

To Andreas Osiander,
Preacher in Nurnberg

June 8, 1545

Grace and peace in Christ, who is our consolation and our very own, even as we are His, "for whether we live or die," as St. Paul says, "we are the Lord's." We have heard, my excellent Osiander, that you have again been visited by a cross, and a twofold cross, through the deaths of your dear wife and beloved daughter. I, too, know from the death of my dearest child how great must be your grief. I often marvel that I am unable to forget the loss of my Wenchen, although I know she is in the regions above, in the new life, saved and redeemed, and that God has thereby given me a true token of His love in having, during my life, taken my flesh and blood to His Fatherly heart. But this love of which I speak is only natural love, which, although good and natural, must still be crucified with us, so that the gracious will of God may be done. For which cause His dear Son, through whom and by whom all things exist, freely gave His life, unto the death. I write all this to testify that we are partakers in your trial, even as God has made you true and faithful participants of our faith and doctrine. Thus you must yield up your Isaac as a burnt-offering, for a sweet savour to God; not your daughter nor your wife, for these live and are happy in the Word, but that natural strong and imperious love which asserts itself too powerfully in us. Farewell, and believe that we love you.

Martin Luther.