

Learning to Walk

During the month of August, an infant in the Christian faith, I was learning to crawl and then to walk. As with kids, this process was accompanied with plenty of falls (none disastrous, thankfully). I shared with my parents and friends about my newfound faith. Like many new believers, I was less than wise in the intensity with which I shared. One couple, close friends for many years, responded to one of my letters, calling it a "tract". They saved my letters to them from India and Switzerland and later gave them to me. I have been rereading my letters to them as I have been writing my blog, I see how heavy-handed I was. I've recently contacted them to thank them for maintaining our friendship despite my aggressive evangelism.

Two of my closest friends during this time were Greg and Bruce. We worked together at Les Mèlèze and enjoyed many great discussions, and some adventures together. In the photo below, Greg is on the left and Bruce on the right. You will see Bruce again, as he was the Best Man when I married Margaret. Sadly, Bruce died in 2010. I have reestablished contact with Greg, who recently retired as a pastor in the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination. We have had a great time reminiscing about our time at L'Abri and catching up on 50 years of life and ministry.



I continued to meet with dear Birdie. She helped me to examine my relationship with my parents. I was able to understand,

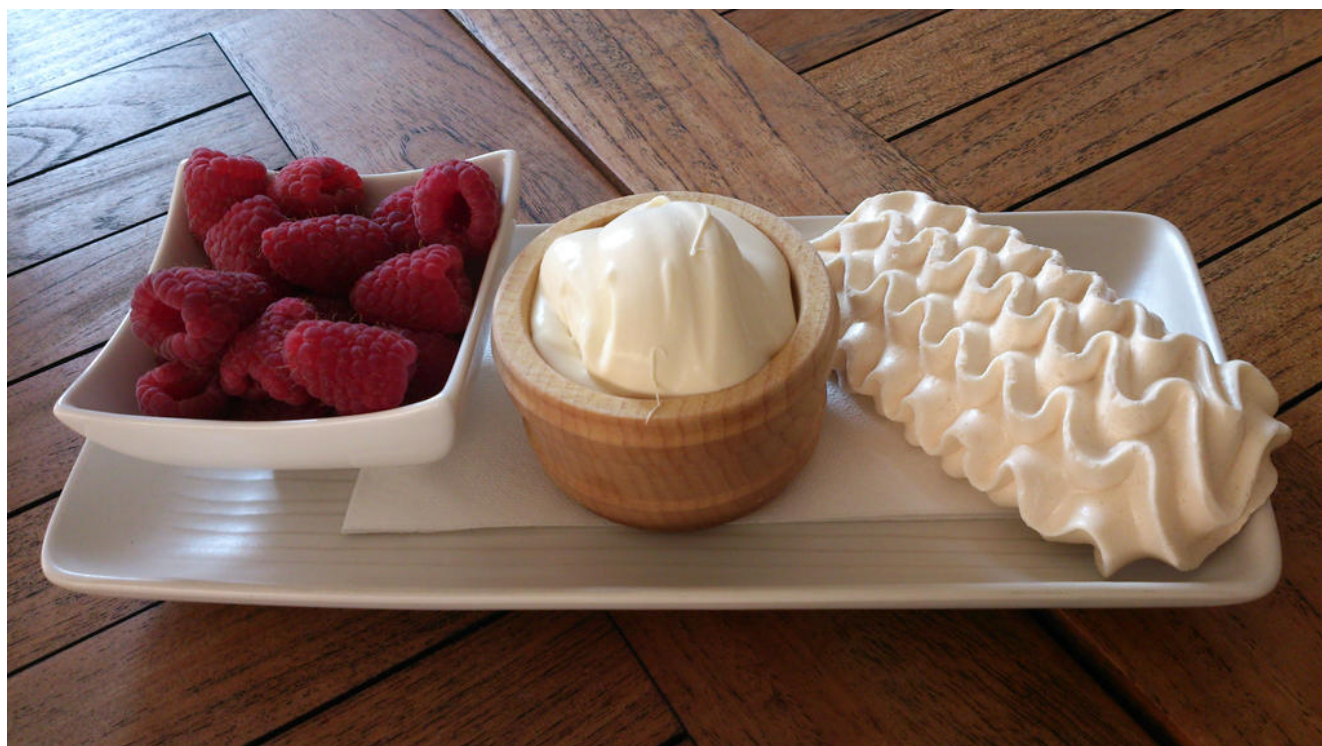
appreciate these dear people while realizing that our interactions, expectations were not always healthy. Those conversations clarified much and reset my attitude about many things! As I wrote to my parents: "The Lord is doing such wonderful healing in my life. I've really begun to take initiative and responsibility for the first time in my life. I'm starting to realize many old patterns of thought that have been limiting me and overcoming them with the Lord's help."

As a helper at L'Abri, I was mostly working to try to get the plants in the large garden at Les Mèlèze to produce! I had nice cukes, zucchini, string beans, carrots and leeks. In the fall I harvested decent broccoli and beets. Even though that was my official job as a helper, much of my time was spent in interacting with people. Almost immediately God was able to use my experiences to be able to make a connection with those who, like myself, were involved in drugs and/or Eastern religions. I was continually amazed at how quickly God was able to transform the minds and hearts of some of the people arriving at L'Abri.

I applied and was accepted to stay on as a helper until the end of October. I was grateful for the opportunity to remain and become more grounded in my new found faith through continued study. During this time period, I was able to make and enjoy music. I became part of a recorder quartet, playing mostly Bach chorales. On Sundays, we were often treated to marvelous sacred music played on the magnificent little Flentrop organ in the chapel.

During this time period, I enjoyed a marvelous day off. Fran and Edith Schaeffer took the L'Abri office staff and those of us who worked at Chalet Les Mèlèze on a fabulous outing to Gruyères (as in cheese). We took a series of buses and trains,

arriving in Gruyères in time for lunch. We ate in a posh restaurant where we sampled a number of dishes for which the Swiss are famous. We began with a cheese quiche. The main course was ham with cheesy scalloped potatoes. After enjoying a cheese board with a sampling of the many varieties of cheeses produced in Switzerland, we finished with a dessert of raspberries with double cream and a meringue.



From there we went to the beautifully preserved Chateau. The Chateau is filled with gorgeous tapestries and paintings. What was so marvelous about the day was that Dr. Schaeffer was our tour guide through the Chateau. He wove the history of the Swiss Reformation throughout our tour of the castle. We all had a great time and a good opportunity to get to know each other better. Seldom did we have the time to do that in the daily hustle and bustle of life at L'Abri.

