

Daniel Waldschmidt June 19th

Do you know what your name means? My name is Daniel. It means God is my Judge. The name Jesus means "Savior." Today I want us to think about how we have 1. union with our Savior. We have 2. reconciliation in our Savior and we have 3. exchange with our Savior. So 1. union, 2. reconciliation and 3. exchange.

First we have union with our Savior. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come." What does it mean to be "in Christ"? To be "in Christ" means to have union with him. You and Christ are united so that Christ lives in you and you live in Christ. It's kind of like this: have you ever seen those pictures where you turn them one way and see one picture and you turn it another way and you see a different picture. Imagine one of those pictures where you turn it one way and you see Christ and you turn it another way and you see you. You and Christ have been united so that Christ lives in you and you live in Christ.

A couple of things that this union means. First, the Bible says that have died with Christ. Paul says in Galatians, "I have been crucified with Christ." That means that your old sinful self is dead. And when your old sinful nature died with Christ then all your sins died with your Christ. All your sins went down the drain. Your union with Christ means that all your sins have died and you are completely forgiven. Christ punished all your sins when Christ died on the cross and your union with Jesus death means that all your sins are have already been punished and paid for.

Here's another thing that your union with Christ means. It means that you have been raised to new life with Christ. That's why it says, "if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come." Now the Bible says that this dying and rising with Christ happened in baptism. In baptism you died and came back to life again. That's why Luther in his explanation to baptism in the Small Catechism, says, "Baptism also means that a new person should daily arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever."

Maybe you are struggling with some sin in your life. You keep doing that sin and you get frustrated with it. What you can do is remember the meaning and significance of your baptism.

Second, we have reconciliation in our Savior. Our Bible passage says that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ. With the word "reconcile" think of a couple that has been in a hurtful argument. Or think of two friends who had blow up fight and have not spoken in years. Reconciliation is when they are brought back together. Well, you and God were like that couple in an argument or friends who weren't on speaking terms. The big difference is that most of the time when a couple gets in an argument, or friends are not on speaking terms, usually both parties are at fault. But with us and God. We were completely at fault. We rebelled against him for no good reason.

Now usually it is up to the person who caused the argument to make the first move and reconcile. It is up to the person who was most in the wrong to go and say, "I'm sorry I shouldn't have done that." Not so with you and God. God was not at fault at all, but he is the one who reconciles us. And he reconciled us through his Son Jesus.

And he reconciled us by not counting our sins against us. Now God didn't just wink at our sins or look the other way. God is a God of justice. Something has to be done about sin. If sin goes unpunished then God would not be a God of justice. So instead of counting our sins against us, he counted our sins against Jesus who stood in our place.

Now what Jesus did he did for the whole world. It says that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ. The ones who receive the benefit of Jesus saving work are *only* those who believe. Unbelievers are not going to go to heaven, not because Jesus didn't die for them, but because they rejected it in unbelief. But it's important to say that Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. Because if we say that Jesus only for the sins of some people, then we might always wonder, did Jesus really die for my sins? Yes, Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. Are you in the world? Yes. Then Jesus died for your sins. Your sins are completely paid for. Receive this gift by faith. So we have union with our Savior, we have reconciliation in our Savior. And finally we have exchange with our Savior.

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. The first thing we learn from this Bible passage is that Jesus had no sin. Can you imagine going your entire without committing a single sin? Jesus was perfectly sinless. But then Jesus made an exchange with us. He said, give me our sin. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us. You know the sins that you have committed in your life. When you see Jesus on the cross, see your sins on Jesus. And the point is that they are not on you.

Jesus made an exchange with us. He took our sin and in exchange he gave us his righteousness. Jesus never committed one sin his whole life long. He had perfect righteousness and he gave it to us so that we have his perfect righteousness. SO now when God looks at us, he sees someone who has led a perfect life.

One of Martin Luther's greatest quotes is this, he said, "Lord Jesus, you are my righteousness and I your sin." And he was talking about this Bible passage. And by making that exchange with us he saved us from hell and put us in heaven.

So we have union with our Savior. He lives in us and we live in him. We have reconciliation in our Savior. Through Jesus we have been reconciled to God. And finally we have exchange with our Savior.

Amen.