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THE CONCORD VINE NEWSLETTER



God's Unspeakable Gift

In stooping to take upon Himself humanity, Christ revealed a character the opposite of the character of Satan. But He stepped still lower in the path of humiliation. "Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Philippians 2:8. As the high priest laid aside his gorgeous pontifical robes, and officiated in the white linen dress of the common priest, so Christ took the form of a servant, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him." Isaiah 53:5.

Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. "With His stripes we are healed."

By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder." God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the "Son of man" who shares the throne of the universe. It is the "Son of man" whose name shall be called, "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. The I AM is the Daysman between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both. He who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," is not ashamed to call us brethren. Hebrews 7:26; 2:11. In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love.

The work of redemption will be complete. In the place where sin abounded, God's grace much more abounds. The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted. Our little world, under the curse of sin the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God. Here, where the Son of God tabernacled in humanity; where the King of glory lived and suffered and died,—here, when He shall make all things new, the tabernacle of God shall be with men, "and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." And through endless ages as the redeemed walk in the light of the Lord, they will praise Him for His unspeakable Gift,—Immanuel God with Us!

E.G White, *The Desire of Ages*, p 25-26



“Gifts for Jesus”

Imagine - you're having a birthday party for your son. The house is decorated with colorful streamers, bouncing balloons, and a Happy Birthday banner over the front door. A chocolate cake with sprinkles waits to be eaten, games are laid out ready to be played, and joyful music fills the air.

Then the children begin to pour in carrying carefully wrapped presents with shiny bows. But then, when it comes time for the birthday boy to open his gifts, a strange exchange occurs. The children begin giving gifts to each other, not to your child. He watches befuddled as his friends begin opening the lovely gifts and he sits empty handed.

Now, how would you, as a watching parent, feel? What would you think of the guests? How would your heart feel as you watched your hurting son?

Think about it. It seems that this is what most of us do every Christmas morning. We prepare for a grand celebration. Shop for weeks. Buy elaborate gifts. Decorate the house. Bake a smorgasbord of goodies. Invite the guests. And then the gift giving frenzy begins while the person whose birth we're celebrating is forgotten.

Oh dear friend, while we are giving family and friends the special gifts we have bought for them, what kind of gift do we plan on giving Jesus? There is only one thing that He wants. He wants our heart...our whole heart. That is at the top of His list.

So what are some "gift" ideas that Jesus would love to receive from you this year?

Giving Him our heart, our whole heart
 A commitment to getting to know Him better
 A commitment to spend more time in prayer
 A commitment to spend more time studying His Word
 Being a better steward of time and money
 Being His hands and feet to the poor and needy

This year, pray about what Jesus would like you to give Him for Christmas this year.

What can I give Him,
 Poor as I am?
 If I were a shepherd
 I would give Him a lamb.
 If I were a wise man,
 I would do my part.
 But what can I give Him?
 I will give Him my heart.



A Poem for the Season

I heard the bells on Christmas day
 Their old familiar carols play
 And mild and sweet the words repeat,
 Of peace on earth, good will to men.

I thought how as the day had come,
 The belfries of all Christendom
 Had roll'd along th' unbroken song
 Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bow'd my head:
 "There is no peace on earth," I said,
 "For hate is strong, and mocks the song
 Of peace on earth, good will to men."

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
 "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
 The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
 With peace on earth, good will to men."

'Til ringing, singing on its way,
 The world revolved from night to day,
 A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,
 Of peace on earth, good will to men!

*By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
 first published in 1863*



To Your Health! with Hans Diehl, DrHS, MPH and Aileen Ludington, MD

Since World War II diabetes has been advancing relentlessly in developed countries where it is now one of the leading causes of death. If present trends continue, babies born today will have a one in five chance of becoming diabetic in their lifetimes. Until recent times, there has been no known cure.

No more! Today many people are beating diabetes. They are normalizing their blood sugars and getting of insulin by making healthful lifestyle changes.

Diabetes occurs when the body becomes unable to handle glucose (sugar), which builds up to dangerous levels in the blood. A diagnosis of diabetes is usually made when a blood sugar test is consistently about 125mg% (7.0 mmol/L) after an eight hour fast. There are two kinds of diabetes. Type I afflicts about 5% of diabetics. They are usually thin and rarely overweight. This type of diabetes usually begins in childhood and is commonly known as juvenile diabetes. Since these diabetics cannot survive without insulin, it is now officially called insulin dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM).

Type II diabetes is different. Called adult-onset diabetes or noninsulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (NIDDM), it is the most common kind, affecting more than 90% of diabetics.

What causes adult onset diabetes? Studies demonstrate a strong relationship fat - both fat in the diet and fat on the body. The disease is rare in areas of the world where fat intake is low and obesity uncommon.

Normally insulin, a pancreatic hormone, enables body cells to use glucose and controls blood sugar levels. But most of the time the problem in adult-onset diabetes is not a defective pancreas unable to produce insulin, but a lack of sensitivity to insulin. This resistance of the cells to insulin appears to relate directly to obesity and to excess fat in the diet and possibly in the liver.

Isn't sugar the culprit? James Anderson, M.D., professor of medicine and clinical nutrition at the University of Kentucky College of Medicine evaluated the effect of diet on blood sugar levels. Just as others before him, Dr Anderson was able to turn lean healthy young men into mild diabetics in less than two weeks by feeding them a rich 65% fat diet. A similar group, fed a lean 10% fat diet plus one pound of sugar a day, did not produce even one diabetic after 11 weeks when the experiment was terminated.

Beating Type II Diabetes?

- ♥ Eat more natural fiber-rich foods, simply prepared, low in fat, grease, and sugar. Freely use whole grain products, tubers and legumes, salads and vegetables. Eat a substantial breakfast daily - a hot multigrain cereal will curb your appetite for hours and stabilize your blood sugar.
- ♥ Use fresh whole fruits, but not more than three servings a day.
- ♥ Avoid refined and processed foods. They are usually high in fat and sugar, and low in fiber.
- ♥ Markedly reduce fats, oils and grease. If you use animal products, use them very sparingly, more like a condiment, or better yet, eat not animal products at all.)
- ♥ Walk briskly each day. Two 30 minute walks every day are ideal to help burn up elevated blood sugar.
- ♥ Work with a physician experienced in the effects of dietary therapy to monitor and adjust your insulin need.

In the Kitchen...

Autumn Stew

Based on traditional Native American foods - squash, corn, and beans - this stew is perfect for a Christmas feast. For a festive presentation, try serving this in a hollowed, lightly baked pumpkin. (Serves 6)

1-1/2 cups water or vegetable stock
 1 tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce
 1 onion, chopped
 1 red bell pepper, diced
 4 large garlic cloves, minced
 1 pound (about 4 cups) kabocha squash or other winter squash
 1 15-ounce can chopped tomatoes
 1-1/2 teaspoons chili powder
 1/2 teaspoon cumin
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 1 15-ounce can kidney beans
 1-1/2 cups fresh or frozen corn

Heat 1/2 cup water and soy sauce in a large pot, then add the onion, bell pepper, and garlic and cook over medium heat until the onion is translucent and most of the water evaporates.

Cut the squash in half and remove its seeds, then peel and cut it into 1/2-inch cubes. Add squash cubes to the onion mixture, along with the chopped tomatoes, remaining 1 cup water, oregano, chili powder, cumin, and pepper.

Cover and simmer until the squash is just tender when pierced with a fork, or about 20 minutes, then add the kidney beans with their liquid and the corn. Cook 5 minutes longer.

*Nutrition information per 1-1/2 - cup serving:
 185 calories, 6 g protein, 38 g carbohydrate, 0.8 g fat, 4% of calories from fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 314 mg sodium*



Mission Minutes - Stories from Adventist Mission, Global Mission Pioneers

“The Promise-Keeping God”

Nina and her husband operate a small business in India. One day some people came by giving away pamphlets. Nina requested one and glanced at it. She realized that the pamphlet was a religious tract.

“I have many questions about Jesus,” Nina told the woman who gave her the tract. The woman invited Nina to ask her questions, then she answered them. “I would like to learn more about Jesus,” Nina said. “I want to know why He is called God.”

The visitor invited Nina to attend an evening Bible study the next night. Nina went to the meeting and was relieved when her husband did not ask her where she had gone. But the next Bible study ran longer, and Nina was late getting home. Her husband met her at the door, angry that she had not told him where she was going. She continued attending the Bible studies, though her husband warned her never to take their children to Christian meetings.

The seventh Bible study dealt with returning tithe to the Lord. Nina listened carefully. She and her husband were having some financial problems, and two friends had failed to return money they had borrowed several years before.

The concept of testing the Lord reminded Nina of the overdue loans. That night she prayed, “Lord, you know that my family urgently needs money. If our friends return the money that they borrowed, I will return the tithe to You.” Nina prayed this prayer on Thursday evening. On Friday she received 5,000 rupees (about US \$115); one loan was paid in full. The next day Nina placed 500 rupees in the offering plate. During the next week the other loan was paid in full, and the following Sabbath she placed 200 rupees in the offering.

“Jesus Christ is a good God,” Nina says. “He keeps His promises. As long as I live I will follow Jesus and return a faithful tithe to the Lord.” Nina has been baptized, and continues to faithfully return a tithe of her business income. Since she first began returning tithe, she reports that her business has doubled.

Nina’s husband is beginning to understand what Nina has discovered. He has told her, “There is power in your God.” Nina prays that her husband will see more of the power of Jesus and give his heart to the Lord as she has.

Our tithes support church workers around the world; our mission offerings support the many ministries that lead people such as Nina to the feet of Jesus.



From the pen of Inspiration

The children of God are not left alone and defenseless. Prayer moves the arm of Omnipotence. Prayer has "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire"--we shall know what it means when we hear the reports of the martyrs who died for their faith--"turneth to flight the armies of the aliens."
Hebrews 11:33, 34.

If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision. Whatever may be our situation, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexities, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend. If in our ignorance we make missteps, Christ does not leave us. His voice, clear and distinct, is heard saying, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." John 14:6. "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper." Psalm 72:12. The Lord declares that He will be honored by those who draw nigh to Him, who faithfully do His service. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." Isaiah 26:3. The arm of Omnipotence is outstretched to lead us onward and still onward. Go forward, the Lord says; I will send you help. It is for My name's glory that you ask, and you shall receive. I will be honored before those who are watching for your failure. They shall see My word triumph gloriously. "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matthew 21:22.

Christ Object Lessons p173-174



Kids Korner!

The Dog That Laughed All the Way Home

by Marvin Hunt

As Wayne parked his pickup truck beside his house one day after work, he heard the neighbor lady calling for him to come over to her house as fast as he could. When Wayne got there, he saw his little beagle dog lying on the ground, flopping around like a fish out of the water. The dog was foaming at the mouth and acting crazy. He had a weird look in his eyes.

Wayne carefully picked up his dog and brought him home. He was worried that his little dog had the terrible rabies disease. To keep the little beagle from escaping while he called the veterinarian, Wayne put him in a horse trailer with high side rails that he had in the yard. Then he ran into the house and called the vet. Hurriedly he explained all about the strange way his dog was acting. Sadly, he found out from the vet that the only way to tell for sure if his dog had rabies was to test some of its brain cells. Of course, there would be no way to do this test while his dog was still alive.

Wayne hung up the phone after making an appointment for the vet to see his dog. It looked very bad for his little pet. After making up his mind about what he had to do, he went outside to get the dog out of the trailer. As he walked up, the little beagle got so excited that he jumped clear over the top of the trailer side and landed on Wayne. As the dog struggled to keep from falling, he scratched Wayne's face. Some foam from his mouth fell into Wayne's bleeding scratches. Now Wayne was really worried, because a human can catch this terrible disease from the saliva of an animal who has rabies.

Wayne tied a rope around the dog's neck and loaded him into the front seat of his truck. All the way to the vet's office the dog kept acting crazy. He bit the seat, attacked the gear shift, and kept foaming at the mouth. When he reached the animal hospital, the veterinarian was waiting for them. Wayne pulled his dog from the truck. He seemed more like a wild dog now than a pet. The wise and experienced vet took one look at the little animal and said, "Oh, he's got a bone stuck in his throat! Bring him inside."

Wayne was astonished. He had been afraid his dog would have to die. Instead, the veterinarian simply took his fingers and forced the dog's mouth open. Then he reached down his throat and popped out a bone! It was just a little bone—about two inches long and as big around as a pencil.

Wayne said later that if a dog could sigh with relief, his beagle surely did. Immediately the dog calmed down and stopped foaming at the mouth. Wayne thought he even began to smile, almost like a human. On the way home, his dog sat up on the seat beside Wayne just like a little king, enjoying the scenery passing by.

Thanks to his training, the veterinarian knew just what to do. He saved the dog's life. He had studied and learned all he could about animals, and God had given him the ability and the talent to become a good animal doctor.

Isn't it wonderful that we have special people to whom we can turn when we have special needs? I'm sure Wayne was thankful that he had a good animal doctor to treat his little beagle friend. I know Wayne was glad he was not alone. When the beagle was so sick, Wayne was very scared. He didn't know what to do. Can you think of specially trained people who help you sometimes with things you cannot do for yourself? A doctor? A nurse? A fireman? I'm sure your mom's and dad's can name lots of special people they have turned to when they had needs. God loves us and hears our prayers when we are in need. And He provides special people to help us when we are in trouble. Let's be glad for them and thank Him for them.

Kid's in the Kitchen!

Black Bean Chili and Rice

Ingredients

- 4 cans black beans
- 1 can stewed tomatoes
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 1 large green pepper, chopped
- 2 celery rib
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 whole bay leaves
- Water
- Instant brown rice or white rice

Directions

1. Put all ingredients (except rice) in a saucepan or a Crock-Pot.
2. Let cook slowly for 2 to 3 hours or until all the vegetables are nice and soft.
3. Taste and add any seasoning it needs.
4. While the chili is cooking, prepare the rice by the instructions on the box.
5. When everything is cooked, pour the chili into one bowl and rice into another.

SERVING IDEAS:

- ♥ Serve with fresh whole-wheat bread and a salad on the side.
- ♥ Serve with chili over the rice, with chopped tomatoes on top





Concord Seventh-day Adventist Church



Sabbath School:

Saturday 9.25am - 10.35am

Main Service:

Saturday 10.50am -
12.00noon

Fellowship Meal:

First Sabbath of each Month

Location:

2141 Hwy 49,
Concord NC 28025

Visit Us Online:

www.concordadventist.org

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in