

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 2022

To God Be the Glory!

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Dear Readers around the world,
God's peace be with you!

GLORIFY GOD. That is our topic today, and I pray that it would be your focus and your heart's desire not only today, but every day. To God be the glory! Let our prayer be such: *That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:6)*

The earth and the heavens declare His handiwork! The Old Testament is full of this word "glory," all of which is the Lord's! *Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters. (Psalm 29:1-3)*

In the New Testament, when Jesus healed someone, He often said that it was for the reason that it would glorify God. *When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby (John 11:4) Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? (John 11:40)*

Let us learn from our Master!

Even in our prayers let us gaze upon our Father. Look to His glory, His strength. Glorify Him, understand that He can provide, that He is in charge of our lives and in control of the whole earth.

Let us try to remember not to approach God only with our needs, our desires, our problems and difficult situations, but let us remember that we can approach Him in praise of His glory, His power, His majesty, and His might! Our God is all powerful; He has promised and He will provide. Let us trust in Him!

When we share about Jesus with our congregations, our towns, villages, family, co-workers, schoolmates, or anyone else, let it be all about Him. *Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. And again, Esaias*

saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust. (Romans 15:8-12)

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:20) What is that price? Jesus Christ! Our redemption cost Jesus Christ His life. We repeat: For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:20)

Yet, salvation for us is free! *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. (Isaiah 55:1-3)*

Are there any thirsty today? Come just as you are. No money, no price is required. Repent and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ! *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. (Acts 3:19)*



Jesus is still in the saving mode today! I trust that you believe this. If so, share the Good News of Jesus Christ to the entire world for the Glory of God.

All glory and honor be to God today and always!
Hallelujah, Amen!

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 than 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 life-time 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) ~*

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. (Ezek 36:25-28)

MY FRIENDS, IS THIS THE change that you need? Or are you satisfied with a few outward changes? Are you mostly good, but need a little help in a couple areas that you cannot quite master? Jesus tells us that we must be born again. Scripture also says, *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)* A complete transformation must take place. First we must be washed from all our filthiness with clean water (the pure blood of Jesus), then He gives us a new heart, and a new spirit. He takes away the stony heart out of our flesh, and gives us a heart of flesh. Do we know what it is to have a stony heart? But, O when He breaks our heart, and gives us a heart that is soft and pliable, like soft clay that He can mold and make us as He sees fit. And a new spirit, not the spirit of rebellion, but a spirit that is after the mind of Christ. This new spirit is God's Spirit abiding in our hearts, to lead us into all truth, to walk in His statutes, to keep His judgments, to do them. *And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God*. Isn't it a precious thing to be a child of God? May we love Him, and follow Him "in truth and in righteousness"!

Paul Coponen; Chassell, Michigan
Submitted by Ralph and Barbara Somero; New Ipswich, New Hampshire

Jesus Sings a Hymn

Pastor Jay Weidner

THE SEASON OF LENT FOCUSES on the passion of Jesus Christ and the events leading up to His crucifixion and resurrection. One of the most often overlooked verses regarding Jesus actions during this time period is: *And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. (Mark 14:26)*

It may not seem unusual that they sang a hymn. This hymn was a group of Psalms normally sung at Passover. What is incredible is that Jesus sang the hymn! It is wonderful to think of Jesus raising His voice to sing the words that describe His mission and the events that He was about to undergo. Just think of Jesus singing:

I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. (Psalm 116:1-4)

What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people, In the courts of the LORD'S house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD. (Psalm 116:12-19)

The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD. God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. (Ps 118:22-29)

How beautiful to think of Jesus singing to His Father, singing as one of us and singing on our behalf of the things He would suffer for us to gain our salvation. We are so blessed to have such a gracious God and Lord.

It is a wonderful Lenten meditation to read Psalms 116, 117 and 118 in light of Christ's passion and imagine Him singing them with His disciples.

May you and yours enjoy a blessed Lent.

God's peace.



Psalms 116-118: A Lenten Meditation

I LOVE THE LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found

trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted: I said in my haste, All men are liars. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people, In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord. (Psalm 116)

O PRAISE THE LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord. (Psalm 117)

O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever. Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let them now that fear the Lord say, that his mercy endureth for ever. I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place. The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? The Lord taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them. They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them. They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them. Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the Lord helped me. The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death. Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord: This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord: we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord. God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. (Psalm 118) ~

Jesus Transfigured

Gwen Wilson
Ridgefield, Washington

Dear Children,

Hello to each of you. It has been a difficult time in the world with the virus that has swept across this globe, but today I hope this finds you healthy and healing. I myself am at the end of the last virus and I had a very mild case. I'm thankful for that.

Our past week here in Washington State has been sun-filled, which is rare for us, but it has been most enjoyable. Today the sun is shining, so it's nice again. Our rain is on the way again soon, so we will enjoy this while we can.

Today we will look at Jesus' Transfiguration. That's a big word, but the dictionary says it's changing appearance into something more beautiful. Go to *St. Matthew 17:1-13*.

JESUS TOOK PETER, JAMES AND JOHN up into a high mountain away from the crowds. If you think about this for a moment, that was quite a hike. The three men with Jesus were probably having many thoughts going through their minds as to where they were going and what this was all about. I like to think they felt it was something big because Jesus only chose the three, AND once again it was up onto a mountain where big things with Jesus took place before. It appears by the first verse that there was no conversation going on.

They reach the place Jesus has chosen and in a moment things happen as Peter, James and John look on.

Vs 2: And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. I'm sure you have all gotten bright sun in your eyes. It is impossible to look at!

Vs 3: And, behold (see, observe), there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

Peter, in his boldness, says, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." He suggested they make three tabernacles (fixed or movable places of worship) there on the mountain: one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias.

While Peter was still speaking, a bright cloud came over them and they heard God say, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

Remember the voice from heaven that spoke those same words when Jesus was baptized? God wants these men to know who to worship: Jesus alone. He wants for us to know that, also.

When the disciples heard that command, they knew it was God who was speaking and they fell down with their faces to the ground and were very afraid. We may not have such experiences, but in our hearts I would hope that we feel that fear and love for God as we read His commands. Although these disciples were so afraid, Jesus, in His usual loving, gentle, way says, "Arise, and be not afraid."

When the fearful three looked up from where they were on the ground, they only saw Jesus. I'm sure what went

through their minds were the last three words they heard from God, HEAR YE HIM. Can you just imagine this? We must focus on those three words, too.

Vs 9: And as they came down the mountain, Jesus charged (ordered) them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. Jesus needed the disciples to keep this quiet so that the work Jesus still had to do could happen without ridicule or much talk from the people.

The men with Jesus ask Him, "Why do the scribes say Elias must first come?"

Jesus tells them that Elias did come first and restore all things. Jesus tells them that the people did not recognize him and he died at their hands. He then tells them that the Son of man will die at their hands, also.

It is right here that Peter, James and John know that Jesus was speaking of John the Baptist. It's another piece of the puzzle falling into place for the disciples. So much of what they hear and heard is a lot to take in. They know their Lord is going to die and this isn't the first time they have been told this. There would yet be much for them to learn and hide in their hearts and minds as they continue to walk with Jesus until His death.



I pray that we His children will serve Him with our hearts and pray to do His will. We can ask God to work His work in our hearts so that our humanness does not take the upper hand. Let us say as Paul, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. (Philippians 4:13)*

God bless your lives with His peace as you serve Him.

God's peace.

Free From the Law

Martin Luther

For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 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 2:19-20

ON FIRST SIGHT PAUL SEEMS to be advancing a strange and ugly heresy. He says, “I am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.” The false apostles said the very opposite. They said, “If you do not live to the law, you are dead unto God.”

The doctrine of our opponents is similar to that of the false apostles in Paul’s day. Our opponents teach, “If you want to live unto God, you must live after the Law, for it is written, Do this and thou shalt live.” Paul, on the other hand, teaches, “We cannot live unto God unless we are dead unto the Law.” If we are dead unto the Law, the Law can have no power over us.

Paul does not only refer to the Ceremonial Law, but to the whole Law. We are not to think that the Law is wiped out. It stays. It continues to operate in the wicked. But a Christian is dead to the Law. For example, Christ by His resurrection became free from the grave, and yet the grave remains. Peter was delivered from prison, yet the prison remains. The Law is abolished as far as I am concerned, when it has driven me into the arms of Christ. Yet the Law continues to exist and to function. But it no longer exists for me.

“I have nothing to do with the Law,” cries Paul. He could not have uttered anything more devastating to the prestige of the Law. He declares that he does not care for the Law, that he does not intend ever to be justified by the Law.

To be dead to the Law means to be free of the Law. What right, then, has the Law to accuse me, or to hold anything against me? When you see a person squirming in the clutches of the Law, say to him: “Brother, get things straight. You let the Law talk to your conscience. Make it talk to your flesh. Wake up, and believe in Jesus Christ, the Conqueror of Law and sin. Faith in Christ will lift you high above the Law into the heaven of grace. Though Law and sin remain, they no longer concern you, because you are dead to the Law and dead to sin.”

Blessed is the person who knows how to use this truth in times of distress. He can talk. He can say: “Mr. Law, go ahead and accuse me as much as you like. I know I have committed many sins, and I continue to sin daily. But that does not bother me. You have got to shout louder, Mr. Law. I am deaf, you know. Talk as much as you like, I am dead to you. If you want to talk to me about my sins, go and talk to my flesh. Belabor that, but don’t talk to my conscience. My conscience is a lady and a queen, and has nothing to do with the likes of you, because my conscience lives to Christ under another law, a new and better law, the law of grace.”

We have two propositions: To live unto the Law, is to die unto God. To die unto the Law, is to live unto God. These two propositions go against reason. No law-worker can ever understand them. But see to it that you understand them. The Law can never justify and save a sinner. The Law can

only accuse, terrify, and kill him. Therefore to live unto the Law is to die unto God. Vice versa, to die unto the Law is to live unto God. If you want to live unto God, bury the Law, and find life through faith in Christ Jesus.

We have enough arguments right here to conclude that justification is by faith alone. How can the Law effect our justification, when Paul so plainly states that we must be dead to the Law if we want to live unto God? If we are dead to the Law and the Law is dead to us, how can it possibly contribute anything to our justification? There is nothing left for us but to be justified by faith alone.

This nineteenth verse is loaded with consolation. It fortifies a person against every danger. It allows you to argue like this:

“I confess I have sinned.”

“Then God will punish you.”

“No, He will not do that.”

“Why not? Does not the Law say so?”

“I have nothing to do with the Law.”

“How so?”

“I have another law, the law of liberty.”

“What do you mean—‘liberty?’”

“The liberty of Christ, for Christ has made me free from the Law that held me down. That Law is now in prison itself, held captive by grace and liberty.”

By faith in Christ a person may gain such sure and sound comfort, that he need not fear the devil, sin, death, or any evil. “Sir Devil,” he may say, “I am not afraid of you. I have a Friend whose name is Jesus Christ, in whom I believe. He has abolished the Law, condemned sin, vanquished death, and destroyed hell for me. He is bigger than you, Satan. He has licked you, and holds you down. You cannot hurt me.” This is the faith that overcomes the devil.

Paul manhandles the Law. He treats the Law as if it were a thief and a robber. He treats the Law as contemptible to the conscience, in order that those who believe in Christ may take courage to defy the Law, and say: “Mr. Law, I am a sinner. What are you going to do about it?”

Or take death. Christ is risen from death. Why should we now fear the grave? Against my death I set another death, or rather life, my life in Christ.

Oh, the sweet names of Jesus! He is called my law against the Law, my sin against sin, my death against death.

Translated, it means that He is my righteousness, my life, my everlasting salvation. For this reason was He made the law of the Law, the sin of sin, the death of death, that He might redeem me from the curse of the Law. He permitted the Law to accuse Him, sin to condemn Him, and death to take Him, to abolish the Law, to condemn sin, and to destroy death for me.

This peculiar form of speech sounds much sweeter than if Paul had said: “I through liberty am dead to the law.” By putting it in this way, “I through the law am dead to the law,” he opposes one law with another law, and has them fight it out.

In this masterly fashion Paul draws our attention away from the Law, sin, death, and every evil, and centers it upon Christ. ~

Exiles Longing for Home

Christoph Ernst Luthardt (1872)

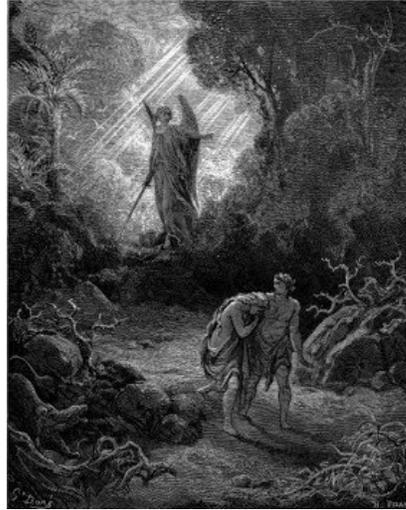
THE REMEMBRANCE, MORE OR LESS OBSCURE, of a fall at the beginning of history, survives among all nations. We everywhere meet with legends of a better state in the early days of our race, with echoes of the Scripture narrative of a temptation from without, and of a yielding thereto on the part of man, entailing fatal consequences on the race of man and his earthly abode. They are but obscure and confused reminiscences, that have been preserved in the memories of the various nations; yet they are reminiscences, and when compared with the account given in Scripture, we easily perceive how they serve to confirm it.

The unadorned simplicity of the Biblical account plainly testifies that the tradition here deposited, is the source of all the traditions which have, in their course through the various countries and tribes, sometimes taken so fantastic a form. Even ancient philosophy bears similar testimony, after its fashion. Plato speaks of remembrances which the soul bears within her,—remembrances of original higher intuitions of celestial beauty, the echoes of which, during this dark earthly existence, accompany her in the mysterious depths of her inner life, and are raised to consciousness as soon as the certain word is uttered by which those slumbering ideas are awakened. He has but transferred to the individual man that which applies to the whole race; for we certainly all bear within us, so to speak, the memory of a lost home.

We feel like exiles, longing for the native land from which they have been driven; a craving for a better future, a homesickness for a lost home, everywhere accompanies us. In old age it often takes the form of a melancholy regret for the days of childhood. Yet this is, in truth, not a regret for the days of our individual childhood, but for the childhood of the race. Whatever of good or noble human nature may bear within it, its ideas of the good, its moral efforts, its higher, nobler feelings, are the ruins of a past greatness. We are all walking among such ruins. They are bearing testimony to what has been; and we involuntarily receive their testimony.

Man is neither an angel nor an animal, but a fallen child of God; and he feels his fall. He has at least preserved remembrances of his dignity. It is true that he now goes

about, as it were, in rags; but, beggar as he is, he once wore a crown. It is evident that he was born a king. Is it to be wondered at that he should long to recover his crown?



The sinful act of the first-created human beings went through three stages. The first was disbelief of God's love. The prohibition enjoined them seemed to them an arbitrary denial of a desirable good, and an obstacle to their freedom instead of an assistance on the road thereto. With faith in God, moreover, love to Him also disappeared, and the tendency of their heart towards God was first checked, and then turned in a contrary direction. This was the first stage.

Man then put himself in the place of God. He took his lot into his own hand, and purposed, in his arrogant

self-exaltation, to look for the future to his own powers for happiness. He desired, as if he had been his own creator, to be what he wished to be through himself alone. He forgot that God was his origin, and therefore his end, and made himself, in his proud self-seeking, the end and aim of his life.

And to this the second was also added the third stage, that of sensuous gratification in the world, of which he thus became the slave instead of the king. Unbelief, pride, and sensuous pleasure,—such is the threefold perversion of man's threefold relation to God, to himself, and to the world,—the threefold dissolution of his original harmony, upon which depended his holiness, his life, and his happiness.

It is in these three fundamental forms that sin first appeared, and that we still meet with it in the history of the human mind. These are the three great historical forms of Rationalism, Pantheism, and Materialism. For the soul of Rationalism is unbelief, that of Pantheism pride, and that of Materialism sensuousness. These have their roots in the occurrence which is related in Scripture, and the dominion which they exercise confirms what our own experience daily tells us, that we all became sinful through that decisive act which took place at the beginning. ~

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him.

Isaiah 57:15-19

TO THE MEEK AND LOWLY in heart are assured all the promises of grace in the Holy Bible; the Lord Jesus protects him with all the garments of His righteousness, and in his behalf He intercedes with the Father. Just think, dear child of God, isn't your cause in good hands when God, our Father, looks at you through the wounds of His beloved Son and sees you pure and guiltless before His face with joy!

Janne Marttiini

Arise, Shine, for Thy Light Is Come!

Lois Matson
Yacolt, Washington

Isaiah 58-60 is an interesting section of Scripture with a beautiful progression. First, in chapter 58, the prophet writes about true and false fasting. False fasting seeks its own pride and pleasure. True fasting is done in humility by helping the neighbor. When you help those in need, sharing your bread with the hungry and covering the naked, then hear the promises in verses eight through ten:

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday (Isaiah 58:8-10)

Then, in chapter 59, Isaiah talks about evil and oppression, and Israel's confession that they hope for light, but no... instead there is darkness. They desire brightness, but they walk in gloom. Because justice and righteousness are far away, they are like blind men groping along in the dark. They hope for justice but there is none, and salvation, but it is far from them. A long confession of their transgressions follows. Then, about the middle of the chapter, the prophet writes that the LORD saw that there was no justice, and that there was no one to help, and His own right arm brought salvation! He promises that the Redeemer will come to Zion! The Messiah! Glory! Hallelujah!

Chapter 60 is about Israel's future glory, and it begins with these familiar words:

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. (Isaiah 60:1-3)

Israel's gloom and darkness is transformed by the glory of the Lord rising on them. Our gloom and darkness is transformed in the same way, when we are translated into the kingdom of His marvelous light! In

the middle of our groping around in the darkness of sin, the brilliance of God's Word shines into our hearts and wakes us from the sleep of death to life that is eternal.

Then comes a long description of the restoration of Israel, and God's promise in verse 16:

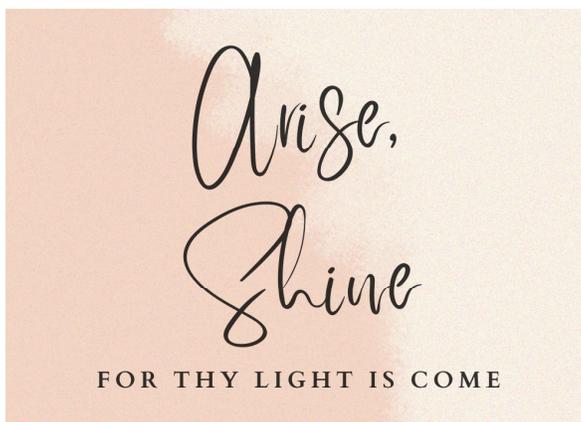
And thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob. (Isaiah 60:16)

We know that He is our Savior, our Redeemer, the Mighty One who brings life where there was death. He brings justice and righteousness where there was injustice and wickedness.

Isaiah continues talking about the Light, the everlasting Light that will shine on Israel. Now, today, since the Messiah has come, that Light has shone on the whole world.

The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. (Isaiah 60:19-21)

Jesus, Christ, the Light of the World, Who shines on Israel (and on us) is our only light. We don't need the sun or the moon anymore, because the Lord Himself is light and glory to us. This is all the work of the Lord, so that He might be glorified.



Augustine of Hippo wrote a book called *Confessions* and he begins in this way:

“Great are You, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is Your power, and of Your wisdom there is no end. And man, being a part of Your creation, desires to praise You — man, who bears about with him his mortality, the witness of his sin, even the witness that You *resist the proud*, — yet man, this part of Your creation, desires to praise You. You move us to delight in praising You;

for You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”

We rest in Him. God be praised! ~

Christian Monthly Vol. LXXVIII—No. 3

Subscription Rate: 1 Year

US: \$12 (South Dakota residents add your local sales tax)

Canada: \$18 (US money order only) Foreign: \$25

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and Book Concern orders to:
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The *Christian Monthly* (ISSN 0009-5494) is published monthly for \$12 per year by the Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern, 45036 SD Hwy 22, Hayti, South Dakota 57241. Periodicals postage paid at Hayti, South Dakota.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: **Christian Monthly, PO Box 104, Hayti, SD 57241.**

General Disclaimer: The material in the *Christian Monthly* is reviewed for scriptural soundness and to ensure that it does not conflict with the teachings of the ALCA. Publication does not imply that other material by included authors has been so approved.



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Rejoice in the Lord Always

Pastor Chuck Bylkas
South Range, Michigan

Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. (Philippians 4:4-9)

IN TIMES OF DIFFICULTY, we may find ourselves anxious about many things. In fact we often defend ourselves, claiming that it is only natural to worry. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ calls us away from such worry and exhorts us to trust in God: *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?... But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6:25, 33)*

The Apostle Paul echoes the same thought in his letter to the Philippians. First, Paul tells us to *Rejoice in the Lord, always...* Instead of worrying, Paul encourages to give thanks to God for all He has done for us, especially giving us life and salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ. Secondly, Paul tells us to pray. *...but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.* Paul teaches us that God will not necessarily give us everything we ask for, but He does promise to give us peace. *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* Finally, Paul instructs us to think on the things that are above. Instead of being so concerned about our own troubles, Paul says *...whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* In other words, we keep our hearts and minds fixed on Christ. In Jesus Christ, we have redemption by His blood. Through Christ's death and resurrection, we have new life in this world and the sure promise of life everlasting in the world to come.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:31-39) ~

St Augustine on the Word Made Flesh

The Word of the Father, by whom all time was created, was made flesh and was born in time for us. He, without whose divine permission no day completes its course, wished to have one day for His human birth. In the bosom of His Father He existed before all the cycles of ages; born of an earthly mother, He entered upon the course of the years on this day.

The Maker of man became man

that He, Ruler of the stars, might be nourished at the breast;
that He, the Bread, might be hungry;
that He, the Fountain, might thirst;
that He, the Light, might sleep;
that He, the Way, might be wearied by the journey;
that He, the Truth, might be accused by false witnesses;
that He, the Judge of the living and the dead, might be brought to trial by a mortal judge;
that He, Justice, might be condemned by the unjust;
that He, Discipline, might be scourged with whips;
that He, the Foundation, might be suspended upon a cross;
that Courage might be weakened;
that Security might be wounded;
that Life might die.

To endure these and similar indignities for us, to free us, unworthy creatures, He who existed as the Son of God before all ages, without a beginning, deigned to become the Son of Man in these recent years. He did this although He who submitted to such great evils for our sake had done no evil and although we, who were the recipients of so much good at His hands, had done nothing to merit these benefits.