

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32

“And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”

MARCH 28, 2021

Let the Word of Christ Dwell.....

Jim Stauffer

“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” (Colossians 3:16)

Let us notice the intent and effect of our Savior’s message dwelling in us richly. The apostle is indicating Christ’s word is to take up residence in us for the very purpose of using wisdom to teach and admonish one another as we worship in song. Several things about our singing become apparent when this takes place. Our hearts (**Eph. 5:19**) are pouring forth a melody of the message of salvation because we are grateful to have been delivered from the *domain of darkness* (**Col. 1:13**). When this happens we are indeed demonstrating evidence the word of Christ is dwelling in us.

There are two components to this instruction. First we must have the word of Christ. Jesus spoke of His message as the truth. Truth is distinct from other messages that came from men (**John 8:32; 18:37**). This word Jesus has communicated to mankind engenders faith in Him (**Rom. 10:17**), and is the very word he expects to dwell, that is take up residence in our hearts. This is the word the Thessalonians believed and then communicated to all who would hear it (**1 Thess. 1:8**). His word is the very source of eternal life, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”* (**John 5:24**)

The second part of this instruction is letting the word dwell richly in us. There is a great difference between an acquaintance with the word of Christ and allowing it to dwell in us. Many in the world have some level of acquaintance with the word of Christ. They often use it inaccurately to defuse an application of it to themselves.

But we are told to allow it to take up residence in us. According to the Lord as He presented the parable of the sower, the good soil in that story was the good and honest heart where it was held fast and then bore fruit as it directed one’s life.

When the word dwells in our hearts, it leads and directs us to follow His will for His disciples. The apostle Paul indicated it led him to teach others, *“We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.”* (**Colossians 1:28**) John says this indwelling of the word affects our lives by leading us to obey the Lord and walk in His steps (**1 John 2:4-6**).

It is clear from Scripture that the word of the Lord rises above any and all messaging we will receive in this life. It is that message that can and does save the souls of men and after all that is the most valuable possession a man has (**Mat. 16:26**). What we begin to see is that when God’s word dwells in us richly, we communicate that message to others at any and all times we have opportunity.

Therefore, when we sing hymns, it is not the beautiful melody of music we seek but the beautiful message of the Lord we communicate to one another as a way of instruction in truth and an admonition to follow such truth. We sing praises to God, but we also communicate valuable messages to each other from His word in our hearts. We are not nearly as concerned about the physical melody as we are about the content of the message.

For this reason, Paul sums up the communication of our songs and prayers this way. *“What is the outcome then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also.”* (**1 Corinthians 14:15**)

Editor's note:

Sometimes we can be inspired by the inspiration one receives from the inspired message of God as in the story that follows as you turn the page.

Fanny J. Crosby

If I told you that today would have been the 201st birthday for Frances Jane Crosby van Alstyne, many would ask, "Who is she?" If I told you that I was referring to Fanny Crosby, many would then reflect on their favorite hymn from this amazing writer and composer.

Born in Putnam County, New York, Fanny became ill within two months. Unfortunately, the family doctor was away, and a "pretend" doctor treated her by prescribing hot mustard poultices to be applied to her eyes. Her illness eventually relented, but the treatment left her blind. When the doctor was revealed to be a quack, he disappeared. A few months later, Crosby's father died. Her mother was forced to find work as a maid to support the family, and Fanny was mostly raised by her grandmother. She nonetheless grew up an active and happy child.

When she was five, sympathetic neighbors contributed money to send Fanny to New York to a Dr. Valentine Mott, a noted surgeon, but he only stated, "Poor little blind girl." She would remember that statement for the rest of her life. At the age of eight, she wrote:

"Oh, what a happy soul am I!
Although I cannot see,
I am resolved that in this world
Contented I will be.

"How many blessings I enjoy,
That other people don't;
To weep and sigh because I'm blind,
I cannot, and I won't!"

When her grandmother Eunice heard that her little granddaughter was blind and that nothing could be done about it, she said, "Then I will be her eyes." Using colorful adjectives, she taught Fanny about the wonderful colors in nature and everything she was missing. She patiently taught her the Bible, and Fanny memorized five chapters a week. At a very early age, she could recite the Pentateuch, the Gospels, Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and many of the psalms.

When Fanny was fifteen, she entered the New York Institute for the Blind, fighting her urge to stay under the protection of the family. She was a student for seven years and taught for another eleven, continuing her work until March 1, 1858. She taught English grammar,

rhetoric and American history. In addition to her love for poetry, writing, and singing, she also mastered the guitar, the piano, the organ, and became a noted harpist.

While teaching at the institution she met Presidents Van Buren and Tyler, Honorable Henry Clay, Governor William Seward, General Winfield Scott, and other distinguished characters of American history. Concerning Mr. Clay, she gives the following story: "When Mr. Clay came to the Institution during his last visit to New York, I was selected to welcome him with a poem. Six months before he had lost a son at the Battle of Monterey, and I had sent him some verses. In my address I carefully avoided any allusion to them, in order not to wound him. When I had finished he drew my arm in his, and, addressing the audience, said through his tears: 'This is not the first poem for which I am indebted to this lady. Six months ago she sent me some lines on the death of my dear son.' Both of us were overcome for a few moments. Soon, by a splendid effort, Mr. Clay recovered himself, but I could not control my tears." In connection with her meeting these notable men, she went to Washington, DC, with others and became the first woman to speak before the Senate and later before a joint session of the Senate and House of Representatives. She spoke about educating the blind, moving many to tears with her poems and winning personality. She would later become a friend to several presidents and would stay in the White House at times. Many of her first poems were published in the Saturday Evening Post and other prominent newspapers and magazines of the time.

In 1858, at the age of 38, Fanny Crosby married Alexander Van Alstyne, an accomplished musician and former pupil at the New York school. He was also blind and took pride in his wife's genius and insisted that she retain her maiden name. She insisted, however, that she use her married name on all legal documents. Shortly after the marriage, a child was born to them but soon died. In later years, she would never speak about that loss except to say in her oral biography, "God gave us a tender babe and soon...and our infant (went) up to God and His throne."

Their only child, a daughter, died soon after birth. The marriage did not flourish, and the couple lived apart from 1880. She lived at various locations in Brooklyn and Manhattan across the years and was often on the edge of poverty. Publishers paid poorly for hymn texts.

In all, she wrote more than 9,000 hymns, surpassing Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley. Some have yet to be set to music. Fanny wrote that each session of writing

was always preceded by a prayer. It seemed that without the prayer, the words didn't flow.

At one point a Scottish minister told her it was too bad God did not give her the gift of sight. She startled him by responding, "If I had been given a choice at birth I would have asked to be blind... Because when I get to heaven, the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Savior."

When she did write a hymn, Fanny received only a few dollars and no further royalties, since the hymns became the property of the composer. Though many thought Fanny should ask for more money she did not agree. She felt her hymns were her work for God and her reward was the effects of the song on those who came to Him. Fanny herself defined a hymn as a "song of the heart addressed to God." She published many hymns under her own name, but, sadly, some book publishers thought that her name was appearing too many times (hey, she did write more hymns than any other human), so, she started using many pseudonyms, including such labels as "the Children's Friend" or initials, or even such symbols as asterisks and number signs. Some of her songs also appeared under the names: Glenn, Mrs. Kate Grimley, Viola, Grace J. Francis, Mrs. C. M. Wilson, Lizzie Edwards, Henrietta E. Blair, Rose Atherton, Maud Marion, Leah Carlton, and many others.

Though she was under contract to submit three hymns a week to her publisher and often wrote six or seven a day (for a dollar or two each), many became incredibly popular. Among some of her most popular hymns are "Blessed Assurance," "All the Way My Savior Leads Me," "To God Be the Glory," "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior," "Safe in the Arms of Jesus," "Rescue the Perishing," and "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross." Go through your hymn book and try to decide which of Fanny's songs is your favorite.

She continued to write her poetry up to her death, a month shy of her ninety-fifth birthday.

Author Unknown

The Sign of the Covenant

This week, let's study the sign of God's covenant with Abraham, as well as the sign of Christ's Covenant. As God gives Abraham the promises of inheriting Canaan and being the father of many nations in **Genesis 17**, He tells him that circumcision is the sign of that covenant. Later, in **verse 14**, God tells Abraham that

any male not circumcised is to be cut off from God's people. The sign of the covenant is so important that those who don't have the sign will be separated from God's people. This continued into the Law of Moses. The sign of the covenant was so important that Moses was under the death penalty and could not complete the mission God had sent him on until it was accomplished on his son.

Colossians 2:17 says that the law is a shadow of things to come. What is circumcision a shadow of? What does it point forward to? **Verses 11-12** identify baptism as the circumcision of Christ and says that we are buried with Christ through baptism. **Romans 6:3-5** further explains that baptism is what unites a person with the death and burial of Christ. That death, along with his resurrection, is what saves a person, so baptism unites with Christ's saving sacrifice. Baptism is truly a sign of the New Covenant, of being united with Christ's saving sacrifice, and it is just as necessary as the sign of the Old Covenant was since it is what unites people with Christ's saving sacrifice. It is no wonder that **1 Peter 3:21** describes baptism as being one of the things that *"now saves us."* Have you been baptized, not just as an optional, outward sign, but as the necessary sign of baptism that washes away sins (**Acts 22:16**)? God bless your discipleship!

Matt Hodge

Does He Mean This Much to You?

Some people never grow too old, or too tired; nor do they live too far from the meeting house to be present for every service. The weather never gets too hot, or too cold, as long as travel is possible. It is never too dry, never too wet, but that some people make arrangements to be at worship.

Do you think it is strange that people should act that way? Not at all. They attend services because of their relation to Christ. To them He is more than life or death, joys or sorrows; more than earthly comfort, entertainment or earthly gain. Christ is their all in all.

Such people do not have to tell their neighbors how much they love the Lord. Everyone knows that they do by the way they live. The apostle Paul said, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Phil. 1:21) "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ lives in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of Him who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Gal. 2:20)

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Psa. 1:1 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.*

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study
Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship
Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship
Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

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Bible Classes:

**Sunday Morning - Messianic
Pathway O.T. to N.T. - Jim Stauffer**

**Wednesday Evening - Home and
Family - Ron Peck**

**Sunday Morning Sermon:
God is Consistent
(with grace and works)**



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10