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Christ Becomes the Greatest Sinner ... for You!

As we begin this Reformation anniversary year, the following sermon from Martin Luther on the Baptism of our Lord proclaims the substitutionary atonement of Christ, delivered to us through Holy Baptism.

As John is preaching like this and baptizing, as St. Matthew goes on to say, Jesus comes to him at the Jordan from Galilee and desires to be baptized [Matt 3:13]. How marvelously backward this is! The Pharisees and scribes who were full of sin and condemnation deny they have any sin. They know nothing of repentance and refuse to be baptized. On the other hand, there is Christ, who is without any sin and who alone bears the distinction of having never sinned.

But why does He come to be baptized, seeing that He is without any sin or impurity for Baptism to take away? What a blessed Baptism that must be! Here John gets a sinner who has no sin so far as His own person is concerned, and yet He is the greatest sinner, who has and bears the sin of the world. That is why He, too, undergoes Baptism and confesses by that deed that He is a sinner — not with respect to Himself, but with respect to us. For here He steps into my person and yours and stands in the place of all of us who are sinners. And since no one admits to being a sinner, especially not the proud saints, it is necessary that He become a sinner for all. He assumes the form of sinful flesh, and in His suffering on the cross, as many psalms testify, He laments the burden of the sins that He bears. ...

[Christ] comes to be a sinner as Isaiah 53 [5] says: “The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” For since we (the prophet says) “all like sheep have gone astray” [Isa 53:6], God found this remedy: He took the sins of all human beings and hung them all around the neck of Him who alone was without sin. He thus becomes a great sinner — indeed, the greatest sinner of all and the only sinner on earth — so that there is no other. For the text says that the Lord has laid on Him the sins of us all.

Because He has become the Sinner who has all of our sin placed upon Him, He truly does need Baptism and must be baptized for the forgiveness of sins — not with respect to His own person, which is innocent and spotless, but for the sake of us, whose sins He bears. He plunges them into His Baptism and washes them away from Himself (that is, He washes them from us, since He has stepped into our person) so that they must be drowned and die in His Baptism ...

Therefore, He is both the greatest and only sinner on earth, for He bears the sins of the whole world, and also the only righteous and holy One, since no one is made righteous and holy before God except through Him.

Excerpted from Luther's Works, vol. 58, pages 44–45.
[to the reader]

When January rolls around, our thoughts turn to life issues like abortion and the historic 1973 Roe v. Wade case. We sign up for the March for Life. We ponder the past 44 years and the millions of children whose lives ended while yet preborn. We mourn, but we speak up. We pray, and we trust that the Lord turns hearts and minds to what is good and true in His perfect timing and according to His will.

But we also think of other issues pertaining to life. Confronted by increasingly fuzzy scientific and medical practices, we consider ethical end-of-life decisions. We talk adoption — both the joys and the challenges. We break the silence on miscarriage, pointing women to their identity in Christ in the midst of loss. We remember that with life, and all things, we look to the Scriptures for answers, and not to ourselves. We remember our bodies and souls — together — have value and worth and that they are not ours alone. We learn about the reprehensible practice of eugenics — not just in Nazi Germany — but in America today. We reach out with God's love and compassion to those considering ending their own lives. And ultimately, we rejoice that Christ values us, regardless of our physical or mental capacity.

This month, we're looking at life issues — from the moment of conception to the instant of natural death. We repent. We pray. We learn. And we endeavor to make a good confession that life — all life — is God's gift, and it is all for our good.

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Managing Editor, The Lutheran Witness
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Asking the Inevitable

by John Pless

CONFRONTED BY THE INEVITABLE approach of death, Christians may be confronted with situations where it is highly improbable that continued medical therapy will produce beneficial results for the patient. It may even be that these procedures subject the dying person to further risk, are costly or are experimental in nature. In such cases, Christians guided by the truth that we are always to care and never to kill are often faced with difficult decisions. Mindful of the fact that “we [are not to] hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need” (Explanation to the Fifth Commandment in the Small Catechism), it is suggested that Christians consider the following questions when they must make decisions for themselves or others. These questions might be discussed with family members, medical professionals and one’s pastor.

• What is the medical prognosis given by the attending physician(s)? Has a “second opinion” been sought? Does this opinion confirm or call into question the original prognosis?

• Have the patient’s vital processes already begun to shut down, indicating that death is inevitable barring divine intervention?

• Is treatment being discontinued to hasten death (hence “choosing death”) or because the treatment itself has become burdensome with no realistic hope of recovery?

• Are there other pressures being applied that would tilt the bias toward death, such as the need for the patient’s organs for transplantation?

• Is adequate physical care (nutrition and hydration) provided for the dying person even when treatment is discontinued or life support systems are withdrawn?

• What spiritual advice and guidance has been provided by the pastor on the basis of the Holy Scriptures?
Family members should not think that they have to make decisions immediately, even though there may be pressures from medical personnel to do so. It may be helpful for the family to meet with the pastor outside of the medical facility in order to have a more prayerful, non-clinical setting for deliberation. When there is doubt about how to proceed, it is advised that we exercise a bias for life. It is better to err on the side of life than death.

Let your pastor help

The Pastoral Care Companion focuses the work of pastoral care of the dying and their families in circumstances where decisions will need to be made at the end of life: “Care of the irretrievably dying always includes provision of those ordinary items needed to sustain life (nutrition and hydration). Once the dying person’s vital processes have ceased their spontaneous functions, the decision may be made to discontinue the use of artificial means to prolong life or extraordinary forms of treatment. ... Trusting in the sure promises of our Lord’s resurrection, the pastor will use God’s Word to comfort and strengthen family members as they commend their dying loved ones to the hands of a merciful Savior.” Pastors will shepherd Christians through terrain where decisions cannot so easily be classified as “right” or “wrong,” with the realization that there are boundaries that we should not transgress. Hence we avoid doing anything that might be causative of death even as we recognize that there does come a time when we should no longer grab at this life as though it could be maintained forever.

Our confidence lies not in our ability to make perfect decisions in life-and-death matters where the boundaries are often blurred, but in Jesus Christ, who holds us in His merciful hands. Even our best decisions can be faulty.

We also trust in His forgiveness for the wrong decisions made out of ignorance or with minds darkened by sin. The Christian lives only by the promise that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin (see 1 John 1:7).

Heeding the Lord’s call

When natural life is clearly ending, neither seeking death nor in futile desperation attempting to thwart or delay the inevitable, the Christian heeds the call of the Lord. In this sense, we may speak with Paul Althaus, a German Luther scholar of the last century, of the vocation to die: “To die willingly means to accept God as God, to honor Him as the One who alone has immortality, who is God by the very fact that He gives us life and has the right to take it back. We die to honor God. This is true all the more because He wants to be praised through our faith, and nothing calls for faith as much as dying. There is no other divine service like that in which man, with all his hopes and desires, with all his thirst for life, obediently submits to God’s call to die, and in his own end relies on God, commits himself into the hands of the Invisible when all things visible fade away. The perfection of the Son of God lies in His obedience to death. So we, too, must joyfully accept as God’s grace that He calls us to the divine service of dying. By our death we are allowed to give praise to God.” With faith in God’s promise to provide His children with the resurrection of the body to life everlasting, we can face death as the gateway to life everlasting with Him. LW

Mercy at Life’s End also includes:

- Information on “death with dignity”
- Arguments against euthanasia’s elimination of sufferers rather than suffering
- Important distinctions regarding treatments and artificial means of prolonging a person’s life
- A guide for families making ethical end-of-life decisions


The Rev. John T. Pless (john.pless@ctsfw.edu) is assistant professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions and director of Field Education at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.
How did you expect God to build your family? First a spouse, then a child or two (or more)? No two families are the same. There are the husbands who come with children from previous relationships or surprise twins that double the joy. There are empty bedrooms, waiting to be filled, and children waiting for parents who will love them like their birth parents would not — or could not.

Our families may not be knit together exactly as we expected. God builds families and gives the blessing of children through birth and also through adoption. When we embrace the opportunity of adoption, we follow in the heart of God as He has given us the adoption as sons (Gal. 4:5) and given us His love by calling us “children of God; and so we are” (1 John 3:1). God has adopted each of us into His family — as full members of His household — and so we have an image of the adoptive family’s love for their children.

God has called us to show mercy to those needing a family. God’s mercy opens our homes and hearts and leads us to be parents to children who each deserve to have a mother and father who love them and will take care of them. All children matter to God and are precious. That is why we embrace parenting by adoption and all the joys and challenges that come along with it.

Challenges

Adoption comes with profound challenges that adoptive families can find difficult to talk about (and their loved ones find difficult to understand). There are, of course, the financial challenges of making adoption happen. International adoption can be particularly costly. However, many states have adoption programs that cost families little or nothing and can provide financial assistance to raise their children.
Once the bills are paid and the children are home, many families begin to experience the fallout from the trauma their children have experienced. The trauma the children experienced that separated them from their birth parents is something their forever family must deal with to bring them to health. Children’s fear and anger are misdirected toward their adoptive parents, instead of at the source of their hurts. This struggle for attachment is usually contained deep inside the home. When you meet them in church or out and about, the struggling children will turn on their charm, or simply be checked out of reality and won’t let you see their struggles. But behind those masks and emotional shields are kids and families swimming in the tumultuous waters of recovery and becoming a family.

“But aren't they thankful they were adopted?” Some day they might be, but maybe not. Children and families in adoption will have a lifelong battle with feelings of loss, rejection, guilt, shame, grief, confusion of identity, lack of intimacy and a struggle for control. Even in our own relationship with our perfectly loving heavenly Father, don’t we struggle with our old nature and new life?

Crosses worth bearing
Adoptive parents can find it difficult to let down their guard and share their struggles. Everyone they meet has such admiration for them for adopting that it can make understanding adoptive parents’ tears and sleepless nights difficult. Adoption certainly is a noble endeavor, but that doesn’t mean that as an adoptive parent you can’t seek help or that you must suffer in silence. Please remember that God has not forgotten you or your children. He has given you a family in Christ, your pastor and your brothers and sisters in Christ, to be a blessing to you in prayer and give you forgiveness and new life in times of sorrow.

The Church, as the family of God, can support adoptive families and become extensions of God’s mercy. Through material, physical, emotional and spiritual support, adoptive families can be lifted up in difficult times and strengthened to endure the brokenness that has impacted their children. Lend a listening ear. Be willing to learn about their unique struggles.

Children are blessings, given at the pleasure of the Giver and are simply received by us. Even when the blessing comes with a cross to bear, through Christ we count our suffering a joy and give thanks that we have been counted worthy to bring up our children in the fear and knowledge of the Lord, who loves them and has set them into our family. LW

The Rev. Phillip Zielinski (pastor.zielinski@spvc.org) is pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Valley City, Ohio. He and his wife, Sara, are the parents of five adopted daughters.

Learn more about the Zielinskis’ adoption story at eyesoflife.org/phil.

The Church, as the family of God, can support adoptive families and become extensions of God’s mercy.
Great Sinners
by Scott Murray

When I was in Germany recently, Hans-Jörg Voigt, the soft-spoken bishop of the Free Lutheran Church in Germany, expressed repentance for the death camps used by the Nazis to exterminate millions of people who were considered genetically or politically inferior, even though Bishop Voigt was born in the 1950s long after WWII. He understood that there is a collective responsibility for the slaughter perpetrated during WWII. If the Germans can confess collective guilt, why can’t we? Let us repent of our complicity in abortion.

When a woman who has had an abortion comes to me and confesses her sin, she is not only confessing her sin but my own. Her repentance rips at her heart. It tears at my ears. For her voice is my voice. Her sin is my sin, because I am complicit. Silence is complicity. As Senator Mike Lee said on the floor of the U.S. Senate in September, “In the case of the Planned Parenthood undercover videos in the court of public opinion (as they taught me in law school), *qui tacit consentire videtur*: the media’s silence indicates their consent.” But what is good for the media is good for me too! I need to repent of my complicity, because I have been silent.

God will not remain silent while we are. He has continued to deliver the story of the cross. It gets sin out in the open. What rips our ears and tears our hearts open His veins. There can be no moral cover-up. God uncovers our sin and places it on the Messiah-King who is crucified for sinners.

Many people say, “But Pastor, what can I do? I feel so helpless!” What can you do? Pray. Show love and compassion to those who are suffering over their abortion or their part in one. With count of the dead now at 57 million, there are plenty of people to comfort!

I believe that many who have had abortions, performed abortions, aided and abetted the abortion industry, or encouraged another to have an abortion bear a horrifying load of guilt. Many feel cornered into supporting this practice as a religious good because they don’t know of the God who sends His Son to suffer on the cross to pay even for the sin of abortion. Jesus has died for all sins, and not just for ours only, but even for the sins of the whole world (*1 John 2:2*). Christ pays for the sin of abortionists, those who helped a woman decide to abort, those who sort through the mangled body parts for useful pieces, those who carry the trays of the remains, those who run the abortion mills, those who write the talking points covering genocide, those who have believed the lies told about their beautiful children and have submitted to abortion and those who have been silently complicit.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?**
Pray. Show love and compassion to those who are suffering over their abortion or their part in one.

*The Rev. Dr. Scott R. Murray (smurray@mlchouston.org) is pastor of Memorial Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas, and second vice-president of the LCMS.*
We place a lot of value on our identity, the distinguishing character or personality of an individual. While many things contribute to it, the value of each attribute can easily be overlooked until it is stripped away.

Six months after meeting my beloved Peter, he proposed to me on March 13, 2015. I relished the upgrade from girlfriend to fiancée. In April, Peter received his call to serve as pastor, and I grew anxious to start married life with the man of my dreams. In May, I resigned from my job to plan our June wedding. In July, I moved 10 hours away from family and dear friends. In August, I went from “Allison” to “the pastor’s wife.” Each month, I felt my identity being left behind, sacrificed for my husband in this new life. My rose-colored glasses must have gotten smashed in the moving van.

In September, on cue to maintain our monthly list of milestones, I discovered I was pregnant, but after ten weeks and six days, I suffered a miscarriage in the middle of the night.

I sincerely wish the events that happened Oct. 15, 2015, were a blur, but I remember them with piercing clarity: the blood that leaked from my womb as we rushed to the emergency room indicated that the nursery Peter and I were preparing would remain empty, and the paralyzing cramps in my abdomen signaled the family Peter and I wanted would have to wait. We held a funeral service for our precious child, Jordan, following the rite of Burial for a Stillborn Child or Unbaptized Child in the Lutheran Service Book. Jordan was buried in Richmond, Va., in November with several other unborn children at Mount Calvary Cemetery. I have made the 90-minute drive alone several times to visit.

Comfort abounded as I pondered what Scripture tells me about my identity: I am a precious child of God.

continued on page 25

FINDING COMFORT IN THE PAIN OF MISCARRIAGE

- Private confession and absolution
- Hymns of Comfort (“Children of the Heavenly Father” was sung at Jordan’s funeral)
- Girlfriends’ care package (candles, bath salts, tea or thoughtful notes)
- Scripture that declares unborn babies are indeed cared for by Christ
- Hugs. No stories of similar experiences, no words at all. Just silent, powerful hugs.
- Care and concern for the father’s well-being (He often gets forgotten!)
Believe
In Christ, God gives us eyes of life — eyes that see life from His perspective. And what we see causes us to speak for life. People are telling their stories at eyesoflife.org.

It is easy to get bogged down in what we are against, but with “Eyes of Life,” we rejoice in what we are for: God’s grace and mercy, Christ’s forgiveness and love, the Holy Spirit’s direction and nurturing ... and life.

Eyes of Life adds a voice to the conversation in defense of the sanctity of life — a voice that speaks and cares for life from conception to natural death. This voice is echoed in action: marching for life, volunteering at a maternity home, helping a family with a special-needs child, caring for the elderly and so on.

Listen
“He started forcing me to sleep with guys and pointed a gun at my head and said if I didn’t, he would kill me.” She states her past matter-of-factly, calmly explaining how she ended up at Redeeming Life Maternity Home, Sanford, Fla.

Meet Jennifer, a survivor of human trafficking and prostitution. She’s speaking up. By sharing her story through the #eyesoflife campaign, she is giving voice to what millions of others believe as well: That all life, from conception to natural death, is sacred, valued and a gift from God.

“It started with just needing the money to take care of myself,” she recalls. “I wasn’t able to work legally because my green card is expired. I couldn’t renew it because I was underage so ... I started making money the only way I knew how to and that was dancing at a strip club.”

“I found myself falling for one of my customers, who was ... later to be my pimp. He had a big organization, and he made me the big fish,” she explains. “He spoiled me with material things and what I thought was love.”

Then came the demands that she sleep with men for money and the threats that accompanied them.
And the gun.
And the fear.
And the realization that she had to get out.
By God’s grace, she did.
“I learned to be comfortable sharing my story to help the women that are scared to get out because I did it,” she says with confidence.

She has another reason as well: Jennifer is a mom, expecting a little boy in the near future. “With the help of God, He opened my eyes to see the mother I wanted my unborn son to have,” she explains.

Thanks to Redeeming Life Maternity Home, she is thankful for the physical things like a home and food. But she also focuses on something even more important: the fact that “They made sure I was safe and assured [me] that I can count on them. I’ve never been dependent on anyone because I’m an independent individual and still am. But ... God and all His servants [have] molded me into that self-sufficient woman I am today.”

“The church and the maternity home have given me a place to lay my head at no cost and given me everything my son will need when he is born,” she says gratefully. “They’ve provided so much support, helping me to get ready for my son.”

Human trafficking. Prostitution. An absent mother. An unborn child. For many, it would be too much. But for this child of God, it’s really just the beginning. And when little Leon Josiah makes his grand entrance, Jennifer will be assured of yet one more thing: “God blessed me with a precious bundle of joy even when I doubted myself and said I wasn’t ready. The Lord has shown me I am ready, and that’s why I have eyes of life!”
Serve

- **Plan** a life event at your church on a Saturday. Invite your pastor or a speaker to come and speak on life issues.
- **Host** a single-parent outreach event at your church, such as free oil changes or distributing diapers and wipes.
- **Support** your local Lutherans For Life chapter by volunteering.

- **Volunteer** at your local hospice, crisis-pregnancy center or nursing home.
- **Join** local life ministries at a public event.
- **Schedule** a servant project for a local hospice or nursing home.
- **Raise** money for a crisis-pregnancy center or maternity home.
- **Care** for new mothers with visits, meals and helping hands.
- **March** for life locally, in Chicago, Washington, D.C., or San Francisco this January.
- **Encourage** and support those who find life challenging due to disability or chronic illness.
- **Run** errands for homebound mothers, elderly or the ill.

Remember

**Word of Hope (888-217-8679)** is the only 24-hour, completely confidential and distinctively Lutheran hotline bringing healing found in Christ to those whose hearts have been broken by abortion.

“They need the love of Christ and His church today more than ever.”

“With the help of God, He opened my eyes to see the mother I wanted my unborn son to have.”
“[They] were so preoccupied with whether or not they could, that they didn’t stop to think if they should,” said Dr. Ian Malcolm, played by Jeff Goldblum, in the 1993 major motion picture *Jurassic Park*. Malcolm was referring to the scientists hired by John Hammond, played by Richard Attenborough, that created the dinosaurs for the theme park. And the point that Malcolm is making is that just because we can do something does not at all tell us whether we, in fact, *should* do something.

It’s a line that we would do well to consider ourselves. Science is a field of study that tells us what is and what can be. But it is theology that tells us what should be, what ought to be and what must be. Science without theology is rudderless. It provides answers to some but not all the questions.

So when we look at polarizing issues like divorce and same-sex marriage, stem-cell research, abortion, in vitro fertilization, snowflake adoptions, contraception, euthanasia and end-of-life care, and the questions raised by them, science will only give us the answers to the questions that science is equipped to answer. It will only be able to tell us what is and what can be. But it won’t tell us what should, ought and must be. For this we need theology. We need a source that tells us not just how things currently are, but how things should be. And for Christians, the Scriptures, and how the Church has always understood them, are our guide.

When questions of abortion and contraception are raised, we look to the Scriptures for what God says about children, that they’re blessings and they’re to be gladly received and sought after. When questions about euthanasia, stem-cell research, in vitro fertilization and abortion are raised, we look to the Scriptures for what God says about life, how He is its author; He defines its beginning as well as its end. We look beyond what science can answer. For God shows us not just what is, but He also thereby reveals what should, ought and must be.

Let us turn to the Scriptures together and listen to the wisdom they give. Let us seek counsel from the Word of God even as we look to our pastors and Synod leaders trained to help us understand them. We can become so preoccupied with whether or not we can, that we don’t stop to think if we should. May it not be so with us.

The Rev. Jason Braaten (pastor.braaten@gmail.com) is pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tuscola, Ill.
If I were a butterfly, I’d thank you, Lord, for giving me wings;  
If I were a robin in a tree, I’d thank you, Lord, that I could sing;  
And if I were a fish in the sea, I’d wiggle my tail and I’d giggle with glee;  
But I just thank you, Father, for making me, me.  
For you gave me a heart and you gave me a smile,  
You gave me Jesus and you made me your child!  
And I just thank you, Father, for making me, me.

Sunday School had it right. What makes us human? It’s not what we look like. It’s not what we can do. It isn’t when we were born or where we live. It isn’t laws or choices. It isn’t research or arguments. It isn’t feelings or beliefs. It’s not how we came about. In fact, like we learned from Abbott and Costello, we won’t know “What?” until we know “Who?” What makes us human is a Who.

God makes us human. God’s Word is what makes us human. Father, Son and Holy Spirit, almighty Maker of the universe and Lord of history, He created us human. “Know that the Lord, He is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people” (Ps. 100:3). “Let them praise the name of the Lord! For He commanded and they were created” (Ps. 148:5). “Your hands have made and fashioned me” (Ps. 119:73). “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:10).

Not only has God made us human, He also makes us holy. His Son’s incarnation and His Spirit’s forgiveness are what makes us holy. “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things ... For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers ... to make propitiation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:14-17). “You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God ... Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you ... for you were bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:11, 19-20).

And God makes us heavenly. “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself” (Phil. 3:20-21). Created, redeemed and called; human, holy and heavenly. Thanks be to God!
This dismissal of blessing from Holy Communion confesses that the very body and blood of God in the Lord Jesus Christ brings eternal life to our body and soul.

Luther states that in addition to the strengthening of the soul, “the mouth, the throat, the body, which eats Christ’s body, will also have its benefit in that it will live forever and arise on the Last Day to eternal salvation.” God’s redemption of mankind includes both the body and the soul.

**What’s Gnosticism?**

An early heresy Christians dealt with was Gnosticism. It challenged the belief and denied the truth of the redemption and resurrection of the body. It taught a dualism between good and evil, maintaining that all material matter, including the body (and soul) of man, was evil. Only the enlightened spirit was good.

For Gnostics, redemption is the eternal liberation of the spirit from the body in death. Because the body is evil and comes to nothing beyond the natural life, it does not matter what one does in the body, allowing for the indulgence of the flesh and its passions. The theological implications are extensive, including the denial that Jesus Christ came in the flesh (1 JOHN 4:2–3), let alone that He died and rose again in the flesh, overthrowing the entire Gospel.
How do we treat the body?

Similar teachings arose during the Reformation, raising the question, “Is the body good or evil, and does it matter how we treat the body in this life?” Lutheran Reformers maintained an essential biblical distinction between original sin that dwells in the nature of man, and the body and soul as that created and preserved by God. The body and soul are not sin (or evil) itself but are infected with sin. Salvation is not the liberation of man’s spirit from the body, but of the whole man in body and soul (and spirit) from the infection of sin and its eternal consequence — death!

What should we believe about the human body?

Scripture teaches that the body is a vital part of man’s creation, redemption and sanctification, temporally and eternally. It matters what we do to the body and in the body as Christians. The faith we hold in the heart we live out in the body as the organ of the soul in subdued obedience to the Lord. This is the proper identity, respect and adornment of the body — a “holy” life that honors God.

Luther again wrote about the Lord’s Supper: “So, when we eat Christ’s flesh physically and spiritually, the food is so powerful that it transforms us into itself and out of fleshly, sinful, mortal men makes spiritual, holy, living men.”

As God’s holy people (1 Peter 2:9), we are to regard the body as “holy” to God. Unfortunately, this regard for the body is not respected in our culture today. Even Christians have succumbed to numerous “self-identifying” forms of bodily defacement, desecration, and mutilation in “the dishonoring of their bodies” (Rom. 1:24–27).

From dietary emaciation to muscle dysmorphia, from dismemberment of babies in the womb from denial of body gender to all unnatural expressions of sexuality, the ongoing influence of Gnosticism is clearly evident.

Is this how we Christians are to treat our bodies or those of others? “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body” (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

Christians throughout history have honored the body and presented it as a living sacrifice to God (Rom. 12:1), not letting sin reign in it to obey its passion but rather as an instrument of righteousness (Rom. 6:12-13) and spiritual worship.

God’s redemption of mankind includes both the body and the soul.

From conception to death, the body is created and sustained by God and to be treated and buried honorably, all to His glory and the truth of eternal life in the bodily death and resurrection of Christ for our body and soul.

Therefore, “May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5:23).
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Amazingly Complex

by Jeff Gibbs

Terminal illness, life-support systems, financial ruin, extended suffering in body and mind—all of these questions and more face us or our loved ones. We are living longer, but until Jesus returns, death awaits us all. Health care’s sword has two edges: Amazing technology also creates impossibly complex situations. Ask four people about questions on dealing with the end of life, and you might get five answers.

As we live together in the Church, we should acknowledge that these things can be complex. No one—not you or I or anyone—will always have the right answers, clean and simple, for every situation.

It does, however, matter greatly what questions you ask. Here are three questions that Christians can and should be asking themselves—and not only in relation to the end of life. These questions relate to basic aspects of Christian identity; they can also help guide our decisions as life draws to its end.

Question 1: To whom does my life belong? Christians (and others) speak rightly of life as a gift from God. There is, however, a follow-up question: To whom does that gift belong? Although God freely gives life to me and to all creatures, He retains ownership: life belongs to Him. This is true on at least two counts. First, God creates my life and sustains it (through means). Second, God has redeemed my life from the devil; He purchased me and my life, and now He owns me. God owns His servants and all people, even those who don’t acknowledge Him in this way. This leads to the second question.

Question 2: Am I in charge of my life? In some ways, of course, the answer is “yes.” When people “take charge of their own decisions,” we call that maturity! In the most important sense, however, I am not in charge. I am not the master of my fate. My wishes and desires, no matter how heartfelt, are not what matter most. God’s will for me is what matters most. And His will, because I am His, is this: I am to love Him with my whole being, and I am to love my neighbor as myself.

Question 3: Am I alone? For some, this is the greatest fear of all. The answer is both a resounding “No” and an urgent “May it never be!” No—even in the darkest moments, Christ is with me and His Word comforts and teaches me. “May it never be—as the body of Christ, may we never leave one another alone!” Rather, we rejoice with those who rejoice, and we weep with those who weep. May God enable us as members of Christ’s body not to abandon our brothers and sisters when they face hard decisions at the end of life but to draw near to support and encourage them.
When we hear the word “eugenics,” many of us think back to World War II. Before concentration camps were built, Hitler’s reign of terror began with an attempt to rid Germany of those deemed mentally or physically unfit.

The Nazis implemented their eugenics policy against the feeble-minded and mentally unstable, as well as those suffering from such ailments as cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy. All told, the Nazis forcibly sterilized more than 400,000 people, and killed another 300,000 through euthanasia.

Less widely advertised is the fact that the eugenics movement began in England and became quite popular in the United States. Our own government took part in the forced sterilization of unwanted population groups. Margaret Sanger used eugenics to popularize Planned Parenthood. She promoted birth control as a way toward a better and purer race. A frequent guest speaker at rallies of the Ku Klux Klan, she hoped to “create a race of thoroughbreds” (Birth Control Review).
In her book *The Pivot of Civilization*, she called immigrants and poor people “human weeds” and “reckless breeders,” even “human beings that should never have been born.” Alveda King, the niece of the great Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., notes that Planned Parenthood still targets vulnerable communities, typically setting up their clinics in the inner city, targeting the African-American community. To this day, abortion is recommended for children born with abnormalities and birth defects. Tragically, the vast majority of babies diagnosed with Down Syndrome have their lives taken by abortion.

The biblical vision of humanity is so much different. In God’s eyes, every person is valuable. Every life is precious. That’s what being pro-life is all about. Each and every person matters — not because you are smart or strong or talented, but because you are a human being, created in God’s image, redeemed by the blood of Christ.

You matter, not because of what other people think of you, but because God loves each and every person. Our life is defined by Christ, who sanctified all life by making His home in the womb of His mother Mary. As Isaiah said of our Lord, “He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.” (Isaiah 53:2) And yet, that same Lord, despised by men, is none other than our beautiful Savior. And so it is, we see the face of our Lord in all who suffer and who are low. In response to our Lord’s command, we welcome to our church “the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind.” (Luke 14:13) Since those who suffer and are lowly are dear to the Lord’s heart, they are dear to ours as well. For in God’s Kingdom, the first are last, and the last are first. The mighty are knocked down, and the humbled are lifted up. With God, every child is in fact a wanted child.

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Last November, amid the tumult of the presidential election, Colorado voted with an overwhelming majority to join California, Oregon, Washington, Montana and Vermont as “right to die” states. The network “Compassion and Choices” funded the campaign to pass this measure. These states have joined our Canadian neighbors in making it legal for physicians to assist their terminally ill patients in ending their lives. Combine the increasing medical expenses of the aged with the decreasing workforce tax-base and our nation is likely to see more of the same.

This may appear reasonable to many at first glance because, after all, out of love we “put down” our cats and dogs when they become terminally ill, so why not grant competent adults the choice to choose the “loving” option? This physician-assisted suicide is championed as “death with dignity.” That phrase covertly implies that those who choose to suffer and die naturally die without dignity. And yet terminally ill cancer patient Maggie Karner, former director of LCMS Life and Health Ministries, approached death with all dignity because she let God be God and end her earthly life at His appointed time and not her own. This is what God’s Word calls us to do. But what about those who do choose to go against God’s will and end their own lives by suicide?

The hard facts

Suicide is murder and murder is a damnable sin, period. “You shall not murder” (Ex. 20:13). For the baptized, the thought of suicide is never to be an option though a government may permit or even promote it. Suicide does harm. The grief cast upon others is tremendous for the victim is also the assailant, making the certainty of eternal salvation ambiguous.

Some may ask, “How could a Christian ever do such a thing?” and then come to false conclusions. One, that he was not really a Christian, or two, that God’s grace wasn’t sufficient to sustain him in the faith. Our actions do not bring us to faith or keep us in the faith. The Holy Spirit does that work, and the promises of Holy Baptism remain resolute to all sinners. Jesus says, “My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand” (John 10:29).

Dr. Luther notes, “I don’t share the opinion that suicides are certainly to be damned. My reason is that they do not wish to kill themselves but are overcome by the power of the devil. They are like a man who is murdered in the woods by a robber. However, this ought not be taught to the common people, lest Satan be given an opportunity to cause slaughter.”

The evil one is behind suicide as he was the murderer from the beginning (John 8:44). Satan wreaks havoc and the effects of his evil work are depression, depressive disorders and despair that can often lead to the suicide of one who is in the faith. Luther is not excusing the act of suicide or reducing its offense of God’s Law. He is placing the blame squarely on Satan’s work through sinful man.
Until recently, advance directives or living wills were rare. But now we are compelled to consider them with every visit to the doctor. These documents convey our wishes to caregivers when we no longer can. They can either designate durable power of attorney for someone to make our treatment decisions or they specify treatment options, like “Do Not Resuscitate” (DNR), whether or not to enter hospice treatment and the like.

Does faith in a gracious God who creates, redeems and sanctifies human life make our approach to these things different from the world’s? Yes, as different as heaven and earth.

We believe that every day we breathe is God’s gift. The Small Catechism reminds us: “I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses and still takes care of them.”

The unbelieving world is afraid that medical miracles might keep their bodies alive long after their souls have become useless. But Christians have no such fear. We know that the miracle of life is for body and soul together. When you are in God’s hands, there is never any danger that He might keep our bodies alive longer He Himself wants to. And we are always in God’s hands.

“Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s” (Rom. 14:8). We need not fear either living too long or dying too soon. The real danger is not what might happen to our bodies, but what is happening to our souls.

Jesus’ human life began with His conception and continued right on through His burial. So also our own. At His crucifixion, He remained true man, not a vegetable. He was loved and served to the very end. Then, in faith until His dying breath, He commended His soul into God’s hands.

Advance directives can and should help the people whom God has given you to love and serve you. For this reason, you may wish to grant a durable power of attorney in order to ensure that they remain able to serve you. Guided by the Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, they can see to it that God’s will is done.

We pray, “Thy will be done” while we have full use of our faculties. This remains our only wish especially when our capacity to confess it is gone. LW

The Rev. Jonathan Lange (jlange64@allwest.net) is pastor of Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Evanston, Wyo., and a member of the LCMS Life Ministry Committee.

When it comes to advance directives:

1. Don’t be pressured. No one is required to have a living will. U.S. law prohibits healthcare providers from discriminating against those who do not.

2. Study *A Small Catechism on Human Life* by the Rev. John Pless. This is an excellent scriptural resource.

3. Confess your fears to your pastor and Christian family. They can help you quiet them by encouragement from the Word of God.
Valuing Life

by Gillian Bond

What is the value and worth of a person in his or her final days or weeks or months of life? For Christians, this is ultimately a meaningless question since God’s view of us is not dependent on our health. However, it is one that has to be addressed in a secular society that increasingly treats human life as a commodity, the value of which may change if a person’s ability to be a “productive” member of society is impacted by ill health, age or disability.

Purchase price

We were bought with a price, and our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within us (1 COR. 6:19–20). What higher value could a person possibly have than the purchase price that God gave for us — the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? And what could be worth more than the Holy Spirit within us? But our value comes entirely from God and not at all from us. It does not depend on whether we can be “productive” members of society.

The thief on the cross, a criminal and an unbeliever, was brought to faith as he hung on the cross and said: “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom” (LUKE 23:42). He would have no more days of earthly life to live “productively” but still Jesus saw him as worth the price He was paying. The man was in the final hours of his life and suffering terribly, but Jesus did not hasten his death so that he could “die with dignity.” Nor did He transport him off his cross because this mortal life should be maintained at all costs. He simply assured him of his salvation and was there with him, even while entrusting Himself to the Father throughout His own suffering.

What does this mean?

God has blessed us with wonderful medical advances, but vigilance is required to ensure that patients receive good care to the end. For example, Medicare disallows physical therapy for patients on hospice, and yet for some patients who spend weeks on hospice the resulting immobility can result in additional pain and bed sores. A time may come when we have to accept that God is taking a loved one, or ourselves, home and that extreme measures to delay death are not appropriate. However, we never aim to hasten death or deny care. How could those be appropriate ways to treat people for whom Christ died and whose bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit?

Our Lord shows us the value He continues to place on us and the importance of caring for one another, even as we approach death, and that we can trust His promise of eternal life.

Dr. Gillian Bond (bondg@csel.edu) is director of Deaconess Studies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.
Transhumanism: Humans Without Bodies

by Andrew Yeager

Transhumanism is the movement that awaits a revolutionary breakthrough in technology where a human personality is uploaded into a robotic body so that the human might live beyond bodily death.

Such a goal might seem absurd and far-fetched. But Ray Kurzweil, a high-profile transhumanist who joined Google as director of Engineering in 2013, is optimistic that man will completely meld with machines to achieve “technological singularity” and the age of partially robotic transhumans by 2045. Humanity will achieve immortality through a kind of disembodied robotic existence.

Understanding the goals

To understand transhumanism, we need to have a firm grasp on postmodernism, the prevailing philosophy of our age. Postmodernism operates from an atheistic worldview and sees human beings as the chance products of evolutionary development. Humanity is malleable and subjective, always evolving and changing, and human beings are nothing more than social constructs, the sum total of our subjective experiences.

Because of this, postmodernism sees no ethical problem with augmenting our bodies. If we don’t like the bodies we were born with, our bodily characteristics can be changed. The field of bioengineering gives parents the ability to shop for preferred genetic traits for their children. Human cloning, artificial wombs and genetically engineered populations are all possibilities on the technological horizon. Transgenderism is humanity’s triumph over “male and female he created them” (Gen. 1:27; Matt. 19:4). Our bodies might have once constrained us. But postmodernism heralds the triumph over the limitations of our creaturely existence.

What does this mean for Christians?

We are fundamentally religious creatures. The notion that life ends at death might be intellectually satisfying for transhumanists, but such a hopeless belief can never satisfy our souls. Even

continued on page 25
Staying on guard

To guard against the works of the evil one, we gird ourselves with the Word of God and prayer. We pray for others and especially our brothers and sisters in the faith. We seek to be attentive to those who are depressed, especially during seasonal changes. We take seriously the head trauma of teenagers that sometimes leads to personality change and despair. We help them receive pastoral care for the spiritual malady and direct them to a trusted psychological counselor. If and when we become aware of someone who has the intent, the plan and the means to commit suicide, we call for a trained police officer to intervene and assist this person toward preserving life.

Some practical things that you can do to support those who grieve because of a suicide is join with them in their grief and shoulder some of their mourning like Job’s friends when they sat in silence for seven days. You can become educated on depression and depressive orders through books like those of Peter Preus such as *And She Was a Christian* (Northwestern, 2011). Speak and write cards and words of encouragement about God’s constant grace. Remember the family of the lost one on the one-year anniversary of their death. But above all, always point the finger of fault squarely at the devil, the world and our sinful nature, while looking to Christ alone for comfort. LW


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atheists crave religion, an eschatology, a hope for a future. Transhumanism provides such a hope.

It substitutes faith in technology for faith in God. If we don’t believe the story of the God who conquered death for us, transhumanism holds onto the hope that we can conquer death ourselves. But the dream of uploading one’s mind into a robot to achieve immortality is the mere fantasy of individuals looking for comfort that they will never find apart from the Gospel.

If transhumanism shares anything with Christianity, it is the belief that death is an enemy to be defeated. What transhumanism doesn’t share is the belief that death is an enemy that has been defeated at the grave of Jesus Christ.

That is precisely the answer Christianity should give to the religion of transhumanism — the true Gospel of the Resurrection.

Transhumanists are on a search for an immortality, even though the Son of God already has defeated death for us. Christ is risen, and our future resurrection with Him on the Last Day is secure (1 Corinthians 15).

In view of the Gospel of the bodily resurrection from the dead, who needs the bodyless humanity of transhumanism? Christianity proclaims an eternal future with a body — a real, human, creaturely body — immortal, restored and re-created in the image of the New Man, Jesus Christ, free of sin and death, to live with God forever.

In view of the Gospel promise, the dream of humans without bodies, of our minds being uploaded into robots so as to live forever, seems less like a dream and more like a nightmare. LW

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Finding my identity

Pains of my miscarriage followed me at church. The very week my name was removed from the prayers for women with child, another “Allison” with impeccable conception timing was added, a dagger to my heart each time I had to explain this bittersweet confusion. My own name could not identify me!

However, sitting alone week after week, as a pastor’s wife does, allowed for reflection. Comfort abounded as I pondered what Scripture tells me about my identity: I am a precious child of God (Gal. 3:26), created in His image (Gen. 1:27), bought and redeemed by Christ’s blood (Eph. 1:7) and loved beyond measure (Eph. 3:19). My child, though unborn and unbaptized, has the promise I have of salvation (2 Sam. 12:15–23). Jordan’s life is hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:1–3).

Just as marriage shadows Jesus’ relationship with His bride, the Church, parenthood conjures images of how our Father cares for us, His children. Through trials of fertility, loss of life and mourning, He cares for each one of us, born or unborn, by speaking His Word, sending the Holy Spirit and being a gracious God. While I once focused on what made me unique, my miscarriage taught me to grasp the unchanging identity I have in Christ Jesus, which I cling to in any vocation the Lord, in His mercy, deigns to grant me. LW

Allison Eckardt (alynneverett@gmail.com) is a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Alexandria, Va.
TO ALL MEMBER CONGREGATIONS OF THE SYNOD:

The 2016 convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod adopted three resolutions that will, if ratified, amend the Constitution of the Synod. Article XV of the Constitution details the amendment process:

- Amendments must not conflict with the provisions laid down in Articles II and VI of the Constitution.
- Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Synod assembled in convention.
- Each amendment must be voted on separately at the convention and receive a favorable two-thirds majority of votes cast.

These requirements were met in the case of these three resolutions adopted by the 2016 convention. The approval process now continues:

- Amendments adopted by the convention must be submitted to the congregations of the Synod by means of three announcements in the Synod’s official periodicals.
- The amendments must be submitted directly to each voting congregation of the Synod on an official ballot provided by the Synod.
- After taking official action on this matter, congregations must use the official ballot to cast their affirmative or negative votes on each amendment, returning it to the Secretary of the Synod.
- Each amendment must receive a favorable two-thirds majority of all votes cast by congregations within six months of the date of the mailing of the ballots.

The purpose of this mailing is to submit the constitutional amendments adopted by the 2016 convention to the voting congregations of the Synod, offering information regarding the amendments and providing the official ballot that must be used by the voting congregations of the Synod.

Please use the official ballot in that mailing (see sample ballot on this page) to submit your congregation’s votes on the amendments. Please follow the instructions included in that mailing. The deadline for this ballot to be received in the Office of the Secretary of the Synod will be March 15, 2017.

John W. Sias, Secretary

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT A
Resolution 11-09, “To Allow Voting Privilege for Assistant Pastors,” received the required two-thirds vote during Session 8 of the 2016 convention (Yes: 921; No: 58). It amends Article V B and Article XII 10 B by removing “assistant pastors” from the two lists of “advisory members [only].”

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING
Article V Membership

B. Advisory Members
Advisory members only are the following:
1. Pastors whose congregations do not hold membership in the Synod
2. Assistant pastors
3. Ministers not in charge of congregations
4. Professors at the Synod’s educational institutions
5. Teachers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church …

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT B
Resolution 11-18, “To Clarify and Confirm the Distinction between Synod and Corporate Synod and to Provide Consistency for the Meaning of ‘Property of the Synod’ Regarding Article XI,” received the required two-thirds vote during Session 8 of the 2016 convention (Yes: 903; No: 66). It amends Article XI E 2 to replace instances of “Synod” with “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” and to clarify that “for the purposes of this article, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod includes both the Synod formed by this Constitution and the Missouri corporation formed by the Synod.”

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING
Article XI Rights and Duties of Officers

E. Composition and Duties of the Board of Directors
2. The Board of Directors is the legal representative of the Synod. It is the and custodian of all the property of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, directly or by its delegation of such authority to an agency of the Synod. It shall exercise supervision over all the property of the Synod and business affairs of the Synod. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod except in those areas where it has delegated such authority to an agency of the Synod or where the voting members of the Synod through the adoption of bylaws or by other convention action have assigned specific areas of responsibility to a separate corporate or trust entities, and as to those the Board of Directors shall have general oversight responsibility as set forth in the Bylaws. For the purposes of this article, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod includes both the Synod formed by this Constitution and the Missouri corporation formed by the Synod.
REQUESTS FOR REINSTATEMENT

MARC B. PAINE, Bella Vista, Ark. has applied for reinstatement to the Minister of Religion—Ordained roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

REBECCA L. FULKERSON, Peoria, Ill.; JILL DIANNE (HARTMAN) MEYER, Lake Saint Louis, Mo.; VALERIE MORAN, Appleton, Wis.; and ANDREA LYNN UNGER, Dearborn, Mich., have applied for reinstatement to the Minister of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Correspondence regarding these applications should be directed to the undersigned for receipt no later than February 5, 2017. — Rev. Dr. John W. Sias, secretary, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

ANNIVERSARIES

The Lutheran Witness welcomes notices 50 words or less from LCMS congregations about their upcoming “milestone” anniversaries. The deadline for receipt of such notices is the 10th of the month two months prior to the publication month (e.g., January 10 for the March issue). Send notices to notices@lcms.org. — Ed.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Hoyleton, Ill., is celebrating its 150th anniversary beginning March 12 with the 9:30 a.m. worship service. Rev. Dr. Dale Meyer will be the guest preacher. A meal will follow in the activity center. Special events and guest preachers are scheduled each month through October. For details, please call 618-493-6226.


IN MEMORIAM

Obituary information is provided by district offices to the Synod’s Office of Rosters and Statistics. Any questions about content should be referred, therefore, to the appropriate district office. — Ed.

No notices have been provided for this issue.

To read online all notices that appear in the print Reporter and The Lutheran Witness, visit lcms.org/notices.

Note: The “official notices” are published for a single purpose only: giving notice of a result, namely, changes in the Synod’s membership rosters by the addition or deletion of the names of individuals and congregations. It is not always appropriate that reasons for the changes be identified in the published notices. Since a change can occur for any of a variety of reasons, no assumptions may be made merely from the fact that a change has occurred. — Ed.
Hope for Life
by Thomas Eggebrecht

Eve was, of course, the first person in the history of the world to give birth to a child. When Cain was born, she said, “I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord” (Gen. 4:1). Some—including Martin Luther—believe that Eve was, at that moment, thanking the Lord that He had already provided the gift of a Savior following her fall into sin. But that wasn’t yet the case. Original sin had already taken hold. It was passed on to the very first generation of children. Before long, Cain devalued life so much that he killed his very own brother.

It was the first of a long and historical pattern showing just how much sinful human beings hurt and harm their neighbors and fail to help them with physical needs. But God did indeed have a plan to restore not only the dignity of life but life itself. The Apostles’ Creed says that Jesus “was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary.”

Use this space to answer the questions posed here or by your Bible study leader.

1. Read Psalm 139. What does this psalm reveal about human beings? What does it tell us about God? What does it say about the way He values human life?

2. God not only values human life, He gives it purpose. See Jer. 1:5. What was the purpose of Jeremiah’s life? How does this verse inform the purpose God has for you? Do you have to be a prophet in order to have purpose in God’s plan? See Rom. 8:1–11 and Eph. 1:3–14.

3. The Commission on Theology and Church Relations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has said, “Christians aim always to care, never to kill.” What does this kind of care look like as Christians deliver the love of Jesus from conception all the way to the point of death? See Matt. 25:31–46; Rom. 14:7–9; and 2 Cor. 1:3–5.

4. Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25). How do Jesus’ life, death and resurrection redeem our own thoughts and actions regarding God’s value of both physical and eternal life?

The Apostles’ Creed goes on: “[Jesus] suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.”

The creed declares that our triune God has redeemed all human life from sin, death and the grave. He provides certain hope for eternal life, even in the face of death. Jesus has guaranteed it by actively restoring what Adam, Eve, Cain and all human beings have destroyed. Jesus is life for you. LW
Ethics of Sex is biblically faithful, theologically sound, and above all, Christ-centered. While the authors responsibly draw from fields such as science and psychology, they constantly return to the cross, emphasizing themes such as forgiveness, healing, and reconciliation.

Christians across denominational lines will appreciate this book for its winsome style, pastoral tone, and Kingdom focus.

—David W. Jones, PhD, Professor of Christian Ethics, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
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