

Third Sunday in Lent

OLD TESTAMENT – Exodus 20:1-17

And God spoke all these words, saying, 2 “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 “You shall have no other gods before me. 4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. 7 “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. 8 “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. 12 “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. 13 “You shall not murder. 14 “You shall not commit adultery. 15 “You shall not steal. 16 “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

20:1–17 See Dt 5:6–21; see also Mt 5:21, 27; 19:17–19; Mk 10:19; Lk 18:20; Ro 13:9; Eph 6:2–3. (CSB)

20:1 words. A technical term for “(covenant) stipulations” in the ancient Near East (e.g., among the Hittites; see also 24:3, 8; 34:28). The basic code in Israel’s divine law is found in vv. 2–17, elsewhere called the “Ten Commandments” (34:28; Dt 4:13; 10:4), the Hebrew words for which mean lit. “Ten Words.” “Decalogue,” a term of Greek origin often used as a synonym for the Ten Commandments, also means lit. “Ten Words.” (CSB)

a *word*; by implication a *matter* (as spoken of) of *thing*; adverbially a *cause*:—act, advice, affair, answer, X any such (thing). (QV)

Only these words were spoken by God from Mount Sinai directly to the Israelites, without the mediation of Moses. After God spoke these words the people trembled and asked Moses to serve as God’s spokesman and mediator (vv 18-19), which he did from then on. Only these words were written down on the two stone tablets (Deut 5:22). (LL)

By proclaiming the ten commandments to the Israelites Himself, and in circumstances of awful solemnity, God showed their fundamental importance, and took a course adapted to impress upon all men their obligations perfectly to obey them. (CB)

The Bible makes a distinction between the “words” given us in chapter 20 (the Ten Commandments) and the “laws” (the rules and regulation pertaining to the conduct of Israel as a nation), which are summarized for us in chapter 21 to chapter 23:19. (PBC)

20:2 I ... you. The Lord directly addresses each individual of Israel. (TLSB)

your God. The God who established a covenant with Abraham and Moses (cf 3:14) and who holds authority over these people. (TLSB)

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out. † The Decalogue reflects the structure of the contemporary royal treaties (see note on Ge 15:7). On the basis of (1) a preamble, in which the great king identified himself (“I am the LORD your God”), and (2) a historical prologue, in which he sketched his previous gracious acts toward the subject king or people (“who brought you out ...”), he then set forth (3) the treaty (covenant) stipulations (see Dt 5:1–3, 7–21) to be obeyed (in this case, ten in number: vv. 3–17). Use of this ancient royal treaty pattern shows that the Lord is here formally acknowledged as Israel’s King and that Israel is his subject people. Reminded of their complete dependence on God’s redemptive mercy and his proved power, his covenant people are to render complete submission, allegiance and obedience to him out of gratitude for his mercies, reverence for his sovereignty, and trust in his continuing care. See chart on “Major Covenants in the OT”. (CSB)

Deliverance from bondage is a great and precious blessing, and special praises should be rendered to God by those who enjoy it. (CB)

self Existent or eternal; *Jehovah*, Jewish national name of God:—Jehovah, the Lord. (QV) – This is the personal and covenant name of God, emphasizing his role as Israel’s Redeemer and covenant Lord. (Gen. 2:4 Note – CSB) – It means “He is” or “He will be” and is the third-person form of the verb translated “I will be” or “I am”. When God speaks of himself he says, “I am,” and when we speak of him we say, “He is.” Ex. 3:15 note – CSB) – Basically it is an assertion of authority.

This is not the first time Yahweh had spoken this name in the Exodus story. It is one of the names revealed to Moses at the burning bush (Ex 6:2-3). Basically it is an assertion of authority. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

Notice that He reveals Himself as a person, with the personal name. God is not an “It,” not an impersonal force. No, God is a personal being with a personal name, who speaks and acts as a person and who called Israel (and us) into a personal relationship with Himself. (LL)

And this personal God who speaks here calls Himself “your God.” He has graciously made Himself your God and has made you His people. He belongs to you, and you belong to Him. God spoke this to us. The God of ancient Israel is our God, who has called us in Christ. Both the OT and NT reveal one and the same God. (LL)

who brought you out - A primitive root; to *go* (causatively *bring*) *out*, in a great variety of applications, literally and figuratively, direct and proximate. (QV)

Yahweh reminds the people that he acted out of grace for them to make them his own. He did this by bringing them out of Egypt. They who were no people, he made into a people. Essentially, the commandments are a call to faithfulness, based on the good news of deliverance. It is of utmost importance that the Decalogue is in indicative, not imperative form. These are statements of what the believer who has experienced God’s grace will voluntarily do. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

By grace, and not because of any merit or worthiness in Israel, Yahweh acted through Moses and delivered Israel from bondage and brought them to Himself into true freedom. As God said in Ex 19:4: “You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles wings and brought you to Myself.” Israel did not deliver itself. The Israelites were helpless under Pharaoh’s control in the land

slavery. But Yahweh defeated Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt (Ex 12:12) and delivered helpless Israel. (LL)

The deliverance of ancient Israel from Egyptian slavery was a preview of the greater deliverance from sin, death, and the devil that we all have received by the work of Jesus Christ our Lord. God did the same saving act for us, only in a far greater way, that He did for ancient Israel. (LL)

20:3–17 Though traditionally known as the Ten Commandments, the term “commandments” occurs only in v 6. The list proclaims both Law (vv 3–17) and mercy (vv 2, 6). According to the Jewish Mishnah, reciting the Ten Commandments was a significant feature of temple liturgy (Tamid 5:1). (TLSB)

20:3 *no other gods before me* – To have a god, is to love an object supremely. What a man most loves is his god. By forbidding men to regard any object more than God or to worship any other, He would remove the temptation, and prevent the inclination to break His commandments which supreme regard to creatures occasions. (CB)

Prohibits any other gods from Israel’s exclusive relationship with Him. (TLSB)

before. The Hebrew for this word is translated “in hostility toward” in Ge 16:12; 25:18. Something of that sense may be intended here. In any event, no deity, real or imagined, is to rival the one true God in Israel’s heart and life. (CSB)

Lit, “in front of My face.” (TLSB)

“Before the face of me, in my presence” presumes that there is no place where God’s presence is absent or missing (Ps. 139:7-12). Israel must not imitate the people around her who worshiped man gods. God will not permit even one other god. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

20:4 *a carved image or any likeness.* Because God has no visible form, any idol intended to resemble him would be a sinful misrepresentation of him (see Dt 4:12, 15–18). Since other gods are not to be worshiped (see v. 5), making idols of them would be equally sinful (see Dt 4:19, 23–28). (CSB)

Cyprian: “Idols are not gods, and ... the elements are not to be worshipped in the place of gods” (ANF 5:498). (TLSB)

an idol:—carved (graven) image. (QV) – To cut or shape something. From an unused root meaning to *shade*; a *phantom*, that is, (figuratively) *illusion, resemblance*; hence a representative *figure*, especially an *idol:*—image, vain shew. (QV)

It refers especially to an image or likeness used as an object of worship, an image suggesting the presence of a deity. Idols were an essential part of pagan life. The neighboring polytheists did not necessarily believe that a piece of wood, stone, or metal was itself the god worshiped. They regarded their idols as objects through which communication with the deities could take place. Because Yahweh has created everything from top to bottom, it is not possible for a human being to make an image that could represent him. God must not be represented by anything in the universe. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

Why would this be wrong? Because Israel did not see God’s appearance; they only heard Him speak and saw the cloud that enclosed Him (Deut 4:11-24). Therefore, if they fashioned a statue of God, it would be

based on their own imagination and reason. And certainly they should not worship such an image. That would be idolatry. (LL)

20:5 bow down – “Serve them.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

For that is giving them the place of Jehovah; worshiping and serving the creature in opposition to and defiance of the Creator. To treat creatures, or the likenesses of creatures, as if they were divine, by bowing down to them and worshiping them, is to act as if they were gods when they are not, and thus by actions to inculcate a falsehood suited to degrade, debase, pollute, and destroy the soul. (CB)

serve them – A primitive root; to *work* (in any sense); by implication to *serve, till*, (causatively) *enslave*, etc.:— X be, keep in bondage, be bondmen, bond-service, compel, do, dress, ear, execute, + husbandman, keep, labour (-ing man), bring to pass, (cause to, make to) serve (-ing, self), (be, become) servant (-s), do (use) service, till (-er), transgress [from margin], (set a) work, be wrought, worshipper. (QV)

jealous God. God will not put up with rivalry or unfaithfulness. Usually his “jealousy” concerns Israel and assumes the covenant relationship (analogous to marriage) and the Lord’s exclusive right to possess Israel and to claim her love and allegiance. Actually, jealousy is part of the vocabulary of love. The “jealousy” of God (1) demands exclusive devotion to himself;(2) 59:17; Eze 5:13; 16:38; 23:25; 36:5; Na 1:2; Zep 1:18; 3:8) and (3) vindicates his people (see 2Ki 19:31; Isa 9:7; 26:11; Eze 39:25; Joel 2:18; Zec 1:14; 8:2). In some of these passages the meaning is closer to “zeal” (the same Hebrew word may be translated either way, depending on context). (CSB)

Hbr *qanna'*, adjective used esp of God; associated with term for “zealous” and “passionate.” God prohibits worshiping other gods because, as in any good marriage, the relationship does not admit third parties. This was not sinful jealousy, but a righteous desire for His people to be faithful. (TLSB)

Yahweh’s jealousy is part of his holiness. Compromise of his worship leads to a divided or redirected loyalty. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

He had as it were married Israel; He was the bridegroom, and Israel was His bride. But if His bride went after other lovers, they would provoke Him to anger. His “jealousy” is unlike human jealousy in that it is not fickle or irrational or selfish. But is jealousy in the sense that He will not share His bride with other lovers. (LL)

visiting the iniquity. Bringing the deserved condemnation. (TLSB)

of the fathers on the children. Sin, which is inherited (Ps 51:5), corrupts and affects families. Consider how children often repeat the sins of the parents and then suffer the consequences. Our relationship with God is both individual and corporate. However, note two things: God pictures His mercy here as being much greater than His wrath. Every person stands before God in judgment based on his own relationship with God, not another’s (cf Dt 24:16). Luther: “ ‘Although the Law does not justify, it is nevertheless extremely useful and necessary. In the first place, it acts as a civic restraint upon those who are unspiritual and uncivilized. In the second place, it produces in a man the knowledge of himself as a sinner, who is therefore subject to death and worthy of eternal wrath.’ But what is the value of this

effect, this humiliation, this wounding and crushing by the hammer? It has this value, that grace can have access to us. Therefore the Law is a minister and a preparation for grace” (AE 26:314). (TLSB)

to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me. † Those Israelites who blatantly violate God’s covenant and thus show that they reject the Lord as their King will bring down judgment on themselves and their households that follow in the footsteps of their idolatrous forebears—households were usually extended to “three or four” generations. (CSB)

hate me. In covenant contexts the terms “hate” and “love” (v. 6) were conventionally used to indicate rejection of or loyalty to the covenant Lord. (CSB)

20:6 *showing steadfast love - kindness*; by implication (towards God) *piety*; rarely (by opprobrium) *reproof*, or (subjectively) *beauty*:—favour, good deed (-liness, -ness), kindly, (loving-) kindness, merciful (kindness), mercy, pity, reproach, wicked thing. (QV)

Steadfast, overflowing, benevolent love which seeks only the good of the recipient. It is the love only God can give us, not what we can give him. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

This means not only forgiving their sins and saving their souls, but often making them instrumental in leading others, especially their children and children’s children, to become pious, and the means of salvation to their posterity to many generations. (CB)

thousands (generations) of those. Innumerable descendants as the emphasis is on the progeny of faithfulness and Yahweh’s unending goodness to them all. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

Notice that God’s love and faithfulness outweighs His punishing wrath. God’s anger extends to the fourth generation, but God’s love and faithfulness extends to the thousandth generation. (LL)

love me and keep my commandments. See Jn 14:15; 1Jn 5:3. In the treaty language of the ancient Near East the “love” owed to the great king was a conventional term for total allegiance and implicit trust expressing itself in obedient service. (CSB)

A primitive root; properly to *hedge* about (as with thorns), that is, *guard*; generally to *protect, attend to*, etc.:—beware, be circumspect, take heed (to self), keep (-er, self), mark, look narrowly, observe, preserve, regard, reserve, save (self), sure, (that lay) wait (for), watch (-man). (QV)

To keep, obey, not slavishly following orders, but listening carefully and responding correctly. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

20:7–17 God no longer speaks directly to the people, but Moses speaks for Him. Cf v 19. (TLSB)

20:7 *not take the name of the LORD IN VAIN.* By profaning God’s name—e.g., by swearing falsely by it (see Lev 19:22; see also Jer 7:9, as on the witness stand in court. Jesus elaborates on oath-taking in Mt 5:33–37. (CSB)

The commandment prohibits taking oaths or vows in the Lord's name, which one does not intend to keep. (TLSB)

In the sense of *desolating*; *evil* (as *destructive*), literally (*ruin*) or morally (especially *guile*); figuratively *idolatry* (as false, subjectively), *uselessness* (as deceptive, objectively; also adverbially in *vain*):—false (-ly), lie, lying, vain, vanity. (QV)

in vain. Without meaning (i.e., to use it unnecessarily or casually). (TLSB)

Suggests nothingness, insubstantial thing, wasted-ness, emptiness. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

This refers to invoking God's name as a throwaway remark, not only in a negative way such as cursing, but also in a neutral and meaningless way. (LL)

To use the name of God in a profane, light or irreverent manner, or to mention it without good reason, tends to lessen the reverence which the soul ought to feel for Him, to render it reckless and increasingly wicked, and is a flagrant offence against the Ruler of the universe. (CB)

The Israelites considered the name too holy to be spoken by human lips. Whenever they needed to say Yahweh, they substituted the word Adonai, which means "Lord," If the name needed to be written, the scribes would take a bath before they wrote it and destroy the pen afterward. (Luc–Light)

20:8 *remember* – A primitive root; properly to *mark* (so as to be recognized), that is, to *remember*; by implication to *mention*; also (as denominative from H2145) to *be male*:— X burn [incense], X earnestly, be male, (make) mention (of), be mindful, recount, record (-er), remember, make to be remembered, bring (call, come, keep, put) to (in) remembrance, X still, think on, X well. (QV)

Pay attention to. (TLSB)

Observe, blessed, praised, celebrated, invoked, pronounced, and then shared. It is more than a mental act. It is an active observance. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

Sabbath. Hbr means "rest" or "stop." (TLSB)

intermission, that is, (specifically) the *Sabbath*:— (+ every) sabbath. (QV)

The Sabbath was a weekly reminder of Passover, just as for Christians Sunday is a weekly reminder of Easter. Comes from the verb meaning to "cease, rest, a cessation for religious purposes from the normal activity of work. On the Sabbath nobody is to undertake usual work. People are not live as if time is their own, to do with it as they please. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

Although we are no longer bound to worshiping on Saturday (Col 2:16), we too receive the blessing of God's rest and a foretaste of our future heavenly rest when we hear the Gospel, remembering our

Baptism, and partake of the Lord's Supper. Of course we obey this commandment when we attend church on Sundays and at other opportunities and when we take part in Sunday school and Bible classes. (LL)

holy. Keep it special by being separate from other days. It is meant for rest and worship. Cf Dt 5:12–15 for emphasis on worship as re-experiencing the saving acts of God. According to Ne 13:17–19, the Sabbath began when it grew dark (Friday night). (TLSB)

Keeping this commandment involves far more than that. We also keep this commandment when we believe the Gospel that we hear and when we honor and uphold God's Word by living in a way that is in agreement with it and when our own attitudes toward others display the forgiveness, love, and consideration God has shown us in Jesus. (LL)

As a day not to be devoted to worldly business, conversation, reading, traveling, visiting, or amusement, nor to sleep, idleness, or worldly thoughts and feelings, but to be employed in religious worship and in the promotion of our own spiritual good and that of our fellow-men. (CB)

20:9 *Six days.* The question of a shorter “work week” in a modern industrialized culture is not in view. (CSB)

All worldly business of the Jews must be done in the six working days, and what cannot be done is those days must be left undone, except what is needful to the best discharge of the appropriate duties of the Sabbath. (CB)

20:10 *On it you shall not do any work.* Two reasons (one here and one in Deuteronomy) are given: (1) Having completed his work of creation God “rested on the seventh day” (v. 11), and the Israelites are to observe the same pattern in their service of God in the creation; (2) the Israelites must cease all labor so that their servants can also participate in the Sabbath-rest—just as God had delivered his people from the burden of slavery in Egypt (see Dt 5:14–15). The Sabbath thus became a “sign” of the covenant between God and Israel at Mount Sinai (see 31:12–17; see also note on Ge 9:12). (CSB)

20:11 *made holy* – As God has hallowed the Sabbath for Israel of old for sacred purposes, and for this end has blessed it, He made it a blessing to all who rightly kept it, and through them a means of rich benefits to others. (CB)

Follow God's example by resting. People worked six days a week, 12 or more hours per day. They needed a day of rest, primarily for the soul (cf Mt 11:28). (TLSB)

the LORD blessed the Sabbath day. Declared it special, set apart for Him. (TLSB)

20:12–17 Whereas the first set, or “table,” of commandments (vv 3–11) describes a person's actions toward God, the second set, or “table,” describes one's actions toward others. (TLSB)

20:12 Care for parents was esp needed during old age, during funeral and burial rites, and about a year after burial, when the bones of the deceased were gathered to the family bone pile. See note, 1Ki 2:10. (TLSB)

Honor. (1) Prize highly (see Pr 4:8), (2) care for (see Ps 91:15), (3) show respect for (see Lev 19:3; 20:9), and (4) obey (see Dt 21:18–21; cf. Eph 6:1). (CSB)

Hold in high regard, respect and obey. (TLSB)

Primitive root; to *be heavy*, that is, in a bad sense (*burdensome, severe, dull*) or in a good sense (*numerous, rich, honorable*); causatively to *make weighty* (in the same two senses):—abounding with, more grievously afflict, boast, be chargeable, X be dim, glorify, be (make) glorious (things), glory, (very) great, be grievous, harden, be (make) heavy, be heavier, lay heavily, (bring to, come to, do, get, be had in) honor (self), (be) honorable (man), lade, X more be laid, make self many, nobles, prevail, promote (to honor), be rich, be (go) sore, stop. (QV)

God demands his rulership be recognized in those to whom he has delegated his authority in the family and in the larger domain in communal life. Father and mother are the channels of God's gift of life. Human beings never cease to be children. Disrespect for parents as God's representative here on earth is a serious offense. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

This means to love them, listen to their teaching, and obey their commands. Treat them with respectful and kind attention, assist them when they need labor to supply their wants, promote their comfort, increase their usefulness, and do them all the good in your power. (CB)

so that you may live long. “The first commandment with a promise” (Eph 6:2). See also note on Dt 6:2. (CSB)

A primitive root; to *be* (causatively *make*) *long* (literally or figuratively):— defer, draw out, lengthen, (be, become, make, pro-) long, + (out-, over-) live, tarry (long). (QV)

By obeying the Lord and keeping his decrees, individual Israelites would enjoy long life in the land, and the people as a whole would enjoy a long national existence in the land.

God promises to bless the keeping of the commandment to honor parents with a long tenure in the land God would give them. The apostle Paul observes that this is the first commandment to which God attached a promise to bless those who kept it. Families comprise the basic unit of human society, and when this unit is solid and solid, with healthy relationships existing within the family, a society of people has a secure foundation on which to build other units. On the other hand, where families are characterized by disintegration, where children do not receive sound training in their early years, and where parental authority suffers, no other social units can flourish either. Sound families, where children are nurtured and parents are respected, result in more moral, secure, industrious, and prosperous communities and nations. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

20:13 See Mt 5:21–26. (CSB)

murder. † The Hebrew for this verb usually refers to a premeditated and deliberate act. This commandment forbids loss of life inflicted by illegal means (see Nu 35:16–18). (CSB)

The unauthorized taking of human life, whether premeditated, in anger, or by carelessness. (TLSB)

A primitive root; properly to *dash* in pieces, that is, *kill* (a human being), especially to *murder*:—put to death, kill, (man-) slay (-er), murder (-er). (QV)

Killing a person, never an animal, excluding capital punishment and war, an act of violence against an individual that results in death, out of hatred, anger, malice, deceit, or personal gain. All life belongs to God. It is not for humans to do with as they will. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

This command forbids not only murder, but all those practices and kinds of business which tend to destroy human life; and requires the performance of those duties and pursuit of such courses as tend to preserve it and render it useful. (CB)

20:14 See Mt 5:27–30. (CSB)

adultery. A sin “against God” (Ge 39:9) as well as against the marriage partner. (CSB)

Specifically refers to a married person engaging in sexual activity with someone other than his or her spouse. (TLSB)

A primitive root; to *commit adultery*; figuratively to *apostatize*:—adulterer (-ess), commit (-ing) adultery, woman that breaketh wedlock. (QV)

Breaking the marriage bond through sexual infidelity. The severity of the punishment shows the importance of the commandment (stoning in Deut. 22:24; burning in Gen. 38:24 and Lev. 20:14). Adultery with a husband, or betrothed of another was, like idol worship, a turning away from the commitment to Yehweh. Before God any act by a man or woman that threatens the full unity of the married couple is an act of adultery. It violates God’s creational intention. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

This command forbids all un-chastity in thought, word, or deed. It also forbids all those things which tend to this evil. It is the application of the great law of supreme love to God and impartial love to men with regard to purity in heart and life. (CB)

20:15 *steal* – A primitive root; to *thieve* (literally or figuratively); by implication to *deceive*:—carry away, X indeed, secretly bring, steal (away), get by stealth. (QV)

God forbids taking private property, which shows approval of the concept of private property in human economy. Ultimately, He is the owner of everything (cf Ps 50:10). (TLSB)

Stealing of any kind under any circumstances, an action trying to gain goods, property, money without honest labor. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

Every man has certain things which God has given him and which, by right from God belong to himself. They are his property. To take them away, or without just cause deprive him of them, is theft, and exposes those who do it to be excluded from heaven. (CB)

20:16 *false witness* – concretely *a witness*; abstractly *testimony*; specifically *a recorder*, that is, *prince*:—witness. (QV)

Lie under oath in court. (TLSB)

Answer, give reply, testify, respond with deceitful testimony. Lying, deceiving, false, deceptive, fraudulent, untrue testimony. The whole matter of the responsibility of the individual Israelite for the integrity of the legal process was taken seriously in the community (Ex. 23:1; Num. 35:30). Wrongdoing coupled with a poor justice system wreaks havoc in a community. The reputation of all Israelites was important if Israel was to be God's witness to the world. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

This is the application of the law of love to the reputation of others, and forbids us to speak differently of them from what under similar circumstances, we ought to wish them to speak of us. (CB)

20:17 Understood as two commandments. Unlike the early commandments that address actions, these two focus on intentions. Ambrose: "Love of money, then, is an old, an ancient vice, which showed itself even at the declaration of the divine law" (NPNF 2 10:63). (TLSB)

covet. Desire something with evil motivation (see Mt 15:19). To break God's commandments inwardly is equivalent to breaking them outwardly (see Mt 5:21–30). (CSB)

Hbr *chamad*, desire or crave. (TLSB)

neighbor's. Member of another household. (TLSB)

ox. Large cattle were important contributors to the household and were kept nearby or in homes. (TLSB)

A primitive root; to *delight* in:—beauty, greatly beloved, covet, delectable thing, (X great) delight, desire, goodly, lust, (be) pleasant (thing), precious (thing). (QV)

Covetousness is the beginning of the violation of all other commandments. The First Commandment lays the foundation for all obedience. The last attacks disobedience at its root. The basic form of the commandment prohibits an obsessive desire for any property belonging to another person. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

Notice that this addresses one's heart and not simply one's actions. God's will concerns both the inner motivations as well as external behavior. Again, the concern is that we, who have received from God blessings such as house, spouse, workers, and cattle for ourselves, value and protect the blessings God has also given our neighbor. The same God has blessed us and our neighbor with His creaturely gifts. To honor God is to protect the gifts He gave others as well as being good stewards of the gifts He gave us. (LL)

The law of God forbids us not merely to take what belongs to others, but to desire to take it. It extends to the thoughts and feelings, requiring us to be content with such things as we have and can gain by doing *covet*. Desire something with evil motivation (see Mt 15:19). To break God's commandments inwardly is equivalent to breaking them outwardly (see Mt 5:21–30). (CSB)

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A primitive root; to *delight* in:—beauty, greatly beloved, covet, delectable thing, (X great) delight, desire, goodly, lust, (be) pleasant (thing), precious (thing). (QV)

Covetousness is the beginning of the violation of all other commandments. The First Commandment lays the foundation for all obedience. The last attacks disobedience at its root. The basic form of the commandment prohibits an obsessive desire for any property belonging to another person. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 10, Part 2)

Notice that this addresses one's heart and not simply one's actions. God's will concerns both the inner motivations as well as external behavior. Again, the concern is that we, who have received from God blessings such as house, spouse, workers, and cattle for ourselves, value and protect the blessings God has also given our neighbor. The same God has blessed us and our neighbor with His creaturely gifts. To honor God is to protect the gifts He gave others as well as being good stewards of the gifts He gave us. (LL)

The law of God forbids us not merely to take what belongs to others, but to desire to take it. It extends to the thoughts and feelings, requiring us to be content with such things as we have and can gain by doing right; loving Jehovah supremely and our fellow-men as we love ourselves, and pursuing that course which under the direction of His word, this love requires. (CB)

right; loving Jehovah supremely and our fellow-men as we love ourselves, and pursuing that course which under the direction of His word, this love requires. (CB)

EPISTLE – 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." 20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him[e] you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

1:18-31 In the cultural context, one ought to remember that many early Christians were slaves or lower-class people. The critic Celsus observed of the Christians: "The following are the rules laid down by

them. Let no one come to us who has been instructed, or who is wise or prudent (for such qualifications are deemed evil by us); but if there be any ignorant, or unintelligent, or uninstructed, or foolish persons, let them come with confidence. By which words, acknowledging that such individuals are worthy of their God, they manifestly show that they desire and are able to gain over only the silly, and the mean, and the stupid, with women and children” (Origen, “Contra Celsum,” *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of The Writings of the Fathers Down to A. D. 325*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1872], 125, book 3, ch 44). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

C. K. Barrett (in *A Commentary on The First Epistle to the Corinthians* [New York: Harper and Row, 1968], 61) informs readers that the citation of Jer 9:24 in v 31 is taken from the Haphtorah (in Jewish synagogue usage in Paul’s day, a prophetic reading that followed the Torah) for Ab 9, and that we might suppose Paul cites it as a “text for his sermon” for that day. In light of the citation, this whole text becomes a reminder of the sort of boasting God rebukes and the sort of boasting he commends. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

1:18 words of the cross – Key note for the Letter. “The Gospel ... preaches righteousness and gives the Spirit” (FC SD V 22). (TLSB)

Paul has been arguing that reliance on one’s skill as a speaker can rob the cross of Christ of its power. He now sets out to cure the Corinthians of their fascination with rhetoric. After all, they should know that no matter how well they dress up the word of the cross, the world will always find it unpalatable. For the world marches to a different drummer. Its enthusiasm always is for whatever seems attractive and successful. Its basic orientation is toward what has aptly been called “the theology of glory.” But now, in opposition to the world’s lust for glamour, success, and “image,” Paul sets forth “the word [the theology] of the cross” (1:18–25). Only that sobering word will provide the Corinthians with a basis for overcoming their divisions and restoring their fellowship in Christ. (CC p. 64)

“The Theology of Glory” and “The Theology of the Cross”

These expressions derive from Luther’s Heidelberg Disputation of 1518. In thesis 20, for example, Luther cites 1 Cor 1:21, 25, and continues: “It is not sufficient for anyone, and it does him no good to recognize God in his glory and majesty, unless he recognizes him in the humility and shame of the cross. Thus God destroys the wisdom of the wise. ... For this reason true theology and recognition of God are in the crucified Christ.” He adds, then, in thesis 21: “God can be found only in suffering and the cross. ... It is impossible for a person not to be puffed up by his good works unless he has first been deflated and destroyed by suffering and evil until he knows that he is worthless and that his works are not his but God’s.” The *power* of God is visible in creation (Rom 1:18–32), but the *grace* of God can only be found in God’s Word and Sacraments, on the cross and in the Supper, which to the world appear weak and foolish. (CC pp. 64-65)

is folly – μωρία—The English word “moron” is derived from μωρός. (CC p. 62)

The Corinthians need to be realistic that “the word of the cross” will always be “foolishness to those who are being destroyed” (1 Cor 1:18). In itself, of course, the Gospel is not foolishness; only to those who are being destroyed is it foolishness. The world will always think Christians are wasting their time. There was a period when even Jesus’ mother and brothers thought he was “beside himself” (Mk 3:21). Many of his Jewish opponents claimed that he was insane (Jn 10:20). Later the Roman governor Festus charged Paul with insanity: “You are out of your mind, Paul! ... Too much learning is driving you insane!” (Acts 26:24). Through the centuries the message of the cross has drawn similar abuse from Christianity’s cultured and less-cultured despisers. In their view, Christians “are of all people most to be pitied” (1 Cor 15:19). (CC p. 65)

So long has the cross been a centerpiece in churches that Christians can easily forget the shame and offensiveness it represented in the ancient world. Only criminals and recalcitrant slaves were crucified. Indeed, Matthew's gospel portrays Jesus' death as that of a slave worth thirty pieces of silver (Mt 26:15; cf. Ex 21:32), and Paul draws a connection between Jesus' taking the form of a slave (μορφήν δούλου) and dying the death of the cross (Phil 2:7–8). In short, as has been well said, “to assert that God himself accepted death in the form of a crucified Jewish manual worker from Galilee in order to break the power of death and bring salvation to all men could only seem folly and madness to men of ancient times.” (CC p. 65)

The cross of Christ is the action of God for us and our salvation (2 Cor 5:18-19). Its power (Rom 1:16-17) is not visible to empirical observations. It meets neither the demands nor the expectations of natural man. Seekers are not drawn to the cross; in fact, the cross is repugnant to unregenerate man and drives him away. Yet its power is at work in the Gospel call. Through the Gospel the Spirit overcomes our natural resistance and brings us to faith in Christ crucified. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 4)

to those who are perishing – Those who see only foolishness in the cross deny its power to save them from eternal destruction. (TLSB)

τοῖς μὲν ἀπολλυμένοις ... τοῖς δὲ σωζομένοις—In the middle voice ἀπόλλυμι means “perish, die,” especially “of eternal death” (BAGD 2 a α). English versions usually treat its participle as middle: “those who are perishing” (NRSV, NKJV, NIV). There are no NT passages where the verb is unambiguously passive. However, the parallelism with τοῖς σωζομένοις, which definitely is passive (“those who are being saved,” *not* the middle “those who are saving themselves”), suggests that here τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις is also passive: “those who are being destroyed [by God].” The passive sense is confirmed by its echo in 1:19, where God is the subject of the active verb: “I will destroy [ἀπολῶ] the wisdom of the wise.” (CC p. 61)

Both of the participles are in the present tense, and they derive their temporal sense from the present tense main verb, ἐστίν, which indicates that some are now in the process of being destroyed, while others are now being saved and are already on the way that will finally lead to their eternal salvation. For Paul, σωτηρία is mostly an eschatological term. Again, as in 1:7–8, the Last Day is in view. (CC p. 61)

power of God – The cross is the instrument of God's salvation. (TLSB)

On the other hand, “to us who are being saved it [the word of the cross] is the power of God” (1 Cor 1:18). Note that despite the divisions he has just deplored, Paul does not classify the Corinthians among those being lost. The words “to us” assure them that they and he are united as the blessed recipients of salvation. For them, as for him, the word of the cross is a “fragrance from life to life” (2 Cor 2:16). (CC pp. 65-66)

According to Pauline theology, believers are surrounded by salvation—past, present, and future. Having been saved by grace in the past (Eph 2:5, 8; cf. Rom 8:24; Titus 3:5), they are now day by day in the process of being saved (1 Cor 1:18; 15:2; 2 Cor 2:15), a process which continues until they are finally saved on the last day (Rom 5:9; 11:26). Above all, it is this sure hope of rescue from God's wrath on the Last Day which lends the words “save” and “salvation” their color. (CC p. 66)

Our salvation is accomplished by “the power of God” effective in “the word of the cross” (1 Cor 1:18). The voice of the Gospel is not foolishness, but “the power of God for salvation” (Rom 1:16). Thus Paul's ministry was “a demonstration of the Spirit and power” (1 Cor 2:4). Through his preaching, God established his kingdom “in power” (4:20). Hence Paul was not interested in how well his spiritually “inflated” opponents could talk, but in their power (4:19). While outwardly he and his coworkers

appeared to be weak, he rejoiced in weakness and blessed God when there was no more room for self-reliance (2 Cor 1:8–9), for then he knew the power of Christ would rest on him (2 Cor 12:9–10; 13:4). (CC p. 66)

1:19 This quote speaks against people who “draw near with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, while their hearts are far from Me” (Is 29:13). (TLSB)

The quote from Is 29:14 reminds readers of Judah’s humanly wise but spiritually foolish policy of alliance with Egypt when Assyrian invasion loomed. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

I will destroy – ἀπολῶ—1 Cor 1:19 quotes LXX Is 29:14 exactly, except for the last word (see the next textual note, on ἀθετήσω). The verb ἀπολῶ, “I will destroy,” echoes the participle in 1:18, τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, “those who are being destroyed.” The plan God announced in Isaiah’s day to destroy the wisdom of the wise and the understanding of the understanding is being carried out now wherever the “foolishness” of the Gospel is preached, including Corinth. (CC p. 62)

the wise. Aristides said that on every street in Corinth one met a so-called wise man, who had his own solutions to the world’s problems. (CSB)

The Lord foils mankind’s “vast intelligence” and grandiose plans (Gen 11:1-9; Psalms 2; 33:10). The quote in this passage is from Is. 29:14 and refers to the people of Hezekiah’s day whose worship was insincere and “made up of rules taught by men” (Is. 29:13). Unless enlightened by God’s Word, human “wisdom” is foolishness. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 4)

I will thwart – ἀθετήσω—Paul’s source in LXX Is 29:14 has the verb κρύψω, “I will conceal.” (CC p. 62)

BAGD, 1 a, opts for “thwart, confound” as the best translation for ἀθετέω in 1 Cor 1:19. However, the stronger verb “reject” (BAGD, 1 b) more accurately renders the sense of the verb not only here but throughout the NT (cf., e.g., Mk 6:26; 7:9; Lk 10:16). In the LXX ἀθετέω frequently means “to rebel against, to want to have nothing to do with someone” (e.g., 4 Kingdoms 18:7 [MT/ET 2 Ki 18:7]; 2 Chr 10:19). On the Last Day God will publicly repudiate the wisdom of the wise and reject those who were captivated by it. He will also claim as his own those who instead believed the foolish word of the cross. (CC p. 62)

1:20 *who is wise*. Probably a reference to Gentile philosophers in general. (CSB)

Jewish scribes and Greek philosophers sought wisdom through debate, but they are “of this age,” in contrast to God’s timeless wisdom. (TLSB)

“Where is the one who is wise?” Aristides said that one met a so-called wise man who had his own solution to the world’s problems on every street in Corinth (*Concordia Self-Study Bible* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986], 1748). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

Although Paul may no longer be formally quoting the OT, we still hear the voice of Isaiah in the series of rhetorical questions which mock the wisdom of this age (1:20). The first two questions Paul draws directly from Isaiah, whom he has just cited and will cite another five times in the epistle. That “splendid and highly enlightened prophet” also had a keen sense for the difference between reliance on human strength and wisdom, and a quiet reliance on God (e.g., Is 7:4; 25:9; 26:3–4; 30:15). (CC p. 67)

scribe. Probably the Jewish teacher of the law (see note on Mt 2:4). (CSB)

The first three questions all begin with the interrogative “where” (ποῦ). In its original context in Isaiah, the first question (“where is a wise man?”) mocks the wise counselors of Pharaoh for their failure to foresee the divine judgments coming upon Egypt (Is 19:12). The second question from the prophet (“where is a scribe?”) targets foreign scribes, men of strange speech, who would tally tribute levied on Israel (Is 33:18). The third question (“where is a debater of this age?”) is Paul’s own free formulation, targeting anyone who raises arguments against the knowledge of God revealed in Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Cor 10:4–5). (CC p. 67)

Adapting Isaiah to his own day, Paul’s first target is probably the typical sage of Greek culture, the philosopher or rhetorician, while the second object of his mockery, the “scribe,” is the Jewish rabbi, and the “debater of this age” is any clever person opposed to the true knowledge of God. Although some think this analysis is too subtle, it suits the context which goes on to speak of Jews and Greeks (1 Cor 1:22). What seems especially clear is that the second question refers to Jewish teachers of the Law. The Greeks never referred to a scholar as a “scribe” (γραμματεὺς); they used that word for a civil officer like the “town clerk” of Acts 19:35. (CC p. 67)

debater of this age. Probably refers to the Greek sophists, who engaged in long and subtle disputes. (CSB)

οὗ αἰῶνος τούτου—The phrase ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος occurs eight times in Paul (Rom 12:2; 1 Cor 1:20; 2:6 (twice); 2:8; 3:18; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 1:21). “This [present] age” is characterized by sin (Gal 1:4) and transience (cf. Paul’s use of the parallel expression τοῦ κόσμου τούτου in 1 Cor 7:31). It stands in contrast to the coming age (Eph 1:21; 2:7; cf. the rabbinic contrast between “this age,” הַיָּמִים הַזֵּהִים, and “the age to come,” הַיָּמִים הַבָּרְאִתִּים). According to Paul’s apocalyptic outlook, “the new aeon has begun already, though as yet concealed from the eyes of men, in and with the resurrection of Christ, inasmuch as this is the beginning of the general resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20, 23).” Thus the new aeon overlaps the old. (CC pp. 62-63)

Paul now sets out to demonstrate what he has just asserted by means of his rhetorical questions. His argument and terminology anticipate his epistle to the Romans, 1:18–22 (cf. “knowing God,” “claiming to be wise,” “being made foolish,” Rom 1:21–22). (CC p. 68)

Even more, they echo Jesus’ words of thanksgiving to the Father in Mt 11:25–26: “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things [insight into the person and work of Christ] from *the wise and understanding* [cf. 1 Cor 1:19] and revealed them to babies. Yes, Father, for this was your *gracious will* [εὐδοκία, corresponding to εὐδόκησεν in 1 Cor 1:21].” Thus Paul underscores what both Isaiah and his Lord had said about the way God surprises the world by rejecting its values and elevating what it despises. For centuries Greek philosophers and Jewish rabbis had been engaged in the quest to know God. “Through ... wisdom” (1 Cor 1:21) the pre-Socratic Greek philosophers had sought to understand the structure of the universe, and Socrates and his successors had tried to understand human beings in relation to their world. But with all their intellectual ingenuity they had missed the mark. Meanwhile, the rabbis had busied themselves with the minute study of Torah, but over their hearts lay a veil which is only removed when a person turns to the Lord (2 Cor 3:15). (CC p. 68)

God made foolish the wisdom of the world. All humanly devised philosophical systems end in meaninglessness because they have a wrong concept of God and his revelation. (CSB)

1:21 Human wisdom cannot lead to God, who reveals Himself in the message of the cross. “The forgiveness of sins ... cannot come to us in any other way than through the Word. How would we know about it otherwise?” (LC V 31). (TLSB)

foolish the wisdom. Jesus expresses a similar thought in Lk 10:21. It is God’s intention that worldly wisdom should not be the means of knowing him. (CSB)

folly...we preach. Not that preaching is foolish, but that the message being preached (Christ crucified) is viewed by the world as foolish. (CSB)

Because of the folly of human thinking about how to attain the knowledge of God, it was God’s gracious and sovereign decision to lead people to the right knowledge of himself by that most unimpressive means, “the silliness of preaching” (1 Cor 1:21). By “preaching” (κήρυγμα) Paul does not mean merely the act of preaching; he constantly bears in mind its content, the cross of Christ (1:18). As he goes on to say (1:23), “we preach Christ crucified.” (CC pp. 68-69)

All the wisdom coming from the teachers, philosophers, and sophists of the day is meaningless since they are not properly focused on God. Have their wisdom and intellect saved one soul? Have their teachings and philosophies forgiven one sin? (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 4)

We dare not lull ourselves into believing that the struggle of men against Scripture and the Christian religion with its appeal to reason (science) will ever cease, since “the natural man” (1 Cor 2:14) is God’s enemy (Rom 8:7) and can only regard what is the essence of Christianity, the Gospel, as foolishness (“they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them.” 1 Cor. 2:14). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 4)

1:22-23 These verses are a clear demonstration of the situation in which Gospel proclamation always finds itself in this world! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

1:22 signs – Judaism sought miraculous confirmation as God’s support for messenger and message. (TLSB)

The Jews asked Jesus to perform signs (Matt 12:38; 16:1–4). They wanted miraculous displays of divine strength, proving that Jesus was the Messiah. When Paul wrote this letter (A.D. 55 or 56), there was a large crop of false messiahs. In A.D. 45, a man called Theudas persuaded thousands of Jews to abandon their homes and follow him out to the Jordan. He promised he would divide the water and they could walk through on dry land. In A.D. 54, another messiah persuaded 30,000 people to follow him to the Mount of Olives. He promised that at his command the walls of Jerusalem would fall down. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

The demand for signs (as Israel did in the wilderness) or wisdom is a manifestation of humanity’s rebellion against God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

The devil tempted Jesus to perform self-serving miracles (Matt 4:1–11). People also asked Jesus to perform signs (Luke 23:8–12; John 2:18), but he insisted that the only sign to be given them was that of Jonah, whose three-day interment in the fish and subsequent life were types of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection (Matt 12:38–40; 16:1–4; cf. John 2:19). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

Nonbelievers, on the other hand, set up themselves as the arbiters of truth. “Man,” they believe, “is the measure of all things.” Thus they demand to be convinced by evidence that falls within the parameters of

their own experience. This nonbelieving world is classified by Paul into two groups, Jews and Greeks. What they had in common was a quest for impressive signs of outward success, whether that be a display of power (like the plagues against Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea, the raining down of bread from heaven, or the ejecting of the Romans from Palestine; compare modern demands for health and wealth) or a brilliant show of intellectual prowess. The Jews, for example, constantly demanded that Jesus give them a powerful sign from heaven to prove his messianic claims (Mt 12:38; 16:1; Lk 23:8; Jn 2:23; 6:30). Otherwise they would not believe (Jn 4:48). In response, Jesus told them: “An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, and no sign will be given it but the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights” (Mt 12:39–40). In other words, when the Jews demanded a sign, Jesus pointed to his death and resurrection. Of course, to those with eyes to see, the miracles performed by Jesus and the apostles were powerful confirmations of the word of the cross. But those miracles were always gracious gifts; they were never performed on demand. (CC p. 69)

Greeks seek wisdom. True of Greeks in general, but especially of the Greek philosophers. (CSB)

The Gk for “philosophy” means “love of wisdom.” (TLSB)

The Greeks on their part looked for wisdom. The Greek historian Herodotus had said of them: “All Greeks were zealous for every kind of learning.” Paul could speak from firsthand experience, having encountered the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers in Athens (Acts 17:18). But we should not think only of the Greeks of Corinth and Athens. From the parallel “Gentiles” in 1 Cor 1:23, we see that Paul uses the word “Greeks” to include all non-Jewish peoples of the Roman Empire, where the influence of the Greek language and culture was widespread (cf. Rom 1:16). (CC p. 69)

The present active form shows a habitual action and describes what they are always doing. The Greeks expected to be reasoned and argued into a salvation that they find rationally acceptable. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 4)

Paul contrasts human wisdom with God’s wisdom. English words such as *sophist*, *sophomore* (an oxymoron), and *philosophy* contain the same Greek root as *sophia*, “wisdom.” In classical Greek, the word could denote manual skills and artistic talent; acquaintance and familiarity with something; sound judgment and practical intelligence; philosophical wisdom of the type attributed to Plato and Aristotle; and in an evil sense, craftiness and cunning (Liddell and Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1889] 737). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

During the NT era, there were a variety of philosophical schools, including the Platonists, Peripatetics, Stoics, and Epicureans, all of whom were active in Athens (John Stambaugh and David Balch, *The New Testament in Its Social Environment* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986] 122–23). Each of these philosophical schools claimed to possess the ethical wisdom that was the key to life. Paul had dialogued with the Greeks at Athens (Acts 17:16–34) where they spent their time discussing new ideas, so he was familiar with the Greek quest for wisdom. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

1:23 *but we* – ἡμεῖς—The pronoun is emphatic. Paul is contrasting the activity of Jews and Greeks with what “we [apostles]” are doing. (CC p. 63)

Christ crucified. See 2:2. (CSB)

The Jews expected a Messiah (Hbr for “Christ”), but did not expect that He should be crucified. (TLSB)

Paul refers to his practice of preaching only Christ crucified. Paul's initial trip to Corinth is narrated in Acts 18:1–18, and he describes how he preached to them in 1 Cor 2:1–2. For an excellent description of the history of the practice of crucifixion and the scandal it represented in the ancient world, see Martin Hengel, *Crucifixion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977). The Greeks and Romans reserved crucifixion as a method of capital punishment for the most heinous crimes committed by slaves and despicable criminals, and the cross connoted utmost disgrace. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

Preaching obtains its power from what is preached. To believe on one who was crucified and to expect from such a one salvation, that seems to the natural man the height of folly. (Stoeckhardt)

The Hellenistic philosophical schools also generally held the physical and the body in low esteem, and considered the good and the divine to exist in the realm of the spiritual. To them it was silly to speak of God becoming incarnate in a human body. It is said that Augustine, who was a great scholar long before he became a Christian, claimed that he could find parallels among the Greeks for almost all the teachings of Christianity, but he never found anything like the Word who “became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). To believe that a man could rise from the dead was also foolishness to Greeks. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

stumbling block to Jews.† They expected a triumphant, political Messiah (Ac 1:6), not a crucified one. Also, the teaching that deity became incarnate and died was repugnant to them. (CSB)

Gk *skandalon*, a cause for offense and rejection, as in Eng “scandal.” (TLSB)

skanedalon. A “scandal”; a *trap stick* (*bent sapling*), that is, *snare* (figuratively *cause* of displeasure or sin):—occasion to fall (of stumbling), offence, thing that offends, stumbling-block. (QV)

“To Jews” a crucified Messiah was “a stumbling block” (1 Cor 1:23), “an obstacle in coming to faith.” While there was a great diversity of messianic expectations among first-century Jews, those expectations consistently were for a *powerful* figure. Moreover, anyone who had been crucified was repugnant, having been cursed by God (Deut 21:22–23; cf. Gal 3:13). For Jews, then, the cross was the most shameful death imaginable (Heb 12:2). In debating with Jews, the early Christian apologists had to devote considerable attention to why Israel's Messiah had to be crucified. (CC p. 70)

The Jews, in contrast, knew from the OT instances of bodily resurrection (1 Ki 17:7–24; 2 Ki 4:8–37; 13:21; cf. Ezek 37:1–14). They also knew of God's long history of dwelling among his people and making his grace available through physical means (the tabernacle, temple, animal sacrifices, circumcision, Passover, etc.). The concepts of incarnation and resurrection were familiar to Jews (though the Sadducees rejected the idea of resurrection, as many liberal Jews do today). But they looked for a Savior who would effect political as well as religious liberation, and in their estimation Jesus failed in this respect. Anyone who was crucified was under the curse of God (Deut 21:23), and most did not understand that the Messiah took on this curse for our sake (Gal 3:13–14). Even though several prominent OT texts clearly depict the Messiah as suffering (Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; etc), these passages played little role in the theology of most of the Jewish sects of the first century A.D. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

This draws to the mind of the original hearers/readers the stick an animal stumbles over, causing the trap to shut. The Jews would see the crucifixion of the Messiah as a stumbling block because anyone killed on a cross was cursed. It was scandalous to think that their God was executed as a criminal. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 13, Part 2)

Expecting a victorious and military human messiah, the Jews for the most part would not accept a crucified messiah, even more problematic was the claim that the Almighty Creator would deign to become incarnate. But the greatest problem for the Jews was the message of the Gospel itself. For the Good News of free forgiveness through Jesus contradicted the very core of their self righteous religiosity. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 4)

folly to Gentiles.† Greeks and Romans were sure that no reputable person would be crucified, so it was unthinkable that a crucified criminal could be the Savior. Also, the claim of Jesus’ resurrection was considered foolishness by the Gentiles. (CSB)

The Greeks certainly found it untenable to have an innocent and reputable person – much less a god be crucified. And the thought of Christ’s blood being shed to forgive their sins was utterly repulsive and against all earthly wisdom. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 4)

1:24 are called – Paul terms the Corinthian Christians “called” also in 1:2, where he associates the term with their being “sanctified” and “holy” (*hēgiasmenois . . . klētois hagiois*). The Jews thought of themselves as the holy people, chosen by God, and they based their hope of salvation on that fact. But many of them did not continue in the faith God revealed to his chosen OT people. Peter applies the prominent OT terms for God’s people to believers in Christ (1 Pet 2:9). Similar to OT believers, Christians base their hope of salvation on the fact that they have been called by God in baptism (1:13–16), chosen, and justified by God’s grace in Christ. They are called into fellowship with Christ (1:9). The ones called are the ones who “are being saved” (1:18). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

power. See Ro 1:4, 16; Mk 12:24. (CSB)

dunamis - force (literally or figuratively); specifically miraculous *power* (usually by implication a *miracle* itself):—ability, abundance, meaning, might (- ily, -y, -y deed), (worker of) miracle (-s), power, strength, violence, mighty (wonderful) work. – Dynamite

Christ is the power of God for salvation. Jesus Christ is God incarnate, and as such he possesses all the power of God, even though he chose not to employ his power fully during his earthly life of humiliation. Rom 1:4 may be interpreted as saying that Jesus was declared to be “the Son of God with power” by his resurrection (see NIV note); it was his resurrection which proved that “all authority in heaven and on earth” had been given to him (Matt 28:18). In Rom 1:18, the Gospel is called the “power of God” which brings salvation. This is the type of power Paul is emphasizing in 1 Cor 1:22–25: not power over creation (First Article of the Creed) or brute force (God’s left-hand rule of Law), but God’s power to save (Second Article of the Creed). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

wisdom. See v. 30. The crucified Christ is the power that saves and the wisdom that transforms seeming folly into ultimate and highest discernment. (CSB)

Christ is also the wisdom of God. Through the foolishness of Christ crucified, “righteousness, holiness and redemption” are ours (1:30). This kind of wisdom is acquired not through human reason or strenuous intellectual exercises of the type practiced by some Greek philosophical schools, but only through simple, trusting faith in Christ crucified. It is hidden from those who are wise by the world’s standards, but “revealed to little children” (Luke 10:21). There is a rich tradition of wisdom literature in the OT. The wisdom of God revealed in the OT is incarnate in Christ. Prov 8:22–31 in particular describes the hypostasis of God’s wisdom in Christ. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

1:25 foolishness of God – God’s ways appear foolish to those who do not understand them (cf Is 55:8). (TLSB)

τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ θεοῦ ... τὸ ἀσθενὲς τοῦ θεοῦ—Literally, “the foolish thing of God ... the weak thing of God.” Cf. the Living Bible: “This so-called ‘foolish’ plan of God.” Paul uses substantivized neuter adjectives with the article instead of the normal feminine abstract nouns for “foolishness” (μωρία) and “weakness” (ἀσθένεια). See BDF, § 263 (2). Hays explains: “This foolish and weak thing is the event of the cross itself.” (CC p. 64)

What the Greeks considered foolishness by their human standards is in fact wiser than all their philosophy and mythology, since it alone is able to make wise to salvation. Moreover, the crucified Christ, whom the Jews considered the epitome of weakness since he did not perform any powerful miracle for them, nor was he able to save himself from the cross, is really God’s power of salvation. This is a classic exposition of the theology of the cross and refutation of the theology of glory. Natural man expects to find God in visible displays of power and glory which appeal to human reason, but through this search man finds only the angry God of Law. Paradoxically, the grace of God is found only in the foolishness of a weak man crucified on a cross. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

Romans 11:33-36, ³³“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! ³⁴“Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?” ³⁵“Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?” ³⁶For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.”

1:26–31 The Corinthian Christians themselves were living proof that salvation does not depend on anything in man, so that when someone is saved, he must boast in the Lord (v. 31). (CSB)

1:26 *were wise according to worldly standards* – God works salvation through a cross and the preaching of a crucified Savior. This salvation was worked in you despite who you were! Your vocation demonstrates it! (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 9, Part 1)

Paul turns the spotlight on the Corinthians themselves as Exhibit A of the wisdom of God. “*Blepete gar tēn klēsīn humōn*” invites a careful look at themselves. (*Blepete gar tēn klēsīn humōn* is explanatory.) The three groupings are representative of what humans normally boast about: *sophoi, dunatoi, eugeneis* are “the educated, the influential, the people of distinguished family” according to Hans Conzelmann (*1 Corinthians* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975], 50). The repeated reminder “not many of you” (three times!) forces the listeners to admit they are a motley crew, humanly speaking. Who can read this without thinking of himself personally? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

If the Corinthian Christians needed evidence that the people who count in this world hold the message of the cross to be folly and weakness, they needed only to look about the. How many wise by human standards, how many influential, how many of noble birth in Corinth were members of their congregation? Not many. Erastus, the director of public works in Corinth, was one of the few. But the leading citizens in Corinth shunned this group of Christians. The men of wealth, the city father, the merchant princes, the scholars, the first families of the city would have nothing to do with this crazy religion a traveling Jew was peddling in Corinth. (PBC)

The pagan philosopher, Celsus, who lived in the second century after Christ, expressed the view of prominent Jews and Greeks when he wrote that a glance at the membership of Christian congregations in his day would prove that the Christians “show that they want and are able to convince only the foolish,

dishonorable and stupid, and only slaves, women, and little children.” The German philosopher Nietzsche (whom Hitler admired) condemned the Christian faith as “a favoring of the botched and degenerate, and a despising of the rich, scholarly, noble, healthy, and strong.” (PBC)

How many of the people who control the press and television in our country, how many leading entertainers, how many industrial magnates, how many noted scholars are simple, believing church-going Christians? There are some, but they are few indeed. Paul’s judgment is still true. (PBC)

Life responsibilities, vocation. (TLSB)

John 15:16 “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.”

1 Peter 1:23 “For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.”

Third Article – *What does this mean?* I believe that I cannot by my own reason of strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

Not many were wise – With his “no one educated, no one wise, no one sensible,” Celsus has of course misrepresented Paul’s “not many” (1:26). (CC p. 76)

worldly standards – The mind, limited by earthly considerations, makes inappropriate judgments. (TLSB)

were powerful – *dunatoi* – powerful or those who had clout.

Of noble birth – Though some may have acquired wealth and authority, they were not of high rank in society. (TLSB)

But the majority of converts in places like Rome and Corinth had humble origins. Many were either slaves or freed slaves (cf. 1 Cor 7:21–23). To some extent this is apparent from their names. The lowly origin of many Christians provoked the scorn of the second-century philosopher Celsus: Their injunctions are like this: “Let no one educated, no one wise, no one sensible draw near. For these abilities are thought by us to be evils. But as for anyone ignorant, anyone stupid, anyone uneducated, anyone who is a child, let him come boldly.” By the fact that they themselves admit that these people are worthy of their God, they show that they want and are able to convince only the foolish, dishonourable and stupid, and only slaves, women, and children. (CC)

1:27-28 Look at the verbs Paul chooses to describe God’s response to human boasting: *kataischunēi* (“shame”) and *katargēsēi* (“bring to nothing”). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

1:27 *but* – *alla* – quite to the contrary. Strongest of emphasis. (QV)

shame the strong – The foolish, weak, and despised bring down and prohibit the boasting of the wise, strong, and esteemed. (TLSB)

1:28 *despised in the world* – Worthless things, nobodies. (TLSB)

τὰ ἐξουμνημένα—ἐξουθενέω, “I despise, disdain,” equals ἐξουδενέω, “I regard as οὐδέν [nothing].” Cf. 1 Cor 6:4; 16:11. (CC p. 74)

bring to nothing – God renders something nothing, and brings from nothing something. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 9, Part 1)

1:29 Not a single bit of flesh can boast before God. You have nothing but what was given. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 9, Part 1)

God’s standards are the genuine basis of judgment. (TLSB)

God’s action is brought to bear so that not a single human being (*pasa sarx* is emphatic) may boast in himself. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

Romans 3:27-28 “Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith.²⁸ For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.”

1:30 *because of him ... you are in Christ*. It is God who has called you to union and communion with Christ. (CSB)

Our life, spiritual and physical, comes from God. (TLSB)

He is the reason you are in Christ. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 9, Part 1)

The expression *ex autou* is translated “he is the source of” in the ESV and RSV, “because of him” in the NIV, “by His doing” in the NASB. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

who became to us wisdom – Paul traces from God (1) revelation given in His Word, (2) the acquittal won by His Son, (3) the holiness that follows for us, and (4) full salvation from sin and death. “This happens because of the righteousness of another, namely, of Christ” (Ap V 184). (TLSB)

righteousness.† It is through faith in Christ that we are justified (declared righteous); see Ro 5:19. (CSB)

Paul then explains what this wisdom-treasure consists of: “righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (1:30). The first part of the wisdom gift comes to us in the form of Christ’s righteousness. Jeremiah had recorded the messianic promise that the days were coming when God would raise up for David a righteous Branch called “the Lord our righteousness” (Jer 23:5–6; cf. Is 45:24). In ourselves, of course, we are sinners, but the righteousness of the spotless Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7) has been imputed to us and covers our sins. For “God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5:18, 21; Phil 3:9). (CC p. 78)

Jeremiah 23:6 “In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.”

2 Corinthians 5:21 “God made him who had no sin to be sin^a for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

sanctification. The second part of the gift is “sanctification” or holiness (1 Cor 1:30 cf. 6:11, where again sanctification is linked to justification). God’s holiness is “an expression for His perfection of being which transcends everything creaturely” and sinful. Sinful humans cannot stand in his holy presence. But in his suprahuman love (Hos 11:8–9) God graciously provided the means—the covenant and sacrifices of the OT, and the perfect sacrifice of Christ—by which our guilt is taken away and our sin atoned for (Is 6:1–7). Holy Baptism (1 Cor 12:13) is now one of the most important means by which Christ’s holiness (ἁγιασμός, 1:30) is conveyed to us, for it is by the washing of water in the word that he sanctifies (ἁγιάζω) the church (Eph 5:26). Again, nothing is “of us” (τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν—“this is not your doing”—Eph 2:8); all is of God, in Christ Jesus. Someone else’s holiness is conferred on us. Only “in and through Christ ... Christians are ‘called to be saints’ [1 Cor 1:2] and washed clean of sin [6:11].” We are then called to live as saints. Pfitzner amplifies: “He is our sanctification in two senses. It is in and through Christ that Christians are ‘called to be saints’ and washed clean of sin. ... Again further growth in holiness can come only after the destruction of all human claims to goodness, only as the saints live the new life in Christ Jesus.” (CC p. 79)

John 15:5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

Ephesians 2:10 “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Galatians 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

redemption. In Christ our righteousness, holiness, and redemption are a done deal. No even sanctification is my doing in any way. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 9, Part 1)

1 Corinthians 1:30 “It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.”

1:31 *as it is written* – ἵνα καθὼς γέγραπται—Literally, “in order that as has been written.” There is an ellipsis in the clause. Paul has omitted a verb like γένηται, “in order that *it might come about* as has been written.” (CC p. 75)

let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord – All gifts in v 30 are from God; therefore, all pride in ourselves is excluded. Though Jesus’ death appears shameful and foolish, it is the only basis of our salvation. “We cannot boast of many merits and works, if they are viewed apart from grace and mercy” (SA III XIII 3). (TLSB)

Paul paraphrases Jer. 24. The larger immediate context of Jeremiah informed his entire argument regarding boasting in the wisdom and strength of man. In fact, the Jeremiah text provides the entire vocabulary of the text of St. Paul. Against Jeremiah Paul weighs the comments of his wayward brethren at Corinth. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 9, Part 1)

There is a proper kind of boasting! Paul spells it out with a capstone quote from Jer 9:24 (cited also in 2 Cor 10:17). Compare his own extended “boast” in 2 Cor 11:16–30. As he glories in the Lord, Paul as preacher ties the attributes of Yahweh (“kindness, justice, and righteousness”) with the saving work of

Jesus (*dikaïosunē te kai hagiastos kai apolutrōsis*, “righteousness, holiness, and redemption”), starting his list where Jeremiah ended. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

1:18–31 We should avoid pride and boasting about anything we do for God or for others. We bring nothing but sin into our relationship with God but receive all good things from Him. • Heavenly Father, give Your people grace to recognize that all praise belongs to You alone. Amen. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – John 2:13-22

13 The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. 15 And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. 16 And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade.” 17 His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” 18 So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” 19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” 20 The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” 21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

2:13 There was likely a lapse of some time between verse 12 and 13. From Luke 2 we know that Jesus went to the annual Passover Festival for the first time at the age of twelve. Very likely He attended every Passover from the age of 12 until His death. The one mentioned here in verse 13 is His first in His public ministry. The Gospel of John mentions the Passovers which took place in Jesus' public ministry. (Buls)

Passover. Passover was one of the annual feasts that all Jewish men were required to celebrate in Jerusalem (Dt 16:16). (CSB)

The first Passover in Jesus' ministry likely took place in AD 30; first of three in Jn (6:4; 11:55; cf 12:1; 13:1; 18:28, 39; 19:14). (TLSB)

The law required every Jewish male to go up (in elevation) to Jerusalem for the yearly Passover feast. This pilgrimage marks Jesus' first appearance there as Prophet. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

All Jewish males 12 years old or older customarily made this pilgrimage at the Passover. The celebration lasted seven days and included the killing of a year old male lamb, without blemish, for the feast. The participants recalled how the blood of the lamb at the first Passover had spared the firstborn Israelite from the angel of death. Now the very Lamb of God was attending that feast. (PBC)

The Passover was a red-letter occasion for Jews, requiring an appropriate offering to the temple. Before us is marked the glory of Christ as the Lamb, the Temple, and the Passover (Jn 1:36; 2:19; 1 Cor 5:7). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

At a later Passover, his final one, Jesus will find a similar scene and react in a similar way (Mt 21:12–13). With the profit to be gained from exchanges, there is no doubt Jesus performed this cleansing repeatedly. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

2:14–17 Matthew, Mark and Luke record a cleansing of the temple toward the end of Jesus' ministry (see note on Mt 21:12–17). (CSB)

Some exchanges during Passover were legitimate, as foreign currency was involved and some travelers found it impractical to transport animal sacrifices. God had provided for this (Deut 14:24–26). In some cases, though, the money changers would discard worthy animals brought by worshipers and require purchase of a temple animal. The cost was often exorbitant. Hence the temple had become a warehouse. *poiēsas*, an aorist active participle, indicates Jesus' readiness to act before even saying a word. Rope was in ample supply as larger animals were restrained. Jesus exited both men and beasts from the temple proper. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

Some scholarship suggests that the selling took place in the Gentiles' courtyard, robbing even earnest Gentiles of the opportunity to approach the true God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

2:14 The references the margin of the Nestle/Aland Greek text are to the second temple cleansing which took place at the time of Jesus' last Passover on earth (three or at the least, two years later, depending on the determination of John 5:1). (Buls)

These *Notes* reject the idea that this temple cleansing is the same as that mentioned by the Synoptics. All good, sound commentators reject identity of the two. (Buls)

temple – The hieron, “temple (and courts),” included the Court of the Gentiles, the only place where proselytes could pray. A market there enabled Jews to purchase sacrificial animals when they arrived, rather than bring them from afar. The kermatistai changed foreign money into the sacred half-shekel required for the temple tax (Ex 30:13). These vendors provided services that made worship more convenient or “user-friendly” in fulfillment of the law. It is estimated that the tax and lambs brought in annual profits in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, and the temple treasury had over \$10 million when the Roman Crassus raided it (Leon Morris, John, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971] 193, note 59). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

"Temple courts," a locative phrase, denotes the Temple proper, perhaps the Court of the Gentiles, translated "in the Temple area" by LB. From what Jesus says in verse 16 it is clear that it was within the limits of what they called the Temple. Formerly the cattle, sheep and doves were sold to worshippers in markets outside the Temple. Gradually all this was moved right into the Temple. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: At the paschal feast He began His activity in Jerusalem and at a paschal festival He brought it to a close. . . The uncleanness in the temple portrayed the corruption of the people and was an image of the impurity in their hearts. . . For the Passover all leaven should be removed from the houses. Here is the house God, and there is an abundance of the leaven of impurity. . . Our thoughts revert to Malachi 3:1-3, where the prophet proclaims the coming of the Lord to His temple. This was the first fulfilment of the prophecy. (Buls)

Fahling: As many as two and a half million worshippers were gathered at Jerusalem from all parts of the Jewish world. . . The time had come for Him to present Himself to the nation as the promised Messiah. . . The work and the profit (of selling animals) must have been enormous. . . The prices charged were often exorbitant. (Buls)

Kretzmann: Instead, however, of keeping the market in the lower part of the city, it had been brought up to the gates of the Temple, and finally into the very courts of the sanctuary. (Buls)

Lenski: The cattle and the doves were a necessity for the prescribed sacrifices, but to make of the great court a stockyard was the height of abuse. (Buls)

Jesus cleansed the temple twice, once at the start (Jn 2:14–17) and again at the end (Mt 21:12–13; Mk 11:15–17; Lk 19:45–46) of his earthly ministry. From first to last, he demanded purity of worship. Judgment begins with the house of God (1 Pet 4:17). John relates the first cleansing only, and as an eyewitness, recording the year (v 20). Apparently the first cleansing had no long-term impact on the lucrative business, necessitating the later cleansing. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

oxen and sheep and pigeons. Required for sacrifices. Jews who came great distances had to be able to buy sacrificial animals near the temple. The merchants, however, were selling them in the outer court of the temple itself, the one place where Gentiles could come to pray. (CSB)

This was for the sacrifices prescribed by the Levitical code, performed Passover. In the outer court of the Gentiles, merchants sold animals to the travelers because it was impractical for travelers to transport animals. Luther dubbed this “crass commercialism” (AE 22:220). (TLSB)

sitting – katae *sit down*; figuratively to *remain, reside*:—dwell, sit (by, down). (QV)

The sellers were "seated" as merchants in their place of business. (Buls)

mone-changers. Many coins had to be changed into currency acceptable to the temple authorities, which made money changers necessary (see note on Mk 11:15). They should not, however, have been working in the temple itself. (CSB)

Travelers had to have their money exchanged into the local currency for the temple tax, which required Jewish coins (shekels) without human images. The on-site bankers charged an exorbitant exchange fee. (TLSB)

kermatiste a handler of coins, that is, *money broker*:— changer of money. (QV)

The noise and confusion were distractions enough. However, the whole business was liable to gross abuses as well. The sellers had a corner on the market much like vendors in a theater or stadium today. From every indication, they exploited the people. Greed gathered wealth. Reverence played the pauper. The practice subverted the worship purpose of the temple. Many surely came with sacrifices not pleasing to God because their hearts were not with God. (PBC)

These vendors provided services that made worship more convenient or user-friendly in fulfillment of the law. It is estimated that the tax and lambs brought in annual profits in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, and the temple treasury had over \$10 million when the Roman Crassus raided it. Jesus cleansed the temple twice, once at the start and again at the end of his earthly ministry. Apparently the first cleansing had no long-term impact on the lucrative business, necessitating the later cleansing. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

2:15 whip – paragallion a *whip*, that is, Roman *lash* as a public punishment:—scourge. (QV)

With the rope whip Jesus drove out “all”—masculine plural in Greek, implying the merchants as well as the animals. “It was surely the blazing anger of the selfless Christ rather than the weapon which He carried which really cleared the Temple Courts of its noisy, motley throng”; “Christ had a powerful confederate in the consciences of the offenders” (Turner and Hengstenberg, respectively, quoted in Morris, p. 194). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

Made of ropes used for animals in the temple. Symbol of Jesus’ moral authority. (TLSB)

Bengel: There was no material which inflicted less lasting hurt on the body than this. Nor is it said, that He inflicted a single blow upon the men. (Buls)

Kretzmann and Fahling feel that Jesus did not actually use this whip but merely had it as a symbol of His authority and power. Lenski insists that He did use it on all, the people and the animals. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: We notice that Jesus does not destroy their property, but He removes the desecration. (Buls)

In any case He clearly maintains the privilege and authority of the Son in the house of His Father. Jesus made no excuses for what He did. Does the word "all" refer to the merchants and moneychangers or to the sheep and goats? KJV, NKJV, LB, RSV, JB, NEB, NASB, and AAT take the former view. NASB is typical: "drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen." TEV and NIV refer it only to sheep and cattle: "drove the animals out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle" Surely the translations from KJV to AAT are correct. (Buls)

Furthermore, the last clause of verse 15 shows how definitely Jesus used His authority and implies that the money changers had already been driven out. We are saying that "all" means not only the merchants but also the moneychangers. They must have been dumbfounded and the sudden rush of cattle, sheep and doves must have caused bedlam, necessary bedlam. (Buls)

drove – Literally, “cast out, expel.” (TLSB)

all – Masculine plural in Greek, implying the merchants as well as the animal. It was surely the blazing anger of the selfless Christ rather than the weapon which he carried which really cleared the Temple Courts of its noisy, motley throng. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

Christ revealed holy wrath, not a violent spirit. (TLSB)

money-changers – Two specific terms are used for the money changers. "A changer of large into smaller coins" and "A man who changes heathen into Jewish money for payment into the Temple treasury." The fact that the Evangelist John distinguishes the two, shows how highly systematized this racket had become. (Buls)

poured out the coins ... overturned their tables. Christ revealed holy wrath, not a violent spirit. (TLSB)

2:16 *make* – poieo to *make* or *do* QV)

He addresses only those who were selling doves, but it is meant for all. They would likely take least space and were selling mostly to the poor people. Jesus addresses the least offensive, making the command

clear for all. He said: "Get these things out of here!" He really cleaned house. It is the same verb used in John 1:29 to denote totality and finality. (Buls)

Jesus' present imperative *mē poieite* means, "Stop making . . ." He purges as a prophet. He reminds us of Moses, whose anger at Israel's idolatry caused him to shatter the first two stone tablets of the covenant (Ex 32:19), or Hezekiah, who purged the temple of abominations during Passover (2 Chr 30:1, 14–15). But Jesus is *the Prophet*. With the phrase "of my Father," he openly claims to be God's Son. In early Jewish prayers God is often called "*our heavenly Father*." Jesus strikingly calls him "*my Father*" with intimate language appropriate only for family members. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

my Father's house – *pate* a primary word; a "father" (literally or figuratively, near or more remote):
—father, parent (QV)

Then He adds: "Quit making My Father's House a merchandise house." The House of God is where God meets man. They had turned it into a place to make money, a place where people meet animals. The contrast is stark. It is symptomatic of the deep degradation of the Covenant people in Jesus' day. This verse has often been quoted in opposition to bazaars in the church. Is it relevant? Isn't the anger of those who want the bazaars often like the attitude of Jesus' enemies? (Buls)

Jesus gives ownership of this temple to his Father. "Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise" (NKJV), *emporion* (literally, "of trading, gain-setting, unjust dealing"). In this Greek word, one sees the English "emporium," a marketplace. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

Jesus openly claims to be God's Son. In early Jewish prayers God is often called "our heavenly Father." Jesus strikingly calls him "my Father" with intimate language appropriate only for family members. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

house of trade – *emporion* a *mart* ("emporium"):—merchandise. (QV)

The temple is where the lowly from all nations may come to beg the Almighty and obtain his mercy. It cannot be an *oikon emporiou* (epexegetical genitive), "a house that is a market or trading place." Sinners have nothing to trade God for his favor. Neither does God owe them anything. Those who do not humble themselves to receive God's free gift will go away bankrupt, even if they are rich in worldly wealth. Here the Lord comes suddenly to his temple to purge and purify it (Mal 3:1–3). At his Second Coming he will return to settle all accounts. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

2:17 disciples remembered – The disciples thought of Ps 69:9 (cf. Ps 119:139). Only later, in light of the resurrection of his bodily temple, did they understand this Scripture (v 22) to refer to his rigor for the Gospel. Luther comments, "When he witnesses the heinous corruption of souls and this abomination and desecration of his Father's house—then he is deeply grieved. The Lord came to His temple. He came as a "refiner and purifier" in the spirit of Malachi 3:1-4. He declared Himself the Son of the heavenly Father. His disciples watched, no doubt frightened and awestruck. Being well-verse in Scripture, they recalled one of David's psalms that spoke of the Messiah, and applied it to Jesus: "Zeal for your house consumes me" (Psalm 69:9). Significantly, that same psalm predicted some of the rejection and suffering that lay ahead for Christ. For now, it gave the disciples another sign that Jesus was the Christ, and maybe it left some fear of what was to come. (PBC)

"Remembered" here and in verse 22, means "recalled." They applied something which they already knew. "It stands written," never to be revoked. This is a quotation from Psalm 69:10, which the disciples knew. The Greek of the LXX has "consume" as past tense, and is found in the Koine text here at John 2:17 and is therefore found in the KJV and NKJV. All others translate future tense. The translations are interesting: RSV, NIV, NASB, and AAT read: "will consume me." JB has "will devour me." NEB "will destroy me." TEV has "My devotion to your house, God, burns in me like a fire." And LB "Concern for God's House will be my undoing." (Buls)

Psalm 69 is Messianic. Did the disciples know that? At any rate, they realize that the situation was critical, and ominous. In part it led to Jesus' death. (Buls)

Hendriksen: The disciples are filled with fear that Jesus may suffer what David had to endure in his day; namely, that this zeal in some way would result in his being consumed. . . In expressing this thought use is made of Psalm 69, which is one of six Psalms most often referred to in the New Testament (the others 2, 22, 89, 110, 118). Other echoes of various passages of this Psalm (68 in the LXX) are heard in Matthew 27:34-48; Mark 15:36; Luke 23:36; John 15:25; 19:28; Romans 11:9-10; 15:3; Hebrews 11:26; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 16:1; 17:8; 20:12,15; and 21:27). While some of these are quotations, others are allusions, references more or less indirect. Jesus himself (15:25) cites Psalm 69:4 'They hated me without a cause' and refers it to his own experience. In fulfillment of Psalm 69:21 he uttered the word from the cross (19:28). . . From this it appears that Psalm 69 is Messianic. It is possible that the disciples so regarded it even at this time, but that cannot be proved. (Buls)

It would not be wrong to say that the Holy Spirit caused them rightly to recall Psalm 69:10 on this occasion. They were believers in contrast to Jesus' enemies in the next verse. (Buls)

zeal – He grows indignant and jealous. A saddened zeal comes over him when he sees his church, his cathedral, desecrated and misused this way. For he loves God; and he is concerned about the preservation of the divine Word, solicitous about the poor people who are thus robbed of their salvation" (Luther's Works, 22:235). Christ was consumed—literally, "eaten up"—with such zeal that brought him from heaven and took him to the cross. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

Luther: "Zeal is an angry love or a jealous love...His anger does not arise from hatred; it springs from... love toward God" (AE 22:233-34). Christ's zeal revealed His relationship with God and the people of His house, Israel. (TLSB)

Here we see the Lord's high regard for worship and prayer. *kataphagetai*, "will eat up," indicates that Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Ps 69:9. Just as Jesus *esplagchnisthē* ("yearned from the inward parts") for the multitude (see Mt 9:36), so, too, his depth of passion for the purity of worship is without comparison. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

2:18 so the Jews – "Then" means that they responded to the whole situation by addressing a question to Jesus. Here "the Jews," as often, means the Jewish authorities who were Jesus' enemies. It is not limited to the merchants and money-changers. (Buls)

sign – semeion an *indication*, especially ceremonially or supernaturally:—miracle, sign, token, wonder. (QV)

Visible proof or evidence to back up Jesus's authority. (TLSB)

The Jewish leaders reacted in a guarded way to Jesus' actions. They did not try to arrest Him, perhaps because they knew of the excesses and unpopularity of the market. But they missed the point. Instead of addressing the faults Jesus had exposed, they asked Jesus for a sign to prove His authority to clear the temple. They implied that if He did a miracle, they might recognize Him as the Messiah, but likely only as someone to lead them against the Roman oppression. (PBC)

Bengel: This very act of cleansing the Temple was a sign, which Jesus had miraculously wrought. . . They require signs, to be proved by signs. They showed the same perversity at 6:30. (Buls)

Look at the passages in the margin at 1 Corinthians 1:22. It is the language of unbelief, in sharp contrast to that of the disciples. TEV paraphrases: "What miracle can you perform to show us that you have the right to do this?" And NIV: "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" And AAT: "By what miracle can You prove to us You may do this?" They are practically saying: "You have no right to do this. You must prove that you have the right." (Buls)

Two things surface here: (Buls)

1. They were impenitent. They should have confessed guilt immediately.
2. They are rejecting Jesus' divinity, barely six months into His public ministry.

Stoekhardt: What was going on in the Temple portrayed the earthly, worldly attitude of the Jewish people. . . . It was Jesus' first and necessary work that, as Messiah, He must oppose the unholy and ungodly living in Israel. The people were in need of a Reformation. (Buls)

Kretzmann: The Jews resented the implication of authority. (Buls)

Lenski: Here the hostile attitude is quite marked. . . An unknown layman and mere visitor cannot be allowed to take matters into his own hands. (Buls)

The word "sign" is a key word in John's Gospel, used seventeen times, occurring first at 2:11. We quote pertinent passages from Kittel, VII, pages 243-247: (Buls)

John uses 'sign' in the sense of 'sign' 'pointer' 'mark.' In John's Gospel almost exclusively of the person of Jesus. . . Signs reveal His true nature, 2:11. . . In John 'signs' takes over the role played by 'miracles' elsewhere in New Testament. . . . The miracle at the wedding of Cana in 4:54, the feeding of the multitude in 6:14 and the raising of Lazarus in 12:18 all explicitly called 'signs' . . . Also includes the appearance to the disciples (20:24ff; cf. 20:30ff). (Buls)

Lenski: John's Gospel naturally uses this term in the sense of the strongest and the most tangible testimony for Jesus' divinity, always counting those guilty who meet the signs with unbelief. (Buls)

Hendriksen: It indicates a miracle viewed as a proof of divine authority and majesty. Hence, it leads the attention of the spectator away from the deed itself to the divine doer. (Buls)

The Jews met the temple-cleansing with unbelieving ignorance. (Buls)

show us – The Jews were skeptical of Jesus’ messianic claim. They did not repent, nor pray, nor keep the temple clean for very long. Seeking an excuse not to believe, they challenged Jesus for a sign, as usual (1 Cor. 1:22). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

2:19-20 *ton naon touton*, “this temple,” “this sanctuary.” The unbelieving Jews were so consumed with the temple building that they missed the Lord, the true Temple. The temple was to proclaim the sacrifice standing before them. Jesus’ body would be destroyed, but it would be built again on the third day. Notice, Jesus does not say that *he* will destroy the temple, as later charged (Mk 14:58; see also Mt 27:40), but rather challenges the *Jews* to “destroy [*lusate*] this temple,” which they will do when they crucify him. Ironically, by doing so, they would also be tearing down their own sanctuary. All men have done the same in relation to God’s glory, by disobeying his holy will. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

2:19 The Jews thought Jesus was referring to the literal temple, but John tells us that he was not (v. 21). Years later Jesus was accused of saying that he would destroy the temple and raise it again (Mt 26:60–61; Mk 14:57–59), and mockers repeated the charge as he hung on the cross (Mt 27:40; Mk 15:29). The same misunderstanding may have been behind the charge against Stephen (Ac 6:14). (CSB)

Christ speaks prophetically of His impending death and resurrection. (TLSB)

Here "destroy this temple" denotes Jesus' answer to a specific question. On "destroy" three explanations have been offered: (Buls)

1. Robertson-Davis and others call it a conditional imperative: "If you destroy, etc."
2. Bengel and others say it is equivalent to a future indicative, a prophecy.
3. But all our translations and several good commentators take it as an imperative.

Note Jesus uses the word for "shrine" not temple. Jesus typified especially the holy place and holy of holies. (Buls)

Bengel: The body of Jesus, about to be raised again, is the temple and dwelling-place of the Godhead. Therefore, Jesus is the Lord of the temple at Jerusalem, which was the type of the body of Jesus. . . . shrine recurs at verse 22. This is a grand declaration of His 'I can do what I please with the temple of My body. cf. 10:17.18. And so, I can also do what I please with this temple made of stone and wood.' (Buls)

Ylvisaker: If they were not satisfied with what they had seen, they must wait. 'Destroy it, if you will' . . . The words imply that they will do this very thing in their blindness and obduracy. . . . When the leaders in Israel rejected the person of Jesus and led Him to His death, they also destroyed the temple as God's dwelling. . . . What the Romans accomplished later was but the external ruination, the razing of an empty shell. . . . The temple was the main shadow or the reflection of the body which the coming of Christ prefigured among the people of the Covenant, Colossians 2:17. (Buls)

Stoekhardt: In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. . . . Already at the beginning of His public ministry the Lord was fully aware of His entire life, suffering, death, resurrection.

Jesus' enemies never forgot what He said here. Cf. Matthew 26:61 and 27:40. At His trial they tried to use it against Him and on Calvary they used it in derision. Mark 15:29. (Buls)

Jesus does not respond with a hypothetical subjunctive, “If you destroy . . . then I will . . .” but with an aorist imperative, “[I tell you to] destroy . . .” Jesus uses a different word for “temple” in his resurrection promise. Unlike hieron (vv 14, 15), the word here, naos, refers to the temple proper—the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Jesus himself is the tabernacle of God’s glory (Jn 1:14), the place of atonement, the Tent of Meeting where God and man are reconciled in peace. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

The Jerusalem temple was always and only a type, a shadow of the body of the Christ to come. Ylvisaker writes, “When the leaders in Israel rejected the person of Jesus and led Him to His death, they also destroyed the temple as God’s dwelling. . . . What the Romans accomplished later [A. D. 70] was but the external ruination, the razing of an empty shell” (The Gospels [Milwaukee: Northwestern, 1977] 140). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

At the very start of his ministry, Jesus establishes his crucifixion and resurrection as the sign of his messiahship. That he himself will raise his body not only shows his power as the Son of God (Jn 10:18), it also promises us the continuation of the true temple. Jesus’ crucified and risen body is the true dwelling place of God. As the faithful eat and drink in the Sacrament, God is in his temple mercifully saving his people. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

2:20 *Jews then said* – The Jews dodged Jesus’ words. They refused to consider that they might bring the temple to ruin by profaning it and rejecting Jesus. Instead they, they zeroed in on Jesus’ promise and mocked it. Natural man disregards the Law and mocks the Gospel. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

No one understood Jesus’ sermon at the time. Only after the resurrection did they truly believe, i.e., find comfort in Jesus’ Gospel promise and perceive its relation to Ps 69:9 and the earthly temple he fulfilled. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

forty-six years. The temple was not finally completed until A.D. 64. The meaning is that work had been going on for 46 years. Since it had begun in 20 B.C., the year of the event recorded here is A.D. 26. (CSB)

Jesus had said "destroy this temple" meaning Himself. They use the same expression but use "shrine" in the sense of "temple," this temple. Verse 19 has been called a *maschal*, a deliberately enigmatic statement, a kind of riddle. In response to such a *maschal*, faith responds positively, though it does not understand all immediately. But unbelief reacts in rejection. Such is the case here. Herod had begun the rebuilding of the Temple forty-six years before, to gain the approval of the people. It was not actually finished for another thirty-six years, in 64 A.D., just six years before its destruction. Thus, Josephus. (Buls)

"And you are going to" is emphatic, something like: "And YOU mean to tell us etc." To these people, Jesus sounded like a fool. Read 1 Corinthians 1:25-30. The things which God says appear as mere foolishness and weakness to unbelievers. Expect that in our day too. Don't give up when it happens. Jesus didn't. Paul didn't. You shouldn't. (Buls)

The 46 years of construction fix the cleansing in A. D. 26 (Alford, The Greek Testament [Chicago: Moody, 1958] 1:710–711). The verb oikodomēthē is a “global aorist,” summarizing as a simple fact the building which continued for years (M. Zerwick, Biblical Greek [Rome: Biblical Institute, 1982] 83, para. 253). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

2:21-22 God's Son became one with us by virtue of his fleshly body (*tou sōmatos autou*). Our destruction is then destroyed with his death. Conversely, our resurrection is then secured by his. Christ's sinless and obedient form declares our sinful form free. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

2:21 *his body* – Christ's human body, where God dwelt and was made manifest, was given as the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of the world. (TLSB)

The body and person of Jesus were the anti-type to the greatest type of the Old Covenant, namely, the Tabernacle and the Temple (Solomon, Zerubbabel, Herod). The Temple was the place where God met the Covenant people. And no one comes to the Father but through Jesus. (Buls)

The Temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. The Israelis would like nothing better than to rebuild it. The Arabs won't permit it because The Dome of the Rock is built on the Temple site. The millennialists have an unScriptural view of Jerusalem and the Temple. It is gone for good. The Jews themselves were the cause of its destruction. (Buls)

2:22 *remembered*. See 14:26. (CSB)

John gives away the conclusion of the Gospel, implying that the readers already know the full story. (TLSB)

Kretzmann: The Jews did not understand Him. Even the disciples did not understand the saying at that time; in a way they were just as ignorant as the Jews. But they remembered it after the Lord's resurrection, and at that time drew their conclusions correctly. (Buls)

Lenski: The disciples found the key as verse 22 shows, but the Jews, because their unbelief grew only more intense, never found it (Matthew 26:61; Mark 14:57; 15:29). (Buls)

On this verse look at 12:16 and then 14:26. It is plain as can be that the disciples were no synergists. They had no innate powers of their own to believe. They recalled and then believed only because the Holy Spirit caused them to recall and then to believe. Neither enemy nor friend forgot what Jesus had said. Friend was enlightened by the Holy Spirit only through the Word of God. (Buls)

The obdurate rejection of Jesus on the part of His enemies led them to say what is recorded in Acts 6:14. They accused Jesus and Stephen of high treason. Read Stephen's final words at Acts 7:44-53 where he gives the Lord's enemies a severe verbal lashing. Jesus was the fulfillment of the Tabernacle and the Temple. The days of the Temple were numbered. Its destruction by the Romans in 70 A.D. is a stark reminder of what happens to those who reject Jesus, the Son of God, Who died and rose again for all. (Buls)

Unbelief does not recognize a true sign when it's pointed out; instead, it becomes a sign of judgment. So these Jews later tried to use Jesus' words against Him at His trial (Matthew 26:61). Even when Jesus rose from the dead to fulfill this sign, these Jews hardened their unbelieving hearts to the truth. The disciples, on the other hand, "recalled what He had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken. (PBC)

Notice how a disciple's faith grows. There is no hint here that the disciples understood what Jesus was saying any more than the unbelieving Jews did. They remembered Jesus words, however, and looked to Scripture for understanding and confirmation. They found Scripture that fit. Perhaps it was Psalm 16:10:

“You will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.” Then they saw the risen Jesus, they believed. (PBC)

2:13–22 With holy zeal, Jesus cleanses the temple, which has been turned into a marketplace, and He predicts His resurrection to those questioning His authority. When we disrespect God’s Word and sacred things, He calls us to repentance. Christ’s suffering, death, and resurrection reveal God’s heart, which is zealous for those He loves. • O risen Lord, give me a heart that fervently clings to You and Your Word. Amen. (TLSB)