

# 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.**

January 2017

## All Things Are Become New

Pastor Chuck Bylkas  
South Range, Michigan

*Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law. Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.*

Isaiah 42:1-10

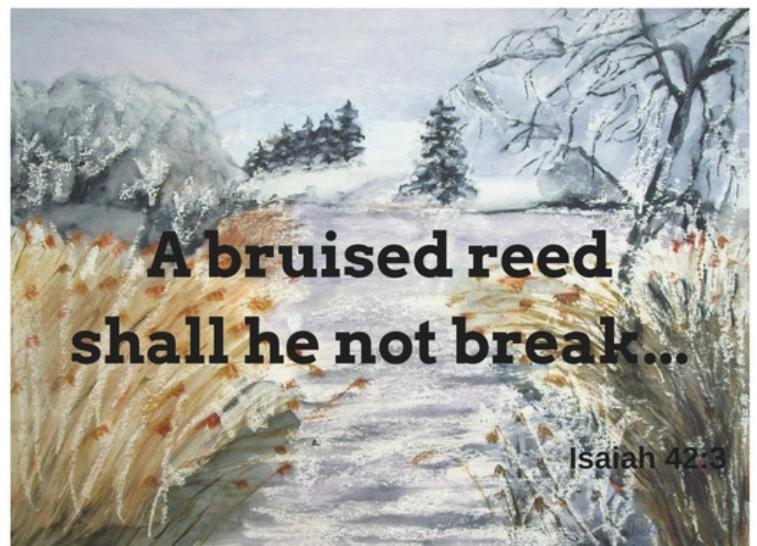
**I**N THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR, our thoughts often turn to making resolutions that that may improve our lives. The new year affords us a second chance to break old habits that are bad for us and develop new habits for our wellbeing. While these efforts can occasionally be somewhat fruitful, many of us become discouraged when we cannot live up to those new resolutions. We set goals that are unreasonable or we make promises that we cannot keep. Oftentimes, we fail because we rely upon our own wisdom or strength to overcome our weaknesses. It is our fallen, sinful nature that deceives us into thinking that it is both possible and beneficial to take control of our own lives.

In the Holy Scriptures, God challenges us to look at life differently. This is what repentance is truly about: God changing our minds to see things from His perspective, not ours. God reveals Himself to us in such a way so that we might see that He alone is best equipped to determine what is best for us. Through the prophet Isaiah, God tells His people that He is declaring new things to His people.

God will do so by sending His servant and Son, Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. No longer will we have to live in fear, because Christ has come to conquer sin, death and the devil by way of the cross. Through His shed blood, Christ has granted us the forgiveness of sins, new life and salvation. God did not merely send His Son to give us a second chance, but to give us new life.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 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. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

In the new year, may God grant us grace to trust in the One who has resolved to love us with an everlasting love. May God grant us faith to believe in the promises that cannot fail, and in Jesus Christ, who has made all things new. Have a blessed New Year! ~



Isaiah 42:3



# Christ Our Great High Priest

Martin Luther



*But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he*

*entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*

Hebrews 9:11-15

**But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come...**

The adornment of Aaron and his descendants, the high priests, was of a material nature, and they obtained for the people a merely formal remission of sins, performing their office in a perishable temple, or tabernacle. It was evident to men that their absolution and sanctification before the congregation was a temporal blessing confined to the present. But when Christ came upon the cross no one beheld Him as He went before God in the Holy Spirit, adorned with every grace and virtue, a true High Priest. The blessings wrought by Him are not temporal—a merely formal pardon—but the “blessings to come”; namely, blessings which are spiritual and eternal. Paul speaks of them as blessings to come, not that we are to await the life to come before we can have forgiveness and all the blessings of divine grace, but because now we possess them only in faith. They are as yet hidden, to be revealed in the future life. Again, the blessings we have in Christ were, from the standpoint of the Old Testament priesthood, blessings to come.

**...by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;**

The apostle does not name the tabernacle he mentions; nor can he, so strange its nature! It exists only in the sight of God, and is ours in faith, to be revealed hereafter. It is not made with hands, like the Jewish tabernacle; in other words, not of “this building.” The old tabernacle, like all buildings of its nature, necessarily was made of wood and other temporal materials created by God. God says in *Isaiah 66:1-2*: *Where is the house that ye build unto me? ...For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord.* But that greater tabernacle has not yet formed; it is not yet finished. God is building it and He shall reveal it. Christ’s words are: *And if I go and prepare a place for you. (John 14:3)*

**Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.**

According to *Leviticus 16*, the high priest must once a year enter into the holy place with the blood of rams and other offerings, and with these make formal reconciliation for the people. This ceremony typified that Christ, the true Priest, should once die for us, to obtain for us the true atonement. But the former sacrifice, having to be repeated every year, was but a temporary and imperfect atonement; it did not eternally suffice, as does the atonement of Christ. For though we fall and sin repeatedly, we have confidence that the blood of Christ does not fall, or sin; it remains steadfast before God, and the expiation is perpetual and eternal. Under its sway grace is perpetually renewed, without work or merit on our part, provided we do not stand aloof in unbelief.

**For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**

Concerning the water of separation and the ashes of the red heifer, read *Numbers 19*; and concerning the blood of bulls and goats, *Leviticus 16:14-15*. According to Paul, these were formal and temporal purifications, as I stated above. But Christ, in God’s sight, purifies the conscience of dead works; that is, of sins meriting death, and of works performed in sin and therefore dead. Christ purifies from these, that we may serve the living God by living works.

**And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.**

Under the old law, which provided only for formal, or ritualistic pardon, and restored to human fellowship, sin and transgressions remained, burdening the conscience. It—the old law—did not benefit the soul at all, inasmuch as God did not institute it to purify and safeguard the conscience, nor to bestow the Spirit. It existed merely for the purpose of outward discipline, restraint and correction. So Paul teaches that under the Old Testament dispensation man’s transgressions remained, but now Christ is our Mediator through His blood; by it our conscience, is freed from sin in the sight of God, inasmuch as God promises the Spirit through the blood of Christ. All, however, do not receive Him. Only those called to be heirs eternal, the elect, receive the Spirit.

We find, then, in this excellent lesson, the comforting doctrine taught that Christ is He whom we should know as the Priest and Bishop of our souls; that no sin is forgiven, nor the Holy Spirit given, by reason of works or merit on our part, but alone through the blood of Christ, and that to those for whom God has ordained it. This matter has been sufficiently set forth in the various postils. ~

**L**ORD JESUS, COME YOURSELF, AND DWELL WITH US, be human as we are, and overcome what overwhelms us. Come into the midst of my evil, come close to my unfaithfulness. Share my sin, which I hate and which I cannot leave. Be my brother, Thou Holy God. Be my brother in the kingdom of evil and suffering and death. Come with me in my death, come with me in my suffering, come with me as I struggle with evil. And make me holy and pure, despite my sin and death.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

# The Epiphany

Pastor Nicholas Kandoll  
New York Mills, Minnesota

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Matthew 2:1-12



Adoration of the Magi Bartolomé Esteban Murillo  
Courtesy of Wikipedia

AT THIS TIME OF YEAR many of us are taking down Christmas lights, getting rid of trees, and simply getting used to the fact that Christmas is over. What if I told you that you are wrong to think this way? What if I were to say that Christmas actually isn't over? Have you ever heard of the "twelve days of Christmas"? I'm sure you've heard of the song. You see, the twelve days after Christmas, December 26th to January 6<sup>th</sup>, are part of Christmas. They represent the time it took the wise men to follow the star; then Epiphany starts.

During Epiphany our focus is directed to the appearance of the wise men. To the revelation of Jesus Christ to those who were not Jewish. In our gospel text we see the wise men come to Jerusalem in search of Jesus. We see the beginnings of King Herod's plot. We see how Herod attempts to use the wise men to spy out the location of Jesus, and knowing what comes next we know his nefarious intentions. We see how all this was instrumental to the revealing of Jesus to the wise men, and in turn to the Gentiles. During this time it would do us well to do the same. To point people to Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. To continue in our various vocations serving our neighbors.

Really, though, Christmas is longer than just one day, even longer than the twelve days it took the wise men to find Jesus. Christmas is every day, because every day He is with us: He is our Emmanuel. Creation will never be the same because Christ was born. He has paid the sin debt of the whole world and as we celebrate and reflect on His birth we eagerly, along with all of creation, await His return. ~

**M**ARK WELL THIS FACT. If we would come to this Child and find Him, we must not be guided by our thoughts or by human reason, but must follow the Word of God, and not turn from it in the least. As soon as we lose sight of the Word we go astray. The Child has indeed a great and glorious name, but yet He is poor and lowly; hence He will not be found amidst the great and pompous rulers at Jerusalem. We must, therefore, follow the example of the wise men, believe the Word of God, and not be led astray by the gaudy show of this world. Whoever wanders from the Word, ignoring the testimony of the Scriptures concerning this Child and judging from external appearances, will certainly be mistaken and not find Christ...

The chief requisite for us is, therefore, to have implicit confidence in the Scriptures and to judge divine matters only as they teach us. But it is a very difficult task to convince men of this necessity. It seems almost impossible for many, in regard to the Sacrament, to simply accept the Word; they insist on judging concerning it as would some irrational animal; they see but bread and wine, and straightway decide that the body and blood of Christ are not there, evidently observing merely that which is visible, while they wholly disregard the Word. The husk they regard as of the greatest importance, leaving out of sight the kernel, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Martin Luther

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

John 14:1-11



# Wise Men Come

Gwen Wilson  
Ridgefield, Washington

Dear Children,

Hello to each of you. I hope this day finds you well and ready to love and serve Jesus in this new year. You read about Jesus' birth last month. Today I would like to tell you about other things that took place during that time, from *St. Matthew 2:1-13*.

**N**OW WHEN JESUS WAS BORN, an ungodly king named Herod was ruling over Israel. He liked being king; in fact, he liked it so much that it went to his head and he didn't want anyone else to take his place.

When Jesus was born, wise men far away in another country studied the stars in the heavens. They had been shown a special star and God's Spirit told them it meant the King of the Jews had been born. God's Spirit worked in the wise men's hearts and they wanted to follow the star and find this Baby. I love how God works and uses so many different people and so many ways to spread His truth.

The wise men packed many provisions and some special gifts for the new King. They traveled for several months before reaching Jerusalem. The Bible does not say how they traveled, but I like to think that they possibly rode on camels. Camels were commonly used to travel in the desert because they can go several days without a lot of food or water, and they have very good feet made for sand. The wise men had to cross great deserts of sand.

When the wise men reached Jerusalem they went to King Herod, saying, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.*

*When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. (Matthew 2:2-3)*

Why was Herod so troubled? Well, he had just heard about a Baby who was also called a king, and Herod thought that this Baby would take the people's minds off of him as their king. He was very worried that he would lose his throne. He began to think about what he could do to keep this from happening.

The Bible tells us that Herod gathered all the chief priests and scribes (writers) together and asked them where Jesus was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea."

Herod called the wise men to him and asked them when they had seen the star. He sent them to find the Baby, and when they had, to come back and tell him so he could worship Him, too. Herod was piecing together a very wicked plan to kill this Baby.

The wise men left Herod. When they came outside the palace, there was the same star, and they rejoiced with very much joy! They followed the star and it led them to Jesus, who was not in the manger anymore for He was several months old. The Bible says, *And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. (Matthew 2:11)*



I just marvel at the holiness of the Baby Jesus. The angels rejoiced in the sky, the shepherds came and fell down before Him. The wise men as well, and then the people, bowed to worship Him. That is so beautiful.

God warned the wise men not to go back to Herod but to go on their way home by another road. This made Herod very angry, and he put his wicked plan into place. He had all children two years old and younger put to death.

From the time the wise men had seen the star until now was about two years, so Jesus would have been close to that age. Herod was sure he was going to get Jesus one way or another. Isn't that awful? But this is what happened and there was much sadness. Did Jesus die? No, God was protecting Him. An angel of God had told Joseph to go to Egypt, and Jesus was safe there.

It was prophesied that Jesus would be called a Nazarene. Jesus did end up living in Nazareth as the prophets had said He would (*Matthew 2:23*). He was about three years old when they came there.

This Christmas story has such a happy beginning and also a happy ending. This is a story that is living in our hearts every day and has no end. Jesus is never ending and will do much for each of you all the days of your life. I pray your hearts stay open and willing to serve Him in this new year. There will be blessings, so many you may not even be able to count them. I pray that Jesus will be with you through this new year, and that you will keep Him as your best friend.

Remember *John 3:16-17: For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.* One day Jesus will come back for His people and take us all to live forever with Him and God in heaven. That is the greatest hope we can look forward to. We have been told this and it is truth. When we begin the new year with Jesus we will begin it right.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!  
God's peace.

# The Gospel Is Always a Surprise

Pastor Bryan Wolfmueller  
Aurora, Colorado

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:20-31

**T**HE PREACHING OF THE LAW is expected. It is no surprise that we are poor, miserable sinners. We live in the midst of our poor, miserable sinfulness. It is no surprise, therefore, when we hear the condemnation of the Law: "Because you are a sinner, you deserve God's wrath." We must answer: "Yes, this is true." The condemnation of the Law might be terrifying, but it is not surprising. Why? The judgment of the Law is not surprising because it is what we have earned and deserved. *The wages of sin is death.* (Romans 6:23) What worker is surprised when they get their paycheck and see that they are being paid their proper wages?

On the other hand, the Gospel is always a surprise. It is always unexpected, always astonishing. Why? Because it is never earned or deserved. *The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* (Romans 6:23) A gift is never earned or deserved. If it were, it wouldn't be a gift. So it is with the gift of the forgiveness of our sins; because it is a gift, it is free. Because it is a gift, it is unexpected. No matter how many times we hear it, because it is a gift, the Gospel is a surprise.

The Lord speaks to us, "I forgive you all of your sins."

We respond, with surprise and delight, "Me! My sins? You are forgiving me?"

"Yes, you. All of your sins are forgiven through the death of My Son for you."

"For me?" The surprise and delight goes on. "How can that be? I don't deserve that."

"This is true, you don't deserve it. It's My free gift to you."

"For me? Oh, thank You, Lord, for Your great love and mercy!"

The Good News is so great that it is never expected. Every time we hear the Gospel it is new, unexpected, a surprise.

May God grant us His Holy Spirit, that the preaching of His Gospel would always come to us as a delightful, astonishing, unexpected surprise. ~



And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, **the people were astonished at his doctrine:** For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. (Matthew 7:28-29)

And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it; **And were beyond measure astonished,** saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. (Mark 7:36-37)

Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, **being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.** (Acts 13:12)

## Another Year Is Dawning

Another year is dawning, dear Father, let it be  
In working or in waiting, another year with Thee.  
Another year of progress, another year of praise,  
Another year of proving Thy presence all the days.

Another year of mercies, of faithfulness and grace,  
Another year of gladness in the shining of Thy face;  
Another year of leaning upon Thy loving breast;  
Another year of trusting, of quiet, happy rest.

Another year of service, of witness for Thy love,  
Another year of training for holier work above.  
Another year is dawning, dear Father, let it be  
On earth, or else in Heaven, another year for Thee.

Frances Havergal, 1874

Submitted by Alvar Helmes  
Battle Ground, Washington



Frances R. Havergal (1836-1879) wrote these words as a poem for her New Year's greeting cards. The hymn was subsequently included in her *Under the Surface*, 1874, and *Life Chords*, 1880.

Photo courtesy of hymntime.com

# Come Boldly to the Throne of Grace

Paul Kretzmann

*Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*

Hebrews 4:1-3

*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

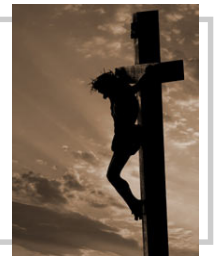
Hebrews 4:14-16

**T**HE PICTURE WHICH the inspired writer had just drawn of the omniscience of God as revealed through His Word might well cause the average reader to quail in terror, feeling his own insignificance in the face of such divine perfection, his own sinfulness in the face of such divine holiness. But here is a comforting reassurance for all poor sinners: Since, then, we have a great High Priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. The author never loses sight of the fact that Jesus the Savior is his great topic, and that the preaching of the Gospel of salvation is the only way of working faith. Of Jesus it is truly said that He passed through the heavens. For just as the high priest of the Old Testament passed through the forecourts and behind the veil to reach the Holy of Holies in the Temple, so Jesus passed through the heavens and appeared among eternal realities in the very throne-room of God. We know that this our High Priest is pleading for us the atonement made during His whole life and completed on Calvary's hill, and that the Father cannot withstand the pleading of this Advocate. And what better and more cogent argument could be devised to keep us in the confession of His holy name, in our Christian profession, than this saving knowledge?

This encouragement is further confirmed: For we have not a High Priest unable to have sympathy with our weaknesses, but tempted in all things like us, without sin. This is one special point of human interest that tends to draw our

hearts to this great High Priest. He was and is flesh of our flesh, true man. And during His earthly life He underwent the severest temptations that have ever come upon any man. It was not merely that the temptation came near Him without really assailing Him. It was rather so that His entire being, body and soul, was sometimes shaken to the very depths, as when He declared His soul to be exceeding sorrowful unto death, and when He found Himself forsaken of His heavenly Father, not to speak of the attacks of the devil which beset Him time and again. So He can indeed be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, He can indeed have sympathy with our weaknesses; He knows what it means for weak flesh and blood to battle with dangerous enemies. Since, however, in His case He passed through all temptations without sin, He is able to be our High Priest and Advocate with the Father.

***He can indeed be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,  
He can indeed have sympathy with our weaknesses;  
He knows what it means for weak flesh and blood  
to battle with dangerous enemies.***



This fact should therefore serve as an inducement to us to place all our trust in Him with all cheerfulness: Let us, then, approach with confidence to the Throne of Grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace for help in time of need. Ordinarily no sinner would dare to come near to the holy and righteous God. Through the merit of Jesus, however, we are enabled to enter upon this act of worship, that of approaching the very throne of the great God Himself, with all cheerfulness and confidence. For it is not that we intend to urge any merit on our part in vindication of ourselves, but that we know we may obtain mercy, the free favor of God, that we shall find grace, God's free love. In all hours of trial and affliction, then, when we feel so sorely in need of some comfort that cannot be challenged and doubted, we have this fact to rely upon, that our High Priest has perfected a full and complete reconciliation, and that God no longer is angry with us, but will accept us with all the kindness of a fatherly heart and give to us all that we need for the enjoyment of eternal bliss in His presence. Thus both the assurance of pardon and of divine assistance is ours, and we may go on through life in the cheerfulness of faith, knowing that the rest of the Lord awaits us at the end of the course, when He takes us home. ~

## 2017 Apostolic Lutheran Church Calendars

You may now order the Apostolic Lutheran Church calendar for the year 2017. The price for each calendar is \$5.50 to cover the cost of printing and mailing. Do not send your payment with your order. An invoice will be included with the shipment for payment to be mailed to the Federation accountant.

Please send your order in one of the following ways: By email: [alc\\_calendars@mac.com](mailto:alc_calendars@mac.com) or by telephone: 925-454-1648 or by mail to: Corrie Karlsen, 2994 Rodeo Lane, Livermore, CA 94550.

Corrie Karlsen, ALC Calendar Committee



# Our Great High Priest

Lois Matson  
Yacolt, Washington

**O**NCE A YEAR IN THE Old Testament dispensation, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest would pass through the veil to the Holy of Holies, where God Himself appeared in a cloud above the mercy seat. The high priest never entered there without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins of the people. This yearly blood offering was ordained of God, but it was only a shadow of good things to come. The high priest was a sinner, and, though he obeyed the command of God, he couldn't truly take away sin. He only foreshadowed the sacrifice of the Great High Priest that would take away the sin of the world.

*It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.* And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: **So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.** (Hebrews 9:23-28)

Jesus, our Great High Priest, is sinless. He lived on this earth and was tempted in every way that we are tempted, yet He was without sin. As sinful humans, we can hardly comprehend this. We are shaped in iniquity, conceived in sin, and born into a fallen world. The Book of Concord says of original sin:

And first, it is true that Christians should regard and recognize as sin not only the actual transgression of God's commandments; but also that the horrible, dreadful hereditary malady by which the entire nature is corrupted should above all things be regarded and recognized as sin indeed, yea, as the chief sin, which is a root and fountain-head of all actual sins.

What a "horrible, dreadful hereditary malady" has come to us from our parents, right along with our DNA. This spiritual leprosy has no earthly cure. We cannot avoid enough sin and/or perform enough good deeds to meet the

demand for perfection that God's Holy Law requires. We need an intervention!

*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

But our Great High Priest is "touched" with the feeling of our infirmities. He knows. He cares. And He did something about it. In the fullness of time, He came to this earth and redeemed those who were under the Law. Our eternal sinless Great High Priest offered Himself. Christ, our Great High Priest, came to earth and shed His own holy blood to atone for the sins of all people. He offered Himself once for all time to conquer sin, death, and the devil. He rose from death and ascended to heaven to intercede for us.

*But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.* (Hebrews 7:24-27)

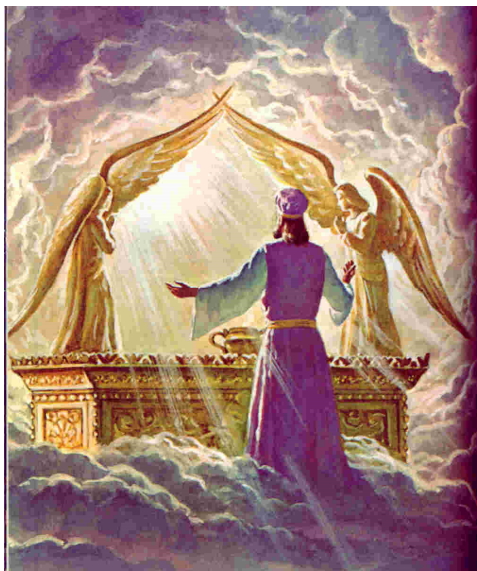
Our Great Sinless High Priest was made sin for us. He took our sin upon Himself and gave us His perfect righteousness. To Him be glory!

**For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.**

2 Corinthians 5:21

**Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.**

Ephesians 3:20-21



**Christian Monthly** Vol. LXXIII—No. 1

Subscription Rate: 1 Year

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

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

Send articles for publication to:

Lois Matson, Editor

Email: [cm@apostoliclutheran.org](mailto:cm@apostoliclutheran.org)

Phone: (360) 904-6951

Postal Mail to:

CHRISTIAN MONTHLY

PO Box 2126

Battle Ground, WA 98604 USA

Address subscriptions, payments, and Book Concern orders to:

Anders & Clara Sundqvist, Managers  
THE BOOK CONCERN

PO Box 2126

Battle Ground, WA 98604 USA

Phone: (360) 896-7344

Email: [books@apostoliclutheran.org](mailto:books@apostoliclutheran.org)

**Apostolic Lutheran Church of America**

[www.apostoliclutheran.org](http://www.apostoliclutheran.org)

Western Mission: [western@apostoliclutheran.org](mailto:western@apostoliclutheran.org)

Eastern Mission: [eastern@apostoliclutheran.org](mailto:eastern@apostoliclutheran.org)

Foreign Mission: [foreign@apostoliclutheran.org](mailto:foreign@apostoliclutheran.org)

The *Christian Monthly* (ISSN 0009-5494) is published monthly for \$12 per year by the Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern, 19113 NE 144th Street, Brush Prairie, WA 98606. Periodical permit paid in Brush Prairie, Washington.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: PO Box 2126, Battle Ground, WA 98604

**General Disclaimer:** The material in the *Christian Monthly* is reviewed for scriptural soundness and to ensure that it does not conflict with the teachings of the ALCA. Publication does not imply that other material by included authors has been so approved.



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

## He Holds Tomorrow!

A.W. Tozer

**E**VERY NEW YEAR IS AN UNCHARTED and unknown sea. No ship has ever sailed this way before. The wisest of earth's sons and daughters cannot tell us what we may encounter on this journey. Familiarity with the past may afford us a general idea of what we may expect, but just where the rocks lie hidden beneath the surface or when that "tempestuous wind called Euroclydon" may sweep down upon us suddenly, no one can say with certainty.

Conditions over the world are so grave that no one who thinks at all is able any longer to maintain a spirit of optimism. The world's philosophers have long ago ceased to preach peace, except as a goal toward which the nations should frantically struggle even while they have but little hope of attaining it. The best brains of the world have gone into the production of tools with which to destroy the world. And if they do such things in the green tree, what shall they do in the dry?

When Pharaoh was faced with trouble, he sent for Joseph; Nebuchadnezzar in distress called upon Daniel. These enlightened men of God knew the score—they could predict the future and point the way to safety. They were wise with a wisdom not of this world and so were able to face the future with cheerfulness even when they knew how dark and troubled that future would be.

Today also there are a few men and women who can face the coming year without discouragement or terror. They are Christians. They are not smiling optimists who draw their comfort from a denial of the facts or base their hopes upon false expectations of peaceful intentions among nations.

Rather, they are of all men the truest realists. They will have nothing to do with fantasy—they demand to know the

facts, whether those facts are good or bad. They insist upon squaring their beliefs with the truth, and do not hesitate to face up to any truth wherever it is found.

Now more than at any other time in generations, the believer is in a position to go on the offensive. The world is lost on a wide sea, and the Christian alone knows the way to the desired haven. While things were going well, the world scorned him with his Bible and his hymns, but now they need him desperately, and they need that despised Bible, too. For in the Bible, and there only, is found the chart to tell us where we are on this rough and unknown ocean. The day when the Christian should meekly apologize is over—he can get the world's attention not by trying to please, but by boldly declaring the truth of divine revelation. He can make himself heard not by compromise, but by taking the affirmative and sturdily declaring, "Thus saith the Lord."



Whatever the world does in the years ahead, and whatever happens among mankind, true Christians have no cause for worry. They are safe forever by a covenant of blood and are dearer to God than the apple of His eye. No night can be dark enough to put out their light, no fire hot enough to burn them, no flood severe enough to drown them on their journey. The winds and waves are their friends and the stars in their courses fight for them. God is at their right hand, and they shall not be moved.

Let us then face tomorrow with praise and song; let us live in a state of perpetual worship. For are we not kept by the power of God until the coming of a salvation that is "ready to be revealed in the last time"? And the "last time" may be nearer than we think. ~

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
Till all the world adore His sacred Name.  
Come, brethren, follow where our Captain trod,  
Our King victorious, Christ the Son of God.  
Led on their way by this triumphant sign,  
The hosts of God in conquering ranks combine.

Each newborn soldier of the Crucified  
Bears on the brow the seal of Him who died.  
This is the sign which Satan's legions fear  
And angels veil their faces to revere.  
Saved by this Cross whereon their Lord was slain,  
The sons of Adam their lost home regain.

From north and south, from east and west, they raise  
In growing unison their songs of praise.  
O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,  
As Thou hast promised, draw the world to Thee.  
Let every race and every language tell  
Of him who saves our souls from death and hell.

From farthest regions let their homage bring,  
And on His Cross adore their Savior King.  
Set up Thy throne, that earth's despair may cease  
Beneath the shadow of its healing peace.  
For Thy blest Cross which doth for all atone  
Creation's praises rise before Thy throne.

*George William Kitchen and Michael Robert Newbolt, 1916*