

March 8, 2021  
FOCUS WITH US...

Dear Friends of Earl Palmer Ministries,

This is the Season of Lent. As believers in Christ we move into a time of repentance with people worldwide. This is a period of intentional discipline in our lives to rethink how we live and refocus on the meaning of Jesus' life and death through the reading of scripture, prayers of confession, reverence of worship and acts of discipleship. This is our time to remember the Savior Lord of Good Friday who died in our behalf and then by his victory over death gave us life. As we anticipate the hope that we feel when the blossoms of spring burst forth and especially emerge out of the dark of the winter past, I would like to draw your attention to the words of this contemporary Christian hymn, *In Christ Alone*, to give focus especially in the weeks forward. Here are the words:

In Christ alone my hope is found  
He is my light, my strength, my song  
This cornerstone, this solid ground  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm  
What heights of love, what depths of peace  
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease  
My comforter, my all in all  
Here in the love of Christ I stand  
(verse 1)

There in the ground His body lay  
Light of the world by darkness slain  
Then bursting forth in glorious day  
Up from the grave He rose again  
And as He stands in victory  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me  
For I am His and He is mine  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ  
(verse 3)

In Christ alone who took on flesh  
Fullness of God in helpless babe  
This gift of love and righteousness  
Scorned by the ones He came to save  
Till on that cross as Jesus died  
The wrath of God was satisfied  
For every sin on Him was laid  
Here in the death of Christ I live  
(verse 2)

No guilt in life, no fear in death  
This is the power of Christ in me  
From life's first cry to final breath  
Jesus commands my destiny  
No power of hell, no scheme of man  
Can ever pluck me from His hand  
Till He returns or calls me home  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand  
(verse 4)

*Authors, Stuart Townend and Keith Getty.  
2001*

As it happened a few months ago, my wife, Shirley got a call from a longtime friend of ours who shared that he had been asked if he could put something together via zoom for their place of worship, Acton Presbyterian Church in southern California. Might she have any suggestions? With the words always fresh in her mind, Shirley quickly answered naming one of her favorites, "What about In Christ Alone?" He picked up on that idea and later via the internet sent the

rendition by the group of the informal choristers with him on the guitar. We asked permission to send the copy off to you. Should you wish, here is a link to “the singers” with this song of praise put together with miles between them under the circumstances of the pandemic:  
[tinyurl.com/spvu739b](http://tinyurl.com/spvu739b).

This is not a professional group of musicians but people who have come together to share their gifts in worship. **Of most important interest is for you to know a bit about the person who sent this music.** This gentleman checks in often to keep in touch. We first met him as a teenager in our youth group in Manila, Philippines in the late 1960’s during my time as pastor serving the international English speaking community in that country. He returned back to the United States in 1968 to attend college, begin a career with the airline industry, become a pilot and is now retired. What an encouragement to know that through the years we have had the joy of knowing him and his entire family along with an ever increasing number of people with whom we have journeyed together as followers of Jesus.

It has been a joy to watch the outreach of ministry as individuals through the years have found their place to share the gospel. This posting is sent to you as a part of this expanding number of Christians that we have had the honor to call friends. We are so grateful. **How is it that even as we live in social isolation we are not separated but joined in our knowing that “*In Christ Alone* our hope is found?” This gentleman from the youth fellowship at Union Church of Manila continues in the calling to serve. We find ourselves inspired knowing him and the many others of you who have done the same. Thank you.**

May the weeks ahead give you pause to reflect and find hope.  
Your brother in Christ, Earl