

# TABLE TALK

Official Publication of the LMS-USA  
*...these words... shall be upon your heart; you shall  
teach them... and talk of them... Deut. 6:6,7*



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## *Christ The Lord Is Risen Today*

Another Easter is in the past? No. The first day of every week is a celebration of the resurrection of our Lord. The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! And so, one of the Easter hymns which is most familiar to all is a hymn that ought to have rich meaning throughout the entire year, "Christ The Lord Is Risen Today".

For about 300 years now, this hymn and its variants have been sung to commemorate and celebrate that Sunday morning about 2000 years ago when the risen Jesus walked out of His tomb and gave demonstration to the fact that He had once and for all time triumphed over sin and death

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## *The Preaching of the Resurrection*

The Apostle Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 15 and verse 15-17, *...if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.*

Obviously, for Paul, the preaching of the resurrected and living Christ was central to the Christian ministry. This then lifts up the question for preachers of the gospel today, What does it mean, for you, to be given the privilege of preaching the good news of Christ risen? This is the assignment, and what follows is the response of four pastors.

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*He is Risen! He is Risen indeed!*

both for Himself and all His people.

The earliest forms of this hymn can be traced back to a Latin text from the 14th century. In 1708 the four Latin stanzas were translated into English and published by J. Walsh in *Lyra Davidica* under the title "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today". A few decades later, in 1739, a modified version was published by John and Charles Wesley in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* under the title, "Hymn for Easter Day". This version, later shortened and supplemented with the "Alleluia" refrain, became the hymn that remains so popular today.

Included below are the 11 stanzas published by the Wesleys. It is well worth reading through each stanza thoughtfully, and perhaps especially the ones that we no longer sing. Each is rich with biblical allusion and the glorious implications of Easter.

1. *"Christ the Lord is ris'n today,"  
Sons of Men and Angels say!  
Raise your Joys and Triumphs high,  
Sing ye Heav'ns, and Earth reply.*
2. *Love's Redeeming Work is done,  
Fought the Fight, the Battle won,  
Lo! our Sun's Eclipse is o'er,  
Lo! He sets in Blood no more.*
3. *Vain the Stone, the Watch, the Seal;  
Christ hath burst the Gates of Hell!  
Death in vain forbids his Rise:  
Christ hath open'd Paradise!*

4. *Lives again our glorious King,  
Where, O Death, is now thy Sting?  
Once He died our Souls to save,  
Where thy Victory, O Grave?*
5. *Soar we now, where Christ has led,  
Following our Exalted Head,  
Made like Him, like Him we rise:  
Ours the Cross; the Grave; the Skies.*

6. *What tho' once we perish'd All,  
Partners of our Parent's Fall,  
Second Life we All receive,  
In our Heav'nly Adam live.*
7. *Ris'n with Him, we upward move,  
Still we seek the Things above,  
Still pursue, and kiss the Son,  
Seated on his Father's Throne;*
8. *Scarce on Earth a Thought bestow,  
Dead to all we leave below,  
Heav'n our Aim, and lov'd Abode,  
Hid our Life with Christ in God!*
9. *Hid 'till Christ our Life appear,  
Glorious in his Members here:  
Join'd to Him, we then shall shine  
All Immortal, all Divine!*
10. *Hail the Lord of Earth and Heav'n!  
Praise to Thee by both be giv'n:  
Thee we greet Triumphant now;  
Hail the Resurrection Thou!*
11. *King of Glory, Soul of Bliss,  
Everlasting Life is This,  
Thee to know, thy Pow'r to prove,  
Thus to sing, and thus to love!*

You may have noticed when reading the above words that the stanzas felt incomplete. The alleluias we are used to singing at the end of each line are missing. A later editor added the alleluias in order to make the lyrics fit the tune and to give added opportunities for praise.

## *The Joy of Preaching the Resurrection*

Rev. Jon Holst

St. Paul, writing to the Church in Corinth, joyfully proclaimed: "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me" (1 Cor 15:3-8).

Along with our Lord's atoning death, St. Paul includes the fact that Jesus' resurrection on the third day is of "first importance" giving several examples of Christ's post-crucifixion appearances to numerous eyewitnesses. As one called to proclaim the saving Gospel of Christ, there are many truths bound up with this historical reality which never cease to be a joy to proclaim to Christians and non-Christians alike.

There is great joy in proclaiming that the tomb is empty. Jesus is alive! As He Himself declared at the tomb of Lazarus: "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die (Jn 11:25-26). By laying down His own life and taking it up again, Christ proved that He has authority and power over death such that all who are in Him "shall never die".

There is great joy in proclaiming that Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). Jesus is life be-

cause the resurrection proves that death has no power over Him, and He is the way, because by His death and resurrection, He has opened for us the way to eternal life.

There is great joy in proclaiming that Jesus, the Good Shepherd, laid down His life for His sheep. After the resurrection, Jesus called Mary Magdalene, one of His precious sheep, by name. She knew it was the voice of her Good Shepherd, and her tears turned to exceeding joy! Likewise, our resurrected Lord calls us by name in Holy Baptism. On account of this, we know His voice and follow Him as He leads us through the valley of the shadow of death to our own bodily resurrection from the dead on the Last Day so that we may dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

And there is great joy in proclaiming that Jesus is the bread of life (Jn 6:22ff). Christ's resurrection, as attested to by numerous eyewitnesses, proves that His word is truth. And His word is this: "the bread of God is [Christ] who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world" (Jn 6:33). Moreover, our resurrected Lord continues to feed us with the bread of life, namely, His own flesh and blood in the Sacrament of the Altar.

As a preacher, I can think of no greater joy and privilege than to proclaim the Good News of Christ's resurrection so that all who hear may have a share in these great joys as the Word of God works to create faith in the hearts of those who hear it and as the faithful look joyfully forward to their own bodily resurrection on the Last Day unto life everlasting.

## The Privilege of Preaching Christ Risen

Rev. John Erickson

What does it mean for me as a preacher to have the privilege of sharing the good news of the Risen Christ?

It is an interesting question. And as I thought about it, I thought about the privilege of preaching through the entire year. Romans 10 (see verses 14 -17) informs us that the preaching of the gospel is central to the planting of faith in the hearts and minds of those who hear. For those of us who follow, quite faithfully, the lectionary, we will preach the Word throughout the year beginning with the prophecies concerning the incarnation of our Lord, through His birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven. This will occupy the first half of the year. Then, a focus on our Lord's teachings will occupy the last half of the year. Think of it... throughout the year, the preacher is God's voice sending forth the Word that, when it goes forth, will "accomplish that which [God] purposes... [and] shall succeed in the thing for which [God] send[s] it" (Isaiah 55:11).

Then I thought also of Paul and the focus of his preaching which we find in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:23), "We preach Christ crucified." Later we find he also makes the resurrection of our Lord central to his message. "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain" (1 Cor. 15:14). In other words, for Paul, as it was for Peter and the other Apostles, it all centers in the crucified and risen Christ Jesus. "There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). And the preaching of that Name... the preaching of Christ... the preaching of God's Word... when that is received by the hearer... and if the hearer then, having taken that word to heart, con-

fesses with his or her mouth that Jesus is Lord and believes in his or her heart that God raised Him from the dead, that individual will be saved (see Romans 10:9). To be called by the Holy Spirit to be the preacher of that Word... is indeed a privilege... a profound privilege.

Paul mentions back in that first chapter of 1 Corinthians how this preaching as described above, is foolishness to who are perishing. It makes no sense to them. They are not interested in it. They want something more than the Word of Christ. People want some sign or signs that this message is worth giving time and attention to. Others want something that has a more intellectual ring to it. This response to Paul's preaching was nothing new. Multitudes responded to Jesus' teaching in the same way. To which our Lord said, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it exempt the sign of Jonah" (Matt. 16:4). Jesus had explained that sign which would be, and which was indeed given. "For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40). And as we know, that of course pointed to His own raising up to life after His three days in the grave.

Does the resurrection mean anything?

Now, as mentioned above, I can preach all year... but then I am given the privilege of sharing the great news of the Resurrection in a special way on Easter Sunday. Easter is a real event that took place in history. And what occurred on the first day of the week, namely the resurrection of Jesus... was, and is, proof positive that Jesus is real and He is true. It means that the Word of Christ (Rom.

10:17) is true... and if His Word is true, than, when Jesus said whoever believes and is baptized shall be saved (Mk. 16:16), and shall never die (Jn. 11:26)... that is also true. It is true as Paul said, that without the resurrection of our Lord, our faith is futile... but with the resurrection we can have absolute faith... faith unshakable in our Lord and Savior... in the forgiveness of sins He has made possible for us... in His presence with us until the end of the age... and in the sure hope of a home in heaven.

But while preaching is a privilege, it is also a challenge. Faithful preachers throughout biblical history, as well as since that time, have always gone forth with the message, "Repent and believe." Biblical preaching calls for a response on the part of the hearer. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9). But here is the issue: there is believing and there is *believing*.

I recently heard a preacher ask his hearers in connection with the familiar hymn: "Were you there when they crucified my Lord? ...Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?" etc. And of course, the obvious answer is "no." None of us were there. But think of all the people that were there... and I suppose we could add to that the demons who were also likely present. They saw... they witnessed. Did they believe Jesus was crucified? Did they believe He died? Did they believe He was placed in a sealed tomb? Yes they did. They believed. After all *they saw it*. Did they believe that He rose up from the dead? They saw the empty tomb. They heard from witnesses who saw the stone rolled away... the grave clothes remaining ... who saw the risen Lord. But did they believe?

It appears that people believed *as much as they wanted to believe of what they wanted to believe*. Few were willing to accept and believe

that Jesus was anything more than what their physical eyes saw. They could see and accept Jesus the "son of man," but they were unable or unwilling to accept Jesus as "of God" ...as God incarnate.

As a Christian... and as a called preacher of the gospel... it is difficult when people seemingly have little or no interest in the message of the Christ of Scripture. We want to see results. We want people to believe. We want people to know the "peace of God that passes all understanding". And while we know we are given the task of "sowing", yet we want to see the positive results of the "sowing". But ultimately the results rest in the hearer of the Word and the response of the hearer to the work of the Holy Spirit in his or her life.

The good news is that the Word, when received, has the power to change lives... to free that life from sin and from the fear of death and the grave. That Word comes with resurrection power, so that even as Christ was raised from death to life... so we too might walk in newness of life and in the sure promise that we too will be raised up to life eternal.

The task of the preacher then, is not only to preach (to sow the Word), *but to pray for receptive hearts*. For it is with the "heart that one believes and is justified" (Rom. 10:10). In Hebrew thought, the heart "is the center not only of emotions, but also of capacities such as insight, critical evaluation and human will" (note on Pr. 2:9 - *Concordia Study Bible*).

Almighty God, God of our salvation, it is Your will that all people might come to You through Your Son Jesus Christ. Grant that by Your Holy Spirit we may faithfully proclaim the good news of Your salvation. Inspire our witness to Him that many may come to know the power of forgiveness and the hope of His resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## EASTER RESURRECTION, IT'S MEANING AND EFFECTS

by Rev. Ralph Spears

The meaning of Easter was contained in eleven notes in the key of B flat on my trumpet. These notes were devised by Geo. Friedrich Handel for the Oratorio *MESSIAH* to carry the words,

***“I know that my Redeemer liveth”***

This I played unaccompanied, perched high up in the choir loft... The Call to Worship, that begin the Easter morning Service at the huge Presbyterian Church downtown. This was my sacred duty all three years of high school. What a thrill! These words affirm the Resurrection with certainty, coming from the most ancient Book of Job, by these notes from the 18th Century. Then I pointed the horn down a hallway to create the effect of an echo before the fanfare for the processional Hymn, *“Christ The Lord is Risen Today”*. What a privilege to declare those words musically on that most Holy Morning.

The Resurrection of Easter morning must be experienced by each Christian as an individual initiation, if you will, into the mystery of life as it really is. There is nothing else like it. To SEE the risen Christ is to be blest beyond measure, but each must see it for themselves under Jesus' saying, “Blessed are those who have not seen (with their eyes) yet believe. Luther, after a lifetime of writing and translating, had no more meaningful words than these; “Believe – and you have it”!

Notice Mary Magdalene who bumped into the gardener that morning finally realizing that it was her own Rabboni when He called her by name. There was John who “saw and believed” in looking at the empty tomb with the shroud and napkin. Then later, the men on the Emmaus Road, and then, that evening, the ten Apostles still in the Upper Room –

their ‘come to Jesus moment’ when He came to them, appearing to them through the locked door (yet without Thomas). They all came to believe in different ways of their own experience. But this is true for everyone. It is true for every Christian.

Each one of us, no matter who we are, when we tell of it, it is often intensely personal, and although subjective by nature, it also has its own objectivity. This is an objectivity that touches on the foundation of our Faith in a dynamic way. Already I have told how much the Day of Resurrection meant to me those years ago. It always has in a way that is not easy to explain. Many Holy Day events over the years have had special gifts of items that are special and add to the total Easter event of collected experiences.

In Seminary, we were assigned to a local parish as a part of our Practicum. In my senior year, I had become the choir director of the parish that I had been assigned to. My job was to help with the liturgy and read the lessons at the early service at Fifth Lutheran Church. The Easter Services were good, but nothing unusual. I had come back a bit early from the holiday break for the Sunday after Easter. As usual, I read the lessons including the account of Jesus appearing to the Apostles with Thomas missing from the company, and his insistence that he, Thomas, would not believe unless he saw for himself. And then Jesus appeared again in the upper room, this time with Thomas present. Thomas' response “My Lord and My God!” was witness of his initiation into the Faith, a response both subjective and objective – from the heart. Thomas no longer needed to see the nail

(Resurrection continued on p. 11)



## *The Preacher and The Hidden God*

by Rev. Jeffrey A. Iverson

When I consider what it means for me to have had the privilege of sharing the Good News of the Risen Christ, I am reminded of two verses from Scripture. The first is from the prophet Isaiah:

*Truly, you are a God who hides himself, O God of Israel, the Savior.* Isaiah 45:15 (ESV)

The second is from Paul's letter to the Romans:

*How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"* Romans 10:14,15 (ESV)

Why do we need someone to preach the Good News of the Risen Christ? Why do we need a preacher? Having a preacher is important to us in the Lutheran tradition. It is important in other Christian traditions as well, but seems especially so among Lutherans. When our pastor retires or takes another call, we set out immediately to find an interim pastor, form a call committee, and begin a search for a new pastor. When a group of Lutherans form a house church, they pray that the Lord will raise up a pastor in their midst or send someone their way. Circuit riders, pastors who itinerate between several congregations, are making a comeback.

Why is it so important for us to have a preacher? It is not because they just speak a bunch of words at us, it is because of what those words

do. The words from a preacher's mouth transform us. They make us something different than we were before, just as God's Word transformed a formless void into a lush planet, just as God's Word transformed a group of Hebrew slaves into the nation of Israel, just as God's Word came upon the Virgin Mary and made her pregnant with the Son of God, we are transformed.

When we are transformed by the words of the preacher, we no longer see with our own eyes but with the eyes of faith. We often wonder why we don't understand everything. "Why were the wars of the Old Testament so bloody when God is a God of love? Why did God's Son have to die? Why are Christians persecuted in so many parts of the world? Why do false religions still prosper? Why do our loved ones die, despite our prayers?" It is only when we will come face to face with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that we will completely know all the reasons. In the meantime, we need a preacher to bring us closer to the face of God, one step at a time.

Martin Luther liked to talk about the hidden God. God hides himself in the things we do not understand in order that we may seek what God *does* want us to understand: his mercy, not his wrath. Luther also described the hidden God as the God "not preached" and the revealed God as God "preached" (Luther's Works 33:139). It is the preacher that brings the revealed God to us: the God of mercy, not of wrath. That is why we need a preacher and why it is such a privilege to be one.

Gerhard Forde, one of my seminary professors, when explaining the imperative of preaching the Gospel,

was invariably asked: "What about the people of (insert your favorite remote place) who have never heard the Gospel?" He would wryly smile and say "Do you know any? Then why are you sitting here?" That is

the imperative of the Gospel: to get off our backsides and transform people by preaching the word, administering the sacraments, speaking the absolution, and showing them the God of mercy.

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## Luther on the "Foolishness of Preaching."

It is true, according to reason, God is the greatest of all fools for taking care of His cause with the Word and the sermon and undertaking to lead people with preaching; for reason absolutely resists the Word and preaching. "If people smarted for it, they would become different; if only He would rain blows upon them as the world does!" . . . But we must not teach or criticize Him. At present He has sent Christ and wants Him to preach, warn, and tell people what a man is to do or to leave undone. If they do not heed, He is indeed wiser than I am. Had I been there as His counselor, I would have attacked with force and fist and said: What is the use of preaching? The more you say, the less is done. See, people only laugh and mock at you besides. But if you used your fist on them, they would really feel it.

But God does not follow my advice; He says: I do intend to interfere with my power, and there is to be no fooling; however, I cannot act as mad reason does, which interferes at once by force. I will not take



them unawares and by surprise. Rather God preaches to men, warns them, and tells them in advance. He knows well that He has a strong and heavy hand and that His arm has might and power so great that He can soon overthrow a kingdom. Hence He does not want to use His power, but first He preaches and says: Be converted. Listen to Me. But if He speaks and it makes no impression on us – if we despise His message and Word, as reason does despise everything – then He has a double right to punish us. (Weimar edition, vol. 33, 620f)



## When the Deadly Outbreak Comes: Counsel from Martin Luther

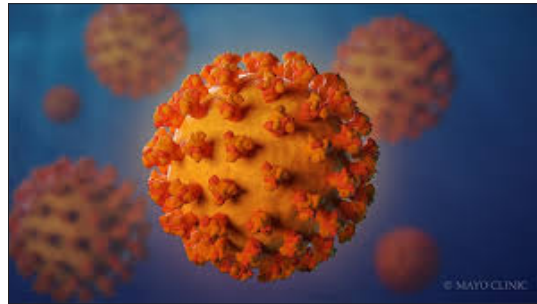
*The March 12, 2020, guest post from Andrew Davis,  
senior pastor of the First Baptist Church of Durham,  
North Carolina. Reprinted with permission*

On December 31, 2019, health officials from China alerted the World Health Organization of a new pattern of pneumonia in the city of Wuhan that they had never seen previously. By January 7, 2020, health officials announced they had identified a new virus in the coronavirus family, which they designated 2019-nCoV. Coronaviruses include the common cold and SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome). They spread by being in proximity to an infected person

devastated Europe in the 14th through 16th centuries. The Black Death came out of China from 1347 to 1350 and killed one-fourth of Europe's population at that time. Later outbreaks occurred in the 15th century as well, leaving deep emotional scars and terror in the memories of many Europeans. When this disease was in epidemic levels, the mortality rate ranged from 30 percent to 90 percent.

### 'Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague' (1527)

This is the historical backdrop for a fascinating pamphlet written in 1527 by Martin Luther, "Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague". In August 1527, the plague had struck Luther's city of Wittenberg, and many of



and inhaling droplets when they cough or sneeze, or by touching surfaces where these droplets land and then touching one's face or nose. Since January 7, this new coronavirus has spread to almost every nation on earth with the WHO reporting 118,000 cases and more than 4,200 deaths. Stock markets have crashed, and global travel and commerce have been radically affected.

Christians are facing this health crisis with a variety of feelings and serious questions, and as always, it is essential to seek our ultimate guidance from the Scripture alone. Yet it is also helpful to look back in time to see how Christians in the past have faced similar crises. And it isn't hard to find lessons in the dreadful circumstances connected with the bubonic plague (Black Death), which

Luther's fellow citizens ran for their lives. Luther's prince, Elector John, ordered Luther to leave immediately to save his own life, but Luther chose to stay to minister to those stricken. Luther himself was surrounded by the disease and its suffering victims. The wife of mayor Tilo Dene virtually died in Luther's arms. So Luther boldly stood in the gap along with many others to minister hope and the Word of God in a desperate situation.

Many Germans from other cities and towns mocked the Wittenbergers for fleeing. One German pastor named Johann Hess wrote Luther asking how a pastor should behave when facing such a plague. The pamphlet was Luther's response, and its wisdom may prove helpful to many Christians even in our 21<sup>st</sup> century crisis.

This is a plague doctor's hood, from the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin, and was worn in the 1600s by whoever was desperate or brave enough to treat victims of the deadly epidemic. They wore the hood along with a hat, robe, gloves, and breeches as a kind of early bio-hazard suit, and used a stick to touch the sick. The plague was thought, like all disease, to be spread through "miasma," the unpleasant air of decay and evil, so the doctors stuffed the beak-like nose of their hood with pleasant-smelling spices and other substances, (perhaps ambergris, rose petals, camphor, or straw,) that they believed would ward off the deadly vapors. The crystal eyepieces, (goggles in other versions,) were generally colored red to counter the evil eye, according to some accounts, though they aren't in this hood.



### Who Can Leave?

In this tract, Luther began by addressing those with the strong conviction that one should never flee because the plague is God's judgment for our sins, and Christians should stand humbly and accept his will in repentance. While Luther considered such views praiseworthy, he acknowledged that not everyone is equally strong in the faith. Luther also asserted that it should be obvious that people with leadership roles (like pastors, mayors, judges, and physicians) should remain in the community until the crisis has passed. Especially pastors must be like the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:11).

Just as strongly, Luther said it would be sinful for parents to abandon their children, or for any person to flee if a family member depends on them. The same applies to our neighbors, for loving our neighbor as ourselves includes being certain they are free from harm. Beyond this, however, seeking to save one's life was natural and biblically allowable, as was using medicine. Luther was no fatalist.

### Fear of Death

Concerning one's demeanor, Luther made it plain that fear of death was the Devil's work, and that no Christian should yield to it. Christ's resurrection should make all Christians fearless in the face of the grave. Yet Luther allowed that some are stronger in this faith than others, and may choose to go boldly into the fire of deadly danger, expecting great reward from the Lord for their service, while others are weaker and flee in the normal way.

Luther said Christians who trust God and minister directly to the dying should not fear boils and infection, for in the end, caring for the sick is like caring for Christ. Jesus said, "I was sick, and you cared for me" (Matt. 25:36). John wrote that Christ laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for others (1 John 3:16). On the other hand, Luther warned against the over-confident who underestimated the seriousness of the plague and were frivolous toward God.

### Word of God

Luther strongly urged those in the presence of the dying to pour into them the Word of God, teaching them both how to live and also how to die

in faith. Anyone who is dying in unbelief should be urgently warned to repent while there's still time, but they should call for a pastor while they can still understand his words.

Anyone who is aware of outstanding sins should do everything they can to make restitution and receive the Lord's Supper if they are able. So also the dying should write a will as soon as possible.

### Practical Steps

Beyond that, Luther advocated practical steps to contain the spread of the disease. We who live after Louis Pasteur discovered his germ theory, and who benefit from the scientific development of medical research and modern hospitals, can hardly imagine how different conditions would have been in Wittenberg in Luther's day.

Luther had to advocate for certain public buildings to be set aside as hospitals for the sick rather than allowing the sick to be in hundreds of private homes. He also urged Chris-

tians to fumigate their homes, yards, and streets to stop the spread of the plague. And Luther urged that the Wittenberg cemetery should be moved outside the city limits, with its walls decorated with biblical scenes to minister to the grieving.

### Love of Christ

Ultimately Luther left all personal decisions on whether to flee to each individual in light of the Word of God. Times like these are intense and serious, and everything we do should be in light of God's Word and the call of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our journey with the coronavirus has just begun, and it may soon fizzle out into the dim memories of the medical history books. But it is also a God-ordained opportunity for many Christians to display the love of Christ in service to their neighbors, and to live out the fearlessness of death that Christ has won for all his children.

This originally appeared at *The Gospel Coalition*: [web@thegospelcoalition.org](mailto:web@thegospelcoalition.org)

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(Resurrection continued from page 6)

prints or the wound in the side. He believed, and he "had it"! I had read that at the 8 o'clock service and then turned and began the Apostles Creed... "I believe!"

But now at the 10:30 service, I stood in the first row as my friend Dick McDaniels read, just as I had two and a half hours earlier. Then he finished that lesson from John 20 with those magical words, "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book, but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His Name". Then he turned to the altar and spoke the same words, which again, I had spoken earlier,

the words of the Apostles Creed... "I Believe!"

In that moment, something very special happened. It happened to me, and it was overwhelming! A whole different thing had been downloaded. I was an "Apostle" in that moment! I was Thomas, shaken from his objective demands for proof of his defining. That moment was eternal – it was real – and it has never left me. I looked around and saw that the congregation had been seated moments before, and there I was, still standing, in that moment. I have seldom shared of that moment, but there it is, a part of the basis of everything that I have ever attempted to speak concerning the Resurrection of our Lord.

Table Talk  
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The LMS-USA is Lutheran Church body describing itself as *Biblical, Confessional, Evangelical, Liturgical and Congregational*. It is a 'Forum' in which there is an on going discussion of theological issues and concerns among clergy and lay alike. The LMS-USA meets annually for a Theological Conference and this publication, besides carrying news of the Ministerium and Synod, functions also as a vehicle for this continuing dialogue.

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