



# News from the Blue Ridge

Claire & Lorin Cranford

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## Family Events:

The month of March has been very challenging to Claire and me, especially healthwise. Mostly Claire has struggled through several illnesses, including a severe case of flu at the end of the month. Her use of the breathing machine over the past five or so months has helped her sleep better and without the apnea problems, but it hasn't helped her regain energy levels. In fact, a slow deterioration of her energy seems to be taking place, despite the fact of getting twelve to fourteen hours of sleep most every night. The surfacing of chest pains caused us alarm and resulted in her spending a night in the hospital in order to closely monitor her and to prepare for a stress test to make sure nothing was amiss with her heart and circulation. The tests didn't show up any problems, thank goodness! Additionally, the doctor is doing some checks on thyroid gland concerns to eliminate this as a source of problem. A possible problem has surfaced here that the doctors are going to monitor closely over the next several months in order to make sure nothing serious is present.

My situation continues amazingly well except for the two ongoing difficulties: the neuropathy based pain in the feet and the arthritis all through my body. Dr. Klein, my neurologist, and I agreed at the beginning of April to begin a trial usage of the arthritic pain reliever, Vioxx, in order to see whether it would help relieve the sometimes severe arthritic pain. So far it has provided dramatic relief from the arthritic pain, and without the severe side-effects that typically have accompanied my use of such medicines. Initially, there was some 'foggy headedness' for the first couple of hours after taking the 25mg tablet at breakfast. But gradually that has diminished to the point that it doesn't pose a bother. It hasn't had any impact on the feet pain, but has helped the often severe arthritic pain.

The beginning of spring offers renewed hope of better times. The older Claire and I become, the more important such hope becomes. We have had a lot of rain and moisture this spring, with the result that grass, flowers etc. are starting to look really pretty. After the past several years of drought, to have adequate moisture in the ground this year is a refreshing change. I've been able to do some work in the yard and flower beds, but much more still needs to be done. I'm especially looking forward to the end of the spring semester so that I can spend more time working outside, as well as in the shop. Over the past year I've been able to add several new power tools in the shop and it's now getting to a point where I can begin some woodworking projects etc. that I have wanted to do for quite some time. There's a long list of "To Do" projects. With these projects and research/writing projects in the office, retirement years are looking more and more appealing. I must confess some envy of those who have already moved into retirement with more freedom to do things that one really wants to.

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## University Happenings:

During the middle of March, Mar. 14-16 to be exact, Claire and I made a trip to Chattanooga, TN -- some five hours from Boiling Springs -- in order to attend the southeast regional meetings of the Association of Baptist Professors of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature. Being the first time I've been able to attend these meetings in over two years, I especially enjoyed reconnecting with colleagues in my profession. The meetings were quite productive, including the papers presented by doctoral students from schools like Duke and Vanderbilt. I had the opportunity to browse through the book exhibits and pick up some volumes to add to my library. The deep discounts available only at these kinds of meetings create great temptation to 'load up' with book purchases. But with limited library space in the office at home, my leanings are increasingly toward additions in electronic format rather than printed books. Fortunately, the release of electronic versions of publications in the field of biblical studies is a rapidly growing trend as well as the wave of the future. Often, the prices are less for the electronic version than for the print version, thus creating even greater incentive toward electronic releases.

We did manage to get some fun time worked into a busy weekend. Perhaps most interesting were a couple of the restaurants near the hotel where we stayed and attended meetings. On Saturday afternoon, we did manage to go through the Ten-



nessee Aquarium, located just a few blocks from our hotel. Because of my bad feet, I faced reality and accepted the fact that I had to have a wheelchair in order to make the lengthy tour of the facility. Poor Claire had the 'joy' of pushing me around, although with the cylindrical design of the building we started out on the fourth floor and then mostly 'coasted' down the spiraling exhibit area to the ground floor.



## Claire's Musings:

April, 2003

The best weekend this month was spent with Lorin in Chattanooga, Tennessee. We left at 4:00 a.m. Friday morning and came home Sunday afternoon, so it was a nice long weekend. Lorin attended meetings and I did what I usually love to do. I walked the streets and took pictures and explored. It was overcast most of the time, so I was unable to get some really great pictures, but I did okay. When I wasn't out I just relaxed and crocheted and read (even though it was *Black Beauty* one of the books for our Junior Book Challenge for school). It was great not worrying about anything, especially all my homework that I was already behind on. Lorin and I were able to do one sight-seeing excursion to the aquarium. It was huge and the place was packed with people. We experimented using one of their wheelchairs for Lorin. There was so much walking involved that he would not have been able to walk that much. I thought we did pretty well.

My computer crashed and it took over two weeks to get it fixed. I still lost quite a few email addresses. After already being behind on my homework I figured that it is going to take a long time to catch up. That will take up most of spring break. But, that's okay because I am grateful for the time to be able to do that.

I had a small health scare, but am just fine. I felt some small pains close to my heart and spent one night and day at the hospital. They ran tests and found nothing wrong. What a relief! I have just not felt really good since I got the sleep apnea and drag through each day dead tired and it's just hard to keep up with both schools. I really feel like a little old lady, but one that is a lot older than my 58 years.

Then later I came down with a really bad case of the flu. It's been about 20 years since I have been that sick. I missed an entire week of school and it even started on a Friday night, which meant it also covered both weekends. I just can't seem to get my act together. Spring break better get here soon.

Our school district has a reading competition each year and in the elementary schools it is called Junior Book Challenge. I am in charge of that and we have a list of 15 books that each child reads. Some of the books are short and easy and some are hard, usually one about seventh grade level, last year it



## Lorin's Musings:

With the first glance at the Kerygma materials from early Christian preaching last month, we began looking at various types of early Christian tradition that was preserved in writing in the letters. This month we take a look at a second group called the **Verba Christi**, i.e., the words of Christ. For a more detailed study of this, see the PhD research paper by one of my doctoral students, Clay Ham, located under *PhD Seminar Papers* in the *Bible Study Pages* of Cranfordville.com. The following discussion is based on his research insights.

In the traditional **letters of Paul** six explicit Verba Christi surface: 1 Cor. 7:10-11; 9:14; 11:23-25; 14:37; 2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Thess. 4:15-17. Beyond these many possible allusions of sayings of Christ exist, e.g., Rom. 12:14, 17; 13:7; 14:13, 14, 1 Cor. 13:2, 1 Thess. 5:2, 4, 15. These are not exact verbal parallels but contain identical content to something in the Gospels.

Some patterns can be detected upon close examination. (1) Most of the sayings come in well defined sections of Paul's letters, primarily ethical and eschatological discussions and (2) most of the sayings come from specific sections of the synoptic Gospels, the Sermon on the Mount, missionary discourses, and teaching in Mk. 9:33-50.

In the **Catholic Epistles of the NT**, much greater use of Verba Christi is found than in Paul. **1 Peter** has more than fifteen allusions to Verba Christi. Two patterns emerge: (1) The 1 Peter allusions include references shared with Matthew, Luke and even John, e.g., 1 Pet. 1:22 and 4:8 with Jn. 13:34-35 and 15:12, and (2) Several parallels refer to episodes which are associated with Peter himself in the gospels, e.g., 1 Pet. 2:13-17 with Mt. 17:24-27 and 22:15-21.

In **James**, some forty allusions to the sayings of Jesus can be detected. See Clay Ham, "Verba Christi in James," PhD Seminar paper, 1997, Appendix 4, pages 28-29, for a listing of these. One example is the saying regarding oaths in Jas. 5:12 (NRSV): **12 Above all, my beloved, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your "Yes" be yes and your "No" be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.** Compare this to Matt. 5:33-37 (NRSV): **33 "Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, "You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord." 34 But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let your word be "Yes, Yes" or "No, No"; anything more than this comes from the evil one. One detects close wording here.**

Although the actions of Jesus outside of crucifixion and resurrection appear very rarely in the letters, what Jesus said does. His words became authoritative sources of early Christian teaching.

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was Heidi and this year it was *Black Beauty*. I was out sick when it was time for the competition so I missed the excitement when our group of 12 kids came in second place in the district. We were so proud of them. We had a small party with cupcakes, etc. when I was back in school. I made them some special bookmarkers and got some great pictures to put on our library bulletin board. Since this was the best our school has ever done in this competition, the students will probably be even more excited about joining next year.