



**Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree” Galatians 3:13.** The sacred writer, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, draws from **Deuteronomy 21:23** to show what Christ does for us as stated in **2 Corinthians 5:21** **“For our sake He (God) made Him (Christ) to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him (Christ) we might become the righteousness of God.”**

Throughout our observance of Lent in hearing God's Word, especially The Passion Account of Christ, we see the curse of the Law completely engulf our Savior Jesus Christ for us. Christ, the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Trinity, **“the Word made flesh” (John 1:14)**, is human in every respect as we are in order bear our temptations; resisting where we cannot. The sacred writer teaches in **Hebrews 2:17** **“For this reason He (Christ) had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people.”** In this way our faithful high priest, Jesus, was our substitute taking our place under God's judgment against us for our sin. As our substitute, Christ atones for our sins making satisfaction to God's wrath against us for our sin. This substitutionary death of Christ is called the “vicarious atonement” which gives us the benefits of redemption earned by Christ, the Savior. Christ gives Himself, sheds His own blood which purifies us from all sin (**1 John 1:7**), heals us by His wounds (**Isaiah 53:5**); Himself **“the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).**

For all who are troubled by their sin, there is great comfort in the Word because the curse is taken from all who sin. We are **“redeemed from the curse of the law” (Galatians 3:13a)** through Christ who becomes the curse for us. Christ suffers the full wrath and anger of God for our sin paying the full penalty under the law on the cross.

When we listen to our Lord's Passion account, it is difficult to hear. The sufferings, punishments, whippings, scourgings, every aspect of what Jesus endures is a result of our sin, yet, Jesus bears this all for us. Christ suffers under the Law for us taking God's wrath against us away. When Christ suffers and is punished under the Law, this is the Gospel; God's mercy and forgiveness through the long promised Savior.

Adam and Eve saw the sad results of the fall into sin the rest of their lives. From the death of one son at the hands of the other son, to the generations that demonstrated the fallen sinful nature of all people who came after them, our first parents lived in this fallen world. We too, see clearly the effects of the sinful nature in ourselves and in the world around us. However, as did Adam and Eve, God's mercy is revealed to us in the promise of a Savior who would come and redeem fallen mankind by His death and resurrection; God's mercy for all through Christ.

During the remainder of Lent, we hear the continuing Passion Account of our Savior on Wednesday nights as we hear God's love for us given through Christ. We also hear God's Word on Sundays during Lent as we are reminded each week of Christ's victory over sin, death and the devil through His work of Redemption on the cross and in His Resurrection. God's love is poured out giving us His forgiveness through Word and Sacrament each time we gather to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest His Word for our spiritual good. As we approach The Lord's Table, receiving His body and blood for our nourishment and the strengthening of our bodies and souls to life everlasting; we are given a foretaste of the feast to come. God's mercies are new to us each morning as Christ is with us daily and as He forgives our sins by His grace and love for us through His work of salvation on His cross.

From the beginning of the Church year in Advent, we hear **“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God...” Isaiah 40:1** to the message of God's promised delivered in the Christ Child... **“Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth...” Luke 2:14a**; to the Passion of our Lord during Lent; we are reminded of God's promise made and given in the person and work of Jesus, our Savior who overcame sin and death for us rising triumphant on the third day, that by His death and resurrection we would have forgiveness, life and salvation. While we stand in awe at the manger beholding the promise of God given in the Christ Child, we also see the manger give way to the cross; the life and work of Jesus continually demonstrating God's grace in Him. Then we stand before the cross while still seeing God's mercy before us causing His beloved Son, Jesus, to be the One crucified for sin. Through it all, God's love is always clear: **2 Corinthians 5:21** **“For our sake He (God) made Him (Christ) to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him (Christ) we might become the righteousness of God.”** Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!  
**Alleluia!**

**In Christ, Pastor Ahrendt**