



Prayer of Thanksgiving: that God the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of truth and therefore completely trustworthy! **“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.” (Joh 16:13 ESV)**

Please do not forget to pray for all the shut-ins and isolated brothers and sisters in our congregations Mrs. Jack and C. Campbell (Fredericton) and J. Steffes (Caribou, Me), Mr. Ross Bathurst, P. Ward (Saint John) and others.

Open Hand Food Bank – Moncton - is in need of grocery plastic bags to give out food to those in need. If you are interested in donating your unused grocery bags, you can bring them to church and someone will collect them and bring them over. Those who want to bring food to give to the **Open Food Bank** may do so by bringing to church and giving it to **Michael M.** of the Moncton congregation.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH OF May 2018

Times of worship services: **Moncton** – 10:30 AM every Sunday.

In Saint John, worship services will be May 13 and 27 at 2:30 PM

Communion- on the second and fourth Sunday of the month.

Address: Moncton—70 King St. —Sage building;

Saint John—50 Newport Cres., Portland United church.

Discipleship group Moncton— Thursday, May 24 (please notice the change) in the home of Mr. and Mrs.

Vautour. **Topics: Galatians 5** – Presenter- T. Cormier

Potluck in Saint John after services May 27

GCI has a new booklet titled WHAT WE BELIEVE. There is one for adults, one for teachers and one for teens. You are encouraged to read and study it. It can be found at <https://resources.gci.org/we-believe>

Change of location of GCI Canada and new address for GCI Canada: The new office will be operational on June 1, 2018

Grace Communion International Canada

Suite 203A

2121 Airport Ave.

Saskatoon SK S7L 6W5

Please pray that God will put an end to the senseless violence happening every in our North America continent and other parts of the world.

Pray that we will see the good works that God has prepared for us in advance so that we can enthusiastically participate in the on-going work He is doing now on this earth in bringing people in relationship with him in Jesus by the Holy Spirit.

Please pray, as per Jesus instructions, the disciples prayer, “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. ¹⁰Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt 6:9-10) as our world is suffering so much and in need of complete restoration by the King of kings, Jesus. As we are his royal priesthood, let us proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, as we are instructed in 1 Peter 2.

Pray for the world and for all people: we live in a world that does not know the way to peace. Important to pray as we are instructed by the apostle Paul — **“1 ¶ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior,” (1Ti 2:1–3 ESV)**

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**TRIALS AND FAITH by Mr. Tkach –
(updated 2016)
(FROM [HTTPS://WWW.GCI.ORG/DISC/09-TRIALS](https://www.gci.org/disc/09-trials))**

Some Christians think that they have a guaranteed way to escape trials. They point to biblical promises that God will intervene for those who have faith in his Son.

However, God not only promises to help us in our trials—he also promises us trials! Christ did not come to bring us a trouble-free life. Instead, he warned us that we would have strife within our families because of him (Matthew 10:34-36), that we would have trials (John 16:33) and that we would be persecuted (John 15:20). We enter the kingdom through many trials (Acts 14:22), and every Christian will suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12). We should not think it unusual when trials afflict us (1 Peter 4:12). Jesus suffered when he was in the flesh; that should remind us that we will also suffer.

Nevertheless, Scripture also says that if we ask for anything in Jesus’ name, then he will do it for us (John 14:12-14). So some Christians conclude that we can ask for a trouble-free life, and if we have enough faith, then Jesus will make sure that we have no troubles. Can we claim John 14:12-14 as a promise for whatever we want? No—in a passage like this there are unstated qualifications, limitations that are explained elsewhere in Scripture. Consider this fact: Some Christians earnestly prayed that a certain person would be president. Others prayed in Jesus’ name for someone else. Christians in each group prayed in faith, but Jesus did not answer all their requests in the same way.

The unstated qualification is that God answers only according to his will (1 John 5:14). God will not respond to prayers that go contrary to what he wants to do. He often has reasons we cannot see. We do not know his will perfectly, and it is possible for us to believe something that is not true. Our faith is no guarantee that the answers we seek will happen, since our faith may be mistaken. I have yet to hear of a literal mountain moving into the sea.

In various competitions and wars, some Christians ask God to give them victory; people on the other side ask the same, and God cannot give both of them what they want. We may ask God for a million dollars—many Christians have—but not receive, no matter how many things we buy “on faith,” confident that God will supply. We can have full confidence in Jesus Christ—confidence that he saves us—without having faith that he is a genie performing all our requests made in his name just because we use the right words and believe.

Faith and healing

Many Christians have firmly believed that God would heal a loved one. They prayed in faith. Some believed that they had confirmation from other believers or from other miracles. So they were surprised, even dumbfounded, when the loved one died. What they had believed with such certainty turned out not to be true. Their faith could not heal the person—only God could heal, and he chose not to, despite their prayers, their faith, God’s love and God’s promises.

When such disappointments happen, a new trial sets in. If faith in the healing turned out to be a mistake, what about faith in Christ? Was it also a mistake? That is one of the dangers of the “word of faith” teaching—it links faith in our Savior to faith in specific predictions. Did Jesus promise to heal every disease? He did not heal Epaphroditus, at least not as fast as people wanted him to (Philippians 2:27). Even in his earthly ministry, Jesus did not heal everyone (John 5:3-9). Didn’t Jesus suffer for us? Doesn’t that mean that we need not suffer? Some say so, but we should test this line of thinking with another fact: Jesus died for us. Does this mean that we should never die? We already have eternal life (John 5:24; 11:26). But every Christian dies. There is something wrong with the line of thinking. We do not yet experience everything Jesus accomplished for us.

There will come a time when we will be raised imperishable. There will come a time when we never experience pain. There will come a time when we receive the full benefits of Jesus’ redemption. But that time is not yet. In this age, we share in Jesus’ sufferings (1 Peter 2:20-21). Jesus promised persecution, not freedom from pain and sorrow. When Paul was beaten, stoned, and imprisoned, he felt pain. Paul had great faith, but also many sufferings (2 Corinthians 1:5;

Philippians 3:10; 4:12). Although Jesus atoned for all sin, Christians still suffer despite their faith—and sometimes *because* of their faith.

We suffer from persecution, and we suffer the incidental pains of living in a world in which sin is still common. Sin hurts innocent people, and sometimes we are the innocent people who are hurt. Sometimes it results in early death, sometimes a slow and pain-filled death. We may suffer physical damage from a burning, a beating, a car accident or asbestos fibers. Our health may suffer from exposure to cold, from smoke in a house fire or chemicals in our food. We may be hurt by wild animals, large or small, or even microorganisms. God has not guaranteed to protect his people from all possible problems.

Is it always God's will to heal people who have faith in Christ? The biblical evidence is that he sometimes does, and sometimes does not. Stephen was killed, James was killed. Eventually all the first Christians died of something. Yet, how many times did God save them out of danger before they eventually died? Perhaps many times.

Have you ever wondered about preachers who claim to heal all infirmities, yet they themselves wear eyeglasses? There is no reason why biblical promises would apply to one kind of ailment but not the other. The scriptures sometimes cited in support of a universal promise of healing do not make any exceptions for eyesight, age, accidents or anything else. Both Scripture and experience tell us that these verses were not intended as universal guarantees.

Yes, some have been healed, sometimes dramatically. These are examples of special favor, grace and mercy. We should not create universal promises out of these examples of exceptional grace. We especially should not imply that people who aren't healed do not have faith. Sometimes their faith is demonstrated through their suffering—they remain cheerfully confident that God will do what is best for them. Whether they live or whether they die, whether they have prosperity or poverty, whether they are sick or in health, they trust in God. There is nothing wrong with their faith. What is wrong is a teaching that implies that they are somehow not doing enough.

Purpose of trials

Since God promises us trials, and he promises to help us in and through our trials, what are they for? Why does God allow any evil? We do not fully know, but we know that God does allow evil, and Jesus himself was willing to endure it, and he is still enduring it patiently. The Scriptures tell us about a few benefits of trials:

- "Suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope" (Romans 5:3-4).
- "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11).
- "You may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed" (1 Peter 1:6-7).

We learn things from suffering that we cannot learn from studying. Suffering shapes our character in a way that words cannot fully describe. Even Jesus learned from his sufferings (Hebrews 5:8), and we are also called to take up a cross and suffer with him. "If we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory" (Romans 8:17).

Trials are not pleasant, but we are comforted by the fact that God is at work in our lives, and he is able to retrieve good from all things. He has the knowledge and the compassion to work in our lives for his glorious purpose. We do not always understand what specific lessons we are supposed to learn from a particular trial, but the overall lesson is always to trust in God. Often, a physical trial is also a trial of faith. In trials, we must trust God despite our physical circumstances, and by trusting God, we are growing in our faith relationship with him. This is of infinite importance, since in Christ we are everything we can be, and without him we are nothing.

An untried faith can be weak. Anyone can persevere when things are good. A tried faith is stronger, and the bond between us and God grows stronger. God wants a personal relationship with his children, a relationship characterized by faith, trust and love. This bond of faith can be strengthened by our difficulties. Trials teach us to rely on God for our every need. Whether our trial is health, or money, or relationships, or a problem in the church, we are to look to Christ.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

https://resources.gci.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/We_Believe_Adult_Edition.pdf

Part of Section 4 – God the Holy Spirit

Section 4: God the Holy Spirit

4.1 Who is God the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, eternally proceeding from the Father through the Son. The Holy Spirit is the comforter promised by Jesus Christ, who unites us with the Father and the Son, and transforms us into the image of Christ. (Matt. 28:19; John 14:16; 15:26; Acts 2:38; Matt. 28:19; John 14:17, 26)

4.2 How are Jesus and the Holy Spirit related?

Jesus' whole life was lived in intimate communion with the Holy Spirit. He was conceived by the Spirit in the womb of Mary, baptized with the Spirit, and on the cross fulfilled his sacrificial ministry to the Father in the Spirit. Jesus now ministers in the world by sending the Spirit who ministers in accordance with the finished work of Christ. (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:35; 4:1, 18; Matt. 12:18; Luke 3:22; 10:21; 24:49; 23:46; Heb. 9:14)

4.3 Was the Holy Spirit at work in the world before the incarnation of the Son of God? *Yes, the Spirit was at work at creation and in the history of the world, with a focus on the people of Israel, the particular people God called to be a blessing to all peoples—blessings given ultimately in and through Jesus. The Spirit's ongoing ministry will eventually bring all creation to full maturity, harmony and perfection. He is the Lord and the giver of life. (Gen. 1:1-2; Joel 2:28; Ezek. 11:19; Luke 24:49; Acts 2:1-21; Rom 1:4; 8:22-24; 1Pet. 1:2)*

4.4 What do Christians believe in confessing their faith in the Holy Spirit?

Apart from the Spirit, our Lord Jesus Christ can neither be known, loved or served. The Holy Spirit is the personal bond by which Jesus Christ unites us to himself. He is the teacher who opens our hearts to Christ, and the comforter who leads us to repentance. He is the liberator who frees our enslaved wills, empowering us to live joyfully and freely in Christ's service. By the working of the Spirit, our love, knowledge and service of Christ are inseparably related. (John 14:26; 1 Cor. 12:3; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 6:17, 19; 3:16; John 4:24)

4.5 How do Christians receive the Holy Spirit and what is the result?

We receive the Spirit by receiving the Word of God. As the midwife of the new creation, the Spirit arrives with the Word, frees us to hear, accept and trust in it as the Word of God, brings us to rebirth and assures us of eternal life. The Spirit nurtures, corrects and strengthens us with the pure spiritual milk of the Word. By the Spirit, we are conformed to the character of Christ, growing in faith, hope and love in personal and responsive relationship with the Father through the Spirit. (Eph. 6:17; John 14:16-17; John 3:5-6; Luke 11:13; 1 Thess. 1:5; John 16:8; Rom. 8:15-16; 1 Pet. 2:2)

4.6 Why do we not, by the Spirit, experience here and now all that Christ has done for us? *We live in the time between Christ's resurrection and return, which the Bible calls "the present evil age." During this "time between the times," we do not experience all that Christ has for us, though we are assured that we will when he returns. In the meantime, we are given the Spirit as a "down payment"—the "first fruits" and "sealing" of the fullness yet to come. (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; Col. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:4; Gal. 1:4; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Rom. 8:23)*

GCI principle website and Moncton Websites—www.gci.org, www.worshipim.ca, www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton; For a wealth of helpful articles about God, grace and his plan for salvation, who we are, etc., please see the GCI.org website. *Contact Information: Pastor's contact information: email—evautour47@outlook.com*