

# 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.

June 2024

## Our God Is Lord of All

Pastor Jay Weidner  
Laurium, Michigan

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place; That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it? It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment. And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken. Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all. Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof, That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?

Job 38:1-20



SADLY, IT CAN BE TEDIOUS to read the book of Job, but the reward at the end is well worth the effort. From Chapter 38 on, God mercifully, but directly, corrects Job for speaking about things he has no real knowledge of. God tells Job that he can't think the thoughts of God nor understand His ways. It is better for Job that God be God

and Job be Job so that God takes care of all things and Job is the recipient of the blessings of God.

This is the only way that things can actually work to the good; otherwise, when directed by human beings the events of life tumble into chaos and meaninglessness so that humans are left to try to make sense of what they can't possibly make sense of.

All too often this is what we hear around us from various media sources, including well-meaning Christian ones. No one seems to want to be the last to share bad news and point out what might possibly happen if we allow our imaginations to run wild and create strange situations drawn with apocalyptic hues. The result is an ungodly fear that works insecurity and distrust, the exact opposite of faith. The world is in a state of chaos; it was created from such and will be until its end.

Our God is Lord of all and reigns even over the chaos. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all iniquity and, by faith, we know that our Father, our God, knows exactly what He's doing. So, we have peace in a troubled world; we have God's peace, that same assurance God gave to Job long ago.

God's peace.

If the Lord did not order the steps of man, so crooked are they naturally, that they would always be going through crooked paths, and by pursuing crooked ways, would be unable to return again. He however came, and called us, and redeemed us, and shed His blood; He has given this ransom; He has done this good, and suffered these evils. Consider Him in what He has done, He is God! Consider Him in what He has suffered, He is Man!

Augustine

# The Ascension of Jesus

Pastor Nicholas Kandoll  
New York Mills, Minnesota

*The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*

Acts 1:1-11

FORTY DAYS AFTER EASTER A monumental event took place: Jesus ascended into heaven. This year, Ascension Day was celebrated on May 9<sup>th</sup>. It's often overlooked these days as it doesn't fall on a Sunday, but there are still some churches that celebrate it on the Thursday on which it occurred. In our church we celebrate it the Sunday after.

On Ascension Day, Jesus bodily ascends to heaven, taking His place at the right hand of the Father. The reign of God on Earth does not cease but continues through His Church. Before ascending, Jesus commissions His disciples to be His witnesses, spreading the Gospel to the ends of the Earth, and promises them the gift of the Holy Spirit. Then, as the disciples watch in awe, Jesus is taken up into heaven, hidden from their sight by a cloud.

As human beings like us, the disciples could be tempted to despair. The angels remind them that this is not the time. *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. (Acts 1:11)*

In our lives we might feel like God has left us or is far from us. There are times when we will be tempted to despair. We can be emboldened by the same words the angels spoke. We know that Jesus has promised never to leave us or forsake us, and that He will, at the proper time, return in glory. This is the culmination of our hope. In the meantime, we wait, with the words of the Apostle John on our lips, *Even so, come, Lord Jesus. (Revelation 22:20)*



Written by Stephen P. Starke, the final verse of "We Praise You and Acknowledge You, O God," is a fitting prayer for all Christians as we wait for His return.

**You sit in splendid glory, enthroned at God's right hand,  
Upholding earth and heaven by forces You command.  
We know that You will come as our Judge that final day,  
So help Your servants You have redeemed by blood, we pray.  
May we with saints be numbered where praises never end,  
In glory everlasting, Amen. O Lord, Amen.**

*God's peace,*

***O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.***

***Psalms 63:1-4***

With our own concerns and thoughts we torture ourselves and stew over trying to pull this off our neck and to get rid of it. There is an evil and clever devil riding me and other people and frequently playing these tricks on me in my temptation or anxiety, whether it has to do with spiritual or with secular affairs. He immediately butts in and makes you start stewing over it. In this way he snatches us from our prayer and makes us so dizzy that we do not even think of praying... We should develop the habit, whenever we see anguish or need, to fall on our knees immediately and to spread the need before God, on the basis of this admonition and promise.

*Martin Luther*



# John the Baptist

Martin Luther

*And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.*

Matthew 11:7-9

**A**S IT WAS OF GREAT importance for [the people] to believe John's witness and acknowledge Christ, He praised John first for his steadfastness, thus rebuking their wavering on account of which they would not believe John's witness. It is as though He would say: You have heard John's witness concerning Me, but now you do not adhere to it. You take offense at Me and your hearts are wavering; you are looking for another, but know not who, nor when and where. Thus your hearts are like a reed shaken by the wind to and fro; you are sure of nothing and would rather hear something else than the truth about Me. Now do you think that John should also turn his witness from Me and, as is the case with your thoughts, turn it to the winds and speak of another whom you would be pleased to bear? Not so. John does not waver, nor does his witness fluctuate; he does not follow your swaying delusion; but you must stay your wavering by his witness, and thus adhere to Me and expect none other.

Again, Christ lauds John because of his coarse raiment as though to say: Perhaps you might believe him when he says that I am He that should come as to My person; but you expect him to speak differently about Me, saying something smooth and agreeable that would be pleasant to hear. It is indeed hard and severe that I come so poor and despised. You desire Me to rush forth with pomp and flourish of trumpets. Had John thus spoken of Me, then he would not appear so coarse and severe himself. But do not think thus. Whoever

desires to preach about Me must not preach different than John is doing. It's to no purpose; I will assume no other state and manner. Those who teach different than John are not in the wilderness, but in kings' houses. They are rich and honored by the people. They are teachers of man-made doctrines, teaching themselves, and not Me.

Christ lauds John, thirdly, because of the dignity of his office, namely, that he is not only a prophet, but even more than a prophet, as though to say: In your high-soaring fluctuating opinion you take John for a prophet who speaks of the coming of Christ, just as the other prophets have done, and thus again your thoughts go beyond Me to a different time when you expect Christ to come, according to John's witness, so that you will in no case accept Me. But I say to you, your thoughts are wrong. For just as John warns you not to be like a shaken reed, and not to look for any other than Myself, nor to expect Me in a different state and manner from that in which you see Me, he also forbids you to look for another time, because his witness points to this person of Mine, to this state and manner, and to this time, and it opposes your fickle ideas in every way and binds you firmly to My person.

Now, if you want to do John justice, then you must simply accept his witness and believe that this is the person, the state and manner and the time that you should accept, and abandon your presumption and your waiting for another person, state and time. For it is decreed that John should be no shaken reed, not a man of soft raiment, and above all, not a prophet pointing to future times, but a messenger of present events. He will not write as did the prophets, but will point out and orally announce Him who has been predicted by the prophets, saying: *For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.* (Matthew 11:10)



## The Coming of God

*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

Revelation 3:20

It is very remarkable that we face the thought that God is coming so calmly, whereas previously peoples trembled at the day of God, whereas the world fell into trembling when Jesus Christ walked over the earth. That is why we find it so strange when we see the marks of God in the world so often together with the marks of human suffering, with the marks of the cross on Golgotha.

We have become so accustomed to the idea of divine love and of God's coming at Christmas that we no longer feel the shiver of fear that God's coming should arouse in us. We are indifferent to the message, taking only the pleasant and agreeable out of it and forgetting the serious aspect, that the God of the world draws near to the people of our little earth and lays claim to us. The coming of God is truly not only glad tidings, but first of all frightening news for everyone who has a conscience.

Only when we have felt the terror of the matter, can we recognize the incomparable kindness. God comes into the very midst of evil and of death, and judges the evil in us and in the world. And by judging us, God cleanses and sanctifies us, comes to us with grace and love. God makes us happy as only children can be happy.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

# Jesus' Ascension

Gwen Wilson  
Ridgefield, Washington

Dear Children,

Easter has passed and we know that Jesus rose the third day from the grave. He was on the earth for 40 more days before God took Him back to Himself in heaven. We will read the last part of Jesus' life here. You can find this in St. Luke 24:33-53.

**A**FTER JESUS HAD RISEN FROM the grave, He came upon two of His disciples as they walked to Emmaus. The two men were looking very sad and Jesus asked them why they were so sad. These men did not recognize this man who was now walking with them. They walked and talked about all the details of Jesus' death. Jesus pretended to be a stranger as He listened.

The three had reached Emmaus and Jesus made it appear that he was going to go on further, but the two disciples urged Him to stay with them and Jesus did.

Later in the day, He revealed Himself to these disciples by breaking bread and eating with them, and then He disappeared out of their sight.

The two disciples were talking how there was a special feeling in their hearts while they had talked to Jesus. They were feeling very excited to have actually seen their Lord and couldn't wait to tell the others.

*And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. (Luke 24:33-34)*

These two disciples went on to tell of their meeting with Jesus on the road and that Jesus had eaten with them. *And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. (verse 36)*

My goodness, Jesus just all of a sudden showed up in the room! He came in where there was no door, as He did not need a door. How did the disciples act when they saw Him? The Bible says, *But they were terrified and affrighted (very scared), and supposed that they had seen a spirit. (verse 37)* No one spoke; they just stood there and stared. Jesus saw their fearful faces, and knew these dear ones needed to hear words of comfort. Words they had heard many times before. *And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. (verses 38-39)* After Jesus said this, He showed them His hands and His side. The disciples still were not sure to believe what they were seeing and just stood there.

Jesus knew they needed another sign, so He asked them for some bread and meat, and they gave Him some. As Jesus ate He talked once more of the many things written of Him way back during the time of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.

He helped them once again to understand the Scriptures and He brought them to a clear understanding.

He told them how He came here to suffer and to die and to rise after three days.

He instructed these disciples to preach repentance of sins in His name to all nations, starting at Jerusalem.

Jesus told them to stay in Jerusalem until God had sent His power (the Holy Spirit) on them.

When Jesus was done giving these last instructions, He led the disciples out to Bethany. He lifted up His hands to God and asked a blessing on these men who were to carry on the work that He began.



*And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted (taken) from them, and carried up into heaven. (verse 51)*

The disciples stood there looking up for some time, but their friend was gone.

They were somewhat sad, but they were actually very happy and worshiped Jesus, and went back to Jerusalem with joy in their hearts. They were always in the temple praising and blessing God.

We can be happy about Jesus, too, and we are to carry on the work that the disciples were instructed to do. We are to teach our children and they are to teach their children and on and on. One day He will come back to take all believers home to His beautiful city in heaven. Jesus wants His children to be with Him forever. I pray that you all will follow Jesus and God, and serve, love and always pray to really know God and His will. He will always lead you in the right way.

*Blessings on your day!  
God's peace.*



# The Ascension of Christ

Paul Kretzmann

*And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.*

**Acts 1:9-11**

**J**ESUS HAD FINISHED THE WORDS of His last commission to His disciples; He had entrusted to them the preaching of the Gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:19). But while they were still looking at Him in anxious expectation, desiring to hear more of the words of comfort and strength out of His mouth, He was lifted up before them. He was in the act of blessing them with uplifted hands when He was taken from them. That is the picture of Christ which should be most dear to the memory of a Christian, with His hands stretched out in blessing over them. And a cloud, the symbol of divine glory, a truly regal chariot, shut the Master from the view of the disciples as He entered its bosom. There was no deception, no optical illusion; the ascension of Jesus is a historical fact which cannot be doubted.

The Lord went up with a shout, with the sound of a trumpet (Psalm 47:5). He has ascended up on high and led captivity captive (Psalm 68:18). He has spoiled principalities and powers, He has made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it (Colossians 2:15). He has ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things (Ephesians 4:10).

By His exaltation and ascension the Son of Man, also according to His human body, has entered into the full and unlimited use of His divine omnipresence. His gracious presence is therefore assured to His congregation on earth. He is now nearer to His believers than He was to His disciples in the days of His flesh. He is now sitting at the right hand of His heavenly Father. As our Brother He has assumed the full

use of the divine power and majesty. He reigns with omnipotence over all things, but especially also over His Church. God has put all things under His feet, and has given Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1:22-23). By His Word and Sacrament He gathers unto Himself a congregation and Church upon earth. He works in and with His servants; He governs in the midst of His enemies. He preserves and protects His Church against all the enmity of the hostile world and against the very portals of hell. And His intercession before His heavenly Father makes our salvation a certainty (Romans 8:34).

While the disciples were still looking after their Lord with longing gaze, there suddenly appeared two men in white garments, in shining vestments, two angels that had just acted as escorts to the victorious Lord. These angels aroused the disciples from the revery into which they had sunk when gazing after their Lord. Addressing the apostles as men of Galilee, the heavenly messengers told them that the time spent in longingly wishing for the visible presence or return of Christ was wasted. And they gave them and all the believers a joyful assurance. This same Jesus, who was here taken up into heaven, apparently taken away from them, will come back again in the very same way in which they watched Him disappear from sight. Jesus will return visibly and bodily. With the same body, clothed in the same human nature, He will descend from heaven to judge the quick and the dead. That is the hope of all believers, that they will see Jesus with their own eyes. And in the mean time they live under His merciful reign and government, safe and secure, knowing that He is with them to the end of the world. This hope and certainty makes the believers willing to work for the Lord and to do the works of their calling on earth in His name and to His glory. The time is short, and His return is both sure and imminent (John 9:4). ~

***Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King. (Psalm 98:4-6)***

Ye already know what it is to make a joyful noise. Rejoice, and speak. If ye cannot express your joy, shout ye; let the shout manifest your joy, if your speech cannot: yet let not joy be mute; let not your heart be silent respecting its God, let it not be mute concerning His gifts. If thou speakest to thyself, unto thyself art thou healed; if His right hand hath healed thee for Him, speak thou unto Him for whom thou hast been healed. "Sing, rejoice, and make melody."

Praise Him not with the voice only; take up works, that ye may not only sing, but work also. He who singeth and worketh, maketh melody with psaltery and upon the harp. Now see what sort of instruments are next spoken of, in figure: "With ductile trumpets also, and the sound of the pipe of horn" (ver. 6). What are ductile trumpets, and pipes of horn? Ductile trumpets are of brass: they are drawn out by hammering; if by hammering, by being beaten, ye shall be ductile trumpets, drawn out unto the praise of God, if ye improve when in tribulation: tribulation is hammering, improvement is the being drawn out. Job was a ductile trumpet, when suddenly assailed by the heaviest losses, and the death of his sons, become like a ductile trumpet by the beating of so heavy tribulation, he sounded thus: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." How did he sound? How pleasantly doth his voice sound? This ductile trumpet is still under the hammer... We have heard how he was hammered; let us hear how he soundeth: let us, if it please you, hear the sweet sound of this ductile trumpet: "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" O courageous, O sweet sound! whom will not that sound awake from sleep? whom will not confidence in God awake, to march to battle fearlessly against the devil; not to struggle with his own strength, but His who proveth him.

Augustine

# The Precious Blood of Christ

**W**E HAVE BEEN THROUGH LENT and Easter, and summer is fast approaching. In reflecting, all I can think or say is, “Oh, how I need Jesus and His precious blood!” in the busy fast-flowing stream of life with its trials—no money to pay the bills, health issues, and many more we could list.

May His sweet name and precious blood comfort you and bring you exceeding great joy as you trust in the finished work of our Redeemer who is *...both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36)*, risen again *...declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:4)*, seated at the right hand of God the Father—His Father, our Father—and He *...ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25)* For us!

May the joy of heaven refresh you all!

God's peace,  
Pastor Mark Matson  
Pasco, Washington

Standing at the foot of the cross, we see His hands, and feet, and side, all distilling crimson streams of precious blood. It is precious because of its “redeeming and atoning efficacy.” By it the sins of Christ’s people are atoned for; they are redeemed from under the law; they are reconciled to God, and made one with Him.

Christ’s blood is also precious in its “cleansing power.” It cleanses from all sin. *Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.* Through Jesus’ blood there is not a spot left upon any believer, no wrinkle nor any such thing remains!

O precious blood, which makes us clean, removing the stains of abundant iniquity, and permitting us to stand accepted in the Beloved, notwithstanding the many ways in which we have rebelled against our God!

The blood of Christ is likewise precious in its “preserving power.” We are safe from the destroying angel under the sprinkled blood. Remember it is God’s seeing the blood which is the true reason for our being spared.

Here is comfort for us when the eye of faith is dim, for God’s eye is still the same.

The blood of Christ is precious also in its “sanctifying influence.” The same blood which justifies by taking away sin, does in its after-action quicken the new nature and lead it onward to subdue sin and to follow out the commands of God.

There is no motive for holiness so great as that which streams from the veins of Jesus!

And precious, unspeakably precious, is this blood, because it has an overcoming power. It is written, *They overcame through the blood of the Lamb.* How could they do otherwise? He who fights with the precious blood of Jesus fights with a weapon which cannot know defeat.

The blood of Jesus! Sin dies at its presence, death ceases to be death, and heaven’s gates are opened!

The blood of Jesus! We shall march on, conquering and to conquer, so long as we can trust its power!

Charles Spurgeon



## Heart Changes

**G**OD CREATES LIFE AND SUSTAINS it, but it can be willfully snuffed out. God willingly lends His hands to those who take care of family or other loved ones, including those who are handicapped, have special needs, or those who are little babies. Infants are Baptized because Jesus does the work of saving them as they are in need of His free gift of salvation like everyone else.

Some don’t think of babies as precious or even human, so they turn to abortion. We all know of a couple who found themselves pregnant and felt alone. They were poor. How can they find help, encouragement? If they were desperate, they might

have considered abortion. Their names were Mary and Joseph! What if they had turned to abortion (in some form) and terminated the earthly life of the Messiah because of their own pride, selfishness, or desires?

God has many roles and uses for people in this world as extensions of Himself to bring glory and honor to His name. How many future leaders have already been murdered through abortion? And just because a law may change doesn’t mean people’s attitudes will change—darkness still finds a way to tempt people and practice sin. What people need is a heart change on a deeper level.

Has your heart been changed at that deeper level where you see things from God’s perspective and ways to glorify His name? Where you’re putting Him first instead of you?

Shalom2u! God's peace.  
Pastor Joel Baker  
Plymouth, Minnesota

# Come, Lord Jesus, But Just a Little More Time

Lois Matson  
Yacolt, Washington

**I**N RECENT DAYS, I have prayed two completely opposite prayers, trusting that God will answer according to His good will. We pray along with the Scriptures, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" But we know that when Christ returns, as He's promised to do, there will be no more time for repentance and faith for those who do not believe in the name of the only Son of God. The Last Day is the day of judgment; it will be too late for preaching, hearing and believing the Gospel.

We often pray, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" because of our own suffering, trials, temptations, and pain. We lose our loved ones, one after another, and we grieve. We suffer addiction or disease. We endure trials of various kinds, and we pray for relief. Our heart's cry is often, "Jesus, please come and take us all home! We're suffering down here!"

But is that a selfish prayer? What about our loved ones who don't believe? What about neighbors and co-workers who do not know Jesus? Christ's return is good for us who believe, but it will be terrible and terrifying for those who do not.

Jesus Himself says He is coming soon. The beloved Apostle John writes in the Revelation 22:1-7: *And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

*And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.*

**Behold, I come quickly:** blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Verses 12-13: **And, behold, I come quickly;** and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Verses 16-17: *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

The water of life is flowing today. We proclaim the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ, for He said: *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)* (John 7:37-39)

There is an urgency to the proclamation of the Gospel. Today is the day of grace. Today is the acceptable time. Tomorrow may be too late, either because Christ has returned in glory or because we've personally been called from time to eternity. We ought to have the Good News on our lips as a constant refrain. When we know what we've been saved from, we want to tell others of this wonderful salvation as well.

There's an old bluegrass hymn that addresses my paradoxical prayers perfectly:

**Here the labor is so hard and the workers are tired,  
And our weary hearts are longing for a rest;  
And we find we're getting anxious to be in that happy land  
Where we'll enjoy some peace and happiness.**

**But wait a little longer, please, Jesus!  
There's still so many wanderin' out in sin.**

**Just a little longer, please, Jesus—  
Just a few more days to get our loved ones in.  
We may look into the skies and tears will fill our eyes,  
For our weary hearts grow heavy with each day.**

**First we cry, "Oh Lord, please come!  
Come and take our children home!"  
And then we look around us and we say:**

**But wait a little longer, please, Jesus!  
There's still so many wanderin' out in sin.  
Just a little longer, please, Jesus—**

**Just a few more days to get our loved ones in.  
The family's scattered here and there, but Lord we love them dear;  
And maybe we can help them find the way.**

**Well if waiting is the cost, well they might not be lost,  
Lord that's the reason why we say:  
But wait a little longer, please, Jesus!**

**There's still so many wanderin' out in sin.  
Just a little longer, please, Jesus—  
Just a few more days to get our loved ones in.**

And so we pray, "Lord, come quickly!" and "Lord, just a little longer!" And our faithful Lord understands.

Verses 20-21: *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

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## The Spirit Points Us to Christ

Pastor Chuck Bylkas  
South Range, Michigan

*If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

John 14:15-27

**I**N THIS GOSPEL text, Jesus prepares the disciples for His departure. Jesus consoles them with the promise that He will send the Holy Spirit to dwell with them and be in them. Even though the disciples will be saddened by their Master's departure, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will bring them comfort by teaching them **"all things"**, and bringing **"all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."**

This is no less true today. Even though we face many uncertainties in this life, the Holy Spirit continues to lead and guide us by pointing us to Christ. And while God uses human vessels to preach and teach His Word, it is the Holy Spirit that brings us to repentance and kindles faith in our hearts. In the midst of our joys and our sorrows, the Comforter reminds us of the words and work of Jesus Christ. When we face temptation, the Spirit points us to the One who **"was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."** (Hebrews 4:15) When we are convicted of sin, the Spirit directs us to the One **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins..."** (Ephesians 1:7) When we are faced with great difficulties in life, the Comforter reminds us of the One who says **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."** (John 16:33)

May God grant us grace to hearken unto the voice of the Holy Spirit, as He teaches us about the Risen and Victorious Prince of Life.

Yours in Christ.



*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah. Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He*

*maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.*

Psalm 46:1-11

All joy from other sources [than our God] is sorrow, all pleasure is pain, all sweetness is bitter, all beauty is mean, everything else, in fine, whatever may have power to please, is irksome.

Bernard of Clairvaux