**Vespers 4,**

 **The Fifth Sunday in Lent,**

7 April 2019.

 *Concordia Lutheran Mission,*

Terrebonne, Oregon.

“Jesus, the Seed (Son) of the Virgin St. Mary,

 Fashioned David’s Gracious Throne by His Passion to Save and Give Life Everlasting.”

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David ... .

St. Luke 1:31-32.

**Introduction**.

Here we see that the Messiah is the Seed or Son of the Virgin St. Mary because she descends from the House of David. The Virgin Mary’s Son will sit on the throne of David because David is His father.

Jesus establishes David’s everlasting Throne through His Passion. Through His Passion Christ establishes His Throne and Kingdom of Grace by Atoning for the sins of men. The Son of David’s Throne is a Throne of Grace, namely, a Throne of Forgiveness and Mercy that forgives transgressions and saves.

From this Gracious Throne He rules Graciously through the Scepter of His Word and Sacraments, namely, the Gospel, whereby, He forgives sins and gives men a new birth unto life everlasting.

Jesus, the Seed (Child) of the Virgin St. Mary is the Son of David and Messiah who gives men birth unto life everlasting.

**I. Christ Fashion’s the Gracious and Saving Throne of David by His Passion.**

**A. The Seed (Son) of the Virgin St. Mary is the Son of David who is the Savior of the world.**

 During the season of Lent we have traced Jesus’ lineage from Eve to Lamech, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and now it’s culmination in the Virgin St. Mary. The Virgin St. Mary is in Christ’s lineage because she is of the House of David. The Evangelist St. Luke writes:

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David ... .[[1]](#footnote-1)

For this reason the Evangelist St. Luke lists Jesus’ lineage down through the Virgin St. Mary’s line, the Apostle St. Matthew tracing His lineage back to David through Joseph’s line.[[2]](#footnote-2)

 Jesus is the Seed (Child) of the Virgin St. Mary and the Son of David, the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

**B. The Seed of the Virgin St. Mary, the Son of David, suffers immediately because of persecution**.

 The Virgin St. Mary receives this news with joy. The Messiah has finally come. And she is the Mother of the Messiah, i.e., the Mother of God[[3]](#footnote-3). The Evangelist St. Luke writes:

And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.[[4]](#footnote-4)

 While the Virgin St. Mary receives this Good News with joy, others did not. When the magi sought out the new born King in Jerusalem, Jerusalem did not rejoice but was alarmed. Martin Chemnitz writes:

Although earlier they [the magi] had entered Jerusalem with that hope that they would find especially that city filled with celebration over the newborn King of the Jews, they saw that Herod was disturbed, that the people were shaken[[5]](#footnote-5), but that no one was concerned about looking for the Child nor did anyone dare to seek out that King for fear of Herod, although they [the people of Jerusalem] not only knew the Scripture regarding the birth, person, and office of the Messiah but could even point it out and explain it to others. In fact, the magi had this great and dangerous temptation amid the very beginnings of their faith: that they saw that people who had been uniquely promised the Messiah and to whom He had been born were so cold.[[6]](#footnote-6) ... Herod, however, was troubled without reason, for He who grants heavenly kingdoms does not take away earthly ones.[[7]](#footnote-7) Although the magi had thought they were bringing the Jews very pleasing news about the rising of their King, whom they had awaited for so many centuries as their Messiah, the evangelist says: “And all Jerusalem was troubled.” What Matthew adds: “... was troubled along with Herod” shows that Herod and the city were similarly disturbed. Thus, people prefer external tranquility to the kingdom of Christ because the latter brings the cross with it. Afterwards, therefore, no one from either the scribes nor from the people joined himself to the magi as their companion to seek the new born King with them, for fear of the savagery of Herod.[[8]](#footnote-8)

 This troubling of Herod and Jerusalem at the birth of the Messiah arises from the fallen human nature spawned by the devil in the Garden of Eden. Ever since the Announcement of the Savior who would crush the head of the devil and liberate men from his clutches of sin, thereby, the devil, for obvious reasons, feared childbirth because each birth could be the Savior who would crush his head.[[9]](#footnote-9) Luther writes:

This obscurity increased Satan’s care and worry. Since it is stated: “I shall put enmity between you and the woman,” he was hostile and suspicious toward all those who gave birth from that time on until Christ was revealed. In man, on the other hand, this obscurity increased and intensified faith. Although individual women realized that they were not the ones who would give birth to this Seed, they were hopeful and certain that It would be born by another. And so it is particularly to mock and irritate Satan, to comfort the godly, and stir them up to faith that God speaks so individually, if I may express myself in this way. Women gave birth up to the Flood and later until the time of Mary; but their seed could not in truth be called the Seed of the woman, but rather the seed of a man. But what is born from Mary was conceived by the Holy Spirit and is the true Seed of Mary, just as the other promises given to Abraham and David testify, according to which Christ is called the Son of Abraham and the Son of David.[[10]](#footnote-10)

 This fear of the Birth of the Savior also gives us insight into modern feminism. Modern feminism disparages childbirth and motherhood.[[11]](#footnote-11) In disparaging childbirth and motherhood they are, wittingly or unwittingly, doing the work of the devil to disparage the Savior born of a woman. The devil couldn’t stop the Birth and Passion of the Messiah so now he tries to discredit the Savior through the avenue of feminism by disparaging childhood and motherhood.

 So, immediately, Jesus begins His sufferings under the persecution of King Herod. The Apostle St. John recounts this in the book of **Revelation**:

And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon; having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.[[12]](#footnote-12)

 Herod went after Jesus with a vengeance. He slaughtered thousands of infants in order to an attempt to get the Messiah. The Apostle St. Matthew writes:

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not.[[13]](#footnote-13)

 Herod, however, failed because Jesus had escaped to Egypt and God’s Salvation in Christ carried on, as the prophet **Hosea 11:1** foretold:

[Even though ] Israel [is] a [rebellious] child, [still] I loved him, and called my [Son] out of Egypt.[[14]](#footnote-14)

**C. The Seed of the Virgin St. Mary saves men by His Passion**.

 Great as the threat of King Herod was, the Seed of the Virgin St. Mary, Jesus, suffered greatest in His Passion. St. Simeon hinted to the Virgin St. Mary of Jesus’ Passion at Jesus’ Circumcision[[15]](#footnote-15):

And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.[[16]](#footnote-16)

The sword that pierced the Virgin St. Mary’s soul was the death of her Son on the Cross. The other sword that caused the Virgin St. Mary such pain was the sword of God’s wrath that pierced Christ’s Blessed Heart because of our sins. The prophet Isaiah writes:

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him: he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Luther writes concerning the Passion of Christ:

In this verse [**Psalm 8:5**] David describes how miserably Christ will be forsaken. No human words can describe this as clearly, briefly, and simply as it is here. He is not speaking of the physical suffering of Christ, which was also great and difficult, but of His sublime, spiritual suffering, which He felt in His soul, a suffering that far surpasses all physical suffering. He describes the highest degree of this suffering and says: “Thou wilt let Him be forsaken of God for a little while.” What this is, no man on earth understands, and no man can reach or express it in words. For to be forsaken of God is far worse than death. ... There is no doubt that in the spirit David is here looking at Christ as He struggles with death in the garden and cries out on the cross, “My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?” (Matt. 27:46) For that is His real, sublime, spiritual suffering, which no man can imagine or understand. In the garden He Himself says, “My souls very sorrowful, even to death”' (Matt. 26:38). This is what He wants to say: “I have such sorrow and anguish that I could die of sorrow and anguish.” He withdraws from His disciples about a stone's throw (Luke 22:41), kneels down, and prays. In prayer He begins to struggle with death, and He prays more fervently. His sweat becomes like drops of blood that fall on the ground. David is talking here about this sublime, spiritual suffering, when Christ fought with death and felt nothing in His heart but that He was forsaken of God. ... And in fact He was forsaken by God. This does not mean that the deity was separated from the humanity -- for in this person who is Christ, the Son of God and of Mary, deity and humanity are so united that they can never be separated or divided -- but that the deity withdrew and hid so that it seemed, and anyone who saw it might say, “This is not God, but a mere man, and a troubled and desperate man at that.” The humanity was left alone, the devil had free access to Christ, and the deity withdrew its power and let the humanity fight alone.[[18]](#footnote-18)

 By His Passion, the Virgin St. Mary’s Son suffers for the sins of men to save them from that suffering.

**D. Jesus lived a holy life for all men from the cradle to the grave in order to save men from their sins.**

Christ, moreover, lived a holy life for all men from the womb to the tomb in order to save men from their sins. Jesus says in **Psalm 22**:

I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou *art* my God from my mother’s belly.[[19]](#footnote-19)

In other words, Christ had God as His God from the womb of the Virgin St. Mary. Christ, therefore, fulfilled God’s Commandments at all times, including from His conception in the womb of the Virgin St. Mary.

 Christ lived this Holy Life for all men from the womb to the tomb. Even on the Cross, when God had forsaken Him, Christ continued to worship God perfectly. The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes:

Yet, while Christ knows Himself totally forsaken of God in the abyss of hell, He cries, “My God, My God!” Even in such an abject condition, as He was in, He still clings to God as His personal God. This was a God-pleasing prayer that as it were issued from the pit of hell. This is something extraordinary, something unheard of. In the midst of the torments of hell Christ asserts that as His Son He will cling to God and claim Him as His own! Never before and never after has such a confident prayer issued from the abyss of hell on the part of those who are damned in that place. Ordinarily from those who suffer the torments of the damned come only cries and sighs of despair, never prayers of faith. It was by this prayer that Christ conquered and overcame the power of hell.[[20]](#footnote-20)

This Holy Worship of God from the pit of hell was the last thing the devil needed. Now in Christ there is no place that man is not holy because of Christ’s obedience for us and all men. In this way, by His Passion and Obedience for us, Christ razed the gates of hell for all men.

**E. Christ’s Passion forms the Throne of Grace of David**.

 As one can see, Christ Fashioned David’s Throne by His Passion and, therefore, Fashioned It a Throne of Grace for sinners. The Apostle St. John writes:

Jesus answered and said, ... Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.[[21]](#footnote-21)

*The Throne of David established by His Son Jesus of Nazareth through His Passion, that is His Suffering and Death for us, is not a throne to punish sin but rather a Throne to Absolve sin and save*, *the Throne of the Cross Christ*.

**II. Jesus, the Seed (Child) of the Virgin St. Mary, Reigns Graciously through His Scepter of His Word and Sacraments, i.e., the Gospel, to Forgive Sins and Save**.

**A. Jesus Reigns through His Gracious Scepter of His Word and Sacraments, i.e., the Gospel.**

 Now that we see David’s Throne is the Throne of Grace by Christ’s Passion, it’s easy to see how Christ Rules His Kingdom: He Rules it through Absolution by His Word and Sacraments. The Evangelist St. Luke writes of Holy Baptism forgiving sins:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call.[[22]](#footnote-22)

The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes of His Gracious Scepter:

Here in the Church He has set up His reign in Word and Sacrament. ... Thus when the Scripture here speaks of Christ’s scepter, it means His rule in His Kingdom of grace, in His Church, the winning of men to believe in Christ.[[23]](#footnote-23)

 Just as Jesus Fashioned David’s Throne Gracious by His Passion so also He Fashioned His Ruling Scepter Gracious by His Passion. 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 ... .[[24]](#footnote-24)

Luther writes of Christ Fashioning God’s Word and Sacraments, namely, the Gospel[[25]](#footnote-25), by His Passion:

... holy baptism was purchased for us through this same blood, which he 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 of sin with the blood of Christ. For we do not gain 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 sins and tucks it into baptism.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Again, Luther writes of Christ Fashioning God’s Word and Sacraments by His Passion:

Christ came into the flesh to be with us in Baptism and at the Holy Supper. Every Spirit who is at pains to teach that Christ does everything through the sacraments of God, is glad to hear about Christ, and gives thanks. For he understand that Christ is his and that He came in the flesh. Therefore this has been stated emphatically. Behold, this is the test of a spirit, whether he is of God or of the devil.[[27]](#footnote-27)

**B. Christ’s Gracious Reign saves and gives life everlasting.**

Because Christ Reigns Graciously through the Scepter of His Word and Sacraments, He saves and gives life everlasting. The Apostle St. Peter writes of Christ’s Scepter saving:

The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience[[28]](#footnote-28) toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ ... .[[29]](#footnote-29)

 Because Christ’s Gracious Scepter saves, it gives life everlasting. The Apostle St. Paul writes:

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.[[30]](#footnote-30)

Luther writes:

Christ is born for you and ... his birth is yours, and come to pass for your benefit. For the Gospel teaches that Christ was born for our sake and that he did everything and suffered all things for our sake ... . Christ has a pure, innocent, holy birth. Man has an impure, sinful, damned birth, as David says in Psalm 51[:5] ... . There is simply no remedy for this except through the pure birth of Christ. ... Christ willed to be born so that we might be born in different manner ... . In this manner Christ takes to himself our birth and absorbs it in his birth; he present us with his birth so that we become pure and new in it, as if it were our own, so that every Christian might rejoice in this birth of Christ and glory in it no less than if he, too, like Christ, had been born bodily of Mary.[[31]](#footnote-31)

 Through the re-birth the Gospel, we become the seed or children of Christ, our everlasting Lord and Savior. The prophet Isaiah writes:

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.[[32]](#footnote-32)

**Conclusion**.

 Jesus is the Seed of the Woman, the Seed of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and, finally, the Virgin St. Mary. God has fulfilled His Promise to become man and shoulder the burdens of men to discharge them for them and, thereby, save.

 Jesus Fashioned by His Passion the Gracious Throne of David. Jesus Reigns from this Gracious Throne and Scepter of Grace, i.e., the Gospel, to forgive sins, save, give life everlasting, and the resurrection of the body on the Last Day when He returns again in glory.

 ***Amen.***

1. **St. Luke 1:31-32**. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “The legal genealogical table of Christ is given by Matthew 1, 1-17, who takes care to establish an unbroken sequence back to David. We have here [**St. Luke 3:23-37**] the natural genealogical table of Jesus, through his mother Mary.” The Rev. Dr. P. E. Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary on the Bible*, Vol. I, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, no date, p. 283, amplification in brackets added. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “On account of this personal union and communion of the natures, Mary, the most blessed Virgin, bore not a mere man, but, as the angel [Gabriel] testifies, such a man as is truly the Son of the most high God, who showed His divine majesty even in His mother’s womb, inasmuch as He was born of a virgin, with her virginity inviolate. Therefore she is truly the mother of God, and nevertheless remained a virgin.” **The Formula of Concord: Thorough (Solid) Declaration**, **Article VIII. Of the Person of Christ**.24, *Concordia Triglotta*, p. 1023. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. **St. Luke 3:46-47**. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. “Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his start in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.” **St. Matthew 2:1-3**. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *The Harmony of the Four Evangelists* .... *Volume One, Book One*, tr. Richard J. Dinda, Malone, TX: 2009, p. 196, first amplification in brackets added. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” **St. John 19:36**. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Martin Chemnitz, *The Harmony of the Four Evangelists* .... *Volume One, Book One*, tr. Richard J. Dinda, Malone, TX: 2009, pp. 196, 192, first amplification in brackets added. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. “Since it was stated: ‘I shall put enmity between you and the woman,’[Satan] was *hostile and suspicious of all those who gave birth from that time on until Christ was revealed*.” Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works*, Vol. I, p. 194, amplification in brackets and emphasis added. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 193, 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The suffragettes around the turn of the 20th century, for example, advocated re-assigning child care from the mother to the State. “In the German Working-man’s Union, Hasenclever, for many years the leading socialist in the German Reichstag, said: ‘The Woman Question would be taken by the developed, or, more correctly speaking, the communistic state, under its own control, for in this state’ (which was to consist of men and women with equal vote) ‘when the community bears the obligation of maintaining the children, and no private capital exists, the woman need no longer be chained to one man. The bond between the sexes will be merely a moral one, and if the characters do not harmonize could be dissolved.’ The ‘Social Democrat’ of Copenhagen has for mottoes: ‘All men and women over twenty-one should vote.’ ‘There should be institutions for the proper bringing up of children.’ All the communistic and anarchistic labor organizations in Germany, France, Switzerland, Denmark, and England proclaim woman suffrage as a prime factor, and the disruption of the family as its corollary. ... Mrs. Stanton Blatch, daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, in her lecture in this country two years ago on the ‘Economic Emancipation of Women,’ said that she rejoiced in every cooperative working-woman’s dwelling, because it was a blow aimed at the isolated home, and she has just repeated in New York her proposition for the institutional care of children.. Alice Hyneman Rhine, in her article on ‘Woman’s Work in America,’ says of socialistic labor, ‘It aims to benefit woman by recognizing her as a perfect equal of man, politically and socially; by fixing woman’s means of support by the state so as to render her independent of man.’” Helen Kendrick Johnson, *Woman and the Republic: A Survey of the Woman-Suffrage Movement in the United States and a Discussion of the Claims and Arguments of its Foremost Advocates*, New York: The National League for the Civic Education of Women, 1909, reprinted: *Forgotten Books*, [www.forgottenbooks.org](http://www.forgottenbooks.org), 2012, pp 206, 207, 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. **Revelation 12:3-4**. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. **St. Matthew 1:16-18**. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. **Hosea 11:1**, translation from the Hebrew in brackets is mine. Because the beginning is verbless and, therefore, cannot be temporal (“when”), I have translated it with the concessive clause “Even though”. “Temporal ..., in the meaning ‘when,’ only in verbal clauses ... .” Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax Outline*, second edition, Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, reprinted 1984, p. 72., underscore added So, even though Israel was rebellious, attempting to murder the Messiah, nevertheless, God in His Grace, calls His Son out of Egypt to effect the redemption of Israel and of all men. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. “**WHY WAS JESUS CIRCUMCISED?** ANSWER: The Child of Mary was circumcised eight days after He was born. Through circumcision the boys of Israel were placed under the law. ‘Every man that is circumcised is a debtor to the whole law.’ Gal. 5,3. ‘In the fulness of time God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, and placed under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.’ Gal. 4:4-5. The circumcision is the beginning of the active obedience of Christ, but also of His passive obedience. With His circumcision He shed ‘His first drops of blood in the purchase of our souls; and on the cross He paid the full price.’ Herberger.” The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt, *Wisdom for Today Volumes II & III*, tr. the Rev. Arthur E. Beck, Ft. Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, pp. 13, 14, underscore added. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. **St. Luke 2:34-35**. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. **Isaiah 53:10**. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, Vol. 12, pp. 124, 126, 127. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. **Psalm 22:10**. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. *Lecutres on Select Psalms*, tr. the Rev. Dr. H. W. Degner, Ft. Wayne, IN: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, p. 67, underscore added. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. **St. John 12:30**, **31-33**. Compare also **Isaiah 42:1-4**: “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in* *whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in teh street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.” “*Till He has established justice in the earth.* He wants to denote the cross.” Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 17, p. 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. **Acts 2:38-39**. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt, *Lectures on Select Psalms*, tr. the Rev. H. W. Degner, Ft. Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1980, pp. 21, 172, underscore added. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. **Ephesians 5:24**, **25**. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. God’s Word and Sacraments are what the Bible means by the Gospel: “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. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 51, p. 325.“This Baptism is also founded upon the name of Christ ... because it was purchased by Christ’s vicarious satisfaction, as Eph. 5:26 expressly teaches, ‘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.’” The Rev. Dr. Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. III, p. 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 285, 286, emphasis added. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. “The Greek word for ‘answer’, as is universally accepted, has in forensic language become a technical term for ‘agreement’. Contained in the original meaning of the word was the fact that the signing of an agreement began with the question: ‘Do you solemnly promise?’ This was eventually lost in idiomatic usage so that by this word as legal expression the Greek came to think only of the legal stipulation itself. And this meaning fits admirably in our passage, the only one in which the word is found in the New Testament. Baptism is the stipulation, or, to say with Luther, ‘the covenant of a good conscience’ in relation to or with God. Baptism cleanses the conscience from sin and its guilt, generates a good conscience which looks up to God joyfully and confidently, standing in union and communion with God. On the basis of this passage from Peter we commonly speak of the baptismal covenant. Cremer’s explanation keys in with this: ‘The claim, the title, which a good conscience has to God.’” The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt, *Lectures on the First Epistle of St. Peter*, tr. Erwin W. Koehlinger, Ft. Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, no date, pp. 165, 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. **I Peter 3:21**. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. **Romans 6:23**. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Marin Luther*, Luther’s Works*, Vol. 52, pp. 14, 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. **Isaiah 53:10**. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)