

# 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 2017

## New Birth

Arnold Anderson  
February 1947 CM

**R**ECORDED IN THE TENTH CHAPTER of Acts is the conversion of a soldier named Cornelius. In light of this and other portions of Scripture, I would like to write about the most important subject and burning question of any day, 365 days of the year—namely, the new birth.

Since he is our example, let us see what sort of man Cornelius was. He was a very commendable man. The sacred historian informs us that he was devout and God-fearing, with all his house. He was charitable, giving alms to the poor. He was religious, too, for he prayed to God always. Not just sometimes, but always.

Now, to the general observer, this man would be as good as or even better than another. It would be supposed that, if any man should be saved and reach the glory of God, Cornelius would, having lived a life so morally upright and good. What do you think? Was he in a saved condition of soul?

Strange as it may seem, the answer is: He was not. I would not want to be discovered upon the judgment seat regarding anyone's soul, yet I would above all things want to abide by God's Word, which is our judge. God's eternal Word is the standard of all truth, and we do well to remain very close to its principles, which are tried and true. We need not leave this chapter for proof regarding the state of soul of the man under discussion.

*While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. (Acts 10:44)* I gather from these words that the Holy Ghost had not yet fallen on him. There is one outstanding fact throughout the entire Bible: no one can possibly be God's child who has not His Spirit. Therefore, in the light of these immovable facts, there is only one conclusion: Cornelius, despite his moral character and virtues, was not yet in a justified state at the time the angel spoke to him.

Now then! These are the conclusions we must draw from these facts: that living Christianity and the new birth are not outward changes alone. *For by grace are ye saved through faith;*

*and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)*

I trust that the reader will not place the wrong construction upon these words and statements. Please do not think that I would in any way discourage good moral discipline. Would to God we had more men and women with high ideals and ambitions in life. Men and women have

disregarded and under-estimated the importance of moral lives so that we have wars and distress, blood-shed and wholesale murder. If men and women would lead decent lives regardless of their attitude toward Christianity, our police force would not have to be so strong, our jails so full, and so on. But the point I am making is this: a moral life will keep you out of the penitentiary, but it is no passport to heaven. Let this be a first principle: there is nothing we can do to save ourselves. All our virtues are but filthy rags, as declared by the prophet of the Old Testament—nothing but filth and uncleanness in the sight of God. Let us also remember that reformation without salvation is only damnation. Cornelius gave alms, prayed, and feared God with all his house, but with all his goodness, he was still outside the gates of heaven, unregenerate.

Therefore, I declare to you this day, my friend: regardless of who you are, it makes

no difference, though you should pay your bills, be honest with your neighbors, mind your own business, and even attend church regularly, and though you should pray and give alms, yet with all your virtues, you would be lost—eternally lost—unless you become born anew, until you experience this miraculous change which the Bible speaks of as the new birth. The decree of our Lord to Nicodemus was: *Ye must be born again. (John 3:7)* It still holds true.

Thus far, we have discussed what the new birth is not. Let us now see what it is. Briefly summed up, it is an inward change of mind and soul, first having its influence upon the entire life as its fruits, originating from above.



*Peter Baptizing the Centurion Cornelius*  
Francesco Trevisani; Wikimedia Commons

This transaction may be divided into two parts: conviction and justification. By the term *conviction*, we mean an awakening of the conscience. This is the first work of God's Word and grace. The importance of this step will be self-evident if I refer to an illustration. If, for example, there was a bomb planted in your basement and it was timed to explode in five minutes, so long as you were unconscious of this fact, you would continue reading this article even until it would detonate. But if you were awake to the full realization of the danger, would you continue reading for another moment? There is no flicker of doubt as to what the answer to that question would be. Any feeling of security in the presence of such physical danger would be the result of your not knowing of the bomb's presence.

You will have no difficulty in applying this illustration to the spiritual. If you can sit there and be unmolested and secure within, being as yet in an unregenerate condition of soul, it will not be because there is not an imminent danger present, but because you are not aware of its presence.

Death is something which none of us can escape, being appointed by God. It may overtake you at any time, any place. A bomb planted in your cellar can destroy your physical existence but not the soul, but dying in an unsaved condition of soul will spell the eternal doom of both body and soul.

Conviction, or the awakening of the soul, may take place in any of God's ways and in His time. But justification takes place instantaneously—and takes place in only one way. There is only one way leading to God and heaven, and that is by way of repentance and faith in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

What is meant by the term *justification*? You will readily understand the uselessness of an awakened conscience and then to be led no further. The realization of danger will only add to our distraction if there is no way of escape, just as an appetite will only aggravate a starved condition if there were no food. It would be better that we never would get hungry then. It would be much better for us if we never would become conscious of danger since there be no way of escape. It would also be far better for us were our consciences never awakened to the realization of doom before us if our Savior had not come into the world to die for us, to shed His own

life's blood that our many crimson sins might be washed away. Far better it would be that we should ride unconsciously into the teeth of doom, undistressed and enjoying life, for that would be all there was for us.

But now that our Lord Jesus has prepared a way of escape there is every need of an awakening and sorrow for sins, for it is to such people that Christ will be gracious to forgive all their sins. Now that forgiveness of sins is offered to all full and free, that soul is blessed indeed who has awakened to the need of his salvation. It is salvation to have our sins forgiven and our record wiped clean. It is the blood of Jesus sprinkled in the forgiveness of sins, declared in the Gospel through the mouth of God's servants on earth, that washes us clean from all guilt and justifies us with God.

My dear friend, are you a Christian with all your sins forgiven, and thus born again? For this, briefly stated, is the new birth. Examine yourself. What is the basis and ground of your security, if you are secure? Have these words of God awakened your conscience to see things in a new light? Perhaps this is what your soul has longed to know and hear, and now you would want to become God's child as Cornelius became. Peter declared the forgiveness of sins to Cornelius and his neighbors, whereby they received the Holy Spirit of God. But though Peter has gone to his reward, God has maintained witnesses who have the same Spirit as Peter, who are willing and ready to declare to you, too, the forgiveness of your sins that will save your soul.

Come, arise, and find the kingdom of God here on earth among His believers. There you will find the Gospel of the forgiveness of all your sins from heaven for you.

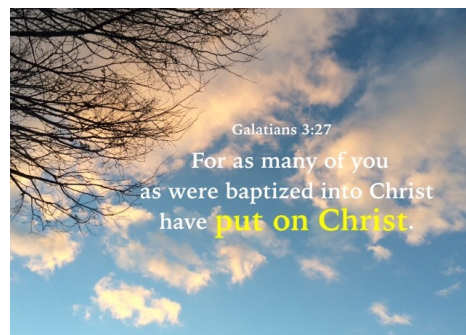
God bless you, dear readers, one and all, who are those fortunate ones whose consciences have been awakened and whose sins have been forgiven. Stand steadfast and unmoved. Remain faithful unto death, and you *shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.* (James 1:12) Believe that all your sins and shortcomings are forgiven in Jesus' name and for the sake of His shed blood. And then, when life's race is run, we shall be united with the saints in glory, and there sing forever the praises of Him who loved us and purchased us with His own life's blood. Amen.

***For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.***

***Galatians 3:27***

**T**HE WORDS "BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST" express the intimate union and partaking with Christ in all His good that baptism contains. This union and partaking are expressed still more plainly by the word "planted"—planted in Him. *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; (Romans 6:5)* because a baptized and believing human is no longer to be considered as a separate person, but entirely as a part of Christ, a member of His body. *For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. (Ephesians 5:30)* So what concerns the member also concerns the Head. And what the Head owns, also the member owns.

But is this true? Maybe we speak words too glorious here? Is it true that baptism contains such an intimate union with Christ, a downright "planting" into Him? Is it sure that this was the apostle's meaning as regards baptism? Then look how he speaks here, *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* Notice the words "put on"—put on Christ, wrapped up in Him. This no doubt speaks about the same intimate union with Christ as the word "planted," grafted in. That is, that we become one with the whole of His person, we have the same worth, and become as equally well-pleasing to the Father as He is.



C.O. Rosenius  
Day by Day with God, Vol. 4, Number 13



# The Most Dangerous Thing in the World

Pastor Bryan Wolfmueller  
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**W**HAT IS THE MOST DANGEROUS THING in the world? I suspect each person would have a different answer. What do you think: lions, tigers, bears (or snakes, I'm not a fan of snakes)? Do you think different diseases like cancer or diabetes? Perhaps Islamic terrorists or communist dictators top your list. If you are a farmer, locusts or drought might be the most dangerous thing. If you're a Colorado Rockies fan, it might be the Red Sox. What do you think is the most dangerous thing in the world?

While the answers listed above are different, they all have something in common: they kill. The thing that lions and cancer and terrorists have in common is that they murder, and the more they kill the more dangerous they seem. But what does the Bible say about this? What does Jesus say is the most dangerous thing in the world?

First, Jesus tells us not to fear physical death. *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* [Matthew 10:28] Physical death is not the most dangerous thing. There is something worse: judgment and condemnation. This is to be feared.

This is why Jesus teaches us the most dangerous thing in all the world is false teaching. That's right: false doctrine. I'm sure that if I did a survey of a thousand people, asking the question: "What's the most dangerous thing in the world?" that the answer 'false doctrine' would never show up; that is, unless we ask Jesus.

Just about every time Jesus (and in fact the entire New Testament) uses the word 'beware' He is using it to warn against false teaching and false doctrine.

*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.* [Matthew 7:15]

False teachers are dangerous because they come to kill and destroy, not our bodies but our souls. Every false teaching strikes at Jesus; every false doctrine obscures the clarity of the Gospel. And false teachers are made even more dangerous because they are hidden under outward righteousness; these wolves dress as cute cuddly lambs.

*Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.* [Matthew 16:6]

Jesus gives this warning to His disciples as they were on the Sea of Galilee, soon after feeding the five thousand and then the four thousand men (with their families). The disciples think that Jesus is criticizing them because they forgot bread. To this Jesus responds:

*O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.* [Matthew 16:8-12]

Jesus warns against the false teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and what is their false teaching? First, the Pharisees and Sadducees rejected Jesus. They saw that He was the promised Messiah, and knowingly rejected Him and plotted His death. Second, the Pharisees and Sadducees sought to achieve a righteousness by their own works and efforts. They needed no forgiveness, no Savior, because, in their own eyes, they had no sin. Such false teaching destroys people eternally.

The Lord's apostles also repeat this warning. From his jail cell, St Paul writes to the church in Philippi: *Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.* [Philippians 3:2] The 'concision' are those false teachers who required Gentiles to be circumcised before they could join the church. Such false teaching displaced the truth of the free grace of God with the lie that works are needed for salvation.

Paul repeats this warning to the Colossians: *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.* [Colossians 2:8] The false teachers in Colossae tried to draw the Lord's Church away from Jesus by tempting them to philosophy, human traditions, the so-called wisdom of the world. Again, this false teaching is dangerous because it pulls our faith away from Jesus and the promise of our forgiveness.

Like St Paul, St Peter also warns the Church about the most dangerous thing: false teaching. *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.* [2 Peter 3:17] Peter's warning stands alongside the warnings of Paul and our Lord Jesus: beware of error; beware of evil workers; beware of false prophets. With these commands the Lord's Church is put on constant vigilance against any error or false teaching that would threaten the simplicity of Christ, the words of the Scriptures, and the comfort of the Gospel's promise of the forgiveness of all sins.

What's the most dangerous thing in the world? According to the Lord's Word, it is false teaching. May His Church continue to pray that the Lord would keep His Church in the purity of His Word, that knowing the truth we would know the freedom of the forgiveness of all sins and the sure hope of eternal life. Amen.



*Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word;  
Curb those who fain by craft and sword  
Would wrest the Kingdom from Thy Son  
And set at naught all He hath done.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, Thy power make known,  
For Thou art Lord of lords alone;  
Defend Thy Christendom that we  
May evermore sing praise to Thee.*

*O Comforter of priceless worth.  
Send peace and unity on earth.  
Support us in our final strife  
And lead us out of death to life. Amen.*

(Martin Luther)

# Down from Glory—Veiled in Flesh

Gwen Wilson  
Ridgefield, Washington

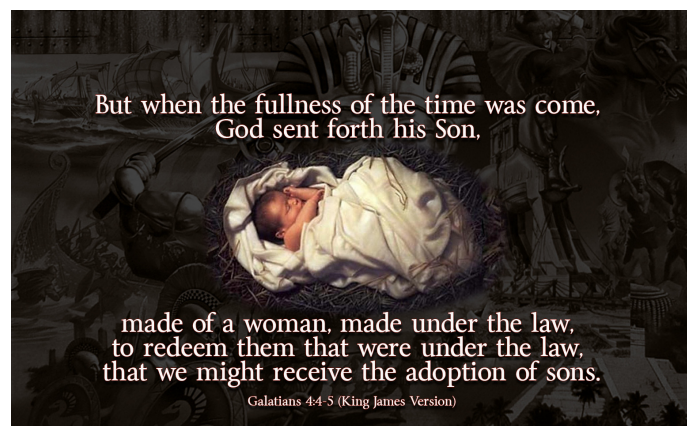
Dear Children all across the land,

Hello to you all and I pray your new year is starting well. We are well where I live and it is even a very nice sunny morning, although on the cold side. But that is what winter is all about in our state.

**W**E HAVE CELEBRATED JESUS' BIRTH and stand in awe of it all. It is a story that never ends.

In light of Jesus' birth in a conversation with a fellow Christian, she brought out the absolutely amazing fact that when Jesus came He was **God IN FLESH** for mankind to SEE. That is hard for us to really understand, but it is so true. God had come down to earth.

When Jesus was speaking to the wise doctors and teachers in the temple at just 12 years old, when He helped His earthly father Joseph and His mother at home, when He spoke to the many crowds of people, when He healed so many of their sicknesses, etc., He was **God in flesh**. God sent Jesus **down from the perfect glory of heaven**, to come as a baby who would grow up and teach mankind about His Father God. Many believed His words, but many hated Him and what He had to say. They could not grasp the truth of Jesus saying that He was God's Son. It is still this way even today.



I'm sure all of you know of John the Baptist. He was Jesus' cousin and was born to an old couple, Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth six months before Jesus' birth. God sent John to be the one (when he was grown), to preach to the people about

this One (Jesus) who was coming after him. *Matthew 3:3: For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.* Before Jesus was born, God was preparing John the Baptist to go before Him, and there would be many who did not believe in Him.

Jesus had a following of believers and many that heard Him became believers and His kingdom here on earth is made up of all who believe in Him. You are part of that kingdom.

Jesus did nothing but good while He was here on earth. He wanted people to believe in Him as He does not desire that any man should perish and not have eternal life.

Jesus came to save mankind from sin. He loves all people and even after being treated so cruelly when He was being sentenced to death, He had nothing but love in His heart. Remember what Jesus said from the cross, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.* (Luke 23:34)

He was God being despised and rejected by mankind. He was God **come down from glory**, returning to glory that was His from before the beginning of time.

Mankind could not understand what they were doing to this holy Son of God, but God was looking down from heaven and knew His Son would soon return to Him.

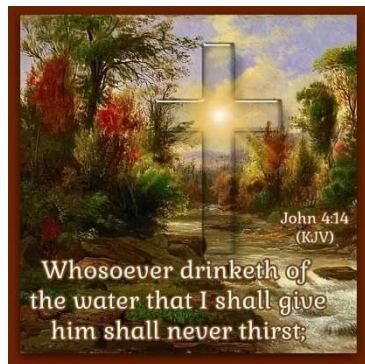
Jesus' disciple Thomas had a hard time believing even though he actually spent time with his Lord. Jesus told him, *Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.* (John 20:29)

All who believe in Jesus in the past and yet do today, are blessed people. I pray that you children and anyone who reads this and is a believer, will stay on the path and on the straight and narrow way that leads to eternal glory. I know this is possible with Jesus as He chooses us. We do not choose Him as we do not have the strength to do that. God has promised to carry His children all the days of their life.

One day we will see Jesus coming through the clouds when He comes to take His own to live with Him in heaven **FOREVER**. This Son of God—Jesus—who God sent to this earth and who had flesh and bones just like you and me, really **WAS** God—**veiled in flesh**.

Let us praise and thank God for His precious gift of His Son, and take His name with us all through this new year.

*God's peace.*



*Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

**John 4:13-14**

**W**HAT JESUS SAID OF THE WATER of Jacob's well is true of everything that earth can offer. There is nothing in this scene that can effectually quench the thirst of a human soul. Man is made for Eternity, and the things of Time can never satisfy. Augustine spoke truly when he cried, "O God, Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our souls can never find rest until they rest in Thee." But he who drinks the living water of the Gospel finds that which quenches his thirst forever. Christ fully satisfies the heart that learns to confide in him. The word received in the power of the Holy Spirit produces new birth, thus giving everlasting life. This is the present possession of all who put their trust in the Lord Jesus.

*H.A. Ironside*

# Apostle Peter's Enlightenment Concerning Christ's Redemption

Pastor Arne Nordahl  
Vancouver, Washington

**C**ORNELIUS WAS A GENTILE, but also an awakened person who wanted to be saved. A sign that a person wants to be saved is that such a person prays often to God, our heavenly Father, concerning his salvation. God will hear such a prayer. In the Book of Acts, it is written: *Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. (Acts 10:4-6)* Cornelius was obedient to the angel's counsel and sent two household servants and a devout soldier to Peter, so he could come and speak God's Word to them. God, who knows each one of us, knew Peter's understanding regarding Christ's redemption as well as the need to reveal to Peter a better and right understanding concerning this redemption. In Acts 11:1-14 we notice that those of the circumcision contended with Peter because he had gone to Cornelius' house, a Gentile, to preach the Word of God. Therefore, Peter told them what had occurred and how Cornelius had seen an angel who told him to call for Peter *who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. (Acts 11:14)* We notice that Cornelius was not saved when the angel talked to him, but as an awakened person who was aware of his spiritual need, without doubt, his prayers were about his soul's salvation.

We as Christians have often experienced that God has great patience with our many weaknesses and frailties and also maybe our somewhat wrong understandings concerning the Word of God in certain matters. Apostle Peter didn't understand that Christ's redemption was for all people, not just the Jews, but also for the Gentiles. I remember an occasion in Norway, as a young Christian, when I pondered on the redemptive work of Christ and what Jesus has done for me and all people. When God by His Spirit revealed to me what His Word teaches concerning His work of redemption in Christ, a great joy and thankfulness arose in my heart that I was a partaker of His salvation by grace through faith and that my sins were forgiven and washed away in the blood of the Lamb. Apostle Peter, at this time in his life, needed to be taught by the Holy Spirit even as we all need to be taught concerning the wisdom and knowledge of God and Christ's redemptive work. Therefore, God showed Peter the vision of the sheet coming down from heaven filled with all manner of unclean animals according to the Law, and Peter heard the voice saying that he should rise up, kill and eat. God knew that Peter was very hungry, but he answered, *Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. (Acts 10:14-15)* This vision that God allowed Peter to see was a picture of all people who are unclean and sinners, but because of Christ's work of redemption on the cross, their sins had been forgiven and they were redeemed. It is written: *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19)* It is important for us who preach God's Word, and for all Christians, that we understand the redemptive work which God has provided through Christ. God has forgiven all people's sins and all have been redeemed

through the redemptive work of Christ. All little children have not only been redeemed but are partakers by faith because Christ says they believe (Matthew 18:6). It is so important that we understand the meaning of this verse: *Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. (Romans 5:18)* The devil, our common enemy, wants to stop all mouths of people that are enlightened by the Holy Spirit and understand and speak of God's redemption in Christ Jesus, the need for repentance, and the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name and blood. We preach according to this commandment Jesus gave to His disciples: *And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:47)*

Apostle Peter didn't understand the vision immediately, but when the visitors from Cornelius told of the message of the angel, the Spirit encouraged Peter to go with them. When he came to Cornelius' house and saw many gathered together, Peter asked the reason for which he was called. Cornelius explained that the angel had told him to call for Peter and said: *Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. (Acts 10:33-35)* Peter continued to speak of Jesus' time on earth, His crucifixion, and resurrection from the dead and how He was seen by many of the believers. Peter continues: *And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. Peter preached with the power of the Holy Spirit, and it is very important that we pay attention to the words given by the Spirit for Peter to preach: To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. (Acts 10:42-44)* After witnessing this occurrence, we notice that Peter wanted these new believers who were given the Holy Ghost to be baptized according to Jesus' commandment. They were then all baptized who had now received the Holy Ghost and a living faith in their hearts which is a gift from God as the Word of God testifies: *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8)* When God gives living faith to a person then it is the same faith of Jesus as Apostle Paul writes concerning himself: *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)*

When this faith of Jesus dwells in a person's heart, then this person is also a partaker of Jesus' righteousness, and has joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. In Cornelius' heart and in the hearts of those living in his household was a great joy and peace abiding, therefore, they asked Peter to stay a time with them so they could hear more of the grace and love that God has provided for them and all people in Christ Jesus. May we who walk this narrow way be preserved in the faith of Jesus with His love abiding in our hearts until the end. ~



# Our Firm Foundation—Living Our Life on the Rock

John Ruotsala, Foreign Mission Administrator  
New Ipswich, New Hampshire

*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.*

Luke 6:46-49

**J**ESUS SPOKE THESE WORDS AFTER He taught about the good trees bearing good fruit. Now Jesus is saying that some people call out "Lord, Lord," and do not do the things that He says. Let us hear the words in James 1:22: *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*

Talk is cheap and easy, and so many engage in it, but do we actually follow the Word of God, and what Jesus would have us to do? The people repeated "Lord, Lord," for emphasis, but it is not in vain repetitions, but rather in following the One that is the Way, the Truth and the Life! Let us not be deceived by the many in our world today who can say nice things, but the lives that they live do not serve the Lord. Let us not be such people.

*Romans 5:1: Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* The Bible also says in *James 2:26: For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

Are these two statements contradictory? No. The Bible is the infallible Word of God and does not contradict or be in error. These two statements mean that we are justified only by faith, but that when one has faith, then works will also be present. The faith must be first, be living, be present, and then when it is, God will work through His believers so that others can also be blessed, called, and welcomed to come and dine! Jesus has done it all; all to Him we owe. The feast is ready, the table is prepared. Come to the Savior, come TODAY! Please read Hebrews chapter 11 to be reminded that our forefathers in faith believed.

O dear reader, do not follow the strange voices that can be heard today, but rather follow Jesus, as we see in *John 10:27: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me...*

What is our foundation? *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 3:11)*

Already many years before Jesus came to earth it was written in *Isaiah 28:16: Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.* If we have Jesus and His complete redemptive saving work as our foundation, then when the storms come, we will not fall. Even the gates of hell cannot prevail over our Lord Jesus and what He has done on the cross for us!

Let us make sure we are not getting sidetracked and building on man's foundations such as worldly pleasures, wealth and prosperity, people and relationships, the outward church or even attending it and going through all of its customs. Let us not put our faith or our foundations in a preacher, or in the arm of the flesh, in strength, military might, or governments. All of these things will eventually fail us. While some of these things are surely right and good in their proper place, we must not build our foundation or our trust upon these things. Our trust must be firmly and solidly upon our Lord Jesus Christ!

When we build our house of faith on the Rock, Jesus Christ, we will be cemented into place by the power of God, the Holy Spirit. When we are building a natural house with bricks or stones, we know that the mortar holds the stones in place. Let us see the mortar as the love of God, holding us as living stones together. As you know, mortar will not stick to dirty bricks or stones. They must be clean. This is a clear picture that man needs to be washed and cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ before we can be fit together upon the firm foundation.

Dear sinners, both believers and unbelievers, believe that the blood of Jesus cleanses you and makes you whiter than snow. Let the blood of Jesus be your everlasting stream of life that will keep you clean and ready to be fit and firm on the Rock Jesus!

Lord, make us into your saints so we can be part of the building, as stated in *Ephesians 2:21: In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord... O Lord, mold us and make us into all You would have us to be! We desire to serve You, and to dwell in Your House, O Lord. Set our feet upon the Rock of our Salvation, Jesus Christ!*

*Psalm 18:1-2: I will love thee, O Lord, my Strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. ~*

## Why Stand Ye Idle?

Many Christians today realize that the fields are white—the harvest is ready—the laborers are few. “Shall I go east?” “Shall I go west?” These are the questions Christians are asking. Listen, Christian: why not begin where you are? Certainly the fields are white in the east. There are scores of communities where there is no church, no Sunday School, no work of any kind. There is a great need in the east. The same can be said for the west. If you cannot help some soul where you are right now, then ask God to do the thing that has to be done, so that He can use you right where you are. If you are not entering the door right before you **here and now**, don't expect God to call you elsewhere. The field is white **here** also.

Liberty's Clarion  
July 1949 CM

*Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. (John 4:35)*

# Pride and Joy

Lois Matson  
Yacolt, Washington

**P**RIDE IS A GRIEVOUS SIN in the sight of God, and the Lord hates a proud look. Arrogance, conceit, and thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought, are directly forbidden in Scripture. How does this relate to being proud of our families?

***Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.***

**Proverbs 17:6**

The Bible says that grandchildren are the “crown” of old men, and that the “glory” of children are their fathers. Does this mean that if we are proud of our grandchildren—or if children glory in their fathers—we’re living in a sinful, prideful manner? No! Christian familial relationships are given of God and blessed by Him. The blessings and glory of generational joy in this verse are explained in Barnes’ Notes on the Bible:

The reciprocity of good in sustained family relationships. A long line of children's children is the glory of old age, a long line of ancestors the glory of their descendants.

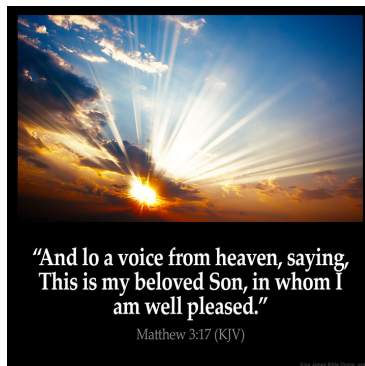
The Apostle Paul called the Christian brothers at Philippi his *joy and crown* (Philippians 4:1), and he called the brothers in Thessalonica his *glory and joy* (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20). Was the chosen vessel of Christ guilty of the sin of pride because people had been brought from darkness to Light through his preaching? No! The glory and credit for conversion always went to Jesus. The Apostle gloried in the cross of Christ, and he desired only that others would know Jesus and be saved from sin. *But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* (Galatians 6:14)

Far from human pride, the Apostle rejoiced that by the grace of God his life was lived in simplicity and godly sincerity, especially toward others, and this will carry into eternity. *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward. For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.* (2 Corinthians 1:12-14)

God is well pleased with His Son. After Jesus was baptized, a voice from heaven proclaimed: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* (Matthew 3:17) Jesus also gloried in His Father, and delighted to do His will. Jesus was an obedient Son, even to death on the cross.

God Himself has made us accepted in the Beloved. He has redeemed us and adopted us through the blood of Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will, to His praise and glory. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;*

*Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.* (Ephesians 1:3-12)



Being well pleased with our children (or parents) isn't being proud in a sinful manner. If we are thankful that they are walking in truth, upright and honest, loving and caring, and if we credit that to God and His goodness, we are glorying in the sustained family relationship. We glorify God for our families; we recognize that He has given them, and He sustains them daily. We can be well pleased with our families, and give God the glory for them.

Always to the praise of His glory.

To the praise of His glory.

The praise of His glory.

Praise of His glory.

Of His glory.

His glory.

Glory. ~

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## Made Acceptable by Christ

Walter Ketola  
Asheboro, North Carolina

**J**ESUS TELLS US, *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. (John 15:5)* Yes, when we burgeon with fruit, this is the work of our Redeemer. In fact, He adds, *for without me ye can do nothing.* It is this work that satisfies our Heavenly Father, for we are told, *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. (John 15:8)* Not only is our Father glorified, but we can be of aid to others for Jesus says to such, *Ye are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14), and 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)* And thus they also can be drawn to our Savior and be found on the narrow way to heaven.

A note of caution: We are not to seek fruit in ourselves; that is what the husbandman, who is the keeper of the vineyard, does. We need to cling to our Savior, the True Vine, as we are told so often by Jesus in the fifteenth chapter of John: "Abide in me." Yes, it is all His work when our light shines when we cling to Him. Oh Jesus, continue to draw us unto Thyself and our heavenly Father.

Following is an excerpt from "Manna for the Children of God"

A devotional by Martin Luther

### My Beloved Son

April 12

*Matthew 3:17: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

With these words God saves the whole world and rules it in all His created ones. He does so with godly sweetness and consolation. How can this be? When I know this man Jesus as the Son of God who is acceptable to His Father, then I am also assured of this, that all that this Man does and says is pleasing to the Father.

Take careful note: Whenever I hear Christ speak or doing something for my benefit, then I think of this Father's message that Jesus is His beloved Son; consequently Christ's message, work and suffering which He has done for me are pleasing to the heart of the Father. How else could God more abundantly have poured out His love to us than to say that He has heart-felt pleasure in this that His Son speaks so kindly and grants me so much good and with such great love suffers and dies for my sake?

Would you not think that if the heart of man would truly know that God is so pleased with Christ and His service to us, that he would die with joy? For he would be able to behold the eternal goodness of God and the tremendous depth of His fatherly love with which He has loved us from eternity. But we are too cold, lazy and unthankful rogues and thus pass by these words as if they should only be accounted to Christ and do not notice that they are intended only for us and for our sakes.

## Living by the Word

**E**VEN WHEN SIN AND MISUNDERSTANDING burden the common life, is not the one who sins still a person with whom I too stand under the word of Christ? Will not another Christian's sin be an occasion for me ever anew to give thanks that both of us may live in the forgiving love of God in Jesus Christ? Therefore, will not the very moment of great disillusionment with my brother or sister be incomparably wholesome for me because it so thoroughly teaches me that both of us can never live by our words and deeds, but only by that one Word and Deed that really binds us together, the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ? When the morning mists of dreams vanish, then dawns the bright day of Christian fellowship.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

*A Song of degrees of David.*

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

*It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;*

*As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.*

Psalm 133