

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.



FEBRUARY 2011

GREAT LOVE

For as the heaven is high above the earth,
so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is
from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Psalm 103:11-12

David was neither an astronomer nor a geographer, but he was certainly inspired by the Holy Spirit. Searching for some standard of measurement to express the magnitude of God's love, he compares it to the height of the heavens. Today we are in a better position to grasp the significance of these words than David was when he wrote them. Astronomers have told us about countless millions of galaxies, all far greater than the galaxy of which our sun is a part. The facts they have given are such that no human intellect can remotely comprehend them. So it is with the love of God. Over and above that which our finite minds can absorb, there remains a vastness beyond our power to imagine.

David goes on to picture the way God deals with our guilt: *...so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.* How thankful we should be that David did not use as his standard the distance from north to south! That is a finite, measurable distance. But the distance from east to west is infinite. No matter how far eastward we may go, there is still just as far to

go as when we started. If we reverse our direction and go westward, the same is true.

That is how God deals with our guilt once He has forgiven us. He removes it so far from us that we can never again come near it. How foolish it would be on our part, then, to be troubled or condemned by what God Himself has placed forever beyond our reach!

*Pastor Nick Magola
South Africa*

Pastor Nick Magola is the husband of Alice Magola who distributes the HIV/AIDS booklet, *Follow Jesus, Prevent AIDS*, published by the Foreign Mission, in several countries of southern Africa. Pastor Nick and Alice attended our church convention in New Ipswich in 2004.

—●—●—●— But God, who is **rich in mercy**, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the **exceeding riches of his grace** in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:4-7

THANKFULNESS

And it came to pass, as he (Jesus) went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that



returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

Luke 17:11-19

According to the Scriptures, lepers were to be separated from the people and to remain outside the camp of Israel. Leprosy was generally of such serious nature that it affected the skin and senses, even rotting away entire members of the body. The disease progressed slowly and caused terrible destruction.

Spiritually, leprosy is a picture of unbelief and the effects of sin. In this state a person becomes separated from the fellowship of faith, giving his members to the servitude of sin. It brings forth corrupt and bad fruits. It causes severance of ties with people, breaking up families and homes. It leads to bitterness, enmity and bad living habits. Truly a person has then become a slave of sin.

In our text, upon seeing Jesus, the ten lepers cried out with loud voices: *Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.* This was a prayerful plea, not only meant for healing from their disease, but also that He would pardon them. There have been occasions where God has, for instance, through sickness caused the awakening of a person's conscience. A prayer has arisen from the depths unto the heights: "Lord, have mercy on me." If physical healing was not given, this one received even more than that: the grace of repentance. He has received greetings from heaven in the audible Gospel of the kingdom of God. And God answered it with peace within the heart. It is remarkable that the same person has thanked God for the sickness through which the Lord brought awakening and an end to that course of life. He has led him in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake (Psalm 23:3).

The lepers were cleansed by the power of Jesus' Word. The sick who were healed, according to the Law of Moses, needed to show themselves to the priests who, upon examining them, proclaimed them whole. Jesus followed this rule. In the Christianity of Lapland it has also been taught. Johan Raattamaa so instructed a young preacher who had fallen into sin in the congregation of Enontekio. The young preacher went to Saivo, where Raattamaa lived, penitent and confessing his sin. Raattamaa indeed did proclaim the gospel of forgiveness to him, but

then told him, "Go now and show yourself to the priest in the congregation in which you committed the sin." He returned from where he had come and there continued his repentance; so he was also made free from the accusations of the people.

Of the ten lepers who were cleansed only one turned back praising God with a loud voice and falling down at Jesus' feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. *Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?* We may hear of good tidings that someone in our own area has come into faith, but the Lord of the congregation may ask, "Where is he? Why has he not come to thank Jesus? Why has he forsaken the holy paths and fellowship of God's children?" The congregation waits and longs for him. "Where art thou? Have the streams of temptation and the winds of deception overcome and carried you along?"

The praise and thanksgiving of God is not only that of the mouth. When it stems from the heart it permeates the whole life and all that is within me (Psalm 103:1). The child of God is of the mind to worship God, so all his actions go forth in a sacrifice of praise, as Hebrews 13 tells us. By so doing we praise the works of God and all His benefits unto us (Psalm 103:2). Here in the midst of failures and faults we often experience, nonetheless, that we are so lax to offer thanks. The desire of our spirit is to thank Jesus with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (Colossians 3:16). We desire not to praise the idols of our day, such as those presented by rock and pop music.

Jesus said: "Thy faith hath saved thee." God has provided for us, in His Son Jesus Christ, a perfect and everlasting righteousness and salvation. Because of the sacrificial blood of Christ, we can believe ourselves to be children of God. The word of the Gospel kindles faith and through this faith we are possessors of the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. By this means also the pearly gate is open to heaven itself. We shall truly give thanks when corruption is stripped away and eternal glory is clothed upon us.

With these words I desire to send greetings of love to the American friends in faith, brothers and sisters, from Europe, Sweden and Finland.

Timo Orre

Translated from the Finnish by Wilfred Sikkila



WHO AM I?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran pastor, theologian, and martyr. After a two-year imprisonment for his part in the German resistance movement against Nazism, he was executed in April 1945, only days before the Nazis surrendered to the Allied forces. He was influential in prison, earning the respect of both his fellow prisoners and his guards, some of whom even smuggled Bonhoeffer's writings and poems out of prison, and who apologized when they had to lock his door after a walk in the courtyard. All were impressed by his calm self-control, even during the heavy bombings in Berlin. He had an amazing ability to comfort the anxious and minister to the sick in prison.

But this is only one side of the story. Bonhoeffer was also a man who lived in, and loved, this world. He longed for freedom and the return to his life before the war. He was calm and controlled before men, but within himself he acknowledged the fight between flesh and spirit, between Adam and Christ. His conflict is expressed in this poem written from his prison cell:

Who am I? They often tell me
I stepped from my cell's confinement
calmly, cheerfully, firmly,
like a squire from his country house.

Who am I? They often tell me
I used to speak to my warders
freely and friendly and clearly,
as though it were mine to command.

Who am I? They also tell me
I bore the days of misfortune
equably, smilingly, proudly,
like one accustomed to win.

Am I then really that which other men tell of?
Or am I only what I myself know of myself?
Restless and longing and sick, like a bird in a cage,
struggling for breath, as though hands were compressing my throat,
yearning for colors, for flowers, for the voices of birds,

thirsting for words of kindness, for neighborliness,
tossing in expectation of great events,
powerlessly trembling for friends at an infinite distance,
weary and empty at praying, at thinking, at making,
faint, and ready to say farewell to it all.

Who am I? This or the other?

Am I one person to-day and to-morrow another?

Am I both at once? A hypocrite before others,
and before myself a contemptible woebegone weakling?

Or is something within me still like a beaten army
fleeing in disorder from victory already achieved?

Who am I? They mock me, these lonely questions of mine.

Whoever I am, Thou knowest, O God, I am thine!

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Jesus, praying to the Father in the High Priestly Prayer:

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word... I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

John 17:6, 9-10

—○— Turn we to the Lord God, the Father Almighty, and with pure hearts offer to Him, so far as our meanness can, great and true thanks, with all our hearts praying His exceeding kindness, that of **His good pleasure** He would deign to hear our prayers, that by His power He would drive out the enemy from our deeds and thoughts, that He would increase our faith, guide our understandings, give us spiritual thoughts, and lead us to His bliss, through Jesus Christ His Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*Prayer of St. Augustine
which he was wont to use after his sermons and lectures*



TESTIMONY

The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works. He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

Psalms 104:31-32

While visiting in New Hampshire, I heard a sermon on Psalm 104. When the speaker came to verse 32, I was quite taken aback. I do believe that from now on, I will look at earthquakes and volcanoes differently. They do not happen by chance. However, I also considered this a little differently, as we all live in a small part of earth called our earthly portion.

I remember quite vividly some 48 years ago when God began working in my own heart. I lived freely in the world, with no restraints from His Word. I did not know what it was like for God to work in the heart or conscience because I was not brought up in living Christianity or even among the Christians. I was born and reared in the world, so this was not at all amiss on my part. My parents repented when I was 13 and I was already deep in the world. I went to confirmation and did not continue with the church after that. A relative of Dad's came to visit and wanted to discuss his particular religion; we talked for some time. The next day, I realized that I knew nothing of the Word of God, only what was memorized from confirmation. I said a brief prayer and asked God to show me what it is to be a Christian, and I began reading the Word. He heard my prayer and looked on me. And I trembled. This went on for some time. I would read and cry and tremble. I continued reading for some time. Soon I could no longer open the Bible. I felt it was on fire and dared not touch it. I was sure I was losing my mind.

Finally, I called my mother and told her of my condition. I told her that I dared not sleep because, if I did not wake, I knew I would have to go to hell, still not understanding why or what my problem was. She sent for my dad to see me. When he arrived, I was quite distraught and upset. He asked what my problem was and I began expounding my sins. I still did not


understand what had happened. He assured me that my sins were forgiven and I did not have to go to hell. I felt better for only a little while. God was not done looking at me yet. When my parents returned three days later, I told them I couldn't greet with God's peace and didn't feel I had become a Christian.

When God looked upon me, He not only dealt with my outward sins, He created an earthquake. The more I trembled, the more I split. Cracks and crevices in my earth revealed more and more of me. Not only did I live in sin, I was sin. I could not be a Christian as I was. The *Song of Solomon 1:6* says, *Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me...* Yes, when God looks on us, we become black, knowing our sins and sinfulness.

And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry. (Luke 15:23) My father spoke to me of a Savior who loves real sinners and who are all sin, not just sinners that do some things wrong. He placed my feet of faith on Golgotha and the work of redemption accomplished for me. I was able to believe that if we are covered with the blessings of redemption through Christ Jesus, we are acceptable to God and our sins and sinfulness are all forgiven. Now even God can rejoice with the sinner. The Fatted Calf has been killed and we can now eat and be merry. I have depended on those promises all these years, as I still carry this sinful earth with me on my Christian journey and it still gives me much trouble, but God has been faithful in His promises, for which I am eternally thankful.

This is my prayer for my children, grandchildren, and now already great-grandchildren, and many children whom I have come to love, whom I would not want to see lost: God, be gracious to them all. Continue to look on this sinful earth that souls may be saved. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Mary Hoard
Taylors, South Carolina
Submitted by Sue Matson
Yacolt, Washington

 **If we do not die to ourselves, we cannot live to God, and he who does not live to God is dead.**

George MacDonald

TWOFOLD TESTIMONY


The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

Psalm 19:1, 7

In this nineteenth psalm, we are called to consider the twofold testimony of creation and of the Word, or the Bible, as we call it. God has revealed His eternal power and deity in the wonders of the created universe (Romans 1:20). This testimony is so full and so wonderful, so compelling, if considered carefully, that men are without excuse if they reject it. In addition, however, He has revealed His love and His righteousness in the Scriptures, where we learn of His marvelous plan of redemption for lost mankind. It is this which, if received in faith, will produce the new birth (1 Peter 1:23-25).

The amazing mechanism of the universe declares there is a Master Mind behind it. It is designed to lead men to recognize the personality and omnipotence of God. Well has Young written, "An undevout astronomer is mad." The heavens are ever telling of their Creator's wisdom, and calling men to bow reverently before Him and to seek His face. But it is only in the Scriptures that we have the full revelation of His Fatherhood and His redemptive plan. We should never understand His grace apart from its manifestation in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Himself the central theme of both Testaments. It is through this unveiling that we are enabled to draw nigh to God, knowing He is full of mercy and compassion, infinitely holy and righteous, yet ready to forgive all who trust His Son, who has made full expiation for all our sins.

H.A. Ironside

 A judicious friend, into whose heart we may pour out our souls, and tell our corruptions as well as our comforts, is a very great privilege.

George Whitefield

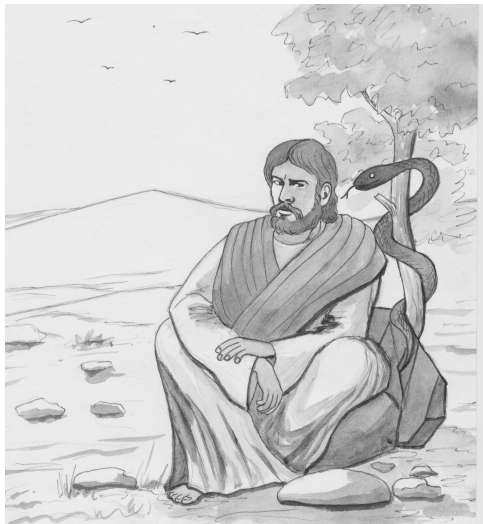
Dear Children,

I hope this finds you all well and happy. The Christmas season as we call it is over, but is it? No, because we can remember Jesus' birth in our hearts every day. Christ's birth is truly a special time.

You have read about His birth and a little about Him growing up. Now I would like to tell you something that happened to Jesus when He was about 30 years of age. It is found in *St. Luke 4:1-15*.

JESUS TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL

After Jesus was baptized, He was led by the Spirit of God into the wilderness. Here He spent forty days neither eating nor drinking, and He became very hungry. The devil came to Jesus in His hunger and tempted Him first with food. The devil thought



Jesus would surely want something to eat. The devil says, *If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. (v. 3)* Jesus tells him, *It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. (v. 4)* You can see Jesus is obedient to His Father, God, and desires to do His will and not listen to the devil.

Next, the devil took Jesus up into a high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world. He tells Jesus that he will give Him power over all that He sees if Jesus will worship him. Listen to what Jesus says to the devil, *Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. (v. 8)* This is something you and I need to listen to and do also, right? We only want to serve God.

The devil then took Jesus to Jerusalem and set Him on a very high point of the temple (church). He tells Jesus that if He really is the Son of God, throw Himself down from the temple, as the Word says that God will send His angels to help Him and He won't get hurt. Jesus then says to the devil, *It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. (v. 12)*

And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. (v. 13) We see that Jesus was victorious over the devil and we can be too, with God's help.

Jesus returned to Galilee. The people all around the area talked much about Him because He had such wonderful power. *And he taught in their synagogues (churches), being glorified of all. (v. 15)* Jesus was so holy at His birth that people bowed and worshipped Him. When He was older, they still glorified and worshipped Him because He is so holy. Oh, yes, Jesus is so holy and wonderful that we should praise His name and glorify Him in song, word and deed!

I pray that each of you will pray to God and ask Him to fill you with His Spirit and strength, so you will be able to be strong over the devil when he tempts you to do wrong. God will certainly hear you and keep you all of your days. The devil is always bothering God's people to do certain things his way and we have to pray for strength, so that we can stay clear of him and serve God only. May God bless each of you and keep you strong. *Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)*

*God's peace,
Gwen Wilson*

NEW PAGE coming: "From the Mouth of Babes"

Please submit short prayers, praises, and inspiring thoughts by your children to cm@apostoliclutheran.org.

*When the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he (Jesus) did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased, And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, **Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?***

Matthew 21:15-16

facebook status updates

Jerry-Heidi DeVries: "Let go and let God." A good reminder for me when things start to weigh me down.

Foreign Mission: Who said this? "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." (As a parent I can really relate; how about you?)

Donna Niemitalo Weisser: If you're worried, pray; if you prayed, don't worry.

Seth Aho: Praying for the deliverance of those hungry, sick, cold, hopeless, wet, needy people striving to survive in a sick world where disease, sickness, filth, wind, rain, chill, noise (train whistles) rule. Asking for those with plenty or little to share some of their Christmas Cheer with our friends in need.

Renee Christopher: Your worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God's grace. And your best days are never so good that you're beyond the need of God's grace.

Steven A. Anderson: Bring the old doctrines of Christ into the new year.

Jeanne Sikkila: Kelvin's prayer on New Year's Eve:

Dear God, please bless this father and mother.

Let them always love each other. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Paul Somero: Happy New Year! God bless you! A day will dawn when time shall be no more.

Phyllis Riikonen: "Courage is fear that has said its prayers." (Dorothy Bernard)

Joy Bergstedt: I live with the realization that my sins are all forgiven. What freedom!! Thank You, Lord, for going to Calvary's cross and that Your mercies are new every morning.

Tywen Aho: When the presence of God is real to your soul, religion becomes second nature. Austere joy, overwhelming calm, and indescribable simplicity.

Stacey Olson: "If you spent one million dollars a day starting the day Jesus was born you still would not be at one trillion! What is our government doing?" (David Jeremiah)

Dakota Karlsen: Risk more than others think is safe. Care more than others think is wise. Dream more than others think is practical. Expect more than others think is possible.

Margaret Salmi: Do we have dusty shoes and worn out knees? DO I?? The last thing Jesus did before He died on the cross was to pray. I find I am so lacking. Do times have to get really bad before we wear out those knees or should we be in much prayer always? I do believe so...

Submit a FB Status! If you have an uplifting or thought-provoking Facebook status, please send it to us. If it is not your own, please *obtain permission* from the author and email it to cm@apostoliclutheran.org.

God hath not promised skies always blue,
Flower strewn pathways all our lives through;
God hath not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.

God hath not promised we shall not know
Toil and temptation, trouble and woe;
He hath not told us we shall not bear
Many a burden, many a care.

God hath not promised smooth roads and wide,
Swift, easy travel, needing no guide;
Never a mountain rocky and steep,
Never a river turbid and deep.

But God hath promised strength for the day,
Rest for the labor, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.

Annie J. Flint

—•••— *For all the promises of God in him are yea,
and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.*

2 Corinthians 1:20



IN LOVING MEMORY OF SAIMA PETERSON

Relecting upon this past year, I find that a precious part of my entire life in this world is missing. My beloved mother, Saima Peterson, passed from this life into eternity with Jesus on November 3, 2010. It is with a tinge of sadness, but yet great joy, I realize that she peacefully reached the goal that we are all striving for. Praise God!

Mom patiently lived her last seven years at a medical care facility, missing her beloved husband, Helmar Peterson, who passed from this life in January 2001. She was an inspiration to everyone and a joy to those who took care of her. She was a loving friend to both young and old who often paid her a pleasant visit.

One of the special lessons that will never be forgotten is how she would always encourage us to have and show love to one another. Her heart was open to all, and her words of love and encouragement sent a special message to everyone who entered her life. As a child, even, I remember her teachings of forgiveness in Jesus' name and blood one toward another. During this blessed Christmas season, when we have commemorated our Savior's birth, we realize the importance of why Jesus came, even as we read in *Ephesians 1:7: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* (Read Ephesians 1:3-14.) How truly blessed to have had believing parents who endeavored to live in and teach these eternal truths.

I would like to share a beautiful poem that was sent in Mom's memory:

The Mansion of Heaven

This world, however beautiful, was never meant to be
The place that we would call our home for all eternity.

And though we would not choose to leave, a loving God knows best,
And in His time, He lifts us to a place of peace and rest.

For He has built a mansion where His children will abide,
Free from pain and sorrow, forever at His side.

And though there may be many things that we cannot explain,
We can be sure it breaks His heart to see His children's pain.

In loving arms, He bears us to a quiet place apart
Where He mends the wounded spirit and heals the broken heart.

And though these ones we love so much have left our present sight
And passed into a better world of majesty and light,

Someday we'll be together in our Father's home above
Where we'll thank Him for His mercy and praise Him for His love.

(Author Unknown)

*Elly (Peterson) Kuivanen, Saima's oldest daughter
Tapiola, Michigan*

—○—○—○— *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)* The whole life of a Christian should be nothing but praises and thanks to God; we should neither eat nor sleep, but eat to God and sleep to God and work to God and talk to God, do all to His glory and praise.

Richard Sibbes

—○—○—○— *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)* The Bible calls the good man's life a light; it is the nature of light to flow out spontaneously in all directions, and fill the world unconsciously with its beams.

Horace Bushnell

—○—○—○— *If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light. (Luke 11:36)* We do not segment our lives, giving some time to God, some to our business or schooling, while keeping parts to ourselves. The idea is to live all of our lives in the presence of God, under the authority of God, and for the honor and glory of God. That is what the Christian life is all about.

R.C. Sproul

LET US PRAY

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Dear Father, we worship You, the triune God-head. O Lord, You have desired and made Your habitation, Your place of doing Your great and wonderful work, among all who believe in You. Please strengthen us that may we serve You faithfully, that we may desire to know You more closely, that we may know You in grace and truth. May we bring the Gospel of salvation unto all men with whom we have the opportunity.

Dear Father, we pray for those who are hard against the Gospel. We pray for our friends who are not able to believe that the Gospel belongs to them, for our dear relatives and friends who do not know Christ. We pray for the many children of Christian parents who have such a poor understanding of Christ Jesus that they believe that they are able by a list of rules to follow the way that is righteousness, peace and joy. O gracious God, it takes something, we have learned, far more powerful than a list of rules: it is the One who has the power of the endless Life, our Lord Jesus Christ. Father, there we have peace and joy and rest to our souls. As we are seated with Him, how He ministers to us, speaks to us and shares with us His wonderful redemptive work!

We pray for the Christian Church throughout the whole earth. Lord, send a special time of repentance unto all of us, that we may turn from our self-centeredness, from our selfishness and pride, that we may be followers of our Lord with thanksgiving and in worship of Him. We pray also for all the pulpits in our land, in all the lands, that there would be a cry that comes out that originates with Thee, dear Father, that originates at the altar of redemption, the altar of atonement, of the forgiveness of sins. Lord, we pray that You would send the word of judgment upon all men, that men may come to know their sin, and be convicted, and become seekers of mercy and grace and truth.

Dear Father, we pray, raise up young men in our congregations who will become harbingers of the Gospel, who love the Word of God, for whom we can pray. Lord, we pray for every congregation. We pray for those who have been drawn away

after the "feel-good" type of preaching, where the focus is on the senses and on the material, and the focus is on works, where one is taught how to raise good teenagers, how to have a strong marriage. Lord, it only comes through our relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Help us that we would be faithful unto the preaching of being united to Christ and drawing nearer and closer to Him. O dear Father, to Your glory we pray. Amen.

*Pastor Ansten Tretten
Lake Worth, Florida*

We must consider the Word becoming Man and His divine appearing in our midst. That mystery the Jews disparage, the Greeks deride, but we adore; for it is a fact that the more unbelievers pour scorn on Him, so much the more does He make His Godhead evident. The things which they, as men, rule out as impossible, He plainly shows to be possible; that which they deride as unfitting, His goodness makes most fit; and things which these wiseacres laugh at as "human," He by His inherent might declares divine. Thus by what seems His utter poverty and weakness on the cross He overturns the pomp and parade of idols, and quietly and hiddenly wins over the mockers and unbelievers to recognize Him as God.

You must understand why it is that the Word of the Father, so great and so high, has been made manifest in bodily form. He has not assumed a body as proper to His own nature, far from it, for as the Word He is without body. He has been manifested in a human body for this reason only, out of the love and goodness of His Father, for the salvation of us men. We will begin, then, with the creation of the world and with God its Maker, for the first fact that you must grasp is this: *the renewal of creation has been wrought by the Self-same Word Who made it in the beginning.* There is thus no inconsistency between creation and salvation, for the one Father has employed the same agent for both works, effecting the salvation of the world through the same Word Who made it in the beginning.

St. Athanasius (c. 297-373)

"SHALL" IN THE BIBLE

The word "shall" is an important auxiliary verb in the Bible that is often overlooked as to its true instructional value. At the time the King James Version was translated, it carried a stronger connotation than it does now. Today, there are even people who say the word "shall" should be dropped from the English vocabulary. Is it because they feel it is too harsh and they don't want to be guided by such instruction? Do they feel we should be able to do whatever we please in our lives without any restrictions? Probably!

In the dictionary the word "shall" implies a much stronger instruction to us than we sometimes want to acknowledge. It says the word is used in the second or third person, especially in speech or writing, to express determination, compulsion, or necessity. Two dictionary definitions of the word are:

1. **Used to express what is inevitable or likely to happen in the future.**
2. **Used to express what is mandatory.**

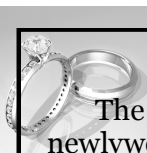
Strong's Concordance says "shall" is used 9838 times in the Bible. The word "shalt," which means the same thing, is used 1616 times. One important Scripture reference is the following: *But **ye shall** receive power... and **ye shall** be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1:8)* The power referred to is the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, which came upon the disciples shortly afterward on the day of Pentecost. Applying the two dictionary definitions above to the word "shall" in this Scripture, we can see that **it is inevitable** that a true believer will receive the Holy Spirit, and with this power, **it is inevitable (even mandatory)** that a true believer will be a witness to the world within their capabilities or means.

One might say that this instruction to be witnesses is legalistic in nature. But it isn't, really. If we, as true Christians, recognize what God has done for us through His Son, Jesus Christ, and what awaits us when we leave this earth, we will **thankfully** do whatever we can to support the spreading of the Gospel with our time, energy, and financial means. *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust*

doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

May the Lord our God, by the power of His Holy Spirit, motivate our hearts, minds, and spirits to do the **"ye shall"** of His command!

*Alvar Helmes
Battle Ground, Washington*



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Come and Pray

*S*oftly the evening vespers
Hallow the closing day;
Sweetly the Savior whispers,
"Come to the throne and pray."

Come, ere the shadows lengthen,
Bring Him thy burdened heart;
Come where His grace may strengthen,
Come from thy cares apart.

Boldly we may approach Him,
Mercy and grace to own;
Tempted like us, He bids us
Come to the Father's throne.

*S*oftly I hear Him calling,
Calling at close of day;
Sweetly His tones are falling,
"Come to the throne and pray."

Clara M. Brooks

—●—●—●— As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me. Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

Psalm 55:16-17

—●—●—●— But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

Matthew 6:6

—●—●—●— Pray without ceasing.

1 Thessalonians 5:17