



This article is written by Pastor Tom Eckstein of Concordia Lutheran Church in Jamestown. "His Word is Truth" will appear in this paper every 3rd Monday.

# His Word Is Truth!

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Today I conclude my series on the Apostles' Creed. The last line of the Creed reads: **"...the life everlasting. Amen."** Regarding this final line of the Creed, Martin Luther writes the following explanation about the work of the Holy Spirit: **"He...will at the Last Day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true."** In last month's article we learned that those who receive the forgiveness of sins through faith in God's Son can look forward

to the **"resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting."** *However, there's more to everlasting life than merely living forever.*

Scripture teaches that ALL people -- both believers and unbelievers -- will be resurrected on the Final Day when Christ returns in glory. ALL people -- both believers and unbelievers -- will live forever. So, the question is: **"Where and with whom will YOU live forever?"** **Those who repent of their sin and trust in Jesus will be resurrected with glorified bodies and will live with the Lord forever in the New Creation** (see Matthew 19:28-29; John 11:23-27 and 14:1-3; Romans 6:23; 1st Corinthians 15:51-58; 1st Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2nd Peter 3:13). **But those who cling to their sin and thereby reject Jesus will be resurrected only to face eternal punishment in hell** (see Matthew 10:28; 2nd Thessalonians 1:8-10; 2nd Peter 2:9-10; Jude 7).

In Matthew 25:46 Jesus

speaks the following about the eternal destiny of unbelievers and believers respectively: **"Then they (unbelievers) will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous (believers) to eternal life."** Also, Daniel 12:2 reads: **"Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt."**

However, God does NOT want any person to end up in hell! Instead, God desires the salvation of every sinner! Ezekiel 18:32 reads, **"For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live!"** 2nd Peter 3:9 reads, **"The Lord...is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."** 1st Timothy 2:3-4 reads, **"...God our Savior...wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."** Finally, in John 3:16 Jesus says: **"For God so loved**

**the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."**

Therefore, if a person ends up in hell it is NOT God's fault! God sent His only Son into the world to be damned in our place. *If we end up in hell it is our own fault because we lived and died clinging to our sin and thereby rejecting Christ. In fact, our future judgment is determined HERE and NOW based on whether we repent and trust in Jesus or not.* In John 3:18 Jesus says, **"Whoever believes in Him (God's Son) is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the Name of God's one and only Son."** In 2nd Corinthians 6:12 the Apostle Paul says: **"As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain...now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."** In Hebrews 9:27

it says, **"...man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment."**

*However, the wonderful GOOD NEWS is that those who repent of their sin and trust in Jesus do not have to fear God's judgment on the Final Day!* Those who repent and trust in Christ have complete forgiveness of sin NOW and are already judged to be holy in God's sight! Those who live and die trusting in Christ can look forward to the Final Day when our bodies will be resurrected and we will be with the Lord forever!

In Philippians 1:21 the Apostle Paul says: **"To live is Christ; to die is gain!"** Paul could say this because he was forgiven and holy through faith in Jesus, our Lord and Savior! (See Philippians 3:7-11) Paul could also look forward to *"the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting."* At the end of Philippians chapter 3, Paul writes: **"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a**

**Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."**

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*Please read the next His Word is Truth article on Monday, December 17th. Pastor Eckstein will write about the meaning of the Season of Advent and how Christ enters our lives in the past, present and future.*

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*For more resources about Christian teaching and issues, go to Concordia Lutheran's webpage: [www.concordiajt.org](http://www.concordiajt.org)*

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