

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.

October 2022

Delight in the Way of Christ

Augustine

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

Psalm 37:23-24

THAT MAN MAY HIMSELF DELIGHT in the Lord's way, his steps are ordered by the Lord Himself. For if the Lord did not order the steps of man, so crooked are they naturally, that they would always be going through crooked paths, and by pursuing crooked ways, would be unable to return again. He however came, and called us, and redeemed us, and shed His blood; He has given this ransom; He has done this good, and suffered these evils.

Consider Him in what He has done, He is God! Consider Him in what He has suffered, He is Man! Who is that God-Man? Had not you, O man, forsaken God, God would not have been made Man for you! For that was too little for you to requite, or for Him to bestow, that He had made you man; unless He Himself should become Man for you also. For it is He Himself that has ordered our steps; that we should delight in His way...

Now if man were to be through the whole of his life in toil, and in sufferings, in pain, in tortures, in prison, in scourgings, in hunger, and in thirst, every day and every hour through the whole length of life, to the period of old age, yet the whole life of man is but a few days. That labour being over, there is to come the Eternal Kingdom; there is to come happiness without end; there is to come equality with the angels; there is to come Christ's inheritance, and Christ, our joint Heir (Romans 8:17), is to come. How great is the labour, for which you receive so great a recompense?

The veterans who serve in the wars, and move in the midst of wounds for so many years, enter upon the military service from their youth, and quit it in old age: and to obtain a few days of repose in their old age, when age itself begins to weigh down those whom the wars do not break down, how

great hardships do they endure; what marches, what frosts, what burning suns; what privations, what wounds, and what dangers! And while suffering all these things, they fix their thoughts on nothing but those few days of repose in old age, at which they know not whether they will ever arrive.

Thus it is, the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delights in His way. This is the point with which I commenced. If you delight in the way of Christ, and art truly a Christian (for he is a Christian indeed who does not despise the way of Christ, but delights in following Christ's way through His sufferings), do not thou go by any other way than that by which He Himself has also gone. It appears painful, but it is the very way of safety; another perhaps is delightful, but it is full of robbers. And he delights in His way.

"Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholds his hand." (Psalm 37:24). See what it is to delight in Christ's way. Should it happen that he suffers some tribulation; some forfeiture of honour, some affliction, some loss, some contumely [harsh language or treatment], or all

those other accidents incident to mankind frequently in this life, he sets the Lord before him, what kind of trials He endured! And, though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholds his hand, because He has suffered before him.

For what should you fear, O man, whose steps are ordered so, that you should delight in the way of the Lord? What should you fear? Pain? Christ was scourged. Should thou fear contumelies? He was reproached with, "You have a devil," who was Himself casting out the devils. Haply you fear faction, and the conspiracy of the wicked. Conspiracy was made

against Him. You can not make clear the purity of your conscience in some accusation, and sufferest wrong and violence, because false witnesses are listened to against you. False witness was borne against Him first, not only before His death, but also after His resurrection... ~



"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way."

Psalms 37:23 (KJV)

King James Bible Online.org

If a Man Dies Shall He Live Again? Job 14:14

A. B. Anderson
October 1954 CM

FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL men have asked the question: “If a man dies, shall he live again?” When death comes (for it is appointed unto man once to die) is there a hope of another life after this one?

This question is important. The answer is important, for everything depends upon it. If there is no life hereafter, then there will be no judgment; and if there is no judgment, then what is the difference how we live in this life—we shall never be called to account for it. If I shall never have to reckon for my own life, I can think only of self and let the rest of the world go by. My worst deeds will not be remembered when death comes.

Paul, writing to the Corinthians in the 15th chapter of the first epistle, argues from this viewpoint. He claimed that our faith and labors would all be in vain. The saint would have died in vain in Christ if there is no life hereafter. The doctrine of the resurrection is therefore an important one. It is a carnal point in the Christian faith. Everything depends upon our belief in a life hereafter.

How do we know that the dead shall rise again? Paul takes his proof from the fact that Christ rose again from the dead. He claimed that this is our proof of the hereafter. If Christ did not rise from the dead, then we would still be in our sins. The grave would be the end of life for all. But the fact that Christ rose from the dead on Easter morning—bursting the bands of death and triumphing over the power of sin, death and the devil—is sound reason for us to believe that He who is the Life and the Resurrection can raise up our mortal bodies.

You ask, how can this be done? How can life be given to flesh and bone which have lain in the silent grave for thousands of years?

Is this too difficult for the Creator, the Almighty God, who made the world and the universe out of nothing? What is impossible for Him who spread forth the expanse of the firmament and flung the stars and planets into space, causing them to whirl with infinite precision? Cannot He who gives life, take it away? And if He takes it away, why cannot He give it again? Jesus claimed that this power was given unto Him of the Father.

How difficult is it for Almighty God to raise up our mortal bodies who takes a small seed and makes it to grow into a mighty oak? “Is anything too hard for me?” saith the Lord God Almighty (Jeremiah 32:27).

The blessed hope of the saints of God is that when this mortal life is ended, we shall see our Redeemer in a land of unending day. When at last our frail tents are folded and our task on earth is done, God shall awaken us on the judgment morning. Then shall be fulfilled the prediction of Daniel

(chapter 12) that the righteous shall shine like the sun in the Father’s new kingdom, like the stars for ever and ever.

My friend—if you are believing, if your sins are forgiven in the name and shed blood of Christ, you will not die, but you will only sleep. The Bible does not speak of the death of the saints as death in its finality. In the Old Testament, death is spoken of as a “sleep.” We read of the patriarchs “sleeping with their fathers.” In the New Testament, death is referred to as sleeping, slumbering for a time. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians (first epistle, 4:14-15) says: *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.* The apostle refers to all of Christendom who have passed away as they who are sleeping. They are not dead, they sleep. Jesus spoke to the grieving relatives in the home of Jairus, the chief of old whose daughter He raised to life by His word. “She is not dead,” He assured them, “she is sleeping.” They laughed Him to scorn, as people today scoff when we say that the dead shall live again.

The saints of the Lord, when they pass on, do not die, but they sleep, spiritually speaking, in the silence of the grave. They sleep so soundly that nothing in this life can awaken them. No, not the heat and roar of the atomic blast, nor the din of war. They sleep in the blood-stained wounds of Christ in Whom they have believed. Then, when time has ceased to be, and eternity shall begin, when Christ shall descend from heaven with a shout and the elements shall melt in fervent heat, when the archangel of the Lord shall sound his trumpet, and when the angelic choir shall begin to sing the new song, the saints which have slept in Christ shall awaken. The children of God shall be awakened to the end of misery and sin. The Sun of Righteousness shall rise and melt away the ice and frost of sin. Then will commence the eternal day after which there will be no night.

Oh, what will it be like, beloved, to be awakened from the sleep of death by the harping of the angels and the shout of the archangels, and the shouts of the host of heaven as they sing the new song! What a glorious thing that will be! How gladly will the blessed saints of the Lord respond to the loving and tender call of the Bridegroom when He shall say: *Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. (Song of Solomon 2:10-13) ~*

WHILE I WAS SICK IN THE FLESH, the Savior was sent to me in the likeness of sinful flesh, fulfilling such a dispensation, to redeem me from slavery, from corruption, and from death. And He became to me righteousness, and sanctification, and salvation. Righteousness, by setting me free from sin through faith in Him. Sanctification, in having set me free through water and the Spirit and His word. And salvation, His blood being the ransom of the true Lamb, having given Himself on my behalf.

St. Epiphanius

Preface to the New Testament

Martin Luther

AS THE OLD TESTAMENT is a book in which have been recorded the Law and commandments of God, together with the history of both those who kept them and those who did not keep them, so the New Testament is a book in which have been recorded the Gospel and the promises of God, together with the history of those who believed them and those who did not believe them. For the term *Gospel* is a Greek term; its German meaning is: a goodly message, glad tidings, good news, a good report, of which men speak and sing in cheerful strains. As, for instance, when David had conquered the great Goliath, a good report, or the good news, circulated among the Jewish people that their worst enemy was slain and that they had been delivered and restored to happiness and peace. So the Gospel of God and the New Testament are glad tidings and report, which were spread throughout the world by the apostles, concerning One who was a true David, fighting against sin, death and the devil and conquering them and by His victory redeeming, justifying, quickening, saving and restoring to peace with God, all those who were in bondage under sin, tormented by death, and overcome by the devil, and causing them to sing, thank and praise God and rejoice forever, provided they firmly believe it and remain steadfast in this faith.

This report and comforting message, these divine evangelical glad tidings, are also called a *new testament*, because, as in a testament, by which a dying person disposes of his goods and orders them to be distributed among his appointed heirs after his death, Christ, prior to His death, has given command and directions to proclaim this Gospel throughout the world after His death, therewith bestowing upon believers, as their possession, all His goods, to wit, His life, by which He has swallowed up death, His righteousness, by which He has wiped out sin, and His salvation, by which He has defeated eternal damnation.

Now, a poor human being that is dead in sins and consigned to hell cannot be told anything more precious than this blessed, lovely message concerning Christ. If he believes that it is true, he must rejoice in his heart of hearts and be glad...

The Gospel, then, is nothing else than preaching concerning Christ, the Son of God and David's son, true God and man, who by His death and resurrection has overcome sin, death and hell for all those who believe in Him. Accordingly, the Gospel may be set forth in a brief or in a long statement by various writers. An extensive account is given by the four evangelists, who recount many works and words of Christ. A brief account is given, for instance, by Peter and Paul, who do not describe the activities of Christ, but indicate briefly how He, by His death and resurrection, has conquered death and hell for those who believe in Him.

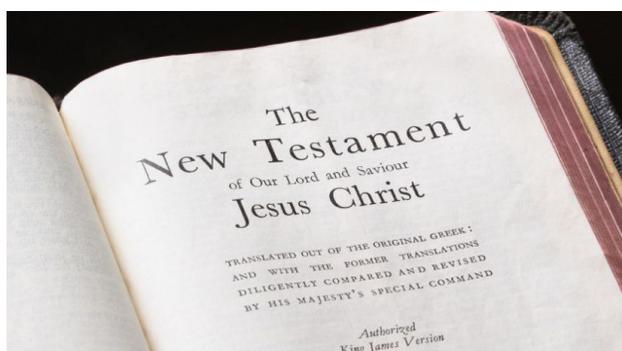
See, then, that you do not make Christ a new Moses or His Gospel a book of law or instruction, as has been done

heretofore in some prefaces that have been written to the New Testament, also by St. Jerome. For the Gospel, properly so called, does not require our works for making us godly and serving us; yea, it abominates our works. On the contrary, it demands that we believe in Christ, namely, that He has conquered sin, death and hell for us and makes us godly, quickens us and saves us, not by our works, but by His works and His suffering and dying, so that we may appropriate His death and victory as if we had achieved it ourselves.

The many commandments and instructions, however, and the expositions of the Law which Christ in the Gospel and also St. Peter and Paul have given, are to be received like all other works and blessings of Christ. Knowing the works and history of Christ is not yet knowing the true Gospel; for that does not embrace the knowledge that He has conquered sin, death and the devil. Even so, knowing the doctrine and commandments recorded in the New Testament is not yet knowing the Gospel; but this is the Gospel, when you hear the voice which tells you that Christ is your own with His life, teaching, works, His dying, His rising from death, and everything that He is, has, does and is able to do.

Accordingly, we see that He is not compelling men, but invites them with kind words, saying: "Blessed are the poor," etc. The apostles use terms like these: "I exhort, I beseech, I pray you." All of which shows that the Gospel is not a law-book, but, properly speaking, a sermon concerning the blessings of Christ, given us to have as our own if we believe. Moses, however, in his writings drives, compels, threatens, beats and chastises men in a horrible fashion; for he is a writer and enforcer of the Law.

That is the reason why no law is given to believers to make them righteous in the sight of God, as St. Paul says in 1



Timothy 1:9, for the believer is made righteous, is quickened, and is saved by Christ. Nothing is required of him but that he manifest his faith by his works. Indeed, when there is faith, it cannot be constrained; it manifests itself, it breaks forth in good works, it confesses and teaches the Gospel publicly and risks its life in doing so. All that a believer does during his life is made to tend to the advantage of his fellow-men and their aid; not only that his fellow-men may also obtain the grace of the Gospel, but also that he follows the example of Christ and sacrifice his life, possessions and honor for others as Christ has done for him. That is what Christ means when at the end of His life He gave His disciples no other commandment than this, that they love one another, telling them that thereby men would see who were His disciples and sincere believers. For faith, unless it breaks forth in works of love, is not genuine, and in such persons the Gospel has not yet taken root, nor have they come to know Christ aright. Observe, therefore, and apply this when you read the New Testament, that you may be sensible that you read it rightly. ~

The Little Maid with Great Faith

Gwen Wilson
Ridgefield, Washington

Dear Children,

How are each of you? I hope you are feeling well.

We adults are responsible for sharing God's Word with those of the household of faith. You children are very precious gems in God's kingdom. He loves each of you dearly, and would want very much that you learn about Him through His Word. Today's story is found in the Old Testament in *2 Kings 5:1-27*.

NAAMAN WORKED FOR the king of Syria. Naaman was very loyal, and the king had given him an important position as a captain of his army. Naaman was a great soldier and well-liked by the king, **but** he was a leper.

Leprosy is a disease of the skin and there was no cure in the Old Testament times. Today leprosy is rare but if caught early, it can be cured.

At the time of our story, the Syrians had gone to battle against the Israelites. They captured and brought back a little maid who was to wait on Naaman's wife. This maid was from Israel, and she knew of a prophet of God there. She told Naaman's wife about Elisha. She had possibly been with her family under the hearing of prophet Elisha, learning about God and witnessing the miracles done by Elisha through the power of God. She believed in this power and told her mistress, *Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria for he would recover him of his leprosy. (2 Kings 5:3)*

This was told to the king of Syria, who wrote a letter to the king of Israel. He sent the letter with Naaman his servant so that the king of Israel could heal him. The king of Syria obviously misunderstood what the little maid had said.

When Israel's king read the letter, he was so upset he tore his clothes and said, *Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me. (Vs. 7)* He knew that only God could do such healing, and he was wondering if the Syrian king was up to some trick, wanting to quarrel with Israel. The king of Israel was very uncomfortable, and he needed to know what really was going on.

Prophet Elisha heard the king was upset and went to him. He asked him to have the king of Syria send the man with leprosy to him.

When Naaman showed up at Elisha's door, Elisha sent a messenger to answer the door. Naaman stood outside. The messenger gave Naaman instructions to go and wash in the Jordan River seven times and he would be clean.

This sounded foolish to Naaman and he became very angry. He went away and said, *"Behold, I thought, He (Elisha) will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover (heal) the leper. (Vs. 11)* He couldn't believe he had come so far to be told to wash in a river!

Naaman was not a believer, as he referred to the God who would be the power behind this healing as Elisha's God. He must have had some reason to believe that this God could heal. Perhaps the little maid's confidence in telling about the prophet who could help him was giving his heart the nudge to believe there was something good here.

I can picture Naaman's thoughts as they rode to see Elisha. He was expecting a big act to happen. He was beside himself to find out there was not going to be anything showy, but to just wash in the Jordan River seven times and he would be healed. I think we would all expect more, like Naaman did. God works in mysterious ways.

His servants certainly looked up to him and even called him father. They saw his anger and tried to soften his rattled countenance. They obviously saw this washing to be an easy thing. Maybe they thought it strange, but why not try it?

And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? (Vs. 13)

Naaman's anger cooled and he did as he was told. He dipped himself seven times in the Jordan River and his leprosy was cured. The Bible tells us that his flesh was like a little child's.

How happy and thankful Naaman was! The company who traveled with him witnessed this miracle. God was not only going to do a great work in Naaman's heart, but many more would see His power and have knowledge of the one true God. Naaman now knew there was no other god but the God of Israel. He asked to take some soil home, so he could build an altar to give offerings to God. He would no longer serve false gods. I'm thankful Naaman found the one God.



Naaman wanted to give Elisha a gift for healing him, and Elisha would not take anything. Elisha had a servant named Gehazi. When Gehazi saw that Elisha had taken no gift from Naaman, he planned in his heart to get some of that gift for himself. A wicked plan it was, too. Gehazi ran after Naaman and told him two prophets had come to Elisha's after he had left. Gehazi then asked Naaman if he could have some money and changes of clothing to give them. Yes, Naaman was fine with that, and the gifts were given. Naaman made two of his servants carry the gifts as Gehazi followed them back to Elisha's house. At the hill just before Elisha's house, Gehazi took the gifts and said he could carry them from there, and he sent the men on their way. Gehazi sneaked the gifts into the house. Why did Gehazi do this? Had he managed to get the things he wanted for himself without anyone knowing? Or did someone know?

Gehazi went in, and stood before his master. Elisha asked him where he was coming from, and Gehazi lied saying,

“Nowhere.” Poor Gehazi was in big trouble and he didn’t know it. Elisha knew exactly what his servant had done, and Elisha was much displeased. Gehazi had just witnessed the miracle of Naaman being healed, so Elisha asked him, “Do you think this is an appropriate time to gather wealth and goods to yourself?” I’m sure Gehazi didn’t see this coming when Elisha told him: *The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed (family) for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow. (Vs. 27)*

Imagine how Gehazi must have felt! He probably wished that he had not told a lie and acted so selfishly. He would be punished for the rest of his life, and not only him but his family, too.

Children, pray to God when you are tempted to lie. The devil loves when we sin, and really likes us to tell lies. Lying can be so easy if one wants to cover up a wrongdoing real

quick, for example. The Bible tells us that God hates lying (Proverbs 6:17).

There is nothing one can do to cover up or hide sin. At some point or another it will be found out. Remember that God sees everything we do and hears everything we say. He even knows our thoughts before we think them. Whoa, there is absolutely NO hiding anything from God.

I also want you to pray to God when you are feeling selfish. Sometimes we don’t want to share with others. I have to deal with this myself. I have to ask God to help me be free to share, because it certainly will not hurt me and I will find blessings and peace when I share. I hope you will feel the same way.

Keep on believing with childlike faith, like that of our little servant girl in the story. Share Jesus with those you care about and love.

God’s peace.

The Thoughts and Ways of God

Pastor Travis Seppala
Greer, South Carolina

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:8-9

WHEN CONSIDERING THE wisdom and knowledge of the Lord of all creation, it is easy to admit that His thoughts far outstretch the thoughts of the human race. There are not many who raise protest to such a statement, and even those who do raise such a protest do so out of ignorance or stubbornness. The simple truth is that God is infinitely more wise, more knowing, and higher than even the wisest of the race that He has created. For this reason He seems to be stating the obvious when declaring that His thoughts and ways are higher than those of the human race. Who would ever be foolish enough to question God and His ways?

Human beings are just this foolish, though. Perhaps not so foolish as to question the Lord's majesty and power and wisdom, but these are not the things that the Lord is drawing our attention to here in Isaiah. The attributes of God that are being revealed in Isaiah 55 are His grace, mercy and forgiveness. The Lord here invites all who thirst and are poor to come to Him in order to receive a blessing that cannot be purchased and that will satisfy thirst and hunger forever. He welcomes all to hear Him and live; He reveals that while He is near all can seek and find Him. What is amazing is that He then says that pardon and forgiveness are available to all who seek Him, regardless of whatever wickedness and unrighteousness they may carry. It is only after making such a bold invitation that He states that His thoughts and ways are not to be questioned, and for good reason, because this unearned favor is constantly questioned and thought of as foolish. Human wisdom says that one gets what one deserves—no less, no more—so the idea that God shows grace to all who call upon Him is offensive and repulsive to the mind. People bristled at the parable of the people coming in the final hour and receiving the same reward as those who had labored all day. This is because giving people what they deserve falls much more in line with the human mind.

What human wisdom fails to notice is that if God gave everyone only what they deserved and earned, not a single soul would receive pardon. In fact, the Scriptures make known that the righteous requirement of the Lord is that the human race be perfect, just as He is perfect. It is only after being able to reach such perfection that one is finally worthy of all of God’s promises. This is not a lofty standard, it is an impossible standard. When faced with this reality one realizes that the solution is not to try harder but, instead, to throw oneself at the mercy of God, or else forever remain poor, thirsty and lost.

Thanks be to God that His ways are higher and His thoughts are His own! His ways see far beyond those of the human race. Rather than giving people what they deserve, He rescues humanity from despair. This rescue is found in the work of His Son, Jesus Christ. It is in Him that He has made Himself near to us. Because of His perfect sacrifice, righteousness is no longer toiled for but instead freely given to all who call upon the name of the Lord. No matter the unrighteousness or wickedness one may carry, pardon is now given full and free because God in His infinite wisdom and grace works in ways that cannot be comprehended by the human race. His ability to love and forgive will always be far beyond the understanding of humanity and His grace will always be greater than even the greatest of sins.

Therefore, instead of trying to comprehend God’s ways, the call in the balance of chapter 55 is to be at peace, to be joyful for what the Lord has done, and to share this message with all, for by this message the Lord continues to mend the broken and rescue the lost. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Luther at the Wartburg

Translating the Bible

J. H. Merle D'Aubigne
The Life and Times of Martin Luther

LUTHER WAS CALLED TO PRESENT his nation with the Scriptures of God. That same God who had conducted St. John to Patmos, there to write his revelation, had confined Luther in the Wartburg, there to translate His Word. This great task, which it would have been difficult for him to have undertaken in the midst of the cares and occupations of Wittenberg, was to establish the new building on the primitive rock and, after the lapse of so many ages, lead Christians back from the subtleties of the schoolmen to the pure Fountain-head of redemption and salvation.

The wants of the Church spoke loudly; they called for this great work; and Luther, by his own inward experience, was to be led to perform it. In truth, he discovered in faith that repose of the soul which his agitated conscience and his monastic ideas had long induced him to seek in his own merits and holiness. The doctrine of the Church, the scholastic theology, knew nothing of the consolations that proceed from faith; but the Scriptures proclaim them with great force, and there it was that he had found them. Faith in the Word of God had made him free. By it he felt emancipated from the dogmatical authority of the Church, from its hierarchy and traditions, from the opinions of the schoolmen, the power of prejudice, and from every human ordinance. Those strong and numerous bonds, which for centuries had enchained and stifled Christendom, were

snapped asunder, broken in pieces, and scattered round him; and he nobly raised his head freed from all authority except that of the Word. This independence of man, this submission to God, which he had learned in the Holy Scriptures, he desired to impart to the Church. But before he could communicate them, it was necessary to set before it the revelations of God. A powerful hand was wanted to unlock the massive gates of that arsenal of God's Word from which Luther had taken his arms, and to open to the people against the day of battle those vaults and antique halls which for many ages no foot had trod.

Luther had already translated several fragments of the Holy Scripture; the seven penitential Psalms had been his first task. John the Baptist, Christ Himself, and the Reformation, had begun alike by calling men to repentance. It is the principle of every regeneration in the individual man, and in the whole human race. These essays had been eagerly received; men longed to have more; and this voice of the people was considered by Luther as the voice of God Himself. He resolved to reply to the call. He was a prisoner within those lofty walls—what of that! He would devote his leisure to translating the Word of God into the language of his countrymen. Ere long this Word would be seen descending from the Wartburg with him; circulating among the people of Germany and putting them in possession of those spiritual treasures hitherto shut up within the hearts of a few pious men. "Would that this one book," exclaimed Luther, "were in every language, in every hand, before the eyes, and in the ears and hearts of all men!"

Luther opened the Greek originals of the evangelists and apostles and undertook the difficult task of making these divine teachers speak his mother tongue. ~



Martin Luther Translating the Bible, Wartburg Castle, 1521
 Eug. Siberdt 1898
 Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

(Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Title of Publication: Christian Monthly; 2. Publication Number: 0009-5494; 3. Date of Filing: 9/8/2022; 4. Frequency of Issue: Monthly; 5. Number of Issues Annually: 12; 6. Annual Subscription Price, \$12.00 7. Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern, PO Box 104, Hayti, SD 57241; Contact Person: Anders Sundqvist; Telephone (605) 303-4193. 8. Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern, PO Box 104, Hayti, SD 57241. 9. Name and Address of Publisher: Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern, PO Box 104, Hayti, SD 57241; Editor: Lois Matson, 2021 NE Yacolt Mountain Rd, Yacolt, WA 98675; Managing Editor: Lois Matson, 2021 NE Yacolt Mountain Rd, Yacolt, WA 98675. 10. Owner: Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern, PO Box 104, Hayti, SD 57241. 11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities: None. 12. Tax Status: Has not changed during preceding 12 months. 13. Publication Title: Christian Monthly. 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data: 9/1/2022. 15. Extent and Nature of Circulation: a. Total Number Copies Printed: Average Number of Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date. b. Paid Circulation: 1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions: Average, 93; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 91. 2) Paid In-County Subscriptions: Average, 0; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 0. 3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, and Counter Sales: Average, 0; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 0. 4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS: Average, 12; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 12. c. Total Paid Distribution: Average, 105; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 103. d. Free Distribution by Mail: 1) Outside-County, 0; 2) In-County, 0; 3) Other Classes, 0; 4) Free Distribution Outside the Mail: Average, 0; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 0. e. Total Free Distribution: Average, 0; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 0. f. Total Distribution: Average, 105; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 103. g. Copies Not Distributed: Average, 20; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 22. h. Total: Average, 125; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 125. i. Percent Paid: Average, 100%; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 100%. 16. Electronic Copy Circulation: a. Paid Electronic Copies: Average, 0; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 0. b. Total Paid Print Copies + Paid Electronic Copies: Average, 105; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 103. c. Total Print Distribution + Paid Electronic Copies: Average, 105; Single Issue Nearest Filing to Date, 103. d. Percent Paid: Average, 100%; Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 100%. 17. Publication of Statement of Ownership: October 2022. I certify that all information above is true and complete.

Anders Sundqvist, Business Manager

Words, Words, Words

Lois Matson
Yacolt, Washington

WORDS FASCINATE ME! We use the same twenty-six letters to form all the words in the English language. Depending on how we arrange the letters and use the words, we can communicate vastly different things, both positive and negative. Consider these encouraging examples:

A bridegroom croons to his bride, "I will love you forever!"

A mother comforts her hurting child, "It will be okay!"

A father disciplines his disobedient child, "If this behavior doesn't stop, it will not be okay!"

A child whispers, "I'm afraid!" and the parent assures the fearful child, "Don't be afraid. I'm here."

A broken soul confesses, "I am a sinner! I deserve nothing but punishment," and the pastor or other confessor absolves them: "Your sin is forgiven in the name and blood of Jesus, who loves you and gave Himself for you."

Our good God uses words to communicate with us. Depending on the arrangement of the words, we hear different messages from our Lord. Consider these examples:

Christ the Bridegroom speaks His everlasting love to His Bride, the Church.

The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel... (Jeremiah 31:3-4)

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Ephesians 5:25-27)

Like a mother, God comforts His hurting children.

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. (Isaiah 66:13)

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. (Isaiah 40:1-2)

Like an earthly father, our Father in heaven disciplines His disobedient children in order to bring them to

repentance.

Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him. (Deuteronomy 8:5-6)

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous:

nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. (Hebrews 12:5-11)

When we whisper our fears, God assures us that He is with us. He will strengthen and help us. *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right*

hand of my righteousness... For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. (Isaiah 41:10, 13-14)

When we confess our sins, God forgives us!

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 1:9 - 2:2)

In the Words of the Scripture, the twenty-six letters of our English alphabet teach, reprove, and correct us, and instruct us in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). God be praised for His encouraging Words to us! ~



Christian Monthly Vol. LXXVIII—No. 10

Subscription Rate: 1 Year

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

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

Send articles for publication to:
Lois Matson, Editor
Email: cm@apostoliclutheran.org
Phone: (360) 904-6951

Postal Mail to:

CHRISTIAN MONTHLY
20211 NE Yacolt Mountain Road
Yacolt, WA 98675

Address subscriptions, payments,
and Book Concern orders to:
Anders & Clara Sundqvist, Managers
Email: books@apostoliclutheran.org
NEW Phone: 360-601-5117
THE BOOK CONCERN
PO Box 104
Hayti, SD 57241

Apostolic Lutheran Church of America

www.apostoliclutheran.org

Western Mission: western@apostoliclutheran.org

Eastern Mission: eastern@apostoliclutheran.org

Foreign Mission: foreign@apostoliclutheran.org

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.



HAVE YOU MOVED? Please notify the Book Concern of address changes. We must pay return postage on undelivered mail.

Look Ever to Jesus

Pastor Nicholas Kandoll
New York Mills, Minnesota

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2

IN HEBREWS CHAPTER 11, we are told about many of the heroes of the faith: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and many more. When the writer says, *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses...* he's referencing these people.

This remains true to this day. The Christian faith unites us into the mystical body of Christ. And through this union we are connected to each other. The other thing to note is that these individuals are not set down to be admired based on their merits or what they did. It is their faith that is set before us as an encouragement.

Throughout the Old Testament we can see where these people gave in to sin and temptation. This cloud of witnesses does not only encourage us to live upright and moral lives—that is what every Christian should try to do—but they encourage us to “lay aside that weight and run the race that is set before us.” This does not mean that they don't have a weight of sin, but that we can draw encouragement from their journeys as we undertake our own.

The testimony to faith in Christ that is left behind for us from the people in the Bible and those Christians whom we know or whom we've heard of that have passed on speaks volumes to us. We see how God was faithful and merciful to them time after time, and we can be assured that we will receive those same gifts.

As always then our eyes are directed from our sin to our Savior. As Jesus endured the cross for us, as He despised its shame, we too are enabled by Him to endure the suffering of this world. To endure sickness, loss, and all hardships. We too are also given the grace to despise the shame that those bring us. And rest assured, dear Christian, because Jesus is set down at the right hand of the throne room of God, we too will inherit eternal life with Him. So let us run our race, looking to Jesus.

“Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through.”

—from *Yield Not to Temptation*, by Horatio R. Palmer

God's peace.

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.

Jeremiah 2:13



TWO EVILS, and both are so sad.

One, to forsake the fountain of living waters. This is forsaking God and His Son Jesus Christ, for from Him flows the waters of life. Jesus said, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (John 7:37-38)* Will we forsake this One Who has poured out this crimson red river of the water of life freely from His holy wounds?

Remember when God gave the children of Israel drink from the Rock in the wilderness? Scripture says that that Rock followed them, and that Rock was Christ. Beloved, that Rock still follows us, to pour forth daily the precious waters of redeeming grace unto us. If we forsake Him, we will find ourselves in the desert of sin where our thirst will never be quenched. The Redeemer says to the Father, *By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee. (Zechariah 9:11-12)*

To forsake this wonderful Savior is a great evil. But to hew out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water, that is, to make our own gods who are no gods, is also a great evil. May we cling ever to our one true God and His Son Jesus Christ, in Whom we have eternal life!

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