



CHURCH OF GOD BANNER

www.onalaskachurchofgod.com



JULY, 2007

FIRST CHURCH OF GOD: 3RD. AVE. & HWY. 508 ONALASKA, WASHINGTON 98570

RED MARBLES

Author Unknown

I was at the corner grocery store buying some early potatoes. I noticed a small boy, delicate of bone and feature, ragged but clean, hungrily apprising a basket of freshly picked green peas. I paid for my potatoes but was also drawn to the display of fresh



green peas. I am a pushover for creamed peas and new potatoes. Pondering the peas, I couldn't help overhearing the conversation

between Mr. Miller (the store owner) and the ragged boy next to me.

"Hello Barry, how are you today?"

"H'lo, Mr. Miller. Fine, thank ya. Jus' admirin' them peas. They sure look good."

"They are good, Barry. How's your Ma?"

"Fine. Git tin' stronger alla' time."

"Good. Anything I can help you with?"

"No, Sir. Jus' admirin' them peas."

"Would you like to take some home?" asked Mr. Miller.

"No, Sir. Got nuthin' to pay for 'em with."

"Well, what have you to trade me for some of those peas?"

"All I got's my prize marble here."

"Is that right? Let me see it" said Miller.

"Here 'tis. She's a dandy."

"I can see that. HmMMMM, only

thing is this one is blue and I sort of go for red. Do you have a red one like this at home?" the store owner asked.

"Not zackley but almost."

"Tell you what. Take this sack of peas home with you and next trip this way let me look at that red marble". Mr. Miller told the boy.

"Sure will. Thanks Mr. Miller."

Mrs. Miller, who had been standing nearby, came over to help me. With a smile she said, "There are two other boys like him in our community, all three are in very poor circumstances. Jim just loves to bargain with them for peas, apples, tomatoes, or whatever. When they come back with their red marbles, and they always do, he decides he doesn't like red after all and he sends them home with a bag of produce for a green marble or an orange one, when they come on their next trip to the store."

I left the store smiling to myself, impressed with this man. A short time later I moved to Colorado, but I never forgot the story of this man, the boys, and their bartering for marbles.

Several years went by, each more rapid than the previous one. Just recently I had occasion to visit some old friends in that Idaho community and while I was there learned that Mr. Miller had died. They were having his visitation that evening and knowing my friends wanted to go, I agreed to accompany them. Upon arrival at the mortuary we fell into line to meet the relatives of the deceased and to offer whatever words of comfort we could.

Ahead of us in line were three

young men. One was in an army uniform and the other two wore nice haircuts, dark suits and white shirts...all very professional looking. They approached Mrs. Miller, standing composed and smiling by her husband's casket. Each of the young men hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, spoke briefly with her and moved on to the casket.

Her misty light blue eyes followed them as, one by one, each young man stopped briefly and placed his own warm hand over the cold pale hand in the casket. Each left the mortuary awkwardly, wiping his eyes. Our turn came to meet Mrs. Miller. I told her who I was and reminded her of the story from those many years ago and what she had told me about her husband's bartering for marbles. With her eyes glistening, she took my hand and led me to the casket. "Those three young men who just left were the boys I told you about. They just told me how they appreciated the things Jim "traded" them.

Now, at last, when Jim could not change his mind about color or size....they came to pay their debt." "We've never had a great deal of the wealth of this world," she confided, "but right now, Jim would consider himself the richest man in Idaho."

With loving gentleness she lifted the lifeless fingers of her deceased husband. Resting underneath were three exquisitely shined red marbles.



◆ *Received from Eva Dean Stone*

BLUE ROSES

By Pastor Hal Steenson

Why do I always have to be the one that starts to do laundry and there's no detergent? I guess it was time for me to do my "Dollar Store" run, which included light bulbs, paper towels, trash bags and Clorox. So off I go.

I scurried around the store, gathered up my goodies, and headed for the checkout counter only to be blocked in the narrow aisle by a young man that appeared to be about sixteen years old. I wasn't in a hurry, so I patiently waited for the boy to realize that I was there. This was when he waved his hands excitedly in the air and declared in a loud voice, "Mommy, I'm over here." It was obvious now, he was mentally challenged, and also startled as he turned and saw me standing so close to him, waiting to squeeze by. His eyes widened and surprise exploded on his face as I said, "Hey Buddy, what's your name?"

"My name is Denny and I'm shopping with my mother," he responded proudly.

"Wow," I said, "that's a cool name; I wish my name was Denny, but my name is Hal."

"Hal like Halloween?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered. "How old are you Denny?"

"How old am I now Mommy?" he asked his mother as she slowly came over from the next aisle. "You're fifteen years old Denny; now be a good boy and let the man pass by."

I acknowledged her and continued to talk to Denny for several more minutes about summer, bicycles and school. I watched his brown eyes dance with excitement because he was the center of someone's attention. He then abruptly turned and headed toward the toy section.

Denny's mom had a puzzled look on her face and thanked me for taking the time to talk with her son. She told me that most people wouldn't even look at him, much less talk to him. I told her that it was my pleasure and then I said something I have no idea where it came from, other than by the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

I told her that there are plenty of red, yellow and pink roses in God's garden, however, "Blue Roses" are very rare and should be appreciated for their beauty and distinctiveness. You see, Denny is a "Blue Rose" and if someone doesn't stop and smell that rose with their heart and touch that rose with their kindness, then they've missed a blessing from God.

She was silent for a second, then with a tear in her eye she asked, "Who are you?"

Without thinking I said, "Oh, I'm probably just a "daffodil or maybe even a dandelion," but I sure love living in God's garden.

Please the next time you see a BLUE ROSE don't turn your head and walk off, take the time to smile and say hello. Because but by the grace of GOD this mother could be you. This could be your child, grandchild, niece, nephew. What a difference a moment can mean to that person or their family.

◆ Received from Joe & Freda Downs

THE WHALE

If you read the front page story of the SF Chronicle (Dec. 2005), you would have read about a female humpback whale who had become entangled in a spider web of crab traps and lines.

She was weighted down by



hundreds of pounds of traps that caused her to struggle to stay afloat. She also had hundreds of yards of line rope wrapped around her body, her tail, her torso, a line tugging in her mouth.

A fisherman spotted her just east of the Farrallon Islands (outside the Golden Gate) and radioed an environmental group for help.

Within a few hours, the rescue team arrived and determined that she was so bad off, the only way to save her was to dive in and untangle her ... *A very dangerous proposition.*

One slap of the tail could kill a rescuer.

They worked for hours with curved knives and eventually freed her. When she was free, the divers say she swam in what seemed like joyous circles. She then came back to each and every diver, one at a time, and nudged them, pushed gently around, she thanked them. Some said it was the most incredibly beautiful experience of their lives.

The guy who cut the rope out of her mouth says her eye was following him the whole time, and he will never be the same.

*May you and all those you love,
Be so blessed and fortunate
To be surrounded by people
Who will help you get untangled
From the things that are binding
you.*

*And, may you always know the
joy
Of giving and receiving gratitude.*

◆ Received from Joe & Freda Downs

ONALASKA'S HAPPENINGS

SUNDAYS

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM
MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 AM

~

EVENING SING & PRAISE
SERVICE
6:00 PM

~

WEDNESDAYS

BIBLE STUDY
7:00 PM

~

SATURDAY, JULY 7

LADIES LUNCHEON
12:00 NOON

~

FRIDAY, JULY 13

ALL CHURCH GAME NIGHT
6:30 PM

~

SATURDAY, JULY 14

CHURCH
COUNCIL MEETING
10:00 AM

~

SUNDAY, JULY 15

FOOD BANK SUNDAY

~

SUNDAY, JULY 29

POTLUCK SUNDAY

COMMUNITY EVENTS

SENIORS ON THE GO
WEDNESDAY

JULY 18
12:00 NOON

~

AMERICAN LEGION
THURSDAY

JULY 19
7:00 PM

PNA EVENTS

FAMILY CAMP
AT
DOUBLE K

"EQUIP FOR MINISTRY"

JULY 15—JULY 21

~

JUNIOR CAMP
@

DOUBLE K
JULY 23—JULY 26

NO ONE IS WATCHING

Two guys who were not known for being overly smart were driving a delivery truck down a road when they came to a tunnel. The

sign said "Warning: Maximum Height 10 feet zero inches", so they got out and measured their truck. Unfortunately, the truck was just over 12 feet high.

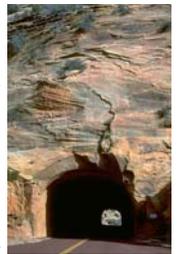
They didn't know what to do, when finally one of them looked both directions and said, "I don't see any police, let's go for it!."

As ridiculous as that sounds, there are many folks who take the same approach to sin. "If nobody sees us, then it's OK to go ahead and do it. We can get away with it!" But just as surely as driving a 12-foot high truck through a 10-foot clearance will result in bad stuff happening (even if no one is watching), so will involvement in sin result in negative consequences, even if no one is watching (of course, we know that God is always watching!)

Christopher Morgan a young man who came to Kid's Club several years ago is now in the Navy and he has asked that we pray for him that he might be faithful to God.

You can write him at:

S.R. MORGAN C.A.
2405 Sailor Dr.
Ship 07 Division 243
Great Lakes, IL 6008



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

SATURDAY, JULY 14

LEWIS & CLARK HIKING TRIP
10:00 AM
BRING A SACK LUNCH

~

MONDAY—THURSDAY

JULY 23—JULY 26
PNA JUNIOR CAMP

CLIFFORD SMITH



Clifford L. Smith who was a long time member of this church and served on the Church Council as a member and also Chairman of the Council passed away on Monday, June 25, 2007.

Cliff spent many hours doing maintenance work around the church and parsonage. It was

through Cliff's leadership that the loan for the parsonage was paid off. His wife Alene, played the organ and piano while they attended here.

THE POWER OF GOD'S GRACE

One night in a church service a young woman felt the tug of God at her heart. She responded to God's call and accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior.

The young woman had a very rough past, involving alcohol, drugs, and prostitution. But, the change in her was evident. As time went on she became a faithful member of the church. She eventually became involved in the ministry, teaching young children. It was not very long until this faithful young woman had caught the eye and heart of the pastor's son. The relationship grew and they began to make wedding plans.

This is when the problems began. You see, about one half of the church did not think that a woman with a past such as hers was suitable for a pastor's son. The church began to argue and fight about the matter. So they decided to have a meeting.

As the people made their arguments and tensions increased, the meeting was getting completely out of hand. The young woman became very upset about all the things being brought up about her past. As she began to cry the pastor's son stood to speak. He could not bear the pain it was causing his wife to be. He began to speak and his statement was this:

"My fiancée's past is not what is on trial here.

What you are questioning is the ability of the blood of Jesus to wash away sin. Today you have put the blood of Jesus on trial. So, does it wash away sin or not?"

The whole church began to weep as they realized that they had been slandering the blood of

the Lord Jesus Christ.

Too often, even as Christians, we bring up the past and use it as a weapon against our brothers and sisters. Forgiveness is a very foundational part of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the blood of Jesus does not cleanse the other person completely then it cannot cleanse us completely. If that is the case, then we are all in a lot of trouble. What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! End of case!!!!

Psalm 103:12 (KJV) *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*

◆ Received from Joe Downs

FREEDOM AND BOUNDARIES

by Os Hillman

Now the serpent was craftier than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" ~ Genesis 3:1

God is big on giving man freedom and boundaries—freedom to manage what He has entrusted to us, boundaries to protect us from evil. The boundaries in the Garden of Eden were not set for the purpose of limiting Adam. Man got into trouble when he questioned those boundaries. God had provided everything he would need for life. He also entrusted man with responsibility to manage and work the Garden. God gave him freedom in that responsibility. God knows we were made to express ourselves creatively through our work.

Each of us must have freedom and boundaries in our work life. Whenever you are hired for a

job, you must have the freedom to make certain decisions. You must have the authority to manage things within your area of expertise. You must also have limits within your area of responsibility. You need to know where those limits are and stay within them. Both freedom and boundaries are always under the umbrella of God's authority and our authorities at work.

Jesus understood these boundaries. When He was tempted for 40 days by the devil after being baptized, He was challenged by Satan to go outside His freedom and boundaries. (See Matthew 4:1-11.) Satan said that He had the power to turn a stone into bread. Jesus was hungry and easily could have justified using His power to feed Himself. However, Jesus understood He could do nothing outside the boundaries of God's will for His life. It was God's will for Jesus to be tempted and to withstand the temptation. God was showing His Son that "man does not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4).

You and I are tempted every day to go beyond our God-ordained boundaries. Whether it is solving financial problems that have arisen through debt, making wrong decisions due to pressure, or manipulating someone in order to achieve our ends, it all represents rebellion toward God.

Ask God to show you His freedom and boundaries for your life. These are meant to enhance your life, not hinder it.

Reprinted by permission from the author. Os Hillman is an international speaker and author of more than 8 books on workplace calling. To learn more, visit <http://www.MarketplaceLeaders.org>

Q
U
I
Z



Once again I was able to stump everyone with last month's quiz.

The answer was Adam, Eve and Melchisedec. The story of Adam and Eve is found in the first two chapters of Genesis and Melchisedec is found in the seventh chapter of Hebrews.

There will be no quiz this month.

GOD IS AT THE WINDOW!

There was a little boy visiting his grandparents on their farm. He was given a slingshot to play with out in the woods. He practiced in the woods; but he could never hit the target. Getting a little discouraged, he headed back for dinner.

As he was walking back he saw Grandma's pet duck. Just out of impulse, he let the slingshot fly, hit the duck square in the head and killed it. He was shocked and grieved!



In a panic, he hid the dead duck in the wood pile; only to see his sister watching! Sally had seen it all, but she said nothing.

After lunch the next day Grandma said, "Sally, let's wash the dishes"

But Sally said, "Grandma, Johnny told me he wanted to help in the kitchen." Then she whispered to him, "Remember the duck?" So Johnny did the dishes.

Later that day, Grandpa asked if the children wanted to go fishing and Grandma said, "I'm sorry but I need Sally to help make supper."

Sally just smiled and said, "Well that's all right because Johnny told me he wanted to help" She whispered again, "Remember the duck?" So Sally went fishing and Johnny stayed to help.

After several days of Johnny doing both his chores and Sally's; he finally couldn't stand it any longer.

He came to Grandma and confessed that he had killed the duck. Grandma knelt down, gave him a hug and said, "Sweetheart, I know. You see, I was standing at the window and I saw the whole thing, but because I love you, I forgave you. I was just wondering how long you would let Sally make a slave of you."

Thought for the day and every day thereafter?

Whatever is in your past, whatever you have done... And the devil keeps throwing it up in your face (lying, cheating, debt, fear, bad habits, hatred, anger, bitterness, etc.) whatever it is...You need to know that God was standing at the window and He saw the whole thing. He has seen your whole life. He wants you to know that He loves you and that you are forgiven. He's just wondering how long you will let the devil make a slave of you.

The great thing about God is that when you ask for forgiveness; He not only forgives you, but He forgets. It is by God's grace and mercy that we are saved.

◆ Received from Jude Cooper

LIVING IN A RUT

"We've always done it this way." Does the phrase ring any bells? The U.S. standard railroad gauge (the distance between the rails) is 4' 8.5". That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built railroads in England, and British expatriates built the U.S. railroads.

Why did the British build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used. Why did they use that gauge? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools they used for building wagons, which is that wheel spacing.

Okay, why did they wagons have that particular wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on the old long distance roads in Great Britain, because that's the spacing of the

wheel ruts. So who built those old rutted roads? Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe and England for their legions. Those roads are still in use today. And the ruts in the roads? Roman war chariots formed those initial ruts that everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels because chariots made for Imperial Rome were all alike in the matter of their wheel spacing.

The United States standard railroad gauge of 4' 8.5" is exactly the same specification as a Roman war chariot. The next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horses butt came up with it, you may be exactly right, because the Imperial Roman war chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses.



To bring the story to the present; when you see a space shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters (SRB's) manufactured only by Thiokol at their factory in Utah. The engineers who designed the SRB's would have preferred to make them wider, but the SRB's have to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains. The SRB's have to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is only slightly wider than the railroad track, which is as wide as two horses backsides. So, a major space shuttle design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of two horses backsides. See where being in a rut can get you when there is no change in over a period of two thousand years!

◆ Received from Susan Olsen