

**St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church**  
**Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz**  
**July 1, 2018**  
**The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**  
*Christian Worship: Year A EHV®*



**Romans 6:1b-11**

**Shall we keep on sinning so that grace may increase?  
2Absolutely not! We died to sin. How can we go on living in it  
any longer? 3Or don't you know that all of us who were  
baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4We were therefore buried  
with him by this baptism into his death, so that just as he was raised from the dead  
through the glory of the Father, we too would also walk in a new life. 5For if we have  
been united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be united  
with him in the likeness of his resurrection. 6We know that our old self was crucified  
with him, to make our sinful body powerless, so that we would not continue to serve  
sin. 7For the person who has died has been declared free from sin. 8And since we died  
with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9We know that since Christ  
has been raised from the dead, he will never die again. Death no longer has control  
over him. 10For the death he died, he died to sin once and for all, but the life he lives,  
he lives to God. 11In the same way also consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to  
God in Christ Jesus.**

People of God-rescued from the flaming lake of fire in Hell by the innocent blood of  
the very Lamb of God:

Michael Andrew Fox – known professionally as Michael J. Fox was born in Canada  
and has dual citizenship – Canadian/ American. Michael wrote a book called Lucky  
Man. I have the little cassette tape – of Michael reading his own book out loud. It talks  
about how when he was just 29 years old he realized he was beginning to show  
symptoms of early onset Parkinson's Disease! What to do? How to cope? Michael said  
he spent the first 7 years pretty much in denial! There is an old Charlie Brown quote I  
have used more than once. "There is no problem so big or so complicated it cannot be  
run away from!" When you are in denial – who are you tricking? Who are you fooling?  
Yourself! Michael said when he tried to speak his lines – his words became *cluttered* –  
like a verbal traffic jam – all the words trying to come out at the same time. Add to that  
uncontrollable movement – an inability to sit still and all kinds of painful and  
frustrating side effects and one would have to admit – having Parkinson's Disease  
changes everything! But very likely not in the way you might think at first. After all the  
title of the book is Lucky Man! It's not page after page of self-pity. It's all about the

blessings in disguise – when he became sick! So much more good than evil came out of having Parkinson’s Disease – Michael Andrew Fox wrote – knowing then – what he knows now – if in fact he could go *Back to the Future* – and decide whether to have Parkinson’s or not – he would actually chose to have it! What? He would choose to have it – because before he was diagnosed – he was selfish – self-seeking – self-serving – self-centered – thinking only about himself and nobody else! Becoming sick changed *everything!* Today God’s Word tells us that the Gospel – sin forgiven and Heaven won for Jesus’ sake – does in fact change everything!

### **Jesus’ Love Changes Everything!**

#### **I. We are dead to sin**

#### **II. We are alive to God in Christ Jesus!**

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians: **You were dead in your trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you formerly walked when you followed the ways of this present world. You were following the ruler of the domain of the air, the spirit now at work in the people who disobey. <sup>3</sup>Formerly, we all lived among them in the passions of our sinful flesh, as we carried out the desires of the sinful flesh and its thoughts. Like all the others, we were by nature objects of God’s wrath. <sup>4</sup>But God, because he is rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup>made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in trespasses. It is by grace you have been saved!** Ephesians 2:1-5 Trespasses. Keep out! No trespassing! You see those signs all the time! Don’t go there! But we do! We climb over the fence and invade what is supposed to be private property! Our eyes – our thoughts – our hands go where they don’t belong. Sin – a failure--we miss the mark! Shall we keep on sinning so that grace may increase? This is the kind of question your unbelieving neighbor – your unbeliever coworker will ask you on your first day of your Summer job. People used to ask me – what’s it like to go to big guy Sunday School? Do you have to go to confession? Do you have bruises on your knees from all that praying? How sorry do you have to be? Do you have to look sad – sound sad? Do you have to cry tears of repentance before they tell you are forgiven? And if all you have to do is say you’re sorry – then can’t you do all the naughty stuff you can? And then just before you die say, “Whoops! Sorry about that! I repent all over the place!” Then you get forgiven and you get to go to a place where everybody wears a white robe – and has this little wire circle over your head with aluminum foil crumpled all around it. And you play a little harp? Is that how it goes? **Shall we keep on sinning so that grace may increase?**

**<sup>2</sup>Absolutely not! We died to sin. How can we go on living in it any longer? <sup>3</sup>Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup>We were therefore buried with him by this baptism into his death, so that just as he was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too would also walk in a new life.** There is nothing more miraculous in the whole wide world than baptism! Our Lord Jesus Christ instituted baptism saying in Matthew chapter 28

go and make disciples of all nations. Think what that means? All nations – Nigeria, Benin and Togo – where there are no roads – only sandy orange sand paths where people ride bicycles with thick tires. Where women carry huge loads of fire wood and large jars of water on their heads. Where men ferment any wild fruit they can find – to turn it into alcohol – to drink to excess. Where people are buried in the literal jungle – around tombstones the size of refrigerators – with all different names scraped into them. Where grave stones serve as property lot line markers – and then are moved in the night. Where people bring 2 liter bottles of fermented grain beverage – with the cap loosened but not removed – for the spirits of their departed relatives to come and drink at their grave – so they don't come by your hut literally made of bamboo rods and mud with palm leaves piled thick to try and keep out the rainy season downpours! All nations are our brothers and sisters in Christ – in almost constant danger from Russian soldiers and their tanks and artillery. All nations are orphans in Haiti and little people in the Amazon Rain Forest – literally in danger from Piranha and Anacondas and rats the size of Wisconsin pigs! Make disciples – students, followers, imitators of Jesus out of all nations – by means of baptizing and teaching! Baptizing. There is nothing more incredible – than to go to TSL – then Lakeside or Luther Preparatory School and Martin Luther College and the Seminary – and be Pastors and Missionaries – and literally take a little person in your arms – and put water on their head in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and had back to their parents a little believer – saving faith planted in their tiny ♥--adopted into the family of believers. Then whenever their Heavenly Father calls them home – after only weeks or months or years or almost 100 years – they will be ready to see Jesus face to face. Being baptized changes everything! It changes how we think and how we act – all according to the love of Christ!

**<sup>6</sup>We know that our old self was crucified with him, to make our sinful body powerless, so that we would not continue to serve sin. <sup>7</sup>For the person who has died has been declared free from sin.** Free from sin – free from guilt and fear and shame! I have a calendar that says what every day celebrates. Today/Thursday is national handshake day! I like that! When I was little I always thought it was the coolest thing in the world when an adult would take time to shake my hand. I still think one of the coolest aspects of being a Pastor is being able to shake hands with literally hundreds of people every time we have church. July 1<sup>st</sup> is the 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my ordination – it's the 42<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of asking Nancy Carol Lauber to marry me – sitting on a quilt from my sainted Minnie Schultz – by the lagoon at our Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Do you know what June 19<sup>th</sup> is? June 19<sup>th</sup> is what's called Juneteenth Day. Did you celebrate Juneteenth Day? It's the day to celebrate the setting free of slaves – even though the Emancipation Proclamation was signed September 22<sup>nd</sup> – It was June 19<sup>th</sup> that the slaves in Texas were set free – it's all kind of complicated. And yet – it's really pretty simple – this is *the land of the free and the home of the brave!* We do not own slaves in the United States of America! We don't. And – thank you, Jesus – we are no longer slaves to sin

either! You don't have to sin. You don't have to do the wrong thing – again and again and again and again! You can – by the power of the Gospel – *change!* You hear people say all the time – people don't change! They were always that way – ever since they were small – and they will never change. People don't change! But they do! They must! They change by the power of the Gospel – the living and active and enduring Word of God. Something – anything that is alive grows – it changes when it grows! Faith grows and people change. Expect that change! Anticipate that change. Watch for change and celebrate change by the power of the gospel! All the glory – all the glory belongs to Jesus! When you are dead to sin and alive in Christ – it changes everything! <sup>10</sup>**For the death he died, he died to sin once and for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God.**

<sup>11</sup>**In the same way also consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.** I saw it on the news a long time ago – and apparently it is happening all the time – people who were professional painters – I mean like portrait painters – people who make a living painting bowls of fruit and a vase full of flowers – who paint pictures of sunsets or storms at sea – are diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. They have trouble thinking the way they used to. Their hands tremble uncontrollably or their hands – their whole arms become stiff. You might – at first think I am ruined. I can never paint again. That might be your first thought – it's simply not true! Now I'm not saying it will be easy – don't misunderstand. But I am saying when you put all your trust in Jesus – we are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus – then God-willing there is nothing beyond your power to do to the glory of God. Even painting when you have Parkinson's Disease! We can do all kinds of things. We can turn away from wickedness and sin and evil – and live lives that give all glory to Jesus – until He brings us home to Heaven so we can say – face to face – *"Thank you, Jesus!"* Amen!

**To God alone all glory!**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rev. Anthony E. Schmitt", is displayed on a light blue rectangular background.