A publication to inspire Christian young ladies in their walk with Christ

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All Glorious Within

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Confident Security
by Karen Wolf

The Security of Trust
by a fellow sister

Stability in a Young Lady – Not Running on Feelings
by Jessica Stamper

A Source of Confidence
by Lana Bode

Security
by Jessica Johnson

You Are Special

Do We Forget?
by Angela Masloske

In the Hands of One Higher
by Sarah Bryant

Themed Scriptures, Hymns, Devotionals
～ And More～

“The King’s daughter is all glorious within . . .” Psalm 45:13
For a limited time, we are offering Vol 6, Iss. 2 and a brochure FREE to anyone you know who might be interested in receiving All Glorious Within, you may request brochures or sample issues for them.

All Glorious Within is a publication for Christian young ladies that began in January 2006. It is compiled, edited, and published three times per year by Karissa Hiebert. Co-editors are Abe and Bernice Hiebert, who approve and improve each issue, giving many suggestions and much valued advice.

We welcome new subscribers! If you have friends or relatives that might be interested in receiving All Glorious Within, you may request brochures or sample issues for them.

All Glorious Within is non-profit; subscription rates are minimal just to help cover costs of postage and copying. Free brochures available upon request. Gift certificates also available.

Our goal is to provide conservative, wholesome reading material to inspire girls in their Christian walk, with an endeavor to maintain the centrality of Jesus Christ. If you have questions or concerns, please let us know personally about them. Suggestions are appreciated!

If you come across anything in All Glorious Within that is unBiblical, opinionated, or does not pass the tests of Philippians 4:8 and Colossians 2:8, please let us know about it. (Note that we do not necessarily endorse every word of each article.)

This issue of this publication has been approved by the co-editors, my parents (Abe and Bernice Hiebert).

We gladly welcome submissions . . . please send articles, poetry, testimonies, reviews, and other such contributions! We do not publish advertisements.

All submissions must be approved by the co-editors (editor’s parents), and we ask that everything submitted be honoring to the Lord, based on the Word of God, and corresponding to Philippians 4:8. Please include information such as titles, authors, and publishers’ information, where applicable. Thank you.

To help cover costs of printing and postage, please include a small donation with your order if possible. Thank you! Note – some issues may not be available.

Christian Chronicle (previous publication, 3 column format): Volume 2, Issue 3: Infatuation vs. Integrity
Volume 2, Issue 4: Home Life
Volume 2, Issue 5: Humility
All Glorious Within
Volume 1, Issue 1: Speech
MAGAZINE FORMAT:
All Glorious Within
Volume 1, Issue 2: Hospitality, Thriftiness, Creativity
Volume 1, Issue 3: Boldness, Enthusiasm, Initiative
Volume 1, Issue 4: Sensitivity, Sincerity
Volume 2, Issue 1: Discretion, Discernment
Volume 2, Issue 2: Reverence, Deference, Tolerance
Volume 2, Issue 3: Virtue
Volume 2, Issue 4: Neatness, Orderliness, Punctuality
Volume 3, Issue 1: Faithful Time Stewardship
Volume 3, Issue 2: Honesty, Integrity, Trustworthiness
Volume 3, Issue 3: Perseverance, Endurance, Diligence
Volume 3, Issue 4: Responsibility, Dependability, Consistency
Volume 4 Issue 1: Missions (Special Issue)
Volume 4, Issue 2: Determination, Purpose, Courage
Volume 5, Issue 1: Gratefulness, Appreciation
Volume 5, Issue 2: His Strength
Volume 5, Issue 3: Trials, Afflictions (Special Issue)
Volume 6, Issue 1: Compassion, Care, Mercy
Volume 6, Issue 2: Submission, Honor, Respect

Submission Deadline for Next Issue: January 2, 2012

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“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:37-39

Note: These definitions do not bring across the full meaning of what we are looking into with this issue.

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Greetings in the name of our King and welcome to the 20th issue of All Glorious Within! May this issue be an encouragement to you in finding security, confidence, and stability in your life.

Lord willing, our next issue’s theme is Contentment. It goes with this issue in many ways, but we decided to give it its own issue (or two!). Contentment has many different aspects – it really affects every area of our lives. We will be featuring articles on being satisfied sweetly in Jesus and so on. We may also look at a specific aspect that many young ladies face: contentment in singlehood, in serving in the home, in resting in the Lord while keeping their hearts, in waiting for God’s best, etc. However, we may decide to leave most of that out and simply follow up the Contentment issue with an issue on these subjects – from keeping our hearts, to loving the Lord, to serving where He has placed us, to contentment, in singleness. We’re hoping to feature some testimonies as well. Your submissions are welcome for both of these issues. We’re looking forward to hearing from you as you seek to bless our readers with whatever the Lord lays on your heart.

We’re not sure if we will get the next issue out quite a bit earlier than usual or quite a bit later than usual, but it could be one of the two. Therefore, if you have any submissions for the issue on Contentment, please submit them by about the end of December. Thank you!

It has been requested that a family picture be published in here; therefore you will find an updated picture below of our family.

~ Karissa

“. . . In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength . . .” Isaiah 30:15

~ July 2011 ~
You are in your usual spot – the corner! All around you are milling the “popular” girls, giggling, chatting, flitting from one group to another while you sit, alone. Black thoughts swirl through your head: “I would be popular too if only I was pretty – or thin – or didn’t have so many pimples.” “Their lives are so put together they don’t even know what it’s like for us poor mortals.” “Nobody likes me and no wonder either – I don’t like me!” “They were all handed life on a silver platter, why should I try?”

And then someone walks up to you with a quick conversation starter and you give a distant reply thinking to yourself as they walk off, “They don’t really care, they are just doing their good deed for the day.”

Does any of that sound familiar? Maybe not to that extent and maybe you don’t show it in that way, but don’t a lot of us have a few insecurities and a pretty major deficit on the confidence side of things? Do you know how many girls feel just like you? Actually I’ve got reason to guess that there are a lot of guys that feel this way too, but they are far slower to admit it!

In my background it was typical for at least once a year to be with a large group of youth. Sometimes over a thousand at one place at one time. It is the prime opportunity for insecurities and loneliness, cliques and ‘un-cliques’. One time before I went Daddy gave me a little bit of advice that I didn’t really believe at the time. He said, “Remember that almost everyone is just as insecure and frightened as you are, everyone is begging for someone to give them some attention, some acceptance and to be their friend.” Well, it was a little hard to imagine that those girls sweeping by in large giggly groups of popular people with pretty clothes were really as frightened feeling as poor little me was. Until I got to know Melinda . . .

Everyone liked Melinda; she had a friendly disposition and a quick wit that got her into any group she chose. She was always in the center of a huddle and had friends everywhere. I was shocked the day we were sitting in her car talking and she confessed, “Sometimes I wonder if anyone likes me. Most the time I’m ok and then I get these awful feelings and wonder if maybe every Sunday morning all the mothers pull their girls aside and tell them, ‘Now remember to be nice to Melinda, I know she is different, but we have to be nice.’” It was funny at the time, but I could tell she was serious – what if no one liked her?

Elizabeth was the epitome of social graces. She was tall, poised and quiet, never said the wrong thing at the wrong time and was charitable towards all. In other words, she was everything I wasn’t! One night she started telling me how alone she felt. She was fairly sure she had failed at most things and knew that she used her quietness as a wall of defense and protection, but was unable tear it down.
That is only two – but their story is legion. One girl after another that I had written off as 'too cool', totally popular, always on top of it, and maybe even as snooty, I later had to re-label as hurting, lonely and insecure.

Does it give you a little more courage and confidence to realize that everyone else might be struggling with the same thing? It did for me!

And besides all that. Am I really a loser like I think I am? Does nobody really like me and am I worth nothing?

Who does God say you are? In Ephesians 1, He says:

He chose me,
He predestined me,
He made me accepted in the Beloved,
He made known to me His will,
I have obtained an inheritance,
I am sealed with the Holy Spirit.

If that isn’t security I don’t know what is! And that is only one chapter; there are many more like it.

If Christ says He loves me and I matter to Him and that through me He is able to accomplish great things, then who am I to say anything else?

If Christ says He loves me and I matter to Him and that through me He is able to accomplish great things, then who am I to say anything else?

That all sounded great. You are enthused and ready to step out. You will try that project that you never had the courage for, you are going to introduce yourself to that girl you don’t know, and you might even speak out in a group. But... the project f... the girl gives you a strange look and turns away, the silence after you spoke was deafening. Actually I doubt that happened, but I’m sure you thought it was going to!

So now what? How do I take the theoretical side, the Biblical side, the true side and match it up with my actions and feelings?

A famous writer said, “They are able because they think they are able.” The more common way of saying that is “fake it till you make it.” Basically just DO IT; by acting confident and secure you will become confident and secure. Is that Biblical or is it hypocrisy? Remember who God says you are and what you can do through Him? Is acting on faith hypocrisy? Or is it believing that what God says He means?

Our own confidence fails – God’s does not. “For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.” (Isaiah 30:15-16)

Here is another road block. I believe that God really does put a very high worth on me, His chosen child, and I know that if I step out in faith He can give me the security and confidence I need... But I LIKE my corner! Ok maybe it’s a little lonely sometimes, but that is a small price to pay for the comfort and ease it gives me. In my corner I never have to experience rejection, I never wonder if I said the wrong thing (because I didn’t say anything), I never have to deal with difficult relationships, I am cozy and mostly safe. So why not just stay here and let the world go by around me? I’ll be happy to watch.
My mother responded to this one very emphatically, “The Bible doesn’t allow a woman to lack confidence!” Look at Proverbs 31. Is there any way to be the woman described there without stepping out of your comfort zone, stretching your insecurities and being confident?

I know another two girls. One would consider herself shy. She has been through some rough times with her family and is a little plainer than most around her and her friends are few and surface. She is friendly enough when someone makes the effort to connect, but usually she stays in her comfort zone. I appreciate her as a friend, but I don’t feel like I know her or have particularly learned much from her.

Another girl has had much the same situation. Many hard times, a lot of family issues. This girl is not naturally outgoing, but she knows what it feels like to be discouraged and is determined to reach out to those who are down. Many times she has come along beside me and asked how things were going; she has shared different things she has learned and opened some of her own heart. Was it fun for her or comfortable? I’m actually sure it wasn’t, but she is now a friend that I depend on and share with. I can go to her for encouragement because she reached out to me first.

You can attach the names that fit! Who do I want to be? Am I reaching out or closing in?


Do these questions make you think?
If I was truly focused on others -
If my life was dedicated to serving in any way possible -
If I did not care for my own comfort -
If I had my eyes only on Jesus Christ -
What kind of person would I be? Would my insecurities even matter? Would it matter how much confidence I had?

No matter who you are, no matter where you have been, no matter what others think of you, you are worth more than anything to God. You have as much potential as you will accept and you have a ministry on your doorstep. Does anyone hear the call to reach out to the hurting, struggling, insecure people who just need a friend?

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. (Luke 4:18-19) ♥

Karen Wolf (22) lives near Hillsboro, WI with her family, where they keep busy with a small home business manufacturing windows.

Editor's note: A few of us stayed with the Wolf family this past August for a few days. I really enjoyed getting to know Karen more and have been blessed and challenged by her. ☺
All I Need:
A Testimony of Finding Stability in Christ

Dear Sister,

Have you ever felt the heartache of insecurity? Or the hopelessness of instability? I’d like to share how I’ve found God to be all I need amidst circumstances beyond my control.

During my earlier years, I wasn’t where I should be spiritually. I didn’t have that vital daily walk with the Lord. During that time our family faced a lot of hard changes – moving, church problems, business setbacks and moving several more times. As the circumstances deteriorated, I began longing for security. Emotionally I found it hard to hold up under all the strains. My definition of security was freedom from all unstable conditions, and I became bitter towards God for allowing our circumstances. I felt hopeless, my heart ached, and my desires and longings (and need!) for security mounted.

My parents and friends encouraged me to look to God for my security. We’ll always face change, but God remains firmly the same. He’s a solid rock we can rest on through all the stormy winds of life.

I knew all they told me was true, but I just couldn’t grasp onto it. As time went on I longed more and more for something stable. God used that desperation to turn me to Him and find the answers to a live and growing relationship with the Lord.

Our family’s circumstances were still the same, but a truth began dawning in my heart. I could trust in God to lead me through every chapter of my life! He’s always faithful! He’ll never let me down! I see the earthly, temporal picture; He sees the heavenly, everlasting side! And He desires to use every circumstance for my good. But I have to make a choice. A choice to trust Him no matter what happens. A choice to lean on Him, a choice to trust His heart.

It’s a continued journey. As humans living in a fallen world, all throughout this life we will face trying times. Insecure and unstable circumstances abound. God is still teaching me what it means to lift my eyes heavenward and trust His almighty hand to guide me through. Then I feel secure in His love and guidance. I like the account of Peter walking on the water. When he took his eyes off Jesus, he began to sink. He found deliverance from his desperate situation when he turned his eyes to Jesus. It’s the same way for us. God will help us to walk even amidst raging winds and billowing waves.

I’ve been really blessed by Psalm 107. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness}

8 For contact information, please see inside cover. For subscription rates, please see back cover (page 28).
they that do business in great waters . . .
see the works of the Lord, and His wonders . . .
He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind . . .
their soul is melted because of trouble.
They are like a drunken man at their wits’ end . . .
then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble,
and he bringeth them out of their distresses.
Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness,
and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Each person and each circumstance is different.
But we always have a solid rock to lean on.
He lovingly offers and bids us to come,
to hide us under the shadow of His wings
and let Him supply all our needs.
Let’s find our security and confidence in the Lord
by placing our complete trust in Him! ♥

Confidence in Christ
(Excerpt from “Boldness” by Alisha Hines and Lara Bode)

Before we can experience boldness in sharing the Gospel,
we must first have our confidence rooted firmly in God,
not in ourselves. (This is the primary difference
between worldly “boldness” and the true boldness which the Bible praises.)

Look closely at the following Scripture verses:
“… Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.”
- Ephesians 3:11b-12.

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him,
that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.”
- 1 John 5:14.

We see here that boldness is not simply feeling self-assured. Boldness comes from realizing how powerful God is and understanding that He hears my prayers.

As evidenced by the Biblical account of Peter and John, boldness based on God’s awesome power conquers fear.

“For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we may boldly say: ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’”

Once we realize the incredible power of God,
He wants us not to shrink away in fear,
but to have boldness and come to Him confidently
because we are washed clean from our sins by the blood of Jesus.

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace,
that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need….
Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,… let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith….”

If we do not have faith in God’s amazing power,
and the ability to boldly bring our requests to Him,
then our witnessing will be ineffective. ♥

For the full text of this article, please visit
http://thekingsdaughtermag.com/v6n6.htm#article3

For contact information, please see inside cover. For subscription rates, please see back cover (page 28).
How does a young lady develop stability in her life, including not running on her feelings?

When I picked this topic to write on, I wasn’t at all sure that I should be the one to address such a challenging thing. I’m so far from where I’d like to be in this area; there are too many days where I feel quite full of feelings, as I’m sure many of you do as well.

But stability has been one area that God has been working deeply in my life, in the past year or so. I’ll share from my own experiences, and from the gold-mines God has opened to my heart. Again, I don’t pretend to have arrived! I’m a fellow pilgrim, walking this pilgrim way, learning from my Father.

For me, not having stability in my life means falling apart when things go wrong. It means doubting God when prayers aren’t answered like I thought they should be. It means running purely on emotion – whether that be short-lived joy over some happy circumstance, or sadness over some unfortunate happening.

If I were to be totally honest, I’d have to confess that I have wrestled with these things for years. Some devastating disappointment would occur, and I’d lose my joy in God. My feelings would fail me, or be nonexistent, and I’d just drag through my day out of sheer duty. I hated living that way, but never could find consistent victory and stability.

I tried singing through hurts or disappointments, but somehow the 'plastic joy' didn’t fool me or those around me – and I doubt I fooled the Lord, either. I tried forgetting about the circumstance. I even tried filling my life with so many things to do, that I would forget the other things. But nothing served as that true, rock-solid stability that doesn’t fail when life takes a unhappy turn.

It was through a few very difficult times in my life that I found true, real, joyful stability in God. The Lord peeled away layers of things that had become props that I relied on; in other words, if those things were in place – whether they were pleasant circumstances, friends who loved me, good health – I was happy and felt like my life was stable. And if for some reason those things weren’t in place, I felt awful … tearful, grumpy, and just plain unpleasant to be around.

Stability and joy in God only comes when I am totally satisfied in Him. I find true, real stability when my heart is finding the greatest joy simply in Him, and in serving Him, and loving Him. He does not change.

Running on our feelings is one thing that I think many of us deal with on a regular basis. Either we don’t have any feelings at all, or we are full of such emotion and feeling that we just react – and usually in a negative way! ☺ Either way, we generally come away feeling like we’ve failed our family, and we’ve failed God.

I have found that focusing on Who God is, rather than what I feel, generally brings much clarity to the confusing mix of feelings. If I focus on how I’m feeling each day, I am not going to be a very stable person!

I’d like to encourage all of us, as young ladies, to set our highest expectations on the Lord, and to be so strongly grounded in Him,
and in His goodness and sovereignty, that we don’t fall to pieces when circumstances go awry, or when we face really difficult things in our lives. That alone has been life changing for me – to really, really understand that all things in my life are working for my good. Do we have any idea the glory of that truth?

Also, how much time do we spend focusing on ourselves, and our failures, rather than on the Lord? Do we try to please the people around us, trying to be someone we’re not, all the while feeling like a failure? I think we as young ladies, especially, need to be aware of who we are living for. It’s a miserable life setting out to please man rather than God! And as we set out to please man, we are often disappointed, and our feelings go running. We feel like we’ve failed. But does God feel like we’ve failed? That’s the question we need to be most concerned about!

So, let’s set our hearts on the only thing in this world that can satisfy. Let’s not waste any of the precious time God has given us, on the short-lived things of this world – because these temporal things that bother us are the things of this world – and let’s choose instead to humble our hearts before God, and let Him do His work. He is so willing to change our hearts! He wants to be our stability. In fact He is the only One who can make us stable, solid sisters who love the Lord extravagantly.

That is what I am learning and finding, as I walk with God. My stability comes only from Him. My feelings don’t matter as much if I am secure in His love. Let come what may – my hope is built on Him, and He is not going to change!

Jessica Stamper (23) writes, “I live in Ephrata, PA where I keep busy with sewing, writing, babysitting, and helping my family at home. I enjoy children, and am part of a children’s ministry in the city. I want my life to have a single purpose – all for Jesus!”

**Stability**

Why is the Christian life so up and down? Why do we feel so victorious, so right with God, so good, sometimes, and then lapse into complacency, discouragement, apathy, etc?

*It’s because we are far too dependent upon our emotions/feelings.*

God created emotions for a purpose – that we might love and worship Him with our whole heart and souls. But we tend to worship Him when the feelings are there only.

**How can we be stable?**

We cannot rely on our feelings. They change! When feelings drop, there must be something deeper.

- We must meditate on the Word.
- We must consciously choose to do right.
- We must follow the Spirit’s promptings.
- We must love God for Who He is.
- We must serve Him because He is worthy.
- We must reach out to others.
- We must die to self.
- We must abide in Christ.
- We must be wise and avoid impulsive decisions, actions, and words . . . not allowing feelings to rule us.
Dear Sisters,

It was a late night in January. I was tired. I was cold. I felt empty. I stared across the room, pencil in hand, poised, thinking. Where is my confidence? In whose strength am I really trusting? I had just read Philippians 4:13. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

I thought about that verse. I pondered. Finally, I turned to my open journal and admitted, “My confidence is in myself. I rely on my strengths and talents to make me successful. This will fail. Christ is the only sure foundation.”

I turned to Philippians 3:3. “...have no confidence in the flesh.” Have no confidence in the flesh. It’s that simple. By myself, I am nothing. And based on John 15:5, I can tell you that by yourself, you are nothing. Our strength is sadly weak.

Have you ever faced a challenging situation and thought, “I can handle this”? Or “I can make it”? I do not want to say that these phrases are wrong. But too easily, they advance from casual phrases to our own philosophies. We begin to not only say, but believe, that we can handle it, that we can make it. And if things start going too badly, then we turn to God.

I have often wondered why we frequently wait to turn to God until we are desperate. Why don’t we claim His strength early on instead of waiting until disaster strikes?

Whatever the reasons may be, each of us needs to realize that God’s strength is infinitely greater than our own. We must trust God’s power in every situation. Dear sisters, I firmly believe that God wants us to draw from His power supply.

In 2 Corinthians 6:1, Paul says, “We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.” Each of us can be a worker together with God.

We cannot survive without Him, but He can easily survive without us. Nevertheless, He wants – wants – to work together with us. What an amazing offer!

Maybe your problem is not overconfidence in yourself, but lack of confidence in God. Maybe you wonder if God is really able to work through the weak vessels we all are.

The answer is yes. (See 2 Cor. 12:9.) When Paul wrote to the Corinthians (see above), he pleaded with them not to receive the grace of God in vain. God’s grace is there. We just have to use it, and use it for His glory. He can, and will, work through you if you open your vessel, weak as it may be, and invite Him to flow through.

Maybe you have opened your vessel to God, and you don’t understand what God has chosen to do in your life. Maybe you have just experienced a painful tragedy. Maybe you are going through a tough trial.

I used to think that Christians should never ask God “why?”. Now I have begun to realize that it is okay to bring our questions, our misunderstandings, to God. That’s what the prophet Habakkuk did.

And God will answer you. Most likely, He will answer in much the same way that He answered Habakkuk. “A full answer is coming. It may be slowly coming, but you will someday understand. And in the meantime, faith in Me will carry you through.” (See Habakkuk 2:3-4.)

And God will give you the grace to respond much like Habakkuk did. “…I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer’s feet, and He will make me walk on my high hills.” – Habakkuk 3:18-19.

And then, on dreary nights, when you feel tired, cold, empty, you can know, deep down, that God is there, and that He will perfect that which concerns you.

♥

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On our yearly vacations to the majestic mountains of Colorado, my family has seen many awe-inspiring wonders of God’s creation. But there is one marvel to which I return year after year, never ceasing to be enchanted.

No matter how many times I have wandered along our sleepy, scenic country road, the beauty of the rippling mountain stream alongside can never grow old. I could sit for hours watching the swirling currents among the glistening rocks and listening to the musical bubbling, trickling sounds of the gliding, crystal-clear water. There is such a soothing stability in the fluid quality of its rhythmic flow.

My love for the sound and feel of water has drawn me to the stream’s banks many a glorious mountain day. Rambling there on sunny afternoons, I have discovered that my beloved brook has many lessons to impart. An insightful poem by Amy Carmichael provides the basis for one of these principles. She aptly calls it “The Pebble Parable”.

Where light and water mixed and made a glory,
Glistened a pebble in a golden pool.
Wond’ring, we sought to read its hidden story:
Where was it carven? Shaped by what tool?

Then from the water did we take it, craving,
A thing so lovely for our own desire.
Ah, but it dulled, missing the water’s laving,
Missing the mystic ministry of fire.

Dear Lord, how often hast
Thou stooped and spoken
By parable, without word or sound.
Flow over me; my heart accepts the token.
Where but in Thee are my fair colors found?

The luster of this lovely pebble, desired so intently by the poet, immediately fades when it is taken from its place in the river. Outside the influence of the sparkling water, it is only an ordinary stone, dull and without significance. All the beauty and glory of this little rock – what some might consider to be its identity, in fact – comes directly from the stream, which has been its sole environment until the events recounted in the poem.

Without the brook, the pebble is nothing. If a pebble were a living thing, we would say that the river is its very life – not merely its locality and existence, but the very thing that makes the pebble the lovely, desirable stone that it is.

The personal application of the parable’s lesson is so staggering, yet so simple. The shiny little rock is an image of me, an ordinary person amid the throngs of others lining the riverbed of life. The golden water in the tumbling brook is a picture of the Lord, “For in Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28a).

This is not so difficult to imagine. He tells me in Jeremiah 17:13 that He is “…the LORD, the fountain of living waters.” And the stirring words of Isaiah 33:21 add a beautiful new dimension to the metaphor. “But there the majestic LORD will be for us a place of broad rivers and streams….”

God flows over me, His little pebble, as a life-giving spring, animating and sustaining me both in this pilgrimage and in the life to come. “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” – John 10:10b. “But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” – John 4:14b.
His waters are delightfully cool and refreshing, more so even than my snow-fed stream of the hills, satisfying the deepest thirsts of my weary and flustered soul. “As the deer pants for the water brooks… my soul thirsts for God, for the living God.” – Ps. 42:1-2a. “...he who believes in Me shall never thirst.” – John 6:35b. “…that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord”. – Acts 3:19b.

His steadily rushing currents cleanse my soul of its accumulated grime and sin, as my rolling rivulet scours its stones for encrusted dirt and impurity. “...like launderers’ soap,” Malachi 3:2 tells me, the Lord will “wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.” – Psalm 51:2. God’s objective is “that He might sanctify and cleanse [me] with the washing of water by the word” (Ephesians 5:26) and “…purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works”. – Titus 2:14.

The Lord is to be my encompassing environment, my dwelling place (Psalm 90:1), the atmosphere in which I perpetually abide. My very identity is derived from being in Christ and abiding in Him. “…I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.” – John 14:20.

Just as the gilded rock in the parable existed as part of the river and lost all its glory and beauty when removed from its place therein, so it is with me. The Lord makes me what I am. Any beauty in my life comes solely through His radiant presence. Jesus shimmers and glows like sunlight bouncing on water – I merely reflect His glory. “In God is my salvation and my glory....” – Psalm 62:7a.

If I were to be “taken out” of my Lord, everything desirable in my life would fade and dissipate. “…apart from Me you can do nothing.” – John 15:5b. I am nothing without Him. I am found in Him.

What tranquil certainty I may find in this knowledge! The stone at the bottom of the brook remains completely indifferent to the events transpiring above the surface. It is immersed in the river, perfectly sheltered and secure from whatever storms or disturbances plague the world above it. Under the Lord’s wings, I am insulated and kept from all harm (Psalm 91). What more could I ask or desire?

The course and currents of my River are utterly certain, ineffably dependable, and stably unchanging. I serve the Father of lights, “…with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” – James 1:17. The meandering mountain creek may carve out new channels, but my Father proclaims, “For I am the LORD, I do not change....” – Malachi 3:6.

Amy Carmichael learned from her encounter that she would glisten and flourish, receive sustenance and strength, and find fulfillment only in her Lord. The value, beauty, and glory of her life flowed through her place in the river, her identity in Jesus. Being anybody special comes from belonging to Him and answering His call for one’s life. May each of us be able to say with her, “Where but in Thee are my fair colors found?” ♥

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Be still, my soul! Thy God doth undertake To guide the future as He has the past. Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake; All now mysterious shall be bright at last.

Be still, my soul! The waves and winds still know His voice who ruled them While He dwelt below. ♥

- Katharina von Schlegel -
“And the L ORD, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.” Deuteronomy 31:8

“And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.” Job 11:18

“I have set the L ORD always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.” Psalm 16:8

“The L ORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The L ORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.” Psalm 27:1,3

“He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defence; I shall not be moved.” Psalm 62:6

“By terrible things in righteousness wilt Thou answer us, O God of our salvation; Who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea.” Psalm 65:5

“He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.” Psalm 91:4

“It is better to trust in the L ORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the L ORD than to put confidence in princes.” Psalm 118:8-9

“For the L ORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.” Proverbs 3:26

“In the fear of the L ORD is strong confidence: and His children shall have a place of refuge.” Proverbs 14:26

“For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; in returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.” Isaiah 30:15

“And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation . . .” Isaiah 33:6

“But now thus saith the L ORD that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the L ORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee . . .” Isaiah 43:1-4

“Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.” Acts 28:31

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ . . .” Romans 16:25

“In Whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him.” Ephesians 3:12

“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6

“And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.” Philippians 1:14

“And you . . . hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in His sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and
settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel . . .” Colossians 1:21-23

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.” Colossians 2:6-7

“To the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.” I Thessalonians 3:13

“Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.” II Thessalonians 2:16-17

“But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.” II Thessalonians 3:3

“But Christ as a son over His own house; Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” Hebrews 3:6

“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end . . .” Hebrews 3:14

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.” Hebrews 10:35

“Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” James 5:8

“But the God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” I Peter 5:10

“And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.” I John 2:28

“Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.” I John 3:21

“And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us.” I John 5:14 ♥

Confidence: II Corinthians 5:6-8 ~ Security: Psalm 61; Psalm 91 ~ Stability: Psalm 15

From Harmony for the Heart, Chapter 10 (“We Rest on Thee”), p. 160.
Silent tears fall on the pillow tonight. A black wave washes over an empty, disappointed heart.

A bad hair day… acne… a terrible first impression on the visitor at church today. A broken dish, a harsh criticism. Gossip heard. A bad grade on math. A scale that registers ten pounds higher than she wants. And no indication that tomorrow will be any better, in any way.

When others shine, she glowers; when others curl, she frizzes; when others soar, she stumbles. And so tonight, when others laugh, she is crying.

I am a failure… I am always messing up… I can do nothing right.

Nothing – it seems to echo in the night.

You can do nothing right… you look terrible… no wonder no one likes you… tomorrow you will fail again… you are nothing… you are nothing…

That’s a lie. It’s not true. Don’t believe it.

Listen. I have something to say. I’ve felt this way before.

This is a lie, what you’ve been thinking. Do you want to know the truth?

Okay, here it is. You are special. You are beautiful. You are a one-of-a-kind jewel.

Yeah, I know your hair’s a mess. You flunked your math test. I heard. But that doesn’t change the truth. You’re still special. You are beautiful.

These thoughts – this black wave of thoughts about to flood you in a sea of despair – is from Satan. Don’t listen. Don’t believe it. It’s not the truth.

The truth is like a shining star of wonderful, incredible light that will make your darkness vanish. Let me show you – dry your tears – look!

The Lord has chosen you as His peculiar treasure.¹ He loves you with an everlasting love,² and He will never change.³

He created you; He formed you. Do not be afraid – He has redeemed you. He calls you by your name; He knows you and treasures you as an individual. He wants you, and you are His. You are precious in His sight.⁴ He loves you. He calls you His jewel.⁵

But I look terrible. Look at me; I’m a mess. I’m so clumsy. My hair never turns out. My face is always breaking out. I’m ten pounds overweight…

Shhhh – you are beautiful! Did you know God formed you from the dust of the ground⁶ and created you in His own image?⁷ Come on, you don’t believe you descended from a monkey. Nor are you a cookie-cutter person turned out from a factory just to be one more human on the planet.

You are like a snowflake – unique, precious, beautiful. God made you, and in His opinion, what He makes is very good.⁸

You are fearfully and wonderfully made. Feel your heartbeat – God keeps it beating because He cares, because He has a purpose. God gives you breath. His works are marvelous!

He wove you together and wrote you in His book. He planned you before you existed; He fashioned you special.⁹ He formed your nose, your mouth. He designed your hair. He knows everything about you¹⁰ and He loves you.

I can’t believe I’m beautiful. Not when I see her over there. She just does everything right. She’s thin, fashionable, sparkly. She sounds good. Everyone likes her. She’s so confident, always knows what she’s doing. I just don’t measure up…

Don’t compare yourself with her. Don’t measure yourself by her success – or anyone else’s.¹¹ By the grace of God you are who you are, and His grace given to you is not in vain.¹²
God doesn't want everyone to turn out like her. He wants her to be her, and you to be you. He sets every member in the body – every person in His Church – as it pleases Him. He makes each of us different, special, unique, to work together and complement each other.13

You’re not supposed to be like her. You’re just as beautiful, just as special, but you’re different, because you’re you.

Okay, maybe you’re right on the appearance thing, but you don’t really know me. I’m – well, I’m always sinning. I’m a big mess-up. If you really knew me, you’d hate me.

Remember that your salvation isn’t by your good works, but by God’s mercy.14 That’s because all of us have sinned,15 and even our righteousness is as filthy rags.16

God knows you are sinful. He knows the deepest thoughts of your heart, the motives and imaginations that you hide from everyone else.17

And guess what? He loves you anyway. He wants a relationship with you, and He wants you to be a part of His work, even though you’ve sinned. That’s why He died – that’s why He bled, because you needed another chance. And now you’ve got one. He can transform murderers.18 He can forgive you.

He promises that if you confess your sin – any sin – He will forgive you and cleanse you.19 As far as the east is from the west, so far will He remove your sins from you.20 They will be gone, forgotten. You will be new, clean.21

Salvation – and day-by-day success – is none of your goodness, and all of His mercy. And as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His mercy toward you.22

God may forgive, but people remember. They don’t always give second chances. Criticism, gossip, rejection – that hurts.

People look on the outside, but God looks at your heart.23 What other people think and say can hurt, but it’s what God thinks and says that really matters.

Remember His love is everlasting – it doesn’t change.24 Nothing – not the worst day in the world – can separate you from His love.25 He accepts you.26 He forgives you. And He can heal your hurt and meet your need.

Okay, so I have another chance – I want to make a fresh start. But I feel totally unable, like I can’t even live tomorrow. I’ll just mess up again. I can’t do this.

Without God, you can’t do it – you can do nothing.27 But with God, you can do all things.28 It’s not your ability that matters; it’s His grace.29

God’s grace is sufficient for you. His strength is made perfect in your weakness.30 He will give you the victory through Jesus Christ.31 God will supply all your need.32 In the day when you cry, He will answer and strengthen your soul.33 Believe it! Claim it! Not one thing will fail of all the good things which God has spoken concerning you – all will come to pass.34

But what if I don’t see those promises coming true in my life? What if I fail – again?

God never promised an easy journey. But when you’re troubled, you don’t have to be distressed. When you’re perplexed, you don’t have to despair. When you’re persecuted, you are not forsaken. When you feel cast down, you’re not destroyed.35 God will never leave you; never will He forsake you.36

Whatever God wants, He will do.37 He is in control of everything, your life included! In His sovereignty, He will make sure that all things work together for your good.38

And when you feel like a failure, He gives you the promise that love never fails.39

I am afraid of what the future holds. There may be grace for today, but what of tomorrow? Life seems so uncertain, so lonely.

God knows the plans He has for you – plans to give you a hope and a future.40 No good thing will He withhold from you.41 He will give you strength for each day.42 When you follow Him, your path will be like a shining light that shines more and more.43 You will go from strength to strength until you appear before God.44
His plan for your future is sweeter than your sweetest dreams, above all you ask or imagine. No one who trusts in Him will be desolate. No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into anyone’s thoughts, the terrific things God has prepared for you.

God’s right hand has spanned the heavens and He’s holding you in that hand. After all, you’re His jewel, acne and all. You’re His peculiar treasure, even when you fail a first impression.

And you know what? When everyone else gives up and leaves, and you cry by yourself at night, He’s knocking at your heart, wanting to be your dearest Friend.

Because He loves you very, very much.

1. Psalm 135:4
2. Jeremiah 31:3
3. Hebrews 13:8
4. Isaiah 43:1-4
5. Malachi 3:17
6. Genesis 2:7
7. Genesis 1:27
8. Genesis 1:31
9. Psalm 139:1-16
10. Psalm 139:1
11. 2 Corinthians 10:12
12. 1 Corinthians 15:10
13. 1 Corinthians 12:18-28
14. Titus 3:5
15. Romans 3:23
16. Isaiah 64:6
17. Psalm 139:1-12
18. 1 Timothy 1:16
19. 1 John 1:9
20. Psalm 103:12
21. 2 Corinthians 5:17
22. Psalm 103:11
23. 1 Samuel 16:7
24. Jeremiah 31:3
25. Romans 8:38-39
26. Romans 15:7
27. John 15:5
28. Philippians 4:13
29. Zechariah 4:6
30. 2 Corinthians 12:9
31. 1 Corinthians 15:57
32. Philippians 4:19
33. Psalm 138:3
34. Joshua 23:14
35. 2 Corinthians 4:8-9
36. Hebrews 13:5
37. Psalm 135:6
38. Romans 8:28
39. 1 Corinthians 13:8
40. Jeremiah 29:11
41. Psalm 84:11
42. Deuteronomy 33:25
43. Proverbs 4:18
44. Psalm 84:7
45. Ephesians 3:20
46. Psalm 34:22
47. 1 Corinthians 2:9
48. Isaiah 48:13
49. John 10:28
50. Revelation 3:20

Abba Father (Mel Esh)
In Jewish history, servants and slaves could not call the heads of the home “Abba Father.” This term expresses the love and the intelligent apprehension of the relationship. He is the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort. Even when our Father chastens us He does it because He loves and cares for us as His children. Do you want God’s plan and path to open up for you? Abide securely, surrendered to God and His care for you.

I Am With You (David Cooper)
Did you ever have a very close friend desert you or exclude you? Loneliness is painful. Jesus experienced rejection, yet did not respond with bitterness, because He was secure in His relationship with His Father. There is nothing more important or powerful than this.

Your Confidence in Christ (Don Wall)
Beginning with the question: “Do you remember the day that you came to Jesus?”, a discourse is presented to encourage all believers to have their utmost confidence in God. God’s Word is worthy of our confidence, and as we rely on all that God has shared to us and continue on with God, we will have a surety of faith in God that cannot be shaken.

Faith or Feelings? (Denny Kenaston)
Feelings are a by product of a faith-walk with God. Faith in the facts will bring feeling in your life.
In the Masloske household, Thursdays are what we call “cleaning day.” On this special day of the week, the whole house gets vacuumed, mopped, the bathrooms are cleaned, the fridge and freezer are wiped out... basically we do a most thorough cleaning to make it a pleasant abode for the weekend and the rest of the week. We greet each other on Thursday mornings with a big grin and a “Happy Cleaning Day!” and we sing together and talk to one another as we work. While some of us may not especially enjoy cleaning, I think we have done a fairly good job of making it as enjoyable as cleaning can get.

Today is one of those joyous Thursdays. My cleaning day is complete as it is now early afternoon, and I was blessed with a rather easy day of cleaning. I had the privilege of vacuuming the lower level (and I mean “privilege” when I say it – I love to vacuum). I was vacuuming in the great room, where our four parakeets live on a coffee table; and since our birdies are rather messy creatures, if you vacuum the great room you must take the attachment and vacuum up all the mess around them. Habitually I took the attachment and began sucking up the feathers and all, and, just as usual on our cleaning days, havoc struck in the cages. The parakeets began chirping loudly out of fright as they scurried across their perches and their heads looked quickly back and forth on either side. Every single time we vacuum around them, this happens. I glanced up from my work when the chirps persisted louder and louder and thought to myself, “Shouldn’t these silly birds be used to the once-or-twice-a-week vacuuming job around their cages by now?” Really – it can’t be that scary for those birds; have they forgotten about the protection of the cages they live in? Or do they forget the fact that the vacuum hasn’t ever hurt them in the past? Why are they so worried, and what are they even worried about?

Suddenly my thoughts changed. I thought about the times in our lives when things happen that we don’t understand or aren’t used to happening, and we become afraid and ridiculously worried. We start imagining things that could happen because of it, and we wonder why God would allow it to come to pass. We fret over virtually nothing at times. And yet, is it really so bad as that? Have we forgotten that we abide continually in the Father’s hand, and He desires nothing but good for us? What about the love and kindness of our Savior’s heart, and the promises He spoke to us? Through every trial we’ve faced in the past, hasn’t God always given us the grace and support we’ve needed to bear it? Do we forget that all things work together for the good of those that love God, no matter how bleak the circumstances may appear? Why are we so worried, and what do we really have to even be worried about?

When I looked at those birds today, I smiled, because I knew I had no intention of hurting them whatsoever – I was actually making it much better for them and for the rest of us. So therefore, I thought it was silly of the birds to be so afraid. When God sees us fretting here on earth after all He’s done for us, I wonder how silly we must look to Him. “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of
God knows that everything He has going on in our lives is for our ultimate benefit in the end. He promises that He is not devising evil thoughts for us, ever. Do we forget?

“For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee” Isaiah 41:13. The tenderness in our Father’s grasp on our hands as we walk through dark lonely valleys and travel in the desert is ever present, even though we may not be able to feel it all the time. We must trust in this promise and go forward with this assurance. But do we forget?

“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom” Luke 12:32. Our Heavenly Father wants to give us Eternal Life. He wants us to have the best at all times, in every situation, and reward us in the end with life in Heaven, living eternally with Him and His Son. In storms boisterous and on dark cloudy days . . . do we forget?

At just the right time, once all the mess was nicely cleaned up around the cages, I turned the vacuum off and proceeded with the rest of my vacuuming chores. Likewise, at just the right time, Jesus will calm the storm, and we will come out of it wiser, stronger, and more faithful to Him than before it began. This is a promise – our trials never do last forever.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" 1 Peter 4:12-13.

God bless you today, dear friend, in whatever you may be facing. Remember that at any time we may boldly remind ourselves, “The Lord is my helper,” and we have no reason to fear what man shall do unto us (Hebrews 13:6), for if God be for us (and He is), what can be against us? (Romans 8:31) ♥

My imagination works hard . . .

“Why didn’t she sit beside me? There’s an empty chair. Is she ashamed to be my friend?”

“What does that fellow think of me? He might be watching me, and he even said 'hello' to me when he walked in”

“What if I’m weird, but no one ever told me? Maybe my youth group can’t stand me.”

My imagination sends me on a tortuous Ferris wheel of worry. (I imagine yours can, too.) Then Isaiah 26:3 flashes at me. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose [imagination] is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” (My center-column reference substitutes imagination for mind.) The Lord must have inspired that verse for girls like me.

“Forgive me, Lord,” I pray. “My focus has shifted to myself and what others think of me. Let me look up at You. Keep my imagination in check as I marvel at Your greatness.”

What a wonder! My worry dissolves as I focus on Him. He understands the imagination that leave me puzzled and exhausted. He’s the ultimate Understander. Imagine that! ♥

From Harmony for the Heart, Chapter 10 (“We Rest on Thee”), pp. 151-152. (see p. 24 of this issue)
Security is “structuring my life around that which is eternal and cannot be destroyed or taken away.” [IBLP definition] Another definition is “the state of being or feeling secure; freedom from fear, anxiety, danger, doubt, etc.; state or sense of safety or certainty.”

After reading these two definitions of security, how would you rate your own personal level of security? If you had asked me this question about six months ago, I would have probably answered with a rank of nine, on a one to ten scale. I felt very confident about this high rank because I felt very secure and safe; I was at home, ready to graduate, free from fear and anxiety. Although I was a little doubtful of what the future held, I really believed that I had structured my life around those things that are eternal. Then the inevitable happened – my Heavenly Father decided to place my idea of my personal security in the refining pot. But before I go into the details of my ongoing purification, I want to return to the concept of security and where our true security should lie.

John 6:27 says, “Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”

It’s funny how many times I have read over these verses and yet never connected them with the idea of where our security lies. I am sure that each of you daughters of the King can think of at least one time in your life when things were not going right and you became uneasy, apprehensive, or worried about what may or may not happen. I can think of numerous occasions when I spent more time biting my nails in worry than I did praying about a situation. How sad that we do not connect our small “nervous habits” to our lack of adopting the mindset of security in Christ.

Why do we choose to forget that the “Son of man shall give unto you” eternal life? Why do we instead adopt and hold on to the worldly mindset of anxiety? I will admit to you dear sisters that I am chief among the anxious. I am a bonafide worry-wart; I have experienced backaches, knotted muscles, and sleepless nights because I have repeatedly chosen to “labor for the meat which perisheth”. As I write this, regret fills my heart to think of the time that I have wasted, to think of the lost opportunities because my security was based on the earthly, not on the eternal.

Colossians 3:1-3 gives us a strong admonition and encouragement from the apostle Paul: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

Sisters, do you realize the urgency of these verses? If we, as daughters of our King, are to develop a meek and quiet spirit and be used completely for God’s glory, we must cast off this sinful mindset of anxiety. If you are risen in Christ, then there is no need to fear or to tremble, because your life is hidden in Christ’s.

Think of 1 Peter 5:7, “Cast all your care [anxiety] on Him for He cares for you.” You are never left alone to figure out your future or to make the right decisions, because He cares for you. I am nineteen years old and I understand the fear that comes from not knowing if marriage is a part of your future, and the
uncertainty of what you are supposed to do after high school graduation. Your decision to make is what type of mindset you will keep. This is a decision that I am struggling daily to keep and enact. But when you choose to have the mindset of security, you will be rewarded; "and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:7)

I would like to share the testimony that God has given me concerning adopting the mindset of security. I believe that God gives us each hundreds of testimonies that He desires us to share with others to encourage and uplift. I pray that this recounting of my triumphs and mistakes will give you some practical applications for adopting the mindset of security in Jesus.

As I said earlier, just at the point when I was feeling rather secure in my life, God decided to test me. This testing came through a generous offer by my grandparents to send me on a four-month trip that would include short stays in California, Hawaii, Washington, and Oregon, as well as a three-month stay in the Philippines. I would be traveling with my great uncle and aunt, and would consider my stay in the Philippines as a missionary internship, even though I had no desire to be a foreign missionary.

Now most people would have jumped at this chance to see the world, but I did not. I did not really want to go. This would be the first time I would be away from my home for such a length of time, and I saw the trip as a threat to my security. I have always been a person to dread new situations, because they present opportunities for me to make mistakes, and I hate making mistakes.

Of course, none of these selfish excuses were taken into consideration by my parents when we made the decision for me to go; in fact, they probably knew that this trip was exactly what I needed. So, five days after my high-school graduation, I flew out of Nebraska to start an adventure that I will never forget. For the sake of time, I will only relate to you the story of my stay here in the Philippines. It was not until I arrived in the Philippines at the end of May that the Lord really began to concentrate on changing my mindset from one of anxiety to one of security.

At first I sought to find my security in myself and a predictable daily routine. But soon visitors and a two-week class at the Bible seminary here disrupted the routine that I had begun to build. The class, taught by our American visitor, was my first experience in a classroom situation outside of my home, and with a teacher other than my mother.

I soon found that, if I wanted high grades, I would have to spend a good portion of my day studying. So I began to place my security in my studies and spent too much time studying rather than intermingling with the Filipino students.

Everything went fine until I decided to enroll in the Bible school for half a semester, just for fun. Their school year here in the Philippines runs from the middle of June until the end of March. So with the help of my aunt and uncle, who founded the school, I enrolled as a freshman. Because we thought we would only be staying until the end of August, we decided that I could just pick the classes that I was interested in, and then learn what I could in that short time.

I initially did not realize that I had picked all upper grade classes except one, which was specifically for freshmen. I also did not know that, in a few weeks, we would decide to extend our stay until the end of October, so that I would be able to finish the first semester. The beginning of school brought the most intense
struggle I have ever faced in learning to deny security in myself, and seeking to adopt the mindset of security in Christ.

You see, sisters, I must confess that I have a perfectionist tendency when I do my work. I like to know what others expect of me, and I will do almost anything to meet those expectations. All my life this has been feasible, because I did not have to meet the expectations of very many people other than my family. Now I found out that this perfectionist character would nearly kill my peace and joy in the Lord as I strove to meet the expectations of five different teachers.

I tried to rely on my own strength and my own hard work to pull me through each day and each test. I would get up early, go to bed late, and, as the proverb says, eat the "bread of sorrows". I was not trusting Christ, but I did not realize that I was choosing to place my security in things that could be destroyed or taken away. It took me eight weeks of emotional and physical agony to come to the breaking point.

Our Father in His great love continued steadfastly during that time to show His mercy to me, but He never stopped pressuring me to give up on myself and look to Him. Until I rejected that sinful mindset of security in myself and began to adopt the mindset of security in Christ, I could not find true joy in the things that I was doing; I could not find lasting meaning in the everyday routine of living.

But when I fell on my face in repentance and began to ask myself if I was laboring for those things that perish or if I was laboring for those things that are eternal, my entire perspective began to change. True and lasting joy was mine when I knew where my security lay, and I sought the Lord’s strength instead of my own.

I want to encourage you, my dear sisters in Christ, to go to the Lord and make Him alone your security. Make the commitment today to labor only for the eternal things. In everything that you do, ask yourself, “Am I laboring for things that perish, or is this work a shining light to someone around me?”

Even if your work is taking out trash or changing diapers or washing dishes, if you do it in a way that will influence those around you to think on heavenly things, your work is eternal. Labor daily for the eternal, but never waste your time on something that will perish. Look deep into every area of your life and seek to structure it around those things that last!

Friends will come and friends will go,
There’s so many folks I know.
But there’s a friend who’ll never flee,
He’s everything to me.

Safe within His tender care,
I can rest, knowing He is there.
Although the way I cannot see.
I know He’s always there for me.

His love for me will never dim,
Forever I’ll belong to Him.
He comforts, gladdens, and makes free,
My King is everything.
What a indescribable privilege it is to be a saved child of the Lord Jesus Christ – the one who calmed the storm (Mark 4:39), who redeemed His people from their wretched sin (John 17:12), and at last ascended to the throne that He alone is worthy to approach, for He was completely victorious!

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in!”

“Who is this King of glory?”

comes the answer...

And Jesus Christ the One with scarred hands and feet, replies,

“The LORD of hosts, the King of glory!”

(Psalm 24:9-10)

Oh, that we could have witnessed this all-glorious return of the risen, triumphant Christ to His Father! This morning as I read Isaiah 42, I was awe-stricken at His power and infinite mercy. "For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds" (Psalm 57:10).

That we could from the mountaintops shout forth the praises of our great and awing King!

"I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee... Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains."

He has promised to hold our hand, dear sisters! The one marvelous God, who laid out the heavens and earth, the One so much higher than our own mortal bodies, He is the only one we can trust for our salvation and to hold secure until that day when we join Him in Heaven, together lauding Him with praises on high.

You see, we can find complete security in Jesus Christ, no matter what fears and assailants this world threatens us with. Rest in His glory, not in your own finite being, to see you through to the end goal. Place your life in His worthy hands and claim His security as your own in bare faith. The IBLP definition of security is, "Structuring my life around that which is eternal and cannot be destroyed or taken away." Do not bear self-guilt over your own sins or infirmities. Instead, know that you "just can’t do it." When you can completely realize this fact, and fall into the grace of Christ, then you will live at complete peace knowing He "can (and did) do it" and has completed the price for your failure. Thus, "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:1) Press toward the mark of this high calling (Phil. 3:14, Heb. 3:1, 2 Peter 1:10), dear ones. I look forward to worshipping our mutual Savior and Father together one day! ♥

Sarah L. Bryant is overwhelmed by the blessing of being one of Christ’s daughters (Mark 5:34), and looking forward to beholding His glory (John 17:24). She resides with her family on a Kansas farm and would love to hear from you at http://kingsbloomingrose.com or 21350 Springdale Road, Easton, KS 66020.
The Rock is our Lord Jesus Christ. This name of God declares His mighty power and strength. “...Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.” – Deuteronomy 32:3-4.

In the Old Testament, the Lord chose Israel as His people. He blessed Israel and showered His chosen with many blessings (Deut. 32:13).

Sadly, God’s people rebelled against Him and served other gods. As prosperity came, their Rock became insignificant in their eyes (see Deut. 32:15-17). Do we today lightly esteem our Saviour, His Word, His sacrifice on Calvary? We need to search our hearts and make sure that our Rock is highly esteemed!

“Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.” – Deut. 32:18 (emphasis added). When we are surrounded by comforts, peace, or material possessions, it is so easy to leave our First Love. We must be careful not to forget our Lord, but to be continually mindful of Him.

In the Bible we see many comparisons between God and righteousness, and Satan and unrighteousness. There are, for example, two cups (1 Corinthians 10:21), two Gospels (2 Corinthians 11:3-4, Galatians 1:6-9), two masters (Matthew 6:24), and also two rocks, as seen clearly in this chapter of Deuteronomy. “For their rock is not as our Rock....” – Deut. 32:31.

One rock is the world, the gods of the heathen, a false foundation on which sin-blinded men build their empty hopes. The other is The Rock on which redeemed believers build on the foundation of our strong, immutable Saviour. Their rock fails them; our Rock will never fail. Their rock grants no blessings, no eternal fruit; our Rock delights in blessing His own and giving everlasting rewards.

As we look in the Bible, three blessings of The Rock can be clearly seen: He is our salvation, our shelter, and our strength, for all of our days! “The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.” - Psalm 18:2.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Rock of our salvation. Jesus rescues all who trust in His blood and delivers them from the eternal flames of hell. “I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.” - Psalm 40:1-3.

God alone is the Rock on which man can trust and rely; there is no one else who can compare with Him. Trusting in the faulty rocks of the world – money, men, or other gods – will not save you from ruin. Christ alone must be our confidence (see Psalm 62:1-2).

As the children of Israel trusted in God in the wilderness, we can trust the fountain of living water which flows from the Rock today. “…I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers... did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank...” - Hebrews 11:1-2.
of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." - 1 Corinthians 10:1-4.

We “…as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house… acceptable to God by Jesus Christ…”; and we can show forth, by a life of faith in Him, “…his marvellous light…” to those around us. The Lord is the Chief Cornerstone! (See 1 Peter 2:5-10.)

The Lord Jesus Christ, as the Rock, is our shelter. He is the place of rest and restoration for the faithful pilgrims who follow Him. “For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name’s sake lead me, and guide me.” - Psalm 31:3.

What comfort to call on His name and to be lifted when we are overwhelmed by sorrow, temptations or uncertainty! “From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.” - Psalm 61:2-3.

Just as “…a wise man, which built his house upon a rock…”, we are wise when we are obedient to the Word of God (see Matthew 7:24-28).

God grants us grace and a glimpse of His glory when we are sheltered in the cleft of the Rock (consider Exodus 33:17-23)!

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Rock, is our strength. “For who is God, save the LORD? and who is a rock, save our God? God is my strength and power: and he maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet: and setteth me upon my high places.” - 2 Samuel 22:32-34.

Our family is walking a new path with the Lord. He has called us to go out as full-time missionaries to the streets of America. The obstacles at first seemed enormous, and the way precarious and uncertain. If we were to go forth in our own strength we would never go. Our strength is so small, but in Jesus we have all we need! “And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God: Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament….” - 2 Corinthians 3:4-6 (also see 2 Cor. 12:9-10).

Daily He shows His mighty hand as we prepare to go, by working out all the details as well as perfecting us for the work ahead. Just as a jeweler chips away at a small stone, His desire is that we come forth as a sparkling jewel to reflect His glory to a lost and dying world. We all must trust the Rock for His strength as we climb to higher ground, to maturity in Him. Our feet will not slip if we go in His power!

The rock of the world is not eternal, is not faithful, and will fail us. But when the dust from that crumbled rock settles, look up, for the Rock, our Saviour, will still be there! Our God is amazing in all His attributes. Our hearts should exalt His name, just as Hannah did as she prayed, “…My heart rejoiceth in the LORD… There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.” - 1 Samuel 2:1-2.

“My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, But wholly lean on Jesus’ name.

On Christ the solid Rock I stand; All other ground is sinking sand.

All other ground is sinking sand.”

- Edward Mote ♥

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