

Today, a day of remembrance, lasting joy. A day of feasting. Today we thank God for the pure teaching of the Gospel. That Jesus Christ was crucified, to atone for your sins, raised for your justification. The Reformation and today, the church at all time, since the Fall, is only about sinners justified by the Christ, to come before God -forgiven, by His works alone, by grace alone. ***Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation, tribe, language, people.***

At the time of the Reformation, even since, some believed this angel (messenger) was a prophecy of Martin Luther. Part of the reason at the time of the Reformation was they believed they're living in the end times; that Jesus return imminent. Life was bad, the church a corrupt mess, false teachings abound. There was plague, pestilence; there was war, and threat of the Muslim army on the doorstep of Europe. Life and church worse than you imagine; didn't look good; seemed like the end was upon them.

Now 505 years later. But their attitude was right. They *were* living in endtimes. So are you. Jesus could return at anytime. Live your lives always ready for His return. Luther was this type of angel, proclaiming the eternal gospel, one of many; from apostles at Pentecost to faithful pastors today.

Where can you look in our times, without seeing a dark, decaying, evil world the prince of darkness has not infected. We too in our time, plague, pestilence, wars, culture wars, much false teaching. Babies murdered called healthcare, a sign of God's covenant used to celebrated prideful sin everywhere in desecration of marriage and one's body. Doctrines of demons are being taught to the young. The climate, planet has become a god for the majority of the western world and in response of these times, a Christian church that mostly has set aside God's Word and historically low attendance. And if you speak of this eternal gospel you're an enemy of the state, society and hated. Insanity, wickedness is public policy.

And I think we've all adjusted too well to our world, too complacent, accepting, too comfortable in this madness and evil times, or else why do we minimize doctrine that saints in the church were willing to die for; why else do we put aside, neglect Holy Scripture, our only weapon of warfare, and fail to pray.

Every day you face an enemy that does not sleep, does not tire, seeks to destroy you and your loved ones in countless ways. Menacing forces in the world ready to strike us down and on top of it all we can be our own worse enemy, an unworthy sinner who deserve nothing but punishment.

Yet today is a day of joy and feasting. You have a mighty fortress, ever present help in times of trouble, your God. Be still and know. We will not fear, though devils all the world should fill, we trembled not, we fear no ill. They shall not overpower us. For us fights Christ Himself -defeats sin, death, the power of demons upon a cross. He holds the field forever. This eternal gospel yours.

I think the older you get, the more you may wonder, ask yourself 2 important questions. Why was I born? What is my purpose? You were appointed by the Lord Himself to live and confess at this very time. He chose you for it. Amid the evil, this is your privilege, He placed you among your loved ones, friends, strangers. You carry His name upon you, you're blessed to carry His works with you. Your purpose, to bask in His gifts and live with Him in unending communion and eternity. You specifically He brought forth to confess His truth, to live, to love, to serve in these times. Do your duty. Remain steadfast.

When we confess the faith of the Lutheran church it's nothing other than the faith of the Sacred Scripture, Christ the center of all we teach and confess, what's true in all times and places. **If you continue in my Word.** Hold to my teaching. The only thing in life that truly matters, the only fight in life that matters -who Jesus is, what He does, how we get it. Doctrine. St. Paul urges, **What you have heard from me, keep as a pattern of sound doctrine. Guard the good deposit entrusted to you.** That's what Luther claimed at the Diet of Worms to recant his teachings. **Unless I am convinced by Scripture, I will take nothing back. Show us our error.** The Reformation was, is about confessing Christ, His doctrine, the truth matters because it matters to our Lord.

We thank God for the Reformers, for Luther, so many others, who fought, sacrificed, even died so that you could sit there and call yourself a Lutheran. We celebrate the Reformation in a spirit of grateful humility that God still allows His eternal gospel to be preached, that many more might hear the pure doctrine that God forgives sinners all by grace in Jesus.

What will happen in these times, I don't know. We're the Church militant. In this battle, He holds the field forever, therefore never despair, joy is ours cannot be broken. He who binds up all your wounds, works of love in your life without measure to keep you always. What will happen in these days ahead, I don't know. But I know soon, we will not care. We'll be free at last of all politics, elections, evil. Free of lies, false truths about God, free of hurts and regrets, of fear and sadness. We will abide in our Father's home given by grace. Yet even now, you are born in love in blood and water from His pierced side, raised to life, our victory has been won, the Kingdom ours remaineth. You are free in the Son. Bask in His grace.