



# Foundation of Faith

---

## Signs of the Times

Eternity Is Approaching  
The Day of the Lord  
Are You Ready?  
The Last Days

# Contents

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

### 4 The Missing Signature

### 4 In the Face of Death

*When the conscience suddenly awakens . . .*

### 5 Are You Ready?

### 6 The Last Days

*Are we living in the last days?*

### 8 A Common Misconception

### 9 Eternity is Approaching

*Is there really an eternity? Do we have proof?*

### 10 The Day of the Lord

### 12 The Big Trial

*We all must answer for ourselves.  
Have you settled your case?*

### 13 Persistently Waiting

### 15 The Two Biggest Events

## EXPERIENCES WITH GOD

### 16 On Holy Ground

## 3 Editorial

### CHILDREN'S CORNER

### 18 Be Different

### 19 Jesus, the Light that Illuminates Our Darkness

### YOUTH PAGES

### 20 Bible Course in Steinbach, Canada

### SERIAL: "I WILL BE WITH YOU"

### 22 The Mission Field in Germany After World War I (Part 11)

### 24 Prayer Topics for 2025

### 26 Report from Kazakhstan

### POEM

### 28 Christ's Return

## FOUNDATION OF FAITH

*Editor*

Hans-Dietrich Nimz

*Editorial Team*

Niko Ernst  
Harry Semenjok  
Ron Taron  
Hermann Vogt

•

The FOUNDATION OF FAITH is a journal of vital Christianity, published in the interest of the Church of God, that takes a clear and decisive stand for full salvation in Christ, the unity of all true believers, and the truths of the Bible.

The editors reserve the right to abridge and edit all materials and information submitted for publication. Research sources are listed for information only and should not necessarily be construed as an endorsement or recommendation.

•

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@christianunitypress.com  
www.christianunitypress.com

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.

FOUNDATION OF FAITH (USPS 9008) is published monthly by Christian Unity Press, 5195 Exchange Dr., Flint, MI 48507, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Flint, MI, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Christian Unity Press, 5195 Exchange Dr., Flint, MI 48507, USA Volume 22 Issue 11

FOUNDATION OF FAITH is a trademark owned by Christian Unity Press in the United States and foreign countries.  
Printed in USA.

FOUNDATION OF FAITH is published free of charge. All expenses are covered by freewill donations.

## Editorial

*Dear Reader!*

*Have you ever heard the words, “The future looms dark before us”? Listening to the news, hardships, and terrible current events can make us scared and anxious!*

*Long ago, the prophet also wrote in such a manner: “For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people.” Yet, gloriously he continues: “But the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you” (Isaiah 60:2).*

*Despite all wickedness, godlessness, and gloomy predictions, “the LORD . . . and His glory” remains for all time—even today!*

*Just as after every dark and stormy night, the sun rises anew in the morning, our Savior is the sun of righteousness, and all can find salvation in Him, for He said: “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” (John 8:12).*

*When we look at the signs of the times—wars, earthquakes, epidemics, wickedness, and increasing ungodliness—let us avert our eyes from the things of this world and cling firmly to the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ. He promised: “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). And again: “But he who endures to the end shall be saved” (Matthew 24:13).*

*Therefore, let us always “look to Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2). Let us remain faithful to Him and wait for His return when He comes to take us home to eternal glory!*

*H. D. Nimz*

# The Missing Signature

This was no small scare! My wife and I wanted to travel abroad. We got to customs and showed our passports. The officer said to me, “You can go through; the lady has to stay behind.”

“Why?”

“Her passport is not in order.”

“What’s wrong with it?”

Then the man laughed. He didn’t want to torment us any longer but had deliberately wanted to “scare” us for a moment. “The signature is missing! As soon as your wife signs underneath her name, she can also go through.”

That was quickly taken care of. My wife signed, and we passed through customs unhindered. But we have not forgotten this little experience. It often goes through my mind when I travel abroad alone or when the two of us travel together.

Doesn’t it have a deeper meaning? Doesn’t it have a parable-like meaning? We all would like to go to the “foreign land of eternity” one day. That is, after all, the great message of the Bible. There is an afterlife; even better, there is the “Father’s house” with God; there is an eternity that is glorious and beautiful.

However, the Lord Jesus consistently added that this eternity also has another side: an eternity without God, separated from Him, a damnation, a hell.

Years ago, there was a dispute about this topic. A well-known professor of theology had spoken in a radio broadcast about the whole seriousness of hell, just as the Bible does. This caused a great stir among many educated people. “One should not say it like that; those are medieval ideas,” etc. For a long time, the newspapers were full of pros and cons.

Unfortunately, most people have forgotten or do not want to hear the Bible’s serious message about eternity. They hardly think about it. They think: If you only live reasonably right and decent, you will get in, and everything will be fine.

Unfortunately, not all will enter heaven. All could get in—it is open to everyone. Jesus has everything ready for all of us. God does not reject anyone. He loves us all. But our “passports” must be in order.

Now in our case, our passport is all right. God issued it to us Himself. He certifies, as it were, that we are “entitled” to go abroad to eternal heaven. But we must personally put our signature under it; we must sign our name.

What is meant by this? Redemption has come. From God’s side, everything has happened that had to happen for our temporal and eternal salvation. But what matters is that we personally accept this redemption in faith and that we say “yes” to it.

# In the Face of Death

Years ago, Dr. C. B., who was seriously wounded in a pistol duel, gave a moving description of what goes through a person’s mind and heart at the moment when he is on the verge of death. He writes about it:

“I was laid on the ground, and then I saw how it became dark around me, and soon I could no longer see anything. Only my whole life with all my sins stood before me like a scene illuminated by a bright flash! What I suffered emotionally at that moment in terms

of remorse and dissatisfaction with myself was terrible and well worth an eternity in hell. Shortly afterwards, I recovered my senses.

“I still heard the two doctors say that I was in very bad shape. The fact that the second doctor was called in also made me think that things were coming to an end. Physical pain only set in several hours later. After two months, I was pretty much healed, but I spent a whole year suffering the emotional impact of that terrible moment, which I don’t like to remember. I am

Back then at customs, it was easy to sign. It will seldom happen that quickly when it comes to spiritual things. But basically, it is also quite simple: As soon as we come to Jesus in true, inner submission—because we are not worthy and our sin stands between us and

God—confess our sins to Him and submit our lives to Him and give Him our “yes,” then our “passport” is in order. Then we need not fear “customs” at the gate of eternity. Then we will enter and experience with great amazement the glorious “abroad” of eternity. ■

## Are You Ready?

A story from long ago:  
A farmer, Andrew, was just about to head out to the field when his mother-in-law came from the garden and asked, “Where are you heading to, Andrew?”

“I’m going to the field, Mother.”

“May God protect you and bring you back safely!”

Andrew laughed loudly. “Listening to you speak, Mother, one might think I was setting off on a world journey where I might sink into the sea or be torn apart by wild animals. What could possibly happen to me in the field, which is only ten minutes away? Should I perhaps call for a pastor to prepare me for death before I go?”

“Don’t mock me, Andrew!” the woman said seriously. “Death often waits by the road without being seen. And one must always be prepared to die at any moment.”

“That’s the wisdom of old wives’ tales!” laughed Andrew and continued on his way to the field. When he

arrived, he grabbed the scythe and once again thought of his mother-in-law, who always saw death standing by the road and would ask, “Are you ready to die?”

He had just swung the scythe through the grass twice when he suddenly collapsed with a loud cry. A bullet had struck him! Blood poured from his wound, and he lost consciousness. Some people were working nearby and heard his outcry. They rushed to him and found him bleeding and unconscious. Immediately, they transported him home.

Fortunately, the two wounds on his chest and upper arm were not fatal. They were just flesh wounds caused by a grazing shot. One of the soldiers who happened to be conducting maneuvers nearby accidentally fired a live round—providentially, from a great distance.

When Andrew regained consciousness, he looked around confused and said, “Death was waiting by the road, Mother, and I wasn’t prepared.”—This experience was a warning that stayed with him for the rest of his life. ■

only writing it down because I believe I am doing science a service.”

In a subsequent letter, he returned to this thought: “The more my consciousness faded during the whole process, the clearer my soul and conscience became. Like a bright flash in the dark night, my whole life passed before my mind’s eye. I had to make the sad discovery that I had almost nothing to be happy about. In contrast, my wrongful deeds stood before me in an incredibly large, terrifying clarity and magnitude. I was

so spiritually miserable. I would never have thought that such a terrible impact was possible. I never believed that one could suffer so much morally in such a short time. I was only unconscious for about a minute, but that minute changed me for the rest of my life.”

What the poet so aptly says has come true:

*During life the conscience sleeps,  
Yet in death it awakens;  
Then one sees before their eyes  
One’s whole course of life.* ■

# The Last Days

*“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” (2 Timothy 3:1–5)*

Years ago, I came across a brochure that posed the question, “What time is it on the world clock?” This suggests that people are concerned about the end of our time, and that is a valid concern. When our time is over, the time of grace will also have ended. God says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.’ Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). As long as the gospel of Jesus is preached, we are still living in the time of grace. But one day, the preaching will stop because the end of all things will have come. That is why it is so important to take advantage of the time of salvation now.

Our Bible text speaks of the last days. This is the time before the coming of the Lord. Evidentially, the Bible also refers to the gospel age as the last days. However, the gospel age has a beginning, a middle, and also an end. It is clear from Scripture, however, that the last days, mentioned here, have their own special characteristics. Therefore, it is possible for everyone to orient themselves by God’s Word and prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord.

When you talk to Christians, they speak of the current conditions as the worst of all time. That does not mean that everything went well before and there were no terrible happenings in the past. Far from it. In the past, there were the most terrible persecutions, and not only through paganism. Horrible abominations also occurred in the name of God, and millions of God’s people were slaughtered. A false Christianity ruled with brutal force and brought terror and misfortune upon pious and defenseless people.

Here, however, the description of the last days is different. Paul emphasizes “that in the last days per-

ilous times will come.” Then he describes these days. And if we consider the attitude of today’s people and compare our times with these prophetic words, then everything applies perfectly. Where is the reverence and fear of God today? Who still pays attention to God’s Word in order to live their lives accordingly? Is God’s Word not just reinterpreted according to each one’s own opinion and simply subjected to the viewpoints of our age? It is not God’s Word that is the standard, but human opinion insists that each person should just live according to their own desires and do whatever pleases them. People tend to think very highly of themselves, are proud, and are blasphemers. Moral concepts are turned upside down. People speak of love and mean licentiousness. Purity and chastity are declared outdated. Women act as if they were men, and men try to appear as women. It is a reversal of the divine order. This leads to neglect, slothfulness, and a reluctance to do one’s duty, preferring others to do the work for them.

This also includes disobedience to parents. No amount of gentle persuasion, pleading, or even severity will help the majority to choose a better path. The love of their parents is simply trampled underfoot, as they want to be free and go their own way. They believe that this is the way to create a new world that will be better than the past. God does not fit into their concept. They consider Him to be an obstacle to their ideas, and they blaspheme. They are not afraid to openly oppose God Almighty. They reject His Word because it is too hard for them. They are self-absorbed and self-obsessed, and yet they are stuck in the mire of sin and will go to eternal damnation if they do not repent.



Another characteristic of the end times is addiction to pleasure. Our text calls them “lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.” Enormous sums of money are spent for pleasure, and even in churches the demonic desire for pleasure often gets the upper hand. It leads people to prefer the easy and carefree side of things. Yet they still maintain the appearance of godliness; however, they deny the divine transforming power whereby one has died to the sinful way of life. They love pleasure more than God. Is this not an evil time? Jude mentions such people in his letter and writes, “that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit” (Jude 18–19).

And what about the time of Noah? That time is taken to be an image of the end times as well. In Noah’s time, the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he *is* indeed flesh” (Genesis 6:3). People did not obey the Spirit. There was disobedience and there was striving. Isn’t it the same today? People simply ignore everything God says, and His serious warnings are ridiculed and mocked. Just as in Noah’s day, people do not repent.

What time is it on the world clock? The Lord’s coming is imminent, so let us pay attention to the signs of the times. Call upon Jesus Christ, “for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

*G. Sonnenberg (1898 - 1980)*

# A Common Misconception

*“Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” (Matthew 7: 22–23)*

Jesus spoke these solemn words during His Sermon on the Mount, warning us about a fatal mistake many will make. People who profess the name of Jesus but have never experienced the saving power of His blood in their lives will fall into this trap. This will include many who consider themselves to be God’s servants, convinced they are important helpers in His kingdom. On that great day, when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ, they will be horrified to discover they will not receive the reward they expected. Instead, their fate will be eternal doom and torment. This dreadful surprise will be even more terrifying because there will be no escape from this state—for all eternity.

On that great and final day, the door will be locked, as clearly described in Luke 13: 25. This is the door of grace. In this time of grace, the door remains open for every sinner. But on that day, everyone will appear before God and must give an account of himself. Everything will be revealed, and nothing will be hidden or concealed anymore. The mask of hypocrisy will be ripped away, and all self-deception will be exposed. Everyone will see themselves as God sees them.

Zeal for God and His cause is no guarantee that someone’s heart is truly right with Him. Neither a lofty confession of faith, fulfilment of religious obligations, nor so-called good deeds prove that God’s favor rests upon a person.

The above Bible passage describes people who prophesied in the name of Jesus, cast out demons, and performed many great works. Was that not sufficient proof that they were true followers and co-laborers with Christ? They testified that they had done all this in His name. But on the great resurrection day, when the doors are shut and the time of grace is over, they will hear Christ Himself utter the shocking words: “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!”

These people are so sure they are in the right that they believe Jesus has made an error in judgment. This becomes evident because they want to make Him

aware of the wonderful deeds they have done in His name. But the divine Judge has made no mistake. He has not overlooked or ignored anything. These people have fallen prey to terrible self-deception and a dangerous delusion.

But what was the cause? They were evildoers, as the Lord Himself calls them. Despite their lofty declaration, influence, and impressive deeds, they did not do God’s will. They believed they loved God, but they had not kept His commandments. In 1 John 5: 3, we read: “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.” And in John 14: 21, Jesus says: “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.” These people claimed to love God and serve Him, but in reality, they did not because they were disobedient.

Obedience is the true test of love. Jesus says if we love Him, we will also keep His commandments. He will acknowledge us as His friends if we do what He commands us and obey Him in all things. No one who disobeys Him in any way can be approved by Him. Only total obedience is pleasing to God. If we want to appear before Him without sin and blemish, we must be washed clean by the blood of Jesus Christ and keep God’s Word. David said: “I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your law is within my heart” (Psalm 40: 8).

Examine yourself to see if you have been cleansed from all sin by the blood of the Lamb of God. Check whether you have the love of Christ and His Spirit in your heart, for whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him. Are you of the same mind as Jesus Christ? Examine whether your heart and life align with God’s Word, whether you keep His Word and do His will. God’s Word is a reliable standard and guide. Whoever follows it and walks in the light of the Word, obeying God’s Word, will not go astray and will not be deceived or misled. But always remember: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7: 21). ■





## Eternity is Approaching

One thing is certain: eternity is inevitably approaching. But are we prepared for it? Perhaps you've thought: Is there even an eternity? Haven't we just been led to believe it? Isn't it just a fantasy, an old myth that modern people today tend to smile about? Many no longer believe in eternity and think that everything ends at death.

Today I would like to tell you why I believe in eternity. Perhaps this will shed light on your soul. In every human being, there is a deep longing for a higher, infinite life, for an existence full of fulfillment. In quiet moments, when we are bowed down by suffering or revel in happiness, when we hear the sound of the wind sweeping the autumn leaves before us or observe the buds of spring, when we see the stars at night or experience the sunrise in the mountains or by the sea—then we are overcome by an awareness of the infinite. We sense that behind all the visible, transient things there is something eternal, something lasting, for which our soul is destined. Since God has placed this longing in people's hearts, it must have an objective. Otherwise, it would be pointless.

We also see that various religions speak of a final judgment in which good is rewarded and evil is punished. Our conscience tells us this as well, does it not? It may remain silent for a long time, but at some point, it awakens and makes our misdeeds clear to us. It tells us unequivocally: guilt is followed by punishment! There is eternal retribution. Even a criminal senses this. An inner voice that originates from God testifies to him: there is a future world and eternal judgment.

Even in the happiest of lives, questions, riddles, and problems remain for which we cannot find answers. There are unfinished tasks that must one day be completed. When we look at the history of na-

tions and families, we come across many unanswered questions. Life often seems to be a chaos, a tangle of a thousand threads that seem to run through each other senselessly, and we despair. Is a solution ever to be expected? But if there were never a solution, our lives would have no meaning. We would be at the mercy of chance or a blind fate that tosses us about without a goal. But Jesus Christ has become the bridge between this world and eternity. His disciples sensed in His presence, in His words and deeds, that He carried something eternal within Him, something that was not of this world. "Lord, to whom shall we go?" they asked (John 6: 68).

Especially in that hour of farewell described in John 17, you could literally feel eternity's proximity in the circle of disciples. They recognized that their Master had come from eternity and was returning there when he 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; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17: 24).

The strongest proof of eternity is the Bible. Its words may have been written by mortal beings, but behind the words, eternity, inspired by God, shines forth—from the first page to the last. God has allowed some to see behind the curtain that still separates heaven and earth. Their hearts and mouths overflow with what no eye has ever seen and no ear has ever heard and what God has prepared for those who love him. Those who immerse themselves in the Bible in prayer and research will attain the certainty of eternity and look forward to heaven with joy. May you also be granted this great gain. "Lord, make us ready for a blessed eternity!" ■

## The Day of the Lord

The uncertain times we are living in now bring about many thoughts and questions. The one topic that is on the mind of some is: Is the end near? Is the day of the Lord at hand?

Jesus, while here on earth many years ago, stated: “I will come again” (John 14: 3, 28). When Jesus ascended to heaven following His resurrection, the angel of the Lord spoke to the disciples: “This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). Jesus is coming back; there is no doubt about it. The first time, He came as the Savior. The second time, He will be coming as the Judge. “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work” (Revelation 22:12). Will He come in our lifetime?

D. S. Warner, who lived some hundred years ago, expressed that perhaps the Lord would come in his lifetime. The world is still standing today. Many have felt perhaps He might come in their lifetime. We know not the hour, but His return is imminent. Just as we sense and see that winter is on its way, so we see the signs of our times and know that the day of the Lord is at hand. Peter compares His coming as a “thief in the night” (2 Peter 3:10). He will come when it is least expected.

I’ve read of saints who would look out the window on a regular basis and wonder if today would be the day of His coming. They lived with expectancy and watchfulness that He might come at this very moment. This is in accordance with the teaching of Jesus. In the gospel of Mark, Jesus says: “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is” (Mark 13:32–33).

Perhaps this short story will help illustrate the command to be ready and watchful when we know not the hour of His coming: A young lady, whose parents had died while she was an infant, had been kindly cared for by a dear friend of the family. Before she was old enough to know him, he went to Europe. Regularly he wrote to her through all his years of absence and never failed to send her money for all her wants. Finally, word came that during a certain week he would return and visit her. He did not fix the day or the hour. She received several invitations to take pleasant trips with her friends during that week. One of these was of so pleasant a nature that she could not resist accepting it. During her trip, he came, inquired as to her absence, and left. Returning, she found this note: “My life has been a struggle for you; might you not have waited one week for me?” More she never heard, and her life of plenty became one of want.

Jesus has not fixed the day or hour of His return, but He has said, “Watch.” Should He come today, would He find us absorbed in thoughtless dissipation? May we be found each day in the expectant attitude of those watching for a loved one. When He comes, “every eye will see Him” (Revelation 1:7), and it will be the last day. Time will be no more. Therefore, Scripture says, “Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2), for we know not what hour will be the last hour. Should the Lord tarry in coming, it is because He “is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). Let us be encouraged by the words of Christ to the faithful church in Philadelphia, “Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown” (Revelation 3:11).

*Jake Wiebe, Waterloo (CA)*

*Watch for the Master's coming,  
Oh, watch and wait;  
Your lamp keep trimmed and burning,  
Oh, watch and wait.*

*Watch for the Master's coming,  
He's at the door;  
Time now is fast declining,  
'Twill soon be o'er.*

*Watch for the Master's coming,  
Oh, ready be;  
Soon in the clouds appearing  
Jesus we'll see.*

*Watch and be ready, waiting  
For Christ to come;  
Let every soul be hast'ning  
To gather home.*

*Refrain:  
Oh, watch and wait,  
Don't be too late;  
Watch for the Master's coming,  
Oh, watch and wait.*

*B. E. Warren*



# The Big Trial

**Y**ou are on trial—your case is before the judge! Find a lawyer who can represent your case before the highest court in the universe, for you can be summoned to appear before the court without further notice.

Every person has a trial before the highest court in the universe. The Bible says: “for all have sinned” (Romans 3:23). “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). The fact that everyone must give an account to God for himself shows that God Himself is the judge before whom every trial is conducted. In Ecclesiastes 12:14, we read: “For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.”

However, every man is given the privilege of settling his personal case before the Day of Judgment comes, so that when he is called, he is immediately dismissed without complaint. This can be done through the great advocate Jesus Christ, whom everyone can secure by believing in Him. “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18).

This great Mediator is the only one who has the right to appear before this divine court. We read in the Bible: “And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1). He is not just an advocate but an authorized representative of God for all those who want to settle their case now, before the judgment begins. “For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son” (John 5:22).

Now is the time for all to come to this great Mediator and settle their case by obtaining forgiveness of their transgressions through the Lord Jesus Christ. He has full authority to save us from our sins.

He says: “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life” (John 5:24). This great privilege was given to us through the great love of the Judge. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

But to reject the free help of the divine intercessor is to place oneself under the judgment of condemnation. The Bible tells us very clearly: “But he who does not believe is condemned already” (John 3:18). But “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). There is no acquittal from this judgment except through forgiveness, and forgiveness must be established in every case before the Day of Judgment, or the declaration of guilt will follow this neglect.

“How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” (Hebrews 2:3)

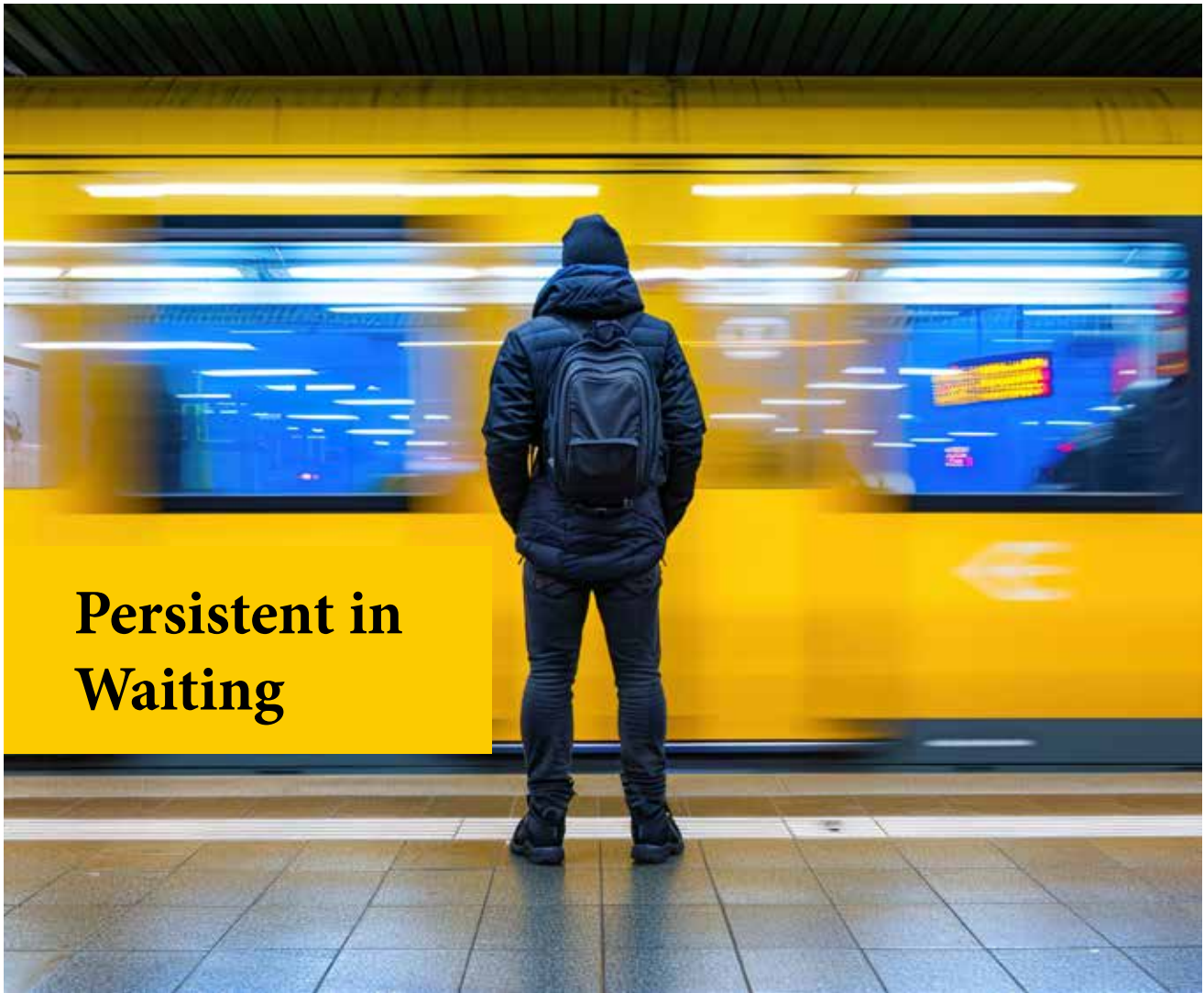
Scripture gives us serious warnings about the last great judgment: “[B]rethren . . . *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 1:3–8). “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day” (John 12:48).

From these scriptures quoted, we can see that if we fail to place our trial in the hands of this Mediator, we will be condemned. But “*there is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).

Christ took our place. He received the judgment we deserved. It is written: “For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). Yes, Jesus Himself “bore our sins in His own body on the tree” (1 Peter 2:24).

If we have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we need not fear judgment, for He settled our case long ago on the cross of Calvary when He shed His precious blood for us. Jesus said: “He who believes in Him is not condemned” (John 3:18).

Decide today! You have no guarantee for your life. “Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). You don’t know what tomorrow will bring. Therefore, “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 3:15). ■



## Persistent in Waiting

**W**aiting—who hasn't experienced this? Nobody actually likes to wait, but often there is no choice. Many wait for their train every day. You often see people waiting for the bus early in the morning. Others wait in front of closed doors. We are expected to wait in the waiting rooms of hospitals or at the doctor's office. Waiting requires endurance, patience, and quiet hope. Waiting can also be a test.

In Luke 12:36, Jesus says: "Be like men who wait for their master." This was obviously about something very important. What position did these people take, and what did others not take? Jesus repeatedly reminds us of waiting and presents it with many practical examples.

In Luke 12, we read the parable of the servants who are in service of their master. A servant is expected to follow the will of his master and fulfill the duties as-

signed to him. Then Jesus said: "But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the unbelievers" (verses 45–46).

At the same time, Jesus mentions the faithful servants and says: "Blessed *are* those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you, that he will gird himself and have them sit down *to eat*, and will come and serve them. . . . [H]e will make [that servant] ruler over all that he has" (verses 37–44). Therefore, it is important to be a faithful and wise steward.

Another example showing us the importance of persistent waiting is the parable of the ten virgins ►

(Matthew 25). Jesus again emphasizes the importance of vigilance and preparedness. Jesus presents a picture of a Middle Eastern wedding at the time. Jesus compares Himself to the bridegroom. The virgins, together with the bride, symbolize the church, the faithful disciples.

The bride had to wait and be ready for the bridegroom at any time. The exact time was not known to the virgins and the bride, hence the importance of waiting and being ready. The bride's reception apparently took place in the late evening. That is why the virgins kept their lamps burning.

The Lord called five of these virgins foolish. They did not have extra oil along, and their lamps went out. Because of this, they missed the wedding and had to stand in front of the closed door. Jesus wants to show us the seriousness of this situation. He warns the church and all believers against spiritual fatigue, idleness, indifference, and half-heartedness. At the same time, He shows us how important vigilance, persistent waiting, and constant preparedness are. The most important thing is to have a firm, living faith!—Do we have that genuine, firm faith that includes persistent, beneficial waiting for our Lord to return?

D. S. Warner wrote in one of his songs:

Are you ready, waiting for the Lord?  
See, the signs proclaim Him near;  
In the awful thunder of His Word,  
Now His coming steps we hear.

Hark! the solemn warning unto all,  
Judgment's coming, O how soon!  
Flee, O man, at mercy's final call,  
Heaven trembles at our doom.

Thou art coming, O my Savior,  
Who can stand Thy flaming light?  
Now the burning of Thy Spirit  
Sweeps away the works of night;  
Quickly coming in Thy glory,  
With Thy bright angelic train,  
We shall see Thee in Thy beauty,  
And forever with Thee reign.

What can we learn from Luke 12 and Matthew 25? Luke 12:35–36 reads: “Let your waist be girded and *your* lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men

who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately.” Isn't that a noteworthy word for us? It is of utmost importance for our time. We live in a world poor in faith with backs turned to God!

Who still believes in eternity, in the return of our beloved Lord and in the final judgment of the world?

*Jesus warns  
the church and  
all believers  
against spiritual  
fatigue, idleness,  
indifference, and  
half-heartedness.*

These outstanding events are ignored in disbelief. And whoever tries to point them out faces anger and malicious contempt, but that doesn't change the clear reality! In view of Jesus' coming again, we are exhorted to persistent waiting, constant vigilance, and complete readiness. None of us can be wiser than to do such.

Let us have the same resolution as the hymn writer P. F. Hiller:

I will ever with endeavor strive for heaven's bliss;  
Always doing and pursuing lest the prize I miss.  
With all might I dare each fight,  
Though I'm weak, the palm I seek;  
Going onward, pressing forward,  
Till the crown is won.

(Translated by J. T. Mueller)

Yes, “the hope of the righteous will be gladness” (Proverbs 10:28).

*Friedrich Krebs*

# The Two Biggest Events

*“And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.”*

*(Hebrews 9: 27–28)*



**D**eath and Judgment—these two great events will occur in the life of every person. We will all be gathered on the great Day of Judgment; from Adam to the last infant yet to be born. Not a single one will be missing. If, on that day, Jesus, the Mediator between God and man, does not stand by our side, and His precious shed blood does not speak for us, then we are irretrievably lost for all eternity. Who could then intercede for us? What could then benefit us, if not the blood of Jesus? Anyone who despises the precious blood of the Lord leaves this life without hope and is hopeless for all eternity.

Even before an earthly court, it is of great value if an advocate intercedes for us and defends our rights—though one might avoid punishment through one’s own eloquence and cleverness if one has done something wrong. But before the judgment seat of God, all of this is of no use. Nothing can save us there except

the shed blood of Christ. Whoever despises it and relies on something else, perhaps interceding saints, will stand alone and his fate will be eternal damnation.

May God make this clear to everyone and give them no rest until they claim the blood of Jesus and become a child of God. Jesus, our faithful friend, who sits at the right hand of God, still desires today that all be helped and escape the future wrath of God. He Himself wants to protect them, to represent them before God’s throne of grace if they surrender to Him and allow themselves to be cleansed by His blood.

We neither know the time nor the hour when God will call us. Therefore, it is of great importance to secure one’s soul now. I want to call out to each one, as the angels once called out to Lot: “Escape for your life!” No hesitation is allowed, for how quickly the hour of death can strike for you!

*J. Albrecht*

# On Holy Ground

*Praise the LORD, o my soul! While I live I will praise the Lord; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. (Psalm 146: 1-2)*

I would like to join the Psalmist in singing “praises to my God” for His goodness and grace in my life.

In early spring of this year, I noticed an unusual growth on the right side of my chest. And then, to my surprise, I felt a growth on the other side as well. This seemed unusual and disturbing. Right after Easter, I was able to get an appointment at the clinic for an ultrasound. The technician was very elusive and quietly left the room to show the findings to the radiologist. A few moments later, he entered the examination room with the technician and solemnly explained that the results were very concerning. The pictures showed that I very likely had breast cancer. He also said that the cancer appeared to be growing in two locations. I was advised to have my family doctor book a surgeon immediately, even before taking biopsies. A short while later, I received the news that no person ever wants to receive—“You have cancer, an invasive carcinoma.”

The Pastor’s Conference was taking place in Aylmer the next week, and learning that the pastors would also be praying for the sick, I asked to be prayed for. Before meeting with any doctors or surgeons, I had decided that I wanted to be anointed according to James 5. The following week, my request was granted. It was a beautiful and meaningful experience. I felt God’s nearness in that sacred hour. As the pastors prayed over and anointed me with oil, I felt that we were on “holy ground.” I fully acknowledged that God was able to completely heal me if He chose to do so, but I had also released my will into His will if He chose not to heal me.

I want to share a few experiences I had during this time. I had the assurance that many people were praying for me, and God truly answered! Our family doctor had notified us that he was retiring mid-May, which coincided with the time that I was scheduled to have my cancer surgery. Often, results for certain tests are only sent to a family doctor. I had asked several friends to help me pray that we could find a doctor who was accepting new patients (which was not easy in our city). Several weeks earlier, I had been placed on the waiting list for a doctor in a neighboring town. A friend of mine, already a patient with this doctor, offered to put in a good word for me. She phoned the doctor’s office and explained my situation. Consequently, the doctor agreed to accept both my husband and me. A short time later, we had an appointment to meet with him. This was such an answer to prayer!

Our lives became a whirlwind of appointments. My husband was going through his own health challenges, and our calendar was full. An MRI was ordered for me before I met the cancer surgeon. The test results noted a “spot on my sternum.” This was concerning as we wondered if my cancer had already spread. A bone scan was then ordered. We prayed and waited and placed our hope in the Great Physician. God answered those prayers as well, as no cancer was found in my bones. I was able to meet the surgeon on May 8 and, less than a week later, my surgery was scheduled.

Moments before I was wheeled into the OR, I was able to tell my surgeon that many of my friends had messaged me to say that they were praying not only





for me but also for him. He patted my arm and said: “I guess we’re covered then.” I am so grateful that I could feel the comforting peace of God surrounding me. I was released from the hospital later the same day. After my radical surgery, we waited again for results to determine if the cancer had invaded my lymph nodes. How we praised the Lord when those results came back clear!

The weeks of recovery were not easy. For weeks I suffered a lot of pain, not only in the chest wall but

also in my arms due to nerve damage. Our God is so faithful. He answered our prayers, and my pain has completely subsided.

In the past few months, my body has healed well. I am grateful to the many people who prayed for me. I can’t thank my Lord enough for His grace and goodness! My future lies in His hands, and I will continue to put my trust in Him alone.

*Marlis Henkelmann, Edmonton (CA)*

*"Let your light  
so shine before men,  
that they may  
see your good works  
and glorify your  
Father in heaven."  
(Matthew 5: 16)*

## Be Different



One lunchtime after school, Nicholas sat thoughtfully at the dining table and stared at his food. His mom noticed he was worried and, later that evening, asked him what was wrong.

Nicholas explained there was a new seating arrangement at school. During the break, the children discussed who wanted to sit next to whom. But in the end, one boy, Peter, was left out. Nobody wanted to sit next to him. The children started to make fun of him and called him "Slovenly Peter." One girl even said: "Take a little weight off, then maybe someone will want to sit next to you." Then everyone taunted: "Peter is chubby, Peter is chubby!" They only stopped when the teacher came in.

Nicholas did not think it was right and did not take part. When it came time to assign the seats, he spoke up and said he wanted to sit next to Peter. The whole class was silent. Peter thanked him later.

Nicholas was sad that his classmates had been so mean to Peter.

After Mom had listened carefully, she explained to him that there is often a lot of meanness in the world because many people don't know God's love. But when Jesus washes our hearts clean, we are different. She read to him from the Bible, Matthew 5: 14: "You are the light of the world," and encouraged Nicholas to have the courage to be different in the future and let his light shine in the world.

"Look here, it's like this candle." Mom switched off the light and lit a candle. "The world is dark, like this room, because there is a lot of meanness and evil. People argue and bully and are mean and afraid. But we should shine like a light and make our surroundings brighter, like this candle. Wherever we are, we should pass on Jesus' love and kindness."

That was a good example that Nicholas could understand.

Nicholas prayed with his mom. He thanked the Lord Jesus for living in his heart and asked Him to help him always be a light and a blessing. ■

## Jesus, the Light that Illuminates Our Darkness

**L**ight is something very special and important in our lives. Imagine it's dark and you can't see anything. You feel uncertain because you do not know where to go. Sometimes darkness also scares us because we don't know what's around us. In the absence of light, we often feel alone because we can't see anyone near us.

In our lives, too, there are sometimes such "dark" moments when we feel insecure, lonely, or anxious. But this is exactly when Jesus wants to be our light. If you feel lonely and think you are all alone with your problems, remember Jesus is always with you. You are never completely alone, because He loves you and is by your side.

If you are sick or feel unwell and it seems no one can help you, Jesus consoles you and stays by your side. He is like a warm light that gives you security.

Sometimes we don't know what to do or which way to go. Even in such moments, Jesus is like a light that shows you the right way. He helps you through the words of the Bible or by changing your situation and opening new doors.

There is also something that is like a deep darkness in our lives: sin. It burdens our heart and our conscience. But Jesus died for us to free us from this darkness. He forgives our sins and makes our lives bright and pure again.

A good example of this is Zacchaeus. He was a tax collector who had cheated many people. That is why he was lonely and sad, although he was rich. His sins were like a heavy burden on his heart. But one day, Jesus visited him, and from then on everything

changed. Jesus brought light into his life and forgave his sins, and Zacchaeus became a different person. He gave people their money back, helped the poor, and became a happy man. Jesus was the light that drove all the darkness out of Zacchaeus' life.

Jesus also wants to be your light.

*Text written by  
Irina Ritthammer*



*John 8: 12:  
"I am the light  
of the world."*



# Bible Course IN STEINBACH, CANADA

Once again, as in most previous summers, there was a two-week Bible course held at one of the Church of God congregations in Canada. This time, the course was held in Steinbach, Manitoba. Reports by students usually focus on the lessons. As a teacher, I would like to focus on two other aspects of the course. Not only did the students learn from the teachers, but the teachers also learned from them. Before the lessons, which started at 9:40 a.m., there was always a 9:00 a.m. devotional, which was usually led by a student on a topic that was dear to their heart. Some students had never led a devotional before and so no doubt it may have been an intimidating experience for them. Nonetheless, these devotionals were all a great blessing; not only did they benefit the other students but also the teachers and the person who put in the time and effort to share the devotional. Also, the presentations by students on how to share one's faith with non-believers, given during the Apologetics class on Thursday, were insightful and useful.

Most of the sessions began with a song from the blue Worship Hymnal of the Church of God. Yet, for the last session of the day, Rosalie Froese and Gerhard Mielke led the singing with guitar accompaniment. Favorite choruses from the hymnal were "This is the Day," "He is Lord," and "His Name is Wonderful." For a few songs, extra verses were added. For example, to the song:

This is the day, this is the day,  
That the Lord has made, that the Lord has made.  
We will rejoice, we will rejoice,  
And be glad in it, and be glad in it.  
This is the day that the Lord has made.



was added the verse:

Christ is the way, Christ is the way,  
That the Lord has made, that the Lord has made.  
Let us rejoice, let us rejoice,  
And be glad in Him, and be glad in Him.  
Christ is the way that the Lord has made.

To the song:

Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning,  
give me oil in my lamp, I pray;  
give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning,  
keep me burning till the break of day.

was added the verse:

There was a time in my life when I was lonely,  
There was a time in my life when I was sad,  
Then Jesus came in my life and made me happy,  
Jesus came into my life and made me glad.

Devotionals, songs, prayers, and testimonials all added to the joy of being together, praising the Lord, and learning from one another.

*Gerhard Mielke*

If I could describe how the 2024 Bible Course impacted me with one Scripture verse, it would be Hebrews 4:12: “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

I came with the prayer and expectation that God would bless the teaching and reveal Himself in new ways to me, and praise God, He has answered. The course has afforded me the opportunity to study the

Word of God in depth and understand in detail the importance of the doctrine of the Church of God. Students were instructed scripturally on what the Book of Revelation means, helping to see clearly through all the false doctrine that is so readily available. I also found a new appreciation for God’s gift of holiness, and that we can live a sin-free life through direct access to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We were also shown how to take a stand for our faith and closely studied the Gospel of John. In each of these sessions, I was amazed by the living power of God’s Word, and its power showed me what is in my heart, as represented by the two-edged sword in Hebrews 4:12.

I was also blessed by the fellow youth attending the Bible Course and the testimonies that were shared. It was an encouragement to sing and fellowship with other young believers, where we shared a common goal to learn more of God. Whether we sang along with the piano or were led by Brother Mielke on the guitar, I will cherish the times of worshiping God and studying His Word with fellow students. Throughout the course, I was reminded of the song “The Bond of Perfectness,” which reads: “Beloved how this perfect love unites us all in Jesus! One heart, and soul, and mind; we prove the union heaven gave us.” I can say with assurance that God was present at the Bible Course.

Through the Bible Course, God provided a scriptural foundation on which to base my spiritual life, equipping me with the true doctrine that I can now share with others. Praise be to God that the prayers of our brothers and sisters in Christ, supporting the 2024 Bible Course, were answered!

*Tom Mueller, Swartz Creek (USA)*



## I Will Be With You

### Part 11: The Mission Field in Germany After World War I

*Salomon Weissburger (1887-1968)*

The war had done a lot of damage to our work for the Lord. Three preachers—Brothers Wehking, Mönch, and Senf—as well as another brother from East Prussia had fallen. Of the brothers from America who had started and led the work with us, many were in Switzerland or the USA. The only free preacher left was Brother Flottmann in Berlin, who was already at an advanced age.

Nonetheless, we set to work with renewed courage. The first thing the Lord put on my heart was to send Brother Girke and his wife to serve in Hamburg. Brother Girke had a strong foundation in the truth. In fact, he had been at the mission house in Essen before World War I, when he was drafted. With his addition, there were now three of us preachers.


At that time, the congregation in Bochum was limited to a house meeting with only a few sisters and brothers in attendance. But the Lord gave grace to attract new people, and we dared to enter the public eye. A congregation at Robertstrasse 93 allowed us to use their meeting space for our services as well.

The Lord soon gave us new guidance regarding Brother Borbe, who was working in the mines at the time. He had known the truth since 1903 and had stood up for it. His stance on doctrine was decisive and

clear, and he had already done a lot to help out in his free time. The Lord helped release this brother from his obligations so that he could better serve the gospel. Brother Borbe served in Bochum and also in Herne and Recklinghaus-Süd. Over time, his service proved to be a great blessing, and Brother Borbe became a pillar in the Lord's work. Since he was very talented, he later taught at our Bible school, travelled as an evangelist, and eventually (in 1935) took over from me as pastor of the church in Essen. Essen was then the largest congregation we had in Germany. Brother Borbe also started the church in Hüls.

Over time, the Lord gave grace to establish even more churches. The meeting in Gelsenkirchen-Horst was revived, and we started new ones in Dienslaken, Bergeborbek, Oberhausen, Wattenscheid, Gelsenkirchen-Wattenscheid, Cologne, and Mülheim-Heissen.

In the first years after World War I, we also received a visit from Brother Dietrich Meier. He came from North America and was a preacher of the German mission in the USA. Although only in Germany for a short time, he was a great blessing. He was also instrumental in bringing this publication's German-language sister magazine, *Evangeliums Posaune*, to Germany.



*“Come and hear, all you who fear God,  
And I will declare what He has done for my soul.”  
Psalm 66,16*

At the time, we had no house in Germany owned by a congregation or the umbrella organization. Intending to provide the German mission with its own house, Brother Dietrich Meier returned to the USA but, before achieving his goal, fell ill with cancer and died. This was hard for us and a big disappointment.

Later, other brothers from the United States visited us: the preachers Blewitt, Charles Brown, and Riggle. Brother Riggle stayed for three weeks and evangelized, bringing great blessings to the congregation in Essen.

Brother Doebert served as a translator at these meetings because Brother Riggle preached in English. Many souls were converted. Among those who came to the Lord were the future mission workers and preachers Ernst Kersten, Fritz Kreitschmann, and Ferdinand Rose. Brother Riggle’s visit was actually a stop on his way from the USA to Syria, where he was a great blessing as a missionary.

Sister Frederice made a special contribution to the publication of the *Evangeliums Posaune*. She was gifted and had good spiritual discernment, serving in the editorial office for many years. Brother Waurich also worked with us, first in publishing the *Evangeliums Posaune* and writing articles and then in serving the Wat-

tenscheid congregation together with his wife. During his time, the building in which the services still take place today was also built.

### **Influence**

When I started working in the Essen congregation again, in 1919, I made a trip to visit my family, which had temporarily remained in Christophstal, near Freudenstadt, in the Black Forest. On this journey, a man suddenly came up to me and asked, “Aren’t you Mr. Weissburger?” When I answered “Yes,” he introduced himself as an old friend from my youth. He told me that he had also come to Christ, converting from Judaism to Jesus, like me. I was thrilled to hear this, but we unfortunately had only a little time to talk about the wonderful guidance of God in our lives. I had to get off the train while he rode onward; our paths never crossed again.

We had lived close together as teenagers, but when I converted in 1904, all association between us ended. Nonetheless, I have the impression that my conversion spoke to him and that this influence eventually caused him to come to believe in Jesus. Our actions can have a greater influence than we know. ■

# Prayer Topics for 2025

## The Local Church at Prayer

**O**ur prayer for the new year is that each member of the local church of Christ would live a vibrant life of faith based on God's Word. As a Christian, where do you see yourself serving with your gifts in the church? Are you a prayer warrior who loves and serves the Lord Jesus and His people? May each local pastor be an example and lead the church family in a manner pleasing to God. As we study five of the churches in Revelation 2 and 3, may we learn what pleases our Lord and what pitfalls of the evil one we are to avoid. If we humble ourselves and plead for His mercy and grace, He will surely lead us and make us a beacon of light to a dark, fallen world. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (Revelation 2:7)

Harry Klinger, Winnipeg (CA)

### Topic 1: The Loveless Church (Ephesus, Revelation 2: 1–7)

*I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. (Revelation 2: 2)*

Jesus is the Lord of every local church and knows every member of that church. He sees our faith and our works to serve Him. The church in Ephesus had an amazing start through the ministry of the apostles, as we read in Acts 19–20 and in the letter of Paul to the Ephesians. There was a great revival that occurred there, and the people there were filled with good works and spiritual blessings. Yet, as the years passed, they had lost their first love to the Lord (v. 4). Jesus called them to repent, as they had fallen from grace

and lost their calling in the Lord (v. 5). This violates the greatest commandment of love (Matthew 22: 37–39). If Jesus would ask us today, "Do you really love Me?" what would our answer be? May God protect us from serving God in a half-hearted manner.

#### Let us pray:

- That our love to Jesus would never grow cold, and to repent if it has.
- That we would be filled with good works, patience, discernment, and perseverance (v. 2–3).
- To hear what the Spirit is saying to our churches today (v. 7).

### Topic 2: The Persecuted Church (Smyrna, Revelation 2: 8–11)

*Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. (Revelation 2: 10)*

The church has always faced waves of persecution from the evil one. In our time, we too will face trials. Even though we may be poor, we can be rich in the grace of God (v. 9). The church in Smyrna faced ten days of tribulation where their faith would be tested (v. 10). They were not to fear the days of persecution but to overcome in the name of Jesus and in the power of His Spirit. Paul and Barnabas encouraged God's people to remain steadfast and persevere with God in the trials they would face (Acts 14:22). In our time, the faith of

the local church will also be tested. Are we willing to suffer for the sake of Jesus as the persecuted church does in many parts of the world? Only then will we be truly blessed and receive the crown of life (Matthew 5: 10–12).

#### Let us pray that we would be:

- Willing to suffer for God's truth and the Kingdom of God.
- Watchful and not afraid of the future and the signs of the end times (Matthew 24: 36–44).
- Found faithful in serving the Lord Jesus until we inherit the crown of life (James 1: 12).



### Topic 3: The Compromising Church (Pergamus, Revelation 2: 12–17)

*“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat.” (Revelation 2: 17)*

To this day, the Lord is speaking to each of us through His Word and Spirit. The church in Pergamum was a faithful church where Antipas had suffered a martyr’s death for his faith (v. 13). Yet the Lord was not pleased with the false teachings that had crept into the church (v. 14–15). Is this not the case today, where there are many teachings regarding Jesus as being only a prophet and not the Son of God and the Messiah? Jesus uses the sharp two-edged sword of His Word to clarify doctrine and dispel error (v. 16). If

we have accepted any false teachings, He commands us to repent! Let us strive to stand on the living Word and eat of this wonderful manna, which is the bread of life that alone will sustain us (John 6:32–35, 47–51).

#### Let us pray for the Spirit:

- To give us discernment of His will based on the living Word of God (Hebrews 4: 12).
- To give us wisdom for each situation in life in order to glorify our Lord (James 1: 2–8).
- To empower us to live holy lives and witness to others with grace (1 Peter 3: 14–16).

### Topic 4: The Faithful Church (Philadelphia, Revelation 3: 7–13)

*I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it. (Revelation 3: 8)*

The Lord Jesus knows and sees each member of His church. The church at Philadelphia had kept His Word and not denied the Lord despite persecution. Though they had little strength, God had set an open door to ministry. Despite Satan’s opposition, they would be effective in reaching others with the Gospel of Christ (v. 9). They were willing to witness, and the Lord promised to strengthen them in the hour of trial (v. 10–12). Today, we will face resistance when sharing the Gospel with others. Are we willing to do

this in a society that has become increasingly hostile to the Good News? May we never be ashamed of sharing our faith in Jesus with others!

#### Let us pray that:

- God grants us an open door to share God’s Word with others (Colossians 4: 2–4).
- Our example of faith will bless and encourage our children to serve the Lord in His Kingdom.
- We may always extend the hand of brotherly love to everyone we meet (Romans 12: 14–18).

### Topic 5: The Lukewarm Church (Laodicea, Revelation 3: 14–22)

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. (Revelation 3: 20)*

Jesus was not at the center of this local church, but was standing at the door knocking. The church had become lukewarm in their service and lost their relationship with the living God (v. 15–17). God will never accept mediocre service from us. We are to be fully dedicated servants of the Lord who are Spirit-filled and led. Jesus calls the lukewarm to turn to Him and repent of their empty works and be restored in their faith (v. 18–19). The Good News is that Jesus

is standing at the heart’s door of every sinner to save them. Hear Him calling, open your heart’s door, and He will come in to save and bless you (v. 20–21).

#### Let us pray that:

- Our faith in Christ would not become lukewarm but remain vibrant and alive (1 Thessalonians 1: 2–5).
- We would be an example of faith like Barnabas and honor our Lord every day of our lives (Acts 11: 24).

# Report Kazakhstan—Church Dedication in Astana



**B**y God's grace and provision, my husband and I were able to travel to Astana, Kazakhstan this year with several other brothers and sisters. The congregation had invited a choir from Germany for this year's camp meeting. For me, it was the fulfillment of a long-standing wish. I am deeply grateful to my Heavenly Father for giving us this unforgettable time.

The choir was composed of brothers and sisters from various places in Germany. After more than 30 years, for many it was quite a challenge to intensely use the language of their childhood again and to sing choir songs in Russian.

On July 25th, we landed in Astana. First, we traveled as a choir to Karaganda, where we were warmly welcomed by the local brothers and sisters. We were privileged to present our songs in the services. Brothers Kowalski and Vogt shared the Word of God. We heard messages titled: "Being in need teaches us to pray—what does prosperity teach us?" "What song are you singing?" and "To the Lord first." Brother Reinik,

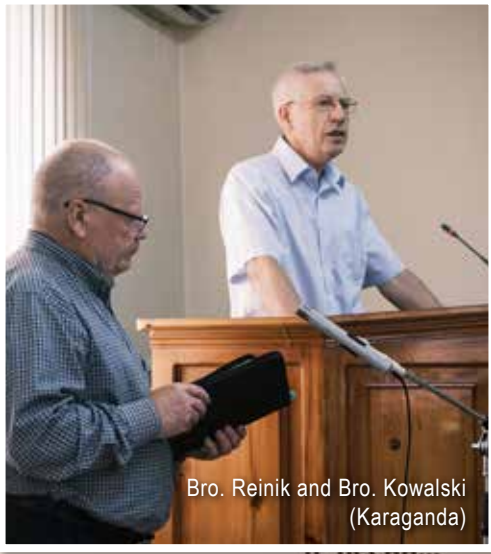
the local pastor from Karaganda, translated the messages.

During our time in Karaganda, we also had the opportunity to visit the "Karlag Memorial Museum" in the village of Dolinka, about 40 km (25 mi) from Karaganda. From 1931 to 1956, these buildings housed the central administration of Kazakhstan's concentration, penal, reeducation, and labor camps. The visit deeply moved us. We gained a small insight into the painful chapter of life that our parents and grandparents endured during that time. Many people had to suffer great hardships for their faith during this period of political repression.

After the weekend in Karaganda, our group returned to Astana. The week was devoted to preparing for the camp meeting and the dedication of the new church building in Astana. In the mornings, we rehearsed choir songs, and in the afternoons, we spent time with the brothers and sisters from the local congregation.



Children in Astana



Bro. Reinik and Bro. Kowalski (Karaganda)

ТЫ - БОГ!  
Твои слова  
заслуживают  
доверия...  
2 Цар. 7гл. 28ст.



Pastors present during the dedication service



Choir from Astana

A special experience for us was the visit to the village of Kamenka. For many years, there had been a large local congregation of the church of God here. Some of the choir members from Germany had spent their childhood and youth in this village. We were also able to visit the former church building. Walking through the village brought back many memories, and some old friendships were rekindled with the people living there.

However, the highlight and main purpose of the trip were the services from Friday to Sunday (August 2-4, 2024). We are very thankful that we were able to participate in this camp meeting, which has been held there in Astana for many years. For decades, brothers from Canada served during these meetings, and in recent years, the brothers from Germany assumed this task.

The central theme of these meetings was the dedication of the new church building. Over the past two years, God made it possible for a new building to be

constructed on the foundation of the first church, which will serve the congregation in Kazakhstan for many years to come. Many brothers and sisters from Kazakhstan and abroad played a significant role in making this possible.

The messages were delivered by Brothers H. Vogt, H. Kowalski, and V. Doberstein from Germany. Brother Adler translated them into Russian. To the glory of God, we can say that we were richly blessed by these services. We had the opportunity to meet many new brothers and sisters, reconnect with others, and encourage one another to trust in God and His promises.

With great gratitude, we look back on this unforgettable time full of blessings and a wealth of new experiences. We will never forget the sincere love and warm hospitality of the brothers and sisters in Kazakhstan. May God richly bless His work in this Muslim country and make it an eternal blessing to many people.

*Luise Anselm, Pforzheim (DE)*

## Christ's Return

*Yes, our Lord will be returning;  
Christ will come, that is for sure.  
Not much longer for those yearning;  
Through tests of fire they've endured.*

*Christ returned to His dear Father  
To prepare a place for us;  
Place of peace, above all others,  
No more sin or pain or such.*

*With His angels and in season  
He'll return to judge the earth.  
Every human eye will see Him  
And the dead, they will come forth.*

*Brothers, sisters, true and graceful,  
Pray, endure, and serve the Lord.  
Only those who will be faithful  
Will receive a great reward.*

*Oh, the bliss and joy and favor  
For God's people, who will see  
Face to face their loving Savior.  
Christ from sin has set them free.*

*Precious words for those who gather,  
Who were saved and born anew:  
"Come, you blessed of My Father  
To the realm prepared for you."*

*Ev'ry battle will be over;  
No more tears will dim the eye,  
For our joy will last forever  
When we see Him by and by.*

*We will sing the song of Moses,  
Of redemption sweet and free.  
Praising God with all the chosen,  
With such blissful harmony.*

*Praise the Lamb, who has redeemed us,  
By God's Spirit sanctified.  
Praise the Lord, who cared and healed us,  
Heard our voices when we cried.*

*O rejoice and praise forever  
God, as Father, Spirit, Son.  
Give Him glory, all together,  
Praise for all that He has done.*

*D. K.*