

Dear Friends,

Some years ago our daughter Emily was having coffee with a friend who was not a Christian. As they sat in the coffee shop and chatted, her friend was very interested in the reasons Emily went to church and why she believed in Jesus.

She later called me to tell me about her new friend and shared a very important question that he had asked her. "Who is this Jesus?" he had asked her, and then he followed with, "What difference does he make in your life?"



Wow! How would we answer that question? When Jesus asks, "Who do you say I am?" in Matthew 16:15, Simon Peter answers, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." After Peter's strong response of faith, Jesus tells him that "upon this rock I will build my church." "Peter" in Greek does mean "rock."

So, how would we answer both Jesus' question and the questions from Emily's friend? Most of us truly believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. I have thought about what my beliefs mean and how they have influenced my life.

Emily told her friend that believing in Jesus makes her want to be a better person, to be more like Jesus. (Yes, I am so proud of her!) I ask myself if believing in Jesus becomes **action** in my life - making me a better person, serving God and serving others, and avoiding temptations, especially judging, self-righteousness, and gossip. Can I be a ROCK like Peter?

Each of you has been a ROCK for Jesus and for members of Grace in so many ways. Your service, dedication, faith, support, wisdom, and experience have helped Grace Church serve God, its members, the community, and the world. Think of all the times you have helped: PAL Lunch, Resource Committee, yard sales, teaching Sunday school classes, serving on Consistory, being present at worship, and so many other ways. You continue to be a rock for Grace Church in sharing your faith and experiences with all you meet. You are a rock and a blessing.

In the visits, phone calls, and even in writing to you, I feel inspired to be a better person and a better Christian. My heart is full of gratitude for the blessings I receive from my relationships with you. Thank you for being a rock and for saying that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God.

Love in Christ,

Patti Miller

Peter, the Rock



and YOU!

Who Is Jesus?

[Jesus]] asked. "Who do you say I am?" Matthew 16:15

"What does this Jesus mean to you?
What difference does he make?
Are this man's teachings sound and true,
Or just a big mistake?"

This was the question posed to me
One day by a new friend
Who asked from curiosity,
Not meaning to offend.

I never had been asked before
And gave some careful thought.
I certainly could not ignore
The answers my friend sought.

"He is my hope, my dearest friend,
The Savior of my soul.
His love and mercy have no end.
He died to make me whole.

'A comforter, my confidant,
Companion and the Christ,
With him there's nothing more to want;
His life he sacrificed.

'His love has touched my life and heart
And makes me want to be
A better person, do my part
To serve humanity."

Who do I say that Jesus is?
I say like Peter, awed,
"All power, glory, honor – his:
He is the Son of God!" Patti Miller



Announcements

~There will be a short meeting on Aug 27th after worship in the gathering place for anyone interested in joining the Worship and Music committee. (We will determine a common meeting time for our first meeting at that time)

~ Sharing God's Grace donations to benefit the PAL (Provide-A-Lunch) program of the Hanover Area Council of Churches will be received during the last hymn today. Envelopes are available in the pews.

~Financial Summary from August Consistory Meeting

General pledge July 2023: \$4,717.00
General pledge July 2022: \$7,738.00
YTD income: \$80,343.38
YTD expenses: \$127,771.97
YTD deficit: \$47,428.59

*“Embracing Your True
Self in Christ”*

Grace United Church of Christ
100 Fourth Street
Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331
717-632-1146

August 27, 2023

Gathering Music

Announcements and Welcome

Westminster Chimes

Prelude

*Call to Worship

Leader: In the presence of the Spirit, we gather as one community.

ALL: We come with open hearts and eager souls.

Leader: Let us remember that we are all a part of a tapestry woven with threads of love, diversity, and unity.

ALL: We celebrate the richness of our differences and the strength of our shared faith.

Leader: Jesus proclaimed to Peter, "Upon this rock, I will build my church."

ALL: With open hearts, we stand upon the foundation of faith, ready to be vessels of God's purpose and love.

*Opening Prayer (Together):

Good and gracious God, as we gather in this sacred space, we humbly offer our praise and gratitude. In this time of worship, let our thoughts become prayers, our voices become songs, and our spirits become one. May our worship be a reflection of our commitment to justice, compassion, and the radical welcome of all. Let us enter this time of worship with open minds, seeking wisdom, and open hearts, seeking transformation. May our worship inspire us to go forth and live out our faith in the world. AMEN.

*Please remain standing, if you are able, and join in the hymn:

"The Old Rugged Cross" #186

*Sharing the Peace of Christ

Joys and Concerns

Prayer

*Please stand if you are able to sing:

"In the Garden" #425

Thank you for sharing your tithes and offerings

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Sermon Text: Matthew 16:13-20

Poem: "Who Is Jesus?"

Please join us in singing:

"My Feet are on the Rock" I Am They

Message: "Embracing Your True Self in Christ"

During the last song, Sharing God's Grace will be received.

*Please stand if you are able to sing:

*"Thrive" Casting Crowns

*Benediction

Please remain standing to sing the choral benediction (Inside front of hymn book or on screen)

Sunday, August 20, 2023

Scripture Reading: Genesis 45:1-15

There is no better cardiovascular exercise than reaching out, bending over and kneeling down, to lift someone up. —Anon.

According to a Chinese fable, an elderly Han woman had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole which she carried across her neck. One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water. At the end of the long walks from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full.

For a full two years this went on daily, with the woman bringing home only one and a half pots of water. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it could only do half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be utter failure, the porous pot spoke to the woman one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house."

The old woman smiled, "Did you notice that there are flowers on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? Why do you suppose that is?"

The poor pot said nothing.

"It's because I've always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them. For two years, I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

The moral of the story? Perhaps it is a reminder to accept oneself as a person made in the image of God, and second, there is no one whom God cannot bless and cannot make a blessing to others!

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I am not perfect. There are plenty of persons around to remind me of this; no need for me to be among them. You love me. You have seen fit to use me for your glory. And I am pleased to be in your service, however you may need me. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Galatians 4-6

Monday: 1 Chronicles 4-6

Tuesday: 1 Chronicles 7-9

Wednesday: 1 Chronicles 10-13

Thursday: 1 Chronicles 14-16

Friday: 1 Chronicles 17-19

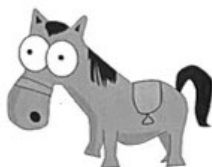
Saturday: Psalms 94-96

Verse to Remember

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

—Galatians 5:22-23

NAME THIS PONY!



RIDDLE: How much earth is there in a hole 2 yards wide by 2 yards long by 2 yards deep?

Pastor Farnsworth bought a little pony for his grandchildren, but didn't know what to name it. As he stood in the pasture thinking, he noticed all kinds of birds flying around, each giving its own special call. Then, he got an idea.

Match the bird with its call, and write the letters in order in the spaces provided to find out the two-word name of Pastor Farnsworth's horse.

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| ___ 1. Dove | A. hiss |
| ___ 2. Crow | A. crow |
| ___ 3. Rooster | E. caw |
| ___ 4. Duck | G. chirp |
| ___ 5. Eagle | I. cluck |
| ___ 6. Owl | L. scream |
| ___ 7. Sparrow | P. coo |
| ___ 8. Goose | R. quack |
| ___ 9. Hen | T. chatter |
| ___ 10. Magpie | Y. hoot |

Pony's name:

BRAIN BAFFLERS!

The following two questions come from an actual **fourth** grade class. They are not questions of fact, but questions that ask you to look for patterns.

These are not easy. But you will be interested and amused when you read the answers. Have fun.

1. What do these words have in common?

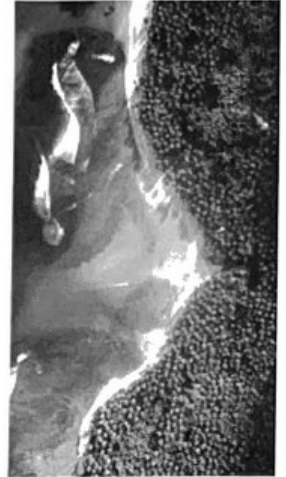
banana
dresser
grammar
potato
revive
uneven
assess

2. What pattern do you see when you multiply 111,111,111 x 111,111,111?

ANSWERS: Riddle — None. Holes are always empty. **Brain Bafflers** — **Question 1:** If you take the first letter of each word listed and place it at the end of the word, and then spell the word backwards, it will be the same word. **Question 2:** 12,345,678,987,654,321. **Name this pony:** Pearly Gait.

Showing external evidence of your internal change

For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky... – Philippians 2:13-15



The renowned Quaker philosopher Rufus Jones was once speaking to a crowd about the importance of having a radiant countenance. When Jones finished his lecture, a very plain-looking woman walked up to him and asked him what he would do if he had a plain face like hers.

Jones replied, "Madam, while I have troubles of my own of that kind, I've discovered that if you light up from within, any old face you have is good enough!"

Rufus Jones' wise words are deeply rooted in biblical truth. In passages like today's, we see that the attitude that is inside us is what is ultimately projected to the world around us. And when we allow God to work in us and cultivate the right attitude, we will shine in the world like stars in the night sky.

It's easy to fall into the belief that to be an effective ambassador for Christ, you have to talk a certain way and look a certain way. But the character of Christ isn't just seen in how clever or attractive you are. Let God's Spirit transform your attitudes and actions from the inside. Then, let that change overflow to the world around you and show the external world evidence of your internal change!

Prayer Challenge

Ask God to transform you from the inside out so that you can be a light in a dark world.

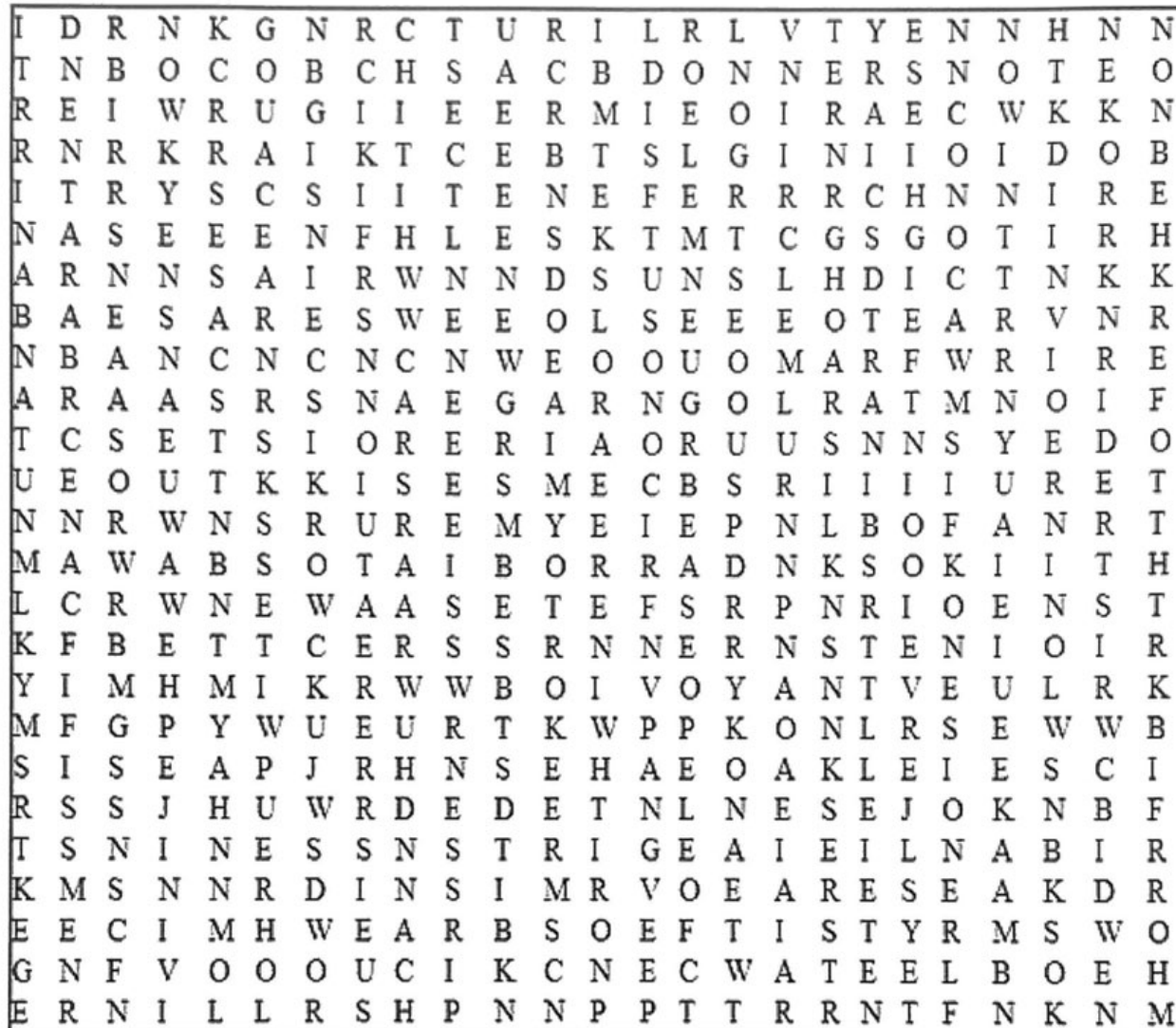
Questions for Thought

Why do you think many people fail when they try in their own strength to project the image of a “good Christian”?

If the attitude of Christ were to completely take over your life, how might you look different to the world around you?

<https://www.seniorlivingministries.org/2023/06/showing-external-evidence-of-your-internal-change-6/>

Matthew Word Search



immanuel

prophets

sow

brethren

myrrh

sacrifice

sower

kingdom

frankincense

wineskins

forsaken

tribulation

gold

canaanite

jews

rabbi

righteous

yoke

covenant

resurrection

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THE CHURCH

R	P	A	S	T	O	R	S	F	E	I	D	P	S
Y	S	J	O	I	N	D	R	E	O	R	O	R	Y
A	U	L	O	V	E	A	D	I	L	I	C	E	D
R	N	P	C	I	A	E	O	L	E	L	T	P	U
P	D	N	O	O	L	A	H	E	L	T	R	A	T
R	A	C	E	P	N	R	G	B	H	E	I	R	S
N	Y	O	T	P	S	C	S	A	E	A	N	A	I
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BELIEF
 PASTOR
 TEACHING
 CONCERN
 SCHOOL
 PREPARATION
 ELDERLY
 HEARTS
 PEOPLE
 SOUND
 DOCTRINE
 PRAISING
 HELP
 PRAY
 TEENS
 JOIN
 NEEDED
 LOVE
 STUDY
 SUNDAY

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/359438/>