

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



Daily 5 With Luther

GOOD SHEPHERD

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, USA

*Serving all people with the
Gospel of Jesus Christ*

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



The Believer's
Identity
in Christ

June 18

Love each other with a warm love that comes from the heart. After all, you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth. As a result you have a sincere love for each other.

1 Peter 1:22

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The Holy Spirit through Peter speaks here of the fruit of faith, to purify our souls, to obey the truth in the Spirit. For where there is real faith, it brings the body in subjection to itself and controls the fleshly lust. And although faith does not entirely destroy fleshly lust, yet it makes it subject and obedient to the Spirit, and holds it in check.

To remain chaste, render obedience to the truth in the Spirit. Do not only read and hear the Word of God, but take hold of it with our hearts.

And what does "sincere love for each other" mean? To what end are we to live a chaste, holy life? In order that we may be saved thereby? No! But in order that I may be of service to others.

By the working of the Holy Spirit, I shall first control my body and the flesh. Then I can afterward be of service to others and so fervently love from the heart. The Apostles Peter and Paul distinguish brotherly love and love in general.

Christian love is visible as Christians who dwell altogether as brothers and sisters. They make no distinctions between themselves. For since we all have a common Christ, one baptism, one faith, one treasure, I am no better than you. That which you have, I have also, and I am just as rich as you. The same *LORD* has generously blessed us both.



Therefore as we have the grace of Christ and all spiritual blessings in common, so we also hold body and life, property and honor, in common, that one should be of service to another in all things.

*My Wisdom and my Guide, My Counselor Thou art:
O let me never leave Thy side, nor from Thy paths depart.*

June 19

You have been born again, not from a seed that can be destroyed, but through God's everlasting word that cannot be destroyed.

1 Peter 1:23

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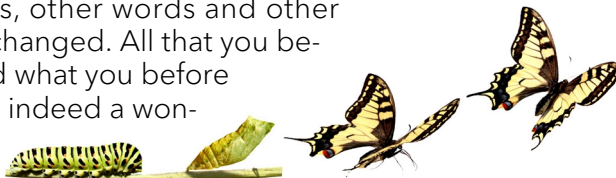
Again, we are to do this because we are not what we were before. This is what God has declares. But we have become new creatures. This has not come to pass

through our works, but is a blessed consequence of the new birth God has worked.

For you cannot make the new man, but he must be born and grow. A husband-man cannot make a tree, but the tree must grow, itself, out of the earth. This, therefore, is what the *LORD* taught His apostle to say. Since you then, have become new creatures, you are to conduct yourselves otherwise than you did. You are to lead a new life.

But how has the new birth taken place? God sent His Word – the Gospel – to go out. His seed falls in the hearts of men. Wherever it fastens on the heart the Holy Spirit is present. The Spirit is the One who creates this new nature; then the soul becomes another creation.

The soul has other thoughts, other words and other works. Thus a Christians is entirely changed. All that you before avoided you now seek out. And what you before sought, you now flee. Therefore it is indeed a wonderful birth, and of extraordinary seed.



*Almighty God, Thy Word is cast like seed into the ground;
Now let the dew of heaven descend, and righteous fruits abound.*

*Let not the foe of Christ and man this holy seed remove;
But give it root in every heart, to bring forth fruits of love.*

June 20

That's why [Scripture says] "All people are like grass, and all their beauty is like a flower of the field. The grass dries up and the flower drops off, but the Word of the *LORD* lasts forever." This word is the Good News that was told to you.

1 Peter 1:24-25

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That which is flesh and blood is corruptible. People are like the green grasses that bloom. Whatever is rich, strong, wise, and fair, is flourishing. This all belongs to the bloom. Yet you observe its bloom wither. What was young and vigorous will become old and ugly. What is rich will become poor and so on. And all must fall by the Word of God.

But this Seed, the Word, cannot perish. The *LORD* concludes: ***This word is the Good News that was told to you.*** You are not to look far in order to reach the Word of God; you have it before your eyes!

The Word is that which we preach. With this Word you may subdue all evil lusts. You are not to seek a word from far afield. You have nothing more to do than fully to take hold of it when it is preached.

As when I hear that Jesus Christ died to take away my sins. He has purchased heaven for me. Jesus Christ bestows upon me all that He has.

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

This then I hear. It is the Gospel. This truth no creature can overthrow. The clearest reasoning avails nothing against the Gospel.

If I, too, would strike the devil while I am in his jaws, I must abide completely by the Word. Therefore the Spirit taught His apostle to say it well when he wrote: you must look for no other Gospel than that which we have preached to you.

*To us the sacred Word apply With sovereign power and energy;
And may we, in Thy faith and fear, Reduce to practice what we hear.*

June 21

So get rid of every kind of evil, every kind of deception, hypocrisy, jealousy, and every kind of slander.

1 Peter 2:1

* * *

What is the characteristic and fruit of a Christian life to be? For we have said, and often enough, that a Christian life consists in two things: faith toward God and love toward our neighbor. Besides, although Christian faith has been given us, yet as long as we live, many are the evil lusts that remain in the sinful flesh.

Since every saint must be in the flesh still, what is in the flesh cannot be entirely pure. Therefore God says, be prepared! Guard yourselves against the sins which still cleave to you! Strive continually against them.

The worst enemies that we have hide themselves in our hearts, in our very flesh and blood. These enemies wake, sleep, and live with us. They are like a wicked spirit which we have brought home with us and cannot send off.

For this reason, since through faith Jesus Christ is entirely yours, trust that you have obtained His salvation and all His blessings. And resolve to lay aside all wickedness, all that is evil, all guile. In this way, let no one act toward another deceitfully or falsely.

We Christians shall not act with deceit, but uprightly and with pure hearts, toward men as toward God, fairly and justly. Furthermore, we are to lay aside evil-speaking and hatred. Here God readily takes up the common vices among souls, our daily interactions with one another.

This evil-speaking is exceedingly common and injurious. It happens so quickly that none of us is aware of it. Therefore God warns earnestly, be on your guard, all you who already have a Christian spirit. Understand and embrace the fruit of this spirit.



*From dark temptation's power, from Satan's wiles defend;
Deliver in the evil hour, and guide us to the end.*

June 22

Like newborn infants, desire the pure spiritual milk,
so that you may grow by it in respect to your salvation,

1 Peter 2:2

* * *

The Holy Spirit teaches His apostle to use a comparison. Be like those newborn babies who seek nothing but the milk; like those babies, striving for the breasts and milk, so you too, be eager for the Word! wrestle for it, have an appetite for it, so that you may receive the intelligible, pure milk.



These words are, indeed, figurative; for God did not mean literal milk, or literal drinking. This is plain from the text. He also does not speak of a literal birth.

But God does speak of another milk which belongs to the mind and heart. This other milk is spiritual, and is gained by the soul. The heart draws it in.

This milk must be pure, unfalsified. There is truly a strong obligation, and great necessity, for the newborn and young Christians. Such milk should be given pure and not corrupted. But this milk is nothing but the Gospel. This is a similar picture to "the seed" by which we are conceived and born, as we have heard earlier.

Yet the Gospel is also the food which nourishes us when we arrive at maturity; it is also the harness with which we equip and clothe ourselves – yes, it is all these at the very same time.

But whatever is attached to it is human doctrine. Human doctrine falsifies the Word of God. Therefore the Holy Spirit would have it so that every Christian shall be vigilant and careful about what he drinks. He shall himself learn to decide in regard to all doctrines.

*LORD, open now my heart to hear, and through Your Word to me draw near.
Let me Your Word e'er pure retain. Let me Your child and heir remain.*

*Your Word so deeply moves the heart, Your Word does perfect health impart, Your
Word my soul with joy shall bless, Your Word brings peace and blessedness.*

June 23

Certainly you have tasted that the *LORD* is good!

1 Peter 2:3.

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



It is not enough that we should hear the Gospel once. We must ever be eager for it. In this way we shall grow. After faith has become strong, we shall provide and eat each kind of food. But to those who have not heard the Gospel, this is not said. For those know neither what is milk or what is wine.

This is why the Holy Spirit adds, ***"Certainly you have***

tasted that the LORD is good!" Whoever has not tasted it, to him the Word is not a thing of the heart, it is not sweet. But they who have tried it, who grow by the Word, to them the Word tastes pleasant and is sweet.

Did you hear those words, ***you have tasted?*** I am to believe with my heart that Christ **has** given Himself for me. Jesus Christ **has** become my own, and my sin and misery are His. Jesus Christ's life also is my life.

When this Word reaches my heart, then I taste it; for how can I not receive joy and gladness from this? I am heartily glad, as though some good friend should bestow on me a thousand thousands of dollars.

But a hardened class lives in their own holiness, builds on their own false works. They do not feel their sin and misery. They cannot taste this, God's joy and gladness. Whoever sits at table, brings and offers nothing, is hungry. This soul is the one who savors all readily, eagerly and thankfully.

He who is previously full of himself, relishes nothing. He only murmurs at the most excellent food placed before him on the table. Therefore the **LORD** clearly says, ***"Certainly you have tasted that the LORD is good!"*** But If you have not tasted it, then the LORD says it is proclaimed to you in vain, uselessly, for nothing.

Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee; Let the water and the blood, from Thy riven side which flowed, be of sin the double cure, cleanse me from its guilt and power.

June 24

You are coming to Christ. He is the living Cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but He was chosen by God and precious to Him.

1 Peter 2:4

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Here the Holy Spirit directs us to fall back again to written Scripture. He quotes the words given through the prophet Isaiah. In Isaiah 28: ***"This is what the Almighty***

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

LORD says: 'I AM going to lay a Rock in Zion, a Rock that has been tested, a precious Cornerstone, a solid Foundation. Whoever believes in Him will not panic. '

Our LORD's apostle was instructed to quote this passage also. It is obviously an important passage of Scripture. Christ is the precious Cornerstone which God has laid. On Him we must be built. Christ, the living Stone, bears up the whole building.

It is called the building, in order that we, bound one to another, may set our confidence and security on Him.

Christ was indeed rejected by men, but is superior and eternally precious in the sight of God. Here God brings forward a passage given through the prophet David, in Psalm 118:22-23: **"The Stone which the builders despised has become the Cornerstone. The LORD is responsible for this, and it is amazing for us to see."** And look also at the LORD's words through Peter, in (Acts 4), where he wrote: **"He is the Stone which was rejected, cast off, despised, disdained by you the builders has in fact become the very Cornerstone, the Chief stone, the sure Foundation."**

They are called builders for they taught the people. They went about with great speeches. They laid down many laws, etc. But by all this they made mere work -saints and hypocrites. It is their work, not God's work

Therefore the LORD's apostle Peter was taught to say, This instead is the corner Stone. *The Cornerstone was indeed rejected by men. On Him you must be built by faith.* This is now most wonderful in our eyes. God's amazing work seems strange to us, full of awe and wonder. And where the Spirit does not teach it, this great and precious truth is utterly incomprehensible.

Therefore God's chosen Stone is of great importance. Through this Cornerstone, the Lord takes away death, satisfies for sin, and rescues from hell. And then, in addition to all His generous blessings, He freely bestows His overwhelming gift of heaven.



*Let every kindred, every tribe, on this terrestrial ball
To Him all majesty ascribe and crown Him LORD of all!*

June 25

You yourselves, as living stones, are being built into a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. .

1 Peter 2:5

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How are we being built? By the Gospel and that which is preached. The builders are the preachers. Christians who hear the Gospel are those who are being built as stones which are to be fitted on this great Corner stone. Thus we rest our confidence on Him. Thus we let our hearts stand and rest on Him.

The building of stone or wood is not His house: He will have a spiritual house, that is, the Christian congregation. Those alone are the holy and spiritual

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

priesthood, namely, those true Christians, built upon this stone.

Christ has been anointed the high and most exalted Priest by God Himself. Christ has also sacrificed His own body for us, which is the office of the high priest. In addition, Christ prayed on the cross for us. Christ has also preached the Gospel And Christ taught all men to know God and Himself.

As to spiritual offerings, it is not necessary that we should present them to the papacy. It is not a "sacrifice" such as it was in the Old Testament, when men were forced to tithe. Why? Is not necessary. These sacrifices and priesthood have now ceased. All has become new and spiritual. The Great High Priest is Christ Jesus Himself.

Since He has sacrificed His own body, we hold nothing back. We likewise all offer up ourselves. We offer up ***spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ***. Since Christ is the Cornerstone on which we are laid, it must be only through Him that we are to deal with God.

For God does not look upon my cross, even though I torture myself to death. Instead God has promised in His written word to look upon Christ. Through Christ alone my works are acceptable before God.



*Jesus, You blood and righteousness, my beauty are, my glorious dress,
midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed, with joy shall I lift up my head.*

June 26

**For it stands in Scripture: 'Look! I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and honored Cornerstone, and the one who
believes in Him will never be put to shame!'**

1 Peter 2:6

* * *

I have before said that the Holy Spirit has enriched and fortified His letter through Peter with Scripture. This is how all preachers should preach. Thus their foundation may rest entirely and only on the Word of God.

Here also God introduces four or five texts, one upon another. The first, the Holy Spirit has taken from the prophet Isaiah, word for word. Christ is a precious Cornerstone or Foundation. This is the very passage which we have just dealt with and explained somewhat.

It is truly an eminent and celebrated proof text of the doctrine of faith. This is the Truth which is to be laid down as a foundation when we are to preach the Gospel in a place where Christ has not been preached before.

For it must be confessed and proclaimed that Christ is the Stone. Christ is the One on Whom faith is to be built and on whom faith is to stand. But why does the prophet call Christ Jesus a Foundation Stone? For this reason: that no man can build a house except he lay one stone first as a foundation, a base, a footing. The other stones in the building cannot stand except on the foundation stone.

So we must all of us rest on Christ. We confess Him as a Foundation Stone. Therefore we are not to pride ourselves that the Stone must receive something from us. Instead

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

we must receive blessings from the Foundation alone. We do not hold up the Foundation. But the Foundation bears us up. On Him lies sin, death, hell, and all that we would have to bear. So that all this – and whatever troubles us – cannot injure us. Why? We have been placed on this sure Foundation.

*Not the labors of my hands can fulfill Thy Law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone: Thou must save, and Thou alone.*

June 27

**So honor will come to you who believe, but for the unbelieving, *The Stone that the builders rejected*-- this One has become the Cornerstone,
1 Peter 2:7**

* * *

This precious value, then, is for you who believe. This exceedingly precious Stone is indeed, to some, precious and honorable. But on the other hand, it is also not precious to many.

Rather it is despised and disdained and a stone of stumbling. How is this? The Scripture ascribes to it a two-fold aspect, inasmuch as there are some that believe on it, and, on the other hand, many who do not believe on it.

This precious value, then, is for "*you who believe*". To believers Christ is precious. Your heart shall be glad as you repose your confidence and trust on Him. You are greatly dependent on Him. Although He in Himself is precious and excellent, yet this may or may not be of service or help to one, unless by faith the soul trusts in Him.

Jesus Christ is indeed precious to us for this one reason: He gives us so many precious blessings! In fact, all blessings eternal and temporary, are given by and for Him! He is an excellently precious Stone. Christ does not retain His virtue and strength in Himself.

Rather this Foundation Stone breaks forth and imparts all its powers and virtues, so that you have all that the precious and chosen Cornerstone is. Did you hear? Do you believe? The living God pronounces the sentence: those who rest on Him, without works, come to be justified through faith alone in Him.

*O Christ, our true and only Light, enlighten those who sit in night;
Let those afar now hear Your voice, and in Your fold with us rejoice.*

June 28

and 'A stone to stumble over, and a rock to trip over.' They stumble because they disobey the Message; they were destined for this.

1 Peter 2:8

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

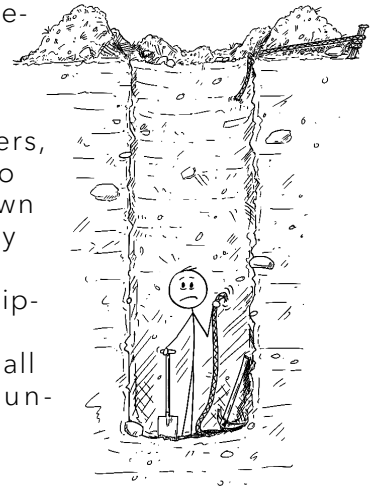
But the unbelieving do not hold Christ as such a precious Stone. They reject Him and stumble over Him, because He is not pleasing to them. Rather Christ is obnoxious and hateful to them.

These are not only the great, openly avowed sinners, but much more those self-made great "saints", those who rest on their free-will, on their own works and on their own righteousness. These self-made righteous ones invariably stumble over this Stone and run against Him.

That is the stumbling and the vexation of which Scripture has much to say. Thus the Jews stumble to this day against this stone. This will not cease until the Last Day shall dawn. On that Day, this Stone shall fall upon all the unbelieving and grind them to powder.

For this reason, although Christ is such an chosen, elect, precious Stone, He must yet be called a Stone of offense and stumbling. By no means is this His fault. Sadly, many are like the Jews in former days. They gloried in the earthly title and fame of God, that they had been God's people.

Thus is the case now, that souls under the name of Christ and calling themselves or their forefathers members of the Christian Church, actually deny Christ. They reject the precious Stone. They have condemned themselves to be ground up and thrown away.



O make the deaf to hear Your Word, and teach speechless- Words, dear LORD, Who dare not yet the faith avow, Though secretly they hold it now.

June 29

But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation. You are God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for God called you out of the darkness into His wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9

* * *

The Spirit of God gives Christians a true title, and has quoted this passage from Deuteronomy 7, where through Moses God revealed to the Jews, ***"For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be His people, His treasured possession."*** "Priests" and "kings" are all spiritual names, as are "Christians", "saints," and "the Church".

You are not called 'Christian' because you have much gold or wealth, but because you are built upon this Stone, and believe on, the Christ. **You are not called a priest** because you wear a tonsure or long robe, but for this reason, that you come into God's presence. **You are not a king** because you wear a gold-

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

en crown, and have many lands and people subject to you, but because you are lord over all things: death, sin, and hell.

Therefore, "**You are Christians**", is the same as here, "**you are a royal priesthood.**" And what is the result of God's work in you? You may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light! This belongs to the office of a priest.

God's priest is a messenger of God. He receives from God's Word Himself God's command to preach His Word. The excellencies, that is, the wonderful works that God has performed in you in bringing you out of darkness into light, you are to proclaim.

For your whole duty is discharged in this, that you confess what God has done for you. Therefore let this be your chief aim: openly make this known. Call every one to the Light, the Light into which you have been called.



*O LORD, I sing with lips and heart
Joy of my soul to Thee:
To earth Thy knowledge I impart,
as it is known to me.*

June 30

For you once were not a people, but now are God's people. For you once had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

1 Peter 2:10

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This passage is found written in the prophet Hosea, chapter 2, and St. Paul was taught to also quote it in Romans 9: "**I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, 'MY PEOPLE'.**" The solemnity and importance of all is this quite simply amazing and full of wonder indeed to think upon and meditate thoroughly.

Almighty God the LORD chose His Old Testament people Israel as a singular people, a unique and precious people. The LORD Almighty God manifested His great power on their behalf. The Almighty LORD God gave them many prophets God the LORD performed many wonderful works toward them. The LORD GOD, from that people. The Lord God Himself had chosen in the Christ to become incarnate, true man.

For the children's sake this has all taken place. Therefore they are called

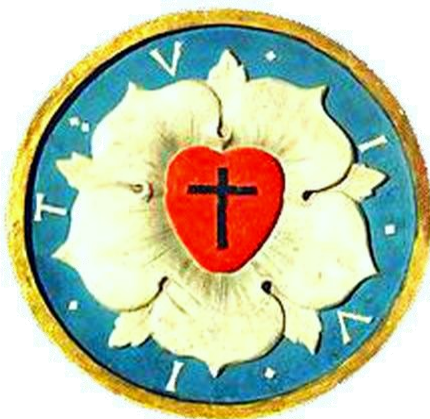
"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1

in Scripture the people of God. But the prophets have extended this even further! **God revealed His eternal election was always to be more comprehensive, widespread and inclusive that anyone could have imagined. God's plans included the non-Jews, the Gentiles.**

Therefore it is written, ***For you once were not a people, but now are God's people.*** It is evident that God instructed His apostle to write this Letter primarily to the Gentiles and not primarily to the Jews. This same gracious and eternal living God also reveals, clearly and firmly, that the passage from His prophet has been now fulfilled.

You are now God's holy people; ***you*** who have God's property, ***you*** who have God's priesthood, ***You*** who have God's kingdom; ***you*** who have all which Christ Jesus has. This is what **the Scriptures declare** and this is what ***you believe*** and therefore ***you have***.

*Salvation unto us has come
By God's free grace and favor.
Good works cannot avert our doom,
They help and save us never!
Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
Who did for all the world atone.
He is our one Redeemer!*



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 P.Tullberg, 2025.