

Ways of Growth and Blessing

- ◆ Listen to God through the Bible: ^{ESV} **Matthew 4:4** ... “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”
- ◆ Speak to God through prayer: ^{ESV} **John 15:7** “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”
- ◆ Receive God’s blessings of Word and Sacrament: ^{ESV} **Exodus 20:8** “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”
- ◆ Grow in your assurance: ^{ESV} **John 8:31-32** “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

Important Practices for Believers

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- ◆ Serve as gifted: ^{ESV} **1 Peter 4:10** “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another...”
- ◆ Support God’s work: ^{ESV} **2 Corinthians 9:7** “...God loves a cheerful giver.”

Going to heaven is all about knowing Jesus!

Then, *knowing Him – by grace through faith*, ✓ we have God’s peace, ✓ we know we are forgiven, and ✓ we know God will welcome us into heaven! Therefore, we ♣live with joy and ♣seek to tell others the good news about our Savior!

How to Connect with Us

Website: BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com
Location: 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134
(Just South of Pleasant Valley Road)
Schedule: See our “Join Us” brochure
Facebook: “Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma”
Podcast: “Benefit from the Bible”
Contact: 440-845-2230

(Last Update: 4-21)

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How Good Is Good Enough?

Have You Ever...

1. Told a lie (Revelation 21:8)?
2. Looked with lust (Matthew 5:28)?
3. Stolen anything (Exodus 20:15)?

If you answered, “Yes,” Jesus has good news for you! He said: “**I have not come to call the righteous** [people who think they are good] **but sinners to repentance**” (Luke 5:32 ESV).

Caution: If you think you *are good enough* and *will be welcomed into heaven* because you have •never told a lie, •never looked with lust, or •never stolen anything; *then you have been tricked into believing a lie*. All have sinned; see [Romans 3:10-20](#); [James 2:10](#); [1 John 1:8, 10](#).

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Good News for All Sinners

God's love is greater than our sins! Therefore, even though we have sinned countless times, *God still loves us!* In fact, He loves us so much that He gave His only Son to save us:

- ➔ **First:** He had to live as our perfect substitute, so the Son of God came down from heaven, put on flesh, was named **Jesus**, and lived a sinless life in our place.
- ➔ **Second:** He had to take the eternal punishment we deserve, so while He was on His cross God the Father put all the sins of the whole world on **Jesus**; then He received our eternal punishment.

Right before Jesus laid down His life He said: *“It is finished”* (John 19:30) or *“fulfilled.”* What does that mean? During Jesus' ministry He explained why He had come: *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets [thus the Old*

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Testament Scriptures]; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them” (Mat 5:17 ESV). So He lived for us, *perfectly keeping God's law!*

He also suffered and died, *so that we can have God's eternal blessings:*

- ➔ ^{ESV} **1 Peter 2:24** “[Jesus] himself bore our sins in his body on the tree [the cross], that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.”
- ➔ ^{ESV} **1 Peter 3:18** “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous [singular—Jesus] for the unrighteous [plural—all people], that he might bring us to God...”
- ➔ ^{ESV} **John 14:6** Jesus said..., “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father [who is in heaven] except through me.”

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How God's Eternal Blessings Are Received

Jesus' saving work is finished, but the benefits of His work must be received:

God is calling us to be sorry for our sins:

^{ESV} **2 Cor. 7:10** “For godly grief [a sorrow for sins that comes from God] produces a repentance that leads to salvation...”

God is calling us to believe in Jesus for God's forgiveness and our entrance into heaven:

^{ESV} **Ephesians 2:8-9** “For by grace [thus by God's love in Christ] you have been saved through faith [thus by the gift of faith given to you by God to trust in Jesus as your only Savior]. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Now, *being saved*, we have God's precious gifts of forgiveness, spiritual life, and eternal salvation!

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