

First Importance!

Easter, 2019

1 Corinthians 15:1-7

April 21, 2019

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St. Paul wrote, “What I received I passed on to you as a **first importance:** Christ died for our sins according to Scriptures, He was buried, and He was raised from the dead on the Third Day according to the Scriptures. 1 Corinthians 15:3

The **Death, burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ** is the *central teaching* of the Holy Christian Church; it is the *most important thing* in the Kingdom of God, and it is the *Gospel Good News* that brings *forgiveness of sins* and *eternal life* to every one of us!

As **LUTHERAN CHRISTIANS**, we echo what Holy Scripture teaches; we confess to the world that **Christ’s death and resurrection leads us to repentance and the forgiveness of sins!** We confess to the world:

The **FIRST AND CHIEF ARTICLE** of the Christian faith is this, that Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, "was put to **DEATH** for our trespasses and **RAISED AGAIN** for our justification." He alone is "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world"
THE BOOK OF CONCORD, SMALCALD ARTICLES, II.I

If the **Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ** is the **first and chief article** of the Holy Christian Church, and it is “**first importance**” in the Kingdom of God, then every one of us needs to thoroughly know, believe, and understand it! This is the core of the Christian faith! Your eternal salvation is based on this!

Jesus’ death and resurrection is the GOSPEL! This is the GOOD NEWS!
These are the WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE!!

UNDERSTANDING THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

BEGINS BY UNDERSTANDING YOUR SIN.

The Lord teaches us that we all need a Savior because we all have sinned. Sin is when you disobey God's Word, when you disregard His Ten Commandments; sin is when you fail to love your neighbor as yourself. Sin separates you from God and overwhelms you with guilt. Because of sin you will die someday.

But God is patient with you; He gracious and kind. The power of His Word leads you to **REPENTANCE**. Repentance means that you turn away from your sin; *it is renouncing the devil, and all of his evil works and all of his wicked ways*. God works through His Word to convict you of sin and expose where you have sinned against Him and against other people.

Repentance means that you turn away from your sin, you pay attention to your conscience, and you confess your sins to God. You realize that if God does not intervene in your wayward life, you will be lost and condemned forever.

Return to the LORD your God. Your sins have been your downfall! **Take words with you** and return to the LORD. Say to him: "Forgive all our sins and receive us graciously, that we may offer the fruit of our lips." Hosea 14:1-2

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. if we **confess our sins**, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:8-9

Today repent of your sins!

Turn away from them!

***Renounce the devil, and all of his evil works
and all of his wicked ways.***

Turn from evil and turn to God in faith!

God promises to forgive your sins! That is why Christ Jesus died, was buried and rose from the dead on the Third Day! His death and resurrection is the work that was done so that you can have the **FORGIVENESS OF SINS!**

**Jesus' death and resurrection
is the Gospel Good News for you!
This is the first and chief doctrine!
This is of first importance!**

In the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, God the Father accepted Jesus' death on your behalf and for your sins. Jesus took your place and paid for your sins. He was declared "guilty!" for you. In the Resurrection of Jesus, God the Father now declares that you are "NOT GUILTY!" of your sins and you are set free to live a new life of holiness and godliness!

Faith makes it personal; you believe that Jesus rose from the dead; and that He did it for you. Your sins are forgiven! You are given eternal life! You belong to God! You have been given a clear conscience and a clean heart! Faith makes it personal → believe it, know that it is true and it applies to you!

The **death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ** is the is the **first and chief article** of the Holy Christian Church, and it is "**first importance**" in the Kingdom of God, and it is the *Gospel Good News* that brings *forgiveness of sins* and *eternal life* to every one of us!

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ changes everything in your life! You now live as a believer in Christ; you are follower of Jesus, you are disciple of the Lord. What that means is that Christ and His Resurrection power is at work in and through you. Christ works in and through you to live a holy and godly life. You are transformed and made new!

- † In Christ, you strive to do good works that serve your neighbor and glorify your Father in Heaven
- † In Christ, you strive to be ever more Biblically literate and doctrinally sound
- † In Christ, you live humble lives under the power and authority of His Word and you trust it, obey it, and confess it to the world!
- † In Christ, you worship each week to receive God's good gifts of forgiveness, faith, and life through His Word and Sacraments
- † In Christ, you share your faith with others so that they too can learn to believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for their salvation!

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ changes everything – not just in your life – but also in our life together as a Lutheran congregation:

- ✓ The Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the **center** of Lutheran preaching, teaching and doctrinal beliefs
- ✓ It **stands behind** the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion
- ✓ It is the **emphasis** of all worship services
- ✓ It is why we send **missionaries** into *all nations*
- ✓ It is why Bibles are **translated** into the many languages of the world
- ✓ It is the **norm** by which all pastors and teachers in the Lutheran Church are to be **evaluated**
- ✓ It is why we send our **children** to Trinity Lutheran School, and Sunday School, Oasis, Confirmation, and Youth Groups.

As conservative Lutheran Christians, our history and heritage has always been to keep Christ and His work of salvation **first and foremost**. This steadfast and unmovable emphasis on the Gospel is the key thing that separates conservative Lutherans from other Christians.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ affects everything for us: both in our individual lives; and in our life together as a congregation.

The **death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ** is the is the **first and chief article** of the Holy Christian Church, and it is "**first importance**" in the Kingdom of God, and it is the *Gospel Good News* that brings *forgiveness of sins* and *eternal life* to every one of us!

As St. Paul wrote, "What I received I passed on to you as a **first importance**: Christ died for our sins according to Scriptures, He was buried, and He was raised from the dead on the Third Day according to the Scriptures.

*May you know and understand this gospel good news;
and may you believe it with all your heart!*

Amen!