



The Bible Banner

November 2017



Salvation for the Chief of Sinners

According to the story, a mother with seven children was asked the devilish question, "Don't you really have a favorite among all those kids?" To the questioner's astonishment, she answered, "Yes, yes I do. My favorite is the one who is ill, until he is well. The one who is away from home, until he returns. The one who is distressed, until he is relieved. The one who is rebelling until he gets over it." Her reply reminds me of the words of our Savior. *"They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."* Mark. 2:17

Macaroni and Cheese Bake (with Sesame Cheese)

16 oz. (454 g) elbow macaroni (I often use rice elbows, Tinkyada brand)

1 package firm silken tofu

5 pieces of bread, torn and soaked in soy or nut milk

1 batch of sesame cheese (See below.)

¼ cup (60 mL) butter replacement or coconut oil

Lawry's-like seasoning salt, to taste

Cook macaroni according to package directions. Mash tofu with fork. Salt with Lawry's-like seasoning salt. Drain macaroni and toss with butter and cheese, reserving enough cheese to cover the top. Add tofu and soaked bread crumbs. Spread in oiled 9x13" (23x33 cm) pan. Top with the remaining cheese. Bake at 350°F (176.7°C) until cheese forms a "crust".

Sesame Cheese

½ cup (75 g) sesame seeds

¼ cup (60 mL) lemon juice

3-4 Tbsp (23-30 g) nutritional yeast

1 ½ (7.5 mL) tsp salt

2 tsp (10 mL) garlic powder

½ cup (120 mL) olive oil (or less)

4oz. (113 g) jar pimento OR 2 tsp (10 mL) paprika

1 cup (240 mL) water

Blend until smooth. This will take a while if you are using a regular blender.



QUOTABLE QUOTES

"Christ carried out in His life His own divine teachings. His zeal never led Him to become passionate. He manifested consistency without obstinacy, benevolence without weakness, tenderness and sympathy without sentimentalism. He was highly social; yet He possessed a reserved dignity that did not encourage undue familiarity. His temperance never led to bigotry or austerity. He was not conformed to this world; yet He was not indifferent to the wants of the least among men. He was awake to the needs of all."
(Evangelism page 636.)



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Amazing Grace for the Chief of Sinners

Most people recall the words of what is probably one of the most famous hymns in history:

*"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind but now I see."*

Today, many wonder if the word "wretch" is an exaggerated figure of speech or a bit of poetic license, but not those who know the story of John Newton, the song's author. Of him it has been written, "His was a tale of two lives, with God at the pivot point."

Newton lost his first job, in a merchant's office, because of "unsettled behavior and impatience of restraint"—a pattern that would persist for years. He spent his later teen years at sea before he was press-ganged aboard the H.M.S. Harwich in 1744. Newton rebelled against the discipline of the Royal Navy and deserted. He was caught, put in irons, and flogged. After being dismissed from service, John joined the crew of a slave trading ship. Later John Newton became a captain and plied the seas for six years, carrying his cargoes of slaves. Espousing freethinking principles, he remained arrogant and insubordinate, and he lived with moral abandon: "I sinned with a high hand," he later wrote, "and I made it my study to tempt and seduce others."

But in 1747, he was aboard a ship that was overtaken by an enormous storm when he was struck by a line in a book he had been reading about the "uncertain continuance of life." He also recalled the passage in Proverbs, "Because I have called and ye have refused, ... I also will laugh at your calamity." (Prov. 1:24-26) He converted during the storm, though he admitted later, "I cannot consider myself to have been a believer, in the full sense of the word." Several years later, Newton had made a complete about-face in his life by becoming preacher, hymn writer and abolitionist.

The epitaph appearing on his grave, which he wrote, reads, "John Newton, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa; was by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the Faith he had once labored to destroy..."

He, like so many others before him, realized the good news of the gospel and that "All His life Christ had been publishing to a fallen world the good news of the Father's mercy and pardoning love. Salvation for the chief of sinners was His theme." {Desire of Ages pg. 753}

Rare it is, even in the Biblical record, to find persons of sterling character like Daniel and, of course, Jesus Christ. And yet too often it seems we put ministers, elders, and other religious teachers up on a pedestal where they do not belong, as if they are infallible and have never done any wrong. Yet Solomon wrote, "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." (Eccl. 7:20) God's greatest men realize they would be nothing, but by the grace of God. The patriarch Abraham called himself "dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:27). Jacob, who lied to his father and stole his brother's blessing, acknowledged to God, "I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies." (Gen. 32:10) King David, who fell into adultery culminating in murder, and later repented wrote "I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me." (Psalm 51:3) The prophet Isaiah when he saw God's glory said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips...for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5) Peter, who once denied his Lord, is said to have been "crucified, his head being down and his feet upward, himself so requiring, because he was (he said) unworthy to be crucified after the same form and manner as the Lord was." (Foxes Book of Martyrs, chapter 1) Even the martyr John Bradford often signed the end of his letters, "That wretched sinner, that miserable sinner, John Bradford," and whenever he saw a man going to be hanged said, "There goes John Bradford, but for the grace of God." Likewise, religious historian Archbishop Ussher's last words were, "Pardon my many sins, especially my sins of omission."

No true son or daughter of God will ever put himself up on a pedestal, for "The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfections will be seen in distinct contrast with his perfect character." {Bible Echo, December 1, 1892 par. 5} Paul wrote, "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." (Gal 6:3) He, too acknowledged that he was only a sinner saved by grace when he wrote to Timothy, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1Timothy 1:12-15

"The Lord God through Jesus Christ holds out His hand all the day long in invitation to the sinful and fallen. He will receive all. He welcomes all. It is His glory to pardon the chief of sinners. He will take the prey from the mighty, He will deliver the captive, He will pluck the brand from the burning. He will lower the golden chain of His mercy to the lowest depths of human wretchedness, and lift up the debased soul contaminated with sin." {Ministry of Healing, pg 161} The gospel is a proclamation of amazing grace for the chief of sinners. It is the story of Him who saved a wretch like me.



SEED-TIME

"The best things come in small packages", so they say. And that might certainly be said of seeds, for though small, they are power-packed with nutritional goodness. The Biblical record alludes to this because in His parables, Jesus used seeds as comparisons for the word of God (Luke 8:11), the kingdom of God (Mark 4:30-32) and faith that could move mountains (Matt. 17:20) The Creator even listed seeds as part of the perfect original diet given to mankind in Eden *"And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food."* Genesis 1:29 (Webster's 1833 Bible, updated from the KJV for use in schools)

Of course, if you think about it, many of the foods we eat today are actually seeds. The grains we eat—rice, corn, quinoa, wheat, rye, etc.—are seeds. Legumes like lentils, pinto beans, peas, and soy are also seeds. In addition, nuts like almonds and walnuts are seeds. But today, we are just going to discuss those seeds that are usually considered to be seeds—pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, flaxseeds, chia seeds and sesame seeds.

Perhaps the most widely available seed is the sunflower seed. **Sunflower seeds are an excellent source of vitamin E, the body's primary fat-soluble antioxidant.** Vitamin E travels throughout the body neutralizing free radicals that would otherwise damage fat-containing structures and molecules. It is also key for strong immunity and healthy skin and eyes. Sunflower seeds are also a good source of folate and selenium. They may be easily incorporated into the diet by being eaten plain, mixed in salads, blended into dressings (see July 2017 newsletter for sunflower sour cream), cheeses and veggie burgers, or just eaten as sunflower seed butter.

Tiny but powerful, **sesame seeds are an excellent source of iron and calcium**, although unhulled varieties are more nutrient-rich. *"If you're looking to increase your intake of calcium or iron, whole sesame seeds are a much better option than hulled. You'll get close to 280 milligrams of calcium and 4 milligrams of iron from a 1-ounce serving of whole dried sesame seeds, whereas a serving of hulled dried sesame seeds supplies less than 20 milligrams of calcium and just 1.8 milligrams of iron. Both varieties are good sources of zinc, phosphorus and magnesium."*¹ Sesame seeds may be easily incorporated into the diet in both sweet and savory dishes. They are good in crackers, tahini spread, on sesame seed toast or they may be blended into sesame cheese (see recipe). At our house, we create a powerful calcium supplement by blending sesame seeds in soymilk with carob powder.

Flaxseeds and chia seeds are both rich in fiber and heart-healthy omega-3 alpha linolenic acid. So what about chia? *"Extremely tiny, yet extremely potent, these small seeds are packed full of fiber, protein, nutrient oils, various antioxidants and even calcium.... These amazing little seeds are an excellent source of high-quality fats, as they are made up of a whopping 34% pure omega-3 oils."*² Chia seeds may be used whole as a crunchy topping, or mixed with liquid to form a gel for an egg replacement in recipes, or mixed with coconut milk to make an easy tapioca-like pudding. Like chia, flaxseed also can stand in for an "egg" binder in pancakes or baked goods. Just mix 2 tablespoons of ground flaxseed with 3 tablespoons of water to replace each egg. Flax is best ground just before using to enhance absorption. And as an extra bonus, since flaxseed contains both tryptophan and omega-3 fatty acids, which increase serotonin production, many people find them useful for boosting the mood and fighting depression.

And last, but not least, **pumpkin seeds are nutritional powerhouses wrapped up in a very small package, with a wide variety of nutrients ranging from magnesium and manganese to copper, protein and zinc.** *"Pumpkin seeds have long been valued as a source of the mineral zinc, and the World Health Organization recommends their consumption as a good way of obtaining this nutrient."*³ In addition, *"They contain a wide array of beneficial plant compounds known as phytosterols and free-radical scavenging antioxidants, which can give your health an added boost... Pumpkin seeds are [also] a rich source of tryptophan, an amino acid (protein building block) that your body converts into serotonin, which in turn is converted into melatonin, the "sleep hormone."*⁴ These seeds are delicious roasted for a snack, added to granola, or ground up and used in cheeses.

And finally, don't forget the medicinal seeds, (those that are good for you, but lacking in taste). **Watermelon seeds** are a natural diuretic useful for cleansing the kidneys. *"Grape seed has antioxidant, antiallergenic, antihistamine, anti-inflammatory and immune boosting properties and it can be instrumental in helping the body fight viruses, allergens, and carcinogens"*⁵. And grapefruit seeds have natural antimicrobial, antiviral and antifungal properties that help boost the immune system.⁶ Whatever the case, it is about time to plant some seeds for health!



¹ www.livestrong.com/article/467747-what-is-the-nutritional-difference-between-hulled-unhulled-sesame-seeds/

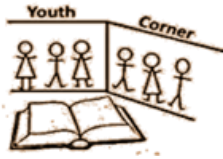
³ www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=82

⁵ https://www.naturalnews.com/029223_grape_seed_extract_health.html#

² www.globalhealingcenter.com/natural-health/healthy-seeds/

⁴ <https://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2013/09/30/pumpkin-seed-benefits.aspx>

⁶ <http://naturalmentor.com/fight-infection-naturally-with-grapefruit-seeds/>



The Infidel Blacksmith

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." 1 Corinthians 13:1, 13

Many years ago, there lived an infidel blacksmith who hated the truth, and scoffed and sneered at all who believed it. An old Christian, who had often tried to do him good, had one day visited him, and long reasoned with him about his soul. The blacksmith turned it all into ridicule, and the good man left him with the sad feeling that his case was hopeless, and that God had given up his hardened heart to believe a lie, and to perish in his iniquity.

The old man told his minister about his visit. That night the minister felt the case of the poor blacksmith lie heavy on his heart; and at intervals all through the night, he wrestled with God for him in prayer.

Not long after, at a prayer meeting, who should be there but the once infidel, now a humble believer in Jesus! He stood up in the crowded room, with his face so changed as if he were a new man altogether. "I stand," he said, "to tell you the story of my conversion."

The minister, after that night of prayer, rode away on a cold January morning to the blacksmith's shop. He found him at work. With the greatest tenderness, and taking him by the hand, he said to him, "Mr. R, I am greatly concerned for your salvation—*greatly concerned for your salvation*,"—and the old minister burst into tears. He tried to say more, but could not. He left the shop, and rode slowly away.

The blacksmith went on with his story. "'Greatly concerned for my salvation!' said I; and I stood and forgot to bring my hammer down. There I stood with it upraised—'Greatly concerned for my salvation!' Here is a new argument for the truth of religion, which I have never heard before, and which I know not how to answer. Had the old man reasoned with me, I could have confounded him; but here is no threadbare argument for the truth of religion. Religion must be true, or this man would not feel as he does. 'Greatly concerned for my salvation!'—it rung through my ears like a thunder-clap. Greatly concerned I ought to be for my own salvation, said I,—what shall I do?"

"I went to my house. My poor wife, whom I had always ridiculed for her religion, exclaimed, 'Why, Mr. R, what is the matter with you?' 'Matter enough,' said I, filled with agony, and overwhelmed with a sense of sin. 'Old Mr. B has rode two miles this cold morning to tell me he was greatly concerned for my salvation. What shall I do?—what shall I do?'"

"'I do not know what you can do,' said my astonished wife; 'I do not know what better you can do than to get on your horse, and go and see him. He can give you better counsel than I, and tell you what you must do to be saved.'"

"I mounted my horse, and pursued after him. I found him alone, in that same little room where he had spent the night in prayer for my poor soul, where he had shed many tears over such a reprobate as I, and had besought God to have mercy upon me.

"'I am come,' said I to him, 'to tell you that I am greatly concerned for my own salvation.'"

"'Praised be God!' said the aged man. 'It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,' even the chief; and he began at that same scripture, and preached to me Jesus. On that same floor we knelt, and together we prayed,—and we did not separate that day 'till God spoke peace to my soul.'"

Years passed by, and the faithful old man was numbered with the dead. But the converted infidel still lived, an earnest, honest, faithful, humble Christian.

--Story selected from the *Children's Missionary Record*, May 1, 1863



GOD'S AMAZING CREATURES



The pudu is the world's smallest deer. Pudus are only 13-17 inches (32 to 44 centimeters) tall. That is a little taller than a blender. An adult pudu is about 33 inches long. That is about as wide as an oven.

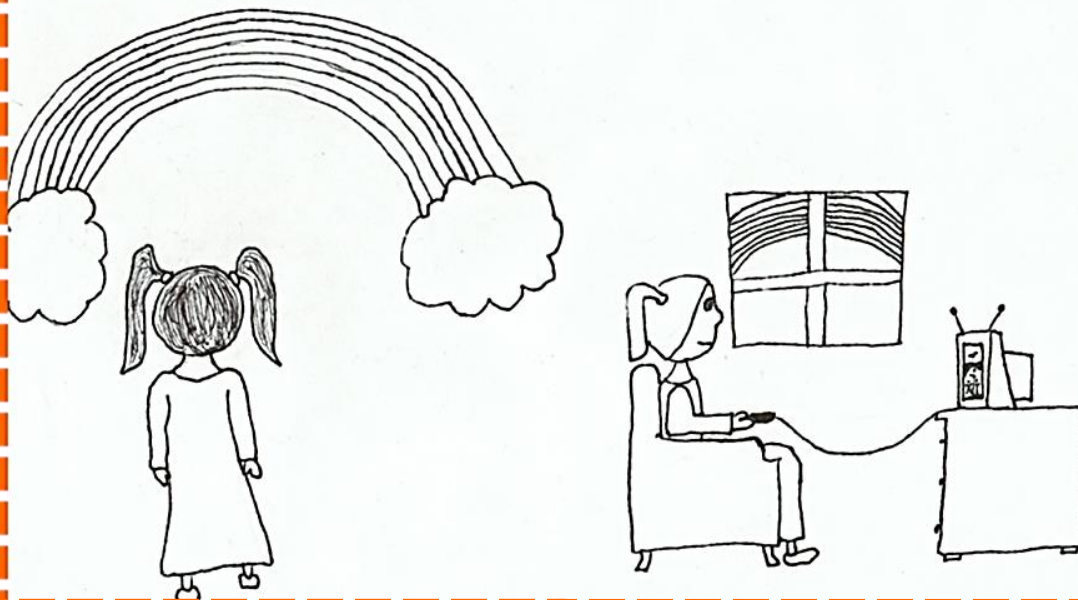
Pudus have small, black eyes, black noses, and rounded ears.

The pudu lives in South America, where the bushes and bamboo thickets keep them mostly safe from enemies. Some enemies of the pudu are the horned owl, foxes, cougar, and other small cats.

The pudus are herbivorous, meaning they eat plant foods like vines, leaves from low trees, shrubs, sprouts, herbs, ferns, blossoms, buds, tree bark, and fallen fruit. Just like the pudu stays safe in the bushes, we can be safe in the arms of Jesus.

Memory Text

Genesis 9:13 "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."



Patience saw a rainbow after a dark thunderstorm. It made her happy as she thought about God's promises. Patience thanked God for the many promises in the Bible.

Passion didn't see the rainbow because she was too busy playing video games. She wasn't thinking about God, she was enjoying watching the cartoon characters. Jesus was sad that Passion didn't want to think about Him.

Study to Shew Thyself Approved – How Christian Pilgrims Progress

Realizing the Burden of Sin—“For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.” Psalm 38:4 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” Romans 3:23

Following the Way—“And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.” Isaiah 30:21 “The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.” Proverbs 15:24

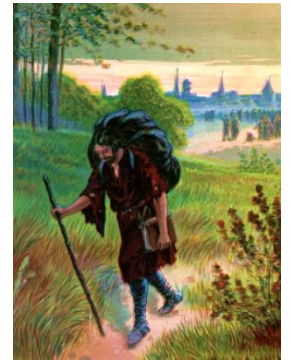
Following the Light—“O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.” Psalm 43:3 “But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” John 3:21



Reading the Little Book (Personal Worship Time)

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15 “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” John 5:39

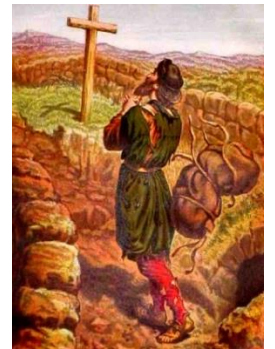
Overcoming the Obstacles (The Slough of Despond)—“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD:” Jeremiah 29:13, 14a “Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” Mark 11:24



A Call for Help—“For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.” Isaiah 41:13 “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” Isaiah 41:10

Repentance—“The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.” Romans 2:4 “Repent ye, and believe the gospel.” Mark 1:15b “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

Burdens are Lifted at Calvary—“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” John 3:16, 17



Following on to Know the Lord—“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:4 “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3 “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15 “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” James 1:27

Experiencing Persecution/ Hatred of the World (Vanity Fair)—“Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.” Luke 6:22 “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Timothy 3:12 “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” John 15:18, 19



The Key of Promise (Rescues from Giant Despair and Doubting Castle)

“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” 2 Corinthians 1:20 “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Matthew 7:7,8



Faith is the Victory that Overcomes the World—“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” 1 John 5:4 “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer... be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Revelation 2:10