



It Happened So Fast!

Gesundheit! Whether from an allergy, a cold, or a whiff of black pepper, a sneeze is irritating—but in the grand scheme of things, a minor annoyance of life.

That is, it's usually minor. I heard about one that wasn't so minor. A woman named Janice was backing out of a space in a parking lot when suddenly she sneezed. The sneeze jerked her foot down onto the accelerator, causing her to hit a parked car. That car in turn jumped a median in the parking lot and slammed into another parked car. In her confusion, Janice then swerved her car the opposite direction, hitting a third parked car before finally coming to a halt.

Can you imagine? One minute you're blissfully backing out of a parking space. You sneeze, and in five seconds four cars are wrecked.

Life happens so fast we hardly have time to salute as it goes by. Accidents happen. Somebody dies. A baby is born. The house catches fire. An unexpected job offer presents itself. A parent learns he has cancer. Things happen fast. One day you're worrying about acne; the next you're trying to hide the wrinkles. One sneeze later four cars are wrecked. Incredible pace we're living.

This is a day that calls for discernment. Ezekiel told about people who built a wall and false prophets quickly came to smear it with whitewash. It looked so good and secure! But it wasn't built well, so before long it had fallen down. Passersby alongside the wall were in too much of a hurry to think about the fact that if they sneezed too close to the wall, it might fall on them.

Life goes fast, but that doesn't excuse us from pausing to distinguish the good from the bad, the true from the false. Just because a novel has an attractive cover, is it really something a Christian should read? Just because a movie has an all-star cast, is it necessarily fit for the eyes of a God-redeemed person? Yes, life happens fast, and we have only split seconds to make decisions. But if the Spirit of God is our constant companion, can He not keep us from making a wreck of our lives?

G. Crowe

Amnesia

I was reading the news today and saw an article on a man who showed up in Denver, lost his memory, and began broadcasting on the news asking for help to find out his identity. After at least a month, the man's friends and family recognized him and have gone to claim him and take him back to Washington State.

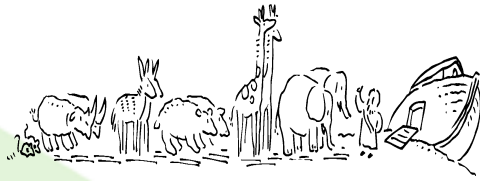
The news story claims that the man has a special stress-related condition that results in temporary amnesia. Several years ago the same thing took place. He had simply wandered off and had forgotten who he was. The news story said that this is a common thing for people who have this very rare condition.

While this might be a rare condition physically, I am amazed at how many of God's people throughout the centuries have had this condition spiritually. Moses warned the Hebrews that they would "forget" who (and more importantly *whose*) they were once they took the land. Moses was right. Numerous passages in the Old Testament say that the Israelites "forgot" their God and began to worship idols.

The pressures of life today are no different. The stresses that we face tempt *us* to forget who we are, to forget *whose* we are. I encourage you this week to be thinking about your identity (*our* identity) and how it is not to be abandoned in times of stress. Rather it is the rock solid foundation that will see you safely through any amount of stress or pressure. Think about these things this week and don't forget!

~Dan

Noah's Ark Night, November 4, 5-8 PM



Our annual **Noah's Ark Night** is **Saturday, November 4, from 5:00 until 8:00 PM**. Children are encouraged to dress as animals on Noah's Ark. This year you need to bring two cans of food: **one can of vegetables for the Two by Two stew, and a can of soup for our food pantry**. In fact, we are having a food drive to restock our depleted food pantry from now until Noah's Ark night. Bring your food (canned goods, pasta, personal items, or boxed food) to the foyer where the youth group is arranging the food in the shape of an ark! The schedule for the evening:

- 5:00-6:30 Crafts, face painting, bobbing for apples
- 5:30-7:00 Two by Two Stew & other goodies! (Come hungry)
- 5:30-7:00 Lots of fun games & prizes, maze, cakewalk and laser tag
- 7:00 PM Donut race, leap frog, and pinata

Bring a friend and join in on the fun!

Shults-Lewis Milk Money Contribution



One of the ways Elmwood members have of showing their gratitude for God's bounty all year is through our willingness to provide milk for the children of Shults-Lewis Home in Valparaiso, Indiana. **That collection will be on Sunday, November 12**. As you are planning your gift for this year, recall that Shults-Lewis provides a safe, loving environment to children who otherwise would have no home or anyone to care for their needs. Our continued support is necessary for Shults-Lewis to become more responsive in reaching out to those in need.

AUTUMN is Coming!

"Yes, I know—it's cold!" No, not that autumn. **Autumn**, a singing group from Rochester College is coming to Elmwood to sing for us during the evening worship on November 5.

Can you keep one or two students overnight Saturday and Sunday night? Can you invite one or two for Sunday dinner? Email Lee Porter if you can do either (porter@elmwood-church.org) or call the church office.

We have waited a long time for Autumn to be here—this will be good! It will be an inspirational event to which you can invite your friends. Autumn is coming!



Robert Waltz, former Elmwood member who now lives in Indianapolis, has just been appointed state chemist by Governor Mitch Daniels. He will manage the Office of the Indiana State Chemist and Seed Commissioner at Purdue. He takes on this role in addition to being state entomologist and director of the Division of Entomology and Plant Pathology at the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, a post he has held since 1988.

Can you help?

Head Start serves 10-15 expectant mothers by offering them education and other support during and immediately after their pregnancy. All participants are families with very limited income and resources. Right now there is a need for maternity clothes, size 10. Clothes may be given to Head Start director, Pam Houlton.



The food pantry is in need of **canned fruit, pasta, and personal items such as: toothpaste & tooth brushes, shampoo, soap, & deodorant.**
—John Stafford

October 22, 2006
Class: 197 Worship: 299
Contribution: \$5,360
Budget: \$8,550



Noah's Ark Night – November 4

Once again this year, Lynae Stafford is coordinating the efforts for our Noah's Ark Night...the safe alternative to Halloween. I won't take the time here to go into why this is so important for our children, but I do hope that all adults will plan to come out and help run the games, visit with our guests, love on our kids and share some "Two by Two Stew." The night is always filled with lots of fun and because it is inside, we don't have to worry about the weather. I'm not telling you that you can't pass out candy on the 31st, but remember to bring plenty for the 4th of November and come have a great time with the children in our church family...this is for children from 0 to 99!

Autumn is Coming!

No, I don't have my seasons confused, I don't mean autumn as in the fall, I mean Autumn, the singing group from Rochester College. Mark your calendars now for November 5 at 6:00 pm; the group will be here to share their ministry in song with us. Afterward we will be having finger foods together. But...let's back up a little. Because of the distance, Autumn will be here with us sometime on Saturday. Hopefully, they will be here in time to help out with Noah's Ark night. Since the group will be with us overnight, we will need to house the group and provide a little nourishment, too. If you have room and would be willing, please let me know how many students you would like to house (usually pairs) and whether you prefer to have male or female students stay with you. Steve Corp coordinates the group's bookings and will be letting me know how many we can expect and what time they hope to arrive. I am sure they will plan to head back to school soon after their performance, so only one night's lodging should be needed. Thanks in advance for covering this need.

Treasure Hunter

That's the theme of this year's Washington Church of Christ Youth Rally. The dates for this year are November 17-19 and Gary Spear will be the First Mate (speaker). One big change for this year is that housing is being arranged for all participants at a local motel...one adult will be required in each room. I don't know if those of you who have connections in Washington will be able to stay with them, or not. More details will be coming soon. I'll pass them along as soon as I get them. I will be teaching a class at the rally again this year. The key passage for the rally is "...Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:2, 3).



Pray that God would show each of us open doors to communicate our faith.

Ginger Maxwell-Spenard had surgery on Friday. She remains in Home Hospital. Having a rough recuperation, she asks for no visitors at this time, please....**Don Burrell** has begun radiation and chemotherapy treatments....**Paul Verett** spent his 91st birthday (last Tuesday) in the emergency room! His fall required 14 stitches in his head and knee....**Valley Stockton** is now home recuperating after being hospitalized for congestive heart failure.... **Willard Farmer**, Shirley's husband, is in St. Elizabeth Hospital, room 3201. He has been diagnosed with lung cancer. Treatment will be determined after another test....**Ella McBride** (*infant great-granddaughter of Dorothy Walters*) is recovering from heart surgery last week. She was scheduled to go home on Monday.... **Geoff Walker**, friend of Natasha Risley, is recuperating from a football knee injury sustained in a recent game...Continue praying for **Jim Willison, Annie Crowder** (*slowly healing from a staph infection*), **Linda Smith, Beth Holt, Elizabeth Tinkle, Pat Turner, Pat Dwyer, Steven Rutledge, Marcia Swails, Gail Monnet** (*co-worker and friend of Cheri Vaughn who is battling ovarian cancer*), **Mark Eddy, Amy Weismiller, Lynn Robinson, Kaden Koebcke, Delpha Allen, Anna Dale, Carrie High** (*Regency Place*), **Irene Fox** (*George Davis Manor Nursing Home*), and in *Rosewalk Village*: **Ruth Marks, Minnie Scott, & Burnell Gulden.**

Serving in Iraq: **Jon Kiefner** and **Loren Sniffen**.
Serving in South Korea: **Amanda Martin**. **Jeremy Crable** will soon be deployed to Afghanistan.

*If you regularly attend Elmwood, and are not receiving the **Christian Chronicle**, please notify the church office. Your name and address will be forwarded to the publication office for you to receive the next issue.*



October 25, 7 PM...Bible classes for all
October 29, 6 PM...LIFE Groups
Nov. 4, 5-8 PM...Noah's Ark Night at Elmwood
Nov. 12...Shults-Lewis Milk Money Contribution during the AM worship services

Read:
Ezekiel 39-48; Daniel 1-4;
Isaiah 36-42

2006 Spiritual Adventure

Week 45: November 5-11

Divine Intervention

In chapters 36 and 37 of Isaiah, the Assyrian army has attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. Jerusalem will be next unless a miracle happens. King Hezekiah prays to the Lord for help and shortly thereafter the Angel of the Lord went out and put to death 185,000 men in the Assyrian camp. Sennacherib king of Assyria withdrew and returned to Nineveh, where he was soon killed by two of his sons.

This kind of intervention by God was nothing new! God had intervened in the history of man from the very beginning of time. His judgment of the ancient world however, was unequalled by any other event in history. He brought a world wide flood and all of mankind was destroyed except for eight people. The death of so many people by an act of God is difficult to explain to an unbelieving world. How could a God of love do such a thing? Well, what if God had just let things continue "as they were" in the days of Noah? Would anyone like to be born into a world where every thought of mankind was evil? Would a God of compassion allow that? Only the creator knows what is best for each person and mankind as a whole.

No, God is not an ogre. His judgments on mankind have slowed the process of man's self destructive ways and provided a way for them to know their creator. The world might want to consider these things before they point the accusing finger at God. Besides, who is man to question God?

-Jim Levick



This Week's Highlight: "God's Guidance"

He Knows Our Hearts

I cannot help but notice her as I approach my gate seating area at Houston Intercontinental Airport. Medium build, cropped brown hair, loose fitting slacks and shirt, and only one arm. We are both an hour early for this flight to Lubbock, where I am to speak six times over the weekend about God's guidance. I am carrying my Bible and notes in a cloth tote bag that says "State Bar of Texas." The plane is late. We have another hour to wait.

As I take a stretch break, I word a silent prayer. "If there is anyone here, Lord, with whom you wish me to connect, please call it to my attention." I walk to the window and watch the planes taxi on the runway. Just then she rises and comes over to me. "Are you a lawyer?" she asks, looking at my bag. "Yes," I say, "for a living. But I am on my way to Lubbock to talk about God's leading in our lives."

"Really?" she says. "I am going to Lubbock to witness to some friends whom the Lord has put on my heart. I hope they will be open to the gospel. God sent you to me. I was just praying for God to provide me some encouragement to go on."

As we chat, there and later on the plane to Lubbock, I learn that Shawn had lost her arm to cancer, but she feels blessed to be alive. She now does research in the cancer hospital for the same doctor who had treated her. There she shares God's love with other patients who face the loss of limbs. Although her doctor is an atheist, he sometimes sends her to pray for other patients whom he knows need encouragement.

Shawn always wanted to be a missionary, she tells me. She wonders if she is out of God's will because she is not. I assure her that she **IS** a "missionary—exactly where God has put her—with an authority and credibility which only her unique experience could possibly provide. And I tell her how God used her to answer my prayer, providing me with a living illustration of one who turned great adversity to God's service, and who faithfully glorifies God in the place he has planted her.

No human being in that airport could hear the silent prayers Shawn and I had offered up at almost the same time. But God, who knows the hearts, heard us both, and he provided just what each of us needed at that very moment.

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Struggle Against Sin

A graceEmail subscriber writes: "I continue to struggle against the same sins, over and over. Does anybody else feel the same way I do? It would help if I knew I wasn't alone in this."

You are not alone. As the old hymn says, "They who fain would serve Him best are conscious most of wrong within." The sense of shortcoming is the convicting work of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and, as such, is itself a sign of hope and reason for joy. If God did not have his strong hand on us, moving us heavenward, we would not feel any moral "tension" or "pressure" (Greek: *thlipsis*= *tribulation, affliction, anguish, trouble*) within ourselves. That he does have his hand on us in that way, and that we consequently do experience such anguish, is one reason why the words "affliction," "Holy Spirit" and "joy" are often found together in the New Testament.

However, we ought not ever to confuse the Spirit's convicting with the devil's accusing. The first work,

which is from God, always seeks to further our redemption and intimacy with God. The second activity, from Satan, always tries to discourage, beat down, quench faith in Christ, and ultimately to destroy. Both God and Satan remind us that we are sinners, but there the similarity ends. Satan would have us think that sinners are beyond God's love and redemption—a double lie at the most fundamental level. God impresses on us that sinners are those very ones whom Jesus came to locate and to save.

Remember the promise concerning God and be encouraged: "He who began a good work in you is faithful, and he will also complete it" (Phil 1:6).

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