

# Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

June 2014

“Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Thessalonians 1:2). God is wonderful! His love will never fail. He has promised that He “will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5).

**Updated Website:** Our website ([www.presenttruth.info](http://www.presenttruth.info)) is undergoing some changes that will hopefully make it much more user friendly. We have received a lot of positive feedback. If you have any comments to share, please post a comment on our website or our Facebook page. If you would like to help, let us know.

## The Righteousness of God

by Lynnford Beachy

Righteousness is the “state of him who is as he ought to be,... integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking, feeling, and acting” (*Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*). This is a high standard to live up to. Paul calls it something we hope for. He wrote, “For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith” (Galatians 5:5). We can hope to have righteousness, but it only comes by faith.

Righteousness is the state of being pure; of thinking, feeling and acting correctly. Jesus put it this way, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48). This is a seemingly unreachable goal. How can you be as perfect as our Father in heaven? The Bible tells us, “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags...” (Isaiah

64:6). There must be something more to this picture.

### A Clearer Picture

Paul explained the righteousness that we can have by faith when he wrote, “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference” (Romans 3:21, 22). Here we learn that the righteousness we get by faith is “the

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righteousness of God.” This sure makes it easier to understand how Jesus could ask us to be as perfect as His Father, for the righteousness we get by faith is God’s own righteousness.

The Bible says, “In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jeremiah 23:6). The Lord is our righteousness. He is our only hope of being perfect. Paul explained it this way, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Corinthians 1:30). Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). Jesus is the way to the Father’s righteousness. If we have Christ we have God’s righteousness, “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9). Having Christ in you is the way that we “...might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Ephesians 3:19). That is amazing!

Paul prayed that he would “...be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death” (Philippians 3:9, 10). The righteousness we are to have is “of God by faith,” but not just any faith, it is “the faith of Christ.” That is powerful! God’s righteousness can only be attained by faith, but not our own puny

faith; it can only be had by the faith of Jesus Christ. That faith is limitless. With His faith, anything is possible.

## *From Faith to Faith*

Paul confessed, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:16, 17). Catch the value of that phrase. God’s righteousness is revealed from faith to faith: from our puny faith to Christ’s limitless faith. When we come to Christ we exercise the little “measure of faith” (Romans 12:3) we have each been given, but then we get His unlimited faith. Please don’t miss this extremely important point. Jesus Christ gives you His faith as a free gift.

Faith is extremely important. The Bible says about the failure of the children of Israel, “So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief” (Hebrews 3:19). They were never able to partake of Christ (v. 14) and His righteousness because of their unbelief. The promises of God seemed too good to be true, so they remained in unbelief. Friends, we must not follow their example. “For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end” (Hebrews 3:14). One of the big things that men fail to grasp is that if we have Christ, then we have “the faith of Christ.”

Notice what the Bible says, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,

peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith..." (Galatians 5:22). Notice that "faith" is part of the fruit of the Spirit. This cannot be our faith, but has to be "the faith of Christ." Friends, this is a BIG DEAL! We have the faith of Christ right now if we accept it and believe that we have it.

## **Incredible Benefits**

You see, many people overlook the incredible benefits we have in Christ. The Bible says, "...ye have not, because ye ask not" (James 4:2). Jesus said, "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29). That is both an amazing promise and a frightful challenge at the same time. We have not because we ask not, and we have according to our faith. If we believe that we have "the mind of Christ," "the Spirit of Christ," "the love of Christ," "the meekness and gentleness of Christ," "the obedience of Christ," "the unsearchable riches of Christ," "the grace of Christ," and "the faith of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16; Romans 8:9; 35; 2 Corinthians 10:1, 5; Ephesians 3:8; Galatians 1:6; Philippians 3:9), then we will have them, and our lives will demonstrate this fact. But, if we do not believe that we have these things, then we will not have them, for they are obtained by faith.

This is actually a simple process; as simple as ABC. Ask God to fulfill His promises in your life, Believe that what God has said He will do, and then Claim the promises as your own. It seems too good to be true, but I have tried it, and it works. The key is not to doubt that these promises are yours. Never stop trusting in the word of God

to do what that word says. That is what Jesus called "great faith" (Matthew 8:5-10). Faith must be grounded in the powerful word of God, and cannot be genuine when it has no foundation. I can have faith that my old car will be able to drive to Alaska and back, but if the Lord did not instruct me to go to Alaska in that car, then how can I be certain it will make it safely? But God promised in His word, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). This is a concrete, solid promise that we can claim and be 100% sure it will happen because God promised. The same is true with all the promises about our benefits we have when Christ lives in us.

All the riches of heaven have been given to us in one unfathomable gift, the gift of Jesus Christ. In Him are all things that pertain to life and godliness. The Bible says, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:2-4).

All these blessings of heaven are available to us "through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." Getting to know God and His Son enables us to have access to far more than is possible without this knowledge. Realizing the

immensity of the blessings that are yours for the asking is the key to unlocking the reality of being a partaker of the divine nature and escaping the corruption that is in the world. When you ask Jesus Christ into your heart you immediately have everything you need to live a victorious life.

## Christ in You

The Bible says, “**Examine** [test] yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be **reprobates** [not standing the test]?” (2 Corinthians 13:5). With Christ in you, you have everything, but without Christ, you have nothing.

The Bible says, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love” (Ephesians 3:17). Jesus Christ dwells in you by faith. That is why it is so important what you believe. If you believe that Christ is in you, based upon His promises, then He is in you. Satan continually tries to get us to doubt that Christ is in us. There is a battle going on over your mind and faith. Jesus said, “This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent” (John 6:29). God’s work is to get you to believe in Christ, and Satan’s work is to get you to doubt. This is why this battle is called, “...the good *fight* of faith” (1 Timothy 6:12).

It truly is mysterious how Christ can live in us, but the Bible has revealed this mystery, “Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom

God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:26, 27). Having Christ living in you is our only hope of salvation.

Paul explained, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). Our meager faith is able to grasp hold of Christ so He can live in us. Then we live our lives “by the faith of the Son of God.” It is the faith of Christ that enables us to live a victorious life.

## The Spirit of Antichrist

John wrote, “And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.... Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 3:24-4:4).

Notice the connection here. John first stated that “we know that he abideth in us,” and he closed with, “greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” Between these

statements is his warning against false teachers “that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh...” Notice the context here. The warning is against false teachers who claim that Jesus Christ does not abide in your flesh. This is a dangerous error because “greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” If you do not have Christ in you, then you do not have the advantage you need over “your adversary the devil,” who “as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

Don’t let anyone trick you into believing that Jesus Christ does not live in your flesh right now. “Christ in you” is your only “hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). Paul explained, “...ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Romans 8:9). The Spirit of Christ is our lifeline to God. The Bible says, “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:11, 12).

## The Son of God

There is a strong connection between righteousness by faith and Jesus being the Son of God. John wrote, “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4, 5). In order for us to overcome

the world and have the righteousness of God, we must believe that “Jesus is the Son of God.”

Jesus lived a unique life when He was here. He was the only person born who lived His whole life without ever committing a sin. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus Christ intimately knows what we are going through, and precisely knows how to give us the victory. The Bible says, “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to **succour** [help] them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2:18).

Not only does Jesus know what we are going through, but He has a divine connection with His Father that enables Him to meet us where we are and bring us to where His Father is. To illustrate Christ’s absolute connection to God, Paul wrote, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” (Hebrews 1:1-4).

The Son of God is “the express image” of His Father, who inherited all



things from His Father, including His pure, holy nature. Later in this chapter the Bible says, “But unto the Son he [the Father] saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Hebrews 1:8, 9).

Here, Jesus Christ is called “God” by His own Father. He is also said to love righteousness and hate iniquity (sin). The pure righteousness of God is an attribute of the character of the divine Son of God. Jesus prophesied in the book of Psalms, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart” (Psalm 40:8).

The fact that Jesus is the Son of God guarantees that He has the same nature as God. His natural love for righteousness and hatred for iniquity He received by inheritance from His Father. If Jesus Christ was unrelated to God, the Father, then there would be no guarantee that they are alike. It is Christ’s connection to His Father and to us that enables us to partake of His divine nature. Just as Christ’s connection to His Father is vital, His connection to us is vital. The Bible says, “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Hebrews 2:17). “For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the

heavens” (Hebrews 7:26). The divine Son of God “became us.” This inseparably connects divinity and humanity, but this connection is only in Christ. For us to be connected with divinity, we must have Christ in us.

## Conclusion

God has given us everything we need to thrive as God’s children. The Bible says, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (1 John 3:1-3).

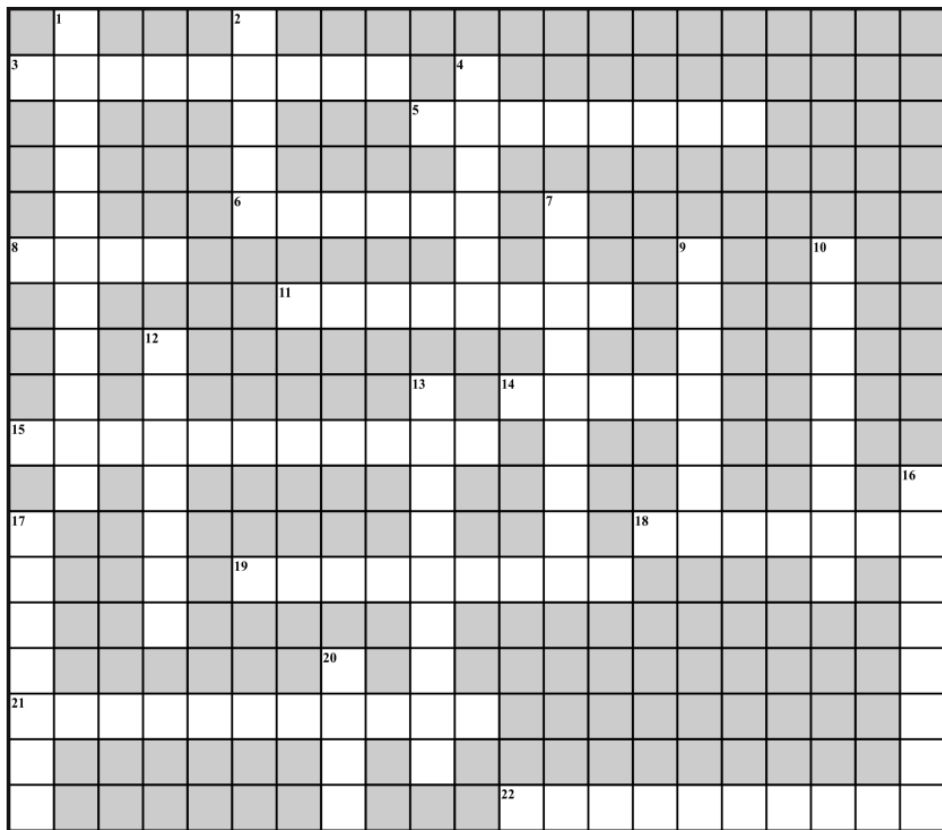
God has entrusted us with so much. He loves us enough to make us the sons of God and make us pure “even as He is pure.” This wonderful ability only comes to us through the faith of Jesus Christ. Having Jesus Christ living in your heart opens up a vast treasure house of blessings from heaven that is available to all those who believe.

I pray that you will accept the great blessing of Christ in you, and let Him continually live in you, “That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:4). May you truly partake of the free gift of the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ. »

# *Present Truth* **Something for the Young at Heart**

This month we are continuing a series of studies written by my children. In order to maintain the flow of the study, this crossword puzzle is not split into Across and Down sections—Across or Down is indicated at the end of each line. (The KJV is required.)

## *Brotherly Love - by Josiah Beachy*



Answers will be printed on the back page of next month's issue.

- "Be kindly \_\_\_\_ one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." Romans 12:10—**21 Across**
- "A new \_\_\_\_ I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 13:34—**15 Across**
- "By this shall all men know that ye are my \_\_\_\_, if ye have love one to another." John 13:35—**7 Down**
- "These things I \_\_\_\_ you, that ye love one another." John 15:17—**12 Down**
- "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he

possessed was his own; but they had all things \_\_\_\_." Acts 4:32—**4 Down**

➤ "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, \_\_\_\_, faith." Galatians 5:22—**5 Across**

➤ "With all \_\_\_\_ and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." Ephesians 4:2—**19 Across**

➤ "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of \_\_\_\_." Ephesians 4:3—**2 Down**

➤ "But as touching \_\_\_\_ love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." 1 Thessalonians 4:9—**3 Across**

➤ "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith \_\_\_\_ exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." 2 Thessalonians 1:3—**18 Across**

➤ "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto \_\_\_\_ love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." 1 Peter 1:22—**13 Down**

➤ "Honour all men. Love the \_\_\_\_\_. Fear God. Honour the king." 1 Peter 2:17—**1 Down**

➤ "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having \_\_\_\_ one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." 1 Peter 3:8—**22 Across**

➤ "And to godliness brotherly \_\_\_\_; and to brotherly kindness charity." 2 Peter 1:7—**11 Across**

➤ "He that loveth his brother abideth in the \_\_\_\_, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him." 1 John 2:10—**14 Across**

➤ "For this is the \_\_\_\_ that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another." 1 John 3:11—**17 Down**

➤ "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the \_\_\_\_." 1 John 3:16—**10 Down**

➤ "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in \_\_\_\_ and in truth." 1 John 3:18—**8 Across**

➤ "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to \_\_\_\_ one another." 1 John 4:11—**20 Down**

➤ "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his \_\_\_\_ also." 1 John 4:21—**9 Down**

➤ "By this we know that we love the \_\_\_\_ of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments." 1 John 5:2—**16 Down**

➤ "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each \_\_\_\_ other better than themselves." Philippians 2:3—**6 Across** »





*Present Truth*  
**An Amazing Recovery**

by Kyle Smith

My name is Kyle Smith. In my first article, published in the May-August 2012 issue of *Present Truth*, I explained how God revealed Himself to me during my two years, eight months, incarceration from January 4<sup>th</sup> 2009 to August 30<sup>th</sup> 2011. When I came home from prison I started "Open Your Eyes Prison Ministry." The reason God told me to start this ministry was to teach Bible truths like the Sabbath and the truth about the pagan trinity doctrine. I was encouraged by the love shown to me by Garth and his wife Ann who I met through writing to a local church while in prison. Garth visited me seven times in my last year and a half and supported me in every way possible. The last two years after being off my one-year parole, I was blessed to be able to take the five-hour trip from Long Island to upstate New York near Syracuse and to be able to speak at their church.

I spent twenty years in the grips of the devil, addicted to drugs, trying to kill the pain of my father's death, who died when I was sixteen years old. After being clean for four years I relapsed. Slowly, over time, I fell away from my ministry work and fell away from my weekly meeting, Celebrate Recovery (a twelve-step, Christ-based program). I fell away from going to church and reading my Bible. I thank God for Proverbs 24:16, which says, "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief." I spent the

year of 2013 in relapse, the Holy Spirit nudging at me, and I knew that I could not continue in sin.

I called Garth and his wife Ann and came clean with them. Garth told me the Holy Spirit was telling him I needed to get up there to visit and spend time with them. They own a cabin on Panther Lake. It was October, which is off season, so I decided to go there to spend three days and two nights by myself with no human contact anywhere around, so I could peacefully commune with God in Bible reading and prayer. Three days and two nights I spent on the back deck overlooking the lake, reading my Bible and praying.

The third day came, and I knew Garth and Ann would be coming soon to pick me up. This whole time God did not speak to me. I became upset and I started to speak out loud to God as I sat on the back deck with my NKJV Bible open. It was a calm day, not a ripple on the lake, not a leaf blowing in the wind. I said to God, "Why have you not answered me? What am I going to do with my life? Maybe I should just go back to the old me and sell drugs to support my habit." Then I said out loud to God, "I know God, What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and lose his own soul." Just as I spoke that scripture a wind came out of nowhere and the pages in my Bible started to go back and forth like crazy. As this was happening I said out loud, "Okay God, are you going to show me something?"

At this point, when I finished saying this to God, the wind was flipping my Bible pages for a good ten seconds, then the wind stopped just as suddenly as it started and I looked down at my Bible to find highlighted in bright orange, Matthew 16:26 which says, “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”

I had highlighted that passage many months ago. I knew once again

that God had spoken to me and again God showed me He is real. I am happy to say I am back on fire for God. And “Open Your Eyes Prison Ministry” now has over forty men and women in prisons all over the U.S. whom God has blessed me to minister to. You can contact me by email at: [preachersmith10@yahoo.com](mailto:preachersmith10@yahoo.com) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000145079368](http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000145079368).

May God bless you and all those whom you love. »

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## *The Gift of Darkness*

by Rebekah Fehr

“You will be covered by his feathers; under his wings you will be safe...” (Psalm 91:4, *Bible in Basic English*).

I have heard some Christians say that their happiest times are when they are suffering because it is in the furnace of affliction that they feel the presence of Christ the most deeply. This has not been true in my case. Depression has visited me on a monthly basis for more than thirty-five years, and looking back over a lifetime littered with its devastating effects, I confess that I have rarely felt Christ’s presence during those dark times.

The only way to escape the agonizing pain I suffered in that dungeon appeared to be total darkness (death).

“Rescue me from this miserable existence!” was my frequent plea to heaven.

But that prayer was met by silence, soul-slaughtering silence. I was alone in the blackness. “My God, my God,” I cried, “why have you forsaken me?”

A gem of truth from the Word of God has recently turned my thinking upside-down. It has taken a lifetime for me to realize (yes, some people are a bit slower than others...) that during those times when I felt abandoned and Christ seemed so far away, He was

clinging firmly to my hand. He never let go. Christ has promised in His Word, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5) and He never did. “...He is faithful that promised” (Hebrews 10:23).



## Present Truth

So, here are the verses that opened my eyes to His amazing grace:

“The people kept their places far off, but Moses went near to the dark cloud where God was” (Exodus 20:21, *Bible in Basic English*).

“The LORD chose to live in a dark cloud” (2 Chronicles 6:1, *Easy to Read Version*).

“And ye drew nigh and... there was darkness, blackness, and tempest” (Deuteronomy 4:11, *Brenton Greek Septuagint Translation*).

I could hardly believe what I was reading — the Lord lives in a dark cloud! My Jesus inhabits the darkness! By choice! So when I prayed for the Lord to remove the darkness from me, little did I know I was praying for Him to remove His Presence from me. When I prayed for Him to remove me from the darkness, little did I know I was praying for Him to take me from my safe place in Him! When a mother hen gathers her chicks under her wings, it’s pretty dark under there, isn’t it? Horror of horrors, I was asking to leave the warmth of His wings!

Thankfully, He neither removed the darkness from me nor removed me from the darkness. Instead, He came near and gently covered me with His wings — protecting me, shielding me, comforting me, providing refuge in the very midst of the depression. The

darkness, which felt like an unrelenting curse, was the precious blessing of Himself, His sweet Presence, the covering of His wings. Jesus gave me the gift of darkness beneath His healing wings to hide the black night of my soul. Although I didn’t feel it, He was so near during those times of hopelessness that He could have smothered me under His feathers! I praise you, my Savior! The darkness was not a curse but a gift, an abundant blessing!

Now if the dark cloud descends, I can know that His feathered wings surround me with His blessed Presence, and I welcome Him. There is a sweet silence now, a stillness, a special serenity, in that place of refuge. Even when it is night in my soul, especially when it is night, I choose to remain under His wings and to live in the Light, claiming the promise of His glorious Word: “In Him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). »

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*Answers to Last Month's Crossword Puzzle*

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