



# News from the Blue Ridge



Volume 5

Claire & Lorin Cranford

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Issue 5



## Family Events:

Grandkids are God's special gift later on in life, when you have more time and wisdom to appreciate His blessings! Claire and I are unusually blessed with ten grandkids. Two live nearby in NC, three live in VA near Washington DC, and five live in Texas. Below are pictures of all of them.

Chris and Charis' four kids live in Fort Worth, TX. They are **Michael, Katie, Helen** and **Aaron**. We don't get to see them as often as we would like. They are growing up in a hurry. Chris and Charis are learning how to deal with teenagers in their house with Michael and Katie. They are active in Travis Ave. Baptist Church where a cousin, Mike Dean, is their pastor. With a policeman father they have to walk a calk line!



Donald and Hallie have three kids -- **Brittany, Trevor, Preston** -- and live in Reston, VA outside of Washington, DC. Brittany is in first grade in there. We get to see them more often since they live only about seven hours away.

**Andrew** is Greg and Jennifer's son and passed his second birthday at the end of January. We don't get to see him nearly as often as we would like, since he lives in Huntsville, TX where Greg is an athletic coach and high school math teacher in the Conroe school district. Needless to say Andrew is growing up surrounded by sports.



**Clay and Taylor** live in Forest City, NC, with their parents, Angie and Brian. Since they



live only 15 minutes away, we get to see them quite often and have lots of fun together. Clay and Brittany are about the same age, as well as Taylor and Andrew.

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## University Happenings:



**Easter weekend 2002** finds me feeling much better than I have in quite some time. The refreshing weekend trip that Claire talks about in her column was a renewing time for both of us. My health is just now getting back to the point where I can get my work done more efficiently and without the utter exhaustion that has been present for over a year. The problem with the pain in the feet is the one lingering difficulty, but I'm working with a specialist in Charlotte on that.

The **spring semester** is rapidly moving toward a close with the first week of April being week 12 of a 17 week semester. I must say that I'm probably looking forward to the end of the semester as much as any of my students. To be sure, the semester has been productive and many, many aspects of it I have enjoyed thoroughly. But, the high work load demands combined with a weakened health situation have made staying on top of things quite challenging. With no teaching responsibility this coming summer for the first time in several years, I'm anxious to move into a less hectic pace for several months. Some projects that have been setting on the shelf for quite a long time can hopefully be gotten under way.

One of the decisions made during this period of severe illness in a re-evaluation of my life and the time I have before retirement in about five years is to no longer teach the **NT survey course** as an online study. After offering the course for three years online, I have fine tuned it to get it down to a minimum time consumption, but it still takes from 12 to 15 hours per week just with this one three credit hour course. This is almost as much time as all the other courses require. Increasingly it has become clear that I'm not being a good steward of my time devoting such a disproportionate amount of time to one course. Additionally, the Religion department is needing to expand its course offerings to accommodate a growing number of students majoring in religious studies. Consequently, this is my last semester to teach the Religion 3050 course.

The new course that I will offer for the first time next fall is **Religion 314, New Testament Theology**. I'm quite excited about developing this course for our religion majors and minors. The concept of the course represents the climax of my years of teaching exegetical methodology at the undergraduate, masters and doctoral level. When the biblical interpreter seriously seeks to understand the meaning of a given passage of scripture, one implication of this should be a growing comprehension of the belief system being set forth in the New Testament. How to take the various "theologies" in the NT -- of Jesus, Paul, John etc. -- and incorporate them into a contemporary, unified Christian belief system for today's world -- this is the goal of the new course. I'm quite excited about developing some learning experiences for the students to achieve this goal.

**For all kinds of info about us as well as a PDF copy and an expanded HTML version of this newsletter, check out our homepage [Cranfordville](http://cranfordville.com) at <http://cranfordville.com>**

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## Claire's Musings:

Nita, Lorin's stepmom, has had to make another move, this time to the Crazy Water Hotel in Mineral Wells, Texas.

She has been in poor health and was living in an assisted living complex and then with her daughter for a while, who was having health problems herself. What is so amazing about all this is that I have never heard Nita complain about her situations. She lives with pain and needs help with many of her daily tasks. She might mention that, but never complains about where she is moved next. When she lived at the assisted living complex she always talked about the wonderful help she had and how nice all the people were, including her neighbors. Then she was happy to be with her daughter, but was more concerned about Dorothy than herself. Now she is in a new place and talks about how well she is treated and many of her neighbors she has known from the past. She is such a joy to visit with, always putting others before herself. She reminds me so much of Don's (my late husband) grandmother. When you know people like this, you've been blessed.



I had a little trouble getting excited about spring break this week, because I knew I would have to spend the great majority of time trying to catch up on university class studies. But, my week did have a wonderful beginning. The first day Angie, Carrie, and I went window shopping. We rarely buy anything when we shop together, we just have lots of fun looking and of course lots of laughter. We usually go to a mall and look and then go to a dollar store where we really shop. It was a special day.

Then the next two days Lorin and I went out of town (wow! All the way to Morganton, almost an hour away). We have both been so stressed with long hours of work, that it was probably the best thing we could have done. When we are at home, Lorin doesn't know how to relax. We attended a Baptist church on Easter morning, and we toured a winery in Valdese. The Waldensian Heritage Wines is a small one which made it even more enjoyable and we were given a personal tour. Other than that we just mostly relaxed and read. Hopefully, the rest will help us to be better able to do our work now.

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looking for as the letter was read. With some tendency to do a similar thing at the end of the letter in the conclusio section, Paul followed an excellent pattern of communicating, both in the ancient world as well as ours: tell the audience what you're going to talk about, talk about it, then conclude by telling them what you've talked about.

For the modern Bible student, these expansion elements provide invaluable clues about the major thrusts of the letters of Paul. They also can provide helpful insight into the meaning of some larger sections later in the body of the letter. This keeps us moderns from drifting astray beyond what the larger section is really talking about.



## Lorin's Musings:

Continuing last month's discussion on the genre of Letters in the NT, we take a closer look at the particulars this month.

First, we look at the letters of Paul, the so-called pauline corpus in the NT. As earlier mentioned, the sequence of listing has nothing to do with when each letter was composed; only with descending length from the longest (Romans) down to the shortest (Philemon).

The first section of ancient letters was the **Praescriptio**. This was the pre-writing at the head of ancient letters identifying whom the letter was from and to whom it was sent, usually followed by a single word of greeting (*χαίρειν*).

In the **Superscriptio** which identifies the sender of the letter, normally the composer included his personal name, unless the letter was being sent to family members. If the letter had some kind of official tone, frequently the composer would add a title of authority after the personal name as the basis for any demands made on the recipients in the body of the letter. On rare occasions, more than one individual would be identified as the sender of the letter.

The **Adscriptio** section identifies the recipients of the letter. For personal letters, usually the name of the individual or individuals to whom the letter was being sent would be included. Very rarely anything beyond this would be found in ancient letters, apart from some reference to the kinship connection of the individual.

The **Salutatio** is mostly a single word of greeting *χαίρειν*, the written form of the most common oral greeting, hello, used in the ancient world (See 2 John 10-11).

With this basic structure in tact, **the apostle Paul** expanded these elements with what can be called 'expansion elements.' For a more detailed examination of this see <http://cranfordville.com/letlstptxts.html>. The expansions can come in any of these three segments of the Praescriptio. In the massive research that my PhD seminar on Critical Methodology did in this area in the 80s and 90s at SWBTS, we made a fascinating discovery. Each of the expansion elements provides a signal of topics that are going to be developed in much greater detail in the body of the pauline letter. For example, when Paul adds the elements "an apostle -- not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead --" to his name in Gal. 1:1, the issue of his apostleship and its nonhuman origin becomes the key topic in the first segment of the body of the letter in 1:11-2:21.

One finds this pattern woven into almost all thirteen of the letters in the Pauline section of the NT. The question the PhD students began raising, as they noticed this, was why. Gradually with more research, the seminar realized that each of the pauline letters was written not primarily to be read by individuals, but publicly before congregations. The one who carried the letter to its designation would read the letter before the house churches in the geographical region specified by the letter.

From a communication strategy, the intent of these expansion elements became increasingly clear to us: Paul was attempting to provide the listeners with oral signals of the most important points in the letter. He provided at the outset of the letter such signals to alert the listeners what to especially be