

Faith Of Our Youth

June 1997

"The Voice of Young Christian Faith"

Volume 4 Issue 2

Wisdom of our Elders

by Nora Lee Ingle

WHAT IS OUR PRIME OF LIFE?

One of the best parts of Sunday dinner at Grandma's is pushing back the plates, putting elbows on the table (or in the lap) and joining in conversation. This is not only a feast; it is an education!

I remember one such event: We were discussing the "prime of life." My father, who was by then a grandpa, said "I feel as if I am in the prime of my life . . . the children are raised and not a one have been a disgrace to mother and me."

"But Dad," said my older brother, Bob, "I feel as if I am in the prime of my life. I have a good job, am married and waiting for a family."

A sister who had small children disagreed with both of them for she felt like her stage in life was the best of all. My mind went in a different direction. I felt like I was in the prime of my life. I was a teen, had a good job and a diamond ring. The point is, there isn't a best time in life, we just need to enjoy the moment.

"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor.

For if they fall, the one will lift

(See "WOOE" on page 3)

"WOOE"

for

"FOOY"

If that doesn't attract your attention, nothing will. It's our way of announcing that a new feature is being added to FOOY. It's called WOOE and it precedes FOOY. FOOY is nurtured and strengthened by WOOE. Actually, FOOY aged and matured becomes WOOE.

You're saying, "What in the world is WOOE? The answer is the title of the new feature on the left. "Wisdom of our Elders" encompasses the valuable insight of an august class of people who have already been where youth is and now occupy a place where youth will be shortly. It should be readily apparent that the "elders" referred to are not officers of the church, but those men and women who by reason of age have traversed the hills and valleys of life and by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

First, speaking to youth, we encourage you to develop an awareness of the value of the wisdom your elders have to offer. Like a pearl of great price, seek out their wisdom regarding their observations on living a Christian life in a wicked world. Each encounter with your elders will make you wiser in ways you cannot imagine. Sure our modern world has many new inventions the elders did not encounter, however, their allurements to sin were driven by the same fleshly nature as yours. It has not changed. Their stories reflect the essence of human struggle between the forces of right and wrong. Elders offer a

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ALMOST THERE, YET, FAR AWAY

by
Stephanie Lynn Moody

Almost there, yet, far away.
A loney soul in a struggle
between two ways.
She's caught in lifelong juggle.

All her life she's had a choice
to follow the devil
or to obey God's voice.
Those are two very different levels.

To do what is right,
or all that is wrong.
A heart that is bright,
or a weariness long.

Does she want God's eternal life and hope?
A chance to feel happy inside?
With God she would be able to cope
with all of life's troublesome tides.

The other choice would lead to death forever.
A very sorrowful state.
For if she goes this way she will probably never
enter through the golden gates.

Satan works in ways she doesn't know.
The devil has power over all.
He will torment and tempt her in ways that don't show,
and prepare her for a great fall.

God's power is greater
for He gives us strength to overcome
all of temptation's craters
which add up to quite a sum.

God is love!
There's no evil in Him.
He sent His son down from above.
The soul's hope is no longer dim.

This girl is becoming old in years.
She still has not chosen the way of the right.
Her struggle has caused her strife and tears.
Thought many have shown her the way to the light.

She's come so close to doing God's will,
and accepting Him and His way.
Then she gets stubborn and Satan prepares for the kill.
She's almost there, yet, far away.

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Dangers of Dancing

by *Brandon Lee*

There are many topics which are heavily debated within society and within the church. They include abortion, consumption of alcohol, what kind of vocabulary violates Col. 3:18, and dancing. Dancing is the subject I would like to focus on. This subject is one that people seem to hold a strong opinion on, one way or the other. However upon further review of God's word it seems God's will on this subject is rather clear.

What is meant by dancing? Where does God draw the line? Webster defines dancing as "to move through a set series of movements usually to music." Before we look at dancing today, and how we should view it, let's look back in history. Since man began to record history dancing has been associated with war, hunting, marriage, and even some religious ceremonies.

Dancing has grown out of three human reactions 1) the desire to imitate beasts and birds, 2) the desire to express emotion by gestures, 3) social impulses.

In the past dancing has been closely connected with worship. People sought to express through bodily movement praise and penitence. Upon reading (Judg 11:34, Ps. 68:24) it seems that instruments may have been associated with dancing.

Over time the Hebrew people developed their own type of dancing associated with worship. It was characterized by three distinguishing features:

- 1 - The sexes never intermingled in it, except where pagan influences were involved (Ex. 32:19).
- 2 - Usually dancing was done by women, with one leading. (Ex. 15:20,21).
- 3 - Dancing usually took place out of doors.

As Christians today should we take part in dancing? Many people say dancing is alright, because the Old Testament says David danced. I assure you that his dancing was nothing like the dancing of today. In Galatians 5 we as Christians are told to avoid lasciviousness. Although people would argue otherwise, I find it hard to involve yourself in dancing without giving in to the sinful desires that Paul speaks of. In Matt. 14 Herod's judgement was clearly affected by a lascivious dance. After the dance was performed he said he would give her whatever she wanted.

There are many forms of dancing and I will not try to list them all.

However upon looking into God's word it's clear that he objects to many of the things dancing can bring. As Christians we must look to God for guidance, and not try to cross the lines God has drawn.

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"WOOE" (Continued from page 1)
up his fellow; but woe to him that
is alone when he falleth, for he
hath no another to help him up."

—Eccl. 4: 9, 10—

Sometimes it takes a lifetime
to realize that each person is not an
island to themselves. Each of us

*"Wake up in
the morning
with a prayer on
your lips. Have
a prayerful atti-
tude all day and
let God be the
guard of the
night."*

needs someone to lean upon during
weighty times. As tiny tots, then
adolescents, we have mom and dad,
but as we mature we must learn to
be an adult, a Christian adult. We
must listen carefully and prayer-
fully to those in authority who have
with more experience.

When one marries, the couple
works together. Mom and dad are
no longer head of those young peo-
ple, but don't forget them with your
love. The husband is head of the
house. Modern times try to demote
the husband of his duties.

I found out during the past two
months how wonderful it is to have
a helper. My husband of 52 years
helped to convert our garage into a
dining room with a Victorian flair.
"This is a lot of togetherness," he
said as we struggled to hang wall-
paper! That's a job that can't be
done alone, it takes team work.
When I think of teamwork I am
reminded of sporting events such as
football, baseball, basketball and
others . . . one person can't be the
team. It takes cooperation to be
successful and play a good game.

My husband and I were mar-
ried when we were "near 19". We
were nearly penniless but made do
with what was at hand. We didn't
go into debt for new furniture.
That came after a few years, a
piece at a time. I would have to say
the most difficult part of our mar-
riage, for me, was the lack of
money. It was difficult for me to
see that money coming in usually
went for re-investment, in our case,
for farm equipment or paying the
"vet" bill. It hardly left enough for
food and money for the collection
plate; and there had to be money
figured in for gas to take us to
worship services 10 miles away,
three times a week. Needless to
say, most of our clothes were hand-
me-downs or sewn on my treadle
sewing machine.

My husband was not only
head of the house but was my
"balance wheel" and comforter.
We did have moments when we
disagreed but tried not to get nasty.
Children need to know that mom
and dad aren't going to get a di-
vorce just because they disagree,
and young folks need to see a fair
settlement based on tolerance and
love.

One reason our financial life
was strained was because of the
economy of the "times." We "lived
by" a hold-over statement from
World War II: Our motto was, use
it up, wear it out, make it do, or do
without.

We made it through lean times
and good times. Our grocery bill
wasn't so high; we had a garden,
chickens, and our own meat.

Those early years were happy
times. We laughed easily and en-
tertained alot, after all, the Lord
told us to be hospitable. Having
other young couples over to help
mix and churn a freezer of ice
cream was entertainment, at least,
in summer time. Popcorn and a
glass of water were treats when
folks stopped by unexpectedly. We,
also, served Sunday dinner to
church friends using fresh farm
produce such as milk, cream, eggs,
vegetables, and meat. While the
children played, the men might dis-

(See "WOOE" on page 4)

Tough Faith

by Callie Stanley

He that loveth father or
mother more than Me is
not worthy of Me: and
he that loveth son or
daughter more than Me
is not worthy of Me."

—Matthew 10:37—

These words are undoubtedly fa-
miliar to most of you. Christ speaks
these words to His disciples after
declaring that He brings a sword, not
peace, and that families will be divided
because of Him. As the child of a man
who reared me in the church only to
forsake it almost three years ago, these
words have a special meaning to me.

*"Choose you
this day whom
ye will serve"*

For those who share my situation, and
even for those who do not, I want my
words to serve as a reminder that devo-
tion to God must come before
everything—even our family.

What Christ demands in Matthew
10:37 is full, absolute obedience to
Him. He uses the illustration of a
divided family to impart the impor-
tance of complete devotion; no pain
exists comparable to watching a parent
or child blindly stumble down the road
to condemnation. It leads to a gamut of
emotions: anger, bitterness, frustra-
tion, sadness, and even despair. If
Christ would demand that one experi-
ence such pain, its cause must be in-
credibly important to Him. He de-
clares repeatedly that no one can walk
the fence: "he that is not with Me is
against Me" (Matthew 12:30). If
one's devotion to Christ is mediocre, it
is absolutely worthless and has no
merit in the eyes of God. Likewise, no
one can serve both God and the world

(See "TOUGH" on page 5)

The Fear of the Lord

By
Kyle Stephens

It is not God's will that we stumble around in the darkness as fools. It is God's will that we have wisdom and understanding so that we may walk circumspectly as in the light. Throughout the Bible those who had wisdom had one thing in common--knowledge of God. Knowledge is the single greatest factor towards salvation. Without the truth you have nothing.

The importance of understanding God's will, given to us in the Bible, is evident as in Romans 10:17, Romans 1:16, Ephesians 5:15-17 and others. Having knowledge will not save you, but you must have knowledge in order to be saved.

"He who rejects Me, and does not receive my words, has that which judges him-- the word which I have spoken will judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48). We will all be judged according to the Bible. I think of it as something I must measure up to. We will not be judged by something that is not in the Bible because God is just and would not ask us to do something we cannot do. God will not require anything of us that is not in His teaching. Everything required of us is in the Bible (2 Tim.3:16,17). Christ told us explicitly the penalty for rejecting the Word of God. We are required to understand it so that we can do it (Jas.1:22). Because God wants our obedience.

Knowledge, we are told, has a beginning and that is the fear of the Lord (Prov.1:7). I am convinced that the only thing one must do to fear

God is to learn about Him. The twelfth verse of the second chapter of 1 Samuel makes a very interesting connection for us regarding Eli's two sons. They were corrupt because they did not know the Lord. This is a simple truth. The sons of Eli were corrupt because they did not fear God. We are told that one *departs* from evil because they fear Him (Prov.16:6). I believe that this is the connection that produces obedience from the first time one can say, "I know God". Knowledge produces fear which produces obedience. We know that we know God if we keep the commandments. There are two reasons to submit to God-- love and fear. But fear comes first and remains. Remember the admonition in Ecclesiastes 12:13 and also the Bible does not say that it is by the love of the Lord that one *departs* from evil, but fear.

We cannot say that we need not fear the Lord. God thinks enough of

*"Having
knowledge will
not save you,
but you must
have knowledge
in order to be
saved."*

it to explicitly command it at least twenty-six times that I found and refers to it many more times as in Proverbs 16:6. Generally, you will find it coupled with obedience.

But what is it?

The word fear in the Bible is exactly what one would expect it to

be. The fear of the Lord is not reverence as you might consider that Hebrews 12:28 distinguishes the two. The Greek word in the New Testament is where we get our word phobia. It means to be exceedingly afraid or in terror. That is what God wants. In Deuteronomy 5, God recounts to Israel how exceedingly afraid they were of His presence at Sinai. In verse 29 He says, "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments." God desires us to fear because He wants our

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"WOOE" (Continued from page 3)

cuss scripture, jobs, and cars. Women talked about "girl stuff". It helped a lot to "just talk." There was no TV and we really didn't miss it. Just like a child who enjoys mom being at home more than fancy toys which are affordable because she works, young Christians enjoy a good visit with one another; which is worth more than spending \$25 or more for a sporting event.

We developed close relationships with others. But, my husband wouldn't allow a friendship with another couple to get "too thick." "It might hurt our marriage," he said. We were aware of a situation in our neighborhood where a very close association of two couples caused stress and an eventual breakup.

My advice to the young, based on my experience, would be:

- 1 Live on what there is, not on what there is not. Think twice before you get caught up in a credit card trap.
- 2 Choose your friends carefully and prayerfully. They play a big part in your future. It is important to have friends, but don't get too familiar. If you choose not to marry (and Paul took this path) it is OK, but do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.
- 3 Remember the "JOY" song is for you, as well, as young children; put Jesus first, yourself last and others in between. Be hospitable.
- 4 Try to have as many meals together as possible. Home is not a short-order restaurant.
- 5 Wake up in the morning with a prayer on your lips. Have a prayerful attitude all day and let God be the guard of the night.
- 6 The Christian life is a "mode of life" not a destination.



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"TOUGH" (Continued from page 3)

"for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other" (Luke 16:13). In God's eyes, part-time Christianity does not exist.

In Joshua 24, the dying leader of Israel calls upon the people to make a choice: "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (verse 15). Every person must make that same decision. To follow Christ requires sacrifices many are unwilling to make. He knows that; in Luke 14:28-32, He tells the disciples to consider the cost of following Him before making the commitment. After all, "no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). The disciple of Christ must always be willing to forsake all he has for Christ (Luke 14:33), he must be prepared for persecution (John 15:20), he must expect chastening from the Lord (Heb. 12:6), he must love God above all others (Matt. 22:37), and he must follow Christ's commandments (John 14:15).

Never does Christ say that obedience will come easily. God does not give us a smooth road to travel, but a narrow one from which we can freely stray. If you choose to follow Christ, He expects nothing less than your best, and He wants it to be offered cheerfully. Any sacrifices made for the sake of Christ will receive a reward that will compensate you and more. He has promised that "every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Matt. 19:29).



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Melodies In our Hearts

Does God feel honored by stained glass? Stylized script? Religious imagery? That warbling organ cranking out "In the Garden"? Is there really a Christian motif? Obviously, God is not worshipped by these things. "He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath and all things." (Acts 17:24-25) However, man does these and many other things to please himself in the name of worshipping God.

In light of this one might ask; "Since God is not worshipped by man's invention, then must we have a Biblical command for everything that is involved with daily living?" The scriptures answer; "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks

to God the Father through Him." (Col.3:17). Again the church is told; "...present your bodies a living sacrifice." (Rom.12:1) This is a constant in the life of the believer. There is no time when we should cease the yielding of our bodies to God. Therefore the worship and service to God is continuous. "So must I consult the scriptures for the color of my living room walls? Or, does Jesus

"There is no time when we should cease the yielding of our bodies to God. Therefore the worship and service to God is continuous."

bless my personal choices because I belong to Him?" The answer is simple. We have many areas of living and each area has its own protocol. For example, there is a difference between what God requires when we assemble for the express purpose of edifying one another, and what we do to obtain food. Within the purpose of assembling in His name there are clear commands from the Lord: eating the Lord's supper, singing and making melody in our heart, exhorting, teaching, praying, etc. But He did not command us to

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MOB & BOB

Please watch for a very good cartoon in the next issue of FOOY by a talented young lady from Oregon. I apologize for not having it ready for this issue. We are moving and several things are misplaced for the time being.

We need more cartoons for future FOOY's. Put your ideas and talents to work.

Help spread the Goodnews with a smile!



-DRS-

FOOY VIEWS (Continued from page 1)

glimpse into the future based on a deeper historical and spiritual perspective.

Go to your elders with an honest and open heart and listen to them. They have observed the world you are entering. They are in an advanced state of transformation and renewal of mind and spirit. Though their outward (physical) man is perishing, yet their inward (spiritual) man is re-

*"Love your elders
and honor them
for their works
sake. Serve them
out of gratitude
for the life they
have passed on to
the young."*

newed day by day. Though their eye sight may be dim to the things that are seen (temporal), they have developed a keen perspective of the things which are not seen (eternal).

Remember they once were you and you will someday be them. Love your elders and honor them for their works sake. Serve them out of gratitude for the life they have passed on to the young.

Secondly, a word to elders, we need your help in presenting the wisdom of our elders to our youth. Our new feature in FOOY is one way you can share your wisdom with a large number of young people.

FOOY is published three times a year by the Ozark Church of Christ. We need a supply of articles similar to the one graciously written by Sister Nora Lee

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FEAR (Continued from page 4)
obedience.

I do not walk around trembling because I fear God. To find if you fear God simply ask yourself if you obey Him. Because obedience is a product of fear and departing from evil becomes habitual and eventually a part of your character. Is obedience to God your lifestyle? If not, you cannot say that you fear God. You cannot say that you know God. If you reject His word, which is unwise, and continue to transgress you will appear before Christ as defiled and corrupt and that which has not been cleaned will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

I pray that we all diligently seek to get to know our God better as we continue in our walks. Fearing Him is just the beginning of the knowledge we need in order to please Him. We have much to learn and a short time in which to do it. However, it is fear that moves us in the direction we need to go. It has been said that God uses fear as a prod to make us obey Him. I do not think that is true because that sounds as if God forces us to do His will. I believe that fear is the natural response when someone first knows Him followed by obedience. Fear God and you no longer need to fear the judgment because obedience has its rewards just as rebelliousness does.

"See then that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.' Now this, 'Yet once more,' indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire."

—Heb. 12:25-29—

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MELODIES (Continued from page 5)

assemble in His name to feed the chickens, punch the time clock, wash the dishes or study algebra, which all have a place in their own setting. Likewise, it would be inappropriate to try eating the Lord's supper for a refreshing break while the assembly line is down. "To the pure all things are pure.." (Titus 1:15), but this doesn't mean we are free to do anything at anytime.

When the church edifies itself through psalms hymns and spiritual songs, we are free to sing. It is enough. To add the extras that we enjoy so much during other occasions is not appropriate, anymore than sharing a strip steak as a part of the Lord's supper. The Lord's children do not need a mood setting synthesizer to enhance their shared song, but they do need to be as the altar made without hewn stone. God's children need to be present with hearts and voices that God has made.

Peter sought to give honor to Jesus, Moses and Elijah during the transfiguration of Jesus. "...Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.." (Mark 9:5) God declared to Peter, James, and John (and to us as well); "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Mark 9:7) Hear what Jesus commanded through the apostle Paul with regard to the music of the church; "...be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God." (Eph.5:18-21) Instead of seeking to honor the Lord with the instruments which please us, let us hear Him.

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Songs of our Youth

When You Come Back

Lyrics: C. A. Caldwell

Music: C. A. Caldwell

1. Lord, you are my strength and soul, - a shin-ing light - to guide me through the day. .
 2. Lord, you sent your Son for me, - and I ac-cept - your gift of glo - ry. -

O, and Lord, - I pray you see my heart, - that it may sing - and your will o-bey -
 O, and Lord, - I live so sin-ful - ly, - and I just thank - you for your mer - cy. -

Chorus:

O, and Lord, - I dream of pa-ra-dise. - When You come back for me, -

I will be here, on - my knees - in all my low - li-ness, -

when You come back - to res - cue me.

"FOOY" Views

"FOOY" (Continued from page 6)

Ingle. When the idea for "Wisdom of our Elders" originated, the first person I thought of was Sister Ingle. I knew she loved to write and, sure enough, she readily accepted my request. Her article arrived within two or three weeks. Her assignment was, "If you could talk to a large group of young people for 10 or 15 minutes, what would you tell them?" Her response was "What is our Prime of Life."

Good job, Sister Nora!

Now all elders, your assignment is the same. What an opportunity! Speaking to hundreds of young people who will pay close attention to what you say to them. Don't waste this moment. Listen to the words of Elihu, "I said, 'Age should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.'" (Job 32:7)

When you have information that is vital to someone's life it isn't hard to get the message across, is it? When you see a young child about to run into a busy street how easy it is to tell them they shouldn't do that and why.

Writing an article for WOOE is as simple as telling the story of your experience in living a Christian life to a group of young people who are eager to learn.

If you need help in writing your story on paper, I'm sure there are those who would help. If you want to simply write a letter to me relating experiences in your life that made you wiser, then I will help edit it into an article for WOOE.

Another idea is for several elders of your congregation to compile a series of short stories

concerning wisdom which gave their life direction. Such stories could be very interesting and encouraging for our youth as well as all of us.

This idea leads to another, i.e., make the session a guidance meeting with young people asking questions of the elders. This could be recorded and compiled into a summary for publication.

Maybe someone else has a good idea. Let us know if you have one.

It is our intention to promote communication between Christian youth and elders. By so doing, all will receive a tremendous benefit for life.

Dwain R. Stoops

Faith of our Youth

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