

October 2025

He who is righteous by faith shall live. Romans 1:17

Martin Luther desperately wanted to please God and find favor in His sight. He wanted to be holy and righteous and worthy of the salvation offered to us Christ. He wanted this so much that instead of becoming a lawyer like his father wanted, he became a monk. He thought that in the monastery he would find a truly holy life which would be satisfactory and would quench his thirst for righteousness before God. While he was there, he would deprive himself of sleep to keep praying. He would fast so diligently that his health suffered severely. He would try to beat his body into submission in order to gain some kind of progress toward pleasing God so that his conscience would no longer be burdened by his sins.



It didn't work. The more Luther tried to please God and be found righteous in God's sight, the more it seemed to be impossible. This caused Luther tremendous anguish. But as he kept studying and praying and, in particular, when Luther was pouring over Romans 1:16-17, he realized that the righteousness that he sought was never going to be a result of his striving for it but that it is a gift given. That, indeed, God Himself, through faith in the Good News that Jesus is the Savior, counts, reckons, or declares a person righteous. Justified before God. This was moment of awakening and great joy for Luther. That God gives freely by His grace to people who do not have a righteousness of their own, the righteousness that Jesus has accomplished - and He gives it to them by faith, not their own works - brought Luther the peace he was searching for.

When Luther discovered that, he said the gates of heaven were thrown open for him. Salvation coming from a righteousness not properly his own, but given to him through faith in the work of Jesus' righteousness. The standard that Luther could never meet, Jesus has met for us and grants it as a gift! This rightly shifted the focus from human works to divine grace and ultimately began what would be known as the Reformation.

We thank God for revealing to Luther the truth of salvation and the Bible's teaching of it. It had always been there but it had been clouded over by many different teachings. Luther was bold to make the truth known. He wanted others to share in the joy of being freed from thinking they must earn their way to heaven or for them to be steered away from the total satisfaction for sins made by Jesus.

From our Church's confession of the faith: Augsburg Confession, Article IV

Also they [our churches] teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight. Rom. 3 and 4. (AC IV)

Happy Reformation,
Pastor Suggitt

LIFE QUOTE

God creates, redeems, and calls all human beings as His own precious treasures from fertilization to forever, regardless of ages, appearances, abilities, or impairments. The Gospel of Jesus Christ invites us to an honest humility and an enthusiastic hope that receive each one as gift and privilege!

A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

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