

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.

March 2013

Easter = Victory

Pastor Andrew G. Kandoll
Champion, Michigan

Dear Friends in Christ,
God's peace! Happy and Blessed Easter!

Easter is the triumph of good over evil. *Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. (Matthew 28:5-6)* When we celebrate the resurrection let us consider the cost of victory, that we may soberly, joyfully and thankfully acknowledge the One who fought the battle and gave His life blood...*the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)* We also gratefully acknowledge the faithful Christian parents, family, friends, pastors, teachers and elders who have prayed for us, raised, taught, loved, encouraged, forgave, disciplined, and inspired us and set a living example of faith by God's grace.

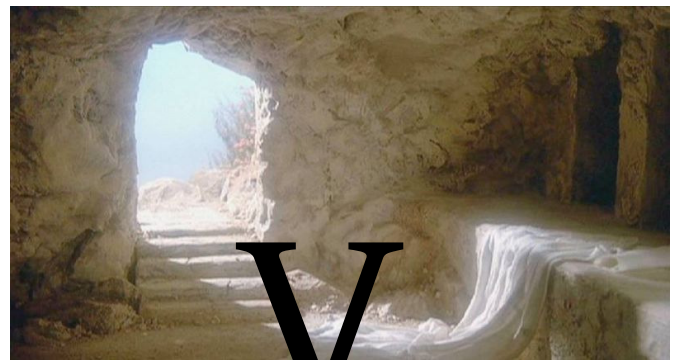
Victory is not easily won. It is most often a long-planned, hard-fought battle that finally results in the defeat of the opponent or enemy. Victory comes through overcoming struggle and difficulties. The greater the deliverance, the sweeter the victory. *I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously... (Exodus 15:1)* *God answereth him in the joy of his heart. (Ecclesiastes 5:20)*

The victory of Easter began before man was created. It was "eternal in the heavens." God's eternal purpose and will is that man should be saved. God has given all for victory: the creation of the earth and heavens, and mankind; the long years of waiting; turning the events, nations and people of world history unto His purpose; saving and working in the hearts of His people through the Old Testament period and since then; the writing of Scripture; the battle in the heavens (Revelation 12:7); the death of His Son Jesus; the giving of the Holy Spirit; and preparing a place for us eternally.

Resurrection victory has come at a great price and we receive it only through faith, when our knees are bowed at the name of Jesus and we confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God,*

thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:5-11)

Victory has been won for us by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Victory is delivered to us through faith. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world. *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)*



Victory is not easily won.
It is most often a long-planned, hard-fought battle...

Hebrews 11:33-40 records the faith of the saints: *Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life*

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again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. (1 Peter 2:21-25)

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Romans 8:11) And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. (1 John 5:6b)

Rejoice in the amazing victory of the Easter resurrection, believing our great battle-scarred Savior, who took our sins upon Himself on the center cross of Calvary, nailing them to the tree. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. (John 20:21-23) And ye are witnesses of these things. (Luke 24:48)

I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. (Psalm 132:16) And we shall see Him face to face, and give Him glory, saved by grace. Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will to all people.

In God's peace and love.



For You, For Me

US Army, London, England
April 7, 1944

the late Wiljo Kandoll
Submitted by Pastor Ron Holmgren
Hockinson, Washington

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Today we again observe Good Friday as we have for years, though in different surroundings. But yet how many of us stop to ask ourselves, "Why does our Savior suffer such bitter agony and torment?" Have we stopped to ponder that it is because of His love for us poor condemned sinners and because of God's terrible righteous wrath and love?

Our Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, was alone capable of fulfilling God's righteous law, opening the gates of heaven for us and closing the mouth of hell. Not through any merit of our own but of His boundless love for us He did all this, ...that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

Therefore on this day, let us again behold our Savior as He kneels down to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane. When the agony of our sins is upon Him the torment is so great that even the sweat from His holy body is as great drops of blood that fall onto the sin-cursed earth. And why does He pray in such agony? Why does He say, *Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.* (Luke 22:42) An angel from heaven appeared unto Him to strengthen Him.

Then let us follow Him as He is taken before the chief priests and scribes and the elders of the people, before Pontius Pilate and Herod. He is mocked, spit upon, blasphemed, ridiculed and cursed, and beaten with manifold stripes, from which wounds holy blood already is flowing. Also a crown of thorns is pressed upon His head causing blood to flow from it. Then He is led away to be nailed on the cross where He cries out, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.* (Luke 23:34) And after a time He dies saying, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit...* (Luke 23:46)

Is it not a heart-rending sight to see our own Creator suffer so bitterly for us? And when we realize that we were there also murdering Him with our sins, does it not cause us to cry out, "O God, have mercy on me, a sinner. Do not let me sink into Hell in my unbelief. My Savior has suffered so much agony for me already, don't let me grieve Him any longer, but smite me with Your mighty hand so I will humble myself to ask, What must I do to be saved? Give me the grace of repentance that I could be a joy to my loving Savior, that I would follow His holy footsteps in faith through all the storms of life and then, when my earthly race is run, be taken into the glory of heaven to sing praises amid that great blood-washed throned forever and ever." Amen.

Wiljo Kandoll went to be with the Lord on April 7, 1991, exactly 47 years after he penned this meditation during his time in the US Army in WW2.

Bright Hope for Tomorrow

Mark Sunnarborg
Rhineland, Wisconsin

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be multiplied unto you today and forever. Amen!

The testimony of the Lord is the work of God in the hearts of men. The Word of God calls saying *...though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. (Isaiah 1:18)* As you hear the Word of God, seeds of grace are planted into your heart. These seeds began to bear fruit unto repentance; a broken and contrite spirit is now evident. The seeds of God's Word are able to work the work of God within. You now hear the Spirit calling unto you, "Make haste and know your salvation draws nigh. Today is the day of grace; tomorrow it may be too late." God is calling you unto repentance toward Him. The day of salvation may slip away from you if you wait. The cry begins within and makes known your sin and unbelief. "I cannot bear my sins anymore. Is there grace for me? Could I have or hear my sins forgiven so I may have peace for my soul?"

God's servants—His ambassadors—will proclaim unto you the forgiveness of all your sins in the name and blood of Jesus. Now peace is yours, the peace that Jesus came to bring. You now have what kings and kingdoms have been seeking. They have and do cry, "Where can I find peace?" You now know and have the testimony of God. Jesus says in *John 14:27: Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* Have you recognized that as God reveals His love to you, your fear is gone?

God causes us to be humble before Him and His Word. Our exaltation is when God calls us His sons, when the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirits that we are the

children of God and our names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

You now have a home in heaven, which grants you strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow. You can say: "Father, You have made me pure and holy in Your sight, cleansing me from all my sins and granting me faith and a believing heart. I am Yours and You are mine; I need no other. I have found what kings and kingdoms have been looking for from the beginning of time."

God has given you His kingdom: righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. His Spirit has been given to live and abide within you. This Spirit is the earnest payment God has made that He will return and claim you, His restored child. A clean heart, understanding and wisdom you now have. You have been granted to see the love of God and are now found wanting nothing. You are now satisfied with all God has done for you, opening heaven to you and pouring into you the oil required to light your path as you walk by faith.

God has done great and wonderful things for all His children. If you know not the blessings of God in your life, you should begin by counting your blessings, by stopping to smell the roses. Often you only see the thorns their stems contain. Being reminded of the grace and mercy that God has blessed you with, you see a need to respond with thanksgiving and praise. God has placed within His children humble, contrite hearts that are found counting their blessings. Knowing that you are richly blessed by God, you offer praise and thanksgiving to Him. He is pleased with your praise because it comes from a humbled heart and has the testimony that the blood of Jesus has washed you clean of all your sins and unbelief. ~

Lent: an annual season of fasting and penitence in preparation for Easter, beginning on Ash Wednesday and lasting 40 weekdays to Easter, observed by Roman Catholic, Anglican and certain other churches.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. Matthew 4:1-2)

This Gospel is read today at the beginning of Lent in order to picture before Christians the example of Christ, that they may rightly observe Lent, which has become mere mockery: first, because no one can follow this example and fast forty days and nights as Christ did without eating any food. Christ rather followed the example of Moses, who fasted also forty days and nights, when he received the law of God on Mount Sinai. Thus Christ also wished to fast when He was about to bring to us, and give expression to, the new law. In the second place, Lent has become mere mockery because our fasting is a perversion and an institution of man. For although Christ did fast forty days, yet there is no word of His that He requires us to do the same and fast as He did. Indeed He did many other things, which He wishes us not to do; but whatever He calls us to do or leave undone, we should see to it that we have His Word to support our actions.

But the worst of all is that we have adopted and practiced fasting as a good work: not to bring our flesh into subjection; but, as a meritorious work before God, to atone for our sins and obtain grace. And it is this that has made our fasting a stench and so blasphemous and shameful...

Martin Luther



Victorious I Will Rise Again

Gwen Wilson
Ridgefield, Washington

Hello Children,

I hope you are having a good day. My day is turning into evening already, but it has gone ok. Here in the state of Washington, USA, we don't see the sun much in the winter, but today we had sun all day and the evening sky is very pretty at the moment. For that we are very thankful. It is a good way to end the day. With the days going by so quickly, it will soon be March, and time to be in thought on the death of our dear Savior Jesus Christ.

It was time to celebrate the Passover. This is a feast that the Jews had to celebrate God safely bringing them out of the land of Egypt, and the Jews have kept this feast even up to today. Jesus and His disciples gathered together for the Passover supper, the last supper the disciples would eat with Jesus until they met Him again after His resurrection.



As Jesus and His disciples were eating, Jesus said to His friends, *Behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.* (Luke 22:21) One of the disciples was going to deny Jesus as his Lord. The disciples were all very worried and wondered which of them would do this terrible thing.

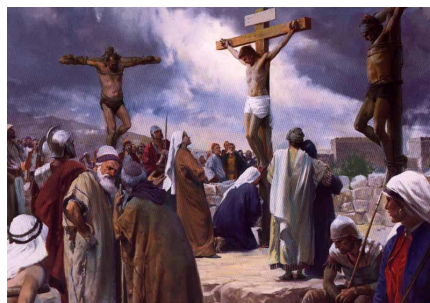
After they had finished eating, Jesus and His disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed to God for strength to face the death He must die. This was a very hard time for Jesus as His heart ached

for the people. After He was done praying, Jesus turned to find a whole crowd of people coming toward Him. The betrayer was with them. *Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?* (Luke 22:48) Yes, Judas was the betrayer. For 30 pieces of silver he turned his back on his Lord. The chief priests and captains talked Judas into this plan. The devil came to live in Judas' heart.

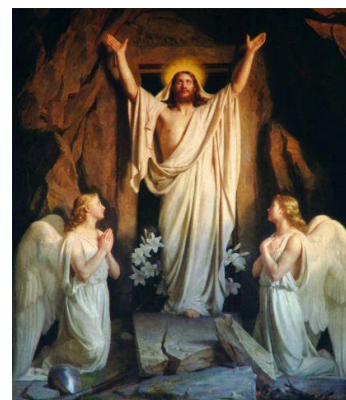


Jesus was carrying the burden of all of the people's sins, even yours and mine. He was taking them all to the cross and leaving them there. He shed all of His blood to cover us with forgiveness and give us grace.

Jesus was accused of many things but He was not guilty of any of them. He was treated ever so cruelly. People spit on Him, hit Him with their hands, said mean things, and even chose a bad prisoner to go free and Jesus to die. On the day that we call Good Friday, Jesus was crucified on the cross and died. Even when Jesus was up on the cross with a crown of thorns on His head, He looked down on the people with love. He was not upset at anyone for how He was treated. The Bible says, *We love him, because he first loved us.* (1 John 4:19)



Jesus was buried in a tomb, but He did not stay there! He arose on the third day to show to us that the grave has no victory over us. Jesus was **victorious** and we, too, can win the same **victory** because of Him.



Jesus wants you and me to follow Him, and not look to any man for peace in our hearts and freedom from sin. He died for you and me because He loved us SO much. May you always believe in the risen Jesus and serve Him all of your life.

Now he which stablisheth us (makes us stable) with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest (promise or guarantee) of the Spirit in our hearts. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

Wishing you all a very blessed Easter and springtime as the earth buds forth with life once more. ~

Victorious! Victorious!

Christ has risen glorious;
Where the fun'ral knell was tolled
Be the hymn of triumph rolled,
Let the palm's green branches wave
O'er the slumber of the grave;
From its gloom victorious,
Christ has risen glorious.

Victorious! Victorious!

Christ has risen glorious;
Where the heavy tomb was sealed
Gates of Paradise revealed,
Where the mourners wept around,
Faith looks up, with glory crowned.
O'er the grave, victorious,
Christ has risen glorious.

Victorious! Victorious!

Christ has risen glorious;
On His brow the conqueror's wreath,
In His hand the keys of death,
He shall buried hopes restore,
He shall live forevermore.
Over death victorious,
Christ has risen glorious.

Priscilla J. Owens

Our Blessed Heritage

History of the Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church

Miriam Yliniemi

Wolf Lake is a small village in northern Minnesota with less than 100 population. Wolf Lake is a relatively young settlement. When the township was organized in 1896, all the residents were Finnish immigrants. Most of the settlers came by train to New York Mills or Menahga and then ventured the 20-30 miles north, walking for days in search of homestead land in the roadless wilderness. Wolf Lake has perhaps kept the Finnish language alive longer than any other settlement. Finnish was used in church records and meetings into the 1970s. One notable resident of Wolf Lake was Juho Hjort, the son-in-law of our revival leader, Lars Levi Laestadius. He was married to Lea Selma Laestadius who passed away in Sweden. Mr. Hjort then immigrated to America and came to live with their daughter Selma and her husband Herman (Hietala) Larson.

The Wolf Lake Apostolic Lutheran Church was established and built in 1898, twenty one years later than the New York Mills Church. The early ministers serving the old church were, William Alajoki, Matt Tauriainen, Alvar Leppanen and John Henry Alajoki. At one time the membership was between 50 to 60 families.

The church needed to be repaired or replaced in the 1950s. It was decided that it could not be repaired, so plans were made to build a new one. The people continued to worship together until 1954, although there was dissension as to who was allowed to preach in the church. This dissension resulted in two new churches built in 1955, the Laestadian Lutheran, as it is known today, one half mile north of Wolf Lake and the Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church, one half mile south of Wolf Lake.



The group of members who left the Heideman church at that time began to discuss how they could advance the work of the kingdom of God in the local community on the basis of earlier Christian teaching. They asked George Wilson from the New York Mills Apostolic Lutheran Church of America to have regular services once a month in the homes of those who had left the church.

In December 1954, a meeting was held to discuss building a new church. They planned to invite speakers known to be of sound doctrine, biblical, and submitted servants of God—ones who would preach without a condemning spirit and set forth the gospel of salvation in a way

that new free children of grace would be born who walk in the power of the Holy Spirit.

They elected a new board and plans were made to build a new church. Land was donated for the church in Spruce Grove Township. Joel Aho was appointed to draw up plans for the new church. Raphael Aho was instrumental in writing the by-laws and getting support for the project.

People were eager to support the project financially because it was known that the church would be open to the whole community. The by-laws stated that any Apostolic Lutheran group could use the church for services, and any Christian group could rent it for funerals and weddings in accordance with the provisions and regulations established by the trustees of this congregation. Most of the lumber needed was donated by area farmers. The church was built by volunteer labor and completed in the spring of 1956.

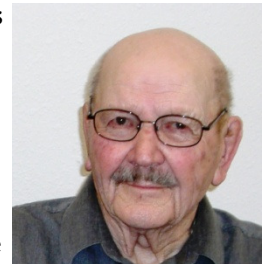
Dedication services were held in June. Speakers invited for the dedication services were: Matti Aho of New Hampshire, John Riikonen of California, Carl Niemitalo of North Dakota, and Taneli Kyhala of Finland. At the dedication services on Sunday the crowd was estimated at about 700 people.

The congregation invited **Pastor George Wilson** to be their pastor. He had services at Spruce Grove on two Friday evenings and on one Sunday afternoon each month since he was the pastor of the New York Mills Church and was there on Sunday mornings. He served from 1955 to 1974.

Pastor Elmer Yliniemi became the first full time pastor in 1974 and served 36 years until his retirement in 2010. Pastor Elmer and Miriam and children were sent to Nigeria as missionaries for one year in 1976-77 by the Federation. Arvi Aho from the congregation served at that time and after Elmer's return assisted for a number of years until he moved away in 1994. Finnish services were also held twice a month until 2011.

On July 20, 2007, the ground breaking for the new addition took place. The new addition includes a narthex, handicapped-accessible bathrooms, kitchen and fellowship hall to seat over 300. Much volunteer labor by church members was done and the rest was hired out. No loans were taken for the church. The Lord provided the resources.

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Raphael Aho (93) is the only living original board member.



Pastor Elmer and Miriam Yliniemi



continued from page 5: The project was completed in June of 2008. Dedication services were held in June with Pastor Vesa Poyhtari from Finland, and Pastor Wayne Juntunen of Esko as speakers along with Pastor Elmer Yliniemi and Andrew Tumberg.

In 2010, the congregation called **Pastor Dennis Hannu** to be the pastor of the congregation. Dennis and his wife Miriam grew up in New Hampshire. They have five children.



Pastor Dennis and Miriam Hannu



The church with fellowship hall and sanctuary as it is today.



There are approximately 250-300 in attendance on Sunday mornings. Regular Bible Studies are held, along with Friday evening services. The youth meet for Bible Study every other week with 20-30 in attendance. The church

membership is very young since there are about 40 young families in the church with many children. In 2011, ten Sunday School rooms were completed in the old basement fellowship hall to accommodate the 80 plus Sunday School children.

"All [we] have needed Thy hand hath provided—Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto [us]." (Thomas A. Chisolm) ~

The Water of Life

Pastor Reino Maunu
Watertown, South Dakota

"Fill my cup, Lord, I lift it up, Lord. Come and quench this thirsting of my soul." (Richard Blanchard)

Thus the songwriter bares the intense desire and inward need of his heart in prayer and supplication. Like the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well in her converse with the lone figure reclining there (John 4), her heart was made aware of its parched condition, prompting a similar supplication for the water that alone would satisfy its thirst.

Interestingly, Jesus first speaks the gospel to her in order to draw her unto Himself. He speaks of the gift of God and who it is that is speaking to her (the blessedness of the gift and source of it). Then Jesus speaks the law to her in order that her heart would be made contrite: *Go, call thy husband, and come hither.* (John 4:16) This served to show her the desperate condition of her heart.

Jesus helped this unnamed woman with confession and then her faith. *I that speak unto thee am he.* (John 4:26) The gospel narrative states that she left her waterpot and went into the city to speak to the others about Christ. The natural things of life gave place to the blessed and eternal water of life that now satiated her soul.

Many an attempt among men has been made in various ways to stifle the inward longing of the soul.

Nothing is able to quench the thirst of the soul. Wealth, fame, this present world, carnal wisdom and its associated reasonings, or any other temporal good can at best offer only a temporary reprieve. Augustine has stated: "The soul, created for God, will not rest until it rests in God."

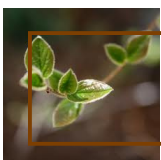
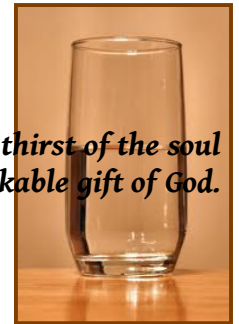
The permanent quenching of the thirst of the soul is the unspeakable gift of God. Christ Jesus given for our ransom, the gift of eternal life in Him, the gracious influences of the Holy Ghost and every saving blessing alone satisfy the soul already in this life with its eventual consummation in heaven's eternal kingdom. Its inception is faith given to the heart by the hearing of the Word. Jesus invites all who thirst to come unto Me and drink (John 7:37). This invitation is without any distinction, only that the heart is drawn to the source of this living water which is Christ. The water itself is spiritual and eternal life given by the Lord for the satisfaction of the soul. The seeking Savior calls man to this refreshing renewing and purifying fountain through the Gospel. May many hearken to His invitation to receive His gift.

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. (Revelation 22:17)

Lord, grant to as many as thirst the water that causes the soul to thirst no more. In Jesus' name. Amen.

In God's peace and love.

The permanent quenching of the thirst of the soul is the unspeakable gift of God.



Our Lord has written the **promise of resurrection**, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.

Martin Luther

The Preaching of the Cross



the late Carl Kulla

Submitted by Anders Sundqvist; Brush Prairie, Washington

Carl Kulla's first sermon was preached at the convention in Esko, Minnesota, in 1941. It was published in *Kristillinen Kuukauslehti* in December 1941. Brother Carl read 1 Corinthians 1:18-24 and spoke as follows:

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Blessed redeemed in the Lord: I stand before you, before this Christian assembly, for the first time, and before you as one who has been saved from eternal condemnation through the blood of the precious Lamb of God, He who suffered and was crucified for the sins of you and for the sins of me, Who in His own body bare our sins upon the accursed tree of sins of the cross, that we might be reconciled to God through Him.

The portion of Holy Writ upon which we shall meditate this afternoon is 1 Corinthians 1:18-24. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." Just what is this preaching of the cross?

In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth, and He climaxed His creation with man. Man was pleasing in the sight of God, but then he fell into the enticing words of the devil, and the curse of sin and death fell upon the face of the earth. But God, in His great mercy and love, did not leave man in such a state but promised unto man a Savior. From that day hence, man was saved in the hope of that Savior. God fulfilled His promise when He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, upon the earth in the likeness of sinful flesh. This same Jesus Christ suffered dire agony and pain, and was crucified for the sin of the world. Christ made that one perfect sacrifice which was to reconcile man with God.

That, dear friends, is the preaching of the cross, which says that man is nothing and can do nothing for his salvation. It is already done. Man must become as nothing in the sight of God, and seek his refuge in Christ, the Savior. The preaching of the cross is the fullness of the Gospel. It consists of all those things Christ has commanded as constituents of salvation: namely baptism, repentance, and the remission of sins and the consequential rebirth.

But to them that are lost, this preaching of the cross is foolishness, for the unbelievers and the dead-faith Christians say, "Not many are lost, for surely God did not create man to burn him in hell." But remember the warnings of the Scripture, *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? (1 Peter 4:18) ...Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. (Luke 13:3) ...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (John 3:3)* We cannot otherwise enter in, but in God's way, which is scriptural salvation, for only where "Christ crucified" is preached is there salvation.

Indeed God has brought to naught the understanding of the prudent and destroyed the wisdom of the wise. Look at the life of Christ — was it not despised in the sight of the world? For Jesus did none of the things which make men great: He never entered a large city, He never went to school, He never wrote a book. He was looked down upon and suffered untold agony by the hand of man. But He reserved one thing unto Himself: the power to overcome sin and death, the devil and hell. That is how the wisdom of the wise is brought to naught, for to them it is foolish that one so meek and lowly could be exalted so high.

But we preach Christ crucified, which lifts us above all sin and corruption and reconciles us to God.

Dear friends in Christ, I want you to remember me as a weak, erring brother in Christ. I am not worthy to say one thing for Him, and I feel there are many others who have greater gifts from God to preach than I. Nevertheless, I will always testify of my Lord, and woe unto me if I preach not Christ, for He is my personal Savior and my personal Redeemer, Who means more than all life to me.

Let us strive together as obedient servants of Christ, that we might cross the river and come to the shores of the true Fatherland and to the heavenly Jerusalem in the shadow of Mount Zion. May the Lord grant that we might be faithful until the very end. Amen. ~

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Stand Fast!

Let nothing shake your confidence in the resurrection! Let no philosophical explanation fritter it away. No other historical fact is so well attested as the resurrection of Christ, which is the very cornerstone of our confidence. *For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.* (1 Corinthians 15:16-20)

Often and often, when I am sorely beset with devilish temptations and insinuations as to the eternal hope of my soul and body, I fly to this—Jesus Christ *did* rise from the dead and, inasmuch as He rose from the dead, He has come back to tell us that there is another world and that not only our souls, but our bodies shall inherit a far more blessed condition than this present one! Hold on to this hope of the Gospel, and never let it go!

**"The Lord is risen! He lives! The First-born from the dead,
To Him the Father gives To be creation's Head.
O'er all forever reigning, Of death He holds the keys;
And hell—his might constraining—Obeys His high decrees.
Flies now the gloom that shaded The vale of death to me;
The terrors that invaded Are lost, O Christ, in Thee!
The grave, no more appalling, Invites me to repose;
Asleep in Jesus falling, To rise as Jesus rose."**

Remember, you have the hope of the Second Advent. If Jesus comes before you die, you will meet Him—gladly meet and welcome the Son of God upon this earth! You shall be changed so that you shall be fit to inherit the incorruptible glories of the skies. You shall see your Redeemer when He stands in the latter day upon the earth. As Job said, *Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another...* (Job 19:26-27)

Have joy, then, at every thought of your Master's coming! Do not put it among dark prophecies or doubtful dreams. It is a clearly revealed truth of God that Jesus will come again and take His people up to their eternal Home—therefore comfort one another with these words (1 Thessalonians 4:18), and be not moved away from that hope of the Gospel which lies so sweetly in the Second Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Selected

The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

Luke 24:34

What did that appearance say to the penitent man? Of course, it said to him what it said to all the rest, that death was conquered. It lifted his thoughts of his Master. It changed his whole atmosphere from gloom to sunshine, but it had a special message for him. It said that no fault, no denial, bars or diverts Christ's love. Peter, no doubt, as soon as the hope of the Resurrection began to dawn upon him, felt fear contending with his hope, and asked himself, "If He is risen, will He ever speak to me again?" And now here He is with a quiet look on His face that says, **"Notwithstanding thy denial, see, I have come to thee."**

Alexander MacLaren

Victory in Jesus!

Soldiers of King Jesus, raise the shout again,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
Marching to the music of the glad refrain,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

O'er the pow'rs of darkness, o'er the hosts of sin,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
Trusting, watching, praying, we shall surely win,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

Send the happy watchword all along the line,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
Let all error perish, lives the truth divine,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

For His church and kingdom, for each trusting soul,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
From the courts of Heaven joyful paeans roll,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

Refrain: Victory, victory, victory in Jesus!
Sing His overcoming blood, sing the grace that frees us;
Ring it out more boldly, song of faith and cheer,
Till the whole wide world shall hear.

Eliza E. Hewitt