



# News from the Blue Ridge

Claire & Lorin Cranford



Volume 8

April 2005

Issue 4



## Family Events:

Ah, the joy of spring break! Mar. 14-18 was that at Gardner-Webb for me. But, two half days were spent in doctors' offices, either getting tested or getting reports back from earlier tests. Then, there was rain, cold, and a teasing of snow! So much for spring break -- and that when it came after the ninth week of the semester, rather than after the usual eight week! Then, there's an early Easter coming up. This year GWU has decided to join the Christian world in a celebration of Good Friday with a holiday on Mar. 25. And for good measure, Monday, Mar. 28, was thrown in too. Talk about inducing spring fever among both students and faculty! Claire has hope for a more restful spring break with hers coming at Good Friday and extending through the following week of Mar. 27- Apr. 1. That is, if snow days don't mess it up. Thurs., Mar. 17, was a snow day for Rutherford County schools. We took advantage of it and celebrated the 12th anniversary of my proposal to her. Fellows, be smart and always do significant things around major holidays so that you can remember the dates!

On the health front, both good news and uncertain news form the picture. My cardiologist had some extensive blood work done at the beginning of March after I added Cozaar to the list of medicines that I take daily -- up to eight different

ones daily now. My blood pressure levels have held fairly stable now for quite some time, averaging 134 over 80 so far in March. The cholesterol earlier had shot up to about 210, so I began taking a low dosage (10mg) of Crestor in mid-February. His concern was to make sure that no damage was being done to the kidneys, liver etc. from either these medicines or from the diabetes. The good news is that these organs tested out fine; the cholesterol levels are cut almost in half, down to 145 for the overall number.

The other issues, mainly the dizziness, are not yet resolved. I did extensive testing on two separate occasions at the Carolinas ENT Clinic. On Mar. 29, I saw Dr. Levy, the ENT doctor, to get the test results. Fortunately -- I think -- the dizziness problem is not vestibular (inner ear source) but a CNS (Central Nervous System) disorder. I am to begin a series of "balance control" physical therapy the first part of April as a first step strategy to correcting the problem.

March, and the breaks especially, have meant the opportunity to catch up on some projects around the house and in the office at home. Some maintenance and trouble shooting work needed to be done on the computers. Several new trees have been planted in the south part of our yard. Some fresh flowers have gone in to the flower beds in the front yard. I have somewhat caught up on a backlog of writing that needed to be completed.

## Academics:

March has meant two significant events for me academically: the regional professional meetings and the approval of the Master of Arts degree program in the Department of Religious Studies at GWU.

First, the professional meetings. On Mar. 10, Claire and I traveled to Winston-Salem, NC, to attend the southeast regional meeting of the National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion (NABPR) and of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL). These were enjoyable days (Friday through Sunday) meeting old friends, listening to some interesting paper presentations, browsing through the book displays etc. One of the highlights of the trip was to spend some time on Saturday going through the [Old Salem village](#). The Moravian Brethren settled this area in the middle 1700s, and the village is a re-creation of the way-life was lived during this period. The village is an interactive experience where you



walk from one building to another and can interact with people dressed in period clothing doing various trades of that time. Although my neuropathy feet limited what we could do, we did manage to see several of the key buildings and talk to a number of people. The experience was a delightful opportunity to get to know our history a little better.

Second, the degree program. For several years our department has been concerned to provide a high quality academic experience for our students. Some three years ago we began a study into the possibility of offering a Master of Arts degree with a high academic structure to it. The product is a MA degree with an initial major in Biblical Studies that will begin this coming fall semester. A 36 hour degree program, it can be completed in one of two possible tracks: (1) a research track with a thesis leading into a PhD program, and (2) a teaching track with an teaching internship, leading to teaching religious studies in a public/private school or community college setting. The degree will meet the certification standards by the NC dept of education for certification to teach credited Bible courses in the public schools -- something done extensively throughout the Carolinas.

This fall semester three seminars will be offered. Religion 600 Research seminar (I will teach); Religion 610 Hebrew Exegesis seminar (by Dr. Gerald Koewn); and Religion 625 New Testament seminar (by Dr. Edgar McKnight). We're quite excited about this step forward for GWU.

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## 😊 *Claire's Musings:*

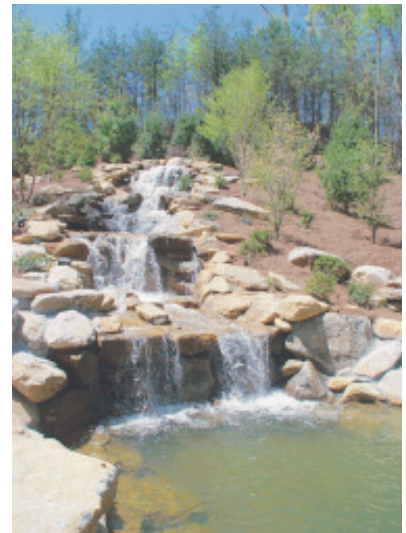
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One of the highlights of March was going with Lorin to Winston-Salem, where he attended meetings. I relaxed and just enjoyed being away and spending time with Lorin. We enjoy spending time together and it seems as though retirement is much too far away. I can hardly wait for that day, which will include photography, of course.

We visited the Salem area and it was quite fascinating. The old homes were so interesting and I enjoyed seeing the people dressed up in authentic costumes of that era and telling the stories of the people who lived and worked in the village years ago. Naturally, we got some great pictures.

I usually don't mention much about school, but recently we had an author, Michael Finklea, visit our school to talk to the students. He had contacted me (as the librarian) and offered to talk to our students. We set up the program and I was nervous, because I was the responsible one for this program. He turned out to be so good with the students and the teachers, that everyone was very happy and proud of me for getting this author to come to our school. In other words, he made me look good as a librarian. Some day when he becomes famous, we can say that he came to our school. Not bad!

I have enjoyed my spring break. I spent one day with Carrie in Asheville and we had a great time. Brian stayed with us for a day and a half, while he took care of some business. One day (not a fun day) I spent with Lorin for two doctor appointments. We spent most of the morning in Charlotte for the first visit. Bless his heart, he spends so much time with doctors and at least this day I was able



to go with him, while I was off work. I spent about two days framing pictures, which had been taken earlier. Working with pictures was the main focus of this break. I really enjoy being at home and working on things around the house, especially pictures. If I can keep up with the photography, maybe I can make this my second career. This career will be an enjoyable one that I can really look forward to.



## ✌️ *Lorin's Musings:*

Last month we looked at the contextual setting for [Col. 3:12](#) with the larger framework for the clothing metaphors of getting undressed and getting dressed.

The getting undressed image is elaborated with greater detail in [3:5-11](#). Our conversion identification with the death of Christ has provided us with the spiritual resources to shed the practices of the non-Christian way of living. Now the challenge is to systematically take off these behavior garments. Some of them are mentioned in [vv. 8-11](#): "8 But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices 10 and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. 11 In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!" (NRSV).

Col. 3:12 continues the transition over to the "getting dressed" image begun in verse 10: "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience." (NRSV). This metaphor controls the thought expression through v. 17: "13 Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. 17 And whatever

you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (NRSV)

The five virtues in the list in verse 12 become the introductory aspect of "getting dressed." The comparative phrase "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved," [ὡς ἐκλεκτοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἄγιοι καὶ ἠγαπημένοι,] sets up the standard that motivates commitment to these virtues. God has chosen us; God has set us apart to Himself (make holy); and God has showered His love upon us. With such wonderful blessings, we then are to respond with a profound commitment to "get dressed" in the patterns of behavior that befit such blessing.

First, we are to clothe ourselves with "compassion" [σπλάγχνα οἰκτιρμοῦ]. Literally, [the Greek](#) is "bowels of compassion" reflecting where the ancient world viewed the location of sympathetic emotions, i.e., the intestines. The word οἰκτιρμός is used four other times in the NT and is closely identified with God as the source of compassion. The combined words, as Peter T. O'Brien (*WBC*, v. 44) suggests, "in this context of Colossians the joint expression means 'a compassionate heart' or 'merciful compassion'." We show mercy to other out of our experience of God's mercy to us.

Second, we are to clothe ourselves with "kindness" [χρηστότητα]. Used some eight times in the NT this [Greek word](#) denotes in the plural form here concrete expressions of kindness shown to other people. We thus possess an essential goodness that flows into our actions toward others.

Third, we are to clothe ourselves with "humility" [ταπεινοφροσύνην]. The [idea here](#) is a humble self-image and this word shows up some seven times in the NT. Fourth, is "meekness" [πραΰτητα], used [some 11 times](#) in the NT. A gentle disposition is the point. Fifth, comes "patience" [μακροθυμίαν]. Used some [14 times](#) in the NT, this word stresses a tenacious consistency of commitment.

With these five virtues, we then are starting to "get dressed" in the spiritual wardrobe that Christ has provided us.