

YOUTH messenger

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TO ME?

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Editorial

To Know Him Is to Love Him

We live in a special time in earth's history. Today, preaching Bible truth is not so restricted like it used to be, when preachers were limited to preaching only in the Piedmont mountains or in small gatherings at night with covered windows, for fear of persecution. Today, the name of Jesus is being preached to large crowds from pulpits of immense churches, in downtown plazas, through Internet, radio and television. Almost everybody knows **about** Jesus—and yet, very few **know** Jesus. And the world has never been more void of His presence.

You may wonder why this is the case. It is because the Gospel was never meant to be only a theory, Jesus' life was never meant to be simply a nice story, and His presence was never meant to be just a pretty picture on the wall. The Gospel is the power unto salvation, Jesus' life is a demonstration of God's loving character, and His presence is to be reflected in our lives.

The world may be full of presentations of Bible history, but what the world needs is a representation of God in the lives of His followers, in my life and in your life. The manifestation of God's transforming power in our lives will convince many that they can be changed, too—and when we see so many familiar faces in heaven, we will humbly say: "It was worth it."

I pray that the articles in this magazine may help you identify Jesus as your Friend, Teacher, Healer, Saviour, High Priest, and King. 



By Carlos Finaru

He Is My Friend

“A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24).

The revelation of Jesus Christ impacted my life greatly in my experience during the missionary school program at Plymouth Leadership College in California. There, I joined like-minded youth in a pursuit of Bible knowledge and to seek a deeper relationship with Christ.

Paired with a few adventures and bonds that were formed between the students, also came the realization of my need of Christ in my daily activities. Missionary school exercised my faith and proved that Jesus is always there to carry you along the way. He was there during the studies when they were long and the times when there were heavy topics

that were hard for the mind to understand. He gave me energy to study and prepare for the exams that would take place at the end of the week. Something we depended on a lot was prayer. We prayed for everything. It was our secret super-power. Prayers were answered on every Friday morning as we began our exams. Prayers were sent up during our many encounters in evangelism where people would hear the message of Jesus Christ for the first time or needed encouragement in their life struggles. Jesus was a friend in my time of need when each student was required to present a study, whether it was for prayer meeting or divine service. He helped me present the topic and I am forever grateful for it. Likewise, Jesus Christ gave me the inspiration to write many essays based on the difficult topics and

many doctrines of the truth that we had learned during class. He helped throughout this wonderful experience and really helped me see how He works for those who love Him. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

Now that my experience with Christ has been shared, what is this friendship with Christ—and how can you obtain it? It is to be known that Jesus is not merely a temporary friend, but rather He lives eternally and will never abandon you. Hebrews 13:8 says, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” He will never choose to be a friend one day and leave the next day. Psalm 37:33 says, “The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.” This confirms that He will not leave you. Jesus has made countless sacrifices in order for your friendship with Him to be possible. He has made efforts to reach out to you and make sure that nothing separates you from Him. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). Jesus sacrificed His status in heaven and His throne and honor to save His relationship with us.

“Jesus gave His life for you. Like a child who has full confidence in his parents, and who is not troubled for fear of being taken advantage of and misused, you may rest in God with perfect confidence that He will be to you a friend and a helper.”—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 305. He is the cornerstone and the firm foundation in your life.

“Jesus is our constant friend. We are to look to him moment by

moment, and by looking to him we are to live. . . . It is enough for us if our life is hid with Christ in God. If the life of Jesus is in us, we shall seek the glory of God in everything. We shall daily humble our hearts before God, and at the foot of the cross we shall have distinct views of the loveliness of Christ. We shall make Christ first, and last, and best in everything. We cannot glorify God if we place man where God should be. Not a word of praise should be diverted from God to sinful men. But if we walk humbly with God, working the works of Christ, our characters will become like that of our Lord; and when we most nearly reflect the likeness of Christ, we are giving the greatest honor to God.”—*The Review and Herald*, December 2, 1890. Jesus is our source of life and He desires for us to live according to His will. He wants us to confide in Him when we feel discouraged and to be the first Person we talk to. He longs for us to live day-to-day with Him in the hope that one day He will see us beside Him in heaven.

HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO BE JESUS' FRIEND? ARE THERE ANY REQUIREMENTS?

“Let every word we utter, every line we trace with the pen, give evidence of unwavering faith. Let us not think that Jesus is the Saviour of some one else, but that He is our personal friend.”—*Ibid.*, June 9, 1896. From the beginning, it has been Jesus' aim that He should be our friend. Believing in Him results in faith being exercised, as seen above.

In order for us to gain friends in real life, what must we do? The key verse explains perfectly that “a man that hath friends must shew

himself friendly” Proverbs 18:24 (first part).

Similarly, in searching for a relationship, Jesus wants us to be receptive to Him as you would be to a close friend. He wishes for you to tell Him all your worries and to tell Him of all your blessings, too. He appreciates a soft, quiet prayer in the morning and the night. He is then able to communicate with you and help you about your day also. He does not only listen—but He has the power to help you as well. As you continue to put trust in Him, His power is revealed, and His infinite love is revealed.

In order for you and Jesus to form a stronger bond, we should further examine what human friendships hold in order for us to see what would bring Jesus closer to us. When you and a friend meet together, you tend to do things you both like and enjoy. Maybe it is a short walk or studying the Bible together. Similarly, Jesus has His hobbies and interests that He wishes to engage in with you. He enjoys communicating with you during your devotions in the morning. And short walks with Him allow your mind to be impressed by Him. He also enjoys hearing your voice in praises you sing during worship. Instrumental praise is also encouraged to show Jesus that you love Him. “O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation” (Psalm 95:1, 2). Why should we do these things? In John 14:15 it says “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” When we love our friends we like to do things that make them happy. Sometimes it might be things that may not interest us much—but we still do it because we love them. The same can be for Jesus; we do the


things He asks because we love to make Him happy.

WHY NOT INVITE HIM TO BE WITH YOU RIGHT NOW?

Now that I have shared my experience with Christ and have shared how you too can obtain this experience, it is now up to you what you do with it. Jesus made His step and reached out to me to be my guide in tough times. I admitted my inability to continue on my own and therefore took His hand—and He lifted me onto a higher, steady ground. “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” (James 4:10). He gave me peace in a time full of concern and calmed that stormy sea of uncertainty and was a comfort during a time I felt alone. . . . I encourage you to take the nearest opportunity you have to take hold of His hand as well. I can say for certain that you will not have any regrets. He now gives you the opportunity to choose His way: “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7).

Simply be open to accept His offer. He chooses to wait for you to ask in order for you to understand that you cannot do it yourself and indeed need His help. And when you accept, you too will receive hope and help in dark times.

In conclusion, Jesus bids us to follow Him and trust Him in His ways. He explains, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:9).

Jesus carried me through the tough times and became a friend to me. My simple wish is that you may experience that same Jesus—the friend. 



By Emma Tudoroiu

He is My Teacher

Throughout the Bible, there are many instances in which we can see Jesus Christ teaching multitudes, families, and disciples. Some of the most well-known examples of Jesus' teaching are found in the Sermon on the Mount. The four Gospels are full of Christ's teachings, but it can feel difficult to relate them to ourselves in our present day. How can Jesus teach you nowadays? How can He be my teacher today when all His teachings are so many years old?

Hebrews 4:12 (NIV) explains, "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." According to historical and cultural context, human nature, and the principle of biblical interpretation, Jesus' teachings are just as relevant and applicable today as when they were first given.

Although the Jewish (and worldwide) culture during the time of Jesus was vastly different from today, His teachings still apply because they transcend culture and time periods. Jesus created every human heart from the beginning of time, and His messages were tailored for the human heart. The core identity of humanity has never changed—no matter how many ages have passed. There is something fundamentally the same about humans in every generation. Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.”

Let us take, for example, the teaching Jesus gave in the Sermon on the Mount as an example of how His teachings transcend time and differences. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). People were spread over the hill and down the valley to hear Him—thousands of them. That was probably the first time certain people in starkly different classes came together and stayed together for hours. Gladiators standing by Jews dressed in sackcloth, standing by religious separatists, standing by women and children, standing by apostatized Jews (tax collectors) etc. . . . You get the picture. Enemies—together—listening to Jesus. His teaching not only transcends time periods, but also any differences between people. His teaching was love; that the kingdom of God has an infrastructure of selflessness. “For God so loved the world,

that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16, WEB). Thus, the teachings of Jesus apply to every generation and culture because the human heart remains fundamentally the same no matter how much time passes.

AMAZINGLY AWESOME HARMONY

Some may make the objection: “The Bible was written thousands of years ago by random men. It’s not inspired by God.” Yes, it may be strange to imagine several bearded men wearing togas being the authors of the Bible. However, those several men (many of whom lived in different generations) are not the authors of the Bible. They simply wrote what was being put within their understanding by the Holy Spirit. How does one know if it’s the Holy Spirit who truly inspired these writers? As previously mentioned, among the writers of the Bible were many people who had never met! Yet miraculously, all their writings synchronize and connect effortlessly—even while centuries lay between some of the writings. Take the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Psalms for example; the symbols and proclaimed prophecies all perfectly describe and attach to the later recorded events that took place (in fact, hundreds of years later). The Bible is composed of thousands of witnesses with their written biographies and records testifying of Jesus. Not one of them produces a contradicting narrative. “All scripture is given by inspiration

of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). The teachings of Scripture all align and support each other with amazing accuracy. This is not to say that there aren’t mysteries in the Bible. Deep questions often arise, showing the traces of a divine mind. These examples are not a product of mere human thought. The Holy Spirit is the source. God is the author. “All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3, ESV).

In continuation, one cannot interpret the Bible without using the biblical principle of interpretation. It is true that there are nearly a thousand translations of the entire Bible and interpretations. But do you think that a caring, conscientious God would give people His words as a guide and not give them a principle by which to understand how they apply? The ultimate sign of the Bible’s divine origin is the fact that it is its own interpreter. Can you imagine God communicating something and leaving it to humans to explain? That would be so confusing! Of course, we need to reason through our study of the Bible because we are slow to understand, but the Spirit of God opens things to our understanding. If at one spot one may have a burning question, some other area of the Bible will explain the answer. The Bible is its own interpreter and thus shows it is divinely inspired by God. “And

we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual” (1 Corinthians 2:13, ESV).

Lastly, it is important to consider what God has been trying to teach you personally. What has He been trying to reveal to you? What kind of events have shaped you, and guided you to the place where you now are? Whether you have ever tried speaking to God, or even tested His existence, the Bible actually encourages you to do so. “So that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7, ESV). God isn’t just a teacher of the past. He is here now, and is using everything to bring you face to face with His passionate love. He is wooing and alluring the hearts of all men, just as He naturally did when His sandals touched the earth. He wants to be more than just your teacher. He wants to be the lover of your soul, if you will let Him. When studied in its historical and cultural context, and also using the biblical principle of interpretation, the teachings of Jesus stand in astonishing relevance for our lives. His words are applicable today. Christ wants to be your teacher as much as He desires to be mine. May we all accept Him into our lives as the psalmist David wrote, “Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth” (Psalm 31:5). 🍷



By Eunice Gessner

He is my healer

“And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick” (Matthew 14:14). Have you ever stopped to wonder how many people Jesus must have healed when He walked this earth? Of course, we have no way of knowing the exact number, but He healed countless people, as indicated by Matthew 19:2 (“And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there”) and Mark 3:10 (“For He healed many, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to touch Him”). But let’s go over some of the examples the Bible specifically tells us about, shall we?

THE NOBLEMAN’S SON

The first person that the Bible has record of Jesus’ healing is the son of a Jewish nobleman from Capernaum. Jesus had returned to Cana (which is in Galilee), where He had previously performed the miracle at a wedding and had turned water into wine. The nobleman’s son was dying, and when he heard that Jesus had returned to Cana, which was about 16 miles from Capernaum, he came to Jesus, asking that He come and heal his sick son. After a short conversation, Jesus tells him: “Go thy way, thy son liveth” (John 4:49). The father believes and, in faith, grasps these words

that give such relief and joy to his anguished heart. In that moment, healing is bestowed upon his sick and suffering son.

“At the same hour the watchers beside the dying child in the home at Capernaum beheld a sudden and mysterious change. The shadow of death was lifted from the sufferer’s face. The flush of fever gave place to the soft glow of returning health. The dim eyes brightened with intelligence, and strength returned to the feeble, emaciated frame. No signs of his malady lingered about the child. . . . The fever had left him in the very heat of the day. The family were amazed, and great was the rejoicing.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 199.

With what lighter step and heart this father must have made his way back home to his beloved son! “When he went to find Jesus, his heart was heavy with sorrow. The sunshine seemed cruel to him, the songs of the birds a mockery. How different his feelings now! All nature wears a new aspect. He sees with new eyes. As he journeys in the quiet of the early morning, all nature seems to be praising God with him. While he is still some distance from his own dwelling, servants come out to meet him, anxious to relieve the suspense they are sure he must feel. He shows no surprise at the news they bring, but with a depth of interest they cannot know he asks at what hour the child began to mend. They answer, ‘Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.’ At the very moment when the father’s faith grasped the assurance, ‘Thy son liveth,’ divine love touched the dying child.”—Ibid.

A LOATHSOME LEPER

In Matthew 8, we see another instance where Jesus healed someone. In this case, He healed a man who had leprosy. Jesus had been up on a mountainside with His disciples for some time, teaching and instructing them. Now, after having come down from the mountain, great multitudes come to Him and follow Him. Among them is a leper. “He is a loathsome spectacle. The disease has made frightful inroads, and his decaying body is horrible to look upon. At the sight of him the people fall back in terror. They crowd upon one another in their eagerness to escape from contact with him. Some try to prevent him from approaching Jesus, but in vain. He neither sees nor hears them. . . . He sees only the Son of God. He hears only the voice that speaks life to the dying.”—Ibid., p. 263. He casts himself at Christ’s feet crying: “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean” (Matthew 8:2). Jesus stretches out His hand, touches Him and says these words that must have been sweet music to the leper’s ears: “I will; be thou made clean”





(Matthew 8:3). In that instant, the leprosy completely vanishes, leaving no trace of it ever having existed on his body. “Immediately a change passes over the leper. His blood becomes healthy, the nerves sensitive, the muscles firm. The unnaturally white, scaly surface peculiar to leprosy disappears; and his flesh becomes as the flesh of a little child.”—Ibid. What a miracle! I can only imagine what it must have been like to witness such an amazing healing. But more than that, how full must this man’s heart have been with love and gratitude for His healer!

THE PARALYTIC BROUGHT THROUGH THE ROOF

Yet another beautiful story of Christ’s healing is the story of the paralytic whose friends opened up tiles in a roof to present the sufferer to Jesus. His story is one of my personal favorites and one of the most touching, so I will dedicate a larger portion of this article to this story. The paralytic man had no hope of recovery and was not only tormented by physical pain but also by bitter remorse, by the burden

of guilt, and thus mental suffering, as his condition was the result of a sinful life. He had hoped to receive some relief for his suffering from the Pharisees and doctors, but they showed him no compassion nor provided him with any hope or help. Thus, he had reached the depths of despair, until the news of the wonderful healings of Jesus reached his ears. He heard how Jesus had healed others as sinful, hopeless, and helpless as he, and the friends who had shared these stories with him encouraged him to believe that he, too, could be healed if he could just find a way of reaching Jesus. But more than for physical healing, he yearned for forgiveness and peace—and as his body was beginning to decay, he realized he had no time to lose. He finally made up his mind to see Jesus. He enlisted the help of his friends who gladly undertook the chore of carrying him on his bed to where Jesus was.

Jesus was at the house of Peter, teaching all those who had gathered around Him. The problem was that such a large and thick crowd was around Jesus that it was essentially impossible to reach Him. In vain, those who had brought the paralytic to Jesus tried and tried to push their way to Jesus. It says in Mark 2:2 that “straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door.” Can you imagine how the paralytic man must have felt when he realized that his only hope of help was so near yet seemed unreachable? In one last desperate attempt, he asked his friends to let him down through the roof, which they did. They took him to the roof and uncovered a part of

it to make an opening. Then, they gently lowered him down at the feet of Jesus. "The discourse was interrupted. The Saviour looked upon the mournful countenance, and saw the pleading eyes fixed upon Him. He understood the case; He had drawn to Himself that perplexed and doubting spirit. While the paralytic was yet at home, the Saviour had brought conviction to his conscience. When he repented of his sins, and believed in the power of Jesus to make him whole, the life-giving mercies of the Saviour had first blessed his longing heart. Jesus had watched the first glimmer of faith grow into a belief that He was the sinner's only helper, and had seen it grow stronger with every effort to come into His presence."—Ibid., p. 268. Now, the paralytic hears the most wonderful words he has ever heard in his life as Jesus tells him: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee" (Matthew 9:2).

"The burden of despair rolls from the sick man's soul; the peace of forgiveness rests upon his spirit, and shines out upon his countenance. His physical pain is gone, and his whole being is transformed. The helpless paralytic is healed! the guilty sinner is pardoned!

"In simple faith he accepted the words of Jesus as the boon of new life. He urged no further request, but lay in blissful silence, too happy for words. The light of heaven irradiated his countenance, and the people looked with awe upon the scene."—Ibid. Jesus then tells him: "Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house" (Matthew 2:11). "Then he who had been borne

on a litter to Jesus rises to his feet with the elasticity and strength of youth. The life-giving blood bounds through his veins. Every organ of his body springs into sudden activity. The glow of health succeeds the pallor of approaching death."—Ibid., p. 269.

"And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion" (Matthew 2:12). What wonderful love, mercy, and compassion Jesus showed to this afflicted man! No words would be able to express the feeling the paralytic must have experienced after this unimaginably life-changing encounter with the Lord.

WHAT ABOUT IN OUR DAY?

These are just three of the many people Jesus healed when He was on this earth. There are many others, and each of these stories is just as inspiring and encouraging. But do you know what the best part is? This healing is for us today as well—not just for the people in these stories. Miracles still happen today; divine healing still exists. "Christ feels the woes of every sufferer. When evil spirits rend a human frame, Christ feels the curse. When fever is burning up the life current, He feels the agony. And He is just as willing to heal the sick now as when He was personally on earth."—Ibid., p. 823. I am proof of this. When I was very little, I could have died, and it is only because of Jesus' help and healing power that I am here today.

In the summer of 1995 we attended the public meetings of the SDARM General Conference held in Ploesti, Romania. I was a little

over 2 years old, thus, needless to say, most of this story is thanks to the recollection of my parents and not my own as I have very little memory of it. Nonetheless, it is my story.

Following the visit to Romania, my parents and I traveled to Hungary where we stayed at the SDARM church in the village of Mogyoród which is in Pest County. Not long after arriving there, we were doing worship on Friday evening to welcome the Sabbath when I blurted out to my parents in a pained tone: “my stomach.” I had developed quite a painful stomachache. After worship, I sat down at the table to eat but was unable to eat almost anything. That night, I developed a fever and diarrhea, and was vomiting all throughout the night. I would be so thirsty and would drink water endlessly but wasn’t able to retain it. I couldn’t keep it down or in! Apparently, I had contracted a stomach infection while in Romania. My parents became quite worried and prayed fervently for God to help and guide, and for Him to send people who spoke English, since they couldn’t speak a word of Hungarian. Thankfully, at the church where we were staying, there was a young Romanian brother who spoke a little German. Since my dad can speak some German, they were able to communicate. My dad asked him if he could make some phone calls to try to find help for me, but the brother explained that there was no phone installed yet in the Mogyoród church. However, he was very kind and brought us a few things we needed.

On Sabbath, my condition had worsened. I continued with the concerning fever, vomiting,

and diarrhea. As I mentioned previously, my parents couldn’t communicate with anyone because they didn’t speak Hungarian, but thankfully there was a brother from Australia whose parents were Hungarian and who spoke both Hungarian and English. He translated for my parents and put them in contact with a kind Hungarian sister whose name I don’t know but I wish I did. He explained our situation to her and she brought me a couple food items that she thought might help and which she thought my unsettled stomach would be able to keep down. Unfortunately, I was in such a rough condition that I was unable to keep those foods down, either. However, she also gave my parents her phone number in case we needed anything, which was of great help later on.

By around 4 p.m. that Sabbath, my mom began to panic because she realized I was very dehydrated from the constant diarrhea and vomiting and being unable to keep any fluid (or food) down. I was crying but was shedding no tears, and when she would lightly pinch my skin, instead of immediately flattening and springing back to its normal position when she let go, it would remain raised for about 5 long seconds. She remembered reading in a book by Dr. Agatha Thrash that both of these signs were indicative of extreme dehydration, so she realized it was dangerous and began panicking. My parents began praying even harder. My dad asked the Romanian brother who was at the church and who I mentioned previously, to find a public phone and call for an ambulance. Not long

after, the ambulance arrived with its loud wailing sirens, making the fear and worry feel even more real for my parents.

When we arrived at the hospital, thankfully we were greeted by a doctor who spoke English fluently as she had lived in California for several years; however, the situation became more complicated because since I was not vaccinated, the doctors were very reluctant to take me in. After some discussion, prayers, and insistence and persistence on my dad's part, they finally gave in.

When we were taken to the room where I would be staying, there were large glass windows everywhere through which could be seen babies and small children who were crying and crying, seemingly all alone. At that moment, the doctors instructed my parents to depart and to leave me there. My mom's heart broke for all the babies she saw crying by themselves, and she firmly made up her mind that not in a million years was she going to leave me there by myself. But it was a struggle because the doctors were not inclined to allow them to stay. Thankfully, during the next shift, a very kind and understanding nurse came and allowed my parents to stay with me. She spoke almost no English, so with a few words and mostly gestures, she told them where they could rest and that they could even use the kitchen during a certain period of the day. She was a blessing, for sure!

I was put on IV, and my hand had to be secured to a small block of wood so I wouldn't hurt myself with the needle by moving my hand and my finger that was

receiving the IV. It was difficult for me as a 2-year-old because I didn't understand why my parents couldn't just take me from that crib and remove my hand from the uncomfortable wooden block. I felt desperate, for sure, and it was hard for my parents to see me crying and asking them to take me out from there.

The next morning, the head doctor and another young doctor came, and thankfully they spoke English! They were both very kind, understanding, and compassionate. My parents were extremely worried and would cry at times as they saw me lying there so weak and thin, and he would reassure them that everything was going to be okay. The head doctor left and the doctor accompanying him stayed with us. My dad asked her what could be done for me in my condition. She explained that the principal focus was to replenish the electrolytes by continuing with the IV and to monitor my condition, given that dehydration could be fatal.


I hadn't eaten almost anything for days but was still throwing up and continued having diarrhea. Another day and another night went by without much improvement. My parents would break down crying often when they would see my weak and thin state, and even more so when I would beg them to take me out of the hospital. I really didn't like it there. But they couldn't, and that broke their hearts too.

Another doctor came the next night and examined me and noticed that, in addition to the stomach infection I was battling,

I had developed a serious ear infection. The doctor told my parents that in the morning they would have to give me medication to treat my ear infection. But my dad has always had great faith in God's natural remedies, so somehow he found a way to go out and buy garlic, oil, a dropper, and cotton balls. He squished, squished, and smashed the garlic enough to get some drops of garlic juice and mixed it with olive oil. He then put some in my ear and placed a cotton ball over it and prayed. The next morning, the doctors came to check on me, and guess what! A miracle—the ear infection had completely disappeared! Isn't that amazing? My parents were so thankful that they had one less thing to worry about!

After three days of being there, my parents decided they would take me from the hospital and see what else could be done. I was so stressed and miserable there, and was constantly crying, not to mention that the cost was also quite high. The head doctor insisted that I should stay until noon of the following day, as I was still quite weak. He even offered to have me stay for one more night free of charge! Yet another blessing; more proof of God's help and intervention.

When we left the following day, the doctors provided my parents with instructions and guidance on what to feed me, how to feed me, and other such information. I had made improvements, but I still had a long way to go. After leaving the hospital, my parents were still very concerned about me and continued praying for help and guidance. My dad called the kind Hungarian sister I mentioned at the begin-

ning who gave her phone number to my parents. She was very kind and hospitable and invited us to stay at her home. Providentially, her son was attending the IMS missionary school in Mogyoród. Because of this, she knew of an IMS brother from Colombia who was teaching at this missionary school and who was a medical doctor as well as being knowledgeable in natural remedies. He came to see me, but I was sleeping, so my parents had to wake me up. Not surprisingly, I began to cry because, what toddler likes being woken up from a nap, right? However, on a happier note, the doctor noticed I was shedding tears as I cried, which was a sign that I was doing better! However, I still needed more hydration and electrolyte replenishment. So, he instructed my parents to make me a form of "home-made IV" by mixing water, sugar, and carrot broth and giving me two tablespoons of it every 15 minutes. I am told that, as a toddler, I wasn't the happiest camper when they would have to wake me up during the night to feed me those 2 tablespoons every 15 minutes, but thanks be to God, this was when I truly began to mend. My parents were beyond thankful and relieved. About 6 weeks later, I had fully recovered. And now, 26 years later, I can only say, thank the Lord for putting the right people in the right place at the right time, and most of all, thank the Lord for being my Healer, for healing me before I even knew Him! "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:2, 3). 



By Paloma
Leivas Duarte

He IS MY SAVIOUR

“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:17).

One of the things that we hear a lot about in church is how Christ is our Saviour and how He died for us on the cross for our sins. But sometimes we forget how much weight that holds. In hearing it so often, we sometimes forget just how much Christ really did. We simply accept it as a part of our faith. But what does it really mean

for us? How important is it that Christ is our Saviour?

WHY THIS HAPPENED

In order to understand this, let us go back to why this all started in the first place—why we came to need a Saviour. When God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the Garden of Eden, He gave them one condition that they had to follow: they could eat of any tree in the garden, except the tree of knowledge of

good and evil. In other words, perfect and perpetual obedience. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve did not heed this condition, and gave in to the temptation to eat of the fruit.

What now? They violated the one rule God gave them. As you can imagine, they were very afraid, and even hid from God. They knew the punishment was death, that they wouldn't be allowed to live after sin, right? Yes, it's true that God told them that if they ate of the fruit they would die, but they didn't, at least not right away. Was God being untruthful? Did He suddenly change His mind?

Of course not. God's law is, after all, unchangeable. But by nature, man was not an eternal being—and now he had forfeited the way to become one. There was now an abyss between God and man, and there was no longer a way to cross it. This is where the plan of salvation came in. Since God's law is unchangeable, it still demanded the death of the transgressor. A price still needed to be paid. It seemed like there was no way out for humanity, unless someone equal to God stepped in and took their place. That is exactly what Christ did. In order to pull the human race out of the abyss and free them from the penalty, Christ intervened, and the plan of salvation was brought forth.

SINCE WHEN?

Was the plan of salvation thought of in that moment, though? Did Jesus come up with it on the spot? Certainly not! In fact, the plan of salvation was always in existence.

It wasn't an afterthought, but something planned by God from the very beginning—from all eternity! The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that "The plan of salvation had been laid before the creation of the earth; for Christ is 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world' (Revelation 13:8)." — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 63. At the time the world was created, the plan of salvation had already existed in advance. That's how much God loves us.

WHY?

Now you may be wondering, if the plan of salvation existed this whole time, this also means God knew man would fall into sin. Why did He allow that? Why did He put the tree in the garden so Eve would be tempted? Why did He allow Satan to tempt Eve? It is because God didn't create us to mindlessly follow Him. He created us with a free will because He wanted loving Him to be a choice we make on our own. Even the angels have free will, shown by how Satan went against God. Man was created perfect and sinless in the image of God. But he could still fall, and he did.

"God placed man under law, as an indispensable condition of his very existence. He was a subject of the divine government, and there can be no government without law. God might have created man without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; but in that case man would have been, not a free moral agent, but a mere automaton. Without freedom

of choice, his obedience would not have been voluntary, but forced. There could have been no development of character. Such a course would have been contrary to God's plan in dealing with the inhabitants of other worlds. It would have been unworthy of man as an intelligent being, and would have sustained Satan's charge of God's arbitrary rule."—*Ibid.*, p. 49.

In relation, there was also another purpose for the plan of salvation. Ever since Satan was cast out of heaven, there would have to come a time when he would be defeated. There will come a time when sin is eradicated forever. But in order for it to be shown that God is just, the rest of heaven would have to see Satan proven wrong. Aside from saving fallen man, the plan of salvation was also meant to vindicate the law and character of God. "In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 761.

Satan was overjoyed when man fell, so he insisted that there was fault in God's law—that no matter how hard man tried, this law could never be obeyed, and as a result, none from the human race could ever be saved. There was nothing that could be done; humanity had to face their punishment because if God took them back, that would make Him inconsistent. It wouldn't be just. But of course, the plan of salvation was already there. In

putting the plan into action, God would show the universe, and Satan, that there was hope. Man could be saved. By dying on the cross, Christ would also reveal the character of Satan to the universe, and the angels and unfallen worlds would see through his deception.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

Christ is He "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

So, what then, does this mean for us? How has the plan of salvation changed things for fallen humanity? How important is it for us? What does it do for us? One of the main things the plan of salvation does for us is to give redemption from sin. Through Christ, we no longer have to be connected to the world. Through redemption, we are free from the control that sin has upon us, because Christ has delivered us from the authority of sin.

He also frees us from spiritual death. When man fell into sin, he experienced spiritual death. All of us are now born in sin, and we have a natural tendency toward it. We became corrupt, but through Christ we can be born again and have new life. The Bible tells us that "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Ephesians 2:5).

HOPE THROUGH THE SAVIOUR

We live in darkness, and without God's intervention we would



never be able to get out of it. The plan of salvation sheds light in the darkness and allows us to be saved. We are bound by sin, and only God is able to free us from it. Only Christ frees us from that burden. The plan of salvation means that we have a second chance, that we are able to once again cross that abyss through the grace of Christ.

This is why salvation is important to us. It is why this is all such a big deal for us. If it weren't for the plan of salvation and the mercy of God, we would all be lost. There would be no hope left for us, but with the plan of salvation, we are able to have a relationship with Christ. He is our Mediator—the bridge between the gap. He loves us so much that he left heaven and took on our lowly human flesh, so that we could experience eternity with Him in heaven. He

took our sin upon Himself—without actually committing any sin Himself—and thus paid the price so that we could be saved. It's a beautiful gift, isn't it? And it is one that is free to take.

HOW WE CAN RECEIVE IT

“And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Acts 2:21, NIV).

We have spoken here about why the plan of salvation exists in the first place, and have explained what it means for us and how important it is for us. So how do we receive it? How can we experience the blessings that salvation has to offer us? That all starts with repentance.

What is repentance? The official definition says it is “the action of repenting; sincere regret or remorse.” Repentance means to genuinely feel guilty for something

wrong that you've done, and to strive to change it. It is having a change of heart. It means turning away from sin and embracing God and His word. When we truly repent, we no longer want to live in the darkness of sin, but rather in the light of Christ.

With repentance comes the confession of sins. In fact, confession will come as a result of that repentance. Confession is absolutely essential, because if we don't confess, there is no repentance. God is constantly calling us to repent and confess our sins. He longs for us to come to Him. The Bible tells us that "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).


Simply believing is not enough. There needs to be action; there needs to be a genuine change of heart. But it is not a choice that God can make for us. This is a choice we all need to make as individuals. We can ask God for help, but in order to receive it, we need to make the decision to turn from sin and follow Him. We need to give our heart and make the decision to allow God to make that change in our life.

Once we receive that gift, we need to maintain it. It doesn't stop there. In fact, we need to be meditating daily on God's word. We also need to maintain that connection with God through prayer. The more we do that, "clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of

holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of Scriptures."—*The Call to Stand Apart*, p. 24. Are you ready to make that change?

CONCLUSION

The plan of salvation is the greatest gift that ever could be given to us. When we fell into sin, and when it seemed like there was no longer any hope for humanity, Christ stepped in as our Mediator. He became our Saviour, and without Him we would be lost. Not only that, but the plan of salvation was also meant to prove Satan wrong—to show that God's law could indeed be obeyed. Christ became our example on how to abide in God's ways. Salvation is what frees us from sin, and it is what allows us to draw closer to God.

Christ has given this gift of love to us. Are we ready to accept it? Sometimes we may think that we can't, that we aren't ready. We might think that we need to prepare ourselves and be perfect before taking this step. I've felt this way before; I've been that person who thinks that way—but if anything, I learned that you can't wait around because there will never be that right moment. Unless you go to God and ask for His help, you can never reach perfection on your own. That is not the point. The point is realizing that you have a need, going to God with genuine repentance, and asking Him to help you. God knows your heart and your whole life. "Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration."—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 118. 



By Fabian Hickl

He Is My High Priest

God had created the human race to live in an unclouded relationship with Him. But through sin, this relationship was destroyed and an unbridgeable gap between man and God took place. God's justice demanded that the sinner die immediately. His love, however, wanted to save the fallen race. When Adam and Eve sinned and put on fig leaves, God gave them clothes made of animal skins (Genesis 3:21). They understood for the first time that sin demands blood. God was willing to make this sacrifice Himself. So, He gave

His only begotten son Jesus Christ to die on the cross, to take upon Himself the punishment for sin, from which He wanted to free us. To illustrate this fact as clear as possible to the ancient Israelites, He gave them the sanctuary as a visual lesson.

A VIVID ILLUSTRATION

God directed Moses, the leader of the ancient Hebrew nation: "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and

the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it" (Exodus 25:8, 9).

God wanted to show His people the plan of salvation by this object lesson. He wanted to show them how they could be reconciled to Him, so that He could dwell among them.

The exact construction of the tabernacle is described in Exodus chapters 25-27. After 480 years, this tabernacle was replaced by the temple that Solomon built. Solomon's temple was twice the size of the tabernacle and was destroyed by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B.C. It was modestly rebuilt many decades later and had been magnificently expanded by King Herod during Jesus' time on earth. This was the temple where Jesus sometimes taught.

In the outer court of the tabernacle, and later of the temple, the priests served every day by offering "bloody" animal sacrifices and "unbloody" thank offerings for the whole nation, for individuals and for themselves. But not only the priests were to bring offerings.

"And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty; or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering

in the place of the burnt offering" (Leviticus 4:27-29).

WHAT WAS IT LIKE FOR THE PEOPLE?

Can you imagine how the sinner went burdened and sad to the outer court to bring his sin offering? Maybe people were watching him while he was on his way to bring his sacrifice. However, they were not condemnatory about it because they, too, all experienced the same. When the sinner arrived there, he took his animal before the brazen altar to lay his hand on his offering and confess his sin. Then he himself had to slay this innocent animal. What a terrible moment! I do not know about you, but for me it would be exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to look this cute, innocent animal in the eyes and then cut his throat. I believe, however, that this was an important lesson for the Israelites. They needed to see the agonizing pain that sin causes. Likewise, we need a clear picture of what sin cost God. Christ took our guilt upon Himself and suffered in our place as the innocent Lamb of God. When we dwell upon the love, suffering, and death of Jesus, we can see how terrible sin really is.

The sinner then left the brazen altar with joy, knowing that his sins were now confessed and forgiven. However, here the reconciliation between the sinner and God was not yet finished. He needed now to trust the priest.

"And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the

bottom of the altar. And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the LORD; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him” (Leviticus 4:30, 31).

Here something very important happened. The priest took the blood, put some of it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and poured out the rest of it at the bottom of the altar. Why was that so important? The Bible gives us the answer in Leviticus 17:11: “For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” We can clearly see that it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul. When Adam and Eve sinned, they lost their oneness with God; they lost the character of God and were no longer in harmony with His holy law. A separation took place, and it is the blood that now brings reconciliation. God’s plan for you and for me is to bring us back into harmony with Him, so that His beautiful character is reflected in us.

So, the blood was put on the horns of the altar. But what does this altar represent? It represents the cross. There Christ brought a complete atonement. “Type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb slain for the sins of the world. Our great High Priest has made the only sacrifice that is of any value in our salvation. When He offered Himself on the cross, a perfect atonement was

made for the sins of the people. We are now standing in the outer court, waiting and looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—*The Signs of the Times*, June 28, 1899.

HOW DOES THIS INVOLVE YOU AND ME?

You and I are guilty of breaking God’s law, but Jesus paid the fine. He exchanged His perfect life for our life full of transgression. He restored us back to divine favor. Through His sacrifice on the cross, Jesus reestablished the connection between heaven and earth. But the plan of salvation does not stop here. The cross is like a bridge that reconnects the gap of separation between God and man. Jesus put an end to this separation by giving His blood on the cross for the human race. However, we must go across this bridge to become one with God again. Even though the cross is the greatest proof of God’s love to humanity, it is not the end of plan of salvation—but rather the beginning of a work.

“The intercession of Christ in man’s behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, ‘whither the forerunner is for us entered.’ Hebrews 6:20.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 489.

We can see that Christ’s ministry as high priest in the heavenly sanctuary is a very essential point in the plan of salvation. We saw that Christ paid our debts

and caused “the sacrifice and the oblation to cease” (Daniel 9:27), but the Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:17 that “if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.” So even though Christ paid for our sins on the cross, if Jesus had not been raised from the dead, we would still be in our sins. This point is very important to understand! This means that at the time when Christ cried out on the cross, “It is finished!” and died there for you and for me, we were still in our sins. Something else needed to happen in order for us to benefit from the sacrifice God gave in our behalf. In Romans 4:25 the Bible tells us that Christ “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” This word “justification” means to be forgiven and declared righteous. This is what needed to happen. Death could not hold our dear Saviour. Because of His sinless life and His resurrection to serve as our High Priest, He offers you forgiveness and is able to declare you righteous.

On the cross, the way was opened for you to be forgiven. The way was made for you to be found righteous. However, on the cross, salvation from the power of sin (1 Corinthians 15:17) and forgiveness and cleansing from sin (Romans 4:25) was not accomplished.

That is why Jesus had to be raised to take another role in this plan of salvation, so that He could continue the work of reconciliation between God and man. Now He bestows His merits upon every repentant sinner, so that you can be free from sin and be found righteous.

The sanctuary service is like God's G.P.S. (Gospel Plan of Salvation), to show us the way of redemption. Nowadays it's difficult to get lost. A simple glance on Google or Apple Maps shows us where we need to go to get to our desired destination. However, in our spiritual life it sometimes happens that we lose track and are confused about which way to go. That is why we need God's G.P.S.—and this leads to and through the sanctuary. “Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?” (Psalm 77:13).

A PATTERN OF A REAL PLACE IN HEAVEN

When we are confused about the gospel, all we need to do is to look to the sanctuary; to behold the same way God preached the gospel to the Israelites in the wilderness. In Hebrews 4:2 we read, “For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”

So simply by looking at and studying the sanctuary, we can understand what the everlasting gospel is all about.

If we look at the sanctuary again, we can see that the blood was shed in the courtyard, and that this blood is representing the blood of Christ on the cross. The blood, however, did not stay there on the altar. Symbolically, some of the blood was brought into the holy place.

This means that Christ made the atonement on earth and then took His own blood to heaven to administer it to you as a remedy.

Why? As we have already seen, when He died, we were not yet forgiven. When He exclaimed, "It is finished," we were not yet declared righteous, but we were still in our sins. That is why He took the blood with Him to heaven, and He can now give you and me the merits of His life, so that we will no longer be in our sins and instead be found righteous.

"But Christ came as high priest of goods with God by the greater and more perfect tabernacle, which is not made with hands, that is: which is not of this creation. Neither did he enter into the sanctuary by the blood of goats or calves, but by his own blood once for all, having obtained an eternal redemption" (Hebrews 9:11, 12).

Why is His blood mentioned here? Because the blood is absolutely necessary. We already saw that it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul (Leviticus 17:14) and God's word clearly tells us that "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22).

WHAT HAS JESUS BEEN DOING SINCE HE ASCENDED TO HEAVEN?

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17).

Isn't that wonderful? Christ brings His own blood into the holy place, and what does He do? He makes atonement for us! Christ bought a perfect atonement for the sins of the people on the cross, and

then went to heaven to make that atonement available to you and me.

That is why the altar of incense, which stands in the holy place is like a miniature of the brazen altar. Both are made of acacia wood and have four horns. What Jesus wants to show us here is that if you want to have access to the cross, if you want to have access to His life (because "the life of the flesh is in the blood"), if you want to have access to His victory, all you have to do is to come to Him in prayer. That's how you can have access to the power of the atonement!

"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).

We can only experience forgiveness and cleansing of our sins when we let our prayers ascend like holy incense to the throne of God.

"True prayer takes hold upon Omnipotence and gives us the victory. Upon his knees the Christian obtains strength to resist temptation. . . . The silent, fervent prayer of the soul will rise like holy incense to the throne of grace and will be as acceptable to God as if offered in the sanctuary. To all who thus seek Him, Christ becomes a present help in time of need. They will be strong in the day of trial."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 616.

That is how you and I can benefit now from our great high priest Jesus Christ, how we can experience forgiveness of sins and cleansing from sin, and how He shares His victorious life with you. It is like Christ giving us a

blood transfusion. In essence He is saying, "I give you my blood so that you can live victoriously."

"For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer" (Hebrews 8:3).

Therefore, we cannot stop at the cross. As already mentioned, when Jesus died there, we were still in our sins, we were not righteous! Therefore, it was necessary that He becomes High Priest, so that He can offer us the gifts and the sacrifice of His life!


And how encouraging and comforting it is to know that our High Priest knows us inside and out. He knows how it is to be tempted. He knows how difficult temptations can be; but even though He was tempted to the maximum and in all points, He stayed loyal to His Father.

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:14, 15).

Jesus knows exactly what you are

struggling with, and He offers you the remedy for your sins—His victorious life. He is more than willing to let His merits flow to you. He longs to be your High Priest, your Intercessor; and He waits for you. He wants you to come to Him, that you might find peace for your soul, and forgiveness and cleansing from your sin.

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

May we access His merits by coming to our great High Priest in prayer—and may His life flow into your life. Amen! 

Today... 'The Great High Priest'

*Without beginning and without end
Jesus is this sinner's Best Friend.
From the order of Melchizedek He came
To die for my sins and bear my shame.*

*Now back to Heaven He's gone
To intercede there for everyone.
My name is graven upon His hands
And He has fulfilled the law's demands.*

*Jesus Christ, the Son of God Most High
Intercedes for me so I won't die
Before the throne He cries, "Father, forgive"
He gave His life that I might live.*

*This great King of kings and Prince of peace
is none other than my Great High Priest.
Praise God that He is my Saviour, too,
and can do that which no one else can do.*

—Roy Allen



By Eunice Lee

He is My King

BORN WITH AN AIM

“And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Revelation 19:16).

As children, my sisters and I were fascinated by the royal family. Their lives seemed so carefree and beautiful! We’d play games and name our characters names that belonged to the royal family. Why did we have such admiration for this “privileged” family? It seemed to us that they had so much, and we wanted the same privileges they enjoyed!

Have you ever imagined what it would be like to be the son or daughter of the queen or king? If you have, what were the reasons you had for wanting to belong to the royal family? Was it for the

attention you’d get, the position you’d hold, the food you’d eat, the clothes you’d wear, or even the money you’d have?

Everyone is born into this world with the desire to gain—whether it’s just the largest piece of cake or the coolest car, we are all driven by our selfish desires to have the very best of everything. . . . Even our desire to go to Heaven can come from a selfish motive to gain something better.

But did you know that God our Father has already given us the privilege of possessing all that will make us eternally happy? He is the King of the universe! Sometimes we forget that fact, lose perception of true value, change our focus, and chase after fame and recognition here on earth.

This brings us to the realization that all we possess in reality belongs to our King, and the position we hold is something much more to be desired than any earthly position of wealth. In gratitude for what our heavenly Father has done for us, it only makes sense that we would want to give back to Him what belongs to Him. Being a child of the King of kings calls us to the responsibility to act and live like it.

Do we realize what it means to be the children of the King? Being in the presence of God daily and revealing His love to others calls for all that we have and are. Where do we invest all our energies? Where do we place value?

GETTING OUR PERSPECTIVE STRAIGHT

In John 18:36, Pilate asks Jesus if He is the King of the Jews, but Jesus replies, “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.”

Pilate continues by asking if He is a King then, and Jesus answered, “Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth” (Verse 37).

We see clearly that Jesus does indeed claim to be a King, but not of this world. This must mean that we are the children of a King who rules not on this earth, but the entire universe.

“The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.” (Psalm 103:19)

Keeping before us the fact that we are not of this world, but truly belong to the heavenly kingdom should embed in us the love to do everything that our King requires of us!

Just as the children of the queen have responsibilities and rules that they must follow, we as children of the Heavenly King are to live and act up to the standards of His Kingdom. In the royal family, the do’s and don’ts list is very long, and some of them get tired of having to keep certain rules and choose not to be recognized as royalty anymore.

Being a child of the King means much more than we can ever know! A share in the “sufferings” that Jesus had to go through are a part of the role we have as children of the King.

Have you ever given way to discouragement and doubted your worth and identity? It can be very easy to let the devil tempt us into believing his lies telling us that we are worthless—subjects of his kingdom forever! This has led many to stumble and give up hope in everything. But this does not have to be a part of anyone’s experience—because of Christ.

Did you know that Christ has already freed us from this world of bondage to the devil? He gave up His glorious throne above, humbled Himself to dwell in human flesh, lived in this sinful place we like to call home, and suffered and died a cruel death—not because He had to, but because He loved us so much. He loved us to the point that it was irrelevant to Him whether He would even enjoy eternity with the Father again!

If He didn't do this for us, we would indeed be doomed! That is when we would have real reason to doubt and be discouraged, because we would have no identity—no reason to live.

Everything we are, we are in Christ. He is my King, and nothing the devil can say, nothing that he may try to make me believe can change the fact that I am a child of the King.

What does this mean for us? God's kingdom is ruled by love, and that is what He requires from all of His redeemed ones. He gives us the strength to reflect His love and He wants us to be bearers of His love to everyone around us.

Jesus declares: "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

When it seems to us that it is too hard to abide by the standards of Heaven, and we're tempted to choose not to be recognized as royalty anymore, remember that your true identity and value can only be found in God. Choosing to lose that privilege demonstrates ingratitude, and a loss of everything valuable. Identity apart from that found in our King is meaningless!

"Many seem to be sad because of their religion. We should not go about begging pardon of the world because we are Christians. I beg pardon of Jesus Christ only, because I am not complete in Him. . . . If we love Jesus we shall become heirs of God, and the Father will love us as He loves His Son Jesus Christ. We are members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King."—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 254.

There is abundant hope for us, not as a result of anything that we have done or can do, but because Jesus Christ, our Saviour, has made it possible.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:3-5).

Without the death and resurrection of Christ, our lives would be in vain. He has made our salvation possible, and made us joint-heirs with Him. Because of what He has done, you and I are given the power to become the sons and daughters of God.

Will you accept Christ as your King? In 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18, He appeals to us to accept His power to free us from the devil's grip and choose to be His. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Again, here it shows us that we have a part to play in being God's children. We cannot serve the ruler of this world, and at the same time claim to be the children of the Heavenly King! The Majesty of Heaven calls us to come out and be separate.

"Let everyone who claims to be a child of the heavenly King seek




constantly to represent the principles of the kingdom of God. Let each remember that in spirit, in word, and in works, he is to be loyal and true to all the precepts and commandments of the Lord. We are to be faithful, trustworthy subjects of the kingdom of Christ, that those who are worldly-wise may have a true representation of the riches, the goodness, the mercy, the tenderness, and the courtesy of the citizens of the kingdom of God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 189, 190.

Are you willing to recognize your true identity and worth? Not only does Christ’s kingdom guarantee the purest joys, but through our life of service, He will be glorified,

and when He comes back to take us to our Home, we will be changed in the “twinkling of an eye” (1 Corinthians 15:52).

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together” (Romans 8:17).

We will reign as heirs of the heavenly kingdom because Jesus Christ has chosen and redeemed us. You are a child of God, a child of the King! 

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The Hem of His Garment

By L. D. Avery-Stuttle

Weary, and sick, and fainting,
Feeble, and pale, and wan,
Far over the hills of Gadara
She wearily tottered on.
She had heard of the great Physician
On the shores of Galilee —
How He healed the sick and suffering,
And made the blind to see.

And she said, "I will seek the Master;
Perchance He will hear my cry;
I will seek this Jesus of Nazareth;
I have heard that He passeth by."
Then slow, where the blue waves murmur
Their sad and ceaseless song,
Along the cliffs of Galilee
There wended a mighty throng.

But ah, she is sick and fainting,
And her step is slow and weak,
And the bright tears spring to her eager eyes
And drop to her pallid cheek!
She yearns for a look from the Master,
For a touch of His healing hand;
But the multitude surge about Him
And throng o'er the wave-girt strand.

"I will touch the hem of His garment,"
She murmured in accents sweet;
And she slowly creeps through the eager throng
And falls at the Master's feet.
And the Healer turns about Him
And cries to the trembling soul,
"Thou art loosed from thine infirmity;
Thy faith had made thee whole."