

The Church of the Damascus Road

Damascus Echo!

Volume 8
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Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA



Thank You, Lord...

Even though I clutch my blanket and growl when the alarm rings, I thank you, Lord, that I can hear. There are many who are deaf.

Even though I keep my eyes closed against the morning light as long as possible, I thank you, Lord, that I can see. There are many who are blind.

Even though I huddle in my bed and put off rising, I thank you, Lord, that I have the strength to rise. There are many who are bedridden.

Even though the first hour of my day is hectic, when socks are lost, toast is burned and tempers are short, my children are so loud, I thank you, Lord, for my family. There are many who are lonely.

Even though our breakfast table never looks like the pictures in magazines and the menu is at times unbalanced, I thank you, Lord, for the food we have. There are many who are hungry.

Even though the routine of my job often is monotonous, I thank you, Lord, for the opportunity to work. There are many who have no job.

Even though I grumble and bemoan my fate from day to day and wish my circumstances were not so modest, I thank you, Lord for **LIFE!**

— Unknown

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Are You a Living Bible?

Sometimes a story comes along that really needs no explanation. As you read, check the story in comparison with your life. Are you a living bible?

His name is Bill. He has wild hair, wears a T-shirt with holes in it, jeans, and no shoes. This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of college. He is brilliant, kind of esoteric and very, very bright. He became a Christian while attending college.

Across the street from the campus is a well-dressed, very conservative church. They want to develop a ministry to the students, but are not sure how to go about it.

One day Bill decides to go there. He walks in with no shoes, jeans, his t-shirt, and wild hair. The service has already started and so Bill starts down the aisle looking for a seat. The church is completely packed and he can't find a seat. By now, people are really looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything. Bill gets closer and closer and closer to the pulpit, and when he realizes there are no seats, he just squats down right

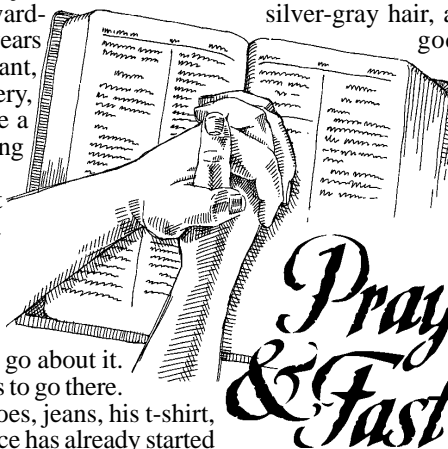
on the carpet. By now the people are really up tight, and the tension in the air is thick.

About this time, the minister realizes that from way at the back of the church, a deacon is slowly making his way toward Bill. Now the deacon is in his eighties, has silver-gray hair, and a three-piece suit. A godly man, very elegant,

very dignified, very courtly, he walks with a cane. The minister could not even preach the sermon until the deacon does what he has to do. And now they see

this elderly man drop his cane on the floor. With great difficulty, he lowers himself and sits down next to Bill and worships with him so he won't be alone. Everyone choked up with emotion. When the minister gains control, he says, "What I'm about to preach, you will never remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget."

Be careful how you live. You may be the only Bible some people will ever read. See you in church!



Joy in Suffering?

Few men suffered as the apostle Paul did, yet he learned how to abound and how to be abased. He learned to live above his circumstances—even in a prison cell. You can do the same. Refuse to permit circumstances to get you down. In the midst of your difficulties, there will be a deep joy. *Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds (James 1:2NIV).*

Rekindled Spirit

In everyone's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner spirit.

—Dr. Albert Schweitzer

Prisoner Inside Myself

Everyone thinks I take it well, but my pain and confusion run deep. They will never understand how nightmares of past memories fade in my sleep. I get real tired of living and sometimes wish I could die. My emotions are still strong, but fading and I don't even know why. My determination must have gotten trapped somewhere upon a shelf, or maybe its just my past that has made me a prisoner inside myself.

— Phillip Wells

Faith Sees

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

—Corrie Ten Boom

Jesus Awaits

Silently waiting for us to call.
 With arms wide open, he won't let us fall.
 Patiently sitting, knowing we will come.
 He gave us his life, God's only son!
 With forgotten sins, he stands by our side.
 Shedding his blood to give us life!
 With a caring heart, he healed our souls.
 Giving all his love, he made us whole!
 Baskets of food he gave to the poor.
 How could we ask for anything more!
 A holy spirit he knows we have.
 Touching our lives so we don't feel sad!
 Ready for us, it's never too late.
 He will guide our hearts,
 To the Lord's heavenly gates!
Jeremiah Hemenway, FDCF

How God Answers

There are four ways God answers prayer: No, not yet; No, I love you too much; Yes, I thought you'd never ask; or Yes, and here's more.

— Anne Lewis



from *The Joyful Noiseletter*
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Post Mozart

After Mozart passed away, the town drunk heard some noises coming from the gravesite. Terrified, he ran and got the priest. He bent over and heard some faint, unrecognizable music. The frightened priest ran and got the town magistrate. He listened for a minute and said, "Ah, yes, that's Mozart's Ninth symphony being played backward. And then there's the eighth... the seventh... the sixth...." Then he stood up and said, "Nothing to worry about; It's just Mozart decomposing."

You Want a Day Off?

Let's take a moment to look at what you're asking for. There are 365 days available for work. There are 52 weeks per year, of which you already have 2 days off each weekend, leaving 261 days for work. Since you spend 16 hours each day away from work, that accounts for 170 days, leaving 91 days for work. You spend 30 minutes each day on breaks, leaving 68 days available for work. You spend one hour each day for lunch, which accounts for another 46 days per year, leaving 22 days available for work. You spend 2 days per year on sick leave, leaving 20 days available for work. You take 9 holidays per year, leaving 11 days for work. You take ten days vacation each year, leaving 1 day available for work. No way you are going to take that day off!

Senior Wisdom

A college student challenged a senior citizen, saying it was impossible for his generation to understand his. "You grew up in a different world," the student said. "Today we have television, jet planes, space travel, nuclear energy, computers..."

Taking advantage of a pause in the student's litany, the geezer said, "You're right. We didn't have those things when we were young, so we invented them! What are you doing for the next generation?"

Don't you just love old people?

— Unknown

About Anger

Anger will get us whenever we violate one of these three principles: not too quick, not too long, not self-centered. While Jesus became angry, he focused that anger on injustices done to others and not on slights done to him.

— Unknown

Astray

Sometimes we go astray and we know that there is no other way except sit down and pray. You have to stand behind the man and that man is Jesus Christ today. So when you fall on your face, get back up and take your place. Amen.

— Albert Cooper

This Day's Thought

Just as the sun can be blotted out by an eclipse, so moods of pessimism and doubt can plunge us into spiritual darkness. At times our situation may seem so desperate that we think even God Almighty can't carry us through. But let's not doubt God's all-sufficient enablement. He will carry us through life's darkest hours.

— Vernon Grounds

Pride and Self-Pity

Pride and self-pity can rob us of our victory in the Lord. Pride destroys because it takes the glory away from God and places it on you and me where it doesn't belong. Self-pity and depression are almost inevitable after a great high. Maybe it's because we get our priorities skewed, forgetting how we got to that high and seeing only the slide downward toward normality. Keep your priorities straight. Keep your attitude in tune with God's purposes in your life. Give God credit when he does something great in your life, being mindful that you can accomplish nothing without him. And then, after the high of victory, realize that a return to normal means coming down, being lower than you were, but by no means down and out. And, unlike Samson, don't think God owes you for your efforts. You owe him. Because without him you can accomplish nothing. Even your next breath depends on his willingness to give it to you. Thank him and glorify him in all things in your life. Make him your focus, rather than yourself.

— Bonnie Ricks

Thoughts on Change

When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world. I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my nation. When I found I couldn't change the nation, I began to focus on my town. I couldn't change the town and as an older man, I tried to change my family. Now, as an old man, I realize the only thing I can change is myself, and suddenly I realize that if long ago I had changed myself, I could have made an impact on my family. My family and I could have made an impact on our town. Their impact could have changed the nation and I could indeed have changed the world.

— Unknown

The Church of the Damascus Road Echo!

Volume 8.1a

January, 2005

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Words of Wisdom

- Love is grand; divorce is a hundred grand.
- I *am* in shape. Round is a shape.
- Time may be a great healer, but it's also a lousy beautician.
- Never be afraid to try something new. Remember, amateurs built the ark, professionals built the Titanic.
- Talk is cheap because supply exceeds demand.
- Politicians and diapers have one thing in common: they should both be changed regularly and for the same reason.
- There is always death and taxes; however, death doesn't get worse every year.
- It's easier to fight for one's principles than to live up to them.
- In just two days, tomorrow will be yesterday.
- I always wanted to be a procrastinator, never got around to it.
- I plan on living forever. So far, so good.
- A day without sunshine is like... night.
- I have kleptomaniac, but when it gets bad, I take something for it.
- I am not a perfectionist. My parents were, though.
- You're getting old when you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.
- One of life's mysteries is how a two-pound box of candy can make a woman gain five pounds.
- It's frustrating when you know all the answers, but nobody bothers to ask you the questions.
- You don't stop laughing because you grow old, you grow old because you stopped laughing.



Need Wisdom?

If you need wisdom, take these three steps: go to your knees, go to the Word, and go to the wise. God will grant your request.

— Bonnie Ricks



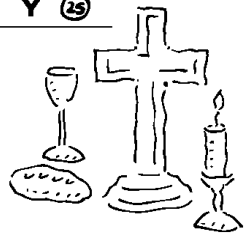
Worship and Celebrate

In our many different denominations and congregations, we worship in many different ways. Although we may worship differently, we believe in the same God! We go to one God in worship and celebration!

Use the code to find words and phrases of things that God's people do in worship.

A	🎵	F	🕯️	K	📖	P	🍷	U	🙏	Z	👁️
B	🎵	G	📖	L	🙏	Q	🙏	V	🍷		
C	🎵	H	🙏	M	🙏	R	🙏	W	👕		
D	🎵	I	🙏	N	🙏	S	🙏	X	🙏		
E	😊	J	📖	O	🙏	T	🙏	Y	🙏		

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1. Praise, 2. Pray, 3. Light Candles, 4. Play Music, 5. Give Offerings, 6. Sit Quietly, 7. Communion, 8. Lift Your Hands, 9. Read Scriptures, 10. Sing, 11. Say "Amen"

Jesus and Work

Those of you who have seen *The Passion of the Christ* know that the film is difficult to watch because it reveals the horrific brutality of the scourging and crucifixion of Jesus. But the film does contain one humorous moment, which hints at the high value God places on work.

The scene shows Jesus at work as a carpenter, finishing a table. His mother comes over to examine it. Her opinion? The table is too high. Not to worry, Jesus responds, he'll build tall chairs to go with it. Mary is not convinced. As she walks away, she mutters, "It'll never catch on."

The scene is a reminder that Jesus spent most of his life engaged in manual labor. Back in Galilee in the second century, the Christian apologist Justin Martyr said that during his lifetime it was still common to see farmers using plows made by the carpenter Jesus of Nazareth.

In his book, titled *The Call*, theologian Os Guinness reminds us that even the humblest work is important if it is done for God. "How intriguing," Guinness writes, "to think of Jesus' plow rather than his cross—to wonder what it was that made his plows and yokes last and stand out." Clearly, they must have been very well made if they were still in use in the second century.

Today, Christians typically exalt spiritual work above manual work. After all, what's making a plow compared with preaching to multitudes, feeding the five thousand, or raising someone from the dead? But the very fact that Jesus did make plows, and made them well—suggests that any work can be

done to the glory of God. Any work can be a genuine calling. A calling, Guinness writes, is anything we do "as a response to God's summons and service."

When God calls us to some task—even if it's something the world sees as lowly—that task is invested with what Guinness calls "the splendor of the ordinary."

"Drudgery done for ourselves or for other human audiences will always be drudgery," he writes, but "drudgery done for God is lifted and changed."

Accepting drudgery is one of the ways we practice discipleship—learning to offer it up sacrificially to God. "We look for the big things to do—[but] Jesus took a towel and washed the disciples' feet," Guinness writes. "We like to speak and act out of the rare moments of inspiration—[but] He requires our obedience in the routine, the unseen, and the thankless." We, his followers, must be willing to take on the humble and thankless tasks as well—and not become impatient with changing diapers, doing homework, or taking out the trash.

During the week leading up to Easter Sunday, we tend to focus on the sacrificial elements of the life of Christ, of his willingness to suffer and die on our behalf. But we should never forget that the second Person of the Triune Godhead spent much of his life laboring in a woodshop.

If you are frustrated in your job or think the work you have to do is beneath you, just remember that for a season the one who turned water into wine and raised the dead to life...also made wooden plows.



Heaven's Grocery Store

As I was walking down life's highway many years ago I came upon a sign that read Heaven's Grocery Store. When I got a little closer the doors swung open wide And when I came to myself I was standing inside. I saw a host of angels. They were standing everywhere. One handed me a basket and said "My child, shop with care."

Everything a human needed was in that grocery store And what you could not carry you could come back for more First, I got some Patience. Love was in that same row. Further down was Understanding, you need that everywhere you go. I got a box or two of Wisdom, and Faith a bag or two. And Charity, of course, I would need some of that too. I couldn't miss the Holy Ghost It was all over the place. And then some Strength and Courage to help me run this race. My basket was getting full but I remembered I needed Grace, And then I chose Salvation for Salvation was for free; I tried to get enough of that to do for you and me.

Then I started to the counter to pay my grocery bill, For I thought I had everything to do the Master's will. As I went up the aisle I saw Prayer and put that in, for I knew when I stepped outside I would run into sin. Peace and Joy were plentiful, the last things on the shelf. Song and Praise were hanging near so I just helped myself.

Then I said to the angel "Now how much do I owe?" He smiled and said "Just take them everywhere you go." Again I asked "Really now, How much do I owe?" "My child" he said, "God paid your bill a long, long time ago."

This poem has been sent to you with love. It originated in the Netherlands and has been around the world 9 times.

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. Thus far, only one reader outside the walls has ever sent us a contribution, so sit down, write, and send it to us. Please?

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