



May 2021

Dear CWR/PTM Friend and Partner,

*For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile, we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life... For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died **for all**, and therefore all died. And he died **for all**, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again (2 Corinthians 5:1-4, 14-15, my emphasis).*

The older we get the more holes we discover in our earthly “tent”—this “tent” we have lived in all our life starts to disintegrate and fall apart. The older we get we are far more conscious and aware of death at work in our bodies and those of our loved ones. The older we get, as we watch and read the “news” around the world, it seems we are far more conscious and aware of the darkness of evil that casts a longer and longer shadow in our world. ***Newscasts and newspapers are bad news, yet there is good news in the midst of our darkness.***

The resurrection of our Lord is the ONCE AND FOR ALL crowning moment in all history when the Light and Life of Jesus won the victory over the darkness of sin, death and the grave and was raised again. The resurrection proclaims the ultimate end of darkness. **He IS our Light and Life—He IS Good News!** “Is—not was.” He is risen!

In the beginning...darkness was over the surface of the deep...when God said, “Let there be light” (Genesis 1:1-3). The spiritual parallel to that creative Old Testament moment is recorded in the New Testament when Jesus, the Light of the world, was resurrected out of the tomb where they had laid his crucified body. **The Light of the world IS Good News!**

Because of him all who trust in him and follow him may experience a new dawn, the powerful, absolute and unquenchable Light of God's love. He is risen and he enlightens and brings hope to a world of darkness and death. **He IS the gospel—He IS the GOOD news.**

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life (John 8:12).

Focus on the spiritual Light of our risen Lord and consider a few of the properties of light:

- Light brings and creates life while darkness produces despair and death.
- Light reveals and uncovers darkness.
- When we walk toward and follow light/Light we walk away from darkness.
- The closer to the source/Source of light/Light we are, the more clear and bright the light/Light becomes for us.

The Light of our risen Lord enables us to see our temporary burdens in the perspective of the promise we are given of an eternal, heavenly dwelling. The Light of Jesus fills us with hope, a hope given to us and lived in us by our risen Lord—giving us assurance of the heavenly dwelling we will be given, by the grace of God.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us 1) new birth into a 2) living hope 3) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...(1 Peter 1:3, my emphasis),

- Our “new birth” is a transformation from the life we once lived to the new life Christ lives in us. Our “old person” becomes a “new person”—while we still live in a mortal body and susceptible to inevitable physical death, we are no longer ruled over by death and the grave but we are free in Christ by his Light and Life.
- Our “new birth” into a living hope is enabled and empowered, inexorably linked by the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- The risen Lord shines his Light and gives new Life to all who embrace, accept and follow him.
- The cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, by the grace, mercy and love of God, confer and sustain a living hope in those who embrace, accept and follow Jesus.

While God’s love for us is expressed throughout the Bible in a variety of ways, the supreme example is the cross and resurrection of Christ. The cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ are foundational to our spiritual existence. They are as fundamental to our spiritual life as water and air is to our physical life.

When the Bible explains new life in Christ it does so in the context of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. *The resurrection life of Jesus Christ is the renewed, restored and regenerated breath of life that was physically given to the first man Adam* (Genesis 2:7). When we are spiritually re-born, regenerated and spiritually transformed the life we receive, by the grace of God, is the Light and Life of our risen Lord!

We are given our spiritual new life by God’s grace. We receive spiritual re-birth and we become new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17) *in, through and by* Jesus Christ. By spiritual re-birth we become God’s children, “*children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God*” (John 1:13).

John explains that our spiritual rebirth is “from above”—spiritual regeneration and new life has no physical or genetic origin. We have a living hope because Jesus, who loved us so much that he willingly died for us, lives in us. We live full and abundant spiritual lives in the power and might of Jesus Christ and his resurrection.

What happened on the cross does not mean that there is no further effort or participation involved in born again Christ-followers. Jesus invites us to follow him—the Jesus Way is no primrose path. By God’s grace, we are “crucified with Christ” (Galatians 2:20) but we still live our physical lives, following Christ. We take up our own cross and follow him, and in one sense, following Christ signifies our own willingness to die. While we naturally fear our physical death, our new spiritual life means we are already dead in Christ, and the life we now lead is the life of our risen Lord. We live victorious lives of faith and hope in the reality of his victorious resurrection. We never cease to live in Christ.

As we walk the Jesus Way with our risen Lord we are forever tempted, like Lot’s wife, to look back and revert to our old person—to the life we lived before. We are tempted to once again fall

into the darkness of sin whereby we feel God owes us something because of our successes and accomplishments.

Christ-less religion is on every street corner offering us a drug—a narcotic—of performance and self-identity. Christ-less religion tells us our heavenly Father is nothing more than a bean-counting auditor in heaven. Those who are deceived by this monstrous lie believe they will still owe him taxes—and he will punish them if they fail to pay him the taxes they owe him on time.

God of course is no sin-auditing tax collector. God is most definitely NOT the IRS. God is no punitive paymaster or angry judge. Always and forever, when we fall into the temptation of thinking we can and must impress God with our pitiful and puny good deeds, our heavenly Father is on the front porch of his house waiting for us to come home—in fact, he starts running toward us when he sees us coming toward him.

Our risen Lord is our Light and Life, revealing to us, day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16) that our spiritual rewards are not a matter of output, merit or physical production, but of grace. God values us in and through Jesus, not because of our accomplishments, but he loves our response to his invitation to be with him and unite in him. All God asks of us is our willingness to admit our dependence on him, while surrendering the heady highs of Christ-less religion that suggest 1) God is an angry judge, and 2) We can earn our heavenly rewards if we work long and hard enough.

Christ is risen! Light prevails over darkness. **Grace triumphs** over religion. **Good conquers** evil. **Life defeats** death and the grave. **Mercy reigns** supreme over judgment. **Joy overwhelms** sadness.

Jesus is our Light and Life—He IS the Good News!

Our risen Lord fills us with hope as we follow him. Our risen Lord fills us with joy as we accept his outstretched hand, his invitation to live in him and to rise with him, both now in this life, and in our immortal bodies when he resurrects us. With joy and thanksgiving,

Because of our risen Lord, who IS our Light and Life



Greg Albrecht
President, Plain Truth Ministries

P.S. We share this note of thanks from a new reader in the United Kingdom. **Thanks so much** for all you do to support this ongoing work, which is reaching many around the world.

Your materials have probably been the most helpful of any I've read or heard in my theological shift (after forty years in the evangelical church). This ministry is wonderful. I find the things you offer week by week more encouraging than I can find words for, and I am thrilled to see the variety of people included among your authors and contributors. What a treasure house of resources and teaching. Thank you all.

CWR/PTM Prayer List—May 2021

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 pray that more and more people will find your weekly services and other resources on your website. I'm so grateful for your magazines and letters every month. May God continue to bless all of you for your loving work.—Louisiana

Please pray for my dear brother whose Alzheimer's is getting worse.—Michigan

Please pray for our precious two grandchildren who are addicted to drugs.—Kentucky

Please join me in prayers for relief of pain in my wife's right knee. Thanks for your prayers.—New York

Please pray for my son, who is now a new father, because he thinks it will be so difficult to fill a father's role and be a good husband to his wife. Also please pray for my new grandchild.—Arizona

I need prayers for healing of the cataracts in both of my eyes. Thank you for all the literature you have sent me. I have been so encouraged by it.—Tennessee

Please pray for my family and friends' health and pray for my spiritual growth.—Massachusetts

Thank you CWR/PTM for your continued efforts to spread God's never-ending love, grace and mercy in this troubled world. Also thanks be to God for the comfort he gives to us.—North Carolina

Please pray for those suffering from COVID-19 and for all those affected by business closings. Please also pray for my parents who are elderly, especially my mother who suffers from dementia.—Wisconsin

Please pray for a friend of mine whose 86-year-old mother is dying from bone cancer.—New York

I was born in 1946 with a left eye turned inward. Now my right eye is blurry. Please pray that I can receive God's healing in both eyes.—Pennsylvania

Thanks for all your prayers for my wife who has had colon cancer. Praise God, she doesn't have it anymore.—Georgia

Please pray that God will help me gain weight and have more strength and energy. Thank you for your very inspiring monthly letters and magazines; I read them two or three times.—Louisiana

Thanks for everything you at CWR/PTM do. May our great God continue to bless all of you. I pray daily for you and all the work you do.—Alabama

Thank you CWR/PTM for all of your encouragement, comfort and for sharing the love of God in you.—Virginia

Thank you for all your letters, magazines and especially your prayers. They are so uplifting during this time of pandemic. I'm suffering from a prolapsed uterus, and I ask for your prayers for healing.—Minnesota

Please pray for God's blessings and protection because so much negativity is going on in the world today.—California

With all of the problems our society is facing, it is causing my depression and PTSD to worsen. So, please continue to remember me in your prayers.—Tennessee

Please pray for my business as an accountant/tax pro that it will be successful in helping people.—Louisiana

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.