



Morning Glory

“The Coming of the Lord Draweth Nigh” — James 5:8

EXPERIENCED SALVATION • CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP • SIMPLICITY IN WORSHIP

Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation • August 2014

How to Get Assurance

By Pastor Maynard A. Force

The Word of God is full of examples of people who received assurance. We cannot find one case in the entire New Testament of a Christian who did not have assurance. Is it not then strange and peculiar that in our day there are many people who do not have assurance? All the New Testament Christians had a positive testimony of what Jesus had done for them. The blind man, for example, said, *“One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see”* (John 9:25). What a positive assurance! The personal meeting with Jesus was such a glorious experience that nothing in all of life compared to it.

Jesus stated plainly, *“I know mine own, and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father”* (John 10:14-15). Here in no uncertain words Jesus relates the true relationship between Himself and His own. He even compares our relationship that He had with the Father. If his is the pattern set before us by Jesus surely we should not be satisfied with anything less.

Jesus Christ has not changed, for He *“is the same yesterday and today, yea and forever”* (Heb. 13:8). It is the purpose of the Word to acquaint us today with this living Saviour, *“whom to know is life eternal.”*

There is only one way. Remember the words of Christ when He said, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life”* (John 14:6). It is interesting to note here that Jesus is not only the way, but also the life. We want to know the way that leads us to the life. But this is the way of the cross, and it is not popular. Many ridicule those who take it. The one requirement to all who come to the cross is that they be sin-burdened. Self-righteous people are in no condition to be saved. They waste their time at the cross. They only find much there to criticize and ridicule. Their head

is overstuffed with their own ideas about salvation until there is no room for God’s great plan of salvation. Such self-righteous sinners can never receive Holy Spirit-wrought assurance; they must pass on and take to themselves false assurance. The sacred place at the cross is only for the lost. For Jesus *“came to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Luke 19:10). It is those who have nothing but sin who come here. The law has utterly undone them; they realize what the Word means when it says: *“that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God”* (Rom. 3:19). They have nothing good to say for themselves. They cry in despair like the publican of old, *“God, be thou merciful to me a sinner.”* These are the Father’s gift to Jesus, for He himself once said, *“All that which the Father giveth me shall come unto me.”* Such, in their lowly position beneath the cross, confess their sins. There they find the cleansing power of Jesus’ blood, for *“if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:9). I praise my God for the day He took me out of the class of the self-righteous who needed no salvation and revealed to me my lost condition. What a revelation! I thought I was too good to be lost. I was a faithful attendant at church; I was a teacher in the Sunday school; I took Communion; I did not drink and carouse like many whom I knew. Surely I must be a Christian. But one day I saw clearly that in spite of all my religion and morality, I was lost. After three months of struggling to better myself, I found my way to the cross. I found that “the way: led to “the truth.” I experienced the verse, *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (John 8:32). I

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found out also that it led to “the life.” Now I praise God that He knocked the false foundation from under me, so that I sank in despair. That is what led me to the cross.

It is at the cross that the Holy Spirit can reveal Jesus to us.

We never see Jesus until we fall prostrate before the cross. Then the Holy Spirit, who is the Comforter, gently lifts our head and whispers, “Look.” Jesus never appears more beautiful than to a prostrate sinner. A look at Him melts the hardest sinner. We begin to realize the price that He paid for our salvation. “*Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him*” II Cor. 5:21. What a wonderful Saviour! All of this He did because He loved us.

It is because of Jesus’ dying on the cross that we can be sure. Jesus himself cried out before dying, “*It is finished.*” Nothing else need be done. He tasted death for every man. “*He died for all*” (II Cor. 5:15). The price of redemption was paid so that no one need go lost because of his sins. All who come to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of “*the whole world*” (1 John 2:2), can be saved. Our assurance is based solely on what Jesus had done for us.

It is at the cross that “the Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:16). Only as we look to Jesus does the Holy Spirit bear this witness; no other One is good enough. It is while looking to Jesus in the Word that we are given faith to believe. Bible verses we have read many times previous now unfold to us like flowers. How living and real

they become. A heavenly relaxation comes over us! *"The old things are passed away; behold, they are become new"* (II Cor. 5:17). Assurance is now our possession. Whereas we once "hoped" or "thought" we were saved, we now know that we are saved. A miracle has taken place. The horror of being lost has left us. We are *"heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ"* (Rom. 8:17). "The spirit of bondage" has been broken, for we have received *"the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father"* (Rom. 8:15). What a blessed day, that day at the cross, when "the Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." God then puts a new song into our hearts.

**"Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood."**

Taken from the booklet *Assurance*
by Pastor Maynard A. Force

Unveiling Grace – The Story Of A Family's Conversion To Christ From Mormonism

A new book, *Unveiling Grace*, by Lynn Wilder and published by Zondervan, was released this past August. It tells the amazing story of the author and her family being set free from the false teachings of Mormonism into a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

Wilder was a full professor at Brigham Young University and a dedicated member of the Mormon Church. According to Wilder, reading the Scriptures was key to their conversion. I read my Bible sometimes hours a day and truly felt I was being washed," she said.

As Wilder read 2nd Corinthians 11:4 which states – *"for if he that comes preaches another Jesus, who we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another Gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."* She said to herself, "another Jesus, that's exactly what I have. In its pages I met a Jesus who was able to save me from my life of working to be good."

The movie "Luther," which focuses on the life of Martin Luther, hit home for Wilder as well. She knew full well about following man-made requirements under Mormon rules. "I was simply overwhelmed by the Spirit," she said. "I went face down in surrender to Christ."

...Lynn Wilder's son Michael says on the video, "We lost a religion, but we gained Christ. And that's a good trade." This powerful and inspiring video, also called "Unveiling Grace," offers deep insights into the false teachings of Mormonism and into the power of the Word of God to bring people to salvation. ...

Information from *The Vine and Branches!*
Christiannews.net.

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Psalm 14:1

Some people think that because they choose to believe that there is no God, their thinking will make this a fact. God is not mocked. He tells us not to be deceived. We do not fool God by these vain imaginations. The people who think this way are only fooling themselves. They live in sin, and refuse to believe that they will have to suffer the consequences.

A father took to drink and a life of crime. He was caught and sent to the county jail where he was sentenced to die for his crime. He wrote his son:

"It is with a heart filled with sadness that I write to you from the jail. If you live to be old enough, I want you to visit the place where your father spent his last days that it may be a lesson to you. I love you with all the tender affection a father can feel for a baby, and I would rather you died in infancy than to follow the life I have led. Above all, never touch any strong drink. Remember your father's warning, and grow up to be a good man."

God is not mocked. Your sin will find you out. Do not be deceived. Turn to the Saviour, and make no delay. He is tenderly saying, *"Come."*

Dear Lord Jesus, lead us step by step in Thy paths, and keep us from the folly of this world. For Jesus' sake and in His name. Amen.

*When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast;
When the tempter would prevail, He can hold me fast.
He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so. He will hold me fast.*

Verse by permission, Tabernacle Publ. Co.

Taken from *Altar Steps* by Pastor R. P. Haakonson,
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Editor's Note: **Philippians 2:12-16 & Hebrews 11:25.**

Editorial

RES UNTIL!!!

“For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” Matthew 24:38-39

(Please prayerfully read also: Matthew 24 & 25, & Luke 17 & 21).

Isn't it interesting as we read and re-read the Holy Scriptures, a portion that you have read/heard several times previously, that all of a 'sudden' a new insight is given unto you personally! ALSO 'marvelous' is the patience of the third person of the Trinity (The Holy Spirit). He is so patient, gentle and understanding with you and me under the 'tutoring' of the same! God tells 'us' to search the Scriptures (daily) and to **II Timothy 2:15**.

Make no mistake. God says what HE means and HE means what HE says! Thus 'we' are to be not only 'students' of His WORD, but *Spiritual sign* readers. NOW a 'sign' is not the 'event' itself, but indication of the coming event!

They continued witnessing UNTIL Noah entered the 'Ark' and **God shut the door!**

It is the great duty and interest of all the disciples to watch, to be awake and keep awake. As a sinful state or way is compared to sleep, senseless and inactive, so a gracious state or way is compared to watching and waking. We must watch for our Lord's coming. To watch implies not only to believe that our Lord will come, but to desire that he would come, to be often thinking of His coming.

Watching is necessary, but a person can be 'watching' and yet not be ready, because being ready is essential. How then does a person get ready?

First, admit/acknowledge before 'our' Holy God that I you are a LOST sinner (Isaiah 64:6, Luke 19:10, Romans 3:10, 6:23) and hopelessly 'lost' without the mercy and grace of God being mine, and then receive God's GIFT (Jesus) as your personal SAVIOR – Deliverer (Revelation 3:20, Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5 John 1:12-13, 1 John 5:11-13) God declares, "When I see the

BLOOD I will past over YOU," (Ex. 12:13) as ***there is power/cleansing power IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB.*** (See Romans 8:1 and **II Corinthians 5:21**) We 'watch' in vain, **IF we do not get ready!**

Turn with me to Matthew 25:1-13. ALL ten virgins were attempting to be 'watchful' and looking for the coming of the 'Bride-Groom'; but when the 'Bride-Groom' came, only five were barely 'ready'. The 'call' came at 'midnight', a time of sleepiness! Notice what is recorded of the 'foolish virgins' in verse 8: their oil was "going out"! Symbolically, they evidently had the Holy Spirit dwelling 'within' them; but had not steadfastly continued to *'contend earnestly for the faith'*.

The gift given to us is a 'living faith' (when we receive Jesus as 'our' personal Savior). This faith struggles, but ends up at CALVARY where the ground is 'level' and Jesus paid it all – as He cried: **It is finished!** "*But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin*" 1 John 1:7. Very serious as you notice the 'foolish virgins' came to the 'right' door and had the right 'words' BUT it was too late – **UNTIL!** God had shut the door AND when God shuts the door – no 'man' opens!

The 'foolish virgins' (knowing better) had NO NEED of oil **UNTIL the call at midnight and** the 'opportunity' of witnessing/testifying/evangelism was all over for the 'wise virgins'. Now where the rubber meets the road is the fact (as a whole) we think we have NO NEED of spiritual disciplines. We are complacent, self-satisfied, comfortable as 'individuals' and as a congregation! Very serious, but isn't this the truth – Be Honest?

NO NEED SOLUTION

- 1. Self-Satisfied with programs, entertainment, activities: Matthew 6:33
- 2. Old fashioned Prayer Meeting where individuals voluntarily took part in free prayer" Mark 11:17
- 3. Evangelistic Meetings (*not just pulpit exchange*) Acts 21:8, Ephesians 4:11, II Tim. 4:5

4. Separation/distinction from the 'world' Matthew 6:24, Luke 16:13
5. Fellowship Meetings with 'personal testimonies' Psalm 107:2, 1 John 3:14, Hebrews 10:24-25
6. Family/personal devotions Josh. 24:25, Deut. 6:5-7, Ps. 78:1-8, Phil. 4:8-9.
7. Sermons, etc. Holy Spirit led 1 Cor. 2:1-4, Eph. 6:18-19, 1 Tim. 13-11, 11 Tim. 4:1-5
8. Name SIN by name Gal. 5:16-26, Prov. 6, Rev. 22:18-19, Ezek.3:16-21, 33:1-7
9. Thoughts Genesis 6:5, Heb. 4:12-16, 11 Corinthians 10:4-5, Romans 12:1-2.
10. Discernment Deut. 29:29, 1 Corinthians 2:10-16, Eph. 4:17-18, Phil. 1:9, Hebrews 5:12-14

No Need of Speaking in Love About HELL even though in God's Incarnate Person (in Divine (Agape) LOVE) JESUS spoke more about Hell than Heaven in the Bible; so it seems 'strange' that 'we' hear so very little about the same from behind the sacred desk/pulpit in 'our' day!

Top it off – Just too busy Luke 21:34-36

Everyone else NEEDS a Heaven-Sent REVIVAL;
but not "ME"???

APOSTASY – Luke 18:8, 1 Thess. 2:1-12

ANSWER: Do you and I dare to draw a circle, step within that circle and ask GOD to revive ALL that is within that "circle," including your finances?

NOAH must have been ridiculed/scoffed at for building a huge 'boat' in the desert and speaking of a rain and flood and at times (likely?) lonely. Because this 'world' does not understand the '*Canaan Language*' nor discernment (Like the Corinthians) ... Noah not being 'better', but distinctively different as he walked/lived by faith and not sight. (See II Corinthians 5:7)

Do you ever look up into the 'sky' and wonder what the weather will be like when the GROOM comes for HIS blood bought 'bride' (Communion of Saints) in a 'twinkling of an eye' (which is a very minute part of a second? Scripturally HE is coming for the 'Meeting' in the air, before HIS second coming; when every eye shall see HIM!

Interesting that in Revelation, His name is the 'Morning Star' and that there is actually a 'morning star' in the Atmosphere which appears at the darkest part of the night which is just before the dawn!

WATCH UNTIL – MARK 13:13-37

Calling Evil Good

A large portion of the earthly church calls evil good. They refuse to condemn it as the Bible says they should. "Come as you are and stay that way," is the modern trend. "Jesus will not condemn you, He is too good a friend."

The world has won the church and holds it in its snare. Sin is no longer evil and "God does not really care." Now, thank God, there are some warriors fighting evil still. They struggle faithfully forward, though all is uphill.

Worldly entertainment was one time a forbidden act. Now it is freely accepted, that's a known given fact. It has even entered in the very church doors now. Supposedly winning souls, it is "a sacred cow."

Immodesty, sadly, for many can no longer be described. The Bible standards forgotten, the world the church bribed.

Homosexuality is now merely "an alternative lifestyle," not sin.

Some churches make them officials Satan is determined to win.

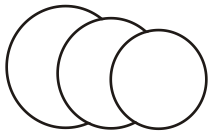
All of this accepting of gross evil, all that is sickening vile, Has caused "God's stomach" to be seriously filled with bile.

Neither hot nor cold but claiming to be what they are not. On their judgment day, they will be among those God "Forgot."

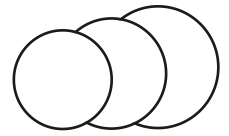
By James M. Hite, Palmyra, PA

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him"

1 John 2:15.



From Our Fellowship Circle



M. & E. L.

Bismarck, ND

Sorry for not being more faithful in our contributions; but it is also good to know that God knows the intent and desire of our hearts!

I have had health problems and still do. But the Lord has sustained me to this day and I am very thankful/grateful for each day that He gives me. I have had ... treatments for the past ... Months.

I/we appreciate the *Morning Glory* and look forward to each arrival each month as it has good and important reading.

I am enclosing \$... to help meet the expenses of the same and will try to continue supporting whenever possible.

In Christ's Love.

H. & D. L.

Luverne, MN

Please find a gift/donation enclosed in memory of Adolph Trooien and Arnold and Bertha Eggen.

Keep up the good work as we enjoy and appreciate the *Morning Glory*.

Mrs. T. S.

Forest City, IA

I am sending you some money in support of the ministry of the *Morning Glory*.

I enjoy it a lot even though I have difficulty in reading; but I sure enjoyed the last one.

So God bless you in His Work.

* * * * *

Martin Luther Speaks to Us

Faith and Human Reason

Christians Should Unquestioningly Believe, As Children Do – Young and old, all who are Christians, must Become children – if not in age, then in mental attitude – so that they are satisfied not to comprehend more than young children; for as soon as they want to rule with wisdom, they suffer a fall. Therefore let the man who would be a Christian or a preacher by all means restrain his reason, surrender himself, so that he be not a man or a mature person but a young child. My Hans Luther does not study things out much; he takes the course which he is told to take; he simply allows himself to be led by words and does not ask many

questions about whether it is right or not. * Exposition of Ps. 8:2.

Christians Should Follow God's Revelation, Not Their Reason – Whoever would be a Christian should be careful to stop his reasoning and attach himself solely to the Word which the lips of Christ speak. For the articles of our faith sound so ridiculous and foolish to reason and appear to be so false that if reason is at hand to judge and decide, it cannot believe them but promptly leaves them, goes wrong, and considers them simply worthless. * Sermon on John 6:47.

Some Illustrations – We have the same experience a man has whose head is dizzy. When he is to climb a high tower or to pass over a bridge under which deep water is flowing, one must simply blind him, must hang a coat over his head and lead and carry him blindfolded; otherwise he falls from the tower and breaks his neck or falls into the water and drowns. Just so we, too, must follow our Guide if we would be saved. Then we are safe. We, too, must simply close our eyes, follow the leader, the divine Word, and say: I will let myself be wrapped in swaddling clothes, will let a coat be put about my head, and will let myself be led to that which I believe and do not see; and thus will I live and die. *Exposition of John 3:9-11.

Martin Luther Speaks to Us
is by the help of Dr. Loren Halvorson

* * * * *

And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him, And delivered him out of all his afflictions.

Acts 7:9-10

Hated by his brethren; sold into slavery; slandered by Potiphar's wife; and imprisoned – yet three times over we read ***"The Lord was with Joseph."*** All these tragic events in his life were but the out-working of the sovereign purposes of God, and paradoxically, each downward step was leading to unprecedented heights of glory. In our trials, so often we wonder why God doesn't intervene and stop the downward spiral. We must never forget that just as the Lord was with Joseph, so also He is with us in our trials. He has great things in mind for us. W. H. Burnett

*His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour,
The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower.*

W. Cowper

Believable ... Yet Unbelievable

Taxpayer Money is Now Funding “I Love Islam” Program

Secretary of State John Kerry has approved the funding of an “I love Islam” program in the Czech Republic. American taxpayers are now paying for children in the Czech Republic to learn and study Islam.

The Clarion Project stated the following about the “I love Islam” program: “The project – Muslims in the Eyes of Czech Schoolchildren – is being spearheaded by a Muslim advocacy group and is being financed by American taxpayers through a grant from the U.S. Embassy in Prague (the U.S. State Department is also promoting Islam in other European countries).”

The program has three levels of study. The Clarion Project gives the three levels on its website. The website states; “The first level acquaints the reader with the history of Islam, the basic religious concepts of tradition, and contemporary issues such as family law, the veiling of women and Islamophobia.

“The second level offers a deeper look at the issues ... Pupils will be divided into three groups within which they will study any of the following topics: the veiling of women, media coverage of Islam, and Muslims in the Czech Republic.

“The third level provides schools with artistically oriented projects or discussions with Muslims and professionals dealing with Islam.”

Not only are we told to keep silent about Islam and its radical teachings, but now we are forced to pay for children to learn and study about it.

Dr. Ron Baity, Return America

Global “Warming” Antarctic Sea Ice Continues to Break Records

Antarctic sea ice coverage reached record levels, April, 2014; hitting 3.5 million square miles – the largest on record.

It was a cold summer down in Antarctica, with sea ice coverage growing about 43,500 square miles a day according to the National Snow and Ice Data Center.

(NSDC)

Medicare Ends 33-year Ban on Sex Reassignment Surgery

SAN FRANCISCO - Medicare can no longer automatically deny coverage requests for sex reassignment

surgeries, a federal board ruled Friday [May 30, 2014] in a groundbreaking decision that recognizes the procedures are medically necessary for people who don't identify with their biological sex.

Ruling in favor of a 74-year-old transgender Army veteran whose request to have Medicare pay for her genital reconstruction was denied two years ago, the agency's Departmental Appeals Board said there was no justification for a three-decade-old HHS rule excluding such surgeries from procedures covered by the national health program for the elderly and disabled.

Jennifer Levi, a lawyer who directs the Transgender Rights Project of Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders in Boston, said the ruling does not mean Medicare recipients are necessarily entitled to have sex reassignment surgery paid for by the government. Instead, the lifting of the coverage ban means they now will be able to seek authorization by submitting documentation from a doctor and mental health professionals stating that surgery is recommended in their individual case, Levi said. ...

Gary Gates, a demographer with the Williams Institute, a think tank on LGBT issues based at the University of California, Los Angeles, has estimated that people who self-identify as transgender make up 03 percent of the U.S. adult population. More than 49 million Americans are enrolled in Medicare.

The cost of gender reassignment surgery varies, but typically ranges from \$7,000 to \$50,000, said the Transgender Law Center in Oakland, Calif ...

The panel went on to say that regardless of what the record showed then, studies and experts have since shown the efficacy of surgical interventions as a treatment for gender dysphoria, the diagnosis given to people who experience extreme distress due to the disconnect between their birth sex and their gender identity.

LISA LEFF · Associated Press

Taken from *The Star Tribune*, May 31, 2014

Condoms at School

An Oregon school district plans to offer condoms to middle schoolers and high schoolers who specifically ask for them during conversation with counselors and administrators. The plan has stirred concern since the Gervais School District approved it as part of an update to its human sexuality policy. Officials are worried about the number of teen pregnancies each year.

Taken from *The Star Tribune*, June 7, 2014

Psalm 51

“In this volume, which like the former, contains twenty-six sacred odes, we have several of the more memorable and precious of Zion’s songs. In commenting upon some of them, I have been overwhelmed with awe, and said with Jacob, “How dreadful is this place, it is none other than the house of God.” Especially was this the case with the fifty-first; I postponed expounding it week after week, feeling more and more my inability for the work. Often I sat down to it, and rose up again without having penned a line. It is a bush burning with fire yet not consumed, and out of it a voice seemed to cry to me, “Draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet.”

“The Psalm is very human, its cries and sobs are of one born of woman, but it is freighted with an inspiration all divine, as if the Great Father were putting words into his child’s mouth. Such a Psalm may be wept over, absorbed into the soul, and exhaled again in devotion, but commented on — ah! where is he who having attempted it can do other than blush at his defeat?”

From the “Preface” of *The Treasury of David*, Vol. II
by C.H. Spurgeon, 1882

Comment: In Psalm Fifty-one, David had sinned against Bathsheba with adultery and had her husband Uriah killed in battle. David attempted to cover it up, but the Lord saw the whole thing and sent the prophet Nathan to confront David about his sin. We read in this account that David said, “I have sinned against the Lord.” (2 Sam. 12:13) Lest we think that this is all that was involved in his getting forgiveness for these sins, Psalm Fifty-one records what God did in David’s life to bring him to repentance: “*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.*” (Ps. 51:17)

Brokenness

Brokenness is something that is foreign to many people today. To have your heart broken means the thing that is nearest and dearest to you is broken, like a young woman in love with her fiancée has her heart broken if he breaks up with her. So when God brings brokenness of heart, He takes the most precious and dearest things that reign paramount in your life and shatters them before your eyes. This would be all your dreams and aspirations, hopes and joys in life and have them brought to nothing. If there is anything in your life that is getting your attention before God, that is an affront to the First Commandment, and it must go. God will see that this happens.

God also takes all of your religious goodness and all your righteousness and has them crushed before your eyes.

You will be led to see that you are utterly hopeless and totally lost before God based on the greatest goodness you can muster, and you now have nothing to avail. Specifically, your life before the Commandments of God is laid bare and you realize how you stand before an all-holy God. “*For my iniquities have gone over my head, they weigh like a burden too heavy for me. ...I am utterly spent and crushed; I groan because of the tumult of my heart.*” (Ps. 38:4, 8)

After you are broken before God, suddenly, many of the things in the world that once held your life are now not very important at all — because the self-life has been broken.

Contrition

Contrition means that you are ground down — like putting graham crackers in a bag and crushing them with a rolling pin. It means that you are terrified before God of what you have done and what God will do to you as a result. It means that your life is laid bare before God and even the least passing thought is seen in all its blackness.

The time in my life when this happened to me, I laid in bed with sweat on my brow and dread in my heart that Jesus was coming and would cast me into hell. I would open my drape and look at a street light just so I didn’t have to lay in darkness. “I’d rather die than live this way.” I lived with that thought for a month under conviction of sin.

Conviction and contrition is absolutely foreign to many pastors and ministries today. The method today is to present a story with a biblical truth intertwined WITHOUT any talk of sin, condemnation, judgment, repentance — and no conviction of sin and no brokenness or contrition of heart. A church in the Twin Cities brought in a 600+ pound lion for Easter services and were going to set it on the stage with a lamb. The people were really excited about it. “What a novel approach — What innovative thinking — What great publicity — It even made the evening news!” They did it to add realism to the story, “The Lion and the Lamb,” which was written by a Christian author. This isn’t even in the Bible! Do you expect to convert people using this? Do you expect people to come under conviction of sin? Maybe the fear of being attacked by a lion, but little else. Isn’t it interesting that the very method that God uses to convert people is what most won’t do. “*The Lord is near to the broken hearted, And saves those who are contrite in spirit*” (Ps. 34:18)

Dear reader, are you broken and crushed over your sins before God?

Pastor Jim Haga
Shoreview, MN

Wisdom From a Watermelon

By William Jennings Bryan

I was passing through Columbus, Ohio and stopped to eat in the depot restaurant. My attention was called to a slice of watermelon, and I ordered it and ate it. I was so pleased with the melon that I asked the waiter to dry some of the seeds that I might take them home and plant them in my garden.

That night a thought came into my mind – I would use the watermelon as an illustration. So the next morning when I reached Chicago, I had weighed enough seeds to find out that it would take more than two thousand of them to weigh a pound. Estimating the weight of the watermelon from which I had eaten, I applied the mathematics.

A few weeks before this time, someone unknown to me had planted a little seed in the ground. Under the influence of sunshine and shower, that little watermelon seed had taken off its coat and gone to work. It had gathered more than thirty thousand times its own weight and forced that enormous weight through a tiny stem and built a watermelon. On the outside it had put a covering of green, within that a rind of white, and within that a core of red. Then it had scattered little seeds throughout the red, each one capable of doing the same work over again.

What architect drew the plan? Where did that little watermelon seed get its tremendous strength? Where did it find its flavoring extract and its coloring matter? How did it build a watermelon?

Until you can explain a watermelon, do not be too sure you can set limits to the power of the Almighty or tell just what He will do or how He will do it. The most learned man in the world cannot explain a watermelon, but the most ignorant man in the world can eat a watermelon and enjoy it.

God has given us the things that we need, and He has given us the knowledge necessary to use those things. Receiving the truth that He has revealed to us is infinitely more important for our welfare than it would be to understand the mysteries that He has seen fit to conceal from us.

So it is with Christianity. If you ask me whether or not I can understand everything in the Bible, I answer no. I understand some things that I did not understand ten years ago; and if I live ten years longer I hope some things will then be clear that are obscure.

But there is something more important than understanding everything in the Bible. If we will only try to live up to the things that we do understand, we will not have time to worry about the things that we do not understand.

Sword of the Lord

Editor's Note: **AMEN!** To truly understand the BIBLE, we definitely NEED the Holy Spirit to be 'our' **Tutor!**

HEART MATTERS

Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life Proverbs 4:23, Read Prov. 4:20-27

Our hearts pump at a rate of 70-75 beats per minute. Though weighing only 11 ounces on average, a healthy heart pumps 2,000 gallons of blood through 60,000 miles of blood vessels each day. Every day, the heart creates enough energy to drive a truck 20 miles. In a lifetime, that is equivalent to driving to the moon and back. A healthy heart can do amazing things. Conversely, if our heart malfunctions, our whole body shuts down.

The same could be said of our "spiritual heart." In Scripture, the word heart represents the center of our emotions, thinking, and reasoning. It is the "command center" of our life.

So when we read, "*Keep your heart with all diligence*" (Prov. 4:23), it makes a lot of sense. But it's difficult advice to keep. Life will always make demands upon our time and energy that cry out for immediate attention. By comparison, taking time to hear God's Word and to do what it says may not shout quite so loudly. We may not notice the consequences of neglect right away, but over time it may give way to a spiritual heart attack.

I'm thankful God has given us His Word. We need this help not to neglect it, but to use it to align our hearts with His every day.

Poh Fang Chia

*Dear Jesus, take my heart and hand,
And grant me this, I pray;
That I through Your sweet love may grow
More like You day by day.* – Garrison

To keep spiritually fit, consult the Great Physician.

Taken from *Our Daily Bread*, Copyright – 2013, RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI, Permission Granted.

The Inevitable Alternative

A skeptic once derided a Christian man by asking him, "Say, George, what would you say if, when you die, you found there wasn't such a place as Heaven after all?"

With a smile the believer replied, "I should say, 'Well, I've had a fine time getting there anyway!'"

Then the Christian sent a boomerang back to the skeptic – a question not quite so easy to answer: "Fred," he asked, "what would you say if, when you die, you found there was such a place as Hell after all?"

Balaam's Error

“Woe unto them! For they ... ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward.”
(Jude 1:11)

Balaam is a very complex character recorded in Numbers 22 – 24. He is cited for an ability to communicate with “the LORD” and had a reputation for accurate prophecy (Numbers 22:6- 8). As the new nation of Israel traveled northward into the Sinai Peninsula, Balak the king of Moab became worried that Israel would subjugate his nation and recruited Balaam to curse them.

Balaam “loved the wages of unrighteousness” (2 Peter 2:15) BUT WAS ASTUTE ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT HE COULD NOT TALK God into doing anything God did not want to do! But even though Balaam was aware of the dangers of getting involved on the wrong side of God’s work, he wormed and squirmed through several interchanges with God until he was finally allowed to go. “God’s anger was kindled” at the stubbornness of this man, and the famous interchange with the donkey took place (Numbers 22:22-31).

Still Balaam persisted with his venture for Balak of Moab and “ran greedily” after the reward that he had been promised. When he arrived at the place where he planned to curse Israel, Balaam knew enough about the correct sacrifices to build the right kind of altars and sacrifice the right kind of animals, then proceeded to seek God’s “word” for Israel. Three times God “put a word” in Balaam’s mouth to bless Israel, and three times Balak insisted that he try again to curse them.

Instead of repenting of his foolishness, Balaam bragged about his ability to know what God wanted and “taught Balak” to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel” (Revelation 2:14). Those who prostitute the gifts of God for their own profit will come under a “greater condemnation” (James 3:1). May God protect us from the Balaams among the churches.

Henry M. Morris III, D.Min.

Taken from *Days of Praise*, Institute for Creation Research, Copyright – 2014, Permission Granted.

* * * * *

And Jehu...went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD?

Having narrowly escaped from the battlefield with his life, Jehoshaphat returned to his house, delivered by the

Lord from a foolish alliance with wicked King Ahab. Jehoshaphat had learned quickly the bitter consequences of joining together with those who hate the Lord. Jehu’s words reinforced the lesson. What will it take for us to learn this truth? For this good king, it was worry, doubt and fear and many tears as he cried out to the Lord in his distress. Our own experience and wise words from others should be enough to keep us from making the same mistake. Are we listening?

Mark Kolchin

Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. Luke 1:38

Such words of trust coming from the heart of this young girl, Mary. Her eyes were focused on what the Lord God had asked of her. She didn’t stop to weigh what it would cost her or how it would affect her life. No, her heart’ desire was to be used by the Lord. And oh how He was going to use her! How blessed we are to have a witness of such a willing heart. Lord, give us a heart like this handmaiden of the Lord and in doing so, may we know the joy that comes from trusting You. V. Gaynier

*Take my heart, it is Thine own; it shall be Thy royal throne.
Take my love, my Lord, I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for Thee.*

Frances Ridley Havergal

* * * * *

To visit the fatherless and widows in their distress. James 1:27

The phrase “to visit” means a little more than visiting a lonely saint and enjoying a cup of tea together – valuable as that is. It has the thought of seeing a need and then meeting it. This is a special area of responsibility for those who are mature in their faith or leaders in a local church. They are to watch over the flock and assess its needs. Then it is their privilege to rise up to meet that need (1 Tim. 3:1), whether it is comforting or counseling, shepherding or supporting. It might even involve a cup of tea. Norman Craig Funston

*Give me a faithful heart, guided by Thee,
That each departing day henceforth may see
Some work of love begun, some deed of kindness done,
Some wand’rer sought and won – something for Thee.*

S.D. Phelps

May I Have “a Word” With You?

By Ted Camp

Words are a way to express yourself and let your thoughts and ideas be known. Words make speech, language and communication possible. It has been said that the average person will speak 25,000 words a day and have over 10,000 thoughts.

Words are powerful and can start or stop wars. Words are warm and can give comfort and hope. Words have the power to help or hurt. Words can also destroy lives, marriages and ministries. Words can change your life. Words can make you better or bitter.

Two words like “I do” can change your life quickly. Two words that should never be said are “I can’t.” Six words that need to be said more are “I am sorry” and “I love you.”

I made a list of some special words.

The greatest word is **GOD**

The deepest word is soul.

The highest word is Heaven.

The worst word is Hell.

The fastest word is time.

The nearest word is now.

The darkest word is sin.

The loneliest word is alone.

The meanest word is hate.

The strongest word is right.

The straightest word is truth.

The tenderest word is love.

The sweetest word is home.

The dearest word is mother.

The tallest word is dad.

The calmest word is peace.

The wisest word is integrity.

The shortest word is life.

The gloomiest word is death.

The fullest word is Calvary.

The grandest word is Jesus.

The longest word is eternity.

The most helpless word is regret.

The most hopeful word is Heaven.

The saddest word is lost.

Are you lost? It was said that Albert Einstein once lost his train ticket. The conductor said, “Mr. Einstein, I know you. I know you had a ticket.” As he walked away, Einstein continued to look for his ticket. The conductor again said, “It is all right. YOU do not need a ticket. I know you.”

Albert Einstein replied, “I know you know me. I also know me, but I don’t know where I am going.”

Do you know where you are going? All people without Jesus are lost. Jesus Christ came to seek and save those who are lost. “*For the Son of man (Jesus) is come to seek and to save that which was lost*” (Luke 19:10).

Lost is the saddest word because many die lost without Christ. The best word is saved. Are you saved? No one is every sorry he was saved. After he is saved, he says, “That’s the best thing that ever happened to me. Thank God, I know I am saved. I know where I am going!”

Sword of the Lord.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

To older people the burdens of the young people do not seem to be very heavy. To most people the older they get the more heavy the burdens of life seem to weigh upon them. There are some burdens that we have to bear ourselves, but there are burdens that we can help lift and make lighter for others.

How often we forget to lift someone’s burden!

A congregation sent a missionary and his wife out on the mission field with a promise to support them. Years passed. The work of this congregation went on through those years.

One evening a stranger stepped into the meeting. Before the meeting was over, he arose and said,

“I am your missionary. My wife and child lie buried in Africa, and I have come home to die. This evening I listened anxiously as you prayed. Listened for you to mention your missionary as you had promised, but I listened in vain. You prayed for everything connected with yourselves, for your church, but you forgot your missionary. You have failed to hold the ropes, and to bear my burdens.”

Are we forgetting those in need? Forgetting those whom we have promised to uphold in prayer so the Lord’s work can be carried on? Have we forgotten to give a kind word, do a kind deed for those who are less fortunate than we are?

Dear Lord Jesus, help us to live close to Thee so that we will be able to see people’s burdens, and give us the will to help lift them. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Taken from *Altar Steps* by Pastor R. P. Haakonson, Copyright Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation.

Editor’s Note: IF you want to feel miserable just think about yourself!

CONCERNING SELF-DENIAL, THE CONDITION OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”
(Matt. 16:24)

In Christ, liberty! How attractive such a promise to young (any age) Christians, at just the age when the desire for liberty is beginning to assert itself within! Be not servants of men! *“If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.”*

And yet, listen to the demand which at the very outset your Savior makes of you: *“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself.”* Christ has many admirers, but few followers, for the very reason that few are willing to fulfill the condition of true discipleship. You know the story of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus asking about the Way of Life. When Jesus called on him to forsake all that he counted dearest, he turned away sorrowful. You too have vowed, in sacred earnest, we trust, “Lord, I will follow thee.” But will you still be willing to follow him if he shall call upon you to renounce, it may be, your fondest inclinations, or to crucify this or that base passion? The Master demands complete possession of us. Deny thyself! Self-will must die in us; everything by which we are held in captivity to sin and the world, all that draws us away from Christ, must die: pride, self-righteousness, self-seeking. This is what Christ calls for, — **Self-denial!** (Ed. Not an *excuse* – please: but we have a three-fold enemy – the old nature, the world and the ‘deceiver/Satan’ to battle with).

It is not the work of an hour. The lesson which our Savior sets for us in that one word requires a life-time for its learning. But as we come more and more to know his love toward us, we shall find the lesson easier and our cross growing lighter. And doubt not that there will be crosses to bear; the world will see to that. Opposition, contempt, and many a smarting wound await him who means to prove himself a disciple indeed. God allows it to be so, since such things work in us the death of self. But although at the beginning of the way we may be prone to exclaim “It costs much to be a Christian,” know that at the end we shall find it possible to say, “It is not hard to be a Christian.”

It is such disciples whom Christ can (will) use in his service, and it is unto such that he reveals also the blessedness of his service, delivered from the world, they abide in constant fellowship with God. “Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost” are their portion. How happy a Paul, with all his crosses! **2 Cor. 4:8-18.** Such blessed-

ness may and shall be yours, provided you do not despise the call of him who hath saved you, but find it in your heart to say:

*Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shalt be.*

Taken from a booklet ‘Follow Me’, By BENVOLUS,
Copyright 1908, By R. Neumann

The Jewel of Joy!

By Hugh Pyle

“In thy presence is fullness of joy.” Ps. 16:11

“Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”
John 16:24

Oh, this is a satisfying treasure! The world seeks joy and never finds it. The world lets down empty buckets into empty wells and draws nothing up. *“They came to the pits, and found no water; they returned with their vessels empty”* (Jer. 14:3). This is the experience of the worldling.

But I read the other day in Psalm 22:26, *“The meek shall eat and be satisfied.”* Others eat, but they’re never satisfied. The Christian realizes that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. *“A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked”* (37:16). *“Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith”* (Prov. 15:16).

Treasure or trouble – which will it be? Much treasure or much trouble – take your pick!

Humanity is divided into those who select the treasure and those who prefer the trouble, the righteous and the unrighteous, the saved and the lost, the Heaven-bound and the Hell-bound.

Treasure or trouble, which? Strange, isn’t it, that so many choose the trouble? Selected.

Editor’s Note: “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” Matthew 6:21. “Has a nation changed its gods, which are not gods? But My people have changed their glory for what does not profit. Be astonished, O heavens, at this, And be horribly afraid; Be very desolate,” says the LORD. For My people have committed two evils; They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns – broken cisterns that can hold no water.” (Jer. 2:11-13)

ONE very definite way of spelling **Joy is: Jesus first, Others second and Yourself last!**

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you”
Matthew 6:33

For the joy of Jehovah is your strength.

Nehemiah 8:10

WE are created to be happy. (Ed. Joyful is a deeper word)

That is why joy has such a releasing effect upon us. Only to meet a person who is truly happy is to be made glad.

Never do we have such strength as when we are happy; never do we get so much accomplished. Never are we better able to endure the adversities of life. Never is it so easy to be forbearing with those who grieve and offend us.

Joy is undoubtedly one of the secret powers of life itself. The doctors tell us that the sick never become well so readily and quickly as when they are happy.

The imperfection of our joy comes to light most clearly by the fact that it is not enduring.

This is due to the nature of our joy. We gradually tire of some things which fill us with joy for a time. We feel empty. And the more of such happiness we have had, the more difficult it becomes for us to feel glad again. But at the same time we yearn ever more for joy.

Our Word for today tells us that there is a joy which does not lose its capacity for making us happy and does not cause us to lose our taste for happiness.

This joy is the joy of the Lord.

This joy no one knows save those who have dared to admit to themselves what an empty and joyless life they have been living, who have found peace for their insincere and guilt-laden hearts at the cross of Christ. And even these people lose their joy again the very moment they forget their sinfulness and no longer appreciate having their names written in heaven.

God, let me see that I myself am sinful and that Thou art gracious, so that I may have no greater joy than to behold the Lamb of God.

And make me a partaker in Thy joy, Thou who hast only one joy from eternity to eternity, that of making others happy! Amen.

Taken from *God's Word for Today* by O. Hallesby, Copyright – Augsburg Publishing House, Permission Granted.

Editor's Note: What greater JOY is there than to know that my sins are under the BLOOD of the Lamb of God and are forgiven? This is true because of His Name's sake AND my 'name' is written in the **Book of Life**. **"Rejoice in the Lord always, Again I will say, rejoice!"** Philippians 4:4.

The Way and the Glory

"Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people." Exodus 33:13

"Moses the man of God" (Deuteronomy 33:1) was surely one of the greatest men who ever lived. He was the leader of a great nation, he received the tablets of the law from God, and he compiled and wrote the Pentateuch. It was said that *"there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face"* (Deuteronomy 34:10). Yet, *"the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth"* (Numbers 12:3).

It was such a man as this who made two remarkable request of God. The first was, as above: *"Shew me now thy way."* (Exodus 33:18).

These were not selfish requests. Moses desired the way of the Lord on behalf of his people. God answered this request with the gracious promise: *"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest"* (Exodus 33:14).

But then he also asked to see the glory of God. So God placed Moses "in a clift of the rock," covering him with His hand as His glory passed by, allowing him to see the remnants of His glory, as it were (Exodus 33:22-23), since he could not have endured any more. With such a vision of God's glory, Moses was then able to lead the Israelite multitude for 40 years in a terrible wilderness, transforming them from a mob of slaves into God's chosen nation, ready to bring God's Word, and God's Son, into the world.

We also can see His way and His glory. Jesus said, *"I am the way"* (John 14:6). Then He prayed: *"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory"* (John 17:24).

Henry M. Morris, Ph.D.

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As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.

John 15:9

Oh for grace our hearts to soften! – Teach us, Lord, at length to love;

*We, alas, forget too often – What a Friend we have above;
But when home our souls are brought – We will love thee as we ought.*

Continue ye in my love. John 15:9

Taken from *Daily Food for Christians*, Copyright 1897 or before.

For we are God's fellow-workers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building.

1 Corinthians 3:9

GOD'S fellow workers! To be a fellow worker is to enjoy even greater confidence than to be a child. Much time must elapse before our children become our fellow workers. We should thank God for the confidence and honor He shows us by making us His co-workers.

The first and most important of these cooperative tasks to which God calls us concerns our own goal. "*Work out your own salvation,*" are His first working orders. "*For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work,*" we are told in the same breath. Here we note coop-eration!

Next after our own *heart* and *home* is a field of labor. We are all to begin at Jerusalem and from thence proceed to Samaria and Galilee and to the uttermost part of the earth.

God works in your *home*. And He has appointed you His co-worker. In the first place, then, be careful that you do not by your thoughtlessness and egotism destroy some of the things which the Lord has done already in your home. In the next place, live your daily life in such a way that it will be easier for your dear ones to be good Christians, and in such a way that those who have not yet become Christians may be drawn to God by your life rather than that Christianity should be made distasteful to them because of you.

From your home proceed to your *neighbors*, friends, acquaintances, and associates. God is working on all of them. And He has chosen you to be His fellow worker here also. In the first place, be kind, be willing to work, and be ready to make sacrifices. By so doing you will be doing the work of God. And in the next place, pray for eyes that see the needs of people wherever you are, both the spiritual and the physical can work."

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An Ephod

Then Gideon made it into an ephod and set it up in his city, Ophrah. And all Israel played the harlot with it there. It became a snare to Gideon and to his house. Judges 8:27

Gideon answered God's call. He pulled down Baal's altar, destroyed his images, and then erected an altar for

Jehovah (Judg. 6:25-26). God then used him to destroy an invading army. As a result, Israel requested that Gideon rule them. He accepted, but asked for the gold earrings of the spoil, which he fashioned into a gold ephod. The ephod became a national idol, and Ophrah, not Jerusalem, became the place of worship. Like Gideon, we too may remove some evil from our lives only to replace it with a less conspicuous idol because it is a work of our own hands.

W. A. H.

Until the race is run, until the journey's done,
Until the crown is won; teach me Thy way!

– B. Ramsey

* * * * *

How to Overcome the Devil

"Now then 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 Cor. 5:20.

J. Frank Norris

Why?

"For he hath made him to be sin for us" (Vs. 21). "For us", "for us", "for us" – thank God for those two little words! God's taking a sinner's place; Christ's bearing the crown of thorns – "for us"!

Darkness wrapped itself around Calvary "for us." He was led as a captive guilty "for us"!

Buried – "for us"!

Raised – "for us"!

Ascended — "for us"!

And, thank God, He is coming "for us"!

That is what it means. Therefore – "*for he hath made him to be sin for us*"!

Why? "*That we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*"

Therefore, we will overcome the Devil not by our puny hands, not by our wisdom, not by our strength, not by our methods, not by our little whims, not by our efficiency and human methods. But we will overcome him by the sinless shed blood of the Son of God.

Therefore, "*they overcame him*" (Rev. 12:11) – not by the philosophy of science, not by the government of men, but by the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

That is why the Devil hates it. That is why he hates the churches and preachers that are preaching it.

God help us to preach it as never before!

Selected

ARE YOU READY?

W. Herschel Ford

I know not when death shall come. I know not the day nor the hour nor the year. I am not afraid, but if I were not a Christian I would be trembling with fear as I think of the future and of judgment and of eternity.

A little girl said to another, "I would be afraid to die." She later found Christ as her Saviour.

The years went by, and she was on her deathbed. Her friend came to see her and said, "Are you afraid now?"

With a smile she answered, "No, I am not afraid. Jesus had come for me."

Thomas Hobbes, the infidel, said, "I am taking a fearful leap into the dark." The Christian says, "I am not afraid. It is not dark, and He is holding me by the hand." On his deathbed the Christian listens and hears His sweet voice saying, "Yea, though you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you may fear no evil, for I will be there with you."

When Jesus is in your heart, you are ready for life, for death and for the judgment. Are you ready?

An old sea captain who lived in a home for retired sailors was quite sick and near unto death. The chaplain of the home talked to him about Christ. He gave the old captain a Bible to read. He also gave him a red pencil and told him to mark the verses which helped him.

One day the old captain's soul slipped away to be with God. The chaplain opened the captain's Bible and found that he had made a red circle around John 3:16. He had also made a little pasteboard anchor and left it at that place in his Bible. On the anchor he had written these words, "I have cast my anchor in a safe harbor."

Have you, my friend?

Sword of the Lord

* * * * *

"And he arose, and came to his father." Luke 15:20

Many people think that it is too difficult to come to God through Jesus. He asks us to come of our own free will. He will not force us to come but He invites us, and holds out His hand to us. Jesus was willing to shed His blood so that we could be saved. He has provided the way, and the Father is waiting to welcome us into His fold. There is nothing in ourselves to merit salvation, but if we come to Jesus just as we are, His blood will wash away our sin.

Charlotte Elliot was a crippled girl. She wondered how she could come to Jesus. When a pastor, Dr. Milan, visited her she talked to him about it. He told her that she

had to come just as she was. Then she accepted Jesus as her Saviour. She wanted to do some service for Jesus, but being a cripple she could not see how she could do any thing. She spent a whole night in prayer, asking the Lord to show her what she could do. Then the words of Dr. Milan came to her, "Just as you are." The next morning she wrote the song that has been such a blessing to many, and has brought many sinners to Christ.

Will you come to the Father? He is willing and waiting to receive you.

Dear Lord Jesus, help us to show many how to come to Thee. Give us wisdom and understanding in dealing with sinners for Thy honor and glory. In Jesus' name. Amen.

*Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

Taken from a 'Family' devotional book, *Altar Steps* by
Pastor R. P. Haakonson, Copyright, Hauge Lutheran
Innermission

DR. BEN CARSON TARGETED BY THE IRS

Dr. Ben Carson, renown neurosurgeon at John Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, Maryland, recently revealed that he had been the object of an audit by the Internal Revenue Service. His first such audit came just four months after he gave a speech that offered an alternative proposal to Obamacare at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, DC, where Barrack Obama sat only a few feet away.

Dr. Carson, whose life and skills as a surgeon were the subject of a movie and a book entitled Gifted Hands, said the audit yielded nothing.

Earlier this year Dr. Franklin Graham wrote a letter to President Obama, stating that someone in his administration had targeted an IRS investigation on his organization, Samaritan's Purse and on his father's organization, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

The IRS's audit of Dr. Carson has raised more red flags for people concerned over the number of conservatives who have been targeted for audits in the past couple of years. Officials at the IRS have admitted targeting conservatives, but the media has largely ignored the story and little has happened to those who gave and/or carried out the orders for such audits.

The Vine and Branches, Winter, 2013

UpDate

IF you truly believe in and adhere to the 'old-time' Christianity found in God's Word, the Bible: then I challenge YOU to definitely align with "ministries" that adhere too as well! By NO means am I saying we are the one and only; but by God's Grace and empowerment 'we' are seeking to follow the Scriptures and are of a Lutheran, pietistic, free-movement and ask YOU to pray about supporting this 'ministry' also!

I/we believe even with your 'financial' giving it is to be LORD directed, IF you truly want to lay up 'treasures' in Heaven; for where your heart is there will be your treasures.

There are number of 'worthy' causes; both secular and Christian organizations asking for your 'support' and 'we' are no different; BUT I believe firmly that a believer and 'steward', we need to seek the face and guidance of Almighty God in believing PRAYER to be given guidance/direction to which and whom should a person support – because the great majority of 'us' cannot give support to ALL! AND HE will guide 'us' in the same, for our benefit (*laying up 'treasures' in Heaven*).

As you are aware of that 'we' (this ministry) are privileged to be included in God's Kingdom Work and as a result 'we' are in a 'spiritual battle'.

YES, those who are the most excited/concerned about 'shall JESUS find faith on earth when HE returns are those who are actively engaged in the spiritual battle – Jude 2-4.

To those who withdraw from the battle are slowly inviting enslavement to apathy, or even worse, to the unbridled passions of our hearts – the old nature. G. Campbell Morgan writes, "to withdraw is to leave God *behind*." Please remember this '*ministry*' *personally and specifically* before the THRONE OF GRACE; in PRAYER and *financially* as the gentle Holy Spirit lays upon your heart.

Thank you so much for what you are doing in 'our' behalf and will be AND may our Living Savior so richly bless you that you become an even greater blessing unto others!

HOLD THE FORT FOR I AM COMING!

June's Income for the ministry of the *Morning Glory* is approx. \$952.00

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The Lutheran Doctrine of Conversion

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we are unable to offer you this booklet. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have brought and, if anyone ordered copies from the July issue of the *Morning Glory*, their funds were returned to them.

We ask for your prayers as we explore other options on developing a booklet on Conversion in Lutheran Theology.