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# CHRISTIAN MONTHLY

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## Living in Christ Jesus

*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

*But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

*II Timothy 3:12-17*

## ON CONFESSION AND PRAYER

God's peace! I pray all is well in your walk of faith today. I wanted to share with you a few thoughts on my heart about confession and prayer. The Bible says, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9)*. Many Christians today will tell you two things about confession:

- 1) It is good and sufficient to confess all of our known sins to the Lord when we pray, and to ask for his forgiveness.
- 2) Sometimes confessing our sins to other trusted Christians can bring an assurance of forgiveness, and encouragement to overcome sin as well.

Let us take a look at the importance of confession to a Christian brother or sister, touch on the relationship of confession to prayer, and assess some major arguments used opposing this necessity.

The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines the word *confess* as, "To admit or acknowledge something damaging or inconvenient to oneself." To illustrate, consider this sentence: "The suspect confessed to committing the crime." The word *confess* implicitly contains the meaning of disclosing information unknown to the hearer. In a court of law, a confession holds no value after the culprit has been proven guilty. On the other hand, if the defendant were to confess prior to the conviction, then his confession would embody the definition of admitting something inconvenient or damaging to him. Likewise, confessing our sins to an Almighty God, who already knows them before we have committed them, seems to be of little value. We are not telling Him anything new, and it is not damaging or inconvenient to ourselves to whisper it in prayer to God. This is not to say that we do not pray for his forgiveness and help in our times of need. Jesus taught us in the Lord's Prayer to pray for forgiveness, but, as far as confession goes, God already knows our sins better than we do.

Many struggling seekers have been turned away in disappointment when they find themselves burdened with a guilty conscience, due to a doctrine of confession only in prayer. They know that they need help, and they have prayed for that help. God finally gives them the courage to confess their sins to a Christian, or even a pastor, but often they are told instead to go tell God of their sins and ask Him for forgiveness. This is unfortunate, because what they need

is to be reassured by a follower of Christ that God has, indeed, forgiven them already. This happened when Jesus died on the cross. When a person confesses his sins in prayer, as in statement #1 above, he lacks the assurance that can be brought by a Christian friend that his sins are truly forgiven. When a person confesses to a Christian those sins that burden him, that brother or sister is able to assure the penitent sinner. This gives the weary soul freedom from its heaviness with the assurance that all of his sins are forgiven in the name of Jesus and in his precious, atoning blood.

The ministry of the cross and the preaching of our Lord Jesus Christ are what bring faith to believe our sins are forgiven. Paul wrote to the Romans: *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:17)* A prayer of confession cannot bring faith because there is no preached Word. God has given this gift of confession and absolution to his children. When the living faith of Jesus has been given to a sinner through the preached Word of our salvation, that person is then reconciled with God. He has that faith in his heart, and a peace that passes all understanding.

Let me remain perfectly clear on one point: confession is not a condition for salvation. It is a gift of God's mercy, to relieve our conscience of its heavy load. The Bible only teaches one condition for salvation, which is to believe in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:37-41, Mark 16:15-16).

One argument against the idea of Christians forgiving one another is the same argument the Pharisees used against Jesus when He was preaching forgiveness to wounded hearts. They objected that God is the only one who can forgive sins. It is true that God is the one responsible for paying the price for all of our sin. He sent his only begotten Son so that, through his death on the cross, the sin debt of the entire world was paid. Jesus died for all sinners, and for every sin that has ever been committed as well as those to be committed in the future. They have already been forgiven in his name and shed blood at that very moment on the cross. Indeed, it is not the Christian brother who is forgiving the sin, but rather, that brother is an ambassador for Christ. The instructions that Jesus gave are clear: *Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained. (John 20:21-23)*

God gave his children this authority to forgive sins through the word of reconciliation by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus gave an example of this forgiveness when He washed the feet of the disciples

(John 13). The meaning of this foot washing was twofold. First, washing feet was a slave's task. Jesus washed the disciples' feet out of humility, showing them the principle of servant leadership. We are to serve each other in Christian fellowship, and care for each other's needs. Peter, being the zealous servant that he was, got excited after Jesus told him it was necessary to wash his feet. He wanted his hands and his head washed, also. Jesus said the whole bath was not necessary because Peter had already been washed (saved). The second meaning of the foot washing was to show that, although Christians are clean, having been "bathed" with the washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5), sins committed after salvation "soil our feet," hindering our fellowship with God, and renewing the need for a cleansing to restore fellowship and faith. When a Christian senses sin in his life, he should confess this sin in accordance with I John 1:9. This responsibility was passed to us, his disciples, when Jesus said, *If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.* (John 13:14-15)

This is the will of God, that we would, in humility, be ready to assure each other in this life with the Word of faith to believe all sins forgiven in Jesus' name and blood.

In the book of Acts, in three accounts of repentance, it is evident that God works through his children and the preached Word of the Gospel to bring faith to the restless. The eunuch of Ethiopia (Acts 8:26-40), Saul (Acts 9:3-18), and Cornelius (Acts 10) are certainly good examples of the way which God ordains for repentant hearts to be filled. Each of these men believed in God beforehand, but they were not saved through praying, or through direct communication with God. He heard their prayers and saw the need in their hearts. He sent a believer to each one, leading them either by the direction of the angel of the Lord, or in a vision.

One may argue that it is possible to gain faith through confession in prayer. The Bible teaches otherwise. The story of the eunuch of Ethiopia demonstrates what is confirmed in Romans 10:17. The eunuch was diligently reading the Scriptures, but did not understand or have faith. *Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.* (Acts 8:35) This preaching of Jesus is what brought faith in the heart of the eunuch, who immediately afterward desired to be baptized. The fact that faith comes through the preached Word from a fellow believer is confirmed in the following two examples, as well as many other portions of Scripture.

One may argue that, in light of John 20:21-23, if we have been given the power to forgive sins, then it should be even more powerful to

go directly to God in prayer with our confessions since He is the ultimate authority. The conversion of Saul, however, does not confirm this. Saul talked to Christ directly before he was saved, but Christ did not tell him his sins were forgiven (as He did directly to people before He was crucified and gave believers the keys to his kingdom). He had already given this authority to his people by this time. Christ directed Saul to Damascus where He sent Ananias to him. When Saul was in Damascus for three days without any food, he already had a penitent heart. He had already asked the Lord what he should do, and then obeyed his commands. Verse 11 tells us that he was praying. None of these things saved his soul. He was not reconciled to God by himself as he prayed alone. The story of his conversion tells how Ananias was sent to preach to him so he could receive his natural sight as well as his spiritual sight, and how he was filled by the Holy Spirit.

**"Through this man  
is preached unto you  
the forgiveness of sins."**

It was only through a Christian servant that Saul would be cleansed of his sins and receive his sight. After Saul became Paul and preached in Antioch, he confirmed this message to the people there by saying, *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things . . . for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you. (Acts 13:38-41)*

The account of Cornelius in Acts chapter 10 confirms the necessity of *hearing* the Gospel. Verse 2 states that Cornelius was a devout man who feared God and prayed always. Although his good works and prayers served as a memorial, they did not save him. He was saved after he *heard* the Gospel of Christ (Acts 10:44; 11:10-14). One might argue that these three accounts tell of people becoming saved Christians, and that the principle of confession to a Christian is not applicable to those who are already walking in Christ. In I John 1:6-10, contrary to statement #2 in our opening paragraph, we can see that everyone continues to sin even after they have entered into a Christian life. Nowhere in the Bible does it teach that a person stops sinning after becoming a Christian. The aforementioned example of the washing of feet also demonstrates this. These sins can become a hindrance to the faith of a believer, and Paul instructs us in this. *Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and*

*let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. (Hebrews 12:1-2)*

Another argument made against confession between Christians is that one cannot possibly confess every sin that is committed in his life. This is a sound argument because there are hidden sins that are constantly committed in the life of a believer, even as David made known in Psalm 19. It is important not to look at confession as a good work meriting salvation. Rather, it is a precious gift that God has given his children to meet the demands of a heavy conscience. Confession cannot make a person righteous because Christ has made the believer righteous already. Only those sins which we know and which weigh heavily on the heart should be confessed. When sins are confessed to a believer, then that believer can give absolution by ministering the reassuring Gospel message that Jesus has forgiven those and all of our sins. This restores peace of conscience for not only the burdening sins, but the hidden ones that we may not know about as well. After receiving absolution from a fellow Christian, we should believe the promise of Christ that our sins, which have been declared forgiven in his name by a trusted Christian on earth, are truly forgiven before God in Heaven. He specifically made this known when He said, *Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (Matthew 18:18)*

### **"Confess your faults one to another."**

In the spirit of James 5:16, *Confess your faults one to another*, it is a part of Christian fellowship to partake of this wonderful practice which God has ordained. It is surely a humbling experience to tell another person about one's shameful sins. Our flesh does not want to humble itself before another, or put a name to our sin in order to have it washed away. In the Old Testament, the children of Israel were required to carry their specific animal offering through the streets where others could see what their sin was. Even then, people's pride was such that the priests decided to sell the sacrificial animals inside the temple so that people could bypass the humiliating part of parading it past others. Jesus was appalled when He came upon this, and He overthrew the tables of those moneychangers.

True fellowship between believers comes not from portraying a pious lifestyle at church and impressing Christians with our Sunday best. God looks upon the heart, and knows our every fault (I Samuel 16:7). Christians should look upon each other in the loving spirit of

Christ, knowing that we are all sinners, and that it is through the grace of God that we are saved (Ephesians 2:8). I find that when I hear those words that “Yes, you may believe all your sins forgiven in Jesus' name and atoning, shed blood,” these are truly words of comfort to my soul when it's sick with sin and wants peace. It is wonderful to be given this assurance from someone else that my sins are washed away in the sea of grace, never more to be remembered.

I am convinced that the latter of the two statements we considered is more important in this Christian walk of faith. God knows our sins already, but through humility, Christian fellowship in confession, and the absolution given through the preached Word of the Gospel, the believer is renewed in faith and that *lively hope of eternal life by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. (I Peter 1:3)* Rather than using prayer to confess our sins to God, we should pray for the humility and strength to confess those sins that burden our consciences to one of his ambassadors. We should pray for Him to deliver us from evil, and for help from falling into those sinful ways again. We should also pray in thanksgiving for this wonderful gift of our salvation through Jesus Christ, given to us as a free gift. Confession is not what saves, but it keeps the believer stronger in faith. With this doctrine of confession between believers, Christ made the fellowship between them a blessing to cherish. We stand before one another as what we are: sinners saved by grace. When we go to a brother to confess, we are going to God. Just as Christ became as one of us, Christ has given us authority to speak for Him unto our brothers. When we hear that Gospel message from our brother or sister that our sin is forgiven through the blood of Jesus, this is God's will, and it is truly forgiven in earth as it is in Heaven.

*Barry Mattson  
Boerne, Texas*

*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.  
Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in  
whose spirit there is no guile.*

*Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye  
that are upright in heart.*

*Psalm 32:1-2, 1*

## Lord, Keep Us Steadfast

Steadfastness plays an important part in the life of a Christian. Not only is it essential for our own individual health and development, but also for the growth and health of the body of believers as a whole.

Steadfastness implies the quality of being faithful--firmly established and unwavering. There are many Biblical exhortations to steadfastness. The verse that I will use for this meditation is found in I Corinthians 15. This chapter emphasizes the Gospel revelation of the resurrection and of the life to come. It concludes with a word of counsel that is as important for us today as it was for the early New Testament Christians to whom the letter was written. This is what Paul wrote: *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. (I Corinthians 15:58)*

In order for us to be steadfast, it is necessary that we are nourished and strengthened by the Bread of Life, and that we are refreshed by the Water of Life. Jesus is both. As Christians, we agree with David when he wrote that *his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. (Psalm 1:2)* Since the Word is our food, it is the source of our strength. We draw on this life-giving source in our private meditation. Our faith is increased and strengthened through the hearing of the preached Word, and we share our living hope with others in the fellowship where we worship.

Even then, were we to be wholly responsible for our steadfastness, we would doubtless soon fail the test. Recognizing this, the Reformer, Martin Luther, placed this important responsibility in more secure hands than his own when he wrote a hymn on the subject:

Lord, keep us steadfast in thy word:  
Curb those who fain by craft or sword  
Would wrest the kingdom from thy Son,  
And set at naught all He hath done.

Lord Jesus Christ, thy power make known;  
For thou are Lord of lords alone;  
Defend thy Christendom, that we  
May evermore sing praise to thee.

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

*Martin Luther, 1541*

In this work, to which the Lord has called us, we are to be steadfast and unmovable, using the gifts we have been given *for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:12)* We are in subjection to Christ, *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. (Colossians 1:18-19)*

There is another Bible passage that I want to use as a conclusion to our subject of steadfastness. *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

*Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. (Hebrews 13:7-9)*

The verse, *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever*, is not to be isolated from the verses that precede and follow it. Jesus Christ is changeless. Let us endeavor to follow the example of those who have gone before us, remembering that, as Jesus said, *I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)* Let us pray that God will continue to impart the guidance of his Spirit so that it may be said of the twenty-first century believers, as it was of the first-century Christians, *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. (Acts 1:14)*

*Pastor Alvin Holmgren  
Seattle, Washington*

*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

*But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

*For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;*

*While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*

*Hebrews 3:12-15*

# The Light of the World

*I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. (John 8:12)* In a world that has been spiritually darkened by sin, there is a desperate need for light. Jesus Christ is that light. We pray that this glorious light would constantly illuminate our hearts, and that the reflection of that light would become evident to others. This is the Lord's desire and his exhortation: *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)*

Jesus has promised that those who follow Him shall not walk in darkness. We must be careful to notice that this promise is made only to those who follow Christ. All who do not follow Him are in unbelief, and therefore walk in darkness. It is the will of God, however, that all would come to the light. For this reason, He sent his only begotten Son into the world that through Him they might be saved.

Because many do not believe in the redemptive work of Christ, they continue to accomplish the wicked deeds we see today, in acts of terrorism and all manner of ungodliness. We pray that God will call them from darkness to his marvelous light so that they may recognize the evil that enslaves them; that they will repent and seek forgiveness in the person of Jesus Christ, and then know the freedom that He came to give. No longer need they be bound in the shackles and chains of sin's slavery. Today they can become partakers in the reconciling blood of Jesus through the power of the Gospel. "Oh, wonderful words of the gospel: A message of blessing they bring, proclaiming a finished redemption Through Jesus, our Saviour and King." [Fanny J. Crosby]

And to you, dear Christian friend, you who have begun your spiritual journey, seek to follow diligently the Lord Jesus in faithful obedience to his Word, for in this we have the promise of the light of life. The Word will illuminate our footsteps upon our journey here so that we may see more clearly the author and finisher of our faith; and, beyond this fleeting time on earth, eternity's beautiful dawn. Let us consider how quickly time is passing, and how our loved ones, who have departed in faith, are gathering in increasing numbers on that glorious homeland shore.

Therefore, dear fellow traveler, continue to fight the good fight, keep faith and a good conscience, and soon we, too, shall receive the

victor's crown. Soon the everlasting light of Heaven's glory will be ours to share eternally. We can forever bask in its warm rays, and with joy-filled hearts, sing that new song of praise to Him who has loved us and washed us from sin.

*Pastor Ken Storm  
Tapiola, Michigan*

*Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.*

*And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men.*

*I Corinthians 3:18-21*

*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

*And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

*But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?*

*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

*Romans 10:14-17*

# CHILDREN'S PAGE

Dear Children,

Hello to each and every one of you. With this greeting comes a prayer that each of you is well and having a good day. If you are not feeling so well, I pray that God will watch over you and give you health.

Today we will continue our story of Paul, who was dedicated to serving the Lord no matter what. He has been through a lot in the past few stories. Let us look into how he was received in Rome. You can find this in Acts 28:15-31.

## Paul Arrives in Rome

After spending a week with some fellow Christians, Paul continued toward Rome. When he was yet about forty miles from the city, word reached some Christians there, and they came out to meet him. When he saw these friends, he thanked God, and felt encouraged by their support.

God told Paul earlier that he would see him to Rome, and God was doing just that. Remember that Paul was still with other prisoners at this time. The Bible tells us that *the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him. (Verse 16)*

After Paul had been in Rome three days, he called the chief elders of the Jews together and told them of all that had happened to him. He said that he had been accused and bound in Jerusalem, and kept by the Roman guard there.

He told how the Roman officials had listened to his testimony of being a believer in Christ, and found no reason to put him to death. He explained that the Jews in Jerusalem accused him for preaching Christ, and they wanted to kill him because of that.

Paul wanted the Jews in Rome to know that the reason for the chains that bound him was for the hope of Israel -- the preaching of Jesus Christ--the only way anyone can be saved.

The Jewish leaders in Rome told Paul that they did not know all these things were happening to him, for they had not received any letters nor had anyone coming through there said a word about it. They said to Paul, *But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against. (Verse 22)* These Jews wanted to hear what Paul preached

about, so they decided on a certain day, and went to Paul's home. They filled the house, and Paul preached unto them Jesus, out of the Law of Moses, and from the words of the prophets. I'm sure Paul was happy to tell those people about Jesus and his saving power, and he taught them all day. The Bible tells us that some believed and some did not. It is no different with people today.

Paul encouraged those who did believe to go and tell others. *Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. (Verse 28)*

There were many people in Rome who had never heard of Jesus. Even today, all around the world, there are people who have not heard, but the Bible says they all will hear.

Children, you can be thankful that you have heard of our precious Jesus who saves, heals, helps, encourages, listens, and, above all, loves his children dearly.

The end of our chapter says that Paul stayed in his home there for two years and helped all who came to him. It says he spent his time *preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him. (Verse 31)*

So we see, at the end of this story, that God was faithful to Paul in that He said He would see that he got to Rome safely. God needed to use Paul. God wanted the people there to hear about his Son, and to follow Him.

Children, I pray that you will talk about Jesus to people who have not heard, and that you will keep on learning more about Jesus.

*God's peace,  
Gwen Wilson*

*And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.*

*Isaiah 54:13*

## Acceptable Christianity

In the time in which we are living, with many "winds of doctrine" and forms of worship coming at us from all directions, I believe it would be well for all of us to look at the seven churches spoken of in the Book of Revelation. Five of the churches had fallen into error, and two were acceptable to God.

In an overview, with the five churches that were in error and needed to repent, there are mentioned many good qualities and virtues, including faith. With so many good and commendable qualities, what had gone wrong that they needed repentance? How had the spiritual growth gone with these churches?

The problem that seems most evident is that some of these five churches had gotten so caught up in good works and virtue that they no longer remembered that they were sinners and in total need of Christ's righteousness. One church had left its first love; two others had allowed false doctrine to be taught. Another had become dead; another indifferent. These different conditions of heart show us the various errors we can fall into individually, as well as whole churches.

Then we have the two acceptable churches. How beautiful and comforting are their testimonies: *Unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich . . . (Revelation 2:8-9)*

*And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. (Revelation 3:7-8)*

May our hearts be lifted by what Christ has done on our behalf. And if we have strayed from our Lord and Saviour into strange ways, let us return in repentance and be renewed to the right paths so that we can be found as those acceptable churches were.

The Word of God speaks of the hidden wisdom mentioned in I Corinthians 2:7: *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.* May we encourage our pastors to continue preaching these hidden mysteries to us so that our souls may continue to be fed. We also want to continue hearing that blessed Gospel, the Great

Commission of Christ, *that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:47)* May many souls be directed to salvation, and be saved through the preaching of this Gospel in its fullness and power, as we ourselves have received.

Apostle Paul wrote, *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. (Romans 1: 16-17)* Let us not be ashamed of this Gospel--that power to release a soul from sin and give him the hope of eternal life in Christ Jesus. This is a monumental gift to us from God. Let us be eternally grateful for it.

*God's peace,  
Beth Staudinger  
Leslieville, Alberta Canada*

*Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path.*

*Psalm 27:11*

## PRAYER

*The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.  
(James 5:16)*

The power of prayer is demonstrated in the Bible in many places. It is written, *Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. (James 5:17-18)*

First James mentioned that Elias was a man of like passions as we are, and that he prayed earnestly; and then we see the great power of his prayer. We can also see that God heard because it came from his heart as an earnest prayer.

In the Old Testament, we read about the children of Israel who were enslaved in Egypt. *And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. (Exodus 2:23-24)* God heard their prayers and helped them in their tribulation.

When Moses, with God's help, led the children of Israel out of Egypt, they reached the Red Sea, but the army of the Egyptians was after them, and mountains rose on both sides. Moses cried unto God. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward. (Exodus 14:15)* God heard his prayer, and, by the miracle of parting the Red Sea, He saved them from certain death. *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. (Psalm 145:18)*

Many times, as God's children, we don't know what we should pray for, but the Spirit makes intercession for us, as is written: *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

*And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*

*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.  
(Romans 8:26-28)*

When we are in need, our prayers will come from our hearts. *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. (I John 5:14-15)*

*And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. (John 14:13-14)*

The Lord's Prayer is a prayer for all things necessary in this life. It also teaches us to pray that God's will will be done in our lives, and in everything. The greatest of God's will is that all people would repent and believe the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ--the remission of sins--and be saved. Then his true joy and peace will enter into their hearts by the Holy Spirit. *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? (Luke 11:13)*

*God's peace,  
Pastor Arne Nordahl  
Vancouver, Washington*

To God the Father's throne  
Perpetual honours raise;  
Glory to God the Son,  
To God the Spirit praise;

And while our lips  
Their tribute bring,  
Our faith adores  
The name we sing.

*Isaac Watts*

# A Scholar's Prayer

Lord and Saviour, true and kind,  
Be the master of my mind;  
Bless, and guide, and strengthen still  
All my powers of thought and will.

While I ply the scholar's task,  
Jesus Christ, be near, I ask;  
Help the mem'ry, clear the brain,  
Knowledge still to seek and gain.

Here I train for life's swift race;  
Let me do it in thy grace:  
Here I arm me for life's fight;  
Let me do it in thy might.

Thou hast made me, mind and soul;  
I for thee would use the whole:  
Thou hast died that I might live;  
All my powers to thee I give.

Striving, thinking, learning still,  
Let me follow thus thy will,  
Till my whole glad nature be  
Trained for duty and for thee.

*Handley Carr Glyn Moule*  
1841-1920

*Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my  
salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.*

*Psalm 25:5*

*I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go:  
I will guide thee with mine eye.*

*Psalm 32:8*