

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✕ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

*Lex semper accusat* - the Law only and always accuses – in its first, second and third function. That's the point. The Law calls out that which is contrary to God's will, that which is contrary to sound doctrine, for false doctrine always breaks the First Commandment. The Apostle writes his son in the faith regarding the Law. The Law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners... and the list goes on.

The Law is not made for a righteous person. That is to say that the Law is made for each of us. For each of us have our flesh. Each of us has harbored our own favorite heresies, wrong beliefs about God. And each of us has sinned against neighbor, venting the transgression in which we were born upon those around us.

So we have sinned against God, and sinned against neighbor – the two tables of the Law smashed against the golden calf of our pride and selfishness. The Law points at every transgression, even your smallest. So the Law has done its work – it has revealed you as unrighteous.

It has brought to light your sinful revelries, your desire to fabricate your own gods, and shown just how perverse each of us has been. Each of us has danced with Aaron and Israel around an idol we have fashioned, an idol in our own image.

*Lex semper accusat*. But the Apostle writes more. The purpose of the Commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith. Against love there is

no law. A pure heart pleases God. A good conscience, free from guilt, cannot be accused. Sincere faith trusts only in the true God, and so receives His gifts.

A pure heart. A good conscience. Sincere faith. Among fallen men these are not be found. So it would be for us only condemnation, but Love became a Man. The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us. His Name is Jesus, for He saves His people from their sins. He saves you from your sins. He does it by completing that which no sinful man coul. He does it by rendering what the Law requires.

According to the Law, He lived perfectly both in active and passive obedience. The Law cannot condemn the One who keeps it perfectly. Christ kept the Law, Christ fulfilled the Law. In the greatest act of love ever known, He fulfilled the Law for you. He rendered the required death, that you be vindicated, that you be declared to be a righteous man, that you might live.

He kept that Sabbath perfectly – But then the Christ that sternly warned His disciples not to make Him known made Himself known to all earth and heaven by emptying His own tomb. And He made Himself known to hell as He descended and proclaimed victory.

His fulfillment of the Law, His perfect righteousness, His resurrection, His eternal life, He offers to you freely, by faith in Him, faith worked by the Spirit that proceeds from the Father and the Son. That Spirit fills you in Holy Baptism. God fills you with Himself, that you believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, according to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God which was committed to the Apostolic trust.

Believing, His pure heart, His good conscience, His sincere faith are made yours. Believing, His perfect keeping of the Law is made yours. Believing, the forgiveness He won by wetting Golgotha's sand with His Blood is applied to you.

Believing, you are no longer an unjust child not of the Law, but you are declared righteous, a holy child of the Gospel Promise. Believing, the Law has no mastery over you. In Christ you are forgiven. In Christ you are free.

And so you, in faith, use the Law lawfully. In it you have a curb, a mirror, and a rule, by which faith sees the will of God for you, and to which your faith, by the power of the Holy Spirit, strives to conform. And although you daily fall short, you have Christ's forgiveness, and the forensic declaration of righteousness that is yours in the Holy Gospel.

Christ, the center and substance of that Gospel, healed many. They pressed about Him to touch Him that their afflictions be cured. But this day it is He that touches you, as you kneel to receive Him and He places His Body in your mouth and streams His shed Blood across your lips. And He heals you, as He makes Himself your meal.

You eat and drink, and you confess "You are the Son of God", which is true and right, salutary doctrine, the confession of saving faith, the confession by which you receive worthily the Holy Eucharist to your eternal benefit.

Christ has fulfilled the Law for you. In Him you are forgiven. In Him you are free.

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