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Zion Lutheran Church Crown Christian School

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"I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity." -Luther's Explanation of the Second Article

Purchased and Won

My Choice! My Right! My Freedom! These have become rally cries in our culture. From every side of the cultural and the political spectrum the individual's right to pursue their chosen lifestyle, identity, or pleasure has become the supreme virtue. Many assert that this is what America is all about. Freedom! Freedom to choose. Freedom to act. Freedom to live my life as I see best. While at America's founding these were virtuous ideas, they have been polluted in our present times. We have been told to believe that every person is autonomous, meaning they can act and think apart from everything and everyone else without consideration of any felt need but my own.

This way of thinking is actually rooted in several philosophies and teachings that might be surprising to us. First of which is something called Nihilism. Nihilism is a teaching that was founded by a man named Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche believed that God is dead, there is no absolute morality in the world, and that the only good that can come is from asserting my own personal will. He says that we must assert what we want over and above anything and anyone else in order to have a prosperous life. That means that my wants and needs are the most important in

the world. This teaching was used heavily in Nazi Germany to justify the mass murder of all “undesirable” members of society. Secondly, this way of thinking is rooted in a teacher named Alfred Kinsey, who believed that the ultimate goal of human life was to receive pleasure, namely sexual pleasure. This pleasure was to be freely sought after without consideration of personal cost, social norms, or moral implications. This thinking has grown to a belief that personal and immediate pleasure is the best outcome from any situation be it eating food, buying and selling, relationships, and structuring society.


So we are left with two things of highest importance: asserting my will and receiving my pleasure. This worldview is inherently problematic because it also has seeped into the Church. Very often we see that personal pleasure and will are set above devotion and discipleship. If you don’t believe me just look at what happens to Church attendance during the summer when the weather is nice and the lake is calling. Or you can look deeper and see this thought process has influenced us when it comes to other things like divorce, premarital cohabitation, worship styles, financial stewardship, abortion, and countless other issues seemingly big and seeming small. It all boils down to the idea that it is all about me.

This stuff is not new. Martin Luther saw it in his day as well when he wrote this explanation to the second article of the Apostle’s Creed. He makes some bold statements here. Jesus is my Lord. He has purchased and won me. I live under Him in His Kingdom. Now if you look at our world today many people might say this, but they don’t live it. If you really think about it these are bold claims the Dr. Luther is making. In a sense he is saying that you don’t belong to yourself. While we would all like to think that we are free, we actually are someone else’s property. We are slaves. Slaves to Christ Jesus. St. Paul puts it this way, “You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.”

Now this might sound pretty restraining. Nobody likes the idea of being a slave. We all would like to think that we are the masters of our own destiny. Actually for us Christians this is some of the best news ever. Being a slave to Christ is wonderful! He purchased you. If you doubt that just look at what He purchased you from. We’ve been, “purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil.” That means that when we are toiling to serve our will and our pleasure we are just bound up in our own sin. We are not truly serving ourselves as do these things but the master of this sinful world, the devil himself. The life lived without Jesus buying you leads to death. So either way you are a slave, either a slave to sin or a slave to Christ. It just so happens that we have been purchased away from an oppressive and insatiable master to a gentle and kind one. We have a master that will pay any price for us. We have a master who would die for us. That is what He does. He dies so that He can grab hold of you and take you as His prized servant.

So maybe our personal freedom is not a big deal. Maybe seeking after ways to please myself and live out my will and pleasure are just fruitless efforts to serve an unrelenting master. The Catechism tells us that we are no longer bound to that master. Rather, we have been bound to a Master who loves us and gives us eternal life. We have a Master who serves us daily with forgiveness. So maybe we as Christians should stop preoccupying ourselves with My Rights and My Freedoms and start focusing on how blessed we are to be slaves. You can start by reviewing your Catechism and remembering who owns you. - *Rev. Jacob Dandy*



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Men's Lunch at Frontier Steakhouse in Princeton <u>noon.</u>	3 Bible Study 10am Conf. Class 6pm	4 LWML/ Ladies Aid 6pm	5	6
7 Worship Service 9am Communion Sun. School & Bible Study	8 School's Piano Recital 7pm	9 School Board 6:30pm	10 Bible Study 10am Conf. Class 6pm	11	12	13
14 Worship Service 9am Bible Study	15 Elders 6pm Council 7pm	16	17 Bible Study 10am Conf. Class 6pm	18	19	20
21 Worship Service 9am Communion Bible Study	22	23	24 Bible Study 10am	25 CCS Awards Night 7pm	26 Last day of school for CCS	27
28 Worship Service 9am Bible Study	29  memorial DAY	30	31 Bible Study 10am	Elders: Brad Bartz and Jim Wagner Altar Guild: Becky and Sophia Berger		