

Christ Lutheran Church

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April 2017

The Third Commandment

You shall keep the day of rest holy.

Catechism Explanation

We should fear and love God, so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

"Why do I have to go to church? I can read my Bible and pray at home. Sunday is my day off; it's my only chance to rest and do what I want." These are some common excuses for not attending church.

Often, we are concerned about getting enough rest. We want to get away from the labor and stress of life. We want time off to catch up on sleep, relax, and have fun. This kind of rest is important for the body and mind; but it does not give our souls rest.

In the Third Commandment, we see that the very thing God wants for us is rest – especially rest for our souls. He wants us to set aside time in our week for being in His Word and worship, that He may refresh our souls by His forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life.

In Exodus 20:9-10 God commanded the Hebrews: *"Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God."* "Sabbath" means "rest." We are no longer required to worship on the seventh day (Saturday). The Sabbath and other holy days foreshadowed Christ's coming; but He Himself is our rest (Colossians 2:16-17).

Yet the same principle applies. Our Savior still wants His people to gather regularly around His Word, that He may give our souls rest. In Christian freedom, we generally worship on the first day of the week (Sunday) – the day of Jesus' resurrection – as the early church did (Matthew 28:1; Acts 20:7).

Jesus says: *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest... rest for your souls"* (Matthew 11:28-29). He was addressing the heavy burdens we carry in our heart and soul because of sin. Day after day, we live in a sin-fallen world, with all its stresses and sorrows. Day after day, we live with our sinful nature and all our failures and

guilt. Sin is the root of all unrest; sin leaves us in fear of death and judgment.

Jesus gives our souls rest by forgiving us. On the cross, He took the entire burden of our sin on Himself. He paid for our guilt by His own precious blood. He laid down His life on Good Friday and took it up again on Easter. His resurrection guarantees the forgiveness of sins, salvation, and eternal life He has won for us.

We can have all the physical rest and entertainment we want; but it cannot take away the restlessness of a guilt-burdened soul. We can spend all the time we want in the most peaceful setting in nature; but nature will tell us nothing about God's forgiveness in Christ.

But as we gather around Jesus' Word and Sacraments, He gives us His true rest. As we confess our sins, we hear His Word of forgiveness and peace with God. We come to His Holy Supper as weak sinners, and He gives His true Body and Blood, sacrificed on the cross, to seal to us the forgiveness He won by these. He continues to strengthen our Baptismal faith and assure us that we are united with Him in eternal life.

Jesus wants us to share His rest with fellow believers, as His family. He has joined us as members of His Body, His Church. He has given us spiritual gifts to build each other up. He calls us together to encourage each other in the faith by His Word (1 Corinthians 12; Hebrews 10:25; Colossians 3:16). As we live in a world hostile to the truth, and Satan aims to destroy our faith, how we need this mutual encouragement! We have a good example in Acts 2:42: *"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."*

And like the early believers, we also reach out to share Jesus' rest with those outside the church. We join our witness, our resources, and our prayers to bring His Gospel to restless souls in need of His salvation.

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." As we recognize His loving gift of rest and worship, let us respond with His people of every age: *"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go into the house of the LORD'"* (Psalm 122:1).

Pastor Smith

The Resurrection Proves You Are Forgiven

(A newsletter of our Evangelical Lutheran Synod's Board for Home Missions)

Where is the evidence? We are fortunate to live in a country where one must be proven guilty. The presumption of innocence is central to our legal system. The lawyers involved in a court case present evidence to support their claims of guilt or innocence for the accused. A baseless claim will be met with the question, "Where is the evidence?"

All truth claims should be proven valid by supporting evidence. Christianity is held to the same standard. What are some of the truth claims of Christianity?

He's Risen!

The first is that everyone is sinful. The evidence for this is overwhelming. Just think. Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever taken something that didn't belong to you? Have you ever had sexual desires for someone who is not your spouse? Have you ever hated someone? The evidence proves that you are sinful.

The Bible claims that God sent His Son, Jesus the Christ, to live a perfect life, to suffer and die innocently, and to rise triumphant from the grave so that the sins of all people are forgiven. It says, "He was delivered over to death for our offenses, and raised to life for our justification (forgiveness)." (Romans 4:25) The resurrection is the crux of the matter. If Jesus rose from the grave, then everything else claimed holds true.

What evidence is there for the resurrection of Jesus? Here are some things to consider.

- The disciples never changed their story. There are no inconsistencies in the different accounts of the resurrection.
- The disciples were willing to die for their faith in the resurrected Jesus. All of the Apostles but John were martyred – killed for their faith. Why would they die for a lie?
- Over 500 men saw the resurrected Jesus at the same time. Jesus appeared to people for 40 days after He was raised to give many convincing proofs that He was alive.
- Where is the body? No event has had such a great impact on the world. To prove Christianity a hoax, all one must do is produce the body of Jesus. His enemies certainly would have if it was possible. But they haven't because Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!

The resurrection of Jesus is a valid event in human history. It really happened. Therefore, everything that the Bible claims about Jesus is true. He did live a perfect life. He did die an innocent death for the sins of all people. He rose from the grave to prove that God has accepted Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf. Here is the greatest claim: Your sins are forgiven. Jesus' resurrection proves that it is true.

Gather with us for our Easter services and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Celebrate because it proves that you are forgiven.



Welcome to Holy Week Services

Good Friday, April 14
6:30 pm Service – "He Spoke a Word of Trust"

Easter, April 16
8:30 am Service – "He Speaks a Word of Victory"
9:30 am Brunch – Egg bake, fruit, and sweet rolls

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 <i>Lent 5</i> Worship with Communion 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM Worship at Crystal Terrace 1:00 PM <i>Happy Birthday Eric Anderson</i>	3 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Maria Smith</i>	4	5  Midweek Lent Supper – 5:30 PM Service – 6:30 PM	6	7 Jesus Cares Ministry 2:00 PM Catechism 4:00 PM	1 <hr/> 8
9 <i>Palm Sunday</i> Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM Worship at Crystal Terrace 1:00 PM	10	11 Council Meeting 5:00 PM	12	13  Maundy Thursday Service 6:30 PM	14  Good Friday Service 6:30 PM	15
16 <i>Easter Sunday</i> Easter Sunrise Service 8:30 AM Easter Brunch 9:30 AM Worship at Crystal Terrace 1:00 PM 	17	18	19	20	21	22 Ray Ohlde's Birthday Party Fellowship Hall 1:00 PM
23 <i>Easter 2</i> Worship with Communion – Confirmation of Philip Smith 9:30 AM Confirmation Reception 10:45 AM Crystal Terrace 1:00 PM 	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 <i>Easter 3</i> Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM Worship at Crystal Terrace 1:00 PM	<p><i>"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).</i></p>					

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