

156. What Assurance Have We that We Are Redeemed?

Christ was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification. *Rom. 4,25.*

How does Christ convince us of the reality and truth of His whole work of redemption and salvation? The answer to this question is given in the last sentence of Luther's explanation of the Second Article: "Even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true." By what, then, do we know with certainty that we are redeemed and saved and have eternal life? Because He, our Savior, lives and reigns. For that reason, and only for that reason, we, too, shall live and reign with Him to all eternity. This blessed truth our Catechism would teach us in the last sentence of the Second Article. With the words, "Even as He . . . lives," it points to the resurrection of Christ as a pledge, security, and seal of our redemption and our own resurrection and salvation. So, then, this is the chief purpose of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the first place, let us understand that the resurrection of Christ is a proof, pledge, and seal that death, devil, and hell are conquered. Christ's resurrection is the clearest proof that all our sins have been atoned for, that all the punishments have been borne, the curse of the Law suffered, and all demands of divine justice against sinful mankind satisfied.

In the second place, the resurrection of Christ is proof, pledge, and seal that through Christ life and salvation has been restored and brought to light. In His resurrection our Lord entered into the state of exaltation. But He did this as our Mediator and Substitute. He was exalted according to His human nature, according to the same nature which was humiliated, was made under the Law in order that He might fulfil it for us, and suffered and died. The same Christ whom we see in the state of humiliation entered into His heavenly glory. From this follows that the glory into which Christ entered at His resurrection was not only a revelation of His divine majesty, but also the wages and payment for His vicarious work and the proof that we are redeemed.

Prayer.

We render thanks unto Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou exalted Prince of Life, that Thou didst give Thyself for us into death as a propitiation for our sins, thereby redeeming us, and that in proof of such redemption Thou didst rise from the dead and bring forth righteousness, innocence, and eternal life. Amen.

In His deep humiliation
Like a worm on earth He died,
For our sins and death were on Him;
Now in power He's glorified.

What He said, a Man, rejected,
"I am Christ, the Son of God."
By His glorious resurrection
Now is sounded out abroad!

Now our shame and death are buried!
And the Son of Man we see
Sitting on the throne of power,
Reigning in eternity.

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