



January 2026

Dear CWR/PTM Friend and Partner,

I am the way and the truth and the life (John 14:6).

No matter the circumstances—whether one is experiencing poverty or riches, dealing with ongoing sickness and disease or good health, alone and isolated from friends and family or blessed with good friendships and the embrace and support of a loving family—the vast majority of people feel their lives are out of control.

At the same time, the vast majority of people, who believe in God or who do not, feel as though their out-of-control lives can somehow be brought under control. Their belief is based on a huge deception—they believe in *the illusion of control*. And when these “best laid plans of mice and men” do not bring their lives under control, many sink into the darkness of anxiety and depression. The desire for control, becoming secure and safe, is so strong that we humans so often fall under illusions and delusions that promise us something beyond our reach.

No one is perfectly in control of their life, but that doesn’t stop the vast majority of people from spending their life chasing a mirage on the horizon. It’s *an illusion of control*.

Feeling your life is out of control is largely caused by the misunderstanding that human life is capable of being controlled. Ironically, one of the first steps in becoming a Christ-follower is to bring all of our burdens and cares to him, and surrender to him, trusting in him that he will give us rest for our souls (Matthew 11:28-30). Thus, **the more we know and accept the reality that our lives are out of our control the more closely we can walk with Christ and follow him.**

To the degree we stop believing the fallacy that we can solve our own problems, that we are the masters of our own destiny, the more we may begin to yield to Jesus, trusting and believing in him, and luxuriating in the peace of God and rest in Christ.

Jesus spoke of a kingdom-focused, grace-filled, Christ-centered perspective in the Sermon on the Mount when he cautioned us that our priority in life should not be storing up *treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven... for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also* (Matthew 6:19-21).

Jesus encouraged us not to be “worry-warts”—consumed with issues of safety and security (6:25), and instead directing our priorities and our focus on Jesus and on the horizon of the kingdom of God and his righteousness (6:33)—a righteousness that Paul later explained is “*apart from the law*” (that is our efforts to please and appease God)—a righteousness “*given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe*” (Romans 3:21-22).

Of course there are aspects of life that we can control and for that reason many of us are still alive! We can avoid danger and live wisely, in sobriety and simplicity, being cautious of traps and pitfalls that might ensnare us. We can “look both ways before we cross any literal or symbolic street”

—and in that sense we have some control. But time and chance happen. Accidents and crime and war and hatred happen. Much in life is far beyond our control, though Christ-less religion will insist it is not!

As we begin this New Year of 2026, will our horizon be filled with apprehension, worry, doubt and fear, so that we live out our lives fumbling and stumbling in the darkness, vainly searching for a pot of fool's gold at the end of the rainbow which is but a mirage of illusions and delusions? OR will our horizon in 2026 be illuminated by the Light of the Cross of Christ—**Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life?**

The illusion of control is part of the lie of Christ-less religion. This BIG LIE posits that we are capable of getting our lives under control, and the more religious tasks and deeds we fulfill, and the more we work, perform, achieve and accomplish the more we have our lives under control. In fact, the BIG LIE even gets BIGGER—big business religion presumes to convince us to believe our hard work can effectively control God!

The illusion of control is a broad road, paved by lies, taken by many. It's a road that produces heartache and misery. Sadly, for many, while it is a path of good intentions, it is nonetheless a "hell" producing destruction and death. Surrendering to and trusting in Jesus is taking the narrow road—the path less taken, the road less traveled—the narrow path of grace is **the Jesus Way—the way and the truth and the life.**

Having goals and looking toward a future horizon is healthy, and such a quest can be a Christ-centered objective. However, apart from God the quest for a "good life" is based solely on variables that are sadly outside of human control, and bound for disillusionment because of the *illusion of control*. One of the best, most concise observations about the oh-so-human, and oh-so-un-Christlike *illusion of control* was published almost 30 years ago by one of my favorite authors:

Think about control in the history of our lives. We start out as babies in charge of nothing whatsoever: everything is done to or for us, nothing by us. But then come the 'terrible twos,' and we begin a lifetime of putting whatever arm we can on everybody we run into. Next come our teens, when we despise all control except our own. After that come our own offspring, whose helplessness tricks us into controlling them as we ourselves were once controlled. Then come their teens, in which we find ourselves out of control all over again (and after that, their adulthood, in which we're not even thanked for our pains but viewed as victimizers). And during all those years of trying to manage our lives, we lose control more and more until our death—when we have none at all. Yet all the while we go on thinking that one more effort at muscling things and people into religious order will make our identities come up roses. It's a wonder God even puts up with us.—"The Foolishness of Preaching" by Robert Farrar Capon

Receiving and embracing the grace and peace of God relieves us from a life of constant striving trying to make the grade and please God, for his grace tells us he loves us because of who he is, not because of who we are or what we do. As we surrender, trusting in and following Jesus, we are at peace with a life that is beyond our control, and, others whom we might try to control ("for their own good" of course) are also relieved to be free of our efforts!

Our risen Lord Jesus lives his life within us, filling us with assurance of the good news (gospel) of Jesus Christ, rescuing and saving us from running around like Chicken Little after we read or hear the latest news report from the media whose primary goal is to agitate and alarm us, leaving us in a fearful constant state of anxiety, more susceptible to their particular orientation.

Paul tells us that God's good work in us will mature us so we will no longer be *tossed back and*

forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming (Ephesians 4:14).

As we walk on the Jesus Way, by the grace of God we are filled with faith, peace and rest in our risen Lord Jesus Christ who gives us spiritual vision to look beyond the horizon of our earthly journey and sojourn, because God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—is beyond space and time. **God is our horizon**, transcending the here-today-and-gone-tomorrow horizon our eyes can see.

As we begin this New Year of 2026, let us place our focus and our faith beyond the horizon, *setting our hearts on things above, not on earthly things* (Colossians 3:2). My brothers and sisters in Christ, Friends and Partners of CWR/PTM, let us be content in Christ, at rest in our hearts and souls because of him, embracing the grace of God, assured of his peace, knowing that everything is under his control, for God has the whole world in his hands—**don't forget that includes you!**

Trusting and having faith in Jesus Christ does not mean we are blind to the troubles in our world. We are not hiding our heads in the sand. But, as we look beyond the horizon, as we trust in God with all our heart, mind and soul, we know that “this too will pass.” After all, just consider the 20th century—World War 1, the Spanish Flu pandemic, the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, World War 2, the Holocaust—despots like Stalin, Lenin, Hitler and Mao-Tse-Tung, then the Korean War, the Cold War, the Vietnam War.

Generation after generation all over this world and in every era and chapter of history, hundreds of millions have experienced plagues, famines, massacres, genocides, slavery... some on an apocalyptic scale that dwarfs what we have lived in and through.

As we begin this New Year of 2026, will our horizon be filled with anxiety and apprehension, worry, doubt and fear? Will we fumble and stumble in the darkness, searching for an earthly horizon of earthly solutions which are but a mirage of illusions and delusions? Or will our horizon in 2026 include the horizon we can see, filled with challenges and difficulties, as well as the Light of the Cross of Christ that illuminates a world beyond our horizon, succinctly summarized as the Jesus Way—the Way and the Truth and the Life?

Anticipating a New Year filled with **serving others in the name of Christ, with you, as we together do what no one of us can do on our own.**

Your brother in Christ—following Jesus with you,



Greg Albrecht
President, Plain Truth Ministries

CWR/PTM Prayer List—January 2026

These prayer requests are a representative sampling of so many others 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 being a CWR/PTM Prayer Partner—for *carrying each other's burdens* (Galatians 6:2).

Please pray about my white blood cell count. Thank you in advance for your prayers.—Louisiana

I have been diagnosed with throat cancer. Please pray for my healing and recovery.—Ohio

Please pray for me and my family as we mourn the loss of my sister.—Indiana

Please keep me in your prayers. The doctors found a spot on my lungs and will be doing a CT scan to determine what it is.—Wisconsin

My sister and her husband both have heart conditions. Please keep them in your prayers.—Arkansas

Please keep me in your prayers. I've been in the hospital with Covid and pneumonia. My brother (age 91) died while I was hospitalized, and I couldn't attend his funeral.—Maryland

I think I might have skin cancer—I have a red rash from my cheek to my neck. Please pray for me.—British Columbia, Canada

Please pray for my 25-year-old grandson. He has MALS, which causes acute abdominal pain. He is awaiting surgery on his intestines. This is the 7th operation he's gone through. He is ready to give up.—Illinois

Pray that citizens of the USA will not lose their healthcare. May God protect and bless us and protect everyone around the world from war.—Maine

Please continue to keep me in your prayers, as I am still recovering from a stomach hernia surgery. Thanks for including me in your prayer list.—Kentucky

Please pray that my children, who believe in God, will come to really know him.—California

Pray for God's comfort during my aging stage of life. I'm facing a blood evaluation for Leukemia as well as a colon condition.—Texas

I am 86 years old and I have Parkinsons. It is ravaging my body. Please pray for me.—West Virginia

Thanks for all your encouraging letters and articles. I am suffering with gout in my left foot. It is painful and sometimes wakes me up at night. I would appreciate your prayers.—North Carolina

Please pray for our family. My husband's alcoholism is getting worse since our son passed away last year. His anger has caused division in our family.—Texas

Please continue to pray for my nephew who is suffering from kidney disease. Please also pray for the doctors who are doing their best for him.—Michigan

Please pray for me. I have Leukemia and A-Fib, and I have had a loss of appetite, causing me to feel very weak. Thank you in advance for your prayers.—Arizona

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