

IN NOMINE JESU

APPLYING GOD'S MERCY, SACRIFICIAL LOVE, AND GRACE

Hear again the Word of God for this eleventh Sunday after Trinity:

Yet God, being continually rich in mercy, on account of His great sacrificial love, with which He unconditionally loved us - even we being dead men by the trespasses - we have been made alive together with the Christ - by grace all of you have been (and are being) saved...¹

Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

This week's readings display for us both the inborn contagious disease with which all humans are conceived, and the mercy, sacrificial love and grace of God which He gifts into His creation. From the Lord's testimony against His chosen nation, to the remembrance of Cain's sin, into the story of the self-righteous prayer of the devout Pharisee, the human condition of sin, the death it brings, and fallen man's subservience to the devil have been proclaimed. If we were left there, we would be led to despair, to abandon all hope, and perhaps to pray that God would just remove us from existence rather than give us what is coming at the end of days.

But, in each of the texts for this week, with more clarity in themselves than perhaps is found on some recent other Sundays, Christians (and them alone) are left with more than that which convicts, condemns and kills. The Psalm, the reading from Genesis, the Letter to the Ephesians and the Gospel all contain the proclamation of God's gifts that overcome what Adam brought upon all his descendants. That is, the

¹ Ephesians 2:4-5.

Church, you who remain in Christ, attached to Him by His Word and Sacraments, have heard God's mercy, sacrificial love and grace declared to you. From that proclamation, the Holy Spirit, who has taken up residence in you since He came to you with the Water and the Word, has brought you comfort, peace and the certainty that all your sin, and Adam's sin, has been, and is being, taken away from you.

Specifically, the reading from St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians, brings out with sharp contrasts and comparison, the condition of man - your status before when you were without Christ Jesus - and the gift of God. The inspired Apostle of the perfect Christ establishes a model for preaching Law and Gospel which many pastors in the past used, and some today still use. That is, he, as the ultimate human preacher of the Word, illumined by His knowledge and study of the Word, speaks as one who declares the Word of God to Christians who need it applied to them individually and as a community.

This is displayed in the Apostle's use of the word we translate "you." That is, when the Apostle decides to declare the Law, he does it to you, to all of you. He does not use the words we translate "we," or "us" until he has driven home the Law to "you." Then, he includes himself. Yet, in this section of the letter, when Paul proclaims the Good News of Christ, he uses the inclusive "us" first before moving to the particular "you."

(Paul was not a 21st century inclusionist. He was not concerned to get his “us’uns and we’uns” out there so people would feel good that he was including himself in the preaching. He kept his commission to preach the Word as Christ delivered to the “yous” whose hearts were either hardened and needed breaking, or the “yous” whose hearts were broken and needed mending. St. Paul knew his calling was to, at the right times, point the Law and Gospel as Christ’s Ambassador, not just to include himself as one of the crowd so that people would like him)!

Now I turn your attention to that portion of the Letter in which the Apostle has been so careful to choose his terms of address. That which has been numbered the second chapter for about 800 years, divided into 10 verses for about 500 years (based on the sentence structure, I would cut that to five verses: but you know I like long sentences!), follows Paul’s wonderful ascription to the glory of God. That is why the sentence begins with the word we translate “and,” and continues:

*all of you continually being dead by the trespasses, and your sins in which once all of you walked according to the eon of this cosmos, according to the ruler of the power of the air, of the spirit now effectually working in the sons of disobedience.*²

The Apostle pulls no punches in this opening description of the Christian community that he is addressing following the description of God’s glory he shared with them. He names the state of every person from the Fall of Adam, and applies it to

² Ephesians 2:1-2.

the “you” of his hearers, whom he has just named the Body of Christ under whose feet all things have been place. This is what you once were, dear Christian: *continually being dead...*

In the sight of God, in His everlasting countenance, you were a dead thing. Oh, you looked alive to the world. But God, who sees beyond the external into the heart, the center of being, of His creatures, knew you for what you were: dead. He places no divine spark of blessed eternal life, no light in the darkness, in the children of Adam at their conception. That which was once the glory of Adam and Eve, before Adam’s sin, has been lost. That is declared in Paul’s following words to you: *by the trespasses, and your sins...*

That which brought your birth into death in this eon of the world was Adam’s trespass, and your own sins. That means that before God, for your eternal salvation and for His praise and glory, you were able to bring nothing to merit His grace and favor. You were as a person whose heart has stopped. You had no life in you, and had no means to rescue yourself. You needed Someone, as does the heart-attack victim whose heart has stopped, Someone outside you to bring you into life.

The fact that you are here today, and believe this Word of God, means that Someone has done just that. God, who saw you in your state of condemnation, a prisoner of death, the devil and destined for Hell’s eternal flames, even while you were

in the trespasses, and your sins in which once all of you walked according to the eon of this cosmos, according to the ruler of the power of the air, of the spirit now effectually working in the sons of disobedience... God reached down to you and brought you to life – not on account of anything in you, not even your faith, but according to His faith, His sacrificial love, His grace.

Wow, the preacher is still speaking to “you!” He named the state of man and applied it to you. He named the path that the dead walk – the way of this fallen world, under the dominion of the Satan – the Prince of the Power of the Air – and controlled by the passions that work effective eternal separation from God. Now, at last, so that you don’t think that the Preacher, including Paul, has a different beginning than you, the second long sentence of this chapter declares:

In which also we all had lived then in the desires of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh and of reasoning minds, then we, by nature, were children of wrath as also were the others.³

The Apostle, having grabbed the attention of his Christian hearers by naming them, you, dead in trespasses and sins, now includes himself, all future pastors, and the rest of humanity in this damning description. Those outside of Christ, everyone who has not yet heard and believed, and those who have heard and rejected the Word and despised the sacraments, outside of God were all children, not of God, but of God’s wrath! That, without the following sentences would not bring any hope or

³ Ephesians 2:3.

comfort. Make no mistake, St. Paul and all right dividers of the Word of God from the very beginning, declares that all humans, affected and effected by sin, are not children of God as long as they remain outside the Body of Christ, firmly attached to Him as Head by the means He established and maintains: the purely preached Word and the rightly administered Sacraments.

(That is just what the Pharisee of today's Gospel missed. And, it was just what the humble tax collector understood by faith. For those who would emulate his humility, saying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," the Apostle continues with Good News in what I maintain is the longest sentence of this section):

Yet God, being continually rich in mercy, on account of His great sacrificial love with which He unconditionally loved us - even we being dead men by the trespasses - we have been made alive together with the Christ - by grace all of you have been (and are being) saved - and He raised us together and He sat us together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that He might have shown in the continually coming eons the surpassing richness of His grace in kindness upon us in Christ Jesus.⁴

There is the fullness of the Good News. It has been , and is still being, done in you by, through, in and with Christ Jesus. Three of God's great attributes - mercy, unconditional sacrificial love, and grace - are declared as the gifts which He pours out on those who were once dead and doomed to the eternal fire of His wrath. It is all God's work (that we might not boast in our prayers as did the Pharisee in Jesus' illustration). Think of how God's work in we vessels of wrath begins to be described,

⁴ Ephesians 2:4-7.

with rich mercy. That mercy flows out of God's Trinitarian love, that which bears all, suffers all, and dies for all. The mercy of God holds a richness that is greater than all the treasures of this fallen creation. It is fully a gift God gives – because of His unconditional, sacrificial love! It is undeserved by we upon whom it falls.

Think about the divine mystery being revealed again: we who were creatures of sin, death and subjects of the devil have been freed, given life, rule and dominion as we remain connected to Christ our head. In the Gospel of this letter we hear of our resurrection from the dead – in Christ. We hear of our ascension to the heavenly realms – in Christ. These are not future events to happen in some mystical fog. They are real events today, for *by grace all of you have been (and are being) saved.*

The present and continuing sense of this Gospel sentence brings comfort to we who still struggle on in this fallen creation. On the cross, the eon, the age, of the devil and fallen creation began its end, and end it will. On the cross, the eons, the ages that will not end, began for those who remain attached to the Gift of God – the crucified, risen, ascended and coming Lord Jesus Christ. In these ages of the Heavenly Kingdom, the surpassing richness of God's grace, benevolence and sweetness is upon us. To drive this eternal reality home, two sentences conclude this section of the preacher's sermon. The first reinforces that which we just heard, and applies it back to you:

For by grace all for you remain being saved, on account of faith; and this is not of yourselves, of God is the gift.⁵

Those words are calling you to own and use that which the blood-bought gift has brought to you. It is the faith of Christ that has saved you. This faith you received as the light of life came upon you in the darkness of death. It opened your hearts, your minds, and your lives to Christ, who has given and keeps you in life.

Finally, the preacher concludes the section by including himself again in the realities of those who have been bought with a price,

*For we remain of His workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that **in them** we might have walked.⁶*

At last, after having given no credit to us for our life and salvation, and having assigned all glory to God for them, we are reminded that we are created in Christ Jesus, for good works. What are they; do we need to devise them? No, even they are the things that God, before the foundation of the world, has prepared for us to do. What then is our calling as those who were once dead and now have been made alive? To walk in the good works that God has planned and begun. To that end,

The peace which passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Trinity XI (LUTHERAN SERVICE BOOK One-year series)

Genesis 4:1-15; Ephesians 2:1-10; Luke 18:9-14

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Pastor Michael A. Morehouse

SOLI DEO GLORIA

⁵ Ephesians 2:9.

⁶ Ephesians 2:10.

Additional Notes:

The doxology that ends chapter one is followed by "what God had done in us in order to establish this relation..."to Christ:"we who were dead have been quickened and made spiritually alive."⁷

Καὶ ὑμᾶς ὄντας νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ὑμῶν, ἐν αἷς ποτε περιπατήσατε κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, κατὰ τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος, τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργοῦντος ἐν τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας·

ἐν οἷς καὶ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἀνεστράφημέν ποτε ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν ποιοῦντες τὰ θελήματα τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν, καὶ ἡμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποί·

ὁ δὲ θεὸς πλούσιος ὢν ἐν ἐλέει, διὰ τὴν πολλὴν ἀγάπην αὐτοῦ ἣν ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς, καὶ ὄντας ἡμᾶς νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ, — χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι — καὶ συνήγειρεν καὶ συνεκάθισεν ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἵνα ἐνδείξηται ἐν τοῖς αἰῶσιν τοῖς ἐπερχομένοις τὸ ὑπερβάλλον πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἐν χρηστότητι ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

τῇ γὰρ χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι διὰ πίστεως· καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν, θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον· οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων, ἵνα μὴ τις καυχῆσθαι.

αὐτοῦ γὰρ ἐσμεν ποίημα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς οἷς προητοίμασεν ὁ θεός, ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν.⁸

Lenski sees vv. 1-10 as one sentence. I would break it into six natural sentences using the καί, γάρ, δε text markers.

"These pronouns show that in this paragraph no distinction is made between former Gentiles and former Jews."⁹

⁷ Lenski, R.C.H. "The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians to the Ephesians and to the Philippians," (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1937), 406.

⁸ Aland, B., Aland, K., Black, M., Martini, C. M., Metzger, B. M., & Wikgren, A. 1993, c1979. *The Greek New Testament* (4th ed.) . United Bible Societies: Federal Republic of Germany

⁹ Lenski, R.C.H. "The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians to the Ephesians and to the Philippians," (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1937), 407.

This aeon is passing away, the eternal kingdom is referred to as aeons, as it will not pass away.

Satan as ruler of this world: John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; II Cor. 4:4.

"A definite spirit or animus operates in the sons of the disobedience."¹⁰

Θεληματα: I prefer "wills," over "desires," or "wishes," due to the context of the sentences and thrust of the contrast between the "flesh" and the Christ-nature.

Διανοια: the mind that is a reasoning entity.

In the three attributes of God, ἐλέει, ἀγάπην, χάριτί we are free to find a purpose in the order they fall in the letter. First, the mercy comes to those who on account of Adam's sin and their own, are dead. This mercy deals with sin's consequences. The love of God manifests itself in His mercy. This is on account of grace, which removes the stain of sin from Christians - the whole stain-guilt and death. This is all God's work, and no one has cause to boast (tie to the Gospel).

The text applies Law then Gospel. This is the way the Word works: convicting, condemning and killing; then, acquitting, releasing and vivifying. "This is a pure monergism of grace."¹¹

Note the dying, rising and ascending with the Christ. All that Christians have now, and will have ever, is in Christ. "God seated us in his own gracious presence in the church, amid all his children, at the table of his Word and Sacraments, under the shadow of his mercy and love."¹²

Χρηστότητι: "benignity and sweetness such as invites to familiar intercourse and sweet converse and bestows all manner of good."¹³

"Saving faith is wrought by the saving grace of God."¹⁴

Faith "grasps the promise of [God's] mercy."¹⁵

Christians are God's handiwork, and thus, in Christ alone, do good works. Only that which is God's handiwork - declared so by Him - is good and can do good. Another tie to the Gospel reading vis a vis the Pharisee and his worldly evident "good works," and the publican with his "divinely evident" humility, a true good in God's sight.

"We are created anew to do good works and thus to glorify him who created us as what we are in Christ Jesus."¹⁶ The Christian does not even have to create good works to do, he merely walks in those that God has prepared for him to do...before the foundation of the world!

Book of Concord References:

v. 1: 522.10

"In the first place, although man's reason or natural intellect still has a dim spark of the knowledge that there is a God, as well as of the teaching of the law (Rom. 1:19-21, 28, 32), nevertheless, it is so ignorant, blind, and perverse that when even the most gifted and the most educated people on earth read or hear the Gospel of the Son of God and the promise of eternal salvation, they cannot by their own powers perceive this, comprehend it, understand it, or believe and accept it as the truth. On the contrary, the more zealously and diligently they want to comprehend these spiritual things with their reason, the less they understand or believe, and until the Holy Spirit enlightens and teaches them they consider it all mere foolishness and fables... Moreover, Scripture teaches that the man who is "in sin" is not only weak and sick, but that he is truly lifeless and "dead" (Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13)."¹⁷

v. 2: 171.16;

"According to the Gospel, therefore, only those are the true people who accept this promise of the Spirit. Besides the church is the kingdom of Christ, the opposite of the kingdom of the devil. It is evident, moreover, that the wicked are in the power of the devil and are members of the devil's kingdom, as Paul teaches

¹⁰ Ibid. 409.

¹¹ Ibid. 418.

¹² Ibid. 419.

¹³ Ibid. 421.

¹⁴ Ibid. 423.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid. 427.

¹⁷Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

in Eph. 2:2 when he says that the devil "is now at work in the sons of disobedience." Certainly the Pharisees had an outward affiliation with the church (that is, with the saints among the Old Testament people), for they held high positions and they sacrificed and taught. To them Christ says (John 8:44), "You are of your father the devil." Thus the church, which is truly the kingdom of Christ, is, precisely speaking, the congregation of the saints. The wicked are ruled by the devil and are his captives; they are not ruled by the Spirit of Christ."¹⁸

V. 2: 225.5;

But so great is the power of concupiscence that men obey their evil impulses more often than their sound judgment, while the devil, who as Paul says (Eph. 2:2) is at work in the ungodly, never stops inciting this feeble nature to various offenses. For these reasons even civil righteousness is rare among men, as we see from the fact that even philosophers who seem to have wanted this righteousness did not achieve it.¹⁹

v. 2: 521.7

We believe that in spiritual and divine things the intellect, heart, and will of unregenerated man cannot by any native or natural powers in any way understand, believe, accept, imagine, will, begin, accomplish, do, effect, or cooperate, but that man is entirely and completely dead and corrupted as far as anything good is concerned. Accordingly, we believe that after the Fall and prior to his conversion not a spark of spiritual powers has remained or exists in man by which he could make himself ready for the grace of God or to accept the proffered grace, nor that he has any capacity for grace by and for himself or can apply himself to it or prepare himself for it, or help, do, effect, or cooperate toward his conversion by his own powers, either altogether or half-way or in the tiniest or smallest degree, "of himself as coming from himself,"⁶ but is a slave of sin (John 8:34), the captive of the devil who drives him (Eph. 2:2; 2 Tim. 2:26). Hence according to its perverse disposition and nature the natural free will is mighty and active only in the direction of that which is displeasing and contrary to God.²⁰

v. 3: 509.6

"in the sight of God original sin, like a spiritual leprosy, has thoroughly and entirely poisoned and corrupted human nature. On account of this corruption and because of the fall of the first man, our nature or person is under the accusation and condemnation of the law of God, so that we are "by nature the children of wrath,"⁹ of death, and of damnation unless we are redeemed from this state through Christ's merit."²¹

v. 5: 470.3;

2. Likewise we believe, teach, and confess that man's unregenerated will is not only turned away from God, but has also become an enemy of God, so that he desires and wills only that which is evil and opposed to God, as it is written, "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."³ Likewise, "The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot."⁴ As little as a corpse can quicken itself to bodily, earthly life, so little can man who through sin is spiritually dead raise himself to spiritual life, as it is written, "When we were dead through our trespasses, he made us alive together with Christ."⁵ Therefore we are not of ourselves "sufficient to claim anything as coming from us; our sufficiency is from God" (2 Cor. 3:5).²²

v. 5: 533.61;

¹⁸Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

¹⁹Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia
6 2 Cor. 3:15.

²⁰Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia
9 Eph. 2:3.

²¹Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia
3 Gen. 8:21.
4 Rom. 8:7.

5 Eph. 2:5.

²²Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

"For this same reason it is not quite right to say that before his conversion man has a mode of acting⁶ in the sense of a mode of doing something good and wholesome in divine matters. Prior to his conversion man is dead in sin (Eph. 2:5); hence there can be in him no power to do something good in divine matters, and he cannot have a mode of acting in divine matters.⁶² But if one is discussing the question how God operates in man, it is correct to say that the Lord God indeed has one mode of acting in man as a rational creature and another mode of action to work in irrational creatures or in a stone or block.⁷ Nevertheless, one cannot ascribe to man prior to his conversion any mode of acting by which he does anything good in spiritual matters."²³

v. 5: 542.20

"Likewise the term "vivification," that is, being made alive, has sometimes been used in the same sense.³ For when the Holy Spirit has brought a person to faith and has justified him, a regeneration has indeed taken place because he has transformed a child of wrath into a child of God and thus has translated him from death into life, as it is written, "When we were dead through our trespasses, he made us alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:5). "He who through faith is righteous shall live (Rom. 1:17). The Apology often uses the term in this sense."^{4,24}

v. 8: 120.87;

"If moral works merited the forgiveness of sins and justification, there would be no need for Christ and the promise, and everything that Paul says about the promise would be overthrown. Then he would have been wrong in writing to the Ephesians (2:8) that we are saved freely by "the gift of God, not because of works."²⁵

v. 8: 120.93;

"Therefore he excludes even the merit of works according to the moral law; for if by these we earned justification before God, faith would not be accounted for righteousness without works.⁹⁰ And afterwards (Rom. 4:9) Paul says, "We say that faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness."⁹¹ In Rom. 5:1 he says, "Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God," that is, our consciences are tranquil and joyful before God,⁹² and in Rom. 10:10, "Man believes with his heart and so is justified," where he declares that faith is the righteousness of the heart.⁹³ Gal. 2:16, "We have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law." Eph. 2:8, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God - not because of works, lest any man should boast."²⁶

v.8: 216.6;

"We have previously shown at length that men are justified by the faith that they have a gracious God not because of works but freely for Christ's sake. This is definitely the teaching of the Gospel, for Paul clearly teaches (Eph. 2:8), "By grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" and not of men.⁷ They say that men merit the forgiveness of sins by these human observances. What is this but to set up another justifier and mediator instead of Christ?"^{8,27}

v.8: 526.26

6 (Repeat of note at section 60).

At the Weimar Disputation Victorine Strigel maintained that the complete exclusion of human powers in conversion inevitably makes conversion nothing but coercion. He therefore stressed man's mode of acting (*modus agendi*), the rationality that distinguishes him from the beasts, and held that it depends on man's use of this mode of action whether or not he responds to the call of the Gospel.

7 This was directed especially against the statement of Nicholas von Amsdorf, who in an over-zealous attempt to demonstrate the enslavement of man's will condemned Strigel's statement "that God works differently with man than with the other creatures."

²³Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

3 At the Altenburg Colloquy the Jena theologians objected to the Wittenberg faculty's coordination of *justificatio* and *vivificatio* as an indiscriminating confusion of terms.

4 For example, Apology, IV, 250; VII, 31.

²⁴Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

²⁵Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

²⁶Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

²⁷Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

"But to be born anew, to receive inwardly a new heart, mind, and spirit, is solely the work of the Holy Spirit. He opens the intellect and the heart to understand the Scriptures and to heed the Word, as we read in Luke 24:45, "Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures." Likewise, "Lydia heard us; the Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul" (Acts 16:14). "For God is at work in you, both to will and to work" (Phil. 2:13). God "gives the repentance" (Acts 5:31; 2 Tim. 2:25). He works faith, for "It has been granted to you by God that you should believe on him" (Phil. 1:29). "It is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). "²⁸

v. 8,9: 42.11;

"We begin by teaching that our works cannot reconcile us with God or obtain grace for us, for this happens only through faith, that is, when we believe that our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who alone is the mediator who reconciles the Father. ¹⁰ Whoever ^(tr-55) imagines that he can accomplish this by works, or that he can merit grace, despises Christ and seeks his own way to God, contrary to the Gospel.

¹¹ This teaching about faith is plainly and clearly treated by Paul in many passages, especially in Eph. 2:8, 9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God – not because of works, lest any man should boast,"

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vv. 8,9: 117.73;

And "to be justified" means to make unrighteous men righteous or to regenerate them, as well as to be pronounced or accounted righteous. For Scripture speaks both ways. Therefore we want to show first that faith alone makes a righteous man out of an unrighteous one, that is, that it receives the forgiveness of sins.

⁷³ The particle "alone" offends some people, even though Paul says (Rom. 3:28), "We hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law," and again (Eph. 2:8, 9), "It is the gift of God, not because of works, lest any man should boast," ³⁰

vv. 8,9: 476.7

#We believe, teach, and confess that good works should be completely excluded from a discussion of the article of man's salvation as well as from the article of our justification before God. The Apostle affirms in clear terms, "So also David declares that salvation pertains only to the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works," ² saying, 'Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered'" (Rom. 4:6-8). And again, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God – not because of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).#³¹

v. 9: 474.10

"7. We believe, teach, and confess that if we would preserve the pure doctrine concerning the righteousness of faith before God, we must give special attention to the "exclusive terms,"⁸ that is, to those words of the holy apostle Paul which separate the merit of Christ completely from our own works and give all glory to Christ alone. Thus the holy apostle Paul uses such expressions as "by grace," "without merit," "without the law," "without works," "not by works," etc.⁹ All these expressions say in effect that we become righteous and are saved "alone by faith" in Christ."³²

v. 10: 526.26;

"We have previously shown at length that men are justified by the faith that they have a gracious God not because of works but freely for Christ's sake. This is definitely the teaching of the Gospel, for Paul clearly teaches (Eph. 2:8), "By grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" and not of men. ⁷ They say that men merit the forgiveness of sins by these human observances. What is this but to set up another justifier and mediator instead of Christ? ⁸"³³

²⁸Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

²⁹Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

³⁰Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

² Literal translation.

³¹Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

⁸ Latin, *particulas exclusivas*.

⁹ Rom. 6:4-6; 3:20, 21, 24, 28; 11:6; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:9; Titus 3:5.

³²Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

³³Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

v. 10:528.39;

"Although the regenerated, while still in this life, reach the point where they desire to do the good and delight in it (indeed, actually do good deeds and grow in sanctification), nevertheless, as mentioned above, we do this not of our own will and power, but the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says, creates such willing and doing (Phil. 2:13), just as the apostle ascribes this work alone to God when he says, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).³⁴

v. 10:552.7;

"First of all, there is in this article no disagreement among us concerning the following points: That it is God's will, ordinance, and command that believers walk in good works; that only those are truly good works which God himself prescribes and commands ^(tr-941) in his Word, and not those that an individual may devise according to his own opinion or that are based on human traditions; that truly good works are not done by a person's own natural powers but only after a person has been reconciled to God through faith and renewed through the Holy Spirit, or, as St. Paul says, "has been created in Christ Jesus for good works."^{8,35}

v. 10: 566.12

"The law indeed tells us that it is God's will and command that we should walk in the new life, but it does not give the power and ability to begin it or to do it. It is the Holy Spirit, who is not given and received through the law but through the preaching of the Gospel (Gal. 3:2, 14), who renews the heart. ¹² Then he employs the law ^(tr-967) to instruct the regenerate out of it and to show and indicate to them in the Ten Commandments what the acceptable will of God is (Rom. 12:2) and in what good works, which God has prepared beforehand, they should walk (Eph. 2:10). He also admonishes them to do these, and when because of the flesh they are lazy, negligent, and recalcitrant, the Holy Spirit reproves them through the law. In this way the Holy Spirit simultaneously performs both offices, "he kills and brings to life, he brings down into Sheol, and raises up."² His office is not alone to comfort but also to rebuke, as it is written, "When the Holy Spirit shall come, he will convince the world (to which the Old Adam belongs) of sin and of righteousness and of judgment."^{3 36}

³⁴Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

8 Eph. 2:10.

³⁵Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

2 1 Sam. 2:6.

3 John 16:8.

³⁶Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The book of concord : The confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia