

# THE SEMINARIAN

The Student Paper of the Lancaster Theological Seminary

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Issue 9

## Editorial

"When it comes to praise for other people's work, writers are usually a miserly group and even when we grudgingly concede that we like something, most of the time we are thinking in our hearts, "But, I could have done it better." Erich Segal

Think about that quote of writer Erich Segal. It certainly is not a very flattering description of writers or their egos is it. Yet, I fear that if one were to remove the word "writer" and replace it with the "minister", the full truth of the quote would remain.

Why is it that we find it so very difficult to praise the efforts of our Christian brothers and sisters. Why must we spend so much time comparing our efforts and results to those of others. Why do we so often seek to raise ourselves by lowering others.

These are not pleasant questions to think about. I know they bother me because I see myself in them. I know how I tend to evaluate sermons or services in light of "how I would have done them." I know how I sometimes feel that -- but for an unfortunate lack of title -- my vast experience as a student pastor for a few years should qualify me to be a bishop, or at the very least, a full professor. The only areas I feel completely free not to compare, and always are quick to<sup>th</sup> praise, are music and art in which I have absolutely no gifts.

As I thought about these things, some verses from Paul's writings came to my mind. At times they seem like they were written just for me: "I have used Appolis and myself as examples to illustrate what I have been saying, that you must not have favorites. You must not be proud of one of God's teachers more than another. What are you puffed up about. What do you have that God hasn't given you. And,<sup>th</sup> if all you have is from God, why act as though you are so great, and as though you have accomplished something on your own.

(I Cor. 4:6-7 L.B.)

## OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY

by Bob Patterson

LTS and the Spanish Assembly of God Church on S. Duke St. are in the preliminary phase of developing a program to mutually benefit both the seminary and the members of this local congregation. The Spanish Assembly of God Church in Lancaster is a dynamic Christian fellowship, beginning 15 years ago with just 7 members. Ten years ago, they built and moved into their present building with a membership of just over 100 and a Church School enrollment of 100. The ten-year old sanctuary seats 1,200 worshippers. In 1984, there are 800 members and 900 enrolled in the Church School program. Their pastor, the Rev. Pablo Figueroa, is planning on continuing his education at LTS in the near future.

The church supports the local community by providing an extensive array of educational, social and mission programs. Included are a girls program on Thursday evenings, a boys program on Saturday morning and youth meetings on Friday evenings.

If you are interested in working with us in building meaningful ties between our seminary and the local Spanish community, there are several options available to you. You may volunteer to work with one or more of the youth groups listed above, or you may choose to establish a "big brother/sister" relationship with a 13-15 year old church member. Either chance affords the opportunities to develop a greater understanding of this increasingly vital segment of our communities.

If you are interested, we can get you started on this challenging project at once. Please contact me or Fran Ringer for more information.

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## A LETTER TO ALL:

The situation in Nicaragua is extremely critical at this time. The Nicaraguan economy which depends heavily on only a few agricultural exports has been under increasing attack from CIA-backed counterrevolutionaries. Several hundred million dollars worth of damage has already resulted from attacks such as the one against the vital oil storage facilities at the port of Corinto last October.

Nicaragua needs a successful coffee harvest to be able to purchase basic foodstuffs, medicines, spare parts for industry and transportation, and oil. Because of the urgent political and military situation, many Nicaraguans have been mobilized in the defense of their country and cannot participate in the December-February coffee harvest this year.

That is why I have chosen to respond to Nicaragua's call for international work brigades to ensure a successful coffee harvest.

In the United States, the National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People (NNSNP) is working to coordinate volunteer participation. U.S. citizens have a particular role to play in this harvest, because if it were not for our own government's attempts to overthrow the government of Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan people would be free to develop their own political life and their own economy in peace.

By participating in the volunteer coffee harvest, I hope to show that as an American citizen, I stand with the people of Nicaragua in their moment of need and that I oppose the policies of the Reagan administration. I urge others who hold similar beliefs to write to write to NNSNP, 2025 "I" St. NW, Suite 402, Wash., DC 20006, for further information on how to help the people of Nicaragua and to make donations. The time has come to give Central America back to its people!

Sincerely, David L. Wiltsie

## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT SURVEY RESULTS

by Bill Beck

The results of the survey on spiritual development at LTS have been tabulated and are presented here for your edification. A total of 40 surveys were returned with 30 respondents being full-time students and 10 part-time. The respondents were almost equally split between commuters (19) and non-commuters (21). I am not quite sure what to make of the class standing of the respondents. There were 10 Juniors, 8 Middlers, 21 Seniors, and 1 student on leave who responded. On a percentage basis it is apparent that we enter seminary with a high level of interest which then wanes before it peaks again as we are ready to leave these hallowed halls. If you see something different in these figures, please let me know your interpretation.

Five understandings of spirituality were offered on the survey and we were asked to rank them according to our own understanding of the subject. The ranking produced from your responses is as follows:

- \* Spirituality is associated with-relationship to the Ultimate.
- \* personal growth toward wholeness.
- \* social concern.
- \* religious practice.
- \* mystical experience.

We were next asked, "What opportunities for spiritual development are you aware of at LTS?" Although many of the more obvious opportunities were mentioned, for example: chapel, certain courses, Wednesday evening devotions, etc., many people see spiritual formation in unique and varied places. The multitude and variety of answers offered makes me believe that spirituality can be a highly individualized subject.

The next question asked, "What additional opportunities would you avail yourself of if offered?" The responses here were even more numerous and varied than for the previous question. I hesitate to list

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some suggestions as best but, for the sake of illustration, I will share some of the perceived needs. Evening chapel and/or prayer services. More frequent Communion. Retreat opportunities. More courses on spiritual development. More Bible study. Etc., Etc. The point I would like to make is that some of you have some great ideas! Why don't you do something about them? Don't wait for "George" to do it. I believe that you have some real contributions to make.

In response to the question, "Are chapel services an integral part of spiritual development?", 25 answered yes; 11 no, 2 maybe, and, presumably, 2 are still trying to figure out when and where we have chapel services.

Those who responded in the affirmative to that question were asked to check each of a list of five ways that are appropriate to their participation in chapel. The three front-running answers were 1) Because I am able to enter into worship there, 2) Because I am able to get in touch with myself and Christ, and 3) Because I sense community there.

The last question was "Do you think there should be a required course in spiritual development for future seminarians?" 18 responded yes and 11 no. I wonder if those 18 are not the bulk of the 21 seniors who responded to the survey?

In any case, thank you all for your interest and thoughtful response.

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# Scenes from L.T.S.' first catalog

found buried in the Archives and brought to light by L.N. Bakalian

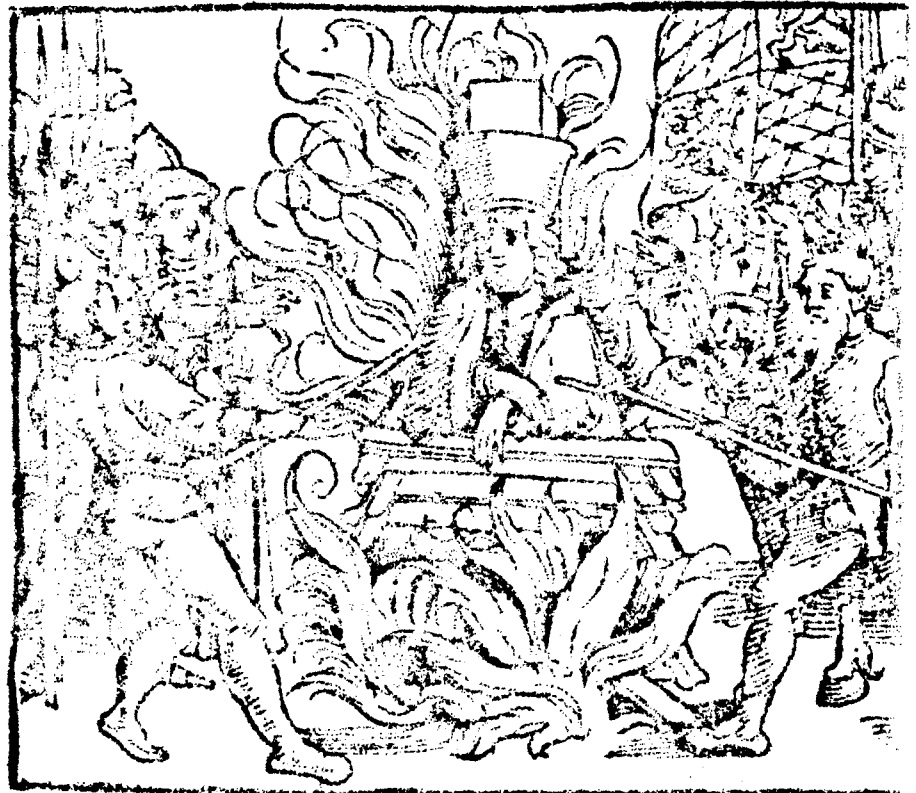
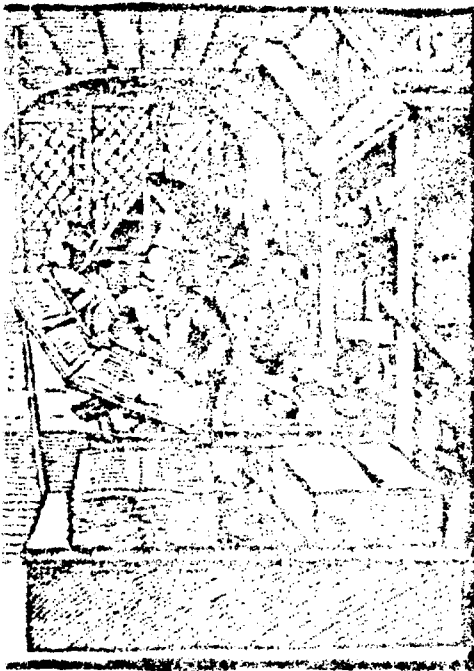


Not only will you meet the academic challenges of mastering Greek, Latin, German, Hebrew, but you will also acquire practical skills.



↑ You will enjoy the bucolic setting of our campus, as well as socializing with fellow seminarians on our beautiful quadrangle.

← Our staff is happy to assist you with your housing, board, and parking concerns.



Our ultimate purpose here at the seminary is to prepare you to enter the exciting and rewarding world of pastoral ministry.

## RESPONSE

by Bill Beck

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At a time when issues involving homosexuals confront us at every turn—in the newspapers, on television, at public meetings, at the seminaries, and in the church—I believe that there is a need for Christians to look at the issues raised and at the people involved as Jesus would view them.

In the Gospel of John, the eighth chapter, the story is recorded of the confrontation between Jesus and a self-righteous crowd about to stone a woman for her sin of adultery. Jesus humiliated the crowd with the words, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." (RSV)

Much less attention, however, is given to the Lord's following words to the woman, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again." (RSV)

Christ's attitude toward all sinners is exemplified by this story: tenderness toward the sinner, a rebuke to the self-righteous sinners who judge and condemn, a command to repent which points toward liberation.

From my statements so far you might guess that I consider the act of homosexuality to be a sin, and I do. I have reached this conclusion more from a gut reaction, an undefinable feeling perhaps fostered by the creation narratives and the "natural" order of things. Yes, I have looked at the texts usually held up as a defense against homosexuality. These include Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:26-27; and I Corinthians 6:9-10. I must agree with Dale that these scriptures have sometimes been misused, prooftexting at its best (worst?).

While acknowledging my belief in the sinfulness of homosexuality

I must also state the realization that we "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23 (RSV) In acknowledging my and our sinful natures, I feel that it is also necessary to acknowledge the sinfulness of those within the Christian fellowship who are guilty of the sin of "homophobia"—a fear and hatred of homosexuals. If we take seriously the command in John 15:12 "that you love one another as I have loved you," then such a serious failure to love as is "homophobia" is also a sin in God's eyes. If we are part of the stone-throwing crowd we too must heed Christ's call to "go, and do not sin again."

I applaud Dale's vision of the preaching of the Gospel. It does need to be preached, but even more so, it needs to be lived daily. I sensed a great deal of anger, frustration, and fear in Dale's responses. I was quite frankly appalled at his connection of violence and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. This man, hung by the Nazis in April 1945, is described by others on a tablet in the church at Flossenburg with this epitaph, "Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a witness of Jesus Christ among his brethren."

I would urge each of us to prayerfully seek the will of God in dealing with these issues. Name and acknowledge the unreasonable fears and hatreds that exist on both sides and resolve that you will be guided by love and through the example of Jesus Christ. As Dale stated, "We are called to be an ever active witness and also an ever quiet presence."

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THE STRUGGLE

by Secretary Belgium N. Baxter

His fate seemed black and still unknown when Isaac's son was left alone.  
 Afraid because of Esau's wrath unhappiness had blocked his path.  
 He knew that Esau sought his life for he obeyed his father's wife  
 And stole his brother's rights from him because his father's eyes were dim.

His conscience now condemned his soul. He could not face his brother whole,  
 Whose might was now four hundred strong to seek revenge for Jacob's wrong.  
 And Jacob could not be at ease for Esau would not be appeased.  
 He knew he needed God support 'lest Esau's might should cut him short.

While Jacob pondered o'er his plan there stood a 'super human' man  
 Who hailed from Great Jehovah's throne to help this man who stood alone.  
 He didn't seem to be so odd but Jacob knew he came from God  
 For much too soon he came to view and there he stood so strong and true.

With Heaven's blessing as his aim Son Jacob leaped upon his frame.  
 And down they tumbled to the earth to struggle for a Nation's birth.  
 No one was there to cheer him on when strength and hope seemed almost gone.  
 No bells to ring to give him rest but Jacob knew this was his test.

The Angel's strength came from the sky and mortal could not qualify.  
 But Jacob's strength came from his prayer. He prayed when he was in despair,  
 For even from his mother's womb the might of Esau was consumed  
 For Jacob took his brother's heel and with great strength made Esau yield.

The battle lasted through the night and even 'til the morning light.  
 But Jacob still maintained his ground and kept the super-human down.  
 "Let me go!" the Angel cried "Daylight is breaking on this side!"  
 But Jacob cried; "I'll cling to thee until thou bless and set me free".

When Jacob clung to his reply the Angel halted on his thigh,  
 And though his hip was out of joint he held him fast to prove his point.  
 "Let me go, my time is short, I must go back to make report".  
 But Jacob cried; "I made a vow, I'll hold you 'til you bless me now".

He changed his name and blessed him there and raised him from a great despair.  
 He named him Israel for his deed, that God might multiply his seed.  
 Remember, in this Holy way, no matter what the people say;  
 When strength is low and hope most gone you'll conquer just by 'holding on'.

(submitted by Christopher Jones)

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What?	GODSPELL!
Who?	The Beech Tree Spiritual Players
Where?	Lampeter-Strasburg High School
When?	April 7, 1984 at 7:30 p.m.
Why?	To help Contact—Lancaster raise part of the \$30,000 it needs to continue operating this year.

Individual tickets cost \$5.00 and may be purchased through Kathy Hengst, 285-4601. Tickets will be \$6.50 at the door.

If we can get a group (10 or more) of students, faculty, and staff to go, then we can get tickets for \$4.00. If you are interested, please put a note in my mailbox or call me at 393-1150.

Thank you for your support of Contact—Lancaster.

Jayne-Marie Dayer