Lesson Nine (3/20/16)

Christian Life = Daily Baptism

"Lastly, we must also know **what Baptism signifies**, and why God has ordained just such external sign and ceremony for the Sacrament by which we are first received into the Christian Church" (LC IV 64).

"But the act or ceremony is this, that we are sunk under the water, which passes over us, and afterwards are drawn out again. These two parts, to be sunk under the water and drawn out again, signify the power and operation of Baptism, which is nothing else than

- (1) putting to death the old Adam,
- (2) and after that the resurrection of the new man, both of which must take place in us all our lives, so that a truly Christian life is nothing else than a daily baptism, once begun and ever to be continued. For this must be practiced without ceasing, that we ever keep purging away whatever is of the old Adam, and that that which belongs to the new man come forth" (LC IV 65).

TWO -- "...and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever."

Galatians 5:25, "If we live	Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live,
in the Spirit, let us also	but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by
walk in the Spirit.	faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."
	Romans 6:3-4, "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized
	into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were
	buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was
	raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should
	walk in newness of life."
	Romans 8:10-11, "And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin,
	but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him
	who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from
	the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who
	dwells in you.

Apology XII

⁴⁴ Since the Confutation condemns us for assigning these **two parts to penitence**, we must show that Scripture makes them the chief parts in the penitence or conversion of the wicked. Christ says in Matt. 11:28, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." There are two parts here. Labor and being heavy-laden mean contrition, anxiety, and the terrors of sin and death. To come to Christ means to believe that for his sake sins are forgiven. When we believe, the Holy Spirit quickens our hearts through the Word of Christ. ⁴⁵ There are, then, two chief parts here, contrition and faith. In Mark 1:15 Christ says, "Repent, and believe in the Gospel." In the first part he denounces our sins, in the latter part he consoles us and shows us the forgiveness of sins. For to believe in the Gospel is not to have the general faith that even the demons have (James 2:19), but, in the true sense, to believe that for Christ's sake the forgiveness of sins has been granted us; this is revealed in the Gospel. You see that here, too,

the two parts are combined: contrition, when sins are denounced; and faith, when it is said, "Believe in the Gospel." We shall not argue if someone says that Christ also includes the fruits of penitence or the new life. For us it is enough that he names contrition and faith as the chief parts of penitence.

parts, mortifying and quickening. Col. 2:11, "In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh." And later on, "You were also raised with him through faith in the working of God" (v. 12). These are two parts here. The one is putting off the body of sins, the other is being raised through faith. Mortifying, quickening, putting off the body of sins, being raised — we are not to understand these terms in a Platonic sense as counterfeit changes; but mortification means genuine terrors, like those of the dying, which nature could not bear without the support of faith. Thus what we usually call contrition Paul calls "putting off the body of sins" because in these troubles our natural lust is purged away. And quickening should not be understood as a Platonic figment but as consolation truly sustaining a life that flees in contrition. ⁴⁷ There are therefore two parts here, contrition and faith. Because there is no peace for the conscience except by faith, therefore faith alone quickens, according to the word (Hab. 2:4), "The righteous shall live by his faith."

⁴⁸ Paul says in Col. 2:14 that Christ cancels the bond which stood against us with its legal demands. Here, too, there are **two parts, the bond and the cancellation of the bond**. The bond is the conscience denouncing and condemning us; it is the voice that says with David (2 Sam. 12:13), "I have sinned against the Lord." Wicked and smug men do not say this seriously, for they neither see nor read the sentence of the law written in their hearts. The sentence is understood only amid genuine sorrows and terrors. The bond therefore is contrition itself, condemning us. The cancellation of the bond is the removal of the sentence which declares that we are condemned and the substitution of the sentence by which we know that we have been delivered from this condemnation. This new sentence is faith, abolishing the earlier sentence and restoring peace and life to the heart.

Scripture? Ps. 118:18, "The Lord has chastened me sorely, but he has not given me over to death." Ps. 119:28, "My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to thy word!" Here the first part contains contrition, while the second describes how we are revived in contrition by the Word of God which offers us grace. This sustains and quickens the heart. ⁵⁰ 1 Sam. 2:6, "The Lord kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up." **In each of these sentences the first part means contrition, the second faith.** ⁵¹ Isa. 28:21, "The Lord will be wroth, to do his deed — strange is his deed! and to work his work — alien is his work!" He calls it God's alien work to terrify because God's own proper work is to quicken and console. But he terrifies, he says, to make room for consolation and quickening because hearts that do not feel God's wrath in their smugness spurn consolation. ⁵² In this way Scripture makes a practice of joining these two, terror and consoles and justifies. We cannot see how the nature of penitence, contrition and the faith that consoles and justifies. We cannot see how the nature of penitence could be presented more clearly and simply.

the terrified. One or the other of these works is spoken of throughout Scripture. One part is the law, which reveals, denounces, and condemns sin. The other part is the Gospel, that is, the promise of grace granted in Christ. This promise is repeated continually throughout Scripture; first it was given to Adam, later to the patriarchs, then illumined by the prophets, and finally

proclaimed and revealed by Christ among the Jews, and spread by the apostles throughout the world. ⁵⁴ For all the saints were justified by faith in this promise, not by their own attrition or contrition.

⁵⁵ **These two parts also appear in the lives of the saints.** Adam was rebuked and terrified after his sin; this was contrition. Then God promised grace and said there would be a seed that would destroy the kingdom of the devil, death, and sin! this was the offer of the forgiveness of sins. These are the chief parts. Even when punishment is still added afterwards, this punishment does not merit the forgiveness of sin. We shall discuss this form of punishment later.

56 Thus David is rebuked by Nathan, and in his terror he says (2 Sam. 12:13), "I have sinned against the Lord." This is contrition. Then he hears the absolution (2 Sam. 12:14), "The Lord has put away your sin; you shall not die." This voice encourages David and by faith it sustains, justifies, and quickens him. A punishment is also added here, but it does not merit the forgiveness of sins. ⁵⁷ Nor are special punishments always added, but contrition and faith there must always be in penitence, as in Luke 7:37ff. The woman who was a sinner came to Christ in tears, which showed her contrition. Later she heard the absolution (vv. 48, 50), "Your sins are forgiven. Your faith has saved you; go in peace." This was the second part of her penance, the faith that encouraged and consoled her. ⁵⁸ From all these passages godly readers can see that we put into penitence the parts that properly belong to it in conversion or regeneration and the forgiveness of sin. Worthy fruits as well as punishments follow regeneration and the forgiveness of sin. We have put in these two parts in order to emphasize the faith that we require in penitence. It is easier to understand the faith proclaimed by the Gospel when it is contrasted with contrition and mortification.

⁵⁹ Our opponents expressly condemn our statement that men obtain the forgiveness of sins by faith. We shall therefore add a few proofs to show that the forgiveness of sins does not come *ex opere operato* because of contrition, but **by that personal faith by which each individual believes that his sins are forgiven.** For this is the chief issue on which we clash with our opponents and which we believe all Christians must understand. Since it is evident that we have said enough about this earlier, we shall be briefer at this point. For the doctrine of penitence and the doctrine of justification are very closely related.

⁶⁰ When our opponents talk about faith and say that it precedes penitence, they do not mean justifying but the general faith which believes that God exists, that punishments hang over the wicked, etc. Beyond such "faith" we require everyone to believe that his sins are forgiven him. We are contending for this personal faith, and we set it in opposition to the opinion that bids us trust not in the promise of Christ but in contrition, confession, and satisfaction *ex opere operato*. This faith follows on our terrors, overcoming them and restoring peace to the conscience. To this faith we attribute justification and regeneration, for it frees us from our terrors and brings forth peace, joy, and a new life in the heart. We insist that this faith is really necessary for the forgiveness of sins, and therefore we put it in as one of the parts of penitence. The church of Christ believes the same, in spite of our opponents' cries to the contrary.

⁶¹ First, we ask our opponents whether the reception of absolution is part of penitence or not. If they try to make a subtle distinction separating absolution from confession, we fail to see what value there is in confession without absolution. If, on the other hand, they do not separate the reception of absolution from confession, then they must maintain that faith is part of penitence since only faith can accept the absolution. That only faith can accept the absolution can be proved from Paul, who teaches in Rom. 4:16 that only faith accepts a promise. Now, since

absolution is the promise of the forgiveness of sins, it necessarily requires faith. ⁶² We do not see how anyone can be said to receive absolution unless he believes it. What else is the refusal to believe absolution but the accusation that God is a liar? If the heart doubts, it maintains that God's promises are uncertain and inane. So it is written in 1 John 5:10, "He who does not believe God has made him a liar because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne to his Son."

⁶³ Second, we suppose our opponents will grant that the forgiveness of sins is either a part of penitence or its goal — the "terminus to which," as they call it. Then that which accepts the forgiveness of sins should properly be included as one of the parts of penitence. But it is very sure, though all the gates of hell (Matt. 16:18) cry out against it, that the forgiveness of sins cannot be accepted by anything but faith alone, according to Rom. 3:25, "Whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith," and Rom. 5:2, "Through him we have obtained access by faith to this grace," etc. ⁶⁴ For a terrified conscience cannot pit our works or our love against the wrath of God, but it finds peace only when it takes hold of Christ, the mediator, and believes the promises given for his sake. Those who dream that the heart can find peace without faith in Christ do not understand what the forgiveness of sins is nor how it comes to us. ⁶⁵ Peter (1 Pet. 2:6) quotes the words from Isaiah (28:16), "He who believes in him will not be put to shame." Hypocrites therefore must be put to shame, for they trust in their own works and not in Christ to receive the forgiveness of sins. Peter also says in Acts 10:43, "To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." He could not have said it any more clearly: "through his name," and he adds: "every one who believes in him." We receive the forgiveness of sins, therefore, only through the name of Christ, that is, because of him and not because of any merits or works of our own. And this happens when we believe that our sins are forgiven because of Christ....

² Let pious consciences know, therefore, that **God commands them to believe that they** are freely forgiven because of Christ, not because of our works. Let them sustain themselves with this command of God against despair and against the terrors of sin and **death.** ⁷³ Let them know that this is what the saints in the church have believed since the beginning of the world. Peter clearly cites the consensus of the prophets; the writings of the apostles attest that they believed the same thing; nor are testimonies of the Fathers lacking. For Bernard says the same in words that are not unclear at all: "You must believe, first of all, that you cannot have the forgiveness of sins except by the forbearance of God; but add further that you also believe that through him your sins are forgiven. This is the witness that the Holy Spirit brings in your heart, saying, 'Your sins are forgiven you.' For thus the apostle concludes, that a man is justified freely by faith." ⁷⁴ These words of Bernard marvelously illumine our case. He does not merely require that we believe in a general way that sins are forgiven by mercy, but he bids us add the personal faith that they are forgiven to us as well. And he teaches us how to be sure of the forgiveness of sins, namely, that faith encourages our hearts and the Holy Spirit grants them peace. What more do our opponents need? Do they still dare to deny that we obtain the forgiveness of sins by faith, or that faith is part of penitence?