

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.

September 2013

Spirit and Truth

Pastor Ron Holmgren
Hockinson, Washington

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)

THROUGHOUT THE AGES MAN HAS performed acts of worship. He has built temples and altars to his god or gods. He has offered sacrifices and tried to worship correctly. It is no different today. All around the world there are acts of worship being performed at all hours of the day.

Jesus is in conversation with a Samaritan woman in the text we have before us. She was not like Him or "His people" in her acts of worship. She challenged Him with the history of her people and His and where they worshiped. So the two places were to be examined as to which was the correct one for worship. Jesus tells her plainly, *Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.* (John 4:22) There was no question as to who was correct when it came to the challenge set before Him. The Jew! The ones who had the promises and the temple and the altar, etc.

But now Jesus turns her thoughts away from the past and points to a future that was to come and was in fact dawning now in Him. Things were to change dramatically, and in the coming time worship would take on a completely different form. The temple would be destroyed and Jew would worship alongside Gentile as one. They would worship the Father in the same way even though the outward acts might look different.

THE TRUE WORSHIP Jesus was talking about was, in fact, the same as it had always been. Although the Jews had all the things outwardly correct, it was not enough. They would only truly worship if they did so "in spirit and truth."

The two nouns are joined and cannot stand alone. Spirit and truth! There is such a thing as genuine worship and it centers in the one who worships in spirit. As Paul writes in Romans 1:9: *For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son...* And also he tells us in the 8th chapter, verse 14: *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* So we do worship in spirit! But that is not to be the only thing we look for in our worship, for to do so is to be deceived. And so Jesus says worship in spirit and truth! We should not try to explain this away as some special kind of revelation beyond the limits of our minds. Jesus is speaking to an ordinary woman. And she would receive His words in the plainest way. It is simple truth as the Word (the Bible) presents it. The great chapter in Corinthians about love confirms this when it says that charity rejoices in the truth! (1 Corinthians 13:6)

The two nouns are joined and cannot stand alone. Spirit and truth!

If we are not in spirit our worship becomes formalism and ritual. And likewise, without the truth of the doctrine of our Lord, our worship becomes an abomination of our own fanciful imaginations. God protect us from this and lead us in the way of righteousness for His name's sake. ~



Prayer for the New School Year

Lord God, at the beginning of this new term teach us to be Your hands and feet where we are;
At the beginning of this new term teach us to love as You love us;
At the beginning of this new term teach us to pray for those in need;
So that You are honored and glorified. Amen.

Annie Barnsdale

Removing the Veil

A.W. Tozer

GOD IS SO VASTLY WONDERFUL, so utterly and completely delightful that He can, without anything other than Himself, meet and overflow the deepest demands of our total nature, mysterious and deep as that nature is. Such worship (of God) can never come from a mere doctrinal knowledge of God. Hearts that are "fit to break" with love for the Godhead are those who have been in the Presence and have looked with opened eye upon the majesty of Deity. Men of the breaking hearts had a quality about them not known to or understood by common men. They habitually spoke with spiritual authority. They had been in the Presence of God and they reported what they saw there.

The Church waits for the tender voice of the saint who has penetrated the veil and has gazed with inward eye upon the Wonder that is God. And yet, thus to penetrate, to push in sensitive living experience into the holy Presence, is a privilege open to every child of God.

With the veil removed by the rending of Jesus' flesh, with nothing on God's side to prevent us from entering, why do we tarry without? Why do we consent to abide all our days just outside the Holy of Holies and never enter at all to look upon God? We hear the Bridegroom say, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely." We sense that the call is for us, but still we fail to draw near, and the years pass and we grow old and tired in the outer courts of the tabernacle. What doth hinder us?

THE ANSWER USUALLY GIVEN, simply that we are "cold," will not explain all the facts. There is something more serious than coldness of heart, something that may be back of that coldness and be the cause of its existence. What is it? What but the presence of a veil in our hearts? a veil not taken away as the first veil was, but which remains there still shutting out the light and hiding the face of God from us. It is the veil of our fleshly fallen nature living on, unjudged within us, uncrucified and unrepudiated. It is the close-woven veil of the self-life which we have never truly acknowledged, of which we have been secretly ashamed, and which for these reasons we have never brought to the judgment of the cross. It is not too mysterious, this opaque veil, nor is it hard to identify. We have but to look in our own hearts and we shall see it there, sewn and patched and repaired it may be, but there nevertheless, an enemy to our lives and an effective block to our spiritual progress.

This veil is not a beautiful thing and it is not a thing about which we commonly care to talk, but I am address-

ing the thirsting souls who are determined to follow God, and I know they will not turn back because the way leads temporarily through the blackened hills. The urge of God within them will assure their continuing the pursuit. They will face the facts however unpleasant and endure the cross for the joy set before them. So I am bold to name the threads out of which this inner veil is woven.

It is woven of the fine threads of the self-life, the hyphenated sins of the human spirit. They are not something we do, they are something we are, and therein lies both their subtlety and their power.

Self is the opaque veil that hides the Face of God from us. It can be removed only in spiritual experience, never by mere instruction. As well try to instruct leprosy out of our system. There must be a work of God in destruction before we are free. We must invite the cross to do its deadly work within us. We must bring our self-sins to the cross for judgment. We must prepare ourselves for an ordeal of suffering in some measure like that through which our Savior passed when He suffered under Pontius Pilate.

LET US REMEMBER: when we talk of the rending of the veil we are speaking in a figure, and the thought of it is poetical, almost pleasant; but in actuality there is nothing pleasant about it. In human experience that veil is made of living spiritual tissue; it is composed of the sentient, quivering stuff of which our whole beings consist, and to touch it is to touch us where we feel pain. To tear it away is to injure us, to hurt us and make us bleed. To say otherwise is to make the cross no cross and death no death at all. It is never fun to die. To rip through the dear and tender stuff of which life is made can never be anything but deeply painful. Yet that is what the cross did to Jesus and it is what the cross would do to every man to set him free.

Let us beware of tinkering with our inner life in hope ourselves to rend the veil. God must do everything for us. Our part is to yield and trust. We must confess, forsake, repudiate the self-life, and then reckon it crucified. But we must be careful to distinguish lazy "acceptance" from the real work of God. We must insist upon the work being done. We dare not rest content with a neat doctrine of self-crucifixion. That is to imitate Saul and spare the best of the sheep and the oxen.

Insist that the work be done in very truth and it will be done. The cross is rough, and it is deadly, but it is effective. It does not keep its victim hanging there forever. There comes a moment when its work is finished and the suffering victim dies. After that is resurrection glory and power, and the pain is forgotten for joy that the veil is taken away and we have entered in actual spiritual experience the Presence of the living God. ~





In Loving Memory of Elsie Wirkkala

The Faithfulness of God to Our Family

FEW HAVE NOT BEEN TOUCHED by death. No one escapes the pain of separation from a loved one if they live very long. I share of God's faithfulness to our family to give glory to God, and hope and consolation to those who grieve. I also write as encouragement to those who near the time when there will be a physical separation from one another. May we make wise use of the time that we have left.

The following are excerpts from letters written by Pastor Alvin Holmgren. He wrote to our family after the death of our father in 1962:

In this hour of sorrow, may you find solace and consolation in the knowledge that **God never errs**, but that, if not now, sometime you'll understand the meaning of your tears and there, **sometime you'll understand**. ... The wonderful and eternal consolation which you are so fortunate to have is the perfect assurance that your loved one departed with his house of faith founded on the one and only sure foundation, Christ Jesus, the Chief Cornerstone. Your sorrow need not be as that of those which have no hope. Instead you may wait for the hour of awakening with joy, **knowing that it will be a glad reunion in the mansions of glory**.

And a few years later, in 1967, after the death of our sister Nancy at 20 years:

Our thoughts and prayers have been with you daily as we have remembered with sadness through which you have traveled this last month. How good it is to know that we have a Father in heaven whose strength is made perfect in us even when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death. His comfortable presence and His willingness to bear the burdens with us serve to ease the trial even though it be the loss of a loved one.

One of Mother's prayers to God was that she would not be taken away suddenly, since our father had been taken in a moment from us. She asked Him to give her long life. That prayer was answered, for she lived to be nearly 94.

She was a very quiet woman who said that "the more she trusted, the less she worried." Mother experienced a lot of adversity in her life, but she did not walk away from our Lord. It was not easy for her to persevere, as her writing illustrates:

God Remembers Us

By Elsie Wirkkala

The writers in the Bible had doubts and often felt despondent. We are accustomed to read that they were heroes of the faith and bold confessors of it. The writer of Psalms is not afraid to reveal his doubts: *does God remember me?* Thus we may confess our unbelief and thence trust that God is merciful to us sinners. We may pour out our feelings before Him. We may battle in our mind against despair and say, *"God remember me, remember me again, do not reject me."*

Another point we may notice. We are accustomed to think that God is an almighty majesty and king who rules everything. Everything is in His hands in this life. We think God has foreordained everything. We have no say in His plans. We have no influence on changing them. God knows, decides, dictates all. When we think thus, God becomes to us cold, distant, and far off, a foreign God who cares little about our thoughts. We receive a picture of God who is hard and immovable. The gospels and the book of Isaiah give us a picture of a different God, a God who is near and warm, a God to whom it is important what we feel and think and ask from Him. We have a God who hears our personal matters. He feels our experience in our daily lives. Of this we have an example of the woman of Canaan (Matthew 15:21-28) and also King Hezekiah (Isaiah 38).

FOR THE LAST TWO MONTHS of our mother's life, her family were near her. As often is the case, the tears of a mother are of sorrow as she watches, agonizes and prays for her children. As time goes on, as God works in unseen ways, as a mother prays and counsels, it is also often the case that her tears are turned to tears of joy over seeing her children find the way for which she had been praying. As she prayed, as God worked, and as we came together as a family for an extended period of time, a reawakening of love toward one another was experienced in our hearts. A recommitment to continue our relationships into the future was gained which will continue in Mother's absence. The fruit she planted and watered is growing. God is faithful and will always provide.

Reflections on Mother's love and commitment to us:

- Mother heard the voice of Jesus from her youth
- She came to know Him as her Creator and Savior
- As she journeyed, she came to know Him as her Friend, Consoler, Counselor and Sustainer
- She drew near Him when He drew near her in the difficulties and sorrows of life
- She continually prayed for us, cared, and visited when we had need, for she never stopped being our mother
- She longed for the city whose builder and maker is God
- She now dwells in that city which is lit by the glory of God and of the Lamb
- She now praises Him in the fullness of love, joy and peace

Our mother gave us life, taught us about Jesus through example, encouraged and counseled us to the end and, lastly, showed us how to wait for God's time to be called to heaven. May our eyes be heavenward as we travel through this life, awaiting the call to be with Him. God has provided everything for us for salvation through Christ Jesus. He will bless and sustain us, and He has provided an eternal place of rest with Him and His Son forever.

Orval Wirkkala

Kingston, Minnesota

In behalf of Allan, Lloyd, Kathy, Ruth, (Nancy), Linda, Sandra, Ralph, Patty and Thomas

Scripture Concerning Children

Gwen Wilson
Ridgefield, Washington

Dear Children,

Hello to each of you. I hope this finds you well.

It's hard to believe it is already August as I write, and when you read this it will be September. Soon children will be back in school. I do hope you will take these few verses and others that you read and carry them close to you as you go to school or even go about any given day. Keep God and Jesus close to you.

I have selected some verses that speak of children; you can fill in the blanks. Have someone help you if needed.



Ephesians 6:1: Children _____ your _____ in the Lord: for this is right.

Ephesians 6: 2, 3: _____ thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) that it may be _____ with thee and thou mayest _____ on the earth.

Matthew 18:3: Verily I say unto you, except ye be _____ and become as _____ ye shall _____ enter the kingdom of heaven.

Galatians 3:26: For ye are all the _____ of _____ by faith in Christ Jesus.

Proverbs 3:1: My son forget not my law; but let thine _____ my _____.

Proverbs 4:1, 2: Hear, ye _____, the _____ of a father, and attend to know _____. For I give you _____ doctrine, forsake ye not my law.

Matthew 19:14: Jesus said, Suffer little _____ and forbid them not, to _____ unto me: for of such is the _____ of _____.

Ecclesiastes 12:1: Remember now thy _____ in the days of thy _____.

As I write these down I realize how much more I also need to keep my mind on Scripture to help it to be "written" on my mind heart. I have a hard time memorizing, but I do enjoy reading the Word as it is so truthful, comforting, and will never lead anyone off the right road. God bless each of you on your Christian journey.

God's peace.

Deeper, Deeper

Fishermen don't all fish the same way. Some stay on shore, some venture into shallow waters, and others take their boats into deeper waters. People who trust in Jesus at some point in their lives are similar to these fishermen.

Those who stay on the shore are those who "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8), but there are lots of distractions among the crowds on the shore, and they tend to give up when the Lord asks them to do something hard.

In Luke 5:2 we read of two boats anchored at the water's edge. The fishermen were washing their nets, but when Jesus asked Peter to take Him out into the water a little way, Peter immediately obeyed. Those on shore may have struggled to hear what Jesus said, but from his vantage point on the boat, Peter could hear Jesus clearly. When we maintain intimacy with the Lord through reading His Word and prayer, we, too, can hear Him clearly.

Peter had obeyed in a small matter, so in Luke 5:4, Jesus said to Peter, "Launch out into the deep." In deep waters

we can't touch bottom, the winds of adversity are stronger, and we easily lose our balance. This is where we experience the most difficult tests and tribulations, where our own abilities don't mean much. In the deep waters we have left everything else to follow Jesus and we learn the purposes for our lives.

In deep waters we often receive abundant blessings, too. At Jesus' command to let down his nets, Peter's nets were so filled with fish that they began to break.

Through this experience and many others, Peter learned that *without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* (Hebrews 11:6)

From a sermon by Pastor Jorge Aguilar

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Submitted by Alvar Helmes; Battle Ground, Washington



Believing God

Martin Luther

Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. (Galatians 3:6)

THE APOSTLE MAKES THE MOST of this passage. Abraham may have enjoyed a good standing with men for his upright life, but not with God. In the sight of God, Abraham was a condemned sinner. That he was justified before God was not due to his own exertions, but due to his faith.

Paul places the emphasis upon two words: Abraham believed. Faith in God constitutes the highest worship, the prime duty, the first obedience, and the foremost sacrifice. Without faith God forfeits His glory, wisdom, truth, and mercy in us. The first duty of man is to believe in God and to honor Him with his faith. Faith is truly the height of wisdom, the right kind of righteousness, the only real religion. This will give us an idea of the excellence of faith.

To believe in God as Abraham did is to be right with God because faith honors God. Faith says to God: "I believe what You say."

When we pay attention to reason, God seems to propose impossible matters in the Christian Creed. To reason it seems absurd that Christ should offer His body and blood in the Lord's Supper; that Baptism should be the washing of regeneration; that the dead shall rise; that Christ the Son of God was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, etc. Reason shouts that all this is preposterous. Are you surprised that reason thinks little of faith? Reason thinks it ludicrous that faith should be the foremost service any person can render unto God.

Let your faith supplant reason. Abraham mastered reason by faith in the Word of God. Not as though reason ever yields meekly. It put up a fight against the faith of Abraham. Reason protested that it was absurd to think that Sarah who was ninety years old and barren by nature, should give birth to a son. But faith won the victory and routed reason, that ugly beast and enemy of God. Everyone who by faith slays reason, the world's biggest monster, renders God a real service, a better service than the religions of all races can render.

Men fast, pray, watch, suffer. They intend to appease the wrath of God and deserve God's grace by their exertions. But there is no glory in it for God, because by their exertions these workers pronounce God an unmerciful slave driver, an unfaithful, angry Judge. They despise God, make a liar of Him, snub Christ and all His benefits; they pull God from His throne and perch themselves on it.

Faith truly honors God. And because faith honors God, God counts faith for righteousness.

Christian righteousness is the confidence of the heart in God through Christ Jesus. Such confidence is accounted righteousness for Christ's sake. Two things make for Christian righteousness: Faith in Christ, which is a gift of God; and God's acceptance of this imperfect faith of ours for perfect righteousness. Because of my faith in Christ,

God overlooks my distrust, the unwillingness of my spirit, my many other sins. Because the shadow of Christ's wing covers me I have no fear that God will cover all my sins and take my imperfections for perfect righteousness.

Learn to understand the constitution of your Christian righteousness. Faith is weak, but it means enough to God that He will not lay sin to our charge. He will not punish nor condemn us for it. He will forgive our sins as though they amount to nothing at all. He will do it not because we are worthy of such mercy. He will do it for Jesus' sake in whom we believe.

Faith says to God: "I believe what You say."

Paradoxically, a Christian is both right and wrong, holy and profane, an enemy of God and a child of God. These contradictions no person can harmonize who does not understand the true way of salvation. Under the papacy we were told to toil until the feeling of guilt had left us. But the authors of this deranged idea were frequently driven to despair in the hour of death. It would have happened to me, if Christ had not mercifully delivered me from this error.

We comfort the afflicted sinner in this manner: Brother, you can never be perfect in this life, but you can be holy. He will say: "How can I be holy when I feel my sins?" I answer: You feel sin? That is a good sign. To realize that one is ill is a step, and a very necessary step, toward recovery. "But how will I get rid of my sin?" he will ask. I answer: See the heavenly Physician, Christ, who heals the broken-hearted. Do not consult the Quackdoctor, Reason. Believe in Christ and your sins will be pardoned. His righteousness will become your righteousness, and your sins will become His sins.

On one occasion Jesus said to His disciples: "The Father loveth you." Why? Not because the disciples were Pharisees, or circumcised, or particularly attentive to the Law. Jesus said: "The Father loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God. It pleased you to know that the Father sent Me into the world. And because you believed it the Father loves you." On another occasion Jesus called His disciples evil and commanded them to ask for forgiveness.

A Christian is beloved of God and a sinner. How can these two contradictions be harmonized: I am a sinner and deserve God's wrath and punishment, and yet the Father loves me? Christ alone can harmonize these contradictions. He is the Mediator.

Do you see how faith justifies without works? Sin lingers in us; God hates sin. A transfusion of righteousness becomes vitally necessary. This transfusion of righteousness we obtain from Christ because we believe in Him. ~

The Goodness and Grace of God

Mark Sunnarborg
Rhineland, Wisconsin

WE OUGHT TO TRUST AND love the Lord. *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. (Proverbs 3:5) And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength... (Mark 12:30)* When we love God as we ought, we are at peace and in the best place: His hands.

Let the Spirit guide you as your faith makes you whole, trusting what Jesus has accomplished as the complete work of restoration of body, soul and mind. Our righteousness comes not from within ourselves, but outside of us. For this we ought to praise God now and forever. Man cannot take the place of the Holy Spirit by offering programs or anything of the office of the Spirit, which is to call, enlighten, sanctify and preserve. He awakens our hearts to the knowledge of sin, invites us to accept His grace in Christ, keeps us in the true faith unto righteousness, forgives us our sins daily, and on the last day shall raise up all believers unto everlasting life. We can not manufacture the goodness and grace of God.

What then is God pleased with? We might reason in this manner: because we have carefully and prayerfully crafted a program that seems good, therefore it must be good. *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. (Proverbs 14:12)*

Let us look at what God requires of us. Has not God provided for us all things, even the prayer or cry that comes from deep in our hearts, even the desire to seek Him? Has He not provided living faith for each of us daily? Has He not provided complete redemption in His Son? Yes, He has! Now consider what God requires: that you would turn to Him in the faith that He has granted you. This turning to Him is your faith in action. Your faith is a work guided by the Spirit of God. Always remember we cannot fix ourselves, but God can, so trust Him in the work He has done. All God requires is that we give back to Him what He has given unto us, and then He is well pleased.

If we look at our problems and to the solution we desire for a remedy, God is left out. We pray that God

would answer according to our request, but we do not always seek His answer by faith. We think the shortest distance between our problem and the solution we desire is a straight line, and that God should answer accordingly. God answers our prayers, not just our problems. He is the answer for all of our cares and needs.

If your problem is too great, then consider this:

1. Start on your knees in prayer and confess you have a problem. State the problem to God, tell Him you are unable to fix you and release it all to Him.
2. When you start to place all your cares upon Him, He will show you in your heart how He alone can and will fix you and your problem.
3. Repeat step 1 as often as you need. Never stop telling God your problem. Remember, as you pray you are showing your faith in action.
4. Tell God of your plan or your ideas about what you want fixed and what He is to work out for you. Tell this to Him in prayer and make Him a partner in the solution to your problem. Work this out with Him—this is very important.
5. Stop, sit down and consider the small things God has done for you to smooth the rough edges in your life. Keep seeking God with your daily struggles.
6. God will show you that He is pleased with you as you begin to take small steps to improve your woes.
7. Stick to your plan and be confident that God can help.
8. Thank God for His help daily, or even every hour. Remember He alone is faithful.
9. Convince yourself that you are not to stray from the plan based on Scripture that God has provided. Putting God's plan first in your life is the answer.
10. *...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. (Luke 10:27)*

Step 10 happens when you are able to trust God with the faith given and are content with God's answer; nothing else matters because you are in His hand. In believing this you can have the peace that passes all understanding. ~

The Service of God

Jamon Holmgren
Vancouver, Washington

TOO OFTEN, CHURCH IS MARKETING as "us serving God." When it becomes about "let's all serve the Lord," then it becomes about us, ironically. It becomes a burden, a drag. You can never measure up. People get disillusioned when they see others who are so "full of the Lord" and they're not.

Luckily, church is totally not about us serving God. It's about God serving us! He reminds us of His glory, His grace, His justice, and delivers all of those things to us. He serves us forgiveness, salvation, faith, comfort, all the good things.



All these things are served through the Word and sacraments. He reminds us that we're sinners, but sinners saved by grace and truth. He doesn't demand that we somehow lift ourselves up to Him. He demands perfection. That perfection is found 100% in His Son, not at all in us.

It's very freeing to know that. I don't have to be guilt-tripped or feel inadequate. I can go to church and know that I'll be served by God Himself, regardless of how worthy or worthless I'm feeling at the moment. I wouldn't trade that for anything. ~

Go and Sin No More

John Ruotsala, Foreign Mission Administrator
New Ipswich, New Hampshire

Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, **Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.**

John 8:1-11

THIS PORTION OF SCRIPTURE SHOWS US what happens when a sinner has an encounter with Jesus; what happens when a sinner is alone before his Savior, King and Judge; what happens when a sinner is pardoned of his sins.

In most countries today, there is a way of issuing pardons to those found guilty of crimes. Imagine being in the spot where John Bridge, Jr. was in 1824, condemned to die. After he witnessed the hanging of several people, the noose was put around his neck. Sure death was just a few short moments away. But then a man on a horse rode up and looked the condemned man in the face. "Sir, do you know in whose presence you stand?" Bridge shook his head.

"There are but two powers known to the law that can save you from hanging by the neck until you are dead, dead, dead; one is the great God of the Universe, the other is J. Brown Ray, Governor of the State of Indiana; the latter stands before you..." Handing over the written pardon, the governor announced, "You are pardoned." Imagine the relief John felt when he heard those words!

Oh, that the sinner today would repent and receive the pardon from the Lord, believing by faith that all sins

have been pardoned by our Lord Jesus Christ, that all sins have been washed away by the power of His name and shed atoning blood! What relief and joy to the sinner!

According to the Law of Moses, the punishment for adultery was death by stoning for both the man and the woman. The scribes and the Pharisees were using the Law incorrectly because they only brought the woman, not the man. They didn't think about this, though; they only wanted to trap Jesus. They thought that if Jesus did not agree to stone the woman, they could accuse Jesus of breaking the Law, but if Jesus did agree to stone her, the people could have gotten Him in trouble because only Romans, not Jews, could carry out executions. They tempted Jesus. They had already used the Law incorrectly, but now they wanted to trap Jesus in not carrying out the Law properly. They did not know the supreme wisdom of the Savior, Master and Lord.

Legalistic people even today use the Law incorrectly by trying to apply it as a harsh ruler over Christians. However, let us also not incorrectly use the Law by accusing others of being legalistic when they are only trying to worship in spirit and in truth. Just because others do not do things the same way we do them doesn't mean they are necessarily being legalistic. Remember Romans 14th chapter.

The woman was caught in the very act of adultery. This is one of the sins that we learn about from our youth. Another is to kill. Another is to steal. I am not sure how it is in your country, but all too often people who claim to be Christians live in adultery. These same people would not

**Let us live as forgiven saints with a new name,
a new office, and a new outlook on life!**

kill someone, but they live in adultery and somehow justify it. Oh, what shame they bring upon themselves. Oh, what a great sin this is according to Scripture.

NOW, HOWEVER, LET'S LOOK AT our own hearts. The Bible says that if we look upon a woman with lust, we have already committed adultery with her in our hearts. The same for hatred, envy, greed and so forth. Now, which of us can say we are free of sin? James 2:10 says: *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one*

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Christian Monthly

September 2013



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from page 7:

point, he is guilty of all. Romans 3:10, 23 says: As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. And Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Which condition are you in? Are you in sin or in Jesus Christ? All mankind will meet Jesus alone like this woman did. It is infinitely better to meet Him while we yet live than to meet him after we die, when He will be the final and ultimate judge. Either way, everyone will meet Him.

The woman confessed that Jesus is Lord. What does the Bible say about those that confess the Lord Jesus? *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (Romans 10:9)* What is your confession today? Oh, that we would humble ourselves before God and not reject the pardon that He offers through what Jesus has done for us on the cross.



"Neither do I condemn thee..." When Jesus spoke these words, He gave the power to the woman to overcome the old life and start anew! The repentant person today receives the power of Holy Spirit to help them through this life. Jesus will not leave us comfortless but wants to fill us to overflowing.

Then Jesus said, **"Go, and sin no more."** Sin is not a light issue. Just because the Christian is under grace does not mean they can live anyway they desire to fulfill the flesh. Romans 6:1-2 says: *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid...* Let us live as forgiven saints with a new name, a new office, and a new outlook on life! Let us lift up Jesus Christ, so others would be drawn unto Him. No matter our life, our background, our country, our financial status, Jesus is the only way. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life! ~

Please visit www.themissionsite.com for more information on the Foreign Mission of the Apostolic Lutheran Church of America.

Make Supplication With Joy

F.B. Meyer

I have you in my heart... For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:7-8

SEE THE APOSTLE'S TENDER AFFECTION towards them. "I have you in my heart... and God is my witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus." The Apostle had got so near the very heart of his Lord that he could hear its throb, detect its beat, nay, it seemed as though the tender mercies of Jesus to these Philippians were throbbing in his own heart.

Let us live like this. You have children in your schools that greatly trouble you, boys and girls whose restless and obstinate natures seem to resist every overture; men and women meet you daily in your home-life, whom you cannot love with the love of natural affection; but, let every one of us get back to the heart of Jesus Christ until it pours its contents into ours, until we begin to yearn over the lost with the compassions of Jesus. Before you pass round that unkind story, before you say you will never speak to that man again, before you treat another with distance and coldness, get back to the heart of Jesus Christ, until His tender compassions shall fill yours. Then you can make supplication with joy. ~

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but **in every thing 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

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