



CHURCH OF GOD BANNER



www.onalaskachurchofgod.com

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

A SOLDIERS LOVE

During the month of February we celebrate Valentine's Day; showing our love for others. This month I am sharing stories of different ways we show love to others. Some of these stories you may remember. This first story is one of the very first stories I shared in my early Newsletters.

HIS NAME IS BILL

His Name is Bill. He has wild hair, wears a T-shirt with holes in it, jeans and no shoes. This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of college. He is brilliant, kind of esoteric and very, very bright. He became a Christian while attending college.

Across the street from the campus is a well-dressed, very conservative church. They want to develop a ministry to the students, but are not sure how to go about it. One day Bill decides to



go there. He walks in with no shoes, jeans, his T-shirt, and wild hair. The service has already started and so Bill starts down the aisle looking for a seat. The church is completely packed and he can't find a seat. By now people are looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything. Bill gets closer and closer and closer to the pulpit and when he realizes there are no seats, he just squats down right on the carpet. (Although perfectly acceptable behavior

at a college fellowship, trust me, this had never happened in this church before!) By now the people are really uptight, and the tension in the air is thick.

About this time, the minister realizes that from way at the back of the church, a deacon is slowly making his way toward Bill. Now the deacon is in his eighties, had silver-gray hair, a three-piece suit, and a pocket watch. A godly man, very elegant, very dignified, very courtly. He walks with a cane and as he starts walking toward this boy, everyone is saying to themselves, "You can't blame him for what he's going to do. How can you expect man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid on the floor?" It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy. The church is utterly silent except for the clicking of the man's cane. All eyes are focused on him. You can't even hear anyone breathing. The people are thinking, the minister can't even preach the sermon until the deacon does what he has to do. And now they see this elderly man drop his cane on the floor. With great difficulty he lowers himself and sits down next to Bill and worships with him so he won't be alone. Everyone chokes up with emotion. When the minister gains control he says, "What I'm about to preach, you will never remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget."

◇ It is the story told by Rebecca Manley Pippert in her book, "OUT OF THE SALTSHAKER."

Ever have those moments when God interrupts you? When he reaches down and shakes your face and silences you?

I do. I had one of those moments a couple weeks ago, when I read a segment of an NBC News broadcast about the emergency military triage facilities in Iraq. This piece (which aired March 1) shared the story of two Iraqi insurgents being treated at Camp Speicher. A U.S. helicopter had fired on them as they were placing an explosive device on a nearby road, and one of the men was on the brink of death. He needed 30 pints of blood if he was going to live. Since the base's supply of blood was inadequate, a call went out for volunteer donors.

And this is what silences me: dozens of G.I.'s responded. Dozens of American soldiers willingly



gave of their own blood so an Iraqi rebel (who had been wounded while plotting their harm) could have another shot at life. They showed him—their enemy—much more than mercy and grace. They showed him love.

◇ Received from Kathleen Mulkins

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MOMMA AND THE WHITE MAN

The first time I saw a white man, I was in church in our Alabama parish in the middle of August and it was very, very hot. The preacher rambled on, his fire and brimstone sermon seasoned with an occasional Hallelujah from our sweaty congregation. I was daydreaming about the Sunday feast that we would have after church. This was a reward for sitting through 2 hours of preaching.

But that Sunday everything changed for me. In the middle of his Bible-thumping, fist clenched exuberance, the reverend stopped. The silence caught me by surprise and at first I thought maybe he knew I wasn't listening. I looked at the pulpit; to see him standing there with an expression of disgust, staring at the back of the church as if the devil himself had just entered...I turned to see.

There, leaning against the front doors of our church, our pure-black church was a drifter, a skinny, disheveled, white drifter. This man, this invader of our sacred space, stood before us in all his unholiness. His ragged clothes seemed to hang on him and his face looked pasty and sunken, like a man waiting for death. Worst of all, he had entered our church barefoot, his blistered, bloody feet staining our holy wood floor.

We were still. He walked down the center aisle with slow, deliberate steps. His legs looked fragile and weak and his hunched back made him look as though he carried the world on his shoulders.

"Pardon me, Reverend", he said as he removed his hat and seated himself in the front pew. The preacher looked around the congregation and then at Mr. Jackson, our layman, who barely acknowledged the man before

turning away. Looking down at the bloody floor, the reverend shook his head. He glanced at the drifter for just a second and with a roll of his eyes, picked up where he had left off.

The man glanced at the stained floor and bowed his head, ashamed. I was confused by the preacher's reaction. I had never really listened to the Sunday sermons, but bits and pieces I had picked up had taught me that God wanted us to be kind to others. And yet here, in the place that this preacher called "God's house," I was witness to a stranger in need being passed over.

Then, to my right, Momma rose. Clutching her good Sunday kerchief, she walked straight to the church's christening bowl. The reverend stopped speaking. Taking the pitcher of water that the reverend himself had been



drinking from during his sermon, she stepped down to the front pew. "Be not ashamed, my brother," said Momma, kneeling in front of the man. I leaned forward and watched as she filled the christening bowl with the water, and then, dunking her kerchief, she bathed the man's feet. I could see the man's face as he began to cry.

Engrossed in the miracle that I had just witnessed, I had forgotten about dinner by the time Momma returned to her seat. I had seen Momma through different eyes that day. Like Rosa Parks walking to the front of the bus, Momma had challenged the racism that surrounded her. Like Susan B. Anthony, taking

charge when it was necessary, Momma had showed me the strength of a woman's actions. And, like the Good Samaritan helping a stranger in need, Momma had gone to the aid of another in need of kindness.

That hot Alabama Sunday, Momma showed me not only who she was, but who I was. In one day, she set a lifelong example, paving a road for her only daughter to walk down proudly. As an African American, as a woman, as a Christian.

This mother taught a lesson by example that could not be taught any other way. Isn't that the way God expects us to teach others. Yes, we use words, but we add conviction and power to the lessons with the way we live our lives. *Received from Stories of Encouragement*

WINTER'S KISS

Mary Warner

*Lord what a wondrous world I see,
Snow drifting down so gleefully,
Wild geese take to wing tonight,
And the world is bathed in pure delight,*

*Your hand fashioned each falling flake,
How I love all the things that You make,
The blanket of white is absolute bliss,
You, Lord, ordained this frosty kiss,*

*Oh wondrous day my Savior designed,
Holy moment that is solely mine,
The geese honk on the frozen lake,
Joyfully chasing each falling flake,*

*Lord what a wondrous world I see,
Snow drifting down so gleefully,
Wild geese take to wing tonight,
And the world is bathed in pure delight,*

*Oh Wondrous day my Savior designed,
He laced the snow over every pine,
He colors each scene here below,
Sprinkling delight in the falling snow.*

ONALASKA'S HAPPENINGS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP AND SERVICE

SUNDAYS

MORNING WORSHIP 8:15 am
& 11:00 am
SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:45 am

~

MONDAY'S

BIBLE STUDY: DANIEL: 1:00 pm

~

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 10th

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:
9:30 am

~

LADIES LUNCHEON: 11:00 am

~

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12th

TEA & PRAISE: 10:00 am
@

ONALASKA SEVENTH DAY
ADVENTIST CHURCH

~

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18th

FOOD BANK SUNDAY

~

VALENTINE LUNCHEON
FOLLOWING THE 11:00 am SERVICE

~

COMMUNITY EVENTS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15th

AMERICAN LEGION: 6:00 pm
@

COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

~

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21st

SENIORS ON THE GO: 12:00 NOON

~

BIG MUD PUDDLES & YELLOW DANDELIONS

When I look at a patch of dandelions, I see a bunch of weeds



and blowing white fluff you can wish on.

When I look at an old drunk and he smiles at me, I see a smelly, dirty person who probably wants money and I look away. My kids see someone smiling at them and they smile back.

When I hear music I love, I know I can't carry a tune and don't have much rhythm so I sit self-consciously and listen. My kids feel the beat and move to it. They sing out the words. If they don't know them, they make up their own.

that are going to take over my yard. My kids see flowers for Mom

When I feel wind on my face, I brace myself against it. I feel it messing up my hair and pulling me back when I walk. My kids close their eyes, spread their arms and fly with it, until they fall to the ground laughing.

When I pray, I say thee and thou and grant me this, give me that. My kids say, "Hi God! Thanks for my toys and my friends. Please keep the bad dreams away tonight. Sorry, I don't want to go to Heaven yet. I would miss my Mommy and Daddy."

When I see a mud puddle I step around it. I see



muddy shoes and dirty carpets. My kids sit in it. They see dams to build, rivers to cross and worms to play with.

I wonder if we are given kids to teach or to learn from? No wonder God loves the little children!!

Enjoy the little things in life, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.

I wish you **BIG MUD PUDDLES and SUNNY YELLOW DANDELIONS**

◇ Revived from Susan Olsen

RECEIVED BUT NEVER OPENED

When Elizabeth married the famous poet Robert Browning, her parents were so upset they disowned her. She and her husband settled far from home in Florence, Italy. Elizabeth loved her mother and father and did everything she could to be reconciled with them. Several times a month she wrote expressive, loving letters. After 10 years without any response, finally, a package came from her parents. It was a happy moment for Elizabeth as she opened it. But inside she found all of the letters she had sent- unopened. Like her husband, Elizabeth was a poet and her letters of reconciliation were eloquent. They have been called "some of the most beautiful and expressive in all English literature." But her parents never read them.



Jesus Christ, like Elizabeth, went to extreme measures in a reconciliation attempt. He died so sinful men could be reconciled to God. It breaks his heart that many refuse to even read the letter of Calvary's love....

A VALENTINE STORY

John Blanchard stood up from the bench, straightened his Army uniform, and studied the crowd of people making their way through Grand Central Station. He looked for the girl whose heart he knew, but whose face he didn't, the girl with the rose.

His interest in her had begun thirteen months before in a Florida library. Taking a book off the shelf he found himself intrigued, not with the words of the book, but with the notes penciled in the margin. The soft handwriting reflected a thoughtful soul and insightful mind. In the front of the book, he discovered the previous owner's name, Miss Hollis Maynell.

With time and effort he located her address. She lived in New York City. He wrote her a letter introducing himself and inviting her to correspond. The next day he was shipped overseas for service in World War II. During the next year and one month the two grew to know each other through the mail. Each letter was a seed falling on a fertile heart. A romance was budding. Blanchard requested a photograph, but she refused. She felt that if he really cared, it wouldn't matter what she looked like. When the day finally came for him to return from Europe, they scheduled their first meeting - 7:00 PM at the Grand Central Station in New York. "You'll recognize me," she wrote, "by the red



rose I'll be wearing on my lapel."

So at 7:00 he was in the station looking for a girl whose heart he

loved, but whose face he'd never seen. I'll let Mr. Blanchard tell you what happened: A young woman was coming toward me, her figure long and slim. Her blonde hair lay back in curls from her delicate ears; her eyes were blue as flowers. Her lips and chin had a gentle firmness, and in her pale green suit she was like springtime come alive. I started toward her, entirely forgetting to notice that she was not wearing a rose. As I moved, a small provocative smile curved her lips. "Going my way, sailor?" she murmured.

Almost uncontrollably I made one step closer to her, and then I saw Hollis Maynell. She was standing almost directly behind the girl. A woman well past 40, she had graying hair tucked under a worn hat. She was more than plump, her thick-ankled feet thrust into low-heeled shoes. The girl in the green suit was walking quickly away. I felt as though I was split in two, so keen was my desire to follow her, and yet so deep was my longing for the woman whose spirit had truly companioned me and upheld my own. And there she stood. Her pale, plump face was gentle and sensible, her gray eyes had a

warm and kindly twinkle. I did not hesitate. My fingers gripped the small worn blue leather copy of the book that was to identify me to her. This would not be love, but it would be something precious, something perhaps even better than love, a friendship for which I had been and must ever be grateful. I squared my shoulders and saluted and held out the book to the woman, even though while I spoke I felt choked by the bitterness of my disappointment. "I'm Lieutenant John Blanchard, and you must be Miss Maynell. I am so glad you could meet me; may I take you to dinner?"

The woman's face broadened into a tolerant smile. "I don't know what this is about, son," she answered, "but the young lady in the green suit who just went by, she begged me to wear this rose on my coat. And she said if you were to ask me out to dinner, I should go and tell you that she is waiting for you in the big restaurant across the street. She said it was some kind of test!"

It's not difficult to understand and admire Miss Maynell's wisdom. The true nature of a heart is seen in its response to the unattractive. "Tell me whom you love," Houssaye wrote, "And I will tell you who you are."

*Happy Valentine's Day
Special thanks to Kathy Ragsdale for this
submission.*

***Love is like a lizard
It wraps it's self
Around your heart
And nibbles at you gizzard***

Q
U
I
Z



The answer to last month's quiz is found in the 17th chapter of Judges. The name of the man is Micah. No one has come up with the answer.

*I had a dream so long ago
I didn't know which way to go
I needed someone to tell me what
to do
So I would be faithful and true.*

*Within the dream my answer
came
And it relieved me of my pain
And so I took the stand of bold
And did exactly what I was told*

*I have no gift or prize to give
Except the prize of answering the
quiz
So it my name I want to know
So tell me quick don't be slow*

GET A GRIP – DIGGING DEEPER

One of the easiest ways to start digging deeper is to compare and contrast the different translations of the Bible. Where they are the same, the translators (or teams of translators) had no problem discerning what the original writer (directed by God) intended the original audience (readers) to understand. The greater the difference, the greater the problems and greater the variation of word use.

For example I will use just the King James and the New International Version of 1 John 3:1:

Behold, what manner of love

*the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the **sons** of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. **John 3:1 (KJV)***



*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called **children** of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. **1 John 3:1 (NIV)***

Note that the King James says we should be called "sons" but the New International says "children". Many people bridle that it was translated "sons" and prefer the more inclusive "children". When I was taking Greek (and I'll show how you don't have to be a Greek scholar to get the same insight), I decided to look up the original word. This can be done using a Strong's Exhaustive Concordance and cross referencing to the Greek words. Strong's says "son" but also indicated it's a generic offspring term. What clinched the argument for the use of "sons" instead of "children" for me was the articles attached to the original. Greek, unlike English, uses male, female and neutral articles with their nouns. When I first concluded this, the female in me was crushed. But then, something prompted me to look further – at the social, economic, cultural setting in which the original was written (1st century A.D.) and translated into King James. I am convinced that translating "children" weakens the power of what John (and our Father) was

trying to convey.

In the first century (and most proceeding it), male children were valued and females were not. They might all have been loved, but not all valued. So low was the value that there was a practice of leaving infant girls (especially if they were the first born) out to die of exposure. The attitude was not as bad during the 1600's (King James time) but males were still very much preferred.

John, in saying "what love the Father has for us" is that he **values** us all as if we were male (human standard)". It does not matter what our birth order is, it does not matter what our sex is – He **LOVES** us and **values** us equally.

When I came to this understanding, I had been struggling with God's love for me. God loves me (and you) as much as he loves Bill Gates, or Billy Graham or the homeless addict living on the streets. He doesn't just love me (and you), he **values** me (and you)! He **wants** us!

Opening myself up to accept his humongous love and value of me made it easy to apply his Word in my life. Filled with his love and acceptance, I began to hate any attitude, action, thought, or behavior I engaged in that prevented me from trusting Him. Instead of envy of those with "more" (things/reputation), I would grieve over their attitudes, actions and behaviors that showed they were not trusting God. It showed me how to pray for others. Not that I'm always doing it right, or right away. But the change is there.

So compare and contrast the translations and dig a little deeper on those passages that disturb you. You may, like me, have a life changing encounter with our Father.