



## A Word from Pastor Schielke

### On Creeds: Part 7

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> article of the Nicene Creed: and He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

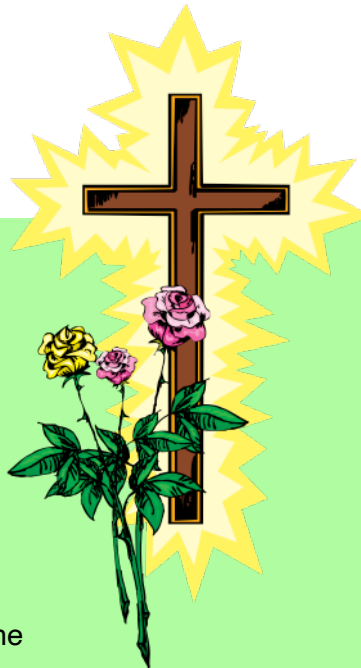
Last month we considered Christ's ascension into heaven. This week, the Creed leads us to consider the second coming of Jesus. Christ's second coming will fulfill the words spoken by the angels to the apostles at Jesus' ascension, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." Jesus will descend visibly in much the same way He visibly ascended. It will be obvious what is happening at the time.

But unlike when Jesus "came down from heaven" as an infant that first Christmas, Jesus will "come again with glory." The birth of Jesus likely appeared ordinary to most people. The return of Jesus will not appear ordinary at all. John gives us pictures of this return in the book of Revelation. For example, Revelation 1:7, "Behold, [Jesus] is coming with

the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him." Notice the mention of the clouds reminds us of the ascension, but unlike the ascension and unlike His birth, every eye will see Jesus' return. Those who lived in faith trusting in the promises of God which made complete in Christ will rejoice at Christ's return. Those who did not live lives of faith will "wail on account of him." Jesus will be revealed to every eye as the Messiah, the only way through which a person can enter eternal life.

The Creed says that Jesus will return as the judge. Now as Christians, that realization should be incredibly comforting! If Jesus is the judge, and He is our advocate, and He has promised that those who have faith in Him are counted as righteous, we have nothing to fear. The judgment upon us is "not guilty" because we have been

justified not by anything we have done but by the shed blood of Jesus which we receive by faith. We will be judged worthy of eternal life. We will enjoy the kingdom of Jesus that has no end as prophesied by Isaiah, "Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore" (Is. 9:7). Being reminded of judgment day is call for us to continue in the "narrow way," the way of living lives of repentance and trust in Christ alone. It is also a reminder to the church about what her mission is. Judgment comes upon all people, the physically living and physically dead, and the spiritually living and spiritually dead. The Holy Spirit works to bring faith through the Word of God proclaimed by the church at large and through individual Christians. But more on the work of the Spirit next month.



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



**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.

#### IV - Good Works

##### **STATUS CONTROVERSIAE: The Principal Question In the Controversy concerning Good Works.**

1 Concerning the doctrine of good works two divisions have arisen in some churches:

2 1. First, some theologians have become divided because of the following expressions, where the one side wrote: Good works are necessary for salvation. It is impossible to be saved without good works. Also: No one has ever been saved without good works. But the other side, on the contrary, wrote: Good works are injurious to salvation.

3 2. Afterwards a schism arose also between some theologians with respect to the two words necessary and free, since the one side contended that the word necessary should not be employed concerning the new obedience, which, they say, does not flow from necessity and coercion, but from a voluntary spirit. The other side insisted on the word necessary, because, they say, this obedience is not at our option, but regenerate men are obliged to render this obedience.

4 From this disputation concerning the terms a controversy afterwards occurred concerning the subject itself; for the one side contended that among Christians the Law should not be urged at all, but men should be exhorted to good works from the Holy Gospel alone; the other side contradicted this.

##### **AFFIRMITIVE THESES: Pure Doctrine of the Christian Churches concerning This Controversy.**

5 For the thorough statement and decision of this controversy our doctrine, faith, and confession is:

6 1. That good works certainly and without doubt follow true faith, if it is not a dead, but a living faith, as fruits of a good tree.

7 2. We believe, teach, and confess also that good works should be entirely excluded, just as well in the question concerning salvation as in the article of justification before God, as the apostle testifies with clear words, when he writes as follows: Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin, Rom. 4:6ff And again: By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast, Eph. 2:8-9.

8 3. We believe, teach, and confess also that all men, but those especially who are born again and renewed by the Holy Ghost, are bound to do good works.

9 4. In this sense the words necessary, shall, and must are employed correctly and in a Christian manner also with respect to the regenerate, and in no way are contrary to the form of sound words and speech.

10 5. Nevertheless, by the words mentioned, necessitas, necessarium, necessity and necessary, if they be employed concerning the regenerate, not coercion, but only due obedience is to be understood, which the truly believing, so far as they are regenerate, render not from coercion or the driving of the Law, but from a voluntary spirit; because they are no more under the Law, but under grace, Rom. 6:14; 7:6; 8:14.

11 6. Accordingly, we also believe, teach, and confess that when it is said: The regenerate do good works from a free spirit, this is not to be understood as though it is at the option of the regenerate man to do or to forbear doing good when he wishes, and that he can nevertheless retain faith if he intentionally perseveres in sins.

12 7. Yet this is not to be understood otherwise than as the Lord Christ and His apostles themselves declare, namely, regarding the liberated spirit, that it does not do this from fear of punishment, like a servant, but from love of righteousness, like children, Rom. 8:15.

13 8. Although this voluntariness [liberty of spirit] in the elect children of God is not perfect, but burdened with great weakness, as St. Paul complains concerning himself, Rom. 7:14-25; Gal. 5:17;

14 9. Nevertheless, for the sake of the Lord Christ, the Lord does not impute this weakness to His elect, as it is written: There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8:1.

15 10. We believe, teach, and confess also that not works maintain faith and salvation in us, but the Spirit of God alone, through faith, of whose presence and indwelling good works are evidences.

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



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	4	5	6 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Lent Dinner 6 p.m. Lenten Service 7 p.m.	7	8	9 Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.
10 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	11	12	13 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Lent Dinner 6 p.m. Lenten Service 7 p.m.	14	15	16
17 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	18	19	20 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Lent Dinner 6 p.m. Lenten Service 7 p.m.	21	22 Spring Cleaning 8 a.m. (On Your Own)	23 Spring Cleaning 8 a.m. - 12:00 noon
24 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	25	26	27	28 Maundy Thursday Service 7 p.m.	29 Good Friday Service 7 p.m.	30 Prayer Vigil
31 Easter Breakfast 8 a.m. Divine Service 10 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt 11 a.m.						

**March Birthdays:**

6 Gary Rohloff

7 Jeremy Higby

12 Hayden Rohloff

13 Eugene Kroeger

15 Joshua Safford



15 Terri Schmidt

21 Dennis Haney

21 Herb Safford

21 Linda Watson

23 Kerri Schielke

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## VIC Happenings



Season of Lent



Easter Morning

**Lenten Services** - We have Lenten services on March 6, 13, and 20 which focus on our sins and need for repentance as we look at Christ's journey to the cross.

**Maundy Thursday Service** - This service is March 28 and goes through Christ's trial and sentence to the cross.

**Good Friday Service** - This service is March 29 and is a Tenebrae service, a service of darkness. It is about his sentence and death on the cross.

**Prayer Vigil** - Saturday, March 30

**Easter Breakfast** - We will be serving breakfast from 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

**Easter Service** - This is a celebration of Christ's win over death and the devil.

**Easter Egg Hunt** - This is following the Easter Service for all children 12

### Future Church Cleanings:

Mar. 2 Schielke Family

April 6 Schober

Mar. 16 Schmidt Family

April 20 Teague and Purdom

Mar. 22 & 23 Spring Cleaning

### The Bible readings for March and part of April are listed below.

March 1: Deuteronomy 5-7

March 14: Joshua 12-15

March 27: 1 Sam. 1-3

March 2: Deuteronomy 8-10

March 15: Joshua 16-18

March 28: 1 Sam. 4-8

March 3: Deuteronomy 11-13

March 16: Joshua 19-21

March 29: 1 Sam. 9-12

March 4: Deuteronomy 14-16

March 17: Joshua 22-24

March 30: 1 Sam. 13-14

March 5: Deuteronomy 17-20

March 18: Judges 1-2

March 31: 1 Sam. 15-17

March 6: Deuteronomy 21-23

March 19: Judges 3-5

April 1: 1 Sam. 18-20

March 7: Deuteronomy 24-27

March 20: Judges 6-7

April 2: 1 Sam. 21-24

March 8: Deuteronomy 28-29

March 21: Judges 8-9

April 3: 1 Sam. 25-27

March 9: Deuteronomy 30-31

March 22: Judges 10-12

April 4: 1 Sam. 28-31

March 10: Deuteronomy 32-34

March 23: Judges 13-15

April 5: 2 Sam. 1-3

March 11: Joshua 1-4

March 24: Judges 16-18

April 6: 2 Sam. 4-7

March 12: Joshua 5-8

March 25: Judges 19-21

April 7: 2 Sam. 8-12

March 13: Joshua 9-11

March 26: Ruth

April 8: 2 Sam. 13-15

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