

September 2008



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Michigan News

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You Will Be My Witnesses part 2

Elder Charles Moore

The book of Acts is filled with stories to show us how normal and authentic Christianity should be lived. Chapter 16 tells us one story about Paul beginning his ministry in Philippi, where a beachhead is to be established for the gospel in Europe. The enemy, however, is not asleep. What follows is an amazing episode. Luke writes, **"As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. (Acts 16:16-18)**

The disciples had been going back to the river to have a time of prayer when they encountered this slave girl. In the first century, there were 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire. Slaves had no rights over their own lives and they were treated like animals. The masters of the slave girl no doubt felt that they had extreme favor because their slave had a demon in her who had the ability to tell fortunes.

This woman followed after them, crying out, **"These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation."** This statement was absolutely true. But why would this demon tell the truth? Perhaps the demon wanted to blow the disciples' cover. The disciples were not bothering anybody. They wanted to be salt in the community by quietly leading a Bible study in Lydia's house and having a prayer meeting at the river. Or perhaps the demon said these words because the demon wanted to associate the apostles with the occult, so that the people of Philippi would say, "Those guys are into the occult too because they have the same message." This happened to Jesus all through His ministry. Doesn't the Bible tell us Satan himself used Scriptures to tempt even Jesus to abandon God's plan for the redemption of mankind? In that instance, Jesus rightly used the Scriptures to defeat Satan's attempts. Satan always tries to present himself as an angel of light, using the same words we use but not meaning the same things we mean. While we may not know why the demon in the woman proclaimed the truth about the apostles, we do

know that Satan is a liar and even when he tells the truth it is only so that he can twist the truth and turn it against us.

Now, the woman's pronouncements were not a one-time deal: the woman did this for **"many days"** and Paul was **"greatly annoyed"**. But Paul addressed the spirit, not the woman, because he recognized that the woman had been victimized by the enemy. The demon, Satan, is the enemy. We too have to remember that. People who attack Christianity are not the enemy; they are the victims of the enemy. Paul said to the demon, **"I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!"** Paul did not want either the Gospel or the name of God to be "promoted" by one of Satan's slaves, so he cast out the demon. After all, Satan may speak the truth one minute and the next minute he tells a lie and an unsaved person would not know the difference.

Notice what Paul did *not* do to help this poor woman. He did not try in his own power to cast out the demon. He didn't yell, sing, torment or even pray. What he did do was to command the demon, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of the slave girl. When he did this, the demon instantly came out. Paul put his trust in the power of the resurrected Lord to overcome the demon and because of this the captive woman was set free from the spiritual enemy. Yes, she was still a Roman slave, but she was no longer a slave of Satan, possessed by a demon. We

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must too rely on the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to stand against the schemes of the demonic realm. It is not fashionable in all Christian circles to talk about the very real battle we fight in the spiritual realm against the enemy Satan, as well the enemy of our own flesh. However, Paul advises us in the book of Ephesians, **“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,” (Ephesians 6:10-18)**

Go forth into this dark and trouble world, proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ **“in the strength of his might”**

Michigan Report

Aurine Moore

September has come upon us, cooler and grayer than usual but still with sun and warmth in the sun. Elder Charlie Moore has taken us back on a walk and we have resumed roaming through Romans, discussing such topics as the right to yield and how to handle unity and diversity. It's been a good month getting ready for Fall and welcoming annual rituals. One such ritual, the annual reunion of Kathy Smeltzer and Kay Nevil for their shared birthday took a turn this year. They indeed celebrated, but Kay's was a surprise celebration hosted by friends in Baroda, Michigan. Diane Begeman was driven to a high level of agitated distraction during the month, trying to determine, “Who are all these strangers who have been sending me cards from California, Hawaii and other far-flung places?” Come to find out, our dear friend Bennie Gee from Good News Unlimited in Auburn, California had put up her travelling friends and relatives to drop cards to Diane from their points of travel. Though distracted, Diane was clearly thrilled with the chase of the puzzle all month long. Vicki Chapman also celebrated her 50th birthday when her brother Steve took her on a Michigan fall tour for the weekend, to Frankenmuth and towards Tawas.

Dale and Geneva Begeman attended the Gospel Quartet Convention in Nashville with good friends, Gerald and Ann Thompson. They had a wonderful time, Geneva's back was pain free and Dale made no detours to the hospital this year. They brought back wonderful stories and videos (including “The Cross Is

Greater than our Sin” by the Hoppers). Members of the congregation sponsored a table and some also attended the annual Faith in Action fundraising dinner at Trinity Lutheran Church. School has started back up for all of our students from kindergarten to college and beyond.

While carrying on the routines of life, members also had the chance to enjoy special treats. We recently went for a sing at Tender Care in Monroe only to discover that through scheduling confusion, we weren't on the schedule. Never fear though – we stopped down to see Judy Begeman in her room and had a short, impromptu concert in her room. She is always flexible, gracious and enthusiastic to sing, pray and visit. Following that visit, Kathy Smeltzer and Charlie and I went to Ann Arbor to visit Karyn Zajackowski where she is recuperating from a recent illness. Karyn's room, filled with flowers, her own quilts and music and other personal touches, has an ambiance nothing like a hospital room. It's a cozy, comfortable place to visit, talk about songs from the fifties and sixties, and fashion (talking about how to walk in certain styles of skirts and how the fabrics lay). We pray for Judy, Karyn and other members of our circle, including Marcia Moore, for they struggle with illness.

Fall is also a time when visitors return to us (as well as having returned to points south and west). Jeff and Melinda Begeman returned from a trip of a life time tour of the west, visits with outlying members, and tales of adventures. We are so glad they had this opportunity to travel with daughter Katie and niece Sydney (daughter of Jim and Tisha) Begeman. Jeff had purchased an extra week of vacation and somehow got another one too, a situation his employer will never again permit, so they were gone a total of about 3 weeks.

We have been enjoying visitors coming to church. Helen Belcher, a long time friend was up from Hamilton Ohio and some of us recently had the pleasure of going to lunch with her, as well as worshipping with her. Some friends of Jamie and Branden Carothers, Bill and Vicki Gilbert, have been visiting also. They are very easy to talk with and had previously crossed paths with our church through the former tri-fellowship meetings in the past. Matt Smith, a student of Kathy and Joe Smeltzer's way back when, visited recently with his two daughters, Cassie and Britney, and his son Matthew. We are really happy for and proud of him. Because his job is being eliminated, he is making good use of a program in Ohio to retrain at college to work in Health Information. He and his children look wonderful.

With September we begin a new schedule of Bible study teachers and as youth and members mature, we mix up the class compositions a bit. We now have Terrie Fedor handling preschool, Diane Begeman teaching 3rd through 6th, Melinda Begeman handling 7th through High School and Tim Begeman through master's level. We also do our annual fall cleanup in preparation for our October Retreat. This year's cleanup went off without a hitch, with the men oiling siding, women cleaning cupboards and walls, people searching for how the bees are getting into the basement and groups evaluating how much longer the current church roof can wait without repairs. (Answer, next spring we will hopefully have saved the money to replace it during spring clean-up). So, you see, life goes on and God is good to us. Until next month, may you be with God and He with you.

David Charles in Rotonda West, Florida has faced some difficulties this month. I reported last month that he was undergoing some medical tests and some things have developed since then. He is not totally through with tests yet. The stress test came back normal, but the doctor was still concerned and wanted to do a heart catheterization. He had to have a blood test for the go ahead for the procedure, and it found he was anemic, so they gave him two units of blood. That improved his whole physical being, so as of right now they temporarily postponed the heart tests and are trying to find out where the anemic condition is coming from. God is good, isn't he? We are thankful you are feeling better, David, and hope all the mysteries are solved soon. We are fearfully and wonderfully made.

There is some great news this month. Doug and Kristen Vaughn are the proud parents of a bouncing baby boy named Lucas Robert Vaughn. He was born September

17, and weighed in at 9 pounds 8 ounces. These new babies give the Charles-Vaughn families reasons to celebrate. Last month on August 4, Brent and Julie Charles had a new little girl named Charlotte Anne. David and Ruth's family continues to grow!

Sonya Pease is quite a quilt maker. She decided to enter one of her quilts in the state fair and she won fourth place! That has encouraged her for 2009, so we will see how she does.

Ellen Momberger keeps busy in Arizona with quilting and other activities. I am trying to obtain a picture of some of her beautiful artwork for all of you. She sends her best to our church and is happy to be so near to her dear son and all of his family.

September has been one of the best weather months I can remember. Now it is time to let fall creep in. May God bless each and every one of you.

The Holy City

Thirty men, red-eyed and disheveled lined up before a judge of the San Francisco police court. It was the regular morning company of "Drunks and Disorderlies." Some were old and hardened, others hung their heads in shame. Just as the momentary disorder attending the bringing-in of the prisoners quieted down, a strange thing happened. A strong, clear voice from below began singing:

"Last night I lay a sleeping,
There came a dream so fair."

Last night! It had been for them all a nightmare or a drunken stupor. The song was such a contrast to the horrible fact that no one could fail of a sudden shock at the thought the song suggested.

"I stood in old Jerusalem,
Beside the Temple there,"

The song went on. The judge had paused. He made a quiet inquiry. A former member of a famous opera company known all over the country was awaiting trial for forgery. It was he who was singing in his cell. Meantime the song went on, and every man in the line showed emotion. One or two dropped on their knees; one boy at the end of the line, after a desperate effort at self-control, leaned against the wall, buried his face against his folded arms, and sobbed, "Oh mother, mother!" The sobs, cutting to the very heart of the men who heard, and the song, still welling its way through the courtroom, blended in the hush.

At length one man protested, "Judge," said he, "have we got to submit to this? We're here to take our punishment, but this—" He, too began to sob. It was impossible to proceed with the business of the court, yet the judge gave no order to stop the song. The police sergeant, after an effort to keep the men in line, stepped back and waited with the rest. The song moved on to its climax:

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem!
Sing for the night is o'er!
Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna for evermore!

In an ecstasy of melody the last words rang out, and then there was silence. The judge looked into the faces of the men before him. There was not one who was not touched by the song; not one in whom some better impulse was not stirred. He did not call the cases singly— a kind word of advice, and he dismissed them all. No man was fined or sentenced to the workhouse that morning. The song had done more good than punishment could possibly have accomplished.

—Author Unknown

**CHURCH OF THE
LORD OUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS**

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Sick Leave

I really needed a few days off from work, but I knew the boss wouldn't give me time off. I thought that maybe if I acted "crazy," then he would tell me to take a few days off.

So, I hung upside-down from the ceiling and made funny noises. My co-worker asked me what I was doing. I told her that I was pretending to be a light bulb so the boss might think I was desperately in need of a few days off.

A few minutes later, the boss came into the office and asked, "What in the world are you doing?"

I told him I was a light bulb. He said, "You are clearly stressed out. Go home and rest for a couple of days." I jumped down and walked out of the office.

However, when my co-worker started to follow me, our boss called out, "And where do you think you're going?"

She said, "I'm going home too. I can't work in the dark."

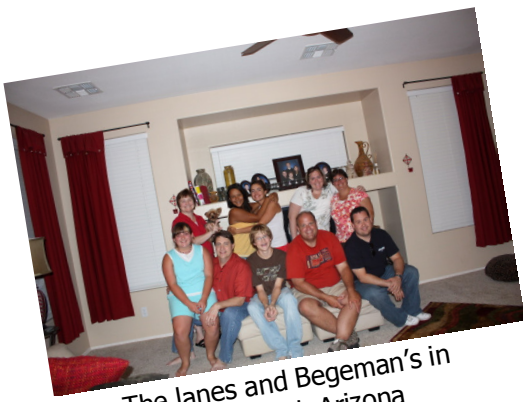


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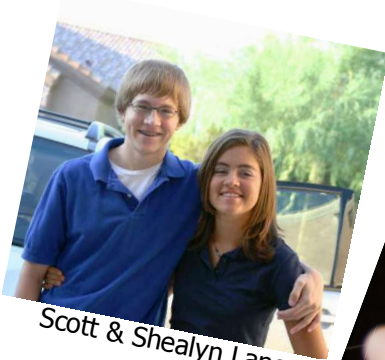
Drew & Ashley Begeman



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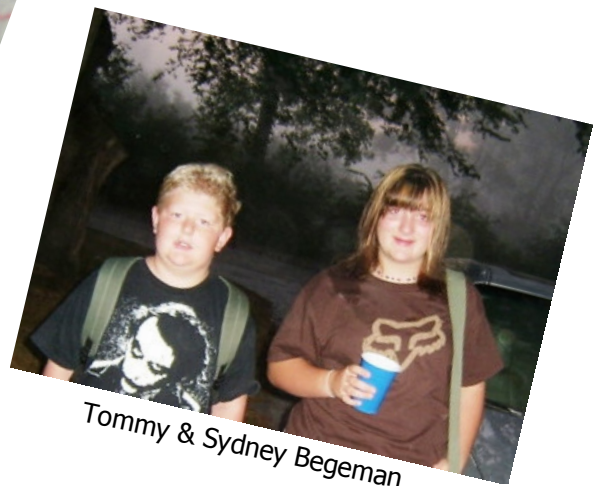
Katie Begeman



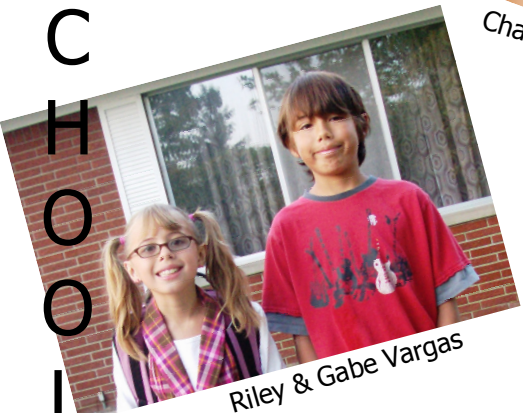
Scott & Shealyn Lane



Charlotte Anne Charles 7/28/08



Tommy & Sydney Begeman



Riley & Gabe Vargas



Ruth Charles, Dale Begeman, Ethel Johnson