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## Writers can share fruit of kindness

By Deb Wuethrich

William Wordsworth once wrote, "The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love." The best news is this: God remembers. And he writes them in a book! (Malachi 3:16)

A school crossing guard recently thanked a stranger for bringing her a donut and a cup of hot chocolate on a cold morning through a letter to the editor at the weekly newspaper where I work.

Christian radio teacher Dr. David Jeremiah once told of a visibly angry woman he'd inadvertently cut off in traffic. When he pulled in to a fast-food drive-through she remained behind him. What he did probably shocked the woman - he paid for her meal.

Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend." Oh, to have been in the seat next to that woman to see what love could do to an angry disposition!

### What do these experiences have to do with writing?

Hosea 14:8 points out, "Your fruitfulness comes from me." God is the Master Gardener and Vine Dresser. Kindness is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

It is in the telling and retelling of acts such as these, verbally or in print, that God's love shines through. By way of even a letter to the editor, others may see the Holy Spirit's ministering to people through other people. We are called to do this in 1 John 4:7 where it is written "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God."

One blustery day I was the recipient of a random act of kindness myself. At a gas station counter, I learned my purchase had been taken care of. The clerk's smile revealed her obvious enjoyment as bearer of good news.

I told of this experience in my newspaper column that week.

When someone is kind you want to say thanks. Not knowing the donor, I was prompted to at least tell others, and more than that, to share a learning experience that accompanied the generosity.

There was one other man in the shop that day, but if he did it, he had a good poker face. I tried to visualize if anyone had been at the pump, or if I'd encountered another coming out while I was on the way in. It made me realize I often haven't been observant of my surroundings and sometimes did not notice or acknowledge other people journeying next to me. It was a lesson—and something I've consciously worked on since.

The point is, relating encounters such as these might help someone else in their faith walk—especially in a world that often laments, "We only hear the bad stuff."

James 3:18 notes, "Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness." Dr. Jeremiah was sowing peace - and being obedient to the prompting within that kept him from the retaliation many engage in under similar circumstances.

Someone noticed the crossing guard on a cold day. Another person saw a shivering woman at a gas pump. Both responded by proffering kind gestures. "Whoever loves his brother lives in the light" (1 John 2:10). Whoever acts on impulses to "be kind and compassionate to one another," (Ephesians 4:32) is producing fruit. He is obeying the God whose kindness is magnified in John 3:16 when it is said of Him, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

And whoever tells others of these things is helping to spread the Gospel of love. ➤

*Deb Wuethrich is a 2003 winner of an Amy Award of Outstanding Merit and is a staff writer/columnist for The Tecumseh Herald in Tecumseh, Michigan. She has completed a devotional called Before God and the Bus Driver, which she is currently trying to market and is working on a second devotional.*

**These excerpts are recently published letters to the editor. We thank the Lord for the ministry of these authors. If you have been published recently, send us a copy of your letter or op-ed column. Include your name, address and phone number, the full name of the publication in which your article was published, and the date it was published.**

## Pen & SWORD

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Shaunna Howat

Linda Wacyk

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*For subscription or  
information on how  
to form a Church  
Writing Group, write  
to the*

*Amy Foundation, or call  
(517) 323-6233*

### **email:**

*amyfoundtn@aol.com*

### **Our Website:**

*www.Amyfound.org*

## **K Intelligent design merits equal time**

A “rural Pennsylvania school district has become the first in the nation to require that ‘intelligent design’ be taught alongside evolution to explain the origins of life.” These students will be better off for hearing the scientific evidence that has convinced even noted atheist Anthony Flew that a “superintelligence is the only good explanation for the origin of life and the complexity of nature.”

The case against teaching intelligent design rests on two assumptions: first, that the scientific inquiry process mandates the exclusion of a supernatural creator and, second, that evolution is a satisfactory explanation for the diversity of living things. Neither assumption is warranted.

Although the scientific community now insists that legitimate scientific inquiry must begin with the premise that the natural world is all that exists, thus ruling out *a priori* the possibility of a supernatural creator, the founders of modern science would have been astounded at that notion. Modern science got its start only because men such as Copernicus, Galileo and Newton believed a rational world that, as a result, could be observed, studied and understood.

As far as evolution’s being a satisfactory explanation for the diversity of living things, microevolution—or variation within species—is accepted by design theorists and evolutionists alike.

Macroevolutionary theory, on the other hand, postulates that the same mechanism that accounts for limited variation within species also accounts for all the differences between species.

Far from being a “principle supported by the known evidence,” however, macroevolution is, as biochemist Michael Denton put it, a theory in crisis. The evidence Charles Darwin assumed would appear to support his theory hasn’t turned up, and, whether willing to admit it publicly or not, many scientists have come to doubt that Darwin’s theory is sufficient to account for the diver-

sity of life forms.

Even such committed evolutionists as the late Stephen J. Gould and Francis Crick have recognized problems with Darwin’s modification with descent and natural selection mechanism, which purports to explain how organisms developed into different species.

A paleontologist, Gould was troubled by the paucity of fossil evidence for evolutionary change and so came to support a theory called “punctuated equilibrium,” which hypothesizes that after long periods of stasis, new species suddenly came into existence. No one has yet proposed a mechanism that can adequately account for how that might have occurred.

As Harvard biologist Richard Lewontin put it, to admit the possibility of nonmaterial causes would be “to let a divine foot in the door.”

Clearly, while intelligent design opens the door to the possibility of a supernatural creator, design theorists don’t necessarily assume that door leads to the God of the Bible. They do believe, however, that when “complicated things...give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose,” as Richard Dawkins wrote, scientists would do well not to dismiss the possibility of design out of hand.

Even if we grant that intelligent design requires a belief in God, the assumption that, in the well-known words of the late Carl Sagan, “the universe is all there is or ever was or ever will be,” differs little from the Bible’s assertion that “[i]n the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Each is a statement of faith that can’t be scientifically proved.

Sagan’s faith statement directs scientific research in one direction, the Bible’s in another. At one time, the Bible’s faith statement ruled public education, and evolutionary teaching was shut out. Today, Sagan’s faith statement is in control, and it’s the evolutionists who refuse to allow any challenge to their orthodoxy.

Regardless of which faith statement scientists start from, however,

they should, as Anthony Flew has done, “[f]ollow the evidence, wherever it leads.”

Since Flew can’t be accused of starting from the “god” premise, as intelligent design theorists frequently are, his “conversion” provides strong support for making intelligent design theory a part of a comprehensive biology course.

*Linda Whitlock  
Salem, Virginia  
The Roanoke Times*

## **K Christian view on tsunami**

The Bible makes it clear that God sometimes does intervene in the created order of nature, for his own purposes. However, God does not always see fit to immediately reveal his purposes for allowing certain tragedies to occur. Some things are allowed for reasons known only to him. In Isaiah 57:8-9 we read, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

Trouble of various kinds is a given for all of us. But we who are believers take great comfort in knowing that God is with us in our times of trouble, and that he will see us through.

*W. Carl Hays  
Flushing, Michigan  
Flint Journal*

## **K Separation ensures freedom**

A recent writer makes the valid point that Christmas is about the birth of Jesus, but is mistaken that only atheists want to keep church and state separate. Faith in Jesus is protected by such separation. When a church gains political power, history teaches that persecution of different religions follows.

In Germany the Lutheran church oppressed Baptists and Catholics. In England the Anglican Church discriminated against Catholics and Puritans. In Russia, the Orthodox Church mistreated Catholics. In France the Catholic Church attacked

Protestants. In Spain the Catholic Church killed many Jewish believers in the infamous inquisition.

When a religious group is wed with political power, people of different beliefs will be persecuted.

As a Christian I am thankful that religious groups are divorced from our government. This protects my right to worship God as my conscience dictates. Jesus instructs in John 18:36 that his kingdom is not of this world. Jesus wants to rule only people who choose him. The Kingdom of Jesus is never established by the use of political force.

*Cliff Rawley*  
Springfield, Missouri  
News Leader

### **K Disasters cause us to repent**

When calamity struck during Jesus' day, he asked, "Do you think that those 18 people who died in the collapse of the tower of Siloam were any worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:4-5)

There have been earthquakes, fires, deadly plagues that have left millions dead throughout history. But the point God is trying to make with every one of these is his call to repent.

Let our hearts be broken that God, our creator, means so little to us. We should grieve that he usually becomes a scapegoat where pain is involved, but rarely thanked or praised for the daily pleasures of life.

*Meredith Berg*  
Hudson, Wisconsin  
River Falls Journal

## *New Amy Ministry Considered*

The Amy Foundation envisions a newspaper column where we present reader questions responding to the invitation formed by the column title:

**God, here is my question. . .**

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Question should be 50 words or less. Question may be edited and/or modified for publication.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Pen & Sword* readers, you are invited to present your current priority question to God. The Amy Foundation will select certain questions for biblical research and write a biblically authoritative response to the question. Identity of question author to remain confidential

You may email your questions to us at [amyfoundtn@aol.com](mailto:amyfoundtn@aol.com) or send them to: The Amy Foundation, P. O. Box 16091, Lansing, MI 48901.

## Attention writers

- Let your voice be heard! If you have never submitted *published* letters to the editor, opinion pieces, or feature articles for Power of the Pen, what are you waiting for? We'd love to feature some new authors.
- Although multiple entries are welcome, writers are eligible for Roaring Lambs awards **only once during each six-month period** (maximum two per year).

### Roaring Lambs awards...

...go to the writers whose letters are excerpted on page two.

1st prize/\$200: *Linda Whitlock*  
2nd prize/\$100: *W. Carl Hays*  
3rd prize/\$100: *Cliff Rawley*  
4th prize/\$50: *Meredith Berg*

We invite you to submit your published pieces for consideration.

#### Criteria for awards are:

- **Appears in secular publication**
- **Teaches obedience**
- **Includes scripture**
- **Written in a spirit of love**
- **Exhibits skillful writing**
- **Persuades effectively**
- **Addresses a current issue**

*Be sure to include an actual clipping, your name, address and phone number, the full name of the publication in which the letter appeared and the date it was published. Only one winning entry per author each 6 months.*

### Words of Kindness

The ideals which have lighted my way, and time after time have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been Kindness, Beauty, and Truth. The trite subjects of human efforts, possessions, outward success, luxury have always seemed to me contemptible.

—Albert Einstein

She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

—Proverbs 31:26

# THE AMY FOUNDATION

March/April 2005



## Church Writing Group Newsletter

# Pen & SWORD

TO EQUIP AND ENCOURAGE THE LATENT WRITERS OF THE CHURCH

3798 Capital City Blvd.  
P.O. Box 16091  
Lansing, Michigan 48901

Our web site:  
[www.amyfound.org](http://www.amyfound.org)

Email us at  
[amyfoundtn@aol.com](mailto:amyfoundtn@aol.com)

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## Crosswinds by Jim Russell

### God's Provocative Answer

by Jim Russell

Jim Russell is the founder and president of the Amy Foundation and author of *Awakening the Giant* and *Overcoming Subtle Sins*. In the **Crosswinds** column, he opens his heart to the members of the Church Writing Group family. Your questions and comments are welcome. This article was originally published in the September/October 2002 issue.

“Lord, help me,” I prayed. This brief, quick plea was my natural response to a nagging problem that at the moment seemed to have no solution. But it wasn’t the first time I had offered it. I had voiced it thousands of times over the years. But this time I sensed God wanted to supply an answer that would truly get my attention. I listened intently.

“I have given you the gift of life,” it seemed God was saying. “I have created you in my image with an eternal soul. I have given you free will from which to make your own choices. I have given you the truth of my holy Word through which I present my Kingdom vision, my disciple-making mission, and my plans for the work you are to do.

“I have given you my Son, because of my love for you so you may have eternal life through Him. I have given you the Holy Spirit to lead you into the truth of my Word and to comfort you in your times of need. I have established clear priorities in my holy

Word, passages of Scripture containing commandments you are to obey if you truly love me.

“I have given you a heart through which the attitudes of your love for me are revealed. I have given you a soul that is the spiritual dimension of your being and will live forever. I have given you a mind to engage in rational thinking and judgment, gaining wisdom that equips you to know and do what is right. I have given you a body so you can express your love for me by performing the disciple-making work I have commanded you to do.

“I have given you everything you need to live a fruitful, productive, meaningful life. Have you used these precious gifts to even half their potential?

“Instead of asking me to help you, ask me to bless you as *you* go about

using all the gifts I have already given you. While doing this, trust in me and depend on me to guide you and strengthen you as you contribute to the work of building my Kingdom by discipling yourself, your family, your congregation, and your neighborhood.

“My Son said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”

“Thank you Lord for the awesome help You have already given me. Trusting in You, it is now up to me to do my part in the kindness shown in making disciples by teaching obedience of all Jesus commanded us to do.” WJR