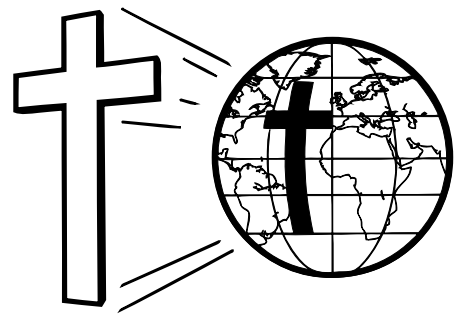


Foundation of faith



WORD — & — SPIRIT



We Need the
Holy Spirit

A Unique
Pentecost Sermon

Two Witnesses

How to
Encounter God

Do Not Despise Your Mother

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Dear Reader!

Mother's Day and Pentecost are the central themes of this month's publication of Foundation of Faith.

We celebrate Mother's Day because God has given us parents who we are to honor. In Scripture, we read: "Honor your father and your mother" (Exodus 20:12).

We celebrate Pentecost because God sent us the Comforter, the Revealer and Spirit of truth, the divine Teacher, and the Spirit of blessing. The Son of God commands us to: "[S]earch the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me" (John 5:39).

All of Scripture testifies to our Creator, Lord, and Master. It reveals that the lost can be rescued, redeemed, and enabled to live a godly life by the grace of God. Jesus Christ thus promised: "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me" (John 15:26). We therefore have two divine witnesses: the Divine Word of God and the Holy Spirit.

These two anointed witnesses stand beside the Lord of heaven and earth. It was these two witnesses who at Pentecost gave power, light, and fire to Christ's message of His suffering, death, and resurrection, resulting in the conversion of 3,000 souls.

Eva von Tiele-Winckler, a loyal and consecrated servant of the Lord, writes the following: "Pentecost should not only occur on one designated day in the year, but is part of daily life, wherever the Holy Spirit works in, and enters into, purified hearts of people. Of utmost importance, however, is surrender and unconditional obedience to the will of God; a heart cleansed by the blood of Christ and the willingness to die to self."

Dear reader, are you prepared to follow and serve the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, then accept the divine testimony of the two anointed witnesses: the Divine Word of God and the Holy Spirit. You will be a blessing to others and inherit eternal life!

H.D. Nimz

Complete Surrender to God

C.G. Finney once held special meetings where the Lord was able to work in a powerful way among the believers. An extremely educated woman of excellent reputation, the wife of an unsaved, yet generally well-respected businessman, came to the meetings regularly, and a longing for a deeper work of grace awakened in her soul. She was unable to rest, and she resolved to ask me what she should do.

In the short conversation that then followed, I tried to show her the necessity of a foundational surrender of her own self and all her possessions to God. I told her that as soon as she did this that she could faithfully expect the sealing of the Holy Spirit. I had not yet finished speaking when she quickly

stood up and left me; such a force was pressuring her to grasp full salvation in Christ without delay.

She returned the same afternoon, but as full of the Holy Spirit as is possible. She explained that as soon as she got home, she threw herself on her knees before God and surrendered herself and everything she had to God. Only in that moment was it made clear to her what a wholehearted surrender to the Lord included, but she did surrender all. Her soul became immediately still, the Spirit of God took possession of her, and there was such a joy and such a peace in her heart that she could have rejoiced out loud.

The Preacher and the Prayer Warrior

A preacher who was gifted at speaking drew large crowds together and won many souls for Christ. Unfortunately, this made his heart proud. Yet God knew how to humble him. He dreamed that the day of judgment had come and he drew near to the throne of God with great confidence. To his surprise, however, he was directed to take the lowest place. “Certainly,” he called out, “I must deserve greater honor than this! Weren’t there many souls saved through my

sermons?”—“No,” answered the Judge, “The honor does not go to you; did you forget that old lady who always came to your church? She could not see for she was blind; she could not hear for she was deaf. But she loved God’s house and she faithfully sat in her humble place and prayed that God would strengthen the word that was brought. It was not your preaching that saved all these souls, it was her prayers.”

A Unique Pentecost Sermon

F.G. v. Recjemberg from Switzerland once told a story of a simple seamstress who smilingly introduced him to her “Pentecost preacher.”

She pointed to her brightly polished, copper tea kettle. “Yes, just look! It taught me about Pentecost in the greatest sermon I have ever heard. How often had I already heard the story of Pentecost, and how often has my heart stood in awe of the holy fire that fell from heaven.

“One year I was sitting at my little table during the afternoon of the day of Pentecost. I wanted to drink my tea and lit the fire under the kettle. My thoughts were still on the Pentecost sermon that I had heard in the morning. I kept mulling over it, but somehow could not quite grasp it. Suddenly the kettle started to whistle, and the sound grew louder and stronger. The fire under the kettle is causing that, I thought. Without fire, the kettle doesn’t make a sound by itself. And as I thought about this, the water boiled and bubbled over. . . . And how can I explain it? The scales fell from

my eyes. My faithful, copper kettle had preached the Pentecost sermon to me. And my heart had understood it.

“When the holy fire from heaven comes into our heart, it begins to sing with a fervor of love and in words that can be understood by and are applicable to all. And out of the singing and praising to the glory of God comes a testimony of what God has done for us. The heart that is full and that burns in the fire of God will boil over. Yes, it simply boils over and cannot do otherwise. The holy fire urges us.

“Is it difficult for a groom to talk about his bride day in and day out? A great fire of love burns in him. It makes him talk about her in season and out of season. The fire of Pentecost must go into hearts, and then it preaches forth from the hearts of people.

“When I lift my kettle from the fire, the whistling and boiling stops. The person who is separated from the holy fire will develop a cold and dead heart. And that is the reason why it is often so dead.”

A Letter of Christ

The missionary Zwemer preached at a hospital in eastern Arabia. He spoke of the love of God and sought to give the untaught people a glimpse of Jesus. Afterwards, a Bedouin came to him. “I understood you very well, because I have seen such a man myself.” He described the man he had gotten to know far from here, as follows:

“He was a peculiar man. If people did him harm, he did them good. He visited the sick, prisoners, and needy. He was even kind to black slaves. To help others,

he made long trips in the scorching heat of the sun. He was a friend to all. He was just as you said.”

In this way, the untaught man had recognized the traits of a Christian missionary in the image of Jesus. To Zwemer’s joyful astonishment, he learned that it had been his own brother in Maska.

The interpretation of the Gospel is best and most effective when the love of Jesus is visible in our character and actions.

Two Witnesses

Witnesses that testify based on what they saw and experienced firsthand play a very important role in a court of law. God wants us to build on certainty and has given us two witnesses as well.

Again and again, we admiringly and worshipfully join Paul as we exclaim, “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!” (Romans 11:33).

How great and powerful is our God! How deep and unsearchable are His riches! How wonderful and magnificent are His thoughts! And above all God has revealed to His children divine mysteries and His plan of salvation. Let us echo the words of the Psalmist: “Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law” (Psalm 119:18).

In Zechariah 4, God reveals His two witnesses. The Lord asks His prophet, “What do you see?” And the prophet answers, “There is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left” (Zechariah 4:2-3).

Then the prophet asks, “What are these two olive trees—at the right of the lampstand and at its left?” And the Lord answered him, “These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth” (Zechariah 4:11, 14).

The lampstand provides light, and the olive trees provide anointing oil. The Lord is telling us that the first witness or anointed one is the Word of God. The second witness is the Holy Spirit. “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit” (Zechariah 4:6). God does not work in human ways. He looks for servants whom He can fill with His Word and Spirit, and He uses them to gather His harvest.

The Savior reveals to us the same thing: “You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me” (John 5:39). Jesus explains to the Emmaus brothers that He, the Son of God, had to suffer and rise from the dead: “And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in

all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27). The Word of God is a divine witness, one of the Lord’s anointed.

Good and powerful, the Holy Spirit is the second anointed one and witness; the Spirit comes from the Father and the Son, and as the third Person of the Trinity, He is one with the ruler of the universe. Scripture provides clear evidence to this fact: “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (John 14:26). “And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth” (1 John 5:6).

What God had previously shown the prophet Zechariah, he also revealed to John on the island of Patmos: “And I will give power to my two witnesses . . . These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth” (Revelation 11:3-4).

These witnesses are not two men as some people mistakenly claim. No, both of these witnesses have divine power and strength, and they are God’s Word and Spirit. People can reject their testimony; they push the Word of God aside and dismiss it entirely. Not only can godless people grieve the Holy Spirit, but they can also stand against Him, blaspheme Him, and figuratively speaking, kill Him.

The Son of God was condemned, expelled from Jerusalem, and executed at Golgotha, and people can treat the two divine witnesses, God’s Word and the Holy Spirit, in the same way. When they do so, they silence these witnesses.

The motto of this world is: “God is dead!” But praise be to God! We have a heavenly Father, a risen and victorious Savior! He is the Light of the World, and the two anointed ones and witnesses will bear witness until He returns.

H.D. Nimz

Two Olive Trees

Through divine revelation, the prophet saw two olive trees at either side of a golden lampstand. Golden oil flowed from them through golden pipes to the lampstand (Zechariah 4). This image reveals a deep spiritual truth for practical Christian living.

The Two Olive Trees in Our Personal Lives

Just as the completely clear and precious golden oil flowed from the trees to the lampstand, so must continuous power flow through the holy lives of God's children. If this supply were cut off, the light would lose its holiness; the aroma of Christ would no longer be evident in their lives. At conversion, a spark from God's altar is placed in the cleansed heart. Eternal divine life from heaven is placed into the heart of the reborn believer. But this flame needs a continuous nurturing supply of the fresh oil of divine grace.

It is therefore an unalterable principle of life, that the Word of God must fill the heart so that the divine flame will receive continuous nourishment and will not be extinguished. The Word effects illumination and comfort. The mild oil from the Father effects comfort in every situation. It gives victory in personal life and in the daily battle against the powers of darkness.

Likewise, the daily working of the Holy Spirit is necessary in the lives of God's children. The Father's Spirit is our Teacher. He reveals to us the will of God and the deep secrets of godly wisdom. He unlocks God's Word to us and translates it in our practical lives; He applies it to our needs. The Holy Spirit leads us safely through the uncertainties of life. He, the Power and Wisdom of God, effects the power to live holy according to the standard of God's Word.

The Two Olive Trees in the Life of the Church

We are reminded of the prophet Zechariah's image in Revelation 1:12. John turned around and saw the Son of God walking among the seven golden lampstands, the churches. In the church, the complete Trinity is unified with imperfect human vessels in such a way that even the wisest man is unable to understand or explain it (Ephesians 3:1-10). The church is protected and empowered through the unhindered

flow of daily grace. No human element can build or protect the church. Only the unhindered flow from the two olive trees lets it glow in all its glory.

In Isaiah 40:9, the church is portrayed as a preacher who broadcasts the biblical truths with a loud voice. It is in the church where the heavenly witness, the Word of God, can appear unhindered and with power. Here is where the bright trumpet of the eternal gospel rings out in perfect clarity. The depth of human need is revealed through this message by placing the audience in divine judgment (Hebrews 4:12-13). If sinners and hypocrites are present, they will tremble under the powerful clarity of God's Word and seek either salvation or escape (Isaiah 33:14). Biblical truth will grant God's children clear guidance and orientation in their present and future need. The foundation of faith will be made known and strengthened in hearts through the unhindered flow of the golden oil from the Word of God, and hereby comes victory through faith.

The mighty and unconfined work of the Holy Spirit in the church is just as necessary as the influx from the other olive trees. His presence and His work legitimizes the fellowship as the church of God. The unconfined governing of the Holy Spirit builds and protects the church. God can effect a mighty work through weak vessels when people are anointed with the oil of the Holy Spirit, when they have been called by God and filled with the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12). The church is completely independent of human wisdom or abilities. If one were rich in human knowledge, zeal, endurance, emotional commitment—yet did not have the working of the Holy Spirit, they would be like an extinguished lampstand that gives no light, but is instead a hindrance for many in darkness.

The image of the two olive trees shows us eternal divine wisdom and protection through grace. In John 17:21, Jesus prayed for the church and gave us a glimpse of the deep unity within the Godhead. The unity of each individual with God and with each other is an indescribable wonder that is effected and protected through the Word and God's Spirit.

Hermann Vogt

We Need the Holy Spirit



he longer I am a pastor, the more I recognize the need for God's strength. For without this godly strength we are not capable of leading others to Christ.

Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles asked the believers of Ephesus: "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" (Acts 19:2). This question from the apostle can also be applied to the Christians of today. We need the Holy Spirit as much today as He was needed in the dawn of early Christianity. Dear reader, have you received the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity? Have you opened the door of your heart and life to Him so that He can make His home there? Our body is but a temporary hut in which we reside here on earth. The Holy Spirit wants to come and live with us in the abode of our body.

He Wants to Comfort Us and Testify of Christ

Shortly before His death Jesus gave His disciples a wonderful promise: "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you" (John 14:15-17).

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit entered the lives of the disciples who fully surrendered to Him. He took control of them. Through the testimony of these Spirit-filled disciples of the Lord, three thousand souls were led to God that day. But was it the disciples alone who testified? No, they alone could not have done that. It was the Holy Spirit that worked through them. Jesus said about the Holy Spirit: "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me" (John 15:26). Those who are saved in the Lord need the

Holy Spirit so that He can continually give them strength and victory.

He Wants to Be Our Guide

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would guide God's children. "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you" (John 16:13-14).

Dear reader, you are on the path to eternity. Many dangers threaten you on your path of life. But this Guide, the Holy Spirit, can protect you from deception and from all evil. He wants to lead you in all truth. You must, however, be willing to listen to His voice and to follow His leading.

I need the Holy Spirit every day of my life. There are so many empty sermons, prayers, and testimonies in which there is no spiritual life. Paul wrote: "And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Corinthians 2:4). When the Spirit of God works and is permitted to have His way then He can touch hearts and can lead them to repentance. He can cause them to recognize their sin. Years ago, while I was lying sick for an extended time, I came to the realization that we absolutely must have the Holy Spirit in our heart if we want to accomplish anything for God.

The Holy Spirit Can Be Grieved

If the Holy Spirit lives in our heart and is concerned with guiding and leading us and we refuse to listen and fail to follow His lead, then He becomes grieved. Paul admonishes us not to grieve the Spirit (see Ephesians 4:30). If Paul had not heeded the voice of the Holy Spirit and had gone to Asia in spite of His warnings, then he would have grieved Him. The same would have happened if Paul and Barnabas had said "no" when the Holy Spirit called them

to fulfill a specific duty. If we have received the Holy Spirit and He lives in us, it is of utmost importance that we always follow Him and that we are fully consecrated and submissive to Him.

The Holy Spirit Wants to Help Us

The Holy Spirit wants to help preachers with their sermon preparation, just as He did for the prophets of the Old Testament. Peter wrote the following in 2 Peter 1:21: “for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

He also helps everyone else in the church to successfully contribute to the work for the Lord. We are called to reach people’s hearts with God’s Word and we can only do this if the Holy Spirit gives life to the message.

How Can One Receive the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is ready and willing to move into the heart of every believer. Jesus said: “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” (Luke 11:13). Peter spoke these words to the people who inquired about the way to salvation: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:38-39).

After individuals have repented and received forgiveness for their sins, they become believers. The Holy Spirit is for believers. When we have fulfilled the biblical requirements and fully consecrate ourselves to God, then we will receive the Holy Spirit.

If you know that your sins are forgiven, then fully surrender to God. Let Him do whatever He wishes with you. Be ready and willing to let Him work in and through you. We must ask for the Holy Spirit and through faith we are privileged to receive Him. What a great joy it is to know that we have received the Holy Spirit and that He resides in us!—Have you received Him?

A.O. Bridwell



The Spirit and the Word

There are many different doctrines circulating in the religious world. Most of them claim to be founded on the Word of God. If that is the case why are the doctrines so contradictory? They are not led by the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit is essential to the interpretation of God's Word.

We need the Holy Spirit when interpreting the Word.

In the religious world, a variety of doctrines circulate. Often one assumes that they are founded on the Word of God. A word can be interpreted in different ways. And the enemy of truth makes use of that to cause confusion. If we were to solely depend on the intellect of people, surely we would find ourselves in the dark.

Even very educated and intelligent people, in their own power, could never interpret the Word of God correctly. Humanly it is possible to research and discover some deep truths. But no human wisdom is sufficient to explore the Word of God without godly assistance. If people had it in them to uncover the truth, then our faith would be based on human wisdom. The apostle Paul said: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God" (1 Corinthians 2:12).

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to reveal heavenly things to us. These are hidden from the eyes of the natural man. It is a secret that God reveals only to those who love Him, and to no one else. The Holy Spirit possesses a key to the treasures of His Word. And only His children have the privilege to use it. God, in His wisdom, hid all these matters from the world and reveals them only to those who inquire of Him. Only through the Holy Spirit do we have access to the Father and to all of His riches. Only through Him are we enabled to interpret the Word correctly. If only people were willing to humble themselves before God and place themselves at the disposal

of the Spirit of God, then disunity in spiritual matters would soon come to an end.

The Holy Spirit alone is the godly teacher. And all who relinquish their own opinions and views and commit themselves wholly to His leading will discern the truth without great difficulties. Through the inspiration or anointing of the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to discern all spiritual matters that serve to our best and to the glory of God. Read 1 John 2:20 and 27, and you will see how this anointing taught the children of God in the early church.

That is, thank God, also the case today. This heavenly interpretation of the Word of God will never divide His children, but instead will unite them closer together. John says: "You do not need that anyone teach you" (1 John 2:27). This applies to all who have the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Not the doctrine or view of people, but what the Lord Jesus teaches has validity. He is the teacher, and therefore we don't need the teachings of people. People are often the instruments through which the Holy Spirit works to reach hearts, but that is not human teaching. A true instrument of the Holy Spirit speaks only that which the Spirit tells him to speak. And that will never contradict the Word of God.

The Word, which was spoken through chosen instruments in the beginning of Christianity, contains the thoughts of the Spirit. We now possess these words in written form, namely in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit, the godly Author of this Word, will never teach us something that does not agree with what He spoke

through the first disciples. He will only give us His own interpretation of these words.

This truth is very important and should be rooted deeply in every heart. Let us be willing to relinquish all man-made doctrines, and that which we, ourselves, hold to be right, and let the Holy Spirit convince us of the truth. We will walk safely if we choose this path and will not lose that, which is good and true. And by doing so, much pointless commotion and controversy could be avoided. The truth will remain truth despite testing. However, we cannot concede and correct an error until

we have first identified it as such. And the sooner we free ourselves of it, the better it is for us.

Oh, let us thank the God of the Bible and glorify His name that He gave us the Holy Spirit to reveal His Word! He never leads us away from the Word, nor does He allow us to reach contradictory conclusions. He always leads us deeper into His truths, namely by unlocking the hidden treasures of the Word of God to us.

EP

A Life Consecrated to God

Someone once said, “We call on Jesus to save our souls; yet at the same time, we are reluctant to entrust Him with our whole lives.”

It will be profitable for us to spend some time reflecting earnestly on this quotation. When Jesus saved us, He did far more for us than any earthly friend would ever be capable of doing. He bought us with the price of His blood. We are indebted to Him for everything. He saved us. Everything that we are and have belongs to Him. Someone might still be capable of saying, “Lord, I thank You for redeeming me. But allow me to plan the particulars of my life.” No, the prayer of a truly consecrated person is, “Lord, I am not worthy to be called Your child. With mercy You saved me. All that I am and have is yours. Take my life and use it exactly as it pleases You.”

It is deeply significant to have surrendered our lives wholly and fully into the hands of God. If we look at the work that is to be done in the kingdom of God, then we must conclude that we only have one talent, one life fully consecrated to God. Oh, how precious this is in God’s eyes! Are we willing to surrender our whole life to God and to allow Him to mold it so that

He can extract the greatest benefit to His service? Or have we designed our own plans? There is still much to do in order to evangelize the world, but that must be done with human tools. Do you want to be a useful tool in His hands to win souls? Then you must place your very life, your all, in His capable hands, holding nothing back. The Lord will never turn away a service fully consecrated to Him.

If His path leads you through light or darkness, through poverty or wealth, through health or illness, through honor or shame, through life or death, can you still say, “Lord, Your will be done! Use me to Your glory!”?

As God allows His plan for you to unfold, He may include persecution or suffering. This will help you to show the world that God’s strength can sustain the soul in all circumstances. Are you willing to suffer so that a Christ-centered life can be all the more visible to others? Do you mean it when you say, or sing, “Take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to Thee?”

A.E.T.

If You Would Believe

Part 5



Lord, why?

As yet, father was permitted to travel throughout Germany on mission matters, but this freedom was soon to be withdrawn. Although the spread of the gospel was not yet expressly forbidden, the government threatened to withdraw religious freedom following the Nazi victory. “We won’t be able to reprogram *you* anymore,” the authorities admitted, “but your children will no longer believe in these fables. After we have victoriously ended the war, the Bible will be found only in museums.”

Their boasting was short-lived as the superior military might of the allied forces became undeniable. Not only was the war fought on multiple fronts, but night after night, Germany’s cities were relentlessly destroyed and set on fire in furious bombing raids. Initially confined to industrial targets the raids quickly escalated to carpet bombing of entire cities, inflicting painful consequences. Hastily drafted youth and older men pressed into action would delay the inevitable only a short time.

Although in his mid-forties, father had a premonition that soon he too would be drafted. His fervent prayer was that he would never be forced to carry a gun, much less raise one against another human.

In 1943 father had traveled to Essen, Germany on mission matters. A ferocious bombing raid broke out over the city. He, along with other civilians, surged to an air raid shelter, seeking refuge. The foundation of the structure shook from the impact of bombs falling around them. Father stood near the entrance. He scanned the ceiling to see what safety it might afford in the event of a direct hit. “Move in a little further, under that heavy beam,” an unmistakable inner voice urged. Barely having squeezed into

position under the beam, bomb shrapnel drilled into the shelter at the exact location he had just vacated.

He regained consciousness in the hospital, and soon sensed that something had happened to his right arm, but he was unable to assess the extent of his injuries. His fear was that his arm had been amputated. His inquiries of a nurse, regarding the condition of his arm were in vain. He suggested to her, “My arm has been amputated.” Still she did not respond. Father observed other patients with him in the ward cursing and screaming. Apparently the nurse feared a similar reaction from him.

“The God who cared for me when I had two arms will surely care for me now that I have only one arm”, he said bravely.

“Yes!” she responded, relieved. Now he had his answer. His right arm had been amputated.

As soon as he was able, father wrote mother a letter. She did not recognize the handwriting on the envelope, and yet it was from him. She missed his fine handwriting as she tearfully finished reading. Tempted to feud with God, she asked, “Why, God? Why? Why did you let this happen to this man? Did he not dedicate his life to your service? Even this trip, was it not for the sake of the Gospel? Why?”

At the first opportunity she boarded the train in Graudenz, Poland (our home at that time) and traveled to Essen, Germany to seek out father in his hospital ward. With an iron will she hid her pain and her feud with God from him as she entered. Did she not come to comfort him, to give him courage, and to cheer him up?

But father understood her innermost torment. “Wanda,” he questioned, “are you feuding with God, why He



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would allow this to happen to me?” Unable to contain herself any longer, she poured out her heart.

“Wanda,” he comforted. “I also don’t know why this had to happen to me, but I trust that God has not made a mistake. Surely He has a purpose and He knows why. The God who cared for us when I had two arms will care for us now that I have only one.”

“I have come to comfort you, and now you comfort me,” she responded tearfully.

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28 NIV).

The war raged on and despite father’s handicap, he was drafted into the Army after his recovery. Clearly, a man missing one arm was not a prime candidate for the front, but he could still be pressed into service as a translator in a prisoner of war camp. Since father spoke Russian fluently, he was assigned to a camp holding Russian soldiers. For his own safety, he had to be armed as he moved about the camp. But with only one arm, he was not able to operate a rifle. So he was to be outfitted with a revolver. He declined. Wasn’t his prayer all along that he would never have to raise a gun against a human? “A man with only one arm is no match for the prisoners,” he argued. “They will overpower me, take my revolver and use it against me.” And so it happened that father was permitted to perform his duties among the prisoners totally unarmed.

Many years later, father reminisced on the experiences of that time. With not a hint of regret, he regarded the loss of his arm to be God’s answer to his prayer that he would never have to raise a gun against another human.



How to Encounter God

SOMEONE ONCE SAID: "GOD OFTEN VISITS US, BUT OFTEN WE ARE NOT HOME." YES, GOD WANTS TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH US. IF WE ARE LONGING TO ENCOUNTER GOD WE HAVE TO DO OUR PART. SO "PREPARE TO MEET YOUR GOD, O ISRAEL!" AMOS 4:12.

I can imagine that every person who believes in Jesus Christ and who has accepted Him as personal Savior has, at some point in his life, wished to live during the time that Jesus walked the earth. You would even be prepared to forgo the comforts of the good life that we know today. Haven't you been a little jealous of the disciples before?

can! It is even easier to encounter Jesus or God (Jesus says that He and the Father are one) than it is to call a meeting with Barack Obama. There are people who have tried and who have never succeeded. With God, this is impossible. He lets us know He allows Himself to be found, when we seek Him wholeheartedly (Jeremiah 29:13-14).

I love the story of Peter and his encounter with Jesus after His resurrection. After Jesus was taken captive, and was led to the palace of the high priests, we come to Peter's fateful denial of Jesus. He denies knowing Jesus, and furthermore, being one of His disciples. He does this three times, and then—as prophesied by Jesus—the rooster crows. In that moment, Jesus turns to Peter and their eyes meet (Luke 22:60-62). What a moment that must have been. Can you relate to how Peter must have felt? He goes away and cries bitterly, filled with doubt. He failed. In spite of all his assurances, he was not able to keep his word. How must he have felt on the day of Christ's crucifixion? How would he have spent his time on the Sabbath? Would he have gone to the tomb? Yet an encounter with Jesus was not possible. Do we sometimes feel like Jesus is too inaccessibly far away? And then the seemingly impossible occurs: they say that Jesus had risen. Now Peter holds nothing back; he runs to the grave. He just wants one thing; he wants to face Jesus. He enters the tomb—it is truly empty. And then John tells us how the meeting went between Jesus and Peter, by the sea of Galilee—truly worth reading (John 21).

So much for theory. We notice in view of the previous Scripture that God links an encounter with Himself to certain conditions. These should not serve to upset us or to make our lives difficult; rather, these encounters should become a conscious pursuit that we take advantage of.

I would like to offer some suggestions that can hopefully be helpful for you.

So what is it like today? Can we meet with God, can we still encounter Jesus today? The Bible gives us great news! In Matthew 28:20 we read, "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." If Jesus is saying here—and He gives special emphasis to His statement—that He will be with us every day, then we ought to be able to encounter Him even today, right? Yes, God be praised, we

1. **Take time for God.** At first, this may sound mundane, or trivial. But for an encounter with God, this will be crucial in most cases. Why the qualification? God can sometimes step unexpectedly into our path, like He did when encountering Paul before the city gates of Damascus. But the Bible makes it clear that this is not the rule. Once I prayed about something for a long time and waited for an answer from God. Eventually I asked Him, "God, why aren't you answering me?" I was immediately struck by God's answer. "When do you give Me the opportunity to do so?" I suddenly became aware of my daily routine and how little time I had set apart for God.

2. **Expect to receive.** You have likely experienced hitting a dead zone on your Smartphone. Nothing seems to work. No Whatsapp Messenger, no internet, no phone calls, in or out. There's simply no service. Unfortunately these dead zones exist in our spiritual lives too. We live in an information age that can overwhelm us. We barely have a peaceful minute to ourselves, whether in a train, the doctor's waiting room, or in the office, before the newspaper is out, or the phone or any other means

of distraction is at hand. We could reason that this is a calculated move by Satan, because as long as we keep ourselves busy with all manner of distractions, then we are not available to God. Doesn't it sometimes seem that even in our devotions, we quickly read a chapter of the Bible for God, and not for us, because we simply cannot assimilate one more piece of information? Spiritual dead zones are real. Therefore consider this suggestion: expect to receive. During your daily devotions. But also when you are in a waiting room and have to wait a while. Next time try to use that moment for a quiet prayer. Or in this situation, reflect on your life and on your relationship with God. Is there maybe something you should change? If you're taking the bus to work tomorrow, read an extra chapter in your Bible rather than reading the news. Please understand this correctly: this is not about acting piously, to where you no longer dare to leaf through a newspaper. That is not what is meant here. But maybe the opportunity will present itself to expect more from the Lord.

3. **Seek God's nearness.** This has to do with a direct request from James 4:8. This verse ends with a promise that when we draw near to God, He will draw near to us. That is what is written. Let us not fail in our attempt to draw near to God. Ask God specifically for help in this area. However, we should not discuss the verse isolated from those that surround it. The verse before it says, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." When we take this verse in context, it becomes clear that we cannot serve two masters. There are perhaps areas in your life that serve as a hindrance to your spiritual growth. For some it might be movies, for others the theater, or music, cars, motorbikes, the fashion world, etc. Once again, this is not meant to be a blanket judgment of all these things. But perhaps these things should be put to the test. Are they obstacles that prevent you from drawing near to God and having a real encounter with Him?

4. **Prayer. Prayer. Prayer.** Your sincere prayers are a prerequisite. Ask God repeatedly to grant you these encounters with Him. In your daily routine, on Sunday mornings during the church service. Before youth hour. Through a stanza of a song during choir practice. On your way to the university. On a hike. Yes, consider prayer itself as one such encounter. Meanwhile, be still long enough to

listen to God, to what He may wish to tell you. Don't we need to learn at times to be silent before God in prayer? Prayer will open the doors to encountering God.

5. **Read the Bible.** Read it before all else as God's personal message to you. Prepare your time of Bible reading by first offering up a short, sincere prayer. Read the Word carefully. After reading a passage, try putting what you have just read into your own words. That's how you can test whether the passage actually penetrated your consciousness. I often have to reread a passage, because I do not always understand it the first time. Or you could test yourself halfway through breakfast to see whether you can still remember what you read during your morning devotions. God does not expect us to read something to Him. It is about us!

6. **Don't give up.** In our desire to encounter God, we are sometimes guided by other people's experiences, and expect to have similar ones. When this doesn't happen, then we think we have problems. Or you may have been praying for a long time for an encounter with God, and it's simply not happening. This is where people can give up, deeply disappointed. Some may wonder what praying accomplishes anyway. I do not understand why God makes you wait for His answer. This happens to me too sometimes. Yet I have experienced again and again that God's promises are true. He allows Himself to be found by us. That's why I want to encourage you to never give up. It is possible that obstacles do exist on your part. We already discussed this previously. But maybe God wants to know how seriously you embrace His plan for your life. *If an encounter with God is precious enough to you, then you will be willing to seek Him earnestly, no matter how long you have to wait for that special encounter.*

My wish for you and for me is that we will have many encounters with God! I hope that these past nine minutes of reading material will be a help to you in the future.

Niko Ernst,
Herford (DE)



Experiences with God

“Listen to Me, you who follow after righteousness, you who seek the Lord: Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from which you were dug.” Isaiah 51:1

Pallasovka (Russia)

How meaningful are these words of God for me. How often do I remind myself of the grace, thanks to which I now live, in which I rejoice. I now have a firm hope of being in heaven for eternity.

Sin killed me and my family. Deep inside, I could see that my entire life was headed towards a dead end. But I could not do a thing, my soul was deep in the bondage of sin. In my youth, I had often heard of a life with God and had seen believers and secretly wished to be like them. However, the world had intoxicated me and I plunged into this pit.

I was soon left with no family, poor, naked, and pitiable. Thoughts of suicide oppressed me and I made the decision to take my life. I told myself that I was only taking up space on Earth and causing others so much grief. However, a half hour before my step into eternity, I saw myself and suddenly clearly realized that I needed God, of whom I had heard in my childhood. I fell on my knees and cried to heaven for help and for forgiveness. Suddenly, everything within me became still and I understood that God had forgiven me. But I had no idea what I was now to do with this. Believers gathered together not far from my house and so I decided to go there on Sunday. How wonderful that first service was for me! I wondered how the preacher could speak of me without knowing me. I soon understood that this was my new home.

God restored my family soon thereafter. My wife soon became saved and my Lord carried my family as if on wings and blessed it with children, peace, and joy. We have now walked the path towards heaven for 16 years and would not trade our lives with Christ for any treasures of this world.

This testimony is more for those who are still bound in sin and believe that there is no other way. God wants you, dear soul, to return to Him. Always remember: sin kills the soul.

Viktor Gritsajev

A Present for Mother

Cindy picked a beautiful bouquet of wild flowers and took them to Mother. Mother was very happy to get the flowers. "That was sweet of you, Cindy, to pick the flowers for me," Mother said, smiling. "I will put them in this vase and set it on the table." Cindy was glad that Mother liked the flowers. Just then Harold came into the house holding something behind his back. "Do you see the pretty flowers I picked for Mother?" Cindy said with her head held high. "They are pretty," remarked Harold. "I have something for you, too, Mother." He brought out a little plaque from behind his back. He put the plaque in Mother's hands. 'If I searched the world around there would never be another who would mean so much to me as my own precious Mother,' Mother read. "Why Harold, this is very sweet." "I'm glad you like it. Daddy helped me write the verse, but I painted the letters and roses myself," Harold explained. "I have two very dear children," Mother said as she put an arm around each of her children and drew them to her. Cindy pulled away. She seemed to be pouting. "You like Harold's plaque more than my flowers because it took more work." "Why, Cindy, I like the plaque and the flowers. I can enjoy both of them," Mother said.

"You can throw away my flowers," said Cindy.

"Cindy, you have a poor attitude. God does not want you to be jealous, and I do not want you to be jealous," Mother said. "Jealousy only makes people unhappy, the way you are unhappy right now. I love both of you, even if you never gave me a gift. The thing that makes me really love you is when you are good and try to please God. That makes me happier than any gift." Cindy hung her head. "I'm sorry, Mother. I don't want to be jealous. I'm glad we both had something to give you." "Cindy," Harold said, "do you want to help me make a plaque for Daddy? We can work on it together." "Oh, Harold," Cindy cried and clapped her hands. "That will be nice!" Cindy then hugged her mother. "I love you, Mother, and I'm glad you like both of our gifts!"

—Sandra Whitson

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Thoughts for Mother's Day

Usually, when we think of Mother's Day, we look at the relationship of child to mother. This was the reason for the day: to honor the mother.

Yet today, I would like to consider Mother's Day from another perspective: the relationship of mother to child. This idea came to me during a conversation I had with my six year old daughter Monica. "Mom, tell me about Easter!" This is how our conversation started. Easter had been a week ago and I had already told her the Easter story several times. As we perhaps are aware, this is a natural reaction. When a concept is too large for a child to grasp, he wants to speak of it repeatedly until he is either done with the topic or he has understood it.

This time I answered: "Well, Monica, how about today you tell me how much of the story you remember?"—She finished it a little over halfway before she again asked: "And what happened then?" Yes, I think it is somewhat overwhelming to understand that Jesus died on the cross and then was resurrected.

Once we were finished with the Easter story, many other questions followed. "Mom, tell me how paper is made."—And since right then I was sewing with my sewing machine: "How are machines made?"

Here I first took a deep breath before attempting to somehow answer all these questions. It was exactly then that the thought crossed my mind: you had time and patience for the spiritual, have patience for the day-to-day! For in this moment, it was not about her questions, but that I showed her attention.

It is my daily prayer that God may grant me wisdom in raising my children. I took this as a hint. I became aware that she wants and needs my attention now. In a house where there is more than one child, each child

needs the undivided attention of the mother or the father at least once a day. This is the only way we can avoid one child feeling inferior. In doing so, the children develop their self-confidence. We should also try to do things together as a family in order to awaken a sense of belonging in the children.

There are many moments that we remember and re-experience. Another of these moments was one day when Monica came and excitedly cried: "Mom, your flowers are already coming up!" She enjoyed seeing the seed that we had planted a few days ago come up. Or we could take a few minutes time while taking a walk. Pause here and there and point out a few things in nature and connect them to God, the Creator.

In conclusion, I would like to share one more event from my personal life. Six years ago I experienced Mother's Day for the first time as a mother. I can still clearly remember how I sat in church that Sunday morning. Monica was three months old at the time. Her feet were so tiny that I could hold both of them in one hand. As I sat there, her little feet in my hand, these thoughts ran through my mind: Child, I cannot always hold your feet; but I pray that they walk down the right path!

We now have two children and I pray that God gives me wisdom to lead them and to sow the good seed.

As parents, we will certainly make mistakes and not always know the right answer in every situation. How comforting it is then to trust God and remember that He too is watching over our children.

Helga Arndt

Mother's Love

*Love so true, the love of mother,
Gift so precious on this earth;
Holy, gentle, like no other
True till death, this love from birth.
Love, that gives all for her child,
Love enduring, love so mild.*

*Love that won't grow cold in winter,
That no storm can blow away.
Love, that none on earth can hinder,
Even thorns, this love won't sway.
Selflessly she thinks of you;
Mother's love is strong and true.*

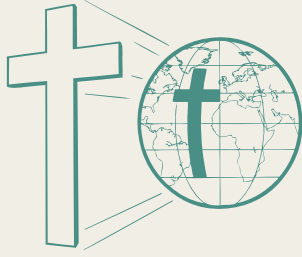
*Love that prays and keeps on hoping
When you've left the narrow way;
When in night and sin you're groping,
Foolishly, you've gone astray.
Though in sorrow and in tears,
Still she loves, despite her fears.*

*She, that always loves you dearly
When all others cast you out,
Will do all she can sincerely;
She believes when others doubt.
Till her eyes shall close in death,
Love she has with every breath.*

*Even when her health is failing,
How her heart does beat for you!
When her rosy cheeks are paling
And she bids her last adieu;
One last kiss, her gentle smile
Says of life: it was worthwhile.*

*What your mothers love has given
None on earth can compensate.
Cherish it, while you are living,
Strive to enter heaven's gate.
Then you'll see her once again;
Love is strong, and not in vain.*





Radio Broadcast

The Message of Salvation

Friedrich Krebs
Kitchener, Ontario

Do Not Despise Your Mother!

“Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old.”
Proverbs 23:22

This is a timely reminder in God’s Word. It speaks of respect and valuing our good mothers. A minister once said: “A mother is the sunshine of the home. If she is missing, then it is as if the sun has gone down.”

In many cases, the proper appreciation that faithful mothers should receive is missing. Their hearts ache because of it. A mother who faithfully fulfills her household and family duties should never feel that she is “just” the mother. She would like to be valued by her family. Her daily many-faceted work should not be taken for granted. She does it out of love and self sacrifice not expecting any payment. For this very reason, the reminder, “Do not despise your mother” is justified. Every child should keep this reminder in their heart and mind.

Someone wrote: “A mother is everything that is beautiful, noble and pure. My mother represents love, happiness and goodness. Who consoles you time and again when you are suffering?—Tis your mother.” So much pain, sorrow, and sadness lies in the words: no mother! Every child should know that their mother can not be replaced. Therefore, if you still have your mother, be thankful and content!

A good mother is also a good educator. She tries to instill good manners, pure intentions and good decision making into her child. These instructions are very valuable to a young person who has not yet experienced life. A wise mother must sometimes be strict in order to achieve these goals.

It is said of Dr. Martin Luther’s mother that one day she found a nut in the pants pocket of her son. He was punished because he had taken it from “somewhere.” She then explained to him that a good reputation is the only thing he inherits. His taciturn father was not less severe. They were poor people. In grateful remembrance of them, Luther said: “Sometimes they had to be strict disciplinarians but they always meant well. The best thing that came out of my father’s legacy is that he raised me well.” A huge value was placed on raising their children well and it wasn’t in vain. Luther did not despise his parents for it. He held them in high esteem. He was drawn to God because of them.

Every faithful mother will try to emulate this. She will try to teach her child to fear and trust God. Someone wrote: “Our mothers give our spirit warmth and our fathers give us light.” More important than that is faith and prayer. Godly and wise parents can bring such spiritual riches into the life of their children! At the very least, the reward should be respect, appreciation, gratitude, and love! They also gain a lasting memory. Because of the caring and praying hands of devout mothers, many useful and reliable sons and daughters have emerged from Christian families. Therefore: “Do not despise your mother”!

I had to think of the mother of the preacher brothers, John and Charles Wesley. They grew up in a very large family. Their mother, Susanna, was a heroine! She would

spend a half hour in prayer each week for each child. It is very probable that this quiet time determined the spiritual fruit that manifested itself in her children. God also gave His blessing. The wise man Solomon stated: "Let your father and your mother be glad" (Proverbs 23:25).

There is also a completely different side. Some time ago there lived a young couple who had a very ill son. The parents were farmers and so busy that they didn't have much time for him. When the weather was good, his father would take him out to the fields where the boy could enjoy the beautiful scenery while his father worked. They always traveled the same road that ran alongside a ditch. One day the boy, reflecting, said: "Father, when I am dead, could you please bury me in the ditch? Every time you drive down this road past my burial site to work in the fields, may it be a reminder that you never told your son about Jesus." What a huge omission! What a tragic reminder! If the parents had been believers, this painful accusation would have never come up. This happens in so many families. The children grow up, and leave home without ever hearing about Jesus. Shouldn't parents give more thought to this situation?!

An emperor allegedly made this statement: "What you scholars could not achieve with money, I inherited from my mother." Again a mother is held in high esteem. Her good influence was very useful to her son's high position. Godly mothers can move nations and create beneficial changes in countries and around the world. Among the nations, many good customs and traditions can be attributed back to the quality of their mothers.

Having faith in Jesus Christ would be most beneficial to all people and every nation. Often this blessing comes from having godly mothers. Confirmation is found in God's Word. Samuel, a prophet of God, could help his fallen people because of his mother's prayers. Paul talks about his much loved co-worker Timothy, how he possessed a genuine faith that first dwelt in his mother and grandmother. Are these mothers not worthy of all love and respect? In this sense, I am also thinking about my own mother.

It is time to pray for such mothers. We also want to thank God for them!



A Letter to my Mother

My dear mother passed away quietly in her home Oct. 15, 1987. Because we lived so far away, I would often write her a letter. She said she preferred a letter to a phone call because she could re-read it many times. I have often wished that I had written more frequently. If I could write one more letter to her, this is what I would write:

Dear Mom,

It has been far too long since I last wrote. I always thought there would be lots of time to write and tell you what I really appreciated about you, but I waited too long.

Mom, thank you for always being there for us. It was so special to come home from school to the wonderful aroma of freshly baked buns and home-made butter or jam.

Thank you for always making sure we had warm, clean clothes to wear—home-made mittens and scarves.

Thank you, mom, for teaching us that hard work is healthy for every young person's physical and mental well-being. We always had to finish up all chores before we could play or read. Many jobs were a family affair; we all worked together.

Thank you for teaching us the importance of the Bible, prayer, and attending all church services. You led by example. It had to be a huge snow storm before we missed any service. We loved going!

Thank you for teaching us that God hears and answers prayer. I remember vividly the time you called all of us children together and said "Your aunt is very sick. She could die. Let us all kneel down and pray. God is the only one that can help her."

We all prayed earnestly many times that day. My aunt got well and lived a long, happy life. That was the beginning of my walk in faith. I never doubt, to this day, that God hears and answers prayer.

Thank you for teaching us to respect authority. You never allowed us to utter a disrespectful comment about any teacher, pastor, policeman, or government official. You taught us to honor you and dad as well as any other adult.

Thanks for loving me enough not to allow me to attend any functions that were godless, or could be harmful to a young Christian. I didn't always understand, but I know I was spared a lot of heartache because of your concern.

You also taught us never to think that we were better or worse than anyone else. We are all equal before our God. We should treat every person with respect.

I remember growing up in our poor little house thinking we were really rich. We were. We were rich in love.

I learned so much from you, mom. I could never relate it all. Most of all, I am thankful for all your prayers sent up to the Father for me and my family, as well as all my siblings, all of our relatives, and friends.

My love for my family, friends, and relatives is thanks to the good example you left me.

*Thank you, Mom
Your daughter*

A Word to Mothers

In Proverbs 31:28 we read of the relationship of sons to their mother. It says: "Her children rise up and call her blessed." Mindful of this passage, I fondly remember my mother and can well say that she set the course for my life in early childhood.

I may have been four years old at the time. One day when I had been naughty, she took me by the hand and led me into the room. Then she knelt down with me and tearfully prayed for me. What she bewailed to the Lord, I do not know, but her prayer made such a deep impression that I think I feel it still. Her prayers have accompanied me throughout my life. O blessed memory!

A God-fearing, pious mother is incessantly considerate of the welfare of her children. But above all, their spiritual welfare is in her bosom. She knows that temptations, enticements, and various dangers will come up. She also knows that to protect her loved ones, a wall needs to be erected. That's why she builds on it and plants the good and noble seeds in their hearts and surrounds them with her prayers. Her desire is not to only raise good, decent people, but also that they are in the service of God and become a blessing to others. For this she prays and wrestles with God.

Being a mother requires more responsibility than any other occupation that exists. Through the mother, God gives the child life. And from birth, she cares for the child day and night in constant love and devotion. It is she who makes the first impressions on the mind of the child and forms and molds it. It is also she who has the privilege of folding the little hands of her darling and teaching him to pray. She plants love and reverence for the divine in their hearts and strives to instill obedience before God and man. She makes all her influence for good effective because she knows the first years of her child's life are the most critical. Here she lays the foundation for later life.

If she fails in the first five years, she cannot make up for what she missed. She also knows that when her child begins school, other educational factors will intervene

and the child is placed in a new environment. All this is reason enough to pray earnestly for the child or children. They are to get a good foundation and foothold in God, lest they are set adrift in the spirit of the times.

Unfortunately, there are many mothers who are not God-fearing and therefore do not take a stand as previously described. Very often they see in their children a hindrance to pursue their worldly pleasures. Since they believe they cannot live without these, a stranger must come to watch their children. Many mothers pass their place in their child's life off to others who cannot muster the interest in love and devotion. So the children are robbed of proper motherly love.

This also applies to mothers who go to work to earn extra money for themselves. It is a materialistic attitude at the expense of their children. The consequences are inevitable, as children grow and become more independent. An estrangement forms between parents and children. Although they are in one house, the bond of unity is ruptured. And now that the chasm is formed, complaining begins. But who has laid the foundation? Certainly not the children! Would it not be time to repent of this?

The home should be a sacred place into which the children gladly come. This the mother can best provide. In the house, a pure atmosphere should always prevail. It will serve as a counteraction to the filth that is so freely offered today. Only in a home where people pray in Spirit and in truth can the spirit of the times not break through. Where the father cannot be present at family worship because of his work, the mother must take up this duty and pray with the children.

Therefore, mothers, recognize your duty! Watch and pray that the enemy does not intrude and make himself at home! Prayer is the most powerful weapon, with which the most wonderful victories are won.

Gustav Sonnenberg

Our Beauty

“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.” (1 Peter 3:3-4)

Even though people who live according to the flesh adorn their outward appearance to please the world, true Christians seek to adorn the inner self to please God.

“Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city” (Isaiah 52:1). God’s people are the holy city. If we clothe ourselves with the garment of salvation and the robe of righteousness, we will not be without any ornament that pleases God. God’s grace develops priceless virtues in our hearts and lives. Some of these virtues are listed in Colossians 3:12—compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

These are the qualities that adorn the true Christian. The more of these qualities which one possesses, the more will that life splendidly and brightly shine, and better will the virtues, of Him who called us out of darkness to His wonderful light, be proclaimed. Every Christian should earnestly pursue these priceless jewels. Each day, we need to make new efforts to grow in these areas. Unfortunately, there are only a few people who seriously pursue an intimate walk with God and in whom the life of Jesus becomes visible.

Compassion is a quality that must adorn the life of a Christian, and it will adorn all those who have the love of God in their hearts. How precious it is when hearts have compassion for the sick, grieving, poor, lost, and sad! Whoever has a compassionate heart will always be willing to give and to offer a helping hand.

This quality not only adorns the life of a Christian, but it also adorns the teaching of Christ.

Kindness is something that belongs to every Christian’s adornment. “A good word makes [the heart] glad” (Proverbs 12:25). “Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, Sweetness to the soul and health to the bones” (Proverbs 16:24). Unfriendliness threatens to destroy Christianity. How wonderful it is to have a pleasant word for everyone, even for the unfriendly! How much more pleasant is kindness than unkindness, rudeness, and a grumpy, unhappy personality!

Faithfully loving all our brothers,
Just as the Lord commanded in His Word;
Friendly to all people,
Always easing our neighbor’s needs.

Humility is undoubtedly the most precious adornment of a Christian. What good is our compassion and kindness if we do not have humility? All other virtues lose their value if they are not accompanied by humility. What kind of light or adornment is it if we do something good and then boast about it and praise ourselves? Such an occurrence would hardly be an ornament or decoration. True humility has no room for self-praise, boasting, pride, and vanity. God recognizes the proud from afar, but He gives grace to the humble. Be watchful! Take care what you say! When



But above all these things put on love,
which is the bond of perfection.

Colossians 3:14

you talk about yourself, and you mention this or that about yourself, do you speak in order to bring honor to yourself? Your life will not shine as it should if you do not seek God's glory in all things.

O humility, the highest grace of God,
The Christian's best ornament;
Beautifully adorn my soul
And rule in me always.

Gentleness, the opposite of rudeness and cruelty, is another jewel. Gentleness is necessary for Christian living. Because they lacked gentleness, many people have brought dishonor to God's name. However, a gentle and quiet spirit is pleasing to God. Jesus said, "Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart" (Matthew 11:29 NIV).

Patience. No doubt, one does not need to mention that patience contributes to the adornment of the Christian. "You have need of endurance" and "Stand

firm, and you will win life" are expressions from the Lord Jesus Himself. This quality shines forth brilliantly in tribulation, suffering, sorrow, failure, misunderstanding, poverty, sickness, and trouble. How often have unbelievers marveled at the patience of believers! Their patience is like a jewel that shines its light in the darkness. God's Word extols the patience of Jesus and Job. My dear brothers and sisters, have you also clothed yourself with this virtue? Can you patiently endure all things without murmuring and complaining? Does your life adorn Jesus' teaching on patience?

There are other virtues that must adorn the life of a Christian: love, self-control, obedience, etc. "But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection" (Colossians 3:14).

Dear brothers and sisters, do not let Satan tempt you with the outward adornments that the world and even popular Christianity offer. If you know the Lord, allow Him to adorn your inner self so that when the bridegroom comes, you can meet Him with gladness.

Chilliwack Church Building Update

It is with grateful hearts that we share this update on the construction of the new house of worship in Chilliwack, B.C. With Samuel we can say: “Thus far the Lord has helped us!”

As can be seen from the pictures, the structure is up, most of the windows are installed and workers are completing the heating, electrical, plumbing and sprinkler system rough-ins. Unfortunately, we experienced a lot of rain and some heavy wind storms over the late fall and winter months, which delayed some of the work. Now that spring has sprung, with crocuses and heather in bloom, we are anticipating better weather. We are thankful for the many helping hands both locally and from abroad. It is encour-

aging when brothers and sisters from out of town come to help, and when we hear that our sister churches are praying for us.

There is still opportunity to be a part of this building project! If the Lord places it on your heart to help along in a practical way, please email Bro. Harry Betjan, our volunteer coordinator, at harrybetjan@gmail.com. We are also thankful to God for the many who have supported us financially. God has promised to open heaven’s gates with abounding blessings. Thanks for your generosity! We need wisdom from above to be good stewards of the Lord’s resources, especially with the challenges that our low Canadian dollar creates.



While we are constructing the physical house of worship, we are reminded that the church is not a building, but a special people with a mission from our Lord. It is our desire to fulfill Christ's great commission and become a more community-focused church.

Lord willing, we plan to dedicate this house of worship to the Lord on the long weekend in September, 2016. Please mark your calendars and join us to experience God's blessings. More information will be communicated as we continue with our planning.

May God's peace and grace be with you all,
In Christ's love,

Chilliwack Church of God



Chilliwackchurchofgod.com
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Special Services 2016 in Canada, Germany, and U.S.A.

Pentecost Conference in Herford

MAY 14 - 16, 2016

Fest Services in Winnipeg, MB

MAY 21 - 23, 2016

Fest Services in Aylmer, ON

JULY 2 - 3, 2016

Bible Course in Aylmer, ON

AUGUST 15 - 26, 2016

Camp-Meeting in Blaubeuren

AUGUST 20 - 27, 2016

Fest Services in Chilliwack, BC

SEPTEMBER 2 - 4, 2016

DEDICATION SERVICE SATURDAY 2:30 P.M.

Fest Services in Flint, MI

SEPTEMBER 3 - 4, 2016

Pentecost

*O Holy Spirit, You've descended,
a Comfort for Christ's followers,
a Guide, from Him who has ascended,
You lead and keep us by Your power.*

*You are the Breath Divine, refreshing,
a holy, mighty, rushing Wind,
the Power of Pentecost, professing,
and yet as gentle as a friend.*

*You are a flame, a fire consuming,
that burns and glows, producing life.
You take our tongues, so unassuming
to testify despite all strife.*

*You are the fountain, living water,
a spring that never shall run dry.
Who comes to drink is well looked after;
the thirsty soul, You satisfy.*

*You are the oil, the precious ointment
that will anoint those sent by God,
and give them gifts for their appointment.
With oil, the lamps can shine abroad.*

*You are the Spirit, full of Power,
that gives us strength in all we do.
We pray for blessings, holy showers,
success for missions comes from You.*

*O Holy Spirit, Love supernal,
into our hearts, pour out your love,
consume and cleanse, that life eternal
remain with us from heaven above.*

*Spirit of Grace, may self denial,
humility, and self-control
remain with us through ev'ry trial;
O, guide and lead us safely home.*

Dora Rappard