

Christian MONTHLY

DEDICATED TO THE PROCLAMATION
OF THE WORD OF GOD



Psalm 119:105
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.

February 2019

Exhortation

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Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.



2 Timothy 1:1-14

PAUL WROTE THIS EPISTLE IN PRISON, waiting for his execution. One would expect a prisoner awaiting his execution to be dejected and thinking of death. Not so with Paul. Not so with those who are hid in Christ. Paul speaks of the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus. This is the Christian hope. The Christian's hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ. When we have Christ, we have life and happiness. Christ is our life. In Christ the believing soul has found all

that it has longed for. It has found forgiveness of sins. It has found righteousness—the righteousness of faith—that is acceptable before God. It has found joy—a joy the world cannot give. It has found peace—a peace with God—the peace of a good conscience. It has found an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven. It has found safety from the floods of the waters of temporal and eternal death. It has found a hiding place. *Thou art my hiding place.* (Psalm 119:114) Christ is the Christian's happiness and hope in life. It is the Christian's joy to live unto Christ, to live for Christ, to confess Christ, that Christ's name and word and will and kingdom may be

magnified. And when the time of departure comes, the Christian receives the end of his faith, even the salvation of the soul. Death opens up to him the full enjoyment of life eternal.

It was in anticipation of this eternal life that the apostle could speak of life in the face of bodily death. This undaunted courage and confidence of the apostle can be understood only by those who have the same hope of eternal life. By those who have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Romans 5:5)

My friend, do you have this hope of eternal life? Are you looking with faith upon him who said, *I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live* (John 11:25)?

There is no other way to eternal life and happiness. Jesus has said, *I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* (John 14:6) *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.* (Psalm 146:5)

The aged apostle would comfort Timothy, whom he loved as a son. Timothy was a young Christian for whom Paul prayed unceasingly day and night and longed for him greatly. His heart was comforted also in seeing Timothy's unfeigned faith. Timothy had had a Christian mother and grandmother. Paul had met him on one of his missionary journeys and, observing the gift of God in him, had asked him to partake in the great apostle's work. So Timothy who had been called to

salvation was also called to preach the Gospel. Of this calling the apostle writes in this manner: *Who (God) hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*

Let us pause for a moment to consider what was necessary for Timothy in his great calling so that we might also be mindful of what we need in our Christian walk today. The first thing that we observe is unfeigned faith. By unfeigned faith is meant a sincere faith. To be a follower of Christ one must walk in earnest. Christianity is not a mere practice. Christianity is something that we live. As the apostle expresses it in these words, *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)* When one sincerely seeks to find the way, God in his grace will lead that soul to the kingdom of God's children where the true Gospel is preached. Paul sincerely desired to know the truth that should make him free. He received sincere faith as a gift from God.

The second thing that is necessary is courage. Those who would be followers of the Lord find themselves pilgrims with no continuing city, but seek one to come by faith in Jesus. Their conversation is in heaven, from where also they look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. They declare that, *if we*



walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John 1:7) The Christians do not seek after that city as uncertain adventurers but as exiles. Their hope is in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to take them home. They are not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord but are willing partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God. The secret of their courage is that *I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* And finally we note in our text that Timothy was exhorted to *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.* Likewise may we be exhorted to be

steadfast and unmovable. May we be strong and courageous in the profession of Christ until He cometh again. Timothy was charged to *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (2 Timothy 4:2)*

In conclusion therefore may I repeat the exhortation of the writer to the Hebrews: *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2) Amen!*

The Trial of Our Faith

Dave Impola
Seattle, Washington

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.

1 Peter 4:12

SIN IS A BURDEN, BUT NOT ALL BURDENS ARE SIN. Many times as we feel the chastening of the Lord we can become discouraged. We may feel that the struggles we are having are of our flesh and surely not from God. Only when we have been enlightened of God, when perhaps He is molding our character to His liking, can we say with Apostle Paul that *we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience. (Romans 5:3)* Perhaps that is why Jesus says, "O ye of little faith!" We know so little and forget His wonderful promises so easily. Jesus says, *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit... I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. (John 15:1-2, 5)*

Our precious elder pastor said that when God gives us a present it isn't always wrapped in beautiful wrapping paper and bows. *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. (Hebrews 12:11)*

We have a wonderful God who knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. At the same time we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:5-7)*

Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. (Psalm 107:28-29) Yes, beloved in the Lord, we have an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. As the boisterous waves of the sea—the devil, the world and our flesh—try to shipwreck our ship of faith, our anchor grips the Solid Rock, which is Jesus Christ.

"This Rock is Jesus, Yes, He's the One; This Rock is Jesus, the only One!

Be very sure, be very sure Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!" (Ruth Caye Jones)

We look forward to the time when we reach the shores of heaven. "We shall sing on that beautiful shore the melodious songs of the blest..." (S. Fillmore Bennett).

In the love and peace of God.

Our Reasonable Service

Pastor Chuck Bylka
South Range, Michigan

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:1-2

AS WE JOURNEY THROUGH THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY, we hear Jesus speak quite often about the importance and nature of discipleship. The Apostle Paul addresses this subject as well, in his letter to the Romans. But what does it mean to follow Jesus? Quite simply, the key to understanding discipleship is sacrifice. The amazing thing is that the Apostle Paul calls presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice our “reasonable service”! This certainly doesn’t sound reasonable to me. My natural mind says that reasonable service means giving up a great deal of my life for God, but certainly not all of it. Jesus says otherwise.

And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

Mark 8:34-36

My sinful flesh tells me that what Christ asks me to do is impossible. The cost is too great. The answer is not in focusing on my sacrifice, but on that of another. Paul encourages us that our sacrifice is not only possible, but reasonable because of “...**the mercies of God...**” The key to understanding discipleship is not found in my sacrifice, but in the sacrifice of Christ Himself. The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer summarizes it beautifully in his book *The Cost of Discipleship*:

Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: 'Ye were bought at a price', and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God.

We follow Jesus Christ, not in order to receive mercy from God, but because we have already received mercy from God. We forgive, because we are forgiven. We love because we are loved. By faith, we offer our meager sacrifice, because God has offered the greatest sacrifice at Calvary’s cross to purchase our salvation. May God grant us grace to joyfully follow in the footsteps of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ.



*And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. **Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.***

1 Timothy 1:12-17

The mere thought of such ineffable bliss as promised to him in the Gospel and accepted by him in faith, causes the apostle to lift up his voice in grateful acclaim: But to the King of the Ages, immortal, that cannot be seen, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever! Amen. The apostle praises God as the eternal Ruler, who lives and reigns from everlasting to everlasting. This great King is immortal, deathless, beyond the power of destruction, in contrast to the temporal, transitory world. The opening of new world periods, the rise and fall of nations, everything that concerns this mundane sphere, does not influence the everlasting Ruler in His essence. He dwells in a sphere beyond the ken of mortal men; no man has seen nor can see Him (John 1:18; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 11:27; 1 John 4:12). His glory is too great and overpowering to be seen by the eyes of sinful men (Exodus 33:20). And He is the only God, the blessed and only Potentate; there is none beside Him, His glory will He not give to another nor His praise to graven images (Isaiah 42:8). To Him, therefore, the apostle and with him all Christians give glory and honor forever and ever. This is most certainly true.

Paul Kretzmann

Made in His Image

Gwen Wilson
Ridgefield, Washington

Dear Children,

Hello to all of you. Christmas is just passed and the new year is upon us. As I was listening to some Bible reading that was yet touching on that baby Jesus, I was in awe again of the generational line from which He came, and we get to serve yet Him in this new year.

We have so much to be thankful for in ALL that God has provided for those who believe. If you believe in Jesus Christ, that is not something you have decided to do, BUT rather and only it is the Holy Spirit that lives in your heart. Praise God for that.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. *Genesis 1:26-27: And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... So God created man in his own image: in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

Jesus always was, and is, and ever shall be. He was in heaven with God before the world began.

In the scripture above, God is speaking to Jesus about creating man in their image, to look like them as having a bodily form.

You remember how He made Adam from the dust and breathed life into him, and then He made Eve out of one of Adam's rib bones. These were the first two humans on earth and they were without earthly father or mother. They were from God. God was their Father.

When Adam and Eve sinned by eating of the fruit in the Garden of Eden, God was so displeased and He asked Eve, "What have you done?" Eve said, "The serpent tempted me, and I ate." God then spoke to the serpent and cursed him for what he had done and told him he would have to crawl on his belly all his days.

And then God said, *I will put enmity (opposition, hatred) between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed (children who would descend from her and through them and many generations would yet come Jesus, that promised Seed); it (that promised child Jesus) shall bruise thy head (Jesus would conquer and destroy Satan and all his power), and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Satan would only be able to turn men's hearts against Jesus and put His humanness to death, but he would have no victory in putting an end to the man Jesus and His teachings.) (Genesis 3:15)*

From Adam to Noah was 10 generations.

From Noah to Abraham was 10 generations.

From Abraham to David (Jesus' lineage) was 14 generations. God had spoken to Abraham and told him to go out of the land where he lived to a land God would show him. He was to live there and God promised to make of Abraham a great nation, and his name would be great and God would bless him. Abraham eventually ended up in the land of Canaan, the land promised to God's people.

Matthew 1:1-16 (You can read all the verses, but I will only use a few with familiar names):

1: The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2: Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judah and his brethren.

5: ... and Obed begat Jesse;

6: And Jesse begat David the king; and David begat Solomon

15: ...and Matthan begat Jacob;

16: And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

So as we celebrated Jesus' birth, we know He was born of the virgin Mary who was with child from the Holy Ghost. Jesus did not have an earthly father, yet was made in His Father's image. Yes, Mary carried Him in her womb but she was not the usual mother as we have, as she was chosen by God for a particular purpose: to bear the Savior. Nor was Joseph the father, but he took responsibility for being an earthly father to Jesus.

Can you see the mysterious way God has worked right from when He created the world? All that He ever did, He did of His own plan and design. He did not need help from mankind. He used many generations to carry out His plans, but He chose those who would play the key parts. We are yet those who are the fortunate ones to serve our God and be part of His grand plan. We can be so thankful today to say we believe in Jesus who was sent from heaven to earth, and to know He was sent to save us sinners from our sins.



The best is yet to come when Jesus comes again and we are found believing. We will go to heaven with Him and even though we will die from this life, it will only be temporary as we will get to live FOREVER; our life there goes on without ever ending. That is quite something to think about but it's true. I pray we will all keep believing in Jesus in this new year and pray for strength to hold God's promises diligently (showing care and concern) in our hearts and lives.

God be with you all in your work and play.

God's peace.

The Glory of the Gospel

Martin Luther

And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

2 Corinthians 3:4-6

Terrors of the Law

When man, conscious of his failure to keep God's command, is constantly urged by the Law to make payment of his debt and confronted with nothing but the terrible wrath of God and eternal condemnation, he cannot but sink into despair over his sins. Such is the inevitable consequence where the Law alone is taught with a view to attaining heaven through it. The vanity of such trust in works is illustrated in the case of the noted hermit mentioned in *Vitae Patrum* (Lives of the Fathers). For over seventy years this hermit had led a life of utmost austerity, and had many followers. When the hour of death came he began to tremble, and for three days was in a state of agony. His disciples came to comfort him, exhorting him to die in peace since he had led so holy a life. But he replied: "Alas, I truly have all my life served Christ and lived austere; but God's judgment greatly differs from that of men."

Note, this worthy man, despite the holiness of his life, has no acquaintance with any article but that of the divine judgment according to the Law. He knows not the comfort of Christ's Gospel. After a long life spent in the attempt to keep God's commandments and secure salvation, the Law now slays him through his own works. He is compelled to exclaim: "Alas, who knows how God will look upon my efforts? Who may stand before Him?" That means, to forfeit heaven through the verdict of his own conscience. The work he has wrought and his holiness of life avail nothing. They merely push him deeper into death, since he is without the solace of the Gospel, while others, such as the thief on the cross and the publican, grasp the comfort of the Gospel, the forgiveness of sins in Christ. Thus sin is conquered; they escape the sentence of the Law, and pass through death into life eternal.

Efficacy of the Gospel

Now the meaning of the contrasting clause, "the spirit giveth life," becomes clear. The reference is to naught else but the holy Gospel, a message of healing and salvation; a precious comforting word. It comforts and refreshes the sad heart. It wrests it out of the jaws of death and hell, as it were, and transports it to the certain hope of eternal life, through faith in Christ. When the last hour comes to the believer, and death and God's judgment appear before his eyes, he does not base his comfort upon his works. Even though he may have lived the holiest life possible, he says with Paul (1 Corinthians 4:4): "I know nothing against myself, yet I am not hereby justified."

These words imply being ill pleased with self, with the whole life, indeed, even the putting to death of self. Though the heart says, "By my works I am neither made righteous nor saved," which is practically admitting oneself to be worthy of death and condemnation, the Spirit extricates it from despair, through the Gospel faith, which confesses, as did St. Bernard in the hour of death: "Dear Lord Jesus, I am aware that my life at its best has been but worthy of condemnation, but I trust in the fact the Thou hast died for me and hast sprinkled me with blood from Thy holy wounds. For I have been baptized in Thy name and have given heed to Thy Word whereby Thou hast called me, awarded my grace and life, and bidden me believe. In this assurance I will pass out of life; not in uncertainty and anxiety, thinking, 'Who knows what sentence God in heaven will pass upon me?'"

The Christian must not utter such a question. The sentence against his life and works has long since been passed by the Law. Therefore, he must confess himself guilty and condemned. But he lives by the gracious judgment of God declared from heaven, whereby the sentence of the Law is overruled and reversed. It is this: *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.* (John 3:36)

II Corinthians 3:8-10

How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? **For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.** For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

When the consolation of the Gospel has once been received and it has wrested the heart from death and the terrors of hell, the Spirit's influence is felt. By its power God's Law begins to live in man's heart; he loves it, delights in it and enters upon its fulfilment. Thus eternal life begins here, being continued forever and perfected in the life to come.

Now you see how much more glorious, how much better, is the doctrine of the apostles—the New Testament—than the doctrine of those who preach merely great works and holiness without Christ. We should see in this fact an incentive to hear the Gospel with gladness. We ought joyfully to thank God for it when we learn how it has power to bring to men life and eternal salvation, and when it gives us assurance that the Holy Spirit accompanies it and is imparted to believers.

(continued on next page)

But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. (2 Corinthians 3:7-11)

Glory of the Gospel

Paul is in an ecstasy of delight, and his heart overflows in words of praise for the Gospel. Again he handles the Law severely, calling it a ministration, or doctrine, of death and condemnation. What term significant of greater abomination could he apply to God's Law than to call it a doctrine of death and hell? And again (Galatians 2:17), he calls it a "minister (or preacher) of sin;" and the message which proclaims a curse, saying, *As many as are of the works of the law are under a curse. (Galatians 3:10)* Absolute, then, is the conclusion that Law and works are powerless to justify before God; for how can a doctrine proclaiming only sin, death and condemnation justify and save?

Paul is compelled to speak thus, as we said above because of the infamous presumption of both teachers and pupils, in

that they permit flesh and blood to flirt with the Law, and make their own works which they bring before God their boast. Yet, nothing is effected but self-deception and destruction. For, when the Law is viewed in its true light, when its "glory," as Paul has it, is revealed, it is found to do nothing more than to kill man and sink him into condemnation.

Therefore, the Christian will do well to learn these texts of Paul and have an armor against the boasting of false teachers, and the torments and trials of the devil when he urges the Law and induces men to seek righteousness in their own works, tormenting their heart with the thought that salvation is dependent upon the achievements of the individual. The Christian will do well to learn this text, I say, so that in such conflicts he may take the devil's own sword, saying: "Why dost thou annoy me with talk of the Law and my works? What is the Law after all, however much you may preach it to me, but that which makes me feel the weight of sin, death and condemnation? Why should I seek therein righteousness before God?"

When the glory and holiness of Christ, revealed through the preaching of the Gospel, is rightly perceived then the glory of the Law—which is but a feeble and transitory glory—is seen to be not really glorious. It is mere dark clouds in contrast to the light of Christ shining to lead us out of sin, death and hell unto God and eternal life. ~

The Right Place of Watching

A. Laitinen [From Sanomia Siionista, Dec. 1897]

Submitted by Ralph and Barbara Somero; New Ipswich, New Hampshire

WHY ARE NOT ALL CHRISTIANS of one mind? Why do some already in the beginning fall away from the road of righteousness? It has been said that the fault is in the birth, or they are born too soon, and have not been awakened.

But I think the bigger fault is this, that they have not been watchful in the right place, they have ceased from watchfulness and prayer. For some have sometimes fallen away, whose awakening has been deep and steadfast. Some have become faithful although their birth has been doubted. The heartfelt and spiritual studying of the cross of the Lord Jesus is the right place of watching and a place of refuge. That is still the regeneration and protection of the strength of God for our soul. Who rejects this, regardless of how awakened he may be, falls from grace and goes on the road of sin.

Looking and studying on the death and wounds of Christ is living grace; His flesh is the true food, and His blood is the true drink. There we shall come to know that we are partaking of His death and strength of His resurrection. In all sorrow, pain and temptations, the death of our Lord is a comfort and healthful blessing. We stay under the cross with love and prayer. The place of watching makes the heart one-minded and remaining in grace. Only in the shelter of the holy wounds of the Lord are we victorious over the temptations and accusations of the enemy of the soul. Only in the holy wounds of Christ are we able to sleep the blessed sleep of death, no matter how the enemy of the soul would tempt us.

The ones who have fallen into the works of the flesh are not the ones who have in spirit and truth been watching under the cross with heartfelt prayer, and in spiritual assembly with Jesus. Whoever draws grace in the spirit, all the poor and hungry souls in this place, will quench the thirst and hunger of their souls. They will not die on this wilderness journey but will arrive at the promised land before the sun sets and before the great day of anger drowns the whole city of corruption.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us stay until death at this blessed place of watching by God's grace and prayer in Jesus.



But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:7-11

The King of Kings

Lois Matson
Yacolt, Washington

THROUGHOUT THE SCRIPTURE, Jesus was given the title of King. Some who treated Jesus like royalty meant it sincerely, even if they didn't exactly understand the kingship of Christ, while others meant the honorific mockingly.

The wise men who came to Jerusalem to worship Jesus when He was but a child asked, "Where is He that is born **King of the Jews**?" They brought Jesus a royal gift of gold and bowed in worship to Him.

When Nathaniel met Jesus, he exclaimed: "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are **the King of Israel!**"

At the Triumphal Entry, Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem. The people who were present shouted, "Hosanna! Blessed is **the King of Israel** who comes in the name of the Lord!" And the prophet Zechariah had foretold this many years before: "Fear not, daughter of Zion! Behold, your King is coming to you sitting on a donkey's colt."

Pilate seemed confused by Jesus, asking if He was the King of the Jews. After Jesus was sentenced to death, Pilate had an inscription in three languages placed over the cross: **Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews**. Pilate refused to change the inscription at the urging of the chief priests, who wanted him to write that Jesus had CLAIMED to be the King of the Jews.

The mockers were abundant. When Jesus was brought to trial, the soldiers of the governor dressed Him in a scarlet robe, like royalty. They twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a reed scepter in His right hand. They knelt before Jesus, saying, "Hail, **King of the Jews!**" They spit on Him and struck Him on the head with the reed.

At the crucifixion, the soldiers taunted Jesus, saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" The chief priests and scribes said mockingly among themselves, "He saved others, but He can't save Himself. Let the Christ, **the King of Israel**, come down from the cross so we can see and believe." Can't you hear the scorn in their voices?

Several New Testament writers mention the King of Kings. The Apostle John writes:

*These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for **he is Lord of lords, and King of kings**: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.* (Revelation 17:14)

*And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, **King of Kings, and Lord of Lords**.* (Revelation 19:11-16)

The Apostle Paul bursts forth in a doxology to the immortal King of All Ages more than once in his first letter to Timothy:

*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. **Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*** (1 Timothy 1:15-17)

*I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall shew, who is **the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*** (1 Timothy 6:13-16)



The kingship of Jesus the Christ is eternal. We are members of His kingdom, living in the present but looking always to the future, when His kingship will be realized in fullness. ~

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Poverty and Blessedness

Andrew Mickelsen
June 1958 CM

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3

When God begins His work, He first convicts man of his sins. This is called **awakening**. In *Ephesians 5:14* we read, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

When the conscience of man becomes awakened, he realizes his transgressions and becomes spiritually poor. He knows that he has nothing to offer God except a sin-stained heart. In an unawakened state man may count his virtues and place them on a balance with his faults and say to himself, "I am not the worst of men; my virtues outweigh my faults. I am not an extortioner; I make an honest living. I am not unjust; I try to treat all people alike. I am not an adulterer; I try to abide by the codes of cultured men. I fast, pray, and support my church." This is the description that Jesus gives of an unawakened man in *Luke 18:11-12*.

The Apostle Paul thought he was blameless in the sight of God before he awoke to the realization of his sins, *...touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless, (Philippians 3:6)* but after his awakening he saw himself as the chief of sinners, *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. (1 Timothy 1:15)* Thus, awakening causes a great change in the life and thoughts of man. Now he has experienced what it means to be poor in spirit. Now his soul joins King David in his cry, *Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. (Psalm 51:9-10)* He is so spiritually bankrupt that his only recourse is to beg, but it is a shame to beg; is there no other way out of this predicament? The problem is vital; the struggle is great. If ever a man wrestled with himself, he does so now. Pride is a mighty foe and so is the devil. Bruised and beaten in heart and mind, he struggles alone. Pride will not allow him to tell anyone of his struggles. In secret he cries out, "My sins, my sins!" His conscience will not give him a moment's respite. Finally his heart breaks, and like Isaiah, he cries in despair, *Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. (Isaiah 6:5)* The awakened man has looked into the mirror of God's Word and has seen the Lord of Hosts in His purity and holiness and he himself so very defiled. The only deduction that he can make is that he is undone. The work of God has caused him to become broken-hearted and filled with sorrow over his sins. Does he feel blessed? Not at all! He feels poor, wretched, and miserable, but, regardless of his feelings, he is blessed because God has chosen him to become an heir of His kingdom, and has begun a good work in him—a work that the Lord will also finish, for He is the Author and Finisher of our faith.

This is an experience that childhood Christians do not have to such a degree as prodigal sons, but spiritual poverty is a continuous experience for wide-awake Christians because they see their mistakes and know they are sinners, though saved by grace. This knowledge of sin keeps them poor in spirit, so that they must always depend on God and often long to hear the blessed Gospel of the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name and atoning blood. They are not blessed because they are poor in spirit, but because, *theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (Luke 12:32) Blessed be His holy name! Amen.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

Isaiah 40:1-2

We have a Savior who has paid for ALL of our sins; He has paid DOUBLE for all our sins! He paid for them with His own blood on the cross of Calvary. He does not look upon us with a mean heart and spirit, but He wants to lead us as a shepherd leads his flock. He tenderly cares for us and will raise us up when we fall; He will give us strength when we become weary. He has given unto us His Spirit, that Spirit of truth which will guide us into all truth. The truth shall make us free.

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