



# CHURCH OF GOD BANNER

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OCTOBER, 2004

FIRST CHURCH OF GOD: 3RD. AVE. & HWY. 508 ONALASKA, WASHINGTON 98570

## IT IS NO SECRET

You are probably familiar with the song, by Stuart Hamblen, a country-western singer of some 50 years ago. Well, when I was in my late teens I had a chance to hear and meet this man. He told us the story of how the song, "IT IS NO SECRET" came to be written. The words of that song go like this: "*It is no secret what God can do; what He's done for others, He'll do for you. With Arms wide open, He'll pardon you. It is no secret what God can do.*"

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My cousin, Frances (Sparks) Fuller sent me an email with the following story of how that song came to be written. It brought back a great memory for me of when I first heard that song.

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Back in the 50's there was a well-known radio host/comedian/song writer in Hollywood named Stuart Hamblen who was noted for his drinking, womanizing partying, etc. One of his bigger hits at the time was "I won't go hunting with you Jake, but I'll go chasing women".

One day, along came a young preacher holding a tent revival. Hamblen had him on his radio show presumably to poke fun at him. In order to gather more material for his show, Hamblen showed up at one of the revival meetings.

Early in the service the preacher announced, "There is one man in this audience who is a big fake." There were probably others who thought the same thing, but Ham-

blen was convinced that he was the one the preacher was talking about (some would call that conviction), but he was having none of that.

Still the words continued to haunt him until a couple of nights later he showed up drunk at the preacher's hotel door around 2 am demanding that the preacher pray for him! But the preacher refused, saying, "This is between you and God and I'm not going to get in the middle of it." But he did invite Stuart in and they talked until about 5 am at which point Stuart dropped to his knees and with tears, cried out to God.

But that is not the end of the story. Stuart quit drinking, quit chasing women, and quit everything that was "fun". Soon he began to lose favor with the Hollywood crowd.

The radio station ultimately fired him when he refused to accept a beer company as a sponsor. Hard times were upon him. He tried writing a couple of "Christian" songs but the only one that had much success was "This Old House", written for his friend Rosemary Clooney.

As he continued to struggle, a long time friend named John took him aside and told him, "... all your troubles started when you 'got religion', was it worth it all?" Stuart answered simply, "Yes". Then his friend asked, "You liked your booze so much, don't you ever miss it?" And his answer was, "No". John then said, "I don't understand how you could give it up so easily." And Stuart's response was, "It's no big secret. All things are possible with God." To this John said, "That's a catchy phrase. You should write a song about it."

And as they say, the rest is history. The song Stuart wrote was "It Is No Secret" - It is no secret what God can do. What He's done for others, He'll do for you. With arms wide open, He'll welcome you. It is no secret, what God can do...

By the way... the friend was John Wayne. And the young preacher who refused to pray for Stuart Hamblen? That was Billy Graham.

◆ Received from James Sparks

## THE HAIRCUT

A young boy had just gotten his driving permit. He asked his father, who was a Minister, if they could discuss his use of the family car. His father took him into his study and said, "I'll make a deal with you. You bring your grades up, study the Bible a little, get your hair cut and then we'll talk about it."



After about a month, the boy came back and again asked his father if they could discuss his use of the car. They again went into the father's study where the father said, "Son, I've been very proud of you. You have brought your grades up, you've studied the Bible diligently, but you didn't get your hair cut."

The young man waited a moment and then replied, "You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that. You know Samson had long hair, Moses had long hair, Noah had long hair, and even Jesus had long hair."

The Minister said, "Yes, and everywhere they went, they walked."

## THE LETTER

by Kristi Powers

In a world where so many lives are being torn apart by divorces and heartaches, comes a story of a father and a daughter, and a promise that was kept. My father was not a sentimental man. I don't remember him ever "ooohhing" or "ahhing" over something I made as a child. Don't get me wrong; I knew that my dad loved me, but getting all mushy-eyed was not his thing. I learned that he showed me love in other ways.

There was one particular time in my life when this became real to me... I always believed that my parents had a good marriage, but just before I, the youngest of four children, turned sixteen, my belief was sorely tested. My father, who used to share in the chores, around the house, gradually started becoming despondent. From the time he came home from his job at the factory to the time he went to bed; he hardly spoke a word to my mom or us kids. The strain on my mom and dad's relationship was very evident. However, I was not prepared for the day that Mom sat my siblings and me down and told us that Dad had decided to leave. All that I could think of was that I was going to become a product of a divorced family. It was something I never thought possible, and it grieved me greatly. I kept telling myself that it wasn't going to happen, and I went totally numb when I knew my dad was really leaving.

The night before he left, I stayed up in my room for a long time. I prayed and I cried—and I wrote a long letter to my Dad. I told him how much I loved him and how much I would miss him. I told him that I was praying for him and wanted him to know that, no matter what, Jesus and

I loved him. I told him that I would always and forever be his Krissie... his Noodles.

As I folded my note, I stuck in a picture of me with a saying I had always heard. "Anyone can be a father, but it takes someone special to be a daddy."

Early the next morning, as my Dad left our house, I sneaked out to the car and slipped my letter into one of his bags. Two weeks went by with hardly a word from my father. Then, one afternoon, I came home from school to find my mom sitting at the dining room table waiting to talk to me.



I could see in her eyes that she had been crying. She told me that Dad had been there and that they had talked for a long time. They

decided that there were things that the both of them could and would change and that their marriage was worth saving.

Mom then turned her focus to my eyes "Kristi, Dad told me that you wrote him a letter. Can I ask what you wrote to him?"

I found it hard to share with my mom what I had written from my heart to my dad. I mumbled a few words and shrugged.

Mom said, "Well, Dad said that when he read your letter, it made him cry. It meant a lot to him and I have hardly ever seen your dad cry. After he read your letter, he called to ask if he could come over to talk. Whatever you said really made a difference to your dad."

A few days later my dad was back, this time to stay.

We never talked about the letter; my dad and I. I guess I always figured that it was something that was a secret between us. My parents went on to be married a total of thirty-six years before my dad's early death at the age of fifty-

three cut short their lives together. In the last sixteen years of my parent's marriage I, and all those who knew my mom and dad, witnessed one of the truly "great" marriages. Their love grew stronger every day, and my heart swelled with pride as I saw them grow closer together...

When Mom and Dad received the news from the doctor that his heart was deteriorating rapidly; they took it hand in hand, side by side, all the way.

After Dad's death, we had the most unpleasant task of going through his things. I have never liked this task and opted to run errands so I did not have to be there while most of the things were divided and boxed up.

When I got back from my errand, my brother said "Kristi, Mom said to give this to you. She said you would know what it meant." As I looked down into his outstretched hand, it was then that I knew the impact of my letter that day so long ago. In my brother's hand was my picture that I had given my dad that day. My unsentimental dad, who never let his emotions get the best of him, my dad, who almost never outwardly showed his love for me, had kept the one thing that meant so much to him and me. I sat down and the tears began to flow, tears that I thought had dried up from the grief of his death, but that had now found new life as I realized what I had meant to him.

Mom told me that Dad kept both the picture and that letter his whole life.

I have a box in my home that I call the 'Dad box'. In it are so many things that remind me of my dad. I pull that picture out every once in a while and remember. I remember a promise that was made many years ago between a young man and his bride on their wedding day, and I remember the unspoken promise that was made between a father and his daughter. A promise kept...

*Received from James Sparks*

# ONALASKA'S HAPPENINGS

## SUNDAYS

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM

MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 AM

*Potluck Second Sunday of the Month*

EVENING SING

&

PRAISE SERVICE 6:00 PM

*(There will be no evening service on Sunday, October 10)*

## TUESDAYS

KID'S CLUB  
3:30 - 4:30 PM

## WEDNESDAYS

MEN'S BREAKFAST

@

THE BURGER BAR 6:00 AM

SOUP & SANDWICHES 6:00 PM

BIBLE STUDY 7:00 PM

*"THE PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE"*

## THURSDAYS

HOME BIBLE STUDY

@

ELVA SMOOTS 10:00 AM  
809 GISH ROAD

## SATURDAYS

PRAYER MEETING 6:00 PM

## CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2004  
5:00 PM

## WCG WORK DAY

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2004  
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

## WCG'S RUMMAGE SALE

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15  
8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

&

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16  
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### TEA & PRAISE

SALKUM CHURCH OF THE  
BRETHREN

10:00 AM



## PNA EVENTS

The PNA's Annual Business Meeting, Saturday, October 2 at the Double K Christian Retreat Center.

The PNA's Ministers and Spouse Retreat in Wenatchee, Monday, October 18 through Thursday, October 21.

The only ones to come up with the correct answer to last month's quiz was my brother and sister in Scottsdale, Arizona. The answer was the fish that had Peter's and Jesus' taxes in its mouth. **Matthew 17:24-27**

Here is this month's quiz.

*I was a mighty man,  
A man of power and fame,  
But when I died  
I died in shame.*

*I was the man who always led the fight,  
And I always did what I thought was right.*

*I killed so many that I've lost count,  
But there were two I should have done without.*

*I was as faithful as I could be,  
Through my efforts the king got the victory.*

*I tried real hard to heed the call,  
But in the end I lost it all.*

*It was in the end I made my fatal error,  
I chose the wrong one to be the heir.  
I thought I would be safe if I held real tight,*

*But in the end I died by a knife.*

*Whom am I?*

# Annual Business Meeting



## Annual Church Meeting

Our Annual Church Business Meeting has been changed from Sunday, October 3, 2004 to Sunday, October 10, 2004 following the Potluck.

This is a very important meeting as we will be voting on three positions for the Church Council as well as positions for Sunday School Superintendent, Head Usher and our PNA representative.

We will also be voting on our annual budget. We will seek to keep you informed on any other items that will be addressed at this meeting.

We will be asking to cash in one of the CD's to cover some maintenance cost at the Parsonage.

Please be in prayer for this meeting and mark your calendar so you will be able to participate.

If you have attended the Onalaska Church of God for the past six months, are 18 years of age or older and have accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, you are eligible to vote.

## THE SEED

*Great Story About Honesty! It's just a story, I know but I thought it was really good!*

Once there was an emperor in the Far East who was growing old and knew it was coming time to choose his successor. Instead of choosing one of his assistants or one of his own children, he decided to do something different.

He called all the young people in the kingdom together one day. He said, "It has come time for me to step down and to choose the next emperor. I have decided to choose one of you."

The kids were shocked!

But the emperor continued. "I am going to give each one of you a seed today. One seed. It is a very special seed. I want you to go home, plant the seed, water it and come back here one year from today with what you have grown from this one seed. I will then judge the plants that you bring to me, and the one I choose will be the next emperor of the kingdom!"

There was one boy named Ling who was there that day and he, like the others, received a seed. He went home and excitedly told his mother the whole story.

She helped him get a pot and some planting soil, and he planted the seed and watered it carefully. Every day he would water it and watch to see if it had grown.

After about three weeks, some of the other youths began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow. Ling kept going home and checking his seed, but nothing ever grew.

Three weeks, four weeks, five weeks went by. Still nothing.

By now others were talking about their plants but Ling didn't have a plant, and he felt like a failure. Six



months went by, still nothing in Ling's pot. He just knew he had killed his seed. Everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Ling didn't say anything to his friends, however. He just kept waiting for his seed to grow.

A year finally went by and all the youths of the kingdom brought their plants to the emperor for inspection. Ling told his mother that he wasn't going to take an empty pot. But she encouraged him to go, and to take his pot, and to be honest about what happened.

Ling felt sick to his stomach, but he knew his mother was right. He took his empty pot to the palace.

When Ling arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by all the other youths. They were beautiful, in all shapes and sizes. Ling put his empty pot on the floor and many of the other kids laughed at him. A few felt sorry for him and just said, "Hey nice try."

When the emperor arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted the young people. Ling just tried to hide in the back.

"My, what great plants, trees and flowers you have grown," said the emperor. "Today, one of you will be appointed the next emperor!"

All of a sudden, the emperor spotted Ling at the back of the room with his empty pot. He ordered his guards to bring him to the front.

Ling was terrified. "The emperor knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me killed!"

When Ling got to the front, the Emperor asked his name. "My name is Ling," he replied.

All the kids were laughing and making fun of him. The emperor asked everyone to quiet down. He



looked at Ling, and then announced to the crowd, "Behold your new emperor! His name is Ling!"

Ling couldn't believe it. Ling couldn't even grow his seed. How could he be the new emperor?

Then the emperor said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone here a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds, which would not grow. All of you, except Ling, have brought me trees and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Ling was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. Therefore, he is the one who will be the new emperor!"

◆ *Received from James Sparks*

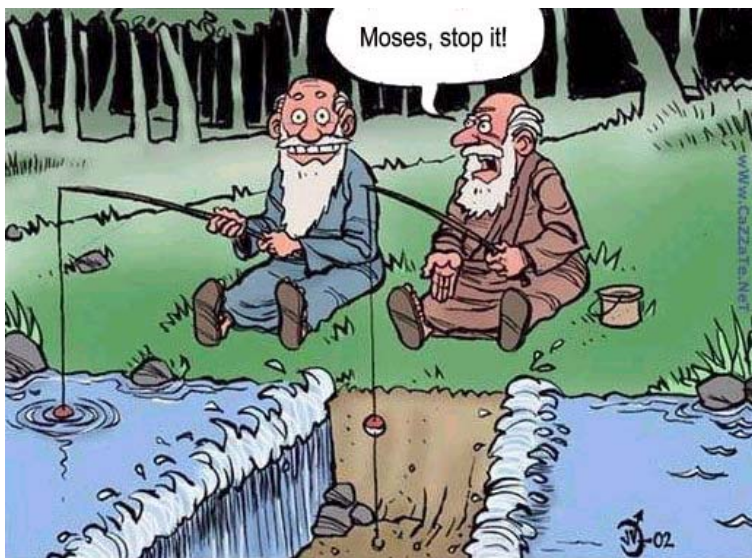
## 100 % TITHERS

Dr. Hugh McKean of Chiangmai, Siam, tells of one church in that country where there are 400 members, and every member tithes. Members receive 40 stands (less than twenty cents) of their rice each week. Of this, each gives weekly one-tenth. Because of this they have more for Christian work than any other church in Siam.

They pay their own pastor, and have sent two missionary families to spread the Gospel in a community cut off from the outside world. They are entirely responsible for this work and are very earnest about it. They are intensely interested in all forms of Christian work, especially work for unfortunates of every kind, and their gifts for this kind of work are large. They not only have accepted Christ but, having found him good, are making him known to others.

And every member is a leper.

◆ *Moody Monthly*



**THE CAT**

A couple was dressed and ready to go out for New Year's Eve. They turned on a nightlight, turned the answering machine on the phone line, covered their pet parakeet and put the cat in the backyard. They phoned the local cab company and requested a taxi. The taxi arrived and the couple opened the front door to leave their house.

The cat they had put out into the yard scoots back into the house.

They don't want the cat shut in the house because she always tries to eat the bird. The wife goes out to the taxi while the husband goes inside to get the cat. The cat runs upstairs, the man

in hot pursuit.

Waiting in the cab, the wife doesn't want the driver to know the house will be empty for the night.

She explains to the taxi driver that her husband will be out soon "He's just going upstairs to say good-bye to my mother." A few minutes later, the husband gets



into the cab.

"Sorry I took so long," he says, as they drive away.

"Stupid thing was hiding under the bed." Had to poke her with a coat hanger to get her to come out! She tried to take off so I grabbed her by the neck. Then I had to wrap

her in a blanket to keep her from scratching me. But it worked. I hauled her downstairs and threw her out into the back yard!"

The cabdriver hit a parked car...

◆ *Received from James Sparks*

**THE MILLIONAIRE**

A contestant on "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" had reached the final plateau. If she answered the next question correctly, she would win \$1,000,000. If she answered incorrectly, she would pocket only the \$32,000 milestone money.

And as she suspected it would be, the million-dollar question was no push-over. It was, "Which of the following species of birds does not build its own nest, but instead lays its eggs in the nests of other birds? Is it A) the condor; B) the buzzard; C) the cuckoo; or D) the vulture?"

The woman was on the spot. She did not know the answer. And she was doubly on the spot because she had used up her 50/50 Lifeline and her Audience Poll Lifeline. All that remained was her Phone-a-Friend Lifeline, and the woman had hoped against hope that she would not have to use it. Mainly because the only friend that she knew would be home happened to be a blonde. But the contestant had no alter-

native. She called her friend and gave her the question and the four choices.

The blonde responded unhesitatingly: "That's easy. The answer is : The cuckoo."

The contestant had to make a decision and make it fast. She considered employing a reverse strategy and giving Regis

any answer except the one that her friend had given her. And considering that her friend

was a blonde, that would seem to be the logical thing to do. On the other hand - the blonde had responded with such confidence, such certitude, that the contestant could not help but be persuaded.

I need an answer," said Regis.

Crossing her fingers, the contestant said, "C: The cuckoo."

"Is that your final answer?" asked Regis.

"Yes, that is my final answer."

Two minutes later, Regis said, "I regret to inform you that that answer is... absolutely correct. You are now a millionaire!"

Three days later, the contestant hosted a party for her family and friends - including the blonde who had helped her win the million dollars. "Jenny, I just do not know how to thank you," said the contestant "Because of your knowing the answer to that final question, I am now a millionaire. And do you want to know something? It was the assuredness with which you answered the question that convinced me to go with your choice. By the way... how did you happen to know the right answer?"

"Oh, come on," said the blonde. "Everybody knows that cuckoos don't build nests. They live in clocks."

