



LIGHT OF THE
WORD



April 2011

Dear Friend of Light of the Word,

***“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance,
that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”
1 Timothy 1:15***

In the very beginning of Genesis, God promised that there would be a day when He would deliver us from the power of Satan and the power of sin. Notice that not just anyone could save you and me from our sins. Throughout the Old Testament, God sent angels to deliver His message and intervene in the affairs of mankind. The Lord also used human beings to rescue His people—leaders such as Moses, Elijah, Abraham, David, and others. But neither angels nor human leaders could save mankind from their sins and restore their relationship with God. Only God Himself could take on the role of Savior.

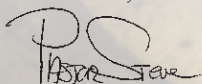
God the Father sent His only Son to rescue us from Satan and ourselves. Jesus didn't have to come to Earth, but He did in order to reconcile us to God. Jesus Christ took the pain and agony of our sins upon Himself so that once and for all, we could be cleansed of our sins. In the Old Testament days, the Jewish people sacrificed animals, often lambs, to atone (cover) their sins. Though it covered them, it didn't get rid of them! But when Jesus Christ came into the world, He did so as God Himself and His sacrifice was a one-time event that took our sins away forever. Jesus experienced the punishment of our sins on the cross so that we would not experience God's wrath. Christ became separated from His Father on the cross so that we could once and for all be reconciled to God! I don't believe the greatest agony for Jesus was the pain, persecution, and betrayal of the cross. I believe the greatest agony was experiencing for the first time separation from God. The Bible says, *“For He made Him who knew no sin to BE sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21)*. Think about that for a moment. Jesus Christ, who was in the beginning with God—who created the world and everything in it—and who was sinless, took on OUR sins on the cross and experienced the separation from God and the wrath of God so that we could become righteous before God!

When we really truly grasp WHY Jesus Christ came to Earth and WHAT He did on the cross our hearts should overflow with love and gratitude toward our Savior and toward our Father in Heaven. The Gospel is the deepest expression of love that we can ever know. And when we grasp what Christ has done, we truly understand just how much love God has for us. It is by the blood of Jesus Christ that sin, Satan, and death are destroyed. Jesus said, *“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends” (John 15:13)*. But the story doesn't end at the cross. The resurrection of Jesus Christ sealed God's victory over sin, Satan, and death. And because Christ rose from the grave, so will we! Satan holds no power over the believer in Christ. We are set free by the power of God—a power that defeated sin, Satan, and death! And it is this same power that now resides in us through the Holy Spirit. As believers, we will be tempted for sure. But we are NOT defeated. We are not beaten down because the power of Christ rules and reigns in us. Psalm 42:11 says, *“Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God.”*

My dear friend in Christ, are you struggling in your life right now? Are you experiencing difficult trials and circumstances in your life? I want you rise up above your trials by realizing that the power of the living God is able to keep you, and bring you through the situations in your life! The passion of the cross is at work in your life. The God of the resurrection has your life safely in His hands. Rise up in His victory and realize that God's will is working in your life!

As you celebrate Easter this year I want you to recognize the reality that Easter should be in our hearts every day of the year.

In Christ,



Pastor Steve