

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*

Pastor Paul A. Tullberg | Pastor John T. Melke
3k-8 Principal/Educator Donna L. Tullberg
Teacher/ECM Director Amanda Irwin

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

May 1

**For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the Hope of righteousness.
Galatians 5:5**

* * *

The Holy Spirit here knits up the matter with a notable conclusion. You wish to be justified by the Law, by circumcision, and by works. But Christians do not seek to be justified by these means. We do not want Christ to become worthless to us. If such mindset befalls us, we become obligated to perform the whole Law. If this happens we shall finally fall away from God's free and faithful grace. Utter ruin.

Instead, believers wait in spirit through faith for the One whose name is the Hope of righteousness. Here God does not only say, as He often does, 'We are justified by faith'. But God intensifies His words, '**We are waiting for the Hope of righteousness.**'



Hope, according to Scripture, is often taken in two ways:

first: HOPE **FOR** the matter designated; second: for the 'HOPE' **WITHIN** the one who hopes. So hope in this place may also be taken in two ways. *Firstly*, the matter that is hoped for, the righteousness **FOR** which we hope. This shall certainly be revealed in such time as it pleases the Lord to give it.

Secondly, the HOPE within us that **LONGS FOR** this righteousness. Our righteousness is not yet revealed. We embrace Him in hope. For as long as we live here, sin remains in our flesh. There is also a law in our flesh and members. That law rebels against the law of the mind, and leads us captive into the services of sin.

Now when the affections of the flesh rage and rule, and we wrestle against them through the Spirit, then is there a place for longing. We long for perfect righteousness, but we are not yet perfectly righteous in and of ourselves.

This righteousness remains a goal then. We strive to be perfectly righteous in and of ourselves. Yet we fully know that will happen finally only in the glories of heaven. This is that for which we hope. Christ is our Hope of Righteousness.

*When He shall come with trumpet sound,
O may I then in Him be found, Clothed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne. On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand:
All other ground is sinking sand.*

May 2

**For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything,
but faith working through love.**

Galatians 5:6

* * *

"Faith working through love". Faith which is not faked or phony, but true and lively. True faith exercises and produces good works through love. He who would be a true Christian indeed, or a member of Christ's kingdom, must be a true believer.

The one who does not truly believe is evident because works of love do not follow faith. Thus on both hands, on the right hand as well as on the left God reveals and shuts out hypocrites from Christ's kingdom.



On the left hand the Holy Spirit shuts out the self-righteous Jews, and all such as desire to work their own salvation. **"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything"**. God bluntly says no works, no service, no worship services, no kind of life in the world avails before God. What does avail? Only faith in Jesus Christ, without any trust in works or merits.



On the right hand the Holy Spirit shuts out all slothful and idle persons. Those who make arrogant claims like, "If faith justifies without works, then let us do no works, but let us only believe, and do what we wish." Emphatically and bluntly the Holy Spirit says, **"Not so!"**

Although it is true that only faith justifies, yet God reveals here another point of faith. After God-created faith has justified one, it is not idle. Faith is occupied and exercised as it lives and works through love. The true Christian life consists **inwardly** in faith towards God, **and outwardly** in generous compassion and good works toward our neighbor.

*May Thy rich grace impart
strength to my fainting heart,
My zeal inspire;
As Thou hast died for me,
O may my love to Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be a living fire.*

May 3

You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the Truth?

Galatians 5:7.

* * *

Here the Holy Spirit compares the Christian life to a track-race. Among the Hebrews to "run" or to "walk" signifies the same as to live or to be active. The teachers run, then, when they teach purely; the hearers or learners run when they receive the Word with joy, and when the fruits of the Spirit follow.



That which seems to us to be very slow and scarcely to creep, runs swiftly in God's sight. Again, that which is to us nothing else but sorrow, mourning, and death, is before God, joy, mirth, and true happiness. Therefore Christ says: "**Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted**" (Matthew 5:4). "**Blessed are you who weep now: for you shall laugh**" (Luke 6:21). God identifies souls who fall away from His gracious faith and pursue the Law and works as 'hindered' in this race.

This happened to the Galatians. They were misled by the false apostles. These false teachers brought the Galatians to leave that path on which they had been running well.

While the Holy Spirit had placed His apostle was there and teaching them God's Word, the Galatians had been slowly maturing. Now with false persuasion they were bewitched, seduced. In fact, they had fallen clean away from the truth!

Yet they thought themselves to be in a happy state and that they ran very well. Therefore God points out that that devilish falling away from the pure doctrine comes not from man, but from the depths of hell. It is eternally perilous and terrifying.

For each and every soul that that continues to pursue error are so far from acknowledging this very sin, that they maintain their arrogance and false high righteousness.

*Run the straight race Through God's good grace,
Lift up thine eyes, and seek His face:
Life with its way before us lies,
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.*

May 4

This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you.

Galatians 5:8.

* * *

This is a great consolation and singular doctrine. God reveals how false opinions planted by wicked teachers may be rooted out of hearts. The false apostles were jolly fellows. They were a pleasant bunch in outward appearance. They far surpassing the Lord's apostle, both in learning and outward godliness.



The Galatians, were letting themselves be deceived with this impressive and exciting show. They wrongly imagined that they were hearing Christ Himself when those smooth talkers jabbered.

Therefore they falsely judged their confidence to be from Christ.

To the contrary, God reveals that this persuasion and doctrine was not from Christ. God had called believer from His own love and grace. So this confidence from their false teachers is a lie, right from the devil's mind. Speaking so bluntly, God's Law and Gospel brought many of Galatians back from their false opinions.

Again, this consolation applies to all who through temptation had a false opinion of Christ Jesus. Remember: the devil is a marvelously slick persuader. The devil knows how to amplify the least sin, yes, an insignificant trifle. The devil can enlarge a sin in such a way, that the soul thinks it the most heinous, horrible crime.

And from there, the devil attempts to deceive the soul even more. The conscience is attacked to believe that this or that particular sin has pushed beyond God's ability to redeem. Therefore, the devil whispers the soul is worthy only of eternal damnation.

Here the troubled conscience must hear the Gospel and be comforted. God's sure Word and promise shall raise up the wounded and fallen. False notions of sin and false teachings that support those false notions fight against the Word of the Gospel.

The Gospel reveals Christ **for us**. He is not revealed an accuser, not as a cruel exactor of fees, not as a penny-pincher. Christ Jesus is revealed as a meek, humble-hearted, and a generous and merciful Savior, a Comforter. Believers are given His Gospel and with His Gospel we may withstand the cold and stingy attitude of Satan's.

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

Believers are aware and alert. The devil can transform himself into the likeness of an angel of God. So only God's clear word can reveal his devilish power and destroy his hellish deceptions.

*On Christ alone by faith I live,
From Him my life, my all receive;
To Him devote my fleeting hours,
Serve Him alone with all my powers.*

May 5

A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough.

Galatians 5:9

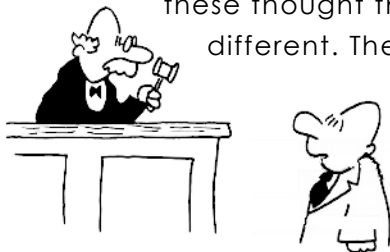
* * *

This whole Epistle clearly witnesses how God our Father was sorely grieved with the fall of the Galatians. How often the Spirit's word chided and sometimes entreated them. God exposed the great and horrible consequences that would follow on the heels of this their fall. They needed to turn back to God, to repent.

This fatherly and apostolic care and admonition of is reflected in the heart and preaching of the Lord's apostle Paul. Yet even hearing God's own words through God's chosen messenger did not move some of them at all. Many of them publicly discounted the Lord's apostle. In arrogance they refused to listen to God's messenger as God's appointed shepherd. They instead preferred the false apostles as far superior to the apostle.

"Now," they said to themselves, "we have the really true teaching of God. It is certainly not what we heard from God's called worker before."

Some others had not yet utterly forsaken the Lord's pure teaching. Instead, these thought there was no danger. After all, it was just a little different. They just were a little flexible, bending away from the Lord's clear word in merely two small areas: the teachings of justification and faith. These were just a few small words from the volumes of the Scriptures.



"Are you sure? — I don't feel guilty."

For this reason, when the Lord's apostle Paul made so horrendous a matter out of those

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

teachings, they were stunned! They considered the differences light and of small importance. They wrongly supposed that if they had swerved somewhat from God's doctrine, it was but a small matter. If there was some small fault in them, as God's proclaimer of Good News, he was supposed to just let it pass by as of little consequence their claims of forced fruit.

At the very least the Lord's called worker should not so vigorously denounce the errors he claims to have spotted. After all, they falsely supposed that in this way the Lord's apostle would actually be breaking the concord, the peace and unity, of God's congregations.

But the Lord instructs His believers to answer teaching with an everyday picture that exposes and reveals the truth: "**A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough.**" In philosophy, a small error of teaching in the beginning of reasoning, becomes a great and destructive error in the end result.

It is the same way in theology. One little error of teaching has the destructive capability of overthrowing the whole doctrine. Therefore in this matter Christians must keep separate and far apart any temporal feelings from God's eternal doctrine. The doctrine of the Word is not mine, but God's. I cannot, may not, and will not drop, remove or change a single tittle of God's holy Scripture.

*By grace! May sin and Satan hearken! I bear my flag of
faith in hand, And pass — for doubts my joy can't darken —
The Red Sea to the Promised Land. I cling to what my Savior
taught. And trust it whether felt or not.*

May 6

**I have confidence in you in the Lord, that you will adopt no other view;
but the one who is disturbing you shall bear His judgment, whoever he is.**

Galatians 5:10.

* * *

Through His called servants, the Lord had taught, admonished, and reproved the Galatians enough so that they should have listened to the Lord's apostle long ago. Nevertheless, the apostle goes on to say, **I have confidence in you in the Lord.**

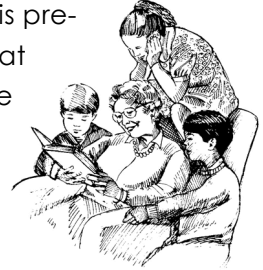
Here some raise a question, whether the Lord's servant does well himself when God told him to write that he has a good hope or trust in the Galatians.

Holy Scripture forbids any trust to be put in people. Both faith and love have their trust and belief, but different sorts. Confidence differs on the basis of the difference between the objects of confident faith,

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

the object of conviction and love. The *object of Faith is God and His words and promises*. So faith cannot be deceived. Love often has as its object merely another human. *Therefore the feeling of love often deceives*.

Now a faith springs from love is absolutely necessary to this present life! For if one man would not believe and trust another, what sort of life would we live upon earth? Christians do sooner believe and give credit through love, than the children of this world do. For faith towards men is a fruit of the Spirit. It displays how Christian Faith works in the attitude of the godly.



In this sense, Paul had a trust in the Galatians, yes, even though they were fallen from God's pure doctrine. They were still in the LORD. That is, so far as the LORD was in them and they in the LORD. In other words, as long as they stayed in the truth.

But, if they fell away from the truth, seduced by the ministers of Satan, the apostle would trust them no more. The Lord told His servant to record this good hope that they will not receive any other doctrine which shall be contrary to God's Word.

But those who were troubling the Galatians would bear their own condemnation. No matter how important they were in the eyes of men, or how kind, or how sweet, their condemnation was coming. With good-tasting poison the false teachers were using feelings to lead souls away from God. Those souls were so deceived they did not even think they were being led away from God. They had forgotten that one little point of doctrine is of more value than heaven and earth. After all it is God's teaching, not man's teaching. God's wisdom, not man's.

*Courage then, for all things must Work for good, and bless us,
If we but in prayerful trust To His Son address us.*

May 7

**Brothers and sisters, if I am still preaching that circumcision
is necessary, why am I still being persecuted?**

In that case the cross wouldn't be offensive anymore. Galatians 5:11

* * *

The Holy Spirit compels His apostle to labor by all means possible to call the Galatians back to safety again. He teachings him to use his own life's experience to clarify for them. The Lord's apostle Paul obtained for himself the hatred and persecution of the priests and elders, and of the whole Jewish nation. The Lord's apostle had ex-

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

posed and removed the false righteousness based on the false teaching of circumcision.

God points out that if His apostle just went along with the little false teaching, in just this one little area, all the Jews would not only cease to persecute him, but would love and highly commend him! He would have no more troubles indeed! But now, God proclaims the Gospel of Christ through His apostle. He preaches the righteousness of faith alone and abolishes the law and circumcision as necessary for salvation. Therefore the Lord's worker suffers persecution.

On the other hand, the false apostles, to avoid the cross and this deadly hatred of the Jewish nation, preach circumcision and that good works are necessary for salvation. By this false teaching, they obtain and retain the favor of the Jews. More to the point, they claim to favor that there be no dissension, but peace and concord, between the Gentiles and the Jews.

But in reality it is impossible to be done without the loss of the God's teaching concerning of faith. This is the teaching of the cross. It is the cause of and is full of offenses. **"Christ sent me to preach the Gospel, not in cleverness of speech, that the cross of Christ should not be made void."** The Lord's apostle does not want the offense and cross of Christ to be abolished in the least. Here some may counter: "Christians then are madmen! They cast themselves into danger of their own accord! They gain for themselves the hatred and enmity of the whole world!"

But this does not hurt the apostle's faith or trouble his mind and heart in the least. Rather, it makes him more bold. God causes His servant to have even more hope for the happy success and increase of God's Church. For in the full and free Gospel of Jesus Christ God rules in the hearts and minds of His people, even though surrounded by His enemies who would stand in His way.

*If thou but suffer God to guide thee, And hope in Him through all
Thy ways, He'll give thee strength, whate'er betide thee, And bear
thee through the evil days; Who trusts in God's unchanging love
Builds on the Rock that naught can move!*



May 8

O that even they would cut themselves off who are unsettling your faith!

Galatians 5:12.

* * *

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



Is this the part of an Apostle? Not only to denounce the false apostles who are troublers of the church? to condemn them and to deliver them to Satan? But also to wish that they might be utterly rooted out and perish? Really!? To some ears this sounds unduly harsh! And what else is this but plain cursing? What does this mean?

God says through Paul **"They compel you to cut off the foreskin of your flesh; but I would that they themselves might be utterly cut off by the root!"** To this I ask: "Is it lawful for Christians to curse?" And the answer I say, God gave him these words to use, therefore "Yes."

However, to bring down the curse of God is not always required. Every injustice does not need such a verbal condemnation. However, when God's Word is abused, when God's doctrine blasphemed, God Himself is being abused! And God Himself blasphemed. What then must I do? I then must turn to this sentence and say: **"Blessed be God and His Word, and whatsoever is without God, let it be accursed!"**

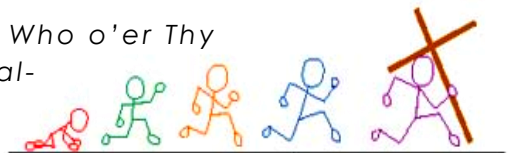
Here we can see how great a matter the Lord's apostle was taught to treat **"a little leaven"**. The false apostles willingly brought down God's own curse on their own heads. Although in outward appearance they were men of great authority and outward kindness and even apparent holiness. God is not deceived when His Word is attacked and twisted!

So when we are dealing with the "leaven" of false teaching let us never think or act as though it is of little account! Although it be ever so minor, it is eternally weighty. If we neglect it, it will be the cause that little by little the truth and even our salvation shall be lost! Even God Himself could wind up being denied. How can this be? This is how it happens.

When the Word is corrupted, God is denied and blasphemed. For if His Word is tarnished, then God Himself must also be corrupted. To deny God means that there remains no hope of salvation! Do you listen to God? He is very clear! God and His word are inseparable. For this reason let us learn to advance and extol the majesty and authority of God's Word.

We are bound by no concern for Christian love or concord. Let me say that clearly. We are bound by no concern for Christian love or concord but we sit, as it were, on the judgment-seat when God's Word is vandalized. We join with the Spirit and all believers and curse and condemn all souls who in the least point deface, vandalize or corrupt the majesty of God's Word.

*Those haughty spirits, LORD, restrain, Who o'er Thy
Church with might would reign, And al-
ways set forth something new Devised
to change Thy doctrine true.*



May 9

**For you were called to be free, brothers;
only don't use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh,
but serve one another through love.**

Galatians 5:13

* * *

Here follow God's exhortations and directions for life and good works. You have obtained liberty through Christ! You, dear Christian, are above all Laws as far as conscience is concerned! You stand holy and pure in Christ before God. You have been blessed, are blessed and have been saved! Christ is your life! Therefore, although the Law, sin, and death, trouble and terrify you, yet they cannot hurt you nor drive you to despair.

And this is your excellent and inestimable freedom, gifted to you by God Himself! Now, however, it is appropriate and wise for you to see to it that you do not misuse your heavenly gift of freedom. This is not to be an opportunity for the lusts of the sinful flesh.

Sadly, this evil is common. This is the most malignant of all others evils that Satan stirs up in the doctrine of faith. In very many people the devil turns this godly freedom, in which Christ has made us free, into the permission for the sinful flesh to rule and destroy them.

"For certain individuals slipped in secretly, about whom it was written some time ago that they are condemned. They are ungodly people who turn the grace of our God into a license for sin and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." (Jude 4)

The sinful flesh is utterly ignorant of the doctrine of grace. The sinful nature does not know that we are declared righteous, not by works, but by faith only. Therefore, when the sinful flesh hears the teaching concerning faith, it abuses and twists it into depravity. It tempts us with this reasoning: "*If we are without Law, let us then live as we please. Let us do no good. Let us not give to the needy. Let us take care of ourselves first. Let us not endure any evil. After all, there is no longer any Law to constrain us.*"

There is danger on either side obviously. But the one is more tolerable than the other. If grace or faith is **not** preached fully and clearly, no one can be saved; for it is faith alone that justifies and saves.

On the other hand, the doctrine of faith is understood by some as an excuse to live as they please. The God-worked and God-given freedom of the Spirit is twisted and disfigured into the freedom of the flesh. Instead of serving one another in love, they serve their own lusts. God forbid!

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

*Lord, in Thy kingdom there shall be No aliens from each other,
But even as he loves himself Each saint shall love his brother.*

May 10

**For the whole law can be summed up in a single commandment, namely,
"You must love your neighbor as yourself."**

Galatians 5:14.

* * *

The foundation of Christian doctrine has no other foundation than Jesus Christ, the righteousness of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11). On this foundation the apostle is now taught to proclaim a life that builds good works, yes, very good works indeed! **"You must love your neighbor as yourself."**

I have taught you about the true spiritual life, and now I will also teach you what true good works are. You need to know the useless and foolish work of ceremonies, which the false teachers urge, are far inferior to the works of love.

For such is the foolishness and madness of all wicked teachers and fantastical spirits. Not only do false and wicked teachers depart from the true foundation and pure doctrine, but they then continue on to fantasies. They obviously never attain to truly good works in God's eyes, although they deceive many who are earthbound and deceived by false kindnesses.

Therefore, as the LORD's apostle says (1 Corinthians 3:12-13), they build with nothing but wood, hay, and stubble upon the Foundation. The false teachers, who were the most earnest defenders of doing good works, never taught or required the truth: actual good works flow only from Christian love.



Christians love God. They love one another! So Christians are at the ready to help their neighbors in every need, not only with their material possessions, but also with their body. In other words, Christians, with tongue, hand, heart, and with their whole strength are to love each other.

False teachers "only" required that circumcision should be kept, such a little thing for the good of others. And then later required only a change of clothing, adding of days, months, years, and times must also be observed.

After false teachers had destroyed the foundation, which is Christ and His Word, they went on to darken the doctrine of faith. Sadly it was impossible that there could remain any true use, exercise, or opinion of good works that God approves.

*We share our mutual woes; Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows The sympathizing tear.*

May 11

But if you bite and devour one another, watch out, or you will be consumed by one another. Galatians 5:15

* * *

Witness that if God's solid and sure Foundation, that is to say, if faith in Christ, is overthrown by wicked and false teachers, no peace or concord can remain in the church, either in doctrine or life.



There surely and foolishly are diverse opinions and dissensions from time to time both in doctrine and life, by which it comes to pass that one bites and devours another (one judges and condemns another). If this continues, at length they are consumed by each other. Concerning this not only the Scriptures, but also the examples of all times, bear witness.

How many sects have we at this day? They spring up one after another, pursuing one person or another, following one feeling or another! Thus when the unity of the spirit is broken, it is nearly impossible that there should be any concord either in doctrine or life! Daily new errors must as consequence spring up it continues without measure and without end. Why? Because the source of all pure teaching, God's Word, is discarded in favor of man's opinions.

The Lord's apostle is instructed to teach that such occasions of discord surely are to be avoided. However this is not done by reproaching or belittling truth and freedom in Christ. Then how? The way to unity and concord is clear: Let every one do his duty in that kind of life into which God has called him! Let him not lift himself up above others or make them conform! Likewise let him not find fault with other men's works and applaud his own works.

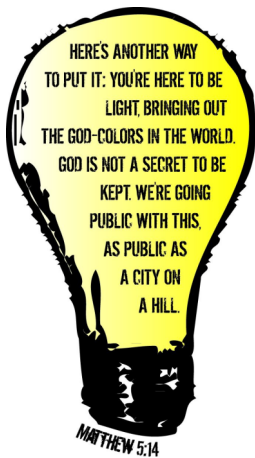


Let every one serve one another through love. It is a hard and a dangerous matter to teach the truth. We are made righteous by faith without works and yet with the same breath the true preacher of Gospel encourages thankful works that flow from the Gospel back to the Lord all the same.

Here, we must pray for God to raise up ministers of Christ to remain faithful and wise teachers of the mysteries of God. They must **rightly divide the word of truth**. To fail in such a task means that true faith and true holy and wholesome works will, by and by, be confounded and muddled, twisted by false teachers.

Both these doctrines, **godly faith** as well as **godly works**, must be diligently taught and urged. Yes, both must be taught and most certainly both must remain within their God assigned eternal boundaries.

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



Teach us the lesson Thou hast taught, To feel for those Thy blood bath bought; That every word, and deed, and thought, May work a work for Thee.

May 12

Let me explain further. Live your life as the Holy Spirit directs your spiritual nature. Then you will never follow through on what your corrupt nature wants.

Galatians 5:16

* * *

I have not forgotten my previous discourse concerning faith, nor do I revoke it when I exhort you to mutual love. The Spirit reveals clearly, **"the whole Law is fulfilled through love."** But that you may rightly understand, I add this in addition: **Live your life as the Holy Spirit directs your spiritual nature.** God speaks plainly enough, yet God has not prevailed yet in their hearts and lives.

There are those who gather from God's words wrong malformed interpretations: Some claim that if love is the fulfilling of the Law, it follows then that love is righteousness; therefore if we love, we are righteous. The Law has commanded love, therefore the work of love follows.

But God's answer to such false and wicked reasoning is clear and direct. It is true that we are to fulfill the Law, and we are to be justified through the fulfilling thereof. But sin hinders us. Indeed, the Law prescribes and commands that we love our neighbor as ourselves, but that great love does not automatically follow the command. They claim, "This is written, therefore it is done? the Law commands love, therefore we love?" Hardly!

There is not one man to be found upon the whole earth, who loves God and his neighbor as the Law requires. But only in the life to come, shall we be thoroughly cleansed from all corruptions and sins. Then, and only then, we shall love perfectly.

We shall not only in heaven be called righteous, we shall also truly be righteous! It is ours through God's truly perfected love, completely unhindered by the sinful nature. But in this life such purity is hindered by the sinful flesh. As long as we live, sin remains in the flesh. In the meantime notwithstanding, so that we may be declared righteous in this life also, we have Christ. Christ Jesus is the Mercy-Seat. He is the Throne of Grace. Because we trust Him, by faith in Him, sin is not credited to us. Faith, therefore, is our righteousness in this life.

*Guard, O God, our faith forever; Let not Satan, death or shame
Ever part us from our Savior; Lord, our Refuge is Thy name.
Though our flesh would fain say. Nay, Be Thy Word to us still Yea.*

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

May 13

For the flesh desires what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you don't do what you want.

Galatians 5:17.

* * *

God admonishes us so that we might sense the strong desires of the sinful nature. Not only carnal lust, but also pride, wrath, heaviness, impatience, unbelief, and the like flow from the sinful nature. Even though God would have us sense them, God would not have us consent to them, nor accomplish them.

Our sinful nature neither thinks, speaks, nor do those things which the sinful flesh provokes in us. For example, if it moves us to anger, then we should be angry in this manner, as we are taught in the fourth Psalm, so that we do not sin. I know that the sinful flesh will provoke you to wrath, envy, doubting, incredulity, and such; but resist it by the Holy Spirit, that you do not sin. If you forsake the guiding of the Spirit, and follow the flesh, you shall fulfill the lusts of the flesh, and you shall die.

So here God speaks not only of the lusts of the flesh, but of the whole kingdom of sin. These two wicked leaders, the flesh and the Spirit, are set one against another in your body, so that you cannot do what you please. God speaks His words here to believing Christians, to those who have been justified, renewed, and have full and complete forgiveness of sins.

Yet notwithstanding, God reveals that the flesh rebels against the Spirit in His holy people. In the same way the Lord's apostle speaks of himself in the seventh chapter of Romans: **"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."**

But what shall be our Anchor-Hold? Christ Jesus is our only and perfect Righteousness.

*God's grace first made me feel my sin, then taught me to believe;
Then, in believing, peace I found, And now I live, I live!*

May 14

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Galatians 5:18.

* * *

The doctrine of faith repeats itself again and again. God is beating it into our heads; yes, even when God teaches about His holy and wholesome good works, He must repeatedly pound it in. Here some may object: How can it be that we should not be under the Law? Doesn't God teach us that we have flesh which lusts against the Spirit?

And indeed we feel sin. We cannot be delivered from the feeling of it. And what

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

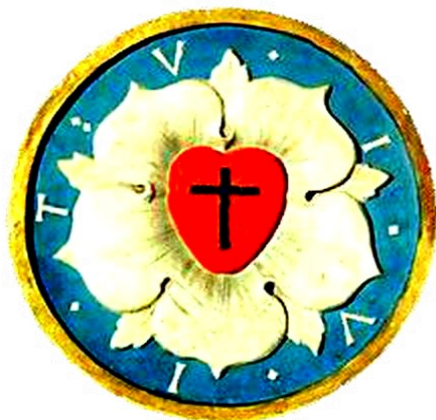
is this else but to be under the Law? To this God says, Do not let this trouble you. Be led by the Spirit, that is to say, show yourselves as those who follow and obey that holy will of the Spirit which resists the flesh, and does not serve the desires. Be led and drawn by the Spirit! You are not under the Law.

So Paul was taught to speak this way of himself: **“on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin”** (Romans 7:25). The faithful then are not under the Law, that is to say, in the Holy Spirit. The Law cannot accuse them, although they may surely feel sin, and surely confess themselves to be sinners.

But the power and strength of the Law is removed by Christ, **“who was born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law”** (Galatians 4:4-5). So great, then, is the power and dominion of the Spirit, that the Law cannot accuse the godly, even though God’s own people may commit that which is truly sin.

For Christ is our Righteousness, whom we hold by faith. Christ is totally without sin, and therefore **the Law cannot accuse Christ. As long as we hold fast to Christ, we are led by the Spirit and are free from the Law.**

*Savior, I follow on, guided by Thee,
Seeing not yet the hand that leadeth me;
Hushed be my heart and still, fear I no further ill,
Only to meet Thy will My will shall be.*



Selections from Luther's Commentaries-St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians 1535, Edwin 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, 2024.