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# Christian Monthly

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### Love One Another

*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.  
These things I command you, that ye love one another.*

*John 15:16-17*

## Serving the Lord

*And he [Jesus] goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.*

*And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:*

*And Simon he surnamed Peter; And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite, And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house. (Mark 3:13-19)*

### **God Seeks Laborers**

When we read the Bible, we notice how God seeks people to be his fellow workers. The proclamation of the Kingdom of God is entrusted to human beings, with the angels being left in an unseen role. God, in his sovereignty, has seen fit to use people as his agents.

### **God's Selection Criteria**

The unfaithfulness of King Saul toward his employer, God, is recorded in the book of Samuel. Because of King Saul's unfaithfulness, the Prophet Samuel declared that a new servant would replace Saul. Samuel said, *The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart. (I Samuel 13:14)*

Of course the elders of Israel could have selected a suitable individual to replace King Saul from among the people. They could have developed complex tests with criteria that would have identified the top candidate from all those under consideration. Perhaps they would have found the most gifted man, but whether he would have fulfilled the fundamental selection criteria established by God is a totally different matter.

### **God Looks at the Heart**

Samuel made a mistake in selecting a suitable worker for God. *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)*

Man looks on outward characteristics, but God looks at the heart. His selection criterion reveals man's inward attitude and relationship toward God. Appearance and achievements are not the important parts. Faith and love must be the top priorities, along with obedience, which puts God in first place, and seeks the fulfillment of his will.

### **Who is Faithful?**

Prophet Jeremiah also had the task of seeking people according to God's established criteria. If these were found, He promised to be merciful to Jerusalem when facing its destruction. In this connection, the Bible says, *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and*

*seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it. (Jeremiah 5:1)*

These conditions expressed the inner being of a person, which revealed the person's relationship with God. He sought a person whose heart had been touched by God's holiness. Only the honest and faithful were to be considered.

### **Who has Vision?**

In a related text, we are told about the breakdown of the walls of Jerusalem, when God sought a protector for the wall. Ezekiel wrote, *And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.*

*(Ezekiel 22:30)* The prophet sought laborers who had vision for the future of the Kingdom of God. It is sad to observe that nobody with a vision was found at that time. We could say that, fortunately, this was an exceptional situation.

At different times, people who have been kindled by a heavenly vision have arisen or stepped forward. Let us take one example. Paul stood before King Agrippa and declared, *Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.* *(Acts 26:19-20)*

### **Teaching Method**

Jesus selected twelve disciples, to whom He gave the task of proclaiming the Gospel. Before they could carry out this mission, they had to learn something that would determine their success. Three times Mark stated a fundamental truth, which must be the basis for all Christian activity.

First, he wrote that Jesus *called unto him whom he would: (Mark 3:13)* Note the emphasis on *unto him*. Jesus called his disciples unto Himself, to be close to Him.

Next, Mark continued to portray the event by saying, *and they came unto him. (Verse 13)* The emphasis is on *unto him*. The disciples separated themselves from all other activity. They followed Jesus.

Thirdly, Mark wrote, *He ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach. (Verse 14)* The emphasis here is on the words *be with him*. The most important task of the disciples was to stay in direct contact with their Master.

Jesus' teaching method was simple. The most important aspect of being disciples was to remain in the presence of Jesus. They needed to come to know Jesus himself. They needed to listen to Him, look to Him, and speak with Him.

The disciples surely had self-confidence, but they needed to grow in their trust in God. They knew the people in their work surroundings, but they needed to also know God. They knew how to make decisions, but they needed

to learn God's will. They knew how to give orders, but they needed to learn obedience to God. They were enthusiastic over human influences, but they needed to find the love of God as the basis of their existence.

The route to becoming a worker in the Kingdom of God had no alternate passing lanes. The Lord offered them only one way: *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me. (Matthew 11:29)*

### **Knowledge of God's Holiness**

Most of all, the disciples needed to know the true nature of God. They needed to recognize his holiness so that they could form an accurate picture of their own condition before Him. They needed to learn that they were no less sinners than others. They were not chosen as a super group for a noble work. It was such a self-righteous attitude that had to be broken at the feet of the Master, where they received the forgiveness of their sins.

The feeling of one's wretchedness has prevented many people from serving the Lord. They do not dare to consider the work of the Gospel because they know their own shortcomings all too well. They think, I am so sinful and wretched that God cannot use me. They are correct as far as their sins are concerned, but wrong in thinking that God cannot use them. The notion that God seeks only successful people who are sinless and gifted as coworkers is totally false. If it were so, no person would be acceptable for his work.

### **Knowing Love**

The disciples also needed to know the love of Jesus as the foundation for everything. It is that Love who gave them the forgiveness of their sins and the gift of eternal life. It is that Love who gave his hands and feet to be pierced on the cross in their behalf. It is the Love whose blood was shed for the forgiveness of their sins. Only the true recognition of that Love could melt their hearts and win them to Him. Only the knowledge of his love is the true and sustaining reason for serving Him. The Apostle Paul had come to know the love of the one who sent him. Therefore, he said, *The love of Christ constraineth us. (II Corinthians 5:14)*

The love of the Saviour inspired Martin Luther for his demanding role. Therefore, he could preach to his listeners, "If you believe and rejoice in your Lord . . . you cannot be idle. That kind of joy and love toward God does not permit inactivity. Your first desire is that others might know the same grace of God. As a result, your love bursts forth."

### **Preaching**

When the disciples had learned their most important lessons, they were sent to evangelize, as Mark wrote, *And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.*

According to the New Testament, the preaching of the Gospel is speaking to sinners who are unsaved in order to make them partakers of salvation in Christ. Christ sent his followers to declare not only forgiveness but also repentance and the forgiveness of sins.

The foremost purpose of preaching is to make people see their lost condition, and to seek for salvation; to lead them to understand that receiving the Gospel of grace is truly a question of life and death. It was this commission that the Lord gave Saul of Tarsus when he was converted on the road to Damascus: *Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 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.* (Acts 26:17-18)

Writing instructions to congregational leaders in 1528, Luther emphasized the following: "If the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed without repentance, this results in people thinking they have their sins forgiven and become indifferent and fearless . . . This must be impressed upon people frequently so that they will not fall into self-deception and imaginary faith, even though they are far from it."

The disciples also needed to be able to resolve questions regarding sin in the proper way. They had to know how to declare the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus and his blood shed on the cross.

They needed the ability to declare the Gospel that creates a penitent heart and a desire to turn to the Saviour. They needed to proclaim the Gospel of Christ crucified in which there is forgiveness of sins.

### **He is Seeking Workers**

God continues to seek workers for his service whose goal is the salvation of souls. Is there someone today with a desire to serve the Kingdom of God? Is your heart burning with a longing to serve God according to your gifts, abilities, and possibilities? Are you ready to give yourself to be used by God?

God is seeking you and your willingness to devote yourself to his work of saving souls. There are many ways to serve, but the basic mission is the same for all. Present yourself for his service. You are needed.

*Ari Auranen  
Finland*

*Translated by Elmer and Miriam Yliniemi*

## **Our Firm Foundation**

God has tucked another year behind us. The past is gone, and the future is in his hands.

The hope and trust we have is that his arm is not shortened. It was with his mighty hand that God led his people out of the land of Egypt. We trust that He will lead us through this wilderness of sin safely to the shores of Canaan, or our heavenly home.

There are frequently reports of earthquakes all over the world, and even near us. The Bible says, *For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. (Matthew 24:7)* With droughts and quakes, the world is being reminded of the last times. All of this goes according to God's prescribed course.

The Christian looks beyond the horizon of this life. *For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. (Hebrews 13:14)* We look for that new Heaven wherein righteousness dwells. This is a foreign land, and the spirit within us, that is given to us by God, longs to return from whence it came.

So, in the New Year, we place our firm reliance on the complete redemptive work of Christ. He is moved to be compassionate toward his children, and accepts us fully. Adding any of our own endeavors or strength is of no avail to our salvation.

How wonderful it is that we can build our home on such a firm foundation. There are so many forces trying to waste away the foundations, but Christ, the solid rock, still stands, Gibraltar-like and unmoved. May He forever be our foundation, and our hope.

*In Christian love,  
Pastor Fred Johnson  
Mesa, Arizona*

## Try the Spirits

*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. (II Timothy 3:1)*

The Apostle Paul, moved by the Holy Spirit, warned his young coworker, Timothy, of the dangerous days ahead. If it was necessary that the Heavenly Father used the Apostle Paul to warn Timothy and the Christians of that day, we should take note of this warning much more so today. We are living in the last days of this world, for Jesus told us that *as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (Matthew 24:37)*

What was it like in the days of Noah? The Scriptures tell us that *as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark. (Verse 38)* The people were going about without a care or concern as to what would happen to them. They did not take heed of the preaching of God's Word. When the flood came and took them away, we can be sure a lot of things came to their minds, but then it was too late.

There are so many things that make these days perilous and dangerous. As Jesus said, *Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. (Matthew 24:4-5)* If the Devil would come in his own garments, we could easily recognize him, but he comes as an angel of light, and we, as mortal beings, can't recognize what is under that disguise.

Peter warned us to *be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. (I Peter 5:8)*

In the Garden of Eden, the Devil said to Eve that she didn't have to believe what God said, but to go ahead and eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for, he said, *Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. (Genesis 3:4-5)* Very convincing, wasn't he? So convincing that Eve ate of that tree, and gave the fruit also to Adam. While Eve yielded to the Devil's cunning sermon, Adam failed to remind her of what God had said to them both. Instead, through the weakness of his own flesh, he also yielded to the temptation.

In these last days, the Devil still preaches the same sermon. Through the new religious movements, many people have reverted back to the time of Adam and Eve. The new religious movements lie to women and men so that they begin to think they are gods and, in this way, they disrupt family life and break love that unites members of even Christian families.

The Devil says, "Do your own thing because you have power and control of our own life." This is being taught in our public schools. The Devil has his servants there, certainly. The young are taught that you are born free. You don't have to listen to your parents. Do your own thing; there is no accounting for your own actions. No wonder there is a discipline problem in schools today. The sad part is that even in many Christian homes, children are not disciplined as they should be. It seems as though many children can do what they want to.

Many of the problems in society today can be traced to the entertainment industry, primarily movies and television. These two media are full of violence and other ungodly behavior. Children continually exposed to this culture cannot help but be affected by it. Things that were once considered sin are no longer considered

sinful. With the advent of videos, additional exposure to the immorality of the world is common in the homes.

How far have we gone? Do we still hear the voice of the Good Shepherd? -- He, who pleaded in his dying moments as He hung on the old rugged cross, his holy and precious blood flowing from his veins, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34)* We were his enemies, but for us He gave his life.

There are so many voices calling today, but we must remember what the Scripture says. *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. (I John 4:1)*

**“Beloved, believe not every spirit,  
but try the spirits  
whether they are of God.”**

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is the only voice we should listen to, for it will lead us safely home. But, as mortal beings, we often want to listen to what is pleasing to us. We become insensitive to sin and insensitive to the pleading voice of the Saviour.

I have often strayed and failed along the way of life, but I thank God that He has not cast me away. He does not want to cast anyone away. He loves us so much that the plea goes out even today, as was heard some six hundred years before Jesus' birth, when God said, *Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God. (Jeremiah 3:22)*

Let us take inventory of our own lives and see if we are still in that first love. Or have we backslidden and have need to return? The doors of grace are still open to those who have fallen away, as well as to the unbelievers Jesus is tenderly calling. Let us pray for a revival of faith in these last days of the world. May we each have a successful journey to our heavenly home.

*God's peace,  
Pastor Roy Davidson  
Old Town, Florida*

*Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.  
Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For  
thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that  
call upon thee.*

*Psalm 86:3-5*

# Children's Page

Dear Children,

I would like to share a story from the Old Testament. You can find this in I Kings 14.

## A Little Prince Dies

Our story takes place in Judah, where King Jeroboam was the ruler. He was a wicked King who worshipped idols. He did not serve God.

He had a little son who was very sick. He and his wife felt the need to get help.

Jeroboam told his wife to change out of her royal clothes and put regular clothes on so that no one would know who she was. He told her to go see prophet Ahijah in Shiloh.

He instructed her, saying, *Take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels [hard biscuits], and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child. (Verse 3)* So Jeroboam's wife went to Shiloh.

The Lord knew that Ahijah could not see, and warned him that Jeroboam's wife was coming to see him. He said, *Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman. And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings. (Verses 5-6)*

Jeroboam's wife could not hide who she was. Ahijah had some very bad news for her, and this news was what the Lord had wanted Ahijah to tell her. God wanted Jeroboam to know that, even though he made him Prince over Israel and gave him the kingdom of the house of David, yet he, Jeroboam, did not keep the commandments as David did. He did not follow God, as David did, or do what was right. He only did evil, and he worshipped false gods, and it made the Lord angry. The Lord wanted Jeroboam to know that all of his people would die.

Ahijah told Jeroboam's wife, *Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam. (Verses 12-13)*

This little son was the only one of Jeroboam's whole family who would be laid in a grave because he was a child, and God found favor in him. He was innocent of his parent's wicked ways.

The prophet Ahijah told Jeroboam's wife that God was going to find himself another King, and he was going to scatter the people of Israel because they did evil. They were going to suffer because Jeroboam was their King and led them in bad ways.

The last verses of our chapter tell what happened to the little prince. *And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah: and when she came to the threshold of the door (the very entrance), the child died; And they buried him; and all Israel mourned him, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet. (Verses 17-18)*

Our story ends with the sadness of death to Jeroboam's whole family, but with joy that the little boy was saved from eternal death. He would live in Heaven.

I pray that we will all ask God to help us to serve only Him, and one day we, also, will go to live with Jesus in Heaven.

*God's peace,  
Gwen Wilson*

*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.*

*Psalm 116:15*

## **Children, We Need Our Saviour**

God's peace to you dear young travelers along the narrow way. Though you may be young, you can see how the Devil tries to make us stray from God's way. We often have to seek forgiveness for hurting others, or for speaking wrong of them.

Jesus told us to love one another; to love even our enemies. This may seem very hard for us to do, but Christ did it. He even forgave those who nailed Him to the cross. I know it is hard to do, but let us try, for each time we try not to hurt or harm one another, we make Jesus happy.

Always remember that Jesus loves us. He will help us in time of trials to win over the Devil, if we just ask for his help.

There are many things that tempt us, but if we will remember to ask ourselves these questions, I think we will save ourselves much heartache: Would Jesus be pleased if I went there? Would He be pleased with what I am about to do or say?

Could I gladly open the door to Him if He should come to our house? Is there anything that would be displeasing to Him in my home? Do I have room in my heart for Him, or is it all taken up with the things of this world?

We older Christians can ask ourselves these same questions and see how we stand in the sight of God— not how our brother or sister stands, but how we stand.

Remember, children, to pray for strength and guidance along the way of life. We cannot walk alone; we need our Saviour. We need his guiding hand. And we need not fear, for our Heavenly Father is watching over us.

Make us useful, Lord, we pray,  
Let us help along the way;  
For we all do sin and stray,  
And need thy presence every day.

Traveling on by day or night,  
We walk by faith, and not by sight.  
His love for us we gladly sing,  
For we are children of the King.

I leave you in God's care.

*Harriet Holmgren  
Lynnwood, Washington*

## Orpah and Ruth

*Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.*

*And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi . . . And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.*

*And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.*

*Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. (Ruth 1:1-6)*

Naomi left that place, and her two daughters-in-law with her. She then began to doubt if they would be willing to depart from the land of Moab. She said to them, *Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. (Verse 8)* At the border of Moab, she bade farewell to them.

Naomi was placing her two daughters-in-law to a test.

Orpah had heard of the blessings of the Israelites and God's people, too, for she lived with Naomi and Ruth. Surely Naomi wondered which way Orpah would go. If she followed Naomi, she would have to forsake her kindred, her friends, and her idols to journey with those who were despised by the world.

*And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law. (Verses 14- 15)*

Ruth replied, weeping, *Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. (Verse 16)* Was this the language of a resident of Moab, which was a heathen land? Ruth longed to find the peace Naomi sought.

**“Thy people shall be  
my people, and  
thy God my God.”**

Why did Orpah forsake her mother-in-law? She did not love the God of Naomi; therefore, she bade farewell with tears and a kiss, farewell, perhaps, forever.

How is it with all of us today? What is the desire of our hearts? Are we longing to leave the land of Moab, seeking inner peace with God in Christ Jesus? Or do we want to return to the world, thereby rejecting Naomi's wish to return to the living God of peace? Has it not been so for all of us, even from the days of our youth, when we heard the living Word from our parents and in church? We have heard our parent's prayers for us, and have felt them in our hearts.

Are we familiar with the tears of Ruth and of godly sorrow? *For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. (II Corinthians 7:10)*

*We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (II Corinthians 5:20)*

*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (II Corinthians 5:21)*

Have you personally come to know the sins of commission and omission, which came about through our fallen nature from Adam and Eve? As in Genesis 6:6, *It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.* Is this not because of our sin? Have you been lead to feel that, without the merits of Christ, who suffered and shed his blood upon the cross to pay our sin debt, we would have no hope of salvation?

This is why Ruth had to be led to Boaz, the picture of Christ, our Redeemer. He led her to seek and glean among the sheaves for not only natural grain, but he saw her needy heart, in her lowly way, to finally become united with Him (Jesus) in Boaz through marriage. Boaz, who came from Bethlehem, was of the kindred of Elimelech, Naomi's husband.

Boaz said to Ruth, *It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. (Ruth 2:11-12)*

Yes, Naomi and Ruth arrived at Bethlehem-Ephrata, where we and all of God's children are led, to the manger to behold our precious Saviour, the Babe of Bethlehem, who, thirty-three years later, paid the price of our redemption.

Though our journey through this foreign land is with sorrow as well as joy, our true and living Shepherd will guide us to eternal life according to his promise.

Oh, how precious it is that we children of God were awakened to the knowledge of sin and of grace by the Word of God, and led from the far country of the world, as Ruth was, becoming united with the kinship of Christ by pure grace alone. Be encouraged, dear elder travelers and young as well, for Naomi in her old age received this promise of God: a child after the marriage of Ruth and Boaz, named Obed. He became the grandfather of David. And Naomi was restored to the lineage of Christ Jesus.

May God lead us and many more souls to this same peace and joy of eternal life, for time is short. Soon Jesus will come to receive his own unto life eternal.

*God's peace,  
Bernie Lampinen  
Ashby, Massachusetts*

## **Come Boldly to the Throne of Grace**

Can one be saved without the spoken word? This is a question the world does not fully understand, I believe. Jesus began his ministry with these words: *The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. (Mark 1:15)*

Jesus gave his final instructions to his disciples when He said *that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:4)* Here was the instruction how to be saved. We are saved only by faith in the Word which is spoken unto the sin sick soul who is lost.

We find these words of comfort as well: *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)* One should look at this verse closely, for it speaks to us in this manner: to come boldly unto the throne of grace. We are not to be timid in our approach to God, the Heavenly Father. He wants us to come to Him at all times with our cares.

But, oh so many people are fearful to approach Him, for they see Him as a stern and righteous judge. We must come to the knowledge that God is a loving God who is willing to forgive our sins.

*The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. (Psalm 34:18)*

God does not turn anyone away who is truly seeking forgiveness for their sins. We must come to know where God can be found. He is found in his Son, Jesus Christ. Where can Jesus be found? Only where his children are, which is in the kingdom of God here on earth. He gave the disciples the command *that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

No one needs to go to judgment without their sins washed away in the name and blood of Jesus. This command will be with us until the end of time— the time of grace. God's Word is unchangeable. We take hold of this Word by faith, for it is only faith that will save. Paul wrote, *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)*

We see that this gift is his only begotten Son, who took our sins upon Himself. He paid the great sin debt on the cross of Calvary. That debt was incurred in the Garden of Eden when man fell from his holy state. God, through his Son, has redeemed us and given unto us life everlasting.

So, dear reader, if you are still walking in the darkness of unbelief, now is the day of salvation. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. (Isaiah 55:6)* He is near, for He lives in the heart of each child of God. Each one has the right to proclaim the forgiveness of sins in the name and shed blood of Jesus.

Let us remember to pray for those who are yet walking in the ways of the world, that God would open their hearts and bring them to repentance. May they taste of that heavenly manna that has come down from Heaven; that which we feed on every day. To that end, let us look to the coming of our Lord and Saviour, when we will, at last, reach that heavenly homeland to be with the Lord forever. Amen.

Terrence Lantto  
Stanley, North Dakota

*To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

*Hebrews 13:6*

**In Memory of**  
**Willard Seppanen**

*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.*  
*Psalm 116:15*

Our father, Willard Seppanen, passed away on April 22, 2006 at his home in Lake Norden, South Dakota. He suffered from Parkinson's disease and other afflictions for several years. His desire was to be a child of God, and that is how he conducted his life.

He is at rest with Jesus, the Lover of his soul, and could say at his departure, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (II Timothy 4:7-8)*

He is survived by his wife, Toini (Kandoll) Seppanen, seven daughters, four sons, sixty-one grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Pa had a concern for men's souls, and wanted to preserve living Christianity. When he preached the Word, it was with a desire to please God, not man. His main concern was that he, himself, his family, and everyone he came in contact with, through the preaching of God's Word, would know the way to Heaven and be there someday.

That is true love for mankind, to preach the Word of God. We often remember how much he cared spiritually about us. We can still picture Pa rocking in his chair in the evenings when we were growing up, singing the hymns and songs of Zion. He encouraged us to read God's Word.

We believe our father was a true example of a Christian father, but also believe he did everything he did only by God's grace.

There's nothing quite like losing a father; it's a heart-wrenching loss. But we have that blessed hope that, "One day on the shores of New Salem we'll meet . . . "

*In behalf of the family,*  
*Norma Tumberg, Neva Emery,*  
*and Mark Seppanen*

## Winter Services

The Portland, Oregon congregation would like to extend an invitation to their special Winter Services March 2-4, 2007. Jay Weidner of Painsdale, Michigan will be the guest speaker. The services will be held at the Portland church in Tualatin, Oregon on:

Friday, March 2	7:30 pm	Evening service
	9:00 pm	Youth Gathering
Saturday, March 3	2-5 pm	Bible Study
	7:30 pm	Evening Service
Sunday, March 4	11:00am	Morning Service
	2:00 pm	Afternoon Service

We ask for your prayers that our Heavenly Father would bless these services.

*God's peace,  
Rick Niska, Secretary  
503/475-4264*

## Spring Services

Our Toronto, Ontario congregation invites everyone to come and join us for services April 20-22, 2007. Our guest speaker will be Chad Kuivanen from Chassell, Michigan.

The location is 70 Dickson Hill Road, Markham, Ontario, Canada. Here is our schedule of services:

Friday, April 20	7:30 pm	
Saturday, April 21	3:30 pm	
	5:00 pm	
Sunday, April 22	11:00 am	
	3:30 pm	(in Plainfield, Ontario)

For more information, please contact Ken McLaughlan at 905/642-2977 or send a fax to: 905/640-9922.

# Serving One Another

O God our Father, throned on high,  
    Enrobed in ageless splendour,  
To thee, in awe and love and joy,  
    Ourselves we would surrender,  
To live obedient to thy will  
    As servants to each other,  
And show our faithfulness to thee  
    By love to one another.

To serve by love! O teach us how;  
    Be this our great vocation—  
To comfort grief, to seek the lost  
    With message of salvation;  
In loving may our full hearts beat,  
    Our words be wise and winning;  
In helping others may our joy  
    Have ever new beginning.

Thee, Lord, for thy dear Son we bless;  
    His heart for us was broken;  
O Love! Upon the bitter cross  
    Thy deepest word was spoken;  
The echo of that word is heard  
    In love for every brother,  
And test we, Lord, our love for thee  
    By loving one another.

*George Thomas Coster*  
*1835-1912*

*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

*John 13: 34-35*