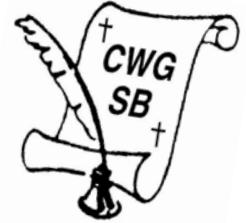


WRITER'S VOICE !



"...I recite my composition concerning the king; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer." Psalms 45:1 (NKJV)

Winter 2009

Volume 5, Issue 1

From the Editor ...

Greetings in the mighty name of **Jesus**.

Glory to God, we announced there would be major changes in 2009 and this newsletter coming to you electronically is certainly a major change for us. We pray this new delivery system works well for all of you. It is our hope that no one falls through the cracks during this change. Please help us spread the word and remind those writers around you to send us their Email address. Thank You.

Katie Cushman's newest book *Waiting for Daybreak* can now be purchased at Wal-Mart. Congratulations Katie for a job well done. It's one thing to write and quite another to get our writings in the marketplace.

Dirt. How's that for a hook? Once again Cory Abele shows us how she sees the world around her through the eyes of scripture. I am sure you'll find it a blessing.

We welcome Debra Keal to our line-up of writers. Her article *A Reason To Write* gives us a practical example of how to share the love of Jesus Christ to those around us by sharing our stories.

Our mission statement is to educate, encourage, and inspire Christian writers, that they may help fulfill the Great Commission to spread the Good News that Jesus is Lord throughout the earth.

Happy Easter To All.

Opal Mae Dailey
Editor-In-Chief



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Calendar . . .

CWGSB Monthly Meeting:

2nd Thursday
12:00 p.m.
IHOP Restaurant
1701 State Street
Santa Barbara, CA

May 1-2, 2009: Antelope Valley
Christian Writers Conference
www.avwriters.com

May 2, 2009: Orange County
Christian Writers Fellowship
Spring Writer's Day
www.occfw.org

September 26-27, 2009: San Diego
CWG Fall Conference
www.sandiegocwg.org

October 2009: 13th Annual Santa
Barbara Christian Writers Confer-
ence at Westmont College:
cwgsb@sbcglobal.net
(805) 682-0316

Dirt . . .

Corrinne Abele

Wow, it's barren out here. We drove our motor-home down a dusty road trying to keep the tires in the ruts that others had previously prepared. Finally, we found a spot that we would call home for the next few days.

Looking out the front windows of the motorhome at the expanse of brilliant blue sky and shadows resting on the rust-colored mountains in the distance, my heart stirs as I think of my God Who made all of this. Slowly my gaze shifts downward and closer to our RV site. The ground here is so very hard and dry. In places the ground is so parched it's even cracked apart. Other areas of this desert floor are completely covered with rock.

And yet, southwest Arizona has a peculiar beauty all its own. It draws me into itself as I unwind and focus on its stillness. On this day there is no sound, no wind, no movement of any sort. No people, no birds, nothing, just dirt, rocks and a few half-starved, scrawny thorn bushes and some cactus trying to survive. It's amazing to me that anything could possibly grow here.

Let's look at some other kinds of dirt, dirt that has ears. You didn't know that dirt can hear? Jesus told a parable about four different kinds of dirt in Matthew 13, Mark 4 and Luke 8. The wayside dirt, or the ground used for many to travel on; the stony dirt; the thorny-bush dirt; and last, the good fertile dirt. These are used to describe the heart and soul of mankind. Every person alive who has heard about the seed can be identified here. How important is that? Well, Jesus said if we don't get this parable, we won't understand any of the others.

He describes a farmer who came along sowing seed. When the seed landed on the compacted pathway, how could it possibly penetrate the surface? Have you ever seen a tree grow up in the fast lane of the freeway? That seed on the wayside dirt had to remain on top, which left it vulnerable to the birds that came and devoured it. No seed, no crop.

Next we have ground that is covered with stones. The seed sown there was able to penetrate, but just the surface. So many hindrances surrounded

this seed. Since there was no depth of earth, it could not root. Immediately the seed burst forth, springing upward. But when the sun arose it was horribly scorched, because it had not developed a root system. No roots, no water!

Some more seed fell among thorny bushes. That seed penetrated the ground and grew some roots, but as it struggled to grow up, the thorns suffocated and finally choked the seed.

But some seed fell on good fertile dirt. It penetrated the irrigated ground and over time grew a crop that produced a healthy, bountiful harvest. Out of the four kinds of ground, this is the only dirt that was productive and fruitful, sometimes bringing in a hundredfold return for the farmer.

The same seed fell on all four kinds of dirt. This special seed is called the Word of God. It is the same yesterday, today, and forever. It is alive. It is incorruptible, lives and abides forever, and can produce a new creation. The same seed that produced in the fertile ground was unproductive in the other types of ground.

Let's look at the problem. The heart of man is exceedingly wicked without God. It believes it can produce fruit on its own. It values and treasures things that have no value and are but a vapor in the span of eternity.

Four different kinds of hearts are revealed by the Master. The heart is the ground which the Word of God was trying to penetrate. Each ground had ears that heard God's Word. I told you dirt has ears!

Those called "the pathway ground" heard the Word, but since they had no understanding of what was being said, the devil came and stole it out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. The "stony ground" heard and received the Word with great joy, but that joy was temporary because they were not rooted. They could not hold on and soon yielded to temptation and fell away. Where did they go? They went back into the world's system of vain and fruitless endeavors. Seed growing amidst "thorny ground" could never produce anything of eternal value because this heart is consumed daily with the cares and worries of their families and circumstances of this world. Some in this group even believe they exist

to seek after things they think really matter, like money. But Jesus called this “the deceitfulness of riches.”

So what’s different about good dirt? They are those, who having heard, recognize the truth and with a willing and good heart become rooted and grounded, more and more each day. They bear fruit with patience. They hear the Word of God, putting the highest value on it: they accept it and do what it says. They put God’s Word first place in their lives no matter what else is going on around them. You see, when this ground heard the good news of God’s love, they embraced Him and received the true reason for living. Nothing else in their lives is more important.

It has been said that in the seed of an apple is an apple tree. That seed held in your hand can produce nothing. It needs to be planted, watered, and nourished. The seed has within itself the ability to reproduce itself, as it grows roots deep in the ground and grows up to become a healthy tree with branches and fruit. One tiny seed can produce an abundant harvest of apples over its lifetime.

God’s Word has within itself the ability to reproduce but first must be planted in the heart of that good fertile ground and be watered and nourished. There are four different kinds of people in the parable. Which one are you? How’s your heart?

Evidently what God calls fruit and what the world calls fruit is not the same. How can we apply this teaching of Jesus to our call to write? As a Christian writer, is your work producing everlasting fruit that is building up God’s Kingdom? Let’s be more fervent and determined to be that rich fertile soil that will produce a hundredfold harvest for the FARMER!

After all, what do you think you were born for?

Corrinne Abele is the author of the devotional *Who Am I?* which can be purchased from her website www.healingstreet.com, along with the companion *Study Guide* and mini-book of *Scripture Sayings*. You may also reach her via email: books@healingstreet.com.

COMING SOON!

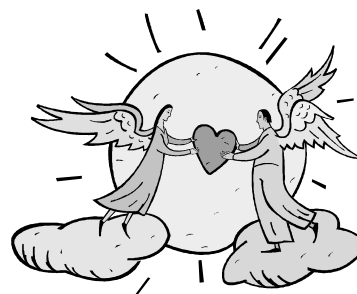
13th annual Santa Barbara Christian Writer's Conference

Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bone.

Proverb 16:24

We don't have a set date yet but it will be in October 2009.

Watch for the date and other information in your Email and on our new website www.CWGSB.com that is currently under construction.



IN OUR MEMORY

Our beloved mentor and advisor, Sherwood "Woody" Wirt, gave up his dual citizenship, moving off to Heaven for eternity with Jesus.

He will be greatly missed here but we will all join him in the future. Our mansions are waiting for us, he's just enjoying his a little sooner.

I'm sure by the time we arrive there, Woody will have already scaled and explored all the mountains in Heaven. How he loved mountain climbing well into his nineties.

His wife, Ruth, is doing well and sends her love.

OH, the wonders of our Salvation in Christ Jesus.

A Reason To Write . . .

Debra Keal

As you have written over time, what have been your most memorable moments? Was it the process of writing? Was it perhaps the reaction of the reader? For me, it has been a combination.

My journals filled with poems, short stories, words from the Lord, sermons, and bible studies have all been a delight to write and a greater joy to share, as I watch God use them for good in people's lives. Whether published or not, our writing is such a labor of love that can keep on giving long after we are gone and hopefully bring the reader into a remembrance of what first moved their heart.

Following is a story that I have used to encourage incarcerated women in the Santa Barbara County Jail. Use it for yourself or tuck it away for a hurting soul who needs to hear a message of hope.

A quaint store rests on the corner of the stone-paved street. Porcelain dolls stare into the darkness and teddy bears dare not move. Grandma's old cupboard is there. A washed tea pot rests upon the lace-covered table ready for yet another day of sipping gossips. Subtle scents of lavender and rose intrude upon the silence. The day is weary and only a few who pass by admire the unique objects displayed in the window.

In the eve of the day, dusk tucks itself quietly under gray clouds. Street lights line a now quiet market, their softened glow providing a dim path for the few whose footsteps echo on. It is chilly indeed and seems a lonely place at this time of day.

A neck is tucked tightly under an upturned collar. A quiet conversation can be heard. Some walk alone; some hurry; others stroll with all the time in the world. Then there are those who partner with the shadows of the night so as to see rather than be seen.

An open door of welcome awaits many, while some would rather be anywhere than where they are going. Who or what awaits them? Only they can tell the story well. Not many of any give them much thought.

Remember the store on the corner with the window full of lovely things, the fragile kind that say, "No touch?" One day a sparkling red crystal heart

took center stage. Gently lifting the delicate piece from the velvet-lined silver box, I imagined the artist an extension of the Potter's hand, blowing His breath into the liquid glass to create this unique sensation.

Suddenly a vision flooded my mind. Kneeling on the floor near her kitchen table was a woman in a red dress, mottled hair covering her tear-filled eyes, frantic as she tried desperately to collect the pieces of her broken heart. Fragments were strewn everywhere just as if a heart of glass had been carelessly dropped.

Worse yet was that some of the pieces lay mixed with her husband's heart. The love of her youth, her companion of twenty years, had left and paid no attention to that left behind. Even if he had bothered, neither could have returned the part they had taken.

She laid what she could on the table again and again, remembering the unkind words, the broken promises, the lies, the shame, and so many other painful experiences that now represent her shattered heart. Such a chore it was as anger grew and desperate hopelessness replaced their dreams.

It had started as love. She trusted. He trusted. They vowed to protect each other's heart forever, to hold it gently, respectfully, and kindly. But the drama of life came and problems loomed. Commitment and perseverance waned from the intensity of the blast. So there lay a heap of shattered pieces of their hearts on the table. Indeed, a puzzle to top all puzzles!

Have you ever tried to be like all the kings' horses and all the kings' men? Or maybe you have something in common with Humpty Dumpty who took the great fall? No one could put him back together. Neither can we pick up the pieces of our broken hearts. It is a vain and fruitless endeavor.

So then what is to be done if we had what was something beautiful that now seems to be nothing? God said, "Look to My Son. He alone is the One strong and true. He alone is the One who walked the earth who will make your heart brand new."

From a simple letter to a published novel to teaching a child to write, God touches those He loves through His willing vessels. May you forever be blessed to bless others as he whispers to you.

Ask and Ye Shall Receive . . .

Opal Mae Dailey

There will be a new column starting in the next issue of *Writer's Voice!* written especially for you—but only if you participate.

Do you have a question about writing that you just can't find the answer for? Have you wondered about the proper use of the semi-colon versus the colon, or where you should put commas when you have a list?

Or maybe you have just finished an article but you don't know how to submit it for publication. Have you ever wondered where those ISBN numbers come from and how you get one for your book? Do you know what POD means in the publishing world and what it means for you?

These and many other questions are just waiting for you to ask our expert, the one who has all the answers or knows where to get them.

No question is too simple, dumb, or silly to ask. And if your question is really hard, we have George Bate, Professor Emeritus at Westmont College, to provide your answer.

I've noticed in classroom situations most people are afraid of sounding stupid or of embarrassing themselves, so many questions go unanswered. Then one brave soul will step out and ask the same question many in the group were afraid to ask, and all of a sudden everyone is speaking up and asking questions at the same time.

Your question will most likely mirror many questions that others have, but someone has to ask it. So, go ahead, ask your questions so that many will receive.

I'm watching and waiting for your emails.



WRITER'S VOICE !

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We welcome your input: ideas, suggestions and article submissions. Please use the addresses above.



Quotes . . .

What you want is practice, practice, practice. It doesn't matter what we write (at least this is my view) at our age, so long as we write continually as well as we can. I feel that every time I write a page either of prose or of verse, with real effort, even if it's thrown into the fire the next minute, I am so much further on. - C.S. Lewis, *Letters of C.S. Lewis to Arthur Greeves*

A writer is someone for whom writing is more difficult than it is for other people. - Thomas Mann