



CHURCH OF GOD BANNER



www.onalaskachurchofgod.com

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

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

By Author Unknown

A story is told about a soldier who was finally coming home after having fought in Vietnam. He called his parents from San Francisco.

"Mom and Dad, I'm coming home, but I've a favor to ask. I have a friend I'd like to bring home with me."

"Sure," they replied, "we'd love to meet him."

"There's something you should know the son continued, "he was hurt pretty badly in the fighting. He stepped on a land mine and lost an arm and a leg. He has nowhere else to go, and I want him to come live with us."

"I'm sorry to hear that, son. Maybe we can help him find somewhere to live."

"No, Mom and Dad, I want him to live with us."

"Son," said the father, "you don't know what you're asking. Someone with such a handicap would be a terrible burden on us. We have our own lives to live, and we can't let something like this interfere with our lives. I think you should just come home and forget about this guy. He'll find a way to live on his own."

At that point, the son hung up the phone. The parents heard nothing more from him.

A few days later, however, they received a call from the San Francisco police. Their son had died after falling from a building, they were told. The police believed it was suicide. The grief-stricken parents flew to San Francisco and were taken to the city morgue to identify the body of their son. They recognized him, but to their horror they also discovered something they didn't know, their son had only one arm and one leg.

The parents in this story are like many of us. We find it easy to love those who are good-looking or fun to have around, but we don't like people who inconvenience us or make us feel uncomfortable. We would rather stay away from people who aren't as healthy, beautiful, or smart as we are. Thankfully, there's someone who won't treat us that way. Someone who loves us with an unconditional love that welcomes us into the forever family, regardless of how messed up we are.

Romans 5:8 (NLT) *But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.*

THE SHADOW OF DEATH

The painting, "The Shadow of Death" by Holman Hunt, depicts the inside of the car-

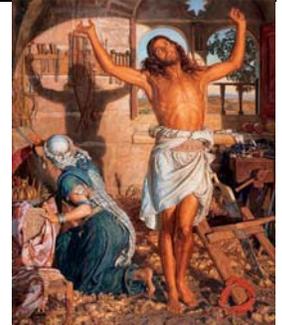
pentner's shop in Nazareth. Stripped to the waist, Jesus stands by a wooden trestle on which he

has put down his saw. He lifts his eyes towards heaven, and the look on his face is one of either pain or ecstasy or both. He also stretches, raising both arms above his head. As he does so, the evening sunlight streaming through the open door casts a dark shadow in the form of a cross on the wall behind him, where his tool-rack looks like a horizontal bar on which his hands have been crucified. The tools themselves remind us of the fateful hammer and nails.

In the left foreground a woman kneels among the wood chippings, her hands resting on the chest in which the rich gifts of the Wise men are kept... She looks startled (or so it seems) at her son's cross-like shadow on the wall...

From Jesus' youth, indeed from his birth, the cross cast its shadow ahead of him. His death was central to his mission.

⇒ (*THE CROSS OF CHRIST*; John R. W. Stott pg 17)



SAYING GRACE

by Unknown Author

Last week, I took my children to a [restaurant](#).

My six-year-old son asked if he could say grace.

As we bowed our heads he said, "God is good, God is great. Thank you for the food, and I would even thank you more if Mom gets us ice cream for dessert. And Liberty and justice for all! Amen!"



Along with the laughter from the other customers nearby, I heard a woman remark, "That's what's wrong with this country. Kids today don't even know how to pray. Asking

God for ice cream! Why, I never!"

Hearing this, my son burst into tears and asked me, "Did I do it wrong? Is God mad at me?"

As I held him and assured him that he had done a terrific [job](#), and God was certainly not mad at him, an elderly gentleman approached the table. He winked at my son and said, "I happen to know that [God thought](#) that was a great prayer."

"Really?" my son asked.

"Cross my heart," the man replied.

Then, in a theatrical whisper, he added (indicating the woman whose remark had started this whole thing), "Too bad she never asks God for ice cream. A little ice cream is good for the soul sometimes."

Naturally, I bought my kids ice cream at the end of the meal. My son stared at his for a moment, and then did something I will remember the rest of my life.

He picked up his sundae and, without a word, walked over and placed it in front of the woman. With a big smile he told her, "Here, this is for you. Ice cream is good for the soul sometimes; and my soul is good already."

A MODERN SHEPHERD

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

John 10:11 (NLT)

A small drama that took place on the slopes of Washington's Mount Rainier may shed light on the meaning of the "good shepherd." One Memorial Day weekend a Christian dentist named James Reddick was teaching his 12-year-old daughter and 11-year-old son the joy of



mountain hiking. A sudden storm came up, battering them with hurricane-force winds and thick, wet sheets of snow. A blinding "whiteout" made it impossible to see or

move on the steep slopes.

Reddick laboriously dug an oblong trench with an aluminum mess kit, then tucked his children into sleeping bags away from the entrance. He covered the opening with a tarp, but it kept blowing away, exposing the trench to the swirling snow outside. Reddick found he had to lie directly across the opening, using his own weight to hold down the edges of the tarp. His body protected his son and daughter from the howling wind.



Two days passed before searchers finally noticed the corner of a backpack protruding from deep snow. They rushed to the site, hoping the snow-covered mound would contain the three missing hikers. Inside, they found Sharon and David Reddick, very much alive. But the stiff body of their father lay against one wall of the snow cave. He had "taken the cold spot," in one searcher's words, by using his own back as the outer wall.

"As a new year dawns, we stand before an open door. Looking through its arch, we see all things new. Behind us the door is closing, closing forever sealed to everything but our memories."

ALASKA'S HAPPENINGS

MORNING WORSHIP 8:15 AM & 11:00 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM

MONDAYS

LADIES BIBLE STUDY
2:00 PM

WEDNESDAYS

SOUP & SANDWICHES
6:00 PM

BIBLE STUDY
6:30 PM

TUESDAY, JANUARY 8th

LADIES LUNCHEON
12:00 NOON

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12th

MEN'S BREAKFAST
AT KIMBERLY'S CAFÉ
8:00 AM

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
9:30 AM

SUNDAY, JANUARY 20th

FOOD BANK SUNDAY

COMMUNITY EVENTS

TUESDAYS

AL-ANON MEETING
6:00 PM

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5th

SCRAP BOOKING
10:00 AM

MONDAY, JANUARY 14th

TEA & PRAISE
@
SALKUM CHURCH OF THE
BRETHERN
10:00 AM

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY

16th

SENIORS ON THE GO
12:00 NOON

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17th

AMERICAN LEGION
6:00 PM

PNA EVENTS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30th

NORTHWEST WESLEYAN
HOLINESS PASTORS' DAY
9:00 AM

@

AURORA CHURCH OF THE NAZA-
RENE

1900 North 175th Street,
Shoreline, WA

**ASSOCIATE PASTOR
COMMITTEE**

Please keep our Associate Pas-
tor Committee in prayer as they
seeks God's will in developing a
Job Description for an Associate
Pastor.

THE HUG

Don Graham

In the fall of the year, Linda,
a young woman, was travel-
ing alone up the rutted and
rugged highway from Alberta
to the Yukon. Linda didn't
know you don't travel to
Whitehorse alone in a run-
down Honda Civic, so she set
off where only four-wheel
drives normally venture. The
first evening she found a
room in the mountains near a
summit and asked for a 5
A.M. wakeup call so she

could get an early start. She
couldn't understand why the
clerk looked surprised at that
request, but as she awoke to
early-morning fog shrouding the
mountain tops, she understood.

Not wanting to look foolish,
she got up and went to break-
fast. Two truckers invited Linda
to join them, and since the
place was so small, she felt
obliged. "Where are you head-
ed?" one of the truckers asked.

'Whitehorse'

"In that little Civic? No way!
This pass is DANGEROUS in
weather like this."

"Well, I'm determined to try,"
was Linda's gutsy, if not very in-
formed, response.

"Then I guess we're just going
to have to hug you," the trucker
suggested.

Linda drew back. "There's no
way I'm going to let you touch
me!"

"Not like THAT!" the truckers
chuckled. "We'll put one truck in
front of you and one in the rear.
In that way, we'll get you
through the mountains."

All that
foggy
morning
Linda fol-
lowed the
two red
dots in front
of her and had the reassurance
of a big escort behind as they
made their way safely through
the mountains.

Caught in the fog in our dan-
gerous passage through life, we
need to be "hugged." With fel-
low Christians who know the
way and can lead safely ahead
of us, and with others behind,
gently encouraging us along,
we, too, can pass safely.



All that
foggy
morning
Linda fol-
lowed the
two red
dots in front

A FATHER'S HAND

My son Gilbert was eight years old and had been in Cub Scouts only a short time. During one of his meetings he was handed a sheet of paper, a block of wood and four tires and told to return home and give all to "dad."

That was not an easy task for Gilbert to do. Dad was not receptive to doing things with his son. But Gilbert tried. Dad read the paper and scoffed at the idea of making a pine wood derby car with his young, eager son.

The block of wood remained untouched as the weeks passed. Finally, mom stepped in to see if I could figure this all out. The project began. Having no carpentry skills, I decided it would be best if I simply read the directions and let Gilbert do the work. And he did. I read aloud the measurements, the rules of what we could do and what we couldn't do.

Within days his block of wood was turning into a pine wood derby car. A little lopsided, but looking great (at least through the eyes of mom). Gilbert had not seen any of the other kids cars and was feeling pretty proud of his "Blue Lightning," the pride that comes with knowing you did something on your own.

Then the big night came. With his blue pine wood derby in his hand and pride in his heart we headed to the big race. Once there my little one's pride turned to humility. Gilbert's car was obviously the

only car made entirely on his own. All the other cars were a father-son partnership, with cool paint jobs and sleek body styles made for speed.

A few of the boys giggled, as they looked at Gilbert's, lopsided, wobbly, unattractive vehicle. To add to the humility, Gilbert was the only boy without a man at his side. A couple of the boys who were from single parent homes at least had an uncle or grandfather by their side, Gilbert had "mom."

As the race began it was done in elimination fashion. You kept racing as long as you were the winner. One by one the cars raced down the finely sanded ramp. Finally it was between Gilbert and the sleekest, fastest looking car



there. As the last race was about to begin, my wide-eyed, shy, eight year old ask if they could stop the race for a minute, because he wanted to pray.

The race stopped.

Gilbert hit his knees clutching his funny looking block of wood between his hands. With a wrinkled brow he set to converse with his Father. He prayed in earnest for a very long minute and a half. Then he stood, smile on his face

and announced, 'Okay, I am ready.'

As the crowd cheered, a boy named Tommy stood with his father as their car sped down the ramp. Gilbert stood with his Father within his heart and watched his block of wood wobble down the ramp with surprisingly great speed and rushed over the finish line a fraction of a second before Tommy's car.

Gilbert leaped into the air with a loud "Thank you" as the crowd roared in approval. The Scout Master came up to Gilbert with microphone in hand and asked the obvious question, "So you prayed to win, huh, Gilbert?" To which my young son answered, "Oh, no sir. That wouldn't be fair to ask God to help you beat someone else. I just asked Him to make it so I don't cry when I lose."

Children seem to have wisdom far beyond us. Gilbert didn't ask God to win the race; he didn't ask God to fix the outcome. Gilbert asked God to give him strength in the outcome. When Gilbert first saw the other cars he didn't cry out to God, "No fair, they had a fathers help." No, he went to his Father for strength.

Perhaps we spend too much of our prayer time asking God to rig the race, to make us number one, or too much time asking God to remove us from the struggle, when we should be seeking God's strength to get through the struggle. *"I can do everything through Him who gives me strength."* **Philippians 4:13**

Q
U
I
Z



We have had several people come up with the correct answer to last month's quiz. I guess I made it too easy. Ruth Bushnell was the first closely followed by Kathleen Mulkins, Katie Jackson, Norma Gift and Jim Mulkins. The answer is found in the 31st chapter of Genesis, where Rachel had taken the family idol and had hid it by setting on it while her father Laban looked for it.

Here is this month's quiz.

*Please give me my mountain I said to him,
The mountain that God will help me win
So he gave me my mountain as I had been told
That I would receive it for being so bold.*

*Now who will help me this mountain to win
My daughter for a wife I'll give to him.
He was very quick to answer my call
And before his sword the enemy did fall.*

*Its my name you need to know
But there's two more names yet to go
The name of the one I gave away
And his name who help save the day.*

*Everyone who comes up with the answer the month
Will have a candy bar to crunch
It not hard their names are there
So don't give up and don't despair.*

LOSING WEIGHT

A woman walked into her bathroom at home. As she did, she saw her husband weighing himself on the bathroom scales, sucking in his stomach. The woman thought to herself, "He thinks that he will weigh less by sucking in his stomach." So, the woman rather sarcastically said to her husband, "That's not going to help." Her husband said, "Sure it will. It's the only way I can see the numbers."



DAD'S RESOLUTION

Last year when I called my parents to wish them a happy New Year, my dad answered the phone. "Well, Dad, what's your New Year's resolution?" I asked him. "To make your mother as happy as I can all year," he answered proudly. Then mom got on, and I said, "What's your resolution, Mom?" "To see that your dad keeps his.



THE RECIPE

I heard about a husband who really enjoyed the meat his wife had served for dinner one night. He asked her, "What did you

marinate this in?" Well, his wife immediately went into a long explanation about how she loved him and how life wouldn't be the same without him, and so on. Eventually, his puzzled expression made her interrupt her answer with a question of her own: "Why did you ask me that?" When he told her, she chuckled and said, "I thought you asked me if I would marry you again" As she left the room, he called out, "Well, would you marry me again?" Without hesitation, she replied, "Vinegar and barbecue sauce."



GRANDPA AND MANNERS

"Grandpa, I'm really proud of you," said the modish young lady.

"What's to be proud of?" asked the old man.



The young lady replied, "I noticed that when you sneeze, you've learned to put your hand in front of your mouth."

"Of course," explained Grandpa.

"How else can I catch my teeth???"