

# The Church of the Damascus Road

# Echo!

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## Rising to Perfection

Augustine says that we may, out of our dead sins, make stepping stones to rise to the heights of perfection. What did he mean by that? He meant that the memory of our falls may breed in us such a humility, such a distrust of self, such a constant clinging to Christ as we could never have had without the experience of our own weakness.

— James Stalker

## A Change of Heart

Chicago lawyer, “Easy Eddie” O’Hare, made life easy for criminals by keeping them out of jail. He became rich defending the gangster Al Capone and his gang. The day came, however, when O’Hare had a change of heart and began taking his faith seriously.

O’Hare began to cooperate with the police, which resulted in the conviction and imprisonment of several criminals. One day while O’Hare drove to work, members of the gang pulled alongside his car with guns blazing. When the shooting was over, “Easy Eddie” was dead.

Emptying O’Hare’s pockets, the police discovered evidence of his decision to live a more Christian life—a rosary, a crucifix, a religious medallion and a poem:

*The clock of life is wound but once  
and no man has the power to tell  
just when the hands will stop,  
at late or early hour.*

*Now is the only time you own.*

*Live, love, toil with a will.*

*Place no faith in time,  
for the clock may soon be still.*

— Author unknown

## Inside the Echo!

- Page 2 - The 19 Commandments
- Page 2 - Bibal Hilarity
- Page 2 - Something to Think About
- Page 3 - The ABCs
- Page 3 - Puzzle
- Page 4 - Singing with the Lutherans
- Page 4 - My Daily Thoughts
- Page 4 - The Most
- Page 4 - Hate



## Science in the Light of Faith: a Valuable Perspective

One subject I enjoy reading about is the intelligent design movement and its arguments against natural origins. And believe me, there’s a lot to read. Recent years have seen an explosion of books, articles, and websites on the subject of intelligent design. Scientists, philosophers, and theologians have all contributed valuable insights to the debate.

But I think I can safely say that, with all of this reading, I’ve never read a book by an eminent scientist and intelligent design advocate that ended with a presentation of the Gospel—never, that is, until now.

Henry F. Schaefer’s book Science and Christianity: Conflict or Coherence? does exactly that. As his book’s title indicates, Schaefer, a five-time nominee for the Nobel Prize, has spent a lot of time studying and teaching about the relationship between science and faith. So his writing is clear and compelling not just on intelligent design, but also on a whole range of other issues that are of interest to both people of faith and people of science.

But I think his treatment of the intelligent design issue is one of the best parts of the book, because it shows Schaefer meeting nonbelieving scientists on their own ground and using their own observations to undermine their arguments.



Schaefer quotes the brilliant scientist and agnostic Stephen Hawking, who wrote that a good theory “must accurately describe a large class of observations” and “must make definite predictions about the results of future observations.” While acknowledging the strengths of the “standard evolutionary model” in the first area, Schaefer points out that it has serious weaknesses in the second area. He writes, “Over the past 150 years evolutionary theorists have made countless predictions about fossil specimens to be observed in the future. Unfortunately for these seers, many new fossils have been discovered, but the interesting ones almost always seem to be contrary to the ‘best’ predictions.” Schaefer then contrasts the theory of evolution with other theories, such as the atomic theory and the theory of gravity, which are able to make precise predictions of future events, such as when Halley’s Comet would appear—predictions, Schaefer says, that turned out to be true in his lifetime.

So, contrary to what many believe, the theory of intelligent design isn’t just something people believe because the Bible tells them so. It’s something we believe because it makes sense and describes the real world far better than the alternative theory.

As passages like this demonstrate, Schaefer’s book is a wonderful resource for the high school or college student interested in studying science. In fact, it’s ideal for parents to go through with their high school or college-age kids. Schaefer’s own story of coming to faith in Christ, his descriptions of many other prominent scientists who are Christians, and his desire to share his faith will be an encouragement to kids who are wondering if their love of science is compatible with their commitment to God. And his exploration of issues like intelligent design will not only demonstrate to them how God has manifested himself through nature, but also provide them with an excellent example of how their own gifts can be used for God’s glory.



## The Nineteen Commandments

1. If you feel far away from God, guess who moved?
2. Fear knocked. Faith answered. No one was there.
3. What you are is God's Gift to you. What you become is your gift to God.
4. I am God's Melody of life and God Sings God's Song through me.
5. We can never go where God is not, and where God is, all is well.
6. No matter what is happening in your life, know that God is waiting for you with open arms.
7. God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.
8. Do your best and then sleep in peace. God is Awake.
9. God has a purpose and plan for me that no one else can fulfill.
10. The Will of God will never take you to where the Grace of God will not protect you.
11. We are responsible for the effort, not the outcome.
12. We set the sail; God makes the wind.
13. Begin to weave and God will give you the thread.
14. When God says "no", it's because God has something better in store for you.
15. The task ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us.
16. Prayer: don't bother to give God instructions, just report for duty.
17. It's my business to do God's Business and it's God's Business to take care of my business.
18. Serenity is not freedom from the storm, but peace amid the storm.
19. How come you're always running around looking for God? God's not lost.

from - Daily Inspiration

## Biblical Hilarity

Pay special attention to the wording and spelling. If you know the Bible even a little, you'll find this hilarious! It comes from a Catholic elementary school test in which kids were asked questions about the Old and New Testaments. Children wrote the following statements about the Bible. Incorrect spellings have not been corrected.

1. In the first book of the bible, Genesis, God got tired of creating the world so he took the Sabbath off.
2. Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. Noah's wife was Joan of Ark. Noah built an ark and the animals came on in pears.
3. Lot's wife was a pillar of salt during the day, but a ball of fire during the night.
4. The Jews were a proud people and throughout history they had trouble with unsympathetic genitals.
5. Sampson was a strongman who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah.
6. Samson slayed the Philistines with the axe of the apostles.
7. Moses led the Jews to the Red Sea where they made unleavened bread, which is bread without any ingredients.
8. The Egyptians were all drowned in the dessert. Afterwards, Moses went up to Mount Cyanide to get the Ten Commandments.
9. The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.
10. The seventh commandment is thou shalt not admit adultery.
11. Moses died before he ever reached Canada. Then Joshua led the Hebrews in the battle of Geritol.
12. The greatest miracle in the bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still and he obeyed him.
13. David was a Hebrew king who was skilled at playing the liar. He fought the Finkelsteins, a race of people who lived in biblical times.
14. Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.
15. When Mary heard she was the mother of Jesus, she sang the Magna Carta.
16. When the three wise guys from the east side arrived they found Jesus in the manager.
17. Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.
18. St. John the blacksmith dumped water on his head.
19. Jesus enunciated the golden rule, which says to do unto others before they do one to you. He also explained a man doth not live by sweat alone.
20. It was a miracle when Jesus rose from the dead and managed to get the tombstone off the entrance.
21. The people who followed the Lord were called the 12 Decibels.
22. The epistles were the wives of the apostles.
23. One of the opossums was St. Matthew who was also a taxman.
24. St. Paul cavorted to Christianity; he preached holy acrimony, which is another name for marriage.
25. Christians have only one spouse. This is called monotony.

## Something to Think About

If you can't walk with your head up showing that you are one of God's children, then you have not learned the meaning of life itself! If you can figure out what's really worth living and dying for, then you'll always know what life is really worth. Just take a moment and think about it and when it comes to you, then start walking with your head up high. Don't mind what the next man thinks about you, it's your life you're living for Christ. —Lydelle E. Turner (FDCF)

## The Biggest Vice

There is one vice of which no man in the world is free; which every one in the world loathes when he sees it in someone else; and of which hardly any people, except Christians ever imagine that they are guilty themselves....The essential vice, the utmost evil, is Pride. Unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that, are mere fleabites in comparison: it was through Pride that the devil became the devil; Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind...As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you. — C. S. Lewis



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*Echo!*

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## Singing with the Lutherans

by Garrison Keillor

I have made fun of Lutherans for years, who wouldn't if you lived in Minnesota? But I have also sung with Lutherans and that is one of the main joys of life, along with hot baths and fresh sweet corn.

We make fun of Lutherans for their blandness, their excessive calm, their fear of giving offense, their lack of speed and also for their secret fondness for macaroni and cheese potlucks. But nobody sings like them.

If you ask an audience in New York City, a relatively "Lutheranless" place, to sing along on the chorus of "Michael Row the Boat Ashore" they will look daggers at you as if you had asked them to strip to their underwear. But if you do this among Lutherans, they'll smile and row that boat ashore and up on the beach! And down the road!

Lutherans are bred from childhood to sing in four-part harmony. It's a talent that comes from sitting on the lap of someone singing alto or tenor or bass and hearing the harmonic intervals by putting your little head against that person's rib cage. It's natural for Lutherans to sing in harmony. You're too modest to be soloists, too worldly to sing in unison. When you're singing in the key of C and you slide into the A7th and D7th chords, all two hundred of you, it's an emotionally fulfilling moment.

I once sang the bass line of "Children of the Heavenly Father" in a room with about three thousand Lutherans in it; and when we finished, we all had tears in our eyes, partly from the promise that God will not forsake us, partly from the proximity of all those lovely voices. By our joining in harmony, we somehow promise that we will not forsake each other. I do believe this: People, these Lutherans, who love to sing in four-part harmony, are the sort of people you would call up when you're in deep distress.

If you're dying, they'll comfort you. If you're lonely, they'll talk to you. And if you're hungry, they'll give you tuna salad! If you laughed while reading this you must be a Lutheran.

The following list was compiled by a 20th century Lutheran who, observing other Lutherans, wrote down exactly what he saw or heard:

1. Lutherans believe in prayer but would practically die if you asked them to pray out loud.
2. Lutherans like to sing except when confronted with a hymn with more than four stanzas.
3. Lutherans believe their pastors will visit them in the hospital even if they don't notify them that they are there.
4. Lutherans believe in miracles and even expect miracles, especially during their stewardship visitation programs or when passing the plate.
5. Lutherans drink coffee as if it were the Third Sacrament.
6. Some Lutherans still believe that an ELCA bride and an LCMS groom make for a mixed marriage.
7. Lutherans feel guilty for not staying to clean up after their own wedding reception in the Fellowship Hall.
8. Lutherans still serve Jello-O in the proper

liturgical color of the season.

9. Lutherans believe potlucks are a church requirement.
  10. Lutherans believe that it is OK to poke fun at themselves and never take themselves too seriously.
- And finally, you know you're a Lutheran when:
- You hear something really funny during the sermon and smile as loudly as you can!
  - It's 100 degrees, with 90% humidity, and you still have coffee after the service.
  - Doughnuts are a line item in the church budget, just like coffee. The communion cabinet is open to all, but the coffee cabinet is locked up tight.
  - All your relatives graduated from a school named Concordia.
  - When you watch a "Star Wars" movie and they say, "May the force be with you," you respond "and also with you."



## My Daily Thoughts

I can't discard what you, through time, put inside of me! How the pages of my life turn into everlasting joy. It is still your beauty and kindness that melts my emotions, and with you pure love entered my heart. You always know how to make me laugh and smile in my saddest times in my need for love. When you wrap me in your arms I feel so safe, knowing nothing in this world can harm me. In my completeness of mind I can only love you the best way I know how. Yet that way is still full of insecurities. I close my eyes and open my heart for your guidance to lead me from my wrongs. I know no distance can ever separate us, and time stops through the essence of your love! My daily thoughts are of our togetherness on the day you call me home. Praise God!

— Kerry Clark 10-19-05

## The Most

Most destructive habit.....Worry  
 Greatest Joy.....Giving  
 Greatest loss.....Loss of self-respect  
 Most satisfying work.....Helping others  
 Ugliest personality trait.....Selfishness  
 Most endangered species ... Dedicated leaders  
 Greatest natural resource..... Our youth  
 Greatest "shot in the arm".....Encouragement  
 Greatest problem to overcome.....Fear  
 Most effective sleeping pill.....Peace of mind  
 Most crippling failure disease.....Excuses  
 Most powerful force in life .....Love  
 Most dangerous pariah.....A gossip  
 World's most incredible computer .. The brain  
 Worst thing to be without..... Hope  
 Deadliest weapon.....The tongue  
 Two most power-filled words ..... "I Can"  
 Greatest asset .....Faith  
 Most worthless emotion.....Self-pity  
 Most beautiful attire ..... SMILE!  
 Most prized possession ..... Integrity  
 Most powerful communication. .... Prayer  
 Most contagious spirit..... Enthusiasm

## Hate

Hate is not His word.  
 It was created by the dark lord.  
 Only the light of love can overcome.  
 Listen closely, hear His angels hum.  
 Follow His path and feel His love.  
 In the darkness, be the dove.  
 Always be willing to give your forgiveness.  
 For only Jesus was sinless.  
 Please, He says, do not hate.  
 His love for you will not abate.  
 — Gene D. Cook, Jr. (FDCF)

## Check Them Out!

The Church of the Damascus Road Librarians are inviting you to come to the chapel (MPR 23), and "check out" the books in our library! There are many genres of books to choose from! We hope to see you there!

## 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