



# Foundation of Faith

## WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT *JESUS*?

WHY PRECISELY JESUS?

BRIGHT HOPE IN A DARK TIME

SEEING GOD'S GLORY

A LETTER TO MY MOTHER

MORE THAN A MOTHER'S LOVE

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## FOUNDATION OF FAITH

*Editor*

Hans-Dietrich Nimz

*Editorial Team*

John Reimer

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*

*In Psalm 139:1-2, David writes, “You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off.”*

*Yes, God knows us and knows our thoughts. Yet Jesus once asked His disciples, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” (Matthew 16:13). He knew exactly what the general public thought of Him. To the Pharisees, who had accused Him of blasphemy for forgiving the sins of the paralytic, He asked, “Why do you think evil in your hearts?” (Matthew 9:2-4). The Pharisees despised Him.*

*But Jesus also addressed His disciples personally and asked them, “But you, who do you say that I am?” Then Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16: 15-16). Peter and the disciples had recognized Him as the Son of God.*

*And this question, “What do you think about Jesus?” is still an important one for all people today, including you and me. With a heart of reflection, consider these questions: Is Christ the Way, the Truth, and the Life for you? Is He your Savior, your Redeemer, your divine Shepherd, and your Lord? Have you consecrated your heart and your life to Him?*

*He loved us so much that He left His life for us to find in Him peace, joy, and eternal life. He promised to be with us every day. He wants to lead and guide us and show us the way we should go. He wants to give us the necessary strength for each day and bring us safely to eternal glory.*

*What do you think about Jesus? When worries, hardships, and doubts plague you, where do you turn? Jesus wants to help you. Look away from the things of the world to Jesus and let Him be your one and only.*

H. D. Nimz



# *Heroine of Faith*

**A** mother always remains in our memory. Even when we're old and grey, our thoughts carry us back to our youth and childhood years. In our memories, one person has a special place: our mother.

So it was with Brother K. When I visited him, he was well into his eighties and often reflected back on his life. I asked him about how he had found the Lord, and he told me the following story:

"My mother trusted God. Although we were very poor, my mother still believed in God. Shortly after I was born, my father died, and she was left alone with us children. It was not easy. Often there seemed to be no way out, but God never forsook us. Mother held fast to the Word of God and clung to her faith in her heavenly Father. I could tell you many stories, but I will just tell you one that I can still remember so clearly.

"In Russia, we lived at the outer edge of the village. As a result, beggars often made their last stop at our place before leaving the village. If no one had given them anything, our mother would still find something to give.

"Vividly I remember that evening. The sun was setting. That day, our supper had been very meager, and when we were finished eating and had said our customary prayer of thanks, only half a loaf of bread was left on the table. It was the last of what we had. We had no more potatoes, no flour, no other supplies in the house.

"There, a knock! It was a beggar, asking for food. Mother asked him in and showed him to the table. He sat down and began to eat. Suddenly I burst out, 'Mother, he's eating everything!'—'Be quiet, Son,' was her answer.—'But Mother, he's eating everything! What's left for tomorrow?'—'Son, I've told you many times, God will take care of tomorrow.'—'Yes, but . . . ?'—'Quiet!'—'No, Mother, I'll be hungry!' And again, my mother replied, 'Until now, the Lord has never forsaken us.'

But I couldn't restrain myself. 'I know, Mother. God will give us something eventually, but not tomorrow morning. And you know I want something to eat tomorrow morning.'

"In the meantime, the beggar had finished eating the little bread we had left. The table was empty where he sat quietly. My mother severely rejected my last argument: 'Child, I do not want to hear anything more. God will take care of us.'

"At that moment, there was a knock on the door. After saying, 'Come in,' two soldiers entered the room. All our eyes were on them. Our mother immediately said, 'Today I can't buy anything.' Each of the soldiers had a loaf of bread in their hands. 'Go on, I have no money today.' One of them replied, 'No, we don't want to sell anything. We've heard that sometimes there is a need here. You have many children. Please, take these loaves. We want to give them to you!'

"It all happened so fast. How could this be! Mother silently took the bread and said, 'Thank you!' As the men left the house, we were speechless. The beggar was still sitting at the table with eyes wide open.

"Mother broke the silence: 'Did I not tell you God will take care of us! Earlier we only had half a loaf, and now we have two whole loaves. See, the Lord knows us and has not forgotten us!'

"I immigrated to Canada. Mother died shortly after. But here in Canada, my mother's faith still admonished me. My life was not right, and I was on a worldly, sin-filled path. But then God gave me an opportunity to find the cross and my Savior.

"The godly example of my mother, her prayers, her faith, and her life with God remain in my memory, and I know I will see her soon and meet her again before the throne of the Lamb, with all the redeemed."

H. D. Nimz

# Come!

**A**n old man reminisces: Isn't "Come!" a great word? It saved me. You see, I was an orphan. The woman who raised me truly wanted what was best for me, but she could never find the right approach. When she wanted me to hear a famous preacher speak, she would say, "Go to the special services at church, dear," or "They have a new preacher, go and hear him speak." But I didn't want to, so I didn't go; but then she called me godless and cold-hearted.

Things changed for me when I got married. My wife Mary was kind and good. I am still amazed that she was able to love me, but I thank God she did. It was through God's goodness and mercy that she was instrumental in changing my heart. How did she manage that? She would say, for example, "Hank, come, I really want to hear Pastor S. speak. He is a good man, and I know you'll like him too."

Another time, she said, "Hank, I can see you're exhausted. But there's prayer meeting today, and I would enjoy it so much more if you were there as well. Why don't you come along? I'm sure you'll return home refreshed!"

Or in the evening, when the table had been cleared and everything was in its place and I was sitting in my rocking chair, she would say, "Hank, I have a fascinating book here, and I want to know what happens next. If you read it to me, I can find out and do my needlework at the same time."

How could I refuse? She always invited me: Come, come! She never gave me an order or placed herself above me; instead, she put us on even footing, saying, Come with me!

One evening, as I was reading in the Bible, I came across the words, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). "Oh, Mary," I said, "this Book is like you! Now I get it. For the first time, I feel like I can love this Book with all my heart."

"Hank, Hank!" she cried, jumping to her feet and putting her arm around my neck, "that makes me so happy! But what do you mean by saying that I'm like the Book and that you get it?"

"Well, you see, Mary, I thought you were not like my foster mother. She always said, 'Go, go, go!' But you say, 'Come, come, come!' And now I see that you got your 'Come!' from this Book, and that is why I love it."

"Oh," she said with shining eyes, "that's not the only 'Come!' in the Bible. You can find it all throughout!"

She took the Book out of my hand and turned a few pages. She knew exactly where to open to, and began reading, "'Come now, and let us reason together,' says the Lord, 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool'" (Isaiah 1:16). Flipping a few more pages, she continued, "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat.

Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1). Then she opened the Book to the very back and read, "And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17).

"Now, Hank, here is the best 'Come!' of all! Jesus says He will speak on Judgment Day: 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world'" (Matthew 25:34).

I couldn't speak, but in my heart, I resolved to follow Jesus and to love Him.

My Mary has now been in heaven for a long time, but I can still hear her voice as she said, "Hank, I'm going to the Lord. Make sure you are coming too so I can see you again, and promise me to teach our child the way as well."

When I read "Come!" in my Bible, it's as though that dear voice were speaking to me once again. In the same spirit of invitation, I have called out to our child, "Come to the Lord!"

\* \* \* \* \*

And you, dear parents, are you sending or leading your children to the Savior? If you let your words and your example encourage them to follow Christ, you can rejoice with them in eternity.

Kindness is always the best approach, especially when winning souls for the Kingdom of God.



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF JESUS?

# Seeing God's Glory

*David writes in Psalm 27:8, "When You said, 'Seek My face,' My heart said to You, 'Your face, Lord, I will seek.'" It is a special privilege of the children of God to look on His face. God desires to meet with us and to reveal Himself to us, but we must also do our part.*

**I**t is the privilege of every child of God not only to converse with the heavenly Father but also to behold His glory. With our natural eyes, we cannot see the face of God, because such glory would be so overwhelming that we could not endure it and live. But our spirit can behold God's glory.

To see His glory is to get to know God better and to get a clear understanding of Who He is. Our souls are

filled with reverence, wonder, and great joy when we behold His glory. Some day in our eternal home, we shall see His majesty face to face. Yet even today, we can get a glimpse of His glory, a foretaste of that bliss. Once we have seen a glimmer of the indescribable glory of God, our souls will be filled with joy, the privilege of every child of God. After the Psalm writer had this experience, he cried out, "One thing I have desired of the Lord, that

I will seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple” (Psalm 27:4). When we have seen His glory and majesty, the glory of this world dims and loses its appeal for us. To dwell in the house of the Lord—where he could behold the glory of God—was the burning desire of David. In our context, to be in God’s house means to be in the presence of the Lord, to have fellowship with the Lord. This can take place when we’re reading His Word, praying, having devotions with our family, or attending a public worship service. In all these instances, we should be seeking to experience the glory of the Lord. We may take part in a prayer meeting or worship service, but if we haven’t had at least a glimpse of the glory of the Lord, then in the truest sense, we haven’t been in the house of the Lord.

It isn’t God’s fault but our own if we do not see His glory. He desires to reveal Himself to us. To which of us do the words of Jesus apply: “Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me?” (John 14:9).

What can keep us from seeing the glory of God? First of all, we must be willing to see. Looking to the Lord encompasses so much. There is effort involved. Think of what it takes for an artist to paint a landscape scene. As the artist studies the landscape, many things become apparent that a casual observer will never notice. Likewise, a scientist describing the beauty of a spider web or the intricacy inherent in the wing of a wasp will point out wonderful details most of us won’t even notice. Precious metals are found by those willing to search for them and then bear the cost of excavation. Genuine pearls are discovered by those willing to search the ocean floor. After a prolonged struggle, Jacob could say that he beheld the face of God. “So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: ‘For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved’” (Genesis 32:30).

A second reason why we don’t see the glory of God is because we’re too busy looking at other things. Focusing on the peripheral may lead to dismay. In the book of Isaiah, we read, “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10). Focusing on upsetting circumstances instead of on God discourages us. Instead, we should focus on God’s willingness to help us, which will help us see His glory. Elijah sought the face of God, and fire fell from heaven. Yet, the following day he focused on the threats of Jezebel and feared for his life. When Peter

looked at the waves, and no longer at Jesus, he began to sink. Hagar couldn’t see the spring of water as long as she looked at the empty water container she had used to quench her thirst up until then. In order to save her from dying of thirst, God didn’t need to create a spring of water but merely had to make her aware of a spring that was already there.

The man of God prayed, “Open my eyes, that I may see the wondrous things from Your law” (Psalm 119:18). Oh, that God would also open our eyes so that we may see the precious treasures He has in store for us! Oh, that the veil may be taken from our eyes so that we could see the glory of the Lord! If we focus too much on material things, our spiritual eyes won’t be able to discern what can’t be seen with the naked eye. Let’s turn our focus away from temporal things that will pass away with time and concentrate on eternal things that will never pass away. Let’s look to Jesus and behold His glory. The effort is worth it.

C. O.





# What Do You Think of Jesus?

People have all sorts of opinions about Jesus. Some see Him as a good person; others see a revolutionary Who died for His cause. Christians consider Him to be the Son of God, as the Bible teaches. Who is Jesus truly? To come to the right conclusion, we want to compare Him to others.

Jesus was far superior to His contemporaries, and He still outshines all great men today, no matter how educated or powerful. Where did He get His wisdom? He saw all hidden injustices, all people's evil thoughts. He renounced all formalism, showing us a flawless way to true spiritual communion with God. He never failed anyone He encountered. He proved Himself a true Savior, Helper, Comforter, and Redeemer without compromising His moral principles in any way. He is still a beacon shining high above all humanity, the immutable and immaculate cornerstone of justice, truth, love, purity, and holiness.

History tells us that He performed many miracles. He never took advantage of the miracles for selfish gain, but used His power only to help His fellow men and women. His motivation, far from egotistical, was to seek God's glory with His every action. He had all of the human characteristics that we share. He had to eat, drink, and sleep. He felt peace, pain, and indignation about injustice. He found joy in what was good. He was subject to every human weakness. Nonetheless, He remained in perfect harmony with the moral principles we all know. Despite the burden of a heavy workload and the strife and agitation

surrounding Him, He consistently displayed a deep peace. He was serious without being rough. Whether issuing judgments, rebukes, and punishments or displaying love, mercy, and forgiveness, He never violated moral principles.

With great dignity, He suffered and died on the cross. Marked as a criminal in spite of His innocence, He didn't complain or rail against God or man; instead, He submitted to God. In fact, He voluntarily chose the path of pain in order to fulfill the will of His Father in Heaven and to take humanity's sins before God upon Himself. John the Baptist said of Him, "Behold, the Lamb of God" (John 1:29), but it was Jesus Christ Who proved these words true. Pilate, the heathen governor, had to admit, "I find no fault in Him" (John 19:6). The heathen centurion in charge of the crucifixion was inspired to exclaim, "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54). From an impartial and unprejudiced point of view, each one of us has little choice but to acknowledge, just as His disciple did, "You are the Son of God!" (John 1:49).

The conviction that He really is God's Son gives us food for thought. Jesus reminds you of everything that is good, pure, divine, and eternal—and also of your guilty conscience and of the person you should be. You are human, and He is the Son of God, the Creator, the Lord of life and death. You will one day stand before Him, whether you want to or not. No matter how much you avoid thinking about Him or resist believing in Him, you will never change the fact of His

reality and existence. Pilate's question in Matthew 27:22, "What then shall I do with Jesus?" is a question that each of us needs to answer—even you, dear reader.

If you take a moment to ponder the figure of Jesus as revealed through the dignity and majesty of His character, life, teachings, love, suffering, and death, your innermost being is sure to tremble in awe before Him, compelling you to stand and be still in His presence. If you let His nature speak to you, your heart will soon tell you, "Here is Someone before Whom I can and must humble myself without losing my self-respect." To despise Him or to think you cannot learn from Him, that obeying Him is only for backward people, or that worshiping Him is something to be ashamed of, only lays bare a heart filled with immorality or malice.

At a dinner party attended by a number of poets, someone threw out the question, "What would we do if Shakespeare suddenly entered the room?"

"We would all get up from our seats to show our respect," was the answer.

"What would we do if Jesus suddenly came in the door?" asked another.

The response was, "If Jesus came in, we would all fall on our knees."

Yes, He is worthy of such worship. Dear reader, what will you do with Jesus? He is your Helper, your Savior, and your Example; He rules the world and knows the hidden depths of every heart. What you choose to do with Him now will have immense consequences for your life on earth and for all eternity, because there will come a moment when the question is reversed: "What will He do with you?"

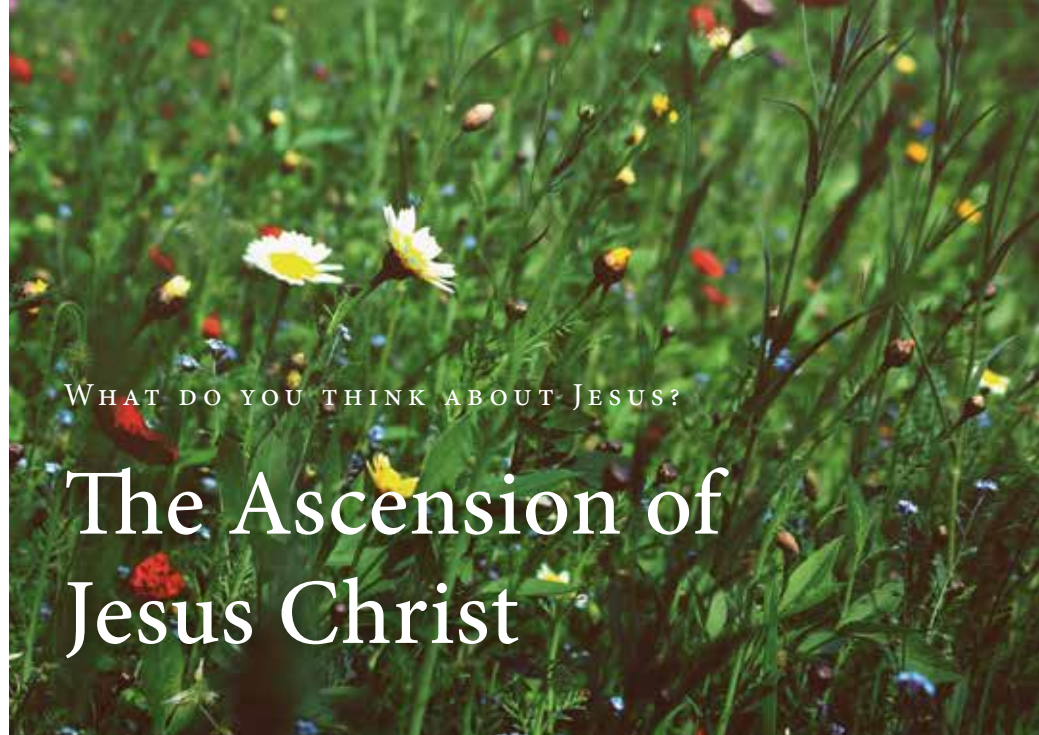
R. Girke



“He was parted from them and carried up into heaven” (Luke 24:51). With these few words, Luke tells us of the ascension of our Lord to heaven. It is noteworthy that Jesus did not ascend immediately to heaven after His resurrection. The arisen Lord remained on earth for forty days. The disciples needed these appearances of Jesus to assure themselves of His resurrection. The Lord further taught them of God’s kingdom during this time. Now they began to understand things that so far they had not understood. For the disciples, this was a time of growth in their faith and understanding. One insight after another convinced them that everything that happened was according to God’s plan.

Even the ascension’s location is noteworthy. “And He led them out as far as Bethany” (Luke 24:50). It was a peaceful place without crowds and where no enemies could distract and hinder His disciples’ concentration. Nearby, the disciples had had an opportunity to accompany their Lord to the Garden of Gethsemane. Here, they had observed how He fought His way through to victory even though He was grieving, trembling, and meek. “Not My will but Your will be done.” Here, they were also to be witnesses of His marvelous ascension.

In the presence of His disciples, the Lord ascended to heaven. With His hands raised above them, carrying them in His heart and giving them His priestly blessing, He left them. They saw Him rise higher and higher until a cloud carried Him up and away before their eyes. He “sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:3). There He lives, sits on a throne, reigns, and will come again in all His majesty.



WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT JESUS?

# The Ascension of Jesus Christ

The ascension of the Lord had a powerful impact on His disciples. It is said of the apostles, “they worshiped Him” (Luke 24:52). As long as He was with them, even after His resurrection, we do not read that they fell down and worshiped Him. His resurrection, combined with His ascension, unequivocally confirmed Him as the promised Savior. He is our justice, the overcomer of death, and the Lord of life. As the Son of God, Son of Man, and God over everything, He is praised into eternity. After they had all seen Him ascend to heaven, they were so overwhelmingly convinced, they fell on their knees and prayed to their glorified master, “Emmanuel, . . . God with us”!

Further, it is written that the disciples “returned to Jerusalem with great joy” (Luke 24:52). Their joy was the fruit of their belief and their certainty that He was Lord and that everything He had prophesied to them would come to pass. Therefore, they no longer worried and were unafraid. For all things that lay before them, they were now in the power and favor of Jesus Christ, their Lord.

They had become assured of His life and love towards them and their calling.

Then it is written that the disciples “were continually in the temple praising and blessing God” (Luke 24:53). They did not neglect nourishing and strengthening their faith, which was alive in them through corporate worship and edification from God’s Word. They were able to praise God continually and to live out their faith practically. To carry out the will of their ascended Lord was now their daily task. Their heart was now in heaven where they were citizens. They no longer yearned for earthly things but for things above, where Christ reigned.

Let us also set our minds “on things above.” Where our treasure is, there our hearts will also be. Like the apostles and first Christians, we also will not fear death, which is man’s final enemy, and we will joyously await the return of the Son of Man.

How will it be when the ascended Lord, in all His glory and with His angels, will come again to judge the world and to take His children to be with Him in all eternity!

# Jesus Christ— *Unchanging*

“The time of signs and miracles is long over,” says the modern man. “Oh yes, but only for the unbelievers,” we can answer.

God’s word tells us clearly: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

**F**or me, the title is a consoling, invigorating, and stimulating certainty. What He was and did then and even today, He will be and do in all eternity. This is a secure basis for our belief that cannot be shaken.

If you want to know what He is still doing today, just read the Bible to see what He did in the past, and you will have your answer.

Jesus came to save humanity. The word “salvation” can mean to “deliver” or “save,” which means that in order to really understand what Christ’s reconciliation did for mankind, we need to know what the former condition was.

The word of God tells us that mankind was created holy and clean in body and soul by the Creator’s hand. To ransom all mankind which had lost this blessed state through sin, healing power was needed through our Savior’s blood. With a thankful heart, I praise God for His wonderful, complete plan of salvation, which remedies both body and soul. This reconciliation points to God, but its effect, salvation, points to us humans.

We are unable to recognize the Christ of the Holy Scriptures without being convinced of His power and compassion. He states of His power, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18). He verified the truth of these words by healing all types of illnesses, making the lame walk again, healing

those affected by leprosy, awakening the dead, and forgiving sinners of their iniquities. Certainly, our Lord is great!

Before Christ ascended to heaven, He told His disciples that He was going to His Father in glory, where He had been before the creation of the world. Did He lose His godly power by going to His Father? Is He less powerful today than yesterday? No, thanks be to God. Jesus Christ is the same today as He was yesterday and will be into eternity.

Wonderful power is in the name of Jesus. He died to be our advocate, seated at the right hand of God. He gave us the right to use His name in His service.

“In My name they will cast out demons . . . they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover” (Mark 16:17-18). Peter also spoke in the name of Jesus to the beggar at the door of the temple, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk” (Acts 2:6). Did the name of Jesus bring him help? Yes, immediately. He jumped up, stood, and walked into the temple with them. He walked, jumped around, and praised God. Jesus’ name has wonderful power.

When Peter and John were teaching the people in the temple and speaking of the resurrection of the Savior, they were brought before the Sanhedrin. They asked them, “By what power or by what name have you done this?” (Acts 4:7). “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘. . . let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole” (Acts 4:8-10).

In James 5:14-15, we read that those who are ill should be anointed with oil in the name of the Lord and that the prayer of faith will help the sick.

Dear reader, does His wonderful name still have the same power today? Yes, most certainly, yesterday, today, and in all eternity. I have physically experienced it myself.

Look at His compassion. Should this have ceased in Him? Is He no longer concerned with the large number of sick and poor? Is Jesus not concerned about us? Has He lost His sympathy for others? That is unbelievable, impossible. He still has the same love, the same sympathy, and the same compassion as before, when He walked upon this earth. He “is the same yesterday, today, and forever”!

# Have You Accepted Jesus Into Your Heart?

“He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”

(John 1:11-12)



**P**rior to the birth of Christ, Israel was anxiously waiting. According to the Scriptures written by the prophets, it was time for God’s anointed One, the Savior of the world, to appear. The spiritual leaders, as well as the people, were envisioning the beginning of a new era. Even though their understanding was correct, their reason for His coming and His mission here on earth was wrong. Their expectation was that they would rise with Him in power over the world and then as the chosen nation rule over everyone else. These expectations came through false interpretation of the Scriptures. God, however, stood on His promised Word, for we read in Scripture, “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (Galatians 4:4-5).

“He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.” Isn’t this sad? They did not accept Him, for Christ was too low and humble for them. But the Lord walked through the land in great self-denial, accepting disrespect and misjudgment. He came to save souls who were lost in sin, but the people did not want Him. Grievously, He cried out, “But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life” (John 5:40). There was only a minority who believed and accepted Him; the majority rejected Him. God spared the Jewish nation due to the belief of this minority; otherwise, it would have become another Sodom and Gomorrah. This faithful remnant would be God’s new spiritual Israel de-

riving from all nations, of which Peter also writes, “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). As it was in the past, so the same remains today: In regard to Christ, ways part. He remains a stumbling block of nuisance to the non-believer and for the believer, the rock of salvation.

In most scenarios today, there is no room for Christ. Instead of accepting Him in their heart as their Savior and serving Him, people search for pleasure. Interest in Christ is decreasing, and instead, the focus is more self-centered; therefore, the focus on the One Who came to give a more abundant life is being lost.

Today, many people are doing the same as the Jews did in their time, only in a more subtle way. Therefore, lives go unchanged, and the inner needs remain, even though the Lord brought grace. He did not come to earth for us to only honor Him through celebrations; no, the reason He came was to save us from our sin. This requires accepting Jesus into your heart. Through this, Jesus gives power to become and remain a child of God. Therefore, open up your heart to Jesus in faith; let Him in, and you will become a child of God.

Gustav Sonnenberg



# Born Again Through Jesus Christ

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.*

*(1 Peter 1:3-4)*

**H**aving God's marvelous grace in mind, the apostle begins his letter with that thought. Peter could bear witness that he had personally experienced this special wonder. He did not write it for his own merit, but because of God's mercy alone. That is why he wrote an impactful doxology: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope . . . to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you."

The New Testament often speaks of the experience of being born again. Just like Peter, other witnesses also came forward and professed to having been born again. Even today, through God's grace, there are people in this world who carry the same wonderful testimony. We cannot immediately recognize from the outside who our fellow human beings are on the inside. For example, I recently met a person who clearly and specifically said, after a short conversation, "I am a born-again Christian." Because I do not know this person well, I cannot say if this great testimony truly harmonizes with his practical living. However, others will definitely know, because Jesus says, "You will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). In any case, the experience of being born again is much more crucial than merely the testimony. Whoever has truly experienced rebirth in the biblical sense has clearly obtained something of the highest value, for a new life depends on this experience. Just as our physically visible life begins with a physical birth, so the spiritual life begins with a spiritual birth. The great value of being born again comes from the opportunity that is given to us to make a new start. Such a new start in life is not possible any other way than through the rebirth that Christ offers us.

Being born again is not just intended for specific individuals, but is the privilege of all people. No matter how flawed and corrupt a person's life may be and how guilt-ridden and hopeless someone's life may be, only rebirth enables him to make a new start. Because there is no substitute, Jesus said to the Pharisee, Nicodemus, "You must be born again" (John 3:7). Although the New Testament doesn't usually state "must," Jesus instructed an unmistakable and vital "must" in this case. This implies that whoever truly wants new life can only experience it by way of being born again. Jesus further says, "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Therefore, a person cannot make it out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light on his own. He cannot pass from death into life. He cannot receive assurance of forgiveness nor attain inner holiness, peace, hope, inner freedom, or salvation.

So often, people try to make a new start by their own strength. They make all sorts of efforts to better themselves. They attempt to forget their dark past; they try to put aside certain sins and forge a better path. But none of this brings about an inner newness and doesn't replace the experience of rebirth.

Others reach the decision to join a certain church and regularly attend worship services, believing that a minister will contend and be responsible for, their salvation. But choosing this path does not lead to the experience of being born again, because no person, not even a pastor, can bring about transformation in his own life, nor the life of another person. The "must" that Jesus instructs is not to be avoided, for our text says, "He has given us new birth." Rebirth is exclusively a work of God on the heart of a person, and everyone who wants it remains completely dependent on God for it.

# Announcements

*Fest in Winnipeg, Manitoba*

May 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*Pentecost in Herford, Germany*

June 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*Fest in Aylmer, Ontario*

*50th Anniversary of the Congregation*

June 29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*Bible Course in Neustädt, Mexico*

July 22<sup>nd</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019

*Youth Seminar in Tuningen, Germany*

July, 28<sup>th</sup> - August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019

*Fest in Chilliwack, BC*

August 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*Camp Meeting in Blaubeuren, Germany*

August 17<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*Convention in Swartz Creek, Michigan*

August 31<sup>st</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup>

*Fest in Edmonton, Alberta*

October 12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>

The way to this vital and wholesome experience is shown to us clearly in God's Word. Our Lord instituted this work and also provided the necessary means to attain it. First is the Word of God itself. In the chapter of our text (verse 23), Peter explains, "[You have] been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the Word of God which lives and abides forever." The apostle James writes, "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." As a result, the seed of the Word of God is the first thing that must penetrate into our hearts and lives in order to establish the germ of new life. This does not depend on someone speaking God's Word but on full acceptance of it through faith. Whoever rejects God's Word also rejects the possibility to be born again.

The second necessary means that God employs is the Spirit of God. Preaching the Word without the Spirit is empty and ineffective. Therefore, Jesus further says to Nicodemus, "Unless one is born of water [the Word] and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. . . . and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." This is the only way to new, spiritual life. Everyone who wants to have new life and stand in the living hope must make room for the Word and the Spirit of God to work rebirth in his life. But it must be emphasized that the work of rebirth through God's Word and His Spirit was made possible only through Jesus' death on the cross and His victorious resurrection. Jesus Christ is the actual cause of spiritual and eternal life because He overcame the power of death and sin and created the opportunity of new life through rebirth. Because of this possibility, Jesus says, "You must be born again." Rebirth, and all its worth and blessing, is also your right and privilege. Do not neglect the grace of God, for you can experience it today.

Friedrich Krebs

# Why Precisely Jesus?

**W**hile we were on a trip through Poland, a Polish professor said to me, “When God’s Word is preached today, Jesus cannot be focused upon enough. Jesus, only Jesus Christ, that is what it’s all about!” This professor openly shares his Christian faith, and his relationship with Christ is evident in his everyday life. All of his colleagues and students are aware of his convictions and respect him.

In light of this, considering his wife’s incurable disease, we could ask, “Where is your God, and the help He claims to offer?” The man and his wife, along with their children, accept this burden by walking together and trusting God along the way.

And if someone asks us, “Is there really only one way to faith, the one that says ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life’?” What do we answer?

Today, we know more about religions and cultures of other peoples and continents than ever before. Yes, individual religions even do active missionary work [in the West]. In general, Christians discern between “religions” and the “Christian revelation.” In religions, man looks for God. Through the Christian revelation, God seeks out man. Through His revelation, we come to know His character, His will, and His promises.

By such differentiation, we must be mindful of the fact that even “religions” speak of God, they earnestly seek for a way to salvation of man, and they practice prayers. These may be cultic prayers or prayers to saints. All of these things point to a primitive or inherent knowledge given to man, about God the Creator. And yet, due to man’s sin, much in religion has become destroyed, confused, and untruth. For this reason, even in our day, idols are worshiped, mechanical prayer wheels rattle, sacrificial rites are held in an attempt to bring peace, heathen monks live in seclusion, and so on.

Amidst all of this, however, God brings full salvation through Jesus Christ. In Him, all ideas, mythologies, and human desires are superseded by an understanding of reality.

In Jesus’ words, we are faced with the enormous claim that there are absolutes given to us by God. Let’s consider what our lives would look like if we truly submitted to the “I am” statements given to us in the gospel of John. Do we really open ourselves up to these?

Perhaps then, “scales” will fall from our eyes, when we suddenly realize Jesus is truly “the way, the truth, and the life,” for us, the only path on which all Christians travel in this world. He is the only way for those who have come out of “religion”. Jesus really is the one Truth revealed by God, as He intended from the very beginning of time. In Him all philosophical speculations and religious imaginations fall apart. He is the truth that alone sets people free (John 8:32). Jesus truly is the Life, and He gives us life that is not by bread alone, but is received with thanksgiving. It allows us to live at peace with Him.

Ask someone, “How can a Christian be so certain of what he knows?” Then we can answer, “Read the words Jesus says to His followers (for example Luke 9:23-26 and 57-62) or the final words in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt.7:24-27) and follow it. Then it will become clear to you. When you dare to take Jesus at His word, you will receive absolute conviction. Once you understand this reality, you will also understand that you cannot be saved by “just any manner of choosing,” but you will know that besides Christ, there is no other way to the Father. Through Jesus, you will be filled with amazement and thanksgiving as you are made completely new.

Yes, when we truly allow Jesus Christ to enter our existence through faith and obedience, and subject our lives to Him, then He gives us a new beginning. After all, this is when our lives really start.

# Go to the Source

What is truth?" asked Pilate, who had heard various opinions and judgments about Jesus from all sides. As the people continued to pester him, he didn't know anymore what he should actually believe. Those who stood in front of him were usually trustworthy people. But then he stood before Jesus, Who was Truth Himself, and asked Him. Although he had only known Jesus for a short time, he had already formed his own judgment about Him, which didn't agree with what he was now hearing. The longer he listened to the cries of the people, the more unsure he became about his opinion. What should he believe? Finally, he tore himself from the clamoring crowd and went to Jesus. He wanted clarity. When he looked at Jesus' face, not many words and explanations were required. Pilate was quickly convinced of the real truth. He was not deceived by this Jesus. Only the blinded people had tried to distort the truth. Had Pilate not gone directly to Jesus, he would never have discovered the correct truth. In the natural world, a spring will bring forth fresh, clear water, while tributaries often have very cloudy water. Therefore, it is important to always go directly to the source.

The enemy tries to cause confusion today as he did back then. He delights in confusing people, and uses any and every method to do so. How important it is then, for us

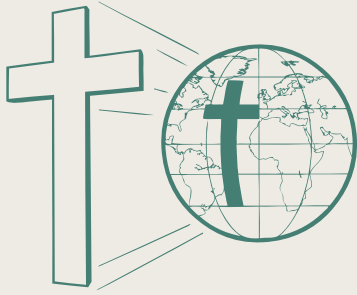
to pay attention to what we hear, as rumors are brought to us! What we learn from rumors does not always align with what we had believed until then and thought of as fact. In such cases of doubt, we should go to the source and ground ourselves in the unclouded truth. This helps us gain a clearer picture of the person whose reputation was smudged by rumors, and some things will be put back into proper perspective. At the source, everything looks different.

"What is truth?" is a question many ask today in regard to faith. Because there are so many Christian congregations in today's time, this question is justified. So many have a desire for the pure, clear truth, and they search here and there. But they don't find it because they are looking in tributaries instead of at the source. They remain unsatisfied and get caught up in one error after another. In the end they are so confused, they've become incapable of discerning between truth and error. Oh, if only these searching people would go directly to the source—to the Word of God. They would find the right way and gain peace for their souls. If time were not wasted on unending discussions about faith and doctrine but were spent in the Word of God, there would be a great deal less spiritual confusion. Only "with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light" (Psalm 36:9). The way to truth through God's Word is so simple that even a fool cannot stray (Isaiah 35:8). We no longer have to run back and forth and ask for truth. The Word of God

is full of truth, is reliable, and shows us the right way. People can err. But if we have recognized the pure truth, then we must do what it says and fight for it. May the Lord protect us from doing as Pilate did, for he recognized the truth but did not find the courage to stand up for it; instead, he gave in to the pressure of deceitful testimony.

An experience made this principle clear to me. I wanted to visit a family who lived a distance away. I knew the street and house number. But because this street seemed to go on and was broken up several times by open areas, I could not find the house. Several times I asked passersby for help and finally concluded that because I had gone back and forth so many times, I didn't even know where I was anymore. Tired from the long search, I made my way home without having reached my goal. When I reached home, I found a city map and, without much effort, found the direction I had to go to find the house. It was a bit complicated, but with the help of the map, I made it to the family on my second try, without asking for help.

Similarly in our spiritual lives, we ask here and there and sometimes pass right by the goal. Not surprisingly, it is still the safest to orientate ourselves with the help of the map—God's Word—to travel the path that leads to eternal bliss. Do not waste your time searching in cloudy and dirty "tributaries" for pure and clear truth. Go to the source, and you will be sure of reaching the goal.



# Radio Program Message of Salvation

Friedrich Krebs, Kitchener (ON)

## *Bright Hope in a Dark Time*

*A proverb states, "Hope dies last." No matter how bad a situation may be, we still hope for a good ending. As children of God we have a living, eternal hope that cannot be extinguished, even in death.*

**A** dark time had come for Jesus' disciples. Their Master had repeatedly told them about His suffering and dying, and now He spoke quite frankly of His return to the Father. They were standing before a painful farewell and the realization that they would remain alone in this stressful world. Furthermore, their hearts were filled with deep sadness.

Jesus brought bright hope into the sadness of His disciples. He knew the coming events would shatter them. And He also knew how His followers clung to Him. After all, they testified their devotion to their Lord by saying, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:68-69).

They faced a profound test of faith, but the Lord comforted them, saying, "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1). They were to hang onto their faith, since Jesus' departure should not shake their faith but fill them with new hope. Jesus made it clear to the disciples that His departure was necessary and beneficial. "I go to prepare a place for you" (verse 2), and followed by the hopeful promise, "I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (verse 3). These comforting words strengthened their faith.

For forty days after His resurrection, Jesus was still in visible communion with His disciples. Then He led

them up on the Mount of Olives, and Luke says, "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. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God" (Luke 24:50-53).

What filled them with such joy in spite of a painful farewell? It was the glorious promise, "I will come again and receive you to Myself." Through this promise, the hope of an eternal reunion with Jesus was revived in their hearts. In the midst of a godless world, heaven was open to them, and that gave cause for joy.

In His high priestly prayer, Jesus prayed, "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me" (John 17:24). Just as they wanted to be with Him on earth, so He wanted them to be in heaven with Him. They were certain that heaven was the place where their Master had gone and where He would take them. This hope gave them and all children of God courage in battle and strength in suffering, for they know this time of suffering is not comparable to the glory that will be manifested in them.

Are we filled with this hope and joy? In this dark time, it is possible for all children of God! It is the sweet hope of eternal life, a hope that has a firm foundation and will not be swayed in any circumstances of life.





Hope is especially valuable in the human life. As a rule, every human being lives with certain hopes. The farmer plows and sows in the hope of a harvest. The young man is diligent and makes an effort, hoping to reach his goal. The hungry hope for bread, the weak for strength, the sick for recovery, and the prisoner for freedom.

A prisoner reports, “We only lived for that one day, the day we could return home. We had only one topic of conversation: life at home. As long as this hope was alive, we were able to withstand the most improbable feats and deprivations. But when hope vanished, we folded like a penknife.”

If earthly hopes have such an effect, how much more eternal hope. Children of God have an unsurpassable hope. Paul writes, “We rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:2), and therefore children of God do

not “sorrow as others who have no hope” (1 Thessalonians 4:13). Thank God for such hope, which fills us with power and joy in all situations!

A poet writes:

This hope of mine looks far beyond  
despite all woe and tears;  
to that land, to the Father’s house,  
To You, my God, to You.  
This hope of mine is God’s great gift,  
and founded on His Word;  
This is my consolation for all time:  
Yes, I will see Him there!

Do you possess this hope, dear reader? You can find it in Jesus Christ and in His peace. He will certainly give it to you.



# On the Road of Salvation

Part 5

*The Fleshpots of Egypt*

Ron Taron

## *God's Plan of Salvation in the History of Israel*

*“Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the children of Israel said to them, ‘Oh, that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.’” (Exodus 16:2-3).*

**H**ow quickly man forgets God’s goodness in his life! How quickly he turns away from God! What caused the Israelites to begin complaining? Why were they suddenly so discouraged? Why were they longing to be back in Egypt? How could the pots of flesh in Egypt seem preferential to their walk with God?

1. They had imagined serving God to be much different. They thought it would be so beautiful and easy. No shadows would arise, God would protect and care for them. Yes, others would even be their servants. In today’s terms, we might encounter fellow believers who surround the new convert. They encourage him, help him, even carry him. He receives much attention, is welcomed into many homes, and is quickly immersed into church life. Everything is wonderful and the new believer is filled with joy and enthusiasm. But sooner or later the first arduous temptation or spiritual battle comes along. Fellow Christians are once again enveloped in their own concerns and responsibilities . . . and suddenly serving God doesn’t seem so attractive anymore. The battle gets vicious and the strain heavy. Discouragements loom and the new Christian feels he is facing his trials all alone. Never has he imagined serving God would be like this.

2. A desire for the fleshpots of Egypt can surface when we forget what God has done for us. In Israel’s case, they had forgotten God had rescued them from a hopeless life of hard slavery. Today, we lose sight of the incredible

price God paid to redeem us from the bondage of sin. He broke the power of sin and set us free. But now, in the dissatisfaction of the moment, we forget all that. We forget how unhappy we were in a life without God. We forget how our sinful behavior destroyed our lives, how we were continually seeking peace and never finding it. And suddenly we see the glitter of the world before us. Those “fleshpots” did offer us joy in our old life. And just as Satan was able to make the Israelites so dissatisfied with the manna God gave them that they became sick of it, he is a master at making Christians tired of serving God and desiring what he has to offer. They forget the world could never satisfy, but serving God does.

3. Israel had lost trust in God. They looked around and saw only a huge caravan on a journey . . . in the desert no less. As far as they could see there was only sand, dust, and desolation. How long can such a large mass of humanity survive in those conditions? Their focus shifted from God and His limitless power and settled on a human perspective that was logistically hopeless. Their trust was no longer in the God who had freed them and destroyed their enemies. In their doubts, the fact that God was present among them in the pillars of cloud and fire seemed irrelevant.

So many of us forget that God, who saved us by His great grace, will not abandon us at the first difficulty. He has promised to be faithful to the end of time. Paul writes in Philippians 1:6, “being confident of this very thing,



that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” We can and should trust Him, even in the darkest valleys and storms of life! God is never powerless, even in impossible situations. When we’re at the end, God is just beginning.

4. Israel desired the fleshpots of Egypt because they had lost hope. In the endless desert with the great multitudes who needed sustenance and the rapidly dwindling supplies, they couldn’t see a way forward. Dear reader: how often have you reacted in a similar manner in such situations? Unemployment, an incurable disease, a broken relationship, or one of many other troubles? Haven’t you looked at circumstances instead of at the Lord? It is your privilege to react as a child who looks into the eyes of his mother or father and calmly says, “My Father will provide. I can trust Him wholly.”

5. Their troubles made Israel desire to go back to Egypt. Everything was just too hard. And now that they had been freed of the yoke of the Egyptians for several weeks, their old life didn’t seem so bad in the face of their current situation. They had lost perspective. “If this is going to be so hard, I’d rather just give up.” I recall a schoolmate dropping out of a course a few days before the final exam. In response to all my attempts to encourage him to just try to finish the course, he replied, “I won’t make it anyway, so why exert myself and write the exam?” — “Yes, but you’ve made it this far. Just a few more days, and maybe you’ll get your credits.” — “No, it’s not worth it; I’m giving up.” When people are discouraged and in trouble they will often react this way. But God is still there and hasn’t changed. He has the situation in hand and will not abandon His child or allow him to fall. His love and grace will bring you through too.

6. In Numbers 11:4-6 we find another important thought: “Now the mixed multitude who were among them yielded to intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said, ‘Who will give us meat to eat? We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!’” The Israelites allowed themselves to be influenced by the “mixed multitude” who had no birthright in Israel. They had never committed their hearts to God and were lusting for the glories of Egypt. As the Israelites listened to their raving, they too started grieving about what they had had to give up to go on this journey with God. “We’re not allowed to have this and that anymore, as God’s people. We have to sacrifice so much to be on the Narrow Way!”

Dear reader, don’t allow yourself to be pulled into this sin. It will cost you your soul and salvation. The joy God gives is much greater than all the fleshpots of Egypt.

Are you one of those on the journey of salvation who is so strongly drawn to the fleshpots of Egypt, the joys of the world? Have you become dissatisfied in your service of God? Do you possibly even complain about it? Has Satan convinced you that the fleshpots of Egypt are what you need to satisfy the longing in your heart? He’s lying! He just wants to destroy your soul! If you’ve possibly fallen into his trap, repent with all your heart and begin anew.

Listen, you don’t need the fleshpots of Egypt, all the meaningless froth of the world. You need the living Word of God. You need Jesus and a living faith. You need a burning love to God, and instead of murmuring and complaining, you will be filled with thanks and praise to God.

... that she is a God-fearing prayer warrior.

... that she is so hard-working.

... that she is an example of sacrificing herself to God and living out a holy life.

... that she is always there for me and makes me feel safe.

... for her love and the place of refuge that she gives me.

... for her sacrificial and unconditional love.

... that she always has a listening ear for me.

... that she is so unselfish and selfless.

... that she always encourages me again.

... that I can talk to her about anything.

... that she is an example to me of being diligent and working hard.

... that she always supports me, not just in times of trouble.

... for her willingness to help.

... that she is simply a goodhearted person.

... for the conversations with her that always give me shelter, love, and hope.

... that she prays for me.

## I Thank My Mother . . .

... that she helps me when I am experiencing difficulties—e.g. at my job.

... that she always makes delicious food.

... that she is a trustworthy person.

... that she always puts others first

... for her good example.

... that she is my best "psychologist" and the most faithful advisor.

... for all that she gives me day after day. She tells me what is right and what is wrong. I can always ask her for advice.

... that she is caring and loving and is always there for me.

... for our lovely home.

... that it was important to her from the beginning that we know Jesus.

... that she supports me in my faith.

... that she is understanding and honest.

... for her comforting words and that I can always laugh with her.

... that she is a good friend and advisor to me.

... that she is sympathetic and understanding, always thinks of others, is caring, loving, and generous, and has a listening ear for me. She is a mother who loves her children, regardless of what has happened. If we need help, she is there.

... that I can always be happy that I have her and that I can call her "mom."

... for her peace and wisdom when decisions need to be made.

## What have you learned from your mother?

- Prayer
- How to follow Jesus
- Honesty/telling the truth/not lying
- Reading the Bible
- Forgiveness/being willing to forgive
- Proper conduct at school/work
- Gratitude
- Kindness
- Love
- Common sense
- Self-sufficiency
- Selflessness/leading a selfless life
- Sharing (as brothers and sisters)
- Not to swear
- To clean up/be neat
- Interacting with people/respect
- Differentiating between good and evil
- To practice hospitality
- Gentleness
- Not to lose courage
- Steadfastness in serving God
- To give others your best
- An example of consistent Bible reading and prayer
- To place God first in my life and to implement the fruit of the Spirit in my daily life
- Politeness
- Not to regard the opinions of others so much
- My mother is my personal every-day hero. She is an example to me every day in how she masters each day's tasks and challenges.
- Faith and trust in God. She lives out a strong, firm faith that is unshakeable through all highs and lows.
- To give my best in every situation in order to be an example

## Lessons From School (5)

After my high school graduation, I didn't really know what to do with myself, just like so many others. After a lengthy illness, the medical field seemed to pique my interest; however, my grades were far too low for me to be accepted into medical school. I was completely baffled. I had clearly received an answer from God that I would study medicine, yet that seemed entirely impossible. At first, I held tightly to my plan, but as time went on and my situation never changed, I started to have doubts, especially after all kinds of "helpful counsel" came my way. "That's not a career for a woman." Or "If God had wanted you to study medicine, you would surely have been accepted into med school by now." Was it really what God had wanted for me, or were these people right? During this time, the story of Moses became a special blessing and comfort to me. God had called him, and yet he had to wait 40 years in the desert before he could actually begin his commission. Shouldn't it be possible for me to wait just a few years? At first, I temporarily worked at the post office. Following that, I began training as an assistant in anaesthesia, all the while knowing that I would most likely never make a career of it. After completion, I applied at two nearby universities so that I could continue attending the worship services in my hometown. At this time, I earnestly began praying again that if God wanted me to pursue this avenue, He would give me a place to study; however, if it should not be His will, I would submit to that as well. How great was my relief when I finally received my letter of acceptance for university. I had waited 7 years for this. Though I don't understand why I had to wait so long, I don't doubt that God had my best interests in mind.

Corinna Kowalski  
Hamm, Germany

### VERSE OF THE MONTH

"Honor your father and mother."  
(Ephesians 6:2)

**We want to give our mothers the honor they deserve. We often take for granted the powerful and varied acts of service our mothers do for us. No one here on earth can give what a mother gives, and no one can replace a mother's heart.**

**We thank God from the depths of our hearts for the dear mothers we have, and for every visible and hidden work they do. May God bless every single mother and richly reward her for her faithful service. May our mothers be blessed in the circles of their families with strong relationships, respect, and love, and may they have much joy in fulfilling their role.**

# Jesus and The Children

*“Let the little children come to Me,” the Lord Jesus says in Luke 18:16. He especially mentions the small children. Bring your little ones to Him. We are promised that “those that seek me early shall find Me” (Proverbs 8:17 KJV).*

**B**egin early. Do you hear, Father, do you hear Mother! Don't put it off until your child has become independent and set in the pleasures of trivial and vain things. No, bring him to the Lord early.

You can easily carve a name into the tender bark of a young tree. The tree then grows and shows the name even in the hard, solid bark as an old tree. Oh, write the sweet name of Jesus on the young heart of your child with the flames of true, parental love. Be sure, even if the storm of youthful recklessness writes over it, even if the world buries it with a thousand vanities, the breath of the Lord can easily sweep away the rubble.

Therefore, hurry, Father and Mother, to write the name of the Savior on the heart of your child. Otherwise, the enemy of souls may easily put his name on it. Bring your children to the Savior early. While they are still young, you can be the first to steer and guide them as they will happily follow you. Later, they have their own will and own mind.

“But how?” you ask.

Learn from the mothers in the gospel. It says they brought their children to Him (Mt 19:13, Mk 10:13, Lk 18:15). How? An old commentator said very simply, “They carried the little ones in their arms, the bigger ones they held by the hand, and the mothers, went along themselves.”

“They carried the little ones in their arms.” Do you know, Father, do you know, Mother, how you also can carry your child to the Lord when she is too small to walk? Pray for your child. On the arms of priestly intercession, bring her before her God and Savior every day

that He may bless her, for everything is gained in His blessing.

The prayer of a godly mother for her child is like an angel watching around his bed, surrounding him as if in a healing, heavenly atmosphere in which he can grow happier and thrive in body and soul. Yes, it surrounds even the child wandering in the distance, the lost son still on the wrong track, like an invisible, heavenly escort.

“The child of those tears shall never perish,” was the consolation of a servant of God to Monica, Augustine's mother. And Augustine was snatched like a burning stick from the fire and saved. “The prayers of my father surround me like mountains,” shouted the seriously ill, lost son of Philipp Jakob Spener, who repented and came to Christ.

Therefore, Father, Mother, if you love your child, do not fail to intercede for him or her. Concerned parents often spend a lot of money, a lot of words, a lot of tears on their child, and yet everything is in vain. Why? They fail to pray to the Lord for their child.

“The bigger ones they held by the hand.” Oh parents, follow the example of those mothers too! If they can walk themselves, lead your children to the Lord through teaching and exhortation. Read God's Word diligently with them; tell them of the life and times, suffering and death of the Lord. Confront them often with Christ's example, teach them to look at their sins in light of the divine Word, teach them to fear God as the avenger of evil. Awake in them a hunger and thirst for the righteousness of God. Exalt for them the noble name in which this righteousness can be found, and you will feel more blessing from it than the application of the best parenting system.

But, dear parents, the mothers who brought their children to Jesus also went themselves. Send your children to Sunday school as much as you like, but if you don't lead them by example in the fear of God, in the love for the Word and God's house, then everything is in vain. Soon they will follow you, because children are naturally inclined to follow your lead, whether good or bad.

By allowing yourself one lie in the presence of your children, you negate every sermon on truthfulness. And by a Christian, godly example, you achieve more in their hearts than by the best exhortations, most touching prayers, and the most severe punishments. Words only teach, but an example directly encourages emulation. Therefore, dear parents, if you are serious about bringing your children to the Lord, don't forget, you must go yourself.



CHILDREN'S PAGE

## Mom's Vacation

**H**ooray, vacation!" Harry cheers loudly, throwing his backpack in the corner and rushing to his mom who is folding the laundry. "Oh, vacation," says Mom, "I have no vacation."


Harry considers this. "Actually, Mom is right. She has no vacation, and she sure looks tired!" Suddenly, he has a thought. "Mom should have a vacation too!" He quickly runs into the kitchen and sets the table and cheerfully says, "Mom, may I help you? Should I carry the laundry basket upstairs? I'm strong, you'll see!" Mom smiles at the eagerness of her son. "Well, Harry, if you want to help, I'll take a vacation, too."

The other siblings arrive home from school. Harry pulls them into a corner, and a plan is drafted. "Mom must have a vacation." Tomorrow morning they'll get up quietly, and when Mom comes into the kitchen, breakfast

will be ready on the table. And in the afternoon when the sun is shining, they'll go into the woods where Mom can rest a little.

A merry bunch leaves the house. Harry is carrying a blanket on which Mom is to rest, and Frieda is carrying a basket with an afternoon snack. It's so quiet outside in the woods. Mom is sitting on the blanket, leaning against a beech trunk, resting otherwise busy hands. She begins to tell beautiful stories from her childhood to her children, who have settled close to her. And the children listen intently.

At supper, Dad asks, "What is going on? You all look so happy!"—"Oh, Dad, Mom has had a vacation with us. We want to do this more often! We're all helping here in the house, and on Sunday afternoon you are coming to the woods with us too, alright?"



*A Letter to my Mother*

*Dear Mother,*

*Let me begin by saying that I am most grateful we have a very close and loving relationship and share a very strong bond. Have we ever given this much thought? What is the reason for our strong relationship? Does perhaps luck or fate play a role?*

*I often think of a conversation I had with one of my colleagues pertaining to mother/daughter relationships. Both of us had lost our fathers when we were fairly young. I told her all about our very close and loving relationship. She listened intently as I continued and was surprised by what I was telling her. "You're very lucky you get along so well with your mom. I could never get along with my mother." I wish I had made more of an effort to explain why we have the relationship we have, and more importantly, how this is even obtainable. I should have told her about the One who came to restore and to heal our broken relationships.*

*Simply put, once I am reconciled with God and find inner peace, then my relationship and bond with God shapes my behavior towards other human beings. One is the result of the other. Dear Mom, even though we are very different in character and personality, and as you say, differences of opinion exist as the result of our age gap, we are united in Christ's love and are one in Him. Christ is the center of our relationship, "because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Romans 5:5).*

*Yet it goes without saying, dear Mother, that we must play our part as well and "make every effort." You know this as well as I do, because to be human means we are fallible and can struggle at times. Mother, you and Father taught and modelled for us that love is an action word, and that nearly everything in life that generates enduring value requires effort and work on our part.*

*In closing, dear Mom, I would just like to mention, whether we are aware of it or not, as Christians we are being observed by those in our neighborhood, social sphere and family. Actions and deeds speak loudly. Our relationship has not gone unnoticed by neighbors and others who observe us. Not infrequently do I hear, "Your mother is lucky to have you as a daughter." If it were all up to luck, I would reply, "I'm lucky to have her as my mother." Of course they are unaware (especially in my current situation) that I need you as much as you need me and we rely on each other. Just a while ago, I mentioned to guard. I will reply, "By the Grace of God we still have each other. We both need each other." Thank goodness, Mom, our sovereign God is in control and we don't have to depend on luck or good fortune!*

*Sincerely,  
Your loving daughter*



# More Than a Mother's Love

*"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. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me" (Isaiah 49:15-16).*

Jerusalem is lying in ruins. The temple is desolate. The sound of trumpets playing has been replaced by the eerie cawing of ravens. Is this not enough to cause one to lament and cry from morning until evening? The splendor of Israel is gone—the nation is scattered, other nations have cast them aside, and God has rejected them. It is no wonder the lament arose that, "The Lord has forsaken me; and my Lord has forgotten me."

Is this really the case? No, Zion is mistaken. Zion should have confessed, "We have forsaken the Lord, we have forgotten the Lord!" Zion should have realized that this misery was self-inflicted due to their disobedience, and now they had to suffer the consequences. However, people constantly make the mistake of giving God the blame instead of themselves. When they end up in extremely hard circumstances because of personal transgressions, they are quick to blame God for lack of mercy and faithfulness, as opposed to admitting it resulted from their own iniquity.

Does this cause God to become impatient? Does God give up? Oh no, God does not give up. God tries again with sincere compassion to rescue His fearful children from the mistake of giving up their faith by letting them answer the question, "Can a woman forget her nursing child . . . ? Surely they may forget."

Would it be possible to find another expression that would surpass the warmth and tenderness we find in the intimacy of God's love? The word "mother" also conveys warmth and tenderness. A mother's love has a tremendous strength which no disappointment can break, it is courageous in dangerous situations, and has patience which can overcome the toughest opposition.

If you are afraid of what the future holds in store for you, and you doubt God's faithfulness, ask your mother to help you overcome this doubt. God wants your mother to help you in this trying situation. Look back at the time she nur-

tered and cared for you as a little child. Let your thoughts remind you of your quiet nursery and how she sang you to sleep. Don't forget how often she lovingly forgave you and prayed for you as you were out and about, and perhaps even when you made bad choices. Then you will really see how God upholds a mother's love. Just listen how He is whispering, "That is how I am. Can a woman forget her nursing child, and can I, Who love you with an unending love which is greater and better than the best mother on earth?"

Is this enough to quiet and comfort you completely? He promised to never forsake you and never to forget about you. It is impossible for Him, Who can do everything, to forget about you poor and helpless child. Your name is written in His hands, similar to how former slaves branded the name of their master in their hands. He has your name, you personally, marked on Him. Who can separate you from the love of God?

Perhaps tomorrow or the day after you may encounter danger which will make you afraid. Your own heart wants to make you fearful. So does the world, and Satan, and even death. My advice to you is to be strong and courageous against these temptations. You need not be afraid if you belong to God and are His precious child. Face all these fears in the name of Jesus. You will then realize most of these things that scared you were only imaginary fears. If God is for you, who can be against you? And if everything would be against you—if God is for you, then in reality there is nothing against you.

Oh, if we could live as calmly as a child! If the child is fearful—the mother watches. If the child is distressed—the mother cares. If the child is poor—he has his mother, and in his mother's arms, he feels safe. The mother has the child; the child has his mother. We have God—and God has us.

A mother was sitting on the bedside of her dying child. She was trying to comfort her precious child by talking about Heaven. "There the light will be shining brightly," she said. The child only sighed. "Oh Mother, that will hurt my eyes!" "There will be beautiful music," the mother said again, "beautiful music sounding from silver trumpets and golden harps." The suffering child answered, "Oh mother, the softest tone already gives me pain!"

The mother was quiet. As her eyes filled with tears, she bent over, laying the head of her child upon her breast, tenderly caressing it, oh so tenderly against her heart. Then the child whispered ever so softly, "Dear Mother, this is how it will be in heaven." Heaven is God's motherly love.

If we abide in this love, then we are in heaven, already here, in our struggles, in our sickness, in death. Th. J.

# A Mother's Influence

John Randolph, an American politician, once said, "I should have been an atheist if it had not been for one recollection—and that was the memory of the time when my departed mother used to take my little hand in hers and cause me on my knees to say, 'Our Father who art in heaven.'"

A good mother is worth as much as one hundred schoolmasters. She draws every heart in her home to herself like a magnet, and she is like a guiding light to their eyes. How different our world would be if we had many more mothers like that.

Dr. T. L. Cuyler said, "Would that I could burn it in the heart of every mother who reads these lines, that, under God, she is chiefly responsible for the moral and spiritual welfare of her household. If the mother is a frivolous fashion worshipper, utterly prayerless and irreligious, or even careless of the spiritual welfare of her children, the whole home atmosphere catches the taint. The downward pull of her home preaching is quite too strong for the upward pull of the best preaching in God's house on the Sabbath. On the other hand if she does her utmost to make the religion of Jesus attractive to her family, if she is watchful of every opportunity to lead them Christward, if she follows up the effect of Sabbath gospel, by the powerful influence of home gospel, then there is almost a moral certainty that God will send His converting grace into that household."

Concerning his mother's wisdom, Dietrichson, the former teacher of a Danish queen, recounted, "I was born in the mountains as an only child. As a youngster, I was a lively and bright boy who could sing little songs and recite poems at age four. The longer I did these things, the more I entertained our neighbors. Often, I would be summoned, placed on a chair, and asked to perform. After sharing a song or poem, I would naturally be rewarded with some cake or various other treats.

"One morning, I felt my mother didn't give me enough attention as she helped to pull my socks on. So, I said I wished I was Mrs. Ramberg's child. After all, she was the one who spoiled me the most.

"Would you like that, my little one?" asked my mother with a calm and cheerful voice. "You can be her child. Come, take your things. You can leave and go to Mrs. Ramberg."

"Defiantly, I marched out of the room, with my clothes under my arm and headed down the stairs. First, I went quickly. But the further I went down the stairs, the slower I went. And when my mother opened the door for me, my defiance was broken. I clung tightly to her, cried and found myself engulfed in her loving arms. In the end, I felt it really was best to be 'Mother's little boy.'"

Someone shared the following incident which took place out on the street:

"Just wait, you're going to get it! Your mom is going to scold you!" said a girl to a little boy, who had ripped a fair-sized hole in his pants.

"The youngster stood silently before the speaker. His eyes were filled with tears, and his fists were clenched.

"My mom never scolds. She is just sad, but that is—that is worse than if she would scold me!" And the boy turned to head home.

"I unintentionally witnessed the whole incident. It was encouraging to see how the young boy defended his mom. As a mom who doesn't scold, she also deserved to be warmly defended. If only there were many more mothers like this."

A man of some reputation once said, "My mother never spoke sharply. In her gentle manner, she spoke very few words. But for me she was always ready to say, 'My dear boy!'

"One day, I badly misbehaved and was caught by my mother. She looked at me sternly and said very slowly, 'My boy!' and not another word was said. For me, this was the hardest lecture I could ever have received. For the first time ever, I missed hearing the loving word that was always included in the endearing phrase she used towards me. This phrase had so often helped to cast away my childhood cares.

"I cannot tell how often in later years, when I was tempted to participate in all kinds of wrongdoing, these words of my loving mother, 'My boy!' protected me from sin! Even today, I hear them echoing in my heart and I often ask myself, would I have stored a long tirade of harsh, reprimanding words in my heart to this day? Those would have been long forgotten. These two words however, continually brought the disappointed face of my mother to mind. In this way, the short lecture from my mother became a great blessing to me."

An educated man once said, “In my years of study, there were times when my faith was in great danger of suffering shipwreck. Not just my Christian faith was challenged, but my faith in the very existence of a God Who answers prayer was shaken. But, right from the start, my doubts were held back. After all, I had to say to myself, “If my doubts were justified, then my mother was the greatest fool who ever walked on two feet.

“I immediately felt outrage against these thoughts. Not just every drop of blood that flowed in my veins was filled with rage, but my conscious mind was outraged. In her

child-like faith my mother was truly wealthy and full of joy. I cannot count the times she brought me back to this realization, whenever her bright, sunny face appeared behind my desk.

“Then I began to question my own doubts and soon came to this conclusion: I would rather risk being wrong and be as my mother is than to be found right and to be like those who have no faith or hope. Of course, this was an illogical, idealistic method and in spirit I see esteemed scholars who smile at this and even less distinguished ones who scoff at it. But either way, I am content with my resolve.”

## *Experiences with God*

I would like to share a testimony about my daughter Abby, and want to give God all the glory for her healing. About two years ago, our 11-year-old daughter went in to the hospital with what we thought was appendicitis. The tests all checked out clear and we were told she was okay, maybe some trapped air or a pulled muscle. She continued to be in immense pain, and clearly was *not* fine. The second time we brought her to the hospital, she was admitted. She went downhill drastically in the hospital, but nobody could tell us why. It was so scary watching her decline and not knowing why. Day after day, night after night, our daughter lay in the hospital getting worse, not better . . . with no diagnosis. I remember one night when I had a panic attack because I thought she might die. I sat in her bedroom at home with my mom, while my husband sat in Abby’s hospital room. I was begging God not to take her. I couldn’t even let myself think about it, but God wanted me to face this fear I had. Would I still love Him if He took her home? Hours later and after talking with my mom, I realized what I actually already knew: Abby belonged to Him. God had blessed our family with this little girl . . . and all 7 of our precious kids, but ultimately they were His. He loves them even more than I can, and He was going to do what was best for her. We were finally allowed to go home after a surgery and an endoscopy that revealed she had a stomach ulcer. I finally had some answers! I thought she would now start to get better once she was in her own surroundings and taking the medicine the doctor prescribed for a stomach ulcer. But I was wrong. I didn’t know this at the time, but the medicine I was pumping down her was actually making her worse. Her balance became unstable, she had zero energy, and she became very depressed. My husband,

Adam, had to carry her from room to room if she’d leave the couch or bed. Even brushing her teeth would cause her to drop to the floor in total exhaustion. Her weight continued to drop and our sweet little girl had lost her zest for life. It was such a dark time of confusion, fear, and disappointment. But God never left us. He carried us through when I felt like all I could do was just be held. Well, fast forward a couple of months, lots of prayer, hours of research, and the help of a doctor of functional medicine. We learned Abby’s ulcer was caused by low stomach acid. This could be remedied by taking digestive enzymes with HCl before every meal. Slowly, Abby was able to eat some food without excessive pain which in turn made her stronger and stronger. Her energy slowly returned and she began to resume some of her previous activities.

Today, when we see Abby jumping on the trampoline and playing with her siblings, we are filled with gratitude that she is even here today. We know without a shadow of a doubt that it was God who healed her. We are so grateful to Him and thankful that He brought us through that dark and difficult year. Each day is a precious gift from Him and I realize more and more how entirely dependent on God I am for absolutely everything. Without the Holy Spirit, I can do nothing and I am thankful He never left us in the middle of the valley. Thank you to everyone who so graciously prayed for our family and did things to cheer Abby up.

We want to give God tremendous thanks for His many blessings. May we never take them for granted!

Jennifer Daggett,  
Swartz Creek, MI

### *The Meaning of Jesus' Ascension*

*That Jesus has ascended now,  
Do you know what that means?  
The Lord desires for you to be  
With Him on high eternally.  
Be true to Him in all you do;  
His heart is full of love for you.*

*That Jesus has ascended now,  
Do you know what that means?  
That God has given Him the power  
To reign forever since that hour  
He rose again. He set us free,  
The One who died on Calvary.*

*He's with the Father now on high,  
Do you know what that means?  
Rejoice, praise Him in all you do;  
With glory He is crowned anew.  
He's seated on His heav'nly throne  
And advocating for His own.*

*That Jesus has ascended now,  
Do you know what that means?  
A fountain's flowing from the throne,  
The blood has power to atone.  
New life has come for you and me  
Through Jesus Christ of Calvary.*