

Lutheran Confessions

Apology, VII and VIII, 13-16

13] And for this there are many reasons. For it is necessary to understand what it is that principally makes us members, and that, living members, of the Church. If we will define the Church only as an outward polity of the good and wicked, men will not understand that the kingdom of Christ is righteousness of heart and the gift of the Holy Ghost [that the kingdom of Christ is spiritual, as nevertheless it is; that therein Christ inwardly rules, strengthens, and comforts hearts, and imparts the Holy Ghost and various spiritual gifts], but they will judge that it is only the **outward observance of certain forms of worship and rites.** 14] Likewise, what difference will there be between the people of the Law and the Church if the Church is an outward polity? But Paul distinguishes the Church from the people of the Law thus, that the Church is a spiritual people, i.e., that it has been distinguished from the heathen not by civil rites [not in the polity and civil affairs], but that it is the true people of God, regenerated by the Holy Ghost. **Among the people of the Law, apart from the promise of Christ, also the carnal seed [all those who by nature were born Jews and Abraham's seed]** had promises concerning corporeal things, of government, etc. And because of these even the wicked among them were called the people of God, because **God had separated this carnal seed from other nations by certain outward ordinances and promises; and yet, 15] these wicked persons did not please God.** But the Gospel [which is preached in the Church] brings not merely the shadow of eternal things, but the eternal things themselves, the Holy Ghost and righteousness, by which we are righteous before God. [But every true Christian is even here upon earth partaker of eternal blessings, even of eternal comfort, of eternal life, and of the Holy Ghost, and of righteousness which is from God, until he will be completely saved in the world to come.]

16] Therefore, only those are the people, according to the Gospel, who receive this promise of the Spirit. Besides, **the Church is the kingdom of Christ, distinguished from the kingdom of the devil. It is certain, however, that the wicked are in the power of the devil, and members of the kingdom of the devil,** as Paul teaches, Eph. 2, 2, when he says that the devil now worketh in the children of disobedience. **And Christ says to the Pharisees, who certainly had outward fellowship with the Church, i.e., with the saints among the people of the Law (for they held office, sacrificed, and taught): Ye are of your father, the devil, John 8, 44.** Therefore, the Church, which is truly the kingdom of Christ, is properly the congregation of saints. For the wicked are ruled by the devil, and are captives of the devil; they are not ruled by the Spirit of Christ.

(Bente, F., *Concordia Triglotta, Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Northwestern Publishing House, 1997*).

Put it into Practice

These questions have been put together to help you as you extend and apply tonight's Scripture to your life.

Prayer

We implore You, almighty God, mercifully to look upon Your people that by Your great goodness they may be governed and preserved evermore in body and soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **AMEN** (*Prayer for Passion Sunday, Judica*)

Word of God: St. John 8:42-59 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

The Jews had just claimed, "The only Father we have is God himself." (v.41)

- On what grounds does Jesus deny their claim to have God as their Father?
- With the words "I came forth from God and am come," (v.42) Jesus teaches two things: A) His person and B) His work.
 - "I came forth from God" = Jesus' Incarnation (taking on human flesh)
 - "and am come" = Mission (presently doing his work)
- Concerning that Mission, on whose authority did he come? (v.42)
- They don't understand his "language" because they "are unable to hear."
 - Why aren't they able to hear? (v.44, 47) see 1 Cor 2:14
 - Does a child understand his Father's (and Mother's) language? (v.44)
 - Thus, to whom do they belong? (v.44, 47)
- These Jews don't believe the truth (v.45) What do they "believe/trust"?
- In v.46, could the Jews prove Jesus guilty of sin? Why not? (Heb 4:15)
- What is the truth-speaking Son of God said to be by the Jews (v.48)? How does this show the great difference between truth and falsehood?
- By dishonoring Jesus—who honors the Father—what have they done?
- The honor Jesus seeks is not self-seeking. Why not? (v.50, 54-55, Jn 5:23)
- According to Jesus, how does one not see death? (v.51)
- They give Abraham as their example. Why? (Comment on Mt 22:29-32)
- How does Jesus show Abraham is his proof, not theirs? (v.56)
- Are they correct that Jesus claims to be greater than Abraham? (v.53)
- When did Abraham see "Jesus' day"? (Gen 21:5, 22:14, 25:8)
- Jesus says that he knows (*oida*) the Father, but they don't know (*gignwskw*) him. Why two different Greek words for "know"?
- Are they correct that Jesus claims to have seen Abraham? (v.57-58)
- Why did they pick up stones in response to Jesus' answer? (v.58) What does I AM mean? ("I exist" and "Yahweh," Ex 3:13-14, NIV preface ix)
- Can you "know" the facts, but not believe? (Ps 14:1, James 2:19)
- When they want to get stones, Jesus slips away. Why?

6:30 PM "Learn by Heart"

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn #508, stanza 4
Christian Questions with their
Answers, 1-9
John 8:42

7:00 PM "Catechesis"

+ Opening Verses
"O Lord, open my lips..." p.224

+ Ascription of Praise
"Praise to you, O Christ,
Lamb of Our Salvation" p.225

Reading
St. John 8:42-59 (back)

Hymn
"Jesus, Lover of My Soul" #508

Catechesis on... (back)
St. John 8:42-59
Liturgy
Catechism

--prayer based on reading
+ Responsive Prayer for Catechesis (insert)

Ten Commandments
Lord's Prayer
Apostles' Creed
Psalm 1
Collect of the Day
Prayers based on the text
Collect: "Before Reading Holy Scripture"
Benedicamus
Benediction

Catechesis on St. John 8:42-59

⁴² Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. ⁴³ “Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. ⁴⁴ “You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and *does not* stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it. ⁴⁵ “But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. ⁴⁶ “Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? ⁴⁷ “He who is of God hears God’s words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.”

⁴⁸ Then the Jews answered and said to Him, “Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?”

⁴⁹ Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. ⁵⁰ “And I do not seek My *own* glory; there is One who seeks and judges. ⁵¹ “Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.”

⁵² Then the Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.’ ⁵³ “Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Whom do You make Yourself out to be?”

⁵⁴ Jesus answered, “If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. ⁵⁵ “Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, ‘I do not know Him,’ I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. ⁵⁶ “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad.”

⁵⁷ Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.” ⁵⁹ Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by. (NKJV)

The Trinity, Christ’s Deity, and Salvation

“Thus the entire Holy Trinity, God Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, **directs all men to Christ**, as to the Book of Life, in whom they should seek the eternal election of the Father. For this has been decided by the Father from eternity, **that whom He would save He would save through Christ**, as He [Christ] Himself says, John 14, 6: *No man cometh unto the Father but by Me*. And again, John 10, 9: *I am the Door; by Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved*” (FC SD XI 66).

Romans 16:25-27, “Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and **the preaching of Jesus Christ**, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began 26 but now has been made manifest, **and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations**, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith— 27 to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.”

“Self-righteous and conceited man rejects the doctrine of the Trinity; he has no use for the soteriological import of this revealed doctrine... And man’s enmity is directed primarily against **the essential deity of Christ**, whom self-righteous and conceited man will not accept as the only Mediator between God and man. The words of 1 Timothy 2:6, ‘**He gave Himself a ransom for all**,’ are, as Luther says, ‘nothing but thunderclaps and fire from heaven against the righteousness of the Law and the doctrine of works’” (Christians Dogmatics, I, p. 406).

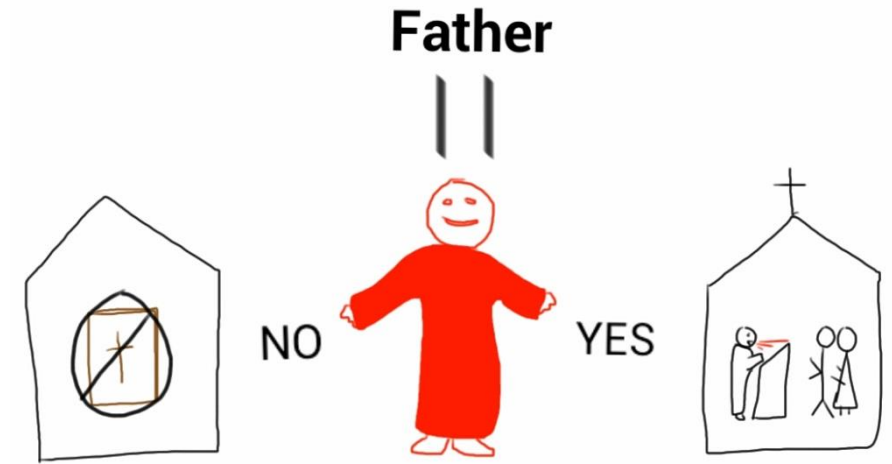
The Divine Authority of the Word

John 12:48, “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the **word that I have spoken** will judge him in the last day.”

1 Corinthians 2:4-5, “And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration **of the Spirit and of power**, 5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in **the power of God**.”

1 John 5:9-10, “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is **the witness of God which He has testified of His Son**. 10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.”

Catechesis on St. John 8:42-59



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