



In [last week's entry](#) of *the Conversations*, we learnt that we are all born with the same condemnation as Adam and Eve and we can't save ourselves. While we are still on the topic of sin, Rev. Oboya Ochalla returns to give us some hope, as the Director of Communications (Dr. T) brings closure to the question:

Dr. T: Why do Lutherans mean by 'sin'?

Rev. Ochalla: Our salvation, as a result, is not based on how well we overcome sin in our bodies – something which is impossible for us to do; but is always tied to the life of repentance – returning to Jesus (baptism, Word, Church, Holy Communion) – where He has promised to give us that Blood bought forgiveness from the Cross. Who will save us from this body of death? (St. Paul writes) “Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 7). Christian living, as a result, does not look like that ‘victorious living’ that many false preachers like to present to the world today. It always looks like humility and repentance – where we constantly put off our brokenness – even when we don't see or feel it in our hearts – to be constantly renewed by Jesus' gift of forgiveness (1 John 1:5-2:2). This is where we need the Sacraments.

Lutherans define the Sacraments in very specific terms. These are things that Jesus has commanded where His promise of forgiveness is attached. This leaves us with three places: Baptism, Absolution (forgiveness spoken by the pastor), and Holy Communion. We insist on these three as necessary practices at the heart of the Church both 1) because of Jesus' command and also 2) because these are the only places where Jesus has promised to bring the Gift of the Sacrifice of the Cross (together with the Gift of His Holy Spirit) into our lives today. Without these, we leave ourselves cut-off from that connection – unforgiven – according to the Bible.

Rev. Oboya Ochalla was ordained in 2019 and serves as the Associate Pastor at St. James Lutheran Church.

With all this deliberation on sin, can humans be good at all? In our next *Conversation*, another pastor answers this question as we get back to the basics . . .