

CHRISTIAN MONTHLY

Vol. LXI - No.5

Subscription Rate: 1 Year

U.S. - \$12.00; Canada - \$14.00; Foreign - \$25.00

(Washington residents add 7.7% sales tax -- \$.92 for 1 year)

Send articles intended for publication to:

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CHRISTIAN MONTHLY

PO Box 220

Yamhill, OR 97148 USA

Phone/Fax: (503) 662-5909

E-mail: ChristianM@Apostolic-Lutheran.org

Address subscriptions, payments and
Book Concern orders to:

Neal and Lynn Karlsen, Managers

THE BOOK CONCERN

PO Box 2126

Battle Ground, WA 98604-2126 USA

Phone/Fax : (360) 687-6493

E-mail: Book_Concern@Apostolic-Lutheran.org

APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA website address

www.Apostolic-Lutheran.org

E-Mail Addresses:

Western_Mission@Apostolic-Lutheran.org

Eastern_Mission@Apostolic-Lutheran.org

Foreign_Mission@Apostolic-Lutheran.org

The Christian Monthly (ISSN 0009-5494) is published monthly for \$12.00 per year by the Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern, PO Box 2126, Battle Ground, WA 98604-2126 USA.

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Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me

Jesus, Saviour, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treacherous shoal;
Chart and compass came from thee:
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me.

As a mother stills her child,
Thou canst hush the ocean wild;
Boisterous waves obey thy will
When Thou say'st to them, "Be still!"
Wondrous Sovereign of the sea,
Jesus Saviour, pilot me.

When at last I near the shore,
And the fearful breakers roar
"Twixt me and the peaceful rest,
Then, while leaning on thy breast,
May I hear thee say to me,
"Fear not, I will pilot thee."

Edward Hopper

THE CALL

One of the enduring memories of my childhood is of my mother standing outside, her hands cupped to her mouth, calling, “*Syömään!*” (“Come to eat!”) It was a compelling call; we didn’t loiter on the way from the fields to the table. It was also a call made with loving intent. Her mission was to make sure we were well nourished. “Eat, eat,” she would exhort; and we would eat until we could eat no more.

Mother has gone to her eternal reward, but she still lives in our hearts. Most importantly, though, she lives eternally according to the promises of Scripture. Paul wrote about our Lord Jesus Christ as the one *who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. (I Thessalonians 5:10)* Jesus told his disciples, whose hearts were troubled by the news that He would be leaving them, *Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. (John 14:19)*

**"Because I live,
ye shall live also."**

The call of Jesus to eat and drink at the table that brings us life is clear. He invites us to come unto Him so that we might find rest for our weary souls and nourishment for our spiritual journeys. (*Matthew 11:28-30; John 6:35; 7:37*) He came to accomplish a marvelous work of redemption, thus blessing us here and in eternity.

Can we ever tire of eating at the table of God’s goodness? Unfortunately, yes. Our mortal portion longs for something that is “new and different.” It resists the same old spiritual menu, just as it will also become tired of overly familiar foods. (It’s pork chops tonight; must be Tuesday!) Knowing this tendency, it is vital that we watch and pray over our own hearts. When we begin to notice signs of dissatisfaction in ourselves, we need to question what might be motivating our restlessness. We need to remind ourselves of the fundamental truths of Scripture so that we will not begin to reject the teaching of the Word.

For example, Jesus said: *He that believeth on me, **as the scripture hath said**, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (John 7:38)* Are we an encouraging presence in the lives of others, or are we a discouragement? Do we build up or tear down? Is our happiness based upon external matters, or do we find our joy in spiritual blessings? Study the Scriptures.

For instance, I Thessalonians 5 contains precious exhortation and illustration of how we should spend our Christian lives. Let us pray that

living waters will flow, and continue to flow, through each of us. The Holy Spirit is still calling to those who are without the assurance of eternal life. We are the instruments of the Lord, so it is our privilege to share the message of life eternal through word and example.

Although this message of life comes especially close to us during this season, it remains supremely relevant to us at all times. Jesus died so that we might have the forgiveness of our sins; He rose again for our justification; He ascended so that we might be comforted.

He is risen! This message of joy radiates through the New Testament Scriptures. The heart of man no longer needs to be troubled. There is refuge in the promises of grace which assure us of life eternal for the faithful. Because He lives, we are strengthened in our own journey, for we have come to know that the threatening enemy has no power over us. The darkness of apprehension, of uncertainty, of restlessness has been lifted, and we dwell in celestial light. *Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. (I Thessalonians 5:5)*

The call of God continues to go forth throughout the world. The call invites the lost to come to the place where they will find everlasting food. The call encourages those who are in faith to persevere. We were called *into his kingdom and glory and unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. (I Thessalonians 2:12; I Corinthians 1:9)* Furthermore, He continues to call us so that we do not leave the feast which He has prepared.

Near the end of his first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul lifted, as it were, his blessing hand upon them by saying: *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (I Thessalonians 5:23)* The next verse provides the answer to how we will be preserved blameless: *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*

For many of us, our mother's voice has been stilled. Her witness of living faith, however, remains. And the voice of the Good Shepherd may yet be heard. May that calling message of the Word fill our hearts with faith, peace, and joy.

*In Christ,
Pastor Earl Kaurala
Alston, Michigan*

A SOLDIER'S LETTER TO HIS MOTHER

Mother's Day 1945

Okinawa, Shima

Dear Mother,

May you be greeted with God's peace on this beautiful Mother's Day! Even though I wrote to you recently, I have a desire to scribble a few words now that it is Mother's Day.

Silvius and I attended the morning worship, and because we still enjoy a much-deserved moment of rest, we had no special excuse by which we would not have been able to take advantage of that occasion. The church service was this morning, and, as always before, it was outside under the heavens. It was warm and sunny, and I have never seen as many soldiers together under these conditions. Obviously, the meaning of the day was the main reason.

The chaplain had a beautiful service, and touchingly spoke of the day's hero: Mother. The text was from Luke 1:46-55 regarding Mary, the mother of Jesus. With tear-filled eyes, many of us sat on the ground with our helmets as our seats and our guns at our sides. Surely many, including myself, upon hearing the chaplain, found that we had not always lived after the minds of our mothers. Naturally, a mother, from the time her child is in the cradle, imagines and hopes that her child will be blessed by God and prosper in whatever comes before it as an adult. Perhaps we have not fulfilled our mothers' hopes, and may have caused disappointment in her heart and mind.

However, among other things, the chaplain said that temporal prosperity is not always in great endeavors or in worldly possessions and riches, but that that treasure is priceless which is found in pure, honorable, and blameless living. God promises his blessing to those who honor and love their parents, as shown in his commandment. We each are to live a pure and honorable life as we strive for success and temporal blessings.

Yet the most precious treasure of all is that we would live for God, for children are God's gift to the parent. There are many mothers who, in prayer, raise their children from birth so that the seed of God's Word would be planted and grow in their hearts from childhood. It is their prayer that, when their children reach adulthood, they would not become so great in themselves that they would forget their mothers' teaching and advice for Christian living. May the precious teaching, advice, and lives of

our righteous mothers always be our light, direction, and uplifting strength.

As you, Mother, have experienced and suffered much, you have also received joy in raising your children. I remember that you have often had sleepless nights because of our sinful paths, but your heart has been rich in forgiving us, and has burned with love. I am sure that, although I have not deserved it, you have forgiven me all those deeds with which I so often sorely hurt you. I am greatly indebted to you, Mother, for you so tirelessly directed us in the paths of truth and righteousness. You did not tire in guiding and preaching, even during the time when we traveled in the dark world of unbelief. God, in his love and grace, heard even your weakest prayers, and raised us from the pit of sin and unbelief, and brought us into his kingdom of grace. And He continues, even to this day, to carry us in that grace.

Therefore, my wish for you, from so far away, is that you had a happy Mother's Day. I will leave you again in God's care. I am well, and hope you are the same.

*With love,
Your son,
Oscar (Wilson)*

*Translated from the Finnish by his wife,
Stella Wilson*

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

I John 5:4

ON SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

God's peace, and greetings from Texas. I pray the Holy Spirit is leading your walk of faith today.

Spiritual growth is a common topic among Christians throughout the world, yet an elusive one to grasp. Churches and ministers encourage Christians to grow spiritually, but everyone seems to give a different viewpoint about what this means and how this growth should take place. Bible verses are often pulled out of context, and we sometimes find that judgment comes with the concept of spiritual growth.

A Sinner in Need

On the long way home from work through the Texas hill country one day last fall, I began thinking about my life. I reflected on how amazing God has been to me despite all my failures. If you ever get the chance to drive a pickup truck down Highway 46 between Bulverde and Boerne, take it. You will know that it is truly God's country. The sky was set ablaze by the October sunset, and the whole setting was incredible there along the Guadalupe River. Taking the back roads was a refreshing change from the hassle of an I-10 traffic jam. I found myself in one of those rare moments when everything slowed down, drivers all waved as they passed, and the commute didn't seem long enough. It really gave me time to think.

A song came on the radio about a backsliding sinner in need of a Saviour. I knew that I, too, was one of those backsliders. I could identify with the lyrics sung by that old country boy because of all the times that I have really tried to take a turn for the better. Although this song was not the inspiration itself, it served as a gentle reminder of my own struggles. I had often resolved to transform my spiritual life, and failed miserably. I had too many battles, while some of the nice people at church seemed to have none of those.

What is the most important message that can be spoken to one such as this? How is spiritual growth to be encouraged? Should the seeking heart try harder to minimize failures in life? One might think, Maybe I can decrease the number of sins in my life to make myself a better Christian. Perhaps there are multiple areas in which I can improve my walk with God. There is only one place to turn for answers to such questions. Let us examine what God's Holy Word teaches on this topic.

What God's Word Says

I am convinced that the majority of churches, if not all of them, started out with pure intentions and good hearts. That being said, it is certain that even good intentions can, and will, go awry. It seems that, all too often, churches today gravitate toward teaching good life lessons and principles to apply to lead a better and more Christ-like life. There is usually nothing wrong with those lessons, and they are all good things to strive for, but that is not the purpose of the Church or the Gospel. Preaching life lessons can turn the focus away from what He has done, and begin to lean toward what we can do, thereby missing true spiritual growth.

Paul told the Corinthians, *I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. (I Corinthians 2:2)* This is where spiritual growth comes: by hearing the Word of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

What is this Gospel that we should hear? It is what Jesus told Paul to preach when He appeared to him on the road to Damascus: *To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me... witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. (Acts 26:18-19, 22-23)*

This passage teaches us that the important message is about Christ alone. His message is the *only* thing that opens the eyes and turns one from darkness to light.

It is impossible for one to become a “better” Christian by focusing on his own life. It does not bring glory to God. I am not saying that we should not correct major problems in our lives, but this comes later.

First, the Word of Christ convicts the heart of the sinner. As I wrote to you previously, this is the opposite of “accepting Christ” as the first step. If the focus is first on self, and improvements are seen, pride may replace the bad attributes that were removed. Instead, glory is given to God when a person is humbled, finds nothing good in his flesh, and is desperately in need of Him. Repentance and the forgiveness of sins through Christ’s work is the saving Gospel – not “accepting Christ” or becoming a better person.

So then, where does spiritual growth come from? As an older, wiser Christian once told me, “Only God can grow us spiritually, and only God knows what is going on inside each of us.” When an old country boy walks into a church looking like fifty miles of bad road, people are bound to judge him. It is in our human nature to do so, but we must remember, *the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. (I Samuel 16:7)* God sees the faith behind the grizzled face and dirty hands. One should not forget, as I have heard our brother Richard Barney preach, that the Church is a hospital for sinners.

Through all my feeble attempts to better my life, I have found it impossible to achieve spiritual growth by any actions of my own. In fact, in the Gospel of John, we are reminded that this is not how it works, for John said of Christ, *He must increase, but I must decrease. (John 3:30)*

Amazing Grace

What, then, are we left with? If we cannot make ourselves holy, and we cannot continue a life down a sinful road, it seems like an impossible spiral.

Thanks to God’s great grace, we are not stuck there. The spiritual growth we seek is none other than growing in faith and in the knowledge of the richness of God’s grace, which ultimately leads to eternal life in Heaven. *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)* This is the essence of spiritual growth, not to attain higher levels of spirituality, or to clean up our acts, but to *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (II Peter 3:18)* The songwriter E.E. Hewitt wrote of this in a favorite song entitled, “More About Jesus Would I Know.”

We read above that God’s grace is what saves us through faith. Faith itself is a free gift, and *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:17)* When our minds are Christ-centered rather than self-centered, we realize how ironic the term *spiritual growth* actually is. In reality, we are not growing at all, but

becoming increasingly humbled, and putting our faith not in ourselves, but in another. There was nothing in us that merited his love. Indeed, Christ died for us when we were his ungodly enemies. Even Paul realized that he could not succeed in any attempts to live a more godly life, for he wrote, *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. (Romans 7:18-19)*

There is a constant spiritual battle going on in the life of the believer. A man's pride wants to look at his accomplishments in moving closer to God. True Christian humility brings him to simply look at what Jesus did on the cross, and believe that it is sufficient for all of his sins. Such faith in that forgiveness brings the fruits of the Spirit in the believer's life as a by-product rather than the other way around. A peace dwells in the heart of the humbled Christian. This brings him compassion for others rather than judgement, because he knows that all men are sinners.

All are lost without Christ, but He has even provided grace for a backslider like me. As we learn from the parable of the prodigal son, no one is too righteous not to need his grace, and no one is too far-gone to be given it. This grace is a leveling ground that covers both the self-righteous man who has been humbled, as well as the penitent, downtrodden backslider. Both are sinners in need of a Saviour, and neither can figure out how to achieve spiritual growth because it is an impossible task.

God is always the one who initiates redemption. We did not choose to accept Him. When souls have experienced his spiritual "growth," they find themselves humbled by his incredible grace. Through hearing his Word, that gift of grace through faith grows in their hearts. Then, the elder brother and the younger prodigal can both be redeemed of their sins. The self-righteous and the backslider can both freely drink of the living water. Both can then only trust, obey, and be happy in Jesus Christ as they sit on this back porch of life together, awaiting the upcoming ride to the Heavenly hill country. In the meantime, both can feel blessed to hear his Word, read his Scriptures, and sing with pure joy, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me!" *[John Newton]*

*Barry Mattson
Boerne, Texas*

More about Jesus would I know,
More of his grace to others show;
More of his saving fullness see,
More of his love who died for me.

*E.E. Hewitt
"More About Jesus Would I Know"*

In Loving Memory of HOWARD PROUTY

Howard was a dear husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. We miss him, but our comfort is to know he is home with his Saviour, where he will never again feel pain or sorrow.

He enjoyed life and his family. He also enjoyed the host of friends he had. He loved to visit and mingle with people, but he loved his Saviour most of all.

During the last week of his illness, we had many, many friends who came to bid him farewell. They sang songs to him, and spoke words of comfort, assuring him once again that his sins were washed away in the blood of the Lamb.

He slept away on November 29, and we were at his bedside as God took him to be with him forever.

We wish to thank the dear friends who sent cards and memorials to us in his memory.

*God's peace,
Mary Prouty and Family
Tualatin, Oregon*

God of the Living

God of the living, in whose eyes
Unveiled thy whole creation lies;
All souls are thine; we must not say
That those are dead who pass away;
From this our world of flesh set free,
We know them living unto thee.

Thy word is true, thy will is just;
To thee we leave them, Lord, in trust;
And bless thee for the love which gave
Thy Son to fill a human grave,
That none might fear that world to see,
Where all are living unto thee.

O giver unto man of breath,
O holder of the keys of death,
O quickener of the life within,
Save us from death, the death of sin;
That body, soul, and spirit be
Forever living unto thee.

*John Ellerton
1826-93*

But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

Matthew 22:31-32

DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. (Isaiah 25:8)

Apostle Paul quoted this verse in saying, *When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (1 Corinthians 15:54)* Paul used this in the context of our passing from this life into eternity, referring to the change that takes place when we receive our new, glorified bodies. This is the final victory, when we enter into Heaven.

We remember that Jesus has already been through this. He is victorious, and has opened the way for us. *O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. (Psalm 98:1)*

Paul reminds us that we haven't already attained this, but we are following after Jesus, pressing on toward the goal, which is to be with Jesus, and to be like Him. *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Philippians 3:20-21)*

Let us keep looking to Jesus. Life isn't always easy. Trials come. They have, for every generation. One thing is sure, though, and that is the promise of God, who said in his Word, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. (Hebrews 13:5)*

Let us help each other, encourage each other, overlook nonessential differences, and teach, with grace, those who lack understanding or are erring from the teachings of Jesus Christ.

And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. (Isaiah 25:9)

*Love in Christ,
Jay Matson
Yacolt, Washington*

Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

I John 5:4

CHILDREN'S PAGE

Dear Children,

I am sure most of you have heard of the Psalms in the Bible. Today I will share one with you: Psalm 146:1-10.

Happy is He who Trusts in the Lord

Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul.

While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God: Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever: Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The Lord looseth the prisoners:

The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down: the Lord loveth the righteous:

The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord.

The Lord is good, and He has all things in place. As I look outside each morning, I am reminded of how God puts everything in order. The day starts right on time, the trees and plants put forth their buds when they should, and the birds have returned to build their nests and raise their young, just as the Lord planned. I could go on describing so many things.

Just seeing God keeping things in order each day helps me to know how much He is there for each of his children, ready to care for them. You children can be sure that He is there for you too, because He loves you.

*God's peace,
Gwen Wilson*

THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH

Feelings of joy or emotion are short-lived and fade away. The faith that God has given us by grace is constant and everlasting, and fadeth not away, *which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast. (Hebrews 6:19)* Oh, how important it is that we would treasure our faith, and to believe that our sins are forgiven in the name and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. (Psalm 32:1)*

The Spirit of God uses our emotions to communicate with Him. As people, we acknowledge the presence of God in so many ways, through the outward beauty of Creation, by the seeing of our eyes and hearing of our ears. Surely God has been good. *The Father which is in heaven . . . maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (Matthew 5:45)*

As children of God, our main focus in this life is on the inward beauty of the Lord. *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. (I Corinthians 2:9-12)

Yes, dearly beloved of Christ, when your faith seems so small, do not become discouraged. We have great reason to praise God in spite of the feelings of our infirmities. *For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. (I John 3:20)* Here is where the joy of our salvation enters in: in spite of my sins, I am a saint before God. Wow! I am a saint before God? Yes, we surely are, as children of God, by grace through faith. We have the appropriated righteousness of Jesus Christ. *For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:17)* That which was mine (the curse of sin) became thine, and that which was thine (his glory) became mine. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. (II Corinthians 8:9)*

"Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace. This confidence in God's grace and knowledge of it makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and with all his greatness. This is the work of the Holy

Spirit through faith. Hence, a man is ready and glad, without compulsion, to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything in love and praise of God, who has shown him this grace, and thus it is impossible to separate works from faith; quite as impossible as it is to separate heat and light from fire." [Saarnivaara "The Way, the Truth, the Life"]

**"God is not the author of confusion,
but of peace."**

Our flesh and the Devil, together with his agents, demand righteousness, or because of a lack of righteousness, try to confuse us. *God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. (I Corinthians 14:33)*

Let us continue to focus on the beauty of our Lord Jesus Christ -- how He has served us in obedience by the way of the cross and resurrection to rescue us from eternal damnation. May we not focus on our ability to serve God in carnal obedience as far as our justification unto salvation is concerned. May we not quench the spirit of sanctification in our lives. May it be the work of the Spirit of God, and not the work of man.

I am sure the reading audience can identify with me when I say that God has been so good to me in spite of my badness. Praise his holy name. As children of God, we praise the Lord with the instruments of our hearts. God is very pleased to hear the praises of his children. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. (Hebrew 13:15)* May we continue to pray to God that we would grow in the need for grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear precious soul who is in the pride of self-righteousness, or you, who are wallowing in the sins of the flesh, come to Jesus. He will not turn you away. He is pleading for you. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (Matthew 11:28-29)*

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. (Hebrews 4:9-10)

*Motivated by the love and peace of God,
Dave Impola
Everett, Washington*

GOD BLESS ALL MOTHERS

Jesus said, *Thou knowest the commandments . . . Honour thy father and mother (Mark 10:19) and For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. (Matthew 15:4)*

Annually, we set aside Mother's Day as a special day for honoring, showing love and appreciation for our mothers, and in the memory of those mothers who have passed on. One of the last concerns of Jesus as He was dying on the cross was the welfare of his mother, Mary. He said to John, *Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. (John 19:27)*

God established the family as his basic unit for nurture, teaching, and bonding in love. He shows us clearly, as indicated in the Bible verse above, how the family is to function. When this is the living reality in the home, everyone is blessed, sharing God's blessings of love.

Therefore, it is written, *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. (I John 4:7)* In families, we pray for one another: parents for children and children for parents, each with the desire that all would be well. In this regard, I share the following from The Book Of Common Prayer: "Almighty God, Heavenly Father, who seest our families and the homes in which thy people dwell: Deliver us, we beseech thee, from vainglory, selfish pride, and every cause of bitterness. Endue us with faith, temperance, and patience. Knit together in true affection those who in holy wedlock have been made one flesh. Turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents, in mutual respect and love, and make us kindly affectioned to one another in the spirit of thy blessed Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Sharing also a prayer of: John S. Hoyland, "Father, Grant unto us true family love, that we may belong more entirely to those whom Thou hast given us, understanding each other day by day more instinctively, forbearing each other day by day more patiently, growing day by day more closely into oneness with each other."

My hope and prayer for all of us, as we again commemorate Mother's Day, is that we would continually, day by day, live in an expression of that which John wrote, *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God.*

Sharing with you the blessings of his love, fulfilled in God's Son, Jesus Christ, for our peace and salvation,

Pastor Rodney Johnson
Laurium, Michigan

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

Proverb 1:7-10

INVITATION TO THE CONVENTION

The Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church wishes to offer you a personal invitation to attend the 2005 Annual Convention in Park Rapids, Minnesota, for *blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it. (Luke 11:28)*

Services will be held at the Century School, 501 Helten Avenue, Park Rapids, Minnesota. The Central Board Meeting, Ministers' Meeting, and Sunday School Meetings will take place Tuesday and Wednesday, July 5 and 6.

The first worship service will begin on Wednesday evening, July 6, at 7:00 at the school. Services will continue at 10:00 am, 2:00 pm, and 5:00 pm each day through Sunday, July 10. Holy Communion will be given at the Sunday morning service.

The Century School is located in the northwest part of Park Rapids. This is a small town, so you will have no problem finding it. The facility is new, beautiful, and air-conditioned.

For those who fly in, Park Rapids, Minnesota is located 80 miles northwest of Brainerd, Minnesota, 85 miles east of Fargo, North Dakota, and 50 miles south of Bemidji, Minnesota, all of which have airports. For more information on traveling here, please contact Julius Aho at 218-837-5369.

Lodging information has been sent to each congregation. This is a busy tourist area, so we urge you to reserve your motel or RV sites as soon as possible. RVs can park at the school in the bus parking area both day and night, but with no services. For questions about lodging, please call Janet Aho at 218-538-6735, Peggy Aho at 218-538-6679, or Darlayne Yliniemi at 218-564-4539. Lodging information can also be found on the Apostolic Lutheran Church website at www.apostolic-lutheran.org or on the Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church website at www.sprucegrovechurch.org.

We will screen-project the hymns sung during services, but you may wish to bring your Companion Hymnals for other activities. For those who cannot make the trip, the sermons will be posted each day of the Convention on the two websites listed above.

The Spruce Grove congregation asks for your presence, and certainly your prayers, during this year's Convention. Glory and honor to our Heavenly Father and his Son, Jesus, whose name *is above every name. (Philippians 2:9)*

*On behalf of the Spruce Grove
Congregation: God's peace,
The Publicity Committee*

ANNUAL CONVENTION MEETINGS

The 97th Annual Meeting of the Apostolic Lutheran Church of America will be hosted by the Spruce Grove Apostolic Lutheran Church, and will be held on July 7, 2005 at Century School in Park Rapids, Minnesota.

In accordance with the Bylaws, the Annual Reports will be read, and the members of the Central Board, the Eastern Mission Board, and the Western Mission Board will be elected. All matters will be considered and acted upon. Congregations are requested to send their delegates to this meeting.

The schedule of meetings and services is as follows:

Tuesday, July 5	Ministers' meeting	9:30 am to 5:00 pm at Century School in Park Rapids, Minnesota
Wednesday, July 6	Ministers' meeting	9:30 am to noon
	National Sunday School Meeting	1:00 pm to 5:00 pm at Century School
Thursday, July 7	Annual Business Meeting	9:30 am to 5:00 pm at Century School

The Foreign Mission Business Meeting will follow the Annual Business Meeting. These meetings will be held in conjunction with the devotional services, which will be held in the morning, afternoon, and evening, beginning on Thursday, July 7 and continuing through Sunday, July 10. Ministers, members, and the general public are invited to participate in these services.

*In behalf of the Central Board of the
Apostolic Lutheran Church of America,
Richard Juuti, Chairman
Ivan Seppala, Secretary*

My King and Saviour

I am not skilled to understand
What God hath willed, what God hath planned;
I only know at his right hand
 Stands one who is my Saviour.

I take God at his word and deed:
"Christ died to save me," this I read;
And in my heart I find a need
 Of Him to be my Saviour.

And O! that He fulfilled may see
The travail of his soul in me,
And with his work contented be,
 As I with my dear Saviour.

Yea! living, dying, let me bring
My strength, my solace from this spring,
That He who lives to be my King
 Once died to be my Saviour.

Dora Greenwell, 1821-82

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

II Corinthians 12:9