



July 2019

Dear Friends and Partners of CWR,

Think with me for a moment about the contrast between a wall and a bridge. Walls exclude and reject while bridges invite and include. Walls are built to limit access—to prohibit adversaries or threats from what is deemed to be worthy of protecting and securing. Bridges are constructed because of a need and/or a desire to increase traffic from one side to another—bridges are built because of inhospitable, formidable obstacles, a valley or a body of water that inhibits or prevents safe crossings.

Both walls and bridges have their role in our world, and many times those roles are the object of intense and fevered debate. That said, *a bridge is by far and away a better illustration of the relationship to which God invites the entire world than a wall.* Jesus came to tear down barriers and hostilities (Ephesians 2:14-15) and build a bridge.

Jesus is the carpenter who used two pieces of wood to build a bridge that spans the distance from here and now to eternity and beyond. Jesus is the Master Bridge Builder because *only Jesus could build a bridge from death to life with only two pieces of wood!* Jesus is not only the Master Bridge Builder, he is the Bridge who enables us to “cross over.”

“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life”—John 5:24 (emphasis mine).

Jesus promises that those who hear his word—his invitation to follow, trust and yield to him—those who believe God the Father sent Jesus, and Jesus is God in the flesh, 1) *have eternal life*, 2) *will not be condemned*, for 3) *they have crossed over* from the dimension of death into life.

1) *Eternal life* means having eternal life within oneself now. Jesus says one who hears and believes him “has” eternal life now, in the present—he does not say that one “will not have” eternal life until some future time. Eternal life is both/and—eternal life is not only then, but it is both now and then.

2) *Will not be condemned* means that a favorable judgment has already taken place—names have already been written in “the book of life belonging to the Lamb” (Revelation 13:8—see also 3:5; 20:12; 21:27). Because of the Lamb, the Light of the world, the Bread of life—no negative or lasting or punitive judgment can ever take place against those in the book of life—they will not be condemned. *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus...”* (Romans 8:1-2).

3) *Crossing over* means passing over, going from one place to another... so that in its spiritual sense *cross over* is being transformed from one state of existence and being to another. In Christ we *cross over* from one time continuum to another.

The kingdom of God is both present, now...and it is future, in its fullness. *Crossing over* means living the life of the age to come now, even while still in our sinful and mortal bodies, while awaiting the glorious return of our Savior when our then deceased bodies will be resurrected and our

salvation confirmed and proclaimed and celebrated—a salvation already given and embraced.

When we *cross over* from death to life we die spiritually now, and of course we will die at some point physically. When we *cross over* from death to life we receive eternal life now, because we are now resurrected with our Lord, and our mortal body then, after its physical death, will be raised from the dead, as Jesus was, and made immortal, as his body was and is.

This new reality of the life of the age to come—this new dimension of eternal life—is a result of *crossing over* from death to life.

There is no toll booth on Jesus' bridge. *Crossing over* is not a trip across the bridge granted because of deeds done or services rendered. *Crossing over* is not deserved or earned.

Crossing over in and through and because of Jesus is not a transaction—it is a transformation by grace. *Crossing over* is life in the Son, life in and through the risen Lord, so that we are now united in and with him. *Crossing over* is crossing the bridge of Jesus, a bridge that the carpenter from Nazareth constructed from two pieces of wood. When we *cross over* the Jesus bridge we are transformed from a world of time and space that confines and limits into a world of eternity ruled over by the love and grace of God.

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever who has the Son has life; whoever who does not have the Son of God does not have life.—1 John 5:11-12

You either have the Son or you do not. Jesus is **either** your bridge upon which and in whom you cross over, and you embrace the grace of God and yield to him, or you trust and believe in your own righteousness and your own abilities to perform rules that might earn you God's favor and thereby trust in a religious bridge that someone else builds and maintains.

You probably already know that *crossing over* the bridge constructed by Jesus is not an easy decision. It is much easier to build walls and live in "safe" places where we are assured by authorities that they will take care of our every need. *It's been said that no one would have ever crossed the ocean if they could have gotten off the ship during the storm.*

The decision to trust God and follow Jesus and live by the grace of God rather than attempting to earn merits from God on the basis of our performance is a frightening and unnerving proposition. Rules and laws that define and confine us offer us a sense of security and comfort, whereas freedom in Christ, living by the grace of God, can seem unsettling. But Jesus is more than a bunch of rules we follow, words we study, songs we sing, ceremonies we observe and rituals we perform.

While we still live in a physical world of time and space, a world where law defines our existence, Jesus is our bridge in whom we pass over and *cross over*. Even while we are still in this mortal body when we cross over, we are given and we possess eternal life, by the grace of God. We either embrace the grace of God or we cling to our abilities to earn a reward from God.

***Crossing over* the bridge of Jesus is both an act, a one-time event when we determine to follow Jesus, and it is an ongoing process, wherein we daily pick up our cross and, following Jesus, *cross over*.**

"Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we became conscious of sin. But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes by faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."—Romans 3:20-22

The Voyage of the Dawn Treader is a fantasy novel by C.S. Lewis, for children, young and old. It is the third novel in the seven novel series of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. You may remember that Lewis introduces Narnia in the first in the Narnia series, *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, as a fantasy world created for the seven novels.

In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* several children magically travel to Narnia, where they begin a journey on a ship named "Dawn Treader." Again, as you may recall, Aslan is a lion who is Jesus, and the children meet him on their journey. They first of all discover a Lamb, who transforms into a Lion (evocative of the Lion and Lamb of the fifth chapter of Revelation). Lucy, one of the children asks Aslan about how they will be able to travel to his country.

"Oh Aslan," said Lucy. "Will you tell us how to get into your country from our world?" "I shall be telling you all the time," said Aslan. "But I will not tell you how long or how short the way will be, only that it lies over a river. But do not fear that, for **I am the great Bridge Builder**" (my emphasis).

We *cross over* from death to life when we believe in Jesus and embrace the grace of God, being united with Christ in both his death and his resurrection. When we are united in and with Jesus Christ, he is inside of us. He is one with us. He lives his risen life in us. He goes on before us. He walks with us. He never leaves or forsakes us. He takes us from our world into his kingdom.

Remember: Jesus is the carpenter who used two pieces of wood to build a bridge that spans the distance from the here-and-now to eternity and beyond. The path that lies ahead of us and the past that lies behind us are not worthy to be compared with the glory of He who lives within us.

Your friend and brother in Christ,



Greg Albrecht
President, Plain Truth Ministries

PS. We pass along this note of thanks from a friend of CWR/PTM who lives in New York. And we **THANK YOU** for continuing to support this ongoing ministry.

I am grateful for your continuous prayers for my wife's health. PTM continues to surprise me with its concern for the welfare of its supporters. Personal interest and compassion for life's daily problems is rarely expressed in many of today's churches. Thank you for considering me and my wife as your friends. Your messages have helped me out of depression and fear of what's happening in the world. They have given me hope and the promise of a future with Jesus beyond this life.

CWR/PTM Prayer List—July 2019

These requests for prayer represent just a few of the thousands we receive and pray for. We invite you to join us in praying for these and the others that space does not permit us to include here. Thanks for joining with us as a CWR/PTM Prayer Partner.

Please pray that I will be able to afford to fix the roof of my house to keep the rain from coming in.—South Carolina

Please pray for me to control my temper and to deal with the stresses of life in a more godly way.—Maryland

Thank you for the magazines. They are a God-send as I don't have a computer to get other messages.—Wisconsin

Please pray for me as I'm being treated for bone cancer, first with radiation and now chemotherapy.—Pennsylvania

I'm searching for work and cannot seem to get interviews. Pray God will open the next door for me.—North Carolina

We pray God will continue to bless the work of CWR/PTM. May it reach all the world with the truth.—Louisiana

I struggle to be free from religion. Please keep me in your prayers.—Alberta, Canada

I wanted to update you on my wife's cancer battle. Her most recent PET scan came back clear.—New York

Please pray for my A-fib, migraine headaches and arthritis, and for a friend who has terminal bone cancer.—Tennessee

My wife has severe cataracts, trouble with her hearing and salivary gland adenitis makes her very sick.—Virginia

My sciatica is painful, especially when the weather changes. I also have digestive problems.—Mississippi

Please pray for our pastor's grandson, age 20, who was recently stung by an insect on his head causing stroke-like symptoms. Even though he is on medication, the doctors don't know if he will fully recover.—Pennsylvania

My wife and I are going through a very difficult lawsuit that began in 2013, and there's no end in sight.—California

Please pray for my two sons and one granddaughter. They have all been diagnosed with cancer.—Wisconsin

Please pray that my son's back operation will be successful and that he will no longer be in pain.—Massachusetts

The fiancé of my wife's granddaughter, who is only 32, has been diagnosed with brain cancer. Please pray.—Colorado

I don't know how much longer I will be here in this life. I grow weaker every day. Please pray for me.—Illinois

My cousin is battling cancer and undergoing chemotherapy. Pray that our gracious Lord will heal her.—Washington

Pray that my doctors will find the cause of the pain in my legs; possibly blockage of arteries in my legs.—Mississippi

Please pray for my great-nephew who has liver cancer—he is only 21 years old.—West Virginia

I had hip replacement surgery. Pray that God will heal me completely so I will feel no more pain.—South Carolina

My sister's husband will have surgery soon for skin cancer. Please pray for comfort and healing.—Tennessee

My two daughters are diabetic and my sister-in-law has heart problems. Please pray for them.—South Carolina

I'm having a hard time with my nerves and I'm experiencing depression, side effects from West Nile virus.—Louisiana

Please pray for a friend of mine whose cancer keeps returning. The doctor doesn't give her much hope.—Arizona

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