

Concordia Lutheran Conference

Daily Devotions

By Carl M. Zorn

for the

Twenty-Third Sunday after Trinity

- Saturday -

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace. – Psalm 37:37

The indicting Law of God condemns the entire world of sinners saying: *“There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one”* (Romans 3:10-12). That is who we all are by nature. *“But now the righteousness of GOD without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of GOD which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe”* (vv. 21-22). You are by God’s grace a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26), and as such you are accounted as righteous in His holy sight. Christ’s perfect righteousness is imputed to you, blessed of the Lord, believing Christian. *“All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,”* writes the Lord’s prophet (Isaiah 64:6). But, in bringing you to faith, the Holy Ghost created in you a New Man, whose will is attuned to the will of God and whose *“clean heart”* (Psalm 51:10) is upright before the Lord, able to overcome sin and do good works, *“seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him”* (Colossians 3:9b-10). *“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright,”* says the psalmist and be likewise! By faith in Christ Jesus you are *“a new creature; and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God”* (Galatians 6:15-16). Though your personal sanctification will never be perfect in this life because of the weakness and opposition of the flesh (Romans 7:18), your *“walk in the spirit”* (Galatians 5:16) as *“a new creature”* (II Corinthians 5:17) is accounted as *“perfect”* and *“upright”* for Christ’s sake and is a manifest fruit and evidence of saving faith. Therefore Jesus tell you: *“Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven”* (Matthew 5:16). *“Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”* (Ephesians 4:32). Be merciful and give and lend gladly to those who are in need. Let your mouth speak the wisdom which the Word of God teaches, and let your tongue talk the judgments of God. Let the Law of God be your heart’s delight. Then shall your steps be ordered by the Lord; and He will delight in your walk. And when you stumble and fall, *“confess your faults”* (James 5:16), sincerely repent of them (Psalm 34:18), and trust in God’s gracious forgiveness for Jesus’ sake (Psalm 103:3a). You shall not be utterly cast down and away (John 6:37; Psalm 51:11); but the Lord shall *“restore unto [you] the joy of [His] salvation and uphold [you] with [His] free Spirit”* (Psalm 51:12). *“Being justified by faith, [you] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Romans 5:1) --- peace of conscience here in this world (Romans 8:33-34) and peace forever in the mansions of heaven (Revelation 14:13).

PRAYER – Lord God, dear Heavenly Father, who hast made me Thy dear child by faith in Jesus and hast created in me a clean heart and a right spirit, continue to work in me to be perfect and upright as becomes a child of Thine, and graciously let my end be peace according to Thy precious Word. Amen.

O keep me watchful, then, and humble, and suffer me no more to stray; uphold me when my feet would stumble, nor let me loiter by the way. Fill all my nature with Thy light, O Radiance strong and bright!

Hymn 399, 4:

* Scripture reading for Saturday: Romans 8:22-25; 1 John 3:1-3 Theme this week: Hope