Grace, mercy and peace ever be yours in the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dear Baptized,

There is a certain principle that you operate under every day and in many areas of your life. You reap what you sow. If you want to harvest corn in the fall, you must plant corn seed in the spring. If you want to pick up a Bible and read about Elisha and the two mother bears, you simply must learn your letters. If you want to make baskets from the free-throw line, you must suffer the practice. You reap what you sow. You harvest what you plant.

This principle is also true in the negative. One who invests his life in drugs will be fried in the head. One who does not up a child in the way he should go will reap the delinquent rewards as a grandparent. One seed is sown within us from the instant of conception. You don't have to train up a child to do evil. They do it by nature. You do have sow other seeds in order to train up a child to do what is God-pleasing. This is hard work for everyone, both in being disciplined in what not to do as well as teaching the way that is good and right. One who will not stand for the truth, will fall for a lie. You reap what you sow.

What is true for the individual is also true for the community. A nation that is prepared for war will have a greater harvest of peace than would otherwise be. A country that has a weak president, who will neither stand for the truth nor oppose the enemy, is inviting the disturbance of the peace. What is true for the state is also a principle of fact for religious groups - as we are most painfully reminded as the Missouri Synod met in convention last week.

The epistle reading for today is from the Holy Spirit via the hand of the Apostle Paul who wrote the truth of God in large letters. Several of the verses speak to the truth ...

"You Reap What You Sow"

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.
Thus far the Word the of the LORD our God.

Sowing to the flesh is the planting of seeds inspired by the evil one and these seeds are cast out by the wretched claws of the old adam within each one of us. Mental lusting and ungodly abuse of human sexuality will ultimately destroy Marriage in a nation and marriages in the homes. This is a bountiful harvest in our native land, for which she will not stand. Tolerance of unChristian ideas continually waft through your mind and are fertilized by this world's refuse, and such sowing has lead to the acceptance of idolatrous services of syncretism. This we are harvesting because of the failure to stand for the truth. The occasional drink can morph into a drink needed every day. This habitual consumption of alcohol, if left unchecked and allowed to run its course, will reap the harvest of short term drunkenness and long term alcoholism. The permission of a little white lie reaps a harvest of heresies, ones which are no longer able to be rejected. For example, there is the claim that we all worship the same God, and that the Muslim god is also the one true God.

Is it any wonder that Paul lists the works of the flesh as "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambition, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries and the like" (Galatians 5:19-21) ? Those who are engaged in any of these ... whether limited to the mind or acted out in life ... are sowing the sins of the flesh that leads to corruption. Corruption is not only death apart from God in this life but also, and especially, the continual corruption that never ends for an eternity that is apart from God.

And if you are of the opinion that your Sunday best and your outward actions get the job done, which can cover you in the eyes of others, remember that they do not covers God's eyes. Neither the Sunday best worn by the parishioner nor the vestments worn by the pastor filter out the intentions of the heart and the deeds done in darkness. God knows and the Word of God creates shambles of such cosmetic, man-made fortresses: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption."

So the natural reaction for the convicted and the frightened who hear such Law is to do the opposite - to start, today, to do what is God-pleasing and to speak only what Jesus would say and to think pure thoughts always. Then one could build up enough good works to set against God's wrath on Judgment Day. Oh, what death this is! Your works do not satisfy God's wrath. Your words will never stay the eternal gavel of God. Such thoughts only call God a liar and dishonor His Son, attempting to take upon ourselves what He has already taken upon Himself. May God ever preserve us from such a plan of action!

What is the answer? Dearly beloved, the answer is in the sowing and the reaping - not our sowing and reaping - but in God's sowing and reaping. In the Garden of Eden the promised Savior would be the Seed of the woman. The Seed was sown in the womb of a maiden with whom no man had lain, that is, when the Son of God was Incarnate by the Holy Ghost. For three terms the sown Savior Seed grew in the depths of the earth. Then, in the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons (Galatians 4:4-5).

His Name is Jesus, which means Savior, and as Isaiah promised in the prophetic Word, He shall be called Emmanuel, which means "God with us."
"Isaiah hath foretold It In words of promise sure,
And Mary's arms enfold It, A virgin meek and pure.
Thro' God's eternal will This Child to her is given
At midnight calm and still." (TLH #645, stanza 3)

Jesus is the Christ of God sent to have the world's sins placed upon His head even as His Holy Blood is shed to atone for the same ... all of yours included. Your sins of thought, word and deed - whether of adultery, fornication, idolatry, licentiousness, outbursts of wrath, dissensions, murders, drunkenness or revelries and the like - became His as He took them upon Himself that they might be removed from you as far as the east is from the west. He became unclean that you would be clean in the presence of God. Jesus became unholy that you would be holy even in the Holy of Holies. He was the Scapegoat driven outside the City that you might always be forever within the Church. He suffered the onslaught of Satan that you would be spared even an instant of time in the eternal destruction in the Lake of Fire. And when all was accomplished and the sufficient Sacrifice for the world had been made, Jesus cried out from the cross, "It is finished!"

And what happened then? Dearly beloved, the answer is in the sowing and the reaping - not our sowing and reaping - but in God's sowing and reaping. They took His Body down from the cross and planted it in a nearby garden. The Seed of the woman, Who is very God of very God, was sown in a maiden tomb in which no man had lain. For three days the body of the sown Savior rested in the tomb, thus consecrating a tomb for the baptism of His people and sanctified the graves of His own whose mortal remains are laid to rest. Then, in the fullness of time, that is, on the third day the Harvest of the First Fruit came forth from the depths of the earth. Christ rose again from the dead. He Who bore your sin bears them no more. They are gone. He is the Victor over your death and the Conqueror of your devils. You belong to Him for He has done all things well for you and the Lord has called you His own.

Now what? Well, now we are ready for the other part. "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'" (Galatians 4:6). So is it time for an "amen," brother? No, it's time to be about that which the Lord would have each son of God do according to his or her various vocations and may be found faithful in the Day of the Lord, or, as Paul writes: "but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."

"Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone
And rests in Him unceasing;
And by its fruits true faith is known,
With love and hope increasing.
Yet faith alone doth justify,
Works serve thy neighbor and supply
The proof that faith is living."
(TLH #377, stanza 9)

Dear brethren, there is much to do, both here and there. This is especially true for us as a congregation. The seeds of doubt, sown first in the Garden by the devilish question, Did God say?, and the sowing of the pestilent seeds of emotionalism, pragmatism and rationalism, and the failure of a majority of the pastors, parishioners and congregations to stand for the truth and against the lie, has resulted in a harvest which is now neither Lutheran nor Church. Hence, all that is left in the LC-MS are the stale words, "Missouri Synod."
The lie was permitted to remain thirty years ago and the liars did not depart. In 1974 proponents of false doctrine who did not leave with Seminex, but stayed, declared with voice and pen, that, "ELIM IS PLEDGED TO REMAIN WITHIN SYNOD!" Indeed, they did stay and they were allowed to remain and these seeds have become long in the tooth and are reaping a harvest of corrupt souls as they continue to tickle the ears of a majority. Truth and error may not remain together, and error is now dominating the Missouri Synod. They will not permit the truth to speak. Two examples.

Last week, on the first day of the convention, after President Kieschnick's discussion of the events leading up to and including the syncretistic service at Yankee Stadium, and after President Kieschnick absolved District President Benke, not for any repentance for praying with pagans in the syncretistic service, but for his less than clear prayer, a motion was made to allow Rev. Wallace Schulz to speak about this matter. The convention voted not to do this. The majority of delegates, along with the false teachers, did not want to hear the truth of the matter and the motion was defeated and the declaration of the truth was denied. They didn't want you or anyone to hear it.

Later in the week, when a resolution was being discussed about the Synod's Board of Directors setting aside a number of corrupt CCM opinions, a motion was made to allow former synodical President, and current Chairman of the Board of Directors, Rev. Robert Kuhn, to address the convention on these matters. The majority of delegates, along with the false teachers, did not want to hear the truth of the matter and the motion was defeated and the declaration of the truth was denied. They didn't want you or anyone else to hear it.

These things that were done last week in silencing faithful men will, without a doubt, continue. Attacks will be made upon pastors who are like barking dogs that warn of dangerous men. Congregations that remain faithful to the Lord and His Word and the Confessions of His Church will not be left alone. Non-Scriptural opinions and man-made by-laws are now in place, empowering synodical and district officials to by-pass the pastor and congregational leaders in sowing the seeds of discontent and destruction. And if you have a complaint against the synodical power brokers, neither you nor I can file charges against them. Indeed, be ready, little flock ... and remember that ...

"We believe, teach, and confess that at a time of confession (when a confession of the heavenly truth is required), as when the enemies of the Word of God desire to suppress the pure doctrine of the holy Gospel, the entire community of God, yes, every individual Christian, and especially the ministers of the Word as the leaders of the community of God, are obligated to confess openly, not only by words but also through their deeds and actions, the true doctrine and all that pertains to it, according to the Word of God. In such a case we should not yield to adversaries even in matters of indifference, nor should we tolerate the imposition of such ceremonies on us by adversaries in order to undermine the genuine worship of God and to introduce and confirm their idolatry by force or chicanery."
Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration
Article X. Church Usages, paragraph 10

Therefore, "let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." I encourage you to come to Bible class as we will be looking at what has transpired in the Missouri Synod and what is taking place as a result. "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith," that is, the Church, wherein we live in God's continual grace, mercy and peace, for, in the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit, we are forgiven of all our sins. Amen.