

## A Lutheran believer's Witness to the World

A Lutheran believer views his witness to the world in the light of law and gospel. He knows that others are closely monitoring his life, since he seems to and claims to have a familiarity with the Bible. But he knows that what the world will see by watching him is law, and a somewhat convoluted law, at that, since he still sins daily. The Lutheran believer has a different view of the world than the world does, due to his exposure to the Word of God. This may be evidenced in many different ways, for example:

- a concern for the poor and needy
- a desire to serve the church
- a respect for the authorities that God has set in place
- a respect for God and His name
- a willingness even to die for the advancement of the gospel

In general, this may be summarized as a respect for the ten commandments.

In addition, the Lutheran believer's life will be different from the rank and file of society. He has come to a view of the world that gives him a sense of peace, purpose and understanding in and of this present world. He does not understand the present world in a competitive light, but in a light of service to others. Death does not strike terror in his heart, because God's word and the sacraments assure him that there is a better life coming for him.

All this will be noticed by the world around him. But, the Lutheran believer knows that this is still a form of law, not gospel. Others will see that their lives lack in comparison to the Lutheran believer, but that is part of the working of the law necessary to prepare them for the true gospel, which can only be declared to them or received in the sacraments. The law will humble their hearts and let them realize that within themselves is not found any power for salvation. Then the message of the cross can take root.

Those today in the modern Evangelical camp take a different view. Since their view of the basis of salvation is based heavily upon a change in a person's life, they see their witness to the world as trying to show others that the new or better life that they live is a witness to what they call "gospel", but which is just a life that has been cleaned up of some outer sinfulness and also now includes regular contact with God in one form or another. To them, when the world looks at modern Evangelicals, they should see the "gospel": a changed life, a personal relationship with Christ.

But a Lutheran believer knows that while his life can serve a necessary and useful purpose to present the law to the world, only the message of the cross and the receiving of the sacraments will truly present the message of the gospel: that Jesus has died for their sin, and His resurrection proves that God is satisfied with that substitution.