



CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD NEWSLETTER

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Heartbeats

Editorial
Jerry McClenagan

When you have nothing better to do you might check out my Blog Site:

www.flytrapfrog.wordpress.com

My alter ego will share a few thoughts with you from time to time from his lily pad in the swamps of Florida. He started his croaking long before 'hanging chads' and other such traumas in those parts.

I vividly recall the creation of 'Flytrap Frog's Filosofees.' It began in the late 80's when I enrolled in a Creative Writing class at Amarillo College. My intention was to listen and learn. But immediately we were told to bring something to the next class that we had written and read it aloud in the session. My thoughts were racing from that moment: This class won't want to listen to my Bible-based writing, so what can I write that will be both interesting and an instrument of teaching me better writing?

Thus, at 4 a.m. (the same hour I'm writing this), the day the class was to convene, I wrote a 200-word story that began, "My name is Flytrap Frog"

I'm not sure I've learned anything about writing, but the feedback was interesting: "Reminds me of Mark Twain"; "It's really not a children's story" (I didn't intend it to be); "It's Pogo of the comic strip"; "I'm thinking of Wind and the Willows"; "Perhaps a bit of Animal Farm."

So I blew the dust off the manuscripts and revived this character as the channel of communication on my **Weblog**. Come by and see me . . . when you have nothing better to do.



Jesus: “My house was designated a house of prayer for the nations” (Mark 11:17, MSG). / “[Jesus] came to Nazareth where he had been reared. As he always did on the Sabbath, he went to the meeting place” (Luke 4:16, MSG).

We would love to have you join us each Saturday for study and worship at 801 Quail Creek Drive — 11 a.m. for classes, 11:45 for singing and preaching. You can come dressed to the ‘nines’ or more casual if you choose. What we really like to see is a spirit of friendliness, an attitude of sincerity, and a willingness to ‘search the Scriptures whether these things are so’ (Acts 17:11). We want your fellowship with us to be a pleasant experience.



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Our sermons broadcast on
 KGRO Radio 9:05 AM
 Sunday.

www.pan-tex.net

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www.christianchurchofgod.org

“So much so you just kept taking more wives!” Lightning struck a tree nearby.

Defensive now, Solomon said, “But I warned the young, who are full of vitality, to not spend their energy foolishly: ‘O my son, be wise and stay in God’s paths; don’t carouse with drunkards and gluttons, . . . Listen to your father’s advice and don’t despise an old mother’s experience. . . . O my son, trust my advice—stay away from prostitutes. . . .’ (Prv. 23:19-22, 26, LB) ‘You’re addicted to thrills? What an empty life! The pursuit of pleasure is never satisfied.’ (Prv. 21:17, Msg)”

“Had you listened to your own advice, Solomon, you would have avoided many heartaches. You couldn’t seem to keep yourself from the enticements around you, and you were led into idolatry by all these foreign women. (Nehemiah 13:26 with I Kings 11:1-4)

Heavy drops of rain fell on them as they walked to cave a few yards away. A red fox cowered in the corner, but relaxed when Jesus looked into its eyes and held out his hand.

Solomon drew his garment closer as he huddled in the opposite corner. The chill had made its way to his heart. He refused to be guilt-ridden over his past indiscretions. His defenses were up, as the fox’s had been.

“My actions were necessary for appearances; other kingdoms were impressed by my slaves and concubines and wives, Lord—a sign of my power and glory. I handled all of it with aplomb. I retained my wisdom, declaring: ‘A fool’s fun is being bad; a wise man’s fun is being wise!’ (Prv. 10:23, LB).”

“So you excuse the magnetic pull of your physical desire. You refuse to admit that innate sexual energy can lead to self-destruction.”

“I believe I acknowledged that when I emphasized the sanctity of sexual pleasure within marriage: ‘Bless your fresh-flowing fountain! Enjoy your wife you married as a young man! Lovely as an angel, beautiful as a rose—don’t ever quit taking delight in her body. Never take her love for granted!’ (Prv. 5:18-19).”

“Solomon, Solomon, you are like so many people down through history that so flippantly excuse their sexual appetites. I inspired one of my servants to write: ‘Honor marriage, and guard the sacredness of sexual intimacy between wife and husband. God draws a firm line against casual and illicit sex’ (Hebrews 13:4, Msg). And again, ‘Is it a good thing to have sexual relations? Certainly—but only within a certain context. It’s good for a man to have a wife, and for a woman to have a husband. Sexual drives are strong, but a marriage is strong enough to contain them and provide for a balanced and fulfilling sexual life in a world of sexual disorder’ (1 Corinthians 7:1-5, Msg –excerpts). He also wrote: ‘There’s more to sex than skin on skin. Sex is as much spiritual mystery as physical fact. . . . we must not pursue the kind of sex that avoids commitment and intimacy, leaving us more lonely than ever—the kind of sex that can never “become one”’ (1 Corinthians 6:14-20, Msg –excerpts).

“This is what I intended from the beginning. But man introduced a curse on himself and perverted my plan. The consequences of sin and foolishness don’t seem apparent at the moment. Fun, so-called, now; pay later. You need to admit that you succumbed to this philosophy at one time.”

The rain had stopped, the claps of thunder fading into the distance. Solomon walked outside the cave, looking up as a few drops of water dripped on him from the boulder above the entrance. He would finish his journal in the coming months, and there would be fresh insights after spending time with the Great I AM.

But his admission of failure in the taking of many wives and concubines came as slowly as the dripping moisture. Jesus stepped outside, his silent presence as powerful as the storm had been.

“Lord of all Wisdom and Power, I know you see into my heart . . . and I know you speak the truth. And I must admit that I used sex and party-time to treat my despondency about the vexing and troublesome aspects of life: ‘Then I decided to spend my time having fun, because I felt that there was nothing better in all the earth than that a man should eat, drink, and be merry, with the hope that this happiness would stick with him in all the hard work which God gives to man everywhere.’ (Eccl. 8:15, LB).”

“And what did you conclude?” Jesus asked.

“I tempered my careless statement with a balancing one: ‘Young man, it’s wonderful to be young! Enjoy every minute of it! Do all you want to; take in everything, but realize that you must account to God for everything you do. So banish grief and pain, but remember that youth, with a whole life before it, can make serious mistakes. Don’t let the excitement of being young cause you to forget about your Creator.—’ | cont. page 9 >

The Quester

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By Jerry McClenagan
Continued from July '08
newsletter



This serialization of a forthcoming book, THE QUESTER, is creative nonfiction based upon my research into the writings of Solomon and the words and life of Jesus. I use not only the traditional KJV, NKJV and NIV, but have relied heavily on *The Message* to give a contemporary flavor to the ancient proverbs of Solomon as well as the NT quotes by and about Christ.

SCENE EIGHT

Then I decided to spend my time having fun, because I felt that there was nothing better in all the earth than that a man should eat, drink, and be merry, with the hope that this happiness would stick with him in all the hard work which God gives to mankind everywhere. —Solomon (Eccl. 8:15, Msg)

Anyone who even looks at a woman with lust in his eye has already committed adultery with her in his heart. — Jesus (Mt. 5:28, Msg)

The walk through the meadow, past the orchard, and through the field of maize was pleasant. The multicolored attire of the pheasant and the stylish fur of the raccoon brought a smile to the faces of Solomon and Jesus.

Solomon began quoting the words of his father David:

“What is man that you are mindful of him,
the son of man that you care for him?

You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.

You made him ruler over the works of your hands;

you put everything under his feet:
all flocks and herds,

and the beasts of the field,

the birds of the air,

and the fish of the sea,

all that swim the paths of the seas.

O LORD, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!” (Psalm 8:4-9, NIV)

He crossed his arms and bowed low before Jesus.

Jesus reached to Solomon and pulled him upright. “Worship me, you should, dear Solomon. It thrills me that you recognize who I am, and that you are growing in your insight—not only of what you have already written, but of me as your Savior and Lord.”

Tears flowed freely down Solomon’s face—unashamed tears, repentant tears, joyful tears.

Welcoming tears; his heart was ready for the Master’s lesson today.

“When I formed man from the dust and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, it was no dull, hapless, insignificant, lackluster life. I came, even at the beginning, to give man life, and that more abundantly. (Genesis 2:7; John 10:10 – KJV) That abundant life included sexual enjoyment: ‘Adam slept with Eve his wife. She conceived . . .’ (Gen. 4:1a, Msg). (Gen. 2:18-23, 25; 4:1.) I established this blessing within marriage: ‘Honor marriage, and guard the sacredness of sexual intimacy between wife and husband. God draws a firm line against casual and illicit sex’ (Hebrews 13:4, Msg).”

Jesus paused for a moment, giving Solomon an intense look. Then, with a tinge of sarcasm he asked, “You believed in marriage, didn’t you?”

Solomon blushed, not quite sure how to take Jesus’ question. He stammered, “I – I did. . . . Of course I did.”

A thunderstorm gathered a mile or so away. Distant thunder reverberated. | cont. page 11 >

Prayer Requests

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“ . . . The prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up; . . . Pray for one another that you may be healed.”
— James 5:15-16.



IF YOU HAVE UPDATES OR NEW REQUESTS PLEASE INFORM THE EDITOR. jerrydalemc@sbcglobal.net

Sheri Bartlett: Julia McKinney’s daughter, having serious health problems.

Debbie Blodgett: Friend of Candace Sellers, has been diagnosed with breast cancer.

Amber & Dylan Clark: Grandchildren of Betty Clark, cerebral palsy.

Vickie Crevoi: Sister of Linda Booth, Chronic Progressive MS.

Bob Fink: Larry Lyles’ daughter’s father-in-law, prostate cancer which has metastasized to the bone.

Paul Flatt: James Bailey’s brother-in-law, suffered a heart attack. He is undergoing alternative treatments.

Velvet Green: Suffers from schizophrenia.

Bobbie Gatson: Mother of Velvet Green, nerve and back problems making it difficult for her to walk.

Je Keishalyn Henley: Daughter of Velvet and Gary Green, is incarcerated and having health problems. Pray for an early release.

Benny Ray Hicks: Betty Clark’s daughter’s brother-in-law, diagnosed with leukemia.

Dollie Meil: She is suffering with cerebral palsy. She has been moved to the Plaza Nursing Center, Room 211-A, 4910 Emory, Lubbock, TX 79416, 806 744-7387.

Ted Rankin: He is having further difficulty with mobility and weakness. Tests showed he had increased brain lesions, indicating MS.

Kathryn Scott: Friend of the Baileys; severe MS, losing use of arms and swallowing ability.

Donnie Sehorn: Nephew of C.B. & Darrell, esophageal cancer. He has been moved to Childress Hospice.

Brad Sellers: James’ brother, involved in drugs; children removed by CPS.

Wilson Stewart: Diagnosed with prostate cancer, numbness and difficulty swallowing.

Jeanne Vincent: C.B. & Darrell Sehorn’s sister, breast cancer which has metastasized to the bone.

Ron Vorheis: Residing at Palo Duro Nursing Home, 403 Collins, Claude, TX 79019. He is suffering from macular degeneration & heart arrhythmia.

Celebrations

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BIRTHDAYS

Reba Bailey 8-10
 Ken Hamilton 8-09
 Savannah Sellers 8-18

ANNIVERSARIES

Candace & James Sellers 8-10
 Trish & Ken Hamilton 8-15
 Jody & Joe Kirkpatrick 8-15
 Martha & Jerry McClenagan 8-26

We will be converting our VHS/Cassette Tape outreach to CD and DVD only. In view of this, the church board has approved the purchase of a duplicator in addition to our other equipment. The cost is about \$1500. If you want to contribute to this need, you may do so by sending your donation to the church address on page 2, or dropping it into the offering plate at the back of the auditorium.



The Quester

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Cont. from pg. 11

The Master completed the statement: "Honor him in your youth before the evil years come—when you'll no longer enjoy living." (Eccl. 11:9-10; 11:1, LB). Parents need to be responsible with their children, teaching them: 'As obedient children, let yourselves be pulled into a way of life shaped by God's life, a life energetic and blazing with holiness' (1 Peter 1:15, Msg).

"That's the positive side of human energy and sexuality. 'It's trouble ahead if you're satisfied with yourself. Your *self* will not satisfy you for long. And it's trouble ahead if you think life's all fun and games. There's suffering to be met, and you're going to meet it' (Luke 6:25, Msg).

"Life is empty, as you discovered, outside of me. And life is short. But 'I am the resurrection and the life; I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly; he that has the Son has life!' (John 10:10)."

LifePoints for Teens

1. Life isn't fair . . . Get used to it!
2. The world won't care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something BEFORE you feel good about yourself.
3. You will most likely NOT make the big bucks right out of high school.
4. If you think your teacher is tough, wait 'till you get a boss.
5. Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity; your grandparents would have called it 'opportunity.'
6. If you mess up, it's not your parents' fault, so don't whine about your mistakes, learn from them.
7. Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they are now. They got that way from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes and listening to you talk about how cool you thought you were. So before you save the rain forest from the parasites of your parent's generation, try delousing the closet in your own room.
8. Life isn't divided into semesters and you don't get summers off.
9. Television soaps and sitcoms do not reflect real life; you'll actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to work.

P. S. READ 'THE QUESTER' THIS ISSUE, pg. 10. KEY WORD: SEX!

Heart Mirror



LORD AND MASTER, I WILL TAKE TIME THIS MONTH TO LOOK AT MY HEART MIRROR AND EXAMINE MYSELF IN RESPECT TO

MAKING DECISIONS

“Choose you this day . . . ,”the Lord said to Israel; “choose life” (Deut. 30:19). All my choices hinge on this basic principle. I must remember the wrong choice of Adam and Eve as a warning. I will meditate on:

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. ~James 1:23-25 (NKJV)

PLANS:

The thinking of principled people makes for justice; the plots of degenerates corrupt .

Prov 12:5 (MSG)

Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counselors they are established.

Prov 15:22 (NKJV)

Roll your works upon the Lord [commit and trust them wholly to Him; He will cause your thoughts to become agreeable to His will, and] so shall your plans be established and succeed.

Prov 16:3 (AMP)

We plan the way we want to live, but only God makes us able to live it. Prov 16:9 (MSG)

Form your purpose by asking for counsel, then carry it out using all the help you can get.

Prov 20:18 (MSG)

READ James 4: 13-15; 1:5-8

GUIDANCE:

You in Your mercy have led forth The people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them in Your strength To Your holy habitation. Ex 15:13 (NKJV)

If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey. Num 14:8 (NKJV)

Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; Make Your way straight before my face. Psalms 5:8 (NKJV)

For You are my rock and my fortress; Therefore, for Your name's sake, Lead me and guide me.

Psalms 31:3 (NKJV)

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; 24 And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting. Psalms 139:23-24 (NKJV)

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. Romans 8: 14 (NKJV)

READ PSALM 23

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the **unforced rhythms of grace**. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." ~ Jesus. Matt 11:28-30 (MSG)

GraceRhythms

GraceRhythms

MORE THAN MERE WORDS

"I will give you the sure mercies of David." [Acts 13:34](#)

Nothing of man is sure; but everything of God is so. Especially are covenant mercies sure mercies, even as David said “an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.”

We are sure that the Lord meant His mercy. He did not speak mere words: there is substance and truth in every one of His promises. His mercies are mercies indeed. Even if a promise seems as if it must drop through by reason of death, yet it never shall, for the good Lord will make good His word.

We are sure that the Lord will bestow promised mercies on all His covenanted ones. They shall come in due course to all the chosen of the Lord. They are sure to all the seed, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.

We are sure that the Lord will continue His mercies to His own people. He does not give and take. What He has granted us is the token of much more. That which we have not yet received is as sure as that which has already come; therefore, let us wait before the Lord and be still. There is no justifiable reason for the least doubt. God's love, and word, and faithfulness are sure. Many things are questionable, but of the Lord we sing- “For his mercies shall endure ever faithful, ever sure.”

—Faith's Checkbook

Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. Lam 3:22-23 (NKJV)



