

Concordia Lutheran Conference

Daily Devotions

By Carl M. Zorn

for the

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

- SUNDAY -

Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. – Acts 3:19.

We all are poor, miserable sinners. There is no doubt about that. But there are *penitent* and *impenitent* sinners. *Penitent* sinners are such as sincerely repent of their sins, believe in their Savior Jesus Christ, and are willing to amend. *Impenitent* sinners are such as do not repent of their sins, do not truly believe in the Savior, and are not willing to amend. The *Law* is to be preached to all sinners, penitent as well as impenitent. But the application of the *Gospel* to the individual, the consolation of the Gospel applied to the individual, by which he is assured of the grace of God, and by which the absolution, or forgiveness of sins, is pronounced to him—that is for *penitent sinners only*. For the sins of him who repents and is converted shall be blotted out. This is the divine rule which we know, and which our text teaches us. To the impenitent sinners the consolation of the Gospel is *not* to be given, nor that of Baptism, nor that of the Lord's Supper, nor that of absolution. To the impenitent sinners, when they become manifest as such, their sins are to be *retained*. And the Office of the Keys, with the public administration of which, on the part of the congregation, the pastors have been commissioned, is the peculiar, the special, and singular church power which Christ has given to His Church on earth to forgive the sins of the penitent sinners, but to retain the sins of the impenitent as long as they do not repent. May God graciously grant you, my dear Christian, at all times to be a *penitent* sinner, in order that you may be filled with the consolation of the Gospel, *the consolation that your sins are blotted out*.

PRAYER. – O Lord, gracious God, do not let me fall into a state of impenitence through the deceit of sin! Take me into Thy gracious keeping, and for the sake of Jesus Christ bestow on me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may always repent of my sins, believe in Jesus Christ, and willingly amend my sinful life. And thus lead me to the fount of grace which Thou hast caused to flow for me in Thy Word and Sacrament, that there I may find abundant comfort. Amen.

However great our sin may be,
The absolution sets us free,
Appointed by God's own dear Son
To bring the pardon He has won.

Hymn 426, 7. (ELHB)

* Scripture reading for Sunday. Epistle: Galatians 5:16-24. Gospel: Luke 17:11-19