

Piety in the Pestilence I

As the coronavirus works its way through America, and many suffer either directly from it or from the attempts to contain it, it is a temptation to worry, if not panic, for we fear what the virus might do to society. Yet, we Christians confess week upon week that we *believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth*. God alone is our maker, and Him alone do we fear.

When times are good, we walk through this world in dull ignorance of it, 'keeping busy' and doing 'what needs done.' When natural disasters loom over us, it is instinctive for us to look at the creation as if it is a place filled with threats, as if creation itself is an enemy. Yet in both seasons, times of peace and times of strife, we fail to appreciate the breadth and beauty of God's handiwork. Just as a man in a desert comes to a deep appreciation of water when he is thirsty, so too let us come to a deeper appreciation of this creation which God declared *very good*, while at the moment it may seem sorrowful. Truly, the God Who created this wonderful world, Who has redeemed our souls, shall deliver us through our sufferings, and into that beauty which He has promised unto us.

On Genesis, Valerius Herberger, a Lutheran theologian of the 17th century, writes:

"So even if all manner of cross and trouble come, I will confidently declare from these words: Take courage! We are not distressed, for we have a mighty Maker whose own we are. He can and will come to our aid. All creation bears witness to this. When look at the heavens arching so high above, my heart says, O dearest Jesus, how mighty Your hand must be! If you were so mightily able to construct this edifice, how can Your reach ever be prevented from helping me now in so little and petty a woe? As soon as I see the stars, my heart says, Dear Lord Jesus, how lovely are the works of Your hands! You must be far more beautiful in Your glory! Oh, how beautiful Your redeemed in heaven will be, for it was for us that You shed your blood, not for the stars. We too are your creatures, no less than the stars, and yet You have loved us a thousand times more than the stars; in this I take comfort. Though diseases may waste and

*wither me, yet eternal bliss will make everything beautiful again, full or rose,
Then I shall shine like the stars, yea, like the angels.”*

We here, the staff of Christ Lutheran Church, will attempt to regularly put such small meditations up on our blog for so long as the current troubles continue, so that, amidst all the talk of crisis and alarm, you may remember to Whom you belong, and to where you are destined, that you may have peace.

Pastor Fields