

IN NOMINE JESU

YOUR SINFUL NATURE IS CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

Hear the theme sentence drawn from the Word of God for this fourteenth

Sunday after Trinity:

But those who are of Christ [Jesus] have the flesh crucified together with the passions and the desires.¹

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

A trend that has been developing and increasing in strength among neo-evangelicals in the U.S. is the preaching of expository sermons. That is the preachers of the churches that often let the world influence their worship, and subsequently their doctrines, have begun turning away from thematic or narrative (storytelling) preaching to work through texts verse-by-verse. In some churchly circles, this type of preaching is heralded as new and innovative. They define such preaching using phrases like this: *In an expository message we relate precisely what a text of Scripture says.²* That is, this “innovative” preaching style gets its points and sub-points directly from the text. (So, how does it feel to be, once again, “on the cutting edge” of Church?)

In truth, expository preaching is ancient and traditional. Congregations like ours, where variety in preaching may be found, are still grounded in the tradition of hearing expository preaching. That is, we follow New Testament apostolic practice of “unpacking” the texts for our hearers, that the Word of God might have full course

¹ Galatians 3:24.

²Internet: Chapell, Bryan. <http://www.preachingtodaysermons.com/trutabexprea.html>, accessed 23 August 2008.

among us. Among us, that is not “innovative.” It is, and should be, the expectation of the hearers. With that in mind, today, you are being called to remember the divine reality revealed through these words:

But those who are of Christ [Jesus] have the flesh crucified together with the passions and the desires.³

It is our prayer that the Holy Spirit might work in your hearts through the exposition of this text, in order that you might confess from your mouths its truths, and live this Word your lives. Together in participation with our hearers, we preachers who use the biblical expository preaching style attempt to bind our words to the Scriptures for the day. This is done with threefold hope.

First, we preach so that you might discover with us the Word’s divinely intended meanings. We then hope to have your understanding opened to the impact the text would have had on its first hearers. Finally, we pray that from our exposition that the Holy Spirit would apply the text to lives who seek God’s guidance now. That is, we hope to have the proclaimed text work in your lives and the lives of those who come in contact with you in the coming week.

Having explained that, what is the prime emphasis of the biblical preaching you should expect, and demand, from all Gospel preachers? In a phrase, the answer is: the proclamation of Christ-crucified for the forgiveness of all your sins. In other words,

³ Galatians 3:24.

we want you to discover Christ in each text, and receive security and comfort from the reality that He has done all things necessary to ensure your forgiveness, salvation, rightness before the Father, and has granted you blessed eternal life.

In the manner of today's words from St. Paul, that would be to declare to you that divine revelation that your sinful nature has been crucified with Christ. United with Him, you have been freed from sin, and sinfulness. That truth is declared again:

But those who are of Christ [Jesus] have the flesh crucified together with the passions and the desires.⁴

How shall we unpack that text? There are different models of preaching still in vogue. Would you like to hear a story or two? That could be done. But then you would likely remember the story and not the Word of God from the text. (From experience, that is what happens when storytelling in preaching takes precedence. Further, when Jesus told stories, what was the typical reaction of His hearers?) Would you prefer to have a simple topic preached, with the texts for the week serving as mere supporting arguments? That could be done. However, what usually happens then is that the hearers end up with do's and don'ts for Christian living. At best they are left under the third use of the Law, moral guidelines. Don't answer this too quickly - would you really like to leave here having heard great moral stories that place you under the Law of good works which teach you what you would need to do to show to

⁴ Ibid.

yourself and others that you are a “good” Christian? How could you be certain you’d done enough?

Instead, we’ll simply open the text into your ears and let the Holy Spirit do His good work within you. To that end, this exposition begins from the end of the section of St. Paul’s letter to the Galatians. Again, it reads:

*But those who are of Christ [Jesus] have the flesh crucified together with the passions and the desires.*⁵

What does that mean?

First, consider its divinely intended meaning. The text stands to remind those who have heard the Word and have been baptized that they have actually participated in the crucifixion of Christ Jesus. In God’s sight, in eternal reality and truth, you who are part of the Body of Christ, have been crucified with our Head. His death as the sin-bearer of your sins, means that your death to sin is real. The flesh, that is your Old Adam, is rendered lifeless in God’s sight. Further, unlike those millions of souls in our world today who have not heard and believed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, you are also freed from slavery to sinful passions and lusts. Hear again the Word of God:

*But those who are of Christ [Jesus] have the flesh crucified together with the passions and the desires.*⁶

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

The second step in considering this text, following the format proclaimed before, is to determine, as best we can, the impact of this text on its original hearers. That is, what did the Christian people in ancient Galatia (central Turkey on our world maps today) receive from this Word of God?

They are reminded that they are one with Christ. They are informed of the truth that their flesh –in Paul’s letter that means the same as saying their Old Adam, the human condition that is inbred in all humans from conception – that flesh has been put to death – even as they yet live in this world. An image that would surely leap into the minds of those first hearers of this Word would be of the brutality and suffering of the instrument the Roman Empire had reserved for non-citizens who had been convicted of capital crimes. The image of horrible death by exposure and suffocation was sharp in their minds as they heard that which was already done through the Word to the nature they inherited from Adam. That death meant that the things of the flesh, that which result from bondage to it – evil desires and lusts – had actually been completely humiliated and suffocated in them in the crucifixion of Jesus. Hear again the text:

But those who are of Christ [Jesus] have the flesh crucified together with the passions and the desires.⁷

The third step outlined for exposition earlier is to proclaim the text that the Holy Spirit might use it to work in your life and the lives of whom you meet this week. That

⁷ Ibid.

is to declare that which was true for its first hearers is true for you. You who have been joined to Christ Jesus have died with Him. Many of you learned what that means as you memorized the explanation contained in Dr. Luther's *Small Catechism*. Surely you recall learning about returning to your Baptism daily, to drown the Old Adam and all sinful desires, that your New Adam might rise to live before God, declared right with Him and pure in His sight forever. A prime application drawn from this summary verse of this week's text is that you who have been crucified with Christ are free from slavery to your sinful nature and all its worldly lusts and desires.

That reality is yours because Christ Jesus, before you were ever conceived in sin, as all people are, died for you. Only the Christian is truly free to turn from sin and evil each day. All others are still bound to worldly desires and lusts and cannot free themselves from evil even when they perform civil good works! Does this mean that they always sin, and you, dear Christian, never sin?

Yes, and no. Yes, those outside of Christ can only sin, for that is their nature and it still lives and reigns in them. No, because you who have freedom from the flesh together with its passions and lusts and still may fall to temptation. Do not despair when this happens. But pray with all earnestness that you may remain in the Word and thereby grow in the faith and knowledge that you have been united by God the Holy Spirit with Christ-crucified into the forgiveness of all your sins. That is one

reason why the theme text for this week is found following the other verses of the third chapter of the Letter to the Galatians. (There is no time today to unpack them all, but there remains a little time to sum them up to aid your further reflection at a later time).

The section begins with the Apostle's encouragement to those who have been crucified with Christ. Those who have died with Christ have also been raised with Him to new life. This is why Paul begins this section declaring the Christian reality:

*But I say, all of you continue to walk by the Spirit, and you may definitely not fulfill the desires of the flesh.*⁸

To walk by the Spirit is to conduct one's life remaining in the good things of God. It is to hear His Word, confess one's sins, receive His Absolution and live each day under the Cross. As those realities rise up in the life of the faithful, the desires of the flesh are set aside.

Having stated the call for believers to conduct their lives under God's mercy, the Apostle uses comparison and contrast to drive home the truth of the Christian life of repentance and forgiveness. This is a form of argument that his first hearers used in their dialogues and debates. Flesh and spirit are declared as opposed. Sin, the fruits of the flesh listed number fifteen, in three sets of five. Grace, the fruits of the Spirit listed number nine, three sets of three. The Law's condemnation is greater in quantity. But

⁸ Galatians 5:16.

the Gospel's absolution is greater in quality. What does this mean? Paul's summary statement rises again to conclude this exposition:

Those who are of Christ [Jesus] have the flesh crucified together with the passions and the desires.⁹

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

Trinity XIV (LUTHERAN SERVICE BOOK One-year series)

Proverbs 4:10-23; Galatians 5:16-24; Luke 17:11-19

August 24, 2008

Pastor Michael H. Morehouse

SOLI DEO GLORIA

Additional Notes:

Λέγω δέ, πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε.

ἢ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος,

τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα κατὰ τῆς σαρκός,

ταῦτα γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἀντίκειται, ἵνα μὴ ἂ ἐὰν θέλητε ταῦτα ποιῆτε.

εἰ δὲ πνεύματι ἄγεσθε, οὐκ ἐστὲ ὑπὸ νόμον.

φανερὰ δὲ ἐστὶν τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός, ἅτινά ἐστιν

⁹ Galatians 3:24.

πορνεία, ἀκαθαρσία, ἀσέλγεια, εἰδωλολατρία, φαρμακεία, ἔχθραι, ἔρις, ζήλος,

θυμοί, ἐριθεῖαι, διχوستασίαι, αἰρέσεις, φθόνοι, μέθαι, κῶμοι

καὶ τὰ ὅμοια τούτοις,

ἃ προλέγω ὑμῖν καθὼς προεῖπον ὅτι οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες βασιλείαν θεοῦ οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν.

Ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματός ἐστιν

ἀγάπη χαρὰ εἰρήνη, μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη, πίστις πραΰτης

ἐγκράτεια·

κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος.

οἱ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ] τὴν σάρκα ἐσταύρωσαν σὺν τοῖς παθήμασιν καὶ ταῖς

ἐπιθυμίαις.¹⁰

Luther's Works:

And in Galatians 5:17, he teaches that in the saints there is an eternal struggle of the flesh against the spirit. Therefore you ought not despair so soon, though you find yourself weak and fainthearted, but pray diligently that you might remain with the Word and grow in the faith and knowledge of Christ.¹¹

I will early destroy all the godless in the land, that I may cut off all evildoers from the city of the Lord.

¹⁰Aland, 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

¹¹Luther, M. 1999, c1955. *Vol. 12: Luther's works, vol. 12 : Selected Psalms I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Concordia Publishing House: Saint Louis

This means: "I cannot list all the vices, but this is the summary of them: I will tolerate none of them." He has listed some, as St. Paul lists some of the works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21 and says: "These and similar ones will not possess the kingdom of God." Thus David also lists a number of things here: transgressors, wicked, false, slanderers, proud, conceited tyrants, deceitful liars; and then he says: "In other words, I will eradicate them all, all the godless, all the transgressors. That is, I will tolerate neither godless people in the spiritual government nor evildoers in the secular."¹²

The offenses that are to be avoided are those that can accuse us in our conscience, as Galatians 5:19 says. But God is praised by our proper and beautiful lives. I see that among Christians adultery is punished and that the women behave in a reserved way.¹³

While he is doing this, behold, he meets a contrary will in his own flesh which strives to serve the world and seeks its own advantage. This the spirit of faith cannot tolerate, but with joyful zeal it attempts to put the body under control and hold it in check, as Paul says in Rom. 7[:22-23], "For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin," and in another place, "But I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified" [I Cor. 9:27], and in Galatians [5:24], "And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."¹⁴

I leave aside that truly Achillean text of mine,³² which Diatribe has bravely passed over and left intact. I mean, where Paul in Romans 7[:14 ff.] and Galatians 5[:16 ff.] teaches that there is in the saints and the godly a battle between the Spirit and the flesh, so fierce that they cannot do what they would. From this I argued thus: If human nature is so evil that in those born anew of the Spirit it not only does not endeavor after the good but actually strives and fights against it, how should it endeavor after the good in those who are not yet born anew but are still "in the old man" and in bondage to Satan? For even here Paul is not speaking only of the grosser passions, in which Diatribe commonly takes refuge when she wants to evade the Scriptures, but he lists among the works of the flesh heresy, idolatry, dissension, strife, which undoubtedly have their seat in those highest faculties, the reason and the will. If, therefore, the flesh wages war against the Spirit with such passions as these in the saints, it will fight against God all the more in the ungodly

¹²Luther, M. 1999, c1956. *Vol. 13: Luther's works, vol. 13 : Selected Psalms II* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Concordia Publishing House: Saint Louis

¹³Luther, M. 1999, c1968. *Vol. 29: Luther's works, vol. 29 : Lectures on Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Concordia Publishing House: Saint Louis

¹⁴Luther, M. 1999, c1957. *Vol. 31: Luther's works, vol. 31 : Career of the Reformer I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

32 Cf. p. 145, n. 68 and p. 234, n. 36.

and in free choice. That is why in Romans 8[:7] he calls it hostility to God. I should like to see *this* argument pulled to pieces, and free choice defended against it.¹⁵

Moreover he cites the sayings of St. Peter [in 5:20]: "Love covers a multitude of sins" [I Pet. 4:8], and again [in 4:10], "Humble yourselves under the hand of God" [I Pet. 5:6]; also the saying of St. Paul in Galatians 5[:17], "The Spirit lusteth against envy."⁵² And yet, in point of time, St. James was put to death by Herod [Acts 12:2] in Jerusalem, before St. Peter.⁵³ So it seems that [this author] came long after St. Peter and St. Paul.

In a word, he wanted to guard against those who relied on faith without works, but was unequal to the task.⁵⁴ He tries to accomplish by harping on the law what the apostles accomplish by stimulating people to love. Therefore⁵⁵ I cannot include him among the chief books, though I would not thereby prevent anyone from including or extolling him as he pleases, for there are otherwise many good sayings in him.¹⁶

Between grace and gift there is this difference. Grace actually means God's favor, or the good will which in himself he bears toward us, by which he is disposed to give us Christ and to pour into us the Holy Spirit with his gifts. This is clear from chapter 5[:15], where St. Paul speaks of "the grace and gift in Christ," etc. The gifts and the Spirit increase in us every day, but they are not yet perfect since there remain in us the evil desires and sins that war against the Spirit, as he says in Romans 7[:5ff.] and Galatians 5[:17], and the conflict between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, as foretold in Genesis 3[:15]. Nevertheless grace does so much that we are accounted completely righteous before God. For his grace is not divided or parceled out, as are the gifts, but takes us completely into favor for the sake of Christ our Intercessor and Mediator. And because of this, the gifts are begun in us.¹⁷

Flesh and spirit you must not understand as though flesh is only that which has to do with unchastity and spirit is only that which has to do

¹⁵Luther, M. 1999, c1972. *Vol. 33: Luther's works, vol. 33 : Career of the Reformer III* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

⁵²This KJV rendering comes closest to Luther's German, which is a literal rendering of the Vulgate of Jas. 4:5. *Hass* is Luther's equivalent of the Latin *invidiae* again in Paul's catalogue of works of the flesh, where the RSV translates the word in Gal. 5:21 as "envy."

⁵³Luther overlooks the fact that the James to whom the book is traditionally ascribed is not the brother of John [Matt. 4:21] martyred by Herod [Acts 12:2], but the brother of the Lord [Matt. 13:55] who became head of the apostolic church at Jerusalem [Acts 15:13; Col. 1:19]. *BG* 7, 21, n. 2.

⁵⁴Editions prior to 1530 here added, "in spirit, thought, and words. He mangles the Scriptures and thereby opposes Paul and all Scripture." *WA*, *DB* 7, 386, nn. 14, 15.

⁵⁵Editions prior to 1530 read from this point, "Therefore, I will not have him in my Bible to be numbered among the true chief books, though I would not thereby prevent anyone from including or extolling him as he pleases, for there are otherwise many good sayings in him. One man is no man (cf. the proverbial expression: *Einer ist keiner*. Wander [ed.], *Sprichwörter-Lexikon*, I, 784, 'Einer,' No. 44) in worldly things; how, then, should this single man alone avail against Paul and all the rest of Scripture?" *WA*, *DB* 7, 386, nn. 17-21.

¹⁶Luther, M. 1999, c1960. *Vol. 35: Luther's works, vol. 35 : Word and Sacrament I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

¹⁷Luther, M. 1999, c1960. *Vol. 35: Luther's works, vol. 35 : Word and Sacrament I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

with what is inwardly in the heart. Rather, like Christ in John 3[:6], Paul calls everything "flesh" that is born of the flesh—the whole man, with body and soul, mind and senses—because everything about him longs for the flesh. Thus you should learn to call him "fleshly" too who thinks, teaches, and talks a great deal about lofty spiritual matters, yet does so without grace. From the "works of the flesh" in Galatians 5[:19-21], you can learn that Paul calls heresy and hatred "works of the flesh." And in Romans 8[:3] he says that "the law is weakened by the flesh"; yet this is said not of unchastity, but of all sins, and above all of unbelief, which is the most spiritual of all vices.¹⁸

I hope now that all this has made it perfectly clear what "spiritual" means. Surely "spiritual" must mean what the Spirit does and what comes from the Spirit, just as "fleshly" is what flesh does and what comes from the flesh, as Paul says in Romans 8[:5], "Those who are of the flesh are fleshly minded, but those who are of the Spirit are spiritually minded." Again [8:13], "If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the flesh you will live." Here, indeed, you find that even the fruit and works of the Spirit are called "spiritual" because they come from the Spirit, as he also says in Galatians 5[:22 f.], "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, patience," etc. In short, he calls the entire life of Christians spiritual, and he calls them altogether spiritual, in I Corinthians 1 and 2.¹⁵⁵ Thus without doubt he who in faith physically eats Christ's body in the Supper eats spiritually and lives and walks spiritually precisely in the physical eating. Our fanatics, however, are full of fraud and humbug. They think nothing spiritual can be present where there is anything material and physical, and assert that flesh is of no avail. Actually the opposite is true. The Spirit cannot be with us except in material and physical things such as the Word, water, and Christ's body and in his saints on earth. Now have we properly overthrown the iron wall?¹⁹

From these passages now we learn what spirit or spiritual, flesh or fleshly are: we do not call "flesh" that which can be seen by the eyes or touched by the fingers, as the fanatics do when they call Christ's body useless flesh; but, as I have said above, all is spirit, spiritual, and an object of the Spirit, in reality and in name, which comes from the Holy Spirit, be it as physical or material, outward or visible as it may; on the other hand, all is flesh and fleshly which comes from the natural power of the flesh, without spirit, be it as inward and invisible as it may. For St. Paul in Romans 8[:5] calls even the fleshly mind "flesh," and in Galatians 5[:19ff.] enumerates among the "works of the flesh" even

¹⁸Luther, M. 1999, c1960. *Vol. 35: Luther's works, vol. 35 : Word and Sacrament I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia
155 No verse in I Corinthians 1 precisely corresponds to this sentence, but cf. 1:2, 7, 30, and 2:12, 15.

¹⁹Luther, M. 1999, c1961. *Vol. 37: Luther's works, vol. 37 : Word and Sacrament III* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

"heresy, enmity, envy," etc., which however are entirely inward and entirely invisible.²⁰

St. Paul in Romans 8 contrasts spirit and flesh practically throughout the entire chapter; and Galatians 5[:17]: "These two, spirit and flesh, are opposed to each other," etc. I suppose this is familiar to everyone who reads the New Testament. If anyone does not believe it, let him just read; he will find that where flesh and spirit are placed in opposition to one another, flesh is certainly condemned as something sinful, as the enemy and adversary of God. Then it will not be necessary to cite all the passages here.²¹

My counsel therefore is this: If you find that you are so utterly insensitive that you do not feel sin, death, etc., take hold of your mouth, nose, ears, hands and feel whether they are flesh or stone. If they are flesh, very well, then at least believe the Scripture, if you cannot trust your feelings. For Scripture says: "The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit" [Galatians 5:17], also, Romans 7 [:18]: "Nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh," and so forth. In accordance with these sayings, speak thus: "Truly, I am aware of my bodily flesh. Surely there is nothing good in it. For that reason, so long as I have flesh, it is of course necessary for me to go to the sacrament to strengthen my faith and spirit against the flesh which is opposed to my spirit." Scripture is not lying to you, but your feeling and your lack of feelings are deceiving you: for, although sin is forgiven and also conquered by Christ so that it cannot condemn us or accuse the conscience, it nevertheless has remained to the extent that it can tempt us and thus can exercise us in our faith.²²

Now if God is to live and work in him, all this vice and wickedness must be choked and uprooted, so that in this event there is a rest from all our works, words, thoughts, and life, so that henceforth (as St. Paul says in Galatians 2[:20]) it is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives, works, and speaks in us. This is not accomplished with comfortable, pleasant days. On the contrary, in these circumstances a man must hurt his own nature and let it be hurt. Here the strife between the spirit and the flesh begins, here the spirit resists anger, lust, and pride, while the flesh wants to enjoy pleasure, honor, and comfort. Of this St. Paul says in Galatians 5[:24], "They that are our Lord Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts." Only then do the good works ensue—fasting, watching, labor, about which some say and write so much, although

²⁰Luther, M. 1999, c1961. Vol. 37: *Luther's works, vol. 37 : Word and Sacrament III* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

²¹Luther, M. 1999, c1961. Vol. 37: *Luther's works, vol. 37 : Word and Sacrament III* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

²²Luther, M. 1999, c1971. Vol. 38: *Luther's works, vol. 38 : Word and Sacrament IV* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

they know neither the source nor the purpose of these good works. Therefore, we too will now discuss them.²³

Surely we must all admit that Christ was not always equally joyous, even though he who is full of the spirit, is also full of joy, inasmuch as joy is a fruit of the spirit; Galatians 5[:22]. Again, Christ also was not always equally sweet and mild. He was filled with wrath and disgust when he drove the Israelites from the temple, John 2[:15-17]²⁴

For we are unable to give to God anything, in return for his goodness and grace, except praise and thanksgiving, which, moreover, proceed from the heart and have no great need of organ music, bells, and rote recitation. Faith teaches such praise and thanksgiving; as it is written concerning the shepherds that they returned to their flocks with praise and thanksgiving and were well satisfied, even though they did not become wealthier, were not awarded higher honors, did not eat and drink better, were not obliged to carry on a better trade. See, in this Gospel you have a picture of true Christian life, especially as pertains to its external aspects: on the outside, it shines forth not at all or at most a little bit in the sight of the people so that, indeed, most people see it as error and foolishness; but on the inside it is sheer light, joy, and bliss. Thus we see what the apostle has in mind when he enumerates the fruits of the spirit in Galatians 5[:22]: "The fruits of the spirit (that is, the works of faith) are love, joy, peace, kindness, being able to get along, patience, confidence, mercy, chastity." No person, canonical hour, food, garment, location, or any self selected human work of this kind, as we see them swarming about in the life of the papists, is enumerated.²⁵

Book of Concord:

5:17 (130.169) More than blind are those who do not believe that evil desires in the flesh are sins, about which Paul says (Gal. 5:17), "The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh."¹⁷⁰ The flesh distrusts God and trusts in temporal things; in trouble it looks to men for help; it even defies ^(tr-171) God's will and runs away from afflictions that it ought to bear because of God's command; and it doubts God's mercy. The Holy Spirit in our hearts battles against such feelings in order to suppress and destroy them and to give us new spiritual impulses.¹⁷¹ But later we shall assemble more testimonies on this subject, though they are obvious throughout not only the Scriptures but also the holy Fathers.²⁶

²³Luther, M. 1999, c1966. *Vol. 44: Luther's works, vol. 44 : The Christian in Society I* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

²⁴Luther, M. 1999, c1974. *Vol. 52: Luther's works, vol. 52 : Sermons II* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

²⁵Luther, M. 1999, c1974. *Vol. 52: Luther's works, vol. 52 : Sermons II* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works. Fortress Press: Philadelphia

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

5:17 (156.319) Second, the opponents' teaching leaves consciences in doubt, so that they can never be stilled; for the law always accuses us, even in good works. The flesh always lusts against the Spirit (Gal. 5:17). If a conscience believes that it ought to be pleasing to God because of its own work and not because of Christ, how will it have peace without faith?³²⁰ What work will it find that it will count worthy of eternal life, if indeed hope ought to be sustained by merits? Against these doubts Paul says (Rom. 5:1), "Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God"; we ought to be utterly sure that righteousness and eternal life are given us freely for Christ's sake. And of Abraham he says (Rom. 4:18), "In hope he believed against hope."²⁷

5:17 (477.13) **8.** However, in the elect children of God this spontaneity is not perfect, but they are still encumbered with much weakness, as St. Paul complains of himself in Rom. 7:14-25 and Gal. 5:17.²⁸

5:17 (480.4) **3.** For although they are indeed reborn and have been renewed in the spirit of their mind, such regeneration and renewal is incomplete in this world. In fact, it has only begun, and in the spirit of their mind the believers are in a constant war against their flesh (that is, their corrupt nature and kind), which clings to them until death.² On account of this Old Adam, who inheres in people's intellect,^(tr-807) will, and all their powers, it is necessary for the law of God constantly to light their way lest in their merely human devotion they undertake self-decreed and self-chosen acts of serving God. This is further necessary lest the Old Adam go his own self-willed way.³ He must be coerced against his own will not only by the admonitions and threats of the law, but also by its punishments and plagues, to follow the Spirit and surrender himself a captive. 1 Cor. 9:27; Rom. 6:12; Gal. 6:14; Ps. 119:1; Heb. 13:21.²⁹

5:17 (524.17) In the second place, the Word of God testifies that in divine matters the intellect, heart, and will of a natural, unregenerated man is not only totally turned away from God, but is also turned and perverted against God and toward all evil. Again, that man is not only weak, impotent, incapable, and dead to good, but also that by original sin he is so miserably perverted, poisoned, and corrupted that by disposition and nature he is thoroughly wicked, opposed and hostile to God, and all

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

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

² Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:21, 23.

³ Rom. 12:7, 8.

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

too mighty, alive, and active for everything which is displeasing to God and contrary to his will. "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen. 8:21). "The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked," that is, is so perverted and full of misery that no one can fathom it (Jer. 17:9). St. Paul explains this text: "The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God" (Rom. 8:7), and again, "The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and these are opposed to each other" (Gal. 5:17). "We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Rom. 7:14), and shortly thereafter St. Paul says, "I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh, for I delight in the law of God in my inmost self (which the Holy Spirit has regenerated), but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin" (Rom. 7:18, 22, 23).³⁰

5:17 (533.64) But after a man is converted, and thereby enlightened, and his will is renewed, then he wills that which is good, in so far as he is reborn or a new man, and he delights in the law of God according to his inmost self (Rom. 7:22). And immediately he does good, as much and as long as the Holy Spirit motivates him, as St. Paul says, "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."^{8 64} This impulse of the Holy Spirit is no coercion or compulsion because the converted man spontaneously does that which is good, as David says, "Your people will offer themselves freely on the day you lead your host."⁹ Nevertheless, the words of St. Paul apply also to the regenerated, "For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in (tr-907) my members." Again, "So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh the law of sin" (Rom. 7:22, 23, 25). And again, "For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would" (Gal. 5:17).³¹

5:17 (565.8) But in this life Christians are not renewed perfectly and completely. For although their sins are covered up through the perfect obedience of Christ, so that they are not reckoned to believers for damnation, and although the Holy Spirit has begun the mortification of the Old Adam and their renewal in the spirit of their minds, nevertheless the Old Adam still clings to their nature and to all its internal and external powers.⁸ Concerning this the apostle writes, "I know that nothing good dwells within me." And again, "I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do." Likewise, "I see in my members another law at

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

⁸ Rom. 8:14.

⁹ Ps. 110:3.

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

war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin."⁸
Likewise, "The desires of the flesh are against the spirit and the desires of the spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would."⁹³²

5:19,20 (455.75) Suppose you say, "What shall I do if I cannot feel this need or experience hunger and thirst for the sacrament?" Answer: For persons in such a state of mind that they cannot feel it, I know no better advice than to suggest that they put their hands to their bosom and ask whether they are made of flesh and blood. If you find that you are, then for your own good turn to St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians and hear what are the fruits of the flesh: "The works of the flesh are plain: adultery, immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, murder, drunkenness, carousing, and the like."⁴³³

5:21 (556.32) We should often, with all diligence and earnestness, repeat and impress upon Christians who have been justified by faith these true, immutable, and divine threats and earnest punishments and admonitions: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9). "Those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5). "If you live according to the flesh you will die" (Rom. 8:13). "On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience" (Col. 3:6).³⁴

5:22 (552.9) Hence faith alone is the mother and source of the truly good and God-pleasing works that God will reward both in this and in the next world. For this reason St. Paul calls them fruits of faith or of the Spirit.¹³⁵

5:24 (554.19) Here again careful attention must be given to the distinction which Paul makes when he says on the one hand (Rom. 7:22, 23) that he is willing and delights in the law of God in his inmost self, and on the other that in his flesh he finds another law which is not only

⁸ Rom. 7:18, 19, 23.

⁹ Gal. 5:17.

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

⁴ Gal. 5:19, 20.

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

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

¹ Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9.

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

unwilling or unenthusiastic but actually wars against the law of his mind. Concerning this unwilling and recalcitrant flesh, Paul says, "I pommel my body and subdue it" (1 Cor. 9:27), and again, they who belong to Christ have crucified (that is, killed) their flesh with its passions, desires, and deeds (Gal. 5:24; Rom. 8:13).²⁰ But we reject and condemn as false the view that good works are free to believers in the sense that it lies within their free option if they may or want to do or not do them or to act in a contrary fashion and nonetheless still retain faith and God's mercy and his grace.³⁶

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