



SUMMER 2007

# GRAPEVINE

BIBLE TEACHING RESOURCES

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“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.... But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:28-29, 33 NIV).

## Marriage Metamorphosis...The Spiritual Journey of a Marriage

*"Be sure of this very thing, that He who began in you a good work will bring it to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6).*

*"But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18).*

Pearl and I are celebrating 54 years of marriage this summer. What joy fills our hearts on this occasion!

Through those years, what cowboy poet Joe Kreger calls "the broncy nature" of yours truly has made for some tough times. Sin, stubbornness, and selfishness characterize the old nature.

God did a marvelous work in my heart through the loss of the ranch in Colorado a few years ago. Periods of praying and fasting have led to the place where we are drinking from our saucers because our cups have overflowed.

A decade ago, Pearl and I determined that we would, as soul mates, share what we have learned from our years together.

Over these last ten years we have produced five marriage studies that we have shared at marriage conferences each spring. These five studies are available through Bible Teaching Resources: (1) *The Pathway to Marital Blessing*, (2) *The Barriers to Marital Intimacy*, (3) *The Seasons of a Marriage*, (4) *The Platinum Marriage*, and (5) *Making a Fresh Start*.

The sixth and final study in this series, newly completed, is *Marriage Metamorphosis*. This article is partly a preview.

The noun *metamorphosis* is defined as a profound change in form from one stage to the next in the life history of an organism.

The very same tools that the Lord uses in making us more like Christ are the tools designed to make couples

shine brightly together in a Christ-like marriage. Profound changes must occur in the life history of the marriage.

We must ask ourselves, "Is our marriage growing as it should?" Sometimes marriages grow into familiar routines instead of growing into the next stage of spiritual and emotional development as God intended. We get stuck in a comfortable rut and no longer experience new discoveries about each other and about God.

Just as we go through various stages in our spiritual progress and growth, so our marriage ought to go through stages of change in the same way. As we become more like Christ, a godly marriage can likewise change and mature for the better.

The major premise of *Marriage Metamorphosis* is that change produces greater closeness and compatibility. Your world has to change before you can change the world.

God uses four tools in our lives to make us more like Christ. These same four tools may be used by the Spirit of God to create a oneness in marriage that we may have only dreamed about.

1. God brings us into RELATIONSHIP. He brings us into a relationship of unconditional commitment: a relationship of caring for each other, a relationship of communication with each other.

Dr. Emerson Eggerichs writes in *Cracking the Communication Code: The Secret of Speaking Your Mate's Language*:

Clearly, the Crazy Cycle triggers and fuels itself. When a wife feels unloved, she tends to react in ways that feel disrespectful to her husband. When a husband feels disrespected, he tends to react in ways that feel unloving to his wife. And around and around they go—on the Crazy Cycle....

When a husband chooses to come across lovingly even though he feels disrespected, he can prevent the Crazy Cycle from spinning and possibly getting out of control. When a wife chooses to come across respectfully even though she feels unloved,

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## From the Editor

Summer has arrived...and things are hopping around the offices of Bible Teaching Resources. At this writing, we eagerly anticipate June, which will bring the 35th anniversary family camp at Cannon Beach Christian Conference Center. A full report will appear in the fall issue. In the meantime, Don provides a preview of his latest marriage study series, *Marriage Metamorphosis*, in "Coach's Clipboard." Board member Larry Watkins shares the amazing story of the Four Rivers Outreach ministry in Sherman, Texas. Terry Elkins updates our readers on our newest foray into the cyber age: podcasting. Now you can download Don's studies directly on your iPod or MP3 player. See page 6 for details. Are you interested in expanding your ability to study scripture inductively and teach the word? Perhaps you will consider signing up for the teacher training class this November in Granbury, Texas. Details are on page 10. Thank you for your faithful friendship and support!

—*Jane Rodgers*



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# Four Rivers Outreach

by Jane Rodgers

## Active Christianity Making a Difference

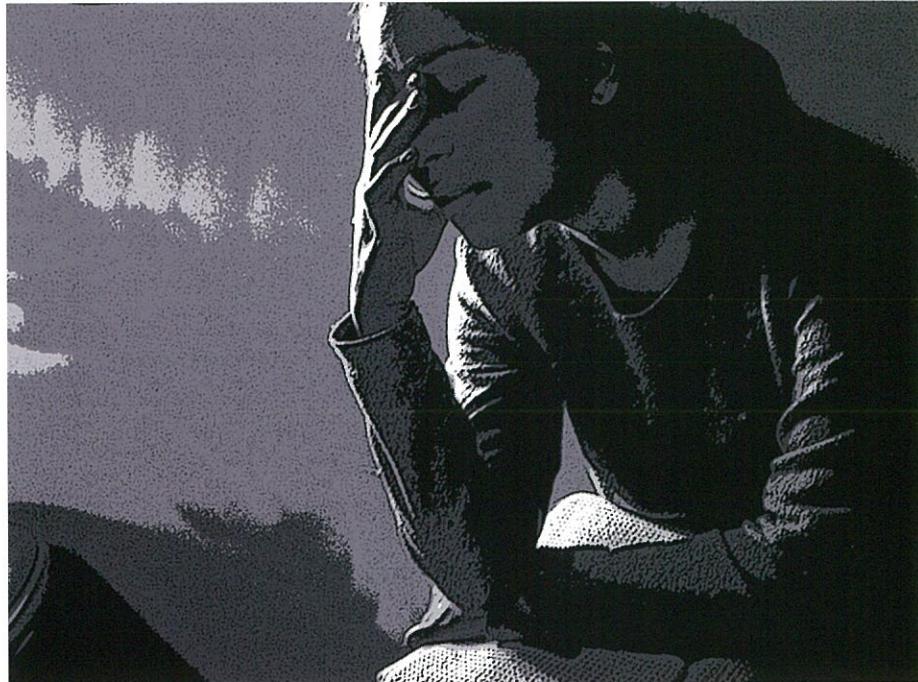
**L**et's call her Linda. She lives in Sherman, Texas. She is 25, has five children, and is on probation. She has appeared before Sherman Judge Rim Nall and is enrolled in the STAR recovery program initiated through Nall's efforts. Probationers like Linda with drug and alcohol problems participate voluntarily in the three-phase, 18 month STAR program. Once a month, Linda appears before Judge Nall. Before each hearing, Judge Nall will have already met with Linda's counselors and probation officer. Linda, like others in the STAR program, will have undergone mandatory drug testing. Setbacks mean jail time. Judge Nall is serious about helping these men and women...but they must be serious, too.

How does Judge Nall's STAR program involve Bible Teaching Resources board member Larry Watkins? To understand this, you need to know Larry. You also need to meet Arthur Horn.

Larry Watkins grew up in Dallas and moved to Sherman in 1979 to start a trucking business, Watkins Trans Services. It has been a good life for Larry and JoAnn, his high school sweetheart and bride of more than 47 years. "My family liked JoAnn more than they liked me!" laughs Larry, who admits that JoAnn should "get the credit" for their happy life. The couple's son and daughter are both married. The five Watkins grandchildren range in age from four to fourteen.

In the early 1980s, Larry and JoAnn met Don and Pearl Anderson at Don's Sherman Bible classes. For the last decade, Larry has been involved in sponsoring the Sherman classes. "If anyone has been a Christian mentor to me, it's Don," says Larry.

Larry recalls his spiritual journey: "I had been a Christian since age 13, but I didn't experience much fellowship with the Lord till about 10 years ago. I didn't like the direction of my life at the time. I had been blessed. I was thankful for my family, friends, and business, but I felt empty. I started praying, 'Lord, I don't know what you have in store but I'm ready to go.'"



Being ready to go meant listening to Arthur Horn.

Larry and Jo Ann had attended church with Arthur and Jeannie Horn in the early 1980s. Larry and Arthur also knew each other from their involvement with the Air Chapel, a 501C ministry geared toward providing spiritual teaching to kids, ages 12-17, who had been convicted as felons and sentenced to boot camp. The men volunteered as mentors to the boot camp kids. One day the conversation between Arthur and Larry turned to church, and Arthur expressed his interest in the Church with No Walls in Florida. Arthur wanted to start something similar in downtown Sherman. He envisioned a church which would reach out to the down and out, ministering to those strung out on alcohol and drugs.

"The more we talked, the more I knew that this was a vision of God, not just Arthur," recalls Larry. "Arthur had an incredible passion for this ministry. Arthur and I started praying about it. Then we started trying to find a facility. God had given us the vision."

Four Rivers Outreach was born. Currently, the organization is awaiting approval for 501C3 status as a not-for-profit entity. All papers have been filed. Arthur serves as executive director. Larry is on the board. Jeannie Horn is the organization's bookkeeper. Jeannie,

wheelchair bound, shops weekly with a longtime friend to purchase supplies for the transitional houses. She also gives a woman's perspective on issues that arise. "Jeannie keeps Arthur and me in line," laughs Larry, crediting her with helping them make tough decisions. "Arthur is the driving force behind the ministry," says Larry.

Enter Judge Nall. Enter Linda.

Judge Nall (who also attends Sherman area Bible Teaching Resources classes) told Larry of Linda's plight. The young woman, then living with a relative who was a cocaine dealer, desperately needed a place to live. She was on probation and wanted to change. Her probation officer confirmed that Linda had reached the "breaking point," and had indicated she was ready to go back to her former life on the streets.

"We have got to find her a house," Judge Nall told Larry.

Larry found one. The Four Rivers Outreach New Day transitional house is close to the probation office, Alcoholics Anonymous, and the county jail. Linda and her children are its first residents. Another lady is expected soon.

In order to stay in the house, Linda has had to sign a contract, agreeing to regularly attend various life skill classes sponsored by Four Rivers Outreach. She must keep the job she holds as a salesclerk. The Texoma Work Commission provides funding for babysitters. Linda must stay in the STAR program, submitting to drug testing, too.

Life is looking up for Linda, but it won't be easy. Last Christmas, the Watkinses and Horns celebrated Christmas with Linda and her five kids at the transitional house. Larry loves taking them riding on his three-wheeled motorcycle (Trike). They have become like extended family to Larry, JoAnn, Jeannie, and Arthur.

Besides Linda and her children, Four Rivers Outreach serves other clients enrolled in Judge Nall's STAR program. Other clients come from AA, the courts, other recovery programs, or even just the streets of Sherman. Every day Arthur Horn goes to AA to see if anyone needs help. One lady, very intelligent but obviously strung out on methadone, put it poignantly: "Mr. Horn, I don't need someone to talk to me. I need someone who will walk with me." That is the goal of Four Rivers. Arthur is a good listener, a man of compassion.

In the last three months, Four Rivers Outreach has opened a ministry office near the transitional house. Arthur is there daily. Every day, five to ten people stop in for a hot meal or to talk to someone or to sign up for life skill classes offered weekly in such areas as



financial management, relationships, or job skills. The class on relationships often attracts 20 participants; other classes are smaller. The ministry is busy. And there are future plans.

Across the street from the Four Rivers office is a 10,000 square foot building the ministry is in the process of purchasing. The building will eventually house ten beds to meet the desperate need for transitional housing in the community. The building's owner is helping to finance the purchase. People come by to help. Volunteers show up. God is blessing the efforts.

Four Rivers Outreach is a faith based mission largely dependent upon contributions. The board has applied for federal funds from Access to Recovery, a program that is one of President Bush's faith based initiatives. Otherwise, private donations fund the work.

And the work is eternal in scope.

"Probation officers can only use the word 'spiritual,'" comments Larry. "We can talk about Jesus Christ and God."

The mission statement of Four Rivers Outreach is as follows: "[to] provide a caring environment for the restoration and wholeness of individuals and families through a community-wide network."

Linda grew up in the Sherman community. When she was 16, her parents divorced. Her mother is a Christian. Her dad was doing drugs. Linda's troubles started when she left her mom's home. Linda is a high school graduate—a smart, pretty girl with a vibrant personality. She wants to change. Change will be difficult. But now she has something she never had before: hope.

*Four Rivers Outreach is located at 333 West Jones, Sherman, Texas 75090. You may contact Arthur Horn at [ahhorn@aol.com](mailto:ahhorn@aol.com) or telephone 903.870.4000 or 903.436.8816.*

# Persevering and Pressing on... and Podcasting!!

That's right! Don Anderson's weekly message currently broadcast over the internet at OnePlace.com is now available as a podcast. This wonderful media outlet allows Bible Teaching Resources to deliver God's word "where the people live." There are several advantages to using the podcast media. First and foremost, by subscribing to the podcast, you will receive the weekly messages automatically downloaded to your computer as they become available. You don't have to remember to go to the website every week and manually download the message. It just shows up, ready for you to listen at your convenience. Once the podcast is on your computer, it will be automatically loaded to your iPod or MP3 player, too. Just think, now you can take Don anywhere you go, right in your pocket!

And did we mention, we are having a drawing for a free iPod? Keep reading!

So, how do you subscribe? You may use iTunes or pick the alternate method. Instructions for both follow.



## Not-iTunes—alternate

1. Go to OnePlace.com and find the "Persevering and Pressing On" webpage ([http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/persevering\\_and\\_pressing\\_on/](http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/persevering_and_pressing_on/)).
2. Click on the PODCAST "button."
3. You will see a "window" with a link that says, "Open this feed in your default podcast application." Do not click on this link, as OnePlace does not have it in service. If you do click on it, nothing bad will happen. It just doesn't work.
4. Instead, at the bottom of the window, notice the funny-looking address that looks like this: (<http://podcast.oneplace.com/ppo/9999999.xml>).
5. Copy that address and then open your podcatcher software.
6. Paste the address into the appropriate place within your podcatcher software.

You are now officially subscribed and can look forward to receiving Don's newest message automatically every week! Don't forget to synch up with your iPod or MP3 player.

Now go subscribe! While you are at it, remember these three things:

- Tell all your friends! Call them, send them an e-mail, or select "Tell A Friend" from the right hand side of the iTunes page!
- Let us know that you have subscribed by sending an e-mail to [podcast@bibleteachingresources.org](mailto:podcast@bibleteachingresources.org).
- Let us know what you think! Tell us in an e-mail or just post a comment right on the iTunes page!

## iPod Giveaway

When you send us an e-mail telling us you've subscribed, you will be automatically entered into the iPod Nano giveaway drawing to be held on July 31, 2007!

# Outta the Mailbag

*Excerpted below are notes, letters, and e-mails that have encouraged us recently. Thanks! We love to hear from you.*

Many thanks for the Bibles that you gave me to take to Mongolia. Two of them (the Student Bibles) went to the waitresses in our restaurant. It thrills me to think about those new Christians, with their limited English, poring over the Word of God!

Thank you for your years of faithfulness in delivering God's word. You have been a very meaningful part of my Christian awakening/journey.

I was reading my devotions this morning and I read Colossians 3:11: "Christ is all and in all," and I thought of you.

Thanks for providing an example of ...finishing and running the race well.

We remember your family with such fond memories—First, Pine Cove—very new at the time—then, Fifth Street Church.... Each day I use the daily devotional book by Don—it's always "just right" for "whatever."...Please thank you for being such a vital part of our family and the spiritual things you always put first.... Someday we'll sit and talk for eternity of these "good" things.

My father...passed away this past Sunday...of [complications from] a sudden and massive stroke....He survived for almost two weeks but never woke up. The day before the stroke he was helping an elderly lady in Sherman with her roof that was damaged in the wind and sandstorm the day prior. He and my mom...had attended your seminars in various places and Kaleo Lodge always held a special place in their hearts.

## ***About the spring 2007 couples conferences:***

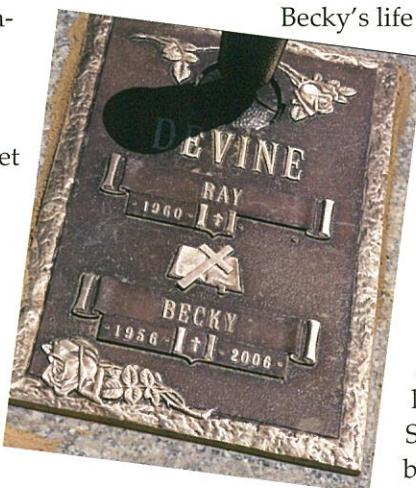
[We] are still basking in the afterglow of another great couples conference. We are reminded of all the work that is done to make this ever so good.... I felt that there was a very close spirit of oneness at this conference where we all just enjoyed being together.

[The conference] was a blessing to both of us and to our family.

Sam and I were blessed in so many ways at the couples conference.... We benefited from each session, the music, even Herman's humor, and we're excited to learn and use the new ideas and the suggested reading resources... Cannot resist saying what a blessing to share in communion, lakeside with our group. That was...MORE than we could have hoped for....new and precious.

## ***About Becky Anderson Devine's homegoing:***

In your grief...you have ministered to all of us.... As I pray for you and the ministry in the morning, I will also pray for Ray.



Becky's life defined a steadfast spirit but the love of Ray and Becky was beyond worldly definition. That love and faithfulness can only be explained in Christ. In today's world of "cut and run" marriages, theirs was a true love story.

...I was deeply grieved to learn of Becky's passing... She must have grown up to be an incredible blessing to you all. I remember the time

I lived with you in Bremerton after you led me to the Lord... Those were wonderful times and you must know that I fondly think of and pray for you and your ministry on an ongoing basis.

I just...read of Becky's departure. I have been praying daily for her, you, and Pearl since I heard of her stroke.... I want you to know that Pearl's and your example of how to deal with pain and loss brings people closer to the Lord the same as your teaching.... I have lost both parents and a sister in the last years.... Sometimes it is in the pain of life that we learn how to truly live as a Christian.



## Recipes by Robichaux

With Johnnie Robichaux's retirement from Kaleo Lodge, we have decided to recycle some classic recipes, vintage Kaleo favorites. Here's Johnnie's famous dilly bread, a recipe originally published in the summer 1992 *Grapevine*.

### Dilly Bread

2 1/2 cups flour  
2 pkgs. yeast dissolved in 1/3 cup warm water  
1 cup cottage cheese heated to lukewarm  
1 tablespoon butter  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon soda  
1 egg  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1 tablespoon dehydrated onion  
2 teaspoons dill seed

Softens yeast in warm water. Combine cheese, sugar, onion, dill, butter, salt, soda and egg in large bowl. Add yeast and water and mix well. Add flour to form stiff dough. Leaving mixture in the same bowl, cover with damp towel and let rise until doubled in size. Stir down and turn into well-greased casserole or loaf pan. Let rise again 30 to 40 minutes or until doubled. Bake at 375 degrees for 25 minutes or till bread sounds hollow when thumped.

### Summer Crunch Hits!

Thanks to you, our friends and supporters, who faithfully pray for Bible Teaching Resources year round. Summer brings special financial challenges to most ministries, including ours. There is usually a summer slump! Thank you in advance for remembering us in every season! You are a blessing.



### Prison Ministry Update

To date, Bible Teaching Resources has distributed Bibles and other study materials, free of charge and upon request, to inmates in the following correctional facilities across the Southwest:

|                                    |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Austin, TX                         | Hobby Unit, Marlin    |
| Bell County                        | Hutchins State Jail   |
| Bowie County Correctional Facility | Jacksboro, TX         |
| Bradshaw                           | Livingston            |
| Bridgeport PPT                     | Lockhart              |
| Burnet                             | Longview Jail         |
| Choice Moore Unit                  | Lubbock Jail          |
| Dawson State Jail                  | McClennan County Jail |
| Gatesville                         | Melissa, TX           |
| Gatesville                         | TDCJ – Iowa Park, TX  |
| Gregg County                       | Tennessee Colony      |
| Gurney Unit                        | Texarkana             |
| Harris County Jail, Houston        | Woodman Unit          |
| Henderson                          |                       |
| Hobbs, NM                          |                       |

### Catch Don 2007

**Sundays, 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. services @ Hide-A-Way Lake Community Church.** 1500 Lake Park Circle, Hideaway, TX 75771. See [www.hideawaychurch.com](http://www.hideawaychurch.com), contact the church office @ 903.882.6966, or email the staff at [admin@hideawaychurch.com](mailto:admin@hideawaychurch.com) for more information.

**Labor Day Conference @ The Dunes** – August 31-September 3, 2007

**Fall tour (TBA)** – September 16-October 25

**Teacher Training** – November 16-17

**www.OnePlace.com:** 24/7 on the internet: Just go to [www.OnePlace.com](http://www.OnePlace.com) on the web and click on the "Perservering and Pressing On" link to hear a message from Don Anderson at any time. Archived messages are also available. Subscribe to podcast and enter to win a free iPod Nano (see page 6).

### Keep the Fire! Audiobook (CD # 980) \$15

*Keep the Fire!* on CD is now available for purchase. Don's biblically-based book on retirement and aging, narrated by Josh Morriss, would make a wonderful addition to anyone's audio library. See page 10 to order.

## COWBOY POETRY

Note: The "Broncy Nature" is a big culprit in many marriage relationships as well as our relationship with the Lord. We hope you'll enjoy this cowboy piece reprinted with permission of the poet.

### Broncy Nature

by Joe Kreger

There is a most descriptive term in western nomenclature, an inborn, bad condition known as broncy nature.

It usually goes with horses who won't work to your plan, but it's also found in cattle and, often, in a man.

Bronciness pops up in dogs, and quite frequently in mules. I think it's just aversion to livin' by the rules.

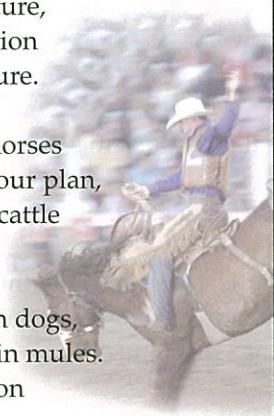
A bronc of any species won't just plod down the road, and his spirit shore ain't tuned up to packin' round your load.

He may be prone to kick or strike or spill you on the ground, and if you want to catch him, he'll never be around.

Independence is his forté. He just will not submit. He's short on cooperation, though pretty long on grit.

That broncy nature's been around since Adam left from Eden, Some just won't be rode or drove and don't take well to leadin'.

"Broncy Nature" by Joe Kreger quoted in *Still Lookin'*. Poetry © Joe Kreger, 2000.



### Pearl's Reflections

by Pearl Anderson

Our youngest daughter, Julea Gulbrandson, told me a rather poignant story about her husband, Steve. Julea is a stay-at-home mom. They have three children.

Steve made the comment that he did not mind working his whole life to take care of and provide for his family. He said the only thing he would really like to have is a nice car for work.

Steve spends a large portion of his time traveling around the state of Oregon as a representative for the Converse athletic company. Since comfortable transportation is important to Steve, Julea makes sure they plan their budget around the purchase, every few years, of a VW Jetta which is Steve's "nice car of choice."

When two people love each other and are committed to the well-being of their marriage, they will make allowances to provide the expressed desire of their mate. They will change and compromise to help the relationship.

The Bible teaches in 2 Timothy 2:15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

It is important that we spend time to study what pleases God. We need to also spend time to understand what we can do to build up and nurture our mates. We need to know what pleases and is important to them.

The great question is not, "Do I want to change to produce greater closeness and compatibility?" but rather, "Where do I get the power to make my marriage work long term?"

The answer to that is the Lord Jesus is fully capable to bring about changes in our lives to accomplish His purpose and plans for us. Unfortunately, at times the desire to change is an 80/20 proposition. One mate may be less willing than another to cooperate to make the necessary adjustments to achieve a more compatible relationship.

Let me warn the one who is selfish and unwilling to sacrifice or compromise. When your mate loses heart and gives up on the idea that you "will ever change," then, my friend, you are in "a world of hurt." Your desperate plea to a counselor to "save your marriage" may come too late.

It takes two to make a marriage successful. Do your part and a lot more. Your marriage is worth it.

Your marriage and your walk with Jesus Christ have the same enemies: the world, the flesh and the devil.

Be courageous and determined as you fight for your marriage and against these spiritual enemies. You are not able to overcome them in your own strength but you are certain to have the victory through "the strength of the One who indwells you." Seek the help of the One who is greater and mightier than they who are against you.

"O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done marvelous things, things planned long ago" (Isaiah 25:1 niv).

# Registration & Order Form

## TEACHER TRAINING CONFERENCE

November 16-17, 2007 (\$50 deposit per person)

### NEW!

*Keep the Fire!* audio book—\$15

### BOOKS

*Keep the Fire!*—\$15

*God Wants a Relationship*—\$15

*A Word from the Word*—devotional—\$20

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## Teacher Training Conference

November 16-17, 2007

Pecan Plantation

Granbury, TX

Join Don and Pearl in a small group setting to learn Don's time-tested techniques of Bible study, preparation, and teaching.

### What you'll learn...

How to study scripture inductively, prepare lessons, gather illustrations to teach.



### What you'll receive...

Methods & ideas for teaching, three reference books, training manual and highlighters, the option to purchase tapes & books at a discount.

### How to sign up...

Mail or FAX the registration form to our office with a \$50.00 per person deposit. You may also register on-line at [www.BibleTeachingResources.org](http://www.BibleTeachingResources.org).

### Other stuff to know...

Cost will vary depending upon accommodations needed but will include meals and materials. Contact the office for further details. It will be a weekend retreat with eternal benefits.

Don's 48 years of studying and teaching the word should bear witness to the fact that God does bless and use the inductive approach.

We would love to have newcomers, but we also welcome those who have taken the course in the past to join us for a refresher. Our dream is for God to raise up an army of teachers who can use our materials, coupled with personal study, to instruct the body of Christ. Plans are to film this training session for release in DVD format, too.

## BOOKSHELF

by Don Anderson

# Bill Lawrence Presented Justinian Award at Law Day Luncheon

The annual Law Day luncheon held Friday, May 4, 2007, at the Tyler Rose Garden Center and hosted by the Smith County Bar Association, featured a gathering of prominent members of the Tyler legal community to honor local leaders, including one of their own and our own: Mr. William D. Lawrence.

The event's theme this year was "Liberty under Law: Empowering Youth, Assuring Democracy." Bill Lawrence received the Justinian Award, a lifetime achievement award given to an outstanding Smith County attorney in recognition of his professionalism, community service, and high ethical standards.

Bill, who received two standing ovations during the ceremony, said of the award, "It is a great honor for me to be recognized in this way. I am very honored to have practiced law with some outstanding people and partners in my life."

Charles Clark, who was hired by Lawrence to work at his firm in 1960, presented the award to Bill, praising him as an excellent lawyer, mentor, and role model.

"Bill Lawrence is one of the best counselors I have ever known," said Clark.

Lawrence, a bomber pilot during World War II, graduated from the University of Texas at Austin and from Southern Methodist University School of Law. He then returned to Tyler and married his college sweetheart, Dorothy, establishing a law practice with his father, Dewey Lawrence, and brother, F. Lee Lawrence. After 50 years in the profession, Lawrence retired from practicing law and



Bill and Dorothy Lawrence

now volunteers as an administrator with Bible Teaching Resources. He and Dorothy have one son, one daughter, and four grandchildren.

Congratulations, Bill! We at Bible Teaching Resources echo the praise of your peers in the legal profession.

*All books reviewed in this issue concern the marriage relationship.*

***Cracking the Communication Code: The Secret of Speaking Your Mate's Language*** by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs (Integrity)

This book is a follow-up to the best seller *Love and Respect*, which we used last year in our couples conferences and reviewed in an earlier *Grapevine*. Here Eggerichs puts the onus on both husband and wife to decide to take the lead in breaking what the author calls the "crazy cycle." When a wife feels unloved, she tends to react disrespectfully. And when a husband does not feel respected, he tends to react in ways that feel unloving to his wife. The result is that the couple goes around in circles, never accomplishing much. This work is well worth reading for all couples.

***Your Time-Starved Marriage: How To Stay Connected at the Speed of Life*** by Drs. Les & Leslie Parrott (Zondervan) Both partners in a marriage face a time crunch, but we always have time for the things we prioritize. Marriage is certainly a top priority. The Parrots put it well: "We share the same address and sleep in the same bed, but our relationship has become nothing more than a pit stop with a dried-up fuel pump" (19). This is an excellent book.

***You Matter More Than You Think: What a Woman Needs To Know about the Difference She Makes*** by Dr Leslie Parrott (Zondervan)

Referring to the issue of gratitude, Parrott states, "Gratitude also cultivates humility," and gives the example of the Masai tribe in West Africa who have an "unusual way of expressing gratitude." Rather than saying thank you, the Masai say, "My head is in the dirt." These tribesmen literally put their foreheads on the ground in acts of gratitude laced with humility (52). This excellent book tills the soil of the marriage relationship to prepare couples for positive change and growth.

***Sex God: Exploring the Endless Connections Between Sexuality and Spirituality*** by Rob Bell (Zondervan)

This is a much needed work to help Christians understand that there is no distinction between the sacred and the secular. The Lord does not turn His head when couples celebrate their sexuality. Rather, the communion that flows from sexual intimacy is the joy and oneness which the Lord desires for all of us. As Rob states, "Lust comes from a deep lack of satisfaction with life.... Lust often starts with a thought somewhere in our head or heart: 'If

*continued on page 15*

# Tips for Summer Family Fun

Grandchildren coming for the summer? Are you planning an old fashioned road trip with the kids? Here are some summer fun tips to keep everyone happy.

To entertain the grandchildren...

- If the grandchildren are coming for a week without Mom and Dad, why not try to schedule their visit around your church's vacation Bible school? VBS will help keep the grandkids entertained and may give them something even greater: eternal truth. Besides, you'll probably be helping up at the church anyway! Why not let the next generation see your spiritual commitment in action?

- Kids love time with you. Trips to the neighborhood pool or park are just as fun as pricey excursions to amusement parks. Kids need YOU.

- Maybe this is the summer to teach little Sally or Shawn how to make a cake from scratch or roll out your special pie crust. Could it be time for knitting, crocheting, or fishing lessons? Grandparents are masters of skills which parents often have too little time to impart to the next generation. Focus on passing on one special "life skill" to the little ones during their next visit. You'll give them an afternoon...and maybe a lifetime...of memories.

Try the following on road trips...

- Pack towels to spread in laps while eating snacks.
- Pack a small cooler with bottled water, fruit, string cheese, other goodies.
- iPod Nanos are relatively inexpensive. Most kids seem to have them. Be sure your kids or grandkids bring theirs.



Consider early birthday presents, too—perhaps purchasing one for the kid who doesn't have one. Then kids, Mom, Dad, Gram or Gramps can all enjoy their music of choice at the same time. Nobody will fight over what is on the radio or CD player...and you can always schedule "no music" time for visiting rather than isolated listening. A long road trip offers plenty of togetherness, and listening to an iPod can be a welcome diversion. The grown ups may want to download Don Anderson's latest internet broadcast, too. See page 6 for podcast details.

- Books on CD can be fun. In our family, I always read at least one book aloud to the troops on every vacation, but this year I have decided to forego that pleasure in favor of letting David McCullough narrate his wonderful book *1776* for all to hear and enjoy revisiting American history in the process.

- Teenagers love to stay in touch with their friends while away. And who doesn't have a cell phone these days? You may want to check out the cost of adding unlimited text messaging to your family plan. The children of the baby boomers are adept at sending thousands of text messages per month. It seems to be the current generation's idea of passing notes. Try to sign up for unlimited texting to prevent an unwelcome surprise at the end of your billing cycle.

- Let kids plot the trip on Mapquest or, here's a novel idea, let them tackle the planning the old fashioned way—using an atlas. They might want to do research on the internet to locate the best hotel values as well...though we suggest that Mom or Dad actually make the reservations.

# Life @ Fifty

by Jane Rodgers

Nora Ephron, the 60-something writer who penned the screenplays of *When Harry Met Sally* and *Sleepless in Seattle*, published *I Feel Bad about My Neck and Other Thoughts on Being a Woman* in 2006. I was 49 in 2006. I did not feel that bad about my neck in 2006.

A good friend gave me Ephron's book this year: 2007. I turned 50. I have started to feel bad about my neck. Or maybe I have just started noticing my neck. Has it always been there? Or is it my mother's neck? When asked about her book's title, Ephron said in an interview with Hannah Storm on the CBS *Early Show* in 2006 (before I needed her book): "There comes a certain point in your life where you get older....and you notice you're not looking in the mirror. You're doing your best not to look into the mirror, because you know something is gonna be staring at you that you don't like. And then, sometimes, a very dear friend sends you a picture of yourself, and says, 'Look at this great picture of you.' And you go, 'Oh, my....! Because there it is. There's your neck. You know, our faces are lies, but our necks are the truth."

"You can do things about it, but they're pretty drastic. And, if you're not into drastic, you end up in less than drastic. You end up in our dear friend, the turtleneck."

The turtleneck has become my friend, too.

I have given up on my neck. The neck is a lost cause. I have moved to the face.

I bought some new make up the other day. The package assures me it is "Age Defying Makeup." It is flesh colored. It was on a rack at Wal Mart surrounded by others of its kind. I anticipate defying age with it. I imagine my bottle of liquid concealer boldly facing off against Age, launching into a diatribe against growing older, rebuking Age as scripture tells us to rebuke Satan.

Of course growing older is a sign of the Fall. It is a sign I am increasingly uncomfortable with. Childbirth was no picnic, but at least you ended up with a



baby. Wrinkles marry and give birth to more wrinkles. Chins become fruitful and multiply. Things I didn't know I had have started to sag ever so slightly. The looking glass is no longer a friend and whoever designs those big marble bathrooms with wall to wall mirrors really ought to receive a piece of my mind...except I don't have that much of my mind to give away.

Yet there are some things to celebrate about growing older. I don't waste as much money as I used to. I know whom and what to ask when something breaks. People call me for advice. My insurance is cheaper and I can afford more of it. The ticket taker at the theater never asks to see my stub when I return from the lobby with popcorn...and I can actually buy as much popcorn as I want at the theater. Some stores will even give me a senior citizen discount if I whip out the AARP card I really should send off for but can't quite bring myself to do. When gas stations start giving AARP discounts, I'll join up. Till then...I'll live in denial. Keep your 10 percent. I have my...my...well, I won't stick my neck out for less than a 25 percent discount.

I would not trade all the Lord has taught me over these years. Life is full of challenges and He is faithful—just how faithful we don't realize till we've lived a bit. And if nothing else, I am certainly closer to Him in many ways than I was at 18 or 28—closer to being with Him forever, yes, but closer to Him in other ways, too. And hopefully, He's not through with me yet. Simeon saw the baby Jesus in the temple after waiting his whole life; Anna, too, beheld the babe that glorious day. They were way older than I am and still going strong. One friend put it this way, "Fifty is the youth of old age." I'm not sure I'm too crazy about that analogy....but one thing is certain: the Lord has stuff for us to do at every phase of life—and we need only be open to His leading and willing to be used.

she can stop or slow the Crazy Cycle as well. On the other hand, life gets insane when a husband says to himself, "I'm not going to love that woman until she starts showing me some respect! I'll not talk to her!" Likewise, madness reigns when a wife says to herself, "I'm not going to respect that man until he earns my respect and starts loving me the way he should. I'll teach him!" (11-12)

The parallel to the "Crazy Cycle" in our relationship with God is recorded in Isaiah 59:1-2: "Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."

2. The Lord not only brings us into relationship with Himself through the shed blood of our blessed savior, but He also provides tools to NURTURE that relationship.

God uses the spiritual disciplines of His word, prayer, scripture memory, meditation, and accountability to help us grow spiritually. If couples make these disciplines a priority in the marriage relationship, they feed the marriage and provide fertile soil for growth in the marriage and in their relationship with the Lord.

3. God is orchestrating a sovereign curriculum of suffering, servanthood, and surrender. These ought to be the GOALS in our marriage relationship. Goals of suffering, servanthood, and surrender turn pride to humility, selfishness to servanthood, disconnection to connecting communication. We learn how to persevere in the pain. We will recognize that by surrender, we are gaining victory over the flesh and allowing the Spirit the freedom to produce His fruit in us.

The Lord not only brings into relationship with Himself and uses the spiritual disciplines to nurture that relationship, He provides the basis for goals to cooperate with His sovereign curriculum of suffering, servanthood, and surrender.

4. Finally, we reach the place where the Lord would desire us to be: to have hearts filled with GRATITUDE and praise. We get to the place of grateful surrender. The old cowboy song comes to mind:

Come on life, try to break me down.  
Watch out trouble when you come around.  
I'll just sing another song,  
I'll just sing another song.

Zephaniah 3:17: "The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing."

Habakkuk 3:17-18: "Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior."

An excerpt from the April 3, 2007 *Daily Bread* devotional puts it well:

"God can take a lowly vessel,  
Shape it with His mighty hand,  
Fill it with a matchless treasure,  
Make it serve a purpose grand.

—Bosch (April 3, 2007)"

Any time we are talking about growth and progress in our various relationships, the first thing we have to do is set goals....

Any time we are talking about growth and progress in our various relationships, the first thing we have to do is set goals so that the change can take place. Consider how we change our relationship to our body. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9:27: "I am treating my body roughly and making it serve me, lest when I preach to others I myself should be disqualified."

To physically change ourselves, we must set goals in the following five areas:

1. Diet
2. Exercise
3. Sleep
4. Habits
5. Foregoing harmful activities

The marriage relationship promises metamorphosis, paralleling the spiritual disciplines and the tools God uses to make us more like Christ. Pearl and I have done a lot of changing, together.

On this the eve of our 54th wedding anniversary, I would like to conclude this article with a word to Pearl:

To Pearl: Sweetheart, I just couldn't resist the opportunity to tell you once again how much I love you. With each moment that we share together I become more aware of what a precious gift you are to me. Thank you for saying yes!

## Bookshelf *continued from page 11*

I had that/him/her/it, then I'd be...' When we're not at peace, when we aren't content, when we aren't in a good place, our radar gets turned on. We're looking. Searching. And we're sensory creatures, so it won't be long before something, or somebody, catches our attention" (73). This is a great book.

**Sacred Marriage: What If God Designed Marriage To Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy?** by Gary Thomas (Zondervan)  
This is also a must-read work, along with Thomas's companion volume, *Sacred Influence*. The title says it all.

**Sacred Influence: What a Man Needs From His Wife To Be the Husband She Wants** by Gary Thomas (Zondervan)  
This volume is the precursor to *Sacred Marriage*, also reviewed here. Thomas quotes Dr. Melody Rhode, who uses a "psychoneurological term to describe a man's reluctance to change: functional fixedness. Men don't normally change if what they've been doing seems to be working for them. When a woman allows her husband to treat her with disrespect, he has no motivation to change – and so it's unlikely he ever will" (29). Be sure to read this one.

**Every Woman's Marriage: Igniting the Joy and Passion You Both Desire** by Shannon & Greg Ethridge (Waterbrook Press)  
This book helps us understand the chemistry of the marriage relationship. As the Ethridges put it, "...men need to feel like heroes to their wives. They not only want their wives to meet their sexual needs, but they also want them to meet their emotional needs for love, respect, appreciation, and admiration. When these needs don't get met, a husband's heart will grow cold toward his wife. But it doesn't have to be this way" (16).

**Lost Women of the Bible: Finding Strength & Significance Through Their Stories** by Carolyn Custis James (Zondervan)  
Although Carolyn Custis's book is not directly on marriage, her teaching illuminates marriage roles. We have previously reviewed the author's *When Life and Beliefs Collide*. It is a joy to read, as is this offering, in which Custis tells the stories of Eve, Mrs. Noah, Sara, Hagar, Tamar, Hannah, Esther, and others. Of marriage, she writes, "At the dawning of creation, when God had a big job to do (and this was the biggest job ever), the team he put together was male and female. The man and the woman were God's A-Team – his first string of all-stars called to fulfill his ambitious mandate. According to the biblical record, the history of men and women working together is longer than men working with men or women working with women. This has profound implications for husbands and wives, but goes well beyond marriage to encompass every relationship between men and women in the family, the church, the workplace, and the wider world community. The clear message of the Bible is that God intended for men and women to work together. God put an exclamation point beside his choices of male and female. He blessed them before presenting them with their global mandate (Genesis 1:28). They are a Blessed Alliance" (37). You will be glad you read this one.

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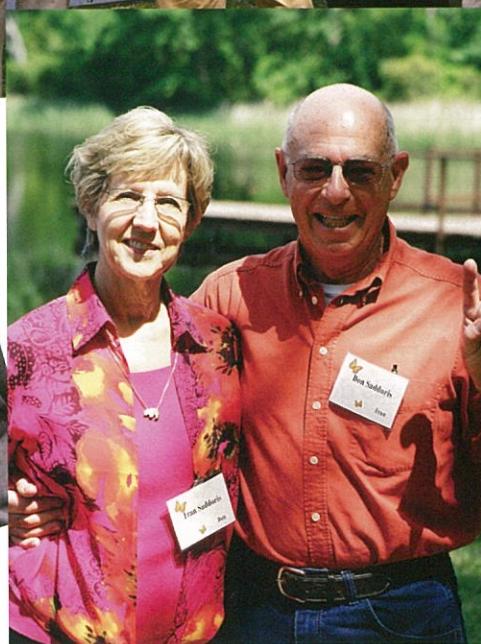
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