

Dear Friends in Jesus Christ our Lord:

May the God of heaven, who loved us enough to give His only Son into death that we might live forever, bless and keep you: "O Lord, we praise Thee, bless Thee and adore Thee, In thanksgiving bow before Thee. Thou with Thy body and Thy blood didst nourish Our weak souls that they may flourish: O Lord have mercy! May Thy body, Lord, born of Mary, That our sins and sorrows did carry, And Thy blood for us plead In all trail, fear, and need: O Lord, have mercy!" (LSB 617 St. 1)

Read the verse of that beautiful hymn again. It sums up what participation in worship is all about. The summer is over and renewed activity is taking place again at the place where we worship Jesus Christ. As always the Lord is calling us to worship Him and receive everything we need.

Sad to say much of the world does not hear these beautiful words or others like them in regular worship. Christ the life of all the living calls His beloved to Him over and over again to receive all that is needed to live forever and get through our days.

We need to have (we must have) communion with God the Father. The communion with God has been interrupted by our guilt and it can only be restored through the removal of our guilt. Only He, the lover of us all, because of the blood of Jesus can and will get rid of our guilt.

As far as I can make out there is only one God and His perfect love is shown in His Son. The question that arises is why are so many looking in so many different places for a god to answer their questions? Jesus Christ is the answer! He is also the question: "What must a man do to be saved?" Like all preachers, I am called upon many times – times of crisis and deep hurt. At these times people seem to have only one question. The preacher can read the scriptures console and pray until he is blue in the face (and this he must do) and he will still hear, "Yes, yes, I know Pastor... but" – You tell me - why does there always have to be a "but"?

Christians know that Jesus is the answer to all their questions in life and the big question at the end of life. It is a sin and a small victory for the devil when you and I question the Lord and His

almighty working. That's right. It is only a small victory. It is by no means the end of the battle and there is no reason to give up just because our weak human nature has caused us to question His ways.

Thank Him that He is our God and that we can question Him.

However, there is another possibility and it is guilt. Guilt has been described as the place where religion and psychology most often meet. Theological guilt, sometimes called true guilt, involves the violation of God's law. The Bible describes Divine standards for human behaviour and when we violate these standards by actions and/or thoughts, we are guilty before God, whether or not we feel remorse. The Bible calls this condition sin and since all of us are sinners, we are guilty before God.

When most people speak about guilt they usually are referring to subjective guilt feelings, but the Bible never uses guilt in this way. The words which usually are translated "guilt" refer to the theological guilt which I have just described. A person is guilty in the Biblical sense when he or she has broken God's law. Therefore there is little difference between guilt and sin.

The Bible does not talk about guilt feelings and no place does it ever imply that we should try to motivate people by making them feel guilty. We are guilty and there is no doubt about it. Something must be done and something must be done quickly. It has been! It has happened in a flash totally by the merits of the One true God and His name is Jesus.

It is all about Jesus. His Divine forgiveness is the major Biblical theme! That is what the New Testament is all about. He, Jesus Christ, came to die so that sinful guilty people could be forgiven and restored to complete fellowship with God.

"Lord, Thy kindness did so constrain Thee That Thy blood should bless and sustain me. All our debt Thou hast paid; Peace with God once more is made: O Lord, have mercy!" (LSB 617 St. 2b)

Rejoicing in His days
Pastor Krestick

