



September 2019

Dear CWR/PTM Friend and Partner,

I've asked Brad Jersak to write this month's letter. It is a joy to have Dr. Jersak so involved in our collective, ongoing media ministry. Brad wears many hats—he is a celebrated author and theologian, he serves as a college professor, speaker, editor and graphic artist. Here's some encouragement from Brad, and a taste of his latest book being published by CWRpress.—Greg Albrecht

Grace and Peace, dear CWR/PTM Friend and Partner,

We're grateful that in his infinite kindness, God has seen fit to make us partners in the gospel of Jesus Christ that truly is good news. And what is that good news? That God has revealed himself through Christ's life, death and resurrection—that the triune **God is infinite and all-embracing love in his very essence.** In Jesus, we come to know God as self-giving, radically forgiving and co-suffering love. By the grace of God, we are able to dismiss toxic images of God as the punitive tyrant, the absentee parent or the divine vending machine.

You might remember these themes ringing through the pages of *A More Christlike God: A More Beautiful Gospel*, released by CWR Press in 2016. Thanks in great part to your support, more than 10,000 copies have found their way into people's homes, seminary and university classrooms and into the Dutch and German languages! Just recently a publisher contacted us about printing *A More Christlike God* in yet another language spoken by hundreds of millions. Earlier this year, PTM was pleased to announce the release of *A More Christlike God* in audio-book format and response has been excellent.

Now we're about ready to publish a sequel, *A More Christlike Way: A More Beautiful Faith*. Like Paul's epistles, which often begin with theology and move to application, *A More Christlike Way* puts feet to the theology of *A More Christlike God*.

But, this two-volume series is more than doctrine (Vol. 1) and practice (Vol. 2). If viewed from that perspective then it would seem like the first book is about God and the second is about us. Better stated, *A More Christlike God* is about Christ's **divine** nature and *A More Christlike Way* is about Christ's **human** nature.

Of course, we're still talking about one Person. It's not like Jesus threw on the God-switch for displays of miraculous power and then pressed the human-button to reveal his vulnerability and suffering. Not at all! As one ancient author put it, Jesus did human things divinely and divine things humanly. In Christ, we see God himself walking (with actual feet) the long and arduous *Jesus Way*—all the way to Golgotha and beyond!

As we journey the *More Christlike Way*, we're not merely speaking of applying good theology to our daily lives. We're responding to a call—to Jesus' call: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24).

We're beckoned to walk in the footsteps of Christ, empowered by the transforming grace of the Holy Spirit. Thus, while we do hope to apply the life of Christ to our own path, this is not another Christian how-to book. In the end, it's all about the *Jesus Way* of Abba's love and how he (not we) lived it perfectly.

On that note, allow me to share a short excerpt from the book, a taste-test if you like, reinforcing what I've just shared:

Jesus alone created the Jesus Way and walked it perfectly.

Each of the attributes I will use to describe the Jesus Way—for example, radical forgiveness, radical hospitality, radical inclusion—describe Jesus, not me and not the church.

Here's the problem: Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me," which is to say, "Imitate me." Largely, we don't. And the harder we try, the more we fail. Miserably. A rule of thumb: the deeper our religious zeal, the further we stray from Christ—just ask Saul of Tarsus! No, we don't become Christlike by willing ourselves into radical discipleship.

Whatever forays we do make along the Jesus Way occur by locking our gaze, not on our performance, but on Jesus. We must look ahead, to Jesus. He is the one who carved out the path for faith, and he's the one who brought it to completion (see Hebrews 12:2).

When "the Word became flesh," God's unexpected and total identification with humanity opened a road, a path, a Way for all of us. That Way is Jesus' path back to Abba's house, our return home to paradise. By the indwelling grace of triune Love, those who surrender to Abba as Jesus did are empowered to walk as he walked. As Paul said,

I have been crucified with the Messiah. I am, however, alive—but it isn't me any longer; it's the Messiah who lives in me. And the life I do still live in the flesh, I live within the faithfulness of the son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:19b-20 NTE).

We live, we walk, we imitate the Jesus Way "within the faithfulness of the son of God." I love that. Whatever steps we take into a more Christlike faith occur because Christ lives in us and we (somehow) live in him—in the grace of now.

*I cannot overstate this: this book could be—but must not be—mistaken for a manifesto. It is not a set of ideals we strive after or laws we live up to. Believe me: **straining to achieve Christlikeness through self-will only leads to despondency (failure and disappointment) or to pride (zealotry and hypocrisy).** The Jesus Way is a surely a struggle, but one engaged not by striving, but by surrender.*

Of course, *A More Christlike Way* will also include many stories and testimonies, practical considerations and thought-provoking questions. Most of all, the message of *A More Christlike God* and *A More Christlike Way* are foundational to the mission and objectives of CWR/PTM—reaching out to people around the world with a Christ-centered message of God's love and grace.

Serving Jesus, with all of you,



Brad Jersak

P.S. from Greg:

We are all extremely excited about Brad's new book, *A More Christlike Way*, with its foreword graciously written by Wm. Paul Young, the author of *The Shack*. It has been my honor and privilege to collaborate with Brad as we discussed the initial ideas for this book and then offering suggestions and editing the many versions of his manuscript.

CWRpress should be receiving the first shipment from our printers shortly after you receive this letter. I am confident you will enjoy and profit from *A More Christlike Way*.

With deep thanks and grateful appreciation for your prayers and financial support!!



Greg Albrecht, President of PTM

P.P.S. With our worldwide ministry in mind, here are two "thank-you's" we recently received:

In reading through the book of Hebrews recently, I found myself thanking God for your ministry. I have learned most of what I know about God from PTM/CWR and I am so very glad to have done so. What a feeling! I am EXCITED for this ministry, and I pray that PTM/CWR will outlast all other ministries worldwide.—Iowa

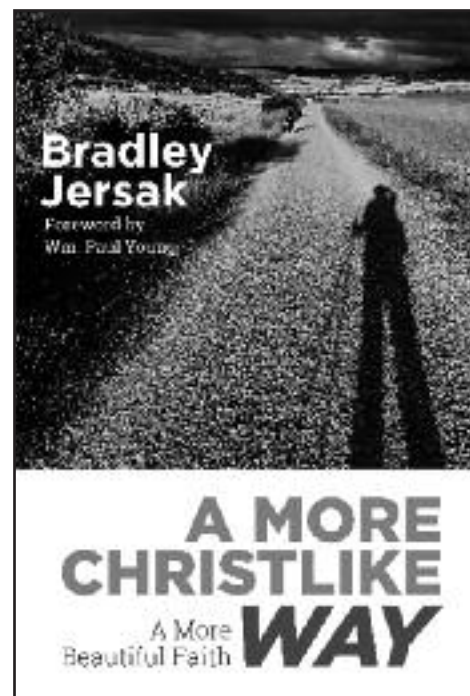
I've followed your teachings for several decades. At first I was skeptical, then I was somewhat amused and even perplexed when you talked about God's grace, then I started to think about the implications and permutations of grace. I do not believe there is any church or ministry that is quite like you guys—your honesty, transparency and willingness to take on the really big issues (like religion!) are so inspiring. I'm a supporter of your ongoing work.—Michigan

Coming Soon!

**A MORE CHRISTLIKE
WAY:**

A More Beautiful Faith

A CWRpress sequel to Brad
Jersak's award-winning book,
A More Christlike God:
A More Beautiful Gospel.



CWR/PTM Prayer List—September 2019

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 sister who can't walk well because her legs are so weak due to her spinal condition.—Minnesota

Pray for us. My wife, age 75, has severe eye problems in both eyes, and I am battling dementia.—North Carolina

Please pray for complete success for my friend's knee operation.—Michigan

Thank you for your prayers. The surgery on my left eye was 100% successful and I can see!—California

Please pray—I'm confined to a wheelchair due to Parkinson's and suffer from terrible blisters on my feet.—Virginia

Please pray for me—I am 85 and I will soon have to go into a retirement care facility.—New Hampshire

Please pray for my husband who has a bladder infection and also has trouble swallowing.—Mississippi

Please pray for my husband—his health is failing. Thanks for all your words of encouragement.—North Carolina

Pray for a young girl who is having her 4th operation to restore a damaged eardrum & middle ear.—British Columbia

Please pray that God will heal me of cancer and make me well again.—Georgia

Please continue to pray for my wife's cancerous condition.—New York

Please pray for my wife who is having trouble with her eyes, ears and blood pressure.—Virginia

My daughter is in a nursing home—her lungs have black spots from smoking. She is also bi-polar.—South Carolina

Pray for two elderly ladies in our family who are in nursing homes suffering from Alzheimer's.—Mississippi

Please pray for my son, as his girlfriend will not associate with any of his family.—Arkansas

Thanks for the encouraging literature you sent at this extremely difficult time! Please keep me in your prayers.—Tennessee

I pray we all grow in our love to God the Father and keep thanking him for his love for us.—South Dakota

I fell and broke four ribs and am now recovering at home. Please keep me in prayer.—Alabama

My granddaughter is involved with drugs and does not have a good relationship with her parents.—Virginia

Please pray for God's healing of a lump in my breast. Thanks for your prayers.—Minnesota

My daughter-in-law needs prayers. She has cancer and an aneurism.—Illinois

My elderly friend has lung cancer. His doctor has told him that he has only a short time to live.—Pennsylvania

Please pray for my mother who is blind and can't get up and move about without help.—Mississippi

Please pray for my kidney problem and white blood count which is going up.—Ohio

My grandson has a lump in his neck and my granddaughter has a cyst on her ear. Please pray for them.—Tennessee

Please pray for God's healing of my eye disease and tension headaches.—North Carolina

Our Father in Heaven: We thank you for your grace, mercy and love. You love each of these individuals, and we thank you in advance for the answers you will provide for each request. With thanksgiving for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, our suffering servant who heals us, in whose name we pray—Amen.