

The scribes and Pharisees interrupted the preaching of the Gospel to try to trap the Son of God in sin. The trap was as follows: If Jesus said that the adulterous woman should be stoned, then they could accuse Him of not putting into practice the mercy and forgiveness that He had been preaching. If Jesus said that the woman should not be stoned, they could accuse Him of teaching contrary to the Law. Jesus' response not only demonstrated His own righteousness, but forced them to acknowledge their own sinfulness.

After the scribes and Pharisees left, Jesus could have stoned the adulteress Himself. He had every right to judge her, since He is God and she was guilty of sin. Instead, He chose to forgive her, just as He daily forgives us of all our sins, according to His mercy.

It is important to note that Jesus *forgave* her sin; He did not *ignore* her sins. He very clearly commanded her, "Go and sin no more." The Pharisees did not care about the woman at all. They dragged her out and exposed her sin only for the purpose of attacking Jesus, condemning her, and making themselves look righteous. Jesus, on the other hand, allowed her sin to be exposed so that He might have mercy upon her and forgive her.

Collect: O Almighty God, who by Thy Son Jesus Christ didst give to Thy holy Apostles many excellent gifts, and commandedst them earnestly to feed Thy flock: Make, we beseech Thee, all pastors diligently to preach Thy holy Word, and the people obediently to follow the same, that they may receive the crown of everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

# THE LUTHERAN HERALD



*The Rich man and Lazarus (Gospel for Trinity 1)*

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## The Calendar

*The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941): TLH; 2022 Supplement: ASBH

(Monday: M; Tuesday: T; Wednesday: W; Thursday: R; Friday: F; Saturday: S)

June 2	Trinity 1	ASBH 39
June 5 (W)	St. Boniface, Bishop and Martyr (R)	ASBH 89 (this issue)
June 9	Trinity 2	ASBH 40
June 15 (S)	David Henkel, Pastor and Confessor (W)	ASBH 90 (this issue)
June 16	Trinity 3	ASBH 41
June 23	Trinity 4	ASBH 42
June 24 (M)	Nativity of St. John the Baptist (W)	ASBH 91 (this issue)
June 25 (T)	Presentation of the Augsburg Confession	ASBH Supplement 90 (the new hymn number will be ASBH 92)
June 29 (S)	Festival of Sts. Peter & Paul (R)	ASBH 93 (this issue)

**Note regarding hymn numbers:** The number for some hymns will change as we prepare for the move from the Supplement to the finished Hymnal. The selection of Office Hymns is now complete as of this year's synod.

### Scheduled Episcopal Visitations

Pr. Mensing and Faith Lutheran Church (Oregon) .....	May 29
Communion visit (Arizona).....	June 4
Pr. Heimbugner and Charity Lutheran Church (Texas) .....	June 30

### Hymns Added Since Synod

"An Awe-full Mystery Is Here"	TLH #304 (public domain)
"And Wilt Thou Pardon, Lord"	TLH #322 (public domain)
"Draw Nigh, and Take the Body of the Lord"	TLH #307 (public domain)
"I Come, O Lord, to Thy Communion"	Selah #755
"I Come to Thee, O Blessed Lord"	TLH #330 (public domain)
"Invited, Lord, by Boundless Grace"	
"Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior"	TLH #311 (public domain)
"Jesus Lives! No Longer Can Thy Terrors"	Church Book #196
"Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Living Bread"	TLH #312 (public domain)
"Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray"	TLH #314 (public domain)
"Lord Jesus, Think on Me"	TLH #320 (public domain)
"Lord, to Thee I Make Confession"	TLH #326 (public domain)
"O Happy Home Where Thou Art Love the Dearest"	ELH #537
"O Jesus, Blessed Lord, to Thee"	TLH #309 (public domain)

FRIDAY, JUNE 28: LUKE 6:36-42

4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY A. TRINITY

There are two common problems when it comes to judgment. The first is when those who have no authority take it upon themselves to judge. The Father has committed all judgment to the Son (John 5:22). Our sinful nature is constantly trying to usurp Christ and play the judge. In some cases, Christ gives authority to men to judge in certain spheres (such as to the government, to parents, and to the pastoral office), but it is not our place to condemn our neighbor for his sins according to our own desires or reasoning.

The second problem is hypocrisy, when the one judging excuses himself for the same sin which he condemns someone else. Because of our sinful nature, we tend to be hyper-focused on the sins of others and completely oblivious to the seriousness of our own. It is consistently the case that we are guilty of the very sins that, when committed by others, aggravate us the most.

As a corrective to our hypocritical impulse, Christ directs our attention to the mercy of our heavenly Father. If anyone has the right to judge, He does. Yet He has had mercy upon us, forgives our sins, and wiped out the condemnation that was against us. When we remember and believe this, the Holy Spirit changes our attitude toward our neighbors so that we show them the same mercy and forgiveness that has been shown to us.

Collect: Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Thy governance, that Thy Church may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The Jewish leaders, because they “sat in Moses’ seat” (Matthew 23:2), actually had the proper authority to judge. It was their vocation to defend the truth and expose falsehood, to promote good works, and to condemn sin. But these Jewish leaders used their authority to condemn the apostles for a good deed done to a helpless man. They judged them, not for sin, but for teaching the truth and doing good works. This was not part of their God-given vocation.

St. Peter was right to respond to their wicked judgment by passing judgment on them in return. He condemned them for killing the Lord Jesus Christ. As an apostle, entrusted with the ministry of the Spirit, it was his duty to preach the Law to the unrepentant false teachers.

If we are judged for confessing the truth about Christ, we should not back down, even if we are judged by the rightful authorities. When the Gospel is at stake, we ought to follow what St. Peter said on a similar occasion and obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). We must hold fast to the name of Jesus no matter what, because there is no other name by which we can be saved from our sin.

Collect: Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Thy governance, that Thy Church may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

## Doctrine and Practice

### The Salutation

#86

“Regarding the salutation, which, if accepted in faith, holds the power of a blessing. The Savior speaks about the salutation of His disciples in Matthew 10. If they pray for peace upon a house or city, that peace will come upon it, provided that the house or city accepts and receives that salutation in faith. Hence, there is a devout custom for preachers to begin their sermons using almost the same formula, saying: “Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” And when descending from the pulpit, they repeat either the same words or another of Paul’s blessings: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you.” Or: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you” [2 Corinthians 13]; and finally, they dismiss the congregation with that solemn blessing with which the Priests of the Old Testament were instructed to dismiss their congregation: “The Lord bless you and keep you: The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you: The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace” (Numbers 6). ...

“The same salutation teaches us what are the most excellent gifts and blessings of God that we should rightly pray for and desire for ourselves and others from God, namely, the grace and mercy of God, bringing with them an infinite abundance not only of earthly goods, but much more of heavenly and eternal ones. This grace of God, and His favor, also makes the human heart peaceful. Indeed, this is the primary source and origin of our election, justification, and salvation. Therefore, let us strive to have a merciful and propitious God. For if He is for us, who can be against us? (Isaiah 51, Romans 8).”

Aegidius Hunnius (1550–1613),  
*Annotations on Titus* (1587)

# Lesson from the Book of Concord

## The First Sunday after Trinity

### ARTICLE XXIV.

Falsely are our churches accused of Abolishing the Mass; for the Mass is retained on our part, and celebrated with the highest reverence. All the usual ceremonies are also preserved, save that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns, which have been added to teach the people. For ceremonies are needed to this end alone, that the unlearned be taught. And not only has Paul commanded to use in the Church a language understood by the people [1 Cor. 14: 2, 9], but it has also be so ordained by man's law.

The people are accustomed to partake of the Sacrament together, if any be fit for it, and this also increases the reverence and devotion of public worship. For none are admitted except they be first proved. The people are also advised concerning the dignity and use of the Sacrament, how great consolation it brings anxious consciences, that they may learn to believe God, and to expect and ask of Him all that is good. This worship pleases God; such use of the Sacrament nourishes true devotion toward God. It does not, therefore, appear that the Mass is more devoutly celebrated among our adversaries, than among us.

But it is evident that for a long time, it has been the public and most grievous complaint of all good men, that Masses have been basely profaned and applied to purposes of lucre. For it is unknown how far this abuse obtains in all the churches, by what manner of men Masses are said only for fees or stipends, and how many celebrate them contrary to the Canons. But Paul severely threatens those who deal unworthily with the Eucharist, when he says [1 Cor. 11:27]: "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." When, therefore, our priests were admonished concerning this sin, Private Masses were discontinued among us, as scarcely any Private Masses were celebrated except for lucre's sake.

Neither were the bishops ignorant of these abuses, and if they had corrected them in time, there would now be less dissension. Heretofore, by their own negligence, they suffered many corruptions to creep into the Church. Now, when it is too late, they begin to complain of the troubles of the Church, seeing that this disturbance has been occasioned simply by those abuses, which were so manifest that they could be borne no longer. Great dissensions have arisen concerning the Mass, concerning the Sacrament. Perhaps the world is being punished for such long-continued profanations of the Mass, as have been tolerated in the churches for so many centuries, by the very men who were both able and in duty bound to correct them. For, in the Ten Commandments, it is written (Exodus 20), "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." But since the world began, nothing that God ever ordained seems to have been so abused for filthy lucre as the Mass.

There was also added the opinion which infinitely increased Private Masses, namely, that Christ, by His passion, had made satisfaction for original sin, and instituted the

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26: MATTHEW 18:15-20 4<sup>TH</sup> S. A. TRINITY

Our Lord recognizes that there are times when judgment is necessary, even within the Church. He has established an orderly procedure for it, so that judging can be done properly, without animosity or hypocrisy.

The primary motivation must be the restoration of the sinning brother. Complaining about our brother's sin to someone else does not indicate a concern for his spiritual well-being. It is meant to hurt his reputation and has the effect of antagonizing him. Christ commands that we put aside our cowardice and speak directly with our brother about the offense he has caused. If he does not listen, then it is appropriate to involve others.

Even if the brother persists in his sin, Christ does not allow personal judgment against him. Instead, He reserves the authority of spiritual judgment for those He has placed in the Office of the Ministry. They are commanded to absolve the sinner if he repents, and to condemn him if he does not. Even then, it is not their own personal judgment, but Christ's judgment.

Collect: Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Thy governance, that Thy Church may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

**TUESDAY, JUNE 25: ROMANS 14:7–17 PRESENTATION OF THE  
AUGSBURG CONFESSION**

Judging is often confused with the disapproval of sin. St. Paul explains that wicked judging involves showing contempt. It is not wrong to call sin a sin. It is wrong to vainly punish your brother for his sin or to use his sin to cause him to fall. If this is the case with sins against God's Law, then it is even more true when it comes to "sins" against human laws and human traditions, which are not necessarily sins at all. Our concern should always be to love our brother and prevent his stumbling in the faith.

However, when the Gospel is at stake, we are not to allow the truth to be spoken of as evil. This kind of judgment is good, because its purpose is to benefit our brother. False doctrine, just like hypocritical judging, threatens to cause Christians to stumble from the faith. When the Lutheran princes presented the Augsburg Confession to the emperor in 1530 A.D., they were properly judging and condemning the false doctrine of the papists. Their goal was not the damnation of everyone in the Roman church. Their goal was to defend the truth so that all could enjoy the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Gospel.

Collect: Almighty God, who, through the preaching of Thy servants, the blessed Reformers, hast caused the light of the Gospel to shine forth: Grant, we beseech Thee, that, knowing its saving power, we may faithfully guard and defend it against all enemies, and joyfully proclaim it, to the salvation of souls and the glory of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Mass wherein an offering should be made for daily sins, venial and mortal. From this has arisen the common opinion that the Mass taketh away the sins of the living and the dead, by the outward act. Then they began to dispute whether one Mass said for many were worth as much as special Masses for individuals, and this brought forth that infinite multitude of Masses. Concerning these opinions our teachers have given warning, that they depart from the Holy Scriptures and diminish the glory of the passion of Christ. For Christ's passion was an oblation and satisfaction, not for original guilt only, but also for all sins, as it is written to the Hebrews (10:10), "We are sanctified through the offering of Jesus Christ, once for all." Also, 10:14: "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Scripture also teaches that we are justified before God through faith in Christ, when we believe that our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. Now if the Mass take away the sins of the living and the dead by the outward act, justification comes of the work of Masses, and not of faith, which Scripture does not allow.

But Christ commands us [Luke 22:19]: "This do in remembrance of Me"; therefore the Mass was instituted that the faith of those who use the Sacrament should remember what benefit it receives through Christ, and cheer and comfort the anxious conscience. For, to remember Christ, is to remember His benefits, and to realize that they are truly offered unto us. Nor is it enough only to remember the history, for this the Jew and the ungodly also can remember. Wherefore the Mass is to be used to this end, that there the Sacrament [Communion] may be administered to them that have need of consolation; as Ambrose says: "Because I always sin, I am always bound to take the medicine."

Now, forasmuch as the Mass is such a giving of the Sacrament, we hold one communion every holyday, and also other days, when any desire the Sacrament it is given to such as ask for it. And this custom is not new in the Church; for the Fathers before Gregory make no mention of any private Mass, but of the common Mass they speak very much. Chrysostom says that the priest stands daily at the altar, inviting some to the Communion and keeping back others. And it appears from the ancient Canons, that someone celebrated the Mass from whom all the other presbyters and deacons receive the Body of the Lord, for thus the words of the Nicene Canon says: "Let the deacons, according to their order, receive the Holy Communion after the presbyters, from the bishop or from a presbyter." And Paul [1 Cor. 11:33] commands concerning the Communion: "Tarry for one another," so that there may be a common participation.

Forasmuch, therefore, as the Mass with us has the example of the Church taken from the Scripture and the Fathers, we are confident that it cannot be disapproved, especially since the public ceremonies are retained for the most part, like those hitherto in use; only the number of Masses differs, which, because of very great and manifest abuses, doubtless might be profitably reduced. For in olden times, even in churches most frequented, the Mass was not celebrated every day, as the Tripartite History (Book 9, chapt. 33) testifies: "Again in Alexandria, every Wednesday and Friday, the Scriptures are read, and the doctors expound them, and all things are done, except only the celebration of the Eucharist."

—The Augsburg Confession

Festival of St. Boniface

89. Awake, Thou Spirit, Who Didst Fire

Wach auf, du Geist der ersten Zeugen  
 Carl H. von Bogatzky, 1750, cento  
 Tr., Catherine Winkworth, 1855, alt.

All' Ehr' und Lob  
 "Kirchengesangbuch"  
 Strassburg, 1541

1. A - wake, Thou Spir - it, who didst fire  
 2. Lord, let our ear - nest prayer be heard,  
 3. Oh, haste to help ere we are lost!  
 4. And let Thy Word have speed - y course,

The watch - men of the Chur - ch's youth,  
 The prayer Thy Son hath bid us pray;  
 Send preach - ers forth, in spir - it strong,  
 Through ev - 'ry land be glo - ri - fied,

Who faced the Foe's en - ven - omed ire,  
 For, lo, Thy chil - dren's hearts are stirred  
 Armed with Thy Word, a daunt - less host,  
 Till all the hea - then know its force

Christ perfectly performed everything which He commands in this sermon. We were once carnally-minded enemies of God (Romans 8:7). Christ did not hate us, but loved us so much that He died for our sins. As He hung upon the cross He blessed those who cursed Him, praying that His heavenly Father would forgive those who were spitefully persecuting Him (Luke 23:34). His thoughts, words, and actions toward us are perfect, just as His Father is perfect.

Through Baptism, enemies of God are turned into sons of God. Instead of receiving the judgment we deserve, we are forgiven. This changes how we act toward our own enemies. Our lives reflect who our Father is and how He and His Son have treated us. Having been loved, we love; having been blessed, we bless; having been spared condemnation, we do not condemn; having been forgiven, we forgive.

After John the Baptist baptized people for the remission of their sins, he then instructed them to bear fruits worthy of repentance. He severely rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees, who wanted to claim God as their Father, but hypocritically judged both their enemies and their Jewish brethren.

Collect: O Lord God, Heavenly Father, who, through Thy servant John the Baptist, didst bear witness that Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world and that all who believe in Him shall inherit eternal life: We humbly pray Thee to enlighten us by Thy Holy Spirit that we may at all times find comfort and joy in this witness, continue steadfast in the true faith, and at last with all believers attain unto eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

# Lesson from the Book of Concord

## The Fourth Sunday after Trinity

### THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not bear false witness.

Thus you see, in short, it is forbidden to speak any evil of our neighbor, and yet the civil government, preachers, father and mother are excepted, that this commandment may be so understood that evil be not unreproved. Just therefore as, according to the Fifth Commandment, no one is to be injured in body, and yet the executioner is excepted, who, by virtue of his office, does his neighbor no good, but only evil and harm, and nevertheless does not sin against God's commandment, because God has, on His own account instituted that office; for He has reserved punishment for His own good pleasure, as He has threatened in the First Commandment,—just so also, although no one has a right in his own person to judge and condemn another, yet if they to whose office it belongs refuse to do it, they sin as well as he who should do so without such office. For here necessity requires one to speak of the evil, to make accusation, to investigate and testify; and it is not different from the case of a physician who is sometimes compelled to handle and examine a patient in parts otherwise not to be examined. Just so governments, father and mother, brothers and sisters, and other good friends, are under obligation to each other to reprove evil wherever it is needful and profitable.

—The Large Catechism, §274–275

Who wit - nessed day and in night Thy truth,  
In ev - 'ry land in this our day  
And fill Thy church - es far and wide.

Whose voic - es loud are ring - ing still  
To cry with fer - vent soul to Thee,  
Let them the earth for Thee re - claim,  
Oh, spread the con - quest of Thy Word

And bring - ing hosts to know Thy will,  
Oh, help us, Lord! So let it be!  
Thy her - i - tage, to know Thy name.  
And let Thy king - dom come, dear Lord! A - men.

The first sound Ezekiel hears from the Lord was not his name, but a phrase by which God would address him more than 90 times in this prophetic document. This title is emphasizing the prophet's humanity as he was addressed by the transcendent God. The other place in the Old Testament where we hear this title is the book of Daniel 7:13 (where the phrase is used as a title in reference to the Messianic figure) and 8:17 (where Gabriel uses the title in addressing Daniel). Jesus' frequent use of the phrase in referring to Himself shows both that He is incarnate man and that He is also the eschatological figure spoken of in Daniel.

The description in verse two of the Spirit entering the prophet Ezekiel and standing him up before the Lord is a beautiful parallel of our understanding of the Holy Spirit entering sinful man. The Spirit brings him to stand before the heavenly Father as one of His elect, to act as His light in a darkened world. The rest of this reading presents the undeniable truth of God's Word and the wretched, rebellious fallen state of all of humanity without faith in Jesus Christ and His holy work of Redemption.

Collect: O God, the Strength of all them that put their trust in Thee: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Bind - ing all the Church in one,  
Pours per - pet - ual mel - o - dy,  
Hear Thy ser - vants as they pray.  
With the bless - ed to re - tain,  
Ev - er Three and ev - er One;

Ho - ly Zi - on's help for - ev - er,  
God the One in Three a - dor - ing  
And Thy full - est ben - e - dic - tion  
And here - af - ter in Thy glo - ry,  
Con - sub - stan - tial, co - e - ter - nal,

And her con - fi - dence a - lone,  
In glad hymns e - ter - nal - ly.  
Shed with - in its walls al - way.  
Ev - er - more with Thee to reign.  
While un - end - ing a - ges run. A - men.



Festival of St Peter & St. Paul

93. Christ, Thou Art the Sure Foundation

Angularis fundamentum

Regent Square

Author unknown, c. 700, cento

Henry Smart, 1867

Tr., John M. Neale, 1851, alt.

1. Christ, Thou art the sure foun - da - tion,  
 2. All that de - di - ca - ted ci - ty,  
 3. To this tem - ple, where we call Thee,  
 4. Here vouch - safe to all Thy ser - vants,  
 Δ5. Laud and hon - or to the Fa - ther,

Christ the head and cor - ner - stone;  
 Dear - ly loved of God on high,  
 Come, O Lord of Hosts, to - day;  
 What they ask of Thee to gain;  
 Laud and hon - or to the Son,

Cho - sen of the Lord, and pre - cious,  
 In ex - ul - tant ju - bi - la - tion,  
 With Thy wont - ed lov - ing - kind - ness  
 What they gain from Thee for - ev - er  
 Laud and hon - or to the Spir - it,

TUESDAY, JUNE 4: I TIMOTHY 6:6-19 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY A. TRINITY

This is a critical text for Americans to properly understand, because we live in one of the most prosperous countries in the world at a time that is likely one of the most materialistic and leisure-focused eras of mankind. Due to this reality, we are certainly facing the sin that Saint Paul warns against in this epistle to the young bishop Timothy.

While the letter is sent to a pastor in the Office of the Holy Ministry, this section certainly has much to offer for all believers as regards living the Christian life and faithfully fulfilling any and all Christian vocations. The theme running throughout is “Fight the good fight of the faith,” focused on “eternal life” while you pursue “godliness with contentment”.

Often this text is misquoted as “money is the root of all evil,” when the Apostle is clear that the “love of money” is where the danger lies. For this type of love is covetousness or idolatry that ends up placing money before the Lord and His Word. Such love always bears the fruit of sin, which receives the holy wrath and righteous judgment of God.

Collect: O God, the Strength of all them that put their trust in Thee: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The Old Testament prophet in today's assigned text presents the same theme as the Apostle Paul did in yesterday's New Testament text: Fight the good fight of the faith. Jeremiah is warning all believers throughout time to keep their focus on God's Word and will in every aspect of earthly life, for this is the path that leads one to eternal life. These two verses sum up faithfulness in the believer rather nicely: Ultimately, God and your knowledge of and love for Him are to be the primary and most worthwhile endeavors in any earthly vocation. The person holding to this has the start of wisdom, for they understand and know the Lord and the central point of redemption: Salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This points to the divine reality that Jesus proclaims about the greatest commandment. God, through the prophet Jeremiah, declares that focusing all on the Lord and His holy Word and will leads to glorying in the Lord, which in turn produces in the believer such faithful works: loving kindness, correct judgment, and blessed righteousness—in which the Lord delights. Thus, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

Collect: O God, who dost guide Thy Church through the faithful ministrations of Thy servants, grant that Thy ministers, like Saint Boniface, stand steadfast against those who would work iniquity; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.



Festival of the Nativity of John the Baptist  
91. O Jesus, Lamb of God, Thou Art

O Lämmlein Gottes, Jesu Christ  
Bartholomäus Helder, 1646  
Tr., August Crull, 1880, alt.

Weimar  
C.P. Emanuel Bach, 1784

1. O Je - sus, Lamb of God, Thou art The  
2. O God, my sin in - deed is great; I  
3. Saint John the Bap - tist points to Thee And  
4. Help me to mend my ways, O Lord, And

Life and Com - fort of my heart.  
groan be - neath the dread - ful weight.  
bids me cast my sin on Thee;  
glad - ly to o - bey Thy Word.

A sin - ner poor I come to Thee And  
Be mer - ci - ful to me, I pray; Take  
For Thou hast left Thy throne on high To  
While here I live, a - bide with me; And

Today's text shows Christ warning His chosen of the coming persecution. Jesus therefore prepares His disciples for the worst, and He equips them with the best: His assurance to have no fear. As they are members of the household of Christ and thus bear the reproaches of their Lord, so they also shall share in His glorious vindication and victory.

Our faithful proclamation of the Gospel shall reveal the hidden Christ (verse 26), and at the time of eternal judgment Christ will acknowledge the faithful before the Father and lead them to glory forever. They will triumph over death; their enemies, who kill the body but cannot kill the soul, shall discover that Christ and the Father are mightier than death. Christ will deny those who denied Him, and He who can destroy both soul and body in hell will be the Judge of all. His holy, righteous judgment will be undeniable: eternal condemnation and hell for the hypocrite and unbeliever, while eternal salvation and paradise await the confessing believer of Christ.

Collect: O God, the Strength of all them that put their trust in Thee: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Jesus shows honor to the Father who sent Him. Note how Jesus connects Himself with the Twelve: He was commissioned, they are commissioned (hence "apostles," or ones who are sent). In this connection of our Lord with His called and commissioned ministers the Church has historically viewed holders of the Office of the Holy Ministry and the official functions of that office, the Word and Sacrament Ministry. These men stand in the stead and by the command of Christ.

The Greek word *micros* is used to refer to someone of insignificance or non-importance. This term must be understood within the context of the preceding verses. It refers to the tiniest act of kindness toward a single disciple, from among the least important of them all. A disciple is one who is striving to be a perfect copy of the Teacher to the best of one's ability. It is also noteworthy that the one doing the tiniest service toward the disciple because he is a disciple is rewarded. It is not the magnitude of the service that determines the reward, but the motive and its appreciation by the Lord.

Collect: O God, the Strength of all them that put their trust in Thee: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

"He who is of God hears God's words." It is easy for us to set aside God's words and listen to the voices of the world that surrounds us. Every day we are bombarded with the voices of radio, TV, and the internet. We can so easily find ourselves sliding into the abyss of this world, a world from which we can in no wise free ourselves.

That is why it is so important to keep oneself immersed in God's words, for here is where we hear the truth. We hear the truth about our sin, and the Truth which is Christ our Lord and His gentle voice, pronouncing our forgiveness. The lie of the devil and the world is to draw you away from Jesus by offering those things which are of no lasting value. The devil lies by having you think that whatever that "thing" might be, it will bring you true happiness. But once the thrill of the moment passes, the desire for more of the same comes. Only Christ can break the cycle as He draws you to Himself in order for you to see through the lie, and to once again to see the Truth. As one Baptized into Christ, you belong to Him and He assures you of that by calling you back to Himself, again, and again, and again.

Collect: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy that, Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Jesus was never one to use words carelessly. When He said, "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail," He was making it abundantly clear that even the smallest point of the Law, God's Law, would not fail. Furthermore, Jesus is God in the flesh, who fulfilled all that the Law requires. We also know that "heaven and earth" will one day "pass away" because creation was subjected to sin. We too will "pass away," because we are sinners who have broken God's Law.

But out of His grace and mercy, God has brought the Gospel to the world through "the law and the prophets," through John, through the preaching of Jesus, and today through the preaching of faithful pastors whom Christ has sent. Even though the world around us continues "pressing" us to give up our faith in Jesus, for Jesus' sake God does not give up on us.

We are renewed every day by the working of the Holy Spirit, who leads us to repent of our sins and directs us to see our forgiveness in Christ crucified. Though "heaven and earth pass away" and we too must "pass away," we have the assurance of eternal life for Jesus' sake.

Collect: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy that, Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

In today's reading the Lord calls on us to be rich toward God. What does that look like, though? You might ask, "how do I accomplish this very important aspect of the Christian vocation?" This week's meditations do a good job of presenting what God finds worthy of the faithful believer's time and energy; they should focus on the Word and the Sacraments. Those holy Means of Grace serve to focus our attention on Jesus Christ as our Redeemer and Lord, who has paid for every one of our wretched sinful acts and thoughts.

The second person of the Holy Trinity humbled Himself to come down in incarnate flesh, born of the Virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit, that He might die an atoning death for all your sins. This is foremost, for contrary to what the world tells you related to earthly temporal value, your Lord teaches: one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses, and you must instead "Take heed and beware of covetousness." We are rich toward God on account of His Spirit and the faith He creates in us as we cling to our Savior Jesus Christ and all that He commands us!

Collect: O God, the Strength of all them that put their trust in Thee: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

# Lesson from the Book of Concord

## The Second Sunday after Trinity

### ARTICLE XIII.

Of the Use of the Sacraments, they [the Lutheran theologians] teach, that the Sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the Sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the Sacraments.

They therefore condemn those who teach that the Sacraments justify by the outward act, and do not teach that, in the use of the Sacraments, faith which believes that sins are forgiven, is required.

—The Augsburg Confession

THURSDAY, JUNE 20: MATTHEW 12:1-8 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY A. TRINITY

“Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!” Says who!?! As always, the scribes and Pharisees were looking for something with which to blame our Lord. And as we also know, they failed at every turn. In this case, they failed to understand that God’s Law was not to be a burden, that is, it was not meant for the hungry to go unfed simply because it was the Sabbath. The purpose of the Sabbath is, as Luther explains, “that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.”

The irony of the Pharisees’ Sabbath observance was that one had to expend a great deal of effort to make sure one hadn’t done too much. The Pharisees had completely lost sight of God’s purpose for the Sabbath, which is to draw our attention away from ourselves and focus our eyes to see His mercy toward us in Christ. Thus, the extensive work of the priests in making sacrifices on the Sabbath was ultimately to bring God’s mercy to His people. Now standing before them was the One to whom all the sacrifices pointed, the very Messiah of God. Yet, the time would come when the Pharisees would bring condemnation upon our guiltless Lord and have Him crucified.

Collect: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy that, Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

“He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.”

Jesus spoke these words as He was about to send out seventy men whom He had designated to preach and heal the sick. We can quickly forget how important the preaching of His Word is to Jesus. We can look at the pulpit on Sunday morning and are tempted to see just a sinful man. Why in the world should anyone listen to him? Well, Jesus tells us why. “He who hears you hears Me.” When the pastor’s preaching is faithful to Jesus’ words, you are, indeed, hearing Jesus. We are to judge a pastor’s preaching based upon his faithfulness to the Word. We are to be like the Bereans and examine the Scriptures in order to see if the pastor’s preaching lines up with Jesus’ teaching.

When the preaching is faithful, our faithful eyes see who is really speaking to us: Jesus. This is serious business. The faithful pastor is God’s instrument. Thus, rejecting your faithful pastor is no small matter, for it is indeed a rejection of Christ Himself. Pray for your pastor, thanking God for this precious gift whom Christ has chosen to bring Himself to you.

Collect: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy that, Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Festival of David Henkel  
90. Rise, Ye Children of Salvation

Auf, ihr Christen, Christi Glieder  
Justus Falckner, 1697, cento  
Tr., Emma F. Bevan, 1858

Neander  
Joachim Neander, 1680

1. Rise, ye chil - dren of sal - va - tion,  
2. Saints and he - roes long be - fore us  
3. Fight - ing, we shall be vic - to - rious  
4. When His ser - vants stand be - fore Him,

All who cleave to Christ, the Head,  
Firm - ly on this ground have stood;  
By the blood of Christ, our Lord;  
Each re - ceiv - ing his re - ward;

Wake, a - rise, O might - y na - tion,  
See their ban - ner wav - ing o'er us,  
On our fore - heads, bright and glo - rious,  
When His saints in light a - dore Him,

Ere the Foe on Zi - on tread,  
 Con - qu'rors through the Sav - ior's blood,  
 Shines the wit - ness of His Word;  
 Giv - ing glo - ry to the Lord,

He draws nigh and would de - fy  
 Ground we hold where - on of old  
 Spear and shield on bat - tle - field,  
 "Vic - to - ry!" our song shall be

All the hosts of God Most High.  
 Fought the faith - ful and the bold.  
 His great name we can - not yield.  
 Like the thun - der of the sea. A - men.

Jesus made it very clear, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God." However, St. Paul wrote, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Corinthians 13:11). So which is it? Be a "little child," or be a "man"?

As children grow, they learn life skills so they can grow to be self-sufficient. A "little child" grows up and becomes a "man". As we grow in Christ, we learn to "put away childish things." Tell a little boy to leave the cookie jar alone, and with crumbs still on his face he will say, "I didn't eat the cookie." As God leads us to mature in faith, He shows us how "childish" it is to think we can hide our sins from Him. He helps us to mature by bringing us to repentance and showing us how utterly dependent we are upon Him. By God's grace, we grow to become less and less "childish" so we can become men and women of God, who know how dependent we are upon Him as His "little children."

Collect: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy that, Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.



There are times when Jesus “doubles down” when making His point about the need for people to repent of their sins. With these words, “Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents,” still ringing in the ears of the Pharisees, Jesus “doubles down” with another parable about repentance.

The scribes and the Pharisees couldn’t stand the fact that Jesus hung around with “tax collectors and sinners.” We know this from Scripture. It is obvious to us that the scribes and the Pharisees are “bad guys.” What can easily happen is we forget what St. Paul wrote to St. Timothy, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

We can so easily find ourselves looking down our noses at the scribes and Pharisees and fail to see the beauty of this parable. Jesus’ point is that no matter how awful the sin, no matter how vile we may act toward God, nor how deplorable we may have been toward our neighbor, we can come to God with repentant hearts and receive forgiveness. Jesus is always ready to forgive your sins.

Collect: O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy that, Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

When Jesus gives us His righteousness and makes us the children and heirs of His Father, is it not ludicrous to think or act like He could somehow leave behind His wisdom and grace to become worse than a human father? All that we deserved, He took out on Jesus precisely so that He could bless us as Jesus alone deserved. Jesus uses these extreme examples of how no human father would fail precisely so we would stop acting as if God would do so.

“Why don’t I have everything that I want, then?” The things asked for in Jesus’ examples of human fathers doing what is right for their children are things for which it is good and right to ask. Still, those fathers are not depicted as giving their sons the things for which they asked, but simply not giving them something bad when they’ve asked for what is good. Asking our Father, we receive. We may not receive exactly what we ask for, but we receive what meets that need or desire in the way that is best for us. Asking for bread doesn’t get us a stone, but asking to make a meal out of cake might bring us bread and fish, along with whatever amount of cake will bless us or test how our faith teaches us to see the world. Our Father gives us “good things,” the things that bring health and blessing for all eternity!

Collect: O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love: Make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

When Jesus performed the first miracle of His public ministry, changing simple water into the best of wine, He signaled His fulfillment of this prophecy of Isaiah. He had come to His people to make them able to be a part of His everlasting feast, to take away the rebuke of His nation, and to bring the people of all nations out from under the veil of darkness to live without the fear and sorrow of death.

The restoration of Judah to its capital city of Jerusalem and to the Temple after the Exile would not be as glorious as what is depicted here in Isaiah 25. This was to teach them (and us; see 1 Corinthians 10:11) that restoration was but a small foretaste of the Messianic Era. The coming of the Christ at Bethlehem, completed with His death and resurrection at Jerusalem, along with the following age and the eternal result, would restore not only Judah (along with Benjamin and Levi), but the children of Adam that would receive it. Jesus' provision for the feasting at Cana set the stage for His miracles of restoring life and health, and His being heard and received by the crassest of sinners, so that they repented unto forgiveness and life. It rightly gave Martha the understanding that through His work Lazarus would rise from the dead on the Last Day (John 11:24), that in Jesus, death would be swallowed up forever.

Collect: O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love: Make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

## Lesson from the Book of Concord The Third Sunday after Trinity

### ARTICLE XII. Of Repentance.

In the twelfth article they [the Romanists] approve of the first part, in which we set forth that, to those who have fallen since baptism, the remission of sins can be imparted at whatever time, and as often as they are converted. ...

Let any one of the adversaries come forth and tell us when the remission of sins takes place. O good God, what darkness there is! They doubt whether it be in attrition or in contrition that remission of sins occurs. And if it occur on account of contrition, what need is there of absolution, what does the power of the keys effect, if sin have been already remitted? Here indeed they also labor much more, and wickedly detract from the power of the keys. ... For if the power of the keys do not console us before God, what then will pacify the conscience?

Moreover, the power of the keys administers and presents the Gospel through absolution, which is the true voice of the Gospel. Thus we also comprise absolution, when we speak of faith, because "faith cometh by hearing" (Rom. 10:17). For when the Gospel is heard, and the absolution is heard, the conscience is encouraged, and receives consolation. And because God truly quickens through the Word, the keys truly remit sins before God, according to Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you heareth Me." Wherefore the voice of the one absolving must be believed not otherwise than we would believe a voice from heaven. And absolution properly can be called a sacrament of repentance, as also the more learned scholastic theologians speak. ... Thus faith is conceived and strengthened through absolution, through the hearing of the Gospel, through the use of the sacraments, so that it may not succumb while it struggles with the terrors of sin and death. This theory of repentance is plain and clear, and increases the worth of the power of the keys and of the sacraments and illumines the benefit of Christ, and teaches us to avail ourselves of Christ as Mediator and Propitiator.

—The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, §1, 5, 7, 39–41, 42–43

There are those who build “with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw” (1 Corinthians 3:11–13) upon the only foundation for the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ. On the Last Day, their work shall be absolutely clear. Until then, we must evaluate such workmanship—not so much to condemn bad builders and to praise the good, but to see where we may safely dwell and build ourselves. This requires always returning to the words of the prophets and apostles, measuring all things by how they fit with Him who is the Chief Cornerstone (Ephesians 2:19–22).

When the work of shepherds who build with hay and straw is challenged, they often reveal the fangs of wolves, those profiting from the slaughter of Christ’s lambs and sheep. So it was in the 1810s and ’20s, when the North Carolina Synod was in such disarray through false and compromising teaching that the Rev. David Henkel was accused of false teaching precisely because he taught the true doctrine of Holy Scripture as placed on exhibit for all by the Lutheran Confessions! Proving his doctrine was sound by acquiring and appealing to the German Book of Concord, those who would receive it found their strength renewed by God’s Word. Such men formed the Tennessee Synod, and witnessed what teaching and missionary activity is possible for those who, by that Word, run without being wearied, mounting up as on eagle’s wings.

Collect: O Lord, hear our prayers to Thee on this day of David Henkel, Thy Confessor and Pastor, that as Thou didst lead him to render faithful service to Thee, Thou wouldst lead us to faithfully confess our hope in Thy salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end Amen.

The Small Catechism teaches us what God’s command not to murder means: that “we should fear and love God that we may not hurt nor harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need.” Similarly, in the Old Testament laws concerning oaths, every lesser form of swearing falsely is condemned and, more, the very idea of making oaths when they’re not required is excluded. The Jewish ‘experts in the Law’ tried to twist what God had commanded into varying levels of obligation depending on the form of the oath or the things sworn (cf. Matthew 23:16–22). However, Jesus says such additions to our speech spring from the devil. As the devil did in tempting Jesus, such oaths seek to guarantee our truthfulness by promising things that aren’t ours to promise (Matthew 4:1–11; cf. Leviticus 5:4–5).

The Law was added because of transgressions (Galatians 3:19); it was verbalized to show where actions had not been in accord with faith, and would point out future unfaithfulness so that we would repent. Even secular laws are increased because of transgression, and that includes perjury, so that we will be called upon to take oaths in important matters. This is not forbidden us (cf. Hebrews 6:16–17), but we are to speak the truth simply and plainly so that we would otherwise be trusted without an oath, speaking every word as unto the Lord Himself.

Collect: O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love: Make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Faithful use of statuary and paintings must direct our thoughts to the true God, never taking His glory and praise. When the Lord, who will not give His glory to another, glorifies His Christ, He makes it obvious that the Messiah is Himself also the Lord—that He must be as St. John will declare Him: the One who was in the beginning, who was with God, and who was God. The Lord, who will not give His glory to another, sets His Christ as His treaty with His people, Israel, and as a Light to the Gentiles, opening the eyes of those who were spiritually blind and bringing them out of the prison of sin and death. The Messiah does the things that only God can do, and receives credit for what only the true God can be given praise.

Isaiah is, thus, the backdrop for St. John’s Gospel every bit as much as for St. Matthew’s. While Matthew directly quotes Isaiah more often, John often presents a narrative that ties back to the prophet (as we saw Tuesday regarding the wedding at Cana). Isaiah 42 is very much the understanding Jesus presents throughout John: that He is doing nothing simply because, as God, He can, but it is all as One who subjects Himself to the Father in all things, so that He might save us who by nature have refused His lordship.

Collect: O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love: Make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Wolves are beautiful, but their natural activity is not to produce wool for us, but to kill the sheep that do. Plants that produce only thorns and thistles exist to bring pain to humans and livestock, a result of Adam’s sin (Genesis 3:17–18). Pruning thorn bushes will never produce figs and grapes; it’s simply not within their nature.

Adam was created “in the image of God” (Genesis 1:26), meaning “there were embodied in man such wisdom and righteousness as apprehended God, and in which God was reflected, i.e., to man there were given the gifts of the knowledge of God, the fear of God, confidence in God, and the like” (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, II:18). Adam’s fruit (righteous works) would be perfect and abundant. When he sinned, that image was lost. Yet, for those who trust in Christ’s atonement for sin, God’s likeness is being restored (Ephesians 5:9, Colossians 3:10; Apology II:19–20), as each believer is “a new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Jesus warns us away from those who minimize this re-creation through faith in Him. No matter how showy their works, apart from faith such works are empty, the unhealthy fruit of a bad tree. Christ alone makes us a good tree, one who loves that the Law prunes away dead works and tells us what the works of our re-created nature are, so that we, through faith in Jesus’ merit alone, continue to bear good fruit!

Collect: O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love: Make us to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.