



# Foundation of Faith

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RETURNING  
TO THE FATHER

ABBA, FATHER!

THE TRINITY

God is Working in:  
BOLIVIA  
KENYA

God—*the* Father

JULY 2018



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## *Editorial*

*Dear Reader!*

*What is the most important thing in life, the most important thing in this dark, godless world tainted by sin?*

*The most important thing in life is eternal life!—And how do we get it? We cannot earn it, create it, or give it to ourselves. It has to be gifted to each of us. The Holy Scripture says: “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).*

*Yes, it is the spiritual gift of our heavenly Father, the gift purely out of His grace and mercy! John 3:16 says: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,” not because of what we had done, but out of love. Grace, forgiveness, peace, and reconciliation come solely and exclusively from God, our heavenly Father.*

*And how do we obtain these gifts? By recognizing our guilt and sins, and recognizing that we are lost and that we deserve eternal punishment. We have all earned death because of our sins.*


*But how do we obtain eternal life? Jesus Christ gives us the answer: “And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3).*

*Yes, to see, know, and attain, is what the apostle Paul wrote of. He strived to have his listeners recognize “the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (see Colossians 2:1-3).*

*When we recognize how much our Father in heaven loves us, we will repent with all our heart, and will love, and out of love follow God, serve Him, and obey Him! We will be and remain eternally thankful to the Father and the Son!*

*H. D. Nimz*





GOD THE FATHER

# Returning to the Father

*“I will arise and go to my father.” (Luke 15:18)*

**T**hink of your own life as you read Luke 15:11-32. The prodigal son went through a number of different phases. One of these phases may be where you are right now. Perhaps you plan to leave the Father’s house, saying: “I want to go it alone; I don’t need anybody to tell me what to do!” Or you are in inner turmoil, far from God, the Father. The inheritance has long been squandered. You feel empty. Whatever happens, you don’t care. Or perhaps you have reached the lowest station in your life, symbolized by the pigs the prodigal son was feeding. There are those that have degraded themselves to the level of animals. Indeed, have you not met people even more base than animals?

Although perhaps not apparent outwardly, when one turns his back on God things rapidly decline. Financially, things may still be going well. A person may also seem to having a good time partying and living it up. But what about the inner person, the soul? How tragic! When the longing of the soul for God awakens, then it becomes apparent that all the riches of the world are vain and meaningless. Life then seems like a colorful ornament on a Christmas tree that is fragile and hollow inside. Nothing in the world can satisfy the craving of the soul for God but God Himself.

I’ve traveled throughout the world  
And there’s beauty far and wide;  
But still there’s a longing in me  
This world cannot satisfy.

Oh, I’ve seen the people working  
And searching night and day;  
They’re coming and going and yearning  
With sorrow upon their way.

They won’t find for what they’re searching,  
In pleasure and fortune and fame;  
And burdened with sin and hurting  
The masses return again.

All of us have left the Father’s house. You know the moment when you slammed the door and said: “I want to be independent. I want to have things my own way. I don’t want God to rule in my life. Who is God? Modern enlightened people have no need of Him. Perhaps during the war, or when our lives were endangered, we cried out to Him. But now things are good. We can manage quite well without God. Who needs Him?”





That is how we distanced ourselves from God and lost contact with the Father's house. That is our sin, our transgression, our godlessness. We stop praying, stop reading God's Word, and deny Him.

Yet God does not run after us and force us to obey Him. He does not force us to stay against our will, saying: "You may not leave!" Everyone has the choice to stay or go. You can decide to leave, or you can stay in the Father's house; He lets you have your free will.

Yet at certain times, maybe at a funeral of a loved one or during a restless night when sorrow and worries keep us from sleeping, we realize how poor we are. What good is my life? Despite my success, I am miserable inside. Then your heart cries out: "I want to go home. I want to go back to the Father! I need a resting place in this dismal world. I need peace in my heart. I am lost in sin!" Woe unto all who do not rest in God.

How many have experienced this! Even people who live relatively good lives and who seem to have it all together will experience this deep unrest when the yearning of their soul awakens and hungers for something that is more than what this world offers. "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God.

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God" (Psalm 42:1-2a). May you experience this! May you come to the point where you too will say: "I will arise and go to my father" (Luke 15:18).

When the prodigal son was sitting with the pigs, far from the Father, it was not this environment which was the worst of all. What was so tragic was his emptiness, his loneliness, his realization that he was lost! Without God, a person is lost forever and will sink into a terrible abyss. Back to the Father! Yes, Christ died on the cross for you so that you, too, can come back to the Father. The glory of the Father's house awaits you.

Whenever you see a cross, think of Calvary. Be certain that Christ wants to meet you at the crossroad of your life. He is seeking for you. It matters not what state you are in, tattered and torn or dirty. He shed His blood and gave His own body as a sacrifice for you so that you will not remain lost in your sin and transgression. He came to "seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He is knocking at your heart's door. Can you hear Him knocking? Your life will be made whole when you say: "I will arise and go to my father" (Luke 15:18). Christ will bring you home, but you must resolve to go. No one can

do this for you. But God's love for you is so great that you can risk it. You will succeed if you resolve to go.

Although the prodigal son had turned away from the father, the father had not turned away from the son. He awaited him. He kept watching to see if the day would come when his son returned. When the son came back, his father already saw him from afar. He had not forgotten him. Even if you are far from God, remember that God is still your Father. The love of God, revealed in Jesus Christ, seeks you and calls you home. When the son was down and out, he remembered his father and saw him in his mind's eye. Otherwise, he would not have risked coming home.

Let me tell you about a young woman who was in the prison hospital. She was 25 years old and had been convicted of a double murder. She was sentenced to life imprisonment. At first, she did not come to our chapel services, but then one day she appeared. She seemed rather disinterested and bored. Maybe she just attended to see what the services were like, or maybe she had nothing else to do. Yet, even a glimmer of hope can be nurtured into a flame under the right circumstances.

This young woman ended up in the prison hospital with a serious illness. That is when God was able to speak to her. She was at death's door. When the shadow of death descends on a life, that is the final time that God can call us to repent, to come back to the Father. Many ignore this call as well and do not hear it.

The young lady called for me, and I came to her hospital bed. Then she told me about her life, her fears and anxiety, her shame and massive guilt. Last of all, she had committed murder. "I did not want to have anything to do with God," she said. That was how it started. After that, things went from bad to worse.

Her mother pleaded with her, but in vain. She wanted to live to the fullest. She wanted to be free. That all ended with her terrible crime and now her illness. She was in tears. "I had other plans for my life," she said. "But now it is all over. I have to die, and because of my ruined life, I am lost, eternally lost. There is no hope for me, and nobody can help me." She could barely find the strength to talk since her illness had made her incredibly weak.

Then I told her the story of the prodigal son. I told her about Jesus, who saves so no one needs to be lost. I told her about the thief on the cross who had also committed murder, yet Jesus promised him that he would be with Him in Paradise. I told her that there is hope for every one of us if we turn back and say: "I will arise and go to

my father" (Luke 15:18). I told her it was never too late in life, and she could even now come back to God, the Father.

Her body started to shake and she said: "Is that possible? Is it really true? I want to come back to God. That is what I always wanted, but I never did it. I didn't have the resolve or strength. I want to come home, just like the prodigal son. Can God forgive me too? Can He accept me like He accepted the thief on the cross and the prodigal son? I can't die without His pardon."

Here was a person who, at the end of her life, still wanted pardon, God's forgiveness, without which none of us can live or die. Because I knew this, I placed my hand upon her head and said: "Be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you" (Matthew 9:2b). I know that Jesus forgave her. She was able to experience the love of God and the peace that passes understanding. That is what the prodigal son experienced as well. When he came home, his father did not reject him. Filled with emotion, his father showed him his love. "There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). All lost sons and daughters who come back to the Lord have Jesus' assurance: "The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out" (John 6:37).

As I was leaving, this dying young lady asked me to play a song for her on my violin, a song her mother had taught her as a child. She could not remember how it started, but she remembered the words: "He knows and loves you too." It was the song: "Do you know how many stars are shining?" The song relates how God has not forgotten anyone on earth. He knows the stars, the insects, the fish, and all the children by name. And He knows and loves you too.

I played the song for her on my violin. Then she grasped my hand one more time, and I left. She died shortly thereafter. I was told by the hospital staff that she became very calm and peacefully passed away without speaking another word. Her eyes shone and were no longer downcast.

Oh yes, there is rest for the weary,  
For everyone far and near.  
I know there is rest for the dreary  
At the old cross of Calvary.

Rudolf Irmeler

# Abba, *Father!*

**T**he Lord Jesus Himself repeatedly used the name “Father.” “As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father”; “Therefore My Father loves Me”; “The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me”; “I and My Father are one” (John 10:15,17; 10:25; 10:30).

The Jews wanted to stone Jesus because He said God was His Father and thereby made Himself God.

The Lord Jesus did not just pray “Our Father,” and He did not only say to His disciples “Your Father,” but in one instance the Son even used the Aramaic word for Father, “Abba.” Jesus said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will” (Mark 14:36).

There does not seem to be a more intimate word in the Bible to describe the relationship of a child of God to his Creator as the name: “Abba, my Father.”—This is how Paul uses the word in his letter to the Romans: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father’” (Romans 8:14-15).

What a deep, trustworthy, and loving relationship is revealed by this name for God! “Abba, dear Father!”—By this I am made certain of my salvation, since I know that I am His child, that my Father in heaven wants what is best for me, and that He leads and guides me in wonderful ways.

A third time we find the word “Abba, Father” as a name for God in Galatians 4:6-7: “And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

Yes, all people from every nation who truly believe and have received salvation are children of God and can pray: “Abba, dear Father!”

In relation to the Aramaic word for Father, “Abba,” it has become very clear and important to me that the infamous robber who murdered someone during a riot is named: BAR-ABBA-S. Barabbas means “son of the father.” I don’t believe it is merely coincidence that Jesus Christ, the Son of our heavenly Father was rejected as the high priests cried, saying: “Not this Man, but [BAR-ABBA-S]!” (John 18:40). And Luke tells us: “And they all cried out at once, saying, ‘Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas’” (Luke 23:18).

Jesus said: The Son of Man will be rejected. The BAR-ABBA-S, the true Son of the heavenly Father, is cast away unwanted. Instead, the people choose the son of another father. Who is that? A son of the devil! “You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44).

My dear reader, who is your father? Is He the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? O, then lift up the name of the Lord and pray: “Abba, dear Father!”

But know also that Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. One of Satan’s servant’s, a thief and murderer, was presented to the people as “Barabbas,” the “son of the father.” This son was chosen above the Son of God. What tragic blindness and deceit!

Let us pray and remain watchful so that the name of the Lord may be lifted up and so that we may remain grounded in the truth!

O pray to God, the Father in Spirit!  
Praise Him for His wonders and grace!  
Give Him all honor due to Him,  
For His strong hand leads and keeps safe.

H. D. Nimz





GOD—THE FATHER

# The Trinity— *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*

**T**hroughout inspired Holy Scripture, we find plentiful evidence for the three persons of the Godhead, particularly corroborated by Jesus and the apostles.

Some people claim that the Godhead comprises no person but Jesus. They support this primarily by citing Isaiah 9:6, where Isaiah calls Him “Everlasting Father.” However, in his list of names, Isaiah included this term for the Savior because it was absolutely necessary in order to comprehensively represent the spirit and character of Jesus. He is not only Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, and Prince of Peace; He is also an eternally protec-

tive, caring, and fatherly figure to His disciples. Christ will be with them all days, even to the end of the age, and will be with them in all eternity (see Matthew 28:20). He never lets them lack for anything and provides for them abundantly. Yes, the term “Everlasting Father” is indispensable to fully express who He is to His disciples. However, this does not prove that there is no other person in the Godhead.

The world’s creation was the work of multiple persons of the Godhead.

“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness’” (Genesis 1:26). It was not mere



chance that the inspired Word uses the term “Us,” referring to multiple persons of the God of creation. Here, in the first chapter of the Bible, we are already taught that the Godhead comprises multiple persons. Here, the original Hebrew text refers to God with the word “Elohim,” the plural of “Eloah,” which means “God.” This passage, therefore, refers to the Godhead in the absolute sense.

In Colossians 1:16, Paul, too, confirms that God created the world through Christ: “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.”

### **Jesus Taught the Plurality of Persons Within the Godhead**

While Jesus was on earth, He prayed to His Father in heaven; He Himself was therefore not His Father. However, in a mysterious way, the Father lived in Jesus. Nonetheless, the Father was in heaven above; otherwise, the words that Jesus spoke to Mary immediately following His resurrection would not have made any sense: “I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God” (John 20:17). How could Jesus have been able to make such a statement if His Father could not be distinguished from His own person? Should a reader really still have doubts concerning this question, the following words of the Savior should serve to remove them: “I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father” (John 16:28). This statement clarified the issue for the disciples, and they answered Him immediately: “See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God” (John 16:29-30).

### **The Father Bearing Witness to His Son**

“You are My Son, today I have begotten You” (Hebrews 1:5). Here, the Father is speaking to the Son, the second person of the Godhood. Jesus silenced the Jews who were arguing about whether Christ had been the Son of God throughout eternity. “While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, ‘What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?’ They said to Him, ‘The Son of David.’ He said to them, ‘How then does David in the Spirit call Him “Lord,” saying: “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies

Your footstool”?’ If David then calls Him “Lord,” how is He his Son?’” (Matthew 22:41-45).

“So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God” (Mark 16:19).

### **Testimony of the Person of the Holy Spirit**

A person is a being in possession of intelligence, will, and existence. The Holy Spirit can be considered to be a person because He has these characteristics. This is clear from the pronouns used in the Bible: He refers to Himself as “I” in Acts 13:2, and when others speak about Him, they use the words “He” or “Him” (see John 14:26).

The person of the Holy Spirit is spoken of in association with the Father and the Son. In the baptismal formula, we are prompted to acknowledge Him, as well as the Father and the Son. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). We see the same thing in the apostolic benediction in 2 Corinthians 13:14: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.” Here, we find the Holy Spirit being associated with the other persons of the Godhead, as one of several people. Together with the Father and the Son, He is earnestly asked by Paul to have fellowship with the Corinthians, something only a person could do.

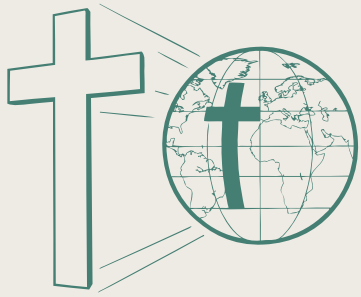
### **The Mystery of the Trinity**

Some facts are incomprehensible for our human intellect. There are even things within the universe that we cannot explain. For example, we do not question the existence of electricity nor many aspects of modern technology. A number of things really do remain a mystery to us.

The apostle Paul makes reference to this in his letter to Timothy: “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory” (1 Timothy 3:16). In the same way, the Holy Trinity is a mystery that is revealed and proclaimed to us in the Holy Scriptures.

Through it, we recognize God’s greatness and majesty, as well as His incomprehensibility, and know that we will leave this piecemeal knowledge behind, only in Glory to comprehend everything face to face.

But for now, dear reader, we can already know this: “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13).



# Radio Program Message of Salvation

Friedrich Krebs, Kitchener (ON)

## “And He Began to Be in Want.”

**W**hat a moving and admonishing statement! And how interesting that it pertains to the condition of a young person! “Hunger” entails suffering or living in want.

Do we not see this in the lives of many young people today? Every day we see them on the streets, tired and depressed at their workplaces or lounging around in the parks. We see them standing around schoolyards, cinemas, and bars, completely disinterested. But are these people not hungering and thirsting and looking for something that no person can give them?

Somewhere, an individual’s hunger began! This hunger, whether inwardly or outwardly, had its cause. In Luke 15, Jesus first points to the prodigal son’s physical hunger. How did it come to this point?

### **He Left His Father’s House**

This was not necessary as no one sent him away. He made the choice to leave. And this decision was not good! Since he was a son, he was entitled to an inheritance, and he demanded it. His father gave it to him. It seems that he received a substantial amount of money. Very quickly, he spent the money in the company of others.

Many sons and daughters have done likewise! They made the choice to leave in order to find the happiness and freedom they thought they could not have at home. Often this hoped-for happiness did not materialize and, instead, they experienced disappointments, hardships, and suffering. And “they began to be in want.”

### **He Wasted His Possessions**

This suggests recklessness and extravagance. This young man had given no thought to being prudent or frugal. Paul wrote: “For I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content” (Philippians 4:11). Many young people have not learned this!

Being prudent is not greed; neither is being frugal miserly. Both are part of a normal, sensible lifestyle. A proverb says, “Better to live sparingly than to perish in misery!” Good intentions are never a mistake, but recklessness always is. Recklessness and wastefulness are sure steps to poverty, and so one finds oneself in a state of need!

### **A Great Famine Came over That Land**

Times of disaster happen, and one cannot always avoid them. This young man had not counted on a famine. However, times of need have often been the “rod in God’s hand.” He sometimes deliberately allows things to happen. But those who carelessly squander their goods, and sometimes with intentions of being generous and enthusiastic, will learn a hard and beneficial lesson when those difficult times come.

This young man had come into dire need. His money was squandered, his friends left him, and his so-called freedom had disappointed him. His “happiness” was gone, and he cried out, “I perish of hunger!” Thousands of others have experienced this, and in many cases, it was through their own fault.





### **He Joined Himself to a Citizen of That Country**

This was apparently his last hope. He had sunk to becoming a servant. There was now a stranger and a much stricter master over him than what his father had been. This man sent him to his field to feed the pigs. It was a most humble and despised job at that time. The time for being haughty, living a lust-filled life, and being obstinate was over. This crisis deeply humbled him and forced him to admit defeat. David once said, “Before I was afflicted, I went astray” (Psalm 119: 67). Going through serious humiliations has brought many a person to their senses and repentance. One can only hope that this would happen more often!

In addition to the reasons mentioned, naturally there are other things that can lead to being in “want,” for example, laziness and idleness. Not a single young person has gained a good reputation from being in this state. A father told me that he could hardly get his adult son

to help. When the father came home after a long day at work, he still had to mow the lawn. When he got close to where his son was lying on the lawn chair, he had to politely ask him to move, which he did very unwillingly. It should be no surprise if such idleness leads to “want” or suffering.

Every young person eventually becomes independent. Independence also requires experience. However, when someone does not accept instruction, experience will be lacking. And where it lacks, silly ideas, ill-considered actions, and many missteps and much foolishness can occur. Not only has many a young person been brought to a “pig trough,” but they have also squandered their inheritance.

It would be wonderful to see many young people follow the example of the prodigal son and return home to the Father who is lovingly and longingly waiting for their homecoming.

# Learning from Children

“Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it” (Luke 18:17).

A young father told this story: “We were visiting a family we knew, and in this house, some workers were busy with renovations. Our little son sat on my lap and was busy with a toy when we suddenly heard the droning sound of a drill. It made him jump, and he looked at me with a little bit of fear. I smiled at him, then he smiled back and quietly kept on playing.”

The reaction of the father allowed the boy to continue playing quietly, for “Father didn’t get scared, so I don’t need to be scared either.” From this young boy, we can learn to have such a childlike trust in our heavenly Father. Jesus encouraged His disciples a number of times to learn from children. Children have several unique qualities that we as adults can learn from.

## 1) Trust

We know that a small child does not worry about whether there will be enough food tomorrow. He does not worry about clothing or other physical needs. A child trusts that his father or mother will provide the necessities. Parents know the needs of their child.

In unfamiliar surroundings, a child also trusts the leading of her father. A child feels safe and secure in the hand or arms of her father, no matter how unfamiliar the surroundings or circumstances may be. A child does not question: “Is my father really leading me the right way?”

## 2) Faith

The prayers of the children in my Sunday School class have often been a blessing to me. Their childlike faith is plain and simple, without effort and without doubt.

When a child approaches his parents with a serious need and receives approval, then he believes strongly

that his parents will fulfill his request. As adults, we also need this childlike faith in relation to God’s Word and His promises.

## 3) Refuge

It is highly unlikely that a child would not run to her father or mother after a fall, an injury, or having been in danger. She does not try to master the situation herself or keep it a secret. No, in her helplessness, she will first run to her parents for help. A child will not ask: “Will my father even help me?”

We have the privilege to have the almighty Creator, who holds the whole world in His hand, as our heavenly Father. How much more is He able to care for us small people. In Philippians 4:6, we have the invitation: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God!” We can trust Him not only in good times but also when our lives don’t run according to our expectations and plans. When the next step is unknown, we should know and trust in the mighty hand of the Father to lead us right. In Hebrews 10:35, it says: “Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.” In Proverbs 3:5-6, we have a wonderful promise: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” Yes, in every life’s situation, we can flee to Him like a child in prayer and with steadfast faith expect help.

Have you already become a child of the heavenly Father? Then hold tight to His strong hand and let yourself be led obediently. Nurture an open, trusting connection and a pure relationship with Him on a daily basis. He will not disappoint your trust!

Dina Grötzinger, Eppingen (DE)

## The Word of a Father

Two men were once standing by a building on which a little boy had climbed who was afraid to get down. Looking up at him, one man opened his arms and, with

a kind voice, said: “Jump, my little fellow, and I will catch you.” But the boy shrank back and would not jump. Then the other man opened his arms and said: “Come, my



boy, jump, and I will catch you.” Instantly the little face cleared, a smile chased away the tears, and with a rush he jumped and was safely caught in the outstretched arms. Why was the boy afraid of one man and willing to trust the other? Because the first man was a stranger and the second man was his father. He knew his father would not let him fall.

Do we, as believers, have such faith in God, our Father, who is, after all, the one wise and perfect God and Father? Do we take Him at His word? Do we trust Him in times of trial and temptation? Let us ask Him to increase our faith and trust in His love and wisdom so that His mercy and grace may be glorified and that we and others may be blessed. He wants to honor those who honor Him.

## ... Notes from School (Part 6)

In the first weeks of my studies, I was temporarily living with the family of one of my classmates and was invited to a worship service. Until then, I had always done my devotions by myself. I even held my own service on Sundays and listened to a sermon. But now, my friend talked to me and asked if I would like to go with her to an evening service. She had found an Iglesia de Dios (Church of God) and wanted to go there together with me.

Up until then, I had never been in a different church. My parents thought it went without saying that we shouldn't attend any other churches. Their stance was so clear that there was never even a discussion about it, although other wonderful people in our circle of family and friends attended other churches. Now I had to make a decision on my own what I should do with this well-intentioned invitation. Because my friend asked so nicely, I gave in and went with her to this Iglesia de Dios.

The first impression I got was of disorder in the service—a constant coming and going. Songs were sung, people walked around, others came in—but a respectful, reverent stillness to worship God was not there. For about an hour, choruses—stanzas which were often repeated—were sung. A sermon came after that, and then following, communion was shared with all who were present, adults and children. I observed how a woman not far away from me constantly made some kind of sound, unrelated to anything that was going on around her.

I felt terrible. I was also scared of becoming corrupted by all of this. When the service finally ended and we stood in front of the building, that exact woman who I noticed earlier came and spoke to me. She said that she wanted to pray for me. It was a scary situation.

I told my friend later that I never wanted to take part in a service like that again. She should also tell this woman that she didn't need to concern herself with me. I served God and did not need this being or spirit. I am thankful to God for this evening, first for His protection but also that through this event, He Himself showed me the great danger and gave me clarity about His Church. I would rather spend time alone with God than search for fellowship elsewhere and be corrupted by a strange spirit.

Patricia J. Günter

### VERSE OF THE MONTH

*“I will lift my eyes to the hills—  
from whence comes my help?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
who made heaven and earth.  
He will not allow your foot to be moved;  
He who keeps you will not slumber.”  
(Psalm 121:1-3)*

*Have you ever had the opportunity to stand on top of a mountain and admire the vast range around you? Or have you taken a drive in the mountains and looked in awe, from the bottom to the top, at the enormous mountains of rock? As a person, you suddenly feel small and insignificant. You definitely feel and acknowledge the mighty hand of God, our Creator. This powerful Creator also holds your life in His hand and is watching over you with His eyes every moment of the day. He is able and willing to help you in every circumstance of your life. Do you trust Him?*

## *Experiences with God*

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God.” Isaiah 41:10

I was given this beautiful Bible verse at my baptism last year. I am so happy that I took this step and entrusted my life to the Lord at the Easter conference in Hamm of that year. I thank God for this opportunity, because shortly after my 13th birthday, in April 2015, I was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML), a very aggressive form of blood cancer. I was admitted to the University of Münster, where I spent most of the next half year. I received five rounds of chemo. During this time, the congregation in Hamm and other local churches prayed for me, for which I was very grateful.

During the course of my therapy, we were told that my greatest chance of survival (up to 50%) would be if I had a bone marrow transplant. When it became clear that my sister was not an eligible donor, the search was extended to the bone marrow donor file. Soon, we were told that several matching donors had been found. The selected donor matched all ten criteria. God had answered our prayer.

Before being placed on isolation for the bone marrow transplant, I came down with severe pneumonia. I had to be transferred to the intensive care unit. At first, it was very hard for me to have to breathe day and night with an oxygen mask, but soon things got better, and God gave grace that my lungs recovered and I could leave the intensive care unit again.

After another complication, I was finally admitted to the bone marrow transplant center where I stayed in isolation for several weeks while my immune system was destroyed by extremely strong chemo drugs. Finally, the day for the transplant arrived. I received the bone marrow and, with that, a new immune system. The doctors told us that I would definitely get a fever again, but to their astonishment, this never happened, thank God. After four weeks in isolation, I was allowed to leave my room for small outside excursions. After two more weeks, I was finally released to go home and only had to be treated on an outpatient basis.

I am especially grateful to my parents, who took turns to be with me in the hospital. All in all, I was out of school for a full year and was very happy when I could return to school again in April 2016. Currently, I have to return to the hospital every three months for a checkup, but I am doing well.

I would like to thank everyone very much for the many prayers that were sent up to God on my behalf. These gave me strength and courage. Please continue to pray for me that I might stay healthy and be faithful to God, to whom I owe so much.

Deborah Mantek  
Hamm, Germany





## CHILDREN'S CORNER

# Why?

**I**n a Sunday school class, the children were asked, “How do you think the angels in heaven do God’s will?” The children thought for a while. Then one answered and said, “They do God’s will immediately and without any doubt.” Another child replied, “They do it quickly and without stopping, once they have started.” A third child said, “They do it always and at every opportunity, most definitely!”

It was quiet for a while. Everyone was still busy-ing themselves with this thought. Then a shy little boy dared to say, “They do God’s will without asking why!”

The boy was right. And it is the same with us. When we are obedient, we do not ask, “Why should I do that?” in response to everything we are told and commanded. We obey, though we do not fully understand why we should do this or that.

In the Bible we find an interesting story of the people of Israel. They were to conquer the city of Jericho. This was a solid city with high walls and tightly locked gates. At that time there were no bombs or weapons like the soldiers have in our time.

But God showed Joshua a plan: all the people of Israel were to march around the city. No one was al-

lowed to talk, only seven priests were to blow a trumpet. In the evening they went back to their tents.

The next day, they did the same thing. What might they have thought? And so it went on for six days in a row.—Perhaps some of the people of Israel asked themselves: “Why this? How can we conquer a strong city if we just walk around it?”—But they were obedient because God had commanded it that way.

And then on the seventh day they were even supposed to go around the city seven times. They went once—nothing happened! Twice, three times . . . . Yes, God had said seven times! At the seventh time, the priests blew the trumpets loudly and all the people were allowed to scream out loud—and what happened? The walls fell and Israel could take over the city!

Would they have captured the city if they had given up after the first or second day or even after the third round on the seventh day? No! They had to fully complete God’s command!

Dear children, we should all learn, though we do not always understand why our parents or especially God forbid or command us to do something, to still be obedient and not ask “why?” Yes, let us obey immediately, completely, and gladly!

# For You Are With Me

*„Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me.“ Psalm 23:4*



**I**t was once again an almost unbearable night—when it is dark and quiet and all others are sleeping, when you hear the tinkling of the wind chimes, when you take one pill after another and nothing changes, when the pain overwhelms you in waves, when you get up and then lie down again, when you wander around the house, when you turn the lights on and off, when you attempt to read but do not know what you have read, when the clock advances at a snail’s pace, and when the morning does not want to come.

During the course of the night, various thoughts passed through my mind. I reminded myself of what I have often said during visits to sick people, and I realize that it is easy to speak of trusting in God, persevering,

and the power of prayer when it applies to others. However, if we ourselves are in this situation, it is different. It is not that easy to accept these truisms.

The next seven weeks became a test of faith for me. It was on a Saturday in March, at our church’s annual business meeting, when great pains together with a feeling of unwellness began. My situation worsened so that I had to excuse myself and drive home. The pains were almost unbearable. I drove to the hospital where they found a kidney stone, which they told me would go away on its own. However, that did not happen. An inflammation attacked my kidney. I drove to the University Hospital in Edmonton where the doctors immediately performed an operation. A stent was inserted to relieve the pressure



on the kidney. Many things have happened since. I had a second surgery. Three kidney stones were removed, but a larger stone still remained in the kidney. The details are not even that important. But today, after a fourth operation, I was released stone-free from the hospital. I am grateful and thankful for God's nearness in this "dark valley."

Looking back, even though it was a difficult time, it was also a blessed time for me. We cannot understand everything, but let me share some thoughts with you. It is possible that you are also in a "dark valley" at this moment. I would like to encourage you to not become discouraged. Do not throw away your trust in God. There is a great reward in store.

*"And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age"* (Matthew 28:20b). Those are encouraging words that Jesus gave His disciples for their life's journey. Jesus has never broken His promises. Like a rock in a storm, He stands solid. Immovable. However, sometimes in desperate situations we feel alone and abandoned. I had to think of the composer who wrote: "E'en when I am not feeling Thy love or might, still Thou art safely leading, though dark the night." David supplements the verse with: "I fear no evil; for You are with me." He is there.

*"Two are better than one . . ."* (Ecclesiastes 4:9). Solomon speaks of true friendship's blessing in which one helps another, and is there for the other. In this case, it was my dear wife. What would I have done without her? She cared for me untiringly. She read every wish of mine in my eyes. No chore was too heavy or too much for her. I will never forget her prayers and her spiritual support. How blessed we are by dear people such as our marriage partner, friend, neighbor, or nurse, who are supportive and there for us.

*"And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it"* (1 Corinthians 12:26). This scripture pertains to the Church and our relationship, our close bond, with one another. I experienced that here in Wetaskiwin (Canada). I received many text messages, phone calls, flowers, cards, and notes with a greeting from young and old, which all encouraged me. Our dear brothers agreed to step in and bring the Word during this time. Each time my wife returned from worship services, she always said that God had blessed them. I thank God for the dear brothers and sisters and their sympathy, as well as their prayers.

*"Unless Your law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction"* (Psalm 119:92). The Word of God exudes power. It raises you up. It gives you cour-

age. It helps you to persevere. Part of the time, I was unable to read because I was too weak and felt unwell. However, I often remembered a Bible verse that had blessed me richly. What a blessing took hold of me, and I was so thankful for the many verses, Psalms, and songs I had memorized.

*"Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered"* (Romans 8:26). If we are in agony due to extreme pain, it is almost impossible to pray. The energy is missing, and it is difficult to focus. We sigh, we groan, and single words come upon our lips as a cry for help, but coherent thoughts are often missing. God's Spirit takes over and helps us in our weakness.

*"Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Ephesians 5:20). We recently studied this verse in our prayer service. During my greatest distress, unbearable pain, and uncertainty about my situation, I learned to thank God for the hospitals, doctors, nurses, and even for the injections and the operations that relieved the pain. I even thanked God for the interesting meals served in the hospital.

*"I have learned . . ."* (Philippians 4:11). Life is like a school. We learn. The Lord is our teacher. So, this time of illness became a "classroom" for me. I had much time, and again and again, I saw the great Teacher before me. He taught me, and He showed me how certain things are done, but He also corrected me. How blessed were these hours with the Lord. He gave me advice. I made new decisions, and I will now do some things differently. I have learned.

*"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"* (Revelation 21:4). Every trial has an ending. If not here, then in eternity. It will not plague us forever. The Lord helped me and made me well, for which I am eternally thankful. However, this may not occur for everyone. Some may first find their cure on the "other shore," where the Lord will wipe away all tears of pain. However the Lord decides, help is promised.

Dear child of God, we live in a fallen world. The results of the fall into sin affect us all. As believers, we are not exempt from this effect. The Lord did not guarantee us a problem-free trip, but He promised to be with us, to help us, and to give us strength for each day until we arrive at our goal. Do not give up. Persevere. He is there.

Harry Semenuk

# The Lord's Prayer

*by Gerhard Mielke - Part 15: And the Power*

When we pray: “Thine is the power,” we are referring to God’s power. Although God is not the only one that has power, God’s power is greater. God has all power. That is why He is called the Almighty. Like His love, His power is without limit. Any power we have is given to us from above. Any power the enemy of our souls has cannot match God’s power. Paul writes: “He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love” (Colossians 1:13). Created in the image of God we share some of His power, yet there are certain powers that God has reserved for Himself. Let me cite a few examples.

## **1. God Has the Power to Save and to Condemn**

Jesus revealed Himself to John as the one “who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death” (Revelation 1:17-18). Furthermore the Bible tells us: “There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?” (James 4:12).

Satan does not have power to condemn us. God has the final word. We are to fear offending God, because it is He who is able to save and destroy. Only He. His is the power. God is also the only one who is able to forgive us our sins. The Apostle John writes: “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).

It is no wonder that when Jesus forgave sins that the Pharisees were offended and exclaimed: “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Mark 2:7). They were correct, but they were wrongly offended because they did not recognize who Jesus was. He alone is the Author of our sal-

vation. Peter exclaims: “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

## **2. His Is the Power of the Resurrection**

The power of the Resurrection is God’s power. That is a power that the Sadducees did not know of nor believe in. Yet “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’ He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken” (Mark 12:24-27).

Even though the resurrection of Jesus Christ may defy logic, the evidence for His resurrection is overwhelming. What happened in Jerusalem was not done in secret. At the time there were over 500 witnesses who could attest to the Resurrection. Someone wishing to promote a falsehood might say it happened in a remote area and that no one witnessed it except for them. In contrast, here was a cloud of witnesses and it occurred in the capital city where large crowds had gathered. The disciples themselves at first also did not believe, but later they were willing even to die for this truth. As Josh McDowell reasoned: “The only thing that could have transformed a group of defeated disciples hiding in an upper room to eager witnesses that even death could not silence was that



they experienced the risen Savior. No other explanation makes sense.” This is God’s power. And it is the power of God that will raise us up as well, since the Bible affirms that: “God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power” (1 Corinthians 6:14).

### 3. The Power of the Holy Spirit

The power of the Holy Spirit is from God. Jesus said: “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit is not a power. He is a person of the Godhead. Yet He gives power. As a person He speaks (Acts 13:2), He guides, and He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30). He is the One who empowers us.

Of Christ we read: “how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly” (Acts 10:38-40). Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power. What Christ did on earth was through the power of the Holy Spirit. And then Jesus told his disciples: “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49).

**Although God is not the only one that has power, God’s power is greater. God has all power. That is why He is called the Almighty. Like His love, His power is without limit.**

The power of the Holy Spirit is given to us so that we may do God’s will.

### 4. God’s Power Is Strong in the Weak

It may seem paradoxical that God’s power is manifested in weakness. If we rely on our own power, we will not succeed, but if we count on God He will grant us power. The Bible says: “He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:29, 31).

Do you feel weak or discouraged? Look not at your own power. Trust in God. When Goliath came to slander Israel, Saul and the soldiers were afraid because they looked at Goliath’s strength and their own weakness. David was able to defeat Goliath because he looked at the power of God rather than at his own small stature. You have a choice: you can rely on your own strength and tremble in weakness, or like David you can rely on the help of God and be victorious.

The Apostle Paul experienced the power of God firsthand, yet he also endured many trials and hardships. To him God said: “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9). Brother and Sister, God’s grace is also sufficient for you. He will grant you His help. Rely on His promises and on His power. He will see you through.





# Bolivia Report

In February my husband Reinhard and I had the privilege of traveling to Bolivia. Reinhard was to put his carpentry skills to good use in the final stages of the renovation project of the house of worship known as Shalom, which is located on the highway going through the town of Cuatro C nadas. I was to work at U.E. Monte S n with the teachers and/or teach Grade 1. The highlight of our visit, however, was to be attending Dedication Sunday on February 18th. This was my twelfth trip to Bolivia, and I have come to appreciate and love the people of Via Gracia and Valle Esperanza. I am so thankful I was able to attend the dedication services.

When we arrived on February 1st and saw the bare sanctuary of Shalom, it didn't seem possible all the work still needing to be done would actually be finished by the 18th. There were no pews, no sound booth or sound sys-

tem, no restroom partitions or vanities. Hundreds of feet of wood trim still needed to be installed, the carpeting on the walls wasn't completed, there was no air conditioning, and the utility company needed to finish hooking up the power. The amount of work that needed to be completed seemed overwhelming. But, we know that with God's help all things are possible.

Prayer is the Christian's most powerful tool, and for the Shalom renovation project it was a tool employed most diligently! People in Germany, Canada, the USA, and South America prayed earnestly and unceasingly. We prayed that building materials would be delivered in a timely manner. We prayed that no one would get hurt on the job. God graciously answered that prayer when He protected one young man from being electrocuted shortly before Dedication Sunday. We prayed that God



DEDICATION SERVICE



## DEDICATION ATTENDEES



would send willing hands from other congregations; and they came. We prayed that the Lord would give the workers the strength and endurance required to get the work completed on time. We praise God for His protection, His faithfulness, and for answered prayers.

The young people of Valle Esperanza worked diligently from early morning till late at night. They painted, upholstered the pew seats and backs, assembled the pews, did clean-up, and willingly helped wherever they were needed. The women of the congregation painted, cleaned, installed wall carpeting, cooked, and served meals. The men ignored their work at home and instead worked tirelessly at Shalom. On the 15 working days in February before Dedication Sunday, the families of the congregation took turns bringing daily hot lunches and snacks for coffee breaks. It was a real blessing for the

workers because they could focus on their work and not worry about meals. The congregation is not large, and it was a true act of service to prepare and deliver food for 20 to 30 people every day. The unity, the brotherly love, Christian fellowship, and the bonding that occurred as the congregation members worked alongside one another became evident. Toward the end the workers were tired to the point of exhaustion, but their joy at having a beautiful house of worship and their anticipation of Dedication Sunday superseded their tiredness.

As Dedication Sunday neared there was a heightened sense of excitement and our prayers for God's blessings and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the services intensified. On Friday the first guests were expected. From Argentina 19 persons arrived, including Pastor Manfredo and his wife Mirian Günter from Oberá. The trip by car



CHOIR OF SHALOM





YOUTH GROUP

was arduous and took about 22 hours, but the Argentinian guests came joyfully. On Sunday, the congregation from Via Gracia arrived. Because not everyone owns a car, one young man from Valle Esperanza left at 4 a.m. in his pick-up truck and drove to Via Gracia to pick up all who still needed a ride. Five or six young people sat in the box of the truck for the 2.5-hour ride in the heat and the dust and the bumpy roads to Shalom so they could be at the dedication services.

On Dedication Sunday three services were held, with Pastor Harvey Elke and Pastor Ron Taron as guest speakers. It was estimated that between 300-350 people were in attendance. The Holy Spirit worked mightily, and over the course of the Sunday evening service and the special services of the following week almost all the young people were kneeling at the altar, either for the very first time

or to rededicate their lives to the Lord. A number of older people sought time with the pastors as well. Some were strengthened in their walk of faith, others repented of their sins, while a few expressed a desire to begin attending the Church of God services. The Lord truly blessed, refreshed, encouraged but also reprimanded, and we praise Him for His Word which is sharper than any two-edged sword.

Our prayer for the Church of God at Shalom is that they continue to stay strong in the faith, that they let the light of the gospel shine through them, so that they might fulfill the great commission: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

Rosemarie Jeske  
Edmonton, AB



YOUTH BIBLE SEMINAR



# Kenya Mission Trip 2018

“Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing” (Acts 15:36).

We were privileged to travel to Kenya, Africa on March 12th as a group of 12 Brothers and Sisters from various congregations across Canada. The Lord orchestrated a harmonious team, with each team member having unique gifts to contribute to ministry. We thank God for His protection, His gracious blessings, the answers to prayer, and the wonderful fellowship we could share with God’s people in Kenya.

Life in Kenya seems harder than it was when we last visited 4-½ years ago. There have been numerous failed harvests due to drought. Generally, our Brothers and Sisters there live in rural areas. Most are not employed, but

rather work their small plots of land to provide for their families.

There are presently sixteen congregations of the Church of God that we have fellowship with. We conducted worship services in seven locations. Some of these congregations are in remote areas. The aggregate average attendance of these congregations is 1,700 adults plus children. God has blessed His work over the years. To Him alone be the glory. Our Sisters and Brothers are eager to hear God’s Word and are very engaged in the worship services. All preaching was translated into Swahili or a local dialect. We praise God for the working of the Holy Spirit during these Services and for dear souls who sought help from Jesus. The text of a chorus that is often sung at the beginning of the Worship Services is: “There is something today in the house of the Lord. . . . There is



HEALTH SEMINAR IN KABECHE



WITH THE CHILDREN





power today in the House of the Lord.” And there is! God is not dependent on nice places of worship. He is present where two or three are gathered in His Name. Praise God! We also shared God’s Word in Ladies and Men’s Bible Studies. There are numerous Sisters in the churches and they were greatly encouraged by the Word of God and the fellowship.

Over the last year the Lord provided funds to purchase 3,300 Bibles for the Churches in Kenya. Until now, people had to sign out Bibles from the church library. The joyful faces—showing their precious Bibles in one of the services is a picture that will be deeply ingrained in our minds. Thanks to the generous donations of God’s people, we partnered with Gideon’s Canada to launch the Hope Magazine in Swahili. This publication combines God’s Word of Hope with attractive pictures and includes the entire Gospel according to John. Several of our team had the privilege to talk with people in the streets and marketplaces to share Christ, our Hope. One man received a Hope magazine and came to the church the next day, seeking salvation. He shared how he is a drunkard, how his wife cried over him. He expressed his heart’s desire to be set free from the bondage of sin. After repenting, confessing His sins and asking Jesus to cleanse him, a wonderful joy came over him. One of the local Pastors shared how he planned to visit this family for the next few evenings, when the temptation for this new Christian was the greatest. We also had a day set aside for fellowship with Pastors. There were 18 pastors in attendance and God’s presence was with us.

What a privilege it was to also share God’s Word with children. God gave us the opportunity to conduct two days of Children’s Bible Studies in a VBS format in two locations. The children were full of anticipation and joyfully learned new songs and listened to the stories of Jesus. In one location there were 150 children and the second location the Good News was shared with over 100 children.

In addition to the spiritual work, we also wanted to bring poverty relief to our Brothers and Sisters. The last time we visited Kenya, we were able to share a moisture sustainable farming method with them. Using this farming method, they are harvesting 2 to 3 times the crop, providing they get rain. We praise God for this!

This time, one of our team members, who is a nurse, presented sessions on various health topics. Topics included: dehydration, malnutrition, gastrointestinal conditions, and first aid. These sessions were well received as the people have very limited access to healthcare. We were also able to pass along donations from our churches in Canada of over 130 kg (287 lb) of clothing and many school and medical supplies. We were also able to provide them with a computer with ministry resources, a projector, and a camera.

Most of our families cook their food on open fires. This method of cooking consumes a lot of wood, which people need to search for in the forests, and also presents a health hazard because of the extent of smoke. One of our Brothers researched a type of stove called a “rocket





PASTORS CONFERENCE

stove” because it directs the flame in a very direct manner. He designed a template for this stove and shared this knowledge in a seminar. This stove reduces smoke by up to 90% and increases the burning efficiency by up to 50%. During the seminar, people from the villages came as well. They wanted to learn more about this new stove and our Kenyan Brothers took that opportunity to share the Gospel with the visitors.

Our hearts were touched by the love our Brothers and Sisters in Kenya showed for each other and for us. Even though they have so few earthly goods, they have big, giving hearts. Repeatedly our team members commented that they had been changed by this experience.

In the future, with God’s help, we plan to build additional Houses of Worship, dig wells to provide drinking water in times of drought, purchase mills to support widows and orphans, and possibly also establish a small health clinic. We would also like to support our Pastors more and replace an aging mission van.

Thank you for prayer support during our trip. Please continue to pray for the Church in Kenya!

Your co-laborer in the Lord’s vineyard,

Gerald Krebs  
Edmonton, AB



MISSION AT THE MARKET PLACE



TRAVELERS FROM CANADA



# Experiences with God

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

*(Psalm 66:16)*

To God’s glory, I would like to share about my life and experiences with Him.

I was raised in a Christian family. After the Revolution in the Soviet Union, Christians were heavily persecuted in my country. During that time, many Christians lost their faith, including my parents. Then the Second World War came, and there was great hardship. The German people were dragged to Siberia. In 1943, my father was conscripted into the Labor Army. One summer, I was assigned a load with two oxen from a collective farm. I worked for a freight business about 100 km (62 mi) away from my home. One night, the oxen escaped. I looked for them the entire day, but I did not find them. The second day was unsuccessful too. I cried and prayed to God. In my despair, I could only pray: “My God, please find my oxen!” Late in the evening, I fell asleep on the field, exhausted and worn-out. In the early morning when I awoke, I kneeled down and called aloud: “Lord, help me. Please find my oxen!” When I looked around, my oxen stood next to me. My heart was filled with a deep thankfulness to God and is still thankful to God today for the answered prayer and His help. To Him alone be all honor, praise, and glory for all eternity! During this difficult time, people began to search for God. The Spirit of God reawakened the brothers, and worship services began again. Many people found peace with God.

In 1955, I received salvation in Atbasar, Kazakhstan. Once Brother Ickert visited our area and invited us to the services. My wife Maria, my brother Heinrich, and I accepted the invitation. My wife and brother received salvation. I felt sorrowful and remorseful but couldn’t find any peace for my soul. One morning, we did our devotions. I opened my Bible and came to the passage: “There will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left” (Luke 17:34). This Word touched me deeply: my wife was saved, and I was lost. I prayed earnestly to God. When we held a service in our home again, the brothers and sisters kept on praying, and I found peace for my soul. Before my salvation, I often suffered from open tuberculosis (TB) that attacked both lobes of my

lungs. The sickness had progressed to one of the last stages. After my salvation, I was completely healed from this disease, and the doctors were amazed by this miracle. To this day, I am no longer sick. God healed my body and soul. Thanks be to God for all eternity! Afterward, my wife and I were baptized.

Shortly afterward, my wife Maria became ill. In her mouth, she had a growth the size of a knuckle on her gums. The doctors did not take it seriously at first and prescribed a mouth rinse. It got worse. Eventually, she could hardly speak. Then Brother Johann Barbulja came to visit us. During a service, my wife asked if the people could pray for her, but no one could understand what she said. I repeated her request. Brother Johann told about the wonders and signs that God did in his life. Then he said: “Brothers and sisters, we want to pray for this sister. But whoever does not believe should not pray.” During the prayer, my wife began to praise and thank God loudly and clearly. She was healed. Our God is great and merciful.

Once, I visited my parents who also held services in their home. My father told me that the people had planned on celebrating the Lord’s Supper. I knew that my parents had not held the Ordinance of Footwashing in their previous congregation and asked them if Footwashing was supposed to take place at the same time as the Lord’s Supper. My father answered: “The Lord’s Supper will be held the way the Apostle Paul described it in the letter to the Corinthians.” Then I replied: “But what about John 13, which also mentions Footwashing? God did not reject it, even though people did.” My mother saw it as a command from God and said to my father, “Daniel, we must do it.” My father took his Bible, immersed himself in this passage of Scripture, and also came to the realization to fulfill this commandment of Footwashing. When the people came to the service, my father spoke about the passage from John 13. Following this, he asked the people if they were willing to obey this command from God, and all of the people agreed. This Lord’s Supper was an experience that I will never forget. Heaven stood open, and God’s blessings rained down.

In 1957, I came with my family to Tokmak, Kyrgyzstan. We stayed with the W. Scheibner family. In 1958, Brother Rode came to Tokmak. A revival took place

during this time. Many people received salvation. A congregation developed with over 100 souls who had experienced God's grace and became sanctified. God revealed Himself to the congregation through signs and wonders. People were healed from their illnesses. The congregation became one heart and soul. Brother Rode was an apostle and father to us in the congregation. Biblical teaching and exhortations were gladly accepted.

Once, Brother Ackermann visited us and stayed with us overnight. After a blessed conversation, we prayed. In the middle of prayer, I had to become still because I was so touched by the prayer of Brother Ackermann. The room was filled with the glory of God. He prayed as if two people were conversing and as if he would have his questions instantly answered. God was present. The awe of God enveloped my heart. I experienced rich blessings through this prayer.

Brother Rode built a small house, and his son, Robert, came to Tokmak. He worked as a truck driver. On one of his routes, an accident happened. He encountered another semi-truck. The driver of the other truck was under the influence of alcohol. During his attempt to dodge the truck, Robert ended up in the opposite lane of traffic. Four people were injured in this accident, and one person died. Robert was arrested and wasn't allowed to have any visitors. His father, Brother Rode, felt responsible and was very distraught. I visited him because his daughter was worried about him. I went home and prayed to God that Robert would be released from prison, and received the answer that he will be. I immediately went to Brother Rode and told him the good news, which he did not accept. As I went home, Robert came toward me. Praise and thanks be to God!

My first wife, Maria, became very ill. She couldn't even walk 20 meters (22 yd) without having to rest at least twice. Brother Ackermann and Brother Rode visited us. My wife asked the brothers to pray for her. In the middle of prayer, she was healed. This was a Friday. On the next day, we had services in the Heck's home, who lived about 3 km (2 mi) away. We drove with the bus to the W. Schillerts'. As we walked to the bus stop, the bus drove past us. It was still about 50 meters (55 yd) to the bus stop. We had to run, and my wife ran without trouble. When we came to the service, the people wondered about the condition of my wife's health.

My daughter Hilda was one year old and became very sick. After three weeks, it was so bad that she couldn't even eat anymore. I called Brother Rode and asked him

to pray that the Lord would take her home. We prayed, and she fell asleep during it. She became healthy again and has a family and two healthy children today.

I remember another answer to prayer: My second wife, Adele, had terrible stomach pains and often could not attend the services. So one evening, I went to the worship service alone. Brother Rode spoke about healing. It was very precious to me. At home, my wife and I kneeled down, and while we prayed, my wife became healthy.

Later, in Germany, Adele suffered from skin cancer, as well as a growing brain tumor. Some paralysis set in. In order to prevent total paralysis, the tumor was removed in a six-hour long operation. To the doctor's amazement, she recovered!

I cannot describe all of the miracles of God and how He healed so often. The verse in Psalm 46:1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," helped us during this time to put our hope in God and trust in Him. I am so thankful to God that my grandparents, parents, siblings, perhaps not all but most, served God and still serve Him. Our children, too, have faith through the grace of God. I thank my God and Savior for that with all of my heart. Amen.

Wilhelm Dell  
Gifhorn, Germany

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## Announcements

*Youth Retreat in Tuningen,  
Germany  
July 27 - 31, 2018*

*Camp Meeting in Blaubeuren,  
Germany  
August 4 - 11, 2018*

*Special Services in Swartz Creek, MI  
September 1-2, 2018*

*Fest Services in Edmonton, AB  
October 6-8, 2018*

## We Praise You, God, our Father!

*We praise you, God, our Father,  
For all that You have done;  
Your helping hand has offered  
The best for everyone.  
You found us lost and weary,  
For we had gone astray;  
You saved us from our dreary  
And self-destructing way.*

*You saw the many dangers,  
Though we were unaware;  
Protected by Your angels,  
You blocked our path with care.  
You took the crutch we leaned on,  
So we would walk again.  
Your love we can depend on;  
Your help was not in vain.*

*When we became conceited  
And filled with boastful pride,  
You gave us what we needed  
And humbled us in stride.  
When vanity was present  
And caused our thoughts to err,  
You helped us see in essence  
How poor and weak we were.*

*Yes, when You spoke as needed  
And caused us fear and pain,  
Our stubbornness defeated,  
We saw Your love again.  
You kept us from destruction  
And from the evil way;  
We needed Your instruction,  
You taught us how to pray.*

*So help us, dear Creator,  
And free us from ourselves  
So that our love be greater  
For You than for all else.  
Let us use the time we're given,  
Press on to heaven's shore;  
And when we get to heaven  
We'll praise You evermore.*