

Resurrection of Our Lord - Day (4/4/10 – *The Amen of the Resurrection of Christ*)

In the Name JESUS. [Amen]

Alleluia! Christ is risen! [He is risen indeed! Alleluia!]

As we joyously celebrate *The Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*, today we ponder – for the last time in this series – the prayer our Savior has given us ... *The Lord's Prayer* ... under the theme: *The Amen of the Resurrection of Christ*.

Every aspect of our faith is wrapped up in this day – our Baptism, our forgiveness and salvation, our daily and eternal life ... even heaven itself. What's more, this is more than just personal ... just for us. The holy Name of God the Father is wrapped up in this day ... and of course His kingdom, His power, and His glory also. Without this day – without *The Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* – everything would be lost and void. Our Baptism would be just plain water only – and no Baptism. Our forgiveness would be a phantom – just some psychological placating of guilty conscience without substance. Our salvation would be only imagined – we would still be in our sins. Our life would be lost and futile – really, only a slow march to death. As St. Paul says in the first verse of our *Epistle* for this day: *If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied* [1COR 15.19]. And of course that is what the world thinks – and what our weak, sinful flesh thinks as well.

Throughout the season of *Lent* – in our *Lenten* midweek Vespers – and during this last *Holy Week*, we have been considering the theme: *The Our Father* (or *Lord's Prayer*) *and the Cross of Christ* – petition by petition. Finally – with our *Easter Resurrection* celebrations – we come to the Conclusion ... specifically the *Amen* of the prayer. We usually end our prayers with *Amen*. And I have often taught that if we cannot agree with a prayer – because it is not offered to the only true God Who has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit ... or because it asks God contrary to His revealed Will in Holy Scripture – if we cannot agree with a prayer we ought **not** add our *Amen*. For the word *Amen* comes from the Hebrew

through the Greek and Latin to us and means, as Luther rightly explains in the *Catechism*, “yes, it shall be so.” More simply still, *Amen* means “truth” or “truly” – as when Jesus says several times: *Truly, I say to you* or as recorded in John’s Gospel account, *Amen, amen, I say to you* || *Truly, truly, I say to you*. In other words, when our Lord speaks, you’d better listen up ... because here comes a profound and eternally important truth.

So it is, when we speak the *Amen* at the end of the prayer – whether we offer it ourselves or it is offered up by another – we are saying that we agree that the content of the prayer is true ... and that we believe and trust in the one to whom it is prayed as true. When a prayer is offered faithfully to the Triune God and in keeping with the Father’s good and gracious, holy Will, we voice our agreement and make it our prayer by adding the *Amen*. When a prayer is offered to a false god – which is no god at all, really – or is offered in any way that is contrary to God’s good and gracious will, we “voice” our disagreement and refuse to make it our prayer by withholding the *Amen*.

But what do I mean by *The Amen of the Resurrection of Christ*? Simply this – that just as we are saying that a prayer is true in all its parts with our *Amen*, just so also *The Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* is God the Father’s *Amen* to the life and work and death of Jesus of Nazareth. Was Jesus truly the Son of God, like He claimed? Jesus’ Resurrection on the third day is the Father’s *Amen*. Yes, He is the beloved Son, in Whom the Father is well pleased [LK 3.22; 20.13]. Was Jesus truly the Christ, the Anointed One, the long-promised Messiah? “Yes, this is most certainly true!” says the Father by raising Him from the dead. Is Jesus of Nazareth – Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried – the Holy One of God ... Whom Scripture prophesied would not be abandoned to Sheol or see corruption? Jesus’ Resurrection that we celebrate today is the Father’s *Amen* – yes, Jesus is the Holy One ... Who though He descended into hell did not suffer there, but declared His victory over sin, death, devil, and hell!

Was what Jesus taught and preached true doctrine ... is the *Lord's Prayer* a truly God-pleasing prayer ... is every thought, word, and deed of Jesus faithful to God's good and holy Will in all its parts? **Amen**, says the Father. Are the promises Jesus made – regarding forgiveness and life and salvation for all who repent and believe in Him – true and faithful? Can we really count on Christ's promises? **Amen**, yes, it is so – Jesus is raised on the third day, just as He said! Did the life of our Lord fulfill all the prophecies of Holy Scripture regarding the promised Savior? Did Jesus perfectly fulfill the whole Law and Will of God? Did He fulfill in our stead – acting as our Substitute and Mediator and Advocate – all that we ought to do ... and refrain from doing that which we are forbidden in God's Holy Writ? "Yes!" says the Father, "His life was a perfect human life ... the way it was created to be before sin entered the world and ruined it ... and He did it all for you!"

Was Jesus' life and suffering and death on the Cross a sufficient sacrifice to pay for your sins and mine ... and the sins of the whole world? Did He do enough? Was He holy enough ... righteous enough? Is God's holy and righteous wrath against our sins appeased? Are our sins atoned for? Is everything necessary for our salvation and eternal life really *finished*? **Amen**, says our God when Christ is raised and leaves the tomb.

And finally, will you be raised from the dead ... will your body be perfected and glorified like Christ's resurrected body ... will you live under Christ in His eternal, heavenly Kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness? **Amen, amen** ... "yes, yes, it shall be so!" For Christ is *the resurrection and the life ... whoever believes in HIM will live, even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in HIM will never die* [JN 11.25-26]. For *in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the Firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. Because HE live[s], you also will live* [JN 14.19]. You have the Father's **Amen** on it!

Alleluia! Christ is risen! [He is risen indeed! Alleluia!]

In the Name of the FATHER and of the ✠ SON and of the HOLY SPIRIT. [Amen]