

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.

April 2015

The Lamb of God

Pastor Elmer Yliniemi
Wolf Lake, Minnesota

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

1 Peter 1:18-21

AS PEOPLE, WE VIEW THINGS in time with human understanding. It is impossible for us to see from an eternal perspective because we are created beings. It is difficult for us to grasp the greatness of God. We often go on with our daily lives making our own decisions and plans as if there were no God. Yet, by His Word, He called all things seen and unseen into existence and set the universe in motion. As we meditate on the events surrounding Easter, may we see God's eternal plan.

When Adam and Eve fell in the Garden of Eden, their sin brought death to all mankind. There is no putting away of sin without a sacrifice!

God promised a Savior, the Lamb of God, from eternity past. The message from Genesis to Revelation is *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.* (John 1:29) A blood sacrifice for sin was required from the beginning. The role of Christ as Lamb of God was not God's "Plan B" or an afterthought, but it was His plan from the beginning. Jesus is God's Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8). Peter tells us He was foreordained from the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1: 20).

The sacrifice for Adam and Eve's sin foretold the death of the Lamb when God made them coats of skin to hide their nakedness. Abel's blood sacrifice was pleasing to the Lord. God's covenant with Abraham involved the death of a lamb. The Passover required the death of a lamb, and the blood was necessary on the doorposts for the LORD to pass by. Throughout the Old Testament, the sacrificial system pointed to the death of the Lamb.

Hundreds of years before Christ, Isaiah the Prophet said, *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* (Isaiah 53:7) What God promises, He fulfills.



JESUS WAS ALREADY PRESENTED AS A LAMB at His birth. Where would a lamb be born? In a stable, and the shepherds were the first to know.

John the Baptist was called by God to introduce Him to the people: "Behold the Lamb of God..."

Jesus was silent at His trial and surrendered Himself to the cross as a lamb led to slaughter. He was not a tragic victim of the cross; He willingly laid down His life. He says, *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.* (John 10:17-18)

The Passover Lamb had to be examined and found without spot or blemish (Exodus 12). Jesus the sinless Son of God was a Lamb without spot or blemish; therefore He could be our sacrifice and bear our sins. He died for all mankind. Jesus atoned for our sins by shedding His blood.

His triumphant resurrection overcame death and crushed the power of Satan. Because Jesus arose, we too can live! Jesus conquered the finality and dread of death. Jesus was *delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.* (Romans 4:25)

God's plan was perfect. It was initiated by God and completed by God. It is for all mankind, but all are not saved. Why? Because we must be united to God through repentance and believe that our sins are forgiven through the precious blood of Jesus. When the blood covers the doorposts of our heart, the LORD will pass over us and we can live with Him forever (Revelation 3:21).

Belief in the resurrection is an essential prerequisite for salvation. *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)*

There was no power on earth that could keep the Son of God in death and the grave. It was not necessary for the angel to roll away the stone on Easter morning so the Son of God could get out! It was so the women and you and I could see the empty tomb, so that we would believe. Jesus

had already risen. Locked doors and stone walls could not hold the resurrected Lord. The stones of unbelief in our lives have to be rolled away by the power of God so we can recognize the Him and say as Thomas did: "My Lord and my God!"

The amazing fact is that the Lord loved each of us so much that He left the glory of heaven to come to earth in a human body so that we could know God. He willingly sacrificed Himself for us so we could be united with a righteous God through the forgiveness of our sins in His blood. This is truly good news!

When the Holy Spirit has revealed to us the living Lord, we are to go quickly and tell others the good news. "Behold the Lamb of God" means a steady looking or focus. Let us keep our eyes looking to Jesus. Because Jesus lives, we too can live! May you have a blessed Easter. ~

Lord, Revive Us Again

the late Andrew Mickelsen, March 1962 CM

Submitted by Anders Sundqvist, Brush Prairie, Washington

THE PSALMIST CRIES OUT IN *Psalm 85:6-7: Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee? Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.*

At the beginning of this psalm, he tells what God has done for His people: brought them back from captivity, forgave their evil doings, and turned away His anger from them. But looking at the state and prospects of the people of God, the Psalmist observes that a revival is needed; therefore, he asks, *Wilt thou not revive us again?*

How is it with you, dear brother and sister, whom God has released from the captivity of the devil, forgiven your iniquity and turned His anger away from you? By examining yourself and the church in general, do you feel that a revival is needed? Are you satisfied with the condition of your heart and spiritual life? I shall not ask you if you are satisfied with the condition of your fellow-believer, because it is much easier to see faults in others than in yourself.

What signs indicate that we need to be revived?

1. **When there is a lack of brotherly love and Christian confidence.**
2. **When there are dissensions and jealousies, and evil speaking among the believers.**
3. **When there is a worldly spirit prevalent among the members of the church.**
4. **When confessors fall into gross sins.**
5. **When Christians become careless and drowsy, not caring whether unbelievers all around them are bound for destruction.**
6. **When excuses are sought after and found, why Christians need not give up luxuries, that more might be given for God's work.**
7. **When Christians do not hunger and thirst after righteousness that their own souls might be fed and refreshed by the Word and that sinners might be saved, but go to church only when it is convenient or if, perhaps, there are not better matters to attend to, and then, too, if the speaker be of their choice.**

How many of these signs are visible among us today? How many do you see in yourself? Is there a lack of brotherly love in your heart, and have you lost confidence in other Christians? If so, what is the reason? Is the fault in them or in you? If in them, have you gone to them, with brotherly love, and told them your reason, or have you gone about speaking evil about them behind their backs to stir up dissensions among the Christians? Has the spirit of the world found room in your heart, which things—such as worldly friends, amusements, clothing and adornments, honor and esteem of the world, worldly possessions, car, home, money, wife, children, or any other things—seem uppermost in your heart and mind, so that your thoughts and conversation are more on them than on the things of God? *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (Colossians 3:2)*

Have you fallen into any gross sins which have not been confessed and forgiven? Have you become careless in your speech, deportment and appearance before unbelievers, to the detriment of Christians and a stumbling-block in Christianity? These are signs of drowsiness, because Christians speak louder with actions than with words. Have you denied yourself any luxuries so that you could give more abundantly to the work of God, or do you give only a tiny portion of your abundance? Let us remember what Jesus said of the widow's mite.

Do you feel such an inward need to attend services that you will put all other things aside as less important, though you have to drive a few miles and make some small sacrifice to attend, because you do not want to miss? Do you pray that God would bless His servant in the pulpit and that your heart might be receptive to His grace and truth? Do you enter God's house in the spirit of prayer?

Placing ourselves before the all-knowing God with these questions, are we able to give an unreserved answer: yes? To how many do we have to add some reservation or admit that we are all guilty in God's presence?

Perhaps now we can observe with the Psalmist that we are in need of a revival and join him in praying, *Wilt thou not revive us again?*

Many of us can recall times when our hearts burned with love toward God and our fellow man, that it was a pleasure for us to speak to others about what God had done for us. It seemed natural for us to seek Christian companionship, that together we could sing and talk, read and pray, thus remaining faithful that others might be saved. It was natural for us to have confidence in one another, both the young and the old, to be of one heart and mind, blessing and forgiving one another, without a thought of speaking evil or unkindly, or being envious, of anyone. The love of God was so abundantly shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that there was no room for the love of this world. Even in the middle of our work our thoughts were on what spiritual things we could do and enjoy when our material duties ended. Our fervent prayers were for our unbelieving loved ones and friends, that they would be saved, and our hearts rejoiced when we heard that somebody had been converted. The more we heard of God's Word, His truth and grace, the more we wanted to hear. It seemed as though we never got enough. The time spent around the Word of God never seemed too long; it always ended too soon, and distances were shortened by the anticipation and hope of sitting at the feet of Jesus to hear what He had to say to us.

Why does all of this seem odd and childish to us now? Have we increased in stature and wisdom, and outgrown such childish things? Yes, we may have become older in years, matured in experience, and learned in the doctrine of Christ, but that is not the reason. Has our Christianity, the doctrine of Christ, or the preaching of the Word of God changed, causing this? No. That is not so, although those who cannot see any fault in themselves may say so and attempt to place blame on some thing, or someone else.

Let each of us search ourselves in the light of the Spirit of God. Have we examined ourselves, are we aware of these faults in ourselves and tried to correct them without much success? Even though we pray, "O God, help me to be more spiritually minded and fervent about Thy business! Give me a burden for the salvation of the lost, that I must go out and speak to them of Thy love, grace and truth. Kindle within me the fire of love, that the last sparks in my cold heart go not out. Help me to be more gracious and not so critical of my brothers and sisters in faith. Restore within me a right mind and a humble spirit that the world, the devil and my own corrupt nature detract me not from the need of drawing close to Thee through Thy Word and Thy Spirit."

In such a prayer we acknowledge ourselves lacking in these things and desire to correct them but have been unable to do so. Why this inability? St. Paul says in *Romans 7:19-20, 24-25*: *For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me... O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*

Here is the means that enables us to correct ourselves from faults and sins: Jesus Christ our Lord! This is why we should fervently pray, *Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?* When God revives us we receive strength to cast aside every weight and sin. Our hearts will begin to burn with love so that its fire will burn away all lack of confidence, dissensions, jealousies, evil back talk, worldliness, sinful desires, carelessness, drowsiness, avarice, greed, indifference, to hear anew the Word of God. That which seemed impossible now becomes possible.

When the people of God become sufficiently convicted of these sins and faults and become convinced that they are unable to correct them themselves and fervently cry to God for a revival, believing that God will hear and answer their prayers, they shall receive it.



Jesus meant it when He said, *And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. (Matthew 21:22) Ask, and it shall be given you... If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? (Matthew 7:7, 11)* St. James says, *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering... (James 1:5-6) ...ye have not, because ye ask not. (James 4:2)*

What has happened to the spirit of prayer? Has Satan convinced the believer that praying leads to self-righteousness? At the beginning of the great awakening and revival in northern Europe, we read of saints whose knees were calloused from praying. It is far better that callouses grow on our knees than on our hearts and consciences. No wonder God answered their prayers with such a forceful revival that whole communities were converted. If we would only search the Bible we would see for ourselves what wonders have been wrought by prayer because *...the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16)* The devil knows this; therefore, he tries to hinder us from praying effectually by bringing in other thoughts to make our minds wander. He knows full well that God wants us to pray for one thing at a time, and if we but concentrate to pray for a revival and that God would first begin it in us, then He could use us in reviving others. I am sure we would have such a revival that it would reach out to the unsaved world, to the glory of God and the salvation of many souls.

Do not let the devil convince you this is not God's time for a revival. God is always willing to revive us if we are willing to clear our hearts and consciences from all obstacles which obstruct our prayers from being heard. Let us unite in earnestly and fervently asking the Lord, *Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?* Believe that God will hear and answer our prayer. ~

Not My Will But Thine Be Done

Gwen Wilson
Ridgefield, Washington

Hello Children,

How are you today? I pray you are well. *This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.* (Psalm 118:24) Today where I live it is a beautiful sunny day.

It is nearing Easter, that time Jesus fulfilled His ministry and completed all God had for Him to do on this earth. Everything He did was the will of his Father, for the saving of all of mankind.

You can find the whole story in *Luke chapters 22-24*.



Christ in Gethsemane
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IT WAS PASSOVER, THE FEAST that the Jews celebrated for the first time when God brought them out of the land of Egypt. Jesus' time of departure was at hand and He gathered His disciples to celebrate this feast one last time.

As Jesus and His disciples were eating, Jesus said to His friends, *Behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table*. One of His disciples was going to betray Him as

his Lord. The disciples were all very worried and each one wondered if it were he. The betrayer was Judas Iscariot. Jesus told Judas that whatever he had planned, to go quickly and do it. Judas was going to meet with the Pharisees and let them know where they could find Jesus to capture Him this night (Luke 22:21-24).

After they had finished eating, Jesus and the remaining 11 of His disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed to God to help Him, saying, *Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.* (Luke 22:42) This was a very hard time for Jesus as His heart ached for the people whose sins He had taken all on Himself.

After He was done praying, He turned to find a whole crowd of people coming toward Him. The betrayer was with them, and Jesus said to him, *Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?* (Luke 22:48) Yes, Judas was the betrayer, and this is what Judas did for 30 pieces of silver. The devil came to live in Judas' heart.

Jesus was accused of many things, but He was not guilty of any of them. He was treated ever so cruelly. On the day that we call Good Friday, Jesus was crucified on the cross to die (Luke 23:33-56). Jesus had said of Himself earlier in His ministry, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* (John 2:19) He was referring to His body that would be put to death but would rise again.

Jesus was buried in a tomb but He did not stay there. He arose on the third day, to show us that the grave has no victory over us who believe. Jesus was victorious and the first Easter happened! We, too, can win the same victory because of Jesus (Luke 24: 46-53). Jesus wants you and me to follow Him and not to look to any man for peace in our hearts and freedom from all of our wrongs.

He died for you and me because He loved us SO much. May you always believe in the Risen Jesus and serve Him all of your life. Praise God for sending His Son!

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

But now is Christ risen
from the dead,
and become the firstfruits
of them that slept.

THIS EASTER WE WILL AGAIN CELEBRATE our Savior's victory over death, the grave and the devil. I cherish the passage from 1 Corinthians 15:20-23: *Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming.* Praise God! Those who are in Christ, who have been born again by His Spirit while living here on this earth, will never die, but will pass from death unto life. This is not a belief and doctrine that grew up within the Church, but it is a belief around which the Church itself grew up. Our faith is based on this! We are led through the valley of the shadow of death by the hand of the Lord into life eternal. *Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* (1 Corinthians 15:57)

Pastor Gary Kangas; Esko, Minnesota
April 1998 CM

Blessings

Helen Holm
Enumclaw, Washington

BLESSINGS SEEM TO COME IN various forms. The happy times and the prosperous times seem to be obvious blessings. Looking at a newborn baby is one of the most precious blessings I have known. To me it is a sign of God's love, His willingness to continue with His creation, the ones He made from the dust of the earth. But there are times the blessings seem to be withheld. The longed-for child has not arrived; the job is lost; the illness is not healed; the prayer seems to have been answered by a resounding "No."

It is in our nature to ask "Why?" We want to know. We don't understand. I have been so guilty of even yelling at my heavenly Father, asking my "why" questions and repeating that I cannot understand. It is an enormous blessing that God is so loving, so calm and so understanding! As I have been studying the various verses about blessings, I have begun to realize that so many people are right when they say that blessings come in many ways.

I have a few things that have bothered me for many years. I have often been questioning and reasoning. The other night I was reminded of many verses in the Bible as I was thinking of these things.

- *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)*
- *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end (a future and a hope). (Jeremiah 29:11)*
- *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. (Proverbs 3:6)*



How many times have I heard these verses? I think I heard them in my heart but not my head, and my head sometimes comes to the forefront. I finally really realized that even those things that had bothered me for all this time really were blessings. If God is always working all things for my good, if His thoughts toward me were of peace and not of evil, if He was directing my path, then these things really were bringing me closer home, making me more "fit" for heaven. I think I must be a very slow learner. It took me over 60 years to really know I can find peace in both prosperity and trouble! To realize that though I may never understand the reasoning behind the happenings in life, I do know the "why." It is because my God loves me and knows what is best. He is giving me a future and a hope. He is guiding my footsteps along the narrow way toward life eternal. He loves me too much to give me anything less.

His love is the greatest love, His concern is the greatest concern, His knowledge is the greatest knowledge and His foresight is the greatest foresight, and so He cannot give us anything that will draw us away from Him. Each thing that happens to us, whether we think it is good or bad, happens for our spiritual growth.

- *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. (Jeremiah 17:7)*
- *O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. (Psalm 34:8)*
- *Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments. (Psalm 112:1)*

We are assured in God's Word that we are blessed. He asks that we trust Him, that we fear Him, honor Him, respect Him, rely on Him, and we will be blessed in the way that matters most: we will remain on the way to life eternal with Him in glory. Every step of the way we can *Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God. (Psalm 147:7)* *Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. (Deuteronomy 28:6)* ~

An Easter Carol

Tomb, thou shalt not hold Him longer;
Death is strong, but Life is stronger;
Stronger than the dark, the light;
Stronger than the wrong, the right.
Faith and Hope triumphant say,
Christ will rise on Easter-Day.

While the patient earth lies waking,
Till the morning shall be breaking,
Shuddering 'neath the burden dread
Of her Master, cold and dead,
Hark! she hears the angels say,
Christ will rise on Easter-Day.

And when sunrise smites the mountains,
Pouring light from heavenly fountains,
Then the earth blooms out to greet
Once again the blessed feet;
And her countless voices say,
Christ has risen on Easter-Day.

Phillips Brooks

Hosanna!

Walter Ketola
Asheboro, North Carolina

On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

John 12:12-13

WHAT MOVED THE PEOPLE to shout praises to the eternal King as He entered Jerusalem? Why do they trumpet victory cries before the battle has begun? Would it not have been more appropriate to wait until the resurrection before this display of triumph was made? This is the way our carnal mind would understand it; however, the mind of man is incapable of comprehending faith, for the matters of faith are the matters of God. The prophet of the Lord proclaims: *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:9)*

Abraham believed God, and he exhibited the same type of behavior as those who praised Jesus. As he went to sacrifice his **only son** Isaac on Mount Moriah, Abraham said unto his young men, *Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. (Genesis 22:5)* Where does he get the assurance that Isaac will return with him? The book of Hebrews tells us: *By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. (Hebrews 11:17-19)*

Where did he receive this strength? It is written: *Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. (Genesis 22:4)* With the eyes of faith he saw the victory on Golgotha, on this same Mount Moriah. Upon this promise he boldly sets forth to sacrifice his son. Faith celebrates the sacrifice before it is made.

Dear traveler to eternity, this staff of faith has been prepared for you also. Jesus tells His followers today as He did some 2,000 years ago: *For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. (Mark 11:23-24)*

The mind of man struggles with, even resists, this sermon of faith. The two-fold man, in whom dwells the old and new Adams, especially wrestles with this, because the Goliath of unbelief wars against the Word. It wars against the redeemed. His father, Satan, makes accusations about us to our heavenly Father. Thus it must be, for early in the Scriptures we learn: *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:15)*

Yes, truly there was war in heaven. But behold, oh doubter, a work is accomplished which you can place your confidence! *I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. (Revelation 12:10)* The accuser is cast down! It is written: *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 40:2)*

Now we begin to understand why the people shouted "Hosanna!" as Jesus entered Jerusalem to do that which His Father had sent Him to do. This word can mean "to bless or prosper" and is based on the 118th Psalm, the last of the Hallel (Hallelujah Psalms 113-118 sung while the Passover lambs were slain), traditionally thought to be the hymn Jesus and His disciples sang at the Last Supper. But hosanna also means "save now." Thus while the people shout praises, they are also pleading to be saved now. Today! This is the plea: *Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD. (Psalm 118:25-26)*

This is the experience of God's children—while they long, they also praise. And this is the praise that He looks for, the acceptable sacrifice of praise. This was known in the time of King Hezekiah also, for when the filth had been removed from the inner part of the house of the LORD (2 Chronicles 29:16), then the bloody sacrifices are prepared and we read: *And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished. (2 Chronicles 29:27-28)*

These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him. (John 12:16) May God reveal this remembrance to our hearts for then, like Abraham and the people gathered in Jerusalem, we also may cry: *Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. (John 12:13)* Behold, we now know why the angel said unto Joseph: *...and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)* Hosanna in the highest! ~



Here Comes the Bride

Lois Matson
Yacolt, Washington

*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as **Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.** Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 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.** So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, **even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.** For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. **This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.** Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*

Ephesians 5:22-33

THROUGH THE AGES, WE HAVE prepared for the marriage ceremony. Different cultures have differing traditions and customs, each having evolved to the present day. There may be pre-marital counseling and planning, music and decorations are chosen, food for the reception is selected. Depending on the financial situation, preparations may run from a few dollars to tens of thousands of dollars.

Over and above all the ceremonial preparation, though, the bride herself must be prepared. The garments, veil and flowers are selected, and we choose those to reflect the bride's personality and taste. The measuring and alterations, the sewing and ironing may commence days, weeks or months prior to the Big Day. Then as the Day approaches, we buff and polish, we shine and curl, we scrub and exfoliate, we shave and moisturize. We beautify the bride to the best of our abilities, so that at the unveiling, when she is presented to her groom at the altar, she is as perfect as our flawed and broken world can make her.

WE do the work in a natural wedding. The family of the bride and her close friends will assist in the labor. The bride may do much of it herself. Some things like sewing

or haircuts may be better left to the professionals. The groom has no part of this in our natural world. He doesn't see the dress or the veil. He doesn't even see the bride in some cultures, until the unveiling. The groom certainly has no part in the buffing and polishing of the bride.

Christ our Bridegroom, though, prepares His own bride for the wedding. HE does the work. He loves her, this Church of His, and He gave Himself for her. He sanctifies her, purifies her, sets her apart for Himself. In baptism, He cleanses her with the washing of water by the Word. He will present His bride to Himself, in all her glory. She will have no spot, wrinkle or flaw. She will be holy and without blemish. She will be perfect in every sense of the word. At the great unveiling on the Wedding Day, when Jesus returns to take His bride to Himself, she will be ready. When she stands before Him at the altar, she will shine in the splendor that He has given. She will be adorned for her Husband, more beautiful than any earthly bride.



Christ nourishes and cherishes His bride, the Church. We are members of His body, His flesh and bones. We are one with Jesus, the Anointed One. He has bought us for Himself; He is our Redeemer who purchased and won us from sin, death and the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with His own precious blood. We are buried with Him, and as He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk as new creatures. He has given life to His bride.

The relationship of husband to wife and Christ to His Church is a deeply profound mystery, one that we can never truly understand until we stand in perfection at the Great Unveiling, beholding our Groom face to face. Come, Lord Jesus. ~

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Send articles for publication to:
Lois Matson, Editor
Email: cm@apostoliclutheran.org
Phone: (360) 904-6951
Postal Mail to:
CHRISTIAN MONTHLY
PO Box 2126
Battle Ground, WA 98604 USA

Address subscriptions, payments,
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Anders & Clara Sundqvist, Managers
THE BOOK CONCERN
PO Box 2126
Battle Ground, WA 98604 USA
Phone: (360) 896-7344
Email: books@apostoliclutheran.org

Apostolic Lutheran Church of America

www.apostoliclutheran.org

Western Mission: western@apostoliclutheran.org

Eastern Mission: eastern@apostoliclutheran.org

Foreign Mission: foreign@apostoliclutheran.org

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When My Life's Work Is Ended

We want to thank everyone for your tremendous support and prayers during our precious son Greg's yearlong battle with cancer. We have felt the gentle hand of God touching our hearts with peace. We wanted to share some comments that Greg made at our family retreat 6 months before he died.

Greg expressed appreciation for people's concern and prayers that he would be healed from his cancer. Greg said that having cancer made him so much more aware of people's need for natural healing – but even more so for spiritual healing which can come only through Jesus Christ. Greg knew that his cancer was possibly terminal, but as a believer he also knew that we simply pass from this life to our life with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. What became much more important to him was that we would all have concern for those who have the disease of sin without the cleansing blood of Jesus.



When my life work is ended, and I cross the swelling tide,
When the bright and glorious morning I shall see;
I shall know my Redeemer when I reach the other side,
And His smile will be the first to welcome me.

Oh, the soul thrilling rapture when I view His blessed face,
And the luster of His kindly beaming eye;
How my full heart will praise Him for the mercy, love and grace,
That prepares for me a mansion in the sky. (Fanny Crosby)

Please continue to pray for us – especially for Kathryn and the children. Thank you!
May the peace of God continue to be with us.

Dave & Karen Impola
Everett, Washington

Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

John 11:23-26

Portland Special Services

The Portland, Oregon congregation will be hosting special services on April 11th and 12th, 2015. Brother John Isaacson will be our guest speaker and we invite everyone to come and fellowship with us around God's Word.

The schedule for the weekend is as follows:

Sat., April 11 th	2:00-5:00 pm	Bible Study followed by dinner
	7:30 pm	Evening Worship Service
Sun., April 12 th	11:00 am	Morning Worship Service followed by lunch
	2:00 pm	Afternoon Worship Service

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (Colossians 3:16)

*On behalf of the Portland Congregation,
Rebecca Kurtti, Secretary*