



November 2017

Dear Friends and Partners of CWR/PTM,

Civilization is a stream with banks. The stream is sometimes filled with blood from people killing, stealing...and doing things historians usually record, while on the banks, unnoticed, people build homes, make love, raise children, sing songs, write poetry...The story of civilization is the story of what happened on the banks. Historians are pessimists because they ignore the banks for the river.—Will and Ariel Durant

We cannot ignore the warfare, bloodshed, brutality, oppression, poverty and disease that are a part of the river of history, a noxious, defiled sewer that continues its relentless flow in our day and age. We cannot ignore the cries of the oppressed and those overwhelmed by the toxic river—can you hear the heartache and the pain?

In what we often speak of as “third world” countries the river of man’s inhumanity toward his fellow man is constantly flooding, discharging its evil and corruption of violence, disease and poverty. Our North American and European “river” overflows with toxic and raw sewage as well, and while some of our depravity is the same—violence and bloodshed—in our more physically comfortable world of North America and Europe we are polluted by filth spewed out from the media, entertainment, politics and even religion.

But here’s good news! In the midst of the cries we can hear—in the midst of the pollutants that insidiously infect so many lives—the healing ministry of Jesus is taking place, and people’s lives are being changed.

During this time of Thanksgiving (remembering all of our Friends and Partners in Canada have already observed Thanksgiving last month) we pause to give thanks not solely or primarily for physical comforts and blessings, but for spiritual gifts and divine favor—which we collectively speak of as God’s grace.

In response to the overwhelming flood of the river of evil and all of its consequences that contaminate the lives of men and women everywhere, the ongoing work of CWR/PTM continuously and incessantly, without compromise and without apology, is empowered by the grace of God to proclaim the love and grace of God. We press on in this ministry because we can hear those oppressed by the river of evil.

You may remember the lyrics of “Love Lifts Us Up,” the title track from the 1983 movie, *An Officer and a Gentleman*:

*Love lifts us up where we belong
On a mountain high where the eagles fly
Love lifts us up where we belong
Up from the world we know where the clear wind blows.*

God’s love lifts us up above the filth, pollution and spiritual sewage of our world, so that we know and experience his no-matter-what love, his always-and-forever love, his love-without-boundaries

and love-without-end. *God's love and grace lifts us up* “where eagles fly” so that we might see beyond the here-and-now, giving us a vision of the hope that tomorrow will bring. We are thankful for God's love and grace. We are overawed and astonished and amazed by “how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ...” (Ephesians 3:18).

Here's a prayer that was offered by a pastor at Thanksgiving, well over 100 years ago—what a profound message about thanksgiving!

“O Lord, as you know very well, here we are again. We are here to do one of the hardest things any mortal can do—to give thanks and really mean it. First of all, there are those people who don't ever say thanks for anything because they figure that whatever they have they got it all by themselves. Then there are those who do give thanks, but you can catch something in their voice that asks, ‘But why didn't I get it sooner?’ And there are those who also say thanks but imply, ‘Why didn't I get more?’”

James reminds us “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights...” (James 1:17). Paul asks “For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive?” (1 Corinthians 4:7).

God's love and grace lifts us up so that we can see and appreciate that all that we have (and all that we are) ultimately comes from God. *God's love and grace lifts us up* so that we can perceive and celebrate thanksgiving as a way of giving thanks that God allows us to share with others. We are thankful not only because *we can hear the cries of the oppressed and the overwhelmed*, but *we are thankful as we hear those cries* we can respond, in the name of Jesus. Of course we can and should share our physical blessings, but we can and should also find ways of passing on the grace of God.

There is no greater privilege or blessing in this world than being able to be involved in something that is bigger and more vibrant and more significant than our own life. Thanksgiving involves such involvement and commitment—thanksgiving means knowing the desperation of a world in such need of the grace and love God has given to you and me. So at this Thanksgiving I ask you to join me in listening to the voices of the oppressed, the hurting, the impoverished, those who are imprisoned, those who hunger and thirst, both physically and spiritually. Can you hear them?

You may know, given my numerous references to it, that I am enthralled with the grace-based message of *Les Miserables* (in book, stage play and movie versions). It's almost the 67th book of my Bible (a little exaggeration, but that's me—sorry!). *Les Miserables* is an unforgettable story of God's love and grace set against a background of oppression, misery and revolution. It's a story of two men, Valjean and Javert, both of whom are deeply aware of the dark, grim demands of the law. Valjean lived most of his life in prison, experiencing God's grace when he is finally released, while Javert, who was actually born in a prison, is a policeman who never stops hunting, tracking and shadowing Valjean, because Javert can only understand life defined as by-the-books law and order.

The lyrics of the majestic finale of the stage play and movie version of *Les Miserables* have the impoverished and oppressed people of Paris hunkered behind barricades as they resist the military might of the French army. They are asking God for release from tyranny and they believe the act of loving another will reveal the face of God.

The lyrics promise peace by putting away the sword in favor of the plowshare and offer assurance that the coming of tomorrow will bring freedom. Here's a few lyrics of this stirring and inspirational song:

“Do You Hear the People Sing?”

*Take my hand and lead me to salvation.
Take my love for love is everlasting.
And remember the truth that once was spoken;
To love another person is to see the face of God.*

*Do you hear the people sing? Lost in the valley of the night—
It is the music of a people who are climbing to the light.
For the wretched of the earth there is a flame that never dies.
Even the darkest nights will end and the sun will rise.*

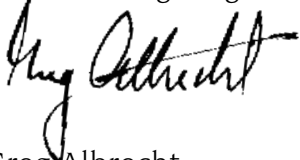
*They will live again in freedom in the garden of the Lord.
They will walk behind the plowshares—they will put away the sword.
The chain will be broken and all men will have their reward!*

*Will you join in our crusade? Who will be strong and stand with me?
Somewhere beyond the barricade is there a world you long to see?
Do you hear the people sing? Say, do you hear the distant drums?
It is the future that they bring when tomorrow comes!*

Can you hear them? They are singing, they are groaning, they are praying, they are crying out—they are in need. You and I, working as a team, as brothers and sisters in this ongoing work of CWR/PTM, are thankful that we can be involved in **a work far bigger than ourselves**—a ministry that boldly proclaims *all Jesus all the time!* Thank God we can share his grace with this world—*faith alone, grace alone and Christ alone.*

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving—let us be thankful for the blessing of being able to pass on the grace and love of God—and don't forget, **I am thankful for your generosity and dedication in this work, as we make a difference**—as we do so much more together, to reach people in Jesus' name, than we could ever do on our own.

With thanksgiving and gratitude,



Greg Albrecht
President, Plain Truth Ministries

P.S. Here are two notes from people who are thankful for the ministry you help to provide with your faithful donations and prayers. Thank you for your continued support!

Thanks for your ministry—your ministry maintains, sustains and uplifts the downtrodden. I am a kingdom citizen and I'm so glad you are able to encourage alienated believers in religious communities.—Kenya

Thank you so much for sharing the heart of God with us. I pray you continue to spread the truth about God worldwide to all the open hearts out there just praying to know the REAL God. You are bringing peace, joy, hope and comfort that so many of us have never known.—Kentucky

CWR/PTM Prayer List—November 2017

These requests for prayer represent just a few of the thousands we receive and pray for. We invite you to join us in praying for these and the others that space does not permit us to include here. Thanks for joining with us as a CWR/PTM Prayer Partner.

Please pray for my wife; she just retired and now she's becoming physically weak and having memory trouble. Please pray for her strength, memory and alertness.—Singapore

I contracted Hepatitis C from a blood transfusion back in the 70's. It was dormant for over 30 years. My doctor said that I no longer have Hepatitis C. Praise God for this dramatic healing, and thank everyone for their prayers.—Texas

Please pray for me as I have sprained my back which is very painful at times.—Illinois

Please pray for my grandson, who is going blind at the young age of 15.—Michigan

Prayers for our daughter who is bleeding internally would be appreciated. Thanks in advance.—California

My brother is totally deaf and dementia is setting in. He received a letter that he is not allowed to drive anymore. Please pray for him. I love your compassionate sermons.—Ontario, Canada

I am 48 years old and have cancer. I need prayers to help me be strong and fully embrace God's grace.—Massachusetts

Pray for God to help me deal with a verbally and emotionally abusive parent.—Texas

I am having a problem with my eye, it's dry and blurry. Please pray to clear my eye so I can see clearly.—California

Pray for me not to have to go to court. Thank you and God bless.—Scotland

Please strengthen my brother and me as we grieve the loss of our brother.—South Dakota

Thank you for your prayers! My blood pressure is slowly coming down.—Saskatchewan, Canada

Please pray that the ongoing pain in my legs, knees, hands and wrists will stop.—Texas

Thanks be to God for watching over and blessing all those that cry out for help. And thanks be to Jesus for His light in times where it seems so dark. Amen!—North Carolina

Please pray for better use of the spiritual gifts God has given me and others.—Florida

Please pray for God's blessings on my family and our family's pastures and livestock.—Arizona

Please pray for my granddaughter who is in so much pain from a heart problem that is going to require surgery.—Illinois

Please pray for my family that we will be able to spend more time together this year.—North Carolina

Pray that God would grant me His wisdom and discernment in all areas of my life.—New York

Please pray that my sister-in-law gets relief from her ongoing health issues.—Texas

Please pray for my sister's youngest son, 56 years old, who has cancer all through his body.—Kentucky

My husband recently died, so I've become a widow. My vision is failing and I can't drive anymore.—Saskatchewan, Canada

Please pray for all the Christians around the world who face persecution.—Colorado

I just lost my wife due to severe heart problems. Please pray for me that my sorrow and suffering will be eased.—Wisconsin

Please pray that my brother will regain his memory, and thank God for my sister's successful back surgery.—Maryland

Please pray for and support organizations that work to help children who face hunger and diseases.—Colorado

Please pray for my wife that she continues to improve as she battles cancer.—New York

Dear God: We bring you many requests and needs. You know each of these individuals, and we thank you in advance for the answers you will provide for each request. With thanksgiving for your love and grace, we pray in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ—Amen.