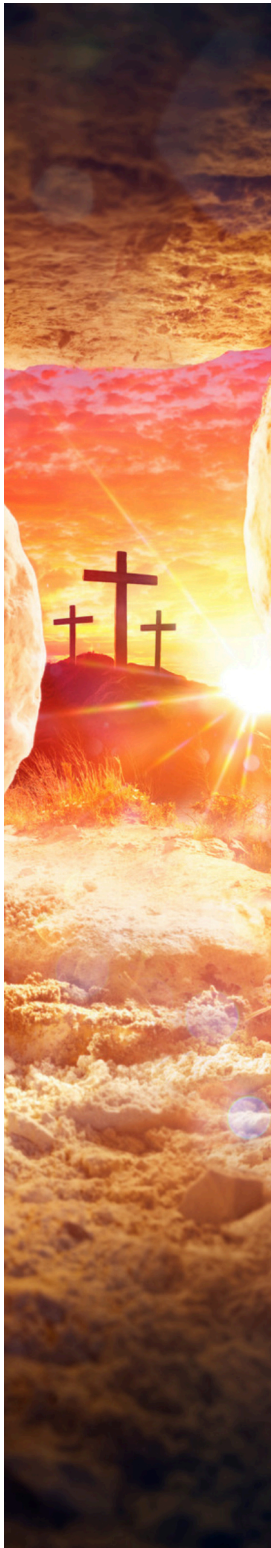


April 2026

THE WINE PRESS

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THE WINE PRESS



Pressing into Truth, Pouring out His Grace

April 2026

He Is Risen — and That Changes Everything

On the night before His arrest, Jesus said to His disciples: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

We can only imagine the fear and despair that gripped the disciples as they watched the scourging and crucifixion of Jesus — the crowd calling for Barabbas to be released and for their Lord to be put to death. But three days later, when Jesus rose from the grave, they understood at last the full weight of His words. He had conquered death itself. And those same disciples — transformed by the resurrection — turned the Roman Empire upside down, not because times were easy, but because they knew something the world didn't: the tomb is empty, death is defeated, and the risen Christ reigns.

That same truth anchors us today. The world may be turbulent, and the forces of darkness may seem to grow bolder by the day — but we stand firm on His Word, knowing that Jesus has already overcome the world and risen triumphant from the grave. He is risen! Happy Easter!

The Wine Press is a thoughtfully curated collection of articles from across the web, compiled to inspire, encourage, and deepen your walk with our King and Savior, Jesus Christ. All articles remain the property of their respective authors to whom we joyfully give full credit and our appreciation for sharing their wisdom and experiences with us. May these words uplift your spirit, strengthen your faith, and draw you into ever deeper communion with the God of all grace.

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God Wrote Himself In

By Tim Keller

In 1961 Yuri Gagarin, the first Russian cosmonaut, became the first man that we knew of that went into space and came back. I remember it, everybody was very excited about it. The official doctrine of the of the Soviet Union was atheism. And he came back and he said that he went up into space and he didn't see God, which he thought confirmed the atheistic viewpoint.

C.S. Lewis was still alive and he wrote a little essay called "The Seeing Eye". And in it he said, "If there's a God, you wouldn't relate to God the way a person on the first floor relates to a person on the second floor. In other words, you don't find God by going higher up in your own space. If God is our creator, then we would relate to God, not as a person on the first floor relates a person on the second floor, but as Hamlet relates to Shakespeare.

Now, how is Hamlet ever going to know anything about Shakespeare? Hamlet's not going to find him anywhere on stage, if he going to, he's not going to find him there. The only way he's ever going to meet Shakespeare is if Shakespeare writes himself into the play. Otherwise, Shakespeare created Hamlet, and if Hamlet's going to know anything about Shakespeare, Shakespeare's going to have to write himself in.

Scroll forward. Dorothy Sayers is a mystery writer and she wrote a set of

mystery short stories and novels about a fictional detective, Lord Peter Wimsey. About halfway through the novels and the short stories a love interest shows up, Harriet Vane. He's very lonely, but then Harriet shows up and they fall in love and they lived happily ever after. And many experts on Dorothy Sayers' work believe that she had written herself into her own stories. That she had looked into this this world she created and this character she created, and she saw he was lonely. So she loved him and she wrote herself in to save him.

I'm here to tell you that almost...almost, not completely, but almost, that's exactly what God has done. And that's what the incarnation's about. God created us. And he looked at us and he saw us flailing and sinking and He loved us enough to write Himself in.

And that's what the incarnation is. Jesus Christ is the creator God. It says so in John chapter 1. The creator God became a human being and came here to love us and to save us. "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14.

Watch the video: https://youtu.be/-DADx_0kCWw?si=IUhvynXNBI-utTXK

The Wonder of the Resurrection

By Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Romans 8:34: “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died—yea rather, that is risen again—who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

I want to focus in particular on that striking phrase: “yea rather, that is risen again.” It seems to capture, in a single expression, the very heart of the Christian message. The way the Apostle frames it is almost a protest—a bold correction, an emphatic declaration. It gathers up the essence of our hope and the glory of the Christian position.

Within those words is the note that defines the New Testament: victory. The gospel is good news—marked by triumph, joy, and confidence. And if there is one thing the resurrection ought to impress upon us, especially at Easter, it is precisely this spirit of victory and exhilaration.

You see it clearly at the end of the Gospels. The crucifixion is surrounded by sorrow, confusion, and despair. The disciples are disconsolate, their hopes seemingly shattered. Then, suddenly, everything changes. The resurrection breaks in. At first uncertain and hesitant, they come to understand what has



happened—and with that realization, the entire atmosphere is transformed.

That transformation is summed up in this phrase: “It is Christ that died—yea rather, that is risen again.” In those words, you have the movement from despair to triumph, from defeat to victory. It is the very spirit of the New Testament.

This same note runs through the book of Acts. What begins with a small and uncertain group quickly becomes a story of bold proclamation and authority. At Pentecost, Peter stands and preaches with confidence—and it is all grounded in the resurrection. From there, the message spreads throughout the world: glad tidings, proclaimed with joy and assurance. And that same note continues through the rest of the New Testament, right to its final book—a revelation from the risen Lord Himself.

A Message of Joy & Hope

All of this reminds us of a central truth: the Christian is meant to live in the light of victory. Ours is not a message of uncertainty or quiet despair, but of assurance, joy, and hope.

We are told in the opening of John’s Gospel that “as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.” As Christians, we are the children of God—and it is vital that we know it, that we rest in it with confidence.

There is nothing more foreign to the New Testament than the idea that Christians are merely struggling, uncertain people—always trying, always failing, always burdened with doubt. That is a distortion of the gospel. The New Testament presents something entirely different: a people marked by assurance and joy.

The Christian is not someone hoping to be saved. The true Christian knows that he is saved—and rejoices in that knowledge, living with a spirit of victory

and hope.

This is the very theme the Apostle unfolds in Romans 8. “If God be for us, who can be against us?” No accusation can stand, no condemnation can prevail. Why? Because “it is Christ that died—yea rather, that is risen again.”

And it is this “yea rather”—this resurrection—that gives us our deepest assurance, our joy, and our triumph.

The Resurrection Proves Who Our Lord Is

The resurrection proves who our Lord is. It was this, finally, that convinced even the Apostles themselves that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the eternal Son of God. There is no salvation apart from this. As Christians, we believe and proclaim that God has visited and redeemed His people—and that He has done so in and through His only begotten Son.

The Work of the Cross Was Complete

The second great truth established by the resurrection is that our Lord’s work on the cross was complete.

“Who can bring any charge against God’s elect?” There are the demands of God’s law, the requirements of His righteousness. The answer is found at Calvary. “It is Christ that died.” He died bearing our sins and our guilt.

Jesus Himself said that He came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many. God laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. Christ has taken our place, satisfying the demands of God’s holy law on behalf of all who believe in Him.

But the question arises: was His death sufficient? Did He truly bear the full punishment for sin? Has every demand of God’s law been satisfied?

If all we had were the cross, we might still wonder. We might say, “Was the burden too great, even for Him?” And we would have no final answer.

But here is the answer: “It is Christ that died—yea rather, that is risen again.” That is our assurance.

The resurrection is God’s declaration that the work of His Son was sufficient. By raising Him from the dead, God proclaims that every demand has been met, every sin fully dealt with, every penalty paid. Christ has borne it all—and God is satisfied.

So the Apostle corrects himself, as it were: “It is Christ that died—yea rather...” The emphasis shifts. Not merely that He died, but that He is risen—and now lives at the right hand of God.

There should be no uncertainty. The resurrection is God’s proclamation that sin has been dealt with. There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

You may say, “But I still sin.” Yes—and so does every believer. But you are not to look at yourself. You are to look at the risen Christ. Your sins—past, present, and future—were laid upon Him. They have been dealt with once and for all.

God is faithful and just to forgive—not merely merciful, but just—because sin has already been punished in Christ. God does not punish sin twice.

This is the teaching of the New Testament, and it is grounded in the resurrection: “It is Christ that died—yea rather, that is risen again.”

His Invincible Power Over All Our Enemies

The resurrection also proves Christ’s invincible power over all our enemies.

Salvation means deliverance—from the

devil, the world, the flesh, sin, and even the condemning power of the law. Christ came to save us from all our foes.

In the Gospels, we see Him conquering temptation, casting out demons, fulfilling the law perfectly. On the cross, He bore our sins and their punishment.

But one enemy remained: death.

Death has ruled over humanity from the beginning. It is the final enemy, the universal conqueror. Yet Scripture tells us that through death, Christ destroyed the one who had the power of death—the devil—and delivered those who were held in lifelong bondage through fear.

Christians are meant to live in the light of victory. Ours is not a message of uncertainty or quiet despair, but of assurance, joy & hope.

The question is answered in the resurrection: “It is Christ that died—yea rather, that is risen again.” He has broken the power of death. He has triumphed over the grave.

“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

Death is no longer the final word. It is a defeated enemy—a doorway into life.

His Ascension and Intercession

The resurrection leads to His ascension: “who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

Christ now sits at the right hand of God as our representative. His intercession does not mean pleading for forgiveness—that has already been accomplished. Rather, He intercedes for



our ongoing needs.

He knows our weakness, our trials, our struggles. Having lived in this world, He understands fully. And now He ensures that we receive every grace and every strength needed.

We are invited, therefore, to come boldly to the throne of grace—to obtain mercy and find help in time of need.

The Resurrection Guarantees Our Own Resurrection & Glory

The resurrection of Christ guarantees our own. Salvation is not only for the soul—it includes the body. These frail, mortal bodies will be raised and transformed.

“If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you... He shall also quicken your mortal bodies.”

Christ is the firstfruits—the first in a great harvest. As in Adam all die, so in Christ all shall be made alive. We are already risen with Him spiritually. But one day, our bodies too will be raised, changed, and glorified like His.

More Than Conquerors

What does this mean for us now?

It means that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Not

death, nor life, nor any power in heaven or earth.

All these forces once opposed Him—and thought they had triumphed at the cross. But they were defeated when He rose.

“It is Christ that died—yea rather, that is risen again.”

He has conquered all—and He has done so for us.

Therefore, we need not fear. He prepares a place for us and will come again to receive us to Himself.

The question remains: do you live in this triumph?

Do you know that death has been conquered? That you are destined for glory? That you will be like Him?

If so, you will live differently—detached from the world, devoted to Him, rejoicing with a joy full of glory.

“It is Christ that died—yea rather, that is risen again... who will come again and receive me unto Himself.”

Blessed be His name.

Full video: <https://youtu.be/JO-wQVvB0O4?si=5LdT-cUS526KCSSS>

The Veil Has Been Torn

By R.C. Sproul

“**T**hen the Lord God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever’—therefore, the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden, He placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life” ([Gen. 3:22–24](#)).

Expulsion from Paradise

Removal from the immediate presence of the glory of God, from the source of life. Man is driven by God out of immediate fellowship. He’s not sent to hell, where there’s only darkness and weeping and gnashing of teeth. There’s no total breaking off of communion with God, but rather a removal in distance. Now, one cannot approach God and deal with Him face-to-face, but there is a barrier that’s placed there between intimate fellowship and intimate communion with God and man because of sin.

Now, what bars the entrance to paradise? The flaming sword. The flaming sword, which turned every way. There is no way for Adam and Eve to get by that flaming sword to come back into the garden. The brilliance of God’s holiness bars the way to intimate fellowship with Him. And

that sword indicates—you see, the flame of the sword indicates—the overwhelming power of God’s holiness.

Again, it’s impossible to understand Christianity at all until we come to an understanding of the holiness of God, and we’re seeing it manifested already here in the opening chapters of Genesis. It’s the holiness of God that scares you to death. Men like the benefits of God. They love to receive the gifts that only God can give them, but people are scared to death to be in the presence of God because of the threatening character of His holiness. All God has to do to keep people out of His presence is post a manifest representation of holiness and that’ll keep people away forever.

The Holy of Holies

In the Old Testament we see this particular aspect of the curse manifested very clearly in the structure of Israelite worship. Where do we find it? In the Holy of Holies.

And what’s the difference between the Holy of Holies in the Holy Place? Only the high priest—and after elaborate procedures of cleansing—once a year can go into the Holy of Holies. What’s in the Holy of Holies? The ark of the covenant, the mercy seat, the throne of Yahweh, surrounded by the cherubim that indicate the presence of God. What separates the

Holy of Holies from the Holy Place? The veil that is so thick and it's so solid that it's impregnable. It's an impregnable barrier. It's not like a linen curtain that hangs down, but the veil is several inches thick, and battering rams couldn't knock that thing down.

And the point is what? People are allowed to come into the Holy Place. They're not left to roam outside the camp totally removed from the presence of God. They're allowed to draw near to the Lord. They can come to a relative place of nearness, where God will meet with His people in the Holy Place, but they are not allowed to go beyond the veil into the Holy of Holies. Access to the presence of God is denied.

Peace with God

Again, we'll see this theme throughout the Old Testament and into the New Testament that the ultimate goal of the Christian for his total fulfillment of human existence is what? Let me ask you, what is the great hope of the final fullest expression of your human existence at the end? What do you live for? What does the Christian live for? To see God, what we call the beatific vision or the visio Dei, the vision of God—the unveiled, unobscured perception of God Himself.

What happened in Jerusalem the day Jesus died? The veil was rent. The description there is one of violence, where God comes down in the act of the cross, He shakes the world with an earthquake, and He rips that veil in half. And the wall of partition has been broken down through the work of Christ.

And what's the significance of that according to the Apostle Paul? "Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1) — what do we have? Peace with God.

Shalom. God puts away the sword.

Prior to justification, God is at war with me. There's estrangement, there's alienation, there's a sword at the entrance to the garden of Eden. But when we were made just in Christ, the sword is put away, the temple veil is destroyed, and we have peace with God.

Is it a lasting peace? Is it merely a guarded truce, where the next act of sin is going to cause the rattling of the sabers again, and God is going to lash out at you in His anger? No. A man who is justified has walked through the veil with Christ, stands in the presence of God, declared just in Christ. We have peace with God. No more warfare. The war is over.

What else do we have? This is the part that's so often obscured: "Through Him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God." Do you know what that verse is all about? We have peace. We have access. The sword is down. We can go back in.

<https://learn.ligonier.org/podcasts/ultimately-with-rc-sproul/the-veil-has-been-torn>



Unseen Footprints

By Jim Denison

The legendary actor and comedian Dick Van Dyke recently became a centenarian. He explains his longevity simply: he keeps a positive outlook and never gets angry.

Scientists agree with his theory.

In one study, people who were optimistic lived between 11 and 15 percent longer than their pessimistic counterparts. In another, those who were more optimistic were more likely to live into their nineties than pessimists.

Research shows that chronic stress and anger are linked to an increased risk of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes, diseases that account for roughly 75 percent of early deaths. Stress is also linked to cellular aging. And researchers studying stroke survivors have found that optimism lowers chronic inflammation, leading to less severe strokes and less physical disability.

However, you and I didn't need scientists to tell us what we innately understood, that happier people are typically healthier people.

If only knowing and doing God's will were so obvious and intuitive.

“Yet your footprints were unseen”

I was reading Psalm 77 recently and was struck by verse 16: “When the waters

saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; indeed, the deep trembled.” Some scholars believe Asaph was referring to the parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14), while others point to Israel's miraculous crossing of the flooded Jordan River (Joshua 3).

Whatever the specific reference, what God did was stupendous: “The clouds poured out water; the skies gave forth thunder; your arrows flashed on every side. The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lighted up the world; the earth trembled and shook” (Psalm 77:17–18).

Now to my point: Asaph then prays, “Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were unseen” (v. 19, my emphasis).

It is one thing to follow someone whose “footprints” are obvious to us. It is another to follow someone we cannot see, trusting that their word is true and their will is best, before we can verify either.

“The people passed over in haste”

When the Israelites passed through the parted Red Sea, its waters were “a wall to them on their right hand and on their left” (Exodus 14:22). Imagine what it must have felt like to risk your life and

your family in this way, knowing that any moment the waters could come crashing down on you as they later did on the Egyptian army (v. 28).

Forty years later, the people found themselves on the bank of the flooded Jordan River. Again they crossed in peril of their lives, knowing that the flood waters could return at any moment to sweep them away (cf. [Joshua 4:18](#)).

No wonder “the people passed over in haste” (v. 10).

God similarly called Abraham to leave his family and homeland, “not knowing where he was going” ([Hebrews 11:8](#)). And the Lord called Paul to leave where he had been to go to a place he had never gone ([Acts 16:6–10](#)).

Solomon famously advised us: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding” ([Proverbs 3:5](#)). There are times when the first requires the second, when our “own understanding” is insufficient for understanding the ways of God, and we must trust what we do not see.

As Jesus said, “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” ([John 20:29](#)). Accordingly, “we walk by

faith, not by sight” ([2 Corinthians 5:7](#)).

“I remember your wonders of old”

As a longtime pastor and theologian, I am familiar with the texts I just cited. But that doesn’t mean I like them better than anyone else. I don’t want God’s footprints to be “unseen.” I don’t want to have to go out “not knowing” where I’m going. I want to walk by faith but also by sight.

It seems that God requires unseeing faith as though it is a precondition to knowing his will, a bill we must pay or work we must perform. But we are saved by faith, not by works ([Ephesians 2:8–9](#)). There is nothing we can do to make God love us any more or any less than he does right now, because “God is love” ([1 John 4:8](#), my emphasis).

Why, then, must we so often trust his will before we understand it? Because this is so often the only way we can understand it.

How could God prove to the Jews while they crossed the Red Sea or the Jordan River that the waters would not return to drown them? How could he prove to Abraham before he went out “not





When I do, I will testify with the psalmist, “Your way, O God, is holy” (v. 13). And I will find the courage to choose this “way” myself.

“The secret of spiritual knowledge”

In Catholic tradition, today is “St. Joseph’s Day.” A ninth-century calendar [mentions](#) March 19 and Joseph, implying that this was the day he died. In 1621, Pope Gregory XV made the commemoration of this day official.

For Jesus’ adoptive father, God’s footprints were truly “unseen.” Joseph was told that his fiancée was pregnant with the Messiah and instructed to marry her anyway. He was told to flee Israel for Egypt and later to return. He was directed to settle in Nazareth, a town so small it is not mentioned even once in the Old Testament.

And his obedience changed both history and eternity.

The famed missionary Eric Liddell noted,

“Obedience to God’s will is the secret of spiritual knowledge and insight.”

Will you learn this “secret” today?

Read the article here:

<https://www.denisonforum.org/daily-article/dick-van-dyke-and-scientists-tell-us-how-to-live-longer/>



knowing” that he would become the father of the Jewish nation as a result of his obedience (cf. [Galatians 3:6](#))? How could he prove to Paul before he followed his Macedonian vision that the apostle would take the gospel to the Western world?

Relationships typically require a commitment that transcends the evidence and becomes self-validating. This is true of choosing to be married, having children, taking a job, or even reading this article—you can’t prove my words are worth your time today until you spend your time reading them.

As a result, when I want God to explain his will to me before I choose it, I am asking him to do the logically impossible, like making a square circle or naming the color of the number 7. At such times, I do well to follow Asaph’s example: “I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds” ([Psalm 77:11–12](#)).

The Promise of Peace in a Worried World

(Written during the Pandemic)

By John McArthur

It is a joy to be able to direct your thoughts toward the things of the Lord in a time of trouble, a time of trial, a time of - for some people - a certain amount of danger, and the reality of mortality faces all of us in a time like this. Let me remind you of something that Job's friend Eliphaz said. He said, "Man is born for trouble, as sparks fly upward." As surely as sparks off a fire fly upward, man is born for trouble. Trouble is certain and trouble is relentless. Life is dangerous. In fact, there is nothing more certain than the fact that we're all going to die. That alone is this certainty of life. In that sense, life is a terminal illness. Life is a fatal condition. Life is a deadly disease.

But sometimes there are things that happen that frighten us beyond the normal sense of impending death. A billion people have died in wars, a billion. Sixty million people a year die; fifteen million of them die from heart disease, ten million of them die from cancer. Fifteen thousand children die every day. Four thousand people die every day from accidents on the highways. Fifty million people died in the Spanish flu epidemic in 1918. But the greatest of all holocausts was the Black Death in the 1300s when seventy-five million people died. One can only imagine the terror that occupied the



hearts of the people who were exposed to that.

The Rock of the Word

For those who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ, who have no true hope after death, it's reasonable to fear, it's reasonable to be concerned about death. But what about the family of God? How do we respond to these things? And how can we be the rock and the safe place and the protector and the helper of those around us? How do we respond, and what is our perspective to be? The Word of God is clear on this, so I want to encourage you with some things from the Word of God:

“The Lord also will be a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble; and those who know Your name will put their trust in You, for You, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.”

“One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to meditate in His temple. For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His tabernacle; in the secret place of His tent He will hide me; He will lift me up on a rock. And now my head will be lifted up above my enemies around me, and I will offer in His tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.”

“Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance.”

“I sought the Lord and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces will never be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and rescues them. O taste and see that the Lord is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! O fear the Lord, you His saints; for to those who fear Him there is no want. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they who seek the Lord shall not be in want of any good thing.”

“The righteous cry, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones, not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned. But the Lord redeems the soul of His servants, and none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.”

“But the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; He is their strength in time of trouble.”

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy dwelling places of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.”

“Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.”

“My heart is in anguish within me, and the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me. I

said, ‘Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest.’ Behold, I would wander far away, I would lodge in the wilderness. I would hasten to my place of refuge from the stormy wind and tempest.”

“Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.”

“Because the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who take refuge in Him.”

Protected by God

Such protection is promised to God’s people; and God repeats it again and again. God declares His commitment to the protection and the care of those who are His, so that they will live out their days as God has ordained. He will protect them to those days which He has ordained so that they can accomplish His will and His purpose.

Those who belong to the Lord, who are His possession, and who walk in faithfulness to the Lord are protected by the Lord. Those who disobey the Lord have no protector. They are part of the kingdom of darkness; and the head of the kingdom of darkness is Satan himself who is a liar and a murderer.

Don’t Worry

In the New Testament we see that the Lord is gathering a new people, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a people for His own possession, and to them He promises blessings, blessings to the faithful.

“For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body

more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing?

“Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. If God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith!

“Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6: 25-34)

Three times in that passage Jesus says don’t worry, don’t worry. He actually says, “Don’t worry, stop worrying, and don’t start worrying,” by changing the form of the verb. If you’re worrying,



stop. If you're not yet worrying, don't start. And just generally, don't worry, don't be anxious.

Don't be concerned for your life. Why would you worry about your life if you belong to God? Don't be concerned about your temporal life, what you eat, what you drink, what you wear. You are in the kingdom. You belong to God's kingdom. You're a child of God. He will make sure that you have all that you need.

For us, if God cares for the birds, do we for a moment think He cares less about us? Do we need to fear the future of food? Do we need to stockpile and hoard, ignoring the promises of God and forfeiting a kind of carefree heart? If God cares for the birds, do you think He's going to care for you? Profound and powerful.

God Sustains Life

Life is a gift from God, right? If God gives life, He sustains life. You didn't create yourself; you didn't plan yourself into the world; you didn't put yourself where you are; providence in God's purpose put you exactly where you are.

He gave you life in order to sustain that life for His own purposes. As you walk in obedience to Him, He will sustain, and that means He will provide all that you need. If God has given me life, He'll give me the food to sustain that life.

"Give us this day our daily bread." That's all we really need. So, no sense in worrying about your food, because the Father who gave you life will give you what you need for that life to be sustained. God has given us life; God will sustain that life. We don't need to worry about that life. We need to be faithful to Him so that it's a full life as He has planned for us before He takes us to glory.

The sum of it is clear: God is your Father, and God takes care of those who are His own. Your heavenly Father like any faithful father will feed and clothe His beloved children.

We are Not of The World

Secondly, He says don't worry because you're not part of the nations. You're not a part of the kingdom of darkness. It is faithless to worry when you're not a part of those who should worry, because they

have rejected their heavenly Father, because they have no hope, they have no promise. They have turned against God and God is their enemy, but not you. “This is what Gentiles” – and the verb is very strong – “eagerly seek.” They live for this.

People outside the kingdom of God live for what they eat, what they drink, and what they wear. The pagans, the Christless world, those who do not acknowledge God, do not know God as their Father, and have not come to Him to claim His provision and His promise, have reason to worry about their supply. They’re on their own.

Those who reject the true God have created gods of their own, false gods, and thus they have violated the first commandment and are under judgment. They have no guarantee of their next breath. They have no promise of a protector, no one to care for them. They are outside God’s kingdom; they’re in the kingdom of darkness; they’re in the kingdom of death; they should be afraid.

Matthew 6:32 says “After all these things do the Gentiles seek” – you could say – “with all their energy,” totally consumed in material gratification for survival. But how different are we? We are in God’s family, and God assures us of a full supply of everything we need. It is shamefully wicked for a child of God to come down to the level of the heathen who don’t know God. You’re in God’s family.

The people of the world seek these things, and right they should, because they’re their own protectors. They are their own saviors, temporally speaking in a sense. They’re on their own. They need to worry about food. They need to worry about drink. They need to worry about clothing. They need to worry about life. But they have to understand this: to do that, you end up serving money.

The world has made its choice. They will

not serve God; they will serve money. Money is the ultimate god; whatever it takes for them to protect themselves, to provide for themselves, they pursue with all their powers. That’s the real reason people chase money, because they have no supernatural protector. One way to say it would be they have no invisible means of support.

We are Sons of the King

We can’t be like the world. Sons of the King do not conduct themselves like the devil’s beggar. So ask yourself, “Do I face life like a Christian, like a member of the family of God, the kingdom of light, or like a pagan? When things are difficult and a little bit unsure, how do I react - by fear or doubt as if it all depended on me, or do I react with joy and confidence because I know it’s in God’s hands? It’s one thing to say you’re a child of God; you belong to His kingdom. Hopefully when life turns out to be deadly or terrifyingly fearful, that claim still holds because your trust is evident.

Our Invisible Means of Support

Paul said: “We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” While everybody else is looking for the visible means of support because that’s all they have, we’re content to rest in the invisible means of support because “Our heavenly Father knows that we need all these things.”

Our Father rules the universe, all the inanimate and animate realities, and He has loaded this planet with amazing wealth, with amazing life. The most powerful thing in the temporal world is life. Life is so powerful and God is the source of all of that life.

All worry either assumes that God is not there, or that God does not care, or that

God is there and does care but can't do anything about it because He lacks the power. He is either unaware, indifferent, or impotent. But no, verse 32 says, "Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things." And verse 33 at the end, "And all these things will be added to you." He knows, which means He has the full awareness, and He has the power to provide. He knows, He has the full awareness, and He has the power to provide everything you need. God does care; God does know; God does provide.

Don't Worry for the Future

And finally, verse 34, "Don't worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." Don't worry because of not only your Father and your family, but don't worry because of your future.

And here it says, "Don't start worrying about tomorrow." That's literally how you would translate that form of the verb *merimna*¶. "Don't start worrying about tomorrow." Providing for tomorrow, that's wise; saving, that's wise. But God is the God of tomorrow just as He is the God of today.

How many times have you sung "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"? You probably can't even recall the number of times you have sung that. Listen to what it says: "The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed will never cease, for His compassions never fail." Lamentations 3: 23 "They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. Why would you worry about tomorrow when the Lord's mercies are new every morning?"

Worry is a powerful force. It can steal your joy. It can rob you of contentment. It can fill you with anxiety and fear, even panic attacks are related to the kind of anxiety that fear produces and worry produces. Don't push your fears into the future. God will give you strength for every new day; His mercies are new

every morning.

To anticipate trouble is to double it without the grace to endure it; because you're not there yet, you don't have the grace yet. To anticipate trouble is to double it when God will allow it only singly and provide you sufficient grace for it.

Fear is a liar. Fear lies to you. Fear tells you your future is not under control. That's a lie. Don't worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. You've got enough trouble today; deal with that. God will be there in the future. [Hebrews 13:8](#), "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." Don't cripple the present by worrying about the future. You destroy your joy and you lose the present.

Worry Means We Don't Trust Him

So worry is a forbidden sin, incompatible with the fact that God is your Father, you're a member of His eternal family, and your future is completely cared for. That makes worry stupid as well as sinful. Let the pagans worry; they have no protector; they have no promise. We're not spiritual orphans. We're not floating around on our own. We're not spiritually homeless. We have a home; we have a Father. We have all of His resources and all of His riches at His disposal to dispense with us.

He loves us and cares for us; He meets every need we have. All He asks out of us is that we love Him and obey Him and serve Him and not worry, because worry declares that we don't trust Him. Either we don't trust that He's aware when He is; we don't trust that He cares when He does, and we don't trust that He can do anything to protect us when He can. This is really a sin against the God who loves you.

Seek First His Kingdom

So the conclusion is: "Seek first His

kingdom and His righteousness.” Walk in obedience. Walk in righteousness. Seek His kingdom, not the things of the world. Seek to know Him, to love Him more. Seek the things that make up the kingdom. The kingdom of God is joy, peace, power in the Holy Spirit.

“Seek His kingdom, seek His righteousness, and all these things shall be added.” All physical necessities will be added. Everything you need now and everything you need in the present and everything you would ever need in the future, all these things will be added for you. And Scripture says, “Eye has not seen, nor has ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for those that love Him.” Long for God’s glory, and He will give you the rest. Obey Him, and He will fill your life with all good things.

That’s the one positive command in this whole passage. Three times a negative command: “Don’t worry, don’t worry, don’t worry.” What sets worry aside, what buries it is to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. Be concerned about God, His glory, His righteousness. Be concerned about being an obedient believer, trusting believer; and God will pour out heavenly blessing on you.

Choose the Good Part

In Luke chapter 10, our Lord is in the house of Mary and Martha. “They were traveling along, and He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord’s feet, listening to His word.

But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, ‘Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.’ The Lord answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the

good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

“You’re fussing about the food; she’s listening to the Word. You’re preoccupied with physical needs; she is consumed with spiritual nourishment. That’s the best part.” Why? “Because man does not live by” – What? – “bread alone, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” So you want the best part? Seek the kingdom. You want to seek the kingdom? Then sit at the feet of Jesus, as Mary did, and listen to His Word. Fill up on His Word, be thankful, be encouraged, walk in the path of righteousness, and God will supply everything you ever need. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.”

This is a time I think for all of us who are believers to rise above the fray and the panic. This is a time for all of us as believers to demonstrate our trust in the Lord. Let’s make sure we give honor to our Father and our family, and His promises of our future.

Closing Prayer

“Thank You, Lord, that we have nothing to fear and nothing to worry about, and that for us, “to live is Christ and to die is gain.” But let it be, Lord, that we live so faithfully that we live out all our days, and You sustain us and give us a full testimony to the watching world of our unending and ever-increasing trust in You. May we demonstrate in these days to those around us our joy, our peace, our calm, our love, based on the fact that we have a God who is faithful, and we rejoice in that, and we pray in the name of Christ. Amen.”

Full sermon:

<https://www.gty.org/sermons/81-72/the-promise-of-peace-in-a-worried-world>

“Holy Wars” & the End of Days

By Fr. Emmanuel Lemelson

A War Framed as Divine

The serpent is no longer whispering in the shadows. It is being spread through official readiness briefings across 40 different military units.

We just struck Iran. The smoke is still rising, and combat commanders are telling their troops that this war is “fully part of God’s divine plan.” They are telling our young men—our sons—that a sitting president was “appointed by Jesus to light the signal fire in Iran and trigger the end of the world.”

This is apostasy dressed up in patriotic clothing. These commanders are “giddy,” calculating exactly how bloody this battle must be to satisfy a 19th-century heresy.

This is the bitter fruit of war-hungry apocalypticism—because they believe it will accelerate the rapture.

What is happening now is deeply troubling. We see leaders praying while tanks and bombs move in the background. It echoes what was said 20 years ago—that God had commanded war—and now we are hearing the same language again: that this is “God’s war.”

Even recently, Netanyahu spoke of the Messiah being near and that “we are going to bring it about.”

There Is No “Holy War” in Christianity

There is no such thing as a holy war in Orthodox Christianity.

We do not accept that concept. Catholics have the idea of a “just war.” Muslims have the concept of jihad. And for Jews, the expectation is that the Messiah will be a political and military leader who brings peace through power.

But as Orthodox Christians, we reject this.

Anyone can see what is happening. Palestinian Christians—and non-Christians as well—are being killed. The distinction does not matter. It is genocide.

I always return to the example of Christ before Pontius Pilate. Jesus said, in essence, that He could call down the armies of heaven and overthrow Rome—but that was not His mission.

Christ did not pursue worldly power.

The True Messiah vs. an Earthly Kingdom

There is a profound difference between the Jewish idea of the Messiah and Christ, the Son of the living God.

Two thousand years ago, they could not accept Him—and they still cannot. They cannot accept a suffering servant or the self-sacrificial love of God. Instead, they

want the law—the Mosaic law—and they continue to cling to it.

The Mosaic law was part of God’s grace, leading us to His Son. But with the New Covenant, it is no longer necessary once we trust in Christ.

The Bible—literally meaning “the book”—contains both the Old and New Testaments. Yet many modern movements rely heavily on the Old Testament while ignoring the fulfillment found in Christ.

Today, Israeli leaders openly speak of expanding to “biblical borders,” including Syria, Gaza, and Lebanon—regions that historically are Christian lands.

Over the past century, the Christian population in these regions has declined by more than 75 percent.

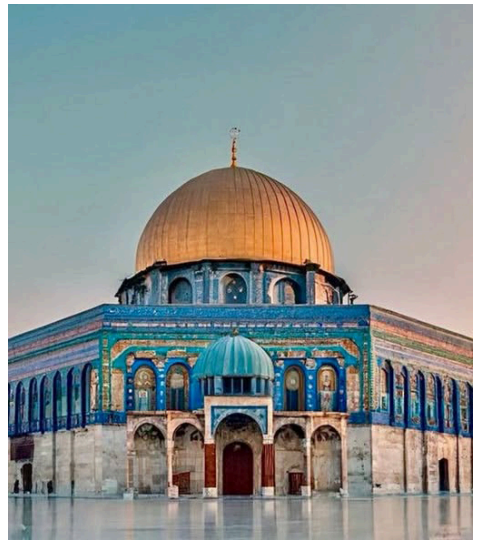
A World on the Brink

I think sadly we are on the verge of World War III, if we’re not already into it. Maybe we could stave that off through prayer and repentance. I think we could. But there’s no question that they’re on a timeline to re-establish the third temple. Whether it’s training up a new Levitical priesthood, which is almost complete now. To the importation of these red heifers from Texas that are now of age for sacrifice to the creation of some 60 vessels to be used in the temple.

If I was forced to bet, I’d bet that Al-Aqsa Mosque won’t be there much longer. And it will probably be blamed on an Iranian missile, that would be my guess.

The rebuilding of the temple is going to be a tomb to a dead God, and they’re going to have a false Messiah sitting in that seat. Because the Messiah already came, but he was rejected, and they cannot accept that.

And one of the key differentiators is that



they want an earthly power, remember that.

Their priority is worldly power, political power.

The dominant movement in Israel from what I can tell is not mainstream Judaism, it’s the Zionists. I have many Jewish friends, and we as Christians, we have to be an icon to them, if there’s any hope of them coming to know the Christ, coming to know the Messiah, the son of God, it should come from us. So we cannot unilaterally condemn the Jews, we have to be a light to them.

With this war, we have not only this tragic loss of innocent life, but you have many people who have lost their ability to feel the pain of the loss of innocent life. When innocent children—like the 160 girls in a school—are killed, they are not “collateral damage.” They are human lives. And yet many have lost the ability to feel that loss.

The Rise of Global Control

One of the things I’m most concerned about is this move towards world government, because in the book of Daniel and in Revelation, it’s implicit.

Revelation says that all rich or poor, big and small will fall under the dominion for this short period of the end of history, under control of this totalitarian world state.

So now we've got the United Nations, and there's the Board of Peace, which is a new iteration of world government, and Xi Jinping just proposed the global governance initiative. So you've got Xi Jinping and Trump both proposing world government.

Nobody knows the end of days, but this looks a lot like it checks a lot of the boxes, doesn't it?

We've seen a great secularization of the school system and society. And they're building out all these biometric IDs, digital IDs. They're saying now all operating systems, Linux, Windows, Mac, and smartphone operating systems, Androids are going to have to have natively built-in identity verification. And this is happening in every single nation on planet. I ultimately think that's going to be how the mark of the beast will be enforced. So that's really a taste of what's coming. When you talk of the mark of the beast, being cut off from buying and selling, that is precisely what the Book of Revelation says.

Faith Over Fear

Yet, despite all of this, we must remember: They are not more powerful than Christ. They are not more powerful than God.

There's the quote in the Bible that says that even the kings, the mighty men, they're building their bunkers now, they can't hide. What makes you think you can you can hide?

And then people are worrying about this globalist or that transhuman or technocratic technology. I think within reason, we have to do things to protect ourselves like, you know, from being debanked and all that, you make normal

arrangements, but not to be fearful.

Christ repeatedly implores us in the gospel, the Holy Gospel, to be not afraid. The antidote to fear is faith, you cannot be afraid and faithful at the same time. Cultivate faith in your heart.

Go to church and look at the cross, look at the holy icons of Christ, or the Christ child, or the Virgin Mary, get the focus off yourself, discover other people and be in communion with them before your living God. And then you will begin to feel that fire of faith in your heart, and you realize that these people, they seem to be very powerful, but in fact, they have no power.

Return to God through repentance, be with faithful Christians, because they are different, people who have Christ in their heart are different. When you live a life in Christ, it changes you, full stop.

So you don't have to be afraid, ultimately God's Will will be done.

That is the most simple prayer that Christ teaches us to pray, right?

“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Notice in there, our daily bread. Don't compromise yourself for more zeros in your bank account. Your daily bread is enough, that will be enough.

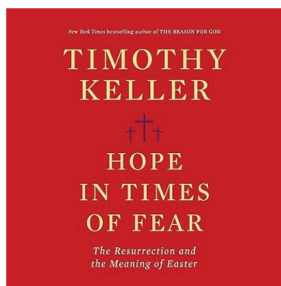
Watch the full interview here:

https://youtu.be/RwLOMaNH_mk?si=utyYJMKH3rhdscyG0

Check It Out: Books, Apps etc.

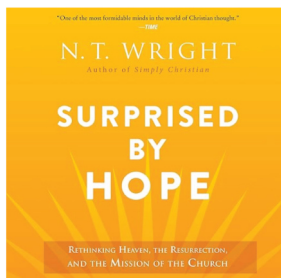
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Books



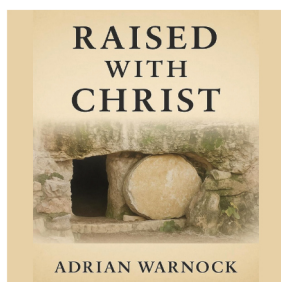
Hope in Times of Fear By Tim Keller

Written while Keller was facing a terminal cancer diagnosis, this is resurrection hope tested in the fires of real suffering. He argues powerfully that the resurrection gives Christians not just hope for the future, but hope that comes from the future. One of the most personally moving books on the resurrection you will ever read.



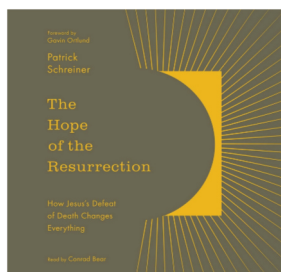
Surprised by Hope By N.T. Wright

Wright challenges Christians to recover a richer, more biblical vision of resurrection hope — not a disembodied existence in heaven, but the renewal of all creation, begun in the resurrection of Jesus. This landmark book will expand your horizons and deepen your understanding of what Easter really means.



Raised with Christ By Adrian Warnock

Warnock makes the compelling case that the resurrection is not merely a doctrine to be believed but a present reality to be lived — and that the power of the risen Christ is actively at work in every believer's life. Theologically solid yet pastorally warm, this book will help you rediscover the practical difference the empty tomb makes every single day.



The Hope of the Resurrection By Patrick Schreiner

A fresh and joyful celebration of the resurrection as not just historically true, but good and beautiful — and transformative for everyday life. Schreiner shows that the empty tomb is not something we commemorate once a year at Easter, but the living power in which believers walk every day.

My Living Hope

Song by Phil Wickham

How great the chasm that lay between us
How high the mountain I could not climb
In desperation, I turned to heaven
And spoke Your name into the night
Then through the darkness, Your loving kindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul
The work is finished, the end is written
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Who could imagine so great a mercy?
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?
The God of ages stepped down from glory
To wear my sin and bear my shame
The cross has spoken, I am forgiven
The King of kings calls me His own
Beautiful Savior, I'm Yours forever
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Then came the morning that sealed the promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me
Then came the morning that sealed the promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me
Jesus, Yours is the victory!

Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ, my living hope
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Oh God, You are my living hope

