



# Foundation of Faith

*The Word of the Cross  
Why Did Jesus Need to Die?  
He Is Calling to You!*

*Victory in Jesus!*

*What Should I Do With Jesus?*

## THE TOMB IS EMPTY

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## *Editorial*

Dear Reader!

The apostle Paul wrote this important admonition to his young fellow worker Timothy:

*“Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel” (2 Timothy 2: 8).*

Let us never forget the price Christ paid to give His life on the cross in order to redeem us.

Dr. Falkenberg, a physician, describes how great these sufferings were and how terrible His agony was:

Jesus Christ actually suffered every kind of flesh wound known to medical science.

• **Crushing or lacerating wound:** “Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck *Him* with the palms of their hands.”

• **Slash wound:** The flesh of the ribs and spine were torn away by the whip.

• **Superficial stab wound:** the crown of thorns painfully penetrated the forehead.

• **Deep stab wound:** Hands and feet were dug through by nails. The pain flashed like lightning through the nervous system.

• **Cut:** The chest was pierced with a spear, the pericardium opened, water and blood flowed out.

• **Result:** Jesus had “no form or comeliness” (Isaiah 53:2). Why? Discover the beauty of His love, which went into the fire of judgment for you, and personally received it!

Yes, dear Reader, look to the cross and remember Jesus Christ and what it cost Him to save you and me!

H. D. Nimz

# He Is Calling to You!

A small group had gathered, mainly businessmen and their wives. At some point, the conversation turned to Christianity.

“Oh no!” laughed Dr. X, shaking his head, “I have no use for Christians!”

At this, a man who had only listened so far spoke up, interjecting calmly, “That’s what I said five years ago.”

“And now?” the others asked curiously.

The man smiled. “My life changed completely, and today I am a truly happy man.”

“And that has something to do with Christianity?” one wanted to know.

“Absolutely!” he confirmed.

“Then tell us what happened.” urged a young woman.

He began, “You know, I had no relationship with God. I thought I didn’t need that. By all appearances, we had a good life, we were wealthy, young, and respected. In truth, however, we were not happy. My marriage was on the verge of breakdown, and it was my fault . . .”

He paused for a moment before continuing, “One night, my wife came home, brimming with excitement.

She had been to a church that evening where a group of young people had spoken of a new life with God. She begged me to accompany her the next night since these young people would be speaking there all week.

“Frankly, I thought it was nonsense, but my curiosity won out, and I went along. I was initially surprised that so many young people were there, but even that feeling faded into the background as, one after the other, they stepped forward and told us how their lives had become completely new through faith. I couldn’t resist a smile at their zeal.

“Then came the moment that turned my whole life upside down. A young man stood and described the crucifixion of Jesus. He kept it short, but his words somehow evoked an image in my mind, making the three crosses so real to me that I could almost reach out and touch them. As I was marveling at this, he suddenly stated firmly, ‘The one in the middle is dying for you, and He is calling to you!’”

With those words, the businessman stopped speaking, and no one asked any further questions because they all understood: The cross of Jesus can transform our lives.

Can you hear? He is calling to you too! ■

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## The Cross and Reconciliation

The cross is a symbol of suffering and death. The Son of God hung on it, bled, suffered, and died there. He sacrificed Himself to redeem the world and purchase eternal reconciliation for humanity. And salvation through Jesus Christ is the core of the Gospel. Without reconciliation, the Gospel has no power to save. Reconciliation is the only way for the sinner to be accepted by God, and His forgiveness is therefore the only way to be saved. Any religion that does not have this reconciliation through Christ as the

foundation of its teachings is “a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal” (1 Corinthians 13: 1).

All the religions of the world, except for Christianity, lack this essential element, for the cross is the only way to peace with God and to purity of heart and life. Therefore, it’s not surprising that Paul wanted to know nothing but Christ, the Crucified One (1 Corinthians 2:2). If the message of the cross seems foolishness to those who are perishing, it is yet the power and wisdom of God to those who are being saved (1 Corinthians 1: 18). ■

## Victory in Jesus

**O**n a cold winter day, the wife of my employee came to my office. I knew the family well and had often supported them. Full of worry, she said, “My husband hasn’t come home for two days. It was payday—he’s probably been drinking excessively again. In this freezing cold, he could be lying somewhere in the cold or even have frozen to death!”

Her husband had been working out of town and had been expected to return the previous day on his bicycle. Since he suffered from depression and mental health problems, her fears were not unfounded. I tried to comfort her as best as I could and advised her to check at the business one more time before calling the police. I promised to drop by at her place afterwards.

Late that evening, at 10 o’clock, I managed to reach her apartment. A heartbreaking scene awaited me. The man sat at the kitchen table, hunched over with his head resting on his arms. He was sobbing and trembling all over. Four small, frightened children stood nearby, while his wife, with tear-streaked eyes marked by sorrow, stood beside him—after a heated argument.

When I spoke to him and expressed my relief that he was home, he responded with wild insults and curses. I asked myself: “What could I do?” Wasn’t this hopeless? No! I knew: There is victory in Jesus! He can change any heart, and He can also use me as His instrument.

I spoke kindly to him and urged him to start a new life. Suddenly, he jumped up and cried out in despair, a cry that still echoes in my mind: “Tell me, who can help me?” I told him plainly, “No person can help you. But Christ, who was victorious over hell and death, can. Whom the Son sets free is truly free! Tell Him your troubles—He will give you the strength you need.”

Again and again, he cried, “Who can help me? I need to know!” This was the cry of a soul tormented by Satan, longing for freedom, and longing to escape the darkness. I knew there was hope—because Christ had started working in him.

He had been raised in a Christian home, and the blessing of his upbringing was not entirely lost. I reminded him how beautiful life is with God, free from the chains of sin. And I urged him to imagine how his

wife and children would rejoice with him if he chose this path.

And then, his hardness suddenly melted away. He showed sincere remorse. After agonizing and pleading with God, he promised that he would have a colleague pick him up on paydays. He also vowed to give up drinking entirely. When I invited him to attend church with me, so that he could find strength and support, he immediately agreed—and his wife was just as determined.

As I left the small apartment late that night, every face was beaming. And above the door, invisible but certain, was written: There is victory in Jesus!

A hopeless drunkard had become a child of God—one who had gratefully grasped the outstretched hand of Jesus and never wanted to let go again. ■



# The Word of the Cross

*“The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1: 18)*

**O**f the many types of crosses on this earth, one cross is of the greatest importance. It is the cross of Calvary. Let us contemplate this cross and ask ourselves: What message does the cross of our Savior have for us?

## **The cross shows us the wickedness of the human heart**

There is no other symbol of greater shame than the cross of Calvary. Here, we humans, trapped in our own sin, killed the Son of God, who came down from heaven out of love for us in order to save us. Here, we godless creatures drove the cold steel into the heart of our creator. This should make us deeply ashamed. Yes, nowhere is humanity more clearly revealed in its sinfulness; nowhere does its outrage against God come to light as clearly as here at the cross.

Israel, the religious nation of the ancient world with the highest knowledge of God, rejected Him through its high priests and elders. And the highly educated modern and cultured man, represented by Pontius Pilate, subjected the holy and righteous Son of God to the curse of the wood. Not only did humanity nail its Redeemer to the cross, but they also mocked His suffering.

That is what humans are like; that is what I am like, and that is what your nature is like. Does the cross help you recognize the wickedness of your heart? Only then will you have a lasting benefit from contemplating these words from the cross.

## **The cross shows us God’s love for everyone**

Despite the actions of fallen and ungrateful humanity, the great work of salvation is wrought by God’s great love. “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).

God’s love was not in words alone, but also in deeds. He sent His only Son—an act of love—for the enemies of God who had rebelled against Him. A Muslim, who

read the message of this act of love in the New Testament for the first time, exclaimed, “This is what I need. This is what I’ve been looking for in vain all my life. This God is my God, and I want to belong to Him!” Through Calvary, many have recognized and experienced God’s love.

## **The cross tells us of shame and curse**

The cross was originally there for the shame and torture of robbers and felons. In Galatians 3: 13, we read, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.” Christ became a curse. Christ became a curse for us. That is how He has redeemed us from the curse of the law. He endured the cross in order to redeem us from the shame of sin.

A crucified man was an abandoned man, an outcast from society. Our Lord experienced all of this for us. He was abandoned by God and abandoned by man. He had to descend into the terrible depth of being separated from God in order to bear the judgment for the sins of mankind. God’s holy judgment was upon Him. If it were not for this gruesome judgment on the cross, then we would have no other option than to bear the punishment of eternal abandonment by God ourselves.

Dear Reader, worship the Lord, for here at Golgotha, the righteousness and the love of God enfold for the purpose of our salvation, yours and mine.

## **The cross tells us about substitutionary atonement**

No other human was so righteous and holy that they could represent humanity. But on the cross, the Son of God, righteous and holy, became our substitute. Through a man called Adam, sin entered the world, and through a man called Jesus, it is cast out again (see Romans 5: 12–18 and 1 Timothy 2: 5–6). For this, Jesus suffered death on the cross. He suffered for us. He was the substitutionary sacrificial lamb for us. He is our sin offering.



### **The cross offers reconciliation**

“That He might reconcile [Jews and Gentiles] to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity” (Ephesians 2: 16). Christ is the mediator, reuniting God and humans. Let us behold Him. The wall of sin has been torn down. Through this reconciliation, we can be reunited with God and attain full salvation. God is no longer the wrathful judge but the reconciled, loving Father for all who by faith accept this reconciliation.

### **The cross proclaims victory**

The cross proclaims victory over sin. Victory over death. Victory over hell and the devil. The promise given in Genesis 3: 15 has been fulfilled: the serpent’s head is crushed. That is why the apostle Paul exclaims: “But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Galatians 6: 14). Only because of the cross do we have this victory and power to lead a victorious life.

### **At the cross you must decide**

One of the robbers hanging on the cross blasphemed, the other was pardoned. The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those who

believe, it is the power of God. Thus, the cross draws a line separating humanity, a line that morphs into a wide chasm. You cannot pass by the cross without making a decision. Either you will embrace or reject its message.

Decide for salvation today! In light of this great work of redemption, how terrible it would be to remain as we are. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10: 31), for all who have not accepted this great salvation. We can bring all of our burdens to God as the following song encourages us to do.

*Come to the cross with all your burdens,  
Tired and weary wanderer.  
Only at the cross there’s pardon,  
You’ll find peace. Come as you are.*

*On the cross, the pure and holy  
Son of God died for your sin.  
Full of grief, in pain and lowly,  
It was love; O come to Him.*

*Come, He stills your deepest longing,  
Peace and pardon He imparts.  
There’s no need to be prolonging  
For your troubled heart.*

## *What Should I Do With Jesus?*

**D**uring a discussion, some were asked the question: “Do you know what to do with Jesus?” Just two days later, one of the interviewees was no longer living. This significant question and the sudden death of this person prompted me to think more deeply about it.

Many in their lifetimes don’t know what to do with Jesus. They are focused on finding pleasure in the things of this world, and find Jesus rather inconvenient in that pursuit. However, they could use Him at the hour of death. But when Jesus is not the be-all and end-all in life, He won’t offer a safe haven in death either.

The question: “What should I do with Jesus?” must be answered personally by every one of us. No one can avoid Him. He, the center of God’s creation is also the center of life. The decision for or against Him is of far-reaching importance because our eternal salvation depends on it. But when it comes to this question, people react differently.

A group that we could call “the undecided” does not know what to do with Jesus. They want to follow their conscience but at the same time enjoy the pleasures of the world. They want to be both a friend of God and a friend of the world. A classic example of this is the Roman governor Pilate.

It was he who put this very question to the people and the religious leaders in Israel: “What then shall I do with Jesus?” He could find no guilt in Him and therefore tried to obtain His release. But when the proposal to release Barabbas did not bear fruit, he knew of no other way out. Pilate did not want to shed innocent blood but did not have the heart to act on his convictions. He had the power to have Jesus crucified or acquitted: “Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?” (John 19:10).

Why did Pilate act against his convictions and condemn Jesus to death on the cross? As so often, it was the fear of losing his reputation. The words “If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar’s friend” moved him to make a momentous decision. Although he held a high position, he was still a prisoner of human honor and the prestige of this world. What power these transient things have that a man can be driven so far by them! Pilate was too indecisive, and the good in him too weak, to say an energetic “no” to the raging of Jesus’ enemies.

Aren’t there still many Pilate like disciples among those who call themselves Christians today? They are convinced of the truth of the Bible. They know that Jesus saves His people from their sins—but they still continue to live in sin and worldliness without making a definite decision for Christ. They believe in salvation in Jesus’ blood, but they do not attain a personal assurance of salvation. They confess the renewing power of Jesus’ blood with their mouths, but their lives remain unchanged. It is sadly possible to confess with our mouth, but deny with our life.

Such people are undecided. And that is why they do not side with Jesus and do not bear His shame. The honor of the world is more important to them. What a tragic decision!

But there are also people who know exactly what they want to do with Jesus. The Jews back then knew it too: “Away with *Him*, away with *Him*! Crucify Him!” So they shouted in spite of the good deeds and miracles that Jesus had done among them.

Even today, there are people who consciously decide against Jesus. Sometimes we assume that Jesus would certainly not be treated so cruelly in our time. But if you look at life today, you see that arrogance, pleasure-seeking, and godlessness still triumph, as if

the Son of God were being crucified again and His blood trampled underfoot! For many people, the cross seems to be the right place to get rid of Jesus.

We must not forget: The devil is a diplomat who likes to negotiate with us. He starts with one small finger. But then he pulls on it until he has us completely. Then we have chosen freely for all eternity—a life without Jesus.

But, thank God, there are still people today who know that the blood of Christ has the power to wipe

away all sins and debts. The blood gives them the power to reign over sin. By the grace of God, they live as children of God and, with His help, keep themselves pure from the world. Because Jesus dwells and reigns in their hearts, they have peace and joy in abundance.

Therefore, dear Soul, if you are still undecided, do not hesitate any longer. Decide for Christ today. Then you too will find happiness in Him—and even more so in eternity. ■

## Vivit—He Lives!

**A** master stonemason was commissioned to install a new portal at the home of the great reformer Martin Luther. It is said they had the Latin word “Vivit” engraved into the keystone of the archway. From that moment on, everyone who entered or left the house had to know its meaning: He lives!

No one could enter the house without being reminded: Jesus lives! No one could leave without this message greeting them one last time. Whatever discussions Luther may have had within the home, the greeting at the gate—“Vivit”—sealed every visit to the house.

Above all, these words were meant for the master of the house himself, in his moments of struggle, doubt, and defeat.

The One who lives and has risen from the dead demonstrates His power particularly in our weakness. When our own strength is at its end, His power shines more clearly. Vivit!—He lives! This is the message that sustains us.

We, too, should engrave this word into our memory—and to help us with that, we should place it on our desk, paint it on our walls, or hang it in that place we retreat to when we are at our lowest.

Vivit!—He lives!

Such news is even greater than that which reaches a worried mother when she hears that her son has survived a terrible accident.

Jesus Himself tells us: “Because I live, you will live also.” ■



## The Power of the Cross

**T**he main theme of the apostle Paul's letters is "the cross." He was a Hebrew by birth, a teacher by profession, and a born leader with unquenchable zeal and fervent enthusiasm. But the sole subject of his sermons was Christ and His cross. "But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Galatians 6: 14). Looking at the cross, the privileges of birth, education, and authority vanish—everything becomes meaningless.

There are many things that stand out in Jesus' life. We see in Him the miracle worker. No one performed more or greater miracles than He did. We think of Him as the great speaker who proclaimed His glorious

teachings to the people. "No man ever spoke like this Man" (John 7: 46). We see in Him the greatest humanitarian who went about doing good. Some see Him as a prophet. But His sacrificial death on the cross will always remain our Lord's greatest deed. The symbol of the cross runs like a central theme through the Holy Scriptures. After the Lord had conquered death and risen, He laid out all the scriptures that were written about Him to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. He told them that He had to suffer these things in order to enter into His glory. The crucifixion was part of God's eternal plan from the very beginning.

Paul speaks of the crucified Christ as the power of God. And truly, there is no greater power in the whole universe. Scripture tells us that the love of God is the

*“The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18)*

greatest thing on earth. God’s love for us is revealed in the cross of His Son. “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10).

We recognize the all-conquering power of the cross in various aspects of our life and faith:

#### **In the salvation of souls**

The cross of Calvary lifts the sinner out of the deepest despair and is the preserving power in his life. The salvation of the lost happens solely through the power of the cross. Jesus says: “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself” (John 12:32).

#### **In the sanctification of believers**

“Just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:25–27). Jesus died on the cross so that His people would be sanctified. In Hebrews 10:10 we read: “By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.” Only through the blood of our Savior can we enter the Holy of Holies on the new and living way that He created for us through His death on the cross.

#### **In the healing of the body**

Christ’s work of redemption also includes the healing of our bodies. “He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows . . . and by His stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:4–5). These prophetic words of Isaiah were fulfilled when the Lord still walked here on earth and cast out spirits through His word and healed all who came to Him. But even today, people can still be healed through His wounds.

#### **In the unity of the people of God**

Jesus died not only for our salvation, sanctification and healing. Through His death, He also created spiritual unity of God’s people. Jesus died “that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You” (see John 17:21).

In the church of God, the body of Christ, this unity is visibly expressed to the outside world. In the cross there is power to break all divisions and make God’s people one.

#### **In the spiritual blessings**

All spiritual blessings are only possible through the power of the cross. In Romans 8:32 we read: “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” God gave us His greatest gift when He sent us His Son to die for us. And He will also give us everything else we need.

#### **In His final victory**

The cross of Christ will never lose its power of attraction. In the heavenly city, where there will be no more night and where the throne of God and the Lamb stands, the cross of Christ will forever remain the center of contemplation for the redeemed. The eternal song of that great multitude will be: “To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood . . . to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever” (Revelation 1:5–6).

The cross has not yet conquered the whole world. For many it is still a stumbling block, for others it is foolishness. But for the redeemed, it is God’s power and wisdom. All around us we see change and decay. But the cross remains. In many an argument and battle it has remained victorious. And it is still the banner of Jesus’ fighters. Nothing can stop its victorious course through the centuries. The cross knows no turning back. It shows the way forward to victory. ■

# The Faith of the Thief

Often, we hear about the grace that the thief on the cross was able to experience in the last hours of his life. This proves true what the psalmist testified hundreds of years earlier in Psalm 103: 10–11: “He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him.” Grace means undeserved mercy. Those who receive it look into the sea of His mercy—into this incomprehensible, immeasurable sea of His love.

But let’s take a closer look at the faith of the thief. Is it not just as incomprehensible as grace? All we know about the life of this man who hung next to Jesus on the cross is that he was a criminal, a robber. It is evident from his own confession that he was a sinner—perhaps even a great one. However, God’s grace is greater than any sin, and this is also evident here.

If we look at the situation on the cross with human eyes, it appears hopeless—both for the thief and for Jesus. Nevertheless, it is precisely at this point that the amazing faith of the thief is revealed. In the letter to the Hebrews, faith is described as follows: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). And what an unshakeable confidence speaks from the words of the thief: “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom” (Luke 23: 42).

At this moment, when Jesus was hanging on the cross, who still believed that He really was the promised Messiah? Judas had betrayed Him and recognized his own guilt, but he saw that Jesus did not resist His enemies. His disciples had fled when He was arrested. Peter had even denied Him. The chief priests and scribes mocked Him. With the exception of John, who

stood watching under the cross, all His disciples had deserted Him. The women who had followed Him wept, but even they could only see the inevitable: Jesus would die.

For some, He was simply an innocent, good man; for others a prophet who had fallen victim to His enemies. Others saw Him as an uncomfortable voice that had finally been silenced.—Jesus of Nazareth dies!—He could not be the Messiah, because He was said to be eternal.

Who still recognized Him as the messenger of God? Was this tortured man really the King of a kingdom? Was He the Son of Man who was to come in the clouds of heaven? I hardly believe anyone indulged in

such illusions. The behavior of His disciples and friends at this point, as well as later, proved it.

But one believed: the thief on the cross. Without the slightest doubt, he spoke of

Jesus’ kingdom. Nevertheless, he saw in the martyred, dying man the King of a kingdom that is not of this world: “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”

Is this faith comprehensible? All visible circumstances spoke against it. However, the thief’s faith was not crushed by the harsh reality—he still believed! Jesus could also have said to him as He did much earlier to Peter: “Flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 16: 17).

And then comes the wonderful personal promise: “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43). These words were probably the last consolation of the thief as he took his final agonizing breaths under the blows of the Roman soldiers. But in eternity, he will reap the fruits of his faith.

Jesus promises us all: “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live” (John 11: 25). ■

*Was this tortured man really the King of a kingdom?*

# Christ Is Risen!

Christ had been laid in the tomb, and an eerie silence lay over the surrounding area. His disciples, who had heard His kind words for three years, seen His miracles, and recognized the Messiah in Him, were now scattered, frightened, and without hope. Jesus, on whom they had pinned their hopes, lay dead in a sealed tomb. What thoughts and depressing questions must have moved them? Had it all been in vain? Had they made a mistake by following this Jesus?

We can hardly imagine how the disciples felt. Their only remaining thought was to embalm the body. But how were they supposed to open the tomb? A guard had been posted, the seal fastened. How could they dare to enter this place? An insurmountable obstacle stood before them. Nevertheless, we see some women approaching the tomb. Their walk is difficult, for they have lost the dearest thing on earth. But they want to pay their last respects. They knew a massive stone had been placed in front of the tomb and ask themselves: “Who will roll this stone away for us?”

When they arrive, they experience the unimaginable: the stone is no longer in front of the tomb. An angel is sitting on it. The tomb has been opened—it is empty! What had happened? Where are the guards? Where is the seal? And above all: Where is Jesus?

The angel recognizes their fear and speaks to them with comforting words: “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay” (Matthew 28: 5–6).

They see with their own eyes that something they had never expected has happened—even though Jesus had announced it to them beforehand. But where was He now? The angel also answers this question: “And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him” (verse 7).

Despite their fear, they are filled with deep joy. They hurry off to pass on the message, and suddenly, Jesus Himself meets them and speaks to them: “Rejoice!” (verse 9).

All those who witnessed this event early that morning were convinced that God had performed a miracle: Jesus had risen from the dead. Even the guards, shaken by what they had witnessed, knew the truth. But their reports in favor of Jesus were to be suppressed with much effort and money. Nevertheless, no amount of bribery or silence on the part of the leaders could stop the news of the risen Christ.

Yes, Jesus Christ has risen and become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. Praise be to God!

A dead Jesus could not have founded a movement of living faith. The founders of all other religions died and remained in their graves. Jesus, however, died and rose again. The Christian message has a living head: Christ Himself. He is alive and triumphant. He has taken away the power of death. He is the resurrection and the life.

Everything that happened had been foretold by Him. This gives us confidence and faith that He will also accomplish everything else that He has promised.

The resurrection of Jesus is the source of our hope and our faith. Just as He Himself rose from the grave, so He will also raise us to eternal life in glory. The resurrection of Christ is the crown of God’s plan of salvation. If Christ had not risen, we would still be in our sins. But because He lives, we can die to sin and walk in newness of life with God. Yes, we have a mighty, risen Savior!

May this day of remembrance of the glorious resurrection of our Lord move many hearts, stir many consciences, and lead many to faith in Christ. May many who consider this fact pray: “Lord, You who have risen and are alive, raise me also to a life in You. Let me no longer serve sin, the world, and the flesh, but You alone. Lead me by Your living power to a life of holiness and righteousness that is pleasing to You.”

May we who have experienced the power of His resurrection in our hearts spread this joyful message. Just like the women at the empty tomb, we too should proclaim to the whole world: “The Lord is risen! Yes, He is risen indeed!” ■

# The Miracle of the Resurrection

*“And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. . . . But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” (1 Corinthians 15: 14–20)*

## **If He is not risen . . . .**

The story of Jesus’ life does not end with His death on the cross. But if it had really ended there, then, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:14, “our preaching *is* empty,” for the main proof of Christianity is: “He lives!” And the wonderful thing is that everyone can personally experience this. In fact, it is absolutely necessary to experience it, because otherwise we are missing the essentials. Paul goes on to say: “If Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile.” What then can make our hearts glad; what do we have in our hands? What can comfort us when we depart from this life? Then no one could exclaim: “for I know *that* my Redeemer lives” (Job 19: 25).

That Jesus died and rose again is the great truth of the gospel. That is why Paul emphasizes this so explicitly: “If Christ is not risen . . . .” Then our death would be a loss, and we would still be in our sins and would need to carry this burden with us forever.

Paul also points out that our hope would then be a deception. Why take on so much struggle, suffering, persecution, and tears if death really is the end? What would be the point of everything that is important to us? That is why we want to hold on to this: Jesus’ resurrection is the great reality of faith. If there were no resurrection, we would be the most miserable of all people. But now we may confess:

## **Death is conquered!**

We can believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ because: “Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Corinthians 15:54). The church of Jesus knows it, believes it, and experiences it: Jesus’ tomb is empty! We are always in contact with the living Lord.

The Holy Scriptures say: Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of the Father after He had taken our sins to the cross and our death with Him to the

grave. But now He cries out: “Because I live, you will live also” (John 14: 19). The realm of the dead could not hold Him because He was without sin. Although He took our sins upon Himself, there was no sin in Him. It was on Golgotha that death was swallowed up by victory, and Jesus’ resurrection is the guarantee that we too will be resurrected. We too can take hold of it: I will rise again!

## **Life has triumphed!**

When Jesus speaks victoriously: “I live”, we need to be reflective. He lives despite the cross, despite death, despite the grave. All those weeping and mourning, all those struggling, doubting, and weary may hold on to this for time and eternity. The miracle of Jesus’ resurrection has become truth for us all. We are called to life. “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” the angel asked the grieving women at the empty tomb. “He is not here, but is risen!” So we too may turn away from the tomb of the old self. Let us press through in faith to live with Him.

Those who seek the Crucified One will find the Risen One. “If then you were raised with Christ,” writes Paul in Colossians 3:1, “seek those things which are above.” Seek what pleases the Prince of Life. Do not remain stuck in sin, doubt, and self-accusation. The miracle of the resurrection is for everyone. Peter also testifies to this effective power of the resurrection: “His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1: 3).

The earth shook when the Son of God cried out: “It is finished!” and it shook again when the sun rose on Easter morning. The stone has been rolled away, the tomb is empty, the Risen One is the Prince of Life and Peace for a world that has fallen into sin and death. We must hold on to this fact of Easter in faith. The miracle



of the resurrection applies to us: no matter where we are, no matter what responsibilities we bear, no matter what worries we have, we can lead a life of victory if we have fellowship with the Risen One.

**Rejoice!**

Where there is this new life from God, there is joy. That is why we want to walk in the light that Easter brought us. We read about the disciples that they were glad when they saw the Lord (see John 20:20). Where there is life, there is joy; and where there is joy, there is strength; and where there is strength, there is victory: I believe in the resurrection of Jesus!

An Easter hymn says: “My Jesus is risen, there is no one to take Him from me.” This living Lord inter-

venes in my everyday life, in the life of my family, in my profession. Great things happen—and many small things—when people reckon with the Risen Lord.

The miracle of the resurrection is:

- the greatest event in world history
- the greatest proof of Christianity
- the greatest revelation of God’s power
- the greatest truth of the gospel
- the greatest reality of faith
- the greatest impulse to live in the light

So rise up and follow Jesus. He lives!

O. L. Ham

# Why Did Jesus Need to Die?

**A**s a young man, I often thought of the question, “Why did Jesus have to die?” This was a rather complicated question that needed to be answered as I was a young believer. I had just given my life over to the Lord, and I did not have the best answer at the time; I only knew that my sins needed to be forgiven.

As the years went by and my faith grew, I was able to understand the Scriptures and it came into focus why God sent His only begotten Son to this world. We needed someone who could restore our relationship with the Father; we required a righteous sacrifice that God was pleased with, and, on that basis, was able to forgive my sins personally—and not only mine but all who would come in repentance and faith. I had a relationship with God that was broken, for I did not honor Him or praise His holy name. The Bible says that we were alienated from God Almighty as He cannot look upon sin. So we needed a substitute, someone who was qualified to forgive sins and restore our relationship to the Father.

Jesus Christ had to die, as humanity sinned against a holy and righteous God. This required a sacrifice, an atonement for the sins that were committed. The Scriptures tell us in Romans 5:19–21, “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

All of us have sinned, and we have a problem, but God gives us the solution at the same time. Because of Adam’s sin in the Garden of Eden, all of humanity was thrown into sin, and it infected everyone born from that day forth. Everyone had the death sentence upon them, and there was nothing humanity could have done to save themselves from the sin that they committed. But God, who is rich in mercy, had a plan that He designed to save humanity from this fallen state that they entered into.

Now, because of this gift that Jesus Christ so freely offers, we can enter into this rest knowing our sins are forgiven, that we have a new identity, that we are no longer slaves of darkness but have been purchased and redeemed by the only begotten Son. This is why Jesus had to die, so that you and I could be brought back to a relationship with the Father, just like Adam originally had as God walked in the “cool of the day” with him (see Genesis 3:8). Acts 4:12 tells us, “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” This precious name is Jesus Christ, as we can only enter into a relationship through Him and by Him. So let us praise the Lord that Christ is our atonement, and He is enough.

*Jake Loewen  
Chilliwack, BC*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 18- 21, 2025  
Easter Conference in Hamm, Germany

June 7 - 9, 2025  
Pentecost Conference in Herford, Germany

June 22, 2025  
100th Anniversary Celebration  
Wetaskiwin, AB

July 18 - 20, 2025  
50th Anniversary Celebration  
Neustädt, Mexico

July 21 - 25, 2025  
Bible Course  
Neustädt, Mexico

# The Risen Christ

On Good Friday, the Lord Jesus was crucified, and before sundown, prior to the commencement of the Jewish Sabbath, His body was taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb. The news of Jesus' death must have spread throughout the surrounding area. Jerusalem was full of pilgrims at the time who had come from all parts of the country to celebrate the Passover. The news of the events would have been taken back to their home countries.

It's easy to imagine that on that Friday night and throughout the Jewish Sabbath day before Resurrection Sunday, all kinds of emotions and feelings gripped the people in that area. They had seen how it suddenly became dark at midday. Then the earthquake happened. Most of them probably didn't know what it all meant, but they were certainly filled with fear.

For the disciples of the Lord Jesus, it was an extremely sad day. Their best and most faithful friend had been seized by cruel hands and killed before their very eyes in the most shameful and horrible way. Now their great Teacher and Master had been taken from them, and they were alone.

Then came the morning of the third day after the crucifixion. Imagine the paralyzing horror that overcame the guards at the tomb of the Lord Jesus when they saw the large, sealed stone that closed the entrance to the tomb suddenly being rolled away by an invisible hand.

Soon after this great miracle, Mary came into the garden with precious ointments to embalm the body of Jesus. When she saw that the stone had been rolled

away and the tomb was open, she hurried back to the city, for she too had been seized with fear. She related what she had seen to Peter and John. Both disciples also hurried to the tomb. There they found everything just as Mary had told them: the tomb was empty!

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest miracle. Thus, the resurrection of the crucified Lord and Savior became the main theme of the apostles' preaching. They spoke and preached with the certainty of those who had seen it with their own eyes. Having seen Him, the Risen One, they had

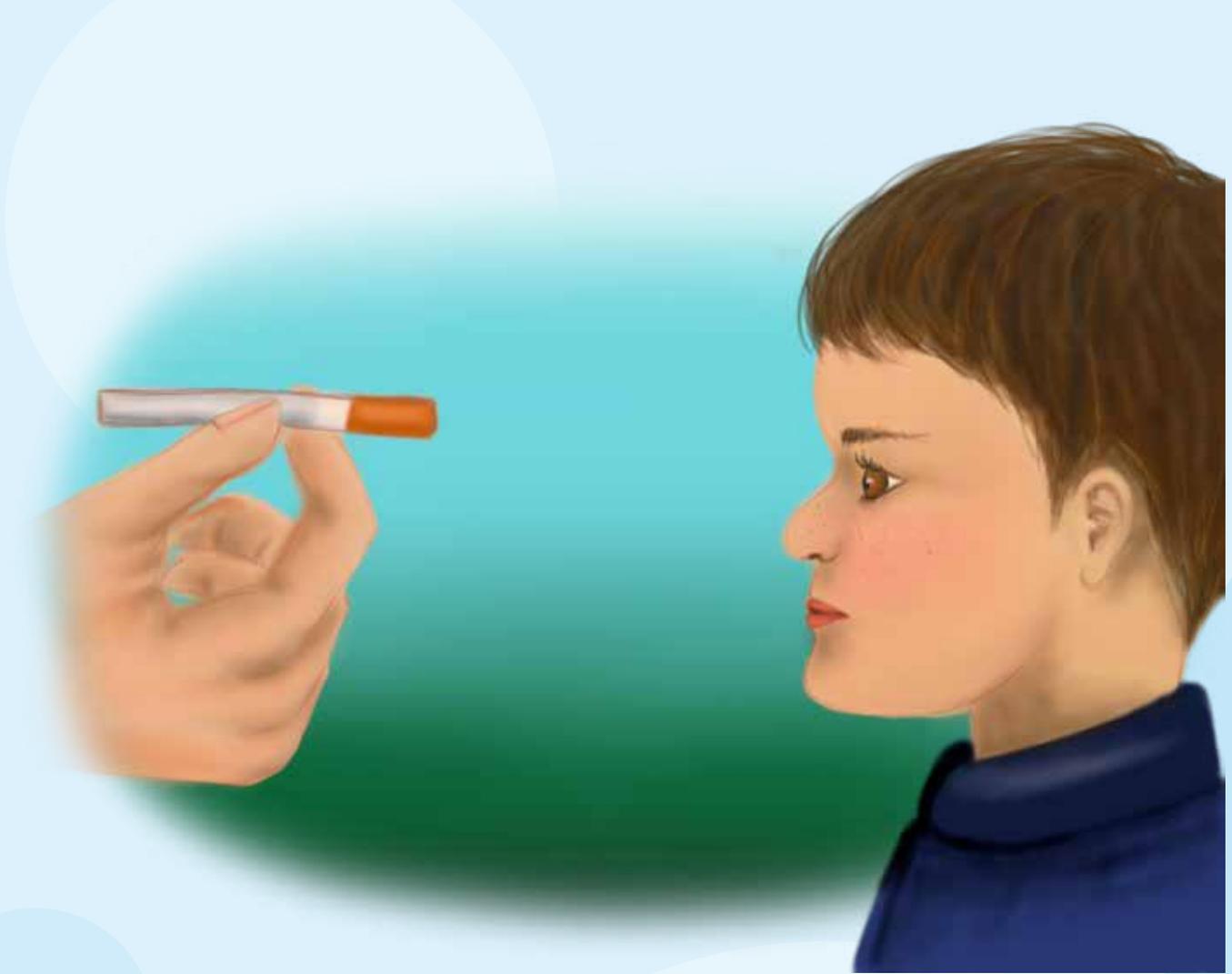
touched Him with their hands and heard the words of the Risen One with their own ears. What they knew was that the crucified Jesus was now the risen Jesus. What they had seen, experienced, and heard they could not help but bear witness to. The message of "Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20) resounded out into the world.

For another forty days, the risen Christ walked the earth and repeatedly showed Himself to the disciples: "to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them for forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3).

How clear, distinct, and definite this account is.

Let us fall down in worship before the Victor over the grave and death, before the King of kings and Lord of lords, and more than anything else seek to "know Him and the power of His resurrection" (see Philippians 3:10). ■

*"Why do you  
seek the living  
among the dead?  
He is not here  
but is risen!"  
(Luke 24:5-6)*



## Be Strong and Courageous

**N**icholas is in third grade at school. On this sunny spring morning, he is really looking forward to recess. Nicholas and his friends are just about to go out into the schoolyard when Sven, a seventh-grade student, approaches him. Sven is popular, and many students, especially the younger ones, look up to him. Suddenly, he produces a cigarette and holds it out to Nicholas: “Hey, do you want to try it?”

Nicholas’ heart beats faster. He knows that smoking wouldn’t please his parents nor Jesus. But now Sven is standing in front of him, and everyone is watching. Nicholas prays silently for courage and says: “No, thank you, Sven. I don’t smoke because I’m a Christian. And it’s also unhealthy.” Sven rolls his eyes and grins mockingly: “Coward! The girls certainly don’t go for those.” These words resonate with Nicholas all day: Am I a coward?

When Dad comes home from work in the evening and asks how Nicholas is doing, he tells him what happened. Mr. Werner hugs his son tightly, looks him

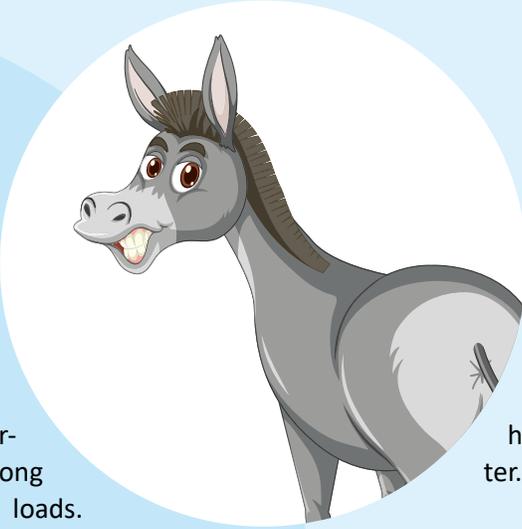
in the eye, and says: “Nicholas, I’m very glad that God gave you the courage to do the right thing. Smoking, alcohol, and other drugs are not only strictly forbidden at school, but they also make people addicted and ill. It is a sin against your own body and God. Never let anyone tell you otherwise! And as for the girls—don’t worry. Just be friendly and helpful. Focus on school and good friends. You only need one woman in your life, and that’s when you’re grown up and want to start a family. Trust in God, and when the time comes, He will give you the right woman and you will be blessed. Look at Mom and I—we thank God every day that we have each other.”

Nicholas’ heart warmed. How wonderful that he has loving parents, siblings, and good friends. But even when he is alone, he knows: “The good shepherd watches over me, cares for me, and always gives me the best. He helps me to remain courageous and strong in the face of temptation.”

*Helene Rotfuss*

## Useful for Jesus

Imagine an animal with soft, gray fur; a white mouth; large, gentle eyes; and long, flexible ears. It has a strong voice and four sturdy, small hooves, which allow it to walk safely over sticks and stones. It has a fluffy tuft of hair at the end of its long tail, perfect for chasing away flies. Its strong back is ideal for carrying heavy loads. Which animal is it? Exactly—it's a donkey!



patient, clever, and careful. In the face of danger, it does not allow itself to be forced into anything but stands still until it sees a safe path. The donkey does not attract people's attention but is a persistent helper and loyal friend of its master. We can learn a lot from him.

*Helene Rotfuss*

This was the only animal that Jesus once said He needed (Mark 11: 1–11). Shortly before the Passover, Jesus sent two of His disciples to a village to fetch a certain tethered donkey. The disciples found the animal as Jesus had described it, brought it to Him, and put their coats on the donkey's back so Jesus could sit comfortably.

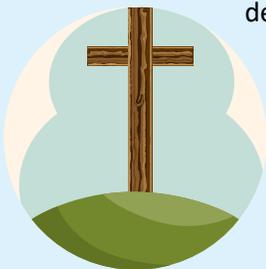
This is how Jesus humbly rode into the great city of Jerusalem on a donkey—not like a king on a high horse. The people were excited! Many spread their cloaks on the ground to honor Jesus. Others cut palm branches from the trees, waved them, laid them on the road, and shouted: “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!”

The rulers of the city felt threatened by Jesus' popularity. And Jesus knew that He was facing a very difficult time. Just five days later, He died on the cross for the sins of the people, showing in effect how much He loved them. But because He conquered death, God resurrected Him after three days. On Easter morning, Jesus left the tomb alive.

Some people call the donkey ignorant and stubborn. But Jesus appreciated him. Why, do you think? Well, a donkey is gentle,

**Who is a follower of Jesus?** (One who loves Jesus above all else and is obedient to Him.)

*If you look again at how Nicholas reacted to the temptation and then think about the good qualities of a donkey, how do you think they match? (Caution, reflection, steadfastness, loyalty.)*



“Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

*Joshua 1:9*

# Biblical AND Courtship MARRIAGE

In the last issue, the argument was made that biblical courtship, rather than dating, is a better means of choosing a marriage partner. Courting should only ever happen when two people feel that they have found someone they can foresee themselves marrying one day. Even before two people become a couple, they should each consider whether the person they are attracted to will make a good spouse based on the following traits.

1) Core Values—Loves and Fears God: The most important priority for a Christian in a marriage partner is that the other person has the same spiritual values. This means that the person is a Christian and places Christ in the center of his or her life. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 6: 14, “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”

2) Character: The person should possess an upright and righteous character. Does the person reflect Jesus’ teachings through his or her life?

3) Communication: The person should be someone you can communicate with. Is the person easy to talk to and clear to understand? If you have a hard time understanding each other, you’ll become frustrated, which can lead to arguments. Is the person open and honest when it comes to what he or she is thinking and feeling?

4) Competency: Does the person have a similar education to you? Do his or her plans for education

and career choices fit with what you would want your spouse to have?

5) Commitment: Does the person display commitment? Is the person committed to God and his or her faith community? Does the person attend worship services regularly? Is the person committed to his or her parents, family, and friends? You can expect them to treat you the same way. Will the person be someone who will be committed and faithful to you?

6) Culture: Does the person have a similar cultural background to you? If not, will that be a problem in the future? Does the person's family have norms and expectations that are very different than yours? If yes, these differences are likely to become even more noticeable after marriage. This is especially true when children enter the picture. People usually want to raise their children the same way that they were raised. Will that be a problem?

These are just a few important things to keep in mind when you're looking for a marriage partner. Of course, the most essential is their love for God and their commitment to Him. On several occasions, I have said to our youth group that the person you want to marry one day should be the kind of person that you are. People often attract those who are like themselves. If you don't serve God, have a terrible character, are a poor communicator, and are not committed or trustworthy, that's likely the kind of person that you'll attract. We need to be sure that we're the type of person that would one day be a great husband or wife. If we do that, we are well on our way to finding a great spouse, as long as we seek and trust the Lord's leading.

*To be continued . . .*

*David Knelsen  
Hamilton, ON*

## FREED FROM CONSTANT HEADACHES

**R**ight around the time I was finishing school, I was struggling with very severe and recurring headaches. Unfortunately, it was almost "normal" for me to live with these headaches, and I did not actively seek help from God in prayer. Instead of facing this problem, I ignored it and allowed the pain to impact my life. However, when I kept reaching the limits of my strength, I knew that I should seek God, that He had healing for me, and that I could claim it. I consciously decided to trust God and entrust the headaches fully to Him. It wasn't until sometime later, during another exam period, that I realized how God had helped me. All the pain was gone, and I know I only have Him to thank for that.

When I finally wanted to give God the glory through a testimony in church, the devil tempted me with a very severe migraine after a few months without a headache. I could clearly feel how the devil wanted to make me feel insecure and doubt that healing had taken place in me and that I had only imagined this miracle. However, I was able to rely on God's promises and have the certainty that He has healed me and that the devil has no influence when God works in my life.

God is faithful; He stands by His word. You can actively apply His promises to your life. He alone deserves honor!

*Ariane Albrecht  
Eppingen, Germany*

# The Graveyard—End of the Line?

**D**oreen and I are visiting her sister Ingrid and husband Harold in Calgary. Our itinerary includes day trips, shopping, shared meals, uplifting conversations, and exchanging memories.

Yesterday, we visited our parents' gravesite. We parked our car and walked slowly and reverently. No words were spoken. Walking through a cemetery surrounded by gravestones is a deeply moving experience. It is thought-provoking. Eventually, we stood before the gravestone: Siegfried and Lina Raasch. Engraved beneath each name were the dates of birth and death. How often had our parents spoken of the fleeting nature of life? We stood there in silence. Only memories remain. Beautiful memories. Their life's work is complete. They are home with the Lord.

I recall a remark someone made at the cemetery just before a burial. With the coffin in front of us, while we were waiting for the other people to arrive, he turned to me and whispered just one phrase: "End of the line!" I understood what he meant. But is this statement theologically accurate? Doesn't the Bible speak of the resurrection of the dead?

The Apostle Paul addresses the topic of "resurrection" in his letter to the Corinthians. Usually, there was a specific reason when Paul addressed such an important topic. In this case, there was a group within the church who believed that with death, everything was over. This can be concluded when Paul asks, "Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Corinthians 15:12). They held the view that with death, everything ends—in other words, "end of the line!"

In a detailed manner, the Apostle Paul addresses the topic of resurrection. He wants to bring clarity and end the negative influence of those who denied the resurrection. He bases his argument on the proof that Christ was raised from the dead—a fact that was common knowledge. Many believers who encountered the risen Christ were still alive and could be questioned as eyewitnesses. If Christ had not been resurrected, our faith would be meaningless, and all our hopes would be buried. But that is not the case. Triumphant-ly, Paul adds: "But now Christ is risen from the dead

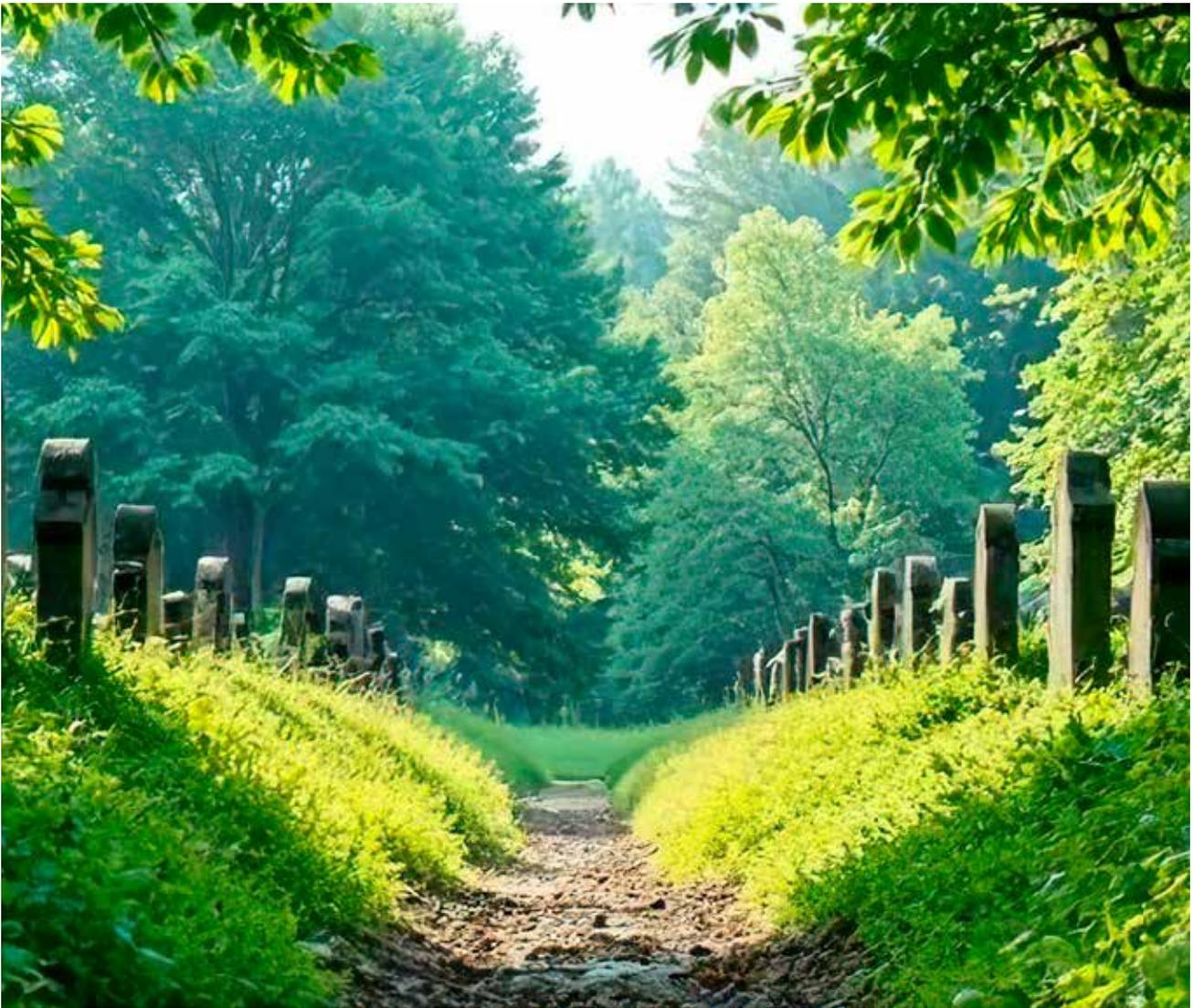
. . . . For since by man *came* death, by Man [Christ] also *came* the resurrection of the dead" (1 Corinthians 15:20–21). The grave could not hold Christ. Death is defeated. While dying remains a reality, the resurrection is an unshakable fact. With this knowledge, Paul can joyfully and challengingly ask, "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55).

When we attentively read chapter 15, Paul addresses the topic from another perspective. He compares our current body with the body we will receive in the future. He calls the first one the "natural" body and the second one the "spiritual" body (1 Corinthians 15:44). The first is *corrupt*, the second *incorrupt* (1 Corinthians 15:42). In summary, Paul concludes: There is only one way to receive this immortal body: we must first die before resurrection can occur, and it will be incorrupt, in glory, and in power (1 Corinthians 15:42–43).

Once again, I imagine myself standing at the graveside of our parents. When the resurrection takes place, the grave will open, and they will rise with a new resurrected body. This will happen not only to them but to all the deceased—probably to us as well, unless we are still alive when the resurrection occurs. Those alive at that time will be transformed in an instant. The outcome is the same: we will have a new, imperishable body. No longer the old, frail, vulnerable, and deteriorating body of an aging person, but a new body, no longer subject to aging. Pain and disease will leave it completely untouched. Canes and walkers will be set aside forever. They will never be needed again.

When I asked an older brother where he would spend his vacation, he replied, "We don't travel anymore. We always need to be within reach of a doctor and a hospital." I felt sorry for him. Such limitations will no longer apply to the resurrected body. It is difficult to imagine: Our calendars will not alert us to a doctor's appointment. Hospitals and pharmacies will not be needed. Doctors will be unemployed, medications will not be required, nor will injections need to be endured. Whatever troubles and burdens you face today will not exist over there.

Although all of this is impressive and fascinating, we will be filled with far greater joy when we meet our



Lord and Savior and will “see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2).

“When all my labors and trials are o’er,  
And I am safe on that beautiful shore,  
Just to be near the dear Lord I adore,  
Will through the ages be glory for me.  
Oh that will be glory for me, glory for me.  
When by His grace I shall look on His face  
That will be glory, be glory for me.”

In the last book of the Bible, the Apostle John gives us a tiny glimpse into the new world to come. We read: “And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. And God will wipe

away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:3–4).

In verse 7, he adds: “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.” Simply glorious. Incomprehensibly wonderful.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith. Considering the Apostle Paul’s reasoning in 1 Corinthians 15 leads us to conclude that a bright future lies before us. The best is yet to come! Perhaps Paul was thinking of our future in the presence of the Lord when he wrote: “and to die *is* gain” (Philippians 1:21).

*Harry Semenjuk  
Wetaskiwin, AB*



# I Will Be With You

## Part 16: In Brazil

*by Salomon Weissburger (1887-1968)*

**W**hen we came to Brazil in 1936, we were about 50 years old, and our daughter Else was 14 years old. Farm work was not easy for us, especially as we had no comparable experience to call on from our previous life in Germany. Nonetheless, we persevered out of love for God's work. My wife and I did not seek our own benefit, instead wishing to serve the Lord in South America as best we could.

Like Paul, we wanted to burden the members of the local congregation as little as possible. We also wanted to be role models and to work based on pure motives. I do not think that others should necessarily imitate us, but as older preachers, we considered this to be our duty and the Lord's will, in keeping with the example of Paul, who accepted little material support.

Generally speaking, however, I am certain it is a congregation's duty to support its preacher. This view is further supported by the words of Jesus (Luke 10:7 and 1 Corinthians 9:1-23). We continued following this approach when we moved from Neu-Hoffnung to Rio das Antas in 1949, to serve at the Bible school

there. We worked alongside the Bible students in the fields to eke out a living; the congregation could offer little support due to widespread poverty.

When we moved to Brazil, we had to learn how to deal with horses, cows, and pigs. We also grew proficient with using hoes, bush knives, and axes. In order to conduct community visits, we had to learn to ride horses, which was the normal mode of transportation there.

I once got on a horse and pulled the reins so hard that the horse reared up and fell over backwards, taking me down with it. Thankfully, although I was no longer a young man, both the horse and I survived without injury. Driving carriages was not without its dangers either, and on one of my earlier attempts, we ended up in the ditch next to the road. Another horse-related incident occurred when I was rolling feed pumpkins down the mountain and one of them ended up underneath one of the horses; the horses shied away and ran off, tearing the cart apart. Fortunately, there were no injuries.



In addition to the worship services in Neu-Hoffnung, we also held services in Serra, a nearby, rural mountain community that would eventually have its own house of prayer. It was about two hours away from the main road, but there was a shortcut that led steeply uphill, through a forest and over exposed rock, where you had to pull yourself up by roots and branches. In addition to my own body weight, I had to maneuver a bag carrying a hymnal, a Bible, and a lantern for when I headed back at night. About one kilometer of the way passed through dense jungle. At that time, there were still many monkeys and other animals, including snakes.

I remember walking along the narrow forest path with my lantern one night. A larger animal must have fled, startled by my approach and the light, because there was suddenly a terrible racket. Later, the brothers made a somewhat more comfortable path that made it easier to get to the meetings.

The road and rail networks were still very underdeveloped. Our nearest train station was in Hamo-

nia, about 45 kilometers (28 mi) from Neu-Hoffnung, which amounted to a day's travel by horse-drawn carriage. There was no other way to travel back then.

We often made the trip from Neu-Hoffnung to Rio das Antas, which took three or four days, by a combination of horse, train, and bus. The Lord gave us grace and saved my wife and me from discontent, enabling us to keep a grateful heart despite all the adversity. The things we did were not for ourselves but for the Lord.

It would not have been difficult to ask for money from North America, since we still had a personal connection through Brother Karl Arbeiter who had lived in the USA for a few years at the time. We also had the trust of our sisters and brothers in general. However, we had learned to look upward and not rely on people, so we received no support for about ten years. Then, the Christian Unity Press began sending us 15 dollars a month and continued to do so for some time. We are still grateful to the brothers and sisters for helping us out back then. May God bless them for it! ■

# He Is Risen!

What a world of meaning is contained in the short phrase, “He is risen” (Matthew 28:6). He has risen and has conquered death, hell, and the grave. Through His resurrection, we are “more than conquerors” (Romans 8:37). It is not to the grave that we go to find the Christ, but we seek the risen Christ who is at the right hand of God and through whom we have victory over all the powers of Satan.

Let us be glad and rejoice in this risen Christ. If only we would look upon Him at all times, how easy it would be for us to conquer all the enemy’s power and with what victory we should triumph in every trial! The risen Christ means victory for us in every combat with the enemy, and the Holy Spirit within us is the seal of the power He gives us. Through the risen Christ, sufficient grace is pledged to us. And not that alone: but through Him, no good thing is withheld from us. “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Romans 8:32). If God did not spare His own Son but gave Him to us, then surely He will not withhold from us the lesser things. Nothing else in all heaven or earth was so precious to God as His Son, and if He loved us so much as to give the very best and greatest gift, then He will not withhold the smaller blessings.

Let us look at our great and blessed privileges, then launch out and avail ourselves of all that God has provided for us. The blessings and privileges are ours if we only make proper use of them. Jesus Himself, by offering Himself on the cross, purchased them for us, and it pleases Him when we partake of and appreciate them. God the Father gave Jesus and Jesus the Son gave Himself. These were a *willing* sacrifice because God the Father and His Son loved poor, lost humanity. Shall we, after such a dearly bought gift, not avail ourselves of the great benefits that are to be enjoyed by gladly appropriating it to ourselves? His great love for us should kindle our love for Him.

Many people today see only a dead Christ. They see no victory, no healing, no comfort, no peace, no present help in time of need, no burden-healer. The

comfort He so desires to give is sought for in worldly things that fail to satisfy. Thus, the dear Lord is grieved because He so desires to help and yet is not sought for nor desired. How sad! All of these dearly bought blessings so precious and near at hand, yet not sought for or noticed.

If people would only seek more earnestly for the risen Christ, they would hear the same glad tidings which the angel proclaimed to the women at the grave: “He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him” (Matthew 28:6–7). The angel was anxious for the followers of Jesus to know that Jesus had risen and had conquered the last enemy, not only for Himself but for them, and that He was now ready to impart all-conquering power to them. No wonder they went in haste to tell the glad news!

Ever since that great and glad event, the Lord is commissioning His ministers to go and tell the glad tidings of great joy that Jesus has risen and that through this risen Christ, we can triumph in this life. Praise God! Let us continue to tell the glad tidings of a triumphant Christ.

Today, the same risen Christ lives and reigns in all hearts who will receive Him, and He gives them the same power that He obtained through His death and triumphant resurrection. Let us believe this; let us live in it daily; let us tell others of the power and victory we can have by accepting the risen Christ. Jesus wants us to enjoy all that He has so dearly and so freely purchased for us.

Like the angel was for the women, we too can be one of His messengers, and tell glad tidings and show the blessings, the comfort, the peace, the healing, to be obtained through this precious risen Christ. Let us hasten, for the time is short, and souls everywhere are in distress and affliction. Let this be the primary object of our lives; then God will be glorified both in us and in those to whom the message is sent. Praise God, “*He is risen.*”

Jenny M. Byers

# Experiences with God

Dear brothers and sisters,

In August, I turned 87 years old, and I would like to share my testimony of how I became a child of God.

My grandfather was a pastor in the Lutheran church for 36 years. My parents attended a Baptist congregation for 55 years. When I was five years old, we lived with our mother in Siberia. At that time, my father was in a labor camp in the Ural Mountains. After World War II, he was allowed to relocate his family, but he had to return to the labor camp afterward. At the age of 19, I experienced salvation and was baptized in the river along with my parents. However, over time, I felt an unfulfilled emptiness inside me.

When we moved to Germany in 1989, my sister invited me to a worship service at the Church of God in Gifhorn. At that time, she and her husband had already attended the church for two years.

My brother-in-law knew the Bible well and explained a lot to me. Still, I resisted going to church for about a year. I said to them, "When I am 100% convinced that it is the right thing to do, then I will come."

However, a willingness to seek must be evident. I cried and prayed a lot, and finally, a quiet voice spoke to me: "You must be born again." After this encounter, I knew what I had to do. Since then, I have been a child of God for 30 years, and my dear Jesus is my best physician.

Three years ago, I had a stroke, could barely eat, and lost 19 kg. (42 lbs.). At 85 years old, I underwent two major surgeries within three months. Presently, I am only mobile with a walker because I cannot put weight on my left leg due to severe pain.

But thank God! I am placing everything in His hands and am grateful that I can still think clearly. I have already prayed to God, asking Him to take me Home. But again, there was a voice that said to me: "Not yet!"

I sincerely thank you for your prayers. I am now physically weak, but Jesus can work miracles!

*In Christ's Love,  
your sister Irma Ott  
Herford, Germany*



# *The Lord Is Risen!*

*O rejoice, my soul, and listen,  
For our faithful Savior lives;  
From the tomb of stone arisen,  
Hope and help to us He gives.*

*Well, the grave was safely guarded  
And with care they sealed the door;  
And although a great stone barred it,  
Christ burst forth with life once more.*

*If our Savior had not risen,  
Had not conquered sin and death,  
We would still be in sin's prison,  
Subject e're to fear and stress.*

*You and I, we would both be lost  
Without a firm foundation  
Had Jesus not covered the cost  
And saved us from damnation.*

*And our faith, it would be in vain  
If the grave had locked Him in;  
All would be lost, nothing to gain,  
But now we have everything.*

*At last, when we are laid to rest,  
We have no fear of the grave.  
We too will be raised and be blessed  
On the resurrection day.*

G. B.