

The Church of the Damascus Road

Echo!

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Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA

I Know Who I Belong To

When I was a boy, we had an elderly lady that lived near us named Julie Mae Brown. She was up in years and had become almost deaf and could hardly see. Despite this, Julie Mae wanted to be in church on Sunday morning, but she couldn't get there on her own. It became the responsibility of the head deacon to drive by Julie Mae's house and bring her to church.

One Sunday, Julie Mae overslept and was running late. She wasn't ready when our head deacon came by to get her and she made him late to church. We were sitting in our Sunday school class when we heard his car slide into the parking lot, scattering gravel all over. As he was helping her out of the car, he became very exasperated.

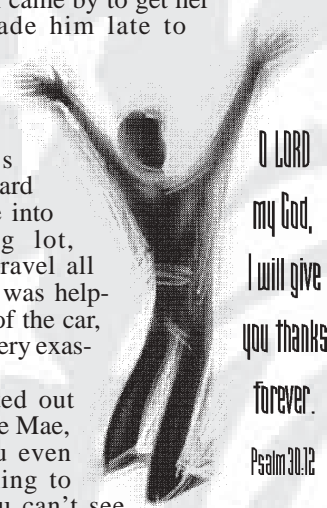
He blurted out loudly, "Julie Mae, why do you even bother coming to church? You can't see, you can hardly hear, you can't be getting much out of coming. Why do you bother?"

All of us heard the deacon's question, but we couldn't hear Julie Mae's reply. When the deacon came through the door with Julie Mae on his arm, we could see he had been crying. We all wondered what could drive a big, gruff man like him to tears.

After church we sought out the deacon and questioned him. He told us that when he had asked Julie Mae why she bothered coming to church when she couldn't see or hear, she replied with empty eyes full of compassion that she wanted people to know who she belonged to!

Today, who do you belong to? Is it obvious to your neighbors? Is it obvious to your coworkers? Is it obvious to your friends? Is it obvious to your family? Make your decision OBVIOUS to all who see you from now on!

— Dr. Edward Williamson



O LORD
my God,
I will give
you thanks
forever.
Psalm 30:12



The Makings of a Champion

In order to become a true champion in the eyes of those around you, you must remember the key thing is dedication to the one true thing that you believe in.

It may be different for each person, but usually one person will be just as dedicated as the next. The thing that separates a true champion from the rest of the wanna-be champions is that a true champion is willing to go that extra mile. Also, a true champ doesn't allow barriers to hold him or her back, preventing him or her from accomplishing the goal.

In the beginning was a person with a goal, and then that person set forth to attain that goal. Nothing in the world could possibly hold him or her back from attaining that goal.

The spark is burning from within, and continues to grow every day, every hour, every minute and every second. Nothing can stop you from completing your mission and from that time on every little moment seems to be an eternity.

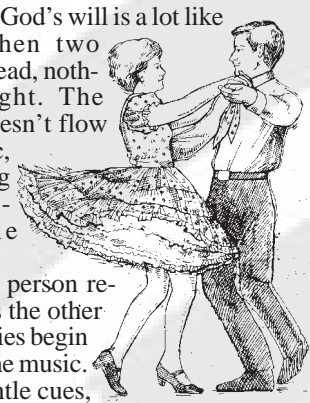
Eventually everything will come through for that person, and all of the past trials and tribulations while trying to attain that goal will seem as if they never really existed. Everything after that seems as if it isn't real and that you aren't even yourself. This is where it all pays off and you sit back and bask in the afterglow of your trophy. This may be something different for everyone, but it all feels the same to each person.

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Guidance

When I meditated on the word **guidance**, I kept seeing "dance" at the end of the word. I remember reading that doing God's will is a lot like dancing. When two people try to lead, nothing feels right. The movement doesn't flow with the music, and everything is quite uncomfortable and jerky.



When one person realizes and lets the other lead, both bodies begin to flow with the music. One gives gentle cues, perhaps with a nudge to the back or by pressing lightly in one direction or another. It's as if two become one body, moving beautifully. The dance takes surrender, willingness, and attentiveness from one person and gentle guidance and skill from the other.

My eyes drew back to the word GUIDANCE. When I saw "G," I thought of God, followed by "u" and "i." "God, "u" and "i" dance." God, you, and I dance. This statement is what guidance means to me. As I lowered my head, I became willing to trust that I would get guidance about my life. Once again, I became willing to let God lead.

My prayer for you today is that God's blessings and mercies be upon you and your family on this day and everyday. May you abide in him as he abides in you. Dance together with God, trusting him to lead and to guide you through each season of your life.

This prayer is powerful and there is nothing attached. If God has done anything for you in your life, please, share this message with someone else, for prayer is one of the best gifts we can receive. There is no cost but a lot of rewards; so let's continue to pray for one another.

God, I ask you to bless me, my friends, relatives and all who read this. Show us a new revelation of your love and power of the Holy Spirit. I ask you to minister to our spirit at this very moment. Where there is self-doubt, release a renewed confidence through your grace.

I hope you dance!

Opening a Rosebud

A young, new preacher was walking with an older, more seasoned preacher in the garden one day. Feeling a bit insecure about what God had for him to do, he was asking the older preacher for some advice. The older preacher walked up to a rose bush and handed the young preacher a rosebud and told him to open it without tearing any of the petals.



The young preacher looked in disbelief at the older preacher and was trying to figure out what a rosebud could possibly have to do with his wanting to know the will of God for his life and ministry. But, because of his great respect for the older preacher, he proceeded to try and unfold the rosebud while keeping every petal intact.

It wasn't long before he realized how impossible this was to do. Noticing the young preacher's inability to unfold the rosebud without tearing it, the older preacher began to recite the following poem:

It is only a tiny rosebud
A flower of God's design;
But I cannot unfold the petals
With these clumsy hands of mine.

The secret of unfolding flowers
Is not known to such as I.
GOD opens this flower so sweetly,
Then, in my hands, they die.

If I cannot unfold a rosebud,
The flower of God's design,
Then how can I have the wisdom
To unfold this life of mine?

So, I'll trust in Him for leading
Each moment of my day.
I will look to Him for His guidance
Each step of the Pilgrim's way.

The pathway that lies before me
Only my Heavenly Father knows.
I'll trust him to unfold the moments,
Just as He unfolds the rose.

They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, and an entire lifetime to forget them.

—from the worldwideweb

Twenty-Six One-Liners

1. Give God what's right—not what's left.
2. Human's way leads to a hopeless end—
God's way leads to an endless hope.
3. A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.
4. He/she who kneels before God can stand before anyone.
5. In the sentence of life, the devil may be a comma—but never let him be the period.
6. Don't put a question mark where God puts a period.
7. Are you wrinkled with burden? Come to the church for a faith-lift.
8. When praying, don't give God instructions—just report for duty.
9. Don't wait for six strong people to take you to church.
10. We don't change God's message—
God's message changes us.
11. The church is prayer-conditioned.
12. When God ordains, God sustains.
13. WARNING: Exposure to the Son may prevent burning.
14. Plan ahead—it wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
15. Most people want to serve God, but only in an advisory position.
16. Suffering from truth decay? Brush up on your Bible.
17. Exercise daily—walk with the Lord.
18. Never give the devil a ride—he will always want to drive.
19. Nothing else ruins the truth like stretching it.
20. Compassion is difficult to give away because it keeps coming back.
21. The person who angers you controls you.
22. Worry is the darkroom in which negatives can develop.
23. Give Satan an inch & he'll be a ruler.
24. Be fishers of men—you catch them & God'll clean them.
25. God doesn't call the qualified, God qualifies the called.
26. Read the Bible—it will scare the hell out of you.

— John Sehring, Fri, Nov 22, 2002



Drawn by Rafael Cardenas

My Love

Its not that you are tall and strong
With eyes of deepest brown;
Or that your smile is quick and bright
And dear to look upon.

It's not the gifts you give me
With a twinkle in your eyes
To see the pleasure that I get
From such a sweet surprise.

It's not the things we talk about
Those plans we share and scheme
The future that we're hoping for
Nor yet the dreams we dream.

It's the one great thing that sums them up
And makes them all come true
And that is, You're in love with me, Lord,
And I'm in love with you.

By: Justin Evans



Drawn by Shawn Shelby

The Church of the
Damascus Road
Echo!

Volume 6.4a

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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.

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Isn't it strange?

- Isn't it strange how a 20 dollar bill seems like such a large amount when you donate it to church, but such a small amount when you go shopping?
- Isn't it strange how 2 hours seem so long when you're at church, and how short they seem when you're watching a good movie?
- Isn't it strange that you can't find a word to say when you're praying, but you have no trouble thinking what to talk about with a friend?
- Isn't it strange how difficult and boring it is to read one chapter of the Bible, but how easy it is to read 100 pages of a popular novel?
- Isn't it strange how everyone wants front-row-tickets to concerts or games, but they do whatever is possible to sit at the last row in Church?
- Isn't it strange how we need to know about an event for Church 2-3 weeks before the day so we can include it in our agenda, but we can adjust it for other events in the last minute?
- Isn't it strange how difficult it is to learn a fact about God to share it with others, but how easy it is to learn, understand, extend and repeat gossip?
- Isn't it strange how we believe everything that magazines and newspapers say, but we question the words in the Bible?
- Isn't it strange how everyone wants a place in heaven, but they don't want to believe, do, or say anything to get there?
- Isn't it strange how we send jokes in e-mails and they are forwarded right away, but when we are going to send messages about God, we think about it twice before we share it with others?
- It's strange isn't it?

Vacation Time

Where do you like to go on vacation? Check out these places from the Bible. Use the Scripture verses below to find these places in the puzzle. (If a verse has more than one place, only one is in the puzzle. Figure out which one.) Circle each place in the puzzle.



Answers go: → ↓ ↘

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Genesis 2:15 | Isaiah 23:1 | Luke 24:13 |
| Genesis 11:9 | Isaiah 23:2 | John 2:1 |
| Genesis 35:1 | Isaiah 23:3 | Acts 8:5 |
| Exodus 13:18 | Jonah 1:2 | Acts 11:22 |
| Ruth 1:1 | Matthew 3:6 | Acts 17:16 |
| 1 Kings 18:19 | Matthew 4:18 | Romans 1:15 |
| 1 Chronicles 11:4 | Matthew 26:36 | |

S I D O N G N I L E S O
 J J O R D A N R I V E R
 E S G A A R C A N A A M
 R A E T B D C D B E O O
 U M T H B E T H E L F U
 S A H E T N E A T N G N
 A R S N Y O M N H I A T
 L I E S R F M T L N L C
 E A M D E E A I E E I A
 M F A R S D U O H V L R
 G H N O A E S C E E E M
 I J E M B N A H M H E E
 T O W E R O F B A B E L



"Actually, I'm 60% leaner than you. I'm made from turkey!"

In His Arms

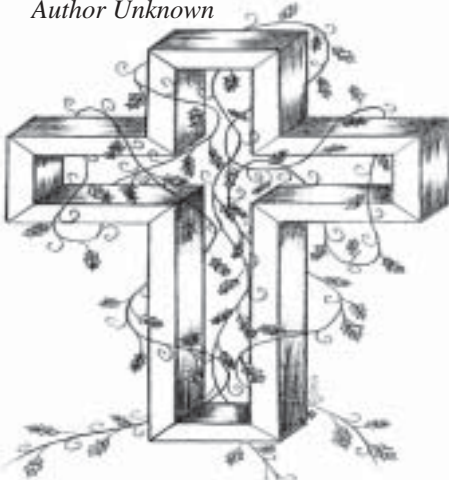
A local county sheriff got a disturbing call one Saturday afternoon a few months ago. His six-year-old grandson Mikey had been hit by a car while fishing with his dad. The father and son were near a bridge when a woman lost control of her car, slid off the bridge, and hit Mikey at a rate of about 50 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



Drawn by Daniel Skalla

W W J D

What Is the Meaning of W.W.J.D.?

When we use the saying What Would Jesus Do? in our daily lives, what do we mean by these words? Are we listening to Jesus when we use these words, or are we just using those words to make everyone believe that we are true followers of Jesus, or what? Each decision I make daily, I ask myself, "How would Jesus handle this matter," no matter what it may be in my life.

Come June 11th, I will be in prison for twenty-two years. These years haven't been easy for me, because I remember the things I use to do before I came to prison in 1981. The only way I have made it all these years is to live for Jesus and let Jesus be in charge of my life, so when I ask myself What Would Jesus Do? if he was in my place, I then listen to hear what the Spirit of Jesus has to say to me. I have given Jesus complete control of my life, so whatever decision the Governor makes on my life sentence, I am letting Jesus do my worrying for me.

So every time we are put in a place that needs a decision, let us give these decisions to Jesus Christ to make for us. For when we put Jesus in the driver seat of our lives, we can never go wrong. Because our big brother Jesus Christ will never leave us or forsake us in anything.

The people who wear those braceletes on their wrist should never be afraid to let Jesus help them, for when you ask this question of yourself, then listen to what Jesus says to you and live the way Jesus lived. The way we carry ourselves is what we think the saying WHAT WOULD JESUS DO, means to one who is walking that way.

May the love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with each and everyone of you as you walk this world.

— Gary C. LeCompte



Drawn by Jason Garton, Marathon, IA

Vacation Time
Answers

S	I	D	O	N	G	N	I	L	E	S	O
J	J	O	R	D	A	N	R	I	V	E	R
E	S	G	A	A	R	C	A	N	A	A	M
R	A	E	T	B	D	C	D	B	E	O	O
U	M	T	H	B	E	T	H	E	L	F	O
S	A	H	E	T	N	E	A	T	N	G	N
A	R	S	N	Y	O	M	N	H	I	A	T
L	I	E	S	R	F	M	T	L	N	L	C
E	A	M	D	E	E	A	I	E	E	I	A
M	F	A	R	S	D	U	O	H	V	L	R
G	H	N	O	A	E	S	C	E	E	E	M
I	J	E	M	B	N	A	H	M	H	E	E
T	O	W	E	R	O	F	B	A	B	E	L

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

It Came to Pass

An elderly gentleman delighted every one with his cheerfulness, especially since he seemed to have more than his share of trouble and relatively few pleasures. When asked the secret of his cheery disposition, he replied, "Well, you see, it's like this, the Bible says often, and it came to pass.' It never says, 'It came to stay.'"