

A STUDY OF THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION

(The Christian Lifestyle)

Prologue

The Christian Church has always been Fighting two errors regarding justification and sanctification.

1. _____

2. _____

True theology must maintain a union between justification and sanctification without mixing or confusing one for the other. We must, as far as is humanly possible, distinguish between the two without separating them.

Two errors in the church are easily and often discovered on the American church scene. These errors include, on the one hand, blatant statements which insist that we earn salvation on our own; to, on the other hand, subtle attitudes that tell us good works cannot hurt our chance of getting to heaven and everything in-between.

One of the most frequent charges leveled at the Lutheran Church is that it neglects the doctrine of sanctification. At Augsburg in March of 1530 Eck's "404 Articles" charged the Lutherans with teaching against good works and a godly life. This same charge is echoed again and again today and has been heard for the past 450 years. The criticism says that Lutherans do not take good works seriously or urge them enough. The argument continues saying that the Lutheran insistence on salvation by grace alone through faith has made good works of little importance, since good works are worthless in giving sinners right-standing before God.

Against this criticism, Robert Preus points out that more is written in the Lutheran Confessions on the topic of good works and the Christian life than any other subject. In his book Getting into the Theology of Concord he writes that "No Roman Catholic theologian ever spoke or wrote emphatically, more clearly, more winsomely about sanctification and works of love than our Confessions. And no Roman Catholic

theologian urges sanctification and good works and their value and how they please God more than Luther and our Confessions" (p. 73).

With this in mind and asking our Father's blessing, this study will attempt to address these inaccuracies and misunderstandings in connection with the relationship of justification and sanctification. We will also examine what the Scripture say and what we, as Christians, confess concerning the Christian Life Style which is only a response to the work Jesus has accomplished for us.

This study will follow the topical outline below:

1. Sanctification Defined
2. The Essential Difference of Justification and Sanctification
3. The Relation of Justification and Sanctification
4. Who Effects Sanctification?
5. The Inner Motions of Sanctification
6. The Means by Which Sanctification Is Effected
7. The Necessity of Sanctification and Good Works
8. The Imperfection of Sanctification
9. The Quality and the Quantity of Good Works
10. The Reward of Good Works
11. The Great Value of Good Works
12. The Christian Life and the Cross
13. The Christian Life and Prayer
14. The Christian Life and the Hope of Eternal Life

1 Sanctification Defined

The term "sanctification" is used in Scripture in a wide and in a narrow sense.

The Wide Sense

When we speak of sanctification in the wide sense, we are referring to everything that the Holy Spirit does in separating man from sin and making him again God's own; so that he may live for God and serve Him only. This activity includes:

Some bible passages will help in understanding this.

2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2 _____

Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2 _____

Cor. 6:11 _____

1 Thess 4:3-7 _____

The Confessions similarly use sanctification in the wide sense:

Large Catechism, page 416, line 40-42_____

The Narrow Sense

When we use the term sanctification in its narrow sense, we are examining the transformation (new birth, born-again, regenerated, conversion, etc.) which necessarily follows immediately upon justification.

Rom 6:17-22_____

Solid Declaration, Article III, page 546, 1 40f. _____

1. Which comes first, the new Spiritual nature (Sanctification) or good works?

Gal. 5:25-26; Gal. 6:1; Gal. 5:22_____

2. But we also properly say that Sanctification and good works are in concert, that is, happen simultaneously. The Holy Spirit is unceasingly active and constantly calling us to live and respond to Christ in faith and action through the means of grace.

Titus 2:11_____

Titus 3:8,14_____

2

The Essential Difference Between Sanctification and Justification

Justification:_____

Sanctification:_____

3

The Relation of Justification and Sanctification

There are two statements which may be used to understand the relation between justification (faith), sanctification and good works.

1. There is an inseparable connection (nexus indivulsus) between justification and sanctification; where there is justification, there is in every case also sanctification.

2. The cart must not be placed before the proverbial horse; that is, sanctification must not be before justification, but must be left in its proper place as the consequence and effect of justification.

We confess this as we subscribe to the Lutheran Symbols:

Solid Declaration, Article III, line 41, page 546 _____

Inseparable Connection (nexus indivulsus)

Scripture teaches that wherever the Holy Spirit works faith in the Gospel He immediately works also sanctification and good works in that same man through that faith.

Luke 23:40-41 _____

With this in mind, is the following statement true or false?

"Where there is no sanctification, there is also no faith." _____

In Romans 3:21 to the end of chapter five, the Apostle sets forth that justification is a forensic act; that is, a judicial verdict of innocence. When he does so, he places the faith which justifies in opposition to every moral quality in man.

Rom. 4:5 _____ 3:28 _____

Gal. 2:16 _____ Phil. 3:9 _____

When he continues his letter to the Romans in 6:1, Paul at once brings up the question that whether, in view of such a justification, a life in sin is possible? How does he answer this question?

Rom 6:2 _____

In verses one through eleven, Paul presents this state of affairs as an established, indisputable fact.

Verse 11: _____

In regard to this, there is also a "psychological connection" between justification and sanctification. There is a "law" which states that love begets love; kindness given finds kindness returned.

This is also true, and more so, in this theological regard. How is that so?

God knows how to convince a man and assure him of His great love.

He does not do so by:

1 Cor. 2:14; 1:23 _____

1 Cor. 2:4 _____

He does this simply by:

John 16:14; 1 Cor. 2:5; Rom. 10:17 _____

When this happens, justification and sanctification no longer form "two heterogeneous strata of dogmatic construction," but rather become alive and vital realities in the life of the Christian.

It is the experience of all Christians, that the more certain they are of God's grace and of their heavenly inheritance; the more ready they are to serve God and set their affection on things above.

1 John 4:19 _____

Ps. 119:32 _____

Sanctification: the Consequence of Justification

Now, we see that even though justification and sanctification cannot be separated; last things must not be put first. Sanctification is the consequence, not the antecedent, of justification.

The old man in us protests against this divine order. According to his conception of religion, works must be placed before justification---the cart must come before the horse. This is the mark of a religion or a faith which is not Christ-centered.

Acts 17:22-23 _____

1 Cor. 8:1; 10:20 _____

Apology III, line 206, page 135_____

This protest is due to the "opinio legis," which each man inherits.

Apology III, line 265, page 146_____

Only when men are instructed by the Holy Spirit through the Word, will they get the right view of religion and place sanctification after justification.

Christians, too, are dogged by the old man and are prone to assign good works a place before justification. In a book called "A Study of Generations," it was discovered that a great percentage of Lutherans, when asked directly, said that they are saved because of their works. This is an easy temptation to which many succumb. This is, according to Scripture, fatal when maintained either in public or private. When this happens, two things occur, according to Scripture:

1. _____

2. _____

Therefore, the practical need of the individual Christian, who is concerned about his Christian faith and Christian life, and the practical need of the Church (inasmuch as it is concerned about faith and sanctification); demand that the inseparable nature of justification and sanctification and the order of consequence be clearly understood and scrupulously maintained.

4

Who Effects Sanctification

1 Thess. 5:23-24_____

In conversion, man merely experiences the working of God; but in sanctification, the Christian plays an active role. He co-operates.

This, however, must be clearly understood! The working of God and the working of the new man, while are co-operative, are **not** co-ordinate, "as when two horses draw a wagon." The activity of the new man is always and fully subordinate to God's activity; it always takes place under dependence of God. In other words, it is the Holy Spirit who produces the activity of the new man; the new man

remains the tool of the Holy Spirit.

Sol. Declaration, II, line 65, page 534, _____

Who, then, initiates these good works, new man or Holy Spirit?

2 Cor. 3:5 _____

5 The Inner Motions of Sanctification

What is the nature of the new man?

Eph 4:24; Col. 3:10; 2 Cor. 4:16 _____

Rom 7:22; Psalm 1:2 _____

Rom. 6:11 _____

But in this life, the Christian retains his sinful nature, the "old man."

Rom. 7:18 _____

Sanctification, therefore, is brought about only in this way; through the struggle within a Christian between his new nature and his old nature, a Christian according to his new man prevails over the will and conduct of the old man.

Eph. 4:22-24 _____

The phrase simul justis et peccator (simultaneously sinner and saint) is very appropriate in application to the Christian.

Regarding this conflict, we will note five points.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6

The Means by Which Sanctification is Effected

Which division of the Word (Law or Gospel) do you think effects sanctification?

The Law does have its place. In what way? _____

It does us well to review the three uses of the Law. What are they?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

How does the Law assist in the work of sanctification? The Law continually prepares the way for the Gospel. As we learned in our study of the Law and the Gospel, where the knowledge of sin ceases; there also, faith in the remission of sins (faith in the Gospel) has come to an end. As a result, the Gospel, the only source of sanctification, is choked off. Which function of Law does this fall under?

How might we categorize the difficulties of life such as poverty and wealth, sickness

and health, misfortune and good fortune? Are they conducive to holiness? _____

7

The Necessity of Sanctification and Good Works

The real concern in this section is the difference between "necessity" and "free." Are we duty bound and obliged to do good works or are they actually a free, natural response of the new man to the Gospel? This is the question to be answered.

In history there were two trains of thought within the Lutheran church.

George Major: _____

Niklas of Amsdorf: _____

The Scripture teaches that sanctification and good works are not necessary for salvation. It teaches that faith obtains, not only the remission of sins, but also salvation without works of the Law. The Formula of Concord, quoting Rom. 4:6 and Eph. 2:8 declares:

(Epit., IV, 7, page 479) _____

When Major was confronted with this, he restated his conviction to say that good works are necessary not to **obtain** salvation; but in order to **retain** salvation. This too is contrary to Scripture. The order of things would be that faith starts things off but eventually resigns itself to the office of works to obtain salvation.

If this is true, what happens to faith? _____

Sol Decl, IV, 34, page 556: _____

What heresy is Major adhering to? _____

What is that? _____

To this thought of works and faith the Scriptures state this: Evil works destroy faith,

but good works do not preserve faith. Nicholas of Amsdorf: _____

There is only one cure for Major's statement that good works are necessary for salvation. What is that? _____

"Sanctification and good works are necessary." This stands as a statement of Scripture.

Rom. 13:5_____Acts 5:29_____

\The necessity of Sanctification and good works means that good works must be performed.

1 Thess. 4:3_____1 John 3:23_____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

This necessity is coupled with a willingness according to the new man.

Rom. 7:22_____

They are to be done without the coercion of the Law.

Ps 110:3_____2 Cor. 9:7_____

1 Pet. 5:2_____

No man in his right senses will get the impression that Scripture leaves it to the discretion of the individual whether he will or will not do good works.

8

The Imperfection of Sanctification

Respond to the following statement by saying if it is true or false. When speaking of Justification we can say that there are no degrees; we either are or are not Justified.

Can you think of any bible passages that will support your answer?_____

Again, identify the following statement as being true or false. When speaking of Sanctification, we can say that there are degrees within which the Christian falls but

that there is never perfection. _____

How can we say this? _____

But what is holding us back from having our sanctification perfected? _____

Anything which teaches that we can reach perfection in this life regarding sanctification is wrong and cannot dwell in the Christian heart. If we could reach perfection, what

action of the Christian would be eliminated? _____

Since we determine that we cannot perfect sanctification, what danger is there for the Christian regarding sanctification? It is God's will that we strive after perfection.

The Christian wants to be fruitful, not only in some but in all good works. It is the characteristic of the true Christian to refrain from every sin and be eager to serve God.

Rom. 7:22 _____ Phil. 3:15 _____

Phil. 3:13-14 _____

What is the status of the Christian who is not striving to serve God alone?

Matt. 6:24 _____ Luke 14:25-35 _____

What does mark the Christian Life? Matt. 16:24 _____

At this point we are about ready to ask "Who, then, can be saved?" Christ answers in

Matt. 19:25-26 _____

Nothing makes a Christian so conscious of their daily deficiencies as the earnest striving for perfection. And when they acknowledge and confess their daily shortcomings before God, they flee for refuge to divine grace, knowing that the grace of God takes no account of the Law and human works. **Only by keeping Law and Gospel separate could the Apostle, on the one hand, be fully assured of grace and salvation, Rom. 8:37-39, and on the other hand, require unsparing self-denial 1 Cor. 9:27. The whole life of the Christian becomes a daily repentance. The more sincerely Christians daily endeavor to rid themselves of all they have and to serve God alone in all their works, the better they learn to know the abysmal sinful depravity which clings to them, and the more earnestly they will daily ask for the free grace of God in Christ.**

The question to ask next is "Which is the greater evil, perfectionism or indifference to

sanctification?" _____

Actually, it is useless to try to determine which is worse. The bible speaks to

both errors. Indifference: Eph. 5:5-7 _____

Rev. 3:16 _____

Perfectionism: 1 John 1:8-10 _____

Eccl. 7:20 _____

Is. 64:6 _____

What can we conclude concerning the pious Christians? _____

9 The Quality and the Quantity of Good Works

This section will be outlined as follows:

1. Good Works

a. are done according to the divine Law

b. flow from a willing spirit

2. An examination of the good works of Christian and non-Christian according to this criteria.

3. God's will as to the quantity of good works and the deficiency in actual practice.

The Norm of Good Works

For a good work to be a good work what must it do? _____

Deut. 5:32 _____

Matt. 4:20 _____

What quality is lacking when we do the work of men rather than of God?_____

Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7_____

Good intentions do not change an evil work into a good work.

1 Sam. 15:22_____

John 16:2_____

Acts 26:9_____

At the same time evil intent changes divine command into an evil work.

Matt. 6:1ff_____

Ignoring the divine norm is nothing less than rebellion against God and idolatry. One who makes his own will the standard of action is actually disposing God as his Lord and Master and putting himself in place of God.

1 Sam. 15:22-23_____

Even the cross we bear must not be self-imposed, our suffering is a true cross only when sent by God.

1 Pet.3:17_____

Again we say that "There is none good but one," that is God (Matt. 19:17). Nothing is good in itself. Only God is good in Himself. All creatures and everything produced by creatures is good only in so far as it corresponds to God's will. To say that anything is good independently of God is a form of dualism or of atheism.

How does this truth challenge us?_____

Good Works Flow From a Willing Spirit

Good works must not only conform to the Divine Law, but they must also flow from a willing spirit, that is, from the love of God. I guess we could say that good works must not only be good, they

must be done well. Whatever is not done from a willing spirit, from the love of God and in response to the Gospel, is not keeping but in fact transgressing the divine Law.

Rom. 13:8-10_____

Matt. 22:37-40_____

When we feel we have been taken advantage of in the Church, what should we do?

Thinking back to your confirmation days, what phrase did Luther use to introduce the meanings of the 10 commandments?_____

Why do you suppose he did this?_____

With this understanding, in what capacity can the unbeliever conform to God's Law?

There are four possible motives for the unbeliever, at best, to attempt to conform to God's Law. List them below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

The love of God and the desire to serve Him is found only in those who have come to faith in the Gospel by the operation of the Holy Spirit and, as a result, of this faith love Him who first loved them. Good works "are done out of heaven", that is, are performed by those who through faith in Christ already possess heaven and accordingly bring the works which they do on earth to God as a

thanks offering (Rom. 12:1)._____

With this as reality and with-in this supreme context, who alone are able to perform

good works?_____

Luther continually stresses the axiomatic truth: "The person must in all cases first be good and pious

before he can do good works," and Luther tells us, how the person becomes good and pious. "Whoever believes in Christ, believes that He was born for us, died, was buried and raised again from the dead, he is regenerated, or born anew. He is a new man, for now he has thoughts which no Papist or Turk ever had...If you continue in this faith, the Holy Spirit is there and baptizes you, strengthens and increases your faith, puts a new understanding into your heart, and awakens in you holy and new thoughts and affections, so that you begin to love God and refrain from all wicked actions, and do from your heart what God would have you do, and love your neighbor, and shun anger, hatred, and envy."

On the other side, works not done out of faith, in response to the Gospel are indeed a curse.

Sol. Decl. VI, 16-17, p. 566_____

"We do not love unless our hearts are firmly convinced that the remission of sins has been granted us" (Trigl. 153).

The Good Works of the Unbeliever

The question of how the good works of the unbeliever are to be regarded has been answered. However, there is much discussion centered on that question. Let's review. When the unbeliever does comply with God's Law, in what sense is it to be regarded?

Such works are being done as stated in Rom. 2:14. In fact Luther asserts that in their external form such works as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, comforting the distressed, working hard in one's profession and trade, etc., are much like the works Christian in the eyes of men. How then, are we to approach these works?

In the spiritual sphere how are these works to be rated?

Eph. 2:1_____

Eph. 4:18_____

Eph. 2:12_____

1 Cor. 12:2_____

1 Cor. 10:20_____

The Scriptures sharply distinguish between the worldly kingdoms and the Church. In this, we

confess that the works of the unbeliever are good in a civil sphere but have no spiritual value. (F.C. Sol. Decl.II, 7, 26, 59, 61, 85, p. 521-537)

Since, according to Scripture, all the works of the natural man are sin; there is no room for the teaching that conversion is effected through human co-operation. (F.C. SOL. DECL.II, 43,p. 529)

In which sphere does mankind have a free will?_____

In which sphere does mankind have no free will?_____

How can we say this?_____

The Quality of the Good Works of Christians

Measured against the standard of the divine Law, the works of the unbeliever do not deserve to be called "good." What, then, becomes of the good works of Christians?

Do they measure up to that same standard?

In what ways?

1. _____

2. _____

No Christian boasts about the quality of his good works. Still, can his good works be pronounced as being good?

Col 1:4_____

What is the reason for this praise?_____

Christ's perfect righteousness covers the person of the Christians and also the imperfections of their deeds.

1 John 2:12_____

Sol. Decl. IV, 8, p. 552_____

Sol. Decl. IV, 22, p. 554_____

The Quantity of Good Works

What is the answer to the question: How much the Christian should do? _____

What does the Scripture expect of the Christian?

Rom. 12:1; Is. 60:6,9 _____

According to the new man: Gal. 2:20; Ps. 110:3 _____

Two things get in the way of this ideal. Can you identify them?

1. _____

2. _____

The doctrine of grace was misused in the Apostolic Church (Gal. 5:13; 6:6-10; Titus 3:14) and the Church of the Reformation. Can we also say that it is being abused in the Church today?

_____ Site an example or two? _____

So, the Scripture speaks not only to the quality of good works, but also to the quantity of good works. Christians should not be satisfied with having performed this or that good work, but they should become rich in good works (2 Cor. 8:7, 20; 9:8, 11). They should not sit at home and wait to be importuned to do good works, but they should go out and seek opportunities to do good works; they should be "zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14; 2 Cor. 8:4), never "weary in well doing" (Gal. 6:9). Serving God should not be their avocation but their vocation; they should make the very most of their time on earth in doing good works (Eph. 5:16; Gal. 6:10; Col. 4:5).

In addition, God has instructed the teachers and watchmen in His Church to give attention not only to the quality but also to the quantity of the works performed by Christians. Titus is to make it his business to "affirm constantly that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works." Titus 3:8. Pastors are to see to it, in particular, that those who are blessed in worldly goods may be "rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate." 1 Tim 6:17-19.

What kind of ramifications does this have?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

10 The Reward of Good Works

What so the Scriptures teach about good works and rewards?

1 Cor. 3:8 _____

What is the danger of using the word reward? _____

We cannot shy away from the terminology. The world hates and persecutes Christians just because of their very best works. (Acts 5:40; Rom. 8:36; 1 Cor. 4:13) But our gracious God makes up for that. He is so pleased with our good works, that He rewards us richly for doing them. What does Scripture say regarding this kind of reward?

Mat. 19:27-20,16 _____

Peter raised the question concerning reward in Christ's kingdom. Reminding the Lord of the fact that the disciples, unlike the young man who would not forsake his goods, had forsaken everything and followed the Lord, he asks: "What shall we have therefore?" In response the Lord says two things:

1. _____

2. _____

Luther on "the last shall be first and the first shall be last."

'Christ simply desires to show in this parable that in the kingdom of heaven, that is, in Christendom on earth, God judges and operates in a strange manner: He makes the first last and the last first; He humbles those who are something so that they learn to rely on nothing but the bare mercy and compassion of God, and, conversely, He will not have those who are nothing despair but have them also rely on God's goodness, just as well as the first. First, then, He casts down the presumption of those who strive to gain heaven with works, as did the Jews, who claimed to be nearest and dearest to God, just as our spiritual orders also did. These are all working for wages...and they despise those who have done nothing at all. They murmur against the householder because he takes account of their great trouble and labor no more than of the idleness and loose life of the others; they consider such a treatment unjust, they blaspheme the Gospel and grace of God; they must take their temporal reward, go their way with their penny, and be damned. They did not work to the eternal favor of

God, but in order to be paid. The others, however, confessing that they have merited neither the penny nor the favor are given more than they thought had been promised them. These remain in grace and are saved, beyond having enough here in time too. For all depends on the good will of the householder.'

What can we conclude about anyone who claims any merit on the basis of having performed good works?

When we begin to think that we have merited some special favor, what does our knowledge concerning the quality of our good works remind us of?

The old man persists in his opinion that good works merit something. Therefore, it is necessary that Law and Gospel be taught side by side. Christ admonishes the Twelve and all Christians to be on guard lest the first become the last.

What is God accomplishing when He tells us that the first are last? _____

11 The Great Value of Good Works

This is a Christian approach to Good Works:

"...for if what I do is good, God has done it through me and in me. But if God has done it and it is God's work, why is the whole world against God and His work? Though it does not make me holy--that must be done before, through Christ's blood and grace, without works--still it is done to the praise and glory of God and for the benefit and welfare of my neighbor, both of which cannot be paid for or equaled by all the world's goods." Martin Luther

Five points can then be made:

1. _____
2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

So, for what reason does God leave the Christian in this world?

12 The Christian Life and the Cross

We learn from Scripture that Christians, by their faith in Christ, enjoy the full favor of God--God is not against them but for them (Rom. 8:31), They are God's children and heirs of eternal life (John 1:12-13; Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:17), the angels serve them (Heb. 1:14), etc. We also learn from Scripture and from life as a Christian that God has ordained the high dignity of Christians should not become manifest in this life, but rather that the same lowliness which characterized the earthly life of Christ should characterize their earthly life (1 Peter 4:1). And this lowly form of the life of Christians, by which they are conformed to the image of Christ is called the cross of the Christians.

Luther describes the contrast between the high dignity of Christians and the lowly form of their life on earth in these words: "We are even now the children of God, and through faith and Baptism have been put into possession of eternal salvation, as is written in Mark 16:16 and John 1:12...But who among men recognizes us as children of God? Who will call those men children of God that are thrown into prison and are so tortured and tormented in every conceivable way that they appear to be the children of the devil, condemned and accursed souls? For that reason St. Paul says that the glory of the children of God is now hidden, but shall be manifested in them later (Col. 3:3-4). So long as God's children are here upon earth, they are not clothed with the livery of God, but wear the devil's livery. For the devil's children should be bound in fetters and should suffer all manner of misfortune. But that does not happen to the devil's offspring; they have all the world's pleasures, are wealthy and powerful, enjoy honor and money to the full; withal they put on God's garb and name, as though they were God's favorites. Us, they regard as heretics, under God's wrath. The right order is reversed: those who are God's children are called children of the devil, and those who are the children of the devil are called God's children. That hurts the pious; heaven and earth and all creatures cry out in complaining protest, are unwilling to be thus subjected to vanity and to suffer that the wicked abuse them to the dishonor of

God."

What Scripture says of the cross of Christians we will examine under six headings:

1. What constitutes "cross"?
2. The inseparable connection between Christianity and the cross.
3. The right view of the cross.
4. The purpose and profit of the cross.
5. The strength to bear the cross.
6. The cross and the sin of Christians.

What Constitutes "Cross"?

Both the believer and the unbeliever have many sorrows. What then properly constitutes what the Christian calls a cross?

What does the Christian deserve in so far as he is a sinner?_____

So what is the true punishment for sin?_____

What distinguishes the Christian from the unbeliever?_____

Why then is the Christian tormented by Satan, the world, and our flesh?_____

The confession of Christ entails persecution. To escape this cross, the antagonists of Paul preached the doctrine of works, which the world wants to hear (Gal. 6:12). For the same end, many in our day embrace synergism; which again is the doctrine of salvation by works, so pleasing to the world.

Considering our dual nature once again, what does the Scripture say concerning our fighting against God's Word, Will, and Order?

Matt. 16:24_____

Luke 14:33_____

Matt. 11:25-26_____

Matt. 10:34; Luke 12:52-53_____

1 Cor. 7:30; Matt. 19:21-22_____

Luke 14:26_____

Gal. 5:24_____

Col. 3:5_____

The Inseparable Connection Between Christianity and the Cross

Bearing the cross is inseparably bound up with Christianity, so inseparably that he who refuses to bear the cross can no longer claim to be a Christian; he has renounced the right to share the glory of Christ.

Does this mean that the Christian may impose a cross upon himself?_____

The Right View of the Cross

How do you suppose the old man of the Christian views the cross?_____

The Scripture instructs us to recognize reality when we are bearing a cross. The cross is not a manifestation of God's wrath against us. Rather the cross reveals God's love toward us. It marks us as children of God.

Heb. 12:6-10_____

1 Cor. 11:32_____

Scripture continues to teach us that when we suffer because of our testimony of Christ by word and deed, the cross is for us a testimony of the Holy Spirit that we are not of the world; but belong to Christ, for we then experience the same treatment which Christ and all witnesses of Christ

experienced.

Matt. 5:12_____

Rom. 8:17; 2 Thess. 1:5-7; 2 Cor. 4:7-8_____

The Purpose and Profit of the Cross

The cross is the way in which God leads His children through this world into eternal life.

Acts 14:22_____

2 Cor. 4:17_____

2 Cor. 12:7_____

2 Cor. 12:8-9_____

Adhering to the Scriptures and carrying the cross God works the following:

1 Peter 1:6-7_____

Ps. 18:6; Is. 26:16_____

Rom. 6:6; 1 Peter 4:1_____

2 Cor. 4:16-18_____

Christians bearing their cross patiently strengthen fellow Christians who, of course, also bear a cross.

The Strength to Bear the Cross

From where is the strength to bear the cross derived?_____

Rom. 5:5,8_____

Rom. 8:18_____

Col. 3:3-5_____

Matt. 5:12; Luke 6:22_____

Whoever, therefore, destroys the assurance of grace and salvation by making grace and salvation dependent upon human works or moral efforts in any form, deprives himself of the strength needed to bear the cross.

The Cross and the Sin of Christians

The question here is whether or not sin forms a part of the cross of Christians. How can that be answered?

Rom. 7:15_____7:14_____

Rom. 7:24_____

13

The Christian Life and Prayer

What the Scripture says regarding the Christian life and Prayer will be examined in this study under four headings:

1. The inseparable connection between Christian life and prayer
2. The requisite for prayer
3. The power and effect of prayer
4. Additional matters

The Inseparable Connection Between Christian Life and Prayer

The Inseparable Connection Between Christian Life and Prayer

How might prayer be defined?_____

Ps. 27:8_____

Rom. 8:26-27_____

Is. 65:24_____

What is prayer the result of?_____

So when does the prayer life of the Christian begin?_____A Christian prays even when, as often happens while fulfilling his earthly calling, he is not conscious of praying. This is true even when by reason of great sorrow and grief he imagines that he cannot pray.

Prayer has been fittingly compared to the heartbeat of physical life. Luther says: "Where there is a Christian, there is the Holy Ghost, who is always engaged in prayer. For though the Christ does not continually move his lips to utter words, never-the-less the heart is beating and pulsating, like the arteries and the heart in the body, unceasingly sighing: O dear Father, may Thy name be hallowed,

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done among us and all people, etc. And as attacks, trials, and troubles press and crowd harder, also such sighing and begging becomes more urgent, even audible. So, then, you cannot find a Christian who is not always praying, as little as a living person is without a pulse, which never rests, but beats continuously, though the person is not aware of it beating."

While this is true, what is the danger in taking this analogy to far particularly

considering our nature? _____

Into what two categories can we divide our prayers?

1. _____

2. _____

The Requisite for Prayer

We have touched on this already, but let's look into this more in-depth.

What does prayer presuppose? _____

Only faith in the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake makes prayer a prayer "in the name of Christ," and only prayer in the name of Christ has God's command and promise. (John 16:23; 14:13-14) It is only because of Christ's work that we have the boldness to approach God in prayer.

What does the old man want us to believe concerning this requisite for prayer? _____

The prayers of all saints have been based on Christ's righteousness, in God's grace and mercy in Christ, never on their own worthiness (Dan. 9:18). And so today and to the end of time, every Christian, entirely disregarding both his own worthiness and his unworthiness, derives his confidence and boldness to pray solely from the reconciliation effected by Christ and from God's command and God's promise to hear.

The Power and Effect of the Christian Prayer

Since God preserves this world only for the sake of Christians, in order that they may execute their Christian calling in the world (Matt. 24:14), and since the will of Christians as expressed in their prayers coincides with the all-sustaining and governing will of God (1 John 5:14), it follows that the Christians' prayer sustains and governs the whole world. In other words, the prayer of Christians has its effect on all occurrences in the Church and the world.

Let's see if this is Scriptural.

2 Thess. 3:1_____

Col. 4:2-4, Eph. 6:19-20_____

Rom. 15:30-32_____

Jer. 29:7_____

1 Tim. 2:1-3, Ps. 76:6_____

Ps. 5:6,10; 55:23_____

Here we keep in mind the office of the keys. What are those?_____

How might this be applicable also in the case of prayer?_____

How does Luther describe the importance of prayer in the civil sphere?_____

Things for Which a Christian Prays

The Christian is told to pray of God everything that is covered by the divine will and the divine promise.

What assurance do we have when we pray in Christ's name?_____

_____(Matt. 21:22)

What does the "old man" have us think when we hear this?_____

What supreme rule regulates prayer?_____

What happens when our prayers go beyond God's command and promise?

When we are praying for spiritual blessings necessary for our salvation, we should ask unconditionally; when praying for other gifts, we should ask that God grant them to us if it be His will.

How can we say this?_____

There are cases where the Christian has asked unconditionally for temporal blessings. One example is when Luther prayed unconditionally for the prolongation for Melanchthon's life. This is what he said: "There our Lord had to give in to me; for I threw down the sack before His door and rubbed into His ears all His promises that He would hear prayer which I could enumerate from Scripture, saying that He would have to hear me if I were to trust His promises."

Such cases belong to the domain of "heroic faith." But God taught Luther a hard lesson from which we would be wise to learn.

What lesson might that be?_____

There are other examples._____

Concerning the Lord's Prayer: (page 423 in the Book of Concord, Large Catechism, Lord's Prayer, line 22 ff.)

Additional Matters

Is. 63:16; 1 Kings 8:39_____

Matt. 4:10_____

1 Tim. 2:5-6; Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2; Rom. 8:31-32_____

Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9_____

What position should one take when he prays?_____

14

The Christian Life and the Hope of Eternal Life

Hope of Eternal Life

Justification by grace through faith is the central doctrine in the Scriptures. It is the only God pleasing motivator. But what brings the Christian life into focus?

Luke 1:67-79; 2:25; 2:38_____

1 Cor. 1:7; Titus 2:13; Phil. 3:20_____

How much impact does this important part of a life of faith have on Christians today?

Knowing that salvation is in Christ and knowing that Jesus may return at any time, what, as Christ-centered believers, are we called to do?

(Matt. 24:45-51; 25:14ff; Luke 12:15ff)_____

Matt. 24:14_____

Titus 2:12-14_____

Matt. 24:36ff._____

1 Peter 2:11; Heb 13:14_____

1 Cor. 7:31_____

Phil. 4:5_____

Matt. 25:1ff._____

Rom. 8:18_____

Luke 6:23; Matt. 5:12; 1 Peter 4:13-18_____

1 Thess. 4:13-18_____

In short, it is the blessed hope of heaven which shapes a Christian's life on earth into the right form. This hope insures the happy life of a Christian; this is the key to a successful ministry.

How might this hope be used in regard to various situations which the Christian finds

himself and are troublesome?_____
