

The Church of the Damascus Road

Echo!

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Righteousness

In my last message we talked about why bad things happen to good people. That how God gave Adam dominion over the earth, (Gen. 1:26, Psalm 115) and by an act of treason the devil tricked man into obeying him rather than God.

Now think about this a minute: God just lost Lucifer, his anointed cherub and a third of all his angels along with him. Next, he loses his child, who he created in his own image, and the earth that was given him. That had to hurt the God of Love.

This perfect creation was now corrupted. Sin had entered in, death, sickness, poverty, and the knowledge of every form of evil was now in the world. For thousands of years the devil was the god of this world {2Cor. 4:4}.

Man was deserving of death for his act of disobedience, but our Father had a plan. He would come and die in our place.

The day Jesus died, he went to hell in our place, but it could not hold him. He is risen, stripping Satan of all his authority, taking all those who were held there with him, and giving the keys of authority back to the Church. Freely he gave himself to die in place of anyone who will believe.

What do you believe?

We believe unto righteousness (Eph. 2:8-9, Rom. 3:21-28).

We have been made righteous in Christ (2Cor. 5:17-21).

"Only believe. All things are possible to those who believe" (Mark 9:23).

"These signs will follow those who believe: In my name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues...they will lay hands on the sick and they will recover" (Mark 16:17-18).

When Jesus died on the cross he took upon himself the sentence that Adam had brought upon himself. Every man born on this earth lives under the curse of the Law

until they accept the Blood sacrifice that Jesus performed for them for the remission of sin.

"We believe unto righteousness, and confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:9-10).

Believe that you are righteous and the Bible says, "The effective, fervent prayer of the righteous man avails much"(James ?). Your prayers matter, not because of who you are, but because of what Jesus has made you: righteous!!

Effective prayer is knowing what God has promised, and asking him for it in faith.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning" (James 1:17). When you know that health is God's will for you it inspires: "Thank you, Lord, that I live in divine health and I refuse to receive sickness in my body." Ineffective prayer would be something like: "If it be your will, Father, please heal me" or "so and so has cancer, please comfort them in their affliction." That is ignorance gone to seed! That is not faith in a loving Father that wants what is good for you, and without faith it is impossible to please Him. "...let him ask in faith, no doubting."

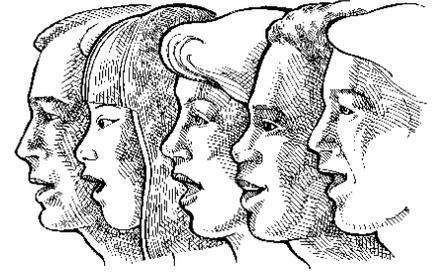
We have the Word of God with every promise He has made to us. Read it for yourself, and when you come across a promise that deals with a situation in your life, stand on that promise. Don't let anyone talk you out of your blessing. The Bible says "All the promises of God are Yes and Amen" not no or maybe.

He who has called you is faithful. He cannot lie. What he says, he means, and he will do it supernaturally if you don't waver.

"Let God be true and every man a liar" (Romans 3:10).

May God bless you with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places. Amen

- William Bell 5/15/06



God's People

God puts people in our life for a reason. We need to be accepting of that, and do what it is that He wants us to do. He doesn't say to go and make disciples of just a few people in your town, but "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," Matt. 28:19. "We love because he first loved us," 1John 4:19. Remember that when you meet him face to face, the Bible says, "So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God." Rom. 14:12. So fellow Christians, I challenge you to live out the Christian life that God intended you to.

-Tony Halsrud FDCF



Inside the Echo!

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Attention Members:

I encourage all of you to submit articles to the Flash, and Echo for us all to read. It's good to hear personal testimonies of how God has inspired you. Let us know what's on your minds, and in your hearts.

-Tony Halsrud FDCF

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.

Pride

The Lord He whispers in my ear
 Son, don't worry and have no fear.
 Just trust in me let go of that pride
 And all that pain bottled up inside.
 Just come to me I'll give you rest
 Try my love put it to the test
 It was for your sins that my son died
 Open up your heart let go of that pride!

Curtis Harms FDCF 2008

What Shall I Render?

To answer this question, one must take inventory and ask themselves what can I render. That would be considered holy, acceptable, and pleasing unto the Lord. For having felt so much loving kindness, for having experienced abundant mercies, for having received more than a measure of grace, what shall I render unto the Lord? The only gift that would be appropriate is the one given to us...our lives!

—by: *Kenneth Crawford FDCF*

Poetry from Inmates

If you would like to see something that you have written for God, or by someone else that you love, you can submit it to the Church of the Damascus Road, and we will publish it in our monthly newsletters. It can be from someone else to you also. We need to be encouraged by each other in this place. Jokes (short, clean and funny) can be submitted, also.

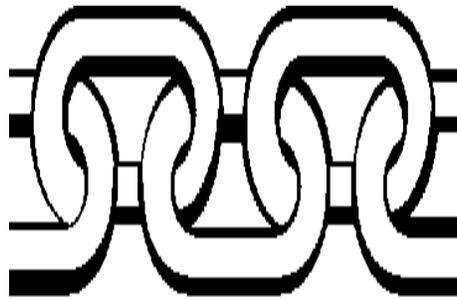
—*Tony Halsrud FDCF*



Change

As I sit here, locked down in my cell, my mind's always wondering why I chose to rebel. There's more to life than these thick concrete walls, if you can leave here, change your life, you'll be standing real tall. All the devil's evil temptations are always trying to bring you down, just pick up that Bible, and never turn around. God speaks to you, nothing but the truth, put you mind to it, what's the worst it can do? Stay focused on your life, and the ones that you love, everything will come naturally, and fit just like a glove. Before you leave this place, set ya some goals, so when you hit the bricks, they're right under your nose. You can take prison two different kinds of ways, stay institutionalized, or head for better days. I don't know about you, but I've got lots of faith, that the Lord will lead me to a much better place. I've lived the life of a sinner for just way too long, I'm going to keep my heart with Jesus, and stay real strong. If you put your mind to it, everything's right within reach, so go to Church on Sundays, and listen to the Pastor preach. Life isn't only about partying, and getting high, if that's what someone told you, you're living a real big lie. Drinking, and drugs, that's what Satan wants you to do, so drop them bad habits, and join our Christian crew. We've got angels watching over us at all times, fighting away evil spirits that are trying to get us to commit crimes. I've got a beautiful family I love with all my heart, there's nothing in this world I'll let tear us apart. I'll do anything it takes to put a smile on their face, even if it means going to Church, and singing "Amazing Grace." I can't wait till we're sitting right up in heaven, we'll bring as many as we can, because it's right where we're headin'. I hope to see you all there between those pearly gates, but if I don't, I guess you're down below in the United States.

—*Grant Van Kooten, FDCF 2007*



Brokenness

Today is not a promise,
 tomorrow never comes.
 Chasing unobtainable dreams
 is like chasing the rising sun.
 Never within reach, always out of grasp.
 Each a living moment, soon to be the past.
 The value placed upon it
 no one really knows.
 Effortless attempts soon to take its toll.
 Bordering on insanity, living on the edge,
 Anticipating happiness;
 emotionally in dread.
 Seeking all the answers
 nowhere to be found.
 Blinded by a curse; death is all around.
 Time is of the essence,
 wasted in my youth,
 Wandering aimlessly,
 searching for the truth.
 Total destruction certain,
 heartbreaking agony.
 On that day of brokenness
 Jesus came to me,
 Giving me the answer;
 no longer must I be
 Lost in total hopelessness,
 pain, and agony.
 The chains of sin were broken.
 Jesus paid the price for me.
 He brought me out of darkness;
 his love has set me free!

Robert L. Johnson II, 11-20-03

Coat of Arms

Coat of arms
 Coats of armor,
 Or coats of death.
 It must be life,
 Because of their breath.

Motionless in the dirt,
 Left to die,
 Left alone.
 Will never see family or home.

Coats have run,
 For fear of death.
 Did not stay,
 To help the rest.

Can not help,
 Can not stay.
 Must run for safety,
 To live another day.

Victory is not ours,
 It will never be.
 Regret in our hearts,
 Until eternity.

Albert Cooper FDCF 2004

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An 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
 Tony Halsrud, Editor

Thoughts from Pastor Jim

For some time now our Sunday messages have dealt with God's people the Israelites and Moses, who led them out of Egypt. In most Bible storybooks, the authors only tell us half of the story about baby Moses in the basket, floating among the reeds, then being raised to manhood in the Egyptian courts. Then later, Moses leads God's people out of Egypt, into the wilderness, toward the "Promised Land." The fact that he murdered an Egyptian guard and covered the body with sand normally is not talked about in too many children's stories. This is hard to explain to children.

When Moses went up onto the mountain for over a month discussing with God His plans for the people, Moses brought back with him the Ten Commandments, one of which stated, "Thou shalt not kill." Yes, God in His wisdom can use any one of us, no matter how bad we have been in the past, to carry out His work as He continues to reveal the master plan for His universe.

During the presidency of Richard Nixon, there was a scandal that involved the president and many people that were close to him and advised him. After a lengthy series of hearings in the U.S. Congress, our president was forced to resign and many of his advisors received sentences that required them to serve time in prison and pay fines for their wrongdoings. What shame our country felt! The new president "pardoned" Mr. Nixon so he wouldn't have to serve time in prison, but the advisors went to jail.

One would expect that this would be the last we would hear of these people that left office in disgrace... but no! God still had work for them to do, just as He had plans for Moses.

Mr. Nixon, when history is reviewed in the future, will probably be remembered as the former President of this country that opened dialog with the leaders of China, leading to trade and diplomatic relations between our countries, rather than the lies he told while he was in office.

His "Aide," Charles Colson (below), after his time in prison, went on to become very active in prison ministry and author of religious books.

God is still speaking and working in our lives today. Heed and listen, is He calling you? Be prepared to say, "Where He leads me, I will follow."

—Pastor Jim Cunningham



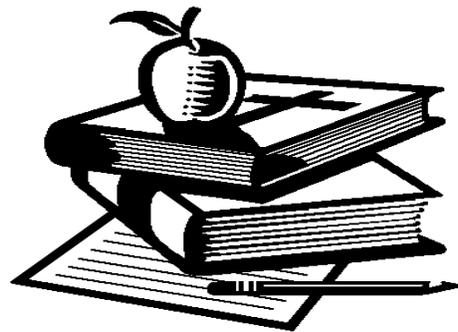
Miracles

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



Josh '07 - submitted by Jonathan Kopaska



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, tapes and compact discs in our library! There are many genres of books to choose from! We hope to see you there!

This Month's Verse

Lord, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke. Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts.
Jeremiah 15:15-16 KJV



Moses and the Law by Damien FDCF '07

This Month's Thought

Never to judge rashly; never to interpret the actions of others in an ill sense, but to compassionate their infirmities, bear their burdens, excuse their weaknesses, and make up for their defects—to hate their imperfections, but love themselves, this is the true spirit of charity.

—Nicolas Caussin

Worship Opportunities

Worship & Bible Study

FDCF Fort Dodge

7:00pm WednesdaysHoly Communion
6:30pm Fridays Prayer & Bible Study

FDCF Chapel Hours

2:30pm-4:00pm Wednesday
1:00pm-2:00pm Friday
2:30pm-4:00pm Friday

NCCF Rockwell City

6:30pm Tuesdays Prayer & Bible Study
6:30pm ThursdaysHoly Communion