

Lutheran Confessions

Smalcald Articles: Part III, Article VIII. Confession

3] And in those things which concern the spoken, outward Word, we must firmly hold that God grants His Spirit or grace to no one, except through or with the preceding outward Word, in order that we may [thus] be protected against the enthusiasts, *i.e.*, spirits who boast that they have the Spirit without and before the Word, and accordingly judge Scripture or the spoken Word, and explain and stretch it at their pleasure, as Muenzer did, and many still do at the present day, who wish to be acute judges between the Spirit and the letter, and yet know not what they say or declare. 4] For [indeed] the Papacy also is nothing but sheer enthusiasm, by which the Pope boasts that all rights exist in the shrine of his heart, and whatever he decides and commands with [in] his church is spirit and right, even though it is above and contrary to Scripture and the spoken Word.

5] All this is the old devil and old serpent, who also converted Adam and Eve into enthusiasts, and led them from the outward Word of God to spiritualizing and self-conceit, and nevertheless he accomplished this through other outward words. 6] Just as also our enthusiasts [at the present day] condemn the outward Word, and nevertheless they themselves are not silent, but they fill the world with their pratings and writings, as though, indeed, the Spirit could not come through the writings and spoken word of the apostles, but [first] through their writings and words he must come. Why [then] do not they also omit their own sermons and writings, until the Spirit Himself come to men, without their writings and before them, as they boast that He has come into them without the preaching of the Scriptures? But of these matters there is not time now to dispute at greater length; we have elsewhere sufficiently urged this subject.

7] For even those who believe before Baptism, or become believing in Baptism, believe through the preceding outward Word, as the adults, who have come to reason, must first have heard: *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, even though they are at first unbelieving, and receive the Spirit and Baptism ten years afterwards. 8] Cornelius, Acts 10, Iff, had heard long before among the Jews of the coming Messiah, through whom he was righteous before God, and in such faith his prayers and alms were acceptable to God (as Luke calls him devout and God-fearing), and without such preceding Word and hearing could not have believed or been righteous. But St. Peter had to reveal to him that the Messiah (in whom, as one that was to come, he had hitherto believed) now had come, lest his faith concerning the coming Messiah held him captive among the hardened and unbelieving Jews, but know that he was now to be saved by the present Messiah, and must not, with the [rabble of the] Jews deny nor persecute Him.

9] In a word, enthusiasm inheres in Adam and his children from the beginning [from the first fall] to the end of the world, [its poison] having been implanted and infused into them by the old dragon, and is the origin, power [life], and strength of all heresy, especially of that of the Papacy and Mahomet. 10] Therefore we ought and must constantly maintain this point, that God does not wish to deal with us otherwise than through the spoken Word and the Sacraments. 11] **It is the devil himself whatsoever is extolled as Spirit without the Word and Sacraments.**

(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

Lord, we implore You to keep Your household the Church in continual godliness, that through Your protection she may be free from all adversities and devoutly given to serve You in good works; 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 Trinity 21*)

Word of God: St. John 4:46-54 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

- It mentions that Cana is the site of Jesus' miraculous sign.
 - How do you supposed that the royal official knew about Jesus?
 - Upon what did his faith rest? He has faith but it is imperfect and limited(See 5B and 5D)
- What need of the royal official brought him to Jesus?
- When he got to Jesus how did he behave and what did he ask of Jesus?
- Jesus' response is recorded in verse 48.
 - John's Gospel is careful to use the word "miraculous signs," not "miracles." Why?
 - What was Jesus' complaint? (See John 20:29, 1 Pet 1:8)
 - How would you feel if Jesus said this to you?
 - Is Jesus saying Yes or No? (Mt 15:21-28 gives another example)
- Does the royal official give up on Jesus?
 - "Sir" is a show of _____.
 - Why should Jesus "come down (to Capernaum)?" --*limitation #1*
 - "my child" is a show of _____.
 - Why must Jesus go quickly? --*limitation #2*
- This time Jesus replied, "Go your way; your son lives."
 - Without miracles, in what does the royal official believe? (See 1B)
 - Did Jesus need to come down to Capernaum? (See 5B, Another example is found in 2 Kings 5:1-14, Naaman)
 - Will death prevent Jesus from acting? (See 5D, John 11:43 Lazarus)
 - How are you rescued from death? (1 Co 15:55-57, 2 Tim 1:10)
- What word did Jesus speak to the man so that he goes? (ὁ υἱός σου ζῆ.)
- What did the servants say to the man? (v..51: ὁ παῖς αὐτοῦ ζῆ.)
- Who else came to believe in Jesus because of Jesus' word to the man?
- We see the second miraculous sign brought faith to the man and his household. To whom did the first miraculous sign bring faith? (Jn 3:1-11)

6:30 PM "Learn by Heart"

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn "By Grace I'm Saved, Grace Free and Boundless" ASBH #59
Lord's Prayer, Introduction and meaning
2 Corinthians 4:6

7:00 PM "Catechesis"

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

+ Ascription of Praise
"Praise to you, O Christ. Alleluia." p.225

Reading

St. John 4:46-54 (back)

Hymn

"By Grace I'm Saved, Grace Free and Boundless"
(Augustana Service #59, insert)

Catechesis on... (back)

St. John 4:46-54

Liturgy

Catechism

--prayer based on reading

+ Recite Word by Word insert

Ten Commandments

Lord's Prayer

Apostles' Creed

Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Matthew 28:19

Mark 16:16

Confession & Absolution

John 20:22-23

Sacrament of the Altar

Words of Institution

Collect of the Day

--prayer based on reading

R. AMEN

Benediction

R. AMEN

Catechesis on St. John 4:46-54

46 So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum.

47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

48 Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe." 49 The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!" 50 Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!" 52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." 53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household. 54 This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee. (NKJV)

The Word of God

"Let me tell you this. Even though you know the Word perfectly and have already mastered everything, still you are daily under the dominion of the devil, who neither day nor night relaxes his effort to steal upon you unawares and to kindle in your heart unbelief and wicked thoughts against all these commandments. **Therefore you must continually keep God's Word in your heart, on your lips, and in your ears.** For where the heart stands idle and the Word is not heard, the devil breaks in and does his damage before we realize it. 101 On the other hand, **when we seriously ponder the Word, hear it, and put it to**

use, such is its power that it never departs without fruit. It always awakens new understanding, new pleasure, and a new spirit of devotion, and it constantly cleanses the heart and its meditations. For these words are not idle or dead, but effective and living. 102 **Even if no other interest or need drove us to the Word,** yet everyone should be spurred on by the realization that in this way the devil is cast out and put to flight, this commandment is fulfilled, and God is more pleased than by any work of hypocrisy, however brilliant. (Large Catechism, I, 100-102).

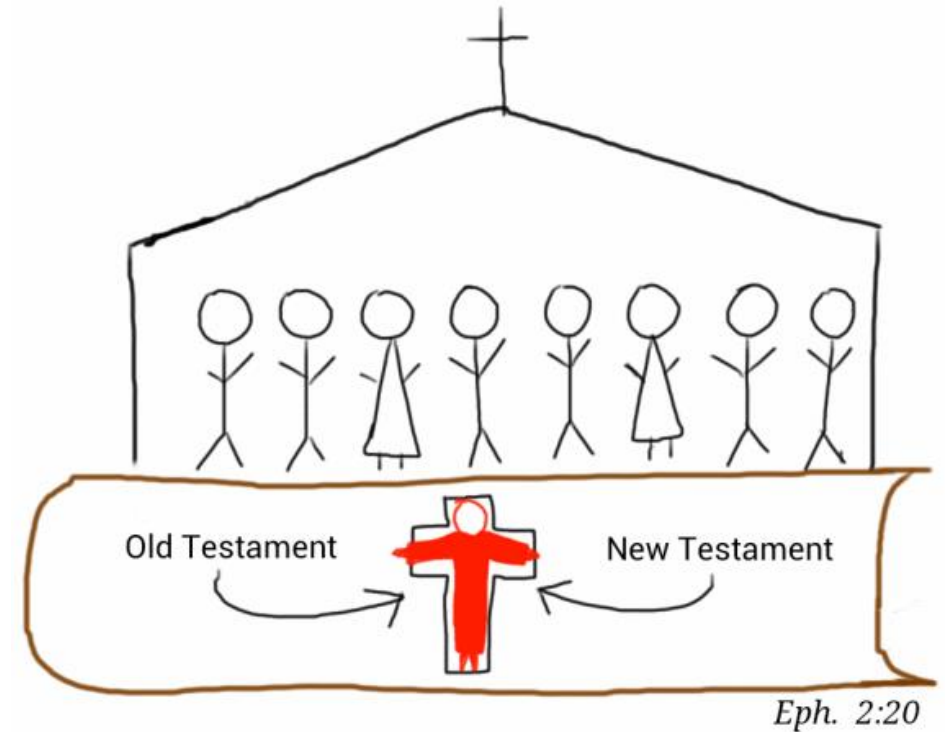
Conversion

52 All who would be saved must hear this preaching, for the preaching and the hearing of God's Word are the Holy Spirit's instrument in, with, and through which he wills to act efficaciously, to convert men to God, and to work in them both to will and to achieve.

53 **The person who is not yet converted to God and regenerated can hear and read this Word externally** because, as stated above, even after the Fall man still has something of a free will in these external matters, so that **he can go to church, listen to the sermon, or not listen to it.**

54 **Through this means (namely, the preaching and the hearing of his Word) God is active, breaks our hearts, and draws man,** so that through the preaching of the law man learns to know his sins and the wrath of God and experiences genuine terror, contrition, and sorrow in his heart, and through the preaching of and meditation upon the holy Gospel of the gracious forgiveness of sins in Christ there is kindled in him a spark of faith which accepts the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake and comforts itself with the promise of the Gospel. And in this way the Holy Spirit, who works all of this, is introduced into the heart" (FC, SD, II, 52-54).

CATECHESIS ON ST. JOHN 4:46-54



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