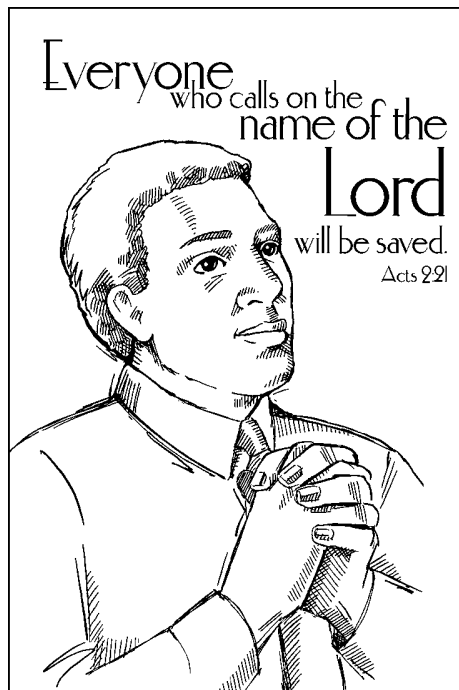
Related Thought

I believe that God wants to use whatever hardship and obstacles we encounter in life to push us to greater heights of faith and trust and to draw each of us closer to him. He says in the Bible that we should consider trials and tests as joy because they give us a chance to see where we're at, to test our faith, to mature, and to learn from the struggle.

Kurt Warner

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Listen Up!

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord

Sinner man and woman. I am not out to write a long sermon, but may I talk to you for a moment about God? I just want to give you some good news. How well you listen could determine the rest of your life and your eternity. I want every unsaved person to know that repentance is necessary to keep from perishing (Luke 13:3). Repentance sometimes seems to be a forgotten concept to those in the world that are having fun (Provs. 14:12). I'm not going to forget it because if God can save a poor wretch booze, drug addict, stealing sinner like me, imagine what he can do for you.

Listen up! Jesus died to save us from our sins. This is grace, a free gift earned for us by Christ's death on the cross. First of all God doesn't care what you did wrong. He loves you. Also, it doesn't matter what denomination you are, what job you have, or whether you are a church member. Salvation is not guaranteed just because you be-

long to a church. Repenting, confessing, and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and securing a membership in heaven is different than joining a civic club or the country club. You can quit drinking, quit drugs, quit running in the streets, quit stealing, quit everything and go to church but still not repent. You may even be a good person, but that still doesn't save you.

Listen up! From the day you and I were born, we wanted to 'do our own thing' and we were rebellious against God. Stop what you're doing, repent, quit sinning, please. Saying you're religious is not the answer! Salvation is! Salvation is committing your life to Jesus Christ and believing on him. You can't use Jesus as a passport to heaven. Just confess to him, believe he is the Son of God who died on the cross and rose again on the third day. Jesus was sent to die for your sins (John 3:16). The Bible also says that we must confess Jesus before men, if you want him to confess you before the Father.

Listen up! I want to ask you a serious question and I want you to tell yourself the truth. Be honest with yourself. Be honest with God. The question is not "Are you a convict," or "what denomination are you?" or "What color are you?" or "Are you Religious?" or "Are you a church member?" or "Are you spiritual person?" My question to you is, "Have you ever repented of your sins and turned your life over to Jesus Christ? Are you saved?" If not do it now. Don't wait too long until you are dead and gone, if you haven't.

Listen up! Stop what you are doing and come forward and accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and personal Savior, please do it today. You will be glad you did. You saw John 14:6 Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the light, no man comes to the Father except by me." I challenge you to listen up! Seize the moment Then sing the famous song "Amazing Grace."

Servant of Christ
Victorio R.A. DeLance

P.S. It's so easy for the devil to trick a man or a woman to take the wrong fork in the road, and when you do, that can be the end of you. Choose you this day life or death, heaven or hell. Listen up!!

Order Out of Chaos

There is no situation so chaotic that God cannot, from that situation, create something that is surpassingly good. He did it at the Creation. He did it at the Cross. He is doing it today.

— Handley Moule



Where I Stand

Laughter and smiles have crossed my face,
But now my soul has weakened in the race.
My heart has lost what it once used to treasure.
Disappointment now is what I feel, "Where is my faith?"

The sun used to glow, but within it shined.
What I thought I had, turned out not mine.
Where did I differ in this world or this race.
I thought I had found my peace, my place.

Why did I lose it, why was it gone!
God gave a love, was it all wrong?
Give me a reason, Help me to understand.
Dispair seems to surround me, with hope I can stand.

I need love, I need truth, I need a friendly hand.
My heart cries to be touched, to be warm again.
Once I had Love with a wonderful wife,
But now I'm alone. Where is my might?

Why is it when there's happiness to hold,
Then a sad song always seems to touch your soul?
I know God's love has directed me through the storms!

Why did I not know you were my Strength, my Guide.
And through my heartache you even cried and stood
by my side
You've counted each step that I've taken in this world,
leaving your reflection upon my face.

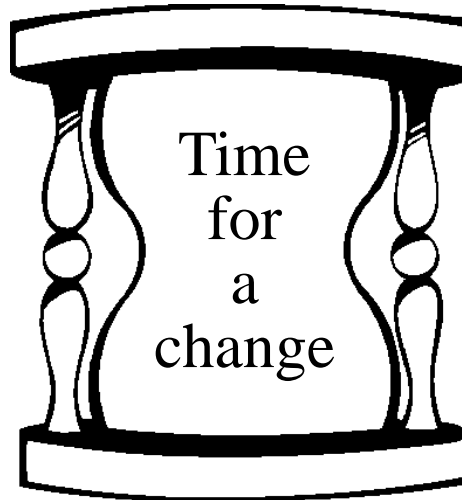
In the darkness you have kept me strong
And moved me from place to place...
I haven't lost anything, you lead her home.
Through this redeeming day you bless me with psalm.

Though I still fell pain some days and some nights...
I awake each morning to the beauty of your light.
Now there's more pleasure added to my life.
The will to live, the will to give, the will to fight.

BY your hands I was loved with grace...
Like a beautiful flower, I have grown in the right place.
And I'll share what's been given to my heart,
The gift of life, the gift of peace, the gift of love.

Where I stand is in God's love.

by D. Powell



It's time for the people of world to start a change. The earth has been with us from the start, so it is time for us to be there for it.

The destruction of the earth is something that should be stopped. Do we want our kids living in a world of war, hunger, and hate? We can change, we all can if we work together.

We have changed in the past. We have grown into an involved race with many new advances, but with all of the advances, we, as a whole, have learned little. We still fight against each other, hate that which is different, fear what we do not understand. God created us in his image, so let us be like him and practice forgiveness, and love the new. Embrace the mysteries that life has to offer. Learn to understand that which you fear, and grow to love the people and land around you.

Through this, we as people will grow together in a world that has no more hunger, war or hate. It would be the land that God envisioned.

— Perry Major

Quotation

I was sitting in an audience when the Speaker asked, "What do you think God expects of you?" I mentally ticked off a list of things I thought God expected of me: obedience, faithfulness, holiness, love, Service. To my astonishment, the Speaker went on to say, "All God ever expects of you is failure!" I wanted to raise my hand and say, "I can do that! I can live up to the expectations of God! I know I can fail!" But then the speaker added, "However, He has given you the Holy Spirit so that you need never fail." Right! Without Christ I can do nothing, but in him I can do all things! The difference between Strength and Weakness, righteousness and Wickedness, Success and failure, is Jesus — the Holy Spirit — in us.

— Anne Graham Lotz

Did you find 'em all?

Hidden Books of the Bible

Were you able find the names of 25 books of the Bible in the following paragraph published in the last Echo? The answers are underlined, and are in order as follows: Amos, Mark, Luke, John, Joel, Judges, Job, Hebrews, Esther, Acts, James, Ruth, Romans, Titus, Matthew, Genesis, Hosea, Lamentations, Revelation, Timothy, Samuel, Numbers, Malachi, Peter, and Kings.

This is a most remarkable puzzle. Someone found it in the seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping himself occupied for hours. One man from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Roy Clark studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Victs mentioned it in her column once. One woman judges the job to be so involving, she brews a cup of tea to calm her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot, that's a fact. Some people will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. The truth is, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or scholar to see some of them at the worst. Something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have. Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation may help: books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers, and punctuation or spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete. Remember, there are 25 books of the bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph.

**The Church of the
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.

Robert Johnson II, 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

Come to the Garden

For the garden of your daily living, plant:

Three rows of peas:

1. Peace of mind
2. Peace of heart
3. Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash:

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce:

1. Lettuce be faithful
2. Lettuce be kind
3. Lettuce be patient
4. Lettuce really love one another

No garden is without turnips:

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for service
3. Turnip to help one another

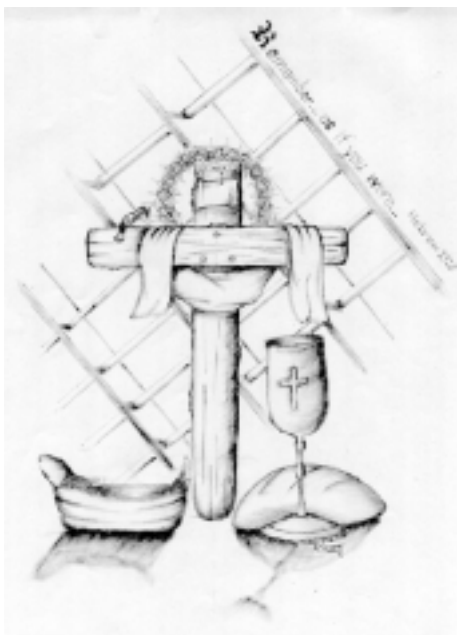
To conclude:

Our garden we must have thyme!

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love. There is much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow. My instructions were to send this to four people that I wanted God to bless. Please pass this to four people you want to be blessed, as well as the person who sent it to you.

Artist's Corner



Drawn by Waymond Tenny, FDCF



A Fork in the Road

Several artists were asked to illustrate their concepts of temptation. When their paintings were unveiled, some of them depicted man's attempt to achieve fame and fortune at any cost. Others pictured mankind's struggle against the alluring desires of the flesh. The prize-winning canvas, however, was quite different. It portrayed a quiet country lane with a man walking among inviting shade trees and lovely wild flowers. In the distance the way divided into two roads, the one leading to the right, the other to the left. The road that veered to the left seemed almost as inviting as the one that kept to the right. But if the traveler chose to take it, he would soon become mired in the mud. The artist was conveying the thought that sin's allurements are extremely subtle at first. They often present themselves as an innocent-looking fork in the road.

— The Daily Bread

What God Wants of Me

Lord, take me where you want me to go;
 Let me meet who you want me to meet;
 Tell me what you want me to say; and
 Keep me out of your way.

— Mychal Judge

This Day's Thought

We've said this before, but it can't be reiterated too many times... God makes everything that happens 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

For Safety's Sake:

Do NOT ride in automobiles: they cause 20% of all fatal accidents.
 Do NOT stay home: 17% of all accidents occur in home.
 Do NOT walk on the streets or sidewalks: 14% of all accidents happen to pedestrians.
 Do NOT travel by air, rail, or water: 16% of all accidents happen on these.
 HOWEVER, Only .001% of all deaths occur in worship services in church, and these are related to previous physical disorders. Hence, the safest place for you to be at any time is church. Bible study is safe, too. The percentage there is even less. ***Go to church! It could save your life!***

Closer

Another year past, closer, I know,
 To the Arms of my family with love I shall go.
 Facing each day as though it is my last,
 I try not to make the mistakes of my past.
 Each day I face, I face not alone
 Another step closer, closer to home.

Robert L. Johnson II
 12-5-2001



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 WednesdaysHoly Communion
 7:00pm FridaysBible Study

NCCF Rockwell City

6:30pm TuesdaysBible Study
 6:30pm ThursdaysHoly Communion