

Faith Of Our Youth

October 1997

"The Voice of Young Christian Faith"

Volume 4 Issue 3

SHARING

by Dan Huff

Our parents taught us as youngsters how to share with others. They taught us to share with our biological brothers and sisters, with our friends, and with our enemies. They trained us to share our toys, our food, our kindness and our love.

Why did Dad and Mom teach us this principle?

1.) It was the right thing to do, because it was right in God's eyes.

"Therefore **"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good"** (Romans 12:20-21, NKJ).

2.) It would allow those children that you were sharing your toys with to receive the same enjoyment that you received.

3.) It would show that you care for that child or friend. As a child your toys were important to you, they were valuable in your eyes.

As you've grown older, different things have, or should have, become more important to you, taking the place of the toys. Things that are more precious, and of greater worth,

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Wisdom of our Elders

by Eldon Cox, Fern Vaughn, and Janie Green

JR High CLASS
OZARK Church of Christ
May 11, 1997

Dear Elder Christian,

Our Sunday morning class is about "making my life count." I want to build my life with meaning and purpose for God. You can help me by sharing the ways God has given meaning and purpose to your life. Thanks for your help.

Your Young Friends,

Joshua Scott

Ryan Scott

Eric Rogers

June 11, 1997

Dear Joshua,

As I get older it is so hard for me to understand how fast time goes by. It was May 11th when you wrote to me. Sorry.

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Love the Lost

by John Morris

There had been a long silence. Dr. Closser was again gazing out the window in one of his frequent meditative states, contemplating some philosophical notion that he would share with the class as soon as he remembered where he was. "Love we know nothing about; love we can't live without," was what his ponderings yielded this time. "Hmmm," I remember thinking, "half right. Love I can't live without. I think I know something about love, though."

Christians are of love! "You are of God, little children," John told the early Christians in I John 4:4, and "God is love" (I John 4:8,16). God manifested His love by sending Jesus Christ to die for transgression, and by accepting that love, we were born of God (John 1:14)—born of Love, if you will. Our very birth into spiritual enlightenment was the direct result of love! And, not only is love our origin, but by divine statute—"You shall love the LORD your God..." (Matt. 22:37), "You shall love your neighbor..." (Matt. 22:39), "...love one another" (I Jn. 4:11)—it is a part of our nature. Yes, I think we know something about love.

With this knowledge comes responsibility, the responsibility to tell others about it. After all, "love is not love until it's given away." Consider what God did. Such was the loving nature of God that He could not look upon the condemned state of humankind, and not take action to halt the digression. Humankind was on a highway to Hell and desperately needed an off ramp! God provided one. "In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (I Jn. 4:9). Why did He bother? Because, "the Lord is...not willing that any should perish..." (II Pet. 3:9). That is the will of God! That is the will of Love—life to those in death! If we are truly of God, then we are bent upon the salvation of the lost, just as He is.

I'll never forget when, four years ago, my anthropology instructor (who had many times ridiculed Scripture and even chided me openly because of my faith) stated that, world around, people feel a need for something to worship. They will seek all their lives, he said, to find something to fulfill this need. He, of course, thought of this as nothing more than some queer psychological need spawning from tens of thousands of years of human supremacy, and, as such, could be satisfied by any number of things. He and I agreed about the need, but certainly not about the answer.

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It sounds to me like you had some good instruction that Sunday morning as you studied Psalms 127. You asked me to share with you the ways God has given meaning and purpose to my life.

Joshua, there are so many ways. I only hope in some way I can impress upon your mind, early in life, to look for the way God would have you live. 1 Samuel 3:10; Ecclesiastes 12:1. I can remember before I accepted Jesus as my savior, having the desire to be close to God. To help you understand this think about your parents and how you feel about them.

Joshua, I realize all things come from God, including our parents, things we enjoy in life, food, pets, flowers, sunshine, rain, knowledge, health and so many things: Everything is from God. There are so many blessings that I know can only come from God. This are a few of the ways God has given Meaning and Purpose to my life. He also sent His only begotten Son to live and die that I might have hope beyond this life. John 3:16-19.

Some verses that have helped me are Philippians 4:8; Colossians 3:12-17; Philippians 4:13 & 4:11.

Hope this helps you, thanks for asking. May God bless you and yours.

Your friend,

Eldon L. Cox

Nixa Church of Christ

May 14, 1997

Dear Ryan,

Thank you for your interesting and thoughtful letter! I am pleased to give you some thoughts from my own life experiences; but first I want to commend you and your entire class, and your teacher for thinking seriously and studying Bible passages so that you might better understand "why" and "how" to give meaning and purpose to individual lives.

Ryan, I am 80 years old, a mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. I have been there and done that.

(See "WOODE" on page 4)

"LOVE" (Continued from page 2)

Our God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob can fulfill this need, and He alone! In Eccl. 3:11, Solomon said that God "...put eternity in their hearts..." speaking of humankind. God put a part of Himself in His creation to provoke it to seek Him. In other words, *we were meant to be addicted to God.*

"It is for any who will hear, and is not for us to decide who should hear. We dare not deny someone truth because we're sure they wouldn't listen."

We were created in His image, made to fear Him and obey Him (Eccl. 12:13). Compliance with these requisites will satisfy any emptiness experienced by anyone. Anything else will only bring more emptiness. So, the question lies before us. Since "we are the only Bible the careless world will read" (Sacred Selections, song 512), what are we doing to help others fulfill their need? "There's a message true and glad for the sinful and the sad," and we've already received its blessings (song 282). Let's "Ring it out" for the world to hear.

Have you made love your song?

Do you sing it all day long?

And if that song rings in your ear,

Do you sing so that lost souls may hear?

In *Sacred Selections For the Church*, song 92, James Rowe wrote:

"O let us spread the word where'er it may be heard,

Help groping souls the light to see,

That yonder none may say,

*You showed me not the way,
you never mentioned Him to me.
You never mentioned Him to me.
You helped me not the light to see.
You met me day by day
and knew I was astray,
Yet never mentioned Him to me."*

What a horrific scene. To think that someone who might have considered the way of truth was denied the opportunity because of another's lack of love. Do we intend to take as many people to Heaven with us as we can, or are we content taking care of "number one?" I've heard it said that anyone who's willing to go to Heaven alone probably isn't going. Food for thought.

As a final consideration, approach evangelism with confidence. We have all been given the responsibility, and God does not give us tasks that He doesn't equip us to handle. Competence has never been an issue with God, only faithfulness. John E. Hines wisely stated that "Preaching is effective as long as the preacher believes something can happen--not because of the sermon, not because of the preacher, *but because of God.*"

Amen! Let us never forget that. The "...gospel of Christ is the power of God" (Rom. 1:16). It is not a bedtime story, a well-written fantasy novel, or even a profound, insightful fable. It is power, saving power, the only *real* power in the world.

It is for any who *will* hear, and is not for us to decide who *should* hear. We dare not deny someone truth because *we're sure* they wouldn't listen. We haven't the ability to make that call. "Life is God's novel. Let Him write it." We'll plant, we'll water. God will give the increase. May God bless as we endeavor to spread His "Wonderful Story of Love" (song 276).



Member of

Lee's Summit Church of Christ

"SHARING" (Continued from page 1)

you now hold dear in your life.

1 Corinthians 13:11 - "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (NKJ).

"The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of coins of gold and silver" (Psalms 119:72, NKJ).

Ps 119:162 - "I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure" (NKJ).

In the United States, where we have been so richly blessed, we probably would not find a person who was dying from thirst, because of lack of water. In other countries not as fortunate as we are there are many who die from a lack of water. If possible, who of you would not share, or give a glass of cold water to

**"Everyone needs Jesus!
How often do we share
Jesus with our neighbors,
our friends, those at
school, or our fellow
co-workers?"**

a friend, or an enemy who was "dying of thirst?" They have been out in the heat which has dried up and depleted the water and minerals they need to live. If something is not done to replenish what they have lost, they will die. We look upon such a person with pity, mercy, and compassion. We want to help them, don't we?

Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote, "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8, NKJ).

What about the many souls who are among the living, yet dead? Many don't realize that they are dead without Christ, the Source of life, the Living Water.

"... Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink'" (John 7:37, NKJ).

(See "SHARING" on page 4)

News & Notes

Compiled by
Dan Huff

Prince Road Congregation

Wendy Woody has started her freshman year at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, IL and she works on campus in the library.

Kelly Hartman has started her freshman year at Lewis and Clark Community College.

This is Dane Hartman's senior year in High School.

The younger class (Leah, Josh and Jeff) are studying the Life of Jesus,

Sunday mornings. The past Sunday their class was on Jesus turning the water into wine.

Jay Street Congregation

The teen class on Sunday mornings is studying the life of David.

Jay plans to take the teen class out for pizza in a few weeks, the fellowship is good for the kids. Poor Jay will have to take his ToFu and grain bars, since pizza is not on his diet.

Note: Sent your news & notes items to Dan Huff, 925 South Ave. F201, Springfield, MO 65806, or dhuff@lakeozarks.net.

Visit Dan's web page: **Bread of Life:** www.lakeozarks.net/~dhaff/bol.htm

See **FOOY Online** by Ariel Bown: <http://members.aol.com/ddeis1234/index.html>

"SHARING" (Continued from page 3)

"Jesus answered and said to her, 'Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life'" (John 4:13-14, NKJ). They have lived their life in such a way that they have separated themselves from the Life-Giving Source. If something is not done to replenish the innocence, purity, and vitality, to revive their soul, then they will die.

Ezekiel 18:4c - "...the soul who sins shall die" (NKJ),

Romans 3:23 - "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (NKJ)

Everyone needs Jesus! How often do we share Jesus with our neighbors, our friends, those at school, or our fellow co-workers? How many times do we just continue along like nothing was wrong, and let those who are dying of spiritual thirst continue to languish and suffer in their sins?

Many times we do not approach our friends, or tell them about Jesus, because we think they already know about Him and God's plan for salvation. Too often we are concerned with what they will say, or what they will think of us. Jesus said, "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33, NKJ).

We must remember that if someone we talk to about Jesus and the gospel rejects it they are not rejecting us, but God and His word.

Hebrews 13:16 - "But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (NKJ). God's word doesn't change, and He expects us to share our possessions that He has richly and bountifully blessed us with.

There are many ways we can

"WOOE" (Continued from page 2)

Once I was young like you and your friends, having fun, going to school, listening to older folks, and seeing what was going on around me.

I was seeing, hearing, and feeling all sorts of notions and just beginning to try to sort out the good, bad, and indifferent. I guess that is what growing up is all about.

Oh, it helps not to drift, but stand firm—like a rock. Psalms 61:2, Psalms 71:1-5. As you have heard in sermons and in class, the Apostle Peter recognized Jesus and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus told him that upon that acknowledgment, the Rock, He would build His Church (Matt. 16:16-18).

I was young when these scriptures began to make sense, so an Evangelist named Brother Wiles, baptized me in the cold waters of the Current River. About the same time (in the 1920's) this same Brother Wiles came preaching in the Flat Rock community and drew believers to establish the Church of Christ there...after years of moving from country to cities, from state to state, getting an education, losing my dear mother as I began High School, finding employment, saying "yes" to my husband Ray,

(See "WOOE" on page 6)

(See "SHARING" on page 5)

"SHARING" (Continued from page 4)

share the Lord with our everyday acquaintances. Making statements such as, "What a beautiful day the Lord has blessed us with," or "I am thankful to our heavenly Father for this rain. Now, I do not have to mow the yard today." (If someone ask why you are so joyful today, tell them that, "Jesus is the reason." Then if they ask you why Jesus has made you happy, you can relate to them that you have had all your sins washed away in His death and blood. You do not have to carry that burden anymore, because He took it all away when you humbly submitted and obeyed His word.) Tell your friends that you want to introduce them to a Friend of yours who has done so much for you, and He wants to do the same for them. Invite your friends and acquaintances to Bible studies. If there are no home Bible studies where you are, take the initiative to start one at your home or school. Invite them to young people's Bible studies. When your friends come to you for advice or help in some area of their life point them to the source of help and instruction that you use—the Bible.

There are many positive ways that we can bring God into a conversation, but one of the most important ways we can share Jesus and the gospel with others is by "walking the talk." There is a song that I like to sing at Vacation Bible Studies called "Sermon in Shoes." The words go like this: "Do you know, O Christian, you're a sermon in shoes? Do you know, O Christian, you're a sermon in shoes? Jesus calls upon you to spread the gospel news, so know it and show it, so walk it and talk it, so teach it and preach it, so live it and give it, a sermon in shoes." Christ has called us to be a sermons in shoes. Let us not let Him down, but share Jesus and the gospel with all.

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Member of
Brookfield Church of Christ

Melodies in our Hearts

Songs of Praise

Music, whether vocal or instrumental, is cheering to the mind. In all ages it has been used as a means of comfort and cheer to the soul.

Sacred music is the sweetest and loftiest employment of heaven and earth. To sing is natural. The church has worshiped God for centuries by singing his praises. Singing, in time of worship, is an institution of God, and to sing psalms, hymns, and

spiritual songs is acceptable to God and well-pleasing to men when properly performed.

These are all good reasons to sing in church. Not only does it

cheer the mind and soul, but it brings us closer to God as well. Psalm 147:1 states, "Praise the Lord. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!" David is absolutely correct. It IS good to sing praises to God. When God's people, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, lift their voice and praise the

Lord, it can be one of the most uplifting experiences known to Christians. Surely, then, singing is an important means of grace. Therefore, as an institution of God, it cannot fail to do good, when properly used. And when so used, it will always be

pleasing and acceptable to God.

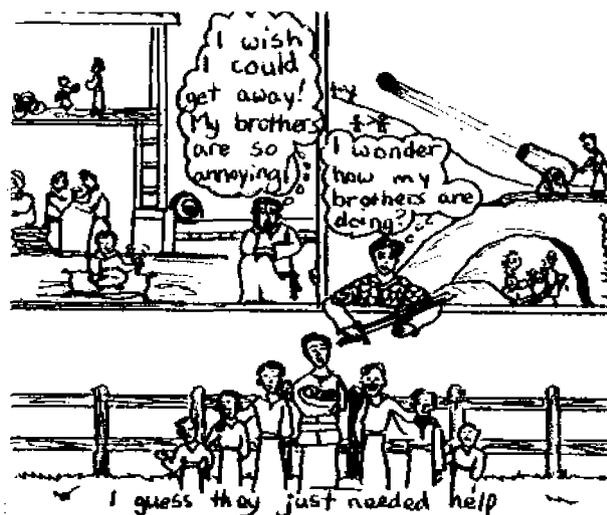
Music, added with the proper text, stirs an emotional response that cannot be equaled by anything

"And singing those praises is not only commanded, but it is another means for us to show our love for Him."

(See MELODIES on page 6)

HUE & BUZ

by Jessi C. Hunter



friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.
Proverbs 17:17

"WOOE" (Continued from page 4)

skipping through the lean years of World War Two, giving birth to two precious sons—one of whom was never able to walk or talk, but is now 50 years old and has been a blessing to family and friends... Yes, along with much happiness there was some sadness; but never did I say or think, "why me?" but instead, "why not me, Lord?"

Always I have felt the presence of Jesus. I have a friend and Holy Father in the Almighty God, and I can speak to Him boldly in Jesus' name. He is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6)!! Ryan, I believe you will follow a different but similar path as you give meaning and purpose to your own life. You can find strength and joy as you stand firm on that Rock.

Your Friend,
Fern Vaughn
Flat Rock Church of Christ, Summersville, MO

5-19-97

Dear Eric,

I was surprised and pleased to get your letter. I'm sure you are having a great study with Dwain. I've known him for many years.

Every life can count for God no matter what the age. The purpose of everyone is to serve God. The ultimate is the rewards of this and for eternity.

I don't know your age for sure—but maybe Jr. High. I am 70. I had a good start in life. My parents were Christians, as were each of their parents. But it has been said, "God has no grandchildren, only children." I think that means I can't ride in on my parents coat tail, I must be responsible for my own faith, as each of us must be.

I've had a good life—much happiness and some sorrows. My husband was a wonderful Christian man. I've been a widow now for 11 years. I have 3 sons and their wives, 7 grandchildren, and 1 great grandson. I've been truly blessed.

The most important thing I have to do now is keep the faith. It is never too early to start living for God and His Son Jesus—and there is never a time to quit. That means a lifetime of service and blessings.

I want to encourage you to hang in there with the "good life." It's well worth it!

Sincerely,
Janie Green
Gregory Blvd. Church of Christ, K.C., MO

MELODIES (Continued from page 5)

else. Singing in church has the power to excite, as well as place us in a mood of somber remembrance. Where else can you "Sing and Be Happy", and then turn the page and remember Christ's sacrifice in "Christ Arose". Often times we have heard Christians cry under the inspiring and soul-transferring influence of church music.

In my opinion, using song to praise God produces results unlike any other. After all, he is our creator and our savior. He deserves our praise continually. And singing those praises is not only commanded, but it is another means for us to show our love for Him. "...Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise." (James 5:13) "You who fear the Lord, praise him!" (Ps. 22:23) "Sing praises to the Lord, enthroned in Zion; proclaim among the nations what he has done." (Ps. 9:11) "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." (1 Pet. 2:9) "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise - the fruit of lips that confess his name." (Heb. 13:15) I rest my case.

Finally, let us all so live and learn to sing praise to God on earth, that when time shall be no more, we may be accounted worthy to unite with the saints and angels in heaven, and sing the new song, of Moses and the Lamb forever and ever.

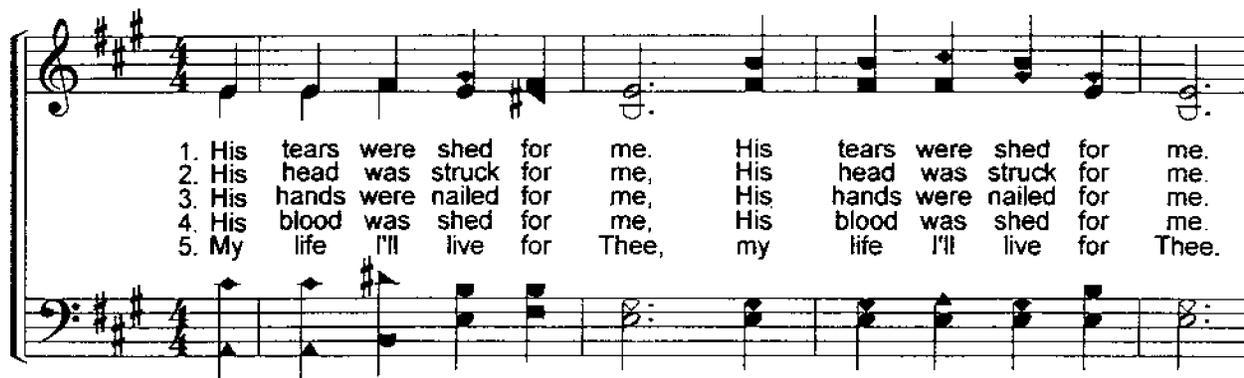
◆◆◆
Bradley Bratcher
Smart Road Church of Christ

Songs of our Youth

Lyrics: Amy Swearingin

For Me

Music: A. Swearingin / K. Spencer



1. His tears were shed for me. His tears were shed for me.
 2. His head was struck for me, His head was struck for me.
 3. His hands were nailed for me, His hands were nailed for me.
 4. His blood was shed for me, His blood was shed for me.
 5. My life I'll live for Thee, my life I'll live for Thee.



In the gar - den of Geth-sem - a - ne, His tears were shed for me.
 By men made just like me, His head was struck for me.
 On the cross-beam of a tree, His hands were nailed for me.
 On the hill of Cal - va - ry, His blood was shed for me.
 You gave Your life for me, so my life I'll live for Thee.

"FOOY" Views

Thank God for Faith-filled Friends and Grandmothers!

Words will not express the special love Kay and I have for all our wonderful Christian friends.

From the beginning of Sharla Kay's illness two months ago, prayers have not ceased on her behalf and their effectiveness is obvious. The many cards and letters from God's special servants express care and concern that can only come from our Father. Thanks to all who share their genuine faith, ours is stronger because of yours. Please continue to remember Kay is your prayers.

One thing Kay misses during her quarantine after therapy is not being able to be with her daughters and grandchildren.

Recently, a group of grandmothers gathered in our city to share their joys and wisdom of "grandmothering." Their leader

made a statement that emphasized the responsibility of this important segment of society. "Grandmothers are the stabilizers of the family." In most crisis, they are the ones relied upon to handle the emotional stability of other family members. They reassure and comfort, not only the little ones, but all family members when events in life are traumatic.

The scriptures teach that "genuine faith" first dwells in Christian grandmothers. Her faith is passed on to her children and to her grandchildren. (2 Tim. 1:5) The role of grandmothers is vital in the church today. Consider the influence of grandmothers and mothers in converting souls in your congregation.

In Titus 2:3-5, the aged women are instructed to be "... teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women..." some very important lessons of life.

To assist in this great work, Kay and I are searching for lessons of grandmother's "good things" in the

bible to be compiled into a study guide. We, also, need the help of grandmothers to share with us in writing about the "good things" they have learned and taught and the ways they have handle their family's crisis. What worked for you in stabilizing your troubled family? or What didn't work? Or, maybe you remember the good works and wisdom of your grandmother. Please share your grandmother experiences with us and we will compile them in booklet form.

This is not a study that can be done quickly or by one person. But working together with grandmothers and their benefactors, we can develop a study book that will help guide grandmothers in teaching the "good things" to the younger women so they can assume this vital role in the 21th Century.

Thank you for your help and prayers.

Dwain R. Stoops

Faith of our Youth

FOOY Online: <http://members.aol.com/ddeis1234/index.html>

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