

*The*  
*Concordia*  *Lutheran*

“The Scripture cannot be broken.” John 10:35.

“Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105.

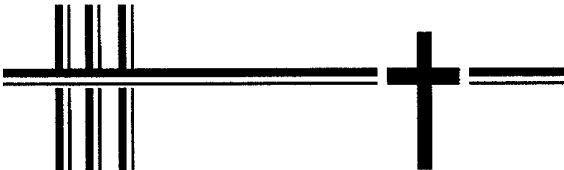
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“We believe  
that Jesus died  
and rose again.”

—1 Thessalonians 4:14





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**The Concordia Lutheran Editor**

The Rev. David T. Mensing  
17151 South Central Avenue  
Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913

**Book and Tract Editor**

The Rev. Paul E. Bloedel  
483 Tangent Street  
Lebanon, OR 97355

**Lay Member:**

Mr. Jason A. Mabe  
6249 El Morro Lane  
Oak Forest, IL 60452

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Officers of the  
*Concordia Lutheran Conference*

**PRESIDENT:**

The Rev. Edward J. Worley  
9658-54th Avenue South  
Seattle, WA 98118

**VICE PRESIDENT:**

The Rev. David T. Mensing  
17151 South Central Avenue  
Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913

**SECRETARY:**

The Rev. Paul E. Bloedel  
483 Tangent Street  
Lebanon, OR 97355

**TREASURER:**

Mr. Robert G. Bloedel  
10017 – 61st Avenue South  
Seattle, WA 98178

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

To set forth in simple and plain language the pure doctrine of God's Word as taught by the true Lutheran Church in full accordance with the **Book of Concord of 1580** and the **Brief Statement of 1932.**

To show, **on the basis of Scripture**, what true Christians are to believe and how, out of love for their Savior Jesus Christ, they are to lead Godly lives.

To furnish aids for Bible study and articles for Scriptural devotion and meditation.

To demonstrate, by our Scriptural stand, that our **Concordia Lutheran Conference** is not a sect or false church body, but that the congregations which form it confess, teach, and practice the Word of God in its full truth and purity and use the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. All who do this are the true visible Church on earth.

To seek out all who truly share our Scriptural position in doctrine and practice, and to urge the mutual public acknowledgment of such God-given unity. Thus we shall be able thereafter to practice a God-pleasing fellowship with them.

To show that we do not have among us a mixture of divergent teachings but that we are "*perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*"

To set forth pertinent historical information which has a bearing upon the Church and to expose modern philosophical thought and the so-called scientific theories which contradict the Word of God.

To expose particularly the false teaching and practice of the various so-called "Lutheran" church bodies by comparing their teachings and practices with what is plainly recorded in the Word of God, in the Lutheran Confessions, and in the old orthodox Lutheran writings.

To expose false teaching and practice wherever it makes its appearance and to keep abreast of the current happenings in the church and among the nations as signs of the times.

To be truthful and factual in our reporting and freely to correct any misinformation of which we are not aware and which has been called to our attention. Also to clarify any information or statement of doctrine or practice which may be unclear to our readers or which may create a wrong impression.

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# Christ's Vicarious Atonement

“...*the Just for the unjust*” —I Peter 3:18

We Lutherans are often accused of being “obsessed with terminology” when we teach and discuss the doctrines of Holy Scripture, terminology that is nowhere found in the Bible and terminology that hopelessly confuses all but professional theologians with its complexity. And our most reactionary critics, particularly from among the sects, allege that this terminology amounts to a stumblingblock [an offense; *skandalon*] which discourages simple people from studying Christian doctrine and may even prevent them from being saved and from coming to the knowledge of the truth (I Timothy 2:4). In point of fact, however, theological terminology which briefly and accurately describes a Biblical truth or a doctrinal concept is merely a short-cut intended to *simplify* that which otherwise might require a lengthy explanation. Actually, *most* of our terminology is taken directly from the words of Holy Writ [terms like *redemption* (Romans 3:24, etc.), *justification* (Romans 4:25, etc.), *sanctification* (I Thessalonians 4:3), *regeneration* (Titus 3:5), *inspiration* (II Timothy 3:16), *propitiation* (Romans 3:25; I John 2:2), and the like]. No one seems to have trouble with *secular* terminology that describes everyday processes and concepts (*aerobic* exercise, *internal combustion* engines, *microwave* ovens, and *Internet* access), but Christ's *passive obedience* and His *vicarious atonement* are just “too much.” The critics need a *reality check*, and they would do well to spend their time in searching the Scriptures (John 5:39) rather than in striving about words to no profit (II Timothy 2:14)!

The word “atonement,” found well over seventy times in the Bible, means, according to its dictionary definition, “satisfaction given for wrongdoing” and, theologically understood in the light of the New Testament, “the effect of Jesus' sufferings and death in redeeming mankind and bringing about the reconciliation of God to man” (*Webster's New World Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> College Edition). “Vicarious” means “taking the place of another thing or person; endured, suffered, or performed by one person in place of another” (Webster, *op. cit.*). Thus, the term *vicarious atonement* simply describes *the all-sufficient payment* that our Savior rendered to God *as the Substitute for sinners* in order to *satisfy divine justice* and to buy us back from “*the curse of the Law*” (Galatians 3:10, 13), namely, from “*the wages of sin*” (Romans 6:23), everlasting death in hell.

In order properly to understand this concept, it is necessary to recognize and acknowledge **an undeniable fact** —undeniable because it is stated in the plain words of Holy Scripture in passage after passage: “*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God*” (Romans 3:23); “*There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not*” (Ecclesiastes 7:20); “*They are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one*” (Psalm 14:3; cf. Psalm 53:3); “*Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*” (Romans 5:12); “*If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us*” (I John 1:10); and “*We [even we Christians] are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*” (Isaiah 64:6).

Consequently it is **impossible** for sinful men, by what they themselves **DO**, to reconcile *themselves* unto God, because the Bible rules out justification by works. St. Paul writes: “*By the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.*” Why? “*For by the Law is the knowledge of sin*” (Romans 3:20; cf. Galatians 2:16). God’s *justice*, manifested in His holy Law, demands **perfection** of every human being (Leviticus 19:2; Matthew 5:48; etc.); and His Law NEVER condones sin, excuses sin, cuts man “slack” concerning sin, or permits anything short of complete holiness for the satisfaction of His divine justice. It never compliments us; it never justifies us; it only condemns us. And, since we are unable to save *ourselves* by the deeds of the Law, so we are also incapable of helping or ransoming or redeeming *anyone else* by our wretched, imperfect works which are not “*precious*” enough to satisfy God’s justice and to secure anyone’s release from the curse of the Law (Psalm 49:7-8).

Moreover, because of what man **IS** by nature, conceived and born in sin (Psalm 51:5), totally depraved and evil already from his *youngness* (Genesis 8:21), incapable of good according to God’s standards (Romans 8:7), and inclined only to evil by nature (Romans 7:14ff.), he cannot please God (Romans 8:8). And even we Christians, who have been regenerated or born again into a new spiritual life of sanctification by the operation of the Holy Ghost through the means of grace, whose *New Man* of faith is perfectly attuned to God’s will and desirous to keep His Law, are unable to merit God’s favor because of the *Old Adam* of sin that still dwells within us (Romans 7:17), keeps us from the perfection that God requires (Isaiah 64:6), and causes us to transgress His commandments (Galatians 5:19ff.). “*O wretched man that I am!*” cries out the Apostle Paul, recognizing his inability to keep God’s Law and

his need for deliverance “*from the body of this death*” by someone outside of himself (Romans 7:24).

Unable therefore to render to God the **perfect obedience** that He requires, to live in the righteousness and true holiness that He demands, and therefore to fulfill the Law’s just precepts to merit His favor, man cannot make one positive contribution to his reconciliation with God. Therefore it was *Christ’s* fulfillment of the Law as the Substitute of sinners that merited God’s favor. St. Paul writes to the Galatians that “*God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law to redeem them that were under the Law*” (Galatians 4:4-5). Christ’s office as the Redeemer of the world necessitated that, when He took upon Himself our human nature, when He took the manhood into God (*Athanasian Creed*), He be put “*under the Law,*” so that, not because He needed to *for Himself*, but because *we* needed *Him* to do it *for us*, Christ assumed our obligation to keep the Law of God perfectly, as **our** Substitute, for **our** benefit. Luther says of Christ’s *active obedience* in our stead:

He satisfied the Law; He fulfilled the Law perfectly, for He loved God with all His heart, and with all His soul, and with all His strength, and with all His mind; and He loved His neighbor as Himself. Therefore, when the Law comes and accuses you of not having kept it, bid it go to Christ. Say: “There is the Man who has kept it; to Him I cling; He fulfilled it for me and gave His fulfillment to me.” Thus the Law is silenced. (*Luther’s Works*, Erlangen Ed., XV, 61, 63).

The *Formula of Concord* also clearly teaches that Christ’s *active obedience* was an integral part of His *vicarious atonement* or *satisfaction*, as follows:

His obedience, not only in suffering and dying, but also in this, that He in our stead was voluntarily made under the Law and fulfilled it by His obedience, is imputed to us for righteousness, so that on account of this complete obedience, which He rendered to His heavenly Father for us, by *doing* and suffering, in living and dying, God forgives our sins, regards us as Godly and righteous, and eternally saves us. (*Formula of Concord*, Thor. Decl., III, 15, *Triglot*, pp. 919-921).

Thus “*Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believeth*” (Romans 10:3-4); for “*as by the offense of one* [namely,

Adam] judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One [namely, Christ] the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous" (Romans 5:18-19). The Apostle does not limit "the obedience of One" to Christ's being "obedient unto **death**, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8), but he contrasts Christ's "obedience" to Adam's "disobedience," Christ's "righteousness" to Adam's "offense," Christ's keeping of the Law to Adam's lawlessness.

But Christ also redeemed us from the "**curse of the Law**, being made a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13). As the Substitute for sinners, Christ bore the guilt of all mankind, as if He Himself had been the transgressor; for "[God had] made Him who knew no sin to be sin **for us**, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians 5:21). Thus "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, **the Just for the unjust**, that He might bring us to God" (I Peter 3:18). The Law condemns both sin and the sinner; and, apart from Christ and His vicarious atonement, God hates both sin and the sinner (Psalm 5:5). God declares according to His justice: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die!" (Ezekiel 18:4) and "the wages of sin is death!" (Romans 6:23). "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them!" (Galatians 3:10). Therefore the Prophet Isaiah says that the people who witnessed the Messiah's suffering and death, as He was "numbered with [or counted as being one of] the transgressors" by the execution detail on Calvary's hill who crucified Him between two malefactors, "did esteem [regard] Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted" (Isaiah 53:4). They, too, regarded the suffering "Christ, the King of the Jews," to be guilty-as-charged and therefore receiving not only the punishment of the Roman state but the punishment of **God Himself**. And so it was; for the Savior cried out from His cross (in fulfillment of Psalm 22:1), "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me??" (Matthew 27:46). As our Substitute, Christ **WAS** guilty of the sins He had taken upon Himself; and He was bearing in our place, *vicariously*, the full brunt of God's fierce wrath against sin and against the sinner, suffering the unremitting panic, utter hopelessness and unrelenting contempt of the damned in hell, who are forever forsaken by God. Thus Peter writes in his first epistle, chapter 2, that "[Christ] His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed." (v. 24).

Therefore we Christians treasure, as a Scripture reading for Good Friday, the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, as the “classical” prophecy of Christ’s *vicarious atonement* in His *passive obedience*, as “**He** was wounded for **our** transgressions; **He** was bruised for **our** iniquities. The chastisement of **our** peace was upon **Him**; and with **His** stripes we are healed. ...The Lord hath laid on **Him** the iniquity of **us all**. For the transgression of **my people** was **He** stricken. ...He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise **Him**; He hath put **Him** to grief. ...He shall see the travail of **His** soul and shall be **satisfied**; by **His** knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify **many**; for **He** shall bear **their** iniquities.” (Selected verses). And the Lord’s apostles remind us that this *vicarious* satisfaction of God’s justice was not just for Israel according to the flesh, but **for us** as well, and for **all mankind**: “Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold..., but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world” (I Peter 1:18-20) to be “the propitiation for **our** sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the **whole world**” (I John 2:2). “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the **ungodly**. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward **us**, in that, while we were yet **sinner**s, Christ died for **us**” (Romans 5:6-8).

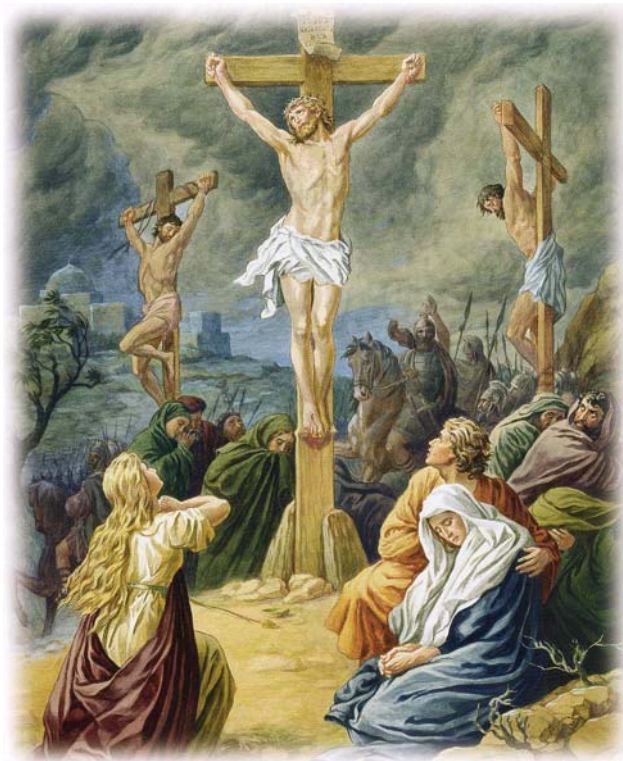
“[Christ] was delivered for [Greek: because of; on account of] **our offenses**,” writes St. Paul in Romans 4:25a. He fully kept the Law of God in our place, thereby earning righteousness for the unrighteous, to be imputed by God to all the world for Christ’s sake; and He bore both the guilt and the punishment of all men’s trespasses in their stead, as their Substitute, so that “*there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*” (Romans 8:1), since God has been “propitiated” (I John 2:2) by the *vicarious atonement*, the vicarious satisfaction of His justice, rendered by His beloved Son, in whom He is well-pleased (Matthew 17:5). Because Christ’s atonement was perfect and complete, “*once for all*” (Hebrews 10:10), and not merely a “down payment” of sorts which we must supplement by our own works of merit, God has been *propitiated* — a completely legitimate and modern, up-to-date word in English still today. His justice has been so *completely satisfied* in all respects that He now looks upon us differently than His justice would require apart from Christ’s redemptive work; and He

is able to be gracious and merciful unto us, not even remembering our sins and iniquities (Hebrews 8:12; cf. Isaiah 38:17), without transgressing His divine justice, “*that we might receive the adoption of sons*” (Galatians 4:5).

Since Christ has full atonement made  
and brought to us salvation,  
each Christian therefore may be glad  
and build on this foundation:  
Thy grace alone, dear Lord, I plead;  
Thy death is now my life indeed,  
for Thou hast paid my ransom!

(*TLH 377, 6*)

—**D. T. M.**





## *Why Are So Many Offended by the Suffering and Death of Christ?*

*“All ye shall be offended because of Me this night”*

—Matthew 26:31a

We live in what may be called an age or era of “offense”: Offense is both given by offenders and taken by those with an oversensitive, “snowflake,” mental state. To the latter this adage should be used for self-correction: “Just because you are offended doesn’t mean you are right to be so!” Whether an individual is a tactless, rude and selfish offender who *gives* offense by boorish behavior, by sinning against others, or by leading others into sin by his sinful example; OR whether someone *takes* offense because of his personal (or politically correct) agenda, judging motives and putting the worst construction on virtually everything someone else says or does, and, therefore, sins against others by “taking offense” where no offense has been given, our current social-interaction environment is filled with examples of both types.

As Christians, informed by the objective truth of God’s Word, we know that every age, every generation, is guilty of such sinful behavior. The Savior carefully delineated this fact with these telling words: “*Woe unto the world because of offenses! For it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!*” (Matthew 18:7; cf. Luke 17:1). Sinners will sin by causing offenses, and always will do so *all* the way to Judgment Day. This “given” does not relieve the moral guilt of any “offender.” God holds him fully liable under His Law for *any* loveless action.

But what are “offenses”? And how are we properly to understand what the Savior said in our title-text, especially in the phrase “*offended because of Me*”? God’s Word provides all the information that is needed for a definitive answer to each of these questions.

Consider the context of our title verse, Matthew 26:31. The remote context includes all the Lord had said leading up to this point in time, including specific reference to the events of the last days of what we call, in the Lenten Season, “Holy Week,” namely Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Even the “far” remote context of specific straight-line (rectilinear) prophecies in the Old Testament, “*written in the law of Moses and in the prophets, and in the psalms*

*concerning [Christ]*” (Luke 24:44) —such as Genesis 3:15— must be considered for a person to be fully informed. The near context is what was happening at that very moment of time. Having eaten His final Passover Meal with the twelve, and having then celebrated the first Lord’s Supper, instituting that special Means of Grace which directly proclaims His death by the giving of His body on the cross and the shedding of His blood for the remission of sins — the free, sacrificial offering of ransom and redemption which brings into historical fulfillment the New Testament Covenant, the Gospel of grace and forgiveness — the Lord led the eleven to a special place of retreat for them (Luke 22:39; John 18:1-2), a garden called Gethsemane at the foot of the Mount of Olives. There already He began to fulfill His own words, whether He had spoken them to people during His public ministry here on earth as the incarnate Christ, or whether they had been prophetic utterances in the Old Testament of the *pre-incarnate Angel of the Lord*, as Peter declares, “*the Spirit of Christ... testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow*” (I Peter 1:11).

Just prior to the various events of the next few days (Thursday through Sunday), the Savior told them what would surely happen, using His inerrant, infallible, divine foreknowledge. He told them: “*All ye shall be offended*” (Matthew 26:31a). Without a single exception, every one of them, in the immediate events that evening and in the events thereafter, would “*be offended.*”

The Greek verb used by the Lord has been translated into English, in the noun root-form, as “scandal,” so the verb could be translated “scandalized.” The modern dictionary uses this word in the sense of “being shocked or horrified by a real or imagined violation of propriety or morality” and gives, as synonyms: “shocked, appalled, outraged, horrified, disgusted, revolted, repelled, sickened, nauseated, offended, affronted, insulted.” (*Google Dictionary*, search result).

The origin of the *Greek* noun and, by extension, the verbal form, is a clear word picture. The root word refers to the trigger stick on an animal trap, the part to which the bait is attached and which springs the trap when the hapless victim grabs the bait, also a “stumbling block” or impediment which causes the victim to stumble and fall into a pit of entrapment. How, then, shall all the disciples, this very night, be caught in a trap?

The Lord gives the answer in the simple, yet profound and telling, phrase

“because of *Me*” (Matthew 26:31a). The fact that this would happen was already laid out by the Prophet Zechariah: “‘Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow,’ saith the Lord of hosts. ‘Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn Mine hand upon the little ones’” (13:7). We are informed as to what the Savior is referring to, specifically the result that the entire group is offended. When the Lord refers to this prophecy, He gives the true meaning: “*I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad*” (Matthew 26:31b). God Himself will do this! The ultimate cause of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, God’s Son incarnate, is God Himself and, more specifically, God the Father, who sent the Savior to do this work, with whom also the Holy Ghost fully agreed and supported this mutual and eternal plan of redemption (Revelation 13:8; Acts 2:23, 4:28; Ephesians 1:7-10; Romans 16:25-27; I Peter 1:20; Galatians 4:4-5; John 3:16-17). [“The *decree of redemption* is that essential internal act of the Triune God by which He most graciously and wisely purposed to redeem fallen and lost mankind through the vicarious atonement of the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ, and thus to prepare the way of salvation for the whole world, whose fall He had foreseen, but not decreed.” (A. L. Grabner quoted by J. T. Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 176. Cf. also Graebner’s definition in his *Outlines of Doctrinal Theology*, Scriptural Publications, p. 50)]. God the Father also *accepted* Christ’s redemptive work for the atonement of the entire fallen race (Romans 4:25; I Corinthians 15:17; I Peter 1:18-19; I John 1:7, 2:2; Isaiah 53:5; II Corinthians 5:15; II Peter 2:1). By the inspiration of God’s Spirit, Isaiah had laid all this out over 700 years before. In the 53<sup>rd</sup> chapter of his prophecy we read how God smote His Servant, and how the Christ was viewed throughout His incarnate life, suffering and death. Even the introduction to the entire prophetic discourse brings out these points: “*Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. As many were astonished at thee, His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men. So shall He sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him; for that which had not been told them shall they see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider*” (Isaiah 52:13-15). And he continues through his fifty-third chapter as follows:

*Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. He hath no form nor comeliness; and, when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and ac-*

*quainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him. He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare His generation? For He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people was He stricken. And He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death, because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief. When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed; He shall prolong His days; and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. By His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death. And He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors (Isaiah 53:1-12).*

God, the incarnate Son, was smitten by God the Father; for “*it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, to put Him to grief,*” in order to pay the full price for the sin of the world, thereby justifying “[*the*] many,” the entire lot of transgressors, all mankind! But, as He appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh (Romans 8:3), His own people and the Gentiles took offense (cf. Psalm 2); and this is seen especially during His sufferings and death, as He bore *their* griefs and carried *their* sorrows to the cross and *on* the cross ...even *as* He saves them!

But did the disciples not know this would happen? Did not God’s Word (from Genesis 3:15 through and beyond Isaiah 53!) foretell all of this? Did not Jesus Himself lay out the specifics to them? What was their problem? It is deeper than the emotional shock and trauma of seeing their Lord arrested and murdered, the instinctual fight- (Peter with a sword) and flight- (they *all* forsook Him and fled) response so “human” in our fallen state as we strive for self-preservation, yes, beyond even

their love and friendship for Jesus as their Master and beloved friend, who “*having loved His own... loved them unto the end*” (John 13:1). Yes, beyond all those factors and emotional triggers lies the ultimate driving force that causes all men, by fallen nature, to take offense, not only where none is given, but in dealing with God, who *cannot* be guilty of any offense (sin), being immutably holy (cf. James 1:13). What is the source? God tells us through the Apostle James: “*Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death*” (1:14-15). In every believer the old man, the sinful flesh, the carnal mind, remains. With the Apostle Paul every believer must confess:

*We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me (Romans 7:14-21).*

*Because of their flesh, the disciples sinned in taking offense at what they saw that night regarding their Savior. They certainly evoke our empathy – what they witnessed is heartbreaking from a purely human point of view – but their behavior cannot be justified and approved. They offended God by **taking** offense at God’s own action in smiting His (and their) Shepherd. They failed to use what was revealed (and later reiterated by the Risen Lord to their full, *opened*, understanding):*

*Then He said unto them, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. ...And they said one to another, “Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?” ...And He said unto them, “These are the Words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the*

*psalms concerning Me.” Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures and said unto them, “Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:25-27, 32, 44-48; cf. vv. 6-8).*

Yes, sad to say (but righteous to confess), every Christian has an offender within himself, the sinful flesh, which is carried unchanged from conception to the grave; and anyone who thinks otherwise offends God by contradicting His clear Word!

How could anyone think himself *above* the rest, as being somehow immune to taking *and* giving offense? But it does happen, and it happens because we are all sinners! Do you recall a classic and telling example of this self-deception among “*the twelve*”? Consider the following:

*From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Be it far from Thee, Lord! This shall not be unto Thee!” But He turned and said unto Peter, “Get thee behind Me, Satan! Thou art an offense unto Me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God but those that be of men.” Then said Jesus unto His disciples, “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me” (Matthew 16:21-24).*

The Savior rebuked Peter, who, being led not by God’s Word but his own misguided, human sentiment, rebuked the Lord to His holy face in opposition to God’s eternal decree of redemption, His eternal, saving plan. As a believer, Peter should have rejoiced in the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 53 and all the rest of the Gospel promises being fulfilled before his very eyes and in his very ears! But he momentarily set aside what he knew deep in his heart. For although he had learned what was written aforetime, he did not *rely* on it for patience, comfort and hope (Romans 15:4). Instead Peter took offense at the truth of the Gospel, as Jesus revealed the explicit cost He would pay in blood, sweat and tears, a cost which repulsed Peter on so many levels. To judge God’s ways; to contradict God’s express, clear and inerrant Word; to oppose the very fulfillment of the Gospel of universal atonement, of objective justification, of salvation for the entire sinful race is

*offensive* to God. The Savior rightly judged that Peter's attitude and actions were Satanic and carnal. No stronger rebuke can be found coming from the Lord's lips to one of the twelve!

Peter is an example here of both "offended" and "offensive" behavior. That very night Peter pulled the "But not me"–card – yes, that arrogant, self-defensive act – directly after the Savior *declared* the fact that *all* will be offended and after the Lord confirmed it with His inerrant, infallible, prophetic Word! Consider Peter's response: "*Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended*" (Matthew 26:33). Setting aside the fact that "all" means "all;" and that, if "all" does not mean "all" – in God's Word especially – no one can ever be certain of his or her salvation; Peter made the strongest denial of Jesus' clear words by saying more than just "yet not I" didn't he? He said to all present, and with an infinite, timeless application to himself exclusively: "*yet will I never be offended.*" No wonder Jesus pulled out the divine Sledgehammer of the Law (cf. Jeremiah 23:29) to break Peter's hard heart into pieces by declaring that his behavior would, all too soon, go far beyond the offense committed by the others to a threefold, repeated, direct, public *denial* of Jesus! And we know what happened shortly thereafter: Peter "*trod underfoot*" (cf. Hebrews 10:29) the Savior, in a blasphemous threefold denial, trashing the entire Eighth Commandment in the process, even adding to his denial sinful swearing and cursing (cf. Matthew 26:69-74)! Thanks be to God, who brought Peter back to sincere contrition and repentance by reconverting him! (Matthew 26:75; Luke 22:31-34, 61). What a miracle of grace that was! For we see that Peter had not immediately repented when Jesus told of his denial to come, nor had he immediately in true contrition broken down despite the heavy blow of God's hammering Law. Quite the opposite: Peter instead reiterated his infallible conviction regarding himself (such arrogance, cf. II Corinthians 10:12-13) saying: "*Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee*" (Matthew 26:35a). Note also the final clause in that same verse: "*Likewise also said all the disciples*" (Matthew 26:35b). Is it any wonder the Lord Jesus says to *everyone* what He, also said directly to John's disciples: "*And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me*" (Matthew 11:6). The blessing of *not* being offended comes as a gift of grace when, converted by God's powerful Gospel to simple, childlike faith, the new man exercises dominion over one's flesh so that, instead of leaning upon subjective and carnal understanding, the believer accepts as true and relies with firm, God-wrought confidence upon, what the Holy Scripture says about God's work in Christ. The Apostle speaks of this in Ephesians chapter 4:

*This I say therefore and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart; who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (17-24). Peter and all the rest had failed to do this and so took offense.*

Christians are constantly and relentlessly to fight the good fight of faith, lest they take offense at God's Word, His works and His ways. Tempted by Satan and by his mocking servants in this present evil world, Christians must, by God's grace alone, through God's Word, live according to the New Man, in daily contrition and faith. Christians must always remember that all the supernatural and exclusive doctrines of the True Faith are opposed by the flesh. The preaching of Christ is considered utter foolishness. The doctrine of the *Crucified One*, "*the preaching of the cross*" (I Corinthians 1:18; Galatians 5:11), of the divine Redeemer incarnate, remains the very opposite of what fallen man *wants* to believe, yea, *does* believe about God, and what he believes about himself and about his relationship with God (i.e., work-righteous folly, cf. Romans 10:3). Only by God-wrought, God-preserved faith, through His Word of Grace, the Gospel (Romans 10:17), is an individual able to say with the Apostle Paul: "*I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written: 'The just shall live by faith'*" (Romans 1:16-17).

The Gospel tells us that God smote His Son to save us from the eternal smiting we deserve by fallen nature and life, by our *original sin* and by our *actual sins*: "*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*" (Romans 6:23). Peter and the other disciples failed to accept *the whole* revelation of Christ's redemptive work and its acceptance by God the Father: Christ's *suffering*, and *death*, and ***resurrection!*** How often Jesus reminded them that He would rise on the third day and prove Himself victorious over sin, death, Satan and hell! The Apostle Paul reminds us to believe the *whole* Gospel:



*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (I Corinthians 15:1-4).*

*“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Romans 8:33-34). Do not stop with how Christ suffered. Move on to His entering into glory, His victory; for it is our victory: “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:37-39). “Therefore, as by the offense of one [i.e. Adam] judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One [i.e., Christ Jesus] the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life” (Romans 5:18). Receive, by the grace of God, His **Objective Justification**, by God-wrought faith alone!*

In specific terms (“*Stone of Stumbling*,” “*Rock of Offense*”), Scripture had foretold that the Savior, both in His person and in His work as the *Messiah*, would be rejected as offensive (Isaiah 8:14; cf. Romans 9:33; I Peter 2:8). God’s people, Israel according to the flesh, the physical descendants of Abraham (Romans 9:8), whom He had chosen to be the custodians of God’s Word (Romans 3:1-4), rejected God’s “*laying*” Christ as the “*Stone*” – the *foundation stone in Zion* (Isaiah 28:16); they took offense because of their work-righteous unbelief, zealously persecuting God’s Son in God’s Name (cf. John 16:1-4) to the point of blasphemous murder, being ignorant of the very passages read in the Synagogue every Sabbath day, thereby fulfilling them in the process! (Luke 4:18-21; Acts 13:27). But God graciously wrought true faith in those few who believed Him to be what He is in truth: “*Unto you therefore which believe He is precious; but, unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner*” (I Peter 2:7).

In true God-wrought contrition (sorrow) for all **our** individual offenses (Psalm 34:18; 51:17; I John 1:8, 10) and with renewed faith in our Savior's sin-cleansing blood (I John 1:7b), let us confess **our** sins, truly confident of God's full absolution in Him: "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*" (I John 1:9). God grant it, for His Son's sake!

Jesus! and shall it ever be  
a mortal man ashamed of Thee?  
Ashamed of Thee, whom angels praise,  
whose glories shine through endless days?

Ashamed of Jesus? Sooner far  
let evening blush to own a star.  
He sheds the beams of light divine  
o'er this benighted soul of mine.

Ashamed of Jesus? Just as soon  
let midnight be ashamed of noon.  
'Tis midnight with my soul till He,  
bright Morning Star, bids darkness flee.

Ashamed of Jesus, that dear Friend  
on whom my hopes of heaven depend?  
No; when I blush, be this my shame,  
that I no more revere His name.

Ashamed of Jesus? Yes, I may  
when I've no guilt to wash away,  
no tear to wipe, no joy to crave,  
no fears to quell, no soul to save.

Till then – nor is my boasting vain –  
till then I boast a Savior slain.  
And oh, may this my portion be,  
that Christ is not ashamed of me!

(*T.L.H.* Hymn 346)

— **E. J. W.**



## The Fourfold Assurance We Have in our Savior's Resurrection

*“If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept!”*

— I Corinthians 15:17–20

On Easter morning we rejoicing Christians celebrate anew the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Over the course of many Easters, we have in our respective congregations reviewed the FACTS concerning that great event as we have them recorded for our learning and assurance in the Holy Gospels —facts so unmistakably TRUE that not the slightest doubt should remain in the mind of any honest, objective investigator who examines them. For all the evidence clearly supports Christ's bodily resurrection from the grave, and not one shred of

evidence can be produced to prove the opposite! It's what we call today an "air-tight" case! There is the **physical evidence** on the scene; there is the **testimony** of numerous *eyewitnesses*, some of whom were Jesus' **enemies**, who would have had nothing to gain and everything to lose by lying, as well as the testimony of *literally hundreds* who **saw Him alive** after His resurrection; and even the **circumstantial evidence** of the Roman guards having to be **bribed** to **lie** about what **really** took place at the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea so early on that bright Sunday morning. Even **that** evidence would be admissible as legitimate in a court of law or at an inquest. ALL THESE constitute **INFALLIBLE PROOF** that Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead **IS** and **SHALL REMAIN** an indisputable **FACT** of objective history!!

But why should we Christians be so **concerned** to maintain the doctrine of Christ's resurrection as a **true** and **literal FACT**, while the unbelieving scoffers of this world make it the butt of their blasphemous jokes?? O, my dear readers, **not just** because we are compelled to uphold the **facts** as *honest* people, but **also** because this doctrine **cannot be denied** without "trashing" God's entire plan of salvation for sinful mankind! For without the doctrine of Christ's resurrection from the dead, there is **no comfort**, **no hope**, and **no joy** in the Christian faith **whatsoever**; and you and I are plain *FOOLS* for placing our confidence in a **dead Savior**! St. Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, **demonstrates** that to us in the verses just preceding our title-text, as he outlines in his first letter to the Corinthians the **fourfold assurance** we have in our Savior's mighty resurrection.

He says in verse 14: "*If Christ be NOT risen, then is our preaching VAIN, and your faith is also VAIN.*" If we were to **sum up** the *preaching* of the Apostles and the *faith* we have "*through their word,*" we could certainly do no better than to quote Holy Scripture itself in John chapter 20, namely, "*that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through His Name*" (v. 31) Indeed, the very **purpose** of **all** Jesus' miracles here on earth was to show Himself to be the Son of God, our Savior. And this He **did**, time and time again, manifesting forth His almighty power even over **death itself**. Recall just a few examples: The raising of Jairus' daughter, the young man of Nain, and Jesus' dear believing friend Lazarus of Bethany. By raising **them** from the dead with but a word from His holy lips, Jesus showed Himself to be the **Son of God**, just **exactly** who He **said** He was when He testified to the Jews: "*As the Father raiseth up the dead*

and quickeneth them, **even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.**” And yet, the Jews dared to accuse Him of blasphemy when, at His trial before Caiaphas, He testified under oath that He was the Son of God! What short memories they had!!

Moreover, by His OWN resurrection from the dead, the **greatest miracle** of all time, Christ **proved** that His claim to almighty power and divine Sonship with His heavenly Father was **no idle boast**, as, for example, when He told the Jews well ahead of His passion: “*I lay down My life that I may **take it** again... I have power to lay it down, and I have power to **take it** again. This commandment have I received from My Father*” (John 10:17-18). Therefore, the **first assurance** we have in our Savior’s resurrection is that **He is truly the Son of God**, as St. Paul writes in Romans chapter 1: “[He was] declared to be the **Son of God with power, ...by the resurrection from the dead.**” (v. 4).

And of what great importance and comfort is **this assurance** to us Christians? —Why, the fact that Jesus Christ proved Himself to be the Son of God makes us confident of our redemption from sin, death, and the power of the devil; for NO MERE MAN could have made a ransom- payment of sufficient value to pay for any **one man’s** sins, much less for the sins of the whole world. For the Psalmist writes of mere human saviors: “*None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their soul is **precious!***” (Psalm 49:7-8). No, rather, it was the **ULTIMATE PRICE**, not measurable in terms of silver and gold, that bought our release; for “*the blood of Jesus Christ, [God’s] Son, cleanseth us from all sin,*” the Apostle John tells us (I, 1:7b). O how we should cling to and treasure this wonderful assurance that we have in our Savior’s mighty resurrection from the dead, that He is truly the **Son of God!**

But now the Apostle continues in verses 14-15: “*And if Christ be NOT risen, ... we are found **false witnesses of God**, because we have testified that He raised up Christ.*” Indeed, had Christ **not** risen from the dead, not only would Paul and the other apostles be rightly regarded as “*false witnesses*” —deliberate liars— but so would also the Psalmist David in the Old Testament, who, as the penman of the Holy Spirit, prophesied in the voice of the Savior Himself, speaking to His heavenly Father: “*Thou wilt not leave my soul in **hell***” [or, better translated from the Hebrew, “*in **the grave***”], “*neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption*” (Psalm 16:10). For this is clearly a prophecy of the Savior’s resurrection in the flesh, His glorified body having suffered no “*corruption,*” no decay, while it lay dead in the tomb.

But the greatest con-artist and liar of them all would surely have been our Lord Jesus Himself if He had not truly risen from the dead. For He had predicted it Himself, not only the circumstances but also the time-frame under which this would occur, saying, for example in : “*The Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men; ...and after that He is killed, He shall rise **the third day***” (Mark 9:31). And to those unbelieving Jews who sought from Him “*a sign,*” a miracle to identify Him indisputably as the **Messiah of God**, Jesus had said: “*Destroy this temple [that is, His body], and **in three days** I will raise it up*” (John 2:19). Those enemies knew full well what He meant, and admitted as much when they went to Pilate and demanded that a security guard be posted at Jesus’ grave. Why?? “*We remember that that deceiver said while He was yet alive, ‘After three days I will rise again.’*” (Matthew 27:63). The real question is: **Did** He? Did He keep His word and make good on His promise?

The unbelieving historians and modernistic theologians of our own day and time may **speculate** as they will and **call into question** the word and veracity of “*the apostles and prophets*” (Ephesians 2:20) —“*but now **IS** Christ risen from the dead,*” Paul adds in our title-text, that is to say, Our eyewitness, and the witness of the prophets, reported to you by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, is **TRUE witness**; and our Savior too is no liar and deceiver, having **made good** on His word and promise by raising Himself victoriously from the grave on Easter morning —“*the third day*” (Matthew 16:21) after His death upon the cross, as the Jews commonly reckoned time— just as He **said** He would! Thus Paul shows us the **second assurance** that we have in our Savior’s resurrection, namely, that **Jesus’ Word, our Holy Bible, is absolutely true and reliable in every detail**. “*For we have not followed cunningly devised fables,*” Peter writes in his 2nd Epistle concerning those things reported about Jesus by His disciples, “*but were eyewitnesses of His majesty*” (1:16). Yes, the Savior Himself **directed** His apostles to put down “black-on-white” their firsthand accounts for our assurance that His Word is the truth; for He said to John in the first chapter of His Revelation: “**Write the things which thou hast seen!**” (v. 19).

But now Paul continues: “*And if Christ be **not** raised, your **faith** is vain; ye are yet in your **sins**.*” Our **faith** as Christians is confidence of the heart in the promises of the Gospel, the beggar’s trusting hand, moved by the Holy Ghost, that simply reaches out to accept the **forgiveness** that *Christ merited* for all men by His innocent suffering and death, the **forgiveness** that *God in heaven granted*

freely and without condition to every single sinner for Jesus' sake (II Corinthians 5:19). Our entire faith in that blessed forgiveness **rests on Christ's resurrection from the dead**, Paul says; so that without the assurance that God raised Him up on "*the third day*," our **faith** would be "*vain*" —empty and totally meaningless.

Why? The reason lies in the difference between *redemption* and *justification*. These aren't just words and technical terms of interest only to theologians, with little if any real importance to our faith. **Redemption**, you see, is the work of Jesus, God's only-begotten Son, who paid the price demanded by God's justice for our forgiveness and salvation. That work Jesus "*finished*" or **accomplished** with His suffering and death in our place on the tree of the cross (John 19:30). —BUT, paying the price is only HALF of retiring a debt. For that "price" must be acceptable to the **creditor** and must be received by Him as "payment-in-full" — as the "propitiation" (cf. Romans 3:25; I John 2:2) — if the debt is to be considered PAID. That's where justification or forgiveness comes into the picture. For **justification** is that forensic or judicial act of God the Father, in which He accepted Jesus' **one sacrifice** as payment in full for the sins of the world and, on its basis, reconciled the whole world unto Himself, no longer charging their sins against them (since He had already charged them —*imputed* them— to Christ), but declaring them righteous in His holy sight! (II Corinthians 5:19).

If God had not raised Christ from the dead on the third day, He would thereby have refused Jesus' sacrifice as "insufficient funds" to cover the debt of sin owed to Him; and we would be, Paul says in verse 17, "*yet in [our] sins*." They would be unforgiven and unforgivable; for our only hope of salvation, Jesus, would have failed miserably as our Redeemer!! AND our faith in Him would be completely misplaced, "*vain*" and meaningless!

*"But now IS Christ risen from the dead!"* Your faith is **NOT** in vain, dear fellow-sinner! For, by raising Christ Jesus on the third day, the Father in heaven **assured** you and me and all mankind of that **complete forgiveness** which is only His to grant. He placed His own "seal of approval" upon Jesus' work of redemption and declared the price paid by His only-begotten Son "payment-in-full" for all our transgressions against Him. Thus the Apostle Paul could write to the Romans: "[Christ] was **delivered** [to suffer and die] for [i.e. because of (Gk.)] our offenses, and was **raised again** [to life on the third day] for [again, because of (Gk.)] our **justification**" (4:25).

O, what a wonderful **third assurance** Christ's resurrection gives us in His precious Word, namely, that *God the Father fully accepted Jesus' payment for our sins and has forgiven them all for His sake!* —In **that assurance** we not only **can** but **must confide**; for our personal confidence in God's justification of US poor, miserable sinners is what the Apostle refers to when he says: "*Be YE reconciled to God!*" Accept God's full and free forgiveness of the whole world as applying also to **YOU** as an individual; for by confidence in that **FACT**, "*by faith*" which is *not* "*vain*" but **effectual**, faith created in you by the Holy Ghost through the Means of Grace, you **lay hold on** and **receive** that forgiveness of the world on God's part as **your very own**, and **have** the full benefit of the forgiveness and righteousness that Christ purchased and earned for you with His holy life, with His precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death.

But now we don't want to miss the **fourth assurance** which we have in our Savior's resurrection. Paul writes in our title-text: "*Now IS Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept.*" In other words, Christ in **HIS** resurrection became the **master pattern** or "prototype" after which *all those who died believing in Him will ALSO rise from the dead.* For since Christ had the power to raise Himself from the dead on the **THIRD** day, so also He has the power to raise **His true believers** from their graves on the **LAST** Day. Of this blessed hope or "expectation" He Himself assures us, saying: "*Because I live, ye shall live also*" (John 14:19).

Certainly, if Christ had not been able to raise Himself from the dead, we would be, in Paul's inspired words "*of all men most miserable,*" for we, like those who deny the resurrection, would have hope in Christ "*in this life only,*" with Christ **only** as our example for bringing about "good" in this present world, in which "only where there is **life**, there's still hope." Then indeed, death would still have its "*sting,*" and the grave would triumph over us in "*victory*" (I Corinthians 15:55)!

"*But now IS Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept!*" "*Death hath no more **dominion** over [us]!*" (Romans 6:9) "*Death is **swallowed up** in victory*" (I Corinthians 15:54) — **Christ's** victory **AND** **our** victory through Him as the gracious gift of God! Yes, "*Thanks be to God, which **giveth US** the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!*" Paul exclaims at the very end of I Corinthians 15 (v. 57). For when our risen Lord comes again to effect our own resurrection, He will raise us up again, **not** to corruption, but to absolute



perfection, Paul writes to the Philippians; for “[He] shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body” (3:21), the “firstfruits,” the prototype, “of them that slept.” Job testified to this anticipated bodily resurrection already at the time of the patriarchs, confidently declaring: “And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself; and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins [all my vital organs] be consumed within me!” (19:25-27). —Just think of it, dear Christian! No more weaknesses, handicaps, pain, or sickness; and then, taken to the mansions He has prepared for us in heaven, we will experience (as do all true believers in Christ who already “sleep in Him”) no more tears, no more wants, no more sorrows, no more fears, but only “fulness of joy and pleasures at [God’s] right hand forevermore” (Psalm 16:11). For “now **IS** Christ risen from the dead, and become the **firstfruits** of them that slept!” Yes, ...

Christ **IS** ARISEN from the grave’s dark prison!  
We now rejoice with *gladness*; Christ has *banished* sadness!  
All our hopes were ended, had Jesus *not* ascended  
from His grave triumphantly!  
For this, Lord Christ, we worship Thee! Hallelujah!

(TLH 187)

— D. T. M.

### **An Apology and Note about Our Editorial Policy**

Your editor recently received a note of objection from one of our contributors that a paragraph in his submitted article had been significantly edited without his prior approval. Even if publication time had been affected by sending the edit back to the author for his approval *before* it was printed, it would have been only right and proper that your Editor do that. Brotherly courtesy certainly warrants at least a consultation with the author before printing above his initials something that he himself had not written, and that is our editorial policy. In this case, that policy was not adhered to. Your Editor takes full responsibility for this over-reach and sincerely apologizes for it.

— Ed.

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**The Rev. Roman G. Schurganoff, Pastor**  
P. O. Box 27  
620039 Ekaterinburg, RUSSIA  
**E-mail:** Schurganoff@mail.ru

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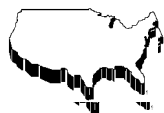
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P. O. Box 123  
Abonnema, Akulga, Rivers State, NIGERIA  
**E-Mail:** njohnfyeface@yahoo.co.uk



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### GOOD SHEPHERD EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

4090 S. Melpomene Way, Tucson, AZ 85730      On the Web at: *GoodShepherdLutheranChurchTucson.com*

**Worship Service** ..... 9:30 a.m.

**Sunday School & Bible Class** ..... 10:45 a.m.

**The Rev. DANIEL P. MENSING, Pastor**

8464 East Wildcat Drive, Tucson, AZ 85730

**E-mail:** goodshepherdlutherantucson@gmail.com

Telephone (520) 721-7618

Pastor: (520) 448-8694

### PEACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Central Avenue at 171<sup>st</sup> Place, Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913      On the Web at: *PeaceEvLutheran.com*

**Sunday School & Bible Class** ..... 8:30 a.m.

**Worship Service** ..... 10:00 a.m.

**The Rev. DAVID T. MENSING, Pastor**

17151 South Central Avenue, Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913

**E-mail:** pastormensing@yahoo.com

Telephone: (708) 532-4288

Pastor: (708) 532-9035

Pastor's Cell: (708) 601-3943

### ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sixth and Tangent Streets, Lebanon, OR 97355

**Sunday School & Bible Class** ..... 10:00 a.m.

**Worship Service** ..... 11:00 a.m.

**The Rev. PAUL E. BLOEDEL, Pastor**

483 Tangent Street, Lebanon, OR 97355

**E-mail:** revbloedel@gmail.com

Telephone: (541) 258-2941

Pastor: (541) 258-2941

### ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

5350 South Fountain Street, Seattle, WA 98178

**Sunday School & Bible Class** ..... 9:00 a.m.

**Worship Service** ..... 10:30 a.m.

**The Rev. EDWARD J. WORLEY, Pastor**

9658 - 54th Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98118

**E-mail:** revworley@comcast.net

On the Web at:

*StLukes-CLC.com*

Telephone: (206) 723-1078

Pastor: (206) 723-7418

**NOTE:** Services are also held in **Victoria, British Columbia** on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. Please call the Pastor for current location.

**Worship Service** ..... 7:00 p.m.

**Adult Bible Class** ..... 4:30 p.m.

**Adult Catechism Class** ..... 8:30 p.m.

### ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

22012 Torrence Avenue, Sauk Village, IL 60411

**Worship Service** ..... 3:30 p.m.

**Adult Bible Class** ..... 4:45 p.m.

**The Rev. DAVID J. MENSING, Pastor**

22012 Torrence Avenue, Sauk Village, IL 60411

**E-mail:** d\_mensing@hotmail.com

On the Web at:

*StMarksEvLutheran.com*

Telephone: (708) 757-6859

Pastor: (708) 655-7549

### TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

300 North Ridgeland Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60302

**Sunday School & Bible Class** ..... 9:00 a.m.

**Worship Service** ..... 10:15 a.m.

**The Rev. ROBERT J. LIETZ, Pastor**

233 North Cuyler Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60302

**E-mail:** robertjlietz@gmail.com

On the Web at:

*TrinityEvLutheran.com*

Telephone: (708) 386-6773

Pastor: (708) 386-4145

*Announcing the*  
**Sixty-eighth Annual Convention**  
of the  
**Concordia Lutheran Conference**

June 28, 29 and 30, 2019

at

**Peace Ev. Lutheran Church**

Central Avenue at 171st Place  
Oak Forest, Illinois 60452-4913

The Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastor

with

*The Plenary Pastoral Conference* on June 25th & 26th

*The Board of Directors Meeting* on June 27th



Motto:

The Providential Preservation of Holy Scripture

I Peter 1:25

The **Essay** will be delivered by Pastor Edward J. Worley.

The **Friday Sermon** on Matthew 24:35 will be preached by President Worley.

The **Sunday Sermon** on I Peter 1:22-25 will be preached by Pastor Bloedel.