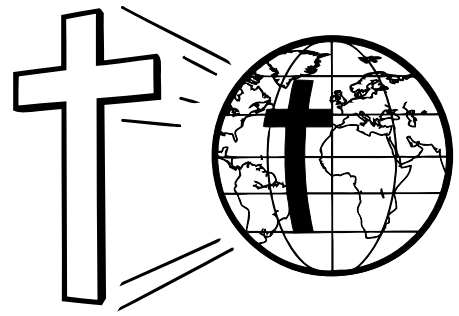


Foundation of Faith



*God's
unchanging*
FAITHFULNESS

GOD WANTS TO BE OUR FATHER

CHRIST, THE BEST NAVIGATOR

DIVINE GUIDANCE

A NEVER CHANGING GOD

**BOOKS CAN
BE HAZARDOUS FOR YOUR FAITH**

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Dear Reader,

The Lord has given us another year. We would like to wish all of our readers God's blessing, comfort, and presence.

Yes, every day, every month is a divine gift of grace from our heavenly Master. In creation, God stepped out of eternity, and according to His plan for us, placed the sun, moon, stars, and the whole universe in such a precise position that we have day and night, and time, days, and years (see Genesis 1:14). Most of the time we take this wonderful divine order for granted, without thinking, without thanking, without recognizing our responsibility before the eternal Judge.

Do you recognize the importance of your time? King David testifies before God: "My times are in Your hand" (Psalm 31:15).

Our Savior saw the city of Jerusalem with all the people while He was on the Mount of Olives, and wept, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes" (Luke 19:42).

Dear reader, be still for a moment, reflect and see the desires of the people, the hustle and bustle for pleasure and material gain! It is like a mighty torrent, similar to Niagara Falls, where there is no stopping, except to tumble to destruction in the bottomless depths.

Our faithful God has given us this year too, so that we may seek the Lord, serve Him, and strive for things above. Whether it is through good or bad days, through joy or suffering, as long as we can say as the Apostle Paul did: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

H. D. Nimz

Thoughts For the New Year

The beginning of a new year always motivates us to think about our life, the past and the future.

Like a mighty current toward the ocean, so the years flow toward eternity. Time does not stand still. Unstoppable, it hurries on and with its current carries people into eternity. Oh time!—Where do you come from, where are you hurrying to? Who knows your worth?

The life of man is also as fleeting as time. The Bible speaks of this as a shadow or vapor that lasts only a short time and then disappears. Yes, in comparison to eternity, life is only a hand breadth and like an arrow that flies through the air. Dear reader, what is your life? Are you not like the flowers of the field that bloom today and tomorrow become limp and die? Can you see this in the light of eternity? Don't you want to pray with the Psalmist: "LORD, make me to know my end, and what is the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am" (Psalm 39:4)?

A new year is beginning. Take a moment to look into the past! Where have the days, weeks, years, and centuries gone? Where are those who were the great and powerful on earth, the wise, the famous, the rich, the mighty armies of history, the powerful empires, and the cities of splendor and glory? They are all gone; everything has disappeared into dust and ashes, rubble and ruins! Everything was "vanity and grasping for the wind."

Take a look at yourself in the light of these things! Who are you, what are you? Don't you see that every-

thing is fleeting and has an end? Your end will also come. Are you prepared? Don't you want to test if the inward man, which is created for eternity, is in a healthy state and ready for it?

A new year has started. What will it bring? This question arises in the hearts of many. Only God alone knows the secrets of this new year that has begun. Only He knows what it will bring. God's Word speaks of a great future event, the day of great judgment of the world where the ruler of heaven and earth will gather all people together and then hold the judgment. Then all people will have to give an account of their lives, and everything hidden will come to light.

Dear soul, look into your heart and also into the future! Everything is transient and futile! Realize that all the thoughts, words, and deeds of your life are noted in the records of eternity! Realize that the state in which death finds you will also be the state in which you will be resurrected! Look into the future and consider that you will have to give an account of your affairs!

Despite all futility and vanity of earthly things, despite everything that the future may bring us, there is One who is the same and remains the same. His love never wavers. His power never fails. Cling to Him, dear soul! Do not despair, but take courage! If you trust Him in faith and willingly obey Him, He will bring it to pass.

God Wants to Be Our Father

“I will be a Father to you” (2. Corinthians 6:18a).

What wonderful words! Many people can testify that they were strengthened and encouraged by these words in times when they needed it.

I personally found myself in a difficult trial for several days. I woke up one night with the thought: “I will be a Father to you”! It was as if someone had called out these words to me. Never before had they meant so much to me as then. I cannot even describe their impact. But I felt it so clearly: I have a faithful, loving Father!

Dear reader, you know who promised to be our Father. It is God Himself. Let us now reflect on this thought. Think about His great power. He has more power and strength than all the angels in heaven, than all the evil spirits, more power than all the people on this earth. And He has promised to always help us when we need it. He wants to keep us as the apple of His eye. He wants to cover us with His feathers.

Perhaps you feel alone. You are not forsaken, for He has said: “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5). Our feelings and emotions often deceive us, but God never deceives us. He is faithful and stands by His Word.

Think about the great love of your heavenly Father. He allowed Christ, His beloved Son, to die for you on the cross. We have become so familiar with the story of Christ’s suffering that it often hardly impacts us anymore. But consider what it cost Him to make it possible to redeem us from our sins! The Father did this out of love for us so that He can be our Father as well.

Observe a child in the presence of his loving father. See how trusting they are with each other. There is nothing that separates them from one another. The child is happy, free from cares and worries. He is not afraid because he knows his father is close by. He fully trusts his father.

The Lord says: “I will be a Father to you”! Do you accept Him at all times as your Father? Or do you sometimes let certain situations and relationships come between you and God so that you then can’t identify Him as your Father?

Also, think about the many gracious promises of your heavenly Father. Search the Scriptures for them. If we are obedient to Him in all things, then He will fulfill all of His promises to us. Indeed, we are sometimes tested, but God will not forsake us. Why should we be discouraged? Why should we despair?

There is no greater privilege for mortal man than to have God, the Almighty, as his Father. Oh, that we may appreciate this precious privilege even more!

It is priceless to have a loving father on earth. How sorry we feel when a child says: “I don’t have a father!” But God, whose love and goodness are incomprehensible, wants to be a Father to everyone. He is capable of caring for us and protecting us. His hand is always reaching out towards us. He hears our pleas, He knows our worries, and He wants to assist us and help us. Everything that we need for our bodies and our souls in this time and for all eternity is contained in the words: “I will be a Father to you”!

Our God is the God of Salvation



One evening in the year 1848, in an industrial town in the Rhine Valley, a poor but godly and hard-working weaver entered his home. His wife and five children had obviously been waiting for him, for when he came, the two smallest children ran to him, and the three older ones shouted excitedly, “Daddy, Daddy!” His wife greeted him kindly. He silently placed the weekly wage he had earned in the factory on the table and sat down with a half-suppressed sigh. Shocked, his wife glanced from the money on the table to the pale face of her husband. “What is with you?” she cried, “you look so distressed and miserable! I hope . . . you won’t . . . !”

“Calm down,” said her husband, “the ancient God still lives! Of course, Mr. Muentner has terminated me, as well as a third of his workers.”

“Merciful God!” cried the woman. “Terminated! So no work and no more bread? This is not possible! Just 14 days ago your boss praised you and set you as an example to the others! So that’s the reward for your 13 years of service!?”

“I don’t understand this either; it’s a dark path. When the names of the dismissed were read, I thought my name would certainly not come up. But then I heard my name. How do you think I felt? As soon as I gathered myself, I calmly reminded the boss that he had always been satisfied

with my work. Then I asked him why he was sending me away. Mr. Muentner just looked at me and said coldly: "It remains as is. You no longer work for me! Take your money, and we will not see each other again."

The mother began sobbing. The older children tried in vain to suppress their tears, and the little ones cried along without knowing why. The father could scarcely keep his composure, although he otherwise confidently believed that all the hairs on our head are numbered (Luke 12:7).

"Do not be so miserable," he said compassionately at last, "as if there was no longer a God in heaven. We only read yesterday morning, 'For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him' (Matthew 6:8). That verse was especially important to me. Oh, now I know why!" To his wife he said, "Do you know, mother, what is most important? We want to pray more earnestly that the love of God is poured out more and more into our hearts. We want to be children of God and continue in faith with Jesus. Then we can also cast our burdens on Him. He cares for us, and everything, even our need will work together for the good." The father committed his ways in full submission to the Lord, in the hope that He would bring it to pass.

On Monday he left early to look for work at several firms. In the evening he came home disappointed, without work. The whole week passed without the slightest prospect of finding a job.

One morning the mother put the soup on the table, added two pieces of bread, and said sadly, "Now the money is gone, and no bread or flour in the house. If we do not leave leftovers, this will be our lunch as well as dinner."

It was very hard for the three older children, and one by one they said, "I'm not hungry. Fritz and Christina should eat!" But the father said quite confidently, "As much as we need, we will eat in faith and not starve in unbelief. The mercy of the Lord has no end, but it is new every morning, and His faithfulness is great."

Thereupon the children said grace, and after all had eaten, there was still something left over. They did not forget their gratitude when the meal was over. Thereupon the three children hurried to school. The father went to look for work again.

The mother inwardly cried out to God and opened a window to watch as her loved ones left. Then she straightened out the living area. Suddenly she heard something in the room drop onto the floor. She was afraid it might be one of the two younger children. But they were still sitting at the table trying to clean off their plates even more.

But here, lying on the ground was a dead raven. A boy, who was known to be mean and a bully, jumped away from the window. "Here you go, you creeps, now you have something to eat!" he shouted with ridicule.

After her quiet, heartfelt prayer, the weaver's wife was able to find peace rather than cares and sorrows, and surrender to the the will of God. But this mockery affected her thoughts so much that the tears spilled over with a vengeance. When her husband came home, she said to him, "Look, with our need, we have already become a laughing stock among the wicked boys."

The weaver picked up the dead bird and wanted to take it from his wife's sight and throw it out. "The poor animal must also have died of starvation. But no," he added, "it has a full belly, and so hard—what is that?" With that, he immediately pulled out his pocketknife and cut the bird's neck open. Full of astonishment, he and his wife detected a yellow chain and something that glittered like glass. To their great surprise, they found a gold chain with sparkling gemstones lying on the table.

The weaver took the bird, along with chain and hurried to the goldsmith to find out who the owner might be.

"Weaver," said the goldsmith, after carefully examining the chain, "the chain belongs to Mr. Muentner's daughter. I made this myself. About 14 days ago he told me that this chain disappeared. Just go and take this right back to him."

Joyfully our weaver set off on his way to his former boss. And even more gladly now, because he could do the boss a favor after his dismissal and humiliation. The daughter exclaimed with sounds of joy when the weaver handed her the jewelry. And immediately the father was summoned.

Speaking of the raven, the daughter said, "You poor little fellow, you always cried out 'thief' and have now become the thief. Except you have been less fortunate and had to give up your life because of that."

Mr. Muentner, looking serious and thoughtful, held out his hand to the weaver, and said, "Forgive me, dear friend. I have done you wrong. I suspected you had stolen the gold chain, as you were the only worker seen walking past my daughter's room on the day the chain was lost. From this day forward you are employed into my service permanently and with double wages."

The weaver, who could scarcely find a word of thanks, hurried home, and after the initial joy and excitement had settled down, he thanked the Lord who makes miracles happen. Through a dead bird, God had given bread to all, and restored the weaver's name and reputation.

A Never Changing GOD

By the grace of God we stand at the beginning of a new year. When we look back on the 366 days that lie behind us, many readers will realize that the way things were in their lives in January 2016 is not the way they are now in January 2017. Change has taken place. Change, perhaps in the state of one's health, the location of residence, our finances, our occupation, our relationships, our circle of friends and loved ones, our appearance. Change has happened. Change has affected us inwardly and outwardly. When we look at the magnitude and the speed of these changes as they are happening in our world and in our society today, it is dizzying. It is not unlike a train that is careening out of control and is heading at greater and greater speeds towards disaster. During the time of the presidential election in the USA in 2008, the main slogan of the campaign was "Change we Need" and "Change we can believe in." And people voted for change. In the last election in Canada, a similar slogan gave the promise of change, and political victory was secured with the slogan: "Real change." And indeed, what change we

have seen! Change upon change upon change.

Over the course of history, some changes that our world has seen might be considered positive and beneficial. Others not so. We look at changes in the fields of transportation, agriculture, communication, engineering, space exploration, science and medicine, and might generally pronounce them as positive. But when we consider the changes in society and its rapidly declining morals and ethics and degrading societal norms and their assault on Christianity, it pains us deeply. Change in this regard is unrelenting, and is coming quickly and furiously.

Our text reads: "I am God; I do not change." Let us dwell on this truth. We serve a God who does not change. What a great privilege! And we can embrace this truth more deeply by stating that not only is He a God who does not change, but more so He is a God who cannot change. It is impossible that He change; He is fully unchangeable! He cannot be altered, He cannot transform, He cannot mutate

in any way, shape, form, purpose, or design. No mutation. No alteration. No variation. No fluctuation. No, our God simply cannot change. His attributes never change. His infinite power never changes. His infinite wisdom never changes. His love is infinitely constant. His holiness is infinitely pure. Circumstances cannot change Him. Neither situations nor time nor conditions can change Him. With God there are no changes in definitions. What is good remains good, and what is evil remains evil. There is no confusion, no redefinition. In our times of societal changes that contradict human reasoning, leading to the reversal of norms, and changing values, God's values never change.

What joy it is, that in this ever changing world in which we live, we can be filled with gratitude and confidence in proclaiming: We have a God who never changes! In an age of turmoil, unrest, moral chaos, and confusion, we can live confidently by the power and grace of the One who never changes. Yes, the creature may be changing, but the Creator never will. Let us rejoice in this! Let us rejoice in

“FOR I AM THE LORD, I DO NOT CHANGE.” MALACHI 3:6A



our awesome, holy, righteous, never changing God. How great Thou art! What a foundation we have! And what blessings are ours because we have a God who never changes. Consider His love, His mercies, His grace, His plan of salvation, His nature, His attributes, His counsel, His will, His actions, His promises, His Word, His power, His might, His understanding, His care, His wisdom, His Truth, His justice, His righteousness, His omnipotence, His judgments . . . All this and more. It can never change, because He can never change.

Dear reader, as you begin the new year, be reminded and strengthened in your faith, knowing that we serve a God who never changes, but who can change all things. Perhaps you will come into circumstances of failing health, loss of employment, or disappointment. Remember, God never changes. His care and love for you are measureless, without beginning, without cause, without limitation, without end, and without change. He who holds the universe in His hands and directs the sun and the stars and the planets, He also holds you in His

hands. And that will never change. His word is not “yes” today and “no” tomorrow. He does not promise today and deny tomorrow. No, never a promise broken, never a covenant forgotten about, never a change of mind. An unchanging God. The grass may wither, the flowers fade, but the Word of God endures forever, and it never changes.

Perhaps you are worried about the future, about what changes this year will bring. Be reminded: God has not changed. His wisdom has not changed, His knowledge has not changed. He knows the present, all things that have been, and all things that shall still be in your future. His concern for His children will never change. As He was for Abraham and Moses and Elijah, He is evermore the same. Trust Him fully for your future, for He is never-changing. You can be secure knowing that this Rock on which your faith is grounded will not shake. It is firm and unchangeable.

And perhaps you are someone who has not yet given your life to Christ. You too need to know that God does

not change. And this should concern you greatly, for the immutability of God means that He will not and can not compromise, that He will never change His mind on sin, He will never change His holy standard, He will never change in His righteousness nor His judgment nor His wrath to come. But know also, that God is unchanging in His love and His mercy and His grace towards you while we are still in the time of grace. He will never change in His offer of forgiveness and in His desire for all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of truth (1 Timothy 2:4). Our God, who Himself never changes, is seeking to change you.

We have a never changing God in an ever changing world. In the unrest of our times, in the raging seas that are around us, in times of tumultuous storms and change and uncertainty and worry, we can be secure and have every confidence in the One who said: “For I am the Lord, I do not change.” Let us rejoice, let us be thankful! Let us rest in Him, let us cling to Him each day of the New Year ahead of us. He never changes . . . yesterday, today, and tomorrow forevermore.

The Unchanging Christ

This world, a place of temporary residence for all people, is subject to great changes. The flow of rivers and streams change. People themselves go through change. The transitions from childhood to adolescence to adulthood and then retirement follow each other in rapid progression. In a similar fashion people's thoughts and goals undergo great changes as well. People's opinions and ideas constantly change. For every honest, upright soul it is a great comfort to know that there is Someone in this great universe that is not subject to change. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

Christ's Existence is Eternal

He existed from eternity. Although this fact is beyond human understanding, it is nonetheless a fundamental teaching of godly revelation. Jesus once said to the Jews: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad" (John 8:56). When they doubted His words, He astonished them by confirming the truth of His Godhead in the following statement: "Before Abraham was, I AM" (v. 58).

He is a Living Savior

To only portray Christ as a godly individual would result in the formal worship of a dead Christ that is robbed of all power and life. Jesus, however said: "I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore" (Revelation 1:17b-18a).

He is Omnipresent

The Lord is not only alive, but He is omnipresent with His people. Indeed this is a comforting and encouraging thought! "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). Even when a believer is separated from God's peo-

ple for a long period of time, then he or she can still be encouraged, for the Lord has said: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). These wonderful promises are not limited to specific time or a specific nation, but are intended for all times and all people. "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). Christ's presence in the Church is reflected in Revelation 1:12-13: "Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lamp stands, and in the midst of the seven lamp stands One like the Son of Man." This reminds us of the words that king Nebuchadnezzar said, when the three young men were thrown into the fiery furnace. "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" (Daniel 3:25).

His Power is Unchanging

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7). Christ's mighty power has no limit. "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18). He has the power to forgive sins (Matthew 9:6). He can heal all sorts of illnesses (Matthew 4:23). Even after His ascension, the apostle James gave specific directions for those who are sick (James 5:13-16).

His Government is Unchanging

The governments of today's kingdoms are subject to numerous, radical changes, but that is not the case in Christ's kingdom. Isaiah prophesied: "And the government will be upon His shoulder" (Isaiah 9:5). No one can compete with His authority. People attempt to reject His right to power, yet He always succeeds in revealing His supremacy to every individual. No one can circumvent Him. He requires them to make a decision. He adds to His Church all those

who come to Him and recognize His authority in repentance and faith. His Church stands high above every man-made organization. He established it and it has not diminished, nor will it ever be destroyed. Jesus said about the Church: “the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). He also is Lord over death, for He overcame death through His resurrection and took its power through His salvation. “Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Corinthians 15:54).

His Word is Unchanging

Human laws are subject to change and can be recalled. But that does not occur with Jesus’ words. “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away” (Matthew 24:35). How often have people tried to erase, change, or completely eradicate Jesus’ words! Nevertheless, God’s Word

stands today in unchanging beauty and spreads victoriously through the earth without being stopped. These words are consistently effective on men’s hearts. Again and again eternal souls are born again to new life by the power of this Word. Their obedience to this Word is evidence of their discipleship. “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word” (John 14:23). And Christ’s words will one day judge the earth. “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day” (John 12:48). How blessed are we that we have an unchanging Christ in the tumult of our times! He is the Rock that can never be shaken, the Lord and stronghold. That which He was in ages past, He is also to the modern people of the 21st century, unchanging in His grace, love and faithfulness.

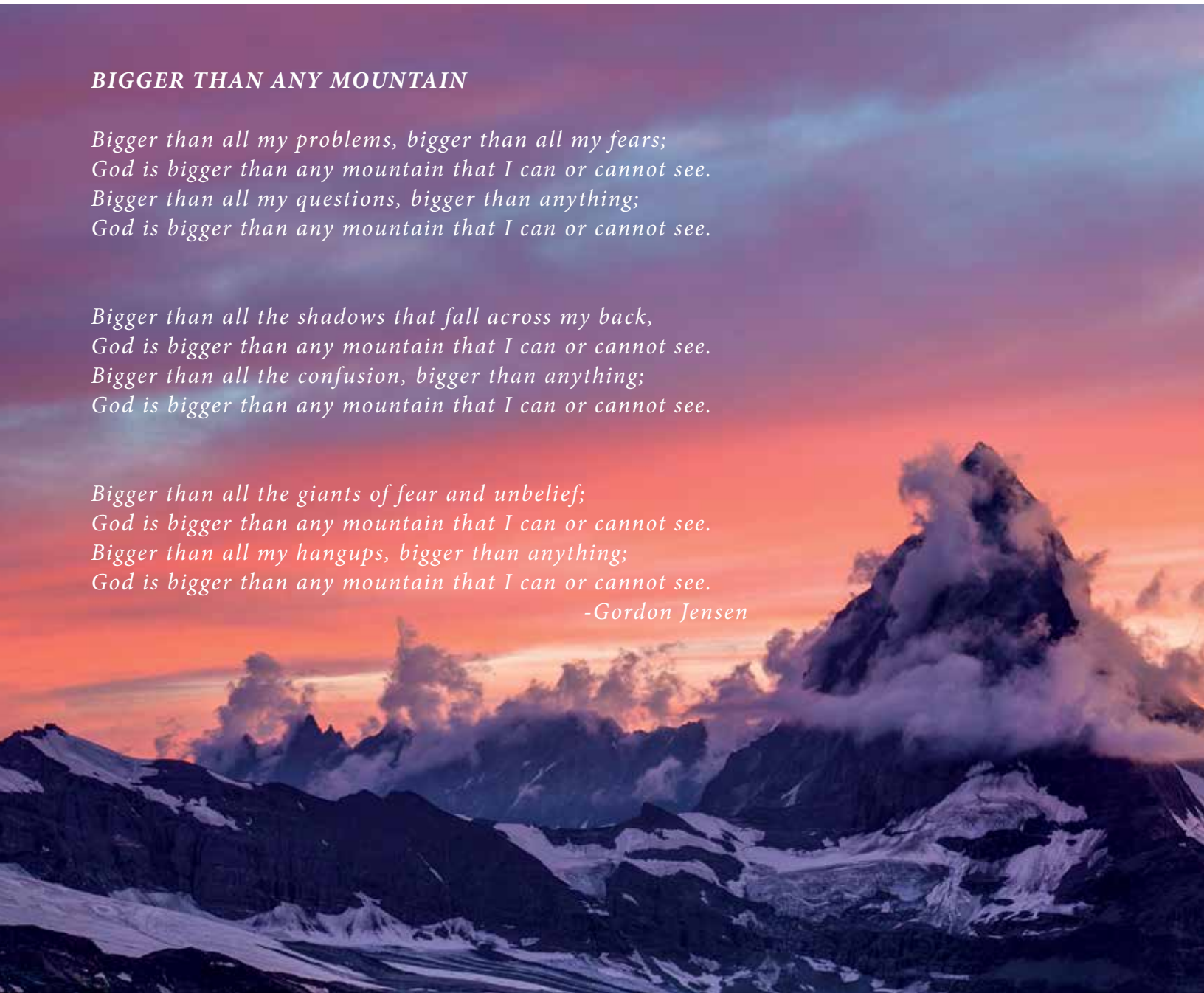
BIGGER THAN ANY MOUNTAIN

*Bigger than all my problems, bigger than all my fears;
God is bigger than any mountain that I can or cannot see.
Bigger than all my questions, bigger than anything;
God is bigger than any mountain that I can or cannot see.*

*Bigger than all the shadows that fall across my back,
God is bigger than any mountain that I can or cannot see.
Bigger than all the confusion, bigger than anything;
God is bigger than any mountain that I can or cannot see.*

*Bigger than all the giants of fear and unbelief;
God is bigger than any mountain that I can or cannot see.
Bigger than all my hangups, bigger than anything;
God is bigger than any mountain that I can or cannot see.*

-Gordon Jensen



Ling-Ching-Ting, the Chinese Opium Smoker

Years ago, a man of about forty entered a chapel in a village in China. His eyes and ears were focused on the words of the preacher, who said that Christ could save everyone. After the service, he remained behind to speak with the messenger of God and said, "I have never heard of this Jesus, nor do I know who He is. But did you not say He could save me from all my sins?" "Yes," the missionary said, "that's what I said." "But you did not know me when you said that. I have been a liar, gambler, sorcerer, and adulterer, and for 20 years I have been an opium smoker. Nobody has ever heard of anyone who has smoked opium for that long and has been cured. If you had known me, you would not have said that, would you?"

Of course, the missionary was able to repeat what he had said before about Jesus' power and willingness, namely, that He can save people who are surrendered to Him from many and heavy sins and vices.

The opium-smoker was stunned. His mind transported him back to the snares of old superstitions, his blood filled with the poison of lust, and worse still, he lay in the hopeless fetters of the terrible opium. The habit of 20 years had bound him in chains. He had never heard of anyone who had been freed. The mere thought of the possibility of such liberation, of a complete salvation from all his sins, was too much. He did not dare to believe that such a state could be anything other than an exaggerated fantasy.

So he went away. But the next day he came again, and every day thereafter, to hear more and more of the miraculous Savior, and to test this gospel of redemption himself. Weeks passed. Then one morning he rushed impetuously into the missionary's room. And before his tongue could speak, his radiant face already told his new discovery: "I know it now! Jesus can save me from all sins, for He has done it!"

Yes, so swift was the victory of faith that the worst enemy was destroyed. The habit was broken, even the desire for opium was gone. He no longer felt the shackles under which he had so long been hopelessly bound. Christ had freed him!

This liberation had to be proclaimed! That was settled for him. The opium slave had to speak because he believed. He had to go to Hokchiang, where his former comrades lived in sin. He had to tell them about this Jesus who could save them from all their sins. Friends tried to discourage him. He should rather stay in this small village where he would be safer than daring to go among the unsavory mob. They would behead him, and then his preaching would be all over. But no! Ling-Ching-Ting wanted to go to his people and with no other weapon than with the Word of God.

He went. He told the story of a great salvation, which also applies to the worst of sinners. And he presented himself as an example. They threw rocks and slung mud at him; he was beaten and wounded. But his testimony could not be stopped. Finally, his pursuers dragged him to a barbaric district officer. False witnesses brought the basest accusations against him. The judge, glad to be able to avenge himself on the strange sect, condemned him to two thousand lashes. The cruel bamboo rod was brandished relentlessly on his back. He was carried as dead into the mission building. The doctor said he had never seen such terrible injuries from a bamboo rod.

The doctor tried to comfort the sufferer. But this man, who so recently was a great sinner, said with a smile, "This poor body is in torment and pain, but my heart is in great peace." Then, to the astonishment of the missionary, he rose slightly from his bloody bed and said, "If I rise again from this bed, you will let me return to Hokchiang again, will you not?"

He slowly began to heal. When he was half healed and still hardly able to walk, he snuck away and suddenly appeared in Hokchiang again to preach to his hate-filled persecutors. Is it any wonder that his testimony, sealed by such bloody experiences, brought even his enemies to the Savior?

For fourteen years, Ling-Ching-Ting preached the gospel. Hundreds were won for Jesus. Soon he grew weaker. Some of those that he had been able to lead to the Savior gathered around him. Singing, and with the joy of unclouded hope, he departed from this suffering into eternal glory.

Christ, the Best Navigator

Life can be compared to a journey across the sea. At the time of our birth, our life-vessel sets off on its journey, headed toward the harbor of heavenly rest, where the soul of man is to be eternally at home.

To safely make this journey over the sea of life, we want to learn a lesson from Matthew 8:23-26: “Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, ‘Lord, save us! We are perishing!’ But He said to them, ‘Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?’ Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.”

It seems as if the disciples had not gotten very far on their journey across the sea, when a great storm suddenly and unexpectedly rose. The waves rose high, and soon the little boat began to fill with water. The disciples were at their end, and feared not only the loss of their boat but also their lives. Perhaps some of their friends had already perished in the sea, and now they may have thought that their end had come. Their situation seemed hopeless.

Jesus had gotten into the boat with them. He was tired and had laid down to sleep. The disciples had seen how He had helped other people throughout the day. And now, when the need and danger were great, He could also help them. So they decided to wake Him up before it was too late. “Lord, save us! We are perishing!” they cried. Jesus arose, rebuked the wind and the sea and immediately there was a great silence. The storm settled, and the sea, which had been raging until then, was completely calm at the words of Jesus. The

disciples’ lives were saved, and all their fear had now disappeared. Oh, how glad they were that the danger was now over!

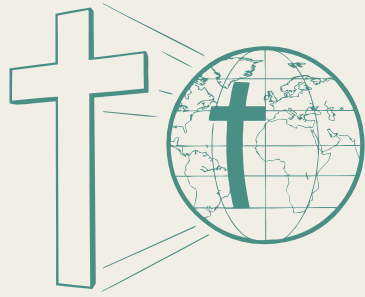
What a privilege it was for the disciples to have such a mighty Friend. He had control over the wind and the sea. Jesus stood quietly and peacefully in the small fishing boat, and they arrived safely and unscathed on the other side. No doubt the disciples were grateful to their Master for this wonderful salvation.

Over two thousand years have passed since that wonderful event on the Sea of Galilee. But there are also many storms today, not just on the sea, but also in our lives. Many have already been shipwrecked and have not reached the longed-for haven of rest. They have tried to navigate the storms of life without Jesus, the Master Navigator, and have failed.

But no one would have had to perish if they had known Jesus Christ, who is mightier than all the storms and every danger that may threaten them. Whoever commends themselves to His protection and care is secure. If we have Jesus Christ, the best navigator, in our lifeboat, we will not suffer shipwreck on the sea of life, but will surely reach the glorious destination.

Is the Lord Jesus Christ with you in the lifeboat, dear reader? Does He hold the helm in His hand? He wants to bless your life and guide you safely through all dangerous storms and billows in the year that lies before us. Oh, what a privilege it is to have such a mighty Friend in life and in death! Treasure this privilege, and completely surrender the direction of your life to Him!

Robert P. Loudermilk



Radio Program Message of Salvation

Friedrich Krebs, Kitchener (ON)

There is a Refuge for You!

“O Lord, my strength and my fortress, My refuge in the day of affliction.” (Jeremiah 16:19)

There is a refuge for you! This comforting and enlightening thought should give us courage for the new year. We especially want to help those who are going through troubles, suffering, and pain, who in their grief, ask themselves how this is to continue. Dear soul, there is a refuge precisely for you! But what is a refuge? A refuge is a help center, a place of rest and renewal. It is a place where help and healing can be found.

Many of us remember those bitter years of homelessness and hopelessness. We think of the war and post-war years when thousands upon thousands were seeking shelter. A refuge is a way out, an accommodation, a place of freedom where one can find acceptance, protection, and admittance. That day remains in my memory when after a very difficult and dangerous flight, we finally reached the bombed-out city of Berlin. Here we found temporary accommodation in an already overflowing refugee camp. We were so happy to have found it. No other place could have been as precious or dear to us. Here many of us experienced the true meaning of a saving refuge.

There is, however, a much higher and more important refuge, one known by few and yet urgently needed by all. Moses, a man of faith, knew this refuge. At the end of his trial-filled life he said: “The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms”

(Deuteronomy 33:27). For what he had experienced in his life and what he had become, he owed this refuge. This refuge and help is also available for you, dear reader!

A great Roman philosopher once said: “We were not born by blind design nor were we created by empty coincidence.” Truly, there is a power that diligently prevails. It has not called us into existence and then after all our work, burdens, and effort, allowed us to sink into everlasting death. We have a harbor, a place of refuge! Let us believe this wholeheartedly! It is true. This refuge is for everyone. It can only be sought and found by faith.

In our present time we notice the regrettable fact that humanity lives in deep unbelief. This means that the great majority of people have consciously disengaged themselves from God. “Without God in the world” is their state, (Ephesians 2:12). To live and die in this state must be unbelievably difficult. But whoever has chosen to do so must bear the consequences. And everyone knows their life will end one day.

Recently I found this remarkable statement: “In the end there are only two groups of people. One group has told God: ‘Your will be done.’ To the other group, God will say: ‘Your will be done.’” This means, God allows every individual to make their own decision and “in the place where the tree falls, there it shall lie” (Ecclesiastes 11:3). Whose

will should take place in our lives? This is a serious question for us to consider.

In Romans 11:32 we read: “For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.” He offers a saving refuge to all people. Whoever does not accept His mercy is excluded from this refuge. To whom could we turn if we had no relationship with God? What could we do with a heart and soul that was guilt-ridden, lost and burdened? One such person called out: “Where could I go, oh, where could I go, seeking a refuge for my soul!” But then a light came on and with joy he could say: “Needing a friend to help me in the end, Where could I go but to the Lord!” He found that saving refuge!

This redeeming refuge is also there for you, dear friend! John writes of the great multitude that followed Jesus (John 6:2). Many of these people did not believe and remained undecided in their attitude. Thereupon Jesus gave a very serious talk. Afterwards, many did not follow Him anymore. “Then Jesus said to the twelve, ‘Do you also want to go away?’ But Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life’” (John 6:67-68).

Here we come to that very important “where to” question again. J. Arndt answers it in the form of a song:

Where to, oh tired wanderer?
Come home to the Father’s house.
You will not find rest anywhere else,
Should you search the whole world over.
Come home with your home sickness
To Jesus’ peace.
Who is not at home in Jesus’ heart,
Remains eternally homeless!

Homecoming entails a change of direction! The prodigal son, of whom Jesus speaks in Luke 15, came to this clear insight and acted upon it immediately. Jesus said: “When he came to himself, he said: ‘I will rise and go to my father and will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you’” (Luke 15: 18-19). Our Father in heaven expects this of everyone who has left Him and is living in sin.

The step that leads to a saving refuge and help begins with a willing change of direction! Jesus calls out to all of us: “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. . . . and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:28-29). A poet testifies to this experience with these words: “Under the cross of the Savior, I found peace and rest in His wounds.” This is the saving refuge for everyone—and even for you!
Friedrich Krebs



Divine Guidance

There are some places in our country that we can visit and participate in a guided tour. With a tour guide, we can enjoy seeing all there is to be seen, and make sure not to get lost. In the Christian life, we also have a Guide, who teaches and guides us into the exciting and pleasant experiences of the Christian life. This guide is superior to any human or earthly guide. He is a divine guide. His guidance reaches beyond the understanding and comprehension of the human mind. His ability to teach and instruct is infinite. Everyone who has begun the life of faith may have the privilege of being guided into all truth, and also in the everyday affairs of life. God has promised to guide all His children. A blessed privilege indeed it ought to be to encourage all those who trust Him.

God Himself has Promised to Guide Us

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go: I will guide you with my eye” (Psalm 32:8). In the important affairs or decisions of life, we have the promise: “The humble He guides in justice, and the humble He teaches His Way” (Psalm 25:9). When we come to the end of our knowledge and understanding, we can trust in a Guide who has not only the foresight and the ability to guide, but who has promised to do it. How restful it is to really know and understand this truth. Why should we ever worry or have anxious thoughts, when we have such a perfect Guide by our side? There are no failures in His judgment; no failures when He sends or guides. “For this is God, our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to

death” (Psalm 48:14). “You will guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory” (Psalm 73:24).

The Secret of Guidance

“In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:6). We must be willing to follow wherever our Guide leads, even though we cannot see the way. He may permit us to go through some dark places, but He knows the end from the beginning. As the poet has expressed it:

*Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes when Eden's bowers bloom,
By waters still, o'er troubled sea,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.*

If we would enjoy the blessings of His guidance, our motives must be pure in all that we do. It is then, and then alone that we can trust God fully. In difficulty or trials where our knowledge is limited, we have the promise: “The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail” (Isaiah 58:11). “When your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness” (Luke 11:34). When certain things are dark and unclear, perhaps this passage will point out the reason. Self may have crept in in some deadly form, and the light that was in you became darkness.

I WILL INSTRUCT YOU AND TEACH YOU IN THE WAY YOU SHOULD GO; I WILL GUIDE YOU WITH MY EYE.

PSALM 32:8

People bring darkness upon themselves because of selfish motives, and their unwillingness to follow the Lord and His Word. The reason is self-interest. Their will has crossed God's will, and that is a hard cross to bear. When our will is completely surrendered to God's will, we shall have little trouble, and shall find that His yoke is easy, and His burden is light, even though we may sometimes have to await the gradual unfolding of His plan. We have yet another promise: "I will bring the blind by a way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, and not forsake them" (Isaiah 42:16).

Another essential is continued earnest prayer before God. As the Psalmist cried: "Teach me your way, o Lord, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies" (Psalm 27:11). We may come boldly to the throne of grace and ask God for what we need and for what is best for us. Then wait and expect it from the Lord as the Psalmist did. "My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him" (Psalm 62:5).

How God Guides

God has all knowledge and wisdom. He can guide us into right paths, where great blessings await us if we will trust Him all the way. Sometimes this waiting and hoping for God's plan to unfold seems to the short-sighted human eye confusion and loss, but if

we can only learn to wait, we shall experience and see the gradual unfolding of His will like a bud unfolds into a lovely flower. So is God's will, when it is revealed to our understanding, as a sweet flower, whose fragrance perfumes the air—so we may say, I delight to do your will, o Lord.

But how shall we know His voice, or know it is God guiding? There are four ways in which He reveals His will to us: through His Word, through personal impressions of the Holy Spirit on our minds, through the convictions of our better judgment, and through providential circumstances. The Christian life is a life of faith, not feeling. Faith is not guess work, for it follows the teachings of God's Word. This is the first step in knowing the voice of God. Many voices may speak to us, but we should be sure they are in harmony with these four elements. The Spirit guides into all truth, and will always lead in accordance with the truth. Providential circumstances and convictions of our higher judgment must always be in harmony with the Word and the Spirit, not independent of them, lest we err. But if all four of these are in harmony we are safe, and may assure our hearts that it is God's voice, and we need not fear. We can have perfect confidence and rejoice in our Guide. Success in all such guidance is inevitable. We can have assurance that we do those things that please him. He will "give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:79).

Wm. T. Schroeder

Christ's Glory

"Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious." (1 Peter 2:7)

Peter spoke from experience. The name of Jesus was precious to him. He loved his Lord and Savior above all else. He had seen Jesus' glory when He was transfigured on the mount. Peter had seen the resurrection and had spoken with the risen Lord. He also witnessed the Ascension. And it was Peter who later testified before the Sanhedrin that it was only through the power of Jesus Christ, Whom they had crucified, that he and the other disciples could perform the notable miracles that were evident to all who lived in Jerusalem. To this testimony he added: "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). Peter had not only seen Christ's glory, but he had also experienced the power of Jesus' name.

Nonbelievers cannot see the glory and beauty of Jesus' name because their non-belief blinds their eyes and because they love the things of this world more than anything else. However, Jesus is precious to those who love Him. To them, He is most precious and most worthy of love. He is their souls' greatest treasure. Those who have found Him can say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his" (Song of Solomon 2:16).

Many great people have walked this earth, and their lives and deeds fill us with admiration and wonder. The further the distance between these great ones and us, the more we admire them. However, the closer we get to them and the more we get to know them, the better we can see the weaknesses and failings in their lives and characters. We are then forced to admit that they are only people, weak and mortal.

With Jesus, our soul mate, it is completely different. When we are far from Him, He may seem to us a good and noble person. The closer we get to Him and the more we get to know Him, the more we are inspired by

His character, glory, and love. The more we behold Him, the more we realize that we are not in the presence of a mere person. He is someone who can do more and give us more than any person can do or give. When we are fully convinced that He is the One Whom God sent into the world to seek and save the lost; that He is the Lamb of God, Who carried the sins of the world; that He is the Savior of the world; and that He is our Savior, then we will cry out, "My Lord and my God!"

In Him, all the needs of our body and soul are met. He is the bread and the water of life. Whoever comes to Him will not go hungry. Whoever believes in Him will thirst no more because He and He alone can satisfy every need. The human soul will not find rest until it rests in Him. Jesus will lift the burden of sin from those who accept His loving invitation: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). And He will give them rest and peace for their souls.

Once people see the Lord through believing eyes and once they experience some of His glory, they will willingly give themselves to Him. Then, they will study His word to learn what the Lord requires of them, and joyfully obey Him to deepen their relationship with Him. Through our faith in the Lord, we can have victory until we reach the end of our lives. And then, we can walk victoriously through the gates of eternity into the heavenly glory where we will see Him, Who shed His blood and died for us so that we might be saved, face-to-face.

How glorious is Jesus, our Lord and Savior! "You are fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured upon Your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever. . . . Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom" (Psalm 45:2,6).

Books Can Be Hazardous for Your Faith

A 13 year old girl approached her pastor and asked: "Can I ask you a question? I can't find an answer to my problem." Inge began to talk about her relationship with the Lord Jesus, and shared that she had recently lost her joy in serving the Lord. What could have caused that?

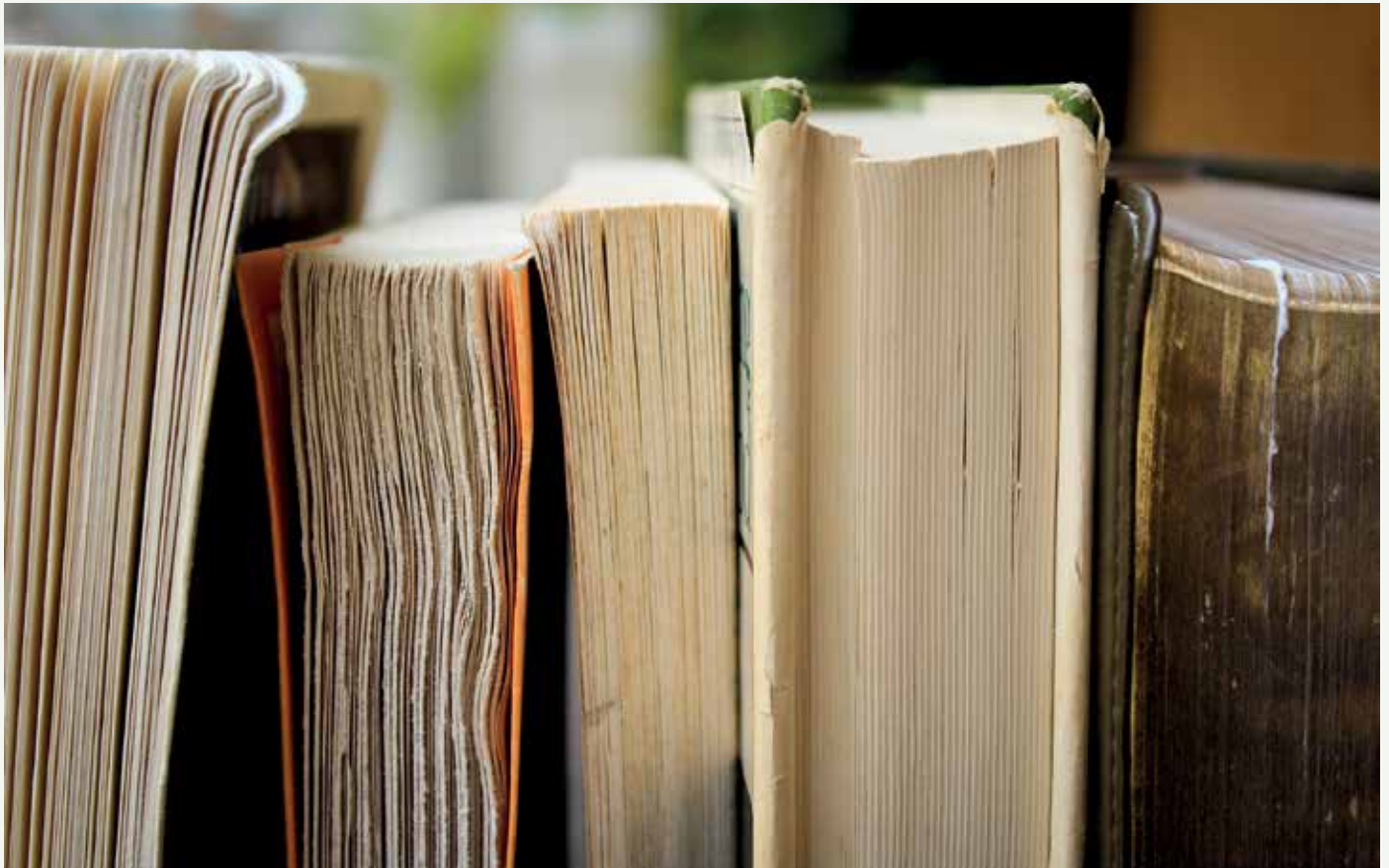
Together they searched for something that had become so important in her life and had come between her and Jesus. In the end their conversation turned to books. Inge was embarrassed and after considerable thought she answered: "That's it! I read so late in the evening, in fact until my mom switches the light off. And then I can no longer read my Bible. In the morning I am so tired that I sleep as long as I can. I know this is not right. Even though my conscience has been bothering

me, I have been doing this for several months. In the meantime I have lost all joy in serving Jesus."

Thankfully Inge understood the Scripture in 1. John 1,9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This is a promise to us, that God will forgive everything we confess to Him.

Perhaps you are also a bookworm, and do not know when to lay your book down, and forget the most important book, the Bible! Books are good and valuable, but they cannot be the most important thing in your life. Jesus alone wants to have first place in your heart.

U. N.



Married Seven Years

“I think truly happy marriages are very rare!” This is what a young woman recently said to me. She has been married for seven years, has three beautiful, healthy children, no financial worries, and yet does not seem to be happy. Her marriage is missing something. She believes there is a lack of common interests between husband and wife, and each one lives his own life. The real, inner bond is missing.

Lately, I have heard this complaint of spiritual solitude in marriage frequently. No effort is made to understand the other. Husband and wife are not prepared to truly listen to each other. Thus, there are no longer productive conversations, and the inner alienation increases. This

condition is particularly disastrous in raising children. Different views and perceptions in the upbringing and discipline of children can seriously strain a marriage.

Happy marriages need to have a focal point, and the center of our marriage needs to be God. We must return to Him in repentant faith. First, our heart and life must be renewed. Then the marriage will also be renewed. If you are dissatisfied, it is not the fault of your spouse. God must renew your life. He can give you so much grace and blessing that it will help your partner as well. Happy marriages are possible—even today. They are marriages anchored in obedience to God.

W. Golze

When Everything Falls Apart

Can a broken marriage be healed again?

Yes, it can! Healing will take place provided one makes the choice to search for help in Jesus. Marriage was founded by our Creator. We will experience an enrichment without comparison when we accept this gift out of the hands of God. When marriage is only for the satisfaction of hidden passion, it will fall apart sooner or later. Problems will not be avoided. We have two completely different people. We must get away from the idea that a happy marriage is free from all tension. In this union called marriage we must accept our partner the way God created him or her, instead of trying to form or change each other according to “my way.” Only in undivided affection to one another can the marriage, even in crisis, mature as it should. The most beautiful years of marriage are not the first ones, but the later years of maturity after living together for decades.

However, when a marriage falls apart, what happens then? When the partners are only living together outwardly, but inwardly their hearts are cold to one another? Or, if they have separated, can this broken marriage be healed again?

Yes, it can! One must only have the courage and be willing to recognize and admit their personal failures to themselves and before God. Those who are completely sincere will experience that Jesus can heal a broken marriage. Where both partners seek and find Jesus for forgiveness of their sin, their marriage can be restored. The Savior, who forgave the adulteress from her guilt, at Jacob’s well in Samaria, and then gave her the strength to begin a new life, can also heal broken marriages today. In a healthy marriage, we must be willing to forgive daily, just as God has forgiven us.

W. Brauer



SOMETHING FOR THE FAMILY

The Miracle

“Among my father’s will,” said Frobenius, “I found the following letter:”

“Dear God, please forgive me that I’ve only managed to write you a letter in the last days of my life. I completely forgot to thank You for the miracle that You did for me twenty years ago.

“You gave me a good wife in Katharina. She kept my house in order, raised the children, and sent them to school. The food she set on the table was enjoyable. I had all the buttons on my coat and none were missing on my shirts. I could have been content, but was not.

“The night before our tenth wedding anniversary, I told You my troubles: ‘Dear Lord,’ I prayed, ‘this cannot go on any further. My wife is a know-it-all, she is quarrelsome, and we argue the entire day. She always has to have the last word. I have to try hard to yell louder than she does, that’s how loud she is. If I want to go right, she wants to go left. Even on a Sunday afternoon walk, the angry words don’t stop. Let a miracle happen. Transform my wife, who is a real dragon, into a gentle, loving dove, so that the quarreling in our marriage stops, and that she becomes reasonable and doesn’t always need to have the last word.’

“That is how I prayed back then, and in the request, I included that this miracle should happen overnight. When I woke up, I spoke a friendly word to my wife to see if the

miracle had happened. I received a friendly reply. But I still doubted, for a miracle is hard to accept. I asked for a new shirt, which had usually led to arguments before. I received the shirt without complaint. We sat down for breakfast, and I was particularly kind to Katharina, for I didn’t want to test the patience of this miracle. She poured me some coffee, the first time in a long time. So the entire day went by in harmony and with friendliness. No angry word was spoken. You had answered my prayer and had given me a new wife.

“We never fought again; no one wanted to have the last word anymore. So it has remained until this day. I thank You for this miracle, and when . . .”

The letter ended there, but I recognized my father’s handwriting. I brought the letter to my mother, who was greatly grieving my father. She had barely read the letter when she broke out in sobs, buried her face in my shoulder, and said: “A miracle really did happen then. But I had thought until now that my prayer had been answered, for I begged God for a miracle to change my husband, who was so quarrelsome and a know-it-all. When I woke up the next morning, I said a kind word to determine if the miracle had occurred. Because father answered me warmly and without anger, I knew that the miracle I prayed for had happened, and I spent my whole life trying not to ruin it.”

If You Would Believe

Part 12

Compiled by Hartmut Sonnenberg

Didn't You Know?

Meanwhile, the youngest son and his family had lived in California for close to 13 years. And now three new job offers lay before them, two from the immediate vicinity in California, and a third from Canada. They had always thought that maybe someday they would return to Canada. They felt strongly that this was their “now-or never” moment. So they asked God, “Lord, what would you have us do?”

For an entire month they prayed earnestly that God would show the way. They fasted and they prayed, and they sought guidance from God's Word. They had made it a habit upon awakening in the morning to ask if either of them had received any guidance during the night, perhaps a dream, or maybe a distinct impression on waking up. One morning the young wife answered, “I dreamed a flock of Canada Geese was migrating north. As they were passing overhead, they looked down and called to me, saying, ‘What are you still doing here?’ ”

On another morning, it was a Thursday morning, she said, “I dreamed that on Sunday in church, you will be told what you need to do.” And so on Sunday morning they sat expectantly in their normal pew. No one else knew of the dream, nor of their heightened anticipation. “My text for this morning,” Pastor Friedrich began, “is taken from Genesis 12, beginning with the first verse.”

The LORD had said to Abram,

“Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.”

So Abram left, as the LORD had told him.”

(Genesis 12:1,4 NIV)

Among other things, Pastor Friedrich emphasized, “How hard it must have been for Abram to pull up stakes and leave all his friends behind! Yet, Abram was obedient and followed God's command.”

Stunned silence permeated the car on the way home. Finally one of them ventured the superfluous question, “Did you hear what Pastor Friedrich preached this morning?” Now for a second time, it seemed that they were being directed to return to Canada. But should they use dreams to make such a far-reaching decision? And their heart was still rooted in California.

Then Friday, June 20, 1975 arrived. A decision on the offer from Canada had been promised no later than today. Whereas in Ontario the decision must surely have been impatiently awaited, in California uncertainty continued to reign. And then the happy thought occurred to them: why not call father one more time? Father had always been able to discern God's will, and the son knew that he had earnestly prayed about their decision.

“Father,” he asked. “What shall we do? Do you have an answer for us?”

“That, my son, you need to know!” came the unexpected response.

“Father, both of us have earnestly sought God's will on this. We have fasted and prayed and we do not feel that we have clear guidance.” (Even with those two experiences, the way still did not seem clear to them.)

“Father, I believe it would be foolish, in such a case, to uproot the family and move back to Canada. Therefore, I have decided that we will stay in California.”

The two in California celebrated the decision. It was as if a heavy weight has been lifted off their chest. Final-



ly they knew what they are up against. They were staying in California, where their heart was. But now, there was no time to lose to call the firm in Ontario, where it was almost 5:00 PM.

He was already in the middle of dialing when an unmistakable impression interrupted: “If they make you a second offer, then that is My will for you.” Hastily he hung up and said to his wife, “If they make a second offer, then God’s will for us is to move back to Canada.”

“Just a moment, please! Didn’t you just finish saying that we were staying in California?”

“True! But this impression is so unmistakable that I must act on it. As planned, I shall decline the offer, but if they come back with a second offer, then that is God’s way for us. But don’t be concerned,” he comforted, “I am also in management, and I know how it goes. It would be astonishing if they were to make a second offer.”

Again he dialed the number in Canada. He thanked them for their interest and the attractive offer, but he had decided to stay in California with his family. For a moment, there was silence. “Is that your final decision, or is there something I can still do?”

“What do you have in mind?”

“It is 5:00 PM here, and I can’t do anything today any more, but on Monday I would like to meet with my management to see if we can draft a more attractive offer. Are you willing to postpone your decision until Monday?”

“Yes, I am willing.”

“You’re not playing games with me, are you?”

“No sir. I am not playing games. I take this seriously.”

Some months following their move back to Canada, mother and father were visiting. For a long time the question had been nagging the son why father, who seemed al-

ways to be able to determine God’s will, was not able to help with this decision.

“Father, did you and mother not know God’s will when we were trying to decide on the offer from Canada?”

“My son, after we hung up the telephone, your mother and I got down on our knees and pleaded with God to show you, what He had shown us.”

Was that not a monumental risk, knowing God’s will and not instructing the son, especially in regard to such an important decision? Yet father simply answered, “That, my son, you need to know.”

Then the light went on. The son realized that father had withheld the answer so that God would show the son. As did father, the son now saw this as preparation for the time when father would no longer be able to give his valued advice. No longer would he be able to simply lean on father and ask: “Father, what should I do?” – “That, my son, you need to know. You must have nurtured an intimate relationship with God, so that you perceive His voice and understand His will.”

**... THE LORD SPOKE TO MOSES
FACE TO FACE,
AS A MAN SPEAKS TO HIS
FRIEND.**

EXODUS 33:11

Special Services in Argentina

October 12 to 16, 2016 in Buenos Aires

October 18 to 23, 2016 in Oberá

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only.” (James 1:22)

With a grateful heart we are able to look back at God’s blessings during the services in Argentina. In the first week services were held in Buenos Aires with Brother Reimer from Canada. In the second week services were held in Oberá with Brother Reimer and Brother Vogt from Germany. The brothers prayerfully preached God’s Word and God gave his blessings to the services. The Lord’s presence was clearly felt through the prayers and the fellowship in the congregations.

Brothers and sisters were asked to share some thoughts that the Lord impressed on their hearts during the services. Here are some of their responses:

“I was very blessed during these services. I am thankful that in spite of my advancing age I am able to participate in services like this. The messages that the brothers brought included very important topics for us. Brother Vogt brought a message about the Church and Brother Reimer talked about the work in the church. There is work for everyone in the church. Every child of God has a task assigned to him; there is no unemployment in the Body of Christ.”

Artur Günther

“I was especially moved by the message about being filled with the Holy Spirit. I am fully convinced that we need the Holy Spirit in our lives for the service in the Church. Only in that way will we be able to endure.”

Elisabet Geryng

“I received a special blessing at the services this year. One message was especially important to me; ‘Discouragement and how we can overcome it.’ Then there was a message on Friday about ‘The door was closed.’ It is said

that when one door closes another one opens. That is true, if the door to heaven closes, the door to hell opens. It was a blessed week.”

Liliana Geryng

“I really enjoyed the services and I was also richly blessed. Two messages that especially spoke to me were about the Church and the Holy Spirit. I know it is important that these topics are preached in Christian circles. A lot is preached about Jesus as our Savior. I believe that it is important to preach about the doctrine of the Church, because the Holy Spirit is the Leader in His Church.”

Hilda Günther

“I felt such a connection with the brethren that came from so far away, it was as if I had known them all my life. There was sense of family in the services. It was the Spirit of Christ that united us. We are also thankful for the souls that sought the Lord during these days.”

Julio Cesar Kornienjuk

“I was really spoken to by the topic of being filled with the Holy Spirit. We will not be able to stand before God if we do not have His Spirit. All the services were a time of blessing for me. I am glad that I was able to participate in the services. I want to encourage everyone to seek God, to draw close to Him, and I will rejoice in the fruit in the lives of those who have sought the Lord.”

Ricardo Zamoski

These special services were very important to me, especially the sermons about sanctification. They were a great blessing to me. I think we all received what we



Bro. & Sis Brödel (Buenos Aires) and Bro. Reimer

Fest-congregation in Oberá

needed. I thank God that He brought these brothers to us that preached the Word of God to us.”

Erich Geryng

“It is always important when the Word of God is preached. This year it was evident again that we still live in the time of grace and that God still calls sinners to repentance. It is grace that we can be His Children, that we can serve Him, that we can belong to the people of God, to His Church and the truths of the Word of God are still preached. Every sermon spoke to our hearts. We have so many reasons to serve God with humility.”

Oscar Gering

“The first message from Brother Reimer was: ‘Discouragement.’ What can we take from this message? Discouragement is a work of the devil that prevents us from walking in God’s love. I have learned to put my whole trust in God through faith. I need to trust God more because He is stronger than the enemy.”

Adolf Günter

“The more we love God, the more we see the importance of the services and fellowship with our brethren. That gives us joy to serve God with all our heart. The message that spoke the most to me was the message about the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit we are empty. Every child of God should be filled with the Holy Spirit, equipped to conquer all the adversities in the many different circumstances of life.

I pray that everyone who attended the services will serve the Lord with courage and be resolved to work for God without growing weary, regardless what trouble may come their way. Onward with courage!”

Ricardo Geryng



Choir Oberá



Church building in Oberá



Service in Oberá

Experiences with God

In song number 96 of the German songbook “Evangeliums Klänge” we sing: “*He is still the same today! He is still the same today!*”

With a joyful and thankful heart I would like to testify of what the Lord has done for me. I thank our faithful God for His grace and for the privilege of being a child of God.

Shortly before Christmas, 2014 I was admitted to the hospital and diagnosed with an aneurysm. An artery in my brain had burst. I was in critical condition and for two weeks I was in a medically induced coma. My family asked the church congregations, friends, and acquaintances to pray for me.

God heard those prayers, and I thank Him for that. After I woke up from the coma, I had to relearn everything again, from swallowing and walking to speaking and reading. I was unable to pray, but the brothers and sisters carried me on hands of prayer and still do so today. And I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your prayers.

I'd like to especially thank God that He answered these prayers.

God is the same today. He hears and answers prayer!

My granddaughter Letizia together with her twin sister Tiana was born in June 2015, almost 2 months too early. After both of them were able to breathe independently, the doctors could not understand why Letizia developed breathing complications and needed respiratory support. After a long stay in the newborn intensive care unit she was finally able to breathe on her own, but then another complication arose: a doctor discovered that she had

a problem with her heart rhythm. The cause was a little hole in her heart. But with regular medication the hole was expected to eventually close. With great joy and gratitude to God, the parents were finally able to take their twin daughters home despite their premature birth and their difficult start in life. Unfortunately the trouble-free time did not last long. In March of this year the twins came down with the RSV infection. This virus is especially serious for small children, premature babies, and children with heart defects. It can have serious consequences and one in 100 cases results in death. While Tiana could be treated at home, Letizia was once again admitted to the hospital. In spite of medical intervention Letizia's condition continued to deteriorate and her oxygen levels decreased. Her life was in danger. When basic measures were not effective, she had to be admitted to intensive care requiring a breathing mask over her nose, and required heavy sedation to keep her calm. She also developed pneumonia that often results from such a virus. The doctors were already discussing more intensive efforts to support Letizia's breathing if her levels did not improve, but God did not allow this.

The brothers and sisters set up a time of united prayer to intensely pray for little Letizia, and God answered those prayers!

Letizia's condition continued to improve such that they could resort to simpler breathing masks. The sedation could also be decreased until she was able to breathe independently. Through this experience we were able to see again that God's ways are higher than our ways and that He does not leave us alone in difficult times. When we trust in Him, He can bring something good out of those situations.

During the time while Letizia was in intensive care, the doctor discovered a very large hole and two additional small ones that resulted in a lack of blood circulating in the body which also affected the lungs. The doctor recommended that Letizia be sent to the Heidelberger Children's Clinic to be examined and operated on. Otherwise, her condition would worsen over time and at some point it would be too late for her. In Heidelberg the doctor's assumption was confirmed.

Again we were able to bring Letizia before our great Lord and Savior and were carried on the hands of prayer by our fellow believers. At the beginning of April, 2016 the little one had open heart surgery. Such a procedure is associated with many risks, but God held His hand over Letizia. The surgeons were amazed at how well the operation went, and none of the dreaded postoperative complications occurred. Letizia recovered quickly from the difficult procedure and is now a lively, happy little girl.

I cannot speak that well yet, but I can thank my God for His love and for all the goodness He has shown my family.

Irma Merkel and Family

He is Just the Same Today

*Have you ever heard of Jesus,
How He came from heav'n to earth,
With a name of mighty virtue,
Though by very humble birth?
When the world was held in bondage,
Under Satan's dismal sway,
Jesus healed their dread diseases—
He is just the same today.*

Refrain:

*He is just the same today,
He is just the same today;
Yes, He healed in Galilee,
Set the suff'ring captives free,
And He's just the same today.*

*Do you see the people gather
Round that great and holy Man,
Bringing all the sick and suff'ring,
Coming to Him all who can?
See Him look with great compassion,
As they fainted by the way!
How He called them gently to Him,
He is just the same today. [Refrain]*

*Is it true that every sickness
May be laid at Jesus' feet?
All my trouble, care, and sorrow,
And I rest in joy complete?
Yes, my brother, every sadness,
If by faith to Him you pray,
He'll remove with tender mercy,
For He's just the same today.*

*Oh, that precious, loving Jesus!
His compassion still the same,
Toward poor sinful, suff'ring mortals
Who seek refuge in His name.
Heed the present invitation,
Oh, you need not stay away!
Just receive His healing favor,
For He's just the same today.*

Jacob W. Byers (1897)

Jesus Christ—Always the Same

Jesus Christ—today, tomorrow,
Yesterday, and evermore.
In our changing times, what comfort!
He remains just as before.

He's the Everlasting Father,
King, Creator, Prince of Peace!
Priest and Helper, Shepherd, Counselor
And His Reign will never cease.

Christ, the source of our salvation,
Conquered Satan, hell, and death.
Spotless Lamb, perfect oblation,
Faithful to His dying breath.

It is finished! And forever
Heaven's door is open wide;
Jesus Christ, unfaithful never,
He for us was crucified.

True and firm in joy or sorrow
Is God's Word for you and me.
Yesterday, now, and tomorrow,
Jesus Christ the same will be.

Immutable, and always firm,
True, eternal as His Word,
Every knee shall bow before Him,
Every tongue confess Him Lord.