

## Ransom Notes



Mary Ann Armstrong

Much to my surprise, my friend responded, "It is my work." She then took me into the next room to show me two other pieces she had created, including the one pictured here today. As I viewed the black and white drawing, my brain clicked in. Wouldn't this drawings make a marvelous corner-stone for a weekly 'Ransom Note'? I quickly asked her permission to take a photo of the art, including permission to use it as a springboard for an article. She replied in the positive, with a smile and a twinkle in her eye.

A friend in Hong Kong and I thought about the picture and what lessons might be stimulated as we viewed the images. For eons, hands have been used to communicate information. A gesture can suggest a person stop, go in a certain direction, or perhaps extend their palms as two friends shake hands and smile in greeting. I remember sometimes tapping my forehead and uttering the word or thought, 'dumb-dumb' or 'duh', why didn't I think of that. Sign language for the deaf is invaluable. Of course hands are crucial for performing multiple tasks from smashing a buzzing mosquito to eating a slice of cheese pizza. Unfortunately hands can also perform harmful, hurtful, or life destroying tasks. Yes, hands, just like the rest of our body/mind may be used for both helpful as well as harmful operations.

Probably every nursery child and even older young people love to use their hands as they sing worship songs. Do you remember the "Itzy Bitzy Spider" who went up the water spout, "Deep and Wide", and a more recent song, "Deep Cries Out"? What about an old favorite, "This Little Light of Mine," I'm going to let it shine everywhere? As we matured a bit, the lyrics of "He's Got the Whole World In His Hands" floats through my brain, while fingers type this message. Yes, hands are one of God's most marvelous additions to the human anatomy that He created.

Our class is studying the book of Mark. In chapter 7 the Lord touches the ears of a deaf man and one chapter later the eyes of a blind individual. You know the rest of the story. Each individual suddenly was rejoicing as they had restored opportunities to appreciate life. His hand was the connection between the one needing help and the recovery. Jesus reached out, but in Mark 5 the reverse is true. A woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years reached out and touched the cloak of the Master, and she too was restored. We so rejoice when we think of how each of the trio must have celebrated those evenings with their families.

Today we cannot physical touch the Master nor can He place His hand on our physical body, but, He is still present in our lives. Sometimes He works through His children (you and me) to do the touching. My Hong Kong friend expressed it so well. "Who better than Jesus to punch through the shell of our own thoughts and draw us out of ourselves? We were once each trapped inside our own minds, thinking ourselves better than we are, or taking to ourselves responsibilities and acts that are best *left up to God.*" His spiritual hand does reach us. Let us beware of His presence in our lives.

**Whose Hand Has Helped You Recently?**

**To Whom Have You Reached Out? Think About the Following Charge:**

**"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might." Ecclesiastes 9:10a**

