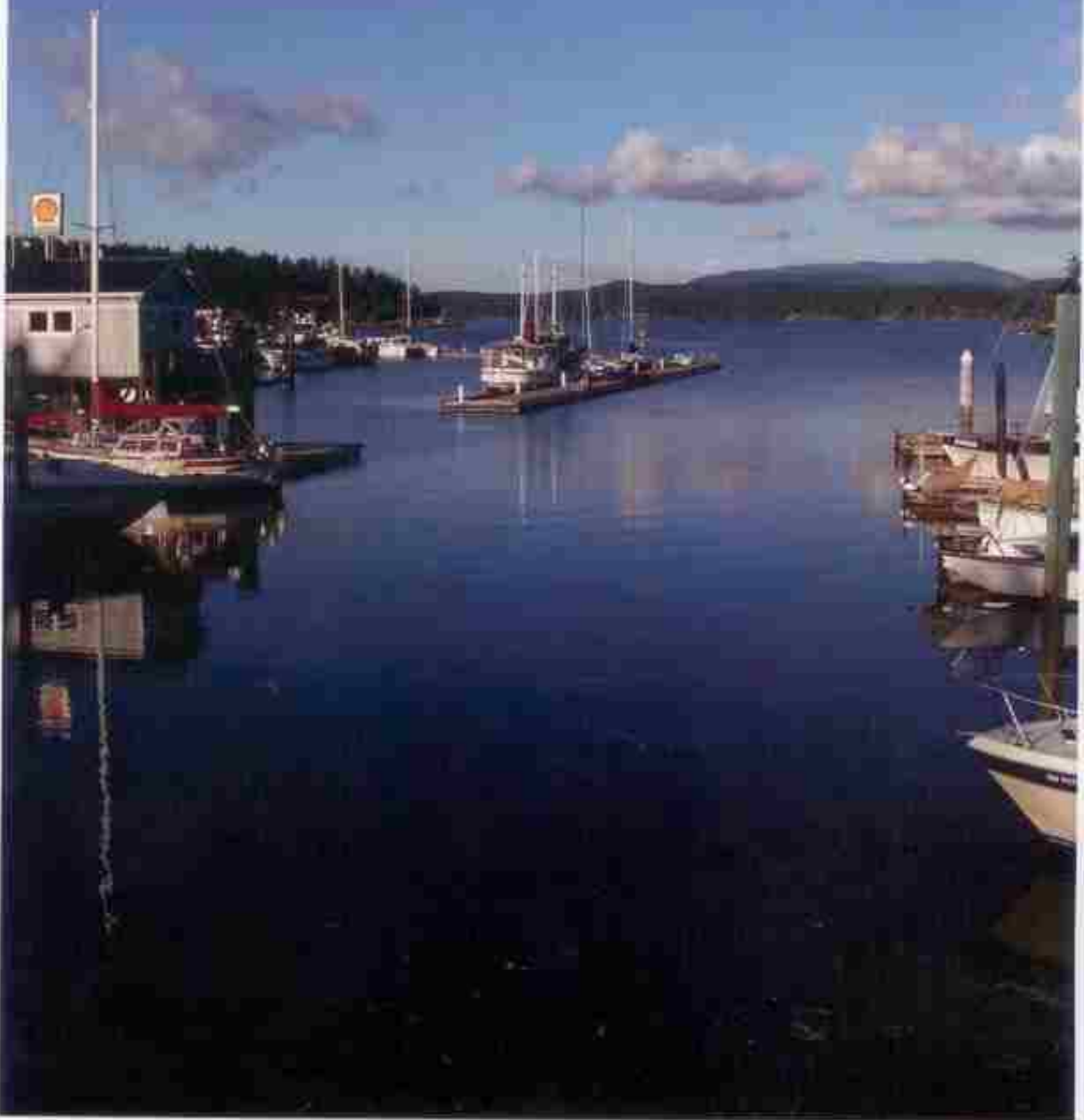


THE PENTECOST

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THE PENTECOST

In this September, 2011, Issue, we welcome you back to another year of The Pentecost. We will discuss redemption in Christ, the Church and Church restoration in the Last Days. God bless you.

Shawn Stevens



"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9). This scripture shows us that we are delivered, or redeemed, through Christ. Yet, we do have an active roll to play individually and as a family of believers, or a church. As you read, I encourage you to allow the Holy Spirit to challenge and remind you of what is yet to come.

Ramona Stevens

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The Redemption that is in Christ Jesus

being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the showing, I say, of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus. (Romans 3:24-26)

Friend, are you a Christian? Some would say, "Yes, isn't everybody?" No, dear reader. A Christian is someone who has been freely justified by God's grace through the redemptive work of Christ Jesus. What does this mean? "Justification" is a legal word which, in the Bible, means that God imputes the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ to a person's account, then declares them fully righteous. Jesus Christ, and the

justification that He provides, is a gift from God, God's greatest gift ever given. God's law exposes man's unrighteousness and reveals God's righteousness. It shows us our need for God's gift.

God displayed His gift publicly as Jesus Christ died on the cross. All could see Christ's death and, through the preaching of the apostles and others, they would be shown that it was on their behalf. Jesus' death was not just for those who saw Him die; it is for us, today, as well, if we choose God's gift.

So, friend, I ask you again, "Are you a Christian?" Have you been redeemed? God saves and justifies the one who puts faith in Jesus. In Canadian culture, faith has become a highly personal, non-confrontational, almost indefinable thing. However, in the Bible God speaks of faith in a different way. God demonstrates His righteousness and justifies those who have faith in Jesus. While God is openly demonstrating

His righteousness, many want to make their faith concealable and unnoticeable. Here is where God's view of faith and man's view of faith collide.

God wants to so change our lives that we become new creatures; this is life-changing faith. Faith is radical and all-consuming. It lays our whole life down at God's feet for Him to have, change and direct. You see, the Bible is relevant to your life because the Bible shows you what faith is and how you can put faith in Jesus Christ and accept God's gift. Reader, if you have not accepted God's gift already, then this is your greatest need. Do not take it lightly. Do not run from God. Don't give the devil another minute of your life.

Turning your life over to God begins with admitting that you are a sinner. You and I have broken God's laws and violated our consciences. It is through Jesus' sacrifice that this can be made right. Admitting that we are sinners is followed by admitting that we need Jesus.

At this point, many say that they are good people. Friend, I ask you, do you deserve to go to heaven? There are other things in life that you may, or may not, deserve. You may be a student who has studied hard and who deserves good grades. You may be a hard-working employee who deserves a promotion on your job. You may even be a soldier who deserves a medal for risking your life, but friend, do you deserve heaven? Heaven is in another class altogether. It cannot be compared to things of Earth. The truth is that none of us deserves to go to heaven on the basis of anything that we have done. We are unworthy sinners, but Jesus is worthy and He offers His righteousness to us, if we will repent and put our faith in Him.

What does it mean to repent and put faith in God? Repentance is turning away from sin and self-rule, and faith is turning to God. Friend, you may have taken many steps away from God but it is only two steps back to Him. These two steps are the steps of

repentance and faith.

Friend, coming to Jesus is making a full commitment to Him, giving Him your whole life. Do not try to give Jesus half of your life. He wants all of your heart, no matter what stage of life you are in.

Still, many will hold out and hang on to control of their lives even when Jesus is calling. Friend, if this is you, how long will you hold on to your life? How far will you let yourself sink before taking His hand? How much of the pain of sin will you suffer? Be honest with yourself and with God, Who has seen every moment of your life. It is time to give it over to the Lord. The Bible says; "For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23). It also says; "for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God;" (Romans 3:23) and; "But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8).

The good news of the Gospel will change your life if you will accept it. Jesus comes and lives within those who are His. You can be set free from fear. So many today sleep with the lights on at night because they live with so much anxiety and fear. Jesus comes and brings His peace to the lives of His own. If you are terrified of God's judgment, give up depending on your own righteousness and trust in Jesus Christ and His righteousness. Commit yourself to Him and let Him clean you through and through.

Friend, this is man's greatest need, to be made clean and to belong to Jesus. It does not matter how intelligent, how attractive, how influential or how rich you are. What matters is, do you know the Lord Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior.

God is trying to soften our hearts; don't reject Him. Don't pour concrete over your heart when God is trying to soften our hearts with His call of love. Friend, life's problems are far

too large, and the destiny of your soul far too important, for you to go it alone. Turn things over to the Lord. God is holy. Cry out to Him and answer His call and offer of redemption.

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