**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

Sermon

*Roman Series*

 *The World Does Know God*

*Pastor ~ Matthew Diehl*

June 30rd In the Year of Our Lord 2019

(Unless otherwise noted, NAS quoted)

Last Sunday, we reviewed God as the Father of Time and how in his omniscience (all-knowing) and sovereignty He brought the lives of so many people together to produce a letter we call Romans, a book in the Bible that witnesses many foundational teachings from God. It is not that Romans is the only book of the Bible to speak to God’s redemptive plan, but it is a place where worlds are challenged and highlights people’s understanding of God, and, at the same time, highlights what God desires for us to know and cherish. We observed that God brought the life of Paul and the life of an empire together by converging a group of Believers in Rome. God worked through the structures of the Jewish community and the first members of “The Way.”

**We start this week in Romans 1:11-32**

11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established;

 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

 13 I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles.

 14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

 15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

 **16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.**

 **17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."**

 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. **(Romans 10:18; Colossians 1:23)**

 **Psalm 19:1-6** 1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

 2 Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge.

 3 There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard.

 4 Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun,

 5 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; It rejoices as a strong man to run his course.

 6 Its rising is from one end of the heavens, And its circuit to the other end of them; And there is nothing hidden from its heat.

**Romans 1 (cont.)**

 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

 24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

 26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,

 27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips,

 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;

 32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. **(see Proverbs 6:16ff)**

**End of Romans 1**

**Supporting Text**

**Joel 2:32** "And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the LORD Will be delivered; For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem There will be those who escape, As the LORD has said, Even among the survivors whom the LORD calls.

**Phil. 2:9-11** 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**New Testament: How the Faithful Life is the Righteous Life.**

**Gal 3:11 Now it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law, because the righteous will live by faith.**

 **Always keep in mind Ephesians 2:8**

**Rom 3:21 But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been revealed, attested by the Law and the Prophets.**

**Rom 9:30 What should we say then? Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained righteousness namely the righteousness that comes from faith.**

**Rom 3:22 The righteousness of God is through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe, since there is no distinction.**

**Rom 10:3 Since they are ignorant of the righteousness of God and attempted to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted to God's righteousness.**

**Rom 3:24 They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.**

**Heb 11:7 By faith Noah, after he was warned about what was not yet seen and motivated by godly fear, built an ark to deliver his family. By faith he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.**

**Phi 3:9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ the righteousness from God based on faith.**

**Heb 10:38 But my righteous one will live by faith; and if he draws back, I have no pleasure in him.**

**2 Cor. 5:21 He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

**Old Testament: Faith Justifies Us and We Live by Faith.**

**Hab 2:4 Look, his ego is inflated; he is without integrity. But the righteous one will live by his faith.**

**Psa 98:2 The Lord has made his victory known; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.**

**Isa 51:5 My righteousness is near, my salvation appears, and my arms will bring justice to the nations. The coasts and islands will put their hope in me, and they will look to my strength.**

**Isa 51:8 For moths will devour them like a garment, and worms will eat them like wool. But my righteousness will last forever, and my salvation for all generations.**

**Luther and Romans**

First to understand the background to the story that Luther recalls,  **Luther used to hate Romans 1:17**. He struggled with this verse in particular, and the phrase 'God's righteousness' in particular, because he always read it in the sense which it was preached by the Catholic theologians at the time. At that time, this verse was understood as the "formal or active righteousness" with which "God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner."

**His experience or turning point in breaking through on his understanding of Romans 1:17 is referred to as his 'Tower Experience', because it occurred in the tower of the Black Cloister in Wittenberg (later Luther’s home) at an undetermined date between 1508 and 1518.**

<https://christianity.stackexchange.com/questions/8742/when-and-how-did-martin-luther-arrive-at-the-justification-by-faith>

**by Martin Luther (1483-1546)**

The following selection is taken from the **Preface** to the Complete Edition of **Luther's Latin Writings**. It was written by Luther in Wittenberg, 1545. This English edition is available in Luther's Works Volume 34, Career of the Reformer IV (St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 1960), p. 336-337. In the first few lines of this selection, Luther writes, "during that year;" the immediate context indicates he is referring to the year of Tetzel's death (July, 1519). This puts the date for Luther's conversion, in his own view, two years after the posting of the ninety-five theses.

Meanwhile, I had already during that year returned to interpret the Psalter anew. I had confidence in the fact that I was more skillful, after I had lectured in the university on St. Paul's epistles to the Romans, to the Galatians, and the one to the Hebrews. I had indeed been captivated with an extraordinary ardor for understanding Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. But up till then it was not the cold blood ab out the heart, but a single word in Chapter 1, "In it the righteousness of God is revealed," that had stood in my way. For I hated that word "righteousness of God," which, according to the use and custom of all the teachers, I had been taught to understand philosophically regarding the formal or active righteousness, as they call it, with which God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner. Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience. I could not believe that he was placated by my satisfaction. I did not love, yes, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners, and secretly, if not blasphemously, certainly murmuring greatly, I was angry with God, and said, "As if, indeed, it is not enough, that miserable sinners, eternally lost through original sin, are crushed by every kind of calamity by the law of the decalogue, without having God add pain to pain by the gospel and also by the gospel threatening us with his righteousness and wrath!" Thus, I raged with a fierce and troubled conscience. Nevertheless, I beat importunately upon Paul at that place, most ardently desiring to know what St. Paul wanted. At last, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely**, "In it the righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live.'"** There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that by which the **righteous lives by a gift of God, namely by faith.** And this is the meaning: the righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely, the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live." **Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates**. There a totally other face of the entire Scripture showed itself to me. Thereupon I ran through the Scripture from memory. I also thought in other terms an analogy, as, the work of God, that is what God does in us, the power of God, with which he makes us wise, the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God. And I extolled my sweetest word with a love as great as the hatred with which I had before hated the word "righteousness of God." Thus, that place in Paul was for me truly the gate to paradise. Later I read Augustine's The Spirit and the Letter, where contrary to hope I found that he, too, interpreted God's righteousness in a similar way, as the righteousness with which God clothes us when he justifies us.

**(Augustine passage included below).** Although this was heretofore said imperfectly and he did not explain all things concerning imputation clearly, it nevertheless was pleasing that God's righteousness with which we are justified was taught. Selections from Augustine's The Spirit and the Letter to which Luther Refers: Chapter 15 [IX.] - The Righteousness of God Manifested by the Law and the Prophets. Here, perhaps, it may be said by that presumption of man, which is ignorant of the righteousness of God, and wishes to establish one of its own, that the apostle quite properly said," For by the law shall no man be justified,"46 inasmuch as the law merely shows what one ought to do, and what one ought to guard against, in order that what the law thus points out may be accomplished by the will, and so man be justified, not indeed by the power of the law, but by his free determination. But I ask your attention, O man, to what follows. "But now the righteousness of God," says he, "without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets."47 Does this then sound a light thing in deaf ears? He says, "The righteousness of God is manifested." Now this righteousness they are ignorant of, who wish to establish one of their own; they will not submit themselves to it.48 His words are, "The righteousness of God is manifested:" he does not say, the righteousness of man, or the righteousness of his own will, but the "righteousness of God," - not that whereby He is Himself righteous, but that with which He endows man when He justifies the ungodly. This is witnessed by the law and the prophets; in other words, the law and the prophets each afford it testimony. The law, indeed, by issuing its commands and threats, and by justifying no man, sufficiently shows that it is by God's gift, through the help of the Spirit, that a man is justified; and the prophets, because it was what they predicted that Christ at His coming accomplished. Accordingly he advances a step further, and adds, "But righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ,"49 that is by the faith wherewith one believes in Christ for just as there is not meant the faith with which Christ Himself believes, so also there is not meant the righteousness whereby God is Himself righteous. Both no doubt are ours, but yet they are called God's, and Christ's, because it is by their bounty that these gifts are bestowed upon us. The righteousness of God then is without the law, but not manifested without the law; for if it were manifested without the law, how could it be witnessed by the law? That righteousness of God, however, is without the law, which God by the Spirit of grace bestows on the believer without the help of the law, - that is, when not helped by the law. When, indeed, He by the law discovers to a man his weakness, it is in order that by faith he may flee for refuge to His mercy, and be healed. And thus, concerning His wisdom we are told, that "she carries law and mercy upon her tongue,"50 - the "law," whereby she may convict the proud, the "mercy," wherewith she may justify the humbled. "The righteousness of God," then, "by faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all that believe; for there is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"51 - not of their own glory. For what have they, which they have not received? Now if they received it, why do they glory as if they had not received it?52 Well, then, they come short of the glory of God; now observe what follows: "Being justified freely by His grace."53 It is not, therefore, by the law, nor is it by their own will, that they are justified; but they are justified freely by His grace, - not that it is wrought without our will; but our will is by the law shown to be weak, that grace may heal its infirmity; and that our healed will may fulfil the law, not by compact under the law, nor yet in the absence of law. Chapter 16 X.] - How the Law Was Not Made for a Righteous Man. Because "for a righteous man the law was not made;"54 and yet "the law is good, if a man use it lawfully."55 Now by connecting together these two seemingly contrary statements, the apostle warns and urges his reader to sift the question and solve it too. For how can it be that "the law is good, if a man use it lawfully," if what follows is also true: "Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man?"56 For who but a righteous man lawfully uses the law? Yet it is not for him that it is made, but for the unrighteous. Must then the unrighteous man, in order that he may be justified, - that is, become a righteous man, - lawfully use the law, to lead him, as by the schoolmaster's hand,57 to that grace by which alone he can fulfil what the law commands? Now it is freely that he is justified thereby, - that is, on account of no antecedent merits of his own works; "otherwise grace is no more grace,"58 since it is bestowed on us, not because we have done good works, but that we may be able to do them, - in other words, not because we have fulfilled the law, but in order that we may be able to fulfil the law. Now He said, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it,"59 of whom it was said, "We have seen His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."60 This is the glory which is meant in the words, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"61 and this the grace of which he speaks in the next verse, "Being justified freely by His grace."62 The unrighteous man therefore lawfully uses the law, that he may become righteous; but when he has become so, he must no longer use it as a chariot, for he has arrived at his journey's end, - or rather (that I may employ the apostle's own simile, which has been already mentioned) as a schoolmaster, seeing that he is now fully learned. How then is the law not made for a righteous man, if it is necessary for the righteous man too, not that he may be brought as an unrighteous man to the grace that justifies, but that he may use it lawfully, now that he is righteous? Does not the case perhaps stand thus, - nay, not perhaps, but rather certainly, - that the man who is become righteous thus lawfully uses the law, when he applies it to alarm the unrighteous, so that whenever the disease of some unusual desire begins in them, too, to be augmented by the incentive of the law's prohibition and an increased amount of transgression, they may in faith flee for refuge to the grace that justifies, and becoming delighted with the sweet pleasures of holiness, may escape the penalty of the law's menacing letter through the spirit's soothing gift? In this way the two statements will not be contrary, nor will they be repugnant to each other: even the righteous man may lawfully use a good law, and yet the law be not made for the righteous man; for it is not by the law that he becomes righteous, but by the law of faith, which led him to believe that no other resource was possible to his weakness for fulfilling the precepts which "the law of works"63 commanded, except to be assisted by the grace of God. This article was made available on the internet via REFORMATION INK (www.markers.com/ink). Refer any correspondence to Shane Rosenthal: ReformationInk at mac.com (connect and write as @mac.com -- when I connect them, I get a lot of junk mail)

https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/MartinLutherConversion.pdf

**The Lutheran Seal – The Five Solas**



In a letter of 1530 to a friend, Luther explained the meaning of the seal thus:

The first thing expressed in my seal is a cross, black, within the heart, to put me in mind that faith in Christ crucified saves us. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness."

Now, although the cross is black, mortified, and intended to cause pain, yet it does not change the color of the heart, does not destroy nature - i.e., does not kill, but keeps alive. "For the just shall live by faith," - by faith in the Savior.

But this heart is fixed upon the center of a white rose, to show that faith causes joy, consolation and peace. The rose is white, not red, because white is the ideal color of all angels and blessed spirits.

This rose, moreover, is fixed in a sky-colored ground, to denote that such joy of faith in the spirit is but an earnest and beginning of heavenly joy to come, as anticipated and held by hope, though not yet revealed.

And around this ground base is a golden ring, to signify that such bliss in heaven is endless, and more precious than all joys and treasures, since gold is the best and most precious metal. Christ, our dear Lord, He will give grace unto eternal life.

Wise words:

"[The Lord's Supper]…is an ordinance for redeemed sinners, and not for unfallen angels. By receiving it we publicly declare our sense of guilt, and need of a Saviour - our trust in Jesus, and our love to Him - our desire to live upon Him, and our hope to live with Him.

Using it in this spirit, we shall find our repentance deepened, our faith increased, our hope brightened, our love enlarged, our besetting sins weakened and our graces strengthened. It will draw us nearer to Christ."

J.C. Ryle (1816-1900)

**1. Sola Gratia (Grace alone)**

Salvation is the free gift of God to man. It is given by God’s Grace alone and not through any merit on the part of the Christian.

GRACE = God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9 (KJV).

The importance of this doctrine in Protestant theology was underlined by Martin Luther, in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians:

“If the Pope would concede that God alone by His grace through Christ justifies sinners, we would carry him in our arms, we would kiss his feet.”

**2. Sola Fide (Faith alone)**

We are judged righteous in the sight of God purely on the basis of our faith. The atoning sacrifice of Christ leads to righteousness being imputed to us as sinners through a legal declaration by God. This is often stated as Justification by faith alone. There is a clear distinction between Justification and Sanctification, the latter being the growth in holiness arising from the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian.

FAITH = Forsaking All I Trust Him.

“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for the just shall live by faith.” Galatians 3:11 (KJV).

Commenting on Justification in his writings, Martin Luther argued that:

“This one and firm rock, which we call the doctrine of justification, is the chief article of the whole Christian doctrine, which comprehends the understanding of all godliness.”

**3. Solus Christus (Christ alone)**

Christ is the one Mediator between God and man and our salvation is accomplished only through His death and resurrection.

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;”1 Timothy 2:5 (KJV).

In addition, every believer is a priest before God, with immediate access to him for the forgiveness of sins. This is known as the doctrine of the Priesthood of all believers. It was classically articulated by Martin Luther, but Protestants point to 1 Peter 2:9 as evidence of support for the doctrine:

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9 (KJV).

The doctrine is not unique to Protestantism, being also found in the Roman Catholic Church, for example, but Protestants insist that no other special form of Priesthood is necessary, as opposed to the Catholic view of a ministerial priesthood being required for the administration of the Sacraments and forgiveness of sins.

**4. Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone)**

Scripture alone is the only infallible source of divine revelation and the final authority for matters of faith and practice. Sola Scriptura does not mean that all truth is contained in the Bible (for example the Nicene Creed is widely accepted and recited within orthodox Christianity), but rather that all mankind needs to know for salvation is contained within its pages.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV).

“For concerning the divine and holy mysteries of the Faith, not even a casual statement must be delivered without the Holy Scriptures; nor must we be drawn aside by mere plausibility and artifices of speech. Even to me, who tell thee these things, give not absolute credence, unless thou receive the proof of the things which I announce from the Divine Scriptures. For this salvation which we believe depends not on ingenious reasoning, but on demonstration of the Holy Scriptures.”

Cyril of Jerusalem (Catechetical Lectures, 4:17)

Protestants typically argue that scripture is perspicuous or clear to all people regarding the essential truths of the Christian gospel of salvation. In contrast to the Roman Catholic view of a Magisterium (or teaching office) of the church, which is required to infallibly interpret scripture; Protestants argue that through the Holy Spirit, individuals can, by themselves interpret the scriptures responsibly.

**5. Soli Deo Gloria (To the glory of God alone)**

Every aspect of the Christian life is to be seen as giving glory to God. In essence, this summarizes the other four Soli above. It also stemmed from the reformers opposition to what they perceived as the unwarranted glorification of the Popes and other clergy.

“If any man speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” 1 Peter 4:11 (KJV).

<http://protestantism.co.uk/solas>

**Luther’s Contradiction**

Luther came a long way from being a Roman Catholic monk to being at the forefront of the Reformation. As much as he promoted “saved by faith” and not works, he still retained infant-water-baptism and also water-baptism for all.

Some historians explain Luther’s retention of infant-water-baptism as a call to a person in adult life that there was water-baptism as a baby, and God had a place for them in His Church. This obviously is a view to a person who has struggled with their relationship with God and to an extent, as they say, “*back*-*slidden*”. As well-intended as Luther was, this is a disastrous teaching and goes against God’s Word and the very Scripture Luther proclaimed. Luther states loudly that he was set free from rules and regulations, the Law, but then held the conflicting retention that water-baptism having something to do with a person’s salvation. One of the verse Luther used to support the need to be water baptized for salvation is Titus 3:5. However, Luther’s translation from the Latin Vulgate or the Greek text or his understanding is in obvious error. We can start with examining the New American Standard text a solid translation from the Greek. Then we will look at Luther’s Small Catechism. Luther actually adds man’s work of water baptism to God’s work of grace. In today’s Lutheran world, specifically, in the Lutheran Missouri Synod, ask the question if a person is not water baptized, are they saved? Ask, was the price God, as Jesus, paid on the Cross insufficient to cover all our sins. What did God leave for us to do because His work on the Cross fell short of achieving propitiation for all of us?

**Titus 3:4-6 NAS**

**4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,**

 **5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness,** but **according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,**

 **6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,**

**From Luther’s Small Catechism concerning water baptism 1529 -**

http://ctkelc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Martin-Luthers-Small-Catechism.pdf

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM**

**I have added explanations in Green, as Pastor’s notes.**

**I What is baptism?**

Baptism is not simply plain water. Instead, it is water used according to God's command and connected with God's word.

**What then is this word of God?**

Where our Lord Christ says in Matthew 28, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

**II What gifts or benefits does baptism grant?**

**It brings about forgiveness of sins,** redeems from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promise of God declare.

Pastor’s Note: [A cut heart, a circumcised heart brings about the forgiveness of sin (Deuteronomy 30:6ff; Acts 2:36ff) which is a rebirth of Spirit as in Ezekiel 36 and John 3). Who administers and controls water-baptism? Man does; officiating priest. Who administers Spirit-Baptism/circumcise Hearts? God does. 6 "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live. (Deut. 30:6)]

**What are these words and promise of God?**

Where our Lord Christ says in Mark 16, "The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned."

Pastor’s Note: [The text of Mark 16:9-20 has been added, not in oldest Manuscripts. AND. The second part of the verse does not speak of baptism. The emphasis is on “the one wo does not believe.”]

**III How can water do such great things?**

Clearly the water does not do it, but the word of God, which is with and alongside the water, and faith, which trusts this word of God in the water. [Then why does a person have to join their acts/work with God?] For without the word of God the water is plain water and not a baptism, but with the word of God it is a baptism, that is, a grace-filled water of life and a "bath of the new birth in the Holy Spirit," as St. Paul says to **Titus in chapter 3:5.** I provide two English translations of Luther’s Small Catechism to verify his mistranslation. Luther miss places the order of words in the sentence. He begins the sentence with “Through the water of rebirth”/ “By the washing of regeneration.”

"through the water of rebirth **and** renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is sure."

http://ctkelc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Martin-Luthers-Small-Catechism.pdf

By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying. http://bookofconcord.org/smallcatechism.php

**IV What then is the significance of such a baptism with water?**

It **signifies** that the old person in us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned and die through daily sorrow for sin and through repentance, and on the other hand that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written?

St. Paul says in Romans 6, "We were buried with Christ through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."

End of section concerning water baptism in Luther’s Small Catechism.

 Luther produced his Small Catechism in 1529. Again, Luther had access to the Latin Vulgate, the Bible of the State Church since the 4th century A.D. There were two other publications that were published about the same time. One before, the Greek New Testament of 1516 and Tyndale’s 1534 English translation which highlights to English speakers the Greek text behinds Tyndale’s work.

**Tyndale’s translation 1534**

TNT Titus 3:5 not of the dedes of rightewesnes which we wrought but of his mercie he saved vs by the foutayne of the newe birth and with the renuynge of the holy goost

Novum Instrumentum omne was the first published New Testament in Greek (**1516**). It was prepared by Desiderius Erasmus (1469–1536) and printed by Johann Froben (1460–1527) of Basel. ... Erasmus used several Greek manuscripts housed in Basel, but some verses in Revelation he translated from the Latin Vulgate.

**Below are verses that clearly teach we are not saved by any kind of work on our part but on God’s grace alone that we access through faith. Jesus did not say by seeing their works, no, by seeing their faith.**

**Matthew 9:2** Just then some men brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic, "Have courage, son, your sins are forgiven."

**Ephesians 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

**2 Timothy 1:9** He has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.

It is obvious that Luther had access to Erasmus’s Greek New Testament that was produced in 1516. Again, Luther also had the Latin Vulgate. There may have been other New Testament text Luther had access to in preparing his Small Catechism. Whatever text he used we can see his interpretation of Titus 3:5 is not consistent with other New Testament passages exampled in Matthew 9:2, 2 Timothy 1:9 and Ephesians 2:8. Luther’s translation of “through the water of rebirth” is where he gets the idea that the acts of water-baptism is a saving act that is to be combined with renewing of the Holy Spirit.

 It is of no small observation that in the original Greek text, Titus 3:5 begins with “not by works that are in righteousness that we did.” In Luther’s small Catechism the verse starts out with “through the water of rebirth”

Here is a up-to-date Greek Text used by translators today.

BNT - Nestle-Aland, Novum Testamentum Graece, 28th Revised Edition, edited by Barbara and Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M, Metzger in cooperation with the Institute for New Testament Textual Research, Münster/Westphalia, © 2012 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart. Used by permission.

Titus 3:5 οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων τῶν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ἃ ἐποιήσαμεν ἡμεῖς ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος ἔσωσεν ἡμᾶς διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας καὶ ἀνακαινώσεως πνεύματος ἁγίου,

This Greek text is the same as Erasmus’ work in 1516.

**Young’s Literal Translation 1862**

 Titus 3:5 (not by works that are in righteousness **that we did** but according to His kindness,) He did save us, through a bathing of regeneration, and a renewing of the Holy Spirit,

**KJV 1611** Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Luther missed the point that the act of regeneration through a bathing/washing is the act of the Holy Spirit, not man. The Greek word “loutron” does not mean to “dip under” as the Greek word “Baptisma” does. “Loutron” is the act of God washing us clean by His work not ours. All the verses below specifically highlight the fact that it is God doing the work of making us clean. We draw close to God with a true heart and He sprinkles us clean (Hebrews 10:22).

We see this explicitly in **Ezekiel 36: 25** "Then **I** will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; **I** will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 "Moreover, **I** will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and **I** will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 "**I** will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. 28 "You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.

**Ezekiel 36:37** Thus says the Lord GOD, "This also I will let the house of Israel ask Me to do for them: I will increase their men like a flock.

**Hebrews 10:22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.

**Jeremiah 33:8** **I** will purify them from all the iniquity they have committed against me, and **I** will forgive all the iniquities they have committed against me, rebelling against me.

In this Psalm, David asks God to do these things to him because he could not do them himself.

**Psalms 51:7** Purify me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

**Isaiah 4:4** **when the Lord has washed** away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodguilt from the heart of Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of burning.

**Zechariah 13:1** "On that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the residents of Jerusalem, to wash away sin and impurity.

Strong’s 3067 λουτρόν loutron

Meaning: a washing, a bath

Origin: from 3068 - Usage: washing (2)

Notes: Romans 11:14, 12:2; 2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 2:9, 2:4; 5:26

1 Peter 1:3, 3:21; John 3:5;

Strong’s 908 βάπτισμα baptisma

Meaning: (the result of) a dipping or sinking

Origin: from 907- Usage: baptism (20).

Notes: Matthew 12:34, 16:1ff; 23:13,33, 23:15

22:23; Acts 4:1, 5:17, 23:6ff; 1Thessalonians 1:10

Summation

Looking back at the Reformation it is easy to be a Monday-morning-quarterback. Men like Luther came from obscurity and blackness. They listened to God and not the state-church. They came a long way in their understandings of God and His Word. Luther and others were still limited like we all are. We are human beings living in a fallen world. Thus, Luther held-on to some of the teachings of the state church such as water-baptism. Many of the reformers simply replaced the authority of the state-church with their own brand of faith and authority. John Calvin was one prime example. Luther was protected by the German Prince Fredrick III, also known as Frederick the Wise, who was Elector of Saxony from 1486 to 1525. This gave Luther the freedom to write, publish and distribute his ideas. After Fredrick other German rulers also protected Luther.

With the Bible still in limited distribution in the 1500’s, there were not many people who cold study the text. However, enough people did, to not only spark the Reformation, but also to further the expansion of the Reformation continuing to this day.

AMEN