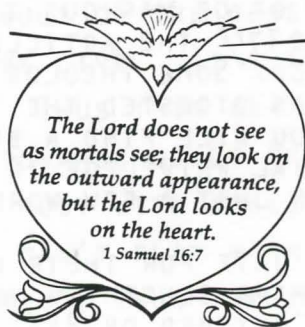


FEBRUARY 15, 199



GRACE AND LACE



GRACE AND LACE LETTER
A Publication for Christian Crossdressers
Lee Frances Heller Publisher
P. O. Box 31253
Jackson, MS 39286-1253
601-362-6335

2
GRACE AND LACE LETTER
LEE FRANCES, EDITOR/PUBLISHER
P.O. Box 31253
JACKSON MS 39286-1253
601-362-6335



DEAR FRIENDS,

THE FIRST ISSUE OF G&L WAS SENT OUT IN APRIL OF 1990 BUT IT WAS ONLY LAST YEAR WE HAD THE ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED 4 ISSUES PER YEAR. NOW THAT WE ARE ON A QUARTERLY (HOPEFULLY) SCHEDULE IT'S TIME FOR US TO PURSUE OUR CALLING TO BE A PUBLICATION OF SPIRITUAL ENCOURAGEMENT AND ENLIGHTENMENT TO OUR COMMUNITY.

I HAVE DWELT ON THE FACT THAT CDING IS NOT A SIN SINCE OUR INCEPTION AND I PUT THE LID ON THAT AS AN ONGOING PRINCIPAL THEME WITH THIS ISSUE. OUR LEAD ARTICLE IS FROM ISSUE #1, APRIL 1990 PLUS JAYE'S DEVOTIONAL ON THE SUBJECT. ALSO YOU WILL FIND THE VERY FIRST ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN THE BETA CHI NEWSLETTER AUG. 30, 1989. I AM THEN GOING TO MAKE THIS ISSUE THE LAST ONE WITH THE FOCAL POINT BEING ON THE FACT WE COMMIT NO SIN WHEN WE CROSSDRESS.

THE THEME OF THE MAY 15 ISSUE WILL BE ON THE SUBJECT OF SALVATION, FORGIVENESS OF SIN AND LIFE! ALL GIFTS OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST. ALL A MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S EVERLASTING LOVE FOR US. I CAN HEAR THE GROANS NOW. I ASSURE YOU THE TREATMENT OF THIS SUBJECT IN GRACE & LACE LETTER WILL CHANGE THOSE GROANS TO AH'S!

OH DEAR! I FORGOT TO LINE UP THIS PEICE OF PAPER IN THE TYPEWRITER SO NOW THE TOP HALF GOES "UPHILL". OH WELL. SOMEDAY THE LORD WILL PUT FEET ON A WORD PROCESSOR AND GIVE IT MY ADDRESS. IN THE MEANTIME I APPRECIATE YOUR INDULGENCE IN THE INCONSISTANCY OF OUR PAGES OF OF VARIOUS TYPESTYLES. I JUST CAN'T RE-TYPE EVERYTHING. I WOULD LOVE TO TYPE THE ARTICLE FROM THE FALL 1990 FEMME MIRROR BY FRANCES FAIRFAX ENTITLED, "SOME THEOLOGICAL THOUGHTS". THIS IS THE WHOLE STORY IN A NUTSHELL. SHE HAS DIGESTED THE INFORMATION AND REDUCED IT TO EVERYONE'S UNDERSTANDING. THEN YOU WILL FIND A BRIEF ARTICLE "WHO I AM". WHICH IS ANONYMOUS. I EXERCISED EDITORIAL PRIVELEGE IN NOT REVEALING THE WRITER. SHE HAS PACKED MUCH FOR REFLECTION IN JUST A FEW WORDS. DYNAMITE!!

I AM SO GRATEFUL FOR REBECCA AND JAYE FOR THEIR LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH MAKE G&L WHAT IT IS. DON'T YOU HAVE SOMETHING YOU'D LIKE TO WRITE ABOUT? IF SO, SEND IT ALONG BUT BE SURE IT'S TYPED ON 8 1/2 X 11 PAPER AND READY FOR THE COPY MACHINE. SEE THE NICE CONTRIBUTION FROM BARBARA JEAN JASON IN THIS ISSUE.

WE WILL BE MAILING NEARLY 150 COPIES OF THIS ONE. I HAVE SUBMITTED OUR ADVERTISING TO "FEMME MIRROR" AND "CROSS-TALK'S NEW MAGAZINE. I HAD A NICE PHONE VISIT WITH KIMBERLEIGH RICHARDS WHEN I CALLED ABOUT ADVERTISING. I TOLD HER I WAS HER SECRET ADMIRER. I REMEMBER WHEN SHE STARTED C-T AND THE DIFFICULTIES SHE HAD IN GETTING THE SHOW ON THE ROAD BUT SHE STUCK WITH IT AND EVEN HAD TO MISS A FEW ISSUES BECAUSE OF FINANCES. I HAVE HAD TO DO THAT ALSO. SHE IS THE ENERGISER BUNNY--SHE JUST KEEPS GOING AND GOING. IT'S A CASE OF THE MAN WHO CRIED BECAUSE HE HAD NO SHOES UNTIL HE MET A MAN WITH NO FEET. I TOOK SOME COURAGE IN SEEING HER OVERCOME THE ODDS. G&L HAS NO SUBSCRIPTION PRICE AND IS FREE AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE. REBECCA AND I COVER THE COST AND WE HAVE SOME HELP FROM SPORADIC VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS. I AM A GOOD FUND-RAISER BUT IT THRILLS MY HEART AND SOUL TO BE ABLE TO SIT HERE AND WRITE WHAT THE LORD BRINGS TO MIND WITH NO CONSIDERATION OF HOW SOME BIG CONTRIBUTOR FEELS. PLEASE GOD, KEEP US FREE IN SPIRIT AND IN PUBLICATION.

LOOKS LIKE THE END OF THE PAPER. I'VE ENJOYED THIS TIME WITH YOU. I PRAY, GOD PLEASE BLESS EACH READER AND ENCOURAGE HER/HIM WITH YOUR PRECIOUS WORD IN CHRIST

In Christ's love

Lee Frances

FOR YOU DID FORM MY INWARD PARTS, YOU DID KNIT METOGETHER IN MY MOTHER'S WOMB. I WILL CONFESS AND PRAISE YOU, FOR YOU ARE FEARFULLY WONDERFUL AND FOR THE AWE FULL WONDER OF MY BIRTH! WONDERFUL ARE YOUR WORKS, AND THAT MY INNER SELF KNOWS RIGHT WELL. MY FRAME (BODY) WAS NOT HIDDEN FROM YOU WHEN I WAS BEING FORMED IN SECRET AND INTRICATELY AND CURIOUSLY WROUGHT (AS IF EMBROIDERED WITH VARIOUS COLORS) IN THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH (A REGION OF DARKNESS AND MYSTERY). YOUR EYES SAW MY UNFORMED SUBSTANCE, AND IN YOUR BOOK ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE WERE WRITTEN BEFORE EVER THEY TOOK SHAPE, WHEN AS YET THERE WERE NONE OF THEM. (PSLAM 139: 13-16, AMPLIFIED BIBLE)

TO THINK THAT GOD DOESN'T KNOW THAT WE ARE CROSSDRESSERS IS AN EXERCISE IN SELF DECEPTION. TO THINK THAT GOD WANTS NOTHING TO DO WITH US BECAUSE WE ARE CROSSDRESSERS IS THE RESULT OF THE GENERAL REJECTION OF US ON THE PART OF SOCIAL CLIMATE IN WHICH WE LIVE. IT'S THE OLD STORY OF OF BLUE IS FOR BOYS AND PINK IS FOR GIRLS. THUS THIS BRAIN CONDITIONING STARTS AT BIRTH. IF WE SHOW ANY INCLINATION TOWARDS DOLLS OR "GIRL THINGS" WE ARE DIRECTED AWAY FROM IT AS "BOYS DON'T PLSY WITH DOLLS". NO REGARD SHOWN FOR OUR FEELINGS. I LIKE DOLLS BUT CAN'T PLAY WITH THEM BECAUSE MAMMA AND DADDY WONT LET ME BECAUSE I AM A BOY". THUS THE BEGINNING OF FRUSTRATION. THE DESIRE TO PLAY WITH DOLLS IS STILL INSIDE BUT NOW THE BOY HAS TO REPRESS IT. IF THE BOY HAPPENS TO TURN OUT TO BE A CROSSDRESSER THEN FRUSTRATION AND REPRESSION BECOME THE HALLMARK OF HIS LIFE. HE LIVES A LIFE OF PAINFUL DECEPTION. HIS DELIGHTFULLY FEMININE PERSONNA IS HIDDEN. IT IS CLOSETED IN THE DARKNESS OF REPRESSION. IT IS HID FROM EVERYONE BUT OURSELVES. HID? FROM EVERYONE? NOT QUITE.

". . .AND NOT A CREATURE EXISTS THAT IS CONCEALED FROM HIS (GOD) SIGHT, BUT ALL THINGS ARE OPEN AND EXPOSED, NAKED AND DEFENSELESS TO THE EYES OF HIM WITH WHOM WE HAVE TO DO. (HEBREWS 4:13. AMP. BIBLE)

THAT VERSE CAN THROW ONE INTO A TAILSPIN. IF CROSSDRESSING IS A SIN AND GOD HATES SIN AND HE KNOWS THAT I AM A CROSSDRESSER AND THE CHURCH SAYS THAT CROSSDRESSING IS A SIN THEN GOD MUST HATE ME. THE BAD GO IN LIFE

THAT I HAVE BEEN HAVING RECENTLY, OR, WHATEVER UNTOWARD EVENT OR EVENTS OR HAPPENINGS OR SERIES OF REVERSES MUST BE GOD'S PUNISHMENT FOR BEING A CROSSDRESSER. THIS THINKING IS THE RESULT OF THE CHURCH'S BRAINWASHING WHICH IS AKIN TO HOGWASH. I SPENT FROM 1947, THE YEAR THAT I SURRENDERED TO CHRIST, UNTIL 1987 IN THIS TYPE OF THINKING. GIVING MY LIFE TO JESUS CHRIST IN RECOGNITION OF MY OWN SINS AND EMBRACING THE FACT OF HIS ATONEMENT FOR SIN AND GIVING HIM ENTRANCE INTO MY LIFE ONLY SERVED TO COMPLICATE THINGS WHEN THE FIRST EUPHORIA DIED DOWN IN A FEW MONTHS. NOW THE CHURCH WAS TELLING ME HOW TO LIVE, WHAT TO DO AND WHAT NOT TO DO. WHERE I COULD GO; CHURCH SOCIAL FUNCTIONS, CONCERTS IN THE PARK, CHRISTIAN MOVIES SHOWN IN THE CHURCH. ETC. WHAT I COULD NOT DO AND WHERE I COULD NOT GO AND THE SKY IS THE LIMIT ON THAT ONE. HELL, I DIDN'T NEED A BIBLE WITH ALL OF THAT PULPIT WISDOM AND THE CHURCH BOOK OF DISCIPLINE. SO I THREW MYSELF INTO A PINK TIZZY SPIRITUALLY FOR THE NEXT 39 YEARS. THE BEAUTIFUL FACT IS THAT I AM A SURVIVOR AND THAT ONLY BY THE GRACE OF GOD! WHEN I SEE THE HORRENDOUS GUILT TRIP CROSSDRESSING PUT ME ON, I WONDER HOW I DID MAKE IT THRU. IN ALL OF THE GUILT, GOD SET ME IN THE POSITION OF A HOME MISSIONARY AS SUPERINTENDENT OF A SKID-ROW MISSION IN THE NORTH EAST. AMAZING GRACE! I HAD LEFT THE CHURCH LONG BEFORE THAT AND HAD NO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP WHICH WAS ALWAYS A REQUISITE FOR A POSITION SUCH AS THAT. IT'S A LONG, LONG STORY OF HOW I WAS SELECTED. I DID NOT APPLY FOR THE POSITION. BOTTOM LINE IS THAT GOD GAVE IT TO ME AND KEPT ME IN IT FOR 19 YEARS DURING WHICH I WAS A CLOSET CD AND ONLY THE THREE OF US KNEW. MYSELF, MY WIFE AND GOD. IN SPITE OF IT ALL, I WAS IN NO WAY COMFORTABLE WITH MY CROSSDRESSING. IN THOSE YEARS I ASKED GOD MANY TIMES TO "DELIVER" ME FROM IT SO THAT I COULD BE MORE COMFORTABLE. HE DIDN'T DO IT. PERIOD. NOW I KNOW THAT HE DIDN'T NEED TO. I SEE THE MIRACLE OF HIS GUIDING HAND IN ALL OF IT. CROSSDRESSING DIDN'T MEAN A THING TO HIM. THAT WAS NOT THE ISSUE WITH HIM. NOW I KNOW HOW MUCH HE BLESSED THE FAITH THAT BROUGHT ME TO HIS FEET TO ASK DELIVERANCE. WITH ME, CROSSDRESSING WAS THE ISSUE. WITH HIM, FAITH IS THE ISSUE. IT WAS THE FAITH THAT HE GAVE ME THAT CARRIED ME AND THAT'S WHY THE DEVIL COULDN'T USE CROSSDRESSING TO DESTROY ME WHICH COULD'VE HAPPENED HAD I SOMEHOW OR ANOTHER BEEN EXPOSED.

I CAN NOW HEAR THE CRY OF, "ABOMINABLE THINKING!" TO SAY THAT GOD ALLOWS CROSSDRESSING WHEN HE SO PLAINLY STATES THAT CDING IS AN ABOMINATION. (DEUTERONOMY 22:5) WE WILL DO A CAREFUL PAPER ON THAT ONE AS I HAVE SOME NEW

RESEARCH ON THAT VERSE. I AM ATTACHING MY ORIGINAL PAPER ON THE VERSE.

BACK TO THE RANCH!

WE WERE TALKING ABOUT HIDING AND HOW IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO HIDE ANY AREA OF YOUR LIFE FROM GOD SO WE HAVE ESTABLISHED ONE FACT NOW. YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE A CROSSDRESSER AND GOD KNOWS AND THAT MAKES TWO THAT KNOW. YOU DON'T HAVE TO MOVE OVER IN THE CLOSET TO MAKE ROOM FOR GOD, MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND BECAUSE HE IS IN YOU AND HASN'T DESERTED YOU. YOUR CHRISTIAN LIFE ---- "YOUR NEW LIFE IS HIDDEN IN CHRIST WITH GOD" (COLOSSIANS 3:3) THAT'S REAL HIDING. IT BRINGS TEARS TO MY EYES WHEN I THINK OF GOD'S EMBRACING LOVE FOR US. HE HUGS US WITH CHRIST, IN HIS BOSOM.

DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT CROSSDRESSING STANDS BETWEEN YOU AND GOD? LOOK AT THE 139TH PSALM AGAIN. "YOU DID KNIT ME TOGETHER IN MY MOTHER'S WOMB." HE MADE NO MISTAKE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT PATTERN THAT HE USED WHEN HE KNIT ME TOGETHER IN MY MOTHER'S WOMB. BUT I DO KNOW THAT IF THE PATTERN CALLED TO KNIT I AND PERL 4 THAT HE KNIT I AND PERLED 4. MY FIRM BELIEF IS THAT I AM A CONGENITAL CROSSDRESSER AND SO CONSTITUTED. GOD JUST DOESN'T MAKE MISTAKES. I HAVE SPENT MUCH OF MY LIFE CRYING OUT TO HIM, "WHY ME?". NOW I KNOW. I HAVE KNOWN FOR 3 YEARS NOW.

"NAY BUT O MAN, WHO ART THOU THAT REPLIEST AGAINST GOD? SHALL THE THING FORMED SAY TO HIM THAT FORMED IT, WHY HAST THOU MADE ME THUS? (ROMANS 9:20, KJV)

"WILL WHAT IS FORMED SAY TO HIM THAT FORMED IT, WHY HAVE YOU MADE ME THUS? (ROM. 9:20, AMP. BIBLE)

LET'S LOOK AT THE OLD TESTAMENT.

"WOE TO HIM WHO STRIVES WITH HIS MAKER! (HE IS) A WORTHLESS PEICE OF BROKEN POTTERY AMONG OTHER PEICES EQUALLY WORTHLESS (AND YET PRESUMING TO STRIVE WITH HIS MAKER). SHALL THE CLAY SAY TO HIM WHO FASHIONS IT, WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT YOU ARE MAKING? OR, YOUR WORK HAS NO HANDLES? (ISAIAH 45:9, AMP. BIBLE)

I HAVE MY ANSWER.

Lucy Frances

Some Theological Thoughts

by
Frances Fairfax

One thing I find very disturbing about the cross-gender community is the attitude among many that Judeo-Christian morality is somehow inimical to the crossdresser. There is a real hostility to the very idea of moral absolutes, and to the idea of a God who holds each person accountable for his or her actions. The act of crossdressing creates in many a tremendous burden of guilt and shame, generated in great part by a narrow, legalistic religious system drummed into them in childhood and reinforced by ignorance and stereotyping in certain quarters today. Deep down inside, the crossdresser knows that his feminine traits are an essential part of his total personality, and as such are a gift of God and not to be suppressed and denied expression. However, in rejecting prohibitions against crossdressing some end up rejecting the whole concept of absolute moral values and become scornful of those who venture to uphold such values. What follows are my own insights on religion and the crossdresser. I write in hopes of dispelling some of the destructive stereotyping on the part of both religious "authorities" and anti-religious crossdressers.

The most often quoted religious injunction against crossdressing is, of course, the infamous Deuteronomy 22:5, which reads (in the King James translation), "A woman shall not put on that which pertaineth unto a man. Neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for whomsoever doeth these things is an abomination unto Jehovah, thy God." This passage occurs as part of a "laundry list" of other regulations and prohibited behaviors. (Curiously enough, crossdressing as such is mentioned nowhere else in Scripture.) To understand and deal with this passage it must be considered in its proper context.

The passage leaves no doubt that for the Jews, crossdressing was forbidden. There was a very serious religious-moral reason for this, one which is seldom mentioned in crossdressing literature. The whole purpose of all the elaborate Mosaic laws was to maintain the separate identity of the Jews as a special people, set apart and consecrated to God, an example to the world. The Jews were about to enter their Promised Land, a land already inhabited by peoples whose religions can best be described as fertility cults. Their worship involved male and female ritual prostitution, as the people sought sexual union with their gods and goddesses. These rituals also included crossdressing, with the men appearing

as women and the women wearing men's clothes and weapons. Young male devotees would castrate themselves and thereafter wear women's clothing and serve at the shrines. It was to keep the Jews away from any semblance of this that God through Moses prohibited crossdressing.

The important thing to remember about Deuteronomy 22:5, however, is that the injunction against crossdressing, like those against eating pork, mixing meat and milk, and all the rest, were for the Jews at that time. Obeying those laws kept the Jews separate from pagan contamination but did not save them, since no one could really obey them all. When Jesus came He fulfilled all the requirements of the Law, then replaced it with His new covenant of love. So the answer for people today who invoke Deuteronomy 22:5 against crossdressing is that Jesus has set us free from that law just as He no longer requires us to abstain from pork. If we had to keep all those laws in order to be saved, then Christ came and died for nothing. So says no less an authority than St. Paul. This is the most effective answer to the invokers of Deuteronomy 22:5, and one that is most difficult for the judgmental to counter.

Another argument used against crossdressing by some preachers is based on a New Testament passage, I Corinthians 6:9. This states in part that "neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind" shall inherit the kingdom of God. This language is from the King James Version, very much revered and still used extensively by Protestants. The traditional Roman Catholic translation also uses the term "the effeminate", followed by "sodomites". What a weapon that one term "the effeminate" is in the hands of preachers who apply it to crossdressers and then link it to the term meaning "homosexuals" that follows it! However, the term formerly translated "the effeminate" actually refers to the ritual male prostitutes who were very much a feature of cultic worship in the Greek society St. Paul was addressing. One of the most widely used modern translations among Protestant churches today is the New International Version, and it renders the same passage as "nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders". The Living Bible settles for the single word "homosexuals" and the New American Bible (Roman Catholic) uses "sexual perverts".


 SOME THOUGHTS ON PSALM 139
 BY JAYE REVIERE

I AM INTRIGUED BY WHAT THE LORD IS SAYING IN PSALM 139:13-16. I WOULD SEEK COMPREHENSION IN THE TOTAL CONTEXT OF DAVID'S SONG. THE FIRST VERSE IS POWERFULLY MEANINGFUL. IT SETS THE TONE AND FRAMES THE CONTEXT. THE REMAINDER OF THE SONG FILLS IN THE DETAILS, INCLUDING THE VERSES INDICATED (VSS 13-16). THE RENDERING IN THE AMPLIFIED TEXT INCLUDES AFTER, "SEARCHED ME", THE WORD "THOROUGHLY". THE CONCEPT SET FORTH IN THE WORDS, "KNOWN ME" IS AWESOME.

LITERALLY, THERE IS NOTHING SECRET FROM THE LORD WHO HAS MADE US SEARCHED US THOROUGHLY, AND KNOWN US. THE AWESOME THING IS, WE ARE STILL LOVED BY GOD. THE WISDOM OF THIS PERMITTING LOVE OF GOD ESCAPES HUMAN WISDOM. YET IT'S VITALITY AND REALITY ARE INESCAPABLE. GOD ALLOWS US OUR HEART'S DESIRE, EVEN WHEN GOD KNOWS WHAT WE WANT IS NOT IN OUR BEST INTEREST. IT HAS TO RELATE TO GOD'S DESIRE FOR US TO RELATE WITH GOD, BECAUSE WE DESIRE TO RELATE WITH HIM, NOT BECAUSE WE HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE. FREE WILL ENTERS. GOD IN KNOWING US PUT IT THERE WITHIN US

I WAS STARTLED BY A REALIZATION COMING, IT SEEMS, AS A SMALL GENTLE VOICE GIVING ME. IN THE FORM OF A REMINDER, THE WORDS, "I DIDN'T MAKE ANY MISTAKES." SO HERE AM I, DIFFERENT, UNACCEPTABLE TO MEN BUT NOW TOLD HOW MY "BEING", MADE AS I AM MADE, IS NOT SOME SORT OF BLUNDER. I THEN CONCLUDE, I AM MADE AS I AM MADE INTENTIONALLY. I WONDER WHY....? BUT I HAVE ALREADY ASKED TOOMANY TIMES....I AM PAST ASKING WHY.... I WAIT. COMES THEN THE AWARENESS THAT I AM MADE AS I AM MADE BECAUSE GOD WISHES ME TO BE AS I AM FOR GOD'S PURPOSE AND I DON'T HAVE TO KNOW WHAT THAT PURPOSE IS.....I JUST HAVE TO BE ATTENTIVE, PAY ATTENTION AND WALK IN FAITH.

THE ENDING OF PSALM 139 IS LIKEWISE POTENT. EVEN AS I AM AS I AM WALKING IN THE FULL FAITH GIVEN KNOWLEDGE THAT I AM AS GOD MADE ME...WARTS AND ALL.... I AM STILL AWARE THAT I AM CAPABLE OF BEING DECEIVED AND SO EVER MUST THERE BE MY PRAYER: "SEARCH ME THOROUGHLY, O GOD AND KNOW MY HEART! TRY ME AND KNOW MY THOUGHTS! AND SEE IF THERE IS ANY WICKED OR HURTFUL WAY IN ME, AND LEAD ME IN THE WAY EVERLASTING.

MIRROR IMAGE

By Rebecca Anne Allison

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. -- Philippians 2:4

Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way. Walk in it." -- Isaiah 30:21

A few summers ago, my family went visiting friends in another town and I was alone for a long weekend. I decided I had been the "lone ranger" long enough; it was time to find other crossdressers. (As some astronomers feel about extraterrestrial life: I knew they were out there, but I didn't know how to make contact.)

New Orleans was a short drive away. My plan was to shop and stroll the mall en femme, then start making telephone calls (yellow pages?) to find the CD clubs. In retrospect, I did not realize the difficulty and danger I might have faced at night in the French Quarter alone. The Lord had an interesting way of protecting me.

I checked into the hotel and took my time with the transformation. The dress and the wig were new - and just right. Finally I was ready. As I smiled at the lady in the mirror, I thought, "This is the best it has ever been."

No one gave any indication of reading me as I walked to my car and drove to the mall. I shopped both department stores, too nervous to actually try on or buy, but savoring the time in public. "This is easier than I expected," I told myself as I walked back to my car.

I left the mall and decided to "cruise" for a while before returning to the hotel for my phone calls. At the first traffic light, I looked into the rearview mirror to check my wig and makeup. I rearranged my bangs, thinking how wonderful it felt to have hair on my forehead again, and didn't notice my foot relax on the brake.

Crunch.

I would never have believed a rear end collision at five miles an hour could do such damage. No one was hurt, thank the Lord; but the car in front of me had broken taillights and a dented trunk. My car would not move. I sat still, soaked in a cold sweat, as the radiator fluid ran into the street. "I am dead," I thought to myself. "Life is over. I'll be on the front page tomorrow." Would I be taken to the New Orleans jail in a dress?

To my relief, the policeman was not even surprised (this was New Orleans, after all), and the only other person to know the whole story was the tow truck operator who carried me back to my hotel. I was still in a panic. I purged everything in the hotel garbage can and rented a car to go back home. Of course, the story was not in the newspapers. My insurance agent finally forgave me. I swore off crossdressing forever (it lasted six months) and tried to devise a believable story to explain the absence of the car.

The experience left me with one major take-home lesson:
"There is a time to look in the mirror, and there is a time to keep your eyes on the road."

Someone else who had problems from looking at his own reflection was Narcissus. Greek mythology tells us this youth incurred the anger of the gods, who caused him to fall in love with his own image as reflected in a pond. He could not stop gazing at this lovely image, and so he wasted away, longing for a love he could not have. From him we have the term "narcissism", which describes an unusual degree of self interest. Narcissism has assumed a negative connotation for most persons. Actually, some degree of narcissism is healthy and promotes self-respect. This is especially true for the crossdresser, as we try to present as attractive a feminine appearance as possible. We are perfectly right to give priority to our own needs. But what is the proper balance between serving ourselves and serving others?

I am not referring here to service to others on a public level. As a Christian, I want to give time in volunteer service to charitable organizations. Through my church I also give my time and money to aid the needy. God's love to us - and through us - causes us to serve willingly.

My question of self service versus self sacrifice is on a more personal level. Once I have met the demands of my work; once I have enjoyed time with friends and family - especially my spouse; once I have shared with others - is there anything left for me? Now we see how selfishness and self-denial have relevance in our special lives.

On the one hand, if I were unrestrained by the needs of others, I could enjoy "being Rebecca" far more often. I would spare no expense to enhance my femininity. My calendar would be cleared for every national event as well as local meetings and social time. It's a wonderful daydream... But what harm I would cause! My loved ones would be neglected; my marriage damaged beyond repair. My professional activity might be seriously compromised. Clearly, for me at least, such a degree of self-indulgence is too much.

But I may overcompensate in my attempt to please others. When I deny, or totally suppress, my feminine qualities, I become unlike the person God created me to be. Consequences follow in a predictable pattern. I cannot will myself not to think about crossdressing. The longer I deny it, the more it dominates my thoughts, producing distraction and irritability. I have created the environment of conflict I tried to avoid. Too much "self-sacrifice" is harmful. I owe it to myself to consider my own special needs.

God has given us ways to find balance in our lives. First, we have Jesus's commandment to love one another. It is this love for others which causes us to modify our behavior. A word of caution is needed here: it is possible to practice self-denial for reasons other than love. We may be seeking to alter or control our spouse's feelings about ourselves and our crossdressing. Maybe our need for her approval motivates us. Perhaps our self image is so poor, we feel undeserving of our own wishes. If we "love our neighbor as ourselves", our healthy self-respect will let us meet our own needs and still be considerate of others.

The second way we find balance is by seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We have God's promise to guide us in our daily walk, if we remain responsive to his leading. There is no fixed formula. The right amount of self restraint for me may be too much for you. Furthermore, God will not show us the "big picture" - he will not spread out before us his plan for the totality of our life. He only gives us enough enlightenment for our present circumstances. He wants us to seek his will daily - and he will not reveal himself further until we follow the leading he has already given. If our attitude is "God, show me your will, and I'll think about it," our prayers will not be heard.

Balance is hard to find and easy to lose. In the months since I shared all my secrets with my wife, I have fallen off the path on both sides. I pushed too fast for acceptance, then retreated too deeply, trying for damage control. Now I am trying to "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." We are learning to negotiate and compromise so both of us will consider the needs of the other. We want a compromise based on love, not on a desire to control. I don't ask for any long range plans. As God leads me one day at a time, he sometimes includes some very pleasant surprises. There are even times to relax and enjoy the view - in the mirror!

REBECCA ANNE ALLISON/P.O. Box 16368/JACKSON MS 39236-6368



Girls if we are to have any semblance of what God's plan is for us I think the first thing we must do is look upon our crossdressing as a tool used by God and our girl within to bring out and develop our femside.

What is femininity? Ladies Home Journal once asked that question of it's readers and got about as many answers as it did responses. We each have our own idea of what femininity means. To me it means gentleness, it means being compassionate and concerned, it means being loving and caring. For me crossdressing is simply a tool used by God and my girl within to bring out and develop those characteristics. As they are developed the feminine remains even while I am in the masculine form.

Girls if we are to stop the feelings of guilt we must do as we ask God to do, look past the clothing, look into the heart and see what is really there. Perhaps then we will begin to see what God's wonderful plan is for us, and begin to understand how crossdressing is a part of that wonderful plan. When we see the heart, when we see just what femininity really is, when we allow the feminine to interject with the masculine to help create a better person out of us, then we will rid ourselves of the guilt, and we will replace it with great pride in God's wonderful plan for us. Like me girls, you will recognize that your crossdressing is a wonderful gift from God, and you will take great pride in the fact that he choose YOU to give that wonderful gift to.

Ms. BARBARA JEAN JASEN
1436 Brett Drive, Memphis Tn., 38127-9136

WHO I AM

I'VE BEEN STUDYING THE LEXICON AGAIN. I'VE CONCLUDED ANYTHING WITH THE WORD "TRANS" OR THE WORD "CROSS" AS A PART OF IT IS AN INSULT TO US. IT IS A TACIT ADMISSION WE ARE DOING SOMETHING AGAINST WHICH THERE IS A STRICT BARRIER...WE ARE CROSSING A LINE SOMEONE ELSE HAS DRAWN FOR US. BULL! WHEN I GET UP IN THE MORNING AND PULL ON A PAIR PANTIES, I AM PUTTING ON MY CLOTHES AND I AM CROSSING NO LINES TO WHICH I GIVE CREDENCE. WHEN I PUT ON A SKIRT, BLOUSE, WIG, HOSE, HEEL, MAKE-UP...I AM NOT CROSSING ANY BARRIER OR LINE I CREDIT WITH VALIDITY...I AM JUST BEING ME...I AM PUTTING ON MY CLOTHES AND AM IN NO WAY CROSSING ANYTHING WORTH BEING CREDITED WITH ANY VALIDITY AT ALL. I AM "FEMMEDRESSING" IF A NAME HAS TO BE GIVEN TO IT. THE CRITICAL THING IS: I AM SIMPLY PUTTING ON AND WEARING MY CLOTHES...I AM NOT CROSSDRESSING FOR I DO NOT GIVE RESPECT, CREDENCE OR VALIDITY TO THE IMPLICIT TABOO OTHERS MAY THINK I AM CROSSING OR BREAKING. IF THEY WANT TO USE ONE OF THOSE TERMS TO DESCRIBE WHAT I DO...OK...IT'S NO SKIN OFF MY NOSE. BUT, SO FAR AS I AM CONCERNED, I AM MERELY GETTING DRESSED ACCORDING TO HOW I AM, WHO I AM AND WHAT I AM RESPONSE TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE MOMENT. THERE'S NOTHING "CROSS" ABOUT IT. IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO WHO IS DEFINING WHOM.

I SIMPLY REFUSE TO LET OTHER PEOPLE WHO IN THEIR IGNORANCE AND THEIR INSISTANCE ON STEREOTYPES DEFINE WHO, WHAT AND HOW I AM AS A UNIQUE HUMAN BEING. MY CREATOR MADE ME AS I AM AND FOR ME TO ALLOW OTHERS IN THEIR IGNORANCE TO DEFINE ME, I AM BEING ASHAMED OF HOW GOD MADE ME...THIS I CONSIDER TO BE AN INSULT TO MY MAKER. IF I CAN STAND CONFIDENT AND CONTENT WITH WHO, WHAT, AND HOW GOD MADE ME, THEN I AM NOT INSULTING MY CREATOR BY REJECTING AND BEING MADE TO FEEL SHAME OVER WHAT MY CREATOR CHOSE TO DO IN MAKING ME.

THIS IS NOT SOME NEW FOUND SENSE OF DEFIANCE OR SENSE OF REBELLION AGAINST AN IGNORANT AND INTOLERANT SOCIAL ORDER. NO. IT IS MERELY A STATEMENT OF FACTS INsofar AS I AM ABLE TO COMPREHEND THEM. IT IS A SHAMELESS ASSERTION OF BEING HAPPY, PLEASED AND CONTENT WITH WHO I AM.

-ANONYMOUS



**APPLAUSE!
APPLAUSE!**

NEW!

CROSS-TALK IS NOW IN MAGAZINE FORMAT!

- 40 pages per month of information for the transgendered community, including:
- INCREASED GENDER COMMUNITY & MAINSTREAM NEWS COVERAGE
- EXPANDED COMMENTARY SECTION INCLUDING READER LETTERS
- ADVICE COLUMNS ON MAKEUP, FASHION, & PASSING
- PSYCHOLOGICAL & SIGNIFICANT OTHER INSIGHTS
- ORIGINAL CARTOONS & HUMOR FEATURES
- CLASSIC REPRINTS FROM "TRANSESTIA"
- HOTLINES, EVENTS CALENDAR, READER PROFILES
- ... AND MORE !!!

For a sample issue, send \$5.00 to P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.
(Make check or money order payable to Kymberleigh Richards.)

FOCUS

by
Jaye

Where is your focus in life? What is most important in life to you? What is it about which you spend the most time thinking? What is it you want to do most of the time? All of these questions bear on the issue of focus. They define the focus of your life; they define the focus of my life. Whatever is most important to me is what will dominate my attention; whatever is most important to me is thus the focus of my life. Whatever it is about which I spend the most of my time thinking defines where my life is focused. Whatever it is about which I spend the most of my time thinking is what is most important to me and is the basis of my life focus. Whatever it is I do most of the time tells me what it is I'm thinking about and what forms the focus of my life.

Before we go off on a tangent defending what we do for a living, the church we attend, or even defending crossdressing, let us look a little beneath the surface. Let's say you are a professional. Let's say you have a career which demands a huge amount of your time and you spend a lot of time thinking about this career and what you are doing in it. Let's say you spend the bulk of your time actually performing the actions required in your career. Is this career the focus of your life? Could be! Maybe not too. It depends.

If we are in a given career with the career and the perquisites which come along with the career: money, status, power, etc.; are the principal things of value to us within the career, then we can say our focus is on the career. But what of the situation in which the career is but a means to an end: a situation by which we are able to meet our needs in a way we can then go on with more important stuff. In such a scenario, our focus is not on our career but on those things we group under the heading: "important stuff." In such a setting we may spend 99.9% of our waking hours in pursuit of the career, but so long as something else occupies the status of "important stuff", our career is not our focus... the "important stuff" is our focus and the career is but a means to the end required by the "important stuff".

As contributing editors to Grace and Lace, we are continually faced with the issue of focus. We are human and there are times when we flop miserably. There are times when we simply are not in tune with the Lord and when this happens, we emit a lot of sour notes and cacaphonic noise. We really hope you dear readers are in a forgiving mood and will recognize our human defocusing for what it is.... evidence we aren't God and we don't have a totally "clear channel" to the Throne any more than you do. Still, even in our ineptness and defocused human failing, we hope what we are doing in bringing this little publication to you will in some way enhance and enrich your FaithWalk with the Lord.

Toward a singularity of mind, we are aware when our focus is on the Lord Jesus Christ all else is insignificant. It is this message, if none other, we all need to hear. Often we've heard the expression: "Let Go, Let God!" How wonderfully true and simple sounding this is. When we let go and let God we are walking in faith. When we try to manage things ourselves in our human power, we are not walking in faith, we are trusting in ourselves. There is no way we humans can please God through the exercise of our human abilities. The Law shows us this conclusively. The Law requires something which is beyond our abilities: perfection. Only Christ possessed and possesses the capacity for perfection. We humans do not. The whole purpose of the Law was to make this point plain to us. When it becomes plain to us we lack the capacity to achieve perfection we are then ready to begin the FaithWalk.

Why all this talk about perfection? This question serves to sharpen our focus on Christ. We talk about perfection because only Christ had and still has perfection. Talking about perfection focuses our attention on Christ. We must focus endlessly on Christ for ONLY in Christ is there hope for us considering the perfection demanded by the Law and our inability to achieve perfection, thus our inability to comply with God's Law.

Why even mention the Law if as Christians we are set free from the yoke of the Law? The answer is simple. Even though we know in our minds what we have been taught about Christ's having paid the price for us we could never pay; Christ's having 'bought us back' (this is what redemption means), we don't live as though we believe what our minds say we know. We tend to fall endlessly into the trap of trying to present ourselves as "better Christians" by our overt efforts to obey the Law as though our so doing would in some way earn "points" with God for us. When we do this, we are taking our eyes off of the Lord, we are taking our focus off of Christ and turning our focus onto our own attempts to earn our way into a good place with God by our own merit. We may deny we are doing this. In fact, we probably will deny and stoutly so claiming we are not engaged in the utter futility of 'works righteousness.' Still, in spite of our denials it is precisely what we are doing when we are not focused EXCLUSIVELY on Christ and walking in a simple child like faith letting go and letting God.

We mention the Law because the law proclaims damnation aiming at turning us to focus on Christ. We mention the Law for the enemy uses the Law to weigh us down with guilt (example: those who hammer us with Deut 22:5 are serving the enemy by trying to heap guilt on us for crossdressing) and we need to avoid the traps the enemy puts before us. The only way we can avoid these traps is to walk in a simple child-like faith letting go, letting God... even to the smallest of details.... Remember, walk in a simple child like faith with a total focus on Christ and God is faithful to take care of even the smallest of details. This is the way out of the conundrum compounded by the Law... Focus on Christ EXCLUSIVELY!

RELIGION

Mission refuses funds from mainly gay church

■ St. Stephen's Community Church had offered Gateway Rescue Mission \$10 a month.

By Charlotte Graham
Clarion-Ledger Religion Writer

Gateway Rescue Mission has taken a bold stand on what Executive Director David Hopkins calls its "biblical principles."

The mission, founded in 1948 as a Christ-centered response to the problem of homelessness and poverty, has refused to accept donations from St. Stephen's United Community Church of America.

The reason for the refusal: The church's primary membership are gays and lesbians.

"Nine months ago, we received a letter from St. Stephen's Community Church and the letter said, 'Our church has voted to give Gateway Rescue Mission \$10 a month. Our church is made up primarily of gays and lesbians. We believe you are helping the people of our community, as well as others.'"

After receiving the letter, Hopkins presented it to the organization's board of directors. "For several months we spent much time considering the overall situation. After much prayer and consideration, the board decided that it would not be fair to them for us to receive their funds when the Bible is the textbook for our rehabilitation program. The Bible, our textbook, teaches against their way of life



"The Bible, our textbook, teaches against their way of life — homosexuality."

— David Hopkins

— homosexuality."

The board of directors returned the \$70 St. Stephen's contributed to the mission.

"Since the Bible, with clarity, teaches that homosexuality is not only sin, but a sin which the first chapter of Romans teaches is wholly against God's direct command, Gateway Rescue Mission is careful to not receive certain funds that might restrict us from teaching and preaching the whole gospel," said Hopkins.

"It is regrettable when one's biblical principles serve to promote prejudice, bias, bigotry and discrimination against any group of human beings," said William A. Flint of Jackson, general superintendent of the United Community Church of America.

"The human factor in our country is

"It is regrettable when one's biblical principles serve to promote prejudice, bias, bigotry and discrimination against any group of human beings."

— William A. Flint

volatile," he said. "The great strides for civil and human rights and justices of the 1960s are in jeopardy of being reversed in the 1990s.

Hopkins said Gateway's board of directors loves homosexuals, just as it does other people. He said anyone is welcome to walk through the doors of the mission.

"We provide service to anyone who needs it, regardless of their beliefs," he said. "However, we stand firm to teach and preach that homosexuality is a sin."

Flint said St. Stephen's has both gay and non-gay members. He said it was the non-gay members' decision to donate to Gateway.

"I'm quite sure Gateway receives contributions from other churches that have gay and non-gay members," said Flint. "When you have got your hand out asking, don't bite the hand that's feeding you. He that is without sin, cast the first stone."

"Satan thought he had a victory when Christ was crucified and he rejoiced," said Hopkins. "In all actuality, what Satan thought was his victory was his defeat.

"Likewise the enemy has tried to use this incident with the St. Stephen's Community Church of America to hinder God's work at Gateway Rescue Mission," he said. "He will soon find out, as Satan found out. It won't be his victory, but our victory. Gateway Rescue Mission is the Lord's work, not ours."



"For all things
come from thee,
and of thy own
have we given
thee."

"But as for thee (Moses), stand here by Me, and I will speak unto you all the commandments and the statutes and the ordinances which you shall teach them, that they may DO THEM IN THE LAND which I give them to possess."
-Deuteronomy 5:31. (Caps, mine LF)

These commandments (not the 10), statutes and ordinances were for the Israelites within the "fences" of the land that God gave them to inhabit. Thus the "fence laws". These laws are found recorded beginning with chapter 21 of Exodus and the 1st verse. "Now these are the ordinances which you (Moses) shall set before them" and on it goes thru the remainder of Exodus and on thru Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. They were all merciless do's and don'ts. We will deal with the Ten Commandments at a later time. Even though we can't live up to them, they serve God's purpose in our lives; even today.

The ordinance with which crossdressers (CD's) are concerned is the one that is found in Deu, 22:5. This is the ordinance that states that a woman shall not wear the garments of a man nor shall a man wear the garments of a woman and those who do are an abomination to God

St Paul, in 2 places in the Bible, deals with these ordinances.

Ephesians 2:15. In a discourse of the bonding of Jew and Gentile and them becoming one in Christ, St. Paul wrote--"Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of the commandments contained in the ordinances--"

Christ, in His atoning death, has forgiven us of all of our transgressions. Colossians 2:13. Col. 2:14 reads, "--Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." Unquote. . If you can picture Deu.22:5 nailed to the cross then you have the picture.

I am having a hard time not straying into side issues but space is limited and ordinances are the subject and I'll keep with that.

The ordinance in Deu. 22:5 is no longer applicable in the light of Christ's victory in His death and resurrection. If we, as Christians are going to have the fullness and freedom of that victory, we have to, —

STOP DISCRIMINATING AGAINST OURSELVES.

Like it or not, we are male chauvinists. We discriminate against that woman in us, our second self. At times we give away, throw away on burn all of her vestiture. We say to her, "That's it, babe. You're history!" and she goes. Never underestimate the power of a (our) woman. She's a fighter and she comes back in all of her splendor and glory. So then we go into rank denial.. She just stands there and taps her foot--waiting for you as she knows that you'll be with her shortly. When you finally do join her you let her know that no one else can know about her. She's a second class citizen when all of the time she is the best part of you and she knows it. You start condemning yourself. Guilt builds up. You try to compromise with her. If she will just go and come at your bidding everything will be alright. She wont cooperate. You see how we discriminate against ourselves. The foregoing is my own personal observations from my own life. That's the way that I was..

I thought that God put Deu. 22:5 in His Bible just for me. It tortured me for years. I was allowing something dead to flog me. That's why I am so intent on clearing this matter up. And, perhaps, overzealous in doing it. I well know the necessity of secrecy in our lives but I am speaking of being free in the sense we recognize the woman in us and not allow her to throw us into a bad guilt trip. The way out of that is in the bringing of Jesus Christ into your life and both of you resting in Him and knowing that it was for the sin that we were born in that Christ died and so that that original state of sin could never stain our souls again, He rose in triumphant victory.

If you think that crossdressing is "a" sin, forget it. How I'd love to write a book on that. CD's crucifying themselves because of what they think (and have been led to believe by spiritual leaders) is "the sin" of CDing! I have believed that way. God in Christ is concerned with our soul. Whether that soul wears a dress or pants is not the issue. Never has been* and never will be. God neither approves or disapproves of CDing. It's just not the issue. If it was, then Deu. 22:5 would still be in operation. The issue is DEAD!!!! NOW!! Let's get on with our lives and stop condemning ourselves and feeling guilty everytime we put on a skirt.

I've said all that I am going to say on the subject. I only hope that this has helped one person at least. I am not seeking anyone's approval. I put these out in our Beta Chi Journal for what they are worth. I have been strongly advised by a Christian Pastor to "watch what I say and NEVER give an indication or imply that God approves of Crossdressing" As I have said above. It simply isn't the issue. I have a soul. You have a soul. My soul is hid with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:3) And that God approves of!!

In crossdressers, I have met a most elegant and beautiful minority of our social structure in this world. Crossdressers are the elite of the male society. My love for our Community is impaled, pierced through my heart and is compounded by God's love in me. I Corinthians Chapter 13.

I hope to set forth some scripture that I'm now studying about God knowing every breath we take--knowing the number of the hairs on our head and knowing every fiber of our being. I believe that I was born a CD. I had no choice in the matter. I'm glad that God made me the way He did. He makes NO mistakes. I escaped becoming a macho man. Dr. Peggy Rudd says on page 83 of her book, "(What these wives should realize is that) the CD has a love for womanhood and not a love of manhood and men." Read Pages 66-67-68 as she addresses the subject, "is Crossdressing Morally Wrong?" She says it all in those pages and it will take me the next 10 years to say the same thing!

Grace and Love is from my crossdressers soul's eye. I will be glad to print your comments, both positive and negative. Trust me.

Other upcoming subjects. "The Church's Relation to the CD" "The Ten Commandments and Crossdressers" and countless others.

LET God bless you. Don't keep Him at an arm's length. Embrace Him just as you are. He loves you so why not return that Love.

Always be assured of my Love and prayers.

* In This New Covenant ushered in by Jesus Christ's ² ~~movement~~

Lee Frances, August 30, 1989

P. O. Box 31253
Jackson, MS 39286-1253