

### When I am weak, then I am powerful

It is one thing to teach, “when I am weak, then I am powerful,” but quite another thing to live it. It’s not much fun. And yet I’m not sure fun is foundational to Christ. “I’m going to live the rest of my life to have fun,” someone recently said to me. I used to quote Sheryl Crow on this: “All I wanna do is have some fun.” I’ve abandoned the philosophy, instead seeking meaning and purpose. All I wanna do is embrace the inner joy of Christ and do the right things. “All I Wanna Do is Live Justly.” Not a great FM radio hit.

Forgive me, Sheryl Crow. I do still like, “Every Day is a Windy Road,” if that makes you feel better.

Ordinarily, I enjoy throwing myself into my talks. Beginning with the second of my three addresses on Saturday, however, my usual exuberance eluded me. The only



other option to lying down and giving up is standing up and giving up, that is, refusing to be anything other than what one is: a vessel fit for the Master’s use. Such a person can still minister if that person is willing for his vessel to be broken so that the perfume within (God’s spirit and God’s life), seeps out of its own accord onto the feet of the saints. ■

# Martin Zender's Clanging Gong News

*“If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, but have no love, I am a clanging gong” --1 Cor. 13:1-2*



Two out of three isn't bad.

## Insights from the Amarillo Retreat



Amarillo, Texas, was an intense time of teaching, fellowship, and deep joy in God. I went there in weakness, returned in weakness, and continue in that frame. I am writing from the top of my head and the bottom of my heart as I wrestle with an ongoing trial of soul and spirit. This may not be the most uplifting *Gong*, folks, but it’s all I’ve got right now.

In the above photo, you are looking at approximately fifty members of the body of Christ. We are standing before Palo Duro Canyon outside Amarillo. The conference hall at the Hidden Falls Ranch is only a few feet from where this unique collection of pixels—foreordained before the disruption of the world—arranged itself upon the hard drive of my sister Kelly’s camera.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth; then He did the people.

I realized more than ever at the edge of this abyss how much I need the body of Christ. I have ministered for years, and now people say it is my time to accept ministry. And so I am hugged and prayed for at this gathering—and upon the shoulders of others I break forth.

I turned 50 on October 8. This has nothing to do with anything, I don’t think. Or maybe it does. Maybe it happens that as we get older everything starts disappearing. Things and people that we treasure go away. Is that it? Is that how it happens? I need new glasses. Is that how it works now? We all eventually go blind? Dollie

Miller’s mother has Alzheimer’s. Is that the score? We all lose our memories? We can’t see where we’re going and then can’t remember where we’ve been? In a matter of four years, I have eulogized both my mother and my father. Is this what Paul meant when he said that the current era is passing by? Does everything pass by but Christ?

After Dan Sheridan spoke on Friday night, he blew a horn. This was not the second coming of Christ, unfortunately, because the horn had pink streamers coming from it. Instead of the second coming of Christ, this particular horn announced the first coming of a large cake.

Someone put a ridiculous-looking hat on my head, and at that moment I became a half century old in front of fifty people.

I was not even embarrassed.

*(Continued on pg. 2)*





## ...the Amarillo Retreat

(Continued from pg. 1)

Dollie Miller conceived this party, and see how happy she is about it. How incongruent that she should be holding a large knife.



The snatching away of the body of Christ into heaven did not occur on Saturday, as it was supposed to have. It wasn't really supposed to have, but in my humble (and worthless) opinion, I thought it might have. I thought the timing seemed fine. Instead, a cold fog descended overnight, shrouding the canyon. Going, going, gone was the Palo Duro canyon—just like the current era; just like my eyesight; just like Mrs. Denton's memory; just like my parents; just like everything else in this extremely difficult con.

The slow disappearance of the canyon was a poor substitute for the snatching away of the saints, and yet it did illustrate the scriptural principle of walking by faith, not perception.

Which is what the Maker of the Canyon was trying to teach us anyway. ■



## Satan wants to split us all up

Our Adversary, Satan, wants to split us all up. His aim is to split up business partners, family members, members of the body of Christ—even co-workers in the evangel.

Look at Dan Sheridan and me in front of the Palo Duro canyon. Aren't we a happy couple? Sure. We're a team, heralding the evangel of Paul five days a week on the radio. Is Satan going to split us up by drumming up persecution from without? Not likely; that would only bring us closer together and earn us greater honor at the dais of Christ. Satan works from the inside, as he did with Barnabas and Saul; he will do everything in his power to fracture us *personally*. We're



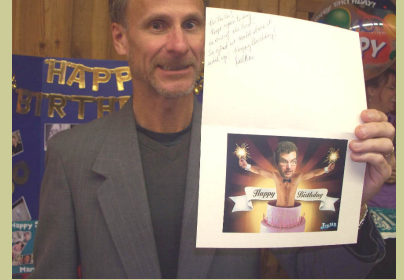
on our guard against this, which is why Dan looks at me at the radio studio and says, for no apparent reason, "Zender, you're an idiot," and I look at him in like manner and reply, "Well, you're an ass." These preemptive strikes are like eating a little chocolate all week to keep yourself from gorging on the weekend.

Our friend Clyde Pilkington—who also spoke at the retreat—publishes a newsletter, e-mails "Daily Goodies" to his faithful fans, promotes and sells scripture books, and glues people to their seats with riveting scriptural deliveries. What will Satan do to ruin *his* life and career? →

He will probably keep him on the same speaking circuit as Sheridan and me. ■

## What a Revelation!

EXCEPT FOR THE CARD WITH THE PICTURE OF DAN SHERIDAN PROTRUDING FROM A CAKE ON IT, AND THE GREAT PARTY, TURNING 50 IS JUST ANOTHER DAY



Turning 50 felt no different than turning 40, which felt no different than turning 30, which felt no different than turning 20, which felt no different than turning 10. The only difference is that there ain't no Santa Claus.

Death is an enemy, but not to be feared. I bought a grilled chicken sandwich in Baltimore before my flight to Amarillo, but only ate half of it in Baltimore, saving the other half for the airplane.

On airplanes, I always look out at the wings and notice how they're riveted to the body of the plane; it always looks a tad precarious to me; put-up; hammered on; not at all guaranteed. This day being my birthday and all, I imagined the wings falling off, turning our plane into a heavy metal tube. I knew in my heart that, should such a thing occur, I would immediately dig through my bag and finish my chicken sandwich.

Therein lay another key difference between 50 and 10. ■

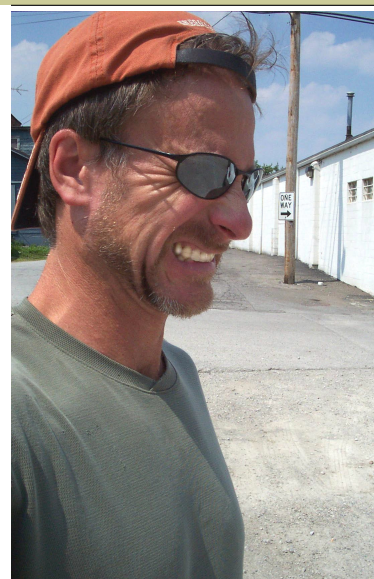


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# Rants & Stuff

The Apostle Paul says we should not murmur (Philippians 2:14). Therefore, I shall rant.



## Oxygen Mask by Dr. Stephen Franson



“...and if you are traveling with small children, please be sure to firmly secure your own oxygen mask before assisting others.”

All pre-flight instructions are important, but none are quite as profound as this one.

I was searching for the appropriate response to my friend Chanya’s admission of her most recent epiphany. “I simply cannot take good care of four children if I don’t first take good care of myself.” She seemed so relieved to actually say this out loud, but I could tell that she was looking for some type of validation.

It was five o’clock in the morning in San Diego. When my family visits, Chanya and I traditionally share this quiet time and space at the breakfast bar and plan the day over a hot French-press. She is awkwardly trying to justify finding time for a power walk today, fear-

ing that her obvious abandonment of her family during that time may lead to a total collapse of the delicate familial infrastructure.

“Please secure your own oxygen mask before assisting others,” I tell her.

Chanya is not unlike my wife, Camilla, and every other busy mother who struggles to find the elusive balancing point between wife, mother and person. These moms are

often left feeling like survivors of a shipwreck, sprawled on the beach gasping for air, thankful that they survived another day.

There are truths that are irrefutable. In life, we serve others best when we are whole. In this pursuit, taking time for yourself is non-negotiable. Time has become the new currency, and if you are not a good steward of it, you will squander it away on whatever needy bird chirps the loudest in the nest that you call your life.

The world has a way of pulling at us – at our time, our energy and our focus. Its favorite prey is the resources that you have left unaccounted for. Your time is an easy target; protect it. Plan for wholeness. ■

Article by Dr. Stephen Franson at [fransonchiropractic.wordpress.com/.../](http://fransonchiropractic.wordpress.com/.../)

