

Lutheran Confessions

Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article IV: Justification, 223-230

Let us, therefore, hold fast to this which the Church confesses, namely, that we are saved by

mercy. And lest any one may here think: "If we are to be saved by mercy, hope will be uncertain, if in those who obtain salvation nothing precedes by which they may be distinguished from those who do not obtain it," we must give him a satisfactory answer.... We will therefore reply briefly. For the very reason that hope may be sure, for the very reason that there may be an antecedent distinction between those who obtain salvation, and those who do not obtain it, it is necessary firmly to hold that we are saved by mercy. When this is expressed thus unqualifiedly, it seems absurd. For in civil courts and in human judgment, that which is of right or of debt is certain, and mercy is uncertain. But the matter is different with respect to God's judgment; **for here mercy has a clear and certain promise and command from God.** For the Gospel is properly that command which enjoins us to believe that God is propitious to us for Christ's sake. *For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved,* John 3, 17. 18. **225] As often, therefore, as mercy is spoken, of, faith in the promise must be added; and this faith produces sure hope, because it relies upon the Word and command of God.** If hope would rely upon works, then, indeed, it would be uncertain, because works cannot pacify **226]** the conscience, as has been said above frequently. And this faith makes a distinction between those who obtain salvation, and those who do not obtain it. Faith makes the distinction between the worthy and the unworthy, because eternal life has been promised to the justified; and faith justifies.

227] But here again the adversaries will cry out that there is no need of good works if they do not merit eternal life. These calumnies we have refuted above. Of course, it is necessary to do good works. We say that, eternal life has been promised to the justified. But those who walk according to the flesh retain neither faith nor righteousness. We are for this very end justified, that, being righteous, we may begin to do good works and to obey God's Law. **228]** We are regenerated and receive the Holy Ghost for the very end that the new life may produce new **229]** works, new dispositions, the fear and love of God, hatred of concupiscence, etc. This faith of which we speak arises in repentance, and ought to be, established and grow in the midst of good works, temptations, and dangers, so that we may continually be the more firmly persuaded that God for Christ's sake cares for us, forgives us, hears us. This is not learned without many and great struggles. How often is conscience aroused, how often does it incite even to despair when it brings to view sins, either old or new, or the impurity of our nature! This handwriting is not blotted out without a great **230]** struggle, in which experience testifies what a difficult matter faith is. (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

O Lord, we implore You, mercifully hear our prayers, and, having set us free from the bonds of sin, defend us from all evil; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **AMEN** (*Collect for Quinquagesima*)

Word of God: St. Luke 18:31-43 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

This is the third time(9:22, 44-45, 18:32-34) in Luke that Jesus predicts his death.

- To whom does Jesus reveal his upcoming suffering/death? (v.31)
- Where is Jesus(and his disciples) going? On Ash Wednesday, three days after this reading, the church will begin a Lenten journey. Where is she going?
- What is going to be accomplished(fulfilled)? (Lk 22:37, 7:22 "tell John") What is the connection between Jesus' passion and the prophets of old? (v.31)
- What particular things does Jesus say will happen? (See Isaiah's Suffering Servant, 52:13-53:12)
- How was this prediction of Jesus' death received by the Twelve? (Lk 9:45, 18:34)
- When would they understand? (Luke 24:25-27, 30, 31, Acts 1:7-8)
- What/Who prevented them from "know"/see Jesus as the Messiah? (1:4, 24:31) *With verses 35-42, we have a side journey with a blind man that illustrates the whole reason for Jesus' journey to Jerusalem to die and rise again.*
- Where is Jericho in relation to Jerusalem? 15 miles. So what?
- Where was the blind man? Why was he there & what was he doing? (Acts 9:2)
- What kind of reputation did a "beggar" have?(Lk 16:3)
- When he finds out that "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by," what does he do? What title does he give Jesus? (Note: "Nezer" is the Hebrew word for root - Is 11:1)?
- What do we learn about "those who were in front?" (v.39, Lk 18:15-17)
- Did the blind man stop his yelling? Why? Lk 4:18 Did Jesus hear him? Is 58:6-9
- What does Jesus command his disciples to do? (v.40) Compare to question #12.
- Why does Jesus ask him, "For you, what do you want me to do?" Ro 10:8-9
- Does the blind man ask for forgiveness? What does he want? Lk 12:33 or 1:50
- Is the new term "Lord" significant? Ex 3:14, Lk 20:42 on Ps 110:1
- Jesus gives the man his sight. How did the man's faith "heal/save him"(v.42)? Verse 42 in Greek is the same as in Luke 7:50, but there it is translated, "Your faith has saved you."
- What does this man do once he has received his sight? (Lk 2:20, 5:25) What did all the "people" do? Who are the "people?" (19:47; 20:19,26; 24:19)
- This blind man was beside the way, but once his eyes were opened he is placed in the way following Jesus. What does that say about catechesis?
- Compare "a blind man"(Lk 18:35-43) to "a ruler"(Lk 18:18-22). Who follows Jesus in the way? Now sing the Magnificat(Lk 1:46-55)! Get it?!

6:30 PM "Learn by Heart"
Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn "**If Thy Beloved Son, O God**" ASBH #18
Sacrament of the Altar, 1
Philippians 3:9
Or 1 Corinthians 2:14

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. Luke 18:31-43 (back)

Hymn
"**If Thy Beloved Son, O God**"
(Augustana Service #18, insert)

Catechesis on... (back)
St. Luke 18:31-43
Liturgy
Catechism

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

Ten Commandments
Lord's Prayer
Apostles' Creed
Psalm 73
Collect of the Day
Prayers based on the text
The Collect for Peace
Benedicamus
Benediction

Catechesis on St. Luke 18:31-43

³¹ Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. ³² “For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. ³³ “They will scourge *Him* and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.” ³⁴ But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken. ³⁵ Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. ³⁶ And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. ³⁷ So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. ³⁸ And he cried out, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” ³⁹ Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁰ So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, ⁴¹ saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.” ⁴² Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has made you well*.” ⁴³ And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise to God. (NKJV)
(* could also be “has saved you.” See question #18)

The Suffering and Death of Jesus

The suffering and death of Jesus was not a tactical mistake in Jesus’ plan for saving the world, but it was by means of His very suffering and death that Jesus planned to save the world from her sins.

Matthew 20:28, “Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”
The Old Testament anticipated Jesus’ suffering and death. (Luke 18:31)

Isaiah 53:4-5, “Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.”

Luke 24:25-27, “Then He said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?’ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”

Jesus foretold his coming suffering and death, before it happened (in Luke 5:35, 9:22, 43-45, 12:50, 13:32-33, 18:32, 24:7). More than this, the entire reason for his taking on flesh and becoming man (incarnation) is so that He could suffer and die.

Hebrews 2:17, “Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”

The Resurrection of Jesus

The resurrection was also predicted in the Old Testament and according to the Father’s plan by which the sins of the whole world were removed.

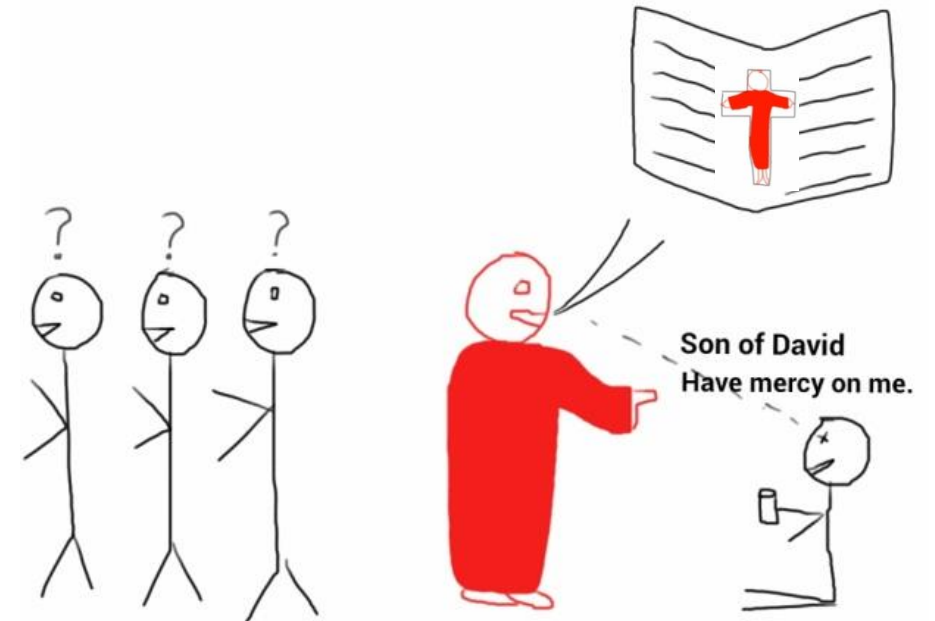
Romans 4:24-25, “It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.”

Mercy from the Son of David

Jesus was the biological son of Mary, and the adoptive (and legal) son of Joseph. Whenever the blind man called Jesus by the title, “Son of David,” he was referring to the promised Messiah (2 Sam 7:16) who would be a descendant of King David. Both Mary and Joseph are descendants of David (Mt 1:6, Lk 3:31).

“**The mercy of God** is goodness as compassion upon man, whose sin has brought him into untold misery. ‘Through the tender mercy of God [διὰ σπλαγγνα ἐλέους θεοῦ] ... the Dayspring [Christ] hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death’ (Luke 1:78-79)” (Pieper’s Christian Dogmatics, v. 1, p. 461).

Catechesis On St. Luke 18:31-43



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“Fasting and Bodily Preparation are certainly fine outward training...”

In our Pre-Lent preparation (on Septuagesima), St. Paul spoke about disciplining the body, not in order to get saved, but so as not to let the sinful flesh (which is with us until we die) lead us away from Christ (i.e. Eph 2:3).

“Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:24-27 ESV).

Our own Catechism acknowledges, “Fasting and bodily preparation are certainly fine outward training” (Sacrament of the Altar). Though we must constantly stress that it is faith alone which makes a person worthy, we should not disdain or at least not ignore the bodily preparation or discipline.

Below are listed some common bodily ways *in the Service* that we discipline our body so that it “prays” with us.

Making the Sign of the Holy Cross.—*normally done whenever the Trinitarian invocation is spoken*

Invocation.—Profession that you are baptized into Christ and have his promise (Acts 2:38-39, Mk 16:16).

Absolution.—At the words, “...in the name of the Father...” I believe/receive the gifts of forgiveness. Repentance tied to baptism (LC IV 79)

Nicene Creed.—at the words, “...and the life of the world to come...”

Benediction.—At the words, “...and give you peace.”

Doxological Stanzas.—Normally the congregation stands if sitting, and/or bows the head when standing during the words, “Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.”

Holy Gospel Reading.—In recognition of the words of our Lord Jesus the congregation stands up at the alleluia verse and remains standing through Holy Gospel reading.

Bowing of the head at the Name of Jesus.—Whenever the holy name of Jesus is sung or spoken the head is bowed.

Kneeling/Genuflecting.—If there are kneelers, then it is customary to kneel for the Confession, Prayers and in the Lord’s Supper service from the Sanctus through the Post-Communion Collect. When there are not kneelers, then the congregation normally stands.

Reception of Our Lord’s Body and Blood.—Upon arriving at the Lord’s Table and at the dismissal, “Depart in peace,” the communicant normally bows and/or makes the sign of the cross.

Fasting.—In the Old Testament, we have the record of Jonah 3 in which the people of Ninevah fasted as a sign of contrition. In the New Testament, we will soon hear the account of Jesus’ forty day fast in Matthew 4:1-11 on Invocavit (Lent One). Furthermore, we will hear on the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, Jesus gives prescriptions to his disciples concerning fasting. Matthew 6:16-18,

“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

If you do choose to fast during Lent, understand that Christians do not fast to be like Jesus or to undergo some pseudo-religious suffering or discomfort. Christians don’t fast to give up something sinful, just so they can pick it up again later.

FASTING IS DONE AS AN AID TOWARD REMEMBERING AND MEDITATING ON OUR LORD’S PASSION, DEATH AND RESURRECTION. We fast on Friday as a reminder that this is the day that our crucified Savior died. We refrain from red meat as a reminder of his flesh that hung on the cross.

Prayer: “Blessed Savior, on this day (at this hour) You hung upon the cross, stretching out Your loving arms. Grant that all the peoples of the earth may look to You and be saved; for Your mercy’s sake. Amen.

(Hymnal Supplement, p.30)

Lord's Supper, 1

“What is it? What are its benefits? and, Who is to receive it? And all these are established by the words by which Christ has instituted it, and which every one who desires to be a Christian and go to the Sacrament should know. For it is not our intention to admit to it and to administer it to those who know not what they seek, or why they come” (LC V, 1-2)

The efficacy of Christ's Command and the Words of Institution

“3. Now, as to the consecration, we believe, teach, and confess that no work of man or recitation of the minister [of the church] produces this presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper, but that this is to be ascribed only and alone to the almighty power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. But at the same time we also believe, teach, and confess unanimously that in the use of the Holy Supper **the words of the institution of Christ should in no way be omitted, but should be publicly recited**, as it is written 1 Cor. 10, 16: The cup of blessing which we bless, etc. This blessing occurs through the recitation of the words of Christ.” (FC Ep VII 8-9).

“Both the Sacraments and Word are effectual **by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ**, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men” (AC VIII, 2).

See Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, and Luke 22:17-20

1 Corinthians 11:23f, “For I received from the Lord **that which I also delivered to you**: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread....”

Essence: Bread, Wine, Body and Blood

“The Tenth Article[of the Augsburg Confession] has been approved, in which we confess that we believe, that in the Lord's Supper **the body and blood of Christ** are truly and substantially present, and are truly tendered, with those things which are seen, **bread and wine**, to those who receive the Sacrament” (Ap X 54).

“6. We believe, teach, and confess that the body and blood of Christ are received with the bread and wine, **not only spiritually by faith, but also orally; yet not in a Capernaïtic, but in a supernatural, heavenly mode, because of the sacramental union**; as the words of Christ clearly show, when Christ gives direction to take, eat, and drink, as was also done by the apostles; for it is written Mark 14, 23: And they all drank of it. St. Paul likewise says, 1 Cor. 10, 16: The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? that is: He who eats this bread eats the body of Christ, which also the chief ancient teachers of the Church, Chrysostom, Cyprian, Leo I, Gregory, Ambrose, Augustine, unanimously testify” (FC Ep VII 15).

Some Errors Related to the Essence of Lord's Supper

1. Reformed Symbolic View (Bread and Wine only)

“2. We believe, teach, and confess that the words of the testament of Christ are not to be understood otherwise than as they read, according to the letter, so that the bread **does not signify the absent body and the wine the absent blood of Christ**, but that, on account of the sacramental union, they [the bread and wine] are truly the body and blood of Christ” (FC Ep VII 7).

1 Corinthians 10:16, “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?”

2. Unbelieving Communicants receive the Body and Blood of Christ (*manducatio indignorum*) to their harm.

“7. We believe, teach, and confess that not only the true believers [in Christ] and the worthy, but also the unworthy and unbelievers, receive the true body and blood of Christ; however, not for life and consolation, but for judgment and condemnation, if they are not converted and do not repent, 1 Cor. 11, 27. 29” (FC Ep VII 16).

1 Corinthians 11:27, 29, “Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.... For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.”

3. Grape Juice Substitution and “The Fruit of the Vine”

It is true that in the words of institution, the Greek word for wine(οἶνος) is not used. However, this fact does not weaken the fact that Jesus undoubtedly used wine, and not grape juice. Whenever Jesus refers to “the cup” in the context of a Jewish Passover, there would have been no doubt that the wine of the Passover meal would have been used. In Matthew 26:29, Jesus further speaks of the contents of the cup as “fruit of the vine,” that term is synonymous with wine, not grape juice(which is a recent invention, whose fermentation is only retarded by modern refrigeration). Finally, when the congregation in Corinth abused the sacrament, some communicants got drunk(1 Cor 11:21), because they were using wine inappropriately, not grape juice.

“Here we exaggerate nothing; we but leave the prudent reader to determine what should be held concerning the divine ordinance [whether it is proper to prohibit and change an ordinance and institution of Christ]” (Ap XXII, 5).

4. Roman Transubstantiation (Body and Blood only)

“As regards **transubstantiation**, we care nothing about the sophistical subtlety by which they teach that bread and wine leave or lose their own natural substance, and that there remain only the appearance and color of bread, and not true bread. For it is in perfect agreement with Holy Scriptures that **there is, and remains, bread**, as Paul himself calls it, 1 Cor. 10, 16: The bread which we break. And 1 Cor. 11, 28: Let him so eat of that bread” SA III, VI, 5).