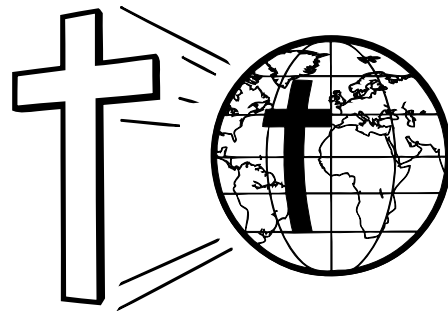


Foundation of Faith



THE ASCENSION-GREAT JOY?

WHAT DOES THE ASCENSION
MEAN TO YOU?

IF WE
ONLY HAD TIME!

HONORING MOTHERS

FINDING GOD IN SCIENCE

THE ASCENSION

MAY 2017

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Editor

Hans-Dietrich Nimz

Editorial Team

Sieghard Schulz

Harry Semenjuk

Ron Taron

Hermann Vogt

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Questions and suggestions can be sent to:
contact@foundationoffaith.cc

Please address all other correspondence and subscription requests to:

Christian Unity Press

5195 Exchange Drive

Flint, MI 48507

Tel.: (810) 732-1831

or email us at

cupress@thechurchofgod.cc

www.christianunitypress.com

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Editorial

Dear Reader!

Perhaps you have heard the proverb: "After every winter comes spring." And the poet J.F. Raeder urges us confidently:

Lord, my soul is waiting, hopes patiently,

Trusts in You completely, You help willingly.

Be not dismayed, brightly dawns the day,

After winter's coldness spring will come to stay.

Yes, after the cold and dark comes spring. The light of the sun awakens everything to new life and brings new hope.

In the month of May, we first celebrate Mother's Day and thank God for our mothers, grandmothers, parents, and ancestors.

The month of May also makes us forget the atrocities of the Passion Week. The Son of God had to suffer greatly: the great injustice, the agonizing hours on the cross of Golgotha! But thanks be to God! Out of the terrible darkness, sadness, and hopelessness shines the glorious resurrection of the Son of God! Out of the night breaks forth the godly light. Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, has banished the power of death. Seven-hundred years before Christ, the prophet Isaiah already declared: "Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high" (Isaiah 52:13). Yes, very high, exalted, due the greatest honor, and seated at the right of the Majesty on high, the Father.

Dear Reader, in this month we celebrate the Ascension of Christ and know that the Son of God is given "dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7:14). Yes, serve this exalted Savior, worship Him, and follow Him!

H. D. Nimz

What Does the Ascension Mean to You?

“A life of benevolence, with a strong sense of duty, has come to an end”—so read a memorial in a newspaper. That is a good report of a life well lived! It is commendable for someone to have lived a life of benevolence, especially into advanced years!

But let us take a look at another memorial. This one read: “The Lord . . . took him . . . home into His heavenly kingdom. We know that he is secure in the gracious hands of the Savior.”

Dear reader, do you notice the difference? Most people are used to putting a period at the end of life—as if it were a financial balance sheet—without troubling themselves about whether the entries will balance out or not. In fact, every world-view that is founded on material things or on human philosophy will shatter sooner or later. That is because the foundation is not firmly grounded on the truth, on Jesus Christ. The anchor of life will not hold on the sandy soil of this world’s wisdom. Without a goal, without much thought, most people just live day by day. Enjoying life and having a good time is what matters most. Since they do not factor life after death into the equation, their motto is “let’s have fun!” And they think that this kind of a life simply ends with death. For that reason, they do not want to be reminded about the end and do not wish to think about it.

Jesus Christ always taught that there is an eternal realm above and a world that passes away here below (John 8:23-24). One who is not born again does not have an eye for the world above, and it makes no sense to them. On the contrary, for the believer the eternal realm is of greater reality than the present, which is subject to decay.

The eternal, heavenly world is where God and His glory is completely revealed. Jesus Christ is the sun of the realm above. He is the goal of the believer, “for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2b).

With the ascension of our Lord, the circle of events manifesting the great and marvelous deeds of God in salvation for humanity through the incarnation has been completed. Jesus came from heaven to earth to seek and to save what was lost, and then returned to heaven. Belief in the ascension, is not merely the beginning, but rather, a continual part of the life of faith. Whoever knows God as Father, and Jesus Christ as Savior, is able to believe in the resurrection and ascension of our Lord. It makes no sense to speculate about the Ascension’s possibility or impossibility. Rather, you must be sure that you have personally experienced salvation through Jesus Christ. You must definitely know that salvation is yours.

As Christians, we are people who are with Christ. He has called us to Himself and given us a new direction. Our past has been rectified. We know our Lord in heaven, and that is where our focus is. Focusing on the above, however, does not leave us blind or ignorant in regard to the concerns and burdens or the necessary duties of this life. Since our Lord is in heaven, our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). That means we are citizens of another world. In this world, where other lords rule and dominate, we are temporary sojourners, guests, and aliens. Jesus said His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). His rule was never a rule of this world. Therefore, the life of a Christian is a hidden life, hidden in God. Christians have received their life from Christ, who is in heaven.

Those who do not know Christ do not know what real life is, and that we cannot live without Him. Things “above” have become the reality of our life. Jesus of Nazareth was bound to time and place, but the exalted Christ belongs to the whole world at every moment. He says: “For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20).

True Christians are always a minority among the great of this world, defenseless like sheep among wolves. But all the kingdoms of this world, no matter how mighty, will end sooner or later. We have seen this repeatedly. Jesus' kingdom is the only eternal one, and its citizens remain with Him as well.

The ascension of our Lord protects us against despair and discouragement. It gives us the strength we need. As believers, we praise God on the Day of Ascension, because Christ, as the heavenly and eternal high priest, lives for us and prays. He can understand us and help us (Hebrews 2:18) because He has entered into the Holy of Holies in heaven in order to intercede for us (Hebrews 9:24). On Calvary, He gave Himself as the sacrifice for our sins, but as Mediator and Intercessor, Jesus Christ stands in the center of reality and history. At the throne of God, He is the advocate for every single one of His own. Our case lies in his hands.

Faith is comforted with the knowledge that the final decision and judgment concerning our lives is made by God Himself. The decision is determined by heavenly values. For Christ, our brother and high priest, has gone into heaven and is our advocate, protecting us; He knows us.

Dear Friend, what does the Day of Ascension mean to you? Jesus came to earth to bless. And those who allowed Him to bless them were richly blessed. Blessing, He ascended into heaven. The last glimpse His followers had of Him was blessing with lifted hands. This Savior is so wonderful. Prayerfully and with great joy, the disciples returned home after their Lord had parted from them. Dear reader, can you join in prayerfully with the disciples? Can you share their joy? May God grant you this.

W. B.

The Ascension

It pains me to realize that only few Christians know something about the meaning of Ascension Day.

I was once asked by a theologian if I still believed in Jesus' "balloon ride." At the time, this question hurt and shocked me. For a long time, I could not come to terms with the fact that there are people whose careers are to speak about the Word of God, but who shake the fundamental truths of proclaiming Christ.

Nonetheless, it seems that many have difficulty with this. In view of the Ascension, the Bible speaks of a reality that removes the dimension of people and replaces and overlays it with a godly dimension.

Ascension! From the biblical account, Christ's church has come to realize that this word, which is objectionable and unclear to so many, cannot fully express what its entire meaning entails.

In his book, "Ascended to heaven," Professor Hans Rohrbach, PhD, a physicist, depicts this great occurrence. He speaks of the existence of visible and invisible reality. Those who cannot distinguish between these two worlds will be lim-

ited in their understanding.

The ascension of Jesus Christ means that after He completed His mission of salvation, He returned to God, His Father, to a world that is invisible to our physical eyes. Out of this "heaven" He will someday appear visibly, recognizable and perceptible to our senses.

What would Christ's church be without this Day of Ascension of her Lord? The Trinity of God would be questioned. What could a resurrected Lord mean to His church if He had remained on earth? Nothing! He would have remained a spirit among many spirits.

However, after having experienced salvation through Jesus Christ, we know that God's holy Trinity is a precious, godly reality. God's Word says that the Father gave the Son the power and glory that existed before the foundation of the world. He is the Lamb of God that was slain for our sins. That is why He was glorified by the Father and the angelic world. He alone be given all praise, honor, and glory in all eternity!

This alone is the profound meaning of Ascension Day!



THE ASCENSION

The Ascension— Great Joy?

“Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.” (Luke 24:51-52)

When we read this account, at first, it seems a bit strange: the disciples had just lost their Master for the second time, yet left the scene with great joy in their hearts! Just a few weeks earlier they had seen Jesus dying on the cross, and had turned away with broken hearts and overwhelming grief. Now they had lost Him again, and walked away “with great joy!” What was it about the Lord’s ascension that brought the disciples such great joy?

They knew where He was going

He wasn’t being forced to endure more strife and suffering. He was taken up into heaven, where He sat down at the Father’s right side. He was returning to where He had come from. He was reclaiming His rightful position as King of all kings, and Lord of all lords, as the Ruler of the universe! His work was accomplished, His goal reached.

Jesus’ eternal kingdom had been established

Shortly before the Ascension the disciples had yet asked the Lord when He would establish a physical kingdom on earth, even though Jesus had just spent forty days teaching them about His eternal kingdom. Only after the Ascension could the disciples understand that this kingdom was of a spiritual nature. And then, after the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit gave them the clarity to understand that this kingdom is the church of God!

The Lord’s ascension was the culmination of the fulfilled plan of salvation. Jesus had finished His work and departed from this earth, but His kingdom would continue on into eternity—in the hearts of His children. And the disciples rejoiced that they had citizenship in this kingdom through God’s gift of salvation. They were born into it by the blood of the Lamb of God, their Savior! We, too, as God’s children, have the same privilege. Isn’t that a reason for great joy?

Jesus hadn’t deserted His disciples

Even though He wasn’t with them physically, He had promised them: “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you” (John 14:18). “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever” (John 14:16). The disciples had only to wait, watch, pray, and consecrate themselves to Him, and they would be filled with the Holy Spirit and with power. From then on, by His Spirit, they would always have the wonderful presence of Jesus with and in them!

Jesus had called them to be witnesses

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Their mission and their calling didn’t end

with Jesus' ascension into heaven, rather it had really just begun! Their time with the Lord was the preparation for their life's work. They were privileged to proclaim the wonderful, saving, bondage-breaking, victorious Gospel of salvation in Jesus to a lost world! They were called to testify that Jesus had died for the sins of all the world, that He arose from the dead, and that He was alive today . . . and forever!

The Lord has also entrusted us with this Great Commission. Shouldn't that be cause for us to rejoice as well?

Jesus was glorified in the eyes of the disciples

Three of them had already experienced this on the Mount of Transfiguration. Now, as Jesus was taken up into heaven on the clouds and in the presence of angels, all of them stood in awe. There was no doubt in their minds that He was God. He had told them beforehand what was going to occur (His death, His Resurrection, His Ascension), and now everything He had proclaimed came to pass just as He had said it. The two angels confirmed that this Jesus, Whom they loved and knew so well, was the eternal God. Overwhelmed by this experience and by His glory, they stood there astounded and stared at the heavens. As they worshiped Him, their hearts were filled with joy that they knew this glorious God and Savior and had personally experienced Him! Do you rejoice in this experience as well?

Sometimes life tries to discourage us with many worries and trials. At times serving God can even seem hard (or Satan tries to convince us of that), but we can refocus and rejoice: we have a victorious Savior and God Who has overcome the forces of darkness and death, and Who reigns over all creation from His throne in heaven. All of our battles are known to Him, and He is ever in control!

Jesus had promised to return

If someone we love and appreciate leaves us, but says "I'm coming back soon," having to separate is not so hard. We have the expectation that we will see each other again soon.

Before we got married, my fiancé left home and travelled to Mexico for one school year to teach there. Parting was very hard for us. At that time there was no internet or social media for communicating, and the village where she was teaching had no telephone. The days we were apart seemed to go so slowly! So I sent her a special daily calendar which included a message for her every day, as well as the slowly dwindling remaining days until we would see each other again. Our longing for one another grew, as well as our joy as the day got closer and closer. And finally the day was there! Our hearts were full, and our joy was complete.

In like manner, Christians wait for the Lover of their soul. The Lord gifted us with His Word. Every day we can

read a "love letter" from Him. We can satiate our longing for Him, and we can rejoice ever more: Soon Jesus is coming again! Then we'll see Him face to face . . . and our joy will be full.

The Lord promised His children in John 14:1-3, "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." Jesus is returning soon! And then He'll take us home to Him, to that incredible place He has gone to prepare for us. Isn't that a reason to rejoice greatly?

Jesus blessed His disciples

"And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven" (Luke 24:50-51). What child of God wouldn't be overjoyed to be so visibly blessed by the Lord? What could be better than to know: "the blessing of God rests on my life"? This blessing of the Lord was clearly discernable in the lives of the disciples. And when they were subsequently filled with the Holy Spirit, rivers of blessing flowed from their lives.

This very same blessing is indispensable in our lives as well. And having it results in worship and great joy, just like the disciples!

They worshiped Him

"And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God" (Luke 24:52-53). For the first time, the disciples came into the invisible presence of Jesus and prayed to Him. Suddenly they noticed that He was there! He accepted their worship and filled their hearts with Himself. They were truly not alone! He had kept His promise! He wasn't lost to them! And so they rejoiced greatly. They knew: Jesus is as close as the next prayer! What joy!

And so, let's close with another look at the Ascension. Does it resonate in your heart with great joy? We don't know the Lord Jesus any other way as being there in heaven; we've never met Him physically here on earth. And yet His victory, His finished work of grace, and His presence to the right of the Father in heaven bring us great joy. Every word that He spoke is true. He lives! He reigns . . . and soon He'll return and take us home to be with Him.

The disciples "were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." Let us do so as well.

R. Taron



THE ASCENSION

God's Eternal Plan of Salvation

We are so thankful to God for His precious Word, for our Bible. As a child of God we have the privilege to nourish our soul with grace from His healing fountain, and we begin to realize how wonderful God's divine plan of salvation actually is.

How grateful we should be when we read: "Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself [God's Son], that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him" (Ephesians 1:9-10).

A mystery remains a mystery until it has been revealed and made clearly visible. From that moment on, one can grasp and understand it.

God's eternal plan of salvation is referred to in His Word as the counsel, plan, and divine will of God. God will follow through with His plan, whether or not we believe it or accept it. No power in the world can ultimately change His counsel, no matter how much it is ridiculed or fought against. We read: "The counsel of the Lord stands forever" (Psalm 33:11)! No matter what plans people make, the outcome will always be what God has planned. "Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it" (Isaiah 46:11). God's plan remains forever. He does what is pleasing to Him. He follows through with His plan into eternity.

Here is another word of Scripture which clearly shows us God's effort, how the heavenly Father allowed His Son to suffer and die to redeem us. We read: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When

You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed [descendants], He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand” (Isaiah 53:10).

There on the cross of Calvary, the Savior called out after terrible pain and suffering: “It is finished!” (John 19:30).

In the book of Hebrews we read: “Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption” (Hebrews 9:12).

Whatever happens in the world, however enemies rage, the fact remains that God’s plan is set: Jesus wants to lead all people to the knowledge of the truth and to recognize Him as Lord and head of His church. Our Savior says: “I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). Yes, Christ is Lord and also remains the divine builder of His church.

We recognize that He not only brought us salvation on Calvary, but also that on the Day of Resurrection, Jesus sought His disciples, consoled them, and brought them together again. And then on the Day of Pentecost, He visibly presented His church. Through His witnesses, the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, the Lord added 3,000 souls to His church in one day.

Even after persecution and great tribulation the Lord led His people. Stephen gave his life just as his Master; his blood became the seed for new souls. Who brought Saul on to his knees before the gates of Damascus? Yes, Jesus Himself intervened: “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”—So it happened that Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor of the church, became a chosen tool for the Lord. And so, God has worked throughout the ages.

When we as people make plans, often we have to change them or come to the conclusion that they were not good. But this is not so with God. He will follow through with what He has decided. God will never abolish or withdraw His decision. Even in evil and ungodly times, His plan of salvation prevails!

Dear soul, do not be discouraged! God is faithful, His goodness and mercy are new every morning! Those who believe in Him will not be put to shame, for we read: “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

The Lord says clearly and decisively: “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away” (Matthew 24:35).

Dear reader, the Lord unfailingly carries out His decision and His plan! Praise be to God forever and ever!

H. D. Nimz

Ascension Song

*Great Redeemer, at the right hand
Of the Father, where You are.
You assist us that we might stand
In the Kingdom of Your power.*

*Our redemption, our salvation,
By Your precious sacrifice,
Is complete; in adoration,
Thank You for eternal life.*

*It is through Your intercession
For Your people everywhere,
That You’ve pardoned our transgressions,
Making us the kingdom’s heirs.*

*Like engraved names on a breastplate,
Ours are in the Book of Life,
All who entered by that one gate
Through Your precious sacrifice.*

*Blessed are the poor in spirit,
Not of this world is their lot,
But remembered by Your merit,
Safe within the arms of God.*

*Praise to You, our Mediator,
In Your sanctuary great.
We adore You, precious Savior,
May thanksgivings resonate.*

The Lord's Prayer

by Gerhard Mielke - Part 2

The Lord's Prayer begins with, "Our Father in heaven." In the last issue of *Foundation of Faith*, it was observed that in the words "our Father," we recognize that Jesus includes both God and our neighbor. These words are linked with the greatest commandment and the other, which is like it. We cannot get to the Father if we do not include the "our." That is, we cannot please God if we have hatred in our heart for others. John writes: "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15).


In fact, if we wish to have access to the Father, we need to have peace with our brothers and sisters. The "our" must necessarily precede "Father," since Jesus Himself says in the Sermon on the Mount: "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).

If God is our Father, it also implies that only He is our Father. A Father can have many children, but a child cannot have many fathers. And if there are many fathers, then not every father is "our" father. Our characteristics give a hint as to who our father might be. In John 8:41 and 44, Jesus said to those who were seeking to end His life: "You do the deeds of your father. . . . You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him."

The spiritual title "Father" should be reserved for God alone. Jesus says, "you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven" (Matthew 23:8b-9). Neither priest nor pope, neither bishop nor pastor should be addressed as "Father." Only God alone is the "Holy Father."

If God is our father and we are His children, we must exhibit His characteristics. Peter writes: "But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy'" (1 Peter 1:15-16). In Galatians 5:22-23 we read about those characteristics that we will display if we are part of God's spiritual family. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." In the verses preceding, the works of those who are not from God are listed. Jesus says: "You will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16).

As Father of His family, God cares for His children. He provides for our needs. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning" (James 1:17). As our Father, God loves us. What is more, God not only loves, but the Bible says: "God is love" (1 John 4:16b). Unfortunately, on earth there are some fathers who are not good fathers. Yet, even if you had a father that disappointed you, God is different. He is the perfect Father. You can trust Him. He says, "Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you" (Isaiah 49:15).



*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and
the glory forever. Amen.
(Matthew 6:9-13)*

Since Jesus calls God His Father, and He teaches us to call Him Father, Jesus makes Himself our brother. As we read in Philippians 2:5-9, He once again humbles Himself. By these words, He indicates that He wishes to walk beside us, and share our fellowship, our joys and tears. Indeed, He has promised to be with us every day until the end of this age (Matthew 28:20).

We pray: “Our Father in heaven.” This phrase means that God is above us. This is true in multiple ways. God, who is in heaven is above all. Therefore, the wise man Solomon warns us: “Do not be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; therefore let your words be few” (Ecclesiastes 5:2).

Solomon is instructing us to take our vows before God very seriously. In comparison to God, we are mere dust. Although Christ refers to us as friends and calls us brothers and sisters—this because of the personal relationship we can now have with God the Father and His Son through salvation—nevertheless we must never forget that we, as mere humans, are dealing with God. We are praying to Him, who spoke to Moses: “Take off your shoes before you draw near, for the ground on which you stand is holy ground.” In Psalm 73:11 God is referred to as the “Most High.” There is none above Him.

God says: (Isaiah 55:8-9)

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD.
“For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.”

There are some beautiful mysteries regarding God’s Kingdom that have been revealed to us. Some of the spiritual blessings we have received are hard to understand for those who have not experienced them. Nonetheless, we can never completely comprehend the heavenly realm that we will have access to one day. Jesus said to Nicodemus: “If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” (John 3:12).

Looking up to heaven means we look away from the things of the earth. Jesus wants us to lay up treasures in heaven, not treasures on earth (Matthew 6:19-21). Just like a ship is to be in the water, but the water is not to be in the ship, so we are to be in the world but not of the world. In Philippians 3:20 we read that “our citizenship is in heaven.”

When His disciples came back from their journeys and announced with joy that even the demons were subject to them in the name of Jesus, Jesus answered them: “Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20).

In Hebrews 12:23 it is confirmed that we are part of a heavenly church, a heavenly people, a heavenly family. The Father who is in heaven wants to take us to heaven where He is because we belong to the heavenly family as His people. Peter assures us of “an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Peter 1:4). All this because “Our Father” is “in heaven.”

Finding God in Science

When I first heard the term “Christian apologetics” from my friend, I had a puzzled look on my face and he asked: “You know what that is, right?”—“Yeah, how we as Christians are to apologize when we do wrong?” I have since learned that apologetics is something entirely different!

So what is apologetics? It is a reasoned argument or writing in justification of something, especially in religious doctrine and beliefs.

Unfortunately, some of the reasons we give for our faith come across more like an apology rather than a convincing argument that is made for God and the Gospel.

As Christians, we are called to be ready to give a reason for our faith and hope: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed” (1 Peter 3:15-16). The root word for “to give a defense” is “apologia,” which is where we get the word “apologetics.”

Applied to the Christian faith it asks the questions: Why do we believe what we believe? Is there actual proof that God is real? How do we know God is real and not just something made up (beyond tradition and feeling)? Is there physical proof of God’s existence beyond the Bible? Those are *very* good questions that we need to think about!

Young people, if you do not have a solid answer to some of these questions it will be hard to stand against the arguments that the professors in school or even fellow students or coworkers will throw at you. So how can you give them a reasonable answer that God does exist? Can we find God in science?

WHAT IS SCIENCE?

Science is a human endeavor to discover the structure of the world and the laws that govern its workings. There have been some fascinating discoveries made about the world we live in, from the macro to the

micro world. Right from the atom to the universe. The big question is: Are science and the Bible at odds with each other? It is obvious that the Bible is at odds with many scientists, *but* the Bible is not contrary to science! It is very much in harmony with it. Although the Bible is not written as a scientific book, what it does say about the world we live in is accurate.

Contrary to frequently made statements, you don’t have to shut down your mind or leave science if you are embracing Christianity! The Bible, in fact, speaks favorably about exploring this wonderful world God has created. “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter” (Proverbs 25:2). That is what scientists do, search the matters that God created. Many are on this endeavor and their honest evidence leads them to the conclusion that the universe had a beginning and a Creator.

So how do we prove that God is real to a generation that uses science as their medium to find answers? How do we prove it outside of the Bible?

THE PROBLEM OF “PROVING” GOD IN SCIENCE

God is a spirit and therefore we can’t “observe” Him. That is what is troubling the scientific community; they can’t put God in a test tube on the lab bench and observe Him. They can look at amazing galaxies and stars—but they don’t have a telescope that can be directed at a certain spot in the universe where we can see the pearly gates. They can travel to the moon and back, but they don’t have a shuttle that can take you to hell and back to see if that place is real.

Consequently, they throw in the towel and say: “If it’s not observable, there is no proof and I don’t believe it.”

But God is a spirit; you can’t see Him with your naked eye. So, how do you respond if you have a classmate, a teacher or professor who, like Richard Dawkins, openly calls you stupid for not believing in evolution?

THE UNDENIABLE EVIDENCE OF GOD

More and more scientists are agreeing that the universe had a beginning. “Christianity Today”



published an article entitled “Finding God in Science” that stated: “At the beginning of the 20th century, most scientists did not believe that the universe had a beginning. But now, about 98 percent of them do. All of today’s evidence shows that the universe is constantly expanding. And if it’s expanding, it must have had a beginning.”¹

While studying the behavior of the planets, stars, and the universe they came face to face with the undeniable fact that there was a beginning! Many still do not acknowledge God, but they are acknowledging that something caused it. There *is* something external to our space-time continuum that acted upon the universe to cause it to come into existence.

The universe is expanding. That means that if you go back far enough everything is small and had to have a cataclysmic beginning. If you ever looked at a high-speed video of a balloon being popped, water flies in all directions, expanding from its original place. If they reverse the video you see it goes back, closer and closer together until it is back in the balloon. If the universe is expanding now, and if we reverse it long enough, it all must assimilate into the point from where and when it came into existence.

The rate of expansion also points to God. The rate is so perfectly fine-tuned that if it was changed at the beginning by one part in 10^{60} (that’s a one with 60 zeros after it), the universe would either be in chaos today or it wouldn’t exist. If it was expanding by that tiny fraction faster, matter couldn’t hold together and we’d have no stars and galaxies. If it was expanding that tiny bit slower, it would have collapsed long ago.

If the universe had a beginning, there had to be laws acting upon it to enable it to happen. Science calls this “Quantum fluctuations” (the temporary change in the amount of energy in a point in space). The question is:

“Where did that law come from if there was *nothing* there?” Something had to cause that to happen if there was “nothing”! There had to be laws that acted on it. If what we see now had a beginning, caused by something outside of this universe, something caused it to happen; something that is outside our realm of testing. Because it is something that is not physical, acts on the physical, created the physical from nothing, *and* it predates the universe!² Doesn’t that sound like a description of God?

We hear a lot about the “laws of nature.” There actually is no such thing! Nature doesn’t have any laws; there are laws that nature obeys, but nature doesn’t make or change the laws. There are only God-given laws that nature obeys.

There is no other reasonable explanation other than this: the metaphysical force that acted upon the universe, that created the universe is GOD! No other explanation fits this as well as Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” In Colossians 1:15-16 we read: “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.”

So, science is *not* contrary to the Bible—they fit like a hand in a tailor-made glove! This is just one of the scientific proofs of God! There are many more that could be discussed, such as the complexity of cells, explanation of consciousness, and conscience. The key issue is what we do with the evidence that we see in science.

[to be continued]

John Reimer
Barrhead, AB

¹ www.christianitytoday.com - Finding God in Science

² Gerald Schroeder – “Science Discovers God”

What Will People Say?

The minority of people live their own life. Most are dependent on the question, “What will people say?” To the many thousands who have become used to caring more about the judgment of others than the peace of their souls, this question becomes a curse.

What are these “people”, who live today, but could die tomorrow? Are we to lay our fate in the hands of those who are like chaff? Will the people who are given this consideration stand by us when we are in trouble? Our trouble or happiness only matters to them as entertainment. Why should we then make our eternal salvation dependent on the opinion of people?

A missionary once told the story of an imprisoned prince who was to be freed under the condition that he allow himself to be led through the entire town at noon.

“Oh,” the young man said, “what faces will the people make?”—The king replied, “You do not yet know how you are to be led through the town.”

When it got close to noon, a crystal bowl that was filled to the brim with milk was placed in his hands. “As soon as you spill a drop of milk, you will be killed,” said the king.

One of the king’s henchman followed closely behind the young man with a drawn sword in order to slit his throat should one single drop spill from the bowl onto the ground.

People had come from near and far to see the prince on his walk. The crowd stood shoulder to shoulder along the streets. All windows were occupied, some had even climbed onto the roofs.

Once the young man had completed his walk through the crowds who had watched in breathless anticipation,

the king came up to him. “So,” he asked, “what kind of faces did the people make?”

“Oh king,” the young man answered, “I didn’t see any of them. I only saw my life in my hands and my death in my throat!”

Let us do the same as this young man. Let us not look towards the gaping crowds, but always carry our soul in our hands.—Before us life, behind us death, for it’s only a step to the grave.

Soon time will be ended, eternity’s near,
 It is only a step to the grave;
 God’s warnings are sounding, oh, will you not hear?
 It is only a step to the grave.
 How near is your dying, O faltering man?
 For there’s only a step to the grave;
 Your life at the longest is only a span,
 And there’s only a step to the grave.
 Backslider in darkness, in sorrow and sin,
 It is only a step to the grave;
 The door may soon close that’s inviting you in,
 For there’s only a step to the grave.
 The end is soon coming, O sinner, beware,
 For it’s only a step to the grave;
 Repent, or you’ll miss that bright haven so fair,
 For it’s only a step to the grave.
 It is only a step to the grave,
 It is only a step to the grave;
 O sinner, awake, your soul is at stake,
 And it’s only a step to the grave.

D. O. Teasley

“You, God, see Me!”

In my life, these four little words have benefited me more than anything else. They were words that my mother taught me early in life: “You, God, see me!” I will still thank her for that in eternity.

I still see her before me, as if it were today, a good mother. Every morning, after she had dressed me and prayed with me, she placed her hand on my head and would solemnly say: “Now do not forget throughout the entire day, my child: ‘You, God, see me!’”

Unfortunately, I often did forget this during my playing and with my friends during the day and overstepped the commandments of my mother when her eye could not see me. How ashamed I was then and looked away

when, after the evening prayer, she sat me on her knee and asked me: “Did you always think today of: ‘You, God, see me’? Even if no human eye is watching you, even if you are alone in the garden or in a dark basement, God’s eye is everywhere and sees everything that you do. Therefore beware that you do not commit a sin nor overstep His holy commandments.”

I have hidden that deep in my heart, and this has led me throughout my life. Yes, I can honestly state that no other influence from my childhood years has followed me continuously as have the often repeated four small words by my mother, who also lived by them: “You, God, see me!”

G. N.



A Letter to My Mom

Dear Mother!

I wish you a blessed Mother's Day! As I write this, my heart is filled with gratitude to God that He gave me such a wonderful mother. When I think back, so many beautiful memories of my childhood come to mind. Being a mother and grandmother myself now, I appreciate everything so much more and I often wonder how you managed to do it all.

Fifty years ago we immigrated to Canada. I know you went through many problems and challenges during that time. With joy I reflect back on how our life has changed, especially after you and father gave your hearts to the Lord. Your total devotion and love for God and his Church were admirable. Your example has encouraged me to follow in your footsteps. Your love to the work of God and your hospitality will always remain in our memory. Your doors were always open and you were always willing to help the people around you and in the congregation.

You always encouraged me to serve the Lord with joy and to trust Him in all things. I am particularly grateful to you that you showed us how to be thankful in all things and to lead a simple life. You were a wonderful example to me in forgiveness as well. You taught me many valuable lessons, not only in the spiritual realm, but also in the daily life. Thank you for your teaching and training in regard to work, how to deal with other people, and respect for the people in higher authority. All of this was very helpful in my life. You have sown the seeds of friendliness and love; now we can reap harvests.

I remember how tirelessly you worked so that your family could have a better life than you yourself had. You could make do with what little you had. And yet you, you and father, always provided for us and protected us.

Thank you for your love and concern for your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Their best was always your first priority. You really lived a selfless life.

Although your health has declined and your body is becoming weaker, I am happy that we are still able to talk and laugh together and share memories of the past. Your longing is now directed towards heaven. And your wish is that all your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be saved and one day be with you in heaven. Now it is up to me to pass on this love and care that you have demonstrated to me when I was growing up.

May God grant you many years yet!

Your loving daughter

When Mothers Pray

It hardly seems possible that Numidia (now part of Algeria and Tunisia), where Christianity disappeared without a trace and where it just now is beginning to be reseeded here and there, was once a country of the first-born children of the Christian Church. In the first centuries, North Africa played a leading role in Christendom. Nowhere did the gospel find more zealous confessors. Nowhere were the writings of the apostles as well known among the upper and lower classes as in these mountain ranges and coastlines, which have now so long been alien to Christianity.

Here stood the house of the distinguished Patricius, who belonged to the Town Council of Thagaste and had been married to Monica since her twentieth year. Here this gentle, tender soul lived by the side of that heathen, violent-tempered, debauched man. For sixteen years, no matter how hopeless it seemed, she did not cease in prayer and supplication day and night, that the Lord might give her the soul of her husband, and lead him to repentance and faith. She did not doubt that God would hear her when his hour came. Although she never criticized him, the nearness of this noble soul was the most effective critique of his despotic, heathen life. Patricius began to feel ashamed of his life. An ever-deeper respect for his wife's faith seized and overcame his soul. Finally, in the year 371, he also found peace with God.

After the intense struggle for the soul of her husband, began the even greater struggle for the soul of her son, Aurelius Augustinus, to whom she gave birth in 354. Soon after his birth, she carried him in her arms to the house of prayer and consecrated him with a fervent prayer to the Lord.

At first, he was an obedient child, but at the age of fifteen he was sent to a school a few miles distant, and he ended up in the maelstrom of an immoral city. What a pity for the poor mother when he came back after a year, and the mother was forced to realize his depravity. As if on a stone, all maternal reminders bounced off the heart of the son. He himself later

lamented: "When I was at home in my sixteenth year, thorns of lewdness came out of my head. And no hand tore them out. My father laughed about it."

But Augustine never dared to contradict his mother, the gentle witness of God, to her face. But he did not want to obey. After the death of his father, he went to high school in Carthage and led a very frivolous life. But his mother now felt an even greater urge: "Pray! Pray!" She stood up there in the Numidian mountains, eyes weeping, lifting up her arms to heaven as Moses did during the Amalekite slaughter. Again and again she exhorted her son to read in the Holy Scriptures. She asked the Bishop of Thagaste to speak with her son. But he refused, and consoled her with the words: "A son of so many tears and prayers cannot be lost."

The time came when Monica followed her son to Milan in Italy, where he had become Professor of Oratory in the imperial residence. And there came the time when Augustine went to church for the first time in many years. First, only to hear the acclaimed speaker Ambrose. But he became more deeply and mightily moved by this powerful personality. Then came the great Easter night of the year 387, the night of the holiest fulfillment for Monica, when Augustine and Ambrose, two of the greatest teachers of the old church stood side by side, one baptizing the other.

Monica did not live to see her son become a man to whom Christianity of that time gave ear, who wrote many books, and the like. But her soul never desired honor and glory. She only wanted that those whom God had given her would be saved with her. And for this she prayed as a heroine of prayer: sixteen years for the husband, thirty years for the son. And her hopes were not dashed, though perhaps all the world had thought her prayers to be futile.

If this forgotten little town in the Numidian mountains of Christendom could call out one thing, it is the great admonition, too often overlooked, yet so thrillingly echoed in the Holy Scriptures: Pray!

Honoring Mothers

“Bathsheba therefore went to King Solomon, to speak to him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her and bowed down to her, and sat down on his throne and had a throne set for the king's mother; so she sat at his right hand” (1. Kings 2:19)

What a precious example of Old Testament motherly honor! A mother wishes to speak with her son who is a king. When he sees his mother, he stands up and goes toward her, bows before her and bids her to sit at the place of honor to the right of him.

Kings do not readily kneel before someone. In those days it was far less common than today. Through this deed, Solomon demonstrated that his mother had a much higher position than the king himself. He had every reason to bow down and give her the position of honor. For next to God, he had only his mother to thank for his life and his throne. If his aging mother had not stepped in at the very last minute and reminded his father David of God's will and his oath, Adonijah, Absalom's brother, would have been crowned instead of Solomon.

The influence of a mother cannot be erased from a child's life even when the child reaches a prestigious position. Do we believe that we are what we are in and of ourselves? A father's influence on a child's finances may be greater than a mother's. But a child's attitude towards finances is determined by his mother. A crown may be inherited from the father, but the manner and attitude in which the crown is worn is determined by the mother.

The woman who gave us life, who sustained us with her own life, who protected us and provided for us in our time of helplessness, who taught us to have the right attitude in the joyous and serious times of life and was deeply

involved in our personal struggles and times of success—she will always remain worthy of honor and recognition. Even royalty is obligated to show honor.

Now some may argue: “Yes, as long as a mother is young and full of life, then it is easy to bring her honor. But when she is old, frail and in need of care or has lost some of her good sense, can you expect such honor then?” God's word says: “And do not despise your mother when she is old. . . . Let your father and your mother be glad, and let her who bore you rejoice” (Proverbs 23:22b, 25).

Whoever does not honor his mother, but despises her, receives the following judgment from God's word: “There is a generation that curses its father, and does not bless its mother. . . . There is a generation—oh, how lofty are their eyes! And their eyelids are lifted up” (Proverbs 30:11, 13).

How many mothers have prematurely entrusted the proceeds of their work and efforts to their children and harvested ungratefulness and disdain! Such children are called thieves and criminals in the Bible: “Whoever robs his father or his mother, and says, ‘It is no transgression,’ the same is companion to a destroyer” (Proverbs 28:24). Not merely goods and possessions belong to her, but also recognition and honor.

Are all mothers worthy of honor?

Unfortunately not. In 2 Chronicles 22:3 we read: “[Ahaziah] also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother [Athaliah] advised him to do wickedly.”

We find a similar passage in the New Testament. There we read of a daughter who was prompted by her mother to request that the king kill John the Baptist (Matthew 14:18). No other council holds more weight for a child than a mother's advice. Many a son or daughter would behave themselves differently if they had an "Athaliah" or "Herodias" as a mother.

A mother is interested in her child's future.

Not every mother does this. A young, highly gifted girl wrote: "At age 12 I had a boyfriend. At age 14, I drank and had a sexual relationship with my boyfriend. At the ripe age of 17 I was weary of life." This child, a daughter of a Christian mother who knew nothing of her child's behavior or the trouble she had gotten into, sought help from a pastor. Can a mother and daughter live such separate lives in a godly home? In this case the words of Prov-

erbs 29:15b hold true: "But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother."

We know that Jesus' mother always paid close attention to her son's behavior and actions even if she did not always understand Him. Even at the very end she stood under His cross. Yes, a mother is the greatest when she stands beneath the cross of her child—whether the cross is deserved or not. She cannot remove the cross from him, but she can stand beneath it. This allows a child to forget his cross for just a moment. Never does a mother stand closer to her child than when she is under his cross.

And what if you do not have a mother?

Then heed this advice from the apostle Paul when he encourages Timothy to treat: "older women as mothers, [and] younger women as sisters, with all purity (1 Timothy 5:2).

Otto Grellert

The Fruit of a Mother's Determined Prayer

When David Talmage was 18 years old and lived at home with his brother Jakob and his sister, the three went out to a dance one evening. Shortly before they left, their sick mother called them to her bedside and said: "You are going to a dance tonight, but I would like you to know that I will be on my knees praying for you until you return." They left. When they returned at two o'clock in the morning, they had to walk past their mother's door. Casting a glimpse into her room, they saw that she was still kneeling at her bedside.

Early the next morning, Mother Talmage awoke her husband, asking him to arise to see what the problem was. She heard someone crying. With haste he entered the living room. There he found his daughter on her knees, crying. As he tried speaking to her, she answered: "Go to the barn, Father! David is in greater need than I am. I will be all right."

When he came to the barn, he found David. He was weeping under the powerful conviction that he was a sinner. A short time later, as Mr. Talmage was praying with his son, David said: "Go to Jakob. He needs you even more than I do. He is in the shed."

So on that morning, the Lord forgave the sins of the three Talmage children and cleansed them from all unrighteousness. This was an answer to the determined and specific prayer of their mother.

A few houses further on the same street lived David's fiancée. When he stood up from his knees, he immediately went to her and shared that he, his brother, and sister had received salvation. He encouraged her to give her heart to God. As they prayed together, she also found peace in her heart with Jesus.

When the church heard the news that these four souls were saved by the blood of Jesus, it provoked some excitement. This was followed by a revival which drew many people.

Later in life, David's fiancée became the mother of T. DeWitt Talmage (1832-1902), a well-known preacher. Several years later, this mother, along with four others, made a sacred promise. They agreed to meet every Wednesday afternoon to pray for their children until every child of the five families had received salvation. They held their promise until all the children received salvation.



FOR THE FAMILY

If We Only Had Time!

Many parents recognize the value of the family altar. They are convinced that it is good and blessed to have family devotions. They also admit that having devotions together has a good effect on parents, children, and all family members. They would like to have family devotions, but they say they cannot find time to do so. Most people admit that fathers and mothers of past generations always found time to have family devotions.

I know of a couple who lived years ago with their ten children on a farm. Their property was large. In order to take care of everything properly, the father was very busy with the older children from morning till night. Everyone worked diligently. During that time, the housewife, besides her housework, made many things herself: soap, carpets, blankets, and much more. She also helped out in the field and kept her house in perfect order.

But every morning after breakfast, even during the harvest, the father always picked up the big Bible, which lay on a small table, and read from it. Then everyone prayed together. Never did they neglect it with the excuse that they did not have time. And every evening, after dinner, the Bible was read again. Then they sang a song and prayed.

At that time, neither the father nor the mother had experienced true salvation. They were just church members. But both felt that they had to keep up with family devotions, no matter how busy they were. And the time came when both the husband and the wife experienced a true conversion. Some of their children also found the Lord.

Most older Christians remember something similar, where family devotions were never neglected. And years

ago, people mostly worked longer and harder than today. And yet they always found time for family devotions.

It is not a good testimony that one can often not find time for it today. What is the reason for this? If our ancestors had time to do so, we too can find time to do so if we only want to. Yes, is it perhaps not, because we do not have a real desire for family devotions, that it is not important to us?

Perhaps many have not yet realized that an atmosphere of devotion and reverence before God in the home is a necessity if the right influence on the growing children is to be exercised. The good and the noble are thereby placed in the foreground. The love of truth, sincerity and true beauty is thereby nurtured and strengthened. Self-seeking and other evil inclinations are suppressed. A holy reverence for divine things is implanted in the hearts of the family members. Yes, God is indeed brought into such a home, where one is in communion with Him.

Years ago, many homes had wall hangings that said: "God bless our home!" and the like. Today one does not find it as often. But we need the divine blessing just as people of earlier times did. Just as we will have no true success in our personal life without God, we cannot establish a godly home without God's help, His blessing, His support, and His presence. Without Him, a home cannot be blessed.

Does God have a place in your home? How much time out of the 24 hours do you dedicate to Him? How much or how little time do you dedicate for family devotions?

N. Fletcher

Christ in the Home

“And it was heard that He was in the house” (Mark 2:1b).

At that time, it was a great privilege to have Christ visit the home. Today it is an even greater privilege. Back then, He stayed only temporarily in a home. Today, He is present continuously wherever He has been accepted.

Wherever the Bible is read, Christ is then also present because He is in His Word. If through belief Christ lives in the heart of a family member, then Christ is in the home. It becomes obvious that He is present whether this person is the head of the family or a child. If Christ lives in all family members, then He occupies the whole home. However, in a home where no member has Christ as the “hope of heaven” in his heart, then one cannot joyfully say that He is present.

In whichever house a believing family moves into, Christ also moves in, and it will soon become apparent that He is present there. If houses could talk, they could speak of pain, sin, and misery that existed therein because Christ was absent! They could also tell of tears, of wrestling with God, of blessings from prayers, and of delights because Christ had moved into this house! Dear reader, what does your home look like? Does Christ live within?

If Christ lives within your home, it will be a friendly place. There will be order in the family. Love defines the atmosphere, and family members will practice mercy with each other. Even if

riches do not abide within, there usually is more bread available here than in a home where sin reigns, because sin is more expensive than mercy.

If Christ is in your home, there is at least one witness of God living there. A true Christian, be they the head of the home, a child, or a servant, is a constant reminder to all other inhabitants. There is not only a Bible in the home, but there is also a living letter that all may read. There can scarcely be a person in this home who can fool themselves by saying that the way of salvation was unknown to them. The light that the Lord has ignited shines constantly.

If Christ is in your home, which was not built by human hands, then a direct connection exists between Christ and this home. If you are the head of your family and Christ lives in your heart, you will have erected a family altar from which daily prayers rise up to heaven. Even if you are a member of the family who cannot establish the house rules, you can still set up an altar, upon which rests the foot of a ladder that reaches into heaven. At this altar, you pray for the whole family and thus uphold this connection. Who can know the dilemmas that are avoided through answered prayers and the blessings that are prayed down into this home?

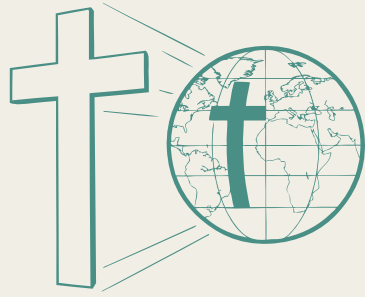
If Christ lives in your home, then God’s special protection is present. Any godless people in this home have no idea that they are also under God’s special protection, for which they should

be thankful. If there had been ten righteous people in Sodom, the whole city would have been spared destruction. Is it too much to say that some families were spared disaster because one person, acceptable to God, was present in the home? A believing person in a home is better protection against thieves and other violence than locks and bolts.

Therefore, it is supremely important that we have Christ in our home. How can we ensure this indescribable blessing? If He lives in our hearts through our belief in Him and He dwells in us, nothing else can satisfy us. Christ is the only salvation; Christ in me is my salvation, my hope for eternity.

Therefore, we need to ensure that Christ dwells in our hearts, not only for our sake but also for the sake of our neighbors. It is not irrelevant whether we are a blessing or a curse to others or whether we take them along to either heaven or hell.

Husband, do you profess to be a Christian? Then you must have Christ in you and let it be known in your home for your wife’s sake! Wife, if you are the Christian, let Christ become known in your life for your husband’s sake! Husband or wife, live a Christian life for the sake of your children! Who knows, husband, wife, or child, whether you may be contributing to the salvation of your loved ones. This can only occur if you have Christ in your heart and His presence is visible to others. What a privilege it is to bring Christ into a house where He does not yet dwell!



Radio Program Message of Salvation

Friedrich Krebs, Kitchener (ON)

The Honorable Mother

Mother's Day should be a special memorial day for our mothers whereby we express appreciation and gratitude for their love and motherly care. What does this love and motherly care look like? The Bible speaks about it.

Mother's Day should be a special memorial day for our mothers. In Proverbs 31:10-11, King Solomon wrote a beautiful passage on women and mothers who faithfully and responsibly, in complete devotion, fulfill their domestic and maternal duties: "Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain."

Her proficiency shows itself in her diligence, her skill, her domestic knowledge, and her tireless care of her family. She keeps order in the house and in the family and does not give herself to idleness, self-care, or vices. She is reliable and virtuous, and wisdom and instruction come from her mouth. These natural qualities and predispositions make her more valuable than the most precious pearls.

Due to her accomplishments and attitude, the works of her hands will honor her just as a work honors its master. Therefore: "Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also . . . and let her own works praise her in the gates" (Proverbs 31:28, 31).

Unfortunately, such praise cannot be given to all mothers. In many cases, mothers have neglected their domestic duties and maternal responsibilities. One very sad omission lies in the failure to educate and instruct their children in the Word of God. From the the Bible's point of view, these mothers cannot be praised. Their honor is called into question, and whether their sons and daughters will rise up and praise them is questionable.

A young boy, taking a walk with his mother on Mother's Day and noticing the others walking around him, aptly said: "lots of ladies but no mothers." How sad for a young boy to make such an observation.

In Proverbs 31:30, a special praise is given to a woman and mother who fears the Lord: "But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised." The lack of godly mothers is the cause of many hardships in families, in the church, in the state, and in the world. On the other hand, God-fearing mothers can have a healing influence on their own families and on their communities. A mother who is spiritual and has a good relationship with God has the ability to lead her child to Him. A mother who



really wants to be worthy of her title must have an intimate relationship with God. If she wants to fulfill the high maternal expectations of the Bible, she must be there for her family.

A mother who practiced this devotion to her children gave the following testimony: “When my children were small, I thought I had to do the best for them, namely, to sacrifice myself for them. So I spared neither time nor pain to teach them, to read to them, and to pray with them. Often I could not do what I needed to do and so left my housework undone in order to have time for the children. Now I have my reward: I have a wonderful relationship with all my children. My adult daughters are women of faith, and my sons are in the service of the gospel. Now I have lots of time to do my housework, lots of time to rest, lots of time to do God’s work, and I have many wonderful memories of my children’s childhood. Now that they have moved on to do their work, I have retained a peaceful conscience. I have done all I could to prepare them for God’s service. I gave them my best: myself!”

Does not such a mother deserve to be praised? Her sons will rise up and praise her. Of these mothers, one can say: “The God-fearing mother’s heart is the spiritual classroom for her children.” These mothers will be praised by God and men now and in eternity. Would you not also like to be such a praise-worthy mother?

We want to ask God for such mothers, because if they were ever sorely needed, it is right now!

Friedrich Krebs

Mother

*You were the first to wrap me in your arms;
T’was at your breast, my first weak smile was given.
You nursed me and protected me from harm.
Your love for me was always strong and even.*

*You sacrificed your sleep in dark long nights,
You dried my tears; your presence stilled my crying.
My first few awkward steps were a welcome sight.
You met my needs, my longing, and my sighing.*

*Concerns and worry weighed down on your heart;
Your passion was your child and its well-being;
And if you quenched wild striving on my part,
It was through love and prudent forward-seeing.*

*A happy smile would light up all your features
When you would see me come in through the door.
You were my forthright, honest, loving teacher,
Example, mother, friend, and much, much more.*

*A polished gravestone now declares your passing,
But in my heart you live forevermore;
And when I leave, for nothing here is lasting,
I’ll greet you yonder on that blessed shore.*

Experiences with God

Psalm 66:16–20

I am thankful that God allows me to experience this day and that He let His Son die on the cross for me.

I would like to share briefly from my life.

When I was little, I always tried my best to be obedient to God and to do His will. His Word was very important to me. I often went outside and marveled at the heavens, mountains and all that He had made. I often wished that God would speak to me personally as He did to little Samuel.

Yet, as I got older, into my teenage years, I came to a point in my life where I was no longer certain whether there truly was a God. I also did not know if the Bible was true or just a fairy tale like many other books. I thought long and hard over this and the more I knew the truth, the more certain I seemed to become that there was no God, for where would He have come from? And the Bible was only stories of things that once happened. Whether they were true stories or not, I did not know, for there are many books that are merely imagined and hold no truth.

I usually had no friends in school, which made my life difficult when I saw how much fun the others had with their friends, and I was not among them. Shortly afterwards, I began to suffer from depression, and it began by giving me a great fear, a fear that was so great that I could hardly sleep anymore and I cried through many nights. And yet I tried to carry it all on my own. I did not dare tell anyone, not even my parents, for what would they think of me? As I continued on in school, I did get a few friends, yet they were not good friends. Yet instead of having no friends at all, I fellowshipped with those who still wanted something to do with me. So I began to be with them a lot. As long as I was with them, everything was fine, but when I came home, I felt bad about how I was living my life and I began to self-harm in my depression and did not know why I was living and why I should continue to live. I wondered why I was on earth and

why God had not taken me from earth when I was still little and belonged to Him. For I knew that if He took me now, I would be eternally lost.

Many people see only alcohol and drugs, etc. as dangerous, and yet there are so many things that are just as destructive, such as self-harming.

I came to the point that self-harming acted like a medicine for me. It took away my pain and I felt so calm. Then I got addicted to it. My arms were completely full of cutting wounds and yet it felt so good, especially when the blood first came. I began to write words in my arms and thought the cuts looked nice. I was also often tempted to cut so deeply that I would bleed out, because life was not interesting anyway. For a while, I did it secretly, but then my friends noticed and tried to help me to be freed from it. In time, I too wanted to be free from it and did what I could to not do it again, for I knew that it was not the right solution. But one day, Satan tempted me so badly that I hardly could stand to live anymore. I sought help from my friends, but I was too scared to tell my parents.

I knew that I wanted to live a different life, but I had no power to do so. I began to pray to God again, and asked for help. I also asked God to help me find the right partner. A partner that could help me, whom I could trust, and with whom I could talk about everything. Shortly after, I got to know a boy who is now my husband. I felt this was God's answer to my prayer and I am thankful to Him that He heard me and blessed me with the partner that I have.

He was a support to me, prayed often for me and took time to talk with me when I had questions or other concerns. My parents also prayed much for me, for which I am also especially thankful.

When we had revival meetings in 2014 with Brother Semenjuk, I felt God's call and the Brother prayed with me. I gave myself completely to God and received forgiveness.

God has already richly blessed me and shown me clearly that there is a God and that the Bible is not



a fairy tale. I am thankful to God that He granted me grace, forgave my sin, and let me experience how good life is when we are led by Him and listen to Him.

I am so very grateful that God by His grace has freed me from self-harm. Sometimes depression wants to assail me, but I have learned that I do not

have to carry the load alone. God keeps helping me and I am confident He will continue to help me in my struggles. To God be all the glory.

I also ask for prayers that I may remain steadfast in the Lord.

Sandra Peters

The grace of God is new every morning.

In my life I have learned that His grace really is sufficient. I grew up in a Christian home, with wonderful parents. Although I knew Jesus from childhood on and tried to follow Him, during my youth years I faced terrible doubt. Should I still believe in a God? I was plagued with these kinds of attacks of doubt. A difficult time in my life followed. But thanks to the prayers of my parents and many others, the devil has not won the battle. In the summer of 2015, I was able to begin a new life with Jesus. Since then I have experienced God's guidance and fidelity countless times.

I am always surprised and astonished how well the loving Savior knows me and knows exactly what lessons I need to learn, such as patience! In my last semester of high school God tested me in a powerful way. I had decided to take a one year break from studying but I didn't know the details of how that would work out. I really wanted to know exactly how it would all come to pass, but God let me

wait. My semester was completed and the summer began, and I still didn't know what God's plan was. At exactly the right time a request came from Mexico requesting a teacher for the school there. My first thought was: no, why should I go there? I am only 18 and much too young for that. But the longer I thought and prayed about it, the more I felt that it was the way God had planned for me. So I agreed to go.

Looking back, I can clearly see that God's guidance was good. I still don't understand everything, but I trust that He has the best plan in mind for me. I must say that He has crossed out and changed some of the plans I had set for my future. It all seems to be like a puzzle. It is truly a great privilege to know that God leads His children on the right path.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Gabi Schulz

The Secret to a Happy Life

A dear devout grandmother received a visit from her granddaughters. They were both Christians, and were 20 and 21 years old. They had enjoyed a privileged childhood and by God's grace were generally liked by young and old. However, it did not take long for them to notice a difference between their own lives and that of their grandmother. Their grandmother had a peace in her heart that could not be disturbed by anything. Her face radiated a steady joy that came from Christ and it could not be dulled or removed by any of life's inconstancies. Her Christianity was fresh from the source. It was like a breath of pure, clear mountain air.

One evening as the crimson sun was casting its final rays over the peaceful village, the three of them sat in grandmother's parlor. The youngest granddaughter had taken her favorite place at the feet of her grandmother while the older sister had taken the seat to her left.

"Grandma," the younger girl began, "tonight we would like to ask you an important question. We are also Christians, but we sense that you belong to a different class. Tell us the secret of your forever joyful and happy life. Is it your advanced age to which you owe your joyous, steady faith? Or have you discovered something extra that we could also have?"

There was a brief pause. Before she answered, the dear woman, like Nehemiah, sent up a prayer for the

right words, through which she could show the girls the secret of a happy, fruitful life of faith. Then with bright eyes she said:

"Yes, you can have the same as what I have. It is quite simple. Look in that corner at Grandpa's clock. Look at it closely, for it was that clock that taught me the secret to a happy life about sixty years ago."—"How can a clock teach us such great things?" the girls interrupted. "It can," the grandmother continued. "You see the pendulum as it swings back and forth, so steady and constant that a tick occurs every second. I had, at that time, also occupied myself with the same question that you are now contemplating. One evening as I sat in this room and thought about this subject, a light bulb went on. As my eyes focused on the steady pendulum swing, I said to myself, 'If a clockmaker is able to create an object that goes so gently, so steadily that a tick occurs every second, then God can also keep me in His grace so that I do not stray either to the right or to the left. Moment by moment I can lead a true life of faith.' Since that time, there has not been an absence of temptations or challenges, but that old wall clock continually sent me the same message: God's power preserves our salvation moment by moment. Trust Him—moment by moment. That is all we have to do. If we learn that, then we also remain sustained in His love. Moment by moment!"

Special Services 2017

Pentecost Fest in Herford, Germany

JUNE 3-5, 2017

Fest in Aylmer, Ontario

JULY 1-2, 2017

Youth Bible Days in Tuningen, Germany

JULY 27 - AUG 1, 2017

Camp Meeting in Blaubeuren, Germany

AUGUST 20-27, 2017

Convention in Swartz Creek, Michigan

SEPTEMBER 2-3, 2017

Fest in Edmonton, Alberta

OCTOBER 7-9, 2017



