

**MINISTRY BY MAIL**  
**Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship**  
[www.lutheranlccf.org](http://www.lutheranlccf.org)  
**Fourth Sunday In Lent, March 26, 2017**

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(Hymns found in The Lutheran Hymnal, CPH, 1941)

Hymns: 298, 401, 398, 392, 412.

Lessons: Leviticus 20 verse 8, Romans 7: 18-25, Luke 15:1-10.

Sermon Text: Romans 6:1-12.

. Sermon by Pastor Robert Mehltrittter

In the name of Jesus Christ, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

In our previous sermons we have talked about how Baptism brings about the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation. In the fourth part of his discussion of baptism, Luther goes beyond that comfort to make application for our daily lives. Today, continuing with the words of Luther, we talk about

**THE MEANING OF BAPTISM FOR OUR DAILY LIVES**

- 1. Our Old Man is to be drowned by daily contrition and repentance.**
- 2. Our New Man is to daily come forth,**
- 3. Who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.**
- 4. But this means a fight, a struggle between the Old Man and the New Man.**

You may have memorized the following words, or words very similar to these: **“WHAT DOES THIS BAPTIZING WITH WATER MEAN?** It means that our Old Adam with his evil deeds and desires should be drowned by daily contrition and repentance, and die, and that day by day a new man should arise, as from the dead, to live in the presence of God in righteousness and purity now and forever. **Where is this written?** St. Paul says in Romans, chapter 6, ‘We were buried with Christ through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.’”

By the end of this sermon, there should be four words and phrases that you should remember. These are “old man”, “new man”, “contrition” and “repentance”. If this were a classroom, there would be a test at the end of the sermon. See if you will pass the test.

Luther is talking about a death and rebirth.

By nature we have a heart and a mind that are inclined only toward evil. This is called the old man, the sinful nature, flesh, old Adam, old self. This is a result of Adam’s fall into sin and is called inherited or original sin. Because of our sinful nature and the sinful desires it produces in us we deserve the same punishment of death and hell for sinful thoughts as we do for sinful words and actions. We are all – all mankind – lost and condemned creatures because by nature we are slaves of sin, death, and the devil. We must all confess that by nature I am spiritually dead in sins, spiritually blind, under the power of Satan and an enemy of God. The devil, the world, and the sinful flesh are enemies of all mankind.

So, to repeat, the old man, the old Adam, is the sinful nature, which has come upon us by the fall of Adam and is ours by birth. It is **“your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires.”** Ephesians 4:22 (NIV) The King James Version speaks of **“the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.”** Ephesians 4:22 (KJV)

And so, really, the old Adam is our original sin, which reveals itself in all manner of sins and evil lusts. In Baptism original sin itself is not removed from our nature, but its guilt is forgiven. Even Christians still have the old Adam as long as they live, and their old Adam is not a bit better than that of any unbelievers. But while unbelievers are in their lives completely ruled by their old Adam, Christians seek to fight and suppress theirs. They “put off the old man”. Paul tells the Ephesian Christians – and us – **“You were taught, with regard to your**

*former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires.”* Ephesians 4:22 (NIV)

The only way we can be saved from the punishment we deserve is because of God’s grace to us in Christ. The only reason that we can have any pure and holy desires in our hearts is because of the new heart and mind that God creates in us by faith in Jesus. This is called the new man, new person, new self, inner being, spirit. This new spiritual life is created in us by the washing of regeneration in baptism. ***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”*** 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

The new man is found only in believers. Our faith in Christ is the way in which a new spiritual life is created in us. For faith not only justifies us before God by laying hold of his promise of forgiveness, but it also sanctifies us in our lives by urging and prompting us to do good works. We read in Galatians: ***“The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.”*** Galatians 5:6 (NIV) By such faith in Christ every true believer becomes a "new creature", ***“a new creation.”***

The result of having both an old Adam and a new man in us is a constant conflict within us. Paul confesses, and we confess with him: ***“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. .... For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do--this I keep on doing. .... So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God--through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.”*** Romans 7:18-25 (NIV)

***“Thanks be to God--through Jesus Christ our Lord”*** we are strengthened by faith in Jesus to fight the old Adam and to follow the new man.

Luther teaches us that our Baptism “means that our Old Adam with his evil deeds and desires should be drowned by daily contrition and repentance.”

The old Adam, the sinful nature is to be drowned, put to death every day. How is this Old Adam to be drowned in us? The Old Adam is to be drowned in us by daily contrition, that is, sincere sorrow for our sins and repentance. Repentance is, first of all faith in the forgiveness of sins, by which we also resist the evil desires and fight and suppress them. Paul concludes a chapter in which he tells of the acts of the sinful nature and the fruit of the Holy Spirit with these words: ***“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.”*** Galatians 5:24 (NIV)

So Scripture speaks of contrition as sincere sorrow in the heart. After Peter publicly denied Jesus three times, we read: ***“The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: ‘Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.’ And he went outside and wept bitterly.”*** Luke 22:61-62 (NIV)

This sorrow, this contrition refers to that particular sin we wish to suppress, not just sin in general. As a fruit of contrition and faith in the forgiveness of sins we then avoid those things for which we are truly sorry. Thus contrition helps us to beat down and keep down the old Adam.

Luther also uses the word “repentance”. Scripture uses this word in a narrow sense and in a broad sense. In a narrow sense, repentance is faith in the forgiveness of sins.

"Repentance" in the wider sense means contrition and faith in the forgiveness of sins and fruits of faith. If we have true faith and appreciate the blessings God bestowed on us in Baptism, we certainly will not knowingly and intentionally do what might displease him. Our attitude will be that of Joseph, who said ***“how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”*** Genesis 39:9 (KJV) Thus our faith in Christ enables us to drown the old Adam by resisting and suppressing his evil lusts.

In a broad sense, repentance refers to first, contrition, and second, faith in the forgiveness of sins, or repentance in the narrow sense, and third, fruits of contrition and repentance. It is not enough merely to have contrition and to be sorry for our sin. Even Judas was sorry for his sin, and ***“he was seized with remorse.”*** Matthew 27:3 (NIV) But he did not have faith that Jesus could forgive even his sin. He went out and committed suicide, and did not bring forth fruits of contrition and repentance. Fruits of faith, that is, fruits of contrition and faith in

the forgiveness of sins will lead to obedience to the will of God. We point to the words of John the Baptist: ***“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance”*** Matthew 3:8 (NIV) or, as the King James Version reads: ***“Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.”*** Matthew 3:8 (KJV)

We must do this "daily", not just occasionally, because daily these evil lusts arise, and we must fight them and beat them down before they become too strong. Cain did not do that. He nursed a grudge against his brother, until it became so strong that he killed him. You can easily root out small weeds in your garden, but if you let them grow into big bushes and trees, it is far more difficult. We must fight against our sins when they begin in the heart. Just as we daily wash our faces, so must we daily wash our hearts in contrition and repentance.

So how does this new man come forth and arise? The new man comes forth and arises as we daily overcome sin and seek to live in true godliness. Scripture says: ***“Put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”*** Ephesians 4:24 (NIV) ***“Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”*** Ephesians 4:24 (KJV)

Faith is an active power, which shows itself in holy desires, and prompts us to lead pure, holy, and righteous lives. And as the old Adam must be drowned daily, so the new man must “daily come forth”. There must not be only an occasional spurt, but a constant effort to grow in holiness of life. And it takes a real effort, because the flesh, the old Adam, ***“lusteth against the Spirit,”*** Galatians 5:17 (KJV) the new man, ***“For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.”*** Galatians 5:17 (NIV) We must always take sides against the old Adam and suppress him, and support and follow the new man.

How does baptizing with water signify the daily drowning of the old man and the coming forth of the new man?

By Baptism we are made partakers of Christ. Now we who are baptized should daily repent of all sins, shun everything that is evil, and walk in newness of life.

***“We are buried with him by baptism into death.”*** Christ died not only for our sins, but he died unto sin. When a man dies, he is through with all that occupied him in this life; he is dead to this world. While Jesus lived on earth, he was occupied with the great task of suffering for the sins of men. Our sins, in a way, dominated his life, because he bore our guilt and finally paid the penalty for our sins, even death. But when he died, he was once for all through with this business of sin. The dominion and jurisdiction of sin came to an end. Baptism has made us partakers of the death of Christ also in this way: that we likewise should consider ourselves to be ***“dead to sin”***. Just as those who are dead and buried are no longer controlled by the sinful lusts and passions of their former life, so we, buried with Christ by Baptism into death, should not again let sin rule in our mortal bodies ***“so that you obey its evil desires.”*** The life of sin, living in sin and daily seeking to continue sinning, should be to every baptized Christian a thing of the past.

By Baptism we were made partakers also of the resurrection of Christ. He died unto sin, but he now lives unto God. Even so we, being dead unto sin, and wanting nothing to do with sin, should be ***“alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*** Being freed from sin, we should be servants of righteousness. Our Baptism, therefore, signifies and means that, being buried with Christ by Baptism into death, our old life of sin should cease, and being planted in the likeness of his resurrection, we should walk in newness of life. Thus our Baptism is to be to us a daily reminder that we shun the old paths of sin and walk in the new way of righteousness.

And so, as we remember our baptismal vows, we renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways. We also promise and vow to serve the Triune God, and him only. So let us renew our baptismal vow daily! Let us daily bring forth fruits of faith in every way! Amen.