



## A Word from Pastor Schielke

Law and Gospel Part 7: More on the Gospel

Last month we started our consideration of the Gospel. Remember, God's law tells us what to do, and the Gospel tells us what God has done for us. The law reveals our sin to us, and the Gospel proclaims that sin is forgiven on account of the all-atoning sacrifice of Jesus. Under the demands of the law we are lost and dead, but the Gospel restores to us everlasting life.

We have an innate sense of the law, and its ramifications are all around us. The Gospel is a surprise. Our fallen human nature would expect that if we were the ones who have wronged God in some way then it is up to us to fix the situation. Logic would dictate that if I've done something bad to offend God then I need to do some good things to make up for it. That's not how the law of God works, however. It's not a system of pluses and minuses. "For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it" (James 2:10). The standard of God's law is complete perfection in thought, word, and deed. Not to mention, we are all born with original sin which is just as damnable as the actual sins of thought, word, and

deed that we commit.

This is why we need God to intervene. This is why we need the Gospel. The law not only shows us our sinfulness but proves to us that we are incapable of keeping it. However, Jesus did keep the law of God, the whole law, perfectly. He is the only man to ever do so. Thus, His sacrifice is the sacrifice of the perfect man. The human and divine blood of God Himself was shed on the cross, and God declares this blood to cleanse all people from their sin. This is the good news we need but, according to our human nature, would not expect.

There are various ways that Scripture describes the Gospel to us. Some of the terms Scripture uses you may find more compelling than others, which is why the Bible gives us so many pictures of what God has done for us in Jesus. The atonement is the word we use to describe the actual sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Jesus' blood was shed in place of our own blood to make up for the sins we have committed. Justification is another term. This word brings to mind a courtroom scene where God declares us "not guilty" on account of what Jesus has done.

Salvation is another popular term. This word means to be rescued. God in Christ has rescued us from the consequences of sin, namely death and hell. Forgiveness is a word we hear often in church and implies the removal of a debt. In theological terms, forgiveness means the debt we owe to God on account of our sin has been wiped off the books. Two other terms that go together are redemption and ransom. To "redeem" means to buy back or make a payment in return for something. Jesus has bought us back, redeemed us, for the Father by paying the ransom price of His own life on the cross. In that purchase, we are freed from slavery to sin and made servants of God. Other words that pop up in relation to the Gospel include peace, life, and reconciliation.

Next month we will consider some misunderstandings of the Gospel that we need to avoid.



**The Formula of Concord** - The Formula of Concord (FC) was the last of the confessional documents written by the Lutherans in the 16th century. Finished in 1577, the FC consists of twelve articles presented in two parts. The first part, the Epitome, is a brief presentation of each point of doctrine and the controversy surrounding it while the Solid Declaration presents a more detailed discussion. Over a dozen authors contributed portions of draft versions of the FC, but the most influential authors of the final document were Jakob Andrea and Martin Chemnitz. The need for the FC arose after the death of Martin Luther in 1546. Over time, the Lutherans became divided over several points of doctrine. Several political peace treaties also forced the Lutherans to entertain and accept certain points of Reformed theology which had been developing in Switzerland. Thus, the FC was pivotal in clarifying the Lutheran position over and against both the Roman Catholic position and, more significantly, over the Reformed position. It is the FC that most clearly distinguishes Lutheran teaching on several important points and against the various Protestant bodies we see around us even today. Over the next months, you will find the articles of the Epitome of the Formula of Concord in our newsletter. It's good for all of us to have at least some familiarity with this important doctrinal statement.

### IX - The Descent of Christ into Hell

#### **STATUS CONTROVERSIAE: Chief Controversy concerning This Article.\*\***

1 It has also been disputed among some theologians who have subscribed to the Augsburg Confession concerning this article: When and in what manner the Lord Christ, according to our simple Christian faith, descended to hell: whether this was done before or after His death; also, whether it occurred according to the soul alone, or according to the divinity alone, or with body and soul, spiritually or bodily; also, whether this article belongs to the passion or to the glorious victory and triumph of Christ.

2 But since this article, as also the preceding, cannot be comprehended by the senses or by our reason, but must be grasped by faith alone, it is our unanimous opinion that there should be no disputation concerning it, but that it should be believed and taught only in the simplest manner; according as Dr. Luther, of blessed memory, in his sermon at Torgau in the year 1533 has explained this article in an altogether Christian manner, separated from it all useless, unnecessary questions, and admonished all godly Christians to Christian simplicity of faith.

4 For it is sufficient that we know that Christ descended into hell, destroyed hell for all believers, and delivered them from the power of death and of the devil, from eternal condemnation and the jaws of hell. But how this occurred we should [not curiously investigate, but] reserve until the other world, where not only this point [mystery], but also still others will be revealed, which we here simply believe, and cannot comprehend with our blind reason.

### X. Church Rites

#### **Which are [Commonly] Called Adiaphora or Matters of Indifference.**

1 Concerning ceremonies or church rites which are neither commanded nor forbidden in God's Word, but have been introduced into the Church for the sake of good order and propriety, a dissension has also occurred among the theologians of the Augsburg Confession.

#### **STATUS CONTROVERSIAE: Chief Controversy concerning This Article.**

2 The chief question, however, has been, whether, in time of persecution and in case of confession, even if the enemies of the Gospel have not reached an agreement with us in doctrine, some abrogated ceremonies, which in themselves are matters of indifference and are neither commanded nor forbidden by God, may nevertheless, upon the pressure and demand of the adversaries, be reestablished without violence to conscience, and we may thus [rightly] have conformity with them in such ceremonies and adiaphora. To this the one side has said Yea, the other, Nay.

Victory in Christ Lutheran Church  
January 2025

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

**1 Corinthians 15:57**



**Victory in Christ Lutheran Church**  
508 Main Street Newark, Texas  
817-489-5400  
viclutheranchurch.org

| Sunday   | Monday                                 | Tuesday                                | Wednesday                         | Thursday                          | Friday                            | Saturday                             |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|  |  |  | 1<br>No School<br>Christmas Break | 2<br>No School<br>Christmas Break | 3<br>No School<br>Christmas Break | 4<br>Men's Bible Study<br>8:30 a.m.  |
| 5<br>Divine Service 10 a.m<br>Bible Studay / Sunday<br>School 11 a.m.<br>Lunch noon<br>Youth Confirmation<br>Council Meeting | 6<br>Epiphany                          | 7<br>Women's Bible Study<br>1:00 p.m.  | 8                                 | 9                                 | 10                                | 11                                   |
| 12<br>Divine Service 10 a.m<br>Bible Studay / Sunday<br>School 11 a.m.<br>Lunch noon<br>Youth Confirmation                   | 13<br>Ladies' Night<br>6:30 p.m.       | 14<br>Women's Bible Study<br>1:00 p.m. | 15                                | 16                                | 17                                | 18<br>Men's Bible Study<br>8:30 a.m. |
| 19<br>Divine Service 10 a.m<br>Bible Studay / Sunday<br>School 11 a.m.<br>Lunch noon<br>Youth Confirmation                   | 20<br>No School -<br>Staff Development | 21<br>Women's Bible Study<br>1:00 p.m. | 22                                | 23                                | 24                                | 25                                   |
| 26<br>Divine Service 10 a.m<br>Bible Studay / Sunday<br>School 11 a.m.<br>Lunch noon<br>Voters' Meeting                      | 27                                     | 28<br>Circuit Meeting                  | 29                                | 30                                | 31                                |                                      |



Epiphany

**Installation of Officers** will be on Sunday, January 5.

**Council Meeting** will be on Sunday, January 5, following the noon meal.

**Epiphany** - Epiphany is when the wise men came to Bethlehem and offered their gifts to Jesus. This day is celebrated on Monday, January 6.

**Circuit Meeting** - VIC will be hosting the pastors' circuit meeting on Tuesday, January 28. They will begin with chapel, and lunch will be provided.

**Voters' Meeting** will be on Sunday, January 26, following the noon meal.

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."  
**1 Corinthians 15:57**



**Victory in Christ Lutheran Church**  
508 Main Street Newark, Texas  
817-489-5400  
viclutheranchurch.org

**January Birthdays:**

3 Robin Kroeger

8 Donna Schober

25 Carrie Purdom

26 Logan Rohloff



**Future Church Cleanings:**

Clean the week of:

Jan. 6 - 11          Higby and Metoxen Families

Jan. 20 - 25        Haney and Knox Families

Feb. 3 - 8           Hill Family

Feb. 17 - 22        Kroeger, McClain,  
Schwiesow, and Wilson  
Families

**For 2025, I would like to challenge every member of this congregation to read or continue reading through the Bible in one year. The Bible readings for January and part of February are listed below.**

|                           |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| January 1: Genesis 1-3    | January 15: Genesis 43-45 | January 29: Exodus 33-35     |
| January 2: Genesis 4-7    | January 16: Genesis 46-47 | January 30: Exodus 36-38     |
| January 3: Genesis 8-11   | January 17: Genesis 48-50 | January 31: Exodus 39-40     |
| January 4: Genesis 12 -15 | January 18: Exodus 1-3    | February 1: Leviticus 1-4    |
| January 5: Genesis 16-18  | January 19: Exodus 4-6    | February 2: Leviticus 5-7    |
| January 6: Genesis 19-21  | January 20: Exodus 7-9    | February 3: Leviticus 8-10   |
| January 7: Genesis 22-24  | January 21: Exodus 10-12  | February 4: Leviticus 11-13  |
| January 8: Genesis 25-26  | January 22: Exodus 13-15  | February 5: Leviticus 14-15  |
| January 9: Genesis 27-29  | January 23: Exodus 16-18  | February 6: Leviticus 16-18  |
| January 10: Genesis 30-31 | January 24: Exodus 19-21  | February 7: Leviticus 19-21  |
| January 11: Genesis 32-34 | January 25: Exodus 22-24  | February 8: Leviticus 22-23  |
| January 12: Genesis 35-37 | January 26: Exodus 25-27  | February 9: Leviticus 24-25  |
| January 13: Genesis 38-40 | January 27: Exodus 28-29  | February 10: Leviticus 26-27 |
| January 14: Genesis 41-42 | January 28: Exodus 30-32  | February 11: Numbers 1-2     |

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."  
**1 Corinthians 15:57**

**Victory in Christ Lutheran Church**  
508 Main Street Newark, Texas  
817-489-5400  
viclutheranchurch.org