

# Holy Week.

“You see, therefore, that what we call the mass is a promise of the forgiveness of sins made to us by God, and such a promise as has been confirmed by the death of the Son of God. For the only differences between a promise and a testament is that the testament involves the death of the one who makes it. A testator is a promiser who is about to die, while a promiser (if I may put it thus) is a testator who is not about to die. This testament of Christ is foreshadowed in all the promises of God from the beginning of the world; indeed, whatever value those ancient promises possessed was altogether derived from this new promise that was to come in Christ. Hence the words ‘compact,’ ‘covenant,’ and ‘testament of the Lord’ occur so frequently in the Scriptures. These words signified that God would one day die. ‘For where there is a testament, the death of the testator must of necessity occur’ (Heb. 9[:16]). Now God made a testament, therefore, it was necessary that he should die. But God could not die unless he became man. Thus the incarnation and the death of Christ are both comprehended most concisely in this one word, ‘testament.’” **Martin Luther**, *Luther's Works*, Vol. 36, p. 38, underscore added.



Albrecht DURER

Large Passion -- CRUCIFIXION

***Crucifixion***  
(*Albrecht Durer,*  
*Large Passion*)

The Festival of Maundy Thursday  
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Terrebonne, Oregon

## **“Christians Receive Life Eternal and the Riches of the Kingdom of Heaven by Listening to the Reading of the Son of God's Last Will and Testament, the Gospel.”**

After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying,  
This cup is the new testament in my blood:  
this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

### **I Corinthians 11:25**

#### **Introduction**

What is a last will and testament? A last will and testament is the promise to give to someone or some group of people what he possesses upon his death.<sup>1</sup>

What then does Christ mean when He refers here to the Lord's Supper as His “testament”? Christ here refers to what He will give to men upon His death.

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<sup>1</sup>“For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.” **Hebrews 9:16-17.**

“You see, therefore, that what we call the mass is a promise of the forgiveness of sins made to us by God, and such a promise as has been confirmed by the death of the Son of God. For the only differences between a promise and a testament is that the testament involves the death of the one who makes it. A testator is a promiser who is about to die, while a promiser (if I may put it thus) is a testator who is not about to die. This testament of Christ is foreshadowed in all the promises of God from the beginning of the world; indeed, whatever value those ancient promises possessed was altogether derived from this new promise that was to come in Christ. Hence the words ‘compact,’ ‘covenant,’ and ‘testament of the Lord’ occur so frequently in the Scriptures. These words signified that God would one day die. ‘For where there is a testament, the death of the testator must of necessity occur’ (Heb. 9[:16]). Now God made a testament, therefore, it was necessary that he should die. But God could not die unless he became man. Thus the incarnation and the death of Christ are both comprehended most concisely in this one word, ‘testament.’” *Luther's Works*, Vol. 36: 38.

But how can God die that He should make a testament? God insofar as He is God cannot die. But now that God has become Man in Jesus Christ, He can, indeed, did, die<sup>2</sup>; and God died for the sins of all men.<sup>3</sup> Upon His Death God bequeathed to all men in His Last Will and Testament, i.e. the Gospel, the remission of sins through which comes life eternal and all eternal riches.

Simply by listening to the Reading of the Last Will and Testament of the Son of God, i.e. the Gospel, Christians receive life eternal and the riches of the Kingdom of Heaven.<sup>4</sup>

## **I. God's Making a Testament Means God would become Man and Die for the Sins of All Men.**

### **A. Christians receive the Benefits of Christ's Life Work through the reading of the Last Will and Testament of the Son of God.**

What does one do at the reading of a will? He listens. Simply by listening to the reading of a man's last will and testament, the listener receives the benefits of a man's life's work.

Listening is what Christians do in Church. Christians listen to the reading of the Last Will and Testament of the Son of God, of God Himself, when they listen to the Gospel. The Apostle St. Paul writes:

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<sup>2</sup>“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” **Acts 20:28**, added.

*“We Christians must know that if God is not also in the balance, and gives the weight, we sink to the bottom with our scale. By this I mean: If it were not to be said [if these things were not true], God has died for us, but only a man, we would be lost. But if ‘God’s death’ and ‘God died’ lie in the scale of the balance, then He sinks down, and we rise up as a light, empty scale. but indeed He can also rise again or leap out of the scale; yet He could not sit in the scale unless He became a man like us, so that it could be said: ‘God died,’ ‘God’s passion,’ ‘God’s blood,’ ‘God’s death.’ For in His nature God cannot die; but now that God and man are united in one person, it is correctly called God’s death, when the man dies who is one thing or one person with God.”* **The Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Article VIII. Of the Person of Christ.**<sup>44</sup>, underscore added.

<sup>3</sup>“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures....” **I Corinthians 15:3**.

<sup>4</sup>“So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” **Romans 10:17**  
“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” **St. John 6:47**.

After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.<sup>5</sup>

Merely through listening to the reading of the Last Will and Testament of the Son of God, i.e. the Gospel, Christians gain the Benefit of Christ's Life's Work. The Apostle St. Paul writes:

So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.<sup>6</sup>

Jesus says everlasting life comes through this believing that comes by listening to God's Word:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.<sup>7</sup>

Luther writes:

... listen to Paul, who says here<sup>8</sup>: “Not by your own labor and sweat or by the works of the Law but by hearing with faith you have received the Holy Spirit.” Or listen to Christ Himself, who gives the following answer to Martha when she is deeply concerned and finds it almost unbearable that her sister Mary is sitting at Jesus' feet, listening to His words, and leaving her to serve alone. “Martha” He says (Luke 10:41-42), “you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her.” Therefore a man becomes a Christian, not by working but by listening.<sup>9</sup>

Again, Luther writes of men gaining the Fruits of Christ's Labors merely by listening:

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<sup>5</sup>**I Corinthians 11:25.** “But Christ commands in Luke 22, 19: *This do in remembrance of Me*; therefore the Mass was instituted that the faith of those who use the Sacrament should remember what benefits it receives through Christ, and cheer and comfort the anxious conscience. For to remember Christ is to remember His benefits, and to realize that they are truly offered unto us.” The Augsburg Confession, Article XXIV: Of the Mass30-31, 32, *Triglotta*, p. 67.

<sup>6</sup>**Romans 10:17.**

<sup>7</sup>**St. John 6:47.**

<sup>8</sup>**Galatians 3:2.**

<sup>9</sup>*Luther's Works*, Vol. 26, p. 214, underscore added.

... and thus the meaning will be that in the New Testament the offerings of beasts are not pleasing to God. ... But He takes pleasure in the offering and obedience of faith. ... Therefore throughout Scripture the Spirit has only one aim: that we hear the voice of God, that is, that we believe. “For he who believes will be saved” (cf. Mark 16:16). ... But the word “ears” is emphatic and forceful to an extraordinary degree ... . He requires only ears. To such an extent has everything been reduced to an easy way of life<sup>10</sup>. For if you ask a Christian what the work is by which he becomes worthy of the name “Christian,” he will be able to give absolutely no other answer than that it is the hearing of the Word of God, that is, faith. Therefore the ears alone are the organs of a Christian man, for he is justified and declared to be a Christian, not because of the works of any member but because of faith.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>“[St. Augustine] also states that Christ desired to have only a few easy ceremonies imposed on his church, namely, baptism and the sacrament ... .” Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 41, p. 22, amplification in brackets added.

<sup>11</sup>*Luther’s Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 223, 224, underscore added. St. John Chrysostom also writes of the ease of becoming a Christian and gaining salvation through the Word. “For there is no need to say, he means, that one must go up to heaven, or cross a great sea, and then receive the commandments, but things so great and grand hath God made of easy access to us. And what meaneth the phrase, ‘The Word is nigh thee?’ That is, It is easy. For in thy mind and in thy tongue is salvation. There is no long journey to go, no seas to sail over, no mountains to pass, to get saved. But if you be not minded to cross so much as the threshold, you may even while you sit at home be saved. For ‘in thy mouth and in thy heart’ is the source of salvation. And then on another score also he makes the word of faith easy, and says, that ‘God raised Him from the dead.’ For just reflect upon the worthiness of the Worker, and you will no longer see any difficulty in the thing. That He is Lord then, is plain from the resurrection. And this he said at the beginning even of the Epistle. ‘Which was declared to be the Son of God with power ... by the resurrection from the dead.’ (Rom. i. 4.) But that the resurrection is easy too, has been shown even to those who are very unbelieving, from the might of the Worker of it. Since then the righteousness is greater, and light and easy to receive, is it not a sign of the utmost contentiousness to leave what is light and easy, and set about impossibilities? For they could not say that it was a thing they declined as burdensome. See then how he deprives them of all excuse. For what do they deserve to have said in their defence, who choose what is burdensome and impracticable, and pass by what is light, and able to save them, and to give them those things which the Law could not give? All this can come only from a contentious spirit, which is in a state of rebellion against God. For the Law is galling ... , but grace is easy. The Law, though they dispute never so much, does not save; Grace yieldeth the righteousness resulting from itself, and that from the Law likewise. What plea then is to rescue them, since they are disposed to be contentious against this, but cling to that to no purpose whatever? Then, since he had made a strong assertion, he again confirms it from the Scripture.” St. John Chrysostom, *A Select Library*

**B. Christ bequeaths to men the remission of sins in His Last Will and Testament and, thereby, life eternal.**

What does Christ bequeath to men in His Last Will and Testament? Christ bequeaths to men the Free Remission of All Sins He won for us by His Passion on the Cross. Jesus says:

This cup is the new testament in my blood....<sup>12</sup>

The New Testament is the Free Remission of All Sins for Christ's Sake. The prophet Jeremiah writes:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: ... I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.<sup>13</sup>

Along with the remission of sins comes also Christ's complete obedience to God. The Apostle St. Paul writes:

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*of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Romans*, ed. Philip Schaff, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., reprinted, September 1980, p. 474, underscore added.

“**Chrysostom, John**. Patriarch of Constantinople; b. 345 or 347; d. 407. His name 'Golden-mouthed' [Chrysostom is derived from the Greek words *chrysos* {gold} and *stoma* {mouth}; hence, 'Golden-mouthed'] was not applied to him till after his death. Member of a rich patrician family, he studied rhetoric and philosophy, intended to follow law, but turned to the Scriptures instead, leading the life of a strict ascetic in the first years after his baptism; labored as priest in Antioch for twelve years; became patriarch of Constantinople in 398. He immediately inaugurated certain needed reforms and laid the foundation for systematic charitable work. But his position became increasingly insecure on account of the enemies which he made by his rigorous rules and by his fearless attacks on the luxury of his day. Theophilus of Alexandria finally succeeded in having a synod called under the auspices of Empress Eudocia, the Synod at Quercum, in 403, by which Chrysostom was deposed and banished. After his recall a second synod, held in Constantinople, once more condemned him, whereupon he, yielding only to force, was banished to Asia Minor. The hardships of the last journeys were too great for him, and he died before reaching his final destination, at Comana, Asia Minor." *Concordia Cyclopedia*, p. 143, s.v. “**Chrysostom, John**”, amplification in brackets added.

<sup>12</sup>**I Corinthians 11:25.**

<sup>13</sup>**Jeremiah 31:31, 34.**

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under he law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.<sup>14</sup>

As already indicated by the remission of sin, we were lacking in obedience to God because of our sin. Christ, therefore, submitted to the law in our stead and fulfilled it for us.<sup>15</sup> Now in Christ we have loved God and neighbor perfectly.

What we see is that Christ's entire life was dedicated not to Himself but to men in dire circumstances because of sin. Jesus says:

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.<sup>16</sup>

*Christ lived His entire life, birth, toil, waking, sleeping, suffering, dying, and rising again from the dead, precisely so that He could bequeath to mankind the Fruits of His Life's Labors and, thereby, give men life eternal and the vast, unbounded wealth the Son of God produced for men by His Life's Labors.* Jesus says:

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.<sup>17</sup>

The Lutheran Church confesses:

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<sup>14</sup>**Galatians 4:4-5.**

<sup>15</sup>This Blessed Obedience to God in our stead is called Christ's *Active Obedience*. "As my *Priest*, Christ *fulfilled the Law* in my stead perfectly (active obedience), *sacrificed Himself* for me (passive obedience), and still *intercedes* (pleads) for me with His heavenly Father." *The Small Catechism*, question 132 B, p. 108.

"This teaching of Scripture is of great practical importance. In his life of faith the Christian continually resorts to Christ's vicarious fulfillment of the Law. Luther: 'He satisfied the Law; He fulfilled the Law perfectly, for He loved God with all His heart, and with all His soul, and with all His strength, and with all His mind, and He loved His neighbor as Himself. Therefore, when the Law comes and accuses you of not having kept it, bid it go to Christ. Say: There is the Man who has kept it; He fulfilled it for me and gave His fulfillment to me. Thus the Law is silenced.'" The Rev. Dr. Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. 375.

<sup>16</sup>**St. Matthew 20:28.**

<sup>17</sup>**St. John 10:10.**

For here [in the Lord's Supper] He offers to us the entire treasure which He has brought for us from heaven, and to which He invites us also in other places with the greatest kindness, as when He says in St. Matthew 11, 28: *Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Now it is surely a sin and a shame that He so cordially and faithfully summons and exhorts us to our highest and greatest good, and we act so distantly with regard to it, and permit so long a time to pass [without partaking of the Sacrament] that we grow quite cold and hardened, so that we have no inclination or love for it. We must never regard the Sacrament as something injurious from which we had better flee, but as a pure, wholesome, comforting remedy imparting salvation and comfort, which will cure you and give you life both in soul and body. For where the soul has recovered, the body also is relieved.<sup>18</sup>

## II. God Fashions His Last Will and Testament by His Passion.

### A. God's Testament means that God would become man and would die for the sins of all men.

The very fact that God makes a testament teaches us again two clear points about the Christian faith. In the first place, it teaches us that God would become man. For only men make testaments.

Finally, the very fact that God makes a testament means that God will die. God cannot die insofar as He is God. But now that God has become man in Jesus Christ, God can in fact and did die. The Lutheran Church confesses:

*We Christians must know that if God is not also in the balance, and gives the weight, we sink to the bottom with our scale. By this I mean: If it were not to be said [if these things were not true], God has died for us, but only a man, we would be lost. But if "God's death" and "God died" lie in the scale of the balance, then He sinks down, and we rise up as a light, empty scale. But indeed He can also rise again or leap out of the scale; yet He could not sit in the scale unless He became a man like us, so that it could be said: "God died," "God's passion," "God's blood," "God's death." For in His nature God cannot die; but now that God and man are united in one person, it is correctly called God's death, when the man dies who is one thing or one person with God.*<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>The Large Catechism, [Part Fifth] Of The Sacrament of the Altar.67-68, *Triglotta*, p. 769, first amplification in brackets added.

<sup>19</sup>The *Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Article VIII. Of the Person of Christ*.44, underscore added.



The very fact that God makes a testament means that God will become man and will die. Luther writes:

You see, therefore, that what we call the mass<sup>20</sup> is a promise of the forgiveness of sins made to us by God, and such a promise as has been confirmed by the death of the Son of God. For the only differences between a promise and a testament is that the testament involves the death of the one who makes it. A testator is a promiser who is about to die, while a promiser (if I may put it thus) is a testator who is not about to die. This testament of Christ is foreshadowed in all the promises of God from the beginning of the world; indeed, whatever value those ancient promises possessed was altogether derived from this new promise that was to come in Christ. Hence the words “compact,” “covenant,” and “testament of the Lord” occur so frequently in the Scriptures.<sup>21</sup> These words signified that

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<sup>20</sup>The Mass is the Gospel, i.e. God’s Word and Sacraments. “But let us speak of the word *liturgy*. This word does not properly signify a sacrifice, but rather the public ministry, and agrees aptly with our belief, namely, that one minister who consecrates tenders the body and blood of the Lord to the rest of the people, just as one minister who preaches tenders the Gospel to the people, as Paul says, I Cor. 4, 1: *Let a man so account of us as the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, i.e. of the Gospel and the Sacraments.* And 2 Cor. 5, 20: *We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in God’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.* Thus the term *leitourgia* agrees aptly with the ministry.” *The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article XXIV. (XII.): Of the Mass, Of the Term Mass.* 80, 81, *Triglotta*, p. 411.

<sup>21</sup>These covenants (arrangements, relationships) between God and men were called testaments because all relationships throughout history are underpinned by the Last Will and Testament of the Son of God. Hence, Moses forged the covenant with Israel with Blood. “And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.” **Exodus 24:8**. “With one half of the blood he sprinkled the altar, and with the other half he sprinkled the people, signifying the blood of sacrifice would unite God with Israel, calling it the blood of the covenant. ... As the Old Covenant was sanctified through blood, so especially was the New Testament. The blood of sacrifice of the Old Covenant prophesied of the covenant blood of the New Testament, and it had the power to atone for sin. Through the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, there was established a complete atonement and redemption, and an eternal covenant of peace between God and the sinners.” The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt, *Wisdom for Today*, Vol. I, tr. the Rev. Arthur E. Beck, Ft. Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, p. 96, underscore added.

Without the Last Will and Testament of the Son of God, not even the covenant of allowing the sun to rise and set and the world to turn would remain. “The world owes its continued existence to the unfinished task of the church in spreading that Word (Matt. 24:14).”

God would one day die. “For where there is a testament, the death of the testator must of necessity occur” (Heb. 9[:16]). Now God made a testament, therefore, it was necessary that he should die. But God could not die unless he became man. Thus the incarnation and the death of Christ are both comprehended most concisely in this one word, “testament.”<sup>22</sup>

The Word Testament sums up very nicely the Christian faith: *Christianity has taught from the beginning and throughout its history that God is so abundant and rich in Mercy that He Himself bears our burdens and makes the sacrifice by becoming man and suffering and dying for undeserving sinners so that they might not perish in their sins but have life eternal and the unbounded wealth of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

**B. God fashions His Last Will and Testament of life eternal and the unbounded wealth of Heaven for men by His Passion.**

Because of the Great Desire and Love of Christ for men to give them the Rich Bounty of Life Eternal and the Inexhaustible Wealth of His Kingdom, Christ on the Eve of His Passion and the Institution of the Lord’s Supper says:

With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.<sup>23</sup>

In the Sacrament of Holy Communion we see the Passion of the Lord for men and His Great Love toward sinners because the Lord’s Supper lifts up the Lord’s Ultimate Sacrifice for men on the Cross, God giving to men the Last Full Measure of Devotion. The Apostle St. Paul writes:

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.<sup>24</sup>

The Rev. Dr. John Gerhard writes of how Christ’s Passion reveals His ardent love for fallen men:

... The Lord now goes willingly to the place of His suffering. With this we have to consider His entire willing obedience to [the point of] suffering and death. About this He himself testifies in Psa. 40: **Sacrifice and food offerings do not**

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The Rev. Dr. Eugene F. A. Klug, *Church and Ministry*, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999, p. 135. That “Word”, of course, is the Last Will and Testament of the Son of God, the Gospel.

<sup>22</sup>*Luther’s Works*, Vol. 36: 38.

<sup>23</sup>**St. Luke 22:15.**

<sup>24</sup>**I Corinthians 11:26.**

**please You. But You have opened my ears; You desire neither burnt-offerings nor sin-offerings. Then I said: Behold, I come; in the book it is written of Me; Your will, My God, I do gladly, and Your Law have I in my Heart.** ... This then, is the greatest and foremost [feature] of the sufferings of Christ: that He willingly suffered out of great love, which love He bore for the poor human race. ... From this comes a holy saying: Out of the wounds of Christ shines forth the inward fire of passionate love, out of which He cries from the cross: **I thirst.** Understand by this [that He thirsts] for our salvation. For the inward fire of true love made Him thirsty for our salvation and for accomplishing the sacrifice, since in the Old Testament all sacrifices had to be consumed with fire which had fallen from heaven. So then, this holy sacrifice of Christ was consumed by the inward fire of heavenly love. Since Christ suffered willingly, [note that] His torture and death is not just a plain, simple suffering. Rather, it is a great and high work, just as His actions in life were not merely simple works, but instead were at the same time a deep, severe suffering. This holy obedience of Christ should give us a powerful comfort against our disobedience against God's commandment; for what the first Adam has spoiled and destroyed with his disobedience, behold, this other Adam, Christ, with His obedience has put right again.<sup>25</sup>

Christ by His Passion fashioned for us His Last Will and Testament, as is manifest by the Lord's Supper. But Christ also fashioned Holy Baptism by His Passion because the Holy Baptism, too, is the Last Will and Testament of the Son of God because it too is the Gospel. The Apostle St. Paul writes:

... Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word<sup>26</sup> ....<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>*An Explanation of the History of the Suffering and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ ...*, tr. Elmer M. Hohle, ed. David O. Berger, Malone, TX: Repristination Press, pp. 31, 32.

<sup>26</sup>Thus we see again that the Sacrament of Holy Baptism is, as St. Augustine says of both Sacraments, the Visible Word of God. "But just as the Word enters the ear in order to strike our hearts, so the rite itself strikes the eye, in order to move the heart. The effect of the Word and of the rite is the same, as it has been well said by Augustine that a Sacrament is a *visible word*, because the rite is received by the eyes, and is, as it were, a picture of the Word, signifying the same thing as the Word. Therefore the effect of both is the same." *The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article XIII (VII): Of the Number and Use of the Sacraments*.5, Triglotta, p. 309.

<sup>27</sup>**Ephesians 5:25, 26.**

Luther writes:

[H]oly baptism was purchased for us through this same blood, which was shed for us and with which he paid for sin. This blood and its merit and power he put into baptism, in order that in baptism we might receive it. For whenever a person receives baptism in faith this is the same as if he were visibly washed and cleansed with the blood of Christ. For we do not attain the forgiveness of sins through our work, but rather through the death and the shedding of the blood of the Son of God. *But he takes this forgiveness of sin and tucks it into baptism.*<sup>28</sup>

Christ fashioned with great desire by His Passion His Last Will and Testament, i.e. the Gospel, so He could shower men with the Magnificent Fruits of and Boundless Wealth produced by the Labors of His Great and Glorious Person and grant life eternal. The Lutheran church confesses:

Therefore every Christian has enough in Baptism to learn and to practise all his life; for he has always enough to do to believe firmly what it promises and brings: victory over death and the devil, forgiveness of sin, the grace of God, the entire Christ, and the Holy Ghost with His gifts. In short, it is so transcendent that if timid nature could realize it, it might well doubt whether it could be true. For consider, if there were somewhere a physician who understood the art of saving men from dying, or, even though they died, of restoring them speedily to life, so that they would thereafter live forever, how the world would pour in money like snow and rain, so that because of the throng of the rich no one could find access! But here in Baptism there is brought free to every one's door such a treasure and medicine as utterly destroys death and preserves all men alive.<sup>29</sup>

### Conclusion

Simply by listening to the Reading of the Last Will and Testament of the Son of God, i.e. the Gospel, the Word and Sacraments, the Sunday Service, men receive the remission of sins, saving faith, life eternal, the resurrection of the body, and the unlimited wealth of the Eternal Kingdom of God.

*Amen.*

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<sup>28</sup>*Luther's Works*, Vol. 51, p. 325.

<sup>29</sup>*The Large Catechism, Part Fourth, Of Baptism.*41-43, *Triglotta*, p. 743.