



For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in His divine forbearance He had passed over former sins. It was to show His righteousness at the present time, so that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. (Romans 3:22b-27a)

With might of ours can naught be done, soon were our loss effected; but for us fights the valiant One, whom God Himself elected. (LSB 656.2)

One of the major teachings of the Reformation is that as Christians, we can be certain of our salvation. How can we be so sure? Simply put, left to our own devices, we are helpless slaves to sin, unable to save ourselves. Yet God had mercy on us, and sent His Son to die for us on the Cross to atone for our sins, and rise again to declare us right with Him. Through other believers, whether our parents or others, God gifted us with the saving faith that empowers each of us to declare, "Jesus died and rose again *for me*." He did this for us because He loves us, and our lives matter to Him. Ultimately, all lives matter to Him, and His desire is for all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. On this we can be certain.

As members of Christ's Body, all lives matter to us, as they do to Him. Thus, we reach out to our weak neighbors who are unable to help themselves, whom society at large might label as unworthy of living. Christ died for them too; thus they are indispensable, and their lives well worth living! Like God's people throughout the history of His church, we assist with their physical needs, and at the same time share Christ and Him-crucified with those who do not yet believe (yes, even our "able-bodied" neighbors who also in the end cannot help themselves), praying that God would use us to bring them as well to salvation and eternal life in Him.

Indeed, the Feast of the Reformation is a powerful proclamation of the sanctity of human life from fertilization to forever. We thank God for your Gospel-motivated voices for life and pray His richest blessings on you now and throughout the year.