

12th Sunday after Pentecost, Part 2 of 3 on the Apostle's Creed

2nd Article and Luther's Sm. Catechism Meaning

The Second Article

Of Redemption.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

What does this mean?--I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord. He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, All this he did that I should be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from death, lives and rules eternally. This is most certainly true.

Introduction: Grace, mercy and peace are yours because God the Father created you, God the Son, redeemed you and God the Holy Spirit sanctified you.

The Apostle's Creed reminds us what we can expect from our God. With the 1 st Article we are reminded that everything in all creation is to serve the creator, ourselves included because He is our loving Heavenly Father who provides everything we need for our life now and into eternity. The Second Article about the God the Son shows us what we receive from God above and beyond all the good things of creation - specifically our redemption.

To help us understand the work of God the Son for the world of sinners, Martin Luther focuses all our attention on one phrase: Jesus Christ is my Lord. This little phrase packs a gigantic punch with the heaviest swing coming down on LORD. In the days of Martin Luther, the people would understand the picture of a lord or king much better than we do today. The peasants, the ordinary people, relied on their lord (king) for peace and safety from their enemies. The king was to act FOR his people. The lord built walls to protect his people. The lord went to war to save his people.

With this brilliant picture of a lord saving his people, we are led to answer the questions: Who is my Lord?

How did he become my Lord? Why did he become my Lord?

First our Lord is the Son of God, who became a man by the Holy Spirit through a virgin birth. He is true man and true God in one person. He rescued us poor sinners from the ownership and possession of the devil. He did this by suffering for my sins and dying on the cross for my sins. He was raised to life by God the Father proving that He is our Redeemer and rightful Lord. He did all this that we should no longer live under the rule of sin, death and the devil, but under His good and gracious rule in His kingdom forever.

The picture of Jesus Christ as our Lord helps us to remember the tremendous outcome of His victory for us.

Think of a battlefield, stretching as far as you can see filled with the enemies of God - the devil and his evil angels with all their terrifying powers of death and sin. Then zoom overhead the ranks of enemies, past the devil, past the evil angels, past all their terrifying weapons of death and sin, and zoom behind the enemy lines and see the human race chained to sin, blindfolded by sin, and condemned to death and an eternal life of hopelessness.

But off in the distance, past the terrifying powers of sin and death, past the evil angels, past the devil

himself, way off on the horizon our Redeemer appears. But wait, he's just a lamb? The armies laugh and scoff at Him. They yell "charge" and rush the lamb overwhelming it and slaughtering it in a matter seconds. The hideous shouts of victory and evil laughter echo across the battlefield. The devil and his minions have their celebration for what seems like days, but then in a flash the Redeemer appears at our side behind the enemy lines, but now He is a LION. Our Redeemer is alive! He unlocks the chains of sin and the blindfold of sinfulness on the whole human race. The Lion, our Redeemer, has freed us from sins and our hopeless death sentence. He then scatters the evil angels with His powerful roars of victory. Even the devil himself is thrown across the battlefield by his roars of redemption victory. The Lion leads His people, freed from sin, death and the devil, to His eternal kingdom of life and hope, all kept safely behind the walls of His Golden City, where His people live in innocence, blessedness and righteousness. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is the Lamb of God and the Lion of the tribe of Judah, is my Lord.

Confessing that 'Jesus is my Lord' is difficult for some people. It means you serve another's wishes, not your own. I've heard it said that we must accept Jesus as our Savior and then receive Him as Lord.

They • make it sound like God the Son is some sort of taskmaster or tyrant. They put the emphasis on us poor sinners

to break free from the chains of sin and blindfold of sinfulness, and decide to put Jesus as Lord of our heart.

If poor sinners are ever going to be able to serve God the Son as Lord it is first and foremost because we have been redeemed, rescued from behind enemy lines and brought into his Kingdom of innocence, blessedness, and righteousness. Poor sinners could never break themselves free from those heavy chains of sin and blindness. The 2nd Article of the apostle's creed reminds us of the redemption that Jesus Christ won for us that is why we call him and serve him as my Lord.

We all know the battle of wills that goes on in a family. From morning to night, the question 'who's in charge' is never far from thought. "It's time to wake up. It's time for bed. Eat your vegetables. Do your chores. Finish your homework." Why should our children serve and obey us? Is it out of fear and guilt that they obey? Sadly, it is at times. If only our children would believe that everything we have done and will do is all for them.

Our Lord Jesus doesn't want to be known as a tyrant either. He has redeemed us from the devil's possession to be His own so that we might serve Him willingly out of love. If that's not the case, we go from one taskmaster to another taskmaster whom we serve out of fear and punishment. But the opposite is true. Everything that the sinful world and the devil have done was for themselves and at the expense of our life and joy. While everything that our Redeemer has done and will do is always for our life and for our joy! The important phrase in Luther's meaning is all the first person pronouns! I counted 4 of them. "For me" is the heart of Luther's meaning to the Apostle's Creed. We could say the reason God the Son became a human being was to be my Lord. He lived and died in order to be my Lord. He rose from the dead to be my Lord, When your Lord commands you to obey him, remember your Lord is your Redeemer who loves you and sacrificed everything for you.

The results of our Lord's work for us are astronomical, literally out of this world. Since God the Son became a man 100%, he can sympathize and understand the human plight of suffering, weakness and simple sadness. He understands us poor sinners.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are-- yet was without sin. 16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Since God the Son rose from the dead and lives and rules eternally, we can be confident that everything He said while on earth is the gospel truth for God does not lie or change His mind. And our Lord Jesus Christ has promised us resurrection from the dead and life eternal in paradise:

John 14:1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. 2 In my Father's

house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

Serving a boss is not an easy thing to do, especially if he is a tyrant, uncaring and unloving. The gospel of Jesus Christ compels us with love and grace to see God the Son as our Redeemer. Could the Lord who saved us from shame, guilt, death and hopelessness by becoming a sinner in our place, dying for our crimes, and rising from the dead for us, make it any easier for us to gladly thank, serve, and obey him?

There are a handful of movies that make me choke up. But there has been only two that made me cry - the Passion of the Christ by Mel Gibson and C.S. Lewis', the Chronicles of Narnia. At the Passion of the Christ I cried at the sheer shock and disturbing disgust at myself for not honoring and serving the God-Man that went through this hell for me even before the crucifixion scene. In the Chronicles of Narnia, I cried at the scene of the children receiving their crowns from King Aslan. The simple thought of the great unearned rewards made my heart overflow with thanksgiving and joy for what my Lord has won for me.

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly. Remember what your Lord Jesus has done for you. Let the Word of Christ move you to, confess your sins to Him, for His humble and gentle of heart will give you rest. Let the Word of Christ, your Lord move you to thank, praise, serve and obey him for all the wonderful blessings he has given you by his work of redemption.