

# Reflections

by Alta Nye Oxendine

## NEW NOTES

With a few exceptions, I always consider what I write as a "work in progress." I've just realized that if I make this clear to my readers, maybe I can just plan to go ahead and share notes I've been working on, rather than waiting to do a good job of writing them up, as my thoughts and research grow. Here are some revised, some still unfinished notes I've been "jotting down" on the computer this week:

### PEOPLE VOTING IN IRAQ

On Tuesday, February 1, I realized that I had not thanked God for the election turnout in Iraq. I believe God is the Maker of our earth, the Creator of the entire world! I believe that He desires the very best for each individual, family, and nation throughout this earth. It was surely a time to stop and give thanks for the encouraging election turnout that Sunday, and what it can (hopefully) mean to the people of Iraq! In the 1960s, when I met our friend "Mike" and learned he was from Baghdad, I was thrilled. That place had always seemed so far away, that I had thought of it as a mythical city.

That first essential step that the Iraqi people have taken reminds me of another essential step—the time you or I choose to accept Jesus' forgiveness and salvation, and become a new Christian. Without that necessary first step, none of us is able to live out the kind of life Jesus taught, and lived, while he was here in this world.

On that same Tuesday Chuck Swindoll pointed out, on his "Insight for Living" radio broadcast, that Jesus' last instruction to his followers (for those of us in the present as well as for that time) was: to make disciples of all people everywhere throughout the earth (Matthew 28). In Acts 1:8 we find Jesus' promise that (after his departure to return to his Father) his followers would be empowered (by the Holy Spirit) to become his witnesses in their own community, country, and throughout the entire world!

None of us can do this on our own, without first making that often difficult choice to give up everything else (if necessary) in order to focus our own life on following Jesus, and living out his kind of lifestyle!

### THOSE BRAVE IRAQIS

Braving the wrath of the insurgents as they walked to the voting places that Sunday, and casting their own ballots, was just the first step toward building a new, freer Iraq. But that was a very necessary first step!

### WHY I CALL MYSELF A CHRISTIAN

Notes to be written out later: 1. "bug science" class—2. class comparing religions of the world—proving that Christianity goes farther, both objectively & subjectively—3. sociology class—the amazing effectiveness of the friendly, subtle approach my beloved first major professor had in nearly destroying my faith in God—(learning years later that he was "an avowed member of the CPUSA")—4. later recalling what we students discovered about the many values of Christianity in the process of making our charts, comparing the "religions of the world"

However, I care deeply about every person, no matter what their religion, or whether they have even taken time to think about religion. I do not want to act superior, or in any way put other people down, even though I am truly happy with the choice I have made!

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## THE MASTER PUZZLE-SOLVER

The other day I got to thinking. Our daily life, here in this world, is made up of all kinds of PUZZLES—mental, physical, emotional, psychological, moral, spiritual.

Most of the time most of us call these puzzles PROBLEMS. To be honest, if we think of them as problems, they can knock us down, literally as well as figuratively!! They can keep us buried in worry, in our personal "slough of despond."

But, as Brother Bob Mangum and others have pointed out, each and every problem is really an opportunity!! Besides using the Bible as a Guidebook, we who are sincere in following Jesus have SOMEONE who can give us both a POSITIVE ATTITUDE and daily CLUES to use toward solving each of the "PUZZLES" in our lives.

### TRUTH

For most of my first half century, I attempted to seek and then share ETERNAL truth. However, for most of the past two decades I have been attempting to seek, and then share, TEMPORAL truth, as well.

The Bible tells us to be as harmless as doves, but as wise as serpents. Surely that means we need to become aware of false prophets and false teachings, including some people in a leadership position and much of our media.

However, I have come to believe that most of the people who are spreading falsehoods (at least in our part of the world) are sincere in believing they are telling us the truth. In fact, all of us likely operate on misinformation more than we realize. I am still urging the rest of you to join me on my "treasure hunt" for the REAL truth concerning our temporal world, something I was prodded into over 17 years ago.

You will likely not be able to spend as much time studying both sides of each issue as I have been attempting to do, all these years. But you can try to make sure not to jump to the conclusion that what you are seeing or hearing is always "the God's TRUTH"—unless you can find it in the Bible.

Some of us are hoping to get together to study and pray about international problems (including communism) that continue to impact our own country and our current culture in subtle ways that are mostly hidden behind the scenes. If you are interested, let me know.

## Philippines Mission Trip

A medical ministry team is being formed now for a Feb. 24 - March 10, 2005 mission trip to Aurora, Philippines. The need for used eye glasses is great and we are asking churches to begin collecting old eyeglasses for distribution on this trip. If you have donations of eyeglasses, please drop them off at the Baptist Building or at the Pembroke Optometric Clinic at 204 Union Chapel Rd. in Pembroke.

## Diabetes Health Conference

Date: April 29, 2005

Quality Inn & Suites: 3608 Kahn Drive  
Lumberton, NC 28358; (910) 738-8261

American Indian lay health advisors as well as those who are involved in diabetes education within the American Indian communities are encouraged to attend this event. The themes of the conference will be educating yourself and others about the physiology of diabetes, and the proper management of diabetes, including proper foot care associated with healthy lifestyle practices for those with the disease. No registration fee required. For more information about this event, contact Missy Brayboy, Director of Community Services at (919) 733-5998 or Quae at the Baptist Bldg., (910) 521-9850.

# Pediatric Pointers

by Dr. Joey Bell, Pembroke Pediatrics

You are bound to get conflicting advice about toilet training from friends, relatives, and experts. Despite what you have heard or the podding you may feel from well-intentioned relatives, the general rule to remember is: The later you initiate toilet training the more quickly the deed will be accomplished. Of course, all rules have exceptions, but children who are trained too early tend to have more accidents. For the parents, here are some general facts that may help you make your own decision about when is the best time to toilet train your child: 1) Children begin to gain some control of the sphincter muscle at around nine months of age. 2) Most children have not developed the connection between brain and body to control elimination before the age of one. Simple awareness of the urge to eliminate must come prior to control. 3) Some experts believe that children will train themselves when they are ready. This appears true of some toddlers who have older siblings. In general, though most children are ready to be trained between the ages of two and three years. They have adequate language and motor skills to proceed with success at this time. 4) The order of development usually follows this pattern: nighttime bowel control, daytime bowel control, daytime bladder control and then nighttime bladder control. Girls usually develop control before boys. 5) Toilet training should not traumatize a child for life unless you are unduly harsh and negative. If a child has readiness skills necessary to learn and you take a positive approach to this milestone, all should go well.

In order to initiate toilet training, you should teach your child the necessary readiness skills to accomplish such a task. The child should be able to identify various body parts, including where urine and bowel movements come from. You should use the names of body parts when you talk with your child, letting him/her watch you go to the bathroom and identify the action. Designate words for elimination, such as potty or poopy. Your child should be able to tell you when his is dry or wet and identify if he is soiled. If he does, respond quickly and praise him for telling you. The ability to discriminate between wet and dry or dirty and clean is crucial. Your child should also be able to follow simple instructions, such as flushing the toilet. The child should willingly follow simple directions and should be praised for following them. For coordination and dexterity, your child should be able to walk or run to the bathroom and be able to pull up and down clothing. You should select loose-fitting pants with elasticized waists, practicing to pull them up or down and praise for accomplishing the task. Wait until your young child has long periods between wetting before initiating training. Be patient because children mature at different rates. If your child is afraid of the toilet, overcome that fear before beginning toilet training. Let him practice flushing the toilet. Let him dump his own bowel movements in the toilet, but reassure him that he will not go down the toilet. Explain to your child that urine and bowel movements are made from the parts of what he eats and drinks that his body does not need.

There are several approaches that you can take to begin toilet training. Keep these points in mind: Be enthusiastic. Be positive. Select a child-size potty, potty seat or step-up potty. You may choose the no-pressure method if you don't care when your child gets trained; eventually, a child will train himself. Twice-a-day training is a more direct gradual approach that may take several months. It elicits the use of praise and reward with trinkets or stickers when the child uses the toilet. One-day training is an intensive approach for children with the appropriate readiness skills. It is a day of modeling training, and then practicing toilet skills with your child. A one-week approach is a positive approach that speeds the learning process, but does so within a reasonable time span. With all of these approaches, don't go back. Stick with it and don't overreact should your child occasionally have an accident. Continue to make her feel good about the progress. After following most of the advice given in this article, your child should be successfully trained before long. However, should repeated accidents persist, consult your child's physician.

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