Dear CWR/PTM Friend and Partner,

Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you may also be where I am (John 14:1-2, my emphasis).

Where will we “go” after we die? What will happen to us? How will we “get” to heaven? If and when we arrive, will “they” let us in? How do we know if we are headed in the right direction so that we will finally arrive? Do we have a “chance” of “making it”? 1) Where we are “taken” after we die and 2) where we are “going” right now are both by the grace of God, not of works, so that no one can boast (Ephesians 2:8-10).

The 14th chapter of John begins with the disciples far from tranquil and at peace—they were agitated and fearful about Jesus’ continuing insistence that he would be crucified and taken away from them. The disciples had left everything. They had devoted their lives to him. And now Jesus was saying that he was leaving them and going away. When Peter asked Jesus, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus replied, “Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later” (John 13:36).

Then, in the last verse of John 13 (verse 38) Jesus told Peter that he would deny Jesus three times. This bold and audacious prediction of disloyalty and betrayal deeply disturbed Peter, and no doubt had a negative impact on the others, as well.

It is one thing to be disappointed and hurt when you are told someone will leave you, but another thing altogether for someone to tell you that you will leave them!

• Jesus urged them to be calm and believe—to have faith in God, and also in him. The disciples believed in the God who performed mighty miracles in Scripture—what we know as the Old Testament. It was one thing for the disciples to have faith in the God of history and another thing altogether to have faith in Jesus, God in the flesh, who was right there with them.

• Jesus urged them to have faith in him—this faith Jesus encourages and exhorts is a consequence and product of believing, and belief itself is a participatory endeavor involving our response to the gracious gift of God that enables and empowers faith.

• Jesus promised them (and by extension, you and me and all who surrender to him, trust in him and follow him) a place in the Father’s house. The Father’s house is where the Father “lives.” We often speak of “heaven” as being synonymous with the Father’s house, but of course it is not a house with a street address, flowers and a fence. The Father’s house is where he is, and he is, by definition, wherever he chooses to be. God is EVERYWHERE at large and NOWHERE to the exclusion of somewhere else.

• The disciples were troubled about the immediate here-and-now, but Jesus assured them he...
would take care of them. Jesus comforted them by promising to take them (and us) to the place he would prepare, to be with him. The place Jesus prepares is the gift of permanent residence, not a temporary room rented on a month-to-month basis for which the rent is due the first day of every month.

- Wherever the Father’s house is and the places/rooms promised for each disciple (and all of us) it is a better place than the here and now. The room in the Father’s house we receive by his grace is permanent, not transitory. Our room in the Father’s house is not here today and gone tomorrow—our room is a gift, an inheritance, with no ongoing payment required.

- Jesus offers no specifics about our eternal home, the room and place provided for us, but he does assure us that we will be with him and he with us. We know nothing of dimensions or furnishings—we do know we as Christ-followers will be with him—forever. Whatever forever is like, whatever eternity looks like, we as Christ-followers will be there.

Where will we go after we die? How will we “get” to heaven? If and when we arrive, will “they” let us in? Do we have a “chance” of making it to heaven?

1) Where we are “taken” after we die and
2) where we are “going” right now are both by the grace of God, not of works, so that no one can boast (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Jesus will take us to our rooms in the Father’s house. How and when and to what precise location and place Jesus takes us is not essential for us to know. The promise that Jesus will take us to be with him is of utmost importance and provides absolute assurance.

A policeman was stopped at a stop light when he saw a car with three penguins in the back seat headed the opposite direction. He turned on his lights and siren, made a U-turn and pulled over the car.

After asking the driver for his license and insurance, he said, “You really need to take the penguins in your back seat to the zoo.” The driver promised he would do that immediately.

The next day, the policeman was once again patrolling the same area. Just like the day before the same car went by him, headed in the opposite direction, with three penguins in the back seat.

After pulling over the driver, the policeman walked up to the car. As the driver rolled down his window the policeman noticed that there were beach towels in the back seat and the three penguins were wearing sunglasses.

A somewhat irritated policeman said to the driver, “I told you yesterday to take these penguins to the zoo, and you promised me you would do that. What’s going on?”

The driver said, “Yesterday I took them to the zoo just like you told me to. We had a good time and today I am taking them to the beach.”

Jesus will not take us to the zoo one day, to the beach the next day and then to the park the day after that. He will take us—deliver us—safely home to his Father’s house. God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, lives in this magnificent, glorious house and we will be given, by God’s grace, a room—a place—in this eternal house that has many rooms.

We often think of eternal life as something that happens when life ends. But eternal life is when life actually begins! As God’s children we stand with one foot in eternity and one foot in mortality. To
live eternal life now is to be in Christ as he is in us and to be with each other as Christ is in us. Eternal life in its full and final and future sense is to live in the Father’s house.

Living in the Father’s house means being with Someone who loves us and Someone whom we love. We will have a wonderful “time” when time as we know it no longer exists!

How wonderful? “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived”—the things that God has prepared for those who love him…” (1 Corinthians 2:9).

While Jesus must return and take us to the Father’s house, as we follow Jesus Christ we are, by his grace, already on the road toward that eternal destination. Where we are “taken” after we die and where we are “going” right now are the present and future dimensions of arriving at our Father’s house.

“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you may also be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going” (John 14:3-4, my emphasis).

1) We do not know exactly where the Father’s house is. Jesus must take us. We don’t know how, nor do we have the wherewithal to make the journey from here to there—Jesus must take us. The future promise of Jesus, by the grace of God, is that he will take us to be with him so that we may be where he is.

2) However, Jesus also tells us “you know the way to the place where I am going” (John 14:4). Jesus has invited us to follow him. As we follow on the Jesus Way we are headed in the right direction. Being a Christ-follower in the here-and-now is a present reality we realize and experience by the grace of God.

As we trudge along, following Christ, falling down into ditches and occasionally wandering off, he is in us and we are in him. He is our Good Shepherd. He will not fail us, leave us or abandon us. He will make sure we “get” to the Father’s house!

Your fellow pilgrim on the Jesus Way,

Greg Albrecht
President, Plain Truth Ministries
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.

I’m having a hard time being shut in so long. Please pray for the elderly like me—most of us have health problems. All people on this earth need God’s divine loving grace to free us from this virus. Thank you for your service.—Louisiana

My son-in-law has to have eye surgery to remove cataracts. His eyes bleed, and the doctors don’t know if surgery will help. Please also pray for me, as I’ve been having stomach problems.—West Virginia

Please pray for my son who is in the hospital with pneumonia and has an aneurysm in his lung. I am praying for all of you to have good health so you will be able to keep this ministry going.—Louisiana

Please pray for my granddaughter who has gotten involved with drugs. Please pray for God’s divine intervention in her life to help her see that her ways are leading her into disaster.—Virginia

Thank you for all that you do. Please continue to keep me in prayer, and also please pray for a friend of mine as she searches for employment. —North Carolina

Please pray for my wife who has diabetes. Thank you for all you do.—California

I pray for everyone at CWR/PTM—this ministry has helped me a lot. Your articles and letters are very meaningful and clear.—Saskatchewan, Canada

Please pray for me as I hurt my back and now I can hardly bend over. Please pray for a friend of mine who is in the military. Pray that he gets the help he needs to succeed in his mission and then returns home safely.—Maryland

Please continue to pray for me as I grieve the loss of my dear husband. I am all alone now and I suffer from anxiety and depression.—Virginia

Please join me as I pray for this sad situation that our world is in at present due to this viral pandemic. May God comfort each and every one of us.—Manitoba, Canada

Please pray for my nephew who is prison for three years. May God protect and guide him.—Arkansas

Please pray that the vaccine for COVID-19 will be given quickly to everybody to stop this pandemic plague.—Maine

Please pray for healing from the effects of gout in my left foot and hand and the swelling in the lower side of my back.—Louisiana

Please pray for peace, love and kindness to be displayed around the world. Also, please pray for me and my husband to be free of pain and to be in good health.—California

Please continue to pray for me as I grieve the loss of my dear husband. I am all alone now and I suffer from anxiety and depression.—Virginia

Please pray for my husband who now lives in a nursing home. Thank you for your prayers.—Mississippi

Please pray for a dear friend who is undergoing chemotherapy for Stage-3 breast cancer.—California

Please pray about my procedure to repair a nerve in my neck and pray for my daughter’s new job.—South 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.