



Daily Devotion



"It does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy." Romans 9:16

What sort of merit is there in acknowledging sin and sorrowing over it? So turn your eyes far away from your contrition, and with your whole heart pay attention to the voice of the brother (pastor) absolving you. And do not doubt that this voice of the brother in the Sacrament or in absolution is divinely spoken by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit Himself, so that you completely depend on what you hear, not on what you do or think.

Martin Luther

Luther was taught, (and wrongly so he came to realize by the study of God's Word), that the certainty of forgiveness depended upon how contrite and sorrowful his heart was. This is the same as telling God that His promise of forgiveness in Christ is null and void, that it is without effect, unless we add our merit, contrition, and proper sorrow over sin to it. But not only are we far from perfect in our daily behavior, we are far from perfect in how we repent and prepare ourselves to receive God's word of absolution. But Christ's work of redemption for you is perfect. God's promise to you that your sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake is perfect. It all depends on God, not on us.

*Dear Father, You speak the word, and I am forgiven. Keep my heart fixed, not on my imperfection, but on Your perfect promises to me in Jesus.
Amen.*