

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.

July 2013



Be Merciful

Martin Luther

Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Luke 6:36

This Gospel describes the works of love to our neighbor in temporal things. The Lord here describes these in few words, for He had just said we should love our enemies, do good to them that hate us, bless them that curse us, pray for them that despitefully use us; if they smite us on one cheek, we should offer also the other; and from him that taketh away thy cloak withhold not thy coat also. All this He here condemns in a short conclusion, and in summing up all, says: "Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful." Here you see described as in a nutshell all the good works we are to do to one another, as our heavenly Father has done to us and still does without ceasing.

You have often heard that we need not do good works to God, but to our neighbor. We cannot make God stronger nor richer by our works, but we can make our neighbor stronger and richer with them; he is in need of them, and hence they should be directed to him and not to God. This you have often heard and you have it now in your ears; I would to God, that it might come also into your hands and feet.

Therefore observe here what a perversion it is for man to exercise himself in doing works to God, which should be done to his neighbor; and then centers his faith in men and saints, which he should center alone in God. Turn this around, and then it is right, thus: faith must belong alone to God, whoever receives the divine works, God alone does them, and the same works of God we receive alone through faith. Then we should apply ourselves to our neighbor and arrange all our affairs to the end that they serve our neighbor. Before God all should be done in pure faith alone. The reason of this is because no one can help us but God, and what we have in body and soul we have alone from God, and in Him alone should we anchor our heart.

Now, they turn it around thus, so that they center faith, which is due to God, upon themselves and other

people and they fall down before their own devised idols and what the great masters have invented, and place their confidence in them. Is not that very Satan and death? As God in *Jeremiah 2:13* says: *For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.* Again he says in *verse 35* to the people: *Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned.*

First he says that the bride has become a harlot and has turned from God; the living fountain from which flow life, salvation and all good, they have forsaken. Secondly, they turn to their own invention, and make their own fountain in which there is no water. Thus also the Papists build upon their own inventions, saying mass, fasting, praying and the like; they indeed appear very much as though they were a fountain, as though they would draw from it life and salvation, yet it cannot hold any water; and they forsake God, the living fountain.

In this manner God says: They boldly rise up against Me; I shall not be angry with them, they insist their ways and doings are right and enter into judgment with Me. Behold, this is their other sin, that they are determined to defend their own doings. Therefore God says: I will enter into judgment with you and show you how base you have become, in that you have continually gone your own way.

See, thus faith belongs to God alone and it should acquire for us from God alone what we need in temporal and spiritual matters; and it should acquire all in a way that it does not think it has merited it. This faith should later again flow forth from our heart's depths to our neighbor freely and unhindered in good works; not that we wish to rest our salvation in them; for God will not have that, but wishes the conscience to rest in Himself alone. Just like a bride must cleave to the bridegroom alone, and to no one else, so does God require also from us that we confide only in Him. ~

To Redeem Them That Were Under the Law

C.O. Rosenius

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Galatians 4:4-5)

Oh, the eternal love of God that loved the world to such an extent! We are given here the reason why the Son of God became a human being, what His great errand was, and the purpose of His arrival in the world! He was *made under the law to redeem them that were under the law*. Oh, the black darkness of unbelief that will not allow us to accept this! Look at those who really believe that God has given us His Son to fulfill the Law for us. I am not surprised that they love such a God and Savior. I am not surprised that they become fervent in spirit because of the high heavenly delight and peace and love that fills them. I am not surprised that they are smitten with zeal against anything less that claims to make us righteous and holy. When God wanted to save fallen human beings and to redeem them from the judgment of the Law, what was He to do? It had to happen so that not even one jot or tittle of divine righteousness would suffer (Matthew 5:18). And the apostle says that it happened by God's own Son being made under the Law. He became a servant and fulfilled the Law on our behalf. Oh, the matchless love of God!

Do you believe what the whole of Scriptures testify, that only because of Christ having fulfilled the Law, yes, only because of the righteousness of Christ we will become righteous? Then the only question remaining to check your assurance will be: "Can I be certain that Christ has fulfilled the Law to the full satisfaction of the eternal Father?" You can certainly rest assured. Christ *has* fully kept the Law. He loved the Father with all His heart, and with all His soul, and with all His power, and with all His mind. It was His meat to do the will of His Father. Equally completely He has also loved His neighbor as Himself, so much so, that He even forgot Himself and poured out His soul unto death, was numbered with the transgressors; and bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors (Isaiah 53:12). He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Philippians 2:8). Because He was made under the Law, it also meant that He was able to take on Himself the judgment and curse of the

Law which overhangs sinners. It is written: *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. (Galatians 3:13) Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Hebrews 2:14-15)* So He has done all for us. Praised and magnified be His name! He was the only one who could do it.

But now everybody should make sure he gives Christ the glory for the work, i.e., should bear in mind and acknowledge that his Lord has done all well. Words cannot describe how deplorable it is when the devil so deceives our senses that we live our time as if we did not know the real value of all that Christ has done. We read, sing and say that God has given us His own Son to be our Brother, our Fulfiller of the Law, and our Lamb of the sin-offering, and yet some in their thoughts and spiritual efforts declare their belief that in themselves they should be unimpeachable fulfillers of the Law in order to please God and be certain of His grace and friendship. By their lips only they praise the Mediator with many great and beautiful words but then turn to works in order to reconcile themselves with God.

There are many who all their lifetime have not had any real service and use for Christ. Let us then stop for a moment and think of what the Scriptures say about the use and service of this great gift which God gave us when His Son was made under the Law. The apostle says it was to *redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*. Have you never seen or heard these words? Should we not at once praise the divine love and acknowledge that what our great Fulfiller of the Law has done is true and sufficient for us. The apostle here says that He has not done it for Himself, but in order to redeem those who were under the Law. Let everybody who wants to be a Christian stop for a moment to consider seriously what the sum and core of the Scriptures are that Christ is the end of the Law! *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Romans 10:4) For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. (Romans 8:3) ~*

Cornerstone of Human Government

Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof. (Leviticus 25:10)

Why is it that, next to the birthday of the Savior of the world, your most joyous and most venerated festival returns on this day [the Fourth of July]? Is it not that, in the chain of human events, the birthday of the nation is indissolubly linked with the birthday of the Savior? That it forms a leading event in the progress of the Gospel dispensation? Is it not that the Declaration of Independence first organized the social compact on the foundation of the Redeemer's mission upon earth? That it laid the cornerstone of human government upon the first precepts of Christianity?

John Adams

July 4, 1837, speech at Newburyport, Massachusetts



This One Is for You!

Mark Sunnarborg
Rhineland, Wisconsin

This one is for you! Please share your writings (findings) with others, maybe with the *Christian Monthly*. They may even publish your article. As you share your findings with others your walk of faith and joy will increase. You will find God is faithful and your fellowship with other believers/unbelievers will bring you closer to God. Letting your light shine forth will show others who Jesus is, that He lives within your heart and that He is your beacon of hope living within you.

God's peace!

Editor's Note: You may send writings by email to cm@apostoliclutheran.org, or through the website at christianmonthlyalca.org/articles or by mail to *Christian Monthly*, Lois Matson, Editor, PO Box 2996, Battle Ground, WA 98604. Thank you for your articles.

Write an article on the tabernacle of God as it is recorded in the Old Testament, using verses from the Bible. Write on the dwelling place of God, that God no longer reveals Himself to men this way. Write how God now dwells in the cleansed hearts of men. (Again, use Bible verses). Write how man could not make a dwelling place acceptable for God, but God Himself had to do this work. Write that this work is through the redemptive work of His Son on the cross of Calvary. Write how God now dwells in your heart and in the hearts of men. Write that this is a place God Himself has cleansed, purified, made holy, a place where the blood of the Lamb has been sprinkled and the Holy Spirit dwells. Insert verses from the Bible on God dwelling in the hearts of men, thus showing the grace of a loving God has been poured out into the lives of undeserving men.

We Are To Pray and Not Worry

Al Wuori
Tapiola, Michigan

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (Philippians 4:6)

We, as oft-erring mortals as well as Christians, seem prone to worry about our spirituality as well as all matters in our lives, our children and families, finances, homes, work, etc. We are sometimes led to worry night and day over situations close to us. Yet we are told by God's Word that we are not to worry but to pray instead. Worry accomplishes nothing, whereas prayer avails much. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16)*

That is not to say we should not be concerned. There is a great difference between concern and worry. Concern is a caring attitude, as for example the Word tells us to care for one another, *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:32)* This caring attitude includes doing things for others. *But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. (1 John 3:17-18)* There are other matters that certainly may and should concern us, such as our families and lives, even our faith. However, rather than worry we should prayerfully submit those concerns to our Heavenly Father.

We may wonder why worries beset us so easily. If we consider closely our own hearts, we know that therein is a measure of unbelief. This unbelief may manifest itself as not fully trusting that God will take care of matters or that He will not take care of them as WE would hope. We sometime put more trust in ourselves, when we should put our trust in God. That causes worry, even worrying that maybe we should, but can't, take care of our own problems.

We have a loving, caring Heavenly Father who implores us to submit our cares unto Him. May we be led by His Word and by the Holy Spirit to put our full trust in God. *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. (1 Peter 5:7)*

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.



Grace—An Act of God

The word of promise engenders faith and at the same time reveals to faith the truth of the situation—the power and persistence of sin (unbelief). It reveals the duality. Grace is not a mysterious supernatural power which operates somehow secretly behind the scenes. Grace is the divine pronouncement itself, the morning star, the flash of lightning exploding in our darkness which reveals all truth *simultaneously*, the truth about God and the truth about us... It is a re-creative act of God, something He does precisely by speaking unconditionally. It is like the "let there be light" which reveals the darkness to be darkness simultaneously with its own lightening.

Gerhard O. Forde



Gwen Wilson
Ridgefield, Washington

Dear Children all around the world,
I am hoping and praying this finds you well and having a good day. I am going to look around in the Bible and give you some verses and you can fill in the blanks. This will be a little like homework, but it is a good way to get into the Bible and see how to find answers. You can have someone older help you if needed, and I hope you both can enjoy this.

In the beginning God created the _____
and the _____. Genesis 1:1

Thou shalt have no other _____ before me.
Exodus 20:3

He is the Rock, his work is _____; for all of his ways
are _____; a God of _____
and without _____,
and _____ is he. Deuteronomy 32:4

And the people said unto Joshua, The _____
our _____ will we _____,
and his voice will we _____. Joshua 24:24

David was _____ years old when he began to
reign, and he reigned _____ years. 2 Samuel 5: 4

O give thanks unto the _____, for he is
_____ : for his _____
endureth forever. Psalm 107:1

Let everything that hath _____ praise the
_____. Praise ye the _____.
Psalm 150:6

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose
under heaven:
A time to be _____, and a time to _____;
a time to _____, and a time to _____
_____ that which is planted;
A time to _____, and a time to _____;
a time to _____, and a
time to _____;
A time to _____, and a time to _____;
a time to _____, and a time to _____;
A time to cast away _____, and a time to
_____ together;
a time to _____, and a time to refrain
from _____;
A time to _____, and a time to _____; a time
to _____, and a time to _____;
A time to _____, and a time to
_____ ; a time to _____
_____, and a time to _____;
A time to _____, and a time to _____;
a time of _____, and a time of _____.
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

God's peace.

At Eventide

...at evening time it shall be light. (Zechariah 14:7)



I love to connect our word *serene* with the Latin word evening, as well as with its own mother-word *serenus*—clear, or bright. Often, after a windy, stormy day, there comes at evening a clear, bright stillness, so that at evening time there is serenity as well as light. So often in life's evening there comes a lull, a time of peaceful waiting "between the lights," the burden-weighted heat of the day behind, the radiance of eternity before. Perhaps the day has been in truth "life's little day," swiftly ebbing to its close; perhaps the worn, tired pilgrim has lived even beyond the measure of three score years and ten. In either case it is in truth the evening.

The dear face reflects "eternity's wonderful beauty," the sweet, serene spirit is freshened by dew from the heavenly Hermon, the fragrance of evening flowers fills the air, the songs of birds come in tender, satisfied cadences, and even the clouds which remain are enriched and made radiant by rays from the Sun of Righteousness.

We whose evening is not yet, are entranced with the exquisite blending of the warm human affection with the celestial flame kindled from the sacred altar. With hushed souls we minister and are ministered unto, until, too soon, the twilight time is past, and the evening and the morning have become the eternal day.

Christian Observer
Submitted by Linda Wirkkala; Castle Rock, Washington



Treasures

Mike Kulla
Yacolt, Washington

Suppose I told you that I have a big pirate's treasure chest full of gold coins worth a couple of million dollars. This big chest is buried somewhere, but I won't tell you where it is buried. If I told you I would share the treasure with you if you can find it, you would think, "Big deal! Why should I waste time looking for it?" If I hinted at where it might be buried, you might spend some time looking for it or thinking about where it could be. But if I told you exactly where the treasure was buried, you'd be running out the door to get it right now. We have a better treasure than gold can buy. Jesus is our Treasure!

Jesus was buried for three days in a tomb, but He is different than a chest of gold. We didn't have to go and find Him; He finds us. He raised Himself from the dead and came out of the tomb. If Jesus hadn't arisen from the dead, His death wouldn't have done us any good. But He DID rise, and He LIVES. 2 Corinthians 4:7 says that we have this Treasure in earthen vessels. In us! We have Jesus in us!

Are we going to hide this treasure we have within us and not share it with anyone? No! One of our Sunday School songs says, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine." Don't hide your light under a bushel.

There are many ways to let our lights shine so people can see this Treasure we have. The Bible says that even a child is known by his actions. For example, how do we treat others? Are we respectful to our parents and teachers? Are we kind to people who others are making fun of? Can people see God's love in us by how we act? Are we willing to stand up for the truth and what is right, even if it's not popular or even if we may suffer persecution for it? Are we honest and moral? The list could go on and on.

But sometimes we need to talk about Jesus our Treasure. Sometimes we need to tell people about Him. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem and the shepherds

went to see Him, they left and spread the word that had been told them concerning this Child Jesus.

Even young people can share what you know about Jesus. Don't think that you are too young, or that you don't know enough to tell people about your Jesus. What did the Lord say to the prophet Jeremiah when he said, "I'm only a child; I don't know how to speak"? He said, *Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. (Jeremiah 1:7-8)* Jesus will be with you, just like He was with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace. Jesus promises He will be with you!

I have a friend, a work acquaintance whom I've known for about 20 years. I've never talked to him about Jesus. Maybe I've mentioned that I will be going to church over the weekend or something like that, but I've never really talked to him about Jesus. One day a young man—a child—was with me when I went to this work friend's house. While I was there, the keys got locked in my truck. While I was trying to break into my truck and then putting my friend's tools away, he was visiting with the youth who was with me. As I walked around the corner of the truck, I could hear this youngster asking my friend if he believed in God. That really convicted me because I had never spoken to him about the Lord. The really great part is that recently this friend told me that he is going to church. Praise the Lord! I'm not saying it is because this youth talked to him that he is attending church. That doesn't matter. He was talking to my friend from a heart of love and concern that this man would know the Lord. God does the work in peoples' hearts. God may have been working in many ways on my friend. We just plant the seeds.

Be bold to speak, even if it feels awkward. The Spirit will let you know when you should say something and give you the words to say. I want to encourage you to share with others about this Treasure that we have, so that they know exactly what it is. ~

Worthy Is the Lamb



Come, let us join our cheerful songs
With angels round the throne.
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
But all their joys are one.

"Worthy the Lamb that died," they cry,
"To be exalted thus!"
"Worthy the Lamb," our hearts reply,
"For He was slain for us!"

Jesus is worthy to receive Honor and power divine;
And blessings more than we can give,
Be, Lord, forever Thine.

Let all that dwell above the sky,
And air and earth and seas,
Conspire to lift Thy glories high,
And speak Thine endless praise!

The whole creation join in one,
To bless the sacred Name
Of Him Who sits upon the throne,
And to adore the Lamb. *Isaac Watts*

And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. Revelation 5:9

The Millennium

John H. Lumijarvi, February 1920

July 1970 CM; Submitted by Ben Johnson; Astoria, Oregon

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. (Revelation 20:6)

Many expounders of the Scriptures believe that a time is at hand when Christ will come to earth with His saints to reign here a thousand years. They believe this to be the first resurrection. These truly are deep and high matters to comprehend. We will state our understanding in a few words.

Before the birth of Christ, the old pharisaic church expected an earthly savior, even as the Jews still await His coming. This is the result of a wrong understanding of the Holy Scriptures. Only a few awaited a spiritual Savior, namely those who sighed in their sorrow and cried to God in the spirit. The Savior came not to be an earthly king, but to save the souls of men, or the world, from the power of sin, death and the devil, as was promised already in paradise. Today, also, there are but few who long for and await the spiritual Savior to save their souls from the power of the prince of hell. We believe that by the blessing of Jesus and the grace of God, we have food, clothing, and all the supports of the body already here in this world, and eternal life in the world to come. *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (2 Peter 3:13)* The millennial teachers explain this Scripture to mean that Jesus will come with His saints to reign a thousand years on this earth. But Jesus Himself says *...lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. (Matthew 28:20)*

He has come once, born in the stable of Bethlehem years ago, and fulfilled all His Father commanded Him. Reconciliation came through Him on the cross at Golgotha, not for us only, but for all the world. He will come in glory a second time to judge all men and will not tarry here a thousand years. We may read of His coming to judgment (in Matthew 25:31-46, and in other parts of the Scripture), wherein all the ungodly will be destroyed, and the righteous shall be invited to partake of their gracious reward before Him and the glorious face of the Father and the holy angels from everlasting to everlasting.

There are two deaths and two resurrections, according to the Holy Scriptures. There are spiritual death and eternal death. The words quoted above treat of the first resurrection and the second death.

The first resurrection takes place in man in new birth. Therein he is changed from death to life, from sin to righteousness. This new creation occurs in the Holy Spirit by the death of Jesus and by the power of His resurrection. In it the sins of one who is penitent and has heartfelt sorrow are forgiven in the name and blood of Jesus. He is thus freed from the accusation of the law. He who believes is born a child unto God and is raised from the dead by the power of Jesus, as the Apostle Paul writes in *Ephesians 2:6:*

And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This is the first resurrection. He also says, And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. (Ephesians 2:1) And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses. (Colossians 2:13)

Then follow these words of advice to the awakened: *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (Colossians 3:1)*

Christ reigns on earth with His born-again children a thousand years. Every born-again child of God has begun to live a thousand years with Christ and His saints. Christ reigns by His holy doctrine in His own congregation, which is the kingdom of heaven. His law is written in Matthew 18, and other places in the Scriptures. He reigns in grace and truth.

The ungodly and heretics are not obedient to Christ's government on earth. No form of government seems to be acceptable to them. Therefore it is said, *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. (Revelation 20:5)* Peter says, *For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Peter 4:6)*

All the dead have not risen from under the power of sin, and on them rests eternal death. The voice of God cries powerfully by the mouth of His prophets *...Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. (Ephesians 5:14)* A whole generation has passed since the beginning of this precious visitation when God awakened Provost L. L. Laestadius to cry out to the spiritually dead. Thus throughout the ages our dear Lord has called the nations unto repentance. Thanks be to God that He has awakened us when we were dead in sin!

A great multitude in white robes still follows God and the Lamb in Europe and America. Let us, in faith, in hope, and in love follow Him: *Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 1:5-6)*

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved

city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. (Revelation 20:7-9)

The spirit of antichrist is now in the world. It has always persecuted Christ and His holy congregation and shall do so to the end. Read 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2. *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.* (2 Thessalonians 2:7) The Revised Version follows the Finnish text more closely: "The mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now until he (the antichrist) be taken out of the way." Then it will be loosed. This spirit teaches disobedience to God's Holy Word and strives to bring about lawlessness on earth. Oh, the times and customs that already are in the "Christian" world!

However, blessed are they whose names are written in heaven. Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven and whose sins are covered. *Blessed is the man unto*

whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. (Psalm 32:2) Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. (Luke 12:42-43)

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (2 Peter 3:8) The martyrs and all the righteous have been partakers of the millennium, as we now are also, in the kingdom of grace and the forgiveness of sins. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. (Revelation 2:7)* The overcomers are the believers. *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (1 John 5:4) ~*

Words Without Knowledge

Pastor Jay Weidner
Laurium, Michigan

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place; That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it? It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment. And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken. Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all. Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof, That thou shouldst take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldst know the paths to the house thereof? (Job 38:1-20)

Only a gracious God could have spoken such kind words. It is one of the greatest temptations known to human beings to try to speak for God, and Job and his friends had just succumbed. They had indeed spoken words without knowledge. Yet God in His infinite mercy responded with fatherly care by refocusing their attention on Him who knows all things because He made them. He confronts Job not with anger, but with correction. He restores Job to his right mind. God alone fixes and determines events; He alone knows a thing from beginning to end.

We often need the lesson of Job because it is too easy in today's world of mindless information to begin to think that we can speak for God. We utter words without knowledge and literally "darken counsel." Still God with a fatherly heart forgives our misspeak and brings us by His Spirit to the right mind of an obedient child. This is one of the reasons there is great comfort in reading Job: to see how our marvelous God and Father gently chastises His children, bringing them to repentance through kindness and renewing their steps on the path He has designed for them. Thanks be to our God and Father for Jesus' sake. ~

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The Power of Prayer

There is an eye that never sleeps
Beneath the wing of night;
There is an ear that never shuts
When sink the beams of light.

There is an arm that never tires
When human strength gives way;
There is a love that never fails
When earthly loves decay.

That eye is fixed on seraph throngs;
That arm upholds the sky;
That ear is filled with angel songs;
That love is throned on high.

But there's a power which man can wield
When mortal aid is vain,
That eye, that arm, that love to reach,
That listening ear to gain.

That power is prayer, which soars on high,
Through Jesus, to the throne,
And moves the Hand which moves the world,
To bring salvation down.

James C. Wallace

God's Work

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Acts 10:34-35

In the life and ministry of Simon Peter we see how God made an outstanding witness to His truth from most unlikely material. Who would have thought of the rugged, impetuous, profane fisherman Simon ever becoming the eloquent spiritual preacher, whose burning words would be used to the conversion of thousands of souls? But God works with what He brings, not simply with what He finds. Simon the fisherman, regenerated, becomes Peter the apostle, to whose sermons and letters the whole world owes a debt that it can never repay...

God works with what He brings, not simply with what He finds.

Like his brother apostle, Paul, he delighted in the true grace of God, which knows no national or racial boundaries. Hence his messages are a delight of believers from among the nations, whom he once despised, as well as among those of Jewry, who have found in the Lord Jesus the promised Messiah.

H.A. Ironside



Expected

Leona Matson

Langley, British Columbia

And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:3

I travel a lot and I don't often prearrange much for my destination. I'm used to finding my way through unknown airports, negotiating different means of transportation into strange cities, and searching for accommodation with minimal amounts of the local language. I enjoy the unexpectedness that comes with traveling this way. However, when my sister Amanda and I flew into Johannesburg for the first time in 2009, we knew our cousin Dennis Hilman would be waiting for us. And was he ever waiting! As soon as we walked through the doors we could see him smiling, waving, and holding a beautiful bouquet of flowers! He greeted us with a hug, introduced us to Bishop Mphahlele, and the two of them proceeded to expertly usher us through the airport and into the city. Because of their care, we quickly felt as though we belonged.

I enjoy my usual helter-skelter method of travel, but it was very special to be expected and met with such love and care! I thought later that it was just a tiny taste of what it will be like to arrive in heaven. There too we will be expected; there too we will be welcomed by a beloved family member; and there too, although we've never been there before, we will belong!

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. (Romans 8:16-17)