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When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you;
And when you pass through the rivers,
They will not sweep over you.

Isaiah 43:2

Grace and Lace Letter

For Christian Crossdressers, Transgenderists, and Transsexuals

November 1993

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NEXT ISSUE / ~~MAY~~ MARCH 15, 1994

God is too wise to be mistaken;

God is too good to be unkind.

For when you don't understand;

When you don't see His plan;

When you can't trace His hand --

Trust His heart.

WHERE ARE YOU GOD?
by
JR

Dare we ask an impertinant question? Dare we ask, "Where are you, God?" Dare we be so bold? Yes! We dare. We are human. We have very little conceptualization as to what God is, who God is, and especially where God is. All of us have notions. All of us have read the scripture, some more than others, some with intellect alone and others with an open heart and a submissive spirit. Still, few of us, if any, really can answer the questions we are asking.

We get lost in mundane issues. We get lost in worrying about minutia. We get lost worrying about what is a sin and what is not a sin. We forget the huge principles such as: "For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God!" We get so wrapped up in things which really don't matter we forget such wonderful truths as Jesus's statement: "I am the way, the Truth and the Light. No one comes to the Father but by Me!" We become so focused on our own insignificant fretting and the temptations of the evil one who uses the law and our natural fear of the law to lure our eyes off of Jesus Christ and onto ourselves. Clearly, for the believer, the most powerful doubt instilling weapon there is for use by the enemy is our human failure to understand the teachings of the very book we hold the dearest: the Bible.

No human knows the Bible so well as does the enemy. No human quotes scripture with greater fluency than does the enemy. No human is so adept at proving his point of view by proof texts as is the enemy. Knowing our reverence for God's word and knowing also our faulty limited comprehension of it, the enemy simply uses it against us almost at will. His most common temptation is to challenge our faith in Jesus Christ by pounding us over the head with law to induce guilt which itself is the very opposite of faith. The more intellectually steeped we are in the very word of God, the more we are prone to being attacked with that which we know and love the most.

How do we survive the assaults of the evil one who would deny us the joy of our salvation by inducing guilt in us through his deliberate misuse of God's own Word? The answer to this demanding question is not easy for us humans. We are accustomed to living by our wits and benefitting from our superior intellectual powers. What we do not realize is that our superior intellectual powers are superior perhaps to the remainder of life on the earth, but they are decidedly INFERIOR to the intellectual powers of our enemy. He merely toys with us, the brightest and most powerfully minded of us, leading us down one contorted path after another always holding out to us the promise of an intelligent solution to spiritual questions being just around the next bend in the path. Of course, it is never there, but suckers we are because of our stupendous pride in human mental powers we keep playing the game. This is NOT a plea against reading and studying the Word. Rather it is a call to read and to study the Bible praying constantly for the enlightnment of the Holy Spirit rather than seeking constantly to comprehend the Word with the mind.

We can deal with the blandishments of the enemy in but one way. As we realize our human capacity to handle spiritual things by intellect is terribly faulty, we turn in a simple childlike faith to Jesus Christ who is our one hope. As we become more and more doggedly insistant upon trusting Jesus in spite of all the seemingly logical reasons we ought to be trusting our intellectual grasp of the matter, we find the efforts of the enemy becoming more and more futile. We know, because Jesus has promised it to us, we cannot be forcefully taken out of the hand of the Lord, but at the same time what we perhaps don't realize is our witness can be neutralized by the enemy turning our attention away from the Lord.

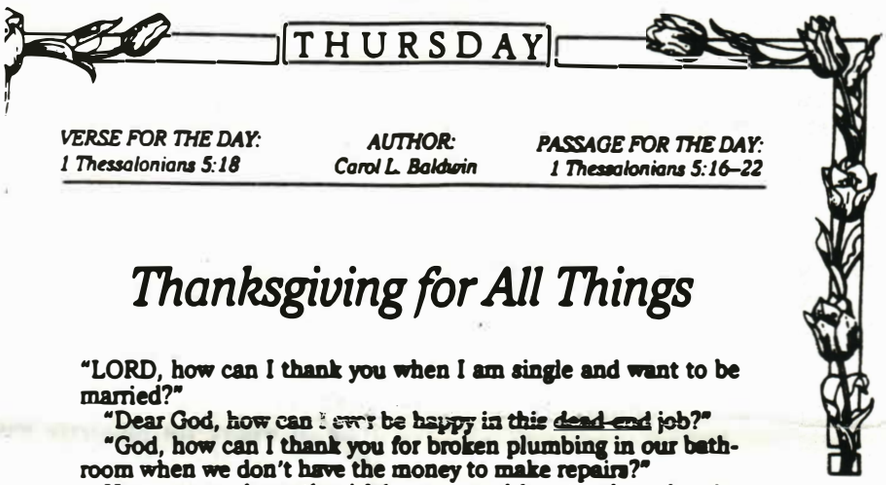
Remember what happened to impeteous Peter when Jesus came walking on the water as the Deciples were be. tossed about in their little boat by rough seas. Peter called out to Jesus who was approaching and said: "Lord if it is you, then command me to come to you." In essence, Jesus told him to come on. Peter without a second thought hopped out of the boat in the middle of the sea and started walking on the water toward Jesus. Then it evidently occured to him just what he was doing and his human intellect instantly told him this was impossible. He evidently looked down taking his eyes off of Jesus and began to sink. This is what happens to us each time we become so wrapped up in worries about the law we take our eyes off of the Lord and begin to sink into doubt and guilt. This allows the enemy to challenge our faith.

There are those of us who come from traditions in which virtually our entire religious experience has been involved in the "Hell fire and brimstone" approach to Christianity in which various teachers and preachers have literally tried to scare Hell out of us. This is so sad. It is sad because it is clearly not Jesus' way. Let's look at the Lord, not at details and fret about the law. What, for example, did Jesus do hanging on the cross when one of the two thieves reviled him. Did Jesus quote law at him trying to convert him through the threats of punishment under the law? No, he didn't. What did Jesus do when the other theif begged for forgiveness? Jesus freely gave it! Was there any consideration taken in respect to all the laws this individual had broken? No. The laws and their having been broken were of no importance to the Lord. What was vital to Jesus at the moment was the turning of the individual to Him in faith. This then is the one appropriate model for all of us in every instance. Turn to Jesus in faith believing in your heart your salvation is secure in Him. Do this and the promise Jesus made to the thief on the cross is yours as well: "This day you shall be with me in Paradise!"

Clearly, it is as Martin Luther said: "Sola Gratia!" It is only through the Grace of God faith is planted by God in our hearts, then God nurtures it and develops it, so that through this faith we might be returned to the special relationship with God for which God created us in the first place. Remember, the holy word itself teaches us we are saved through Faith and not through works so that no man (person) can boast! It is all God's doing. We are but the recipiants of the Grace of God poured out on us even though we deserve anything but this outrageously generous and wonderful gift.

Dare we ask the questions with which we began? Yes, indeed we dare ask. Unless we ask we cannot know, can we? Clearly God does want us to know where He is and what our relationship with him is to be. Perhaps we have to ask first with our intellect so we can come face to face with our incapacity to know God intellectually. Clearly, once we have come to this knowledge we are ready for God to begin to work FAITH in us. It is with Faith we are finally able to comprehend what we need to know of God, where God is (inside the believer) and what our relationship with God is.

Jesus Christ has called you to salvation because He loves you JUST AS YOU ARE! If there are any changes, and there probably are, (most probably not the ones you think too!) the Lord wishes to make in perfecting you, then leave it to the power of the Holy Spirit to effect those changes. You are beloved, JUST AS YOU ARE! Rest in this faith and you will know real JOY!



THURSDAY

VERSE FOR THE DAY: *1 Thessalonians 5:18*

AUTHOR: *Carol L. Baldwin*

PASSAGE FOR THE DAY: *1 Thessalonians 5:16–22*

Thanksgiving for All Things

"LORD, how can I thank you when I am single and want to be married?"

"Dear God, how can I ever be happy in this dead-end job?"

"God, how can I thank you for broken plumbing in our bathroom when we don't have the money to make repairs?"

How can we have thankful, contented hearts when the circumstances in our lives are not what we had planned and when they lie outside our control or our power to change?

Let's look at our alternatives. If we are not thankful, we become bitter and angry with God: he is not providing what we "rightfully" deserve. If we are not content, we become rebellious and complaining: after all, he gives our friends everything they pray for—why does he refuse us?

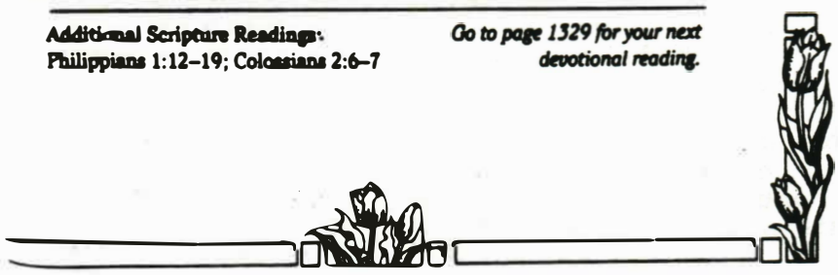
Underlying these complaints and questions lie two errors in our thinking: that God is not trustworthy and that he does not desire our good. When we compare these conclusions with Scripture, we discover how wrong we are! God's Word instructs us that God is sovereignly in control, providing for and working out *all* the circumstances in the lives of those who love him and whom he has called (Romans 8:28; 1 Corinthians 10:13a; Philippians 4:6–7). He is intimately involved with us; he works out his purposes through the events in our lives so that we may be conformed to the image of his Son.

We have further reason to praise him. The same God who formed the world in six days knows every hair on our heads. The same God who chose a people for himself before we were born sent his Son to die on the cross to redeem us from our sins.

God's love for his people is not determined by the circumstances in our lives. His love is steadfast. Our marital status, career or finances might fluctuate or totally break apart. In spite of that, however, we can and must give him thanks for his love toward us. We must serve him with unhesitating hearts.

Additional Scripture Readings:
Philippians 1:12–19; Colossians 2:6–7

Go to page 1329 for your next devotional reading.



STRENGTH THROUGH WEAKNESS

by Rebecca Allison

"If my life is broken when given to Jesus, it is because pieces will feed a multitude, while a loaf will satisfy only a little lad."

Women's Devotional Bible
Page 1084

In a small Southern state capital, society seems to automatically bestow status according to profession. Bankers and attorneys, business executives and architects...and, of course, physicians. While others struggle for years to earn the respect of their colleagues, the physician has immediate respect on beginning a practice. Who you **are** is defined by what you **do**.

Once, not too long ago, I had this respect. But it has quickly disappeared. For I have clearly become "not one of the group". I don't fit the mold anymore.

The word has been spread. I dont know who started it; it doesn't matter. All my colleagues have heard I am "having a sex change." I am having to discuss it with friends and acquaintances much more often...that is, the ones who are willing to listen.

Some persons handle my disclosures by simply withdrawing. They no longer stop me in the hallway to talk; they avoid my table at lunch. Without openly rejecting me, they have silently done so. I am learning to deal with this rejection. Those who have known the person I appeared to be in the past have the right to disassociate from the person they see me becoming.

Still I find it a new and humbling experience. In many areas of my life, such as scholastic achievements and professional skills, I have become accustomed to success in the traditional sense, as the world defines it.

But while I was enjoying the external success, I experienced constant inner turmoil, knowing the real and gentle person within was unable to find release; unable to experience life as... herself.

What now? All has turned upside down. Perhaps later, some external success will return to my new life; but it is certainly vanishing now. And yet my inner life is becoming orderly and peaceful. My Lord, through His holy spirit, is bringing me peace through the rough months of transition.

God does not view success as men do. Throughout the Bible we are reminded that He looks at our hearts rather than our degrees, neighborhoods, or bank accounts.

Accounts of victory in the face of rejection abound in Scripture. Consider the personal and family losses sustained by Job; the scorn and rejection of Hosea by his wife; and the imprisonment of Jeremiah. King David experienced rejection from his wife Michal. When the Ark of the Covenant was returned to Jerusalem, David led the parade with dancing and shouting. His wife considered this unbecoming for a man of his position, and she "despised him in her heart". [2 Samuel 6:16]

Paul gave up a career full of great promise as a Pharisee in order to humble himself before Jesus. He endured prison, beatings, stonings, ridicule, physical infirmity, and ultimately execution. He prayed for deliverance from his difficulties; and the Lord responded in this way: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Paul concluded, "That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." [2 Corinthians 12:9-10]

Jesus experienced rejection so much more profound than I will ever know. He associated himself with sinners and

common people. declining the status with the Jewish community which could have been His. His brilliant teaching could have established Him. in time. as a leading rabbi. Imagine the Jews saying. "How could he throw away such a promising career?"

But He chose to live in harmony with His nature: to love and minister to all persons. The poor. outcasts. lepers. the "street people"... these received Him. and they knew it. The [illegible]nt Sadducees and Pharisees thought He was sinful to visit and sit down to eat with "sinners". But He replied. "It is not the healthy who need a doctor. but the sick." [Matthew 9:12]

My Lord has allowed me to experience the rejection of men. My intellect and my skills will not be enough to sustain me through the next few months and years. I know now. I must depend on Him for all things. Only He is constant in his love. Only He will never let me down. I can go to Him with humility now. I have hurts and deep wounds; so does He. As the song says,

And Jesus said, "Come to the water; stand by my side.

I know you are thirsty. You won't be denied.

I felt every teardrop, when in darkness you cried.

And I strove to remind you, that for those tears I died."

His blood...His agony and death... and His glorious triumph over it all are more real to me now than they have ever been. And my willingness to share what He has done for me is greater than ever. I finally have a testimony. In the past I felt vaguely uncomfortable around persons who said. "The Lord got me through such a trial." because I couldn't relate to them. I had had no such trials of my own. But now I have. And He is more than able to sustain me.

In my new found weakness I can finally feel His strength.

And there will come a time when I am strengthened enough to minister to those who have hurt as I have. One who has experienced the same rejection can be a source of strength and support. If I can know I helped one other soul navigate this course. it will all be worthwhile.

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CROSSDRESSING OVERSEAS
by Jennie

Can a Christian be a crossdresser? We who are CD's and sisters in Christ know that Christians can be crossdressers. But those around us may not understand. I am a missionary overseas and must relate to fellow Christian workers who simply condemn crossdressing and transsexuals as wrong, contrary to the Bible, and against all rules of nature and family life. Most Christian publications dealing with home and family life do not deal with crossdressing and transsexualism. Perhaps we keep ourselves so hidden and obscure, no one considers us to be a significant group.

The life of a crossdresser overseas can be lonely, especially living and relating to others in a Christian organization. Living conditions provide little privacy and few opportunities to dress. It has been wonderful to discover Christian sisters in the states who like to write letters and be prayer partners. The Grace and Lace Letter has been a blessing also, and is very encouraging. It's amazing how much our experiences are alike. I, too, struggled and prayed through years of guilt and doubt. I can't count the number of nights spent praying and agonizing over my crossdressing. When I was saved, God had taken away my bad habits, but I couldn't stop dressing. It took me many years to accept that feminine part of me; it really is a gift from God.

Not being able to dress often does cause stress and frustration, but being a crossdresser has helped me in understanding and ministering to others. I am glad to be a crossdresser and am thankful to God for making me the way I am. And I trust that as special sisters in the Lord, we will encourage each other to use our unique gifts in His service.

Grace aims at fulfillment. It is the operative power of God's personal action, moving us toward that which God intends us to be. The purpose of creaturely existence is that each of God's creatures achieves the fullest excellence of which its nature is capable. Any thwarting of fulfillment, therefore, is really a wrong against the basic purpose of creation itself.

Harold Ditmanson

So the gracious Word often becomes flesh in ways not usually labeled religious.

Grace comes...when in judgment on distorted masculinity it opens a man to new ranges of emotion and bodily self-acceptance.

from Embodiment
by James B. Nelson

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EASTER CHICKEN

by Kathy Switzer, S.D.

Have you noticed how people treat each other? The way they talk about others when they aren't around? You wonder about it all, especially when all this is going on in the church.

Reminds me of a time when I was a little girl growing up in Indiana. We lived in a small town called Jasonville, just outside of Terre Haute. My Mom taught school there and my Dad worked at the university. I was about five years old and my sister was four.

There was a man there by the name of Roebuck. Now Mr. Roebuck was what you would call the town drunk. This man took a liking to my sister and me, and he was friendly to my dad who on Saturdays would be working in the garage behind the house. Mr. Roebuck would come to the back yard fence to talk to us girls, then he would go to the garage and talk to Dad for awhile.

Mr. Roebuck would bring some candy or little toys for us children to play with. We really looked forward to seeing him come around on Saturdays for his visits.

One year, the holidays of Easter and Passover fell on the same weekend. Mr. Roebuck came to our house and presented my sister and me two of the prettiest chicks you ever saw. They were all fuzzy yellow; you could just hear then "cheeping" along. They were to be our very own Easter Chickens. Jean's chick met a very unhappy end, thanks to the local cat; but mine grew and was very healthy.

We kept that chick in a box on the back porch. He would scratch and peck and do all the things chickens normally do. But as he grew, he grew pin feathers and the fuzzy down disappeared. That was one ugly chicken!

One day my Dad said, "that chicken has to go." I guess it was because the bird got on the clothesline, and you can guess what he did. My uncle Charlie had a farm, just north of us in Attica. We took the chicken up to the farm one Sunday. We went to the barnyard where Uncle Charlie kept his farm animals and chickens. We turned our chicken loose and he went over to the other chickens as they were feeding. But the other birds wouldn't let him eat. In fact they were downright mean to him. They pecked and kicked so that I was afraid to let him stay there.

But we left the chicken there; and when we came back to the same barnyard later in the year, I couldn't believe what I saw. The ugly little chicken grew up to be a big old white Leghorn rooster. You could see him strutting around the barnyard like he owned the place.

But what surprised me about that bird was the way he went about treating the other birds. He treated them the same way they treated him when he was a little thing. He would go around pecking and kicking them as if they had done something to him.

That chicken was given to me some thirty-two years ago, and to this day when I think about it, that chicken reminds me so much of the people who are around me. We who follow the teachings of Jesus Christ are to live in such a way that people can know that, yes, we are different. That we do take very seriously, "in everything do to others as you would have them do to you," and "love your neighbor as yourself."

But it seems to me that there are lots of these Easter chickens running in the henhouse called the church, by just looking at the way the people look and act toward someone who is different or not a part of that group. The Love of Christ is nowhere to be found. So we have a choice to make, my friends; we can be Easter chickens or we can love others as Jesus did.

A New Revelation
by Dianna C.

Virtually every culture throughout the history of man has acknowleged a third culture of people seperate from male and/or female. The third culture which seems to be the most revered within the Gender Community is the Berdach, a special person within many of the American Indian tribes. The Berdach were held in high esteem for their bi-gender status and were allowed to maintain "households" with the women or to hunt and/or fight along with the men by the Berdach's own choice. They also were utilized as mediators in disputes between men and women of the tribe due to their special gender insights. "American pioneer settlers encountered tribes where transvestites called berdaches, were often respected spiritual leaders and healers thought to possess supernatural powers.

Until now, it did not appear that an equivalent position/culture had been recognized in the Western European/American cultures.

The primary hypothesis for this research project has been that although recent history has highly mis-represented them, Eunuchs traditionally have been portrayed in the same light as the Berdach in that many or most personal trait aspects displayed by members of the gender community fit the description of eunuch traits and therefore that members of the gender community can fulfill the roles ascribed to the eunuch, emotionally if not physically, as they have existed throughout history.

This information is a composite of research and definitions developed by Judeo-Christian scholars throughout the past 121 years, referencing original Hebrew and Greek texts in their work. (Reference source will appear at the end of article.) The following discussions will take two separate approaches: overview and insight.

Let's start by defining "eunuch". According to the New Catholic Encyclopedia, a eunuch, by common use of the term is an emasculated man, usually by castration. This same encyclopedia defines castration as "the surgical removal or definitive ionizing of the male testicles or the female ovaries." As used here, "definitive ionizing" means "the total destruction of". Also the frequently referenced Greek verb "eunouchizo" refers to the act of castration.

"Castration of the male is referred to in Chinese medical history as early as 1100 B.C." The surgery included the amputation of the penis, scrotum, and the testicles. Clinical castration of females did not occur until 1809, with the advent of abdominal surgery.

The Cyclopedia of Biblical Liturature, published in 1870, makes reference to studies which reported that the fatality rate from male castration could range from as low as two in one hundred to as many as two in three or three in four cases. By the 1870's castration, especially in infancy, was considered no more dangerous than any ordinary amputation. One form of infant castration consisted of softening the testicles of very young boys in warm water then rubbing and pressing them until they disappeared. When castration is performed at a tender age "... non-development of beard and feminine mold of the limbs and modulation of voice ensues".

Male castration was first imposed as a punishment for crime. Byzantine historian Marcellinus suggests that castration was instituted by legendary Assyrian Queen Semiramis about 810 B.C. in Mesopotamia. However, ancient tablets of law indicate castration was employed as a means of punishment in Assyria at an even earlier time, particulary in cases of adultry.

During the course of history, castration also became a voluntary procedure for the purpose of gaining lucrative and influential positions in the imperial courts.

Our Greatest Need

If our greatest need
had been information,
God would have sent us an educator.

If our greatest need
had been technology,
God would have sent us a scientist.

If our greatest need
had been money,
God would have sent us an economist.

If our greatest need
had been pleasure,
God would have sent us an entertainer.

But our greatest need
was forgiveness,
So God sent us a Savior.

—Author Unknown

Eunuchs have "frequently risen to high offices of trust", such as ambassadors, negotiators, confidants, supreme judges, financial ministers/treasures, teachers and of course chamberlains. "They mostly appear in one of two relations - either military as ùset over the men of war' greater trustworthiness possibily counterbalancing inferior courage and military vigor, or associated as we mostly recognize them, with women and children."Eunuchs were also considered "the surest guardians of the monarch's person and the sole confidential witness of his unguarded or undignified moments." They "were characterized by single-hearted loyality and in the harem by unquestioned fidelity. The use of eunuchs, both domestically and politically, became common place throughout the Persian Empire, during the Roman and Byzantine Empires and in various Islamic caliphates as well as in China." In Asia Minor a eunuch priesthood flourished through the institution of ritual castration, "probably motivated by a desire to be one physically as well as spiritually with the deity.

"The prospect of rank, honor and royal confidence might even induce parents to thus treat their children at a later age, if they showed an aptness for such preferment. The characteristics as regards beard, voice, etc., might then perhaps be modified, or might gradually follow."

Other researchers/writers have described eunuchs "as being the base and ready tools of licentiousness, as tyrannical in humor, and pertinacious in the authority which they exercise." In other words, according to Webster's 9th Collegiate Dictionary: lacking legal or moral restraints, especially disregarding sexual restraints and marked by disregard for strict rules of correctness; oppressive, unjust, or having arbitrary behavior or control; and adhering resolutely to an opinion, purpose or design etc.

In order to consider biblical writings from a historical perspective, rather than from a religious perspective, a little background information is necessary. "Some scholars believe that early Hebrew Scriptures referring to homosexuality as an ùabomination' (particularly Leviticus) may have been a response to the Jewish people's experience during their exile in Babylonia in the 6th century B.C. Throughout the Near East at that time, priests in Pagan religions tried to emulate a ùMother Goddess' figure by becoming effeminate, even dressing as a woman and sometimes castrating themselves. Their male followers came to the temple and had anal intercourse with them as part of religious rituals. Judiasm, which depicted a God who was exclusively male, had no place for such ùMother Goddess' worship; so the priests of Jehovah outlawed both cult prostitution and the practice of men dressing as women.

In spite of this, eunuchs in general were recognized for their power and their social status. In the Hebrew-language Old Testament the Hebrew term saris appears 47 times; the RSV Bible translates 28 of these literally to "eunuch" and the remainder to military officer, political official or chamberlain, while the NEB Bible translates the term to "eunuch" in every case. The term saris is generally considered to be a loan word from the Akkadian idiom sa resi (sarri), which means "the one who is at the head (of the King)".

Isiah 56:3-5 (as well as Wisdom 3:13-14) overturned the ruling of Deuterotomy 23:1-2 that emasculated men were to be excluded from God's community. Isiah 56:3-5 states that if they keep God's covenant's and laws, the eunuch may be a member of God's people: "For thus saith the Lord to the eunuchs: they that shall keep my sabbaths, and shall hold fast my covenant, I will give to them in my house and within my walls, a place, and a name better than the sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which shall never perish." And in Wisdom 3:13-14: "So also the eunuch whose hand wrought no misdeed, who held no wicked thoughts against the Lord - for he shall be given fidelity's choice reward and a more gratifying heritage in the Lord's temple."

Acts 8:26-39 describes a meeting between Phillip the Deacon and an Ethiopian eunuch who was "a minister of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia, who was in charge of all her treasures". Phillip is lead by angles to the place where, in a carriage, the eunuch was studying gospel. Phillip helped the eunuch to understand the gospel passages in question and the baptized the eunuch in fulfillment of the principles established by Isiah 56:3.

Judaism recognizes only two classes of eunuch, natural (literally translated as "a eunuch from the time of seeing the sun", or "so born") and man-made.

In Matthew 19:12, Jesus describes three classes of eunuch: naturally impotent, castrated and spiritual. Spiritual eunuch are defined as those "who voluntarily refrain from sexual pleasure out of dedication to the Kingdom of God - either because they devote their lives to a goal transcending human power or because they find God everywhere and in everyone so that they cannot limit themselves to exclusive relationship of marriage." It has also been proposed that Jesus in defining a spiritual eunuch was reacting against a slander spoken against him and his disciples, that they were accused of being eunuchs due to the fact that they were not married.

In the early church a man by the name of Origen, misrepresenting in a literal sense the spiritual part of this passage, castrated himself.

In the third century a sect of heretics emasculated themselves under the assumption that they would therefore "eradicate their evil propensities and qualify themselves for performing the duties of religion in a more holy and acceptable manner." This practice was reported to have continued to exist in Russia as late as the 1870's.

The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, in it's definition of eunuch proposes an extremely interesting concept; it suggests a relationship between castration and the Biblical admonitions of Matthew 5:29-30, (as well as those of Mark 9:42-46) that the amputation of body parts (cutting off your arm/hand/feet/eye/etc.) is acceptable if those parts cause you sin. "Measured by the standards of the kingdom of heaven even things necessary to life are unimportant, and must be surrendered where there is a conflict." A footnote to Mark 9:42 in The Holy Bible states that "no sacrifice, however painful it may be, is too great if one may save his soul thereby."

Furthermore, according to doctrine expressed in the New Catholic Encyclopedia, irradiation and surgical castration can be a part of therapeutic measures in the presence of very serious medical indications. One justification appears to be that "the function of these organs as endocrine glands constitutes a threat to the patient's general welfare". "Such a procedure is properly called theraputic castration, and provided it is free from contraceptive intent, is correctly evaluated in the moral context under the principle of 'double effect'". The Interpreter's Bible supports a non-discriminatory position for modern-day eunuch within the church; that people who are shunned and snubed elsewhere should be openly welcomed into the church provided with the inspirations of the gospel as well as a place within the fellowship. This book further states that "prejustice and social snobbery are sins which damage the church and frustrate God's purpose through her."

This overview and insight is intended to awaken you to possibilities that you likely have never considered before. More importantly, this is to reveal to you that you are not alone but throughout history had some very impressive role models to emulate.

Bibliography:

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God Incarnate

God came to earth that Holy Night
In the Form of a Baby Boy,
That all might come to know Him,
His love, His peace, His joy.

Came to hang upon the Cross,
The Cross of Calvary,
That all who so believe might live
With Him, throughout Eternity.

Great is our God and wonderful,
That, through our Savior Jesus Christ,
That Baby born in Bethlehem,
Souls might have eternal life.

Glorify Him—praise His Name,
Surrender your whole life unto Him,
And, in His Holy Spirit,
God, in Christ, will dwell within.

—Ruth V. Eaker

LETTERS

I have felt a little guilty about being a CD. These [G&LL] newsletters have helped me to understand that I should not be ashamed of it. -- TN

I think a lot of people simply go by their own prejudices and then go through the Bible looking for passages that support what they already think. They also find passages they can twist in favor of those prejudices. They should let the Bible, and the Christ it tells of, form their thinking. -- J.A., MI

I would very much like to receive your G&LL: I am a transgendered male to female CD as well as a Christian. I know Jesus loves me whether I am my male self or my female self. I know he doesn't condemn me. -- CA

Thank you for the G&LL sample. The article "Why me, Lord" was particularly special to me. I find the day to day grind, while trying to find my true life with God, to be exhausting sometimes. It's good to read the reassuring words of G&LL. -- OH

I'm glad I met Rebecca...Thanks for sending G&LL. I usually go to church every Sunday. I picked up your letter at the PO Box on Sunday; very fitting! I am hopeful that the publication will help give me the strength I need to deal with my situation. -- KS

Please continue the great work of G&LL and continue to keep me on your mailing list. Thank you very much for all of your help! G&LL has answered many questions and some of my prayers. May the peace of Christ be with you always. -- MD

Thanks so much for the recent G&LL. It's comforting to know that there are other CD Christians out there. Please thank Becky and Jaye for me. I read their essays with interest and have already begun to contemplate the issues they raised. Your "Why me, Lord?" touched several responsive chords in me. -- AZ

G&LL has been a source of comfort to me but is also a challenge to live more as a Christian. -- MS

We have been meaning to write you for the longest time, to tell you what a wonderful newsletter you put out; and I feel it is one of the most important newsletters in the community. -- TX

The level of faith and belief in God and His goodness is astounding in your writers. I feel a kinship in our journey. May they never be let down, or let Him down. -- RI

I am very glad to hear of a Christian prospectus which is in touch with the gender community. I want to be able to defend my convictions; and I know, truly in my heart, that the barrier to us is made by society. Being CD/TG/TS does not automatically give a person a one way ticket to hell. -- PA

I enjoy being a man but also enjoy crossdressing. Your articles in G&LL are comforting and I fully agree: God loves us -- anyhow! I'm sure the feminine side of me is an asset which can further the Lord's work. -- MS

I really appreciate G&LL. It has really helped me accept my crossdressing. I love my rebirth in spirituality. I am praying for you, the staff writers, and the gender community. --ID

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Dear Friends;

To mark the successful completion of 2 years of GRACE & LACE LETTER I thought I'd write this letter instead of an article. Jaye, Becky, Dianna, Kathy, Jennie certainly have given us a diversity of articles and I am so grateful to them for helping to make G&LL a successful Paper.

What is the purpose of G&LL?

Our purpose is to encourage and support you as the CD/TG/TS God made you. To tell and demonstrate the fact of the Love God has for us. He has not set us aside. To tell you that you can be a full participant in God's salvation wrought by Jesus Christ's atonement and join in the fullness of joy in the new life imparted to us by His resurrection. Our thrust is to lift up the discouraged and troubled Christians among us who, unnecessarily, allow themselves to continue in the guilt they feel because our lives have been condemned by a well meaning but unenlightened Church, Pastor or Layman. To lift them up by the power of God's word, the Bible. To rejoice with those with those who have found freedom in Christ, freedom from the repressive bonds of the evil one who tells us God can never love us or care for us unless we get "delivered" from our gender problems. in our community this is the BIG LIE and God has given G&LL the blessed vocation of conveying His True Love of us. Pray for us.

I pray for those of you who have asked me to pray for a need you have or have simply said, "Please pray for me". Presently there are 28 of us on the list and I pray thru the whole list at least 4 times a week and often more. Once you are on the list you are there until I leave this present world for my home and reward in heaven where I'll be with God FOREVER!. What a happy prospect! I'm not Pentecostal but if I was I could shout for joy right now but I'm a staid German that swallows her emotions.-----or is that Presbyterian? Just joking. The Church denomination I was in I quit in 1970. I quit because I am a CD and feared the ridicule if it was ever discovered. "if you aint there they can't hurt ya" . God has blessed my life in abundance, regardless. A Pastor friend of mine always reminds her congretation to pray for themselves also. It's important. As Director of a Rescue Mission drug and alcohol rehab center in an East Coast city for 20 years I had much to pray for and pray about but I always prayed for myself first because if I wasn't in good Spiritual shape I would be ineffective in my work which was God's work. Pray for yourself and I'll pray with you.

CHANGE THE SUBJECT. I had a real blessed experience a couple of months ago. If you have ever gone to Church in your feminine best you are familiar with the uneasiness that accompanies such action. I have been going to a certain Evangelical Church in Jackson, ossame on ever since I arrived in Nov. 1985 (wow!, 8 years ago. Hard to believe it.) I started going again this Summer in earnest. I became aware of the fact that if I was discovered, what effect it would have on the congregation. Long ago I learned how to handle being read or discovered.I finally made an appointment with the Pastor.(Prior to the appointment I sent G&LL to him.) I wanted todiscuss with him, my desire to attend Church on a regular basis.

On the day of the appt. the butterflies were a'flying and when I stepped into the office the Secretary hugged me and said how happy she was to see me. We had talked on the phone a couple of times. With that the butterflies left and I was calm. I knew I was in friendly territory. She ushered me into the Pastor's office we shook hands and he immeadiately started telling me how, acouple of years

ago 4 crossdressers came to Church one Sunday and one of the Church ladies went to him and told him she thought some CDs had just come in and she wondered if it would be proper for her and a couple of other ladies to sit in the row ahead and and welcome them and see to their comfort and invite them back when the service was over. He gave them the go-ahead. Those CD' were were Cissy Conley, Rita Wright, Rhoni Behtz and myself. The Pastor and I talked for an hour and I now have a Church where I can worship and be the person God has made me. I can be an Ambassador from our community. I can show what kind of people the biggest majority of us are. By the grace of God and the Holy Spirit I can dispel the idea people have of us being men in dresses bent on partying and devious dark activities and/or crazy.We too, can be Christians,a credit and benefit to our Church and community at large. I told him he was free to tell anyone or the whole congregation I am a CD. I would leave that to his wisdom. I put no restrictions on him. If he has told anyone, I know nothing about it as everyone is so nice to me. No one has slipped and called me "sir" yet. I have nothing to hide or be ashamed of. I simply want to do the G&LL letter, uplift our whole Gender Community to God and be the born-again Christian crossdresser He has made me for just as long as He leaves me in this world.

I dislike going to a negative note now but we must be about our business. If you would like to have G&LL sent to a Pastor or a Church or to any individual you can send their name & address to me and I will mail a sample to them. Your name will not be used. They will receive a Copy of G&ll plus one of my cards with my name and phone number on it. I'll be glad to take the "heat", if any. Some of you write of negative experiences with a Church so let's send them a G&LL in the Spirit of love and trust the Holy Spirit to speak to their hearts in a positive way concerning the subject of CD/TG/TS.

Rebecca does most, if not all of G&LL on her P.C. which is and has been a big answer to my prayer for someone to help with the "donkey" work. She not only does that but she just spent $130.00 for postage for this issue and this time, will also help with the cost of copying this mailing of 240 issues. When I started G&LL i stated I would send it out until I could no longer afford the cost. This issue, with the fancy envelope, costs $.96 each. May I make a simply request? I simply can not afford it any longer, we've grown beyond anything I expected.

If you enjoy G&LL then will you join in helping us by sending a contribution of $1.00 to $5.00. It will help and every penny will go directly into the publication of G&LL. None of it for administrative costs.
'. No, not even a bowl of beans for me. You will be put on the list to receive an accounting of money received and disbursements of wich the U.S.P.O. and the printer are the beneficiaries.

Rebecca changes address from Jackson MS to Atlanta GA on Dec. 2, 1993. She will start her 1 year Real Life Test on the evening of Nov. 30 when she and I will go to a restaurant and launch her onto the feminine sea of life where her life from that date back will be only a foggy memory and she will now have the life God made her for. We will conduct G&LL business by mail and, of course, she will be back here from time to time. I will miss the fellowship we have had and the Saturday nite dinners we had here and the prayer we had together at the close of those evenings for ourselves and primarily for G&LL.

God bless and guide you, Becky, Many of us are praying for and with you.

And we are praying for and with you my dear friends. Enjoy this issue of G&LL.

In Christian love,

Lee Frances

P.S. Please excuse this mess but I had no time to retype it — so here it is, typos & all!

God bless this mess!!