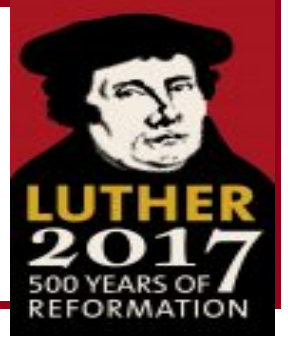


Peace & Confidence

John 11:1-45

April 23, 2017

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Martin and Katie Luther had 6 children. **Hans**, **Elizabeth**, **Magdalena**, **Martin Jr.**, **Paul**, and **Margarete**. Both their daughters, **Elizabeth** and **Magdalena** died as little girls.

Elizabeth died at 7 months old. Katie Luther wrote that she died of the plague, the Black Death. On her tombstone they inscribed, "Here sleeps Elizabeth, daughter of Martin Luther."

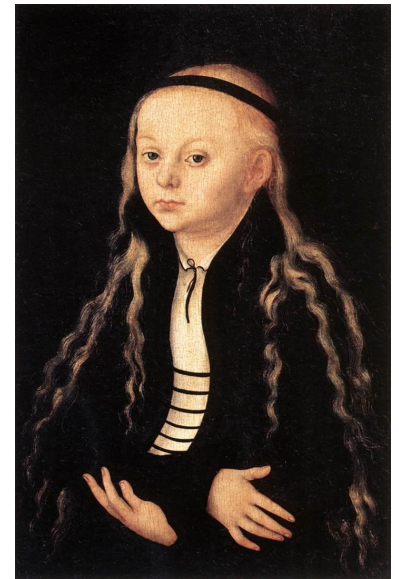
Magdalena died when she was 14 years old. This is a portrait of Magdalena.

She had a lengthy illness, and when it became obvious that she was near death, Luther prayed, **"Dearly do I love her; O Lord, but if it be Thy will to take her, I resign her to You without a murmur."**

Luther then went to Magdalena's bedside, and said to her, **"my dear little daughter, my beloved Magdalena, you would willingly remain with your earthly father; but if God calls you home, you will also willingly go to your Heavenly Father?"**

Magdalena replied, **"Yes, dear father, it is as God pleases."**

Luther then took out his Bible, and read to her the following passage from Isaiah: **But your dead will live, O LORD; and their bodies will rise— let those who dwell in the dust wake up and shout for joy— your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.** ISAIAH 26:19



Magdalena's last recorded words were **"I go to my Father in Heaven."** Soon afterwards, she died, and they put her in a coffin. Luther said, **"Ah! Sweet daughter, you will rise again and you will shine like a star, yes, like the sun! I am happy in the spirit, but my heart is broken."**

The thought of our children dying is almost unbearable; Martin and Katie Luther grieved terribly at Magdalena's death. But in the midst of their grief and sorrow, they had **peace and confidence**.



PEACE AND CONFIDENCE in the midst of death and dying comes only from the *resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead on the third day*. **PEACE AND CONFIDENCE** are the fruit of faith in the promise of the *resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting* that Jesus gives to us! **Because Jesus lives, we also shall live!**

Like Martin and Katie Luther, we all have loved ones who have died, some of us even have children who have died. Grief is a *heavy burden*, sorrow can feel overwhelming.

Even closer to home, the **hard, cold, and painful reality** is that you yourself are going to die someday.

- † Death comes from sin, and none of us can avoid it.
- † We have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

We all need a Savior! *Jesus is that Savior!*

In Christ's death and resurrection, we find **PEACE AND CONFIDENCE** at times of death. The resurrection gives you the proper understanding of death and dying. Jesus is alive and He has promised to give you life: He promises you the **resurrection of the Dead and the life everlasting!**

The **resurrection of the Dead and the life everlasting** are **two promises** God that gives you!

First, at the moment of death you are immediately with God in heaven.

Death is the unnatural separation of your body and soul. The moment you die, you are in the presence of Christ. There is no more sin, there is no more sickness, disease, evil, nor temptation. At death, the Lord “*graciously takes us from this veil of tears to Himself in Heaven.*” **At death, Jesus takes our hand and leads us home.** At the moment of death you are immediately with God in Heaven.

To live is Christ; to die is gain PHILIPPIANS 1:21
Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies... JOHN 11:25
Jesus said, “Truly, truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.” JOHN 5:24

When you consider your own death, or when you grieve and mourn your loved ones who die, we have **PEACE AND CONFIDENCE** because we believe Jesus’ Word that we have already been given eternal life through faith. You have already crossed over from death to life when you were baptized. **Physical death cannot interrupt the eternal life you have right now in Christ.**

† At the moment **Luther’s little girls Elizabeth and Magdalena** died, they were immediately with Christ in Heaven.

† As the moment **your loved one died**, they were immediately with Christ in Heaven.

† At the moment **you die**, whenever and however that happens, you will be with Christ in Heaven.

The promise of eternal life comforts us and gives us **PEACE AND CONFIDENCE**.

The second reason that we have **PEACE AND CONFIDENCE** in death and dying is because Jesus has risen from the dead, and *He promises that you too will rise from the dead on the last day!*

Today we heard the story of Lazarus. **The story of Lazarus is a foreshadow of the last day!** When Jesus returns on the last day, He will raise your body from the dead and glorify it, so that you will live forever in the Kingdom of Heaven with your body! **Just as Jesus called Lazarus out of His grave, so too, Jesus will call your body out of your grave, and you will live forever in a new resurrected body.**

[Jesus said,] “A time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out
JOHN 5:28-29

So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.
1 CORINTHIANS 15:42-44

DID YOU HEAR THAT?! This is an amazing promise! God is going to raise your body from the dead on the last day! The word that is used in 1 Corinthians 15 is “corpse”.

God is going to raise your corpse from the dead.

That word gives it some realism doesn't it?

That's God's promise to you on the last day!

- † God promises to raise both **Elizabeth and Magdalena bodies** from the dead on the last day!
- † God promises to raise **your loved one's body** from the dead on the last day!
- † God promises to raise **your body** from the dead on the last day!

Just as Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday, so too you will rise from the dead on the last day! *Jesus guarantees it!*

The resurrection of the dead takes the sting out of death and dying, grief and sorrow. We will see our loved ones who died in Christ again in the Kingdom of Heaven! We will see them in their resurrected bodies and live with them forever in the Kingdom of Heaven!

Like Martin and Katie Luther who lost two of their children, we grieve and mourn the death of our loved ones. But in our grief and mourning, Jesus' promise of the resurrection of the dead comforts us and gives us **PEACE AND CONFIDENCE**.

We have **PEACE AND CONFIDENCE** at times of death and dying because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Jesus gives life to the world! Jesus promises eternal and resurrected life!

- † At the moment of death, you will immediately be in the presence of God in Heaven.
- † On the last day, God will raise your body from the dead, and transform it into a resurrected body to live forever.

Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we believe, teach, and confess the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting! And that, gives us peace and confidence! Amen!