



St. Paul's Lutheran Church
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The Epistle of Romans

The Justification of the Ungodly

A Brief Excursus

It is very important – before we enter into chapter 7 – to take a moment and think through what we have learned and what Paul will soon introduce to us.

Let's start from the beginning and work our way through to the end.

- 1) Because of Original Sin, A person is conceived in sin and is under the power of the devil until Christ claims the person as His own in baptism.
- 2) At baptism, a new sacramental reality occurs, there is a creation of the 'new man' as the person is given the Holy Spirit, as well as forgiveness, life, and salvation.
- 3) With the creation of the new man, the Christian experiences a paradoxical state of being simultaneously saint and sinner (i.e., the Christian lives in a time where there is an overlapping – see the back page). That is to say, the Christian is joined externally to Jesus in baptism (e.g., the Christians is entirely a saint); however, the person simultaneously remains a weak creature where sin

still dwells internally (e.g., the Christian is entirely a sinner). As it is to be expected, this creates a civil war with the Christian because sin – even though it is conquered in Christ's death and resurrection – still wreaks havoc within, resulting in the Christian being driven daily, in ever greater degrees, to flee outside 'himself' to Christ.

- 4) By faith, the Christian flees outwardly to an external reality of the new person he is in Christ.
- 5) Every moment, every thought, every word, and every deed becomes the combat zone of this epic war with the Christian.
- 6) Even though this civil war begins at baptism, the good news is that the civil war ends at the death of the Christian. That is to say; the end of the civil war between the 'old Adam' and the 'new man in Christ' ends when the Christian dies. At death, the Christian no longer lives in this paradoxical state but is delivered unto paradise with Jesus. At death, the reign of sin, death, and the old Adam are terminated as the

Christian awaits the resurrection of the body and everlasting life.

To understand what has just been said, please consult the diagram on the right side.

So, what does this look like practically speaking? Well, let's examine this practically.

- 1) Due to original sin, there is a reign of sin, death, and the devil in this life under the sun. And so, each day, we are going to have frustration, guilt, futility, angst, because of our sinful nature, the attacks of the devil, and our constant fight to keep death at bay. This is the daily grind. The heaviness of heart. The tough world that we know.
- 2) Due to Good Friday and Easter – the death and resurrection of Jesus – there is victory over sin, death, and the devil. The victory is that death will not be the final say, sin will not ultimately condemn, and the devil is a defeated foe.
- 3) Because of Good Friday and Easter, the Lord sends Pastors to baptize and preach the good news of what was accomplished by Jesus. So, promises are preached into people's ears, and water is splashed on people's heads, delivering to them the victory of Jesus as they live this life in this vale of tears.
- 4) The Good News of Good Friday and the Resurrection has given to Christians personally renews minds. Even though Christian walk through this difficult vale of tears every day, they do so with faith, hope, and love. That is to say; they are given faith in Christ to endure the ongoing struggles. They are given hope to know that there will be an end of the daily struggle and grind. They are given love by the Lord so that they may love their neighbor against all odds.
- 5) And when the end of death finally comes to the Christian, they can approach death not alone. They can approach death knowing that the Lord is with them. AND they can approach death clinging to the hope of the resurrection – that someday they will be raised back to life "WITHOUT" sin, death, and the devil.

What is mentioned above and in the diagram to the right is the Christian faith. As we move on to chapter 7 of Romans, we will begin to see in more detail the civil war within each of us as Christians.



