



# KOINONIA

Issue 3

Christian fellowship



All interviews conducted by Bob Paulus

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## Karen Leftwich: "To express yourself in music is a natural response to life."

Karen was raised in Richardson, Texas, a suburb of Dallas. After graduating from high school, she attended Texas A&M University and earned a Bachelors degree in Computer Science.

While employed as a software engineer in Richardson, she worked on satellite communication systems for the Navy and earned her Masters degree.

In 1985, Karen married Frank Leftwich who also attended Texas A&M. They eventually moved to Whitefish.

Karen explains, "Frank and I took vacations up the Rocky Mountain chain. Frank had a friend who advised us to come up and check out the Flathead Valley. We did and fell in love with it and bought property for retirement. Later, we decided to just *make the move*. We moved here in 1997."

I asked Karen what attracted her to FPC. She replied, "Mostly, it was the people we met here. But I also liked the location of the church right in town because it gives us the opportunity to be part of the town. I also liked the architecture of the building."

"I was raised in the Baptist Church. Frank was Episcopalian. When we got married, we wanted something that was half-way in between the two. I went to the public library and researched Presbyterianism to see if it would be a good compromise for us. We heard a Presbyterian pastor speak at a funeral for a friend of my family and were very impressed with him. We attended his Presbyterian church in Texas but didn't

become members so FPC in Whitefish is our first official Presbyterian church."

I asked Karen to talk about her musical background. She responded, "I took piano lessons in the 4th grade and continued with them through high school. That's how I learned to read music. In 5th grade, I started playing the saxophone. I played that all the way through high school and performed with the marching band. My church started a bell choir, so I got one year of experience with them before leaving for college. My vocal experience was with the children's and youth choirs at my church. I now sing in the Glacier Chorale."

Karen is the Music Director for FPC. About three years ago, she was asked if she would help with the choir. She explained, "Shortly before I took the position of director, I had just taken a seminar on conducting. A lot of my job entails clerical work and organization. I choose the songs, make practice CDs, distribute new music to the choir, and file the previous week's music. During practice I help the choir members work through rhythms and notes and coach them on the dynamics and style of the piece. I look at the lectionary and try to match the music to what's going on in the coming Sunday service, especially pertaining to the scripture readings. I determine if we will sing the following week based on who is available and whether we have enough choir members to sing each part."

"My work in the bell choir is more of being a helper than a leader. I help with coordination and planning performances at the church and elsewhere."

I asked Karen what kind of music she prefers. She enthusiastically responded, "I like them all! I'm partial to Gospel. I love Classical but I also love Blues, Rock, and most everything else."

"I think music is a gift God gave us. To

*Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music.* Psalm 98:4

express yourself in music is a natural response to life. What mother doesn't sing to her child? When you're happy, you hum a tune. It's a natural expression of how we feel."



Karen's work for our church also includes serving on the Worship Committee and performing other functions as well.

She is the guru of our Web site. Karen took classes at FVCC in HTML programming and she hard codes most of the site herself. She says, "I'm more of a techie than an artist. I designed the site to be practical and user friendly over pretty and creative."

Karen is also the technical advisor for the church. She installs and troubleshoots the technical hardware in the office and works with the projection system, sound room, and other assorted gadgets that need her expertise.

Reading is a hobby of Karen's, along with traveling. She has been to Europe, Mexico, Australia, China, and a lot of areas in the U.S.

I asked Karen what changes, if any, she would like to see at FPC. She replied, "I would like to see us do a better job interfacing with the community—*be in it yet not of it*. We need to be more accessible. This requires that more people get involved. We have a small group of core people doing a lot. If more people would get involved, even in little ways, it would off-load those that are over-burdened now and help us do even more. The message I would like to send is—you will get a lot more out by putting just a little more in."



Vivian Hull

**Meet one of the first ladies of our church:**

Vivian Hull is a Whitefish native. She graduated from high school in 1943.

Vivian worked as a secretary for the Great Northern Railroad in the Chief Dispatcher's office. Vivian and Albert were married in 1946 and have recently celebrated their 61<sup>st</sup> wedding anniversary. They have three children—two girls and one boy, two grandsons, and one great grandson. After raising her family, Vivian went to work as a secretary for the school district and retired in 1985 after working there for 18 years.

I asked Vivian how long she has attended FPC. She replied, "Actually, I was born into this church. I became a member in about 1940. I recall Reverend Daane. I really liked him. He stayed until I graduated from high school and then he joined the navy. This was during World War II.

"There were a lot of families attending here who were a part of the community. The church was an extension of that. By the time I came along, my older brothers and sisters were attending this church. It was natural for me to begin attending it too."

Vivian is recognized as the "Historian" of FPC. I asked her how she came by that title. She responded, "Strictly by accident. The Memorial Committee was thinking about having the church put on the National Register of Historical Places. It is a long process. You have to go back into all the history of the church. Carolyn Pfrimmer had kept a scrap book for many years which helped a lot. When we had the Centennial Celebration in 2003, a group of us were asked to put together a history of the church. The people involved were Carolyn Pfrimmer, Flossie Fletcher, and Lynda Nelson. Shelle Kuntz helped us a lot with it too. My knowledge of the history of this church came as a result of doing my part of this research."

Vivian reminisced about changes she has seen over the years at FPC. "I recall when the Brethren Church merged with FPC. The minister there had gone to Presbyterian seminary and we needed a minister. I've seen the church grow and diminish, grow and diminish. There have been a lot of changes. One of the things I miss is not having many children like we used to. Many years ago, we had lots of high school kids graduating. I remember having Youth Sunday where teenagers would have the entire service."

I asked Vivian what some of her most treasured memories were of this church. She replied, "Oh, I remember lots of good Sunday school teachers we had. Also the

Sunday school classes that used to meet in the basement in those small rooms off the balcony. I remember going to the camp and pitching a tent. I recall the youth retreats where kids from other Presbyterian churches would stay in our homes for a weekend or we would travel to their town and stay in their homes.

"Presbyterian Women would have cafeteria once a month in the basement to raise money for the church. It would attract the many who worked in the stores, Great Northern offices, and school teachers. It was a great money-maker."

Vivian does extensive volunteer work giving her time to the Cancer and Historical Societies and hospital. Vivian says, "I like to read, do crossword puzzles, handiwork, sewing, and like to go to basketball games."

When asked about desired changes at FPC, Vivian replied, "I would like to see continued growth here but would not like to see it become too big. I think we can have too many people to where it's hard to know them all personally. But we have such a long way to go before we reach that number.

"I would also like to see a Sunday school program here again. But we would need the children to go with it. I wouldn't want to change too much. We have always been known for friendliness and caring."

**Partners**



Frank Leftwich



Pam Peters



Hap Peters

**Partners in Service:**

*Some of the couples who share in the pursuit of giving.*

**Frank Leftwich**

Frank Leftwich was born in Mobile, Alabama. His family moved a few times in his early years and eventually settled in Richardson, Texas. After graduating from high school, Frank attended Texas A&M University earning a degree in Recreation and Parks Administration. He explains, "My training is more on the commercial side of that degree and I went to work for Hilton Hotels Corp. After five years in the hotel business, I went into the aviation

business."

Frank worked as a Buyer of avionics parts and later as Production Planner then Program Manager which involved the maintenance of commercial airplanes. He eventually graduated to sales of maintenance services and parts to the airlines. Frank is Western Regional Sales Director for Kellstrom Industries and travels extensively all over the western U.S.

Moving to the Flathead Valley came as a result of Frank and Karen's search for a future retirement home. Frank had done considerable back-packing in the Rocky Mountains and was drawn to the Flathead area. After several visits, they bought 30 acres north of Columbia Falls. Frank relates, "We decided to move here because I travel all the time in the west anyway, and we wanted to get out of the suburbs and live in the country. I'm kind of a country

boy anyway.”

I asked Frank what attracted him to FPC. He replied, “It was initially the architecture of the building. Andy was the pastor here at that time and he was young which was different to me because all the preachers in my life had been much older. We were also impressed with the people at this church. We were seeking a Presbyterian church to attend, and the people here make one feel accepted as soon as you walk through the door.”

The Mission Committee is Frank’s primary service to this church. He explains, “The Mission Committee focuses on *out-reach* and *public service* to the community. I’ve been blessed in my life. I feel that people who haven’t been blessed as much as me, or are having hard times, need some of those blessings passed unto them from me. I like to rally the people who have the resources to give of their time, talent, and finances to help people out in our community. All this comes from the grace of God. My parents were raised in the South and people there are very gracious in their mannerisms, openness, and social graces. That’s called *giving*. This is also what I call *having class*. Adopting this attitude from

my upbringing, I have found that this is really God’s graciousness flowing through people to others. I try to take this concept into the mission world.”

Frank is the Habitat for Humanity liaison for Whitefish. He relates, “I’m a believer in getting out there and bringing the message of God in giving graciousness to the people.”

Frank also serves on the Session and Finance Committee. He emphasized, “Our church used to have a serious financial challenge, but now we are better positioned to grow in our outreach to others. The pledge program has worked very well for us.”

Hammers and nails are no strangers to Frank. His grandfather taught him well in the proficiency of tools. He used his building skills to re-build the stairway at the back of the Fellowship Hall and installed a ladder on the roof of the church. He is now working on the two railing pieces for steps to the choir loft and to the pulpit. At home, Frank builds furniture and has done a lot of the finish work on his house. This summer, he plans on building a boat, in the mahogany Chris-Craft Runabout style.



## Pam Peters

Pam Peters was raised in New Jersey. She recalls, “My dad was a first generation Eastern European immigrant, so my roots as a child included a great amount of ethnic culture which I treasure. After Hap and I were married, we moved from New Jersey to Detroit, Tulsa, Philadelphia, Houston, and New Orleans before settling in Whitefish in 1998.”

Pam earned her RN in New Jersey, a BA from Western Illinois University, and an MSW in clinical social work from the University of Houston. “I worked as a Nurse (ICU/CCU and administration as Director Of Nursing), a psychotherapist in Addiction Treatment and private practice, and as an Administrator in Community and Private Mental Health organizations like the Houston Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction”, she stated.

After moving to Whitefish, Hap and Pam began to attend FPC. “It was the Presbyterian church with a long history in our new town. The sense of community was obvious and people were friendly.”

I asked Pam why she took on the job of Church Librarian? She replied, “I noticed that the library was unattended for a while

and wondered why. When I asked, I found out that the librarian, Peggy Lowe, was ill. I volunteered to help her and after she passed away, it was a transition to taking full responsibility.”

To manage a library, one must have a love for literature. Pam explains, “I have always been an avid reader from Nancy Drew as a child through school, college, and graduate school. I love that you can travel, discover, and/or escape through a good book. I also think that reading and learning are extraordinarily important throughout life.”

When asked what books are her favorites; Pam replied, “There are so many and the list changes—these come to mind: *The Complete Letters of Vincent Van Gogh* (insight into the soul of a great artist), *The Source* by James Michener (fictional account of the beginnings of religion), *The Captain’s Verses* by Pablo Neruda (beautiful romantic poetry), *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker (well written story of redemption), *The Infinite Plan* by Isabel Allende (what a novel should be), and the *Holy Bible* (because it continuously changes my understanding of all things).

Frank is an Eagle Scout. He enjoys hunting, fly fishing, hiking, bicycling, canoeing, kayaking, and woodworking/furniture building.

I asked Frank what changes he would like to see at FPC. He replied, “I would like to see our service have more music, both hymns and contemporary songs. We have experienced a lot of change and growth as a church family and have begun to reap the fruits of our labors. You can really feel the power of God in our culture and excitement all around. I would like to see our church steadily grow and bring in ideas of programs or activities from new church members so everyone can participate. I would also like to see more activity in our building during the week, as a beacon of outreach to our community.

“We should reach out to our community as a congregation and serve those who need to hear, see, and experience the power of Jesus. By reaching out and being heard in our community, our church family will continue to grow. We should be open-minded and open-hearted with each other and all those who want to worship with us and God will take care of the rest.”

“I like fiction and read a lot of non-fiction to learn and keep up with the world. Things change so quickly that it becomes difficult to understand issues unless you read media—newspapers, blogs, magazines, journals, etc. I listen to a lot of *podcasts* on my IPOD which has helped with the immense number of things that need to be assimilated today.

“I love working with books and the library is a good project but I think my most important work at FPC was to serve on the Mission Study Task Force and the Pastor Nominating Committee. It was exquisitely important that the work be done carefully, prayerfully, and according to the Book of Order. For me, personally, it was a time of spiritual growth as I watched the process unfold under God’s hand.”

When asked about leisure activities, Pam related, “I love music and art, travel, golf, knitting, and gourmet cooking. I paint and make collages and jewelry. I have been selling my paintings and mixed media work for five years and they are in collections around the world.”

I asked Pam what changes she would like to see at FPC. She responded, “I see

changes already! There is a new energy and vibrancy building now at FPC. Session has begun its work and people are finding their way to our pews. I find this time exciting. Change is not a bad thing—every day,

## Hap Peters

Hap's parents were Presbyterian missionaries in South America. He was raised in Venezuela. Hap was partially home-schooled. He explained, "It was a blend of living in cities where there were American communities but we were more involved with Latin communities. When I came back to the U. S. at age 18, I could speak Spanish better than I did English."

Hap went to The College of Wooster, a Presbyterian school in Ohio, earning a Bachelors degree in Chemistry. After graduating, he moved to the east and worked for a variety of chemical companies while serving in the Air National Guard. While living in New Jersey, Hap met Pam and they eventually married. Hap evolved his career into the oil business and moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma. Ever eager to expand his horizons, he returned to academia to a Master's degree in Business. Several years later, the Peters moved to Houston, Texas. They have two daughters.

In 1998, Hap and Pam moved to Whitefish. Hap explains, "After living in the humid, hot environment of Houston, Pam wanted to live in a place where there were mountains. She had visited here on vacation and loved it."

Shortly after moving to Whitefish, Hap bought into a chemical business. He relates, "It's not a full time position so I back-fill with volunteer work. I feel very strongly about giving back of the experience I have

billions of molecules in and outside us change. Progress comes from embracing that forward movement. Keeping things the way *they always were*, will make us stiff and rigid. Change allows us to flow



gained. I'm involved with Habitat for Humanity and Session, especially the financial side of the work of our church."

I asked Hap what attracted him to FPC. He replied, "I felt a need for church community and was raised Presbyterian. Also, the people here were extremely friendly. I was asked to be on Session. Shortly after I started, the finance chair was vacated so I chose to do that position. I was able to bring my financial experience into the job. Also, since 1990, I've been involved in investing. I've been able to use that experience to shift some church money into other vehicles that have a higher return. With this enhanced rate of return, we are better placed for reaching out and serving our community."

Hap and I discussed *money management* from a Christian perspective. He had this to say, "This is about stewardship. God gives us resources and talents. These really aren't ours. They are lent to us. The important thing to consider is—how are these resources being used? Everything we have comes from God and everything will return to God. Stewardship is critical. Managing resources is the responsibility that comes with stewardship. The more we give, the more we receive. One should never fear giving—either of our personal talents or wealth. We will have it returned to us boundlessly."

Singing in the choir is a joy for Hap. He



## Suffering

I'm a self-taught student of history, especially Christian history. While traveling the dusty literary corridors of Christian history, I've noticed that most, if not all, people who truly merit the distinction of being *deep in the faith of Jesus Christ* experienced profound suffering. Something happened in their life experience that brought them to their knees before the living God. Whether this transforming experience happened as a result of sins they committed, or someone else's sins, or merely an event of the natural world they lived in; the

condition they experienced was the same—*intense suffering*.

Suffering is a troubling subject for many Christians. While some choose to merely *blow it off* as not being a worthy subject of a serious pious attitude toward the Lord, others tend to dwell on the subject to the point of morbidity.

I asked several individuals in our congregation to discuss the question: Why does a loving, just, omnipotent God allow

into the future as Jesus the Christ demonstrated by His coming to change the world."

relates, "My history in singing goes back to when I was very young. My mother taught herself to play piano. I sang in duets, played the flute, and sang in church choir and college. Singing is a wonderful outlet for me."

Hap describes himself as a prolific reader. He also enjoys physical activities. "Pam is really big on wellness. I work-out and swim at the Wave. I also hike, ski, and play golf. We also like to travel. Two years ago, we visited China. We just got back from South America. We've been to many countries in Europe and visited Mexico."

I asked Hap what changes he would like to see at FPC. He replied, "I would like to see continued growth and more outreach into the community and the world. We are doing some of this now but I would like to see even more."

In closing, Hap stated, "Change is inevitable. In the context of the bible, it didn't work in the Old Testament so God sent His Son and that sending was about *change*. From a biblical perspective, change is an ever-present thing. Change is going to happen and it's necessary. Change is uncomfortable but it can be managed. As an example, God has given us this beautiful building with a lot of classrooms. I ask, how can this building be used more for the community, for out-reach, and for the proper purposes we can provide? That's change."

his children to suffer? Or, to borrow a phrase from the title of a popular book, *Why do bad things happen to good people?*

The quotations that follow are some of the responses. These are followed by a story I wrote on this subject. The idea was taken from the book *The Inward Journey* by Gene Edwards. The words and setting are mine but the idea is Edwards'. I thank the Seedsowers Publishing House for graciously giving me permission to use the concept of *crocodiles* for my story.

## Why Does God Allow Bad Things to Happen to Good People?

“I don’t think God allows bad things to happen to anyone. I think that is just the world we live in. The bottom line is, we have free will. Free will is the cause of a lot of the things that happen. Some people use their free will to do good, others use it to do bad. What’s important to consider is: It’s not that bad things happen, but it’s how we deal with it. Being a Christian doesn’t mean bad things won’t happen to you. When bad does happen, God helps you get through it. God does not allow bad things to happen. They just do because of the state of the world we live in. Blaming those things on anybody does not fix it. We need to look for the solution and how to get through it rather than put blame on someone.”

“God gave us the ability to reason and create our own destiny and make our own choices. As we go through life, we experience hard-hits that are brought on by ourselves or by outside influences. I guess you can say God lets things happen because He controls everything. But He isn’t going to prevent things from happening because He has made us free to make our own choices. If tragedy happens, it happens because of what is happening on this earth, not because God is controlling everything. He’s going to let it happen because He is testing us in our faith in Him. If a great tragedy happens to me, I’m going to have to depend on God to get through it. So how can I turn around and blame Him for allowing it to happen? It is really all about us—everything we create, our intelligence, decisions, and outside influences that we have no control over. When bad things happens to us, we are tested by God in how we live our lives, how we are affected by others, and how we handle the situation. It all boils down to our faith and the test is: Do we run *from* God or do we run *to* God?”

“Actually, I don’t think it’s a matter of God allowing bad things to happen. I believe that things happen and God gives us the strength to survive and grow from the events of our lives. Our first child died at 4 and-a-half months from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. After a long grieving process, during which I was angry at God, someone suggested that I read Kushner’s, *“When Bad Things Happen to Good People”*. I did, and it allowed me to come to acceptance and understanding and turn that experience into a career helping people who had similar losses. As time goes by, we understand our losses...but at the time, they are so painful and so devastating, that God waits for us to heal. Then He gives us understanding we had no reason to expect.”

“God loves *all* of his creation. I believe that bad things and good things happen to both the just and the unjust. God does not keep his little clan of Christians to Himself, manipulating and over-protecting them from the consequences of living life. I think of John 16:33, “In this world you will have tribulations, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” To me this scripture means that with our willingness to work with Him, He will guide us “in His Grace” through hard times, transforming us in the process. I think it is impossible to change and grow without some adversity in our lives.”

“My thoughts on suffering is when after suffering happens to a person, maybe years down the road, that person understands that suffering brings wisdom and teaches you to be more empathetic towards others who are suffering. The experience makes one a better person to help others. It seems some people suffer more than others. I

don’t know why that is but perhaps they are called to be the ones who help others handle their suffering. I don’t think suffering comes from the hand of God. His role in suffering is to help you through it. It is true that God is all powerful but he also gave people free will and we are not always obeying Him. As far as people suffering from something that is not anyone’s fault, such as, disease, one can always ask the question, “Why does God heal some and not others?” I don’t know the answer to that. It is a mystery. If we knew all the answers, we wouldn’t be trying to learn more about God.”

“Before I knew God, I never expected Him to intervene in my life. To me, God was intangible, unknowable, and aloof. After I became a Christian, I realized He had been there all along, right beside me. He never let more happen to me than I could survive. I am learning that God allows *bad things to happen to good people* to refine and mold us, not only into His likeness, but into sanctified beings in need of an understanding and comforting Father.”

“I don’t think God allows bad things to happen. Life is a journey. We are all challenged. At the other end of the challenge is a tremendous amount of experience. I think when a real bad experience happens, the question to ask is not, “Why me?” Rather, one should ask, “Why not me?” I have found that a negative challenge can strengthen a relationship. Personal growth can come out of suffering. Presbyterians believe in predestination. That means that God knows what is going to happen. I don’t think God intends these things to be a negative burden on anybody. I think it’s part of the journey that we all go through.”



## CROCODILES

By Bob Paulus



Desert sky can be so deceptive. Cobalt blue to the horizon, then a patch of white mist rising— a hundred miles away. Rocks dot the landscape mixed with scrub brush so dry a spark from a flint could ignite it. I sit under a Joshua tree listening to the quiet. Nothing stirs. Not even my mind.

There was a reason why I had come to the desert. I needed to shut down. My mind was tormented by worry, regret, painful memories—just a lot of crud that had been piling up for a very long time. I needed a place to unwind; a place of solitude. It’s no wonder that T. E. Lawrence responded to the question, “Why do you like the desert?” with, “Because it’s clean.”

Still, the thoughts returned; those tormenting questions Christians secretly ask, usually only to themselves.

Why? Why does a loving, just God allow his children to suffer? Especially those that have done nothing to deserve it? It all seems to *fly in the face* of the teaching of the church and those kind, well meaning souls who try so hard to comfort with

words of assurance describing a God who *won't let you down*. Why?! Is there an answer?

A flicker of movement catches my eye far out across the heat drenched expanse. It's a man. He's walking my way. His figure shimmers in heat waves as he approaches. I can see him clearly now. He's not more than a hundred feet from my tree. He looks middle age with long brown hair and shaggy beard. He moves evenly with a heavy walking stick and strong gait. He's close enough now that I can see a broad smile and bright eyes staring straight at me.

"Good day!", the man calls out. "Care to share the shade of your Joshua tree?"

"Love to." I call back.

The man draws into the shade and sits beside me. I ask, "What's your name and what are you doing out here in this desert on such a hot blistering day?"

The man replies, "My name is Job and I'm taking a walk on this beautiful fine day."

"Taking a walk!", I exclaim. "Out here? In this heat?"

"Oh, I don't think it's so hot. Besides, I need to get out of the house once in awhile. The kids get noisy, the wife gets grumpy, and my house is so big and land and livestock so vast, I need to get away sometimes. Once and awhile, I come out here to enjoy the quiet."

Suddenly, it hits me. "Job! Are you the one and only Job? The Job out of the bible?"

With a glowing smile that almost drove the shade away, the man replied, "Yes, it is I. In the flesh."

I was speechless. After a few seconds, all I could mutter was, "Wow, Job himself!" I shook the cobwebs from my mind and continued, "Job, I've read all about you in the Hebrew Bible. I have lots of questions for

you. I bet you learned a lot from the awful experience you went through, especially about the meaning of suffering. Tell me all you learned and please don't leave anything out even if we have to stay here all night. I'll listen to every word. I promise."

Job's face clouded over with bewilderment. He looked at me and said, "I really don't have much to tell you. I know of the account you speak of but I don't have much to say about learning anything. No. I honestly can't think of a thing. Except—maybe—one thing."

"Go on.", I prodded.

Job sat back a little. He looked out over the landscape of rocks, brush, and sand. After a moment, he said, "Crocodiles. That's the only thing I learned."

"Crocodiles!" I exclaimed. What do you mean, crocodiles?

"Well", Job began. "Have you ever thought about crocodiles? They are mean, nasty, ugly creatures. I don't like them one bit and can't figure out why God made them. But God did make them. That is for sure."

"What are you talking about?" I sputtered.

Job continued, "Think about it. God made those dreadful creatures, crocodiles, and didn't seem to give a twit as to what I thought of it. He didn't consult me. He didn't ask for my advise on the matter, nor did he seem to consider how I would feel about the existence of such creatures. He just went ahead and made them even before he made me and they are here in the world whether I like it or not.

"You see God is a person who is very comfortable with his own judgment. He doesn't feel the need to ask anyone for advise or counsel. God does what he wants, when he wants, and how he wants without letting anyone in on what he's doing. He doesn't even seem to mind the fact that I don't always agree with him. I never would have consented to the making of crocodiles.

God never asked me for my opinion on the matter either and is totally unperturbed that I don't like what he did."

I stared into Job's eyes certain I must be missing something. Slowly I said, "Job, are you telling me that the way you perceive *crocodiles* is all you learned from that horrible ordeal you went through?"

Without a heartbeat of hesitation, Job answered, "Yes. That is all I learned. Now, if you will excuse me. I'd better be getting back to the house. My wife might think I've got a girl friend stuck away out here."

Job sauntered off the way he had come. As he walked away, I said out-loud, "Boy, this is something, to meet Job himself way out here." A phrase popped into my mind. I voiced it loudly so he could hear. "The patience of Job!", I called out.

I heard a laugh, deep and strong. Job called back, "The patience of Job? That's a good one! More like Job the whiner! Wait until I get home to tell the wife that one. Patience of Job! *Hah, hah, hah*" The laughter continued until Job disappeared into the heat waves of the desert.

The talk I had with Job left me feeling confused. Why, I asked, didn't Job learn something specific about his horrific ordeal other than the mysterious ramblings concerning crocodiles? After all, everyone knows that Satan was his tormentor and that God and Satan.....

Wait a minute, I thought. Job didn't know that. He was never told.



#### A note from the Editor, Publisher, Printer, and Copyboy:

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