

Outside of Christ, You are a Zombie  
Joe Willmann

Northern Illinois District Lutheran Church Extension Fund District Vice President

*And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (Ephesians 2:1-3)*

I am not a Greek scholar. I would assume that most of you reading this are not, either. Even so, there are some words in Koine Greek that I love because of the combination of what they proclaim and how they sound. That might be a bit silly, but I challenge you not to smile when you think about this:

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. (2 Timothy 3:16)*

The Greek word for the phrase 'breathed out by God,' or in a literal sense, God-breathed, is θεόπνευστος (theopneustos). For those of you who are reading this and saying, "How would I pronounce that?" I'll give you the authoritative-Willmann-phonetical-guide (which is a fancy way of saying that my wife, who is a trained reading teacher, will roll her eyes when she reads this): thay-op-new-stah-s. How cool is that word? First, it sounds fantastic, and second, its meaning is crucial for us as we understand the inspiration of Holy Scripture.

Ephesians 2 starts with another important word in the Greek, νεκρός (nekros, which is pronounced neck-ros). The root of this word means 'not alive.' You could read the opening of Ephesians 2: 'And you were dead, a goner, a rotting bag of flesh walking around.' or 'And you were a zombie.'

You were, past tense, the walking dead. But, dear Saint, you are no longer a zombie because you are no longer outside of Christ. You have been attached to Christ in the hearing of His Word and in being touched by Him in the waters of Holy Baptism. Paul proclaims this to the church in Galatia saying:

*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)*

Your life now is no longer nekros. Your life is now Christ's life, in which you go about living by faith in Him, who died and rose for you. Rejoice in that good news today and every day.