

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 God, our heavenly Father, seeing that of ourselves we have no strength, keep us both outwardly and inwardly that we may be defended from all adversities that may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.** (*Prayer for Second Sunday in Lent, Reminiscere*)

Word of God: St. Matthew 15:21-28 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

- Location
 - Where are the cities of Tyre and Sidon in regard to the Promised Land given to the Israelites?
 - Would you expect to find Israelites or Canaanites in that region?
 - How unusual for Jesus to be in Gentile country but say He is sent only for the Israelites. Comment.
- Woman
 - What titles does she call Jesus? Why?
 - What is mercy?
 - When she asks for mercy, what does she want?
- Jesus
 - How does Jesus respond to her prayer the first time? What does His silence mean?
 - When Jesus responds to the disciples request to send her away, does He agree or disagree with them?
 - What does Jesus call her with His response to her prayer(v. 25-26)?
 - What does she call herself in verse 27?
- According to Great Faith,
 - ...who is Jesus? (v.22)
 - ...what is the relation between faith and God's Word?
 - ...who is this Canaanite woman? Who are you?
 - ...do Jesus and His Words ever disappoint us?

6:30 PM "Learn by Heart"

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn "O Faithful God, we worship Thee" ASBH #21

Sacrament of the Altar, 3
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. Matthew 15:21-28 (back)

Hymn

"O Faithful God, we worship Thee"
(Augustana Service #21, insert)

Catechesis on... (back)

St. Matthew 15:21-28
Liturgy
Catechism

--prayer based on reading

+ Responsive Prayer for Catechesis (insert)

Ten Commandments
Lord's Prayer
Apostles' Creed
Psalm 73
Collect of the Day
A Prayer for Peace
Benedicamus
Benediction

Catechesis on St. Matthew 15:21-28

“Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed.”

²³ But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, “Send her away, for she cries out after us.”

²⁴ But He answered and said, “I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

²⁵ Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord, help me!”

²⁶ But He answered and said, “It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw *it* to the little dogs.”

²⁷ And she said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.”

²⁸ Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, great *is* your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour. (NKJV)

Jews and the Gentiles

“For Daniel knew that **the remission of sins in Christ was promised not only to the Israelites, but also to all nations.** Otherwise he could not have promised to the king the remission of sins. For it is not in the power of man, especially amid the terrors of sin, to assert, without a sure word of God concerning God’s will, that He ceases to be angry” (Ap IV III 141) Romans 3:28-30, “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. ²⁹ Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, ³⁰ since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.”

Suffering in Faith

“Now, the Decalog requires not only outward civil works, which reason can in some way produce, but it also requires other things placed far above reason, namely, truly to fear God, truly to love God, truly to call upon God, truly to be convinced that God hears us, and to expect the aid of God in death and in all afflictions; finally, **it requires obedience to God, in death and all afflictions, so that we may not flee from these or refuse them when God imposes them**” (Ap IV 8).

“Now the rest are **eucharistic sacrifices**, which are called sacrifices of praise, Lev. 3, 1f.; 7, 11f.; Ps. 56, 12f., namely, the preaching of the Gospel, faith, prayer, thanksgiving, confession, **the afflictions of saints**, yea, all good works of saints. These sacrifices are not satisfactions for those making them, or applicable on behalf of others, so as to merit for these, *ex opere operato*, the remission of sins or reconciliation. For they are made by those who have been reconciled” (Ap XXIV 25).

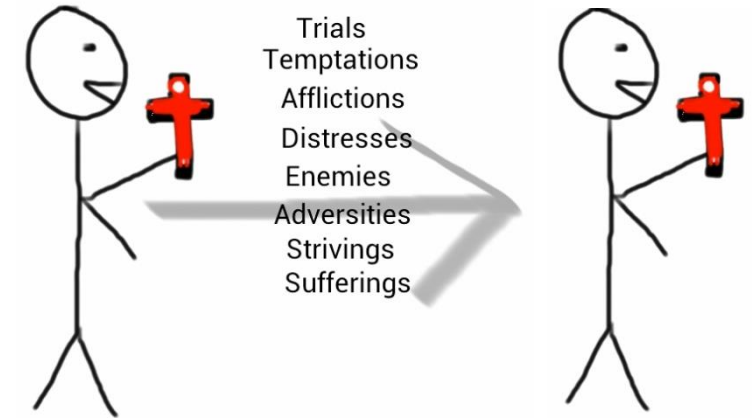
“Therefore, although a ceremony is a memorial of Christ’s death, nevertheless it alone is not the daily sacrifice; but the memory itself is the daily sacrifice, i.e., preaching and faith, which truly believes that, by the death of Christ, God has been reconciled. A libation is required, i.e., the effect of preaching, in order that, being sprinkled by the Gospel with the blood of Christ, we may be sanctified, as those put to death and made alive. **Oblations also are required, i.e., thanksgiving, confessions, and afflictions**” (Ap XXIV, 38).

Confidence in Prayer

“It is, therefore, **a pernicious delusion of those who pray in such a manner that they dare not from the heart say yea and positively conclude that God hears them, but remain in doubt** and say, How should I be so bold as to boast that God hears my prayer? For I am but a poor sinner, etc.

122] The reason for this is, they regard not **the promise of God**, but their own work and worthiness, whereby they despise God and reproach Him with lying, and therefore they receive nothing. 123] As St. James 1, 6 says: **But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering**; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. 124] Behold, such importance God attaches to the fact that we are sure we do not pray in vain, and that we do not in any way despise our prayer” (LC III, 121-124).

Catechesis On St. Matthew 15:21-28



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