

Thus says the Lord, "In quietness and confidence is your strength"—Isaiah 30:15

Daily 5 With Luther



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GOOD SHEPHERD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, USA

*Serving all people with the
Gospel of Jesus Christ*

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January 15

Do what You promised me, Your servant, so that people will respect You. Every word You say can be trusted. Your laws are fair and will last forever.

Psalm 119:38, 160.

* * *

Is it true that God Himself speaks with us in the Holy Scriptures? One who doubts this must think in his heart that God is a liar. A liar is one who says a thing and does not perform it. But know this: when God opens His mouth it is as much as three worlds. God with one word made the world (Genesis 1). The Psalmist says: "*When He speaks, it is done; when He commands it stands fast.*"

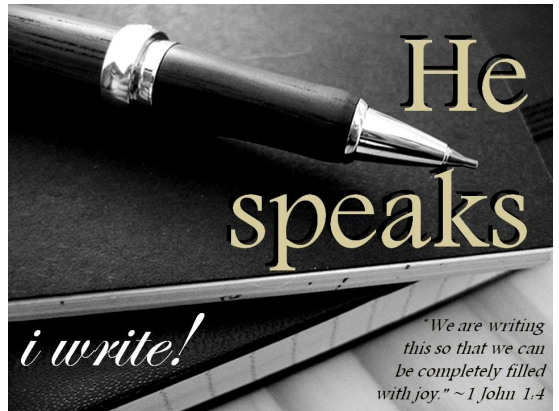
We must mark a great difference between God's Word and the word of man. A man's word is but a little sound, which flies into the air and soon vanishes.

But the Word of God is greater than heaven and earth, yea, it is greater than death and hell, for it is the power of God, and remains everlastingly; therefore we ought diligently to learn God's Word.

We must certainly know and believe that God Himself speaks with us. David knew this, and believed, for he recorded these words of God: "*God has spoken in His holiness, I will rejoice.*" We also are glad of it, but such joy and gladness many times comes through the season of affliction. This is what David experienced when he endured many temptations and trials. "*I know, LORD, that Your judgments are just and that You have afflicted me fairly.*"

We always rejoice in the Lord, yet with fear and reverence toward Him.

*Father of mercies, in Your Word what endless glory shines!
Forever be Your Name adored for these celestial lines.*



January 16

Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in Your Word. I am only a foreigner in the land. Don't hide Your commands from me!

Psalm 119:18-19.

* * *

If you wish to be sure and certain of your conscience and salvation, to know God, His essence, and His will, then abstain from speculating and searching according to your own worldly mind, sense, and reason. Without the Word and His

Son, Jesus Christ, God will not be found. You must learn to take hold of God by the means which He has given us; namely, the Word concerning Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit taught the apostle Paul: *"The world with its wisdom was unable to recognize God in terms of His own wisdom. So God decided to use the foolishness of the Good News we proclaim to save those who believe.*

"Jews ask for miraculous signs, and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified. This offends Jewish people and makes no sense to people who are not Jewish. But to those Jews and Greeks who are called, He is Christ, God's power and God's wisdom."(1 Corinthians 1:21-24).

Therefore begin to seek God there where Christ Himself began; where He was conceived in the womb of His mother, the Virgin Mary; then where He lay in the manger at Bethlehem. For God came down from heaven, was born a natural human creature, walked with us on earth, preached, worked miracles, suffered, was crucified and died, and arose again from the dead!

Christ did this so that He might place Himself in such a manner before our earthly eyes. His purpose was and is to draw the eyes of our hearts to Himself. In His Word God causes to be offered to us such things as are necessary for our knowledge to salvation.

*The Gospel shows the Father's grace, Who sent His Son to save our race;
Proclaims how Jesus lived and died that man might thus be justified.*

January 17

How blessed are those whose way is blameless, who live according to the Lord 's instruction! Blessed are those who keep His decrees and seek Him with all their heart. They do nothing wrong; they follow His ways.

Psalm 119:1-3

* * *

I esteem those to be the best preachers, who teach the common people and youth most plainly and simply, without nuance or enlargements. Christ taught people by plain and simple parables. The blessed hearers hear and believe God's Word willingly, simply, plainly.

Although some may be weak in faith, yet so long as they do not doubt the teaching of God's Word, they may be helped. Why? God can and will endure weakness, so let us only acknowledge it and pray to God for grace. We ought diligently to regard the strength of the Word of God, and not view His Word with scorn. God wishes to deal with us by the means of His Word. God will also work in us through this same Word.

The ancient church-fathers say well that we ought not to look to the person

“There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Romans 8:1

baptizing or ministering the Sacrament. Instead, look to God’s Word.

Our God chooses for Himself hearts to whom He reveals His Word. God also chooses for His people mouths to speak His Word. He preserves and maintains His Word, not by sword, but through His divine power.

A fiery shield is God’s Word. It is more substantial and purer than gold tried in the fire. Gold loses none of its substance in the fire, but resists and overcomes all the fury of the fiery heat and flame. So is the one who believes God’s Word overcomes all. Such a believer remains continually confident contrary to all misfortunes.

*A trusty weapon is Thy Word, Thy Church’s buckler, shield, and sword;
Lord, let us in this Word abide, That we may seek no other guide.*

January 18

**Unless the LORD builds a house, its builders labor over it in vain;
unless the LORD watches over a city, the watchman stays alert in vain.**

Psalm 127:1

* * *



In this little verse the LORD through Solomon would briefly teach all kings, princes, magistrates, and all who must reign. What is the way they should rule peaceably and well. He teaches how to conduct matters that they may be well.

For, first, they are to watch and labor as their office demands. For God does not say that they should not watch or labor. So also God speaks through St. Paul (Romans 12:8) that those that rule should do this with diligence.

Yet the LORD desires that their watching should not be in useless and unsuccessful, but useful and profitable. Therefore, they should commit such watching to God in true faith, and let the LORD care how He would provide for protection.

Rulers should not presumptuously think that their watching and their labor are protecting the city. Let them cast their care upon God. Trust that God will protect the city, and guard the country and its people.

Let rulers, therefore, watch without presumption and care, in true godly faith. God surely will guard all. Yet He has so put in place for us to be diligent and watch. In the same way He does not want us to think that our watching and labor are doing the guarding. That guarding alone His goodness and grace can do.

If we watch, trusting in ourselves, our plans, our skills, either of these two will follow – A) presumption or B) apprehension. If all is well and secure we will end up boasting of our watching our planning; if things go wrong, we worry, tremble, and despair.

Now God desires neither presumption nor despondency: we are not to worry if we do not feel safe; neither are we to boast, if we feel safe. But in all things we are

Thus says the Lord, "In quietness and confidence is your strength"—Isaiah 30:15

to watch with right, true faith, a living trust in God's words and promises, and do what He has laid before us to do.

*Beneath His watchful eye His saints securely dwell;
That hand which bears creation up
shall guard His children well.*

January 19

The LORD will not always strive with us; Nor will He keep His anger forever. The LORD has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Psalm 103:9-10

* * *

God has shown He is upright, faithful, and true. First, God gave us His promises in Christ. Through Christ we have forgiveness of sins and deliverance from everlasting death.

Then God laid before us, in the Scriptures, many gracious and easy to comprehend examples of great and holy believers. They were highly enlightened and favored by God even though they fell into great and heavy sins.

Adam, by his fall and disobedience, through heredity, conveyed sin and death on all his posterity. Aaron brought a great sin on Israel. It was so very great that God, for that particular sin, was set to have destroyed them. David also fell very heavily, Peter denied, Paul persecuted Christ.

These and innumerable other examples the Scriptures teach us. We are not to live in false security and sin because of the mercies of God. Instead when we feel God's anger (which will surely follow upon sin), then we should not despair. Let us well remember such familiar examples.

Let us certainly conclude that as God was merciful unto them, so likewise He will be gracious unto us. God will do so out of His sheer goodness and mercy shown in Christ; God will not impute our sins to us.

*When all Thy mercies, O my God, my rising soul surveys,
transported with the view, I'm lost In wonder, love, and praise.*

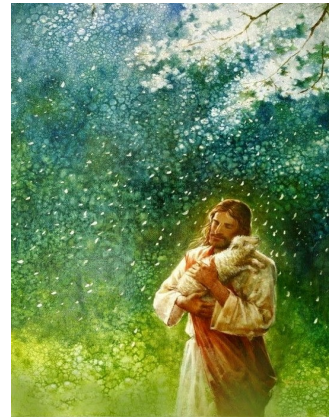
January 20

Paul, an apostle -not sent from men, nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead-

Galatians 1:1

* * *

Paul had planted among the Galatians the pure doctrine of the Gospel, and the righteousness of faith. But by and by, after his departure, there crept in certain



"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1

false teachers. The false teachings overthrew all that God had planted and had truly taught among them.

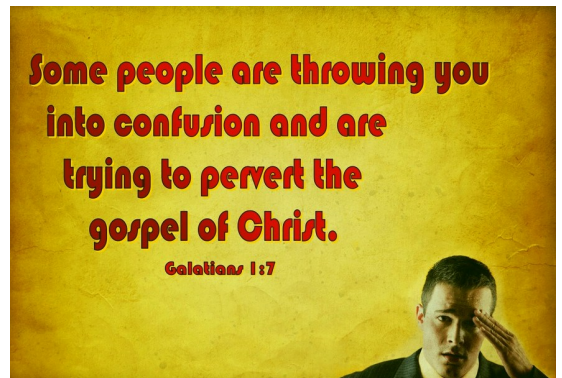
Here in the very beginning of his Epistle the Lord through Paul addresses those false teachers who boasted themselves to be the disciples of the Apostles. They had claimed to be sent by the apostles, but despised the Lord's apostle. They claimed Paul was not sent by anyone to preach the Gospel. They implied that Paul put himself into his office.

Against these Paul defends Gospel ministry. *"My calling seems worthless to your preachers; but whoever the false teachers may be, they have entered the office of preacher-teacher either from themselves, being not called, or else sent by others. But my calling is not from men, nor by men, but it is above all manner of calling that can be made by false teachers. My calling comes through Jesus Christ."*

God calls men to the ministry of the Word in these days. Today he does not do so without means, by Himself alone, but through people. But the LORD's Apostles were called immediately by Christ Himself just as the prophets in old time were called by God Himself.

And the LORD teaches about this through Paul, *"As for me, I am called and sent neither of men, nor by man, but without means, that is, by Jesus Christ Himself." And he adds, by "God the Father, who raised Him from the dead."*

Out of the abundance of his heart the LORD wishes to set forth the unsearchable riches of Christ. He rose from the dead, and in so doing Jesus Christ has gained the victory over the law, sin, death, hell, and all evils, And this victory Christ Jesus has given unto us.



Come as a teacher, sent from God, charged His whole counsel to declare; lift o'er our ranks the prophet's rod, while we uphold thy hands with prayer.

January 21

"...and all the brothers who are with me: To the churches of Galatia."

Galatians 1:2

* * *

These words are to stop the mouths of those false apostles. All Paul's arguments tend to the advancing and magnifying of the Lord's ministry. The Lord's servant exposes their false ways. It is as if he would say:

Thus says the Lord, "In quietness and confidence is your strength"—Isaiah 30:15

"Although it is enough that I, through a divine calling, am sent as an Apostle by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him up from the dead; yet, lest I should be alone.

"I add besides, that all the brethren, who are not Apostles, but fellow-soldiers, write this Epistle as well as I. They also bear witness with me that the doctrine I proclaim is true and godly. For this reason we are sure that Christ is present with us and that He teaches and speaks in the midst of us and in our church.

"As for the false apostles, if they are anything, they are sent either of men, or by men; but I am sent of God the Father, and by Jesus Christ, who is our Life and Resurrection. My other brethren are sent from God; although, it is true, by man, that is, by me. Therefore, lest they might say that I only set myself proudly against them, I have my brethren with me, all of one mind, all as faithful witnesses. They also reflect, write, and teach the exact same thing that I do."

"to the churches of Galatia." In these words the LORD reveals that false apostles did not endanger themselves to go to dangerous places where no man had preached before, as Paul and the other Apostles did.

Instead false teachers went into Galatia, which was won for Christ already through the labors and struggles of Paul. False teachers went to places where they, the enemies of Christ's cross, might live in great security, and without any persecution.

*Send men whose eyes have seen the King, men in whose ears
His sweet words ring; send such Thy lost ones home to bring;
send them where Thou wilt come.*

January 22

**Grace to you and peace from God our Father,
and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Galatians 1:3

* * *

This greeting of the Apostle is strange to the world. This greeting was never heard of before the preaching of the Gospel. These two words, *grace and peace*, comprehend in them whatever belongs to Christianity.

Grace releases sin, and peace makes the conscience quiet. But Christ has vanquished these two monsters, sin and conscience. This the world does not know, so this world can teach no certainty about the overcoming of sin, conscience, and death.

Only Christians have this kind of doctrine found only in God's Word. Thus Christians alone are exercised and armed with grace and peace to overcome sin, despair, and everlasting death,

Peace of conscience, however, can never be had unless sin be first forgiven. And sin is not forgiven by the fulfilling of the Law; for no man is able to satisfy

"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1

the Law. Much less is sin taken away by the works and inventions of men; there is no work that can take away sin.

There is no means to take away sin, except for God's attitude of grace alone. By grace alone we have remission of sins and peace with God. This God-grace and God-peace are different from all other kinds of grace and peace.

The Lord's apostle prays for the Galatian's grace and peace, but not from rulers or the world. Grace and peace is from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ.



FOR FREEDOM CHRIST HAS SET US FREE;
STAND FIRM THEREFORE,
AND DO NOT SUBMIT AGAIN TO A YOKE OF SLAVERY
- GALATIANS 5:1

He prays for them a heavenly peace. In affliction and in the hour of death, the grace and favor of the world cannot help us. But when the grace and peace of God are in the heart, then is man strong.

With such grace and peace one can neither be cast down with adversity, nor puffed up with prosperity. Instead, with grace and peace, he walks on bravely and keeps the

highway. This peace of God and God's grace Paul prays upon the Galatians.

And thus I live in God at peace, and die without a thought of fear, content to take what God decrees, for through His Son my faith is clear, His grace shall be in death my stay, His peace shall bless my dying day.

January 23

"...Who gave Himself for our sins.

Galatians 1:4a

* * *

Through Paul, God's Word speaks of nothing but Christ, and therefore in every word there is a fervency of spirit and life. And mark how well and to the purpose! The LORD does *not* say: Who has received our works at our hands. *Nor* does God say, Who has received the sacrifices of Moses' law, worshipings, etc.; Instead God reveals His purpose with the word that **"He gave Himself"**

– what? Not gold, nor silver, nor beasts, nor paschal lambs, not even an angel, but Himself!

– For what? Not for a crown, not for a kingdom, not for our holiness and righteousness, but **"for our sins."** These words are very thunderclaps from heaven against all kinds of righteousness. Again, by this sentence it is declared that our sins are so great, so infinite and invincible, that it is impossible for the whole world to atone for even a single one of them.

Here is to be marked the infinite greatness of the price offered and shed for

Thus says the Lord, "In quietness and confidence is your strength"—Isaiah 30:15

our sin. It is most certainly evident that the power of sin is so great, that by no mere earthly means could it be put away. The eternal Son of God and Son of man had to be given for it.

Furthermore, this singular sentence sets out a singular comfort to the conscience of all who are terrified with the greatness of their sins. For, although sin be ever so invincible a tyrant, yet nevertheless, forasmuch as Christ has overcome it through His death, sin cannot hurt those who trust in Christ Jesus.



Especially mark well the pronoun *our*. You who judge yourself unworthy of God's grace, from your heart say and believe that Christ was given for your sins also. The chief knowledge and true wisdom of Christians is revealed through the Lord's apostle. Count these words of God, revealed through the Lord's apostle, to be true and of great importance, namely, that Christ was delivered for our sins.

*He breaks the power of canceled sin, He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean; His blood avails for me.*

January 24

That He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father, To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Galatians 1:4b-5

* * *

In these words the Holy Spirit calls this whole world as a witness. All which has been, is, and shall be, the "present world", is radically different from the everlasting world to come. Moreover, the Lord calls it **evil**.

Whatsoever is in this world is subject to the malice and deceit of the devil reigning over the whole world. For there is in this world nothing but ignorance, contempt, blasphemy, hatred of God, and disobedience against all the words and works of God.

In and under this kingdom of the world we Christians exist. By these words then, "**that He might deliver us,**" Paul shows that we have need of grace and of Christ. No other creature, neither man nor angel, can deliver any soul out of this present evil world. This wicked world is an obedient servant and willing follower of the devil. Saving activities belong solely to the Divine Majesty. Neither man nor angel has any power. Christ has put away our sin. He has delivered us from this wicked world. This happened according to the will of God and our Father.

We are not delivered by our own will, or cunning, nor by our own wisdom or policy, but God has had mercy upon us, and has loved us. The Holy Spirit makes mention of the Father's will, so that in Jesus' words and works we should not just dwell only on Jesus, but also on the Father.

For Christ came into this world, and took mankind's nature upon Himself.

"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1

Thus Jesus Christ made a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, and so reconciled us to the Father. This was done through the good pleasure of the Father.

The Holy Spirit's purpose for us is to look upon Christ Jesus, that we might be drawn and carried straight to the Father. To Him be glory for ever and ever. Here are intermingled praise and thanksgiving. This is the right kind of worship and service to God.

*The Gospel shows the Father's grace, Who sent His Son to save our race;
proclaims how Jesus lived and died that man might thus be justified.*

January 25

**I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by
the grace of Christ, for a different gospel.**

Galatians 1:6

* * *

You see how God handles His Galatians, who had fallen away and were seduced by the false apostles. The Holy Spirit does not at the first set upon them with vehement and rigorous words. In the manner of a very fatherly sort, God's words speak tenderly to them.

Yet, He does this in such a way that He reproves them nonetheless. Since God's purposes were first to raise up those that were fallen. Then, with a fatherly care, He calls them back again from their error to the purity of the Gospel.

Our heavenly Father uses words most gently and mildly speaks to them. God's Word reveals that to fall from faith is an all too easy matter for them!

His apostle Paul, with singular study and diligence, had planted churches in Galatia. Yet he had scarcely set his foot out of the door, as it were, but by and by the false apostles were invited in and overthrew some.

To the intent that God might call back again those backsliders, the Holy Spirit reveals that God knows they have been deceived. They were deceived by the misleading, sweet, cunning, fraudulent teachings of the false apostles. The Lord's apostle would have wished that they had grown up a little more in the strength of sound doctrine. You have turned away, God says, "***from Him who called you by the grace of Christ.***"

It is as if the apostle said, 'My preaching was not of the hard Law of Moses, nor did I teach you that you should be bond-slaves under the yoke. 'I proclaimed the only doctrine of grace and freedom from the Law, sin, wrath, and damnation. I was sent to do this that you be freemen under Christ. And now what? Will you permit yourselves to be carried away?

'So soon no less will you turn aside from such a living Fountain, full of grace and life, to another Gospel? The Holy Spirit calls the teaching of the false apostles "another Gospel," but He says this in mocking derision for it is not good news but a wicked aping of God's grace and mercy.

Thus says the Lord, "In quietness and confidence is your strength"—Isaiah 30:15

My soul be on thy guard; ten thousand foes arise, and hosts of sin are pressing hard to draw thee from the skies.

January 26

Not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are troubling you and want to change the good news about the Christ.

Galatians 1:7

* * *

That which the false apostles taught was not another Gospel, as Paul here points out. The false prophets taught the works of the Law of God, besides faith in Christ, were also necessary to salvation. Most earnestly and stubbornly they contended that the law needed to be observed.

So they also misled those who were not well-grounded in the faith. They implied that Paul was not a sincere teacher.

Why? Because Paul disregarded the Law. They said that he preached to the Gentiles freedom from the Law to abolish the Law of God and the kingdom of the Jews.

Then they claimed they themselves ought to be heard. They claimed to preach the Gospel rightly,

to be the very disciples of the Apostles, with whom Paul was never conversant.

By this clever twisted preaching they defamed Paul among the Galatians. By very necessity, the Holy Spirit had compelled the Lord's true apostle to set himself against these false apostles, to reveal their fraud and deceit.

The Lord's apostle boldly reproved and condemned false teachers, with all his God-given might, revealing they were the troublers of the churches and over-throwers of Christ's Gospel.

The false preachers mingled the Law and the Gospel. But God's word is clear: either Christ must remain, and the Law perish, or the Law must remain and Christ perish.

Where the righteousness of the Law rules, there the righteousness of grace cannot rule. And if you cannot believe that God forgives sins for Christ's sake, whom God sent into the world to be our High Priest, how then can you trust God to forgive sin based on your works of the Law, which you could never perform without error? Such wicked, sweet-sounding, peace-robbing deception!

'Tis not by works of righteousness which our own hands have done, but we are saved by sovereign grace abounding through His Son.

"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1

January 27

But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

Galatians 1:8

* * *

The false apostles were exceedingly brazen and shameless. With all their might they set themselves against Paul. The apostle using his God-given spirit of zeal and fervency, was fully persuaded of the certainty of his calling. The apostle set himself strongly against the false apostles. The Lord wonderfully magnifies His divine ministry through the apostle in the above words.



The Lord's chosen apostle dares so boldly curse, not only himself and his brethren, but also even any angel from heaven if the Gospel is attacked by distortion. There is no other Gospel besides that which the apostle preached. The Lord's apostle proclaimed the same Gospel which God promised before through His Old Testament prophets in the Holy Scriptures (Romans 1).

Therefore the apostle pronounces himself and others shall be undoubtedly accursed if they teach anything contrary to the true and faithful Gospel. Why? The voice of the Gospel, once sent forth, shall not be called back again till the day of judgment.

The Good News of Jesus Christ-crucified and risen- is the only way for sins to be forgiven and heaven entered. This Gospel is the righteousness of God who alone is to be praised.

Thy Gospel-heralds dare not rest, 'till through the world Thy truth has run; 'till Christ has all the nations blest that see the light, or feel the sun.

January 28

As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.

Galatians 1:9

* * *

In this verse the Lord's servant repeats the same thing, only changing the persons. Before the apostle cursed himself, his brethren, and/or an angel from heaven. Here the Holy Spirit teaches Paul to say, *'If there are any besides us who preach to you any other Gospel than that which you have received from us, let them also be accursed!'*

This shows exceedingly great fervency of Lord's Spirit living within the Apostle. He speaks a curse of God against all false teachers, throughout the whole world, and

Thus says the Lord, "In quietness and confidence is your strength"—Isaiah 30:15

even in heaven. None is to alter God's Gospel or teach any other falsely! All must either believe the Gospel God proclaimed through Paul, or else they must be accursed and condemned.

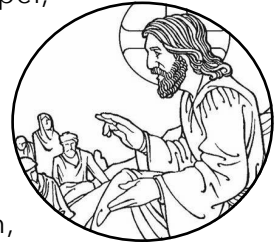
The changing of persons is here to be marked. In the first curse, the Lord's apostle said, ***"But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you";*** in the second curse, ***"a gospel contrary to that which you received."***

The Lord does this lest the Galatians should say, "We did not alter the Gospel that you preached unto us; we simply did not understand you rightly, but the teachers who came after you have declared to us the true meaning."

This is a false premise that the Lord's apostle cannot, and shall not, give credence to in any fashion. The false teachers ought to add nothing to God's Gospel, nor correct God's Words. For that which the apostle preached, and they heard, is the sincere and living Word of God. This alone must remain!

For this reason, if you hear any, bringing any other Gospel, any other than the one you have heard from the Lord's own messenger, let such a one be under God's curse.

Any who is bragging that he will deliver better things than they have received from God's Word, let such a false teacher, and his followers, be both accursed. Paul here subjects himself and an angel from heaven, all doctors upon earth, and all other teachers and all masters whatsoever, under the authority of the Scripture.



No doctrine ought to be taught or heard in God's Church other than the pure Word of God. Period.

*Within Thy temple when they stand, to teach the truth as taught by Thee,
Savior, like stars in Thy right hand, let all Thy Church's pastors be.*

January 29

For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

Galatians 1:10

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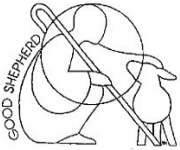
It is as if the apostle asks, "Does it not appear sufficiently to you by my preaching, and by so many and such great afflictions which I have suffered, whether I serve men or God? Do I not show plainly enough by my preaching that I do not seek the favor or praise of men, but to set forth the benefit and glory of God?"

Neither do we seek the favor of men by our doctrine. We teach that all are

"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1

wicked by nature. All are born as the children of wrath. We condemn man's sinfully twisted free-will, darkened scandalous strength, sin-warped wisdom, and self-righteousness. We proclaim the truth that souls obtain God's grace by the free mercy of God only, for Christ's sake only, found in Scripture only.

This is not how to preach for the favor of men and the world. If I sought the favor of men I would not condemn their works. But here I stand and show God's judgment from His Word against all. All are sinners. All are not made righteous by works of any kind. God saves all only by His grace alone and only through faith in Christ alone."



The false apostles must of necessity seek to please and to flatter people. They want to live in peace and security of the flesh. They teach the things which are of men, that is to say, wicked things. More subtly, they themselves do not actually teach so brazenly. But instead they allow the blasphemies and wicked judgments of the God's enemies to spread and flourish. They promote matters contrary to the Word of God, ignored, unrestrained, incurable.

In this manner false preachers and teachers sin against their own conscience until they have killed their conscience and made it dead. False teachers do this to keep the favor of politicians and religious leaders and to enjoy their goods. But I desire this only: that my teaching may please my God and Savior, Jesus Christ. And by doing this, the devil makes others my mortal enemies. What a wicked creature the evil one is!

*Sure I must fight, if I would reign! Increase my courage, LORD;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain, Supported by Thy Word.*

January 30

For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:11-12

* * *

The holy Gospel is not according to man. This does not mean that the Gospel is not heard on earth. Instead the Holy Spirit reminds the reader that the Lord's apostle had not learned the Gospel through the service of men, or received it by any earthly means.

That is how all of us discovered it, either by the ministry of someone, or by some other earthly means, by hearing, by reading, by seeing, by writing.

But the apostles received the gospel by the revelation of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen! Paul received his Gospel on the way as he was going to Damascus to exterminate followers of Jesus. At that physical place and time, Jesus Christ the liv-

Thus says the Lord, "In quietness and confidence is your strength"—Isaiah 30:15

ing Lord, appeared to him. Jesus was not invited, not sought and fully despised by him. Paul did not choose to have anything to do with Jesus Christ.

Instead stepped into history. Christ chose. God chose to talk with him, to call, to enlighten and to teach him. The LORD then sent Ananias to connect with him. The LORD gifted Paul with the additional public testimony of men that he was called by God to preach the Gospel of Christ.

This personal history Paul was grateful to repeat. Some slandered the Lord's apostle and implied Paul was inferior to the rest of the Apostles.

Some falsely claimed Paul had received from the Apostles that which they taught to all others. The Galatians were not fully established and grounded, but as yet weak in the faith and so were being deceived.

Let every careful Christian labor and strive diligently to learn and to keep this chief doctrine which Paul taught, the free and faithful gracious Gospel of Jesus Christ; let each use humble and hearty prayer, with continued study and meditation of the Word, that each one may remain faithful.



*A trusty weapon is Thy Word, the Church's buckler, shield, and sword;
LORD, let us in this Word abide, that we may seek no other guide.*

January 31

For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure, and tried to destroy it; and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.

Galatians 1:13-14

* * *

The Holy Spirit teaches Paul to use here his own example. So the Lord's apostle wrote, "I have in the past defended the traditions of the Pharisees, and the Jewish religion, more constantly than you and all your false teachers.

Now, if the righteousness of the law had been worth anything, I would **not**

"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1



have turned back from it! Before I knew Christ, I so exercised myself, and so profited therein, that I surpassed many of my contemporaries of my own nation in my zealous manner of life for Judaism."

"I was extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions." With this phrase, Paul teaches not just of the pharisaical traditions, but of a far higher matter: the

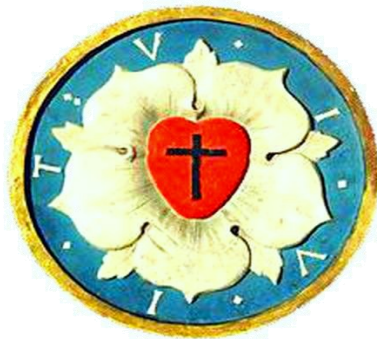
law of Moses. The apostle is taught to categorize Moses' law with the fathers' traditions. It was just a matter received and left as an inheritance from the fathers."

"For these," said he, "when I was in the Jewish religion, I was very zealous." To the Philippians the Holy Spirit taught Paul to write: "as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the Church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless."

This is as though he would say: "Let them show me, if they can, a more zealous and earnest defender of Moses' law than I have been." This ought to have persuaded you not to believe these deceivers. They magnify the righteousness of the law as a matter of great importance."

"How foolish! See? if there were any cause to glory in the righteousness of the law, I would have more cause to glory than any. But I have no cause to glory in myself. I glory in Jesus Christ! His glory has set me from the darkness and doom of my sin."

*The darkness of my former state, the bondage, all was mine;
the light of life in which I walk, The liberty is Thine.*



Selections from Luther's Commentaries-St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians 1535, Edwinus London; Epistles of St. Peter & St. Jude 1523, E. H. Gillett; Select Works of Martin Luther 1555, Rev. Henry Cole; Familiar Discourses of Luther 1566, Capt. Henry Bell, Rev. R.D.Fish; The Lutheran Hymnal; Rev. J.T. Mueller, 1925; Rev. Paul Tullberg 2025.