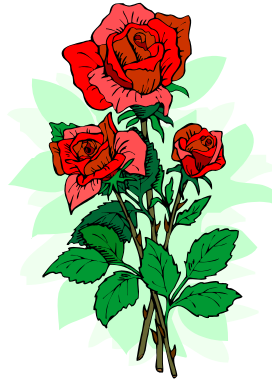


Things I Wish I'd Said...

At Ladies' Bible Study



Marjorie A. Younce

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Introduction

This book originally started out to be only a book of poems taken from "The Poet's Corner" on our website, www.heritagebbc.com. Since I have only been putting a poem a month on that, I realized the book would only be twelve pages long, give or take a few! Some were from my Christmas cards. I like to write my own poems for cards, as you can seldom find one that says what you want it to.

You are welcome to the poems.

There is an article for each month and a scriptural point is drawn from each one. Most relate incidents of life in the ministry at various churches where we have served. I sincerely hope these will be of use to you in your Bible study.

"May" contains a complete monologue for a Mother-Daughter Banquet called "Hats Off to Mom." There are some line drawings in it that I used as transparencies to visualize the talk. You are welcome to enlarge them and use them. The decorations were little hats on stems in flower pots. You could do this theme anyway you want to.

There is a Bible lesson in "June" on King David which I have used in Ladies Bible Study.

The last chapter contains some very important guidelines for the pastor's wife. These would also apply to the wives of

youth leaders, deacons, church bus drivers, church administrators, secretaries, Christian school educators.

And, being a typical woman, I have thrown in an opinion or two.

Since my literary talents definitely need some prayer, I thought it would not hurt to put in some of those.

Some of the poems are meant to inspire; but, some I have written for my husband's books. These are sharp and to the point, as I feel doctrinal things should be.

The line drawings for May were done by my artistic friend, Patricia Montgomery, who is with Norm in Heaven. Thank you, Pat!

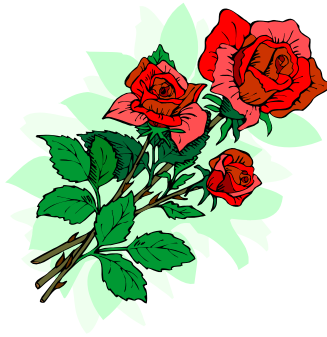
Thank you, also, to wildlife photographer, Mitchell Krog, for permission to use his photograph entitled, "Following Junior." You can view other beautiful examples of his wildlife photography at www.mitchellkrog.com.

I hope you enjoy this trip with me through the year, whatever it is, and the small view into the ministry it gives.

Thank You...

... to my wonderful husband, Dr. Max D. Younce, a full-time pastor who took time out of his busy schedule to listen to my pages. He always thought I should write a book and kept encouraging me to start. Little did he know, that I usually write at night, as that's when the Parkinson's tremors let up.

He is my pastor, too!



January

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." - Rev. 22:20

THIS COULD BE THE YEAR!

A bright, new day in the morning dawns,
The very first in a brand, new year.
The thought comes to me as I muffle my yawns,
This could be the one in which we hear...

A garment's rustle; then, the Archangel's shout;
The Trump of God sound a mighty blast,
The Angelic Host ordered out.
The Saints of God are going home at last!

The Savior, Himself, shall descend,
His nail-pierced hands are opened wide.
Heaven's gates will open and we shall ascend
To spend eternity at His spear-wounded side.

I know what we'll do when we get there.
We'll search the crowd for each loved one's face.
There'll be joyous reunions everywhere
Of Saints redeemed by God's amazing grace.

At the throne, we join the new song being sung,
By the side of those we hold near and dear.

We'll be there with every kindred, nation, and tongue.
The Redeemed of all ages are present here.

We'll be praising the Lord that He died for us,
And gave Salvation, as a gift, completely free!
"Worthy is the Lamb," are the words to our chorus;
And, in gratitude, we'll fall to our knee.

Then the coffee pot gurgles its last drop;
And I sit down with my very first cup.
Out of my thoughts into the present I drop!
But God's Word will comfort me, 'til we're taken up.

Should Jesus not return before this year is done,
We can redeem the time and the precious tender in it.
We can work for Him, there are many souls to be won,
And we can't waste a single, golden minute!

On the horizon I see the first golden ray.
Soon the sun will shine high in its dome.
"Even so, Lord Jesus," is the prayer that I pray.
"Come, Lord Jesus," and take us all home!

**"To read a poem in
January is as lovely as to
go for a walk in June"**

Jean-Paul Sartre

"KEEPING THINGS IN BALANCE"

Junior, the Lion Cub

It was one of those rare times that my husband and I could settle down for an enjoyable evening watching television. Hmm! A documentary about lions in Tanzania looks promising; especially when the first few scenes depict a lion pride at rest with adorable cubs at play.



"Following Junior"
Photographer: Mitchell Krog

Little did we know it was entitled, "Big Cats Dealing With Drought." We never "come in at the beginning."

I know conservationists strive to show us how hard it is for animals just trying to live. They cite percentages of survival and do a good job of keeping us informed. But everything comes from the humanist standpoint; and, always, with the false science of Evolution thrown in somewhere.

If most conservationists had a creed, it would be this. "We believe that life is ordained to be perpetuated through the survival of the fittest. We must not interfere with this process by any means; or, we shall weaken the species. It is the "balance of nature," and man must exercise control over it."

Christians know the real story. God's creation was perfect in the beginning; but, interfered with "big time" when Eve gave Adam that forbidden fruit. Just read Genesis Three. We continue to squander our precious creation by careless and greedy usage of our natural resources, and by throwing chemicals all over it. We do not control domestic herd populations and allow them to eat up all the precious grasslands; as, in some countries they are a sign of wealth and status.

Some of us just want to make more money.

We have interfered in God's Creation in such a way that it no longer perpetuates itself as God intended. We know that it will not be made right until our Lord sets His Kingdom up and...

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. (6)

And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. (7)

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. (8)

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." - Isaiah 11:6-9

In a humanistic way, the conservationists are trying to encourage us to care about wildlife; which is something God would approve of. We often forget that our Heavenly Father takes note of the tiny sparrow's fall, provides for the raven, and warns us in Proverbs 12:10 that "*A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.*" This is a passage about compassion.

I am not a "tree hugger;" but I am *for* the compassionate treatment of animals. God has given us the responsibility for them. (Genesis 1:26-28). We are the stewards of Creation, which means "*We take care of it!* Don't get me wrong. I make a mean venison roast! My husband loves to hunt and we eat what he hunts. But, my opinion is, when you hunt, you should come home with something you can fill your freezer with; not, Bambi, or Teddy!

When you hunt, you should stay within the limits, so animal populations can survive for the good of all. It seems to me that the word "conserve" speaks for itself. It means to "save" like money in a bank. It does not mean "never interfere." Mankind has already "been there, done that."

I have a problem, though, when a conservationist makes a wildlife documentary of a lynx kitten; which he lets starve through a particularly tough winter, when he could have put some food out. It would then have survived. Then, he lectures about how they must not "upset the balance of nature;" which was upset long ago in the Garden of Eden.

Or, a group of photographers follow rogue lions to a nest of innocent lion cubs, which the lioness thought she had carefully hidden before she left for hunting. After which, they

meticulously record and photograph her pitiful calls for cubs that will never come. All of which they had in their power to prevent.

Another case in point. The photographers document a lioness abandoning her cub because she has been attacked by a cobra. She continues to walk around them in a daze, as the venom is coursing through her veins, and she wants to live! She is searching for her cubs; but can't see or hear them. The venom has blinded her. They take great camera shots of the hyenas immediately pulling her cubs to pieces; when they could have snatched them to safety.

Do not tell me that conservationists tramp about in Africa without copious supplies of anti-venom, tranquilizer darts and first aid equipment. All parties could have been transported back to headquarters with cameras rolling. That would have made a much better documentary. In my opinion, you do not help by not interfering. I would paraphrase a portion of Proverbs 12:10 as "...the tender mercies of the *uninformed* are cruel."

Back to our program. The camera comes in close and focuses on one small cub. The babies of any species are always adorable! He comments, "This is Junior, the smallest of the litter. It will be difficult for him to survive." I could see where this was going and it was not going to be good. It was going to be bad; but, the extent of the bad I could not have guessed. It would be horrible!

All seemed to be going well. The pride was following the herds, getting their buffalo, and Junior turned out to be a spunky, little guy who could keep up just fine

Cut to the next morning and sunrise on the parched African plain. The Narrator: "There has been collateral damage during the night time hunt. One of the lionesses is seriously wounded; but, should recover, unless the wound becomes infected. (Well! Somebody get the dart gun and the sulphur powder out.) And Junior, running in the middle of the hunt, has suffered a very serious injury when he was kicked by a frantic buffalo, breaking the cub's pelvis."

The Narrator wrote him off immediately, citing the usual mortality percentages; but, Junior had other ideas. He was determined to live and stay with his pride.

We were treated to heart-rending pictures of this little lion cub plodding along, dragging his hindquarters behind him. The Narrator assured us that he could not long survive, and one thing animals in the wild could not worry about was a weak individual who endangered a whole pride. The Narrator was certain they would very soon abandon him; but, in *unusual* fashion, his siblings stayed with him to encourage and help the little cub.

Dragging himself along behind the herd as he did, he probably suffered for days before his death. And, of course, eventually, the pride moved on; since, as the Narrator coldly said, "They did not have to care for Junior any longer." He was not only abandoned by the lions. He was abandoned by humans. This is a case for the Animal Cops!

"We're losing lions." That's the message we were supposed to take to heart. I thought what we were conserving was the lions; not a strict "balance" of nature. "Nature" has been quite unbalanced for some time. Just look at the weather.

I am quite sure that little lion could have been transported back to the reserve; and, if not able to be saved, at least compassionately cared for. Instead, we are left to imagine. Was our plucky little Junior pulled to pieces by the lovable hyenas, too? When humans are there, why do animals have to die when they have the ability to help.

I just recently watched a documentary where game keepers were releasing a baby rhino from ropes they used to pull him from a mud wallow. The mother was on a charge full tilt; but, with cool heads, they managed to get him loose

But, my faith in man's better nature was restored. I immediately went to the internet to find out what exactly had befallen Junior. Lo and behold, many others found that web page, too. They all agreed with me!

One said it much better than I. "Very few things have prompted me to write a letter to a network regarding something I found deeply disturbing. Junior has now been one. I can't stop thinking about that brave, little creature. Mankind is ultimately responsible for many of the predicaments these animals are facing. I don't understand why we pick and choose when we should help and when we shouldn't. Junior deserved to be rescued from the wild and either rehabilitated or humanely euthanized to prevent further suffering. I sincerely hope we can avoid being so callous in the future."

Well, not only were they calloused in the treatment of Junior, they callously posted a video on the same site of his whole, horrible ordeal.

This brings me to another thought. If we do not care about animals, will we care about people? Will we care about souls going to Hell? Of course God wants us to have concern for animals and treat them humanely; but, there has to be a balance in this, too. If we care about cute, fuzzy, animals more, and ignore our next door neighbor's soul and let him go to Hell, what does that say about us?

The prophet Jonah had preached to Nineveh, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." He expected that the mighty city and all its residents would be destroyed. But, the people changed their ways, as they evidently believed God's word, and God seemed to "change" his mind about the destruction he was going to rain down on them. Of course, God knew what was going to happen all along.

Jonah accused God of being too gracious, merciful, and kind. "I knew you weren't going to do it," he said to God. "That's the reason I didn't want to come in the first place!" Evidently, he was embarrassed that he had preached judgment was coming and none did. (Jonah 4:1-3). All God said was, "...Doest thou well to be angry." (Jonah 4:4).

Jonah was definitely pushing his luck after running away from the Lord and having to be brought to Nineveh in the belly of a great fish. So Jonah went up on a hill, pouted in the shadow of a booth he made to see what would happen. (Jonah 4:5).

God caused a gourd to grow over his booth for shade, which Jonah enjoyed very much. The next day, God sent a worm that ate the gourd and it withered. Then God sent a hot

sun, and an east wind. Jonah suffered a sunstroke, and wished he were dead—again. (Jonah 4:8)

God once again asks, "Dost thou well to be angry over a *gourd*, which is here today and gone tomorrow? You didn't plant it. You didn't make it grow." And, further you care nothing about the 120,000 children of ages 3 and 4 that live in Nineveh. "*And also much cattle?*"

God was sparing Nineveh for the innocent. Cattle make no decisions; except where they should graze. The children had their whole lives ahead of them, and God, being God, knew what they would do. If the parents had believed God's Word, the children will be influenced by them.

God was trying to show Jonah his lack of compassion; but he only thought about Jonah. Preachers love to say that Jonah, "the unwilling prophet" was a man of second chances. Actually, I would say he had many chances. All Jonah cared about was that he had said Nineveh was going to be destroyed and it wasn't. It wouldn't have mattered about the children to him at all. He only cared about himself. He told God, "*I do well to be angry.*" What a guy!

Dr. Scofield characterizes him as "a bigoted Jew, unwilling to testify to a Gentile city, and angry that God had spared it." (Beginning notes, Pg. 943, Old Scofield Study Bible).

I love animals and want to see them treated right. I also care about getting the Gospel to lost souls. But there can be a balance for both things in my life. It is when things get out of balance, that trouble comes.

"A false balance is an abomination to the LORD; but a just weight is his delight." (Proverbs 11:1)

God wants us to be as compassionate and caring for other people as well as animal creatures. His greatest desire is that we have compassion toward the lost. The Apostle Paul is a great example of this when he says,

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."- Romans 10:1

A Prayer for the New Year

Dear Heavenly Father, Let me learn from the adorable lion cub, Junior, who so wanted to live; that life is precious and not to be squandered. I want to use my life for you. I don't want to be like Jonah, even though he was used as an example of the greatest event in History, the Resurrection of our Lord. This just proves that God can use any sorry individual for His Glory. Lord, grant to me a compassion for the lost like the Apostle Paul. Most of all, Dear Lord, thank you for dying for me on that cross and giving me eternal life, just because I believed that. Amen!

Documentary quotes from National Geographic Wild television and NatGeoWild Blog -1/8/2011. Lynx Kitten - Early Wild America episode. Marty Stauffer. Photograph, "Following Junior," Photographer: Mitchell Krog, Website: www.mitchellkrog.com.

February

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. - John 15:13

NO GREATER LOVE

On the way to Gethsemane that evening long ago,
The Savior began to teach as He was wont to do.
His lesson in the vineyard became the "Parable of the Vine,"
A lesson that we all should learn, ev'ry precious line.

It's not a lesson about Salvation; but, how to serve the Lord.
A parable has just one point; not a doctrine in each Word.
Christ is the Vine and the Branches are all who have believed.
We are clean through his Word, as the Gospel we've received.

In a vineyard, the Husbandman has chores by the score.
Every branch that bears fruit is pruned; so it will bear much more.
But to bear any fruit at all, we must be attached to the Vine,
That is where we get our strength to serve, and lay all upon the line.

If we abide in Him, we shall have strength much fruit to bear.
If our branch begins to wither, and we do not the Gospel share,
Our branches will be gathered up, and our branches men will burn,
As useless as wood, hay, and stubble, is the lesson we must learn.

Only is the Father glorified if His vineyard bears much fruit.
With a bountiful harvest of souls hanging upon each shoot.
"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you..."
"Continue ye in my love," a commandment tried and true.

If you do not love one another; but, instead bite and devour,

The fruit that grows upon your branch will leave a taste most sour.
A watching world will give no heed to the words that you say;
But cast them all aside, and go upon their merry way.

"This is my commandment, that ye love one another,"
Even to the point that you lay down your life for a brother.
Christ has called us to go forth and bear fruit that will remain.
And a soul bound for Heaven, cannot be lost again.

"For God so loved the world," for all mankind was lost,
"That he gave his only begotten son," upon a rugged cross.
"That whosoever believeth in him," that's you and I, my Friend.
"Should not perish, but have everlasting life." Life without end.

*"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay
down his life for his friends." - John 15:13*

John 15:13 is one of my favorite Bible verses; but, until the Lord gave me the above poem, I never realized what "kind" of love the Bible verse was talking about. As strange and violent as they may seem, the following are true stories about love.

February is a month that is usually represented by valentines, candy, and engagement rings! All a part of love stories that begin, and continue in June with the weddings.

February is also the month that we honor two great Commanders-in-Chief, Washington, and Lincoln. They presided during two defining periods of our nation, the Revolutionary War, and the Civil War. There is also a day in February set aside to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the face of the Civil Rights movement in the 50s and 60s.

Washington was commander in chief of the Continental Army, and finished his second term as the first President of the United States in 1797. Weary of the political infighting surrounding the presidency, he longed for the peace of retirement to his beloved Mount Vernon. Unfortunately, his solitude lasted less than three years as he died on December 14, 1799 at age 67. The rest of his adult life, he had given for his country.

After the Civil War, President Lincoln was assassinated. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was also assassinated at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968, at the age of 39.

Great causes require great sacrifice!

"As you are well aware, Secretary, we are at war. War is ugly and the price is high.

Yet, by the grace of God, and by the men and women who are continuing to put self aside and willingly serve; the actual living out of this war is being kept off our home borders.

Freedom is never free. "

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM



Infantry School Photo - Wikipedia 1.

I never read John 15:13 but what I am reminded of this picture of a 19 year old, fresh-faced, young man with an infectious grin, named Ross McGinnis.

"McGinnis, earned the Medal of Honor December 4, 2006, in Adhamiyah, Iraq. The machine gunner with C Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, was providing rear security in the turret

of a humvee during a combat patrol in the northeast Baghdad neighborhood when an insurgent threw a grenade. McGinnis tried to deflect it, but it landed in the hatch, near the radio.

McGinnis yelled "grenade" to warn the crew, then threw himself on it, absorbing the blast and saving the lives of SFC Cedric Thomas, SSG Ian Newland, SGT Lyle Buehler and PFC Sean Lawson. McGinnis died instantly.

(www.us.army.mil. "Medal of Honor recipient honored at the National Infantry Museum" - 6-16-2009)

President George Bush presented the Medal of Honor to McGinnis' parents...18 months after his death. Ross McGinnis had a Mom and Dad, and two sisters, for whom grief will be a part of their lives...always.

The Honorable Pete Geren, Former Secretary of the Army, had this to say about Ross and the McGinnis Family.

"Ross McGinnis was one of those remarkable people. Tom McGinnis is his father. I never knew Ross, but I had the privilege of spending a good bit of time with Tom in the summer of 2008.

The McGinnis' are from Knox, PA. Ross was the youngest of three children-with two older sisters.

His dad told me that Ross never particularly liked school- he loved music, cars and basketball. He worked at McDonald's after school to buy himself a Ford Thunderbird.

A good kid with a strong family that loved him dearly, but there was really nothing that set him apart from his peers until, at age 17, with his nation at war, he joined the (all volunteer) Army- most don't, he did- he was part of that less than 1%- (of the population) and that tells you a lot.

On December 4, 2006, Ross was manning the .50 caliber machine gun on his humvee on a patrol in Baghdad when an insurgent threw a grenade through the gunner's hatch. Reacting immediately, he shouted a warning to his four crew members. He then easily could have jumped to safety.

Instead, he dropped down into the humvee and covered the grenade with his body. He chose to give his life to save the lives of his four buddies.

He was 19 years old.

The next day (after the Medal of Honor Ceremony), we held a ceremony honoring Ross and his family in the hall of Heroes at the Pentagon. There was an overflowing crowd.

In the crowd, sitting together, were the four Soldiers Ross saved: SPC Sean Lawson, SGT Lyle Beuhler, SGT Ian Newland, and SFC Cedric Thomas- men who are alive today only because Ross chose to die for them.

There were several speakers, including Ross' father and he was the last to speak. He was not used to speaking before a crowd and was visibly nervous when he walked up to the podium.

Previous speakers had spoken of Ross's heroism and sacrifice and emphasized the debt- "**the debt**"- we all owe to Ross and those who sacrifice for our lives and our freedom.

His father had prepared remarks, but before reading them, he looked down into the audience, directly at the four surviving Soldiers, and he paused, apparently sensing the burden the four men must carry.

After collecting his thoughts for a moment, he said: "Something that was said just a few minutes ago made me think, when it was said that Ross gave these four men a gift. That is what it was."

Then he spoke directly to the four: “[You] can’t be expected to live the rest of your lives living up to something, or paying back something. It can’t be carried as a debt. A debt is something you can repay. A gift is something for you to enjoy. So live your lives and enjoy your lives, because it was a gift.”

He then turned to his prepared text and talked about his son. Ross gave his life for those four Soldiers- his dad continues to look after them." (Remarks by the Honorable Pete Geren, former Secretary of the Army, ...Oct. 27, 2010. Locality: The Marshall Foundation)

Life is a gift! May we always realize that and not waste a single second.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

The gift of a second chance at life was one received by the four men in the humvee, that was paid for by a Hero's life. The heroic sacrifice of Ross McGinnis is the highest form of love a human being is capable of, to lay down his life for his friends.

Eternal life is a precious gift offered by our Savior. The Lord Jesus Christ made this sacrifice when he paid for all sin on the cross, past, present, and future. Christ died for all men, friends and enemies alike.

*" But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. "-
Romans 5:8*

" For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; " - Romans 3:23

This is the kind of love that only God is capable of. I hope you will not turn your back on God's love; but, believe that Christ died for you.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." - 2 Corinthians 5:21

I pray that you will accept the gift of eternal life by believing that Jesus Christ died on that cross for you. It is not a debt that you owe; as Tom McGinnis emphasized, when speaking about physical life. It is the gift of eternal life, paid for in full by our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.-Ephesians 2:8-9

In a continuation of remarks by the Honorable Pete Geren, former Secretary of the Army, ...Oct. 27, 2010 ...former Secretary Geren read a letter from a mother who had lost her son in Afghanistan. She represents many in our country today.

"Dear Secretary Geren,

It has already been over four months since my son died serving our country in Afghanistan. Yet there are days that the pain is as sharp as the day we saw his casket for the first time and realized it is not just a bad dream. Please accept my

apology for having taken so long to respond to your letter of condolence and gratitude for his service and sacrifice.

As you are well aware, Secretary, we are at war. War is ugly and the price is high. *Yet, by the grace of God*, and by the men and women who are continuing to put self aside and willingly serve; the actual living out of this war is being kept off our home borders. Freedom is never free.

History has proven over and over the truth that genuine peace can only be achieved by those willing to risk all to preserve it. The reality of that cost does not change the truth, no matter how painful.

We lost our son at war. Yet those in other countries have lost so much more. The death of family members, the struggle with survival, the lack of the comfort of home, and the reality of no freedom in regards to speech, faith, and thought are the norm.

I tell you gratefully, that even in the thick of battle, our son understood this. These are not just the hopeful prattles of a grieving parent. You see, we were given a gift. In his personal effects, there were found a couple of pages of a journal.

Aside from the usual soldier jargon (after all, I'm sure he never thought his mother would be reading it!), there was a window into the heart of our soldier. And what was found was a healing balm to our aching hearts.

He knew that they were serving the great cause of FREEDOM. He knew that death was quite probable. In that

short time, he developed a greater sense of the fragility and worth of each human life.

He took time to prepare himself for eternity. He expressed a strong hope that with his death others could experience the opportunity to walk in peace.

He showed love and gratitude for his country, his fellow soldiers, and his family right to the end.

We lost our son...he is no longer here. The river of grief, at times, rages up and takes one's breath away and floods the eyes, rendering one both speechless and blind...often within seconds and never planned!

But, please know that even in the midst of our grief; our pride in America and her military, as well as our son's choice to serve is not diminished.

We do not regret his decision. And, *we do not grieve as those without hope.* In fact, it has given us all a greater awareness and gratitude for the many who sacrifice daily for this great country of ours and for the plight of others less fortunate.

Know that there are still many who understand that the cost of freedom is high and are grateful for those who are willing to pay, with their very lives, if necessary.

Again, Thank You, Sincerely,

...and it was signed by the mother."

(End of remarks by Former Secretary Geren.)

There are some phrases that I have italicized in this mother's letter that reveal most likely that she believes her son is in Heaven. She talked about the Grace of God as something she relied upon.

She took solace in the fact that her son had "prepared himself for eternity." She alluded to the great comfort for the bereaved that God has given in his Word. "We do not grieve as those who have no hope." Only a Christian can have this hope. I would pray that is the case with this brave mother.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. ((13)

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.(14)

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.(15)

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:(16)

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (17)

Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

There are thousands of military families out there who have lost loved ones; or, had a family member return with grievous injuries that make it difficult for them to support themselves, or their families. We should thank God for them, pray for them, and be proud of them. Where would our country be without them?

I told this "Love Story" because of our great-grandchildren, Haley and Dryden. SSGT. Ian Newland is their father.

I have learned of great organizations like the Sentinels of Freedom and the Wounded Warriors who minister to the wounded who return. May their tribes increase!

The next time you pass by a member of the military, or a veteran, walk up and shake their hand, tell them how much you appreciate their sacrifice. Let them know...we care! If they have a need and you have it within your power to help, do it!

They pay the price for Freedom!

A Prayer for the Military

Dear Lord,

In all honesty, Lord, I come to you with a laundry list of needs. I pray that *all* the military chaplains would have the

"guts" to give the clear Gospel message to our Service men and women; and view the Chaplaincy as a ministry; not just a good job with great benefits. We thank you for those dedicated chaplains that do.

Let Christians in this country make a concerted effort to get the Gospel to those in our Military. I pray that the Holy Spirit would inspire their minds to find the ways, whether by tract ministry, billboards, tapes and CDs. And don't forget to stick in a few candy bars and socks, too. You tell us in the Book of James, "We have not because we ask not." (James 4:2b) I am asking, Lord.

I give grateful thanks for "the men and women who are continuing to put self aside and willingly serve. May I always remember, freedom is never free."

I pray that we may not forget those who come back after suffering horrendous wounds to their body. We must minister to them, and not forget the burdens they bear, and never, never look away!

Please help them, Dear Father, to turn to you for "help in time of need,"(Hebrews 4:16) when they suffer needless "guilt" because they lived to return; or, because of what they have seen, or have been asked to do. May we always be grateful and not turn away, nor forget.

I pray for the mothers, fathers, and children of the Military. Give them strength, as only you can, as they support their loved one.

Amen!

March

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." - John 3:16

THE MARCH WIND

In our clime, the March wind blows,
To evaporate the winter snow,
Making God's Earth ready
For Spring's garden show.

After Winter's deadly grip,
Soon all is bright and green.
The song of tree frogs can be heard,
Nesting robins can be seen.

Farmers begin their yearly race
To get the seed into the field,
With a fervent prayer to Heaven
That Fall will bring abundant yield.

Gentle rains begin to fall;
Or, a noisy thunderstorm.
The tiny seeds within the ground
Life-giving roots begin to form.

The sun soon sends away the clouds,
Bringing warmth to every seed.

They push first leaves through the sod.
God has given all they need.

The Savior spoke about the wind
To Nicodemus long ago.
He said, "It bloweth where it listeth,
Whence it cometh, ye cannot know.

It was an object lesson
Using an earthly thing,
Teaching how the Spirit works
Eternal Salvation to bring.

As Moses lifted the Serpent of brass,
Those that looked in belief did live.
The Son of Man must be lifted up,
Eternal life to give.

The Pharisee, who came by night,
Looked in faith to Calvary.
A secret believer was he, at first,
Later, a defender of Christ was he.

He helped to lay our Lord in the Tomb
After that, he went on his way.
What Nicodemus did the rest of his life,
The Scripture does not say.

Before the Lord returned to Heaven,
They would be 'imbued with power,"
Which would come "from on high."
"Tarry at Jerusalem," until that very hour.

So, "they gathered in one place,"
And, "they were all of one accord."
The Holy Spirit indwelt on Pentecost
The Savior was true to His Word!

The Holy Spirit seals to the Day of Redemption.
He's our Down-payment on Eternity.
God never takes back the Holy Spirit!
We have "Purchased Possession Security!"

The Holy Spirit, like the March wind,
Blew the works of the Law away.
We can now have Salvation by Grace,
Trust Christ's payment; there's no other way.

He's that still small voice we hear,
That's keeps us away from sin.
He points the way to righteousness
To every listening ear.

And when troubles come,
That seem more than we can bear,
He's the strength on which we rest,
He will every burden share.

So grow in the grace and knowledge
Of our Wonderful Savior and Lord.
Use your life to plant a new crop
Of believers, saved by God's Word.

WHEN THE PHONE RINGS...

When the phone rings in the parsonage, you never know who is going to be on the other end of the line. It may be good news someone wants to share and you rejoice with them. Since we have a Q & A website, it may be someone wanting a Bible question answered. In that case, the call may come from Germany; or, anywhere in the world. Whoever it is, it is definitely not the time to get cute and say, "Sam's Pizza Parlor. What do you want on yours?"

Most of the time, Max is out. After I say, "He's not here; but, I can have him call you," they often say, "Well, maybe you can help me (sort of like sending in the second-string quarterback.)" In those cases, I have the blessing of turning to the website and I can then say, "Here is what he teaches on that.

And there are those times when the person on the other end is going through family problems, someone is ill; or, they have lost a loved one. I do my best to comfort them and carefully take down the message.

Something evil had blown into Dora Lake, Minnesota, on the March wind of 2008. It was a deadly cocktail of microbes which no one knew would kill; and, at this point in time, no one knew the damage it would eventually wreak. It devastated a family and a church!

I was totally unaware of this when the phone rang about 6:30 p.m. on March 15. I recognized the voice of our pastor friend, Rev. Dan Adams.

"No, Max isn't home; but, I can have him call you when he gets back."

"Nope, I can talk to you," he said. Since, Dan is normally low key in his conversational tone anyway, I did not immediately realize the seriousness of his call.

I launched into the light-hearted conversation that we normally engage in, as we are old friends. When he was telling me how sick he was with the flu, I kidded him. I didn't have a clue about "H1N1" then.

"Are you going to carry a pail to put under the pulpit when you preach tomorrow?"

This is something Max has resorted to in the past. When he began to relate to me how sick Danny, his son, was, and that he couldn't get him to go to the hospital, my response was "Well, you know how men are. We can never get you guys to take care of yourselves!"

But, the tone of his voice when he said, "Sometimes you get so sick, you just don't care if you die," sent chills down my spine. It was then I realized that the situation was probably very bad!

But, truly, we still didn't realize how bad. I promised that we would pray for Danny and that was the end of the conversation...and the last time I ever had a chance to speak with our friend.

I sit here, now, with tears running down my cheek, thinking about all the things I *could* have said; but, I just didn't

know the situation at the time. "Shoulda, coulda," just doesn't cut it, sometimes!

It turns out that he *did* go to the morning service and preach, as sick as he was.

He was a faithful pastor and a "rock to lean on," as the Sentinel Tribune reported at his funeral. There are many in Dora Lake, and the surrounding area, in Heaven; or, headed there, because of Rev. Dan Adams.

One of the best pictures we have of our friends was taken outside of the camp kitchen. Dan is sitting there casually, with his arm thrown around La Donna. From the smiling expression on his face, I can just tell he is speaking about his philosophy on how to run a Bible Camp. "Controlled chaos," he called it. I'm pretty sure he was joking!

That morning, La Donna had gone over to be with her son; and, since Dora Lake is not a community where you can have an ambulance at your door in minutes, when he worsened she rushed him to the hospital in the car. He died on the way, with La Donna pounding on his chest to keep him breathing and driving at the same time. What a terrible experience for her!

Sometimes it's nice to live where an ambulance and medical help can reach you! Dora Lake is not like that.

The phone rang again on Monday. This time it was their son, Jimmy.

The terrible message was, "Barney passed away, and we need Max. We just can't do anything for Dad!" In the background I could hear the great sobs of grief coming from Dan. I could hear them over the phone. I think I will *always* hear them!

By the time Max got there, they had rushed Dan to Duluth; and, he passed away on Wednesday, March 19th, without gaining consciousness. La Donna, herself, had to be put in a hospital room in the same hospital and, was so sick, she barely survived! She was too ill even to attend her son's funeral.

Dan Adams was my husband's friend and they made many wonderful memories together. Your head knows they are in Heaven; but, your heart still feels the loss. People have a tendency to think pastors are superhuman, and do not hurt or sorrow; but, they are human beings, just like everyone else.

Now, we remember the good things and remind each other about the great "family reunion" we're going to have at the Father's House. (John 14:1-3) How do people go through times like this without our Precious Savior?

Max loved going up to hunt; both for animals and mushrooms; although, not at the same time. He and Dan would sit around their table and have great fellowship discussing Scripture. La Donna allowed him to mess up their kitchen when he fried mushrooms for everyone. Those were good days. Dan and La Donna were very gracious in their hospitality toward us, and La Donna still is.

Since Max is a few years older, Dan took it upon himself to look after him. I appreciated that very much! When Max had knee surgery, Dan was just sure he would not try to shinny up a tree to his deer stand. No such luck! So, he stood at the bottom and tormented Max. "How's it going to look if I let a 72-year old man fall out of a tree stand." It was just something they had going.

It *would* have looked kind of silly. Just about the same as Rod Goble mistaking the camp piano for a bear! Probably OSHA would have had to check in to the safety features of tree stands used by senior citizens!

Max and Danny, Jr. also had a great friendship. Danny, Jr. was usually called "Barney." That is a nickname given to him by his Grandpa Chan. He and his wife, Julie, had a restaurant, with cabins, called "Barney's on the Bowstring." When Max was up hunting, he never went hungry. Barney never allowed him to pay, even though Max tried all the old tricks, like hiding the money, and everything he could think of.

They spent many an hour talking together over a meal at Barney's on the Bowstring, and were very good friends. Julie wanted him to officiate at Danny's funeral, and he got almost through it before he broke down. It was very hard.

Barney was quite a young man! He was a good father and husband, and had a grandson on the way. It was said "he lived life by the seasons: fishing season, duck season, bear season, elk season..." He was a faithful member of his father's church, taught Sunday School, was one of the camp cooks, and best of

all, a soul winner! There was always a stack of Heaven Tracts by the register at Barney's on the Bowstring.

We lost Rod Goble in October of 2008, the greatest bear hunter and guide in Minnesota. He now is "absent from the body, present with the Lord." (2 Corinthians 5:8) Rod, Dan, and Barney are together again, fellowshiping around God's throne. But, Dora Lake just doesn't look; or feel, the same anymore.

And then there is my friend, La Donna. She lost her husband, her son, and her mission in life in one fell swoop! Did you ever wonder what a pastor's wife does then?

The Adams Family were all deeply involved in the ministry of the Good News Bible Church and Camp. Their grief is still hard to bear. Our sorrow is nothing compared to theirs!

Jim Adams now does the preaching at Dora Lake. It is quite difficult for him as, since an auto accident, he has headache pain much of the time. God bless you, Jim!

This would be a very sad story indeed, if we sorrowed without hope. But, we do have hope...the Blessed Hope! (Titus 2:13). When the Rapture takes place, that Popple River Cemetery is going to be quite a mess!

And what is the point of all this? If you're going to do something for the Lord, do it today! Tomorrow may never come.

Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.- Proverbs 27:1

A Prayer for Days when the Phone Rings

Dear Lord,

We know not what a day may bring; but, you have promised that you will never forsake us. You will go through the darkest valley with us.

Thank you for the strength your blessed Holy Spirit gives, no matter what that day does bring.

Thank you for the blessings you bring every day. "Our cup runneth over." We live in your "goodness and mercy" and when our time is come, we only walk through the "shadow" of death.

Thank you for salvation, paid for by Christ, and totally free if we believe He did that for us. If you should take our spouse from us, we shall dwell in the House of the Lord (together) forever." What a grand reunion that will be!

Amen!

Was that the phone?

April

**A CHRISTIAN ANSWERS SKEPTICS OF THE
RESURRECTION**

Christ did not arise as He always said.
No one ever came back from the dead!
His followers stole the body away.
His bones, somewhere in the dust, still lay.

Let's assume the body of Christ *could* be found,
Somewhere in Jerusalem, even DNA in the ground,
It would have been most famous news ever heard!
But after 2,000 years, there's been not a word.

The atheists and agnostics would shout with glee,
If Archaeology with their false claims would agree.
They won't find the body, if they search until time's end.
Christ's bringing it with Him when He comes back again!

You Fool! The soldiers made sure of the prisoners' death,
By breaking their legs so they could not get breath.
When they came to the Savior, He was already gone.
They fulfilled the Scripture and did not break a bone.

But, just to make sure, they thrust in a spear.
Blood and water flowed out; death diagnosis was clear
He was placed in a tomb behind a 10-ton stone.
A guard was set; He seemed to be there alone.

A Roman guard who failed in duty set,
A sentence of death was sure to get,
Levied by Caesar with no appeal.
There was no chance anyone the body could steal.

Many of the disciples ran away,
They believed Christ was in that tomb to stay.
The women bought spices to anoint a deceased.
Their faith in Resurrection had certainly ceased!

Suddenly, an earthquake rolled the stone from the door,
And a bright ray of light shone across the floor,
Revealing the place where Christ should lie in repose,
Was filled with a pile of linen grave clothes.

Mighty angels were the welcome committee;
Sending all who came back to the city;
With a message to the disciples from the Risen Lord,
"He is risen, as He said! Spread the Word!"

"The Bible's no good for proof." so you say.
But it's History in advance; fulfilled every day,
Giving written testimony to what people saw,
Admissible evidence in any court of law.

"Who saw the empty tomb?" the Judge would ask.
The Chief Priests and Elders would be taken to task.
"I saw," said Mary, Peter, and John.
As will 500 in the disciple's throng.

Josephus' History tells He appeared on the earth,
In a body; not a vision, which would have little worth.
He ate fish and honeycomb; he had flesh and bone.

His blood He gave at Calvary for sin to atone.

A sacrifice made useless if He had not died;
Faithful to the end, "It is finished!" He cried!
He paid the price for all mankind's sin.
Triumphed over death and returned to Heaven again.

Don't be a fool! The facts of the Resurrection believe.
A merely crucified Savior we cannot receive.
But when He stands on Resurrection Ground,
If in that we believe, eternal life we've found!

NEWS ALERT - JERUSALEM

18th Nisan, 33 A.D.

High Priests Bribe the Soldiers to Say That The Body of Christ Was Stolen From the Sepulchre.

*Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch
came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all
the things that were done. (11)*

*And when they were assembled with the elders, and
had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the
soldiers, (12)*

*Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole
him away while we slept. (13)*

*And if this come to the governor's ears, we will
persuade him, and secure you. (14)*

So they took the money, and did as they were taught:

*and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews
until this day. - Matthew 28:11-15*

The Tomb was empty and the cover-up had begun! It continues to this day. Just consider this quote from the heretic Catholic priest, John Dominic Crossan of the Jesus Seminar in Time Magazine (Jan. 10, 1994).

"Jesus, a peasant nobody, was never buried, never taken by his friends to a rich man's sepulcher. Rather, says Crossan, the tales of entombment and resurrection were latter-day wishful thinking. Instead, Jesus' corpse went the way of all abandoned criminals' bodies: it was probably barely covered with dirt, vulnerable to the wild dogs that roamed the wasteland of the execution grounds."

Of course, Scripture contradicts the heretic Crossan in 1 Corinthians 15:19,20...

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. (19) But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." 1 Corinthians 15:19-20

The Illegal Trial of Jesus

A careful analysis of the New Testament narratives respecting the so-called "trials" of Jesus, coupled with a thorough reference to an examination of the existing Jewish Laws relating to criminal proceedings; should convince anyone, with an open mind; that the entire proceedings, from the moment of his arrest to the actual crucifixion, were wholly void and unlawful.

Consideration, in a judicial manner, will now be given to the numerous errors which were spitefully and illegally committed by the enemies of Christ.

1. The arrest was without authority of law, and therefore, illegal.

2. Annas, before whom Jesus was first taken for examination, was a mere politician without jurisdiction whatsoever.

3. The Great Sanhedrin was unlawfully assembled for these reasons: The Hebrew laws prohibited such a meeting in the night time or during the Feast of Passover.

4. He was first accused of blasphemy; but when before Pilate, the charge was changed to sedition, without notice to the Prisoner, or anyone.

5. Jesus was denied an opportunity to obtain His witnesses who would have testified in His behalf or to obtain counsel.

6. No person could be found guilty upon his own confession of guilt, alone.

7. There must have been at least two witnesses to testify in support of the charge against the accused: and their testimony must agree as to all the material facts involved.

8. The trial could not lawfully have been concluded in a single day.

9. The Roman conquerors had long before taken from the Sanhedrin its authority to sentence anyone to suffer the death penalty.

10. A unanimous verdict of guilty rendered by the Jewish court had the effect of an acquittal.

11. The members of the Sanhedrin were definitely disqualified to try Jesus, because of enmity toward the accused.

12. The merits of Jesus' defense were completely ignored by the Sanhedrin.

13. Pilate, as the Roman Governor, having stated four times that Jesus was not guilty of any wrong, should have released Him; instead of delivering Him over to the mob for crucifixion

14. The condemnation of the Christ, resulting in His death on the cross, was permitted to be done without a lawful judgment of conviction.

15. The members of the Great Sanhedrin, though learned in the law, deliberately and spitefully ignored every existing Hebrew law which had been enacted for the protection of the innocent.

"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." - John 15:20

THE CHURCH THAT LOVED TO FIGHT!

When we first went to this church, one of the ladies said to me, "Oh, we're not having Sunday Evening church tonight. It's our once-a-month business meeting. You're gonna love our business meetings!"

"Why is that?"

"You'll see."

I definitely did *not* care for their "business meetings." Robert's Rules of Order went out the window, along with Christian love, and a lot of Christian's testimonies with them. We had come to serve in the "Church that loved to fight."

Two years of "honeymoon" pass...

There they were! Sitting on the platform, behind the pulpit like a modern day Sanhedrin! I saw Annas, Caiphas, Judas, Diotrophes, Hymenaeus, and Alexander. (The names have been changed to protect the guilty !)

They were going to try my husband for Heresy. Heresy! My husband is one of the most dogmatic sticklers for correct biblical doctrine that walks on two feet! You've got to be kidding! No, from the looks on their faces, they were deadly serious. It was no time to panic; but, to "batten down the hatches," line up behind my leader, and head bow forward through some very rough seas.

I must have missed this lecture in Bible College!

The only other pastor I know who they tried this on was Floyd Seekins. After an evangelist came to town, Floyd became convinced he had not been preaching the clear gospel. The evangelist showed him a better way, and possibly encouraged him to go ahead and try.

So...Pastor Seekins began to preach that by simply believing that Jesus died on the Cross to pay for *your* sin, he would give you everlasting life. (John 3:16)

"Easy Believism!" they shouted.

He followed it with, everlasting life is life that never ends. And it starts the moment you believe. You did not have to come forward; or repent of (i.e. "be sorry for") your sins.

The word "repent" (Gr. metaneo) when used with Salvation, means "Change your mind about any other way of getting Salvation and believe Jesus died to pay for your sin, past, present...and future!" You did not have to pray through, promise to be good; it was no works for Salvation at all. Period! In fact, to get into Heaven, you can't be just "good," you must be perfect!

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." - 2 Corinthians 5:21

Pastor Seekins also emphasized that, even if you still did things that God was not pleased with; in other words, *committed sin!*; God did not kick you out of the family. But...He did have the right to discipline, as any other earthly father. God always disciplines in love and for our own good.

Christians are not under bondage; but, free to live their lives as they feel God wants them to.

Anti-Nomanism! they screamed.

Pastor Seekins evidently decided he had enough and headed for another pastorate. He is now in Homer, Alaska.

And what heretical charge were they going to bring against my sincere, Bible-teaching husband.? Well, he taught that Jonah died when he was in the belly of the big fish. This hardly rises to the level of Heresy. And, it actually happens to be true!

Maybe all those deacons thought that after the fish swallowed Jonah, he found a little chair and table, and sat there while the "whale" circumnavigated the earth for three days, until the whale barfed him out on the beach at Nineveh!

The whole matter was actually about *control*. These six men would cycle in and out of the deacon board, with a couple of other men, and always retain control of the church. They would have a new pastor come, use him about two years; then, they would put the offering money in a safe deposit box at the local bank and tell the pastor there was no money to pay him. They would first try to starve him out. "No-o-o!" you say. It's true.

(Some carnal men view the pastor as just "the hired help," and not God's leader of the church.)

If this did not work, they began with trumped up charges, and irritated the poor pastor until he began attacking them

from the pulpit. Usually, by this point, if the pastor had not really done anything wrong, he just left for greener pastures.

Enter Pastor Max Younce. When it comes to false doctrine, as many have learned by this time, he stands and fights! In his opinion, the truth of God's Word is important enough to be defended.

And he doesn't respond well to bullying. One "banty rooster" on the deacon board would meet him on Sundays at the side entrance of the church before he was to preach. This one was between that church and the parsonage and could not be seen by church members. It was supposed to be the pastor's private entrance that he used before his sermon. Not the time to disturb a preacher!

This deacon would come out and say, "If you keep preaching this way, we're going to get rid of you." He did this a couple of times, and Max saw where this was going. Since he had every intention of "keeping on preaching that way," he knew exactly what to do.

"If I find you out here next Sunday morning before I preach, I'm going to throw you over this side wall here (about 10 feet to the ground)"

Evidently the deacon believed him, as he wasn't there the next Sunday and they proceeded to Plan B, the Heresy Trial.

Here is Max's teaching about whether Jonah died, or not. It is taken from the Archives on our web site, www.heritagebbc.com, #0022,

JONAH AND THE "WHALE,"

By Dr. Max D. Younce

Question: My friend says he can't take the Bible seriously because of the Book of Jonah. He feels there is no way possible Jonah could have been swallowed by a whale and, after three days, live. I tell him there's no way to humanly figure it out--it's a miracle. Who is right?

Answer: You are both right! Jonah did *not* live for three days in the "whale's" belly--he died! And it *was* a miracle. Two points should be emphasized.

(1). The miraculous is obvious from the beginning.

"The Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." (Jonah 1:17).

(2). Our Lord explicitly stated in Matthew 12:40 that this was a fact!

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Also see Jonah 1:17b.)

What was the miracle that was illustrated by this great incident in the life of Jonah? Jonah's being swallowed up by the great fish was an example of the Resurrection of Christ, who would be crucified, buried, and raised up on the third day. *"For as Jonas...so shall the Son of man be..."* Christ did not live in the grave for three days and then emerge. He *died* as the payment for the sin of all mankind.

The fact that Jonah died is proved by the biblical language.

"Then Jonah prayed to the Lord...out of the fish's belly." (Jonah 2:1)

"Belly" is the Hebrew word "me-ah" or "abdomen." In Jonah 2:2, Jonah states

"...out of the belly of hell cried I..."

Here "belly" is from the Hebrew word "betan" and means "a hollow place" and "hell" is "sheol." Now Jonah's body is in the belly of the fish and his soul and spirit is in the hollow place of Sheol.

This is the same location as described in Luke 16:19-31 (from the Greek "Hades") with Paradise on one side and Torment on the other with a great gulf between and, until after the resurrection of Christ, was the place where the soul and spirit of those deceased would await their resurrection. Not "soul sleeping"; but, lost and saved were fully conscious, able to feel, see, reason, and speak as evidenced by Luke 16.

When Christ's body was in the grave for three days and nights, he was in the Paradise side of Sheol/Hades. (Acts 2:27; Psalm 16:10) After Christ's Resurrection, at His Ascension, He emptied Paradise (Eph. 4:8-10) and Paradise is now in the immediate presence of God. We find the Apostle Paul was

"...caught up to the third heaven...into paradise". (2 Corinthians 12:1-4)

During this present church age the saved who die are

"...absent from the body...present with the Lord." (2 Corinthians 5:8).

Torment, with its fully conscious, unbelieving inhabitants, awaits the final judgment of Revelation 20:13.

There are many accounts in the Bible of those who were brought back to life in a physical body like Jonah; but, eventually they died, as did Jonah in his time. It was a temporary thing, as this physical life is. If we believe that Jesus died to pay for our sins, God promises us everlasting life.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

"The Trial"

Actually, at this time in our ministry the web site did not exist. Jonah was one of my husband's "sugar stick" sermons as it brings in a great many doctrinal points. These men, in their foolishness and desire for control, were actually attacking the Word of God.

Well, what happened? They held their little "Heresy trial." When it came my husband's turn to speak, he gave the Scripture on this matter.

Then, they pulled another, what seemed to them, "biggie" out of their Judas bag. Wagging an accusative finger at him,

they said, "Well, you haven't put on any new missionaries in the two years you have been here!"

I had been elected Church Secretary that year, and took down all the minutes. Something clicked in my brain and I rustled through the pages of the minutes. There it was, we had put on two missionaries. Officially!

"What, Lord? Get up in front of this angry bunch. I can't do it."

Then my friend, Lynnann, who had come up to sit next to me, so I wouldn't look so alone on the front pew, gave me a sharp poke in the ribs.

"Get up there! Read that!"

Hesitantly, I rose to my feet. The moderator recognized me and gave me permission to speak. My knees began to knock, my voice quivered; but, this was the "nail in their coffin." And, since one of the "Sanhedrin" was the treasurer and wrote the check out to these missionaries every month, he had to corroborate that statement.

It was "case closed" for the congregation! And, all over for the Sanhedrin!

The congregation began to speak out. One woman stood and said, "We've had enough of this Communism where you get rid of the pastor every two years. We like this one and we want him to stay. Her husband stood and said, "I agree, he's the best Bible teacher we've had so far!"

Another sweet woman stood to her feet and spoke very quietly with a slight accent. Her father had been a pastor in Germany during WWII. "Who are you people? My husband and I have been coming to your church for over a year now, and you don't even know our name. You never talk to us. Pastor was the one who came to visit us when we wanted to join the church, and we were not as we should be. (Translation: living together, not married.) And pastor is the one who led us to the Lord and married us.

They had asked to join when they weren't married; but, fortunately they *wanted to be* married; so, that was taken care of first. Max was relieved about that! The church had two new members, and he did not have to risk offending them.

While the congregation was having its say, my husband leaned over to one of the "Sanhedrin" and said, "Look at my chair."

"Why do you want me to look at your chair?"

Because if I survive this vote today, next week you'll be sitting here, and we'll be voting on you."

Max did survive the vote, mainly because he did not allow the Sanhedrin to take the ballot box to the church basement.

"No, you count them right up on the communion table here in front! And any members of the congregation that want to come up here and watch, are certainly welcome to do so." Several fine men of the congregation jumped at the opportunity to do just that.

My husband did win a majority vote and we served there another six years. The next week, all the deacons, but one, were voted off the board. That problem was solved by appointing new deacons and holding the meetings at the parsonage. Since the surviving member of the Sanhedrin continued to spread the same bad spirit as the departing ones, the newly appointed deacons voted him off the board.

After most of the trouble-makers had left, they did not give up. They went so far as to call the parsonage with a bomb threat while we were having a baby shower. We had to call law enforcement and have the house searched. I asked the ladies, "What shall we do?" They said, "We're not going to cave in to that! Let's open the gifts." And that's what we did. You didn't know life in the ministry was so exciting, did you?

It's always a shock to learn that what should be a little piece of Heaven on Earth is not; because of out of fellowship Christians. But should we be surprised? Did they not persecute and crucify our Lord? Did he have a fair trial? He did not.

We, as Christians, are going to suffer persecution, if we are doing anything at all for the Lord. But, until they show up at your door dragging a big wooden cross, a hammer, and a bag of nails, you don't have much to worry about.

The blessing that came out of all this is that the Church That Loved To Fight became the Church That Loved To Fight for God's Word.

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." - 2 Timothy 3:12

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." - 2 Timothy 2:3

I would like to say that "they all lived happily ever after"; but, this was not the case. As with all false doctrine, if the congregation is willing to learn, they can learn the correct teachings from the Bible. Many times, others are un-teachable, refuse the truth of God's Word, and want to continue their own way. They sometimes go "underground" for a while; and, when they feel they have enough clout, the problem rears its ugly head again.

The result was Heritage Bible Church of Ohio and...was, at least to me, a little piece of...

"Heaven On Earth"

Heritage Bible Church in Ohio began in the Madison Town Hall. We had a keyboard for congregational singing, two speakers, a mike, and we had a "portable church." There was a lectern in the hall to serve as a pulpit. The men of the church came in early to sweep out the cigarette stubs and air out the place. They taught Sunday School classes under the stairwells, in the basement, and anywhere they could find a place.

The church grew rapidly. The Lord allowed us to purchase land and get into a building in under two years.

What a blessing to have a brand new church from the ground up, and with no "underground false doctrines" such as the public invitation to root out. After "The Church That

Loved To Fight," it was a little piece of Heaven-on-earth to me and just what church life should be like.

Of course, it wouldn't have happened without people like Dolly M., the mother of two red-headed twins, who brought \$100 she had been saving for bunk beds for them. "My kids need a church more than they need bunk beds!," she said. The people gave sacrificially of their money and time.

One man, Dan Arbogast, practically did the shell construction single-handedly, and many other important jobs. Rev. Dan Arbogast is now the pastor of Christian Bible Church in Geneva, Ohio.

Others bought pews for the sanctuary. Everyone helped. I might add that my husband never asked anyone for money or pledges; as his manner was that the Holy Spirit would work in the lives of Christians to give.

They were all "willing workers," just like the people who built Jerusalem's walls in Nehemiah's time.

"So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work." Nehemiah 4:6

People came out to clear land, put up walls, lay tile, put on the roof, all the things that go toward putting up a new church. Pat Montgomery, a member of our church, nearly froze to death painting a "Bible Bear" mural for the Nursery. The furnace had not been installed yet!

The first service in the new church was on an Easter Sunday. As I said, it was Heaven-on-Earth. What precious memories we have of Heritage Bible Church in Ohio.

A Prayer For The Battle

Dear Lord, you have promised that "as our days, our strength shall be." I could use those "shoes of iron," too. (Deuteronomy 33:25) You will not give us more than we can bear.

Help me always to remember, the Christian life is not a "Sunday School" picnic ; but, a battle ! Help me to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

Amen!

May

HATS OFF TO MOM!

(Adapted from a presentation given at a Mother-Daughter



Banquet. The illustrations were drawn by Patricia Montgomery, a sterling example of a wonderful mother! I was blessed to have her as a friend and I look forward to reuniting with her in Heaven.)

When we tip our hat to someone, we are saluting them, that is why we chose "Hats Off to Mom" as the theme of this story. We want to salute our mothers. When we say a person "wears many hats"; we mean they have many jobs. Mom has many jobs and we're going to look at some of the hats she wears.

"Chief Cook and Bottle Washer."

A time honored title for Mom. There was a time when Mom got up before the chickens, went out to the cold kitchen to fire up the old wood cook stove. If she had learned the art of

"banking the fire," she just threw on another chunk of wood and stirred with a poker. Then she ran the old hen off the nest for some fresh eggs, pulled bacon out of the smokehouse and carved off a few slices, went to the pantry for some baking powder and flour, to the spring house for some buttermilk.

Then she went back to the old cook stove and threw another chunk of wood on. Soon the delicious aroma of bacon, eggs, and biscuits were wafting through the house and sleepy school-bound children come yawning down the stairs to dress by the heat of the old cook stove.

After the bus "had gone," and after cleaning up the breakfast dishes, Mother went to the pump with a copper wash boiler, filled it and struggled back to the kitchen and wrestled it to the top of the old cook stove. It was washday. After the washing was scrubbed out on a washboard, she either hung it outside or on racks around the old cook stove.

Then she ironed with a flat iron heated on top of the old cook stove. My mother-in-law told me her standard practice as a small child on wash day was to cry all day long! Her mother reminded her of this delightful experience from her childhood many times.

And these were the "Good Old Days!"

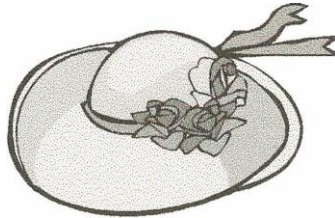
*Proverbs 31:15 - "She riseth also while it is yet night,
and giveth meat to her household" ...*

A modern mother, after a day in which the dog bit the neighbor's child, the toddler fell off his trike and had to be rushed for stitches, Johnny broke the neighbor's window on

the other side, she had no bags for the vacuum cleaner, the pump clogged on the washer, the belt came off the dryer, and while she was soothing the neighbor with the broken window—the pot roast burned and the fire department came.

After concocting a wonderful meal from two boxes of Hamburger Helper, she collapsed on the couch for a few moments of much needed rest. . . . Only to have her husband arrive home and say "Well, I wish I had nothing more to do than push buttons and lie around on the couch all day!" Needless to say, *he* pushed some wrong buttons. This was probably the same man who described his wife as an Angel, always up in the air, harping about something.

Proverbs 31:27 - "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness."



Detective Mom



Mother is the "finder of all lost objects," gets to the "bottom of things," and "stays on the case." This is the woman who knows who took the last cookie from the cookie jar, who didn't wash behind their ears or brush their teeth, whose dirty socks those are behind the couch. These are the days of "You just wait until your Father gets home!"

"Sherlock Mom" asks probing questions at dinner like, "Was that Mary Jo I heard you talking to in the driveway last night when you came home?" You know she knows it was not Mary Jo she heard, but Spike Mullins, the boy you are not supposed to be out with, and now this conversation has attracted Dad's attention. Or, she casually says, the Joneses window was broken today" and Dad's head comes up. Now, Mom is the detective, but Dad is Judge, — Jury, — and

Executioner! Since you are the only male-type child seated at this dinner table and definitely the possessor of a ball and practice tee, Mom is artfully signaling you that a confession is in order, as confessions sometimes result in a milder sentence from the Judge.

Mom, as family detective, is a very light sleeper and could possibly be guilty of *never* sleeping— you don't *know!* It's possible!

But one moonlit summer night, you and your cousin, who is spending the summer, struggle out of your bedroom window onto the porch roof, and drop to the ground. You run to the barn, push the 1936 Ford down the lane and coast down the last little hill, starting the motor. What a fun night you have ahead. You pick up the neighbor guys, you're not a very good driver and you kind of run through the ditch and knock down the Swanson's fence; but, so what! You get her back on the road and pull the bumper out straight again—good as new! Before first light—you push the '36 Ford up the lane again and back into the barn.

You are shinnying up the walnut tree, tiptoeing over the porch roof, congratulating yourselves on a successful adventure, and just as you swing your leg over the window ledge, you see a sight that strikes terror in your adolescent mind! Mom, the Detective, has successfully awakened Dad, and the Judge is in! Mom is a light sleeper; but Dad is hard to get up and when he is gotten up before he is ready to get up, he is not happy! These were the days when you did not call the Sheriff, you went over to the neighbors and apologized and paid for the damages Somehow, at this moment,- - looking

into your father's eyes,— you KNOW who is going to pay!
And how! (Names have been changed to protect the guilty.)

*Proverbs 19:18 - "Chasten thy son while there is hope,
and let not thy soul spare for his crying."*

Jack of All Trades Mom

Nowadays, some Moms have to go out and "climb on the



tractor, feed the pigs, milk cows, etc. to (perish the thought!) help bring home the bacon." They help out wherever they can, working as a team with their husband. If you're going to get the crops in or out, everyone has to help. In this day and age, it is hard to make it on just one salary; but, we

have some Moms who dedicate themselves to stay at home, doing without a lot of the extras, to be with the family. For the Moms who have no choice and must work and the Moms who stay at home, we salute you both; our hats are off to you!

*Proverbs 31:13 - "She seeketh wool and flax and
worketh willingly with her hands."*

Nurse Mom

"Nurse Mom" always gives us "just what the doctor ordered." Her bedside manner can't be beat, she puts ice-packs on our heads, dispenses sympathy liberally, gives us Band-Aids for our "boo boos" even when we don't have "boo boos," and hugs for our hurt feelings. She has a well-stocked medicine chest of remedies which are guaranteed to "fix us up just fine"—most of which taste extremely bad! A few are Kaopectate, Sulphur & Molasses, Castor Oil, Pepto Bismal—the worse it tastes, the better we probably will feel.

This same sweet person, who in earliest memory cuddled and cooed us in her loving arms; when we were sick and coughing our little head off, put something hard and round



down our little, baby throats so far that when the sticky medicine rolled down we didn't even have to swallow. And we've all heard about the Mom who wants to put that thermometer *WHERE?*

Nurse Mom comforts us through acne, peer pressure, and bad hair days. She giggles and laughs with us after our first prom, and kisses away the tears when we've been "stood up."

After the wedding, and the baby comes to cry all night, you call on your Nurse Mom and she knows just what to do. She always knows "what's good for us" and Thank God she does!

Proverbs 31 :20b "... yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy."



Teacher Mom

This is a Mother who home schools, helps with homework, and teaches by example. Her children know that church is important, because they go to church every Sunday and Mom and Dad bring them. They know God's Word is important as Mom reads it to them every day (and they see her reading it herself). They know prayer is important because they see Mom on her knees and she

also prays with them. More spiritual values are "caught than taught." "Sometimes what you do speaks so loud, I can't hear what you say." Children see Mom's reactions as much as her actions. Does she yell and scream, getting angry when problems come; or, does she rely on God's Word and prayer to solve her problems?

Proverbs 31 :26 - "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness."

Grandmother's Job Is Never Done

A Grandmother's gray hair is her crown. She can be giver of wise advice to younger women. When you see gray hair, think of experience. This is a person who has "been there, done that, and moved on." They have seen how things have "come out." They have many of those invisible "college degrees" on their wall. They have perhaps paid dearly for their experiences, and you could have their advice for *nothing!* Listening to this older, experienced person could give her the opportunity of adding value to something that was perhaps very unpleasant. The greatest thing about advice is, you don't HAVE to take it.



Older women have a mandate from scripture to teach the younger women. Titus 2:3-5 tells us she is to teach the younger women good things, and to love their husbands and children. For God to say in scripture that we must be taught to love our husbands and children, lets us know He understands' that there are those moments when such love does not come naturally!

*2 Corinthians 1:3c, 4,5 ". .. and the God of all comfort;
Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may
be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by*

the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God "

Of all the jobs that Mother has, we have mentioned only a few: We could have said that she is housekeeper, interior decorator, budget manager, and hostess with the mostest! But we now come to the most important hat Mother wears.

Missionary Mom



This hat could be her "Soul winner's Crown. Proverbs 11:30b says " ... *he that winneth souls is wise.*" From the very beginning we must talk to our children about how to go to Heaven. They are our "mission field" and we have them

at the optimum time of the tender, credible years. We must sit them down, early and often, and explain to them that we are all sinners; not because of what we do but because we are born that way. We must tell them that Heaven is a perfect place and no sin can enter there. We must be absolutely perfect to get into Heaven. Then we tell them God made a way for us to have the perfection we need; He sent Jesus Christ to the cross to pay for the sin of the world, and if we believe that He did that for us He will mark our sin debt paid and give us the righteousness we need to go to Heaven.

Genesis 33:5 explains our responsibility as, these are "*...the children which God hath graciously given thy servant.*"

Psalm 127:3 - "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward."

Some Mothers say, "I don't worry about telling my children how to go to Heaven or about taking them to church. I just let them go wherever they want and they can make up their own mind." This is like giving them a bottle of rat poison, a loaded gun, and a Coca Cola, and hoping little Mary and Johnny make the right choice. No, it is our responsibility to lead our children to the Lord.

Paul, in writing to a young pastor, named Timothy, reveals he was won to the Lord as a child,

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." - 2 Timothy 3:15

2 Timothy 1:5 reveals that Timothy first heard his Bible teaching at the knee of his *grandmother*, Lois, and his *mother*, Eunice. The first person I remember trying to win me to the Lord was my grandmother at age 8. Many of you first heard about the Lord at your mother's knee.

We, as Missionary Moms, *must win* our children to the Lord. It is our sacred trust!

Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown?

Will there be any stars in my crown, in my crown
When I enter the Heavenly Way?

Are the children all in,
Are their hearts cleansed from sin?

Will there be any stars in my crown, in my crown
When I stand on that glorious day?

Will there be any stars in my crown, in my crown
When I stand at the Throne on that Day?

A soul that is saved can never be lost,
Though the Prodigal's footsteps may stray,

He will still be a star in my crown, in my crown,
When I stand on that last Judgment Day.

Our hats are off to you, Mom!

Dearest Mom,

I have replaced the traditional Mother's Day card with this letter. I propose that one day set aside for mothers is not enough for my mother; and that for my mother, every day shall be Mother's Day. So, let this letter serve and declare that I, your son, will love you and think of you on Mother's Day, as every day. Thank you for believing in me when no one else would, and know that when I am far away, my heart is always with you.

*Everlasting Love,
Your Son, Bradley*

June

THE IDEAL DAD

The ideal Dad gets up every day;
If his knees will permit, he kneels down to pray,
Asking God's blessing on that day's path,
And not to provoke his children to wrath.
Searching for wisdom to nurture and lead,
A chapter or two of God's Word he'll read.

The ideal Dad heads out to work he must do,
To provide for his family things old and new.
Going out, he pats each sleeping child's cheek,
Waving goodbye as their sleepy eyes peek.
He kisses the wife and heads out the door,
Into the world and into the war.

The ideal Dad keeps his path straight.
Role model for life is a task that won't wait.
The toddler goes clopping in Daddy's big shoes,
Perhaps when he's grown, Dad's path he will choose;
So Dad leads by example, "Just watch what I do."
Actions speak louder than words, it is true.

The ideal Dad speaks words fit to be heard,
No swearing and cussing, he lives out God's Word.
His words build up his children for life,
Not tearing them down in critical strife.

He takes his family to church every Sunday,
And goes out to live for the Lord every Monday.

The ideal Dad teaches work must done;
As his children grow up and leave one by one.
Little boys fix the car and go fishing with Dad.
That makes mowing the lawn not quite so bad.
Little girls do the dishes and help with house;
And dream of the day God brings a wonderful spouse.

The ideal Dad cherishes tears on his shoulder,
Dollies will break; and hearts, too, when they're older.
Games will be lost and games will be won,
Life's not always fair, and not always fun.
Talking to Dad reveals the way you should go,
How *is* he so wise? How *does* he know?

It all goes back to how Dad starts his day,
Reading his Bible and stopping to pray.
His children will watch and probably feel,
"My Dad is not perfect; but, he's sure my ideal!"

ONCE THERE WAS A MIGHTY KING...

King David was the greatest king of Israel. He will co-reign with our Lord Jesus Christ in the Millennial Kingdom.

In his lifetime, he ruled seven years in Hebron, and over the United Kingdom for 33 years. Altogether, he reigned for 40 years and lived his life in such a way that God called him "a man after His own heart." (Acts 13:22b). But...one thing is obvious. King David was certainly human.

He had at least nine wives and 14 children that are named in Scripture. To say that he had a blended family is an understatement.

He made the same mistake that many of us make. When things are going great and we are on the "mountaintop," we let down our guard and Satan's fiery darts of sin hit their mark.

He felt secure that his "mighty men" and General Joab could handle the wars and; instead of being on the battlefield, he was lolling about on his rooftop in the warm summer's night in Jerusalem. Being the King, his rooftop was probably higher than all the rest; and casting his eyes about, he suddenly spied the beautiful Bathsheba bathing.

This would have been a good time to think on Matthew 5:29; except, it had not been written yet. But, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," was definitely in Scripture, and God's estimation of this was that it deserved a punishment of death.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife," would have been good to consider as well. King David certainly knew "The Law." This is the same man who wrote in Psalm 40:8,

"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."

Why you would go on your rooftop to bathe, knowing others were higher, is puzzling; but, that is not the point of this story. David, being the King, could have anything he wanted, and he sent for the lovely Bathsheba, even though he knew she was another man's wife.

King David's behavior is certainly not that of a father who is a good role model! When he committed adultery with Bathsheba and found she was going to have a baby; instead of facing his sin and taking care of the matter, he resorted to lies and murder!

He called Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, home from the war, thinking he would go home to his wife. He even sent a nice supper to him.

Usually, when a soldier comes home from war, things happen and babies are born. David could then have claimed the child was Uriah's. Being the conscientious soldier that he was and one of David's 30 mighty men, Uriah slept on his soldier's mat at the servant's quarters. When David asked why he did not go home, Uriah probably drew himself to an erect "Attention" posture, saluted,

"And... said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing." ...Sir! (2 Samuel 11:11)

David even called him to the palace, fed him and got him drunk; still Uriah would not go home. (2 Samuel 11:13)

It was then that the desperate King hatched a plan for murder. In the morning he sent a letter, which was carried by Uriah. A soldier so trustworthy, David knew he would not look at what he carried, even though it was his own death warrant. David had instructed his commander, Joab, to set

Uriah in the front of the battle, and withdraw from him, leaving Uriah to be killed. This Joab did, and Bathsheba became a widow, and David became a murderer!

Bathsheba mourned her husband, and then David took her as his wife. A son was born. (11:14-27) Problem solved. Right?

Not so fast!

"But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord." (2 Sam. 11:27b).

And there was a price to pay!

We find in the Twelfth Chapter of 2 Samuel that God was going to levy punishment. As King, David mediated certain legal matters for the people; so, he did not suspect a thing when Nathan, the Prophet, arrived to spin him a little tale about a rich man and a poor man, and the poor man's one little ewe lamb. As Nathan told it, this one little lamb was a beloved pet to the poor man and his family. They even took it to bed with them!

The rich man was expecting company, nobody special, just a traveler. He did not want to waste one of his fine sheep on a nobody, and he slaughtered the poor family's pet ewe for supper!

As expected, David's "righteous indignation" boiled over! "This man is going to die for this, after restoring four fold in damages, of course!" Why? "Because he had no pity."

No pity! This was only a little lamb, and David had just murdered a woman's husband to bail himself out of a jam!

The prophet fixed his eyes on King David, stretched forth his arm, pointed a bony accusing finger at the King, "Thou art the man!"

"Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.(10)

*Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.
(11)*

For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." - 2 Samuel 12:10-12

The punishment was swift! God took David and Bathsheba's firstborn son to Heaven. (2 Samuel 12:23 cf Psalm 23:6). His son, Amnon, defiles his sister, Tamar. (2 Samuel 13:1-20). Later, another son of David's, Absalom, arranged the murder of Amnon to avenge his sister, Tamar. (vss. 28,29).

David's favorite son, Absalom, turned the hearts of the people against him and tried to usurp the Kingdom from him.

"...they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. (16:22).

This very sad story is concluded in Chapter 18 of 2 Samuel. A battle between the two sides was inevitable as David had to go against his own son to take back his kingdom. David had asked his army to "...deal gently for my sake with the young man."

However, Commander Joab found Absalom hanging from a tree as a result of his mule running under it. Accident? You think? Joab took no chances and he secretly finished Absalom off with three darts and they buried him.

When David heard of Absalom's death, he mourned...

And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! (18:33).

What if King David had "lived" for his son, and the rest of his family? If he had been the living example he should have been, these tragedies might never have happened. The adultery would not have occurred in the first place, and judgment would not have fallen.

God did not cause the sons of David to do the things they did. He simply took the protective care off David and allowed the natural things to take their course.

To David's credit, in 2 Samuel 12:13, he acknowledged his sin and God did not take his life. But, some things can never be made right! Guilt can last a long time, and death is

forever! He had taken an innocent life. Psalm 51 is the heart-cry of David.

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.(1)

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. (2)

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. (3)

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." - Psalm 51:1-4

Praise the Lord, there are no King David's in our church! We have wonderful Fathers who are great role models to their families. Proof of the fact is that we now have several three generation families in our church.

Isn't it wonderful for the toddler when the first sight he, or she, sees is Grandpa waiting to play a tickle game, or to toss them into the air. Grandma is right there, too, glad to hug and hold; or, "help in any way she can."

Isn't it great when Dad or Mom is your Sunday School teacher, or Youth Leader?

My husband gets into the act, too. He has a huge container of Tootsie Rolls, and doles out one for every child

who comes, and an extra one on birthdays. Needless to say, the children of our church love their pastor. When they have their surgeries, he goes to the hospital and prays with them and the family. He treats them as important members of the congregation.

One little boy couldn't get over the fact that Pastor came to see him when he had his tonsils out. It impressed him so much that when my husband fell on the steps at church and was hospitalized, he was determined to come and visit *him!* Unfortunately, the first thing my husband thinks about when he goes into the hospital is how soon he can *get out* of the hospital. Lane was so disappointed that he had come home; but, he visited him at home anyway.

A Prayer For Fathers

Dear Lord,

I thank you most of all for God, the Father, who sent His Son to die on the Cross to pay for my sin. He is my Heavenly Father.

I thank you for my "Father in the Faith," Dr. Thomas Duff, who led my husband and I to you.

I am so grateful to have my husband who is a Christian Father, Grandfather, and Great-grandfather. I praise you for him and for the influence he has had in our sons lives and in the families of our church. It is his legacy.

I praise you for the wonderful Fathers, and Grandfathers we have in our church, who lead by word and example. They are the foundation of the next generation.

Amen!

July

THE COST OF LIBERTY

The doors were barred to prevent surprise.
Curtains drawn against prying eyes.
A group of men huddled deep in thought
Around the parchment one had brought.

They argued and wrangled into the night,
Freedom of speech is surely a right,
The right to bear arms we must affix,
Said the Continental Congress of '76.

To craft their demands was a monumental feat,
And when the Declaration was complete,
A holy silence fell upon them there,
As they petitioned Heaven with a mighty prayer.

Then each man put his life on the line;
As one by one they bent to sign.
They pledged their honor, fortunes and lives.
They jeopardized family, homes, and wives.

The Revolution against tyranny had begun,
Much blood was shed before it was won,
And Washington accepted Cornwallis' sword,
And a prayer of gratitude sent Heaven-ward.

If you visit Yorktown on any given day,
You'll see rows of crosses where the sacrificed lay.
That's the price of Liberty,
Many men die so many can be free.

Blood is still being spilled today
In lands where the tyrant has his sway.
Lives are still going on the line
To protect this freedom of yours and mine.

The "fireworks" are a danger real,
Causing wounds that may not heal.
As we wave our "Star Spangled Banner" in the air,
While on parade, for them say a prayer.

Let's not waste what's so dearly bought
By each Mother's child who lies in their plot,
By spiraling down into moral decay,
A nation on notice for Judgment Day.

Let us remember that freedom's not free,
And resolve not to waste our liberty.
The freedom to live each day for the Lord,
Reading His Bible, giving out His Word.

Let us serve Christ, our Righteous King,
Who sacrificed Himself, He paid everything
To ransom us back, our freedom win,
From Satan's evil slave market of sin.

He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.
Accept Him today and have eternal life.
Believe in His truth and He'll set you free,
No longer lost, you have true Liberty.

THE LITTLE YELLOW PLANE

Parades, picnics, family reunions, these all make us think of July. We commemorate the declaration of our independence from Great Britain. But the 4th of July Weekend in July 2006, we were commemorating something quite different!

The telephone rang and an extremely distraught young man tried to explain that he needed the parents of Ben ___. right now! Ben was a young man in our church. "It's Ben! It's Ben!" was about all he could say at the time.

Knowing that Ben had just taken delivery on his ultra light plane and was an avid pilot who just loved to fly, I feared the worst.

It was the worst!

The young man didn't want to tell me what my heart already knew; but, I needed the facts before I blindly sent Ben's parents to a terrible shock. I asked him where he was.

"By the air port in _____."

Then, *I knew!*

"Did Ben crash his plane?"

"Yes"

"Is Ben dead?"

Then it all tumbled out. "Ben was practicing take offs and landings...and the wings came off! The wings come off!"

After making him promise to stay there until Todd and Melody came, I made my calls.

Melody, a cancer survivor, and her family were a delight to our church, and a great addition to our music program. Ben, the oldest, wrote music, sang music, played the guitar and piano, and whatever else he could make a musical sounds come out of. He led the congregational singing in the church and had just taken over the choir.

Mitch, second oldest, played harmonica and kept us from taking ourselves too seriously at choir practice by making mitten puppets. Hannah, played the violin, was a great writer, and very theatrical. You could always count on her for a great job on reciting "The Touch of the Master's Hand," one of our favorites, and other poems.

Ben, at 21, had been investing in real estate since High School. He had established a business partnership with another person and was due to be married in a month.

Since I could not immediately get hold of my husband, I did get the parents to the right location. The partner did not stay; but, they found their son. The smashed-up little yellow plane was already stowed on a flatbed for towing. That was probably a blessing.

You can't imagine how empty and sad our church service seemed the next Sunday morning without Ben behind the pulpit with his wonderful smile.

As I said, Ben had a great burden for souls. I have reprinted part of an email he sent to Max the week before he died.

"What Can One Man Do?"

"Pastor ... Freddie Coile had a good point when he said redundancy in teaching the Gospel (and that goes for all doctrines) is key in helping the listeners learn it! I absolutely love it every time I hear you give the gospel one more time ...

The Lord has been working hard on me lately. I decided last fall when I really started going hard with my Real Estate investing ventures that it would be for the sole purpose of supporting, first my church, and then to other ventures that would further spread the gospel. Today I realized that all the money in the world isn't going to solve the problem we have in this area.

The problem is that we need to find a way to break through to these people. How can we do that? I feel so helpless, yet so burdened to do something for all these ignorant souls who are walking around .. ignorant of the fact that they are going to HELL for their unbelief. I'm praying for wisdom, and for ideas to better impact people with the gospel in such a simple, yet mind opening way. I'm completely ready to do whatever it takes to do my part in the Lord's work here .

...I have such a burden for these people, having seen firsthand now how stubborn and lost they truly are! yet, I know there are so many more people out there who need Christ. I'm not a preacher, but I know the Gospel by heart, and I want to share it with more people. I'm working on turning all

my real estate adventures into opportunities to share the Gospel with more people. How do I know when I'm doing all I can for Christ?

I'll be praying hard this week for you and I and every believer who is trying to work for the Lord amidst stubborn and ignorant people walking straight to Hell.

In Christ, Ben __."

One thing about Ben. He lived what he spoke. We still miss him and we still can't stand the sight of small, neon yellow planes.

My heart broke for his fiancé. She would not wear her beautiful wedding dress for the special wedding in the park the family had been planning. Todd and Melody lost their son, and Hannah and Mitch lost their brother.

We lost Melody in November of 2007. She was buried in her wedding dress.

This would be a very sad story, indeed, if there were no Rapture; or Resurrection to look forward to. But, Christians don't say, "Good Bye." As my husband says at funerals, "We just say, So long, for awhile."

And Ben's short life accomplished a great deal. He was a soul winner and touched many lives. He made his time on earth count!

Can we say the same?

Are we redeeming the time; or wasting it on non-essentials?

*"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (16)
Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what
the will of the Lord is." Ephesians 5:16, 17*

To redeem the time means to "Buy up for yourself the seasonable time" (whenever it occurs) to do good to yourselves and to others. Even though your desk may be full of papers, or the potatoes are boiling over, we must make the time for others.

A wise pastor once said, "If you don't have time for people, you don't have a ministry!"

Our lives are so exposed to evil, as to make it necessary to make the most of every seasonable opportunity, so long as it lasts. In our time, the end of "freedom of speech" could be fast approaching.

Ben's life was a testimony of concern for the lost and he "redeemed" his time. He won souls to the Lord that no one knew about until after his passing.

To be "unwise" about the "will of the Lord," is not to understand what the will of the Lord is. We should always make the time to witness to the lost, no matter how inconvenient it may be. Proverbs 11:30 tells us what the will of the Lord is...

"...he that winneth souls is wise."

THE POWER OF ONE

"Dear Lord, my reaping has brought in so few.
I fear I have failed in my work for you.
I teach and preach and lead them in prayer,
Not caring if one, or a hundred are there;
But hearts are hard and they turn a deaf ear.
The truth of your Word, few seem to hear."

"My Child, I cherish each single soul,
Who serves in my Army, in whatever role.
My band of disciples oft' made me frown;
Later, they turned the world upside down!
Andrew brought Peter, that was just one;
But, at his first sermon 3,000 were won.

My servant, Paul, a single firebrand,
Ignited churches in many a land.
He multiplied himself, writing down my Word;
Where he could not go, It could still be heard.
He trained their pastors, especially Timothy.
Evangelized the Roman world for eternity.

That dedicated pastor who brought you my Word;
If he had stayed home, you might not have heard.
The "faithful few" teachers at whose feet you learned,
How to make clear the Gospel; your credentials earned.
They taught Bible doctrines with extreme clarity;
Which, in these days, is a precious rarity.

So, keep right on running, even though you're just one,
Don't "throw in the towel;" for the race is not done.
You will never know until the Harvest is in,
How many souls you've been able to win.

Despise not the day of things that are small,
Take courage, Dear Child, and give it your all!"

*And my speech and my preaching was
not with enticing words of man's
wisdom, but in demonstration of the
Spirit and of power:"*

1 Corinthians 2:4

August

*"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."--
John 4:35,36*

"THEN COMETH HARVEST"

Are you working in the Harvest;
Bringing in the sheaves;
Or, sitting idly on the sidelines;
While the Holy Spirit grieves?

This is not the time to shirk,
There are souls yet to be won.
The day is almost over,
It's the setting of the sun.

When the Lord counts your sheaves,
Will they be many; or, be few?
Each sheaf is a precious soul,
In Heaven because of you.

"Lord, I cannot reap today;
My finances are so few.

I have to make a living first;
And then I'll work for you.

It's just too hot, it makes me ill.
I'll come tonight when the air is cool."
Says the Lord, "The time's too short,
To think of just yourself is cruel!"

Will you try to make excuse;
And suffer shame before His gaze?
Or, will you have a garner full,
And be rejoicing in His praise?

Wouldn't it be wonderful
To hear the Savior say,
"Well done, thou faithful servant!"
On that grand and glorious day?

The message is to just believe
Christ paid your price for sin.
It's not by works of righteousness;
But faith that gets you in,

To a life that is eternal,
No assurance should you lack.
Sealed by the Holy Spirit,
And never taken back!

When we gather up in Heaven,
And the Harvest is all in,
Will your family be the ones,
You did not have time to win?

Or, will you rejoice in wages full;
And gain the soul winner's crown?
Not a crown to wear in pride;
But at the Savior's feet cast down.

Behold, this message give I unto you,
The fields are already white.
There's not much time left to reap,
For, Christ may come tonight!"

FARMING

Heritage Baptist Bible Church is located in "farm country." When it comes time to get the crops in; or, take them out, farming is the most important thing going on. During spring planting, or fall harvest, you can hear the hum of tractor motors going day and night in the fields.

A farmer should have a great dependence upon the Lord, as much of farming depends on the weather. As Verna __. succinctly commented one day: "You can pour all your time and money into getting your crops out. You can admire the fine look of your corn field with lush, green stalks shooting up. And, you can stand and watch as a hail storm takes them all out in fifteen minutes!"

She's also the same sweet lady who said "Some people would _ _ _ _ _ if you hung them with a new rope! You fill in the blanks. She had a way with words!

Everyone enjoyed her tales of farming long ago. She said her mother ploughed behind a horse, going round and round

the field, with her babies on a blanket. She would stop and move the blanket with each furrow; so, she could keep a close eye on them. With a twinkle in her eye, she would launch into her stories. She'd tell them at the drop of a hat; and, if she happened to be wearing one, "she'd drop it for ya."

Particularly poignant was the one where the wife of long ago got fed up with the male chauvinism of her husband and did him in. Then she hid him in the straw stack, and set it on fire, thinking the fire would destroy the body. Instead, the sight of the flames across the fields triggered the cooperative response of good neighbors working together to fight the fire. The fire was doused and her guilty deed was unfortunately discovered!

Just as farm neighbors work together to fight fires, Christians should work together to win souls and save them from the fires of Hell! It is just as Paul said,

"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." - 1 Corinthians 3:6-7

Just as God gives the increase in field or flock, we must depend on Him as we sow the Gospel message. One person can give the Gospel, clearly, to a certain person many times and they seem to reject it. Another can come along and give the Gospel one time, and they accept it right away. Neither of these people is any more important than the other. Be

thankful to God that He gives the increase and that person trusts Jesus Christ as His Savior.

A deacon at one of our churches, sent my husband to visit a man that he had tried to lead to the Lord many times. As I recall, he didn't even get in the door!

Standing on the porch Max said, "Tom, if I could show you just one verse in the Bible that tells you how to have eternal life, would you believe it?" Tom said, "One verse? Sure, come on in." Perhaps the phrase "one verse" assured Tom the encounter would be brief.

Max launched into his usual soul winning opener, John 3:16. He always has them read the verse for themselves, breaking it down into phrases. For some reason, Tom was in a mood to co-operate, so he read, "For God so loved the world,..." There Max stopped him.

"Who do you think that includes?"

Tom ventured that, since it said "world," it included everyone, probably even him.

Max had him read the next phrase,

"...that he gave his only begotten Son,"

"Stop! Tom, do you celebrate Christmas?"

"Doesn't everybody? Sure, I celebrate Christmas."

That's where Max says, "Christmas celebrates the fact the Jesus Christ was born into the world in a perfect, human body." He goes on to say that since all men are sinners, they can only pay for their own sin. God had to send the sinless son of God to make that payment for us.

"Tom, do you celebrate Easter?"

"Sure, doesn't everyone?"

Max continues, "That's where God gave His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross to pay for the sin of the world."

Tom continues reading, "that whosoever believeth in him..."

"If you believe that Jesus died for you, Tom, God promises you two things:

You "should not perish," that's just another way of saying "You will not go to Hell."

"...but have everlasting life." "That's not life until you sin again, it's everlasting life. Tom, how long do you think 'everlasting' is?"

"That would be life that never ends."

"Tom, does this make sense to you?"

"Makes a lot of sense, when you put it that way."

"Tom, do you believe that Jesus died to pay for your sins?"

"Yes, I do."

"According to the Bible, what does this verse say you have?"

"Hmm. According to that, I have everlasting life."

He trusted the Lord, and he and Rose started coming to church on a regular basis. The deacon had done a lot of "watering," but, God had given the "increase."

It's important to remember that it doesn't matter *who* sows or reaps, it is God who "gives the increase."

The sad thing is, there are some Christian workers who can't fathom this. Because of their pride, they have to be the *one* to give the Gospel, they are the ones with *all the ideas*, and they just can't be happy unless they get *all the credit*.

At a dear friend's funeral, the wife had asked Max to do the service. An evangelist, who knew the deceased, tried to coerce a brother of the deceased to influence the wife to allow him to do the funeral. Any way that you look at it, this is as unethical as you get!

The young man could not get across to the evangelist that the deceased's wife had asked Max, wanted Max, and that was that! The pastor/evangelist still persisted.

"Max, you'll have to handle it. He just won't listen."

This put my husband in the uncomfortable position of having to confront the man, which he did. To the evangelist's

credit, he accepted the admonishment and did not cause an uproar. He also complimented my husband by saying, "Do you care if I use that sermon sometime?" I guess imitation is the sincerest form of flattery!

What I call my husband's "Dad Chats" are usually effective; but, that doesn't mean he enjoys them.

We should all rejoice, as Heaven does, when a soul gets saved!

"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth (Gr. metaneo-)." Luke 15:10

"Metaneo" means that the sinner changes his mind about what he thought was the way to Heaven, and trusts Christ as his Savior.

We can be happy if we lead someone to the Lord; but, moreover, we can rejoice if *anyone* leads a person to the Lord!

"So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." - 1 Corinthians 3:7

A Prayer For Soulwinners

Dear Lord,

Please give me boldness to present the Gospel to all who will listen, by every means I can.

When someone who is lost crosses my path, let me recognize that it is you that has sent them, and it is a "divine appointment."

Help me to tell them how to go to Heaven in the clearest way that I can.

Let me know that, no matter how busy I *think* I am, there's always time to talk to someone about how your Son died on the Cross for us.

Amen!

September

*"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace,
that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in
time of need." - Hebrews 4:16*

SAFE HARBOR

I head for my safe harbor
At the setting of the sun,
Kneeling at my bedside
When the day is done.

In Heaven's Throne Room
I find a resting place,
And lay out all my troubles
Before the Throne of Grace.

I thank Jesus for my blessings;
And though I forget a few,
He never scolds my ingratitude,
He just makes my day all new.

I pour out all my heart needs
Into His loving ear.
He reaches down to comfort me,
"My Child, I'm always here.

I will never leave thee;
Nor, when trials come forsake.
I'll walk with you through the valley.
I know the way to take.

Sleep in peace, My Child,
And at the morning's dawn,
We'll face the day together.
I'll help you carry on.

Let not your heart be troubled,
My peace I give to you.
Not that trouble will not come;
But, I will take you through.

When at the end of life's voyage,
You bid this world "Good Night."
I'll welcome you to Heaven's Harbor,
Where everything's made right."

Good Night, Lord!

FROM "HEAVEN ON EARTH" TO MARTIN LUTHER AND WALNUT GROVE!

This year Heritage Baptist Bible Church will be celebrating 20 years of ministry in Walnut Grove, by the Grace of God! Had the Lord not led us here, we would have always thought of the Lutheran Church as just another modernistic denomination. We have since learned the truth; but, we *never* would have learned it, if we had not come here.

This little community "showed up on our radar" during a visit to one of our sons, who lived in Walnut Grove at the time. It was hot and I decided on a nap; therefore, my husband was left with time on his hands. He did what he usually does with time on his hands. He went to talk with people about the Lord, and in the entire area, he only found two people that knew they were going to Heaven.

In this surrounding area, there were *no* gospel preaching churches. There were churches; but, none that preached a clear gospel.

This is how a very wise pastor advised is the way to determine the Lord's will.

- Is there a need? Well, Yes! There are no Gospel preaching churches.
- Is it God's will? Of course! It is always God's will for people to hear the Gospel.
- Will I be happy? Umm..mm...Yes. We are always happy if we are doing God's will, aren't we? (Can you sense a little less enthusiasm here? At least on my part.)

Back to Ohio we went, and when my husband could not enlist any recruits to pastor a new church in Minnesota, he took that as a leading of the Lord. He resigned Heritage in Ohio, and we came ourselves.

One of the men we ordained into the ministry, Rev. Carl Dixon, has been the pastor of Heritage Bible Church in Ohio for the 20 years we have been here. Carl came into another church, where my husband was pastor, one night after the evening service in an inebriated condition. He was waiting for

Max in the lobby. Since you cannot deal with someone in that condition, Max made an appointment to go the next day to visit the family and they all trusted the Lord.

Carl took over the tape ministry and, in time, began taking Bible courses and Institute classes. He is now doing a fine job as pastor at Heritage Bible Church in Ohio. The Lord can always make something beautiful out of our lives.

And here we were at this little town of 600 people who were totally not expecting us. When they found out that we were here for the purpose of starting another church, their reaction was, "Why? We already have four!"

They were not accepting of strangers. When I went into the grocery store, some people peeked around the end of shelving like I was an alien from Mars! When we went into the Cafe for lunch, it was like the commercial, "When E.F. Hutton talks, everybody listens." There was total silence!

Things have since changed and we have met some very nice people. But when you begin telling them baptism will not get you into Heaven, things become a little tense. This area is predominantly Lutheran and Catholic, and the largest denomination is Lutheran, by far!

Here we were! The dreaded "Ana-Baptists" had arrived in town! We have had people jump up from their chair and run out of the house when they were presented with the fact that Martin Luther is wrong, and baptism does not save.

At another church, we ignorantly thought about using a play about Martin Luther entitled, "Here I stand," after his

supposed statement, "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise." It turns out, it is quite possible that Martin Luther never said this at all. (www.christian-history.org/martin-luther.html).

Here is another famous quote by Martin Luther, "The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:17). Many preachers, who should know better, assume that because Luther said this, he believed that salvation was by faith, plus nothing. Nothing could be further from the truth! He had 15 years from the time he wrote the Catechisms (1529) to his death in 1546 to make that plain. He never did!

You forget! Martin Luther had already been baptized as a child in the Roman Catholic organization. He believed he was now "just," or, in other words, "righteous." How did Luther believe you should live out your testimony? By faith in your water baptism. In light of what he believed about baptism for Salvation, Martin Luther was talking about his testimony—not, Salvation.

The Lutheran churches in Germany, of Martin Luther's time, were simply Catholic churches for which he had written the masses in German. They were only called "Lutheran" because they were connected to Martin Luther. He believed the people should understand what the church was saying. He also did a German translation of the Bible, which was not complete.

Remember, Martin Luther did not leave the Catholic Church of his own accord. He was excommunicated!

Martin Luther removed ELEVEN books from the Bible, plus parts of Esther and Daniel, in his German translation

(1522 - 34) -- seven from the Apocrypha; and, from the New Testament, he removed Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation.

He put these writings in an appendix at the back of his Bible, separated from those he regarded as "scripture," and he left the pages unnumbered so no one could make the mistake of thinking they were accepted as part of the Bible. He also wrote prefaces for them explaining his reasons for not considering them scripture.

And what did Martin Luther believe about baptism?

"What does Baptism give or profit?

It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare." (Small Catechism, "The Sacrament of Holy Baptism, Point II, Par. #1)"

A college friend of my husband, who now teaches in a Bible college, admitted he was thinking of teaching Galatians from Luther's Commentary on Galatians. He realized the truth about Martin Luther's "grace" when he got to Chapter Three. This was Luther's explanation of Galatians 3:27.

"He clothes us with the righteousness of Christ by means of Baptism, as the Apostle says in this verse: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Martin Luther - Commentary on Galatians.)

Martin Luther taught that you do not even have to have faith for your baptism to be valid!

“Further, we are not primarily concerned whether the baptized person believes or not, for in the latter case (i.e., does not believe) Baptism does NOT become invalid.” (Large Catechism, Page 87, #52).

“Baptism is valid, even though faith be lacking.” Baptism does not become invalid even if it is wrongly received or used, for it is bound NOT to our faith, but to the Word.” (Large Catechism, Page 87, #53).

Here is the tragedy. Many people do not witness to Lutherans because they quote the same Bible verses we do. However they do not mean the same thing by these verses. And it makes me sick at my stomach to hear Bible-believing preachers quote Martin Luther. This makes Lutherans, who do not know the Lord, think they are OK.

I defy you to find a Lutheran who will not totally agree with you on Ephesians 2:8,9. They will say, "Oh, yes! Salvation is totally by faith, no works at all. But, you do have to be baptized."

I thought you said "No works at all."

"Yes, I did; but, Baptism is not a work. That's what the Catechism says."

"For to be baptized in the name of God is to be baptized not by men, but by God Himself. Therefore although it is performed by human hands, it is nevertheless truly God's own work." (Martin

Luther's Large Catechism, XIII, Part Fourth, Baptism).

I ask, "Where is "saved by Grace then?"

They say, "In the water. Baptism is a Sacrament."

I ask, "What is a Sacrament?"

They answer, "A means of Grace."

They have been brainwashed by a man who has been dead for over 460 years. Former Lutherans have formidable peer pressure from the rest of their families, when they believe the Gospel. After all, Grandma can't be wrong! These wonderful sweet, Grandmas who are going to Heaven "living out their baptism" with all the good works they are doing, will completely ostracize you if you become a Christian.

Do you see what you are up against?

Don't ever take for granted that a person who goes to a Lutheran church is saved; but, explain the Gospel carefully. You have tough job on your hands; but, they are souls for whom Christ died.

A great resource on understanding how to witness to Lutherans, and for learning what they believe, is my husband's book, "Martin Luther, Master of Deceit." It is available on our web site, and you can read the pdf file there at no charge. <http://www.heritagebbc.com>

You may think the poem I end this chapter with is quite mean; but, is the actual truth. It is reality! Please read it again, and again, and take it to heart.

THE PASSPORT TO HEAVEN

As my death is drawing near,
Dear Family, I say, "Have no fear.
I remember my baptismal grace.
I know I am going to a better place.

I was but an infant small,
When our minister came to call.
Reminding my parents of the church tradition;
Of babies who die in un-baptized condition.

He felt a loving God would not send me to Hell;
But...the certainty of this, he could not tell!
My loving parents, wanting the best for me,
Had me baptized the next Sunday for all to see.

And as the baptismal drops I received,
My Godparents answered that I believed.
My baptismal certificate still hangs on the wall.
It's my "Passport to Heaven," when Death comes to call.

I've remembered my baptism all of my days,
That's how I am sure of God's amazing grace.
Many are those who've told me I'm wrong.
I said, "Look at the wall, my faith is so strong."

"It was finished," they said, "When Christ died in our place.
Accept Him as Savior; that's how you receive grace.

You have been deceived, tradition is cursed!
You will end up in Hell, that's the worst."

"This is my answer; it is always the same.
Don't bother me; it's all in the frame.
My baptismal certificate still hangs on the wall.
It's my "Passport to Heaven," when Death comes to call."

What's this? Two angels appear on each side;
But no appearance of joy on their faces abide.
We seem to hover over fiery, dark space,
This can't be Heaven, I'm in the wrong place.

As I'm hurtling downward, I scream, "This is wrong!"
Their answer: "This is the end of all the deceived throng,
Who reject the Savior for baptism's "Passport to Heaven;"
And missed out on God's grace on Calvary given."

How could my parents and church all be wrong?
I've followed their tradition all my life long.
The answer from Heaven came loud and clear,
Even though I'm in Hell, I wish my family would hear.

"Howbeit in vain do they worship me," when;
They "teach for doctrines the commandments of men.
Through Christ is preached unto you forgiveness of sin."
Your baptismal "Passport to Heaven" will not get you in!"

-- From the book, *"A Biblical Examination of Baptism,"*
available at www.heritagebbc.com, or read the pdf free online.

*"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence
in man." -Psalm 118:8*

October

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." - 2 Corinthians 12:9

LESSONS IN GOD'S SCHOOL OF GRACE

Three times Paul asked the Lord,
To take away his thorn;
A handicap within his flesh,
Most grievous to be borne.

Three times the answer came back, "No";
He did not whine nor complain.
He trusted in God's sufficient grace,
Christ's power would be made plain.

No matter what Paul said or did,
To spread the Gospel in each place,
The message had far greater power,
Through sufficiency of God's grace.

Here is the lesson contained within,
This portion of God's Word.
There's no excuse for not witnessing,
'Til all you've met have heard.

Many have thorns in their flesh;
That illness, or accident wreak.
Even though their spirit is willing;
Their flesh is often times weak.

Still, they speak out for the Lord,
Through each hard and painful hour.
It's not easy, and plain to see,
It's God's grace that gives the power.

Can you see, think, and speak?
Is your body well and complete?
Do you thank your Savior every day,
You can walk on your two feet?

Or, do you seek to make excuse,
Why you can't work for Him today?
"I'm too busy, too tired, too shy."
"I don't know enough," you say.

Then "grow in grace and knowledge,"
Of the One who died for the unjust;
Speaking forth the message,
With which we're put in trust.

"Study to shew thyself approved,"
A workman who labors not in vain,
Rightly dividing the Word of Truth,
Making the Gospel plain.

The message we give out by grace,
Is the one all must believe.

Christ has paid your price for sin.
Will you His payment receive?

"For God so loved" this sinful world,
On the Cross His Son he gave.
If, in this, you do believe,
Your soul from Hell He'll save.

"For by grace are ye saved."
Works don't count at all!
"It is finished!" comes the shout from the Cross,
Where Christ paid it all.

Even tho' we live in the flesh,
And our works burn at the Bema Seat,
We, ourselves, will still be saved.
Our Salvation is complete.

A soul once saved has life eternal,
Our Savior holds you in His hand.
No man can ever pluck you out,
And, "No man" means you, My Friend!

So, we who study in God's school of grace,
Are not graded on a curve.
The grade received, with or without a thorn,
Will be one that we deserve.

We thank our Lord for His Amazing Grace,
We do not deserve at all;
By which we're saved for eternity,
And marked "present" at Heaven's Roll Call.

"MY HERO!"

The preceding poem was written for those serve the Lord in spite of their "thorns," whatever they may be. In the "serving with a thorn" category, my Number One Hero is my husband, Max Younce.

The Lord led us to Walnut Grove in August of 1991. In December of that year he had a heart attack that almost took him home. We had already been having Bible studies in our home to form a nucleus to get the new church going. Even though he had suffered that near fatal heart attack, he did not miss one Bible study!

The doctors told him that within 10 years he would need by-pass surgery. By God's grace, that has not happened, and he has been serving the Lord non-stop ever since! Even on this very night, he is driving on treacherous roads, on his way to try to win a soul to the Lord in another city 90 miles away.

There has been a glitch or two, here and there; but, the heart medications have been regulated and he keeps right on going. The most amusing thing to me is that he keeps asking me, "Do I look like I have slowed down any?"

His Dora Lake friends have nick-named him "the Energizer Bunny." They ask, "*How do you keep up with him?*" My standard answer, "I don't even try." I like to tease him that he is the only "hyper-active" senior citizen that I know! Does that tell you that he is a very energetic guy? Slowed down? You have got to be kidding!

But, in September of 2010, two very serious events occurred that brought him to a halt and almost took him from me, forever! On the very first day of September, leaving the church after Institute class, he fell down the front steps of the church, suffering a compound fracture of the femur. Had it not been for the quick thinking of the staff at our local hospital emergency room, he could have bled to death right then.

Then, two weeks later, blood clots landed him back in the emergency room with a bleeding colon. It was touch and go for a few days and brought him very low. Being the fighter that he is, he battled his way back from that.

Six months later, at this writing, he is now walking on two feet, with a slight limp. As soon as he could stand for any length of time, he resumed the Institute Class and finished that this past month. Talk about "serving with a thorn in the flesh." He used a stool, had his crutches close by, and had everyone around him on pins and needles for fear he would fall!

The church put in a chair lift, and during this very snowy, Minnesota winter, someone always has the walks clean, and is there to get him in and out of the church. Some very nice men installed two firm banisters on the front stairway. How we praise the Lord for the sweet, loving people of Heritage Baptist Bible Church!

He was determined to get back to "normal" as soon as possible; so, as soon as he got to "one" crutch, everyone's heart was in their throat as he "did" the front stairs. They insisted on being in front of him, just in case...

Rev. David Thomas helped out on short notice with the preaching; and, altogether, I think Max missed a month. Dave is a really good preacher and how we thank the Lord for him and his whole family!

"It is what it is..."

My "thorn" is Parkinson's Disease, which began to manifest itself in my later 40's. Parkinson's can make life difficult; but, with the Lord's help, it's not impossible! If you can still wiggle your pinky finger, you must be OK.

It was diagnosed, at first, as polio, the after effects of polio, a chicken virus, and stage fright. I dropped that doctor in a hurry! We finally got the right diagnosis and, most importantly, the right medication, from a great lady neurologist who worked at the same clinic. One day, on an office visit, I realized she had it, too.

Without the Lord in your life, PD would present a pretty bleak picture! However, as the Apostle Paul wrote,

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." - Philippians 4:13

Praise the Lord for Medicine!

My motto is, only take what you need now; as, PD is a progressive disease, and you *will* need more later! I am very fortunate that mine has progressed slowly; as, my two sisters have it, too. Theirs manifested sooner; and, I am sorry to say, seems to be more severe. But, it hasn't slowed them down a bit!

Before I realized I had a problem, can you imagine how ridiculous I looked in my "secular jobs"; all dolled up in my executive secretary's suit, serving tea to visitors on the boss's genuine Delft china, tea cups clattering like teeth in an arctic blizzard! I made it successfully every time, to everyone's great relief. It probably resembled those relay races we play at camp, where your team has to balance an egg on a teaspoon, race to the other end, and pass it off to a team mate.

When I resigned that job, the Delft china tea set, carefully brought back from Holland, was still intact! And I *knew* something was wrong; but, what?

My husband and I agreed, from time to time, that I could bring in a little extra temporarily; until this ministry, or that, got going. Most employers are shocked when they realize you don't want a career, you just want a job that pays money!

I was even able to type out two of my husband's books on my lunch hours. I always regard my first priority as working for the Lord! (No, I am not running for sainthood!)

When I was younger, I could work full time, type the church bulletin, direct the choir, and teach a ladies' Bible study, and make *all* the church services. Now, I thank the Lord I can make the Sunday morning service...most of the time.

Now, that people know I have Parkinson's, or PD, they are always asking how I'm doing with it. My standard reply, "It is what it is."

What "Is It" Then, for Me?

My Parkinson's can manifest itself with uncontrollable tremors, or, what I call the "herky-jerky," usually at very inconvenient times. It is a "resting" tremor; so, in the night I am usually quite comfortable; and, that is when I feel like "a normal person." However, you are often sleepless; so, I figure that is the time to get something done. Fortunately, there are no lack of "things to do"; but, it must be something v-e-r-y quiet, as my husband sleeps so light that if a mouse squeaks, he hears it.

This book is a product of the night time hours.

Fatigue is another frustrating symptom. When the PD says your day is over, it is! I have learned that if something doesn't get done today, there's always tomorrow. And, if the Rapture happens; or, the Lord calls me home, who cares!

And then there are the times when the symptoms break through, and you get the "creepy-crawlies." These are nervous tremors which race up and down in your leg muscles. It is roughly equivalent to having earthworms in your legs!

My balance and coordination is becoming an issue. I was talking with a friend at church whose toddler was at her side. In the course of a gesture, my hand went flying out and almost bopped the poor child on the nose. She didn't understand that at all! You should have seen the look I got, and even though I tried to make amends with a hug, she quickly pulled back. In self-defense, I imagine. At times, you do frighten the children. It is what it is...

I have to remember not to nod my head when I agree with a certain points in my husband's sermons. Once it gets started, it has a tendency to behave like the head of those bobble head dolls that you see in the Pep Boys commercial.

Occasionally, my feet will tap dance under the pew or table, even though there is no music. So, I have vacated my "front pew, organ-side" seat. I have to smile when folks say, "Well, you can't notice it at all." I notice it.

Some of you might say, "How about some cheese with that whine!" I'm not whining, I'm explaining.

There are certainly a lot of worse diseases that can afflict a person. My husband, by God's grace, survived a serious heart attack 20 years ago. I know people who have M.S. and still serve the Lord. I know people who are paraplegic and still serve the Lord. I know people that are blind and still serve the Lord.

I thank the Lord every day for what I *am* able to do. I always count up at the end of the day what the Lord has helped me to get done. That helps your morale and gives you a sense of accomplishment.

"Famous" People with Parkinson's

Many famous people, in quite different fields, have PD and go on to accomplish great things.

The most famous athlete to suffer from Parkinson's disease is Muhammad Ali, the American boxing champion.

But athletes with Parkinson's have excelled in many different sports...

Of actors, the most prominent is undoubtedly Michael J. Fox; but, I was surprised to learn that Vincent Price, also had the disease. Another was James Doohan, the Canadian character actor best known for his portrayal of "Scotty" on the original Star Trek.

Johnny Cash, the American singer/songwriter enjoyed a late-career resurgence despite his illness. In classical music, British violinist Albert Sammons, of the London Orchestra, is one of the best-known musicians to have had Parkinson's.

Billy Graham, the American evangelist pastor, for many years continued to act as pastor to a number of U.S. presidents despite the illness. And in 2002, Michael Kinsley, American journalist and political pundit, and co-host of CNN's "Crossfire," announced that he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's.

I was surprised to learn that Charles Schulz, cartoonist and creator of the "Peanuts" comic strip, suffered from Parkinson's disease, as did Ralph McQuarrie, futurist and set designer of "E.T." and "Star Wars."

And the "Not So Famous."

According to the experts, "there's about a million people in the United States that have Parkinson's disease, what we call idiopathic Parkinson's disease and probably for every one that's diagnosed, there's probably another one that's very early and/or is under diagnosed. It's a very common disease..."

I really appreciate my loving husband who, out of the best heart-felt intentions, always wants to "fix me." The only one who can "fix" *this* is the Great Physician, and I am all for that! But, if the Lord fixed just me, would that be fair to the other 999,999 of you?

I am happy to report *there is a cure!* We can all look forward to that wonderful new body we're going to get when we enter Heaven! It will have all its parts. It will not tremble. It will be strong, not weak.

Parkinson's, or any ailment,...it is what it is; but, only for this life.

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:(20)

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." - Philippians 3:20-21

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.(5)

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." Isaiah 35:5-6

So, for all my friends who have Parkinson's, there is a cure... in Heaven. I hope you have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ, so you can go for the cure, too.

" For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Corinthians 5:21

Christ died, that's History. Christ died for me. That's salvation.

A Prayer For People With "A Thorn"

Dear Lord, I pray every day for a cure for this disease; but, every night I must thank you for the way you help me deal with it through that day!

I thank you for preserving my husband's health. We take nothing for granted and praise you every morning we wake up together!

Then I remember my sweet friend, Melody, as vibrant and unforgettable as her name, who withered away with cruel cancer. It would surely be wonderful to have a cure for cancer, too!

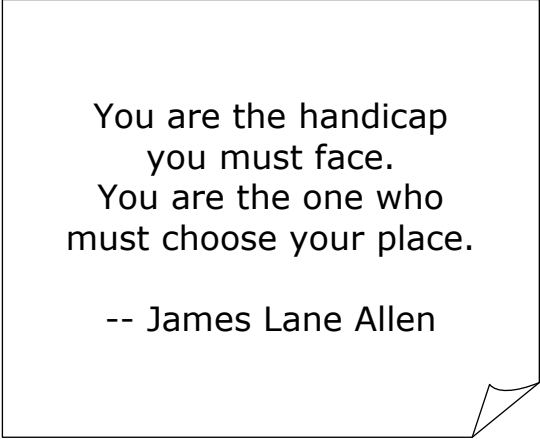
I know there are thousands of known incurable diseases which can kill, and many more on the "runway." I praise you every day for all the medical resources we do have, and thank you for each medical researcher working away in their quiet corner of the lab. Please give them strength and wisdom.

I promise to try not to complain. Today I saw a beautiful teen ager on TV facing certain death; as, she needs a double lung transplant. Please help her to get one!

I realize, Dear Lord, that for the deadliest disease of all, Sin, You are the only cure. To die without trusting You as Savior, is to spend our everlasting in the Lake of Fire; or, the Second Death, from which there is no resurrection! I thank you that the cure for Sin is available to everyone. "Whosoever will may come."

Last of all, Lord, thank you for another day.

Amen!



You are the handicap
you must face.
You are the one who
must choose your place.

-- James Lane Allen

November

*"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God
in Christ Jesus concerning you." - 1 Thessalonians 5:18*

IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS

"In everything give thanks, for
This is God's will concerning you."
This verse seems quite a puzzle,
But I know your Word is true.

I know this doesn't mean
That all trouble comes from You;
Although you have that power,
And You can prevent it, too.

It could mean to be thankful,
Lest a worse thing come your way;
But, after Nine Eleven,
I'm not sure that's what you say.

I know a Christian's testimony,
Is a most important thing.
If you always cry and complain
Your witness has a hollow ring.

But, how can you be thankful,
When the one you love is gone,

And you face a sorrowful future,
One of living all alone?

Or, you work your life long achieving,
The goal of security and acclaim;
But, on your desk you find one day
A termination letter with your name?

Then, a phone call comes one day,
Every parent dreads to hear.
Your child's been in an accident.
And his passing is very near.

I am sure that what you *do* mean is
No matter what we must go through,
We can have the calm assurance,
We'll be facing it with You.

That's how to "give thanks in everything."
Just don't leave the Saviour out!
For, "God's will *in Christ Jesus*."
Is what the verse is all about.

Have you trusted "*in Christ Jesus*?"
Who paid the price for all man's sin?
Simply believe He did that for you,
And, then "*Christ Jesus*" you'll be "*in*."

The first thing you can give thanks for
When you "give thanks in everything,"
Is a Savior who never leaves your side
No matter what life will bring.

Now we understand the meaning,
Of the verse we have in view,
"In everything give thanks, for its
God's will *in Christ Jesus* concerning you."

SHOULD THE UNTHINKABLE HAPPEN...

When faithful pastors are taken from us, seemingly before their time; it is tempting to ask the Lord, "Why?" But, we must trust the One "who doeth all things well," and knows the end from the beginning.

My heart goes out to the widows of these pastors. Their sorrow has caused me to give a lot of thought as to what I might do, should such a situation become my lot in life. I pray that can I have the strength of these women.

When any woman loses the love of her life, her husband, life always becomes very different. The grief can be all consuming. But, when her husband is the pastor of a church, she has to be there for the church, too. Suddenly, her position in the local church has changed. It can be a very difficult time for her. And, it is just as difficult for a pastor who loses his wife.

In the comments I am going to make now, I want to make this perfectly clear. I am not picking on any specific church. I should have learned *something* from all these years of "experience," and that is what I am drawing on. If something here puts conviction on your heart; then, you need to get your heart right with the Lord!

I have seen terrible things happen after the pastor is gone. I would not want to stand in the shoes of some carnal Christians at the Judgment Seat of Christ for their treatment of the pastor's wife during the power struggle that can ensue in the church following the passing of a leader.

She sometimes has her heart broken when she sees all that she and her husband have given their lives to build, pulled to pieces by carnal Christians who behave like a pack of marauding hyenas in the jungle. There are "Alexander, the Coppersmiths" in any church and they wreak their damage when there is no strong leader to curb them! The Apostle Paul said this about Alexander, the Coppersmith.

"Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: (14)

Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words." - 2 Timothy 4:14-15

When Paul said "...he hath greatly withstood our words." that meant he did not receive Paul's doctrine; but, had something different he wanted to spread in the church.

When there is no strong leader, the "big shots" come out, as Diotrophes did in 3 John 1:9.

"I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not."

The widow of a pastor must not falter; but, show strength. She can "speak the truth in love," but, sometimes she *must* speak the truth! (Ephesians 4:15). All the while, she should

seek to maintain her testimony, and remember "God is not the author of confusion." (1 Corinthians 14:33a).

I am going to carefully qualify that statement. She is not preaching or teaching in a church service. She is a member of that church and has that same privileges as any other member of that church. She also has one vote. Remember, a church business meeting is *not* a church service! And, she has no man to speak for her.

It would be a tragedy if everyone else in a meeting is behaving badly and, I'll put it bluntly, "shooting off their big mouths;" if, she, in good testimony and with "parliamentary procedure," of course, did not offer the wise counsel of her years in the ministry. They may not listen; but, be brave, and speak up, all the while maintaining your testimony.

It is very sad when misguided leadership in a church prevails and the widow must remain and listen to someone teach contrary to what her husband taught; or, find another church. A tragedy, indeed!

A Prayer For The Unthinkable Times

Dear Lord,

I have not "walked a mile in these moccasins." Should widowhood become my lot in life, I pray for strength to fight the overpowering emotion of grief.

Give strength and solace to the widows and widowers I know.

Help me to be brave, and think of others and not myself.

Help me to remember Heaven is our permanent home, and we are just passing through.

Help me to go in your strength, alone...remembering "the Blessed Hope."

Amen!

December

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." - Ephesians 2:8-9

I REMEMBER CHRISTMAS...

I remember Christmas
The way it used to be.
With family and friends,
And gifts beneath the tree.

Not the latest product
From Target or Wal-Mart;
But precious, handmade treasures
Given from the heart.

We gathered at the table
And bowed our heads to pray,
To thank our precious Savior
Who's the Reason for the day.

Mom and Grandma bring the food,
Turkey, Potatoes, Pumpkin pie,
Dressing, "famous" Hot Dish.
What a sight for the hungry eye!

After we have stuffed ourselves,
Did we head out to the Mall?

No, we all stayed and visited.
Catching up with news from all.

The children rip off wrappings,
Play with toys, shout with glee;
Until Father gets his Bible down
And places it upon his knee.

Suddenly the room grows quiet,
Even children stop their play,
As we contemplate the Reason
That we have a Christmas Day.

He reads to all the Gospel Story,
Beginning with the Birth.
"The provision of a Perfect Body,
Is why the Savior came to earth.

Christmas leads to Calvary,
Calvary leads to the Grave,
He must be the perfect Sacrifice
That's how mankind He'll save."

The Grave led to His Resurrection,
And His Mission was complete.
He ascended back to Heaven,
At the Father's side He took His seat.

Now, the Savior offers the best gift
For Christmas; or any time of year.
If you believe Christ died for you,
Eternal life is yours, free and clear."

Father asks all to bow their heads,
"Will you believe Christ died for you?
You don't have to pray or raise your hand,
Just believe is all you do."

When the kitchen is set to rights,
And the toys are put away.
We all got dressed up for church,
And soon headed out that way,

To sing the old, familiar carols,
Watch the children's Christmas play.
Hear the Gospel presented clearly,
The perfect end to a perfect day.

A bag of candy for each child,
Lunch in the "fellowship hall."
Good food and conversation.
A blessed time was had by all;

Then, Father loaded us up for home.
Mom sent tired children up to bed.
They shared coffee by the barrel stove,
And prayed for each "sleepy head."

Yes, I remember Christmas
The way it used to be.
With family and friends,
And gifts beneath the tree.

Seeing Father get his Bible down
And placing it upon his knee.

That is one family's memory,
Of how Christmas used to be.

Christmas Card - 2010

I wish this were my family memories of Christmas; but, this poem is based upon things I have heard from older friends.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS PAST

This brings me to my final chapter, December, and a church located in beautiful Southern Indiana, on a hill overlooking the Ohio River Valley. It was, as the Bible says, "beautiful for situation." (Psalm 48:2) It was not Mount Zion; but, was a lovely location with a beautiful view. This was our second ministry, and we have many memories of this church; most happy, some very funny, some very sad.

It was here I first began my choir directing "career." I don't know why I waited until now to let this little secret out of the box; but, usually it helps if Pastor's wives are "Jill's of all Trades." I am pretty sure you know that means,—we do a lot of things—but, only adequately.

It was here I was able to accompany a complete Christmas cantata which contained the song, "O Holy Night," and, by God's grace, I got through it. I am strictly self-taught and not proficient as a pianist.

Later, I met Norman Montgomery and learned about "lead (cheat) sheets" and chords. That made my life a lot easier and was probably a lot easier on everyone's ears!

Just a tip, Ladies. It does help if you can at least *read* the music and match it up to the keys on the piano! This I drove my parents crazy with while I was teaching myself at Age 10; but, God knew what He was doing.

At any church where we have served, this time of year is bu--sy! Cantata practices usually start mid-September. Before this, you must learn the music yourself. The pace increases in intensity through Thanksgiving, as you decorate your own family's tree, buy and wrap your own family's gifts, help decorate at the church, attend the all the practices and dress rehearsal, and collapse into a pew after the performance.

Then I begin to pray for my husband as he begins to give the Gospel. This is the real reason everyone has expended all this time and effort—to get people into the church to hear the Gospel. This is a good way to get people into your church.

And, I love every minute of it!

Often, he uses what we call the "Hand Gesture" to illustrate the Gospel. ⁽¹⁾ He takes out his wallet and places it in one hand. "Let my wallet represent sin." (He usually cracks a little joke about the wallet's being a sin because it has no money.)

"We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

"We have two options: we can go to Hell and pay for this sin ourselves (pointing hand down); or, accept God's payment for our sin, the sacrifice of His Son on the Cross."

Holding up the other hand without the wallet, he says, "Let this hand represent Jesus Christ. He had no sin. One sinner cannot pay for another man's sin; he has to pay for his own. God sent Christ to make the sin-payment for us. When we believe that, He takes our sin and places it to Christ's account (puts the wallet in the other hand) and gives us Christ's righteousness." Then he quotes,

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Corinthians 5:21

"If this makes sense to you, why don't you right now, tell the Lord you believe he made that payment for you."

On my front pew (which I still do this to this day), I pray, "Lord, give him clarity. Help him to finish it all the way." The "Hand Gesture" is simply a great way to visualize what our Precious Savior did for us on the Cross. ⁽¹⁾

There is only one reason to go to all the work of putting on Christmas programs, and it is not because we like to sing! It is to win souls!

One Christmas, we decided to put "artistic" scallops of netting, with Christmas lights entwined, across the front of the church. The effect we were after was twinkling lights. The effect we got was—one half of the front blinked, then the other half blinked. Unfortunately, we had to go with that.

Then, there was the Christmas where our Cantata was being broadcast on television live. Two things happened. First, a tall young man standing on the back riser fainted,

taking out the entire back row. Thinking fast, they never stopped singing! All, but the two who were dragging the unconscious young man out, popped back up again as if nothing had happened. The other two returned, and I don't think anyone noticed. The motto of this story is, "Never stop singing!"

At this same performance, a soloist stepped forward to sing his part from memory and couldn't remember a word! He hum-a-hummed something, while a gentleman in the row behind him sang the solo for him. This was the chairman of deacons who declined to sing his solo at dress rehearsal. Max was there and insisted that he do it; but, he continued to refuse.

"I've got it," he said, with supreme confidence (pride). The Lord handed him a gigantic piece of humble-pie to chew on, and his buddies never let him forget it.

After another Cantata, a former church member who had gotten away from church was so touched by the music and invitation that he promised, "Next year, *I'll* be in the choir! I'm getting back in church." But for Bill, "next year" did not come.

Before Thanksgiving of the next year, I was at the church helping with something. A group of hunters entered, looking for Max. As it happened, we could not get hold of him.

I asked them what they wanted and they said, "Bill died in the woods while he was hunting. We found him sitting under a tree." We want you to go with us to tell Emily." (Emily was

Bill's wife.) I said, hopefully, "You want me to be there while you let her know. Right?" "No, we want you to tell her."

On the way over, I prayed, "Lord! What am I going to say?" And, as clear as a bell, in my head I heard Dr. Mark Cambron's voice saying, "Don't play guessing games. This kind of news never gets better!" Dr. Cambron was a professor from Florida Bible College.

Emily came to the door, a young woman in her late 30's, wiping her hands on her apron. "Well, Marge, what are you doing here? I was just baking some of Bill's favorite pies. He'll be home for supper soon."

I went close to her and said, as calmly as I could, "Emily, Bill's not coming home. He's gone home to be with the Lord. His friends (the big, strong hunters, waiting in the car!) have brought me to come and tell you. They want to take you to the hospital."

I explained how they had found him; and then, I put my arms around her shoulders, and we both cried. I tried to comfort her as best I could; then the men, who were relatives, took her to the hospital. Max arrived and took it from there.

That was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do; but, it happens. It's part of the ministry. We are to comfort the bereaved, as best we can.

"...that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." 2 Corinthians 1:4

What a tragedy it would have been, if Bill had not been "absent from the body and present with the Lord." (2 Corinthians 5:8).

This is the same church where we decided the choir should have matching jackets for the men and skirts for the women. Max, being the one who knew where the best fabric bargains were, came back with bolts and bolts of bright red double knit. The choir looked very sharp in red jackets with white pants, and the ladies looked lovely in long red skirts and white blouses. I don't even want to *see another yard of red double knit!*

What is the point of all this? If you want a lot of people to come to your church and hear the Gospel, you must be willing to put your talents to work. You can give your time to sing in the choir, teach Sunday School, work in the Nursery, even clean the church.

It's all about winning souls and the Greatest Christmas Gift of all!

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

⁽¹⁾ The "Hand Gesture" is simply a way to visualize what our Precious Savior did for us on the Cross. It was taught by Dr. A. Ray Stanford in Personal Evangelism Class at Florida Bible College, and utilized by many pastors who have graduated from there.

IF AN EVERGREEN TREE COULD PRAY

If the evergreen tree could say a prayer
Standing in the forest there.
We know it really cannot pray,
But if it could, what would it say?

"In the winter wood I can be seen.
Thank you, God, I am always green.
I love my branches hanging low
To shelter creatures from the snow.

You let my cones fall to the ground,
Making food for all around
A plenteous bounty, enough for all,
And a seed of "my kind" after its fall.

It dies and is buried in the forest floor,
But lives again when spring comes once more.
I am thankful for rain which makes me grow.
I am thankful for sun which makes me glow.

You send the frost, snow and wind,
To open cones, seeds and berries send,
So all the seedlings don't grow in one spot.
But go far and wide to their own plot.

My boughs can be used for a camper's bed,
A fragrant place to lay one's head,
Turpentine comes from evergreen trees,
Paper, homes, poles for utilities.

A very tall mast for a sailing ship,
Or a lodge pole pine from stem to tip.
My favorite use would seem to be
When they dress me up as a Christmas Tree.

Thank you, God, that you can use me
To celebrate the Greatest Gift in History.
The gift of everlasting life, as I am always green,
Just believe that verse, John Three Sixteen.

It is only possible because you gave your Son
To die for our sins, each and every one.
And like my seedlings, He came up from the grave,
Offering eternal life to all who believe.

When they place a star on my very top bough,
Thank you for wise men who still seek him now
The beautiful gifts under my branches they leave
Show Salvation is a gift, if God's Word we believe.

Of all the service I can give unto you,
These are the best, I would say it is true.
To represent the Savior, there's no higher call,
If I could pray, that is my prayer, my all."

Odds & Ends

IN THE FAR NORTH WOODS OF MINNESOTA

In the far north woods of Minnesota,
In a time now just a memory,
The logger's saw could still be heard,
And the "Lost Forty" was still a mystery.

When you chopped wood to heat the cabin,
Fed your family with gun in hand,
Trapped and riced for extra cash,
That was "living off the land."

There were ricing seasons of competition
Between the Adamses', Gobles', and Hines,'
You could hunt in the solitude of forest and bog,
Hear the song of the wind in the pines.

It was "heaven on earth" to young men then,
Even tho' you weren't rich in worldly goods.
They just couldn't imagine a life lived anywhere;
But a life in these beautiful woods.

There was a church in the town, of course,
But they seldom darkened its doors.
They weren't good enough, they were told,
To even walk on its floors!

One of the men we're writing about,
Was a son of Della and Chan.
With Ladonna, his wife, and children four,
He was an Adams, by the name of Dan.

Then, out of the South, there came a man,
A "rebel" surely was he.
He proclaimed, to all that would hear,
That going to Heaven was free!

You couldn't be good, the Rebel said,
You had to be free of *all* sin,
You must be completely perfect,
Before God would let you in.

There's only one way to get into Heaven,
And like all gifts, it is free.
Everyone knew that "Christ died for sin."
Do you believe "Christ died for me?"

You didn't have to turn from your sin,
The sin was yourself, it was clear.
Everyone knew they were sinners,
It was like looking in a mirror.

One by one, they saw it!
They believed Ephesians Two, Eight and Nine!
"For by grace are ye saved, through faith,
It's not of works," no matter how fine.

All the people talked to each other,
Witnessing to all of their peers.
"It's not what the old church has told us
For all these miserable years."

For some reason not known to me,
Young Dan was "out of the loop,"
"It's not that easy," he said.
He was not a part of the group.

Just like Andrew, Rod got him to listen
To what the Rebel had to say,
And listen he did when he heard the truth,
He believed it that very day.

When Sunday came where did everyone go,
But off to the "other church,"
To tell them their works salvation was wrong,
And they needed the Bible to search.

It's putting it mildly to say that chaos ensued,
And of Christian love a great lack,
They said to the new believers, in short,
"Get out and don't ever come back!"

Other words were uttered
Which do the Savior great shame,
Considering they were supposedly
Said in our Dear Savior's name!

"We'll build our own church," everyone said,
Where the Gospel is preached by God's grace.
They worked in the woods, selling the trees,
And built a new church in that place.

The young man, Dan, worked right along;
But, a greater call came to his life.

He obeyed the call from the Lord,
And went to college with family and wife.

Leaving Rod behind to help with the work,
A founder of the church he became.
Rod grew in the grace and knowledge of God,
Became an elder who witnessed without shame.

Dan spoke in chapel of a place in the woods
That sounded like "Heaven on earth;"
So it seemed to a preacher in training,
A man of Ohio birth.

To serve the Lord in a place like that
Became his fervent prayer.
A call came from the Good News Bible Church
And, they needed a pastor up there.

In January of 1971, He took his family,
And what remained of his worldly goods,
Trav'ling all of the way from the heat of Miami
To that beautiful church in the woods.

That's how he met the man named Rod,
Who kindly took him under his wing.
Rod taught him the art of hunting and trapping,
The poor "Buckeye" didn't know anything.

A precious friendship was born between
The guide of the woods and the guide for God's Word.
In hours over coffee they swapped stories and lies,
That's OK with God, Hezekiah the Third.

One thing's for sure, Rodney Goble was
A woodsman of legendary fame.
But shooting the piano instead of the bear
Was not good for this hunter's name!

Rod has now joined his friends, Barney and Dan,
In fellowship around the throne.
Family and friends have been left behind,
And they feel very much alone.

We sorrow, but, we are not without hope
As Jesus is coming and then,
We'll rise up at the Rapture and meet our old friends,
We'll all be together again!

Today we say, "So long, Dear Friend";
But it's only for a little while.
We comfort ourselves, "He's in Heaven," we say,
And brush away our tears with a smile.

This poem was written in 2008 and read at Rod Goble's
funeral.

Note: Yes, I know Dan and LaDonna have five children!
Puddin' was born when they came back to Dora Lake.

THE REAL NATIVITY

Mary prayed, "When *will* this pain be past?
Dear God, How long can a mere woman last?"
There suddenly came a blessed relief!
And a child of beauty beyond belief
Lay on her breast as she counted fingers and toes,
Two little eyes and a very Jewish nose.

She raised her eyes to Joseph's watchful gaze
As he hovered about in a new Father's daze.
She thankfully sipped the cold, clear water
Brought to them by the inn keeper's daughter.
He moistened a cloth and gently wiped her face.
"Having a child is hard, Even in the best place."

I'm so proud of you, and that God has blest with His Son.
I will give my life to guard the life of this Holy One."
A tender moment from a man late in life.
"How blessed I am," she thought, "To be his wife."
From His Humanity, a baby cry arose,
Mary set to her work and nestled Him close.

Joseph nodded against the stone of the door,
There was only the sound of suckling and cooing galore.
Mary sleepily gazed at the starry night sky,
"It's not so bad with little lambs to lie."
The shepherds had tried so hard not to see,
But there was no such thing as privacy!

She remembered the words of the shepherds who came
"To think that the Angels were praising His Name !"

*"But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in
her heart." - Luke 2:19*

It was not the time to view a future unthinkably cruel.
Growing up the Perfect Lamb, slain under Roman rule.
Years would pass before these events would arrive.
In the meantime, the child would grow and thrive.

In process of time, His ministry would start.
And, Mary, who bore Him, would have a broken heart
To see the child of the sheepfold who never deceived.
Die as the Lamb sacrificed for all who believed.

*"(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,
that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." -
Luke 2:35*

He died on the cross, His blood freely given,
So that all of our sins might be completely forgiven.
She kept silent vigil as His life at last he gave.
She helped as with spices they prepared for the grave.

She expected to see Him
When the Resurrection was past.
She believed on Him as Savior
For eternal life that would last.

*"And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." - Luke
1:47*

"Oh, no...not the time to think." And she dozed off to sleep.
While Joseph his vigil at the sheep fold did keep.
That's what really happened that night long ago.
Will you believe on Christ now, since you know?

- - Christmas Card - 2009

WHAT DOES ONE VOTE COUNT?

"Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness;..." - Exodus 18:21a

You really can't complain,
About the nation's politics;
If you don't get out to the polls,
And write down all your picks.

Don't waste your time protesting,
And walking with a sign;
March right up to the ballot box,
Write each name upon the line!

Republican or Democrat;
Or, somewhere in between.
It really doesn't matter,
If your ballot isn't seen.

"What does one vote count?"
Is a question some may ask.

Marcus "Landslide" Morton
Will take you right to task.

The good folk of Massachusetts,
Evidently had naught to fear.
The same thing occurred again,
The very next election year.

You say you're so disgusted
By actions on the "Hill,"
You just don't feel like voting.
Well, change they never will!

"Bad officials are elected by
Good people who don't vote."
Not an original thought with me,
But, quite a famous quote.

It's our chance to send a message,
We, the people, are still here,
And getting more dissatisfied
With every passing year!

That we're horrified by the moral slide
Of the country that we know,
Abortion, Perversion, Christianity shamed,
And on, and on, we could go.

Don't get me wrong, My Friend.
I am not saying who to choose;
But without godly people in Washington,
Our freedoms we'll increasingly lose.

To spurn this golden opportunity,
To change the "status quo,"
Is to spurn a price paid in blood,
Freedom is not cheap, you know!

Then, when Election Day arrives,
On that Tuesday in November;

Prayerfully go out and cast a vote
That Washington will remember!

Don't say you wished you'd voted.
The consequences could be dire!
Speak your piece and let them know,
Your vote is not for hire.

You say, "Politics, and religion,
Is a dangerous path to trod."
Say I, "It's our duty to cast our vote,
For government's "ordained of God."

We must protect our freedom
To teach, and speak, and preach,
To present the Gospel clearly,
And every citizen reach.

History will record who won,
In the election of this year;
But, no matter what the outcome,
Your conscience will be clear

November, 2010

THE REALITY OF HELL

I scream and cry in agony, and shed evaporating tears.
You'd think my body would burn up, I've been here so many years!

There is no end in sight, we just keep adding to the crowd.
My lying preacher is down here, too; and screaming just as loud!

He, and others, lied to me, baptism is not accepted.
This is where I ended up because the Savior I rejected.

I'm not sitting in a corner, playing cards and drinking beer;
Like the joke I used to tell to every listening ear.

The Devil is not the King of Hell. I'm told he'll be here, too.
The all powerful God is in control and has his end in view.

Sadly, some here knew the Bible; but did not comprehend it's worth.
They didn't believe Christ died for them while they were still on earth.

It's dark, there's excruciating pain, and shadows moving in the flame.
I pass the time and gnaw my tongue until they call my name.

I've been told it will get worse after the Great White Throne.
It all depends on what's in the books. I'm lost! I'll stand alone.

The cruelest tool is the memory of those who witnessed to me
I remember how I ridiculed them, and failed the truth to see.

They told me Jesus died for me; if I only had believed.
My sins would all have been forgiven, and Eternal life received.

The pain, the flames, and memory, are my most miserable fate.
Hell is a real place, after all; and I have believed too late!

*"...behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is
the day of salvation:..." (2 Corinthians 6:2)*

From *"The Biblical Examination of Hell*, available at
www.heritagebbc.com, to purchase; or read pdf online.

THE LIGHTHOUSE OF GOD'S WORD

God's Word is a lighthouse revealing rocks of sin,
Illuminating false doctrine before it enters in.

"God so loved the world," that's each and every man
"Not willing... any should perish" was the purpose of His Plan.

Ordained before the world began and accomplished by our Lord.
"Whosoever will may come" is the message of God's Word.

If you live in the shadows where the lighthouse does not glow,
False doctrine may wreck your vessel before His truth you know.

"Predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son,"
At the Rapture this will happen, First John Three, Verse One.

God did not choose some for Heaven and others to go to Hell,
That's what they mean by "T-U-L-I-P," they just don't want to tell.

They do despite to the Grace of God, and Christ's death sacrificially,
"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

Read Isaiah, Chapter 53, Verse Six. Read it very carefully.
"Go in at the first all...out at the last all, you'll be saved eternally."

Ordained before the world began, and accomplished by our Lord.
"Whosoever will may come" is the message of God's Word.

If you live in the shadows where the lighthouse does not glow,
False doctrine may wreck your vessel before His truth you know.

Thank God for the "whosoever's" and the "alls" revealed in His Word.
You have no excuse to reject the truth because you now have heard.

God never gives you the faith with which to believe.
He gives you the truth in His Word which you must receive.

Believe Christ died for you as full payment for your sin,
And when the time comes to go to Heaven, you will enter in.

*" Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be
saved,..." Acts 16:31*

From the book, *Not Chosen to Salvation*, available at
www.heritagebbc.com, to purchase; or read pdf online.

A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

Is the public invitation
A blessing or a curse?
It's the church's new tradition
That leads to something worse.

It adds an element of "doing,"
To something that is "done."
Adding works to God's amazing grace,
Confusing almost everyone.

"It wasn't easy for Our Lord;
It shouldn't be easy for you."
The trouble with their statement is,
It simply isn't true."

The hard part was the Savior's death,
It's finished, and victory's won.
The easy part is to just receive
What on the cross was done.

"If you want to know the way to Heaven,
Christ comes with you all the way."

When you get to the front of the church,
What will the "personal worker" say?

Will he say Christ died to pay for your sin,
And that payment must be received?
Or, will he mix the gospel with works
And the seeker goes home deceived.

Preach the gospel from the pulpit,
Preach it loud and clear,
With words easy to be understood
By every listening ear.

And you will reach that timid one,
Too shy to step out of his pew.
Tell them Christ died to pay for their sin,
None can explain it better than you.

Pastor, tell people they can trust the Lord
Wherever they happen to be.
Don't play games with people's souls
And risk their eternity.

If you want to be a reaper,
Plant God's seed God's way.
And you will reap the harvest
In Heaven on that day.

Don't count the numbers on the wall;
They just don't tell the story.
For those who fear the altar call
Might not make it into Glory!

" He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." -John 3:18

HOW TO BE A MISSIONARY

You may cross the ocean,
Or just the great divide.
The person who does not know the Lord
May be standing by your side.

Speak out the Gospel message.
Speak it loud and clear.
Jesus died for all mankind.
Tell every waiting ear.

Practice what to say.
Practice what to do.
How to spread the message
Is strictly up to you.

Say, "If you die tonight,
Would you go to Heaven?"
I could show you in one verse,
If just a moment given.

"For God so loved the world
That he gave His only Son,"
To pay the price for sin
For each and everyone.

If you will but believe
He paid that price for you,
Your sin will all be washed away.
Your life will be brand new.

Justified is what you' ll be
"Just as if" you'd never sinned.
The past is gone, wiped away,
A new life will begin.

Just take a moment here and there
That's all you have to do.
Before you start, say a prayer,
Then, give the Gospel clear and true.

Some go to darkest Africa,
And cross the ocean wide.
But the person who does not know the Lord
May be standing by your side.

From the book, *Three Important Questions*, available at
www.heritagebbc.com, to purchase; or read pdf online.

THE LAW OF THE SABBATH

God gave the Law to Israel. It was never meant to save;
It regulated all of life from the cradle to the grave.

It was a stern schoolmaster, and showed our lost condition;
As filthy sinners bound for Hell, sentenced to Perdition.

The Sabbath Law belonged to God, a high and holy sign.
That He would keep His promises to Israel in due time.

No cooking, walking, playing; it was really for the best.
In "Six days may work be done; ...the seventh ye shall rest."

For foolish souls who paid no heed, the penalty was death.
God wanted them to know He gave them evr'y breath.

Set apart as a nation, with a mission to win the world!
Instead they crucified their King; and the Age of Grace unfurled.

You can't get to Heaven by keeping the Law. Try it, you're sure to fall;
If you offend in just one point, you'll be guilty of it all.

This would seem a cruel hoax making God look most unjust,
To give us what we cannot keep; but, keep it all we must!

Wait! God has sent the Answer. He nailed it to a Cross.
Christ, the "end of law for righteousness." Oh! What a terrible cost!

He "redeemed us from the curse of the law," and paid sin's penalty.
What no mere man could ever do, Grace now extends for free!

There's neither "Jew nor Greek;" but, all in Christ are one.
Israel's set aside; we're grafted in; but, this nation is not done!

When the Deliverer comes to Zion, they'll be "forgiven by the Lord."
From Tribulation to Kingdom they'll go, as promised in God's Word.

We know the Sabbath is not for today. It's a Covenant Sign to the Jews.
We will follow our Savior's lead, and on Sunday fill the church pews.

Praise the Lord for His Amazing Grace, and Salvation full and free.
He only asks that we use each day to "Win the lost for Me!"

From the book, *Three Important Questions*, available at
www.heritagebbc.com, to purchase; or read pdf online.

THE CIRCUS BANDWAGON

Here comes the circus right through our town.
A grand parade from Main Street down.

Here come the elephants lumbering by
With beautiful ladies riding on high.

Their harness a-sparkle in the sunlit noon
They'll perform tonight under the moon.

The stars of the big top are walking in line,
Swirling their capes and waving a sign,

“Come out tonight and be thrilled to see
All of the wonders in rings One, Two and Three.”

There are wagons with lions and tigers, too.
Of strange things to see, there are not a few.

Here come the clowns! This is such fun!
Painted smiles on their faces, different each one.

Last of all, the bandwagon comes,
Tooting their horns and beating their drums.

Lads and Lassies run along side
Trying to jump on and catch a free ride.

Soon a crowd follows right to the tent.
Getting a ticket is their intent.

Many a dollar will soon be plunked down.
Helping the circus get to the next town.

What's the attraction to come to the show?
It's something different, all new you know.

If it's new and different, it surely can't be wrong
To jump on the bandwagon and ride along.

It brings in the crowds and they bring in the dough,
So on with the circus, on with the show!

Let's look at the Scripture with a different view,
The Young Earth can't be wrong, it's something brand new!

We'll see Museums and Lectures, Props and Seminars.
We'll talk about dinosaurs, short time, and dead stars,

A creation of earth with the appearance of age,
That is the way we will set the stage.

We will load our wagon with false doctrine and pride,
Hoping that you will jump on for the ride.

It will bring in the crowds and they bring in the dough.
So on with the circus, on with the show!

Dear Friend, will you listen to the sound of their band,
And follow the crowd into sinking sand?

Our Lord is calling from Heaven to you,
"Follow the Scriptures, so tried and so true!"

I need no circus; I need no show.
I spoke it all into being with My Word you know.

Creation, Judge and Restore were my plan.
Measurement of time relates only to mere man.

My judgment will sit on your false presentation
Of the countless ages of my wondrous creation.

There will be no glib answers at my judgment bar,
You will stand there and I'll see you, just as you are.

All of your lies and all your deceit,
Will be completely exposed on the day that we meet.

I know you will tremble and your body grow tense,
And surely this statement will not be your defense."

"If it's new and different, it surely can't be wrong
To jump on the bandwagon and ride along."

It will bring in the crowds and they will bring in the dough.
So, on with the circus, on with the show!"

From the book, *The Truth About Evolution, Or, Don't Let Satan Make A Monkey Out of You!*, which is available at www.heritagebbc.com, to purchase; or read pdf online.

Wanted: Pastor's Wife

Job Description: She must be as wise as Abigail, as beautiful as Bathsheba, as industrious as the Proverbs 31 Woman, have the scriptural knowledge of Priscilla, and personify Mary and Martha.

My husband's ministry has resulted in the ordination of seven men, six of whom are still active in the ministry. Before ordinations, it is usually required that I get together with the ladies, and instruct them as to "how this is done." I feel very inadequate for this, as I feel I myself am still learning. We all are in the "school of grace" until we leave this earth.

JUST THINK...

You're not here by chance,
But by God's choosing.
His hand formed you
And made you the person you are.

He compares you to no one else—
You are one of a kind.
You lack nothing that
His grace can't give you.

He has allowed you to be here
At this time in History
To fulfill His special purpose
For this generation.

The preceding poem was written by Roy Lessin. I spotted it on a greeting card and thought it perfect for this subject.

Just as there is no one woman who exhibits all the qualities of the multi-talented woman described in Proverbs 31, there is no one way to serve as a pastor's wife. Our gifts, or talents, are different. Roy Lessin's verses describe how unique and special each woman is.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,... - Romans 12:6a

Some are great at teaching and others feel insecure at speaking in front of others. Some have the gifts of "helps" and they just love to help others. (1 Cor. 16:15). This is a great asset to a church.

It is not the purpose of this chapter to get into the spiritual gifts; only to point out that all pastor's wives are not the same. Don't expect your pastor's wife to be the same as another.

They may have operatic voices, play classical piano; or, not sing or play at all. Some are in education and teach. Some pastor's wives get right out there with the hammer and nails, lay tile, paint, and physically help to build the church building. Some love to work in the nursery. And then there's that energetic whirlwind of a woman who can do them all! We are all different.

But, when your husband is called to the ministry, you must answer the call, too. Here are some guidelines that can help you avoid some of the pit falls of life in the ministry. After all, these guidelines are the "benefit" of all those

invisible "diplomas" I have on the wall. In other words, the benefit of "years of experience gained learning from mistakes."

1. *Start Each Day With the Lord.*

"...a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." - Prov. 31:30

My husband and thank the Lord for each morning we wake up together. I am not going to say we do devotions then; because we don't. This is a personal thing. But, we do begin each day with prayer.

2. *Plan Your Activities Around His.*

"She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." - Prov. 31:12

When you plan your activities for the week, be sure to take your husband's schedule into consideration. A man that has at least three messages to preach a week, needs quiet time for study. Saturday is not a day to plan a social event, unless you both agree. My husband needs his Saturdays free to get ready for Sunday.

3. *No disagreements on Sunday Morning!*

"She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household,..." - Prov. 31:15

Sunday mornings are not a good time to discuss whether you paint the dining room chartreuse or gold; or, whether Junior should have the keys to the car.

Just make him what he wants for breakfast and help him get ready. You need to get yourself ready in a timely manner. If you only have one bathroom, take this into consideration. Don't expect help with the children. He has enough to think about!

4. *Wear Appropriate Attire.*

"She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple." - Prov. 31:22

Ladies, you should wear a dress to church. It is honoring to the Lord and sets the example that we should wear our best to the Lord's House. After all, if we we're going to a wedding; or, other special event, we would certainly get all dressed up! We should do the same for the Lord.

This is not against the wearing of slacks or jeans. I wear them, but there is a time and a place for everything. We don't have to look like a 5th Avenue fashion model; but, we should dress in a way that shows we respect the Lord's House. You can be stylish; but, not tempting!

5. *Pitch In On The Work At the Church.*

"She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms." - Prov. 31:17

Never ask anyone to do what you would not do yourself. My husband was speaking at another church and we were guests at a carry-in following the service. I got up to help clear away the dishes, *as I always do*, and the pastor's wife stopped me. "They know what they are supposed to do," she said, as if the congregation were their servants and they were some elite! "That's not my style!" I told her and got up to help.

If there is work to do around the church and you are able, pitch in! We always tried to do whatever the people in the church do; if, physically able.

Some examples: Putty the church windows, scrape old paint and hanging tar paper off the church basement walls, paint, clean up after the carpenter(s). In Walnut Grove, the carpenter was my husband.

Or, you can go ricing, pick berries and balsam in the woods, participate in the cottage industry of making Christmas wreaths. If your congregation picks up a little extra cash this way, you do it, too.

Ricing is an activity someone with a devious mind invented as a team sport for husbands and wives! But, there is money to be made there; and, if the people in your church are struggling to make it financially and they do it, you should at least try. There is money to be made; or, at least there used to be.

In ricing, usually the wife stands up in the back of a flat bottomed canoe and poles it through the rice beds at the edges of lakes and rivers with a long, aluminum pole with a duck bill on the bottom.

The husband sits in the bottom of the canoe, reaching up with two sticks: one to pull the rice over the boat, and the other to knock the kernels off the stock. In his first attempt, Max managed to seed quite a bit of Dora Lake, as he was hitting them too hard. Ricing is an art, and he soon got on to it.

I was doing pretty well, after I got over the initial shock of actually standing up in a canoe that was floating in water! I can't swim, but ricing is done in the shallow water by the water's edge. One day my pole got stuck in the mud, and when it came loose with a thwack, it rammed my husband in the back of his head.

I just sat down in the canoe while he rubbed the round red circle he had on the back of his head, and "got over it." He promised me that if I ever did that again, he would throw me in. I never did that again.

6. No Criticism of Your Husband.

"She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness." Prov. 31:26

Do not criticize your husband to anyone in the church. Not even if he is a terrible slob you can track from the front door to the bedroom after he comes home. After all, you are not perfect either. It doesn't take much to start tongues wagging!

7. Don't Speak Out During His Sermons.

"The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her..." - Prov. 31:11

Don't speak out during his sermons to correct him; or contradict him, should he misspeak. I knew a pastor's wife that did this; and, surprisingly, it did not endear her to the congregation. Even if your husband says, "Moses built the Ark in 40 days and 40 nights," mums the word!



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8. *S.T.P.* - *See The Pastor!*

*"Her husband is known in the gates,
when he sitteth among the elders of
the land." - Prov. 31:23*

Have you ever heard of "S.T.P.," the "Racer's Edge"? In our church it stands for, "SEE THE PASTOR." Burn this into your brain, Ladies, and you will avoid a multitude of troubles! This is good advice for the wife of *any* church worker. The ladies of our church are very familiar with this one, and it keeps them, as well as myself, out of the middle of many church problems!

Every organization must have a leader who is responsible for the actions of the organization. Churches are no different. The pastor is the spiritual leader of the church.

People often will come to you with something they want to do in the church; perceiving you as the *weak* link; and their idea may be one they are not sure will be approved. Or, on the positive side, you might just be handy, like "the second-string quarter-back" mentioned previously.

9. If You Must Seek Outside Counsel, Go Far Away.

"Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come." Prov. 31:25

If the Lord's counsel is not enough, and you *must* seek advice from someone besides your husband, go at least 150 miles away; or to another state. I used to say at least 50 miles; but, even that is not far enough. The point is to consult a person who will not let word get back to your church.

You have spent your life ministering to others. I truly believe *you can find what you need* through prayer and God's Word; but, there are those extreme situations. Unless *this is* an extreme situation, I would advise against it.

Do not single out anyone in the church as a confidante. They might be most happy to do this; but, people are human and word gets around. It will come back on you in the end.

On this subject, you should be a friend to everyone; from the nicest person to the most cantankerous person. (We do not have any cantankerous people in our church!) But, do not show partiality to anyone.

If anyone shares a confidence with you keep it; after, *first letting them know you share everything with your husband!*

10. Appreciate What You Have.

"Give her of the fruit of her hands;..." - Prov. 31:31

Sometimes churches cannot pay a large salary and we have to learn to live by faith. God is able to supply all our needs, and we have truly never wanted for a thing! Sometimes it is a half of a pig, with the skin still on, thrown into a storage trailer in the dead of winter.

I took my saw out and carved more than one good pork roast off of that pig! My husband thought I should serve it to Herb Hirsch, a Christian Jewish evangelist. Even though he was saved, that pork was a "no go." He was like the Apostle Peter and the Lord had not gotten the "Pork" Law out of him, yet.

God has supplied more than our needs and we count our blessings every day.

11. Make Your Home A Place of Refuge.

"She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." Prov. 31:27

When a pastor comes home, his home should not be a place of clutter and filled with confusion. Dinner should be on, homework should be done, and he should be able to relax for a time. There will be time to discuss problems later; unless, Junior fell off the roof and you will be at the emergency room anyway!

In other words, try to make your home a little piece of Heaven.

12. Be Sure You Are Nice to Come Home To!

"Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." - Prov. 31:28

Take a little time to perk yourself up and greet him at the door with a kiss. Let him know he means as much to you as the day you married him. It takes a little effort on busy days; but it accomplishes a lot.

A Prayer For Pastors and Their Wives

Dear Lord, How thankful we are that you are beside us all the way! You never leave us; nor, forsake us.

You give us wisdom for the asking.

You rejoice with us on the mountaintops and walk with us in the valleys.

Thank you, Lord, for all the congregations we have known, and the blessings we have received from them.

God bless them everyone!

Amen!

CONCLUSION

I really want to end this book on a happy note, lest you think the ministry is all very sad. There are always new babies to Ooh! and Ah! over. There are beautiful weddings to attend. Many of the brides or grooms are someone you have taught in Sunday School. The ministry is a great place to meet and make Christian friends.

You get to try out different ideas that you have. I like to put on plays and musical programs. I get extreme enjoyment from that. You get to use your decorating or art talents. The ladies in our church love to scrapbook. They keep scrapbooks chronicling everything that happens at the church.

One of the most enjoyable evenings I have spent was painting backdrops for the Children's Christmas program with another lady in the church. We had the canvas on the floor and we were crawling around on our elbows and knees, putting on a lot of brown chalk, singing goofy songs like, "Don't it make your brown eyes blue...Beautiful, beautiful brown eyes, The brown, brown, grass of home." We were having some good fellowship!

The most surprising people have artistic talents and working with them like this gives you a chance to really know them.

The play was about a little Mexican burro who was descended from the donkey that Jesus rode into Jerusalem. We had made cute little serapes and ordered in sombreros for

all of them. When we lined them up in their sombreros, they looked like hats with legs. No time to send them back. The "hats with legs" wowed the congregation with their singing.

We put on a tableau of the Passover with different men of the church playing the parts. It looked just like the famous painting in Rome. Somehow I convinced Tom __. to play the part of the Lord. His comment: I'll do this *once* for you, Marge! He was definitely not the kind of guy who walks around in a robe and sandals, even as a costume.

Vacation Bible Schools are always lots of fun! Lots of work, too! It is worth it all when a mob of kids show up. At one VBS, we had it outside on our church property, with a western theme. Little did we know Southern Indiana was going to have its first monsoon in History!

There was Max, underneath the tarp, rain running off his head, passing out punch and cookies. He would tell the kids, "Isn't this fun. We get to play in the mud today and go home all dirty!" The kids picked right up on it. "Yeah, yeah, this is fun!" I wonder if their moms had as much fun with the laundry.

It took our plaster crafts just a *little* longer to dry.

I had seen a horse that shot water out of his nostrils at an ice show. It would skate right up to the crowd, blink its big eyes and drench everyone with water out of his nose.

I managed to rig up a similar costume. The water apparatus was achieved by using a detergent bottle and a plastic line. It worked great. Unfortunately, the front end of

the horse and the back end of the horse began to have a disagreement. Did you ever see the front end of a horse kicking the back end? My youngest son was involved in that one!

At this same VBS, we decided on a Cowboys and Indians theme. The kids could be Cowboys, or Indians, as teams to do memory verse competition and contests. We fixed it up that the Indians were going to "kidnap" Nannette __, one of the counselors and not bring her back unless they learned all their verses. Nannette played it to the hilt. She screamed bloody murder when the "Indians" ran off with her. It all had a happy ending and they brought her back.

It was a fun way to get kids to learn memory verses.

You have the privilege of entertaining some very interesting people in your home. We have had missionaries from different countries, Bible College Professors, and even the president of our Bible College. The entire singing group, Eternity, manage to ready themselves for their concert by means of a timed shuttle in and out of our 6 x 6 bathroom. Part of *that* was taken up by the hot water heater.

Their leader was sitting in the kitchen timing them. "Your 15 minutes are up!" The girls would groan but were good natured about giving the next person their turn. There are no motels in Dora Lake and the bathroom was better than their bus. The concert was beautiful!

One last story. We were having Bible Camp and the Vice President of our Bible College came to speak. After dinner,

we were lined up around the living room with our coffee, relaxing until time for the evening service.

Suddenly, the two flying squirrels that our youngest son, Douglas, had been hand rearing, burst out of his bedroom. They circumnavigated the living room, hopping over everyone's feet, including the visiting speaker's, ran up over the drapes and down, and out a door my son was holding open. When everything was quiet, Dr. S. with eyes as big as saucers, said to my husband, "Would you mind explaining what that was?"

Ladies, it's the greatest job life has to offer. It usually doesn't pay a lot of money; but, the fringe benefits and retirement package are great! I am referring to Heaven. How privileged you are if the Lord calls your husband into the ministry!

Yes, I wrote all the poems in the book but two: "Just Think," and "Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown."

Thank you for reading this book. I pray it has been a blessing to you. If I were to write about all the people we know now, and have known along the way, who were a blessing to us and our ministry, I could not carry this book!

To the people who support our ministry, we say, "We couldn't have done it without you. Because of you there is still a church, with a radio and internet outreach. You will share in the rewards...We gratefully thank all of you!"

A Prayer of Thanks

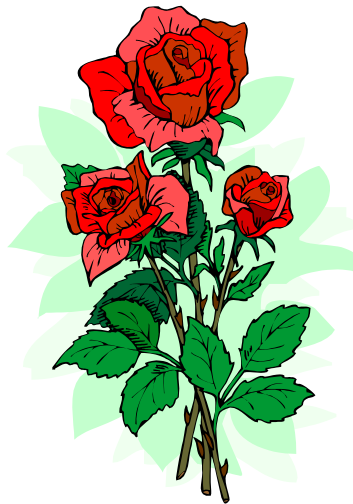
Dear Lord,

How I have loved my years in the ministry! They are like the tapestry woven by the woman in Proverbs 31. There are bright threads and dark threads for contrast. Would we appreciate the sunshine, if we did not have the rain?

I look underneath and I see how you have tied it all together. You meant it all for good, and it has been wonderful!

Amen

And That's All I Have To Say!



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