

TWELFTH EVENING LECTURE.

(December 12, 1884.)

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The worst fault in modern preaching, my dear friends, is this, that the sermons lack point and purpose; and this fault can be noticed particularly in the sermons of modern preachers who are believers. While unbelieving and fanatical preachers have quite a definite aim, — pity, that it is not the right one! — believing preachers, as a rule, imagine that they have fully discharged their office, provided what they have preached has been the Word of God. That is about as correct a view as when a ranger imagines he has discharged his office by sallying forth with his loaded gun and discharging it into the forest; or as when an artilleryman thinks he has done his duty by taking up his position with his cannon in the line of battle and by discharging his cannon. Just as poor rangers and soldiers as these latter are, just so poor and useless preachers are those who have no plan in mind and take no aim when they are preaching. Granted their sermons contain beautiful thoughts; they do not, for that matter, take effect. They may occasionally make the thunders of the Law roll in their sermons, yet there is no lightning that strikes. Again, they may water the garden assigned to them with the fructifying waters of the Gospel, but they are pouring water on the beds and the paths of the garden indiscriminately, and their labor is lost.

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Neither Christ nor the holy apostles preached in that fashion. When they had finished preaching, every hearer knew: He meant me, even when the sermon had contained no personal hints or insinuations. For instance, when our Lord Christ had delivered the powerful, awful parable of the murderous vine-dressers, the high priests and scribes confessed to themselves: He means us. When the holy Apostles Paul, on a certain occasion, had preached before the profligate and unjust Governor Felix concerning righteousness, temperance, and the Judgment to come, Felix perceived immediately that Paul was aiming his remarks at him. He trembled, but being unwilling to be converted, he said to Paul: “Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.” But he never did call him. He had heard the sermon suited to his spiritual condition, and Paul’s well-aimed remarks had struck home.

The reason, then, my dear friends, why in the Lutheran congregations of our former home country Germany unbelieving preachers are nearly always in the ascendancy is unquestionably this: the sermons of the Christian preachers are aimless efforts. Unbelievers are increasing in the congregations about as fast as the Christian preachers are increasing, of whom there are considerably more now than when I was young. Why do they accomplish nothing? Oh, would to God that these dear men had the humility to sit down at Luther’s feet and study his postils! They would learn how to preach effectively. For the Word of God, when preached as it should be, never returns void.

May God help you in your future ministry not to become aimless prattles, so that you will have to complain that you accomplished so little, when nobody but yourselves is at fault because you have no definite aim when preparing your sermons and do not reflect: To such and such people I want to drive home a lesson, — not this or that person whom I am going to name, but persons in whose condition I know to be such and such.

However, while it is important that your sermons do not lack a special aim, it is equally important that your aim be the right one. If you do not aim properly, your preaching, after all, will be useless, whether you preach the Law or the Gospel.

Thesis VIII.

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In the fourth place, the Word of God is not rightly divided when the Law is preached to those who are already in terror an account of their sins or the Gospel to those who live securely in their sins.

In the opening lecture on our series of theses we got acquainted with the six points of difference between the Law and the Gospel. They differ 1) as regards the manner of their being revealed to men; 2) as regards their contents; 3) as regards the promises held out by either doctrine; 4) as regards their threatenings; 5) as regards the function and the effect of either doctrine; 6) *as regards the persons to whom either the one or the other doctrine must be preached.* As a rule, point No. 6 is named last. The reason is not that it is less important; for this point introduces a difference of especially great importance. It is this: the Gospel must be preached only to bruised, contrite, miserable sinners; the Law, to secure sinners. Inverting this order means confounding both and, by confounding them, commingling both in the most dangerous manner. Of the truth of this we became convinced in our first lecture, from the statement in 1 Tim. 1, 8–10: *We know that the Law is good if a man use it lawfully. Knowing this, that the Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.* No law is given to a person who is made righteous by Christ, but to the unrighteous and disobedient. These are the persons to whom the Law must be preached. To make a miserable, contrite sinner the subject of Law-preaching is to commit a grievous sin against him; for the Gospel ought to be preached to him.

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Isaiah says, chap. 61, 1–3: *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.* The phrase “day of vengeance” does not signify a day of judgment on men; for to proclaim such a day would not be proclaiming an acceptable year. The meaning is this: The Son of God meant to take vengeance on Satan, who had hurled the human race into misery. For this reason the proclamation of “the day of vengeance” is a cheering, comforting message to us. If God had not avenged our Fall upon Satan, we should be lost. If Christ had not redeemed us from the devil, we could not rejoice, but would have to remain in sadness. The picturesque phrases which follow in this text must all be understood figuratively, as pointing to spiritual gifts of grace.

These texts show us that according to God’s Word not a drop of evangelical consolation is to be brought to those who are still living securely in their sins.

That was the practise of our Lord and Savior. One day He was approached by a woman “which was a sinner” (Luke 7, 37), who in the presence of self-righteous Pharisees knelt down, washed His feet with her

hot tears, and dried them with her hair, with which in former days, no doubt, she had frequently made a display of vanity. She was crushed when she came to Jesus; there was no one to comfort her. But she turned to Jesus, for she had realized that where He was, there was the throne of grace. What did the Lord do on that occasion? He did not utter one word of reproof because of the sins she had committed in darkness, - for she had, no doubt, lived in the worst sins of fornication, — no, not a word. He simply said to her: “Thy sins are forgiven.” In another, a similar instance He dismissed the guilty woman with the assurance: “Neither do I condemn thee,” and with the brief admonition: “Go and sin no more.”

The same treatment the Lord accorded to Zacchaeus, the nefarious publican, who had defrauded people throughout the land. He may have heard some things from Christ directly and many more things from the report of others. He had gained the conviction that he could not go on in his sinful ways, but must amend his conduct. When the Lord was about to pass in the neighborhood, he mounted a sycamore-tree, because he wanted to see this holy Man. What did the Lord do? Catching sight of him in the tree, He called to him: “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house.” Zacchaeus surely expected that the Lord would go over the record of his sins with him and hold up to him all the evil he had done. But Jesus did nothing of the kind. On the contrary in the house of Zacchaeus He said: “This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.” It is Zacchaeus who says: “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.” The Lord did not demand this of him, but his own conscience, first alarmed, but now quieted, demanded this joyful act of generosity to the poor from him. No doubt, he kept his promise.

The parable of the prodigal is another illustration. The Lord pictures him to us, after he had wasted everything he had with harlots, as returning to his father with a contrite heart. The father receives him without a word of censure, but falls upon his neck, kisses him, and exclaims: “Let us be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” A joyous banquet is prepared, but not a word of reproof is spoken.

This attitude the Lord maintains even while hanging on the cross. Next to Him hangs one who has led an infamous life. The patient suffering of Christ has given him a new understanding, which he voices in these words: “We, indeed, are justly in this condemnation; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss.” Turning finally to the Lord, he says: “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.” He recognizes in Jesus the Messiah. And now observe that the Lord does not reply, “What! Thee I am to remember? Thee, who hast done so many wicked things?” No, He does not cast up his sins to him at all, but simply says: “To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.”

By these incidents the Lord shows us what we are to do, even to-day, for a poor sinner who may have led a shameful life, but has become crushed and contrite, full of terror because of his sins. In such a case we should not lose any time in censuring and reproofing him, but absolve and comfort him. That is the way to divide the Gospel from the Law.

The practise of the holy apostles was identical with that of the Lord. You will recall the incident of the jailer at Philippi. He was on the point of committing a shocking deed, the mortal sin of suicide, when Paul called to him: “Do thyself no harm, for we are all here.” All through the night he had heard Paul and Silas singing praises to God. No doubt a new knowledge had begun to dawn on him. When he heard Paul’s

warning cry, he called for a light, came trembling and, falling down before Paul and Silas, said: “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They do not tell him of a number of things that he will have to do first, for instance, to feel contrite. They simply say to him: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house.” They simply invite him to accept the mercy of God; for that is what faith is — accepting the divine mercy, or grace.

Let me now cite you from Luther’s writings, not so much passages in which he insists that the Gospel, pure and unalloyed, must be proclaimed to poor sinners, but rather a particular incident which illustrates how Luther brought consolation to a person who had fallen into a great and grievous sin. The party in question was that splendid man Spalatin (born 1482), who had a great share in the work of the Reformation. He became Ecclesiastical Counselor to the Elector of Saxony and lived at Altenburg. He was Luther’s intimate friend. He had been party to an advice given to a certain pastor to marry the stepmother of his deceased wife. The marriage was absolutely contrary to God’s Word, and the advice was the more appalling since the Apostle Paul, in dealing with a similar offense in 1 Cor. 5, had declared that it involved fornication such as is not so much as named among the Gentiles. When the truth dawned on good Spalatin, he refused to be comforted. Luther learned that he had fallen into melancholy. No comfort offered him would take effect. He imagined that no consolation of Scripture could apply to a man like him who had known the Word of God so well and had derived so much consolation from it.

How did Luther proceed to comfort this man? He wrote him a letter, which began as follows: (St. L. Ed. X, 1729 ff.): "Grace and peace from God in Christ and the consolations of the Holy Spirit to my worthy master in Christ, George Spalatin, superintendent of the churches in Misnia, most faithful pastor of Altenburg, my beloved in the Lord. Amen.

“My dearest Spalatin, I heartily sympathize with you and earnestly pray our Lord Jesus Christ to strengthen you and give you a cheerful heart. I should like to know, and am making diligent inquiries to find out, what your trouble may be or what has caused your breakdown. I am told by some that it is nothing else than depression and heaviness of heart, caused by the matrimonial affair of a parson who was publicly united in marriage to the stepmother of his deceased wife. If this is true, I beseech you most urgently not to become self-centered and heed the thoughts and sensations of your own heart, but to listen to me, your brother, who is speaking to you in the name of Christ. Otherwise your despondency will grow beyond endurance and kill you; for St. Paul says, 2 Cor. 7, 10: ‘The sorrow of the world worketh death.’ I have often passed through the same experience and witnessed the same in 1540, in the case of Magister Philip, who was nearly consumed by heaviness of heart and despondency on account of the landgrave’s affair. However, Christ used my tongue to raise him up again. I say this on the supposition that you have sinned and are partly to blame for the aforementioned marriage, because you approved it.”

Observe that Luther grants that Spalatin had committed a grievous wrong by approving the marriage, by advising in favor of it before it was contracted.

Luther proceeds: “Yea, I shall go further and say: Even if you had committed more numerous and grievous sins in this present and other instances than Manasseh, the king of Judah, whose offenses and crimes could not be eradicated throughout his posterity down to the time when Jerusalem was destroyed, while your offense is very light, because it concerns a temporal interest and can be easily remedied;

nevertheless, I repeat it, granted you are to blame, are you going to worry yourself to death over it and by thus killing yourself commit a still more horrible sin against God?"

Luther means to say: This marriage can be dissolved, for it is not legitimate. It would be a greater sin now to despair of the mercy of God than it was to advise this marriage. For despairing of God's mercy is always the most horrible sin, because it means that we declare God to be a liar.

Luther goes on: "It is bad enough to know that you made a mistake in this matter. Now do not let your sin stick in your mind, but get rid of it. Quit your despondency, which is a far greater sin. Listen to the blessed consolation which the Lord offers you by the prophet Ezekiel, who says, chap. 33, 11: 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.' Do you imagine that only in your case the Lord's hand is shortened? Isa. 59, 1. Or has He in your case alone forgotten to be gracious and shut up His tender mercies? Ps. 77, 10. Or are you the first man to aggravate his sin so awfully that henceforth there is no longer a High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities? Heb. 4, 15. Do you consider it a new marvel when a person living this life in the flesh, with innumerable arrows of so many devils flying about him, is occasionally wounded and laid prostrate?"

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Luther means to say: Why are you surprised at your grievous fall? That is a common occurrence. The terrible part is only that we refuse to rise again and, like miserable reprobates, crawl back to the throne of grace.

Luther continues: "It seems to me, my dear Spalatin, that you have still but a limited experience in battling against sin, an evil conscience, the Law, and the terrors of death. Or Satan has removed from your vision and memory every consolation which you have read in the Scriptures. In days when you were not afflicted, you were well fortified and knew very well what the office and benefits of Christ are. To be sure, the devil has now plucked from your heart all the beautiful Christian sermons concerning the grace and mercy of God in Christ by which you used to teach, admonish, and comfort others with a cheerful spirit and a great, buoyant courage. Or it must surely be that heretofore you have been only a trifling sinner, conscious only of paltry and insignificant faults and frailties."

There are only two ways in which Luther can explain to himself why Spalatin refuses to be comforted. Either he has hitherto failed to perceive his misery and wretchedness under sin; he has not been aware of the fact that he is a great sinner by nature; his grievous fall had to occur in order that his eyes might be opened to these facts. Or Satan must have hidden every consolation out of Spalatin's sight. Practically Luther says to Spalatin: Had you fully realized the awful corruption of your heart in its relation to God, you would not be so inconsolable; for you would say to yourself: Alas! the fountain is so polluted; that is why such filth has to flow from it.

To return to Luther: "Therefore my faithful request and admonition is that you join our company and associate with us, who are real, great, and hard-boiled sinners. You must by no means make Christ to seem paltry and trifling to us, as though He could be our Helper only when we want to be rid from imaginary, nominal, and childish sins. No, no! That would not be good for us. He must rather be a Savior and Redeemer from real, great, grievous, and damnable transgressions and iniquities, yea, from the very greatest and most shocking sins; to be brief, from all sins added together in a grand total."

To the company of real, great, abominable sinners to which Spalatin is invited Luther feels that he belongs himself. He argues that by making our sins small, we make Christ small. That would practically amount to saying: Christ can forgive small, but not great sins.

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When a person has committed a great sin and is unconcerned about it, he is beyond help. But when he worries about it, his help has already come. Luther relates: “Dr. Staupitz comforted me on a certain occasion when I was a patient in the same hospital and suffering the same affliction as you, by addressing me thus: Aha! you want to be a painted sinner and, accordingly, expect to have in Christ a painted Savior. You will have to get used to the belief that Christ is a real Savior and you a real sinner. For God is neither jesting nor dealing in imaginary affairs, but He was greatly and most assuredly in earnest when He sent His own Son into the world and sacrificed Him for our sakes, etc. Rom. 8, 32; John 3, 16. These and similar reflections, drawn from consolatory Bible-texts, have been snatched from your memory by the accursed Satan, and hence you cannot recall them in your present great anguish and despondency. For God’s sake, then, turn your ears hither, brother, and hear me cheerfully singing — me, your brother, who at this time is not afflicted with the despondency and melancholy that is oppressing you and therefore is strong in faith, so that you, who are weak and harried and harrassed by the devil, can lean on him for support until you have regained your old strength, can bid defiance to the devil, and cheerfully sing: ‘Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall; but the Lord helped me.’ Ps. 118, 13. Imagine now that I am Peter holding out my hand to you and saying to you; ‘In the name of Jesus Christ, rise up and walk.’ Acts 3, 6. For I know I am not mistaken, nor is the devil talking through me; but since I am laying the Word of Christ before you, it is Christ who speaks to you through me and bids you obey and trust your brother who is of the same household of faith. It is Christ that absolves you from this and all your sins, and I am a partaker of your sin by helping you to bear up under it.”

On the occasion to which Luther refers he had gone to Dr. Staupitz to pour out his sorrowful heart to him. He had not committed any gross and manifest sins, but he was worried over the sinful condition of his heart. God had granted Luther an extraordinary measure of knowledge that made him understand the corruption of human nature. His remark about a painted Savior is striking. If we do not want such a Savior, we must not be surprised when we discover ourselves to be real, actual sinners. Luther’s appeal to Spalatin to receive him, not for his person’s sake, but because he is laying the Word of God before him, is a fine touch. Spalatin is to see Christ standing before him and speaking to him in the person of Luther. Also the remark about Luther’s sharing Spalatin’s sin by helping him bear his burden is excellent. When a minister absolves a person who has confessed his sin to him, he takes that sin of the other on his own conscience. He can cheerfully do this, for the party that came to him to confess perhaps the most horrible sins came with a bruised heart. He may cheerfully pronounce absolution to such a person and say: “I shall assume the responsibility for what I am doing, for I know that on the great day of Judgment Christ will say to me: You did right; for he came to you with a bruised conscience, and it was proper that you ministered the Gospel to him.”

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Luther concludes his letter with these urgent remarks: “See that you accept and appropriate to yourself the comfort I am offering you; for it is true, certain, and reliable, since the Lord has commanded me to communicate it to you and bidden you to accept it from me. For if even I am cut to the quick by seeing you

in such awful distress because of your deep melancholy, it gives God a far greater displeasure to behold it; for 'He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil.' Joel 2, 13. Therefore do not turn away from him who is coming to comfort you and announce the will of God to you and who hates and abominates your despondency and melancholy as a plague of Satan. Do not by any means permit the devil to portray Christ to you differently from what He is in truth. Believe the Scripture, which testifies that He 'was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil.' 1 John 3, 8. Your melancholy is a work of the devil, which Christ wants to destroy if you will only let Him. You have had your fill of anguish; you have sorrowed enough; you have exceeded your penance. Therefore, do not refuse my consolation; let me help you. Behold my faithful heart, dear Spalatin, in dealing with you and speaking to you. I shall consider it the greatest favor that I have ever received from you if you allow the comfort which I am offering you, or rather the absolution, pardon, and restoration of the Lord Christ, to abide in you. If you do this, you will, after your recovery, be forced to confess yourself that you have offered the most pleasing and acceptable sacrifice to the Lord by your obedience; for in Ps. 147, 11 it is written: 'The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy'; again, in Ps. 34, 18: 'The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart and saveth such as are of a contrite spirit'; and in Ps. 51, 17: 'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.' Therefore let the accursed devil with his despondency scamper away like a whipped dog. He wants to make me sad on your account; he wants to blast my joy in the Lord; yea, if he could, he would swallow us all up at one gulp. May Christ, our Lord, rebuke and chastise him, and may He strengthen, comfort, and preserve you by His Spirit! Amen. Comfort your wife with these and your own more effectual words. I have not the leisure to write also to her. Given at Zeitz, August 21, A.D. 1544. Your Martin Luther."

Luther argues that sharing a brother's sin entitles you to the claim that the brother must, in turn, share your comfort. God takes no pleasure in beholding a person stricken with remorse and laboring with might and main to remain thus stricken. When the hammer of His Law has crushed us, we are to flee from Moses to Christ. That is the right procedure. — Luther's exegesis of 1 John 3, 8 is beautiful. The term "works of the devil" is commonly interpreted to signify horrible and gross sins, but Luther comprises in that term also doubt and melancholy as being the most grievous sin. Christ did not come to fill us with sadness, but with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. — Luther wrote this letter to Spalatin while stopping during a journey at Zeitz. The only thanks which he craves for the task of composing this letter — no doubt, with heartfelt sighings to God — is that Spalatin accept his consolations.

I wanted to communicate this letter to you in its entirety, hoping that it may have pleased you so much that you will often read it again. Think of it particularly whenever a sorrowing, disconsolate sinner approaches you in your pastoral capacity. Read this letter as a preparation for the evangelical treatment which you are to accord such a sinner. Remember, Luther admits that Spalatin has sinned, but he realized that at that particular moment he must not, for God's sake, say anything to Spalatin that might strike his friend's heart like an arrow.

Let me read another letter to you which Luther wrote, as far back as 1516, to the Augustinian friar Spenlein, who was in great agony concerning his state of grace. Spenlein had been an inmate with Luther in the Augustinian monastery at Wittenberg. In the judgment of all who are familiar with Luther's writings

this letter is most excellent. One marvels that Luther could write such a letter even at that early date. It is sterling gold and pure honey.

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“I wish to know,” Luther writes (ST. L. Ed. XXIa, 20f.), “the condition of your heart, whether you have at last come to loathe your own righteousness and desire to rejoice in the righteousness of Christ and to be of good cheer because of it. For in these days the temptation to presumptuousness is very strong, particularly in those who strive with might and main to be righteous and godly and do not know of the altogether immaculate righteousness of God which is freely given us in Christ. As a result of this they are searching for something good in themselves until they become confident that they can pass muster before God as people who are properly adorned with virtuous and meritorious deeds, — all of which is impossible. While you were with us, you held this opinion, or rather this error, just as I did. For my part, I am still wrestling with this error and am not quite rid of it yet. Therefore, my dear brother, learn Christ — Christ Crucified. Learn to sing praises to Him and to despair utterly of your own works. Say to Him: Thou, my Lord Jesus, art my Righteousness; I am Thy sin. Thou hast taken from me what is mine and hast given to me what is Thine. Thou didst become what Thou wert not and madest me to be what I was not. Beware of your ceaseless striving after righteousness so great that you no longer appear as a sinner in your own eyes and do not want to be a sinner. *For Christ dwells only in sinners.* He came down from heaven, where He dwelt in the righteous, for the very purpose of dwelling in sinners also. Ponder this love of His, and you will realize His sweetest consolation. For if we must achieve rest of conscience by our own toil and worry, *for what purpose did He die?* Therefore, you are to find peace in Him by a hearty despair of yourself and your own works. And now that He has received you, made your sins His and His righteousness yours, learn also from Him firmly to believe this, as behooves you; for cursed is every one who does not believe this.”

We note that Luther tells Spenlein not to be surprised when he finds nothing meritorious in himself, but only sin. He must learn to sing praises to Christ and to despair of himself as of a person in whom nothing good is found except what the good God has done through him. He is not to strive after a righteousness of his own, which would make him seem no longer a sinner. For in one that knows what God’s Word says about this matter, that would be an impudent denial of his Redeemer. — The remark of Luther that Christ dwells only in sinners, Walch, the editor of Luther’s Works, has annotated by a gloss that limits Luther’s remark to poor sinners. That is self-evident. Bold sinners do not acknowledge that they are sinners. What others call sin they call human weakness and a natural, inborn disposition. Their occasional display of godliness is sheer hypocrisy. They may say: “We are such poor sinners,” but they do not mean that statement in the Scriptural sense. They say: “Well, we cannot help being weak mortals,” but one is a drunkard, another a fornicator, the third a thief, etc. All these vices are to pass for mere weaknesses. Verily, Christ dwells only in sinners who are such in their own estimation. He had dwelt among the angels, but came down on earth because He wanted to make His abode also with sinners. — Luther’s surprised query: Why, then, did Christ die? is an excellent point. Any one who is troubled on account of his sins is a fool for not promptly taking refuge with Christ and for imagining that his evil conscience is proof that he may not come to God. No; *this* is what the evil conscience states: You *should* come to Jesus; He will give you a cheerful conscience, causing you to praise God with a joyful heart when you rise in the morning and

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lie down to rest at night. For what does it mean that Christ died for you? Accordingly, when you have committed this, that, or the other sin and are perplexed about a way out of your sin, do not try to make a way yourself. Go to Him who alone knows a way — go to Christ. — It is a remarkable statement of Luther, but certainly true, that we are to find peace by wholly despairing of our own works. When a poor sinner regards himself, he does despair; when He looks at Jesus, he is made confident.

What Luther wrote to Spenlein is the most beautiful Gospel that can be preached. For it declares that Christ has come in behalf of everybody, that He has borne every man's sin, that He calls on every one to believe in Him, to rejoice and rest assured that his sins are forgiven and that in the hour of death he will depart saved.