

The Use Of Law And Gospel In Motivation For Christian Living

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The Christian educator will recognize that in the whole area of Christian, truly Christian, living the question of the motivations that underlie the action of men is of primary importance and concern. We live in a world which has to a large extent adopted a veneer of Christian culture. The democratic way of life, which underlies the culture of our nation, seems to recognize the fact that man is his brother's keeper. We find in our governmental processes a concern for the sick, for the aged and infirm, the halt and the blind, for widows and orphans. And because many members of the visible church lose sight of the all-important question of motivation, they tend to confuse the socialist pattern of society with the kingdom of God.

There are other areas of our culture where the Christian way of life seems to have gained a signal victory. The practice of charity, of giving for so-called worthy causes, has become so much a part of our American life that it now takes more courage and more of a sense of dedicated Christian stewardship to refuse to contribute than it does to part with a few dollars that we are expected to give and that we will never miss. When we realize, however, that the various community chests are devices invented to get the insistent army of shameless solicitors off the back of the American business man and in some cases, as the Baptist *Watchman-Examiner* charged not so long ago, thinly veiled schemes for obtaining the support of Protestant Americans for Roman Catholic welfare institutions, we must begin to take a little more seriously the question of motivation in Christian conduct. And when we observe the patent selfishness of such slogans as "Drive Carefully, the life you save may be your own," and "Help your heart fund help your heart," we are confronted with the need to look beneath the surface behavior of men.

And especially in the field of education is it important that we should clearly understand the difference between true Christian living and the type of conduct which represents only a formal cultural pattern. As Lutheran educators, who have in many cases in our own experience never seen a public school or a public school system in action, we are sometimes inclined to the view that only a Christian school can train responsible citizens. But just a little reflection will serve to convince us that the public schools are not intent upon training murderers and thieves and robbers. It may be that the "blackboard jungle" is more of a reality in some parts of the country other than our own, but this sort of situation is surely, in most parts of our land, at least in the area of primary education, the exception, and there are large areas where that sort of thing is completely unknown. By and large, the public schools of our land have done a commendable job of training men to live what is in our culture regarded as the 'Christian' life.

There are places where the parochial school enjoys the favor of the populace because of the breakdown in morale and in morals in the public school. It is sad that this should be so, for our quarrel with public education, if it can be called by that name, is not with the public school at its worst but with the public school at its best. We all recognize that even under the most ideal conditions the public schools do not and cannot employ the same motivating forces that can be instilled through a thoroughly Christian training. By the very nature of things, the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be and remain foreign to the curriculum of the state-sponsored educational institution.

But what of the Law? Here we are sometimes ready to grant too much to public education. We sometimes are inclined to say that the public school can operate only with the Law. But even this is not true. The code of ethics inculcated in the public educational system of our land is more a matter of custom and culture than of divine sanction, and it bears only a very superficial resemblance to the Law of God. The motivating force in such an environment will not be the fear of the wrath of God, but fear of the wrath of an aroused society, not the love of the God of mercy but the pressure of enlightened self-interest.

THE PROPER DISTINCTION BETWEEN LAW AND GOSPEL.

If we are to apply Law and Gospel correctly in motivating Christian living, we must first of all be conscious of the distinction, the great difference, between these two great doctrines of the Word of our God. The distinction between Law and Gospel is one of the simplest and most elementary, and at the same time, one of the most difficult and most complicated features of the theology of the Christian Church. When we follow the Synodical Catechism in our instruction, we begin the systematic study of doctrine with this distinction between Law and Gospel, and at the same time we know that Dr. Luther was right when he said that the highest art of the Christian theologian is the proper distinction between Law and Gospel.

It is well for us, therefore, whenever we begin to discuss the application of Law and Gospel in the classroom to return to the basic elements in both doctrines. These are matters of the utmost simplicity, and yet Law and Gospel are so contrary to one another that we stand in constant jeopardy of letting the one color our teaching of the other. Law and Gospel, said Luther, must be kept as far apart as heaven and earth, and yet they are closely joined in the human heart. At another time he said that Law and Gospel are diametrically opposed to each other. In his commentary on Galatians he said that Law and Gospel are more different from each other and more separated from each other than outright contradictory statements. They fight against each other and are opposed to each other, yet the one without the other is useless, at least so far as the Christian faith is concerned.

Luther was absolutely right in this conception of Law and Gospel. The Law says the very opposite of the Gospel, and the Gospel, at least to the man who is not in on the secret of the solution, contradicts the Law flatly. The *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* repeats the judgment of Luther that Law and Gospel must be kept as far apart as heaven and earth. The *Formula of Concord* makes it clear that if the difference between Law and Gospel is not kept clear there can be no true teaching in the Church. Dr. Walther told his students, at the beginning of his series of lectures on Law and Gospel, "Comparing Holy Scripture with other writings we observe that no book is apparently so full of contradictions as the Bible, and that not only in minor points, but in the principle matter, in the doctrine of how we may come to God and be saved." At another time he said, "The entire Scriptures seem to be made up of contradictions, worse than the Koran of the Turks."

If men are looking for contradictions in the Bible, they can surely find them here, and it is certainly surprising that those who search picayunishly for errors and mistakes and inconsistencies in Holy Writ do not fasten oftener on the seeming contradictions between Law and Gospel. For here they would find passages that stand in diametric opposition to each other, so the one affirms in plainest speech what the other denies just as clearly.

We need to be conscious of this in our teaching. We ourselves are often not as aware of this diversity as we ought to be, perhaps because often we do not take either Law or Gospel at full face value. But both are God's Word and eternally true. No man has a right to limit either in any way. Both are perfect expression of the will of God. If our teaching is to be truly Scriptural,

then it must follow the Scriptures wherever they lead, and if they lead us into what human reason considers to be an impossible and self-contradictory position, we shall have to be still and let God be God and recognize that God's Word is true whether it seems so to men or not, Above all, we must not in any way attempt to make ourselves self-appointed Saviors of God's honor in making His holy and unchangeable Word plausible to human reason.

THE MESSAGE OF THE LAW.

With that word of warning, then, we are ready to proceed to examine the wide gulf that is fixed between Law and Gospel. If we are to have the proper approach to the problem of human conduct we must ourselves be clear on this and make it clear to others that all the actions of men stand under the judgment of God. Not conscience, not society, not pragmatic considerations of any kind, but God alone shall be Judge. We must learn, therefore, to see our offenses, not as violations of the rules of society, but as disobedience to God. We and the children whom God has given us must learn to say with David, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight." Unless this consciousness has taken root deep in our soul, we shall never have the proper approach to the whole question of human conduct.

This consciousness of sin and its true nature the Law is intended to create and to awaken and to keep alive. It speaks of God's awful wrath against all sinners. This wrath is graphically portrayed in countless histories of Scripture. We see it vividly in the thunder and lightning at Sinai, in the overflowing of the world by the water of the flood in which all flesh perished, and in the fire and brimstone that fell on Sodom and Gomorrah, in the command of God that told the Israelite that they were utterly to destroy all the Canaanites, men, women and children. We have heard these stories so often and have told them so often that the horror that breathes forth from them often passes us by, and so many times our own indifference communicates itself to our children. When we teach these stories we ought to stop and think of what they really mean, lest they become nothing more to us than empty words piously recited. It is difficult for children, especially in the lower grades to grasp highly abstract ideas. They must learn to see what the wrath of God is by observing what the wrath of God does.

And lest there be a misunderstanding of these events, the Scripture also tells us in more abstract terms of this anger in unmistakable language. The Bible speaks of the terrible and terrifying fury of the Lord. Listen to Nahum of old as he describes this awful anger of God and says, "God is jealous and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for His enemies. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked; the Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm and the clouds are the dust of His feet He rebuketh the sea and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers; Bashan languisheth and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth. The mountains quake at Him and the rocks melt, and the earth is burned up at His presence, yea, the world and all that shall dwell therein. Who can stand before His indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him."

And there is nothing that impresses upon us the wrath and the fury of the Lord against all sinners more than the doctrine of eternal damnation, the doctrine of hell. Of almost every other form of punishment we could make ourselves believe that God has in mind that He will do good through the suffering that inflicts, that He will call the sinner to repentance and keep the child of God faithful. But what can we say to explain or to justify to human reason the fearsome fact of everlasting punishment? It is not at all necessary in our teaching to become lurid in our teaching of hell. If we seriously and earnestly teach that there is a hell, where sinners will be punished

forever, that will be quite enough. One of the most awful, and at the same time most blessed experiences that I can remember from my childhood in the parochial school was when I sat in confirmation class and heard our pastor try to give us some concept of what eternity was like. He said that we should imagine a mountain of solid granite as large as the whole world. Every year a little bird comes once to this mountain to sharpen his bill by rubbing it on the granite. After thousands of years a little mark begins to appear on this mountain where the bird has rubbed his bill against it. Now, he said, if you can imagine how long it will take before that mountain is worn completely away, then you can imagine what one second of eternity is like. Granted that this is an understatement, yet it does help to give us some concept of what a frightening, soul-searing thing we are saying when we say that hell is eternal punishment where the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever and they have no rest day nor night. It is certainly enough to give us the shivers.

And this is what all men have deserved, without exception. God has said, and again we must not forget that what God says is absolute truth and admits of no contradiction, "Cursed is every one that continueth in all the things that are written in the book of the Law." And mind you, it says "every one." There are no privileged characters here. Every one, every single one who so much as violates a single jot or tittle of the Law shall be cursed, or in good plain English, he shall be damned. The soul that sins shall die, and these are no idle threats. These are the words of God, of whom it is said that He will not forgive our sins, that He will not at all acquit the wicked. He hates the sinner and threatens him with eternal damnation and He can not lie. Luther says in his commentary on Galatians, "God is not able to deny His own nature, that is, it is not possible for Him not to hate sin and sinners, and this He does of necessity, for otherwise He would be unjust and love sin." Every sinner must be damned. This is the clear and unalterable teaching of the Word of God.

This doctrine is offensive to human reason. A God who is pictured in that way the world calls a "bloodthirsty God," "a dirty bully," "a loathsome deity." "This is too harsh a God for us," they say, "and that kind of God I could never worship and never love." Thomas Jefferson said that such a God is a "demon," "a malignant spirit." He said that the ideas expressed about God in the Old Testament are degrading and injurious.

And we find this attitude over against the Law not only among the avowed enemies of Christianity but also in visible Christendom. There are those who will say that the Law is indeed necessary but that we gradually outgrow our need of it. It is to be used as a sort of bogey man to terrify men into obedience until their habits are more or less fixed and then it can largely be ignored. But how wrong such an attitude is! The fear of hell and the terrors of death, they ought to walk side by side with us every step of the way. Hell ought to be as real to us today as it was in those days so long ago when we lay in bed in a cold sweat in the fear of the eternal punishment of hell, and death ought to be as terrifying to us as it was then. Luther said once that he was not at all pleased with stories that told of the ease and the unconcern with which Christians die. He said that they give us a wrong concept of death. Read what the Psalmist had to say of death, and you will know that death is still the king of terror, and those of you who have seen it at close quarters know that it is the greatest evil that can befall men of which we have any experience. It is the wages of sin, and only the man who does not think is not afraid to die. It is a matter of believing what God says about death, of taking the Law seriously. It is no wonder then that Luther says that in the Law we have an overwhelming picture of the stern wrath of God before which no man can stand. The tendency in our day is to try to bypass this picture as much

as possible, to push it into the background, to tone down and to soften its message. But it is through this message that men learn to develop a horror of sin and to fear the wrath of God

When we teach the Law of God in this uncompromising way, the charge is often raised against us that our religion is a religion of fear. And we so often fall into the trap laid for us in that challenge, that we immediately begin to protest and insist that this is not true. But we must learn to admit that, viewed from the standpoint of Law, Christianity is a religion of fear. As long as we are faithful to Scripture and teach the doctrine of God's wrath and eternal punishment in hell, we shall have to admit that the Christian religion operates with the tool of threats and seeks to instill fear.

If someone objects that this is not a worthy motive for ethical action, we can only say that you can scarcely expect worthy motives from men who are totally depraved. I know that in me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. If I believe that with the apostle, then I must also expect no good thing to come out of the flesh. Moreover, when men reject this counsel of the Law, they must be made to realize that their quarrel is with God and not with us. Here is the truth taught by God in His Word. We could not change it if we wanted to, and if we wanted to, we would only by that very desire condemn ourselves and manifest our innate opposition to the Word and will of God. So that picture of God in the Law must stand.

THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL IN CONTRACT TO THAT OF THE LAW

But when we turn to the Gospel, we get a picture of God which is the direct opposite of what we have learned in the Law. And here, too, we must be careful not to modify the words of God. While the Law tells us that God hates all sinners, the Gospel assures us that He loves the whole wide world, that every man is the object of that everlasting love which knows no limits, the love that yearns for the salvation of every sinner, the love which says even to those who are lost, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." And so we find one passage in the Bible which says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," and another which proclaims, "I will love them no more." And this love extends to the grossest of sinners, to thieves and murderers, to harlots and adulterers. As He hates the sinners without exception, so He loves all sinners without exception.

And the same God who is displeased and angry with all sinners, is also favorably disposed toward all sinners. Men are the objects of His good pleasure. The grace and favor of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, says the apostle. God is reconciled to the world. The same God who threatens to curse and to damn every sinner, holds out the promise of salvation to every sinner. The same God who is "willing to show His wrath," is also not willing that any should perish." The same God who wants to send the sinner to hell, also wants to take the sinner to heaven. The same God of whom it is said that He will not forgive our sin, has already forgiven the sins of every man, again without exception. The same God of whom the prophet Nahum said that He will not acquit the wicked, has acquitted or justified the whole world. The same God who threatens to send the sinner to hell, promises to take the sinner to heaven. Over against the fearful wrath of God, set forth in the Law to inspire fear in the heart of the sinner, the Gospel sets the surpassing love of God which is intended to drive out all fear. The Law tells us that we are sinners and hated by God, and the Gospel tells us that we are free from all sins, that we are just and loved by God. Now if we take this all seriously without making any attempt to mitigate the force of either, we have reached a position which is absolutely impossible for human reason.

THE RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

But what is rationally irreconcilable is reconciled in the Christian faith. Both Law and Gospel are God's Word, and I am to believe what each of them says. But how can I believe the Law which says that I am a sinner and at the same time believe the Gospel which says that I am a saint? How can I believe the Law which says that I will go to hell and be damned and at the same time believe the Gospel which says that my sins are forgiven and that God will take me to heaven? When we speak of the Lord Jesus as the Mediator between God and men, we might do well sometimes to think of Him also as the Mediator between the Law and the Gospel. He was my Substitute and when He was made a curse for me, I was damned, I went to hell in Him. And when He was made a sinner for me, I was made a saint in Him. When He was punished for my sins, then I was freed from punishment through Him.

So often men present the work of Christ in such a way that they give the impression that somehow Jesus came to teach us that God is not quite as strict as He is portrayed in the Old Testament. But we ought to take our cue from the Lord Jesus, who specifically warns us against this point of view when He says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law and the Prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfill."

When men forget this, they will say, "Since Jesus came, God is satisfied if we do the best we can," and by doing so they reduce the force of God's Word in its motivation for Christian living. Certainly you will find no such statement in the Bible. God, the all-holy, is never satisfied with anything but absolute perfection. This is the demand of the Law. But we have absolute moral perfection in Christ, who is our Righteousness. This is the assurance of the Gospel. God is never satisfied with what we do, but He is satisfied with us because of Christ.

Another remark which is commonly heard also in our circles and which is correct as far as it goes, but which tends to confuse the issue of the distinction between Law and Gospel is the statement that God loves the sinner and hates the sin. Yet sin is never something that exists by itself. It is always an attribute of a personal being. God does not send sin to hell. He sends sinners to hell. All these superficial solutions to the problem presented to human reason by the apparent contradiction between Law and Gospel tend to reduce the force and vigor of the Law.

On the other hand, human reason, which objects to the sternness and strictness of the God of the Law and seeks to reduce the demands of the Law and restrict its threats, also objects to the free mercy of God in the Gospel and seeks to limit the love and the grace of God, to those who deserve it at least a little bit. If we tell men that God demands absolute perfection, they will say that it is unfair of God to demand more than a man can give. And when we tell them that God grants salvation freely and that a man who lives honestly and decently all his life in the hope of gaining heaven thereby will be lost while the most depraved sinner, guilty of the vilest crimes, who cried to God for mercy in Christ from the electric chair in Sing Sing will be saved, they will say that this is unfair also. And we ought to recognize that from the standpoint of reason they are correct. It certainly does not seem fair to us, but with Paul we may say, "Who are Thou that repliest against God?" Only in the Christian faith in the vicarious atonement can Law and Gospel be reconciled.

THE PARISH SCHOOL TEACHER AND LAW AND GOSPEL.

If we are clear on the distinction between Law and Gospel, we will have laid the proper foundation for the use of Law and Gospel in the classroom. We must first of all be on our guard against the point of view which would rule out a stern approach to all sin. There is abroad in our land today a philosophy which would reduce the seriousness of sin. It is just here that the dogma of evolution has undermined the foundations of morality. If death is nothing more than a natural

necessity by which the less fit make room for the more fit, then one of man's most soul-shattering experiences, the fact that he must die, has lost its significance and therefore also its ability to teach him to number his days that he may apply his heart unto wisdom. Moreover, if anti-social behavior is nothing more than a remnant of jungle life and not damnable revolt against the commandments of the Lord, then we need not expect men to look upon sin with horror since basically it is no more reprehensible than spitting on the floor. Besides all this, the modern view which looks upon all sin as excusable weakness, and, as an example, considers alcoholism to be a disease for which the alcoholic is no more to be blamed than a victim of T. B. is to be blamed for his tuberculosis, has served also to blunt our consciences.

But not only in the world, but also in the church we find in our time a definite antinomian spirit. If we are, however, to do our duty as preceptors of the youth of the church, we must make every effort to let our teaching be sin-conscious. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. There is a good reason why Luther begins the explanation of the commandments with the words, "We should fear God," and why he says that we "should fear His wrath," because He threatens to punish. In the Large Catechism he says that God issues these threats to "terrify and warn us." And when we very correctly say as teachers of the Gospel that we must not be afraid of God for He is our loving, kind, merciful, gracious, forgiving Father in Christ, we must not imagine that we must stop saying that we should stand in fear of the Holy God, for He is a consuming fire. We are teachers of the full counsel of God, and the full Word of God includes also the Law,

It would be well for all of us, as teachers of the Lutheran Church, to read again and again the fifth and sixth articles of the *Formula of Concord*, which repeatedly stress the fact that also Christians, because of their old Adam, still need the warnings and the threatenings of the Law, and, as Luther says, we ought not to treat this whole matter as though it were a joke. We are to declare the full counsel of the Word, and no one who knows his Bible can say that the Bible does not speak in the most horrifying way about sin and its consequences. The saddest aspect of this whole matter is that men actually set the Word of God against itself and use the Gospel to overthrow the Law. They will say that such a stern and harsh approach to sin is a denial of the Gospel. "We are Gospel teachers," they say, "and therefore those harsh truths have no place in our teaching." But the apostle Paul asked, "Do we make void the Law through faith? Nay, we establish the Law." You don't solve the problem presented to the human soul by the doctrine of hell by ignoring that place of eternal punishment.

And what is most amazing in this whole development is this, that often when men begin to soft-pedal the Law of God, they make a new Law out of the Gospel. They will speak of God's willingness to forgive us and to love us if we do this or that. And the emphasis in their teaching will shift to what we should do rather than what God has done.

We notice the tendency in the new approach to the sacraments that we sometimes find in Lutheran circles today. The sacraments are pure Gospel. They are tools and channels through which God does something for us. What we do in the sacraments is absolutely secondary. Both Rome and Geneva have turned them into Law. Only in Lutheranism have the sacraments retained their truly sacramental character as channels through which God assures us of the forgiveness of our sins. In Catholicism the sacraments have become instead good works which we do. They have even turned the Lord's Supper into a sacrifice. Here we have a complete reversal of direction, and instead of being something that God gives to us the sacrament becomes something that we do for God. What was Gospel has become Law. In Reformed circles the sacraments are marks of confession and little more. Always the emphasis is on what we do. And

when the emphasis in the sacraments is transferred from what God does to what man does, then a legalistic view of the sacraments as become dominant, and the Gospel is itself turned into Law, but it is not the Law of God but a perversion of the divine Word.

But while our teaching of the Gospel must never become a minimizing of the seriousness and the earnestness of the wrath of God and the horribleness of sin, our teaching of the Law dare never, on the other hand, overshadow our teaching of the Gospel. The Law can point out the gravity of sin, it can and should terrify the heart which believes the Word of God, it can curb the old Adam and check sin outwardly but it can never produce that spontaneous service to God which alone fulfills the Law.

If we want to produce in our classrooms, as tools of the Holy Ghost, a truly God-pleasing atmosphere, we must surround these boys and girls with the warmth of the marvelous love of God, and we can do that only as we bring them the assurance of the full and final forgiveness of all their sins. There must be none of this “God-will-love-you-if-you-are-good” business, or “God will forgive you, if you repent, if you are sorry, if you believe,” unless we are very careful to explain what we mean. The Law says that God will love you if you are good, but neither Law nor Gospel say that God will love you if you be believe or if you are sorry, in the sense that our faith or our sorrow are conditions that we must fulfill before God will be gracious.

No, God loves these boys and girls, with all their sins and all their faults. He has already long ago forgiven all their sins. You are to be a messenger of God to bring them this good news. You are to tell them without conditions and without reservations, “God loves you. God has forgiven you all your sins No matter what you do or have done or will do, God has already washed away all your sins with the holy precious blood of His own Son “ You must tell them this because it is true.

When we set forth this basic, essential message of the Gospel, and understand what it is that we are teaching, we can also see why it is that some men will charge that our Lutheran doctrine of justification is an immoral and unethical doctrine which will encourage laxity and carelessness and indifference in Christian living. Men will often say that the logical conclusion of such a doctrine is that I may live as I please and that it will make absolutely no difference in the state of my soul. It must be comforting that the apostle Paul had to meet this same argument in his teaching. But when St. Paul was confronted with the question, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?,” he had a ready answer. “God forbid,” he said, “How shall we, which are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”

Life is more than logic. Those who charge that the doctrine of salvation by grace alone without works takes away the chief motivation for good works in the life of men, since it teaches that men need not do good works in order to earn salvation, by that charge simply betray their own lack of understanding of the Christian faith. The same Word of God which convinces us that the eternal Son of God took flesh and blood and bled and died that we might be redeemed from the everlasting fires of hell, that in Him we have forgiveness, and life, and salvation, also rouses in us a consciousness of the debt that we owe Him and which we can never repay. It places us under a compulsive feeling of obligation that cannot rest. The same Holy Spirit who works in our hearts that faith which knows what Jesus Christ has done for me, which knows that He loved me and gave Himself for me, will also waken in our hearts a responsive love for Him who first loved us. Those who have been down the Damascus road with the apostle Paul will also know what he meant when he wrote, “the love of Christ constraineth us.”

And when we know and understand this, we will be done once and for all with the nonsense which says that we preach too much justification and not enough sanctification Those

two can never be preached at each other's expense They complement each other. Love for Christ is aroused through the contemplation of the love of Christ. I will be moved to serve the Lord, and this is sanctification, by being reminded of the great things which He has done for me, and that is justification.

Human reason, then, may say that it is dangerous to preach a grace that is too free, and that it will lead our children into ethical indifference and moral laxity. But this danger is to be met with the teaching of the Law. The Law is there to curb the old Adam who still lives in us. The Law is there to hold before us always the horribleness of sin and the awful wrath of God But the Gospel knows nothing of this. It is the free offer of forgiveness, the full and unconditional assurance of the Father's love and grace

As Bible-loyal Christian teachers you must teach your children both Law and Gospel. And as you teach them both, you ought to pray that the Holy Spirit, who alone can know the secrets of the heart and who alone can make our teaching effective, will make use of your teaching of the Law to instill in the heart of your pupils a true realization of the nature of sin and all its fearsome consequences, for only that soul which know that it's in danger of hell can ever believe that Jesus is the Savior from hell, and only those who have tasted the bitterness of sin can taste the sweetness o forgiveness. You should pray that the Holy Ghost will use the Law, which you teach, to create in the hearts of your children that fear of God which will curb the old Adam and check the wicked tendencies of their hearts.

And then you ought to pray too that the same Holy Ghost, when He had done what the Lutheran confessions call His strange work, will also use the Gospel to assure them of their forgiveness and salvation in Christ, and through that assurance fill their hearts with such love and gratitude to God for their deliverance that they will be fervent with zeal to do the will of Him who loved them unto death. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he, says the Bible, and out of the fullness of the heart, the mouth speaketh. When we are therefore concerned with classroom behavior and classroom atmosphere, we must first of all be concerned with instilling in the hearts of these boys and girl committed to our care, a deep-seated horror of sin and a fervent, overflowing love for our mutual God and Savior. With God's help this sort of atmosphere can be established if we will teach both Law and Gospel side by side and yet keep them as far apart as heaven and earth.