

# CHRISTIAN MONTHLY

Vol. LXII - No. 4

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**

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Yamhill, OR 97148 USA

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E-mail: [ChristianM@Apostolic-Lutheran.org](mailto: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](mailto:Book_Concern@Apostolic-Lutheran.org)

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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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### **Our Lively Hope by the Resurrection of Christ**

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

*To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*

*Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

*I Peter 1:3-5*

## The Message of the Cross

*And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. (Mark 8:31)*

The death of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection are the greatest events in history. God's plan of salvation from eternity was put into action. The holy, righteous God, who hates sin, could be reunited to sinful man only through the blood sacrifice of his only begotten, sinless son. God's great love toward fallen man could not cancel his holiness and righteousness. A price had to be paid. Jesus, the Son of God, left the throne of Heaven to come to earth for one purpose, which was to die to redeem you and me from sin.

*Jesus said, As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

*Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. (John 10:15-18)*

No human being can truly understand the twofold suffering that Jesus endured. It was not only the wrath and cruelty of mankind, but, at the same time, He experienced the wrath of God toward our sins, which were placed on Him. Only Jesus, the sinless Son of God, could comprehend and endure, without bitterness or despair, the horror of being rejected by God and hated by the people that He loved so much and came to save.

The Father heard his beloved Son cry in agony, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. (Matthew 26:39)* God did not take it away. He saw his perfect Son led as a lamb to the slaughter. He saw Him stretched out naked and nailed to the cross and lifted up before the mocking crowd. He saw Him hanging in his blood, insulted, tortured and beaten until He cried out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46)* Still no hand reached out to save Him. The murderers heard Jesus say, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34)* Even the sun gave no light, and there was darkness over all the earth when the Light of the World was crucified. The dreadful suffering continued until Jesus said, *It is finished. (John 19:30)* God would not save his Son until the Son had saved us.

**"Father, forgive them;  
for they know not  
what they do."**

*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. (1 Peter 2:24)*

But God works through that cross, showing us how terrible sin is, and how great his love is. What else can awaken the knowledge of sin and its terrible fruit than the cross, and how a holy, innocent man was killed in such a cruel manner? When the guards, who were watching the body of Jesus, saw the earth quake and the rocks split, they feared, and said, *Truly this was the Son of God. (Matthew 27:54)*

Apostle Paul wrote, *The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. (I Corinthians 1:18)* The words are offensive to many people today, even as they were then. Paul knew that his message was a stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks who sought human wisdom. The cross is offensive to our own goodness and pride.

The wages of sin is death, and the cross is a judgment of sin; therefore, it is offensive. Today *sin* is not a popular word. We excuse and rationalize our sin by calling it something other than sin. To have godly sorrow, we need to be broken before the cross for true repentance to take place.

There are four basic facts of Scripture that cannot be separated: death, resurrection, repentance, and forgiveness. A message that tries to by-pass any one of these four related, basic truths makes the congregation fall asleep spiritually.

In the great Greek city of Corinth, Paul declared, *I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. (I Corinthians 2:2)* He deliberately preached the doctrine of the cross because he knew this was the very basis for conversion and the salvation of the world.

Paul gloried in the cross only because, through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, eternal life became possible. The mystery of reconciliation is revealed when we are broken before the cross. To become partakers of this life, we must know and believe that our sins are washed and forgiven by the blood of Jesus. The final instruction of Jesus to the disciples was *that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:47)*

But it does not end there. In three days, Jesus Christ arose from the dead. The tomb was empty.

Jesus is alive! The women who went to the sepulchre to prepare the body saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, *Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. (Mark 16:5-6)*

*And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. (Acts 4:33)*

The greatness of God was demonstrated by his victory over death, hell, and the grave. His resurrection opened the passage between this world and the next for us.

Because He lives, we can live forever. We can experience the peace and joy of salvation now, and someday receive a crown of glory. Praise his holy name!

Pastor Elmer Yliniemi  
Frazee, Minnesota

*None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.*

Romans 14:7-9

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

John 5:24

## Led by the Spirit of God

*He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. (John 20:22)*

Jesus spoke these words to his disciples on the evening of Resurrection Day. Earlier in his ministry, He had promised to pray that the Father would give his disciples a Comforter who would abide with them forever. He called this Comforter the Spirit of Truth, and said that He would teach them all things, and bring to their remembrance those things that He had spoken to them.

Just prior to his death, Jesus explained why it was necessary for Him to go away. *Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. (John 16:7-8)*

During his prophetic office, Jesus taught his disciples many things about his kingdom and the part they were to play as his messengers. And, what is also important, during this time the disciples were on the way of new birth.

Although Apostle Paul was not among the chosen twelve, he did much to advance that kingdom which at first he threatened and persecuted. In his writings, he left very clear teachings concerning the nature of the Kingdom of God. He placed great emphasis on the need for the individual believer's personal possession of the Holy Spirit when he said, *Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. (Romans 8:9)*

As to how one receives the Holy Spirit, he explained that, when a person believes in Jesus Christ through the hearing of the Gospel message, he is sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. That Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance. The indwelling Spirit then bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God, and heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

When we have become this new creation in Christ, we also receive a sanctified spirit. But the old nature, the nature of Adam, remains unconverted. It will always be at odds with the things of God. Paul wrote, *For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 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. (Romans 7:14, 18)*

*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. (Galatians 5:17)*

*The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. (Romans 8:7-9)*

Thus we conclude that the Holy Spirit sanctifies us by his presence because He takes of what the Lord Jesus Christ has done and reveals it to us. Jesus Christ becomes our sanctification as well as our wisdom, our righteousness, and our redemption.

The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin, and his perfect life becomes our Spirit-imputed righteousness and sanctification.

The Holy Spirit also becomes the source of strength in our daily lives, even as it is the source of power by which we endeavor to proclaim the Gospel. This certainly became evident in the lives of the Lord's initial disciples in their Pentecost experience.

In this living relationship with God, we are encouraged by the Word to let the mind of Christ dwell in us. We are instructed to be compassionate, and to forgive one another, even as the Lord has forgiven us. *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*

*And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. (Colossians 3:12-15)*

**"Above all these things  
put on charity."**

The work of the Holy Spirit can be divided into two parts. The first we have already discussed. I will summarize it by quoting from our church confessions that state, "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him, but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith, even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith, in which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives me and all believers all our sins."

The second part of the work of the Holy Spirit is that He reminds us that we are no longer our own; that we have been bought with a price, and that we should seek to glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are God's. *For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. (II Corinthians 5:14-15)*

The grace that brought us salvation also teaches us that, *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. (Titus 2:12)*

In his writings to the Church at Rome, Paul addressed this subject

thus: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Romans 12:1-2)*

As born-again believers, God has made us his temple, and his Spirit dwells within us. This is indeed a high and holy calling, a privilege far above our merit. God's Word cautions us not to defile this temple, and *grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30)*, nor to quench the Spirit. But this Spirit does not hold us captive through fear. It is *the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father (Romans 8:15)*

*Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (Hebrews 13:20-21)*

*Pastor Alvin Holmgren  
Seattle, Washington*

*As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

*Romans 8:14-18*

## At Easter Time

Each year at Easter time, the Christian nations of the world commemorate the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ. This tradition has been carried from one generation to the next for centuries. Although this practice cannot be spoken against, we recognize that, for many, it is simply this: a practice. As God's children, let us never allow this holy event to become merely a tradition in our lives. It is too precious to be taken lightly.

God sent his Son into the world to save the world from sin. The Scriptures teach us that whosoever believes on Him will not perish but have everlasting life. Do we understand that we, who deserve punishment for our sins, have received the favor of a loving God? It is only when we recognize that it is out of his great love that He called us that we can truly begin to behold, in a small measure, how great his grace is toward us.

Dear pilgrim, you, who here must journey by faith, be reminded with me today of those sad, yet wonderful events that took place at Easter time. Christ loved us so much that, while we were yet sinners alienated by our unbelief, He took upon Himself all of our sins. The debt, which we could never hope to pay, He took so willingly from our shoulders and bore it on the cross of Calvary.

Jesus was crucified so that we may go free, no longer shackled by the bondage of sin. We are set free, not because we deserve, not because we merit liberty, not because we've earned the right, but, dear friend, because God loves you and me.

Jesus said, *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. (John 15:16)* Think of it! He chose us from the millions in this world to be his own. How humbling a matter this becomes in our hearts when we consider how great was his love.

Oh, the love that drew salvation's plan!  
Oh, the grace that brought it down to man!  
Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span  
At Calvary!

*[William R. Newell, "At Calvary"]*

Let us rejoice in the knowledge that Christ has risen victoriously over death, hell, and the Devil, and that we, too, shall be victorious in Him. He is our *wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (I Corinthians 1:30)*

Let us keep faith and a good conscience, always putting away sins in Jesus' name and holy, precious blood so that we may, with the eyes of faith, behold Him as He is, *full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)* He is the *Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end (Revelation 21:6)* and *the author and finisher of our faith. (Hebrews 12:2)*

Soon will dawn that eternal Eastertide, when our last feeble steps have been taken and the gates to that city appear. Then the beautiful songs of the angels will float out on our listening ear. Rejoice, dear redeemed child, *and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven. (Matthew 5:12)*

*God's peace be with you,  
Pastor Ken Storm  
Tapiola, Michigan*

## Jesus Prayed for Us

*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*

*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

*I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*

*And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.*

*I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.*

*And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee.*

*Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*

*And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*

*I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

*I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

*As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*

*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*

*And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

*Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

*O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.*

## Our Redeemer

*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)*

*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (John 3:17)*

*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: (I John 3:1) Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (I John 4:10)*

While our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, walked upon this earth, He made this statement: *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. (John 10:17-18)* In saying this, Jesus tells us why He came to this world. He came that He might die and rise again from the dead. Why would He do this?

He has done this for you and me. When our first parents, Adam and Eve, disobeyed the command of God, our race fell from grace. Sin entered the world, and a breach was made in our relationship with God. Because of sin, our peace with God was removed, and death entered the world. *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. (Romans 5:12)* Our dear Heavenly Father, however, would not allow it to remain this way. He would send his Son to repair the breach. *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (I Corinthians 15:22)*

Our Saviour said, *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)* For us to have this more abundant life, a great sacrifice had to be made. That sacrifice was our dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1:14)* His precious blood was shed upon the cross at Calvary so that our sins might be forgiven.

Oh, how great a love the Father has for his creation! How great a love He has for you and me. He has expressed this love to us by sending his Son, in whom He is well pleased. When Jesus laid down his life for us, his sheep, our Heavenly Father was well pleased with Him, not because Jesus did it for Himself, but because He did it for us. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. (John 15:13-14)*

Let us heed the words we find in Hebrews 4:16: *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* The blood that our Saviour shed is greater than all of our sins. By it, our consciences are cleansed; our sins are washed away. Our guilt is removed.

We, however, must believe this. We must believe with a faith that is given from God above. *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8)* He gives this gift to us by his abundant grace. We are told to believe in Jesus Christ, just as Paul and Silas told the Philippian jailer when he asked what he must do to be saved.

Let us consider, through every day of grace we are given, the great sacrifice that Christ made on our behalf -- all so that our sins could be forgiven and life eternal could be ours -- the abundant life Jesus spoke of. *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)*

### **"With his stripes we are healed."**

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for you. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, rose again for you, and lives this very day so that you, also, might have true life through Him.

*Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

*Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

*Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:33-39)*

Pastor Gene Mixon  
Seattle, Washington

## **The Cross of Christ**

When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast  
Save in the death of Christ my God;  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown!

His dying crimson, like a robe,  
Spreads o'er his body on the tree;  
Then am I dead to all the globe,  
And all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small'  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

*Isaac Watts*

## CHILDREN'S PAGE

Dear Children,

It is that time of year when we remember what Jesus did for us on the cross. I will take verses from a few chapters of John.

### Jesus Died for Sinners

In John 13, Jesus gathered with his disciples to have the Passover supper. It was to be the last time that they would celebrate it together.

There was one disciple who would betray Jesus. *And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him. (John 13:2)* Betray means to turn totally against, and Judas's heart turned against Jesus from this time on. Judas left the supper table and went to the priests and Pharisees to tell them that he would help them capture Jesus.

After the supper, Jesus washed the disciples' feet, showing them that they must love and forgive each other. In chapters 14-16, after Judas left the room, Jesus talked to his disciples about himself and God, his Father. *Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. (John 13:31-32)*

He told them that He must go away. *Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. (John 13:33)*

He also told the disciples that they would have to deal with many difficult people and would have hard times: *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. (John 15:20-21)*

He encouraged them to believe in Him. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. (John 15:7-9)*

Jesus talked with his disciples and told them what was going to happen to Him on that night. He tried to comfort them. Then they went out to a garden, and it was there that Jesus went alone to pray and ask God, his Father, for the strength to give up his life for all mankind. That was a very hard night for Jesus.

Judas brought men to the garden to capture Jesus, as he knew He would be there. Jesus often went there to talk to God, and had brought his disciples there to teach them.

Jesus was then taken before important men, who asked Him many questions. He was whipped and spit upon. Others hit Him and said cruel things to Him.

Finally He was made to carry his cross to the hill of Calvary, where He was nailed to the cross, and died for all mankind. Why? So that we all might have life in Him, now and in Heaven forever.

Jesus did not stay on the cross. He was buried and He arose from the grave in victory. After spending a little more time with his disciples, He was taken up in a cloud, and He went to be with God his Father in Heaven.

He loved man so much that He gave his own life so that whoever believes in Him can have eternal life.

We can be very thankful that we have the Bible and all the words of Jesus to read for ourselves. We can read and feel as if we are hearing Jesus talking to us. Through his words, we find help and comfort.

Remember, little children, that Jesus loves you. As He says in his word, *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.*

*Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.*

*And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them. (Mark 10:14-16)*

You children are so special to Jesus. I pray that you will always believe in Him.

God's peace, and a blessed Easter to you all.

Gwen Wilson

## I Declare Unto You the Gospel

Paul testified to us, *Brethren, I declare unto you the gospel. (I Corinthians 15:1)* What does it mean, and what does the Gospel contain?

The resurrected Lord Jesus, Himself, declared, *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations. (Matthew 28:19)*

We are to declare this Gospel of grace because we, ourselves, have received grace. In this Gospel is contained a declaration and assurance of Christ's suffering and death, reconciliation on the cross, and payment for our sins. Included with the aforesaid is the declaration of his victorious resurrection. If we testify only of the Saviour's sufferings, we find ourselves in sorrow without comfort. If we pause only in the exultant joy of the resurrection in times of trial, the feelings of joy deceive us. Therefore, Paul said, *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings. (Philippians 3:10)*

When Jesus rose from the grave, victorious over sin, death, and the powers of darkness, He showed the disciples the signs of battle: his hands pierced by nails and his side run through by a spear. After this, He said, *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: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. (John 20:21-23)*

**"Whose soever sins ye remit,  
they are remitted unto them."**

We are to remember that the joy of new birth and of a lively hope fills our hearts only after our souls have tasted the Easter gift: the assurance of our salvation.

The witness of Peter was, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (I Peter 1:3)* And, *We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (II Corinthians 5:20)*

The Gospel, *The Lord is risen indeed (Luke 24:34)* gave comfort to the friends of Jesus who attended the first Easter services. They were filled with the hope of eternal life. The same Gospel lifted the travelers to Emmaus out of their sorrow when the resurrected Lord revealed Himself to them.

With this same Gospel, we are encouraged and strengthened to live in faith. Is not the Gospel *the power of God unto salvation to every one*

*that believeth? (Romans 1:16) We need it at the beginning of the journey, along the way, and at the end.*

*We are victorious only through Him who has loved us. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (Colossians 3:1)*

*May the true Easter peace rest in the hearts of God's people.*

*Vaino Juntunen  
Finland*

### **Easter Morn**

*As it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.*

*And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.*

*And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead, and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.*

*And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.*

*And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.*

*Matthew 28:1-9*

## Continue in His Word

*If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (John 8:31-32)*

Many people think it must be so difficult to be a Christian, believing and following God's Word. This is true if we try to walk with our own strength because the strength we need is not found in our flesh. Jesus said, *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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)*

It is also written, *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. (Psalm 119:105)* Satan, our common enemy, always tries to lead us away from God's will and his Word. It does not matter in which manner Satan entraps us, but his purpose is to destroy our confidence and joy in Christ our Lord. The enemy wants to deceive people so they do not believe God's Word.

Our walk of faith is a journey on which we need Jesus to lead us and protect us from the onslaught of the Devil and the many temptations that come our way. God wants to be with us always to protect us from the evil. As Jesus asked the Father, *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. (John 17:15)*

Our Heavenly Father wants to preserve us from evil, and that is why it is his will that we continue in his Word. Then we are his disciples indeed, and we shall know the truth which shall make us free. This freedom we have in Christ is not the freedom of the flesh, but freedom according to the Spirit, in which the love of Jesus and his peace reign in our hearts.

May God bless you, and preserve you in faith and love.

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

*Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

*Matthew 4:17*

# Easter Hymn

Christ the Lord is risen today!  
Sons of men and angels say:

*Hallelujah!*

Raise your joys and triumphs high,  
Sing, ye heavens; then earth, reply,  
*Hallelujah!*

Love's redeeming work is done;  
Fought the fight, the battle won:  
Lo! the sun's eclipse is o'er;  
Lo! he sets in blood no more.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;  
Christ hath burst the gates of hell:  
Death in vain forbids his rise;  
Christ hath opened Paradise.

Lives again our glorious King!  
Where, O death, is now thy sting?  
Once He died our souls to save;  
Where's thy vict'ry, boasting grave?

Soar we now where Christ hath led,  
Following our exalted Head:  
Made like Him, like Him we rise;  
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.

Hail! the Lord of earth and Heaven!  
Praise to thee by both be given.  
Thee we greet triumphant now;  
Hail, the Resurrection, Thou!

*Charles Wesley*  
*1707-88*

*Jesus said . . . I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?*

*John 11:25-26*