

CHUCKLES #1

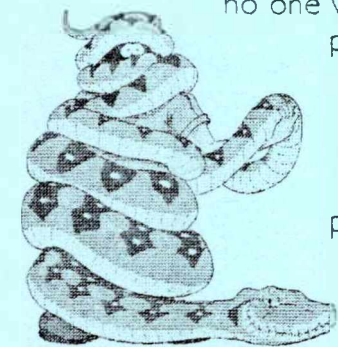
FROM: Joy-Lynd Chamberlain

And God looked down on all that He/She had made... and **laughed**. I often wonder if He/She knew way back then what that seven days of work would turn into. The next question, in the same vein, is similar in its sarcasm. If mankind is made in the image of God, is God an arrogant, self-centered, type being?

In my early years of life, I was taught that mankind was the only intelligent life that was created by the "Great Creator." I was taught that all of man's ideas were intelligent. Added to this were the "facts" about race differences and religious correctness as well as the true place of men and women in the scheme of things.

I was brought up in the baby boom era. It was a time when hard work and effort was all that was needed to get the American dream. If you did not get the "right" grades in school — you were not trying! They would take time to test you for intelligence, but that is a test of experience: if you had the right experience than you passed with flying colors. In my case I was just labeled a "bad" or "mal-adjusted" child. My I.Q. was high but I did badly in school, it must be by choice — right?

I always felt like I was choking. If I complained I was the squeaky wheel that no one wanted to notice. If I did poorly in my studies I was the problem child that no one liked. It was to come much later that there were problems (real problems) in some people with the perception of the written word. Too late for my early schooling, but not for



my "higher education."

Years had passed, I was in my late thirties and completely convinced of the fact of my lack of



2200 S. Ft. Apache Rd. # 1227
Las Vegas, NV 89117-5714
228-2600

smarts. Although I knew I had tested high in I.Q., it made little difference that learning (book learning) was not in my future or on my resume for that matter. Then, I was offered the opportunity to go to college... I laughed! This was a waste of my time and the State of Ohio's money. I tried to tell them, but they would not listen, after all they were the know-it-all humans in charge, and I was the poor wretch who needed assistance.

My first quarter in college was strange: I had been out of school longer than most of my fellow students had been alive. I was both frightened and excited about the classes I was taking; they were bored. I was searching for ways to find more study time; they were trying to find more drinking/party time. I was forced to cheat, I started falling behind. Don't think too badly of me — the cheat was asking Ross to read to me. He read out loud faster than I did silently. When he read to me I would remember. It was great. I was on the honor roll each quarter of my first year. This was going to work!

You've heard of the best laid plans of... Well, Ross was whisked away to New York for work, and I was left alone to fend for myself again. At the age of thirty eight I experienced my first taste of self worth and I was about to lose it again. At this point I knew God was laughing at me! No one in the college seemed to care about my concern; after all I was getting mostly "A's" and just a few "B's." I was not a student in need of assistance. My getting Ross' help in secret had turned out to be the wrong move.

One day my state counselor and I were talking and I told her of my fear of the upcoming year without Ross to assist me. She was angered that I had not come to her sooner. I pointed out that I told her in the beginning that I thought I was too stupid to go to college and we decided to do some testing. Three days of testing! It was not easy to go through. Again I felt slow, all day proving to these people that I was a bad reader, and could not

remember much of what I was able to read. They were nice, but they always knew what was on the page and so I felt dense! — Then the results came back!

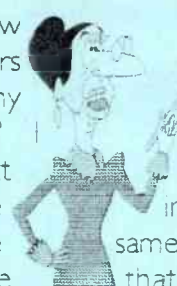
I WAS NOT STUPID — I JUST COULDN'T READ!
The word is dyslexia. I am dyslectic... not a bad kid or even one who did not try. The fact that I had developed the ability to remember 97% of what ever I heard, showed a desire to learn by other means.

YES, now I was out for bear! There are two ways to look at a problem: the first is to give up; the second is to find a way to overcome it! I chose the second. For thirty eight years I had thought I was stupid and if one is, in fact, stupid there is little that can be done. Now I knew that there was a problem, and one can work on problems to overcome them. I got in touch with the Government and found that I qualified for their talking book program. Funny thing, they have an academic program in Princeton NJ that supplies text books to students with sight and reading problems and their phone number is my social security number less the middle two numbers. Was that easy to remember? Well, the story had a happy ending for my grades stayed high and I at last could add some book learning on those resumes.



I still see teachers in much the way I did back in my earlier years. Well sort of... It always seemed as though teachers were on some kind of power trip. I used to laugh when I heard it said that one becomes a teacher when they fail at everything else, or when one of my Ph.D.'d friends told me, the Ph.D. stands for "Push Here Dummy." That was until I started teaching. My first real job was at a nursing college in Pepper Pike Ohio - Ursilin College. I was to teach a word processing class there. I had 24 students in my class - four of them my age and the rest much younger. The students my age thought they could act up because they had something in common with the teacher. It was hard but at last I told them that they would have to behave in class or I would have to remove them... they apologized and became model students. Just a word could solve a problem! The feeling of power was sneaking in. A week or so later I gave the class an assignment which

one of the younger students thought was too excessive. She looked up at me and in front of the rest of the class asked why she or they should do the assignment. I thought for a moment on how to explain my reasoning then a fiendish light flashed and I looked down at her and said "because I said so." She said nothing as she copied the assignment off the board. What POWER! I felt great for all of 10 minutes, then saw myself as one of those teachers that I thought so little of in my earlier life. What had I become?!? I gave the class a good reason the next session and felt better about the incident. Later in the semester the same young student came to me to tell me that she felt like she did not have to do all the work and I had no problem telling her that she would fail the class if she did not do what I assigned. I was tired of her games at that point and the power of holding a failing grade in a class that cost her over six hundred dollars to take was comforting.



All of these things are in the past. But I will always remember one fact... The only difference between a fool and a sage is that fools do not learn from their mistakes. I now know how little I know and how little others around me know. Truth is only what I perceive it to be, but it is mine. Facts are untrue the moment they are formed. And to judge anyone else makes a fool of the judge. I have also learned that learning happens best where you are. It does not start or stop in school.

Maybe the greatest lesson learned in my college experience was not what I memorized but the knowledge to gather information when I need it. Some of the smartest people I know can not get what is out of their reach. I can not answer a question as fast as they but I can find an unknown faster than they can. I have left the memorization to those who want to play parlor games and store only the index in my head. I spend more time laughing that way. If the Creator can spend His/Her time that way — why not me?

