



*TrailNotes* speaks to forward movement, paying attention to the “landscape” we are passing through in this trail-laced wooded hillside and valley, not to mention the world beyond. **TrailNotes** is an unfolding, ongoing journal of the people who share the trail with us and the things we’re learning and doing.

## ElderTalk: Where do your roots go?

ERIC BYROM

Yesterday was the first day of Spring, and I find myself thinking about the trappings that come with Spring. I notice the daffodils beginning to pop up in the flower bed. I hear the birds singing songs again and the world seems to be coming alive from the long winter rest. Pretty soon the trees will be budding, and the beauty of the woods will change from the quiet of winter to the buzzing of S P R I N G !

This year Grace Fellowship has been focusing on the theme of “**Grow-ing down into God’s grace.**” The idea is that in the same way that a tree needs a good root system in order to support its growth upward, we also need to have a good grounding in God’s grace and to be drawing our resources up from that in order to grow in Christlikeness.

Colossians 2:6-7 is the theme verse for the year, and it says, “*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*”

That’s such a great verse to memorize because it has so much wisdom packed into such a small space. We, as a country and even world, are going through a shaking right now with the pandemic we are facing. The storm is the time when a good root system keeps the tree from being blown over. We are being tested, and my prayer for all of us is that we have been sending our roots down into God’s grace for us in Christ and all that it means to us.

Roots are a support but also where a tree gets its water and nutrients. In the same way, our spiritual roots are where we get the sustenance we need to grow. If we have our roots in anything other than Christ, we will be drawing into our lives ideas and lies counter to the way God sees us and the world. During this time where many events are cancelled and we might have a good bit of free time on our hands, I would like to challenge us all to be intentional in putting our roots down into God through these means available and all He has for us.

We can do this through the spiritual disciplines. There is the discipline of Scripture Reading. Prayer. Fasting. Silence. Solitude. There are others not mentioned here. We have a choice as to how we will use this time given us. I would encourage you to use it to grow deeper down into God through these means available to us.

Let your roots grow deep into Christ!  
And be amazed at the new life that will  
S P R I N G up!

“How has your life changed during the **COVID-19 pandemic?**”

*Ed’s note: This is the question I’ve been asking a few people via email. What would be your answer? Send in a paragraph to the Kurtzes at [bucytalent@aol.com](mailto:bucytalent@aol.com) by April 20!*

**BETH FEIA**

“I am teaching online and it’s hard and so time consuming. I am so overwhelmed...Spring break is coming...”

**TOM RUSSELL**

“I continue my work at Heritage Christian Counseling, although many people are choosing to do phone or Skype sessions rather than face to face. This is fine with me as I have a compromised immune system ever since my spleen was removed eleven years ago.”

**KATHY RUSSELL**

“I continue to manage the financial side of Heritage, but fortunately, I am able to work from home most days. I am also spending a lot of time with my 89 year old mother who is trying not to go out any more than she has to. Living alone during a time like this can get pretty boring. We hope everyone is doing well and we look forward to seeing you soon! Here’s some ideas for the kids:”

**KIDS KORNER:** RightNow Media is available to everyone. 1) Go to our church website. 2) Click on the Right NowMedia link. 3) Create your password. 4) Type in “Kids” and you will find lots of fun things for kids of all ages. Superbook Academy also has a Super-book Bible App available from the App Store. Google Play has activities too.

(continued on p. 2)



Todd and Trisha Bowman grew up in Ohio and met each other at Taylor University. After 16 years of marriage and the adoption of their four children (twins Trey and Trinity, 9, Truth 7, and Tilly 4), they have returned to Ohio, building a homestead and the Bowman Soap Company

I found myself in a dark, dreary place, and it felt familiar so I stayed there. We had recently moved to this new home and unpacking boxes, painting, remodeling, and adjusting to someplace new had left me exhausted. Without realizing, I slowly slipped into sadness and into a lackluster slump. I had been in this place before many years ago.

God was faithful. He began to show me small life changes I could make that would alter my perspective. I began to take short walks, and the dreary fog of this life season began to lift. As I walked in the early mornings, I would ask God to show me why I found myself here again after such a long time. One day the sun broke through the fog. God whispered to my heart. He showed me the temptation that came to dwell in a place that felt known, when everything else around me was so unknown to me. He showed me that when I'm exhausted, it is easier to stay put than journey on. Then He said something that changed every day after that: *"Seek the places I have told you to dwell and move there."*

I began to look up "dwell" in scripture. I wrote down all the places God said to dwell on small cards that I could carry with me. Every time I feel tempted to dwell in sadness and discontentment, I pull out the cards and remind myself to journey on toward the places God has called me to. Here are a few of my favorites:

Psalm 65:4: **in His courts** Blessed is the one you choose to bring near, to **dwell in Your courts.**

Psalm 4:8 **in safety** In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O Lord, **make me dwell in safety.**

2 Samuel 7:10 **where I am not disturbed** And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they may **dwell** in their own place and **be disturbed no more.** And violent men shall afflict them no more as formerly.

Joshua 24:13 **in a city I did not build** I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and **you dwell in them.**

Psalm 91:1 He who **dwells in the shelter of the Most High** will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

Let me encourage you today! God has some amazing dwelling places for you. Do your own scripture search and find your favorite dwelling places!

## How has your life changed?

(continued from p. 1)



### KAY VEGA

"Well, some things have changed but not everything. I still go to work every day at the hospital. Infection prevention has always been a priority. This brings it closer to home because of all the unknowns. Management is extremely concerned about all of the employees. I'm really happy about that! I go through stacks of emails every day all dealing with this rapidly evolving situation. It can be a bit overwhelming.

"At home, I still try to keep to a regular routine: eat well, exercise, and try to limit the news and internet to just a couple of short sessions a day. Life goes on! Humor helps. I'm reading a really funny book right now that takes my mind off of doom and gloom. (I read something that said that reading a funny book, even six minutes a day, can reduce your stress level by 68%. I believe it!)

"And of course, we have One who walks with us every step of the way. He knows our worries and cares, so I have to do my part and not let my imagination run to the Zombie Apocalypse!"



### KAY BERRY

"I am coming right along, feeling better each day!"



### SUSAN BUZZA

"The CONTACT phone lines are filled with calls from all over the country from people who are terrified and looking for answers. Pray for us as we deal with them even through the night (when I am there!)"

# How has your life changed during the pandemic?

(continued from page 2)

## STEVE PARSONS



“Well, let’s go back to my 65th birthday a month ago today! It’s been a whirlwind of medical activity, so I apologize for not responding to the many birthday wishes. My birthday was the only day that week that I didn’t have physician consultations. I did, that day, begin a new drug to ward off early signs of dementia—**Strike One!**

In January, I had a growth removed from my left cheek. On February 21, doctors at The James Cancer Hospital confirmed that it was a rare sarcoma that could spread to my lungs. A second surgery was ordered as soon as possible (March 31) to remove 2 centimeters of tissue around the previous nickle-sized tumor—**Strike Two!**

The Monday before my birthday, I was removed from a Phase 3 study of a new drug that was successful controlling my eczema for two years. The doctor feared that the experimental drug might hurt my body’s ability to fight the sarcoma. Then I started itching again—**Strike Three!**

**Sooo...** Three strikes and I’m...still swinging because I believe my God is the Great Physician and doesn’t depend upon human rules in the game of life.

Daily, each of us has a choice to fear or listen to faith. Fear leads to panic and a flurry of bad choices. The Bible states that faith is a shield that extinguishes the fiery accusatory arrow our enemies shoot at us. Living by faith leads to love, joy, peace and a sound mind making wise choices. Recently, I have lost several friends to Alzheimer’s and skin cancer. That feeds fear. What we fear can eventually rule us because we make it our goal.

Fear tells me my memory losses will worsen gradually for years until my mind is gone even while my body still functions. Faith says that healthy habits and renewal by the Holy Spirit will keep me as sharp as the Lord wants. Fear tells me that the pathology I’m expecting any day will show sarcoma cells in my blood are traveling to my lungs. Any shortness of breath means the cancer is taking over. Faith says God will heal me and to expect no more sarcoma cells. I’ll have a couple more decades to pester y’all!

Fear tells me that eczema will once again cover 65% of my body, and I’ll have incessant itching as long as I live. Faith says that avoiding food allergens and applying proper lotions will control it until God takes it away.

Even if fears become reality, I will still trust in Jesus Christ because I already know that he loves me and fights for me. There is no better future than this.

Steve Parsons @2020

## NANCY SOLON



A few years ago at church, we were challenged to take note of how busy we were and all the ways we let that “busyness” affect our daily lives. I don’t think any of us thought we were that busy—or at the very least, we determined we could manage it ourselves. Being forced to stay home has caused much reflection for me. Boy, are we busy people! School plans, sports, dance/cheer, vacation, work schedules, volunteering, meetings, church events, shopping, eating out, etc., etc., etc. Instead of feeling trapped or inconvenienced by the current situation, I am using this time to see all the ways that God has blessed me and look for new, more positive ways to spend my time. Anyone care to join me? I’d love to hear your ideas!

AND ME FIRST – I know many folks that are home-bound (or limited in their travels out). I’m challenging myself to send a card of encouragement through the mail each day through April 15. Remember those days when getting something in the mail was exciting? I’m hoping to bless their day. Who’s next?

## BRIAN JUDD

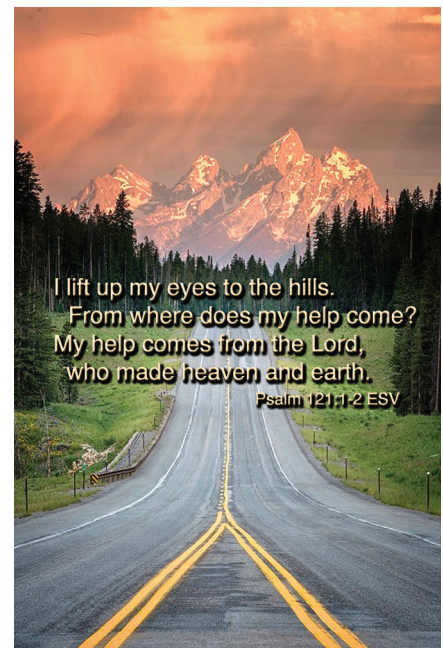


I am part of a skeleton crew at my work. I do my original job, plus help others do theirs remotely from home. Sue is nestled in with daughter Rebekah at her apartment, both practicing social isolation, which is going well.

Son Jon misses his live sports, his bowling and Sue being around. Daughter Heidi is still working 1st shift at a factory. This Monday they start employee temperatures. They make car parts, so we suspect they will shut down before long.

All five of us are doing ok by God’s grace. (*Pray for Italy!*) I am almost 63 so am taking many precautions. I am needed – so I go...but carefully.

Stay safe, do as they say, and hope to see you someday either after all of this or in Glory.



# Why German Evangelicals are praising God in English

KEN CHITWOOD - Christianity Today Weekly



(Illustration by Mallory Rentsch)

English is the first thing you notice at Hillsong Berlin. The church was meeting at a movie theater in a historic brewery, just one tram stop from the last standing section of the Berlin Wall--but on Sunday night the sign out front said, "Welcome Home." A smiling cadre of young, fashionable, and diverse volunteers from around the world greeted people in accented English.

Inside, the entire service is in English, including the sermon and all the worship songs. Participants sing "Wake," "What a Beautiful Name," and "King of Kings." Most international Hillsong churches translate their services from the local language into English. In Berlin, there is no translation. The service is just in English. That isn't Hannah Fischer's first language, but that's part of why she comes to Hillsong Berlin.

"People from outside Germany can't really understand how awkward it is to be a Christian here," she said. "I could never praise God like that in my language."

Five hundred years ago, Martin Luther insisted that Christians needed to hear the gospel in their own language, in words they could understand. When the Reformation swept Germany, people abandoned Latin worship for German prayers and praise.

Today, however, German Christians like Fischer are turning from their own language to a more global tongue, English. They say the foreign language allows them to loosen their German identity, praise God in an uninhibited way, and connect with a global, cosmopolitan Christianity.

Deborah Justice, an ethnomusicologist at Syracuse University, researched transnational evangelical groups in Germany, including Hillsong, Vineyard, and the campus ministry, Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ). She found that many are "choosing to worship in English

as a globalized non-native language. These Christians," Justice wrote in an article last year, "are adopting English as their special worship language, and that changes how people are relating to their fellow congregants and to God."

When German evangelicals sing in English, they understand themselves as singing in community with the millions of other Christians around the world. And sometimes those other Christians are not so far away. At the Leipzig English Church, a lot of worshippers are binational couples, and English is their common language, according to chaplain Martin Reakes-Williams. "People like the style, the international flair," he said.

At Rhema Cafe, an Assemblies of God mission in Landstuhl, in the southwest, services are in English because the church is trying to reach US and NATO soldiers stationed in the area. Service members from 28 NATO nations all speak English and their native tongue. Only the Germans speak German, but they also speak English...

For the most part, the use of English is very intentional. To reach people in Germany, refugees, immigrants, students, newcomers, and youth, you have to translate it into the local, modern language. Luther wrote that the gospel needed to be communicated "as though it were written yesterday," and the evangelical churches are trying to do that too. Now, that means singing songs in English.

And if Luther were alive today, he would do the same.

*Ken Chitwood is a writer and scholar of global religion, living in Germany.*

# How's your Christology?

JOHN KURTZ

For the past year our Bucyrus Home Group has been listening to a fine series of lectures on Early Church History by a professor at the Gordon Conwell Seminary. We are now only up to the point of the First Crusade in 1096. Early on we were fascinated by the various heresies which developed during the early and formative years of the Church. I thought that it would be informative (and perhaps a bit of a challenge) for everyone to see if you could identify and name the major early church heresies pertaining to the Person of Jesus Christ which developed and had to be dealt with, some of which persist even today in one or more of the pseudo-Christian cults.

Because none of us in our little group could do well with this subject beforehand, I have chosen to give you this “test” backwards. First will be a brief summary of the various beliefs which were held in the early years of the Church and show which were heresies and which were really truth along with describing a bit about each. Then on page 6 of this issue of Trailnotes you will find “the test” part. If you make mistakes, just come back here and re-read the facts—then try again.

## **Arianism** [air-ee-uh-niz-uh m] (4th Century):

A heresy which held that Jesus was only a “creature” created by God but then later adopted by God as His Son, having only a human nature and will. This heresy was corrected at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD and the Nicene Creed written to proclaim the truth over it.

## **Dyothelitism** [dy-oth-uh-la-tiz-uh m]—The orthodox (true) position:

This is the position we hold today, Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox alike: that Jesus Christ is fully human, that He is a real man. But we believe, as well, that Jesus is not a “mere man,” but that He is, at the same time, the eternal, divine Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity. He also has two natures, one human and one divine, “united with neither confusion nor division”—the “hypostatic union.” This was initially confirmed at the First Ecumenical Council in Nicea (325 AD) and set forth in the Nicene Creed. Reiteration of the true position was required at numerous subsequent Church Councils over the next several centuries to correct the various heresies which had appeared.

## **Monophysitism** [muh-noph-uh-cy-tiz-uh m] (5th century):

This heresy taught Jesus’ humanity was absorbed by His divinity. The heresy is Monophysite in nature, derived from the Greek words “mono” (“one”) and “physis” (“nature”). In essence, the heresy claimed Jesus had only one nature (something new and different from the Divine or human nature that God and humans have, respectively). Instead, this heresy taught a third unique nature was possessed by Jesus; a blend or mixture of the human and the Divine. It was corrected at The Fourth Ecumenical Council in Chalcedon in 451AD. The Chalcedonian Creed addresses this heresy. Some would place the Oriental Orthodox here.

## **Monothelism** [muh-noth-uh-la-tiz-uh m] (7th century):

This heresy emerged in response to the Monophysite heresy, but it also taught something denied by the Scripture. The name is derived from a Greek root that means “one will.” Monothelism taught Jesus had two natures but only one will. Instead of having two cooperative wills (one Divine and one human), Jesus had one Divine-human “energia.” It was corrected at The Third Council of Constantinople; the Sixth Ecumenical Council (680 – 681AD). Monothelism still has its adherents in the so-called Oriental Orthodox Churches, such as the Coptic, Armenian and Ethiopian Orthodox.

## Missile from the “Straits of Corona”

MICHAEL OLAN WEBB

*Ed's Note: Mike is a dear friend from AZ who*



*was a BARNABAS ENSEMBLE member on the Hungary/Romania tour. He returned to Romania with his*

*family and set up an audiology clinic in Oradea.*

Frequently, when the Bible uses the term, “distress,” the original language really means to be “in straits, confined, pressed, restrained, narrow, in a tight place.” The resolution of that “distress” is described as being “brought out into a broad or spacious place” several times in the Hebrew texts.

Jesus articulated the same theme in the New Testament, describing the narrow (strait) gate or road vs. the broad way. His take was that broadness, or freedom, is achieved by submitting ourselves to a portal which is narrow. Sheep enter the spaciousness of pen or pasture through the confinement of a gate. This is the arrangement for both provisions and protection for the sheep.

As we have been called to surrender to the straitness of a narrowed life-experience for a season, we have the option of cooperation or resistance. Most whom I have talked to and observed and interacted with on hunting/gathering jaunts seem to have accepted the wisdom and necessity of these measures. There is a camaraderie and goodwill among my fellow “strait-dwellers.” Even a recent suggestion that some wish to rehang Christmas lights hints at this spirit. When we are “squeezed,” it often produces a sweet wine...if we let it.

Some, for whatever reason, are stoically resistant to being squeezed. The outflow is predictably sour. My wife recently had to “unfollow” a family member who persisted in a withering, profane, virulent daily barrage aimed at the President, regardless of the fact that the protocols are the results of many advisors. It is unfathomable that social media sit-at-homers imagine that they know better. Do we really need that?

*(Continued on page 6)*

# How's your Christology?

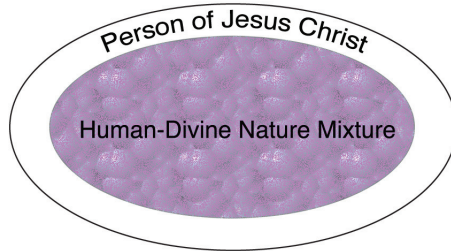
(continued from page 5)

Below I am going to show each of the beliefs as to who Jesus Christ is in a diagrammatic (graphic) form so that you can see how good (or not so good) you are following your "crash course" in Christology on page 5. Match up each diagram with one of the names listed at the bottom of this column and then look at the correct answers in the inverted box below it to see how well you did. If at first you don't succeed, then try, try again!

**A.**

is

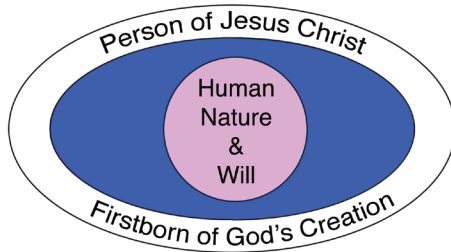
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**B.**

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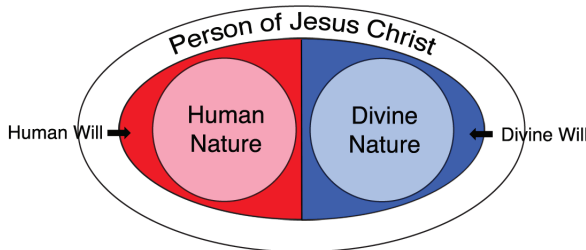
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**C.**

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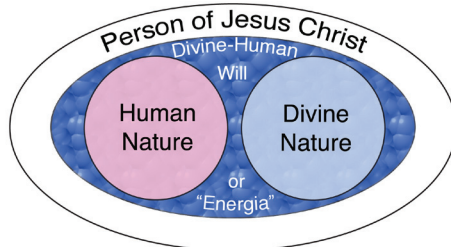
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**D.**

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The choices are: 1.) Dyothelitism (orthodox/true belief)  
2.) Arianism, 3.) Monophysitism and 4.) Monothelitism.

Sadly there were some other less "popular" Christology heresies during the early centuries of the Christian Church and in addition some which pertained to the concept of the Trinity and also about the Holy Spirit. Perhaps at a later date we can attempt to tackle those.

The answers are: A. is Monophysitism, B. is Arianism, C. is Dyophysitism (orthodox/true belief) and D. is Monothelitism.

## "Straits of Corona"

(continued from page 5)

Not to mention "virtue signaling" celebs who feel that their ability to entertain, somehow qualifies them to make hateful, dogmatic comments about anyone they don't approve of. Twitter followings can be a heady illusion of grandeur.

Anyway, in our present "distress," let's remember that narrowness yields to spaciousness when we humble ourselves to surrender to it. Provision and protection depend on us allowing the narrowness of the gate for a season. Resistance or acceptance? That is our choice in our "Straits of Corona." And much depends on our choices.

Grace, love, and peace to you from Arizona. God bless us, every one.

## BREAKING NEWS

from Nathan Tucker on 3/26 at 2 pm:

**The returning teachers who have finished their terms in Japan are safely in their US homes. Hilary, Anselm, and Nicole, are in their new Tamara City apartments under two week quarantine. They will have to wait to meet their teammates! Nathan will be doing their orientation via Skype. School starts Apr. 6.**

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(A list of church functionaries will return next month)



*He is not here, for he has risen, as he said.*

*Matthew 28:6 (ESV)*