



# News from the Blue Ridge



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## Family Events:

After a long struggle to get the shop set up at home, I can say that it has now started materializing. Some shelving and work benches have been added, thus enabling me to get the tools and supplies organized where they can be easily found for projects around the house. Lighting has been installed along with a fan and a radio. I must confess to a feeling of deep satisfaction with the progress here. I enjoy working with my hands and this shop is taking shape as a delightful place to get away from the rigors of my work in teaching.



Equally satisfying has been the opportunity to make some serious progress on the flower beds in the yards. Quite a number of plants have been purchased and planted in order to create some beautiful accents to the appearance of the outside of the house. Although this year has witnessed a continuation of the drought here that is also plaguing a lot of the US these days, I've been able to plant ground covers and other plants that are drought resistant and thus will not require so much water.

My big frustration this summer has been the inability to work outside for more than one to two hours at a time, usually just once each day. The feet problems continue to hound me and prevent me from standing on my feet in order to get much work done. Also, the arthritis in the shoulders down to the feet works pretty heavy on me at times and slows down the pace as well. Thus, I have been forced to plan out each day's activities carefully and balance work outside with work in the office where I can sit down. A surprising amount of work has been accomplished this way, although I have had to learn to live with a long list of projects all underway at the same time. Small amounts of progress on these each day is seemingly the way to get things done with my ongoing health issues. Living with a ton of 'loose strings' is a challenge!

The health issues continue to look basically good. The second PSA test came back 0.00 in May just as we had hoped. The new orthotics are helping some with the feet pain. My blood pressure and blood sugar remain at acceptable levels.



One 'sacred' commitment each day this summer has been the afternoon nap. I promised myself that I would get some rest so the body could heal further from the cancer surgery. Thus a one to two hour nap each afternoon after lunch has been the one constant activity that I can predict each day. Added to that has been some pleasure reading of materials just for the sheer joy of reading. With the addition of a couple of rocking chairs on the front porch, Claire and I both have taken time to enjoy a slower pace of living.



## University Happenings:

One of the delightful activities that has consumed a large chunk of my time so far this summer has been to begin posting at Cranfordville.com the massive *bibliographical databases* that I've accumulated electronically over the past two decades. I've grown weary of not being able to find resources quickly and efficiently over the internet. Some bibliographical databases in religious studies exist on the internet but nothing with any real depth. Since these references have been gathered over the years and are mostly already in electronic form -- although in a variety of formats -- I decided to begin uploading them to Cranfordville.com so that others could make use of them as well. In order to access them just go to <http://cranfordville.com/bibliography.html>. This gateway page opens up access to five databases related to New Testament studies:



**New Testament Genre | Bible Commentaries |  
New Testament Theology | NT Exegetical Methods  
| Research Updates**

The initial objective is to post 10,000 references during the first year, and then do continual updates after that. Thus far I have a little over 500 references posted.

Many of the references have *hyperlinks to additional sources of information* about the publication, along with a link to AddAll.com which does a cost survey of over thirty retail sources when the reference is clicked on. The bibliography listing is annotated and, increasingly, comments about the content of each publication are being posted along with the bibliographical information. Materials from some six or so languages are being posted for international assistance.

Each posting is set up in *basic Turabian style format*, so that a mere copying and pasting of the reference can be made from the web listing into the document where the reference is needed.

In the commentary section, a *discussion on the history, nature, and use of commentaries* is being developed, especially for use in the freshman Bible survey courses. Many of these students have never previously used commentaries in Bible study; this section is designed to answer questions about this.

As you may have electronic databases on bibliography that *you would share with me*, I will be happy to receive them and consider them for inclusion. Just send them to me at [GWU@cranfordville.com](mailto:GWU@cranfordville.com) as an email attachment.

My intent is to provide a helpful service to as many students of scripture as possible. Such a database can significantly reduce research time in finding the secondary sources of information for doing not only advanced level research, but Bible study as well.

Any observations that you would share about the sites would be welcomed. I want the format etc. to be as helpful as possible.



## Claire's Musings:

My first two online classes for my Masters in Library Science have been great. I really enjoyed learning more about the Internet, especially since I am fortunate enough to have my own private tutor at home. For the most part taking online classes is close to almost teaching yourself. One has to be self-motivated to keep up with the classes and not fall behind, plus the fact that there is not a live teacher to show how to do certain tasks. There's a lot of reading texts and interaction online with the professors and fellow students. It was difficult when I was working the long hours at work, but then I was able to catch up on spring break. The good part is that I made A's in both classes. Now I am ready to start another five-week session with two classes this time, Intro to Differences in Human Learning in Schools and Organization of Information in Libraries, very fast and intensive. This is not one of the more fun summers, but I am getting some of this behind me. I don't want this drug out any more than it has to, after all I'm not getting any younger.

When people ask me how my summer has been all I can say is that I spend most of the time studying for my classes. Someone asked me if I was involved in Summer School and I said only indirectly, other than my classes. Besides studying Lorin and I are helping Angie and Brian by keeping Clay and Taylor a couple of days a week while Angie is teaching Summer School. To some that might sound like work, but not to lucky grandparents. Of course work is involved, but this is fun work. I tease Clay (7) that he wears me out talking all the time. It takes everything I've got just to keep up with a two-year-old and a seven-year-old and they do wear me out. That's one of the disadvantages of getting older, but what fun. Just like when the girls were growing up, we were making memories. We have done a little bit of visiting with special friends, Carlos and Connie and Rachel and Newlin from our Sunday school class. Clay and Taylor were wonderful and they enjoyed the visits as much as I did. Newlin had musical talents that I did not realize about. He played the piano, guitar, and a trumpet and we all sang. Clay, Taylor, and I went to the Shelby Park a couple of times after our visits. The park is wonderful and continues to be fixed up. Besides the carrousel there is also a small train (complete with depot) and a large play area.

Lorin and I went to our first "Alive After Five" in the town of Shelby, which is about ten minutes from here. It was great and it makes me wonder why we waited so long to go to one of these. Shelby does this each summer and plans them about two weeks apart. They block off a street next to the county court house and have a special band to play. It's almost like a small fair. People bring lawn chairs and sit and visit with others and listen to the music. It was so much fun that I can't wait to go to another one.



## Lorin's Musings:

After the ancient letter Proem came the body of the letter. Then the Conclusio finishes up the ancient letter. This month we will begin giving attention to the body section of the letters in the New Testament.

One of the shortest, complete letters in the NT is found in Acts 15:23-29. It contains a typical Praescriptio, Body, and Conclusio, omitting only the Proem (NRSV):  
<sup>15:23</sup> with the following letter:

### Praescriptio:

"The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the believers of Gentile origin in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings.

### Body:

<sup>15:24</sup> Since we have heard that certain persons who have gone out from us, though with no instructions from us, have said things to disturb you and have unsettled your minds, <sup>15:25</sup> we have decided *unanimously* to choose representatives and send them to you, along with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, <sup>15:26</sup> who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>15:27</sup> We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. <sup>15:28</sup> For *it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us* to impose on you no further burden than these essentials: <sup>15:29</sup> that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.

### Conclusio:

Farewell."

The context for the letter is the Jerusalem Council meeting that concluded that Gentiles are saved by believing in Jesus the same way that Jews are saved. The letter records the decision in a letter sent back to the Christian community at Antioch where the issue had originated.

The body of the letter is comprised of three sentences in the original Greek text. Although the NRSV translation above obscures it, the Greek text sets forth a twofold division of the body with the repeated ἔδοξε... (*it seemed good to...*) in verses 25 and 28.

The first section (vv. 24-27) certify Barnabas and Paul, along with the delegation being sent to Antioch from Jerusalem. The second section (vv. 28-29) outlines the essence of the agreement reached at the meeting in Jerusalem.

The **heart of the issue** that had arisen in Antioch over how non-Jews could come into Christianity had seriously questioned the credibility of the Gospel message preached by Paul and Barnabas. Their critics had evidently claimed they weren't in line with the Apostles in Jerusalem (cf. v. 24). Thus the first division of the letter affirms the work of Paul and Barnabas. Judas and Silas were sent along to verbally confirm the letter (v. 27). One insight here is the dual confirmation of servants of the Lord, both verbal and written.

The **heart of the agreement** was that both Jew and non-Jew come into salvation solely on the basis of faith. Non-Jews don't have to first convert to Judaism before becoming Christians, as the critics had claimed in Antioch. The compensation listed in verse 29 was that non-Jews be sensitive to dietary and moral codes standard among Jewish people. To be sure, this proved to be difficult in a Gentile world as Rom. 14:1-15:13 and 1 Cor. 8:1-13 make clear.

The decision represents a huge victory for the Gospel.