**Proverbs 31:10-31** An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. **11** The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. **12** She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. **13** She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. **14** She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar. **15** She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and portions for her maidens. **16** She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. **17** She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong. **18** She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night. **19** She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. **20** She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy. **21** She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet. **22** She makes bed coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. **23** Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land. **24** She makes linen garments and sells them; she delivers sashes to the merchant. **25**  Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. **26** She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. **27** She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. **28** Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: **29** “Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.” **30**  Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. **31** Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.

**Titus 2:1-15** But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. **2** Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. **3**  Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, **4** and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, **5** to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. **6** Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. **7** Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, **8** and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. **9**  Slaves are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, **10** not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. **11** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, **12** training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, **13**  waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, **14**  who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. **15** Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Since Christ is at home with us, our homes have life in His name.

1. Christ comes to the suppressed home.
2. Christ brings surprise into the home.
3. Christ makes the home steadfast.

 In the Name of Jesus. Amen. As we draw to the close of Advent this final week. It is natural as we come to Christmas to focus upon the home. We know it was into the home God came being born of the Virgin Mary. Even our secular society still wants to celebrate the home. The song, “I’ll be home for Christmas” sums up the holiday goal many long to achieve. The modern movie, “Home Alone” has Kevin, a young boy, who his family left behind for Christmas. When thieves arrive on the scene he give his famous line, “This is my house, I have to defend it.” The emphasis we have on home still rings out today, but that has not always been the case. Before the Reformation, society and life was not as hospitable to the home.

 If last week, we praised St. Lucia and her celibate life of charity and martyrdom, tonight we have to consider the other side of that coin. St. Katharina Von Bora was born in 1499, but family difficulties right from the start set things in motion. Hardship of finances and a mother’s death was enough to have her father put her into the Benedictine convent at the age of five years old. Of course, Katharina Von Bora should sound familiar, because this nun would later become the wife of Martin Luther. She would be invaluable to Luther in caring for him and keeping stability in their home, which was actually an old Augustinian monastery. Since Christ is at home with us, we find our homes have life in His name.

1. **Christ comes to the suppressed home.**
2. The life of a nun had turned into a prison to which Katharina belonged.
* Our Lutheran father’s describe this disgrace in the Augsburg Confession stating, “Many entered monastic life through ignorance…They were trapped and compelled to remain…This displeased many good people before this time, who saw that young men and women were thrown into convents for a living. They saw what unornate results came of this procedure, how it created scandals, and what snares were cast upon conscience!” (Concordia 64:53-54).
* Unlike most women, Katharina as a nun was educated, so reading Luther showed her how the grace of God was through faith alone and not prayers and works.
* Courage from the Gospel allowed her in 1523 along with some other sisters to seek release from their convent life.
1. What we face today in life has also emptied the home and made plenty of prisons for people.
* Technology continues to both easy the daily task of family life, but at the loss of turning into selfishness.
* Financial goals and worries have led both spouses to work away from home along with the term “family planning” to cover up the truth of abortion.
* Unhealthy doctrines have worked their way into the home, but the cure is Christ and His saving Word, “For the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all people…”
1. **Christ brings surprise into the home.**
2. Luther had this happen when finding husbands for those refugee nuns whose families would not take them back.
* The man of the reformation had to eat his own words about God’s value of marriage, when Katharina would settle only for Martin Luther.
* They married in 1525 him being 42 and her 26 having six children and a self-sufficient life with Katie running a boarding house and brewing beer.
* By her sacrificial spirit and discipline as a nun, Katie more than self-worth had a service that in pictures shows Luther singing and teaching at home.
1. Much surprise can happen in the home beyond the credit we give it in our world.
* Never forget Jesus had a blessed life to godly parents in the home while growing up.
* The first miracle of Jesus was at wedding of a man and woman and the parable on the wise home built upon the Rock is about His forgiveness. (laughter)
* Men and husbands look past the sale pitches of society for, “Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.”

1. **Christ makes the home steadfast.**
2. Katie trusted in the greater faithfulness of God and not her works.
* As a mother, she had miscarriages along with losing two of her six children before adulthood, which meant Christ alone as her refuge in life.
* When Luther died, Katie had deep grief and hardship having to fight for her home and even flee for safety.
* Not martyrdom, but a sad accident led to her death in 1552, but leave it to a German to have her last words be, “I’ll stick to Christ like a burr to a cloth” (Celebrating the Saints, 231).
1. The integrity of the home remains safe with steadfastness in Christ.
* There is nothing greater than what parents bring children to Jesus by baptism and how they invite Christ to be in their homes.
* To those suffering grief of losing a spouse or hardships of a brutal world, the church is a home created by God for those bearing crosses in family.
* Earthly homes need the better promise that we are, “waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”

 Fixing and caring for the home rests in each of our hands based upon the vocations God has given. Society likes the niceties about playing house, but the Christian knows the greater purpose. Rather than, “I’ll be home for Christmas.” How about, “I’ll just be home.” Rather than, “This is my house and I have to defend it.” How about, “We need a united front as husband and wife and to defend what God says is good.” Since Christ is at home with us, we find our homes have life in His name. Amen. In the name of the Father Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.