

33. The Lutheran Church.

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. *Matt. 28,20.*

What does the Lutheran Church stand for? What does it believe? The Lutheran Church believes that through Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, our Lord, who has redeemed, purchased, and won us lost and condemned creatures from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, we have grace with the great God, our Maker and our Judge; that we have forgiveness of all our sins; that we are declared free, or justified, from the curse, or condemnation, of God's holy Law; that we are God's dear children, for whom He cares and for whom He provides with true fatherly love and kindness, and who in the hour of death will not suffer us to perish, but will save our souls alive. Aye, every true Lutheran believes that.

And this faith of the Lutheran Church is sure and rests on a firm foundation. For it is not built on the changeful feelings of our hearts; not on any merit or virtue within us; not on any good works which we might do, but solely on the immutable rock of God's Word.

From this everyone can see that we Lutherans are not a new sect. No, we have not cut loose from the one true holy Christian Church. Luther, by his doctrine, did not separate himself from the Christian Church, but he reformed the Church. Luther merely cleansed the Church from the errors and abominations that had crept into it. He drew forth the pure Word of God from under the rubbish which for centuries the Papacy had been accumulating upon it. It is, therefore, an undeniable fact that in the Lutheran Church we have returned to the doctrine and practise taught by Christ and His apostles. The true Apostolic Church has endured to this day and as a visible organization will be found in the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as long as this Church, by the grace of God, will adhere in every point to the doctrine of Christ and His apostles.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst purge out the leaven of papistic error and idolatry, we pray Thee with a humble heart to preserve unto us also in the future Thy divine Word and the holy Sacraments. Protect and keep us and Thy whole Christian Church — particularly the Evangelical Lutheran Church — from all error and unbelief, from all soul-destroying doctrine. Restrain all enemies, persecutors, and blasphemers, and be Thou our Stay and Refuge, our Strength, our Shelter and Shield, that the gates of hell may not prevail against us. Amen.

My Church, my Church, my dear old Church!
I love her ancient name,
And God forbid a child of hers
Should ever do her shame!
Her mother-care I'll ever share,
Her child I am alone,
Till He who gave me to her arms
Shall call me to His own.

This devotion is one of 318 taken from *Daily Bread* by F. E. Pasche, published by CPH in 1926, but now in the public domain. They have been copied and reformatted by Rev. Bruce G. Ley and made available for distribution by pastors and missionaries.

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