

# Faith Of Our Youth

October 1995

"The Voice of Young Christian Faith"

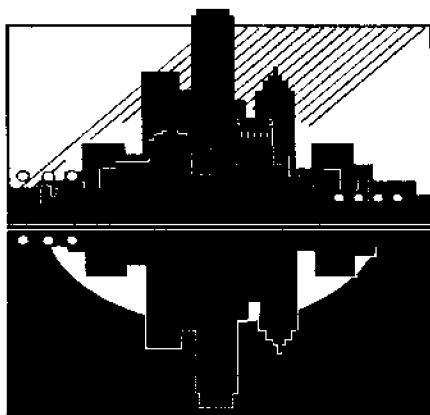
Volume 2 Issue 3

## Modern Sodom

by Phillip Reynolds

**Y**ou've heard the old saying, "The road to Hell is paved with good intentions?" In the United States and most of the western world, we could put a contemporary slant on that bit of sage wisdom, re-phrasing it to say, "The road to Hell is paved with political correctness." Young Christians today face a new problem in the battle against Satan, a problem that is crafty in its inconspicuous nature. I'm referring to the constant pressure on young Christians today to passively accept certain sinful practices, all in the worldly cause to "be open-minded" and to "promote loving peace." We should be wary of such rhetoric. Christ tells us that he "did not come to bring peace, but a sword (Matt. 10:34)," and we are warned in Colossians 2:8 to "see to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition . . . rather than on Christ."

Recently, the one sin that I see being promoted in this country more heavily than any other is the acceptance, support, tolerance or indulgence of homosexuality. Young people today—Christians included—are encouraged more and more to view homosexuality as a "lifestyle" to which one is "born." The growing influence of gays as a constituency should be obvious when we consider that our current President, when elected in 1992 by a country wracked with socio-economic problems,



*"For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it." --Gen. 18:32--*

chose to put first on his agenda the effort to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military.

The heated fervor generated by the President's actions and the media's sensationalistic presentation of the opposing viewpoints regarding this issue reveal a basic ignorance and general lack of level-headedness on both ends of the spectrum. Just what is the nature of homosexuality? Is it biological or psychological in origin? First, I want to address the Scriptural/Moral side of this issue, specifically, what the Bible says concerning the gay "lifestyle", and how Christians should look upon the practice.

Perhaps the most alarming trend concerning this issue is not the obviously growing acceptance of homosexu-

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## Melodies In our Hearts

by Louis Garbi

**T**he heading of this article is also the name of a project, a project to bring together a collection of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs that have been written by our brothers and sisters in Christ...songs from our spiritual family. I am thankful that a part of this project will include a continuing series of articles in Faith of Our Youth. In each article, I will try to provide some information and encouragement for you to think about singing, and composing your own hymns. But I think the best feature of these articles will be the presentation of songs that you have written.

These songs will be offered to give a sample of what is coming in for the project, and to make them immediately available for your singing pleasure. Feel free to xerox them and to share them with others.

One objective of the "Melodies.." project is to encourage music that is meaningful to the times we live in. While the Word of God and it's message

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*"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*

*—Eph 5:19—*

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# CHRISTIAN JUDGMENT

by Rich Miller

**M**atthew 7:1 is a passage that is well documented among Christians. It says, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." This passage and others pertaining to this subject throughout the Bible give us a simple, but powerful, message. That message is this: "God is the Judge."

In some situations, we must judge our fellow man because we have no choice in the matter. The American concept of giving offenders of the law a fair trial by a jury of our peers is an example of that. However, we must always be careful not to make judgments out of jealousy, anger, etc.. Those are the type of judgments that Matthew 7:1 refers to. Those judgments are usually related to our eternal fate in some way, and are not up to us to decide. Besides, there might be a whole lot more there than we can see at the surface. I'd like to touch on some types of judgments we should avoid, mainly because they can have long-lasting effects on a person's reputation as well as jeopardize our spiritual welfare:

1) **Fault finding**- From time to time, we have run into people who are down on life and seem to do nothing but complain. As is most often the case, these people feel "short-changed" by life, and this is how they take out their frustrations. When we are supposed to judge someone, we must look at all he/she has to offer, not just the faults and shortcomings. If we look only at the bad, we become nothing more than a "merchant of doom" and become a burden to others.

2) **Gossip**- This is like a cancer that has spread all through the body. A little rumor comes to the surface, then it gets larger and spreads out of control. As a result, the person's reputation is irreparably damaged, just like a human body's organs are destroyed by cancer. 1 Timothy 6: 3-5 refers to this as "evil surmisings." If we ever go public with the information, we should be absolutely sure we have all the facts and know exactly what they are.

3) **Self-righteousness**- This is more commonly referred to as being conceited, cocky, etc.. We can find a prime example of this in Luke 18:9-14. While praying, the Pharisee openly boasted about all of his works, while the Publican simply asked for forgiveness of his sins. As a result, the Publican found favor with God rather than the Pharisee. The Beatitudes teach us, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the Earth." When we judge we should not put others down by trying to boast about all that

we have done. We, as Christians, should make every effort to project a humble attitude.

4) **Hypocrisy**- We are warned about the evils of hypocrisy in Matthew 7:5 and Romans 2:1-4. We shouldn't make someone look like an outcast for doing something bad, then go ahead and do it ourselves once we are out of view of our brothers and sisters in Christ. For example, if I warned my home congregation during public exhortation about the evils of gambling, then played poker with friends not long after church let out, what kind of picture would that present to some unsaved soul who is seeking the Lord? We must always practice what we preach!

Considering the above, one might ask, "How can we make judgments that God approves of and won't condemn?" Usually, if we follow some basic guidelines and apply Christian principles to the situation, we can make proper judgments without great difficulty. Consider the following:

1) **Get all the facts**- This is perhaps the most important thing to consider when making a judgment call. A misinformed or uninformed person who judges another is risking damage to their own reputation as well as the person he/she is talking about. We should read the words of Jesus in John 7:24, and heed what he has to say.

2) **Use the right standard**- Quite simply, this standard is God's word. It is infallible. When God makes judgments it's not out of strife and envy. He does it because He loves us and it's for our own good. We should always remember to apply God's word to every situation so we CAN make proper judgments.

3) **Consider the circumstances**- Some circumstances dictate that we do things differently than what we normally do in order, for instances, to be on time for work, get through hard times, or even survive. If we see a member of our Christian brethren doing something different than that which their personality dictates, or something contrary to their Christian beliefs, we should make every effort to look into the matter and find out for sure what's going on.

4) **Have the right attitude**- Galatians 6:1 says that we should show meekness. We must also show love, as documented in John 15:12. Consider when a congregation has to discipline one of its members. If we show a GENUINE concern for the member's spiritual welfare, and follow the model of church

discipline that Paul laid out for the Corinthians, the member will most likely realize that the church is looking out for him/her, and will often times work harder to clear up the disagreement or problem. If we show no concern or only half-hearted concern for the member's plight, he/she will be unreceptive and push Christ out of his/her life. We must always use the utmost concern in this area.

In conclusion, we should remember that although God is the supreme judge, he is also a fair and righteous judge, and we should try to follow his example to the best of our ability. God is no respecter of persons, and we shouldn't be either when it comes to judgment. Remember, God will respond to each and every unnecessary judgment in kind when our eternal judgment comes to pass. May God always grant us the wisdom to effectively judge our fellow man.

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405 Leo Street  
Derry, PA 15627

## My Best Friend

by Sara McCleave

He is my best friend  
In Him I can confide.  
I can trust the things He says  
For I know He's never lied.

A friend who will always be there  
For the good and for the bad.  
A friend above all others  
Who lifts me up when I am sad.

I will always try to be like Him  
When I am tempted and tried.  
I know He will always love me  
If I'm serving at His side.

A love too deep to describe  
Will always keep me near,  
To my precious Savior  
The one I love so dear.

Sara McCleave is 14 years old. She is a member of the Church of Christ in Nixa, Missouri.

# A New Perspective

by Jed Spencer

As the song reads, "I've been to Calvary, I can say I've seen the Lord through the witness of his word." A trip to the Bible lands will give you a new perspective in every aspect of Christianity.

As in any story, we form a picture in our own mind of how things look and feel. Our imaginations can be our best explanation for our own reasoning. I had formed many images of things mentioned in the Bible, from the desert, to the streets of Jerusalem. My imagination was my explanation for my assumptions of how things looked, felt or how they worked.

We were truly blessed by God to be allowed to see with our own eyes what we had only been able to imagine in our minds before our pilgrimage. Because of the situation of the trip, each person was anticipating many things, yet, because we were anticipating different things we then each became excited about everything, something that was not very hard to do, no doubt. Much of our excitement would not have been possible if we had not known as much about the Word of God and about the stories, examples, events Biblical and other historical happenings as each person did. The group was blessed with many knowledgeable persons, which allowed for others to listen and learn more. And because each person had a different view point or piece of information to offer, everyone benefited from every other person in the group, I am quiet certain.

As we traveled in Rome, and discussed the story of Paul, we may have caught a glimpse of what Paul was dealing with in the people, physical setting, and government. Then as we took our tour flight to Egypt, and we flew over parts of Greece and the island country of Crete, the factor of travel came into mind. The thought that men God chose to take his message to the world had to get there somehow, put our short three hour flight into perspective. We know of Paul's journey's, but we can not really comprehend the trouble of travel. It is then even more impressive that the gospel was spread and that it is now available to all people of the world wherever they may be.

Egypt and Israel were two totally different countries. From the airport to the commoners of the country, the atmosphere was different. The Nile River is Egypt's source of water, and therefore food, energy and life. To see how these people held the river in such high regard, to know that if it were not for the water they would not be here, puts a different outlook on the value of nature

*"From the wailing wall, to walking the streets, to the garden tomb, to the place of the skull, seeing with an eye of faith the events, stories, and history of the city, combined with the feelings and emotions, made us realized that, yes, the Bible is the truth—"*

and the care for it.

By being able to visit Egypt, a predominately Muslim country, pieces of the puzzle were fit together concerning public structure, regard for women, government influences and control, and religious practices. Being able to take in the atmosphere and the mood of the people reflected on what we know about the Bible. I was able not only to understand the events of the present day, but it also sharpen my imagination for the stories of the Bible from the past. For instance, to see the Nile River and imagine having a dream with fat cows and corn, coming up from the water, and the real fact the the water turned to blood, knowing how they hold the water as their lifeline, imagine their shock. By seeing another belief, Muslim, followed by the majority of the people, made an impact on the fact that yes, there are still nations that have not seen the full truth and are not following and worshipping the only one true and Living God.

In Israel, we were able to see a nation that has not fully accepted Christ as its Messiah. The land of Israel was simply awesome. Everywhere you looked or talked about, there was a Bible story related to it. That in itself, knowing you are in the land that was promised by God, and that you have been blessed

enough to walk in it, and see it, and feel it, was awe inspiring. Being among the native people of the land was the biggest factor I found that helped me understand how the present connects with the past. Though just 'tourists' in the 'land of God's children', the fact that we had seen many places where our Lord had preached, walked and preformed miracles, strengthened the feeling that the free gift of salvation is for ALL, and that we too are called and can be God's children! Brother Eli gave us his unique perspective of living life among the Jews, trying to spread the gospel, as did our tour guide, Makhoul, who was Palestinian.

With the opportunity to attend a Sabbath Synagogue service, it gave the thought of Jesus and others who went to these places to preach the full truth and the type of people they took the message to. This made meeting with the brothers and sisters in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem the experience that made the trip real, and increased our faith and belief. To hear the songs and prayers given in the Hebrew tongue, to know that even though we could not understand them, that they do believe in the one true and Living God, and that we are honored to call them our brothers and sisters!

The city of Jerusalem was the pinnacle for thoughts concerning why we were traveling here and why we have made commitments of our lives to live for God and the reason why we have hope, i.e., Jesus Christ. From the wailing wall, to walking the streets, to the garden tomb, to the place of the skull, seeing with an eye of faith the events, stories, and history of the city, combined with the feelings and emotions, made us realized that, yes, the Bible is the truth, and God has blessed us for the opportunity to visit the Holy land and pray that it might serve as a spring board for us to have the courage, energy, and dedication to preach and spread the gospel, because it is for all. A trip like this is a rare opportunity that will definitely change your perspective.



1830 College Heights  
Manhattan, KS 66502

*SODOM (Continued from page 1)*

ality in socio/political/entertainment circles, but the not-so-obviously increasing acceptance of homosexual behavior in the religious/"Christian" realm as well. Some denominations boast openly gay preachers, and teach "peaceful tolerance" of the homosexual "lifestyle" in church dogma. The scary part of all this is that these churches proclaim scriptural backing for their ideas, and through twisted reasoning and heavily slanted interpretation, manage to convince their flocks that they are correct.

But very little interpretive reasoning is required on this matter as far as the Gospel is concerned. Jude 1:7 tells us that "In a similar way Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and *perversion* (my italics-P.R.) . . ." Here we have the homosexual act labeled specifically as "perversion." Read on in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 to find the kind of company the Bible places the homosexual with: "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor male prostitutes nor *homosexual offenders* (my italics-P.R.) nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God."

The warning "do not be deceived" is an appropriate one, for deception is the name of the game in Satan's desire to convince the young Christian of the "normalcy" of homosexuality. Some churches and Bible scholars have tried to preach the idea that the fate of Sodom in Genesis 19 was reserved by God for that town only at that time, but such teaching requires that Christians virtually ignore several other passages of scripture. Romans 1:26-27 refers to the homosexual act as "unnatural," and Leviticus 18:22 calls the laying of man with man "detestable."

For Christians of all ages, all issues such as these must come down to God's will, regardless of the apropos political and social ideas of the day. Don't let your perspective get fogged on this one; the Bible—in spite of what some say—is very clear on the issue. The temptation to accept this behavior can be very strong, not only due to social peer pressure, but especially when a friend or family member announces their desire to "come out of the closet." Do not support them in this decision, rather, try to help them to the path of

righteousness in full faith and knowledge that God would not have them partake in such wickedness. God has described such behavior as "perverse," "detestable" and "unnatural;" is that not clear enough for you?

Those Christians who find themselves tempted to embrace the world's teaching on this subject should be reminded of Romans 1:32: "Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very

**"For Christians of all ages, all issues such as these must come down to God's will, regardless of the apropos political and social ideas of the day."**

things but also approve of those who practice them." And as a final warning to those who blow the whole issue off as "no big deal," I ask you to refresh your memory of the fate of a town called Sodom, and the words in the second part of the 7th verse of Jude: "They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire." That, Brothers and Sisters, is a big deal.

When it comes to the Christian's perspective on homosexuality, nothing would prove more confusing than a belief that people are "born gay." For indeed, if homosexuals are born with their particular desires, then how could God, in all fairness, disapprove of their behavior? As I pointed out in the first part of this article, God in no way looks upon the sexual practices of the gay population as anything but despicable, and worthy of eternal damnation. If homosexuals are actually born that way, then logically that would indicate that God predestines some souls for Hell—a disturbing thought that has plagued many Christians over the years, some to the point of a weakening or abandoning of their faith. God may indeed "work in mysterious ways," but I don't believe that He works in self-contradictory ways.

For many years, the only "defense" employed by gay people in answer to their critics was that they "knew they were that way from childhood," that argument usually backed up by stories detailing years of "confusion" and "certain feelings" as children, which they later

supposedly realized as proof of a different sexual proclivity. That line of argument is a difficult one to prove, and therefore was usually regarded with much skepticism. In fact, the American Psychiatric Association regarded homosexuality as a mental disorder until 1973, and in general the majority of the population is abuzz over the supposed finding of the "gay gene," discovered by Dr. Simon LeVay, a neurobiologist who was at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in LaJolla, California. At last, the gays believe, they have scientific proof-positive that being gay is something one is born with. The rumor has proved a strong and effective one, as many people now believe that such a gene exists. But the facts say it doesn't.

In layman's terms, Dr. LeVay's "proof" is as follows: Scanning the brains of 41 cadavers, including 19 homosexual males, LeVay determined in 1991 that a tiny area believed to control sexuality was less than half the size in the gay men than in the heterosexuals. Also, he reported in *Science* that the volume of a certain hypothalamic cell in the brains of the gay men was only half that in the brains of the straight men. At best, this can only be regarded as circumstantial evidence. For one thing, the hypothalamus, despite its size, figures in a variety of vital functions in addition to sex. Also, there is just as much evidence to suggest that sexual orientation could affect brain structure, rather than the other way around, as Dr. LeVay would have us believe. For instance, Kenneth Klivington, an assistant to the president of the Salk Institute, possesses a body of evidence showing that the brain's neural networks reconfigure themselves in response to certain experiences. One study found that in people reading Braille after becoming blind, the area of the brain controlling the reading finger grew larger. All of these factors point to the reality that the boasting of the homosexual community of a scientific basis for their lifestyle displays a desperate, grasping quality in their desire for legitimacy. In other words, there is no gay gene, only a miniscule amount of flimsy evidence based mostly on wishful conjecture.

It should be noted that Dr. LeVay has his own personal interest in proving the biological origin of homosexuality: he is gay as well. His quest seems to be his own, as many scientists have aban-

## Here and There

done the notion of a gay gene, saying that it's naive to think a single gene could account for so complex a behavior as homosexuality.

Gore Vidal, a best-selling author and self-admitted sexual experimenter, once observed that "there are homosexual acts but no homosexual people," and I would agree, for how else would you explain the Bible's stance on the issue and successfully integrate it with the fairness of God? No Christian can legitimately believe that people are born gay and reconcile the notion with the God they supposedly believe in.

So where does homosexual behavior come from? Psychologist Joseph Nicolosi, author of **Reparative Therapy of Male Homosexuality**, says there is "much more proof for familial causes of homosexuality (Listen up, Christian parents!)." He says "research has shown repeatedly that a poor relationship with a distant, aloof father and an over-possessive, domineering

**"For indeed, if homosexuals are born with their particular desires, then how could God, in all fairness, disapprove of their behavior?"**

mother could cause homosexuality in males." I myself have spoken with several homosexual men, and found that "aloof father" in the past of virtually every single one. The interesting thing to note is that, while men tend to be homosexual due to subconscious forces, women homosexuals have a much higher reported rate of having actually chosen lesbianism intentionally. Many lesbians say their choice was as much a feminist statement as a sexual one, a sort of rebellion against the perceived "male dominated society." Also lesbians as a whole tend to be less interested in proving the biological origin of their preference than men do. The bottom line is that even some gays admit to not really being "born that way."

As I said in the first part of the article, I believe that most of the confusion concerning this issue is a result of not hearing the objective facts. Science is not always our enemy as Christians; in fact, if presented truthfully and objectively, I really believe it is usually our friend.



Phillip Reynolds is a member of the Independence, MO congregation. His address is 11415 E. 13th, Independence, MO 64052.

The following news was gathered at the Gregory meeting:

### 25th and Oakley:

Rache'l Lambros is working on her Social Workers degree thru CMSU via Longview Community Campus. Richard Plattner is at Wentworth Military Academy beginning his college career and still scaring quarterbacks.

### Smart Road:

Brad Bratcher is tooting his horn at MU in Columbia trying to pep up the football team. Brandon Lee is going to Longview part time and working at Hallmark. Amber Spark is into her senior year at Lee's Summit High School. Wade Stanley is still at Warrensburg working on his degree. Kyle Stevens is going to Longview. Shannon Teghmeyer is still enjoying school at SMSU in Springfield.

### Carrollton:

Amanda Miller is doing her student teaching. She's finishing up a 1st grade stint and then going to 8th grade math all in the Warrensburg area.

### Murray Road:

John Morris is going to school at UMKC working on his English degree. Mark Little and Kathy Germann are to be married on October 21.

### Topeka:

Kristi Kuhn is cheerleader this year.

### Vandalia:

Matt Clark is studing and working at McDonalds. Derek Ingle is looking forward to basketball season.

And there were others there from Prince Road, Chapel Glen, Martinsville, etc. Sorry I didn't get a chance to talk to all of you.

— Dan —

## HUZ & BUZ OF UR

by Aspiring Cartoonists

### Help! With a New Feature.

How many are acquainted with these two brothers who lived in the Ur of the Chaldees? I'm sure you know their uncle and their niece was one of the mothers of the children of Israel. But as to "Huz & Buz", very little is recorded in scripture about them; none of their spoken words were recorded for our learning.

I know their physical appearance has nothing to do with our salvation, but I wonder what they looked like and how they dressed. Huz was the first born, followed by Buz, in a family of eight. I wonder what advice and comments they could offer to youth today.

This suggest an idea that I believe could be an excellent tool for reaching and teaching those who might not otherwise be receptive to lessons of truth. That is, Huz & Buz as cartoon characters sowing seeds of spiritual insight for youth.

There is one problem with this idea; it requires an artist in caricature drawing and a writer skilled at crafting humor that teaches. If anyone has these talents, you are invited to submit a one or two frame "teaching" cartoon for this space in future FOOY's. If we can get the first one, I believe others will follow.

Send your cartoon to the address on the back page. The editor reserves the right to accept or reject any submissions.

—DRS—

## "In His Service"

**M**Y prayer for you is that you will come to appreciate the authority of God, and that you'll see that the character you want for yourself and your friends is found in the Lord God, and all that you could want for love and relationships is found first in the Lord God Almighty."

This was how I ended my last thoughts with you. I would like to continue to expand the idea that God can be the ideal for your relationships. How can God be an ideal for sex? That's seems like a funny question on the surface, but God designed and perfected our sexual nature. So who better to look to have a real understanding about our sexuality.

What's the truth about sex? On one side God would have us: abstain, flee, not commit, not even a hint, put to death, avoid all sexual - immorality (Acts 15:29; 1 Cor. 10:8; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3). The reason for that is because God had something much better in mind for us. God's standard for sex is love. A love that produces intimacy and closeness. A love that is both giving and trusting. A love that is safe, secure and loyal through all the ups and downs of life. A love that values the happiness, health, and spiritual growth of the another, as important as your own (Eph. 5:28). This is not a love that makes you jump when you hear a car door close. This is not the love that makes you nervous for the next several weeks. This is not the love that puts an invisible distance between two people.

God's standard for sex is also purity. The sexual relationship is meant to form an unbroken circle of purity. A pure union, two virgins entering into an exclusive relationship (Heb. 13:4). It is never having to say "Honey, I'm sorry."

God's standard for sex is also faithfulness. It is a commitment between two people to remain faithful to each other (Ps. 85:10). It means to honor your word before God and men.

Why such high standards? Because God Himself is love (1 Jn. 4:8-9), purity (1 Jn. 3:3), and faithful (1 Jn. 1:9).

"So what?" you say. "I don't see how that applies to me. It just looks like so much stuff to confuse us and spoil our fun." Consider, if you will, for one moment what it might be like if you actually tried it God's way. If you decided to act as if sex was to be based on love, purity, and faithfulness. First of all, this would protect you from a lot of things happening in this world. 1.) Protect you from guilt. ("Oh no, my parents are home!") 2.) Protect you from an unplanned pregnancy. It does happen! It happens to 2,795 teenage girls everyday! Another 1,106 get an abortion daily in America. 3.) Protect you from STD's—25 known kinds, 20 of which are NOT preventable with contraceptives. And you will never have to say "I'm sorry" to your mate. 4.) Protect you from sexual insecurity and/or comparison. There will only be just the two of you in your marriage bed. 5.) Protect you from a vast array of emotional distress, suspicion, stress, disappointment, and depression. That seems like quite a list just in itself. But wait there's more!

If you act as if sex was based on love, purity, and faithfulness you will be provided with some valuable things as well. 1.) Provided with spiritual rewards (1 Cor. 6:13). 2.) It will provide you with a healthier atmosphere in which to raise your children. You'll be able to answer questions honestly. 3.) It will provide peace of mind—no disease, no "ghost" from the past, or emotional baggage. 4.) You will be provided with a sense of trust, proven character, and maturity. 5.) It will provide you with a true intimacy—being one flesh, one spiritually, and one emotionally.

Consider what God has to offer you in the way of protection and what He can provide for you. Young people, may you all find the love of your life, and at the right time so that you can experience all that God has in store for you. Stay strong. Love the Lord.

In HIS Service,  
Dan Green

### MELODIES (Continued from page 1)

never changes, the expression of melody does. There is no melody line or harmony we can produce that has the stamp of biblical standard. As time proceeds, and the surroundings of life change, so also the soundscape changes. The emotional resonance that we as believers feel in our bodies and in our spirits correspond to our sojourn from century to century with all it's external changes. I believe this is why God left the matter of melody open. "...making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Eph. 5:19) God has given us a privilege to incorporate the uniqueness of our time's melodic expression in our worship of Him. "All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O LORD, when they hear the words of your mouth. Yes, they shall sing of the ways of the LORD. For great is the glory of the LORD." (Ps. 138:4-5) According to Revelation 1:6, those whose sins are washed away by the blood of Jesus are the kings. May it be the case that the One who loves us all will remember we have made melodies in our hearts to thank Him and to teach one another of His way.

Some of you have a good depth of musical experience and can arrange your own manuscript. A lot of you are probably like me, having a love for music, but needing assistance in various areas of composition. If this is the case, don't hold back. There are brethren helping with this project, who will assist in editing these songs, and they will help with any area that is in need. So don't feel shy. You indeed may have a fountain of praise to God in song welling up in your hearts. Send your tapes or manuscripts to me at the address appearing at the end of this article.

This issue's feature, "Listen Closely", was written by Alena Caldwell, a sister from Bakersfield, California. Alena is 16 years old and will be a junior in high school. She has a wide field of interests and activities, some of which are: running cross country, track, basketball, swimming, playing clarinet in band and orchestra, playing piano in jazz band, and drawing. She writes, "Music, without a doubt, is my greatest passion." This will be evident to you as you take the time to learn and sing "Listen Closely". To me, this song has the power to touch with hope any corner of a troubled heart. She adds, "Of all the ways to worship the Lord, singing and praising Him with music is the most moving for me."

May we all be moved as the profundity of truth and the resonance of emotion merge and emerge to the glory of our Creator through the melodies in our hearts.



Louis Garbi  
903 W. 11th  
Eldon, MO. 65026

# "Songs of our Youth"

## Listen Closely

C. Alena Caldwell  
March 19, 1995

Listen closely as we sing to him. Weary sinner he is calling Listen

close ly hear his voice so sweet troubled spir it he is cal ling. Comenow he'll lift your

burden give him glory praise his na me oh come quickly heed his plead ing lift your

hands and praise his name. Al le lu ia al le lu ia give your life to great Je

ho a vah al le lu ia he is calling lis ten close ly praise the Lord

# "FOOY" Views

**Y**oung people of senior high-school and college age are in the most critical period of their entire lives. During this decade of life, they are leaving home to be out on their own for the first time. They begin making decisions that will affect the remainder of their lives for better or for worse. They are trying to figure out who they are and what they want out of life. The carefree days of adolescent are soon consumed by the realities of a "dog eat dog" world. Economic welfare becomes a major concern of the young mind. With major life decisions about career and family relationships—which are very important—taking up most of their time and energy, it is easy to neglect ones soul and leave God out of the picture.

In this critical period of life, it is a constant struggle with the pressure of peers to conform and of self to feel loved and accepted. Young Christians will experience rejection by the world, as the world rejected Jesus. This can create a crisis of confidence. And a state of cri-

sis can foster bad chooses and wrong decisions, that have lasting effects on life.

Those of us who have made it through this critical period have a responsibility to warn of the pitfalls we encountered and offer support, encouraging the youth to chart their course with God as their strength and guide.



**FOOY NOTES:** Change is good if for the better. To improve the scope and mission of "FOOY", some changes are being implemented with this issue; including an expanded 8 page layout with more features in a revised format. We trust this change is for the better. Your suggestions or criticism for improvement are welcome.

One new feature is a column "Melodies in our Hearts" by Louis Garbi accompanied by a featured new "Song of Our Youth." The inaugural column, featured on the front page, describes a worthy project encouraging new songs written by brothers and sisters of our church "family." This project adds another dimension to the primary mission of "FOOY", i.e., to encourage expressions of faith, commitment, and devotion by young brethren in essays and poetry, and now in melodies in the heart.

Occasionally, morsels of truth that

are offered in clever or humorous wrappings are more palatable and make a deeper and longer lasting impression than the same information communicated in a "matter of fact" statement. Even profound knowledge transmitted in a manner that brings a smile or a chuckle is not soon forgotten. I still remember a very serious lesson of truth emphasized by a brief humorous statement delivered from the pulpit over 25 years ago regarding people who are very intolerant on small issues of opinion, yet open wide their throats of tolerance to accept a huge mouthful of error. The memorable quote was, "How would you like to have a dromedary stuck in your esophagus?"

This gives rise to another possible new feature. "Huz & Buz of Ur", explained on page 6, would use a lighter approach to deliver a lasting impression of truth. This feature will depend on those who have talent for drawing combined with the ability to briefly express truth in clever and humorous statements. The talents of youth are preferred in this feature, keeping with the purpose of "FOOY". However, given the fact that many of us do not have this talent, it may be necessary to relax the age limit in order to keep a supply of caricature teachings featuring "Huz & Buz of Ur."

— DRS—

## Faith of our Youth

Ozark Church of Christ  
Dwain R. Stoops, Editor  
401 E. Mt. Vernon  
Nixa, Missouri, 65715

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