

By God's Grace a Confessing Confessional Lutheran Church

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A competent observer of the contemporary Lutheran scene in the U.S., not of the Wisconsin Synod and writing in 1969, describes us in this way:

The Wisconsin Synod is known for its uncompromising dedication to orthodox, confessional Lutheranism. It teaches a “word for word” verbal inspiration of the Bible, accepts Scripture as “true and without error in everything it says”...

The Wisconsin Synod is now one of the most conservative of all Lutheran bodies. But it wasn't always that way. It started out liberal...ⁱ

That observer's statement that the Wisconsin Synod “wasn't always that way. It started out liberal” supplies us a starting point and a basic theme in harmony with the one-word anniversary motto, “Grace.”

In all of the events and developments in the past 125 years of the Wisconsin Synod's history—whether that be in the area of education or administration, outreach or expansion, finances or any other field of endeavor—the blessings of effective grace are everywhere and always in evidence. But nowhere is the working of that grace anywhere more manifest than in the Synod's doctrinal history, in the development of its theological position, in its confessional stance.ⁱⁱ

In spite of errant intentions and erratic beginnings 125 years ago, in spite of contrary tendencies from within and contrived temptations from without on numerous occasions since 1850, the Wisconsin Synod is by grace a confessing confessional church as it commemorates its founding a century and a quarter ago. It is the working of this effective grace in the confessional history of the Synod that we desire to ponder and emphasize in this conference anniversary observance.

The response that will be pleasing to God and appropriate to His grace is patterned for us by the forefathers of the Synod, gathered for their eleventh convention at Fond du Lac in 1860. With only ten years of history behind them, they devoted the morning of June 6 to listening to a reading of the Synod's history that they in the previous year had commissioned President Muehlhaeuser to write. The 1860 minutes report:

The Synod heard with great interest the history of the Synod from its founding, further development, and growth up to the present time. The countless evidences of gracious assistance, of mercy and faithfulness, of great blessing which the Lord has placed on our insignificant efforts, and which were thereby made manifest to us, moved us to deepest gratitude and aroused in us the joyful hope that He, who up to now has so faithfully been with us, will also in the future be with us, moved us, however, also to a more joyful commitment to work with the Word that He has placed in our hands.ⁱⁱⁱ

With our much larger and longer record of God's grace and blessings on our “insignificant efforts” we ought to be all the more grateful in our response to the grace and all the more zealous in our study of the record. The record does not always flatter every individual and group inclination and undertaking. In fact, evidences of shortsightedness and shortcomings, stupidity, and sin abound. By the same token, God's grace abounds the more.

We ought not in this anniversary observance misrepresent 125 years of history by distortion or subtraction or mythologizing in the well-intentioned but misguided interest of magnifying the name of our Synod and its leaders and shielding it from all that might seem to distract. We might thereby increase the WELS name and fame; we might also in the process decrease our appreciation of God's grace working effectively in our doctrinal history.

A synodical anniversary is a most inappropriate time for that peculiar view to surface that holds the less we know about the past the happier we can be. A better approach is indicated by the statement quoted on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod: "A church that forgets its history is as a man who loses his memory."^{iv} Above all else, we don't want to lose our memory of God's grace and goodness to us as individuals and as a church body in the past, especially in the matter of a sound and saving doctrine and a confessing confessional position.

To fortify this memory is the underlying purpose of this essay and to achieve this purpose the assigned topic, "By God's Grace a Confessing Confessional Lutheran Church" is being divided into three parts. The pathways along which the God of our fathers and of us guided the Wisconsin Synod to the confessional position it maintains today will be traced in three major areas of doctrine: Scripture and Fellowship, Justification and Salvation, Church and Ministry.

Part One: By God's Grace a Confessing Confessional Lutheran Church in the Doctrines of Scripture and Fellowship

A long look back to what Wisconsin was over one hundred years ago and even beyond that to what its background was when it came into being in December 1849 and May 1850 is a natural starting point and a most useful aid in emphasizing the theme, "By God's Grace." Wisconsin's roots were deeply grounded, not in good confessional soil, but in the sands of Pietism and Union. The founding fathers, Muehlhaeuser, Weinmann and Wrede, were trained for the work, sent into the work and assisted in the work by a unionistic mission society.

From 1817 on when King Frederick William III proclaimed the Prussian Union involving Lutherans and Reformed, religious forces in German-speaking countries were divided into unionistic and confessional camps, each of which had its own varieties and divisions. It is against this background that the beginnings of the Wisconsin Synod are to be viewed.

For over a century before 1817 the cause of Lutheran confessionalism had been under severe attack by the twin foes of Pietism and Rationalism. A consequent deterioration of Lutheran confessionalism had set in many areas. Those rationalistically inclined saw little reason to uphold Lutheran doctrine over against that of the Reformed, since they viewed both as unreasonable and objectionable. The Pietist's zeal for the cause led him to stray across denominational lines when seeking allies for his efforts and to minimize differences so that great goals might be more easily achieved. When the Union came, both the rationalistically inclined Lutherans and the Pietists in the denomination saw little reason for opposition and many reasons for espousal. Mission societies for spreading the Gospel to Africa, Asia, Australia, and America that enlisted the joint efforts of both Lutherans and Reformed received a boost at this time. Among them was the agency that sent out the Wisconsin Synod founders, referred to variously as the Rhine or Barmen or Langenberg Mission Society.

The Prussian Union of 1817 had an entirely different effect on those who still retained a good measure of their, Lutheran consciousness and confessionalism. Seeing their treasure threatened they cherished and preserved and defended it the more. A confessional revival,

sparked by the 1817 Ninety-Five Theses of Klaus Harm, was set in motion. It strengthened the Lutheranism of many who found themselves tangled up in one manifestation of the Union or the other. It inspired others to continue to struggle against all forms of the Union until finally under the next ruler they were allowed a free church outside the state establishment. It motivated others, such as Stephan's Saxons and Grabau's Prussians, to leave their homeland for a free country and to take their staunch brand of Lutheranism with them.

In the course of several decades of conflict deep-rooted thought processes and life patterns were developed within the different Lutheran camps and also sharp and bitter animosities. It was easy for the "Old Lutheran" in Buffalo or St. Louis to downgrade the well-intentioned effort of the "New Lutheran" Wisconsin as a pious front to cover the sins of unionism. It was equally easy for the "New Lutheran" to reject the sound precept and example of the "Old Lutheran" as more of the same old loveless nitpicking and Pharisaism.

These considerations will help us appreciate the miracle of God's grace in guiding the Wisconsin Synod in its infant years to a confessional position that in word and deed held to the truths of Scripture as taught in the Lutheran Confessions. Our synod began as an enterprise of missionaries trained and sent out by the Langenberg Society that desired to be supported by and be of service to both Lutherans and Reformed.

A special look at synod founder Muehlhaeuser is in place. He was the first influential leader and his personal theological stance seems to strike the average for the very heterogeneous group of pastors gathered into the Wisconsin Synod in its earliest years. During Wisconsin's first decade Muehlhaeuser as president was for all practical purposes the Synod and in most of the next decade his role as "Senior" enabled him to continue to wield considerable influence in the affairs of the young church body.^v

On his trip to scout Iowa in 1853 Pastor Deindoerfer of Frankenhilf, Michigan, detoured through Milwaukee. In his description of the town he adds:

It is also there that the president of the united Milwaukee Synod, Pastor Muehlhaeuser has his headquarters... Here I was forced once again after a long time to strike out in all earnestness at the deceptive and lying nature of the union church.^{vi}

This reference to Muehlhaeuser and Wisconsin by one who would help found the Iowa Synod is mild compared to denunciations to be found in the pages of *Der Lutheraner*.^{vii}

It is no secret that Muehlhaeuser's Basel background and Langenberg backing made him prone to unionistic practices in his earliest Wisconsin endeavors and in his synodical presidency. His first congregational organization was an "evangelical" venture.^{viii} At the dedication of his congregation's church building a Congregationalist preached on and a Presbyterian prayed for "amiable tabernacles."^{ix} There is no question about Muehlhaeuser's love for the Savior's name and zeal for the Gospel's spread. That was demonstrated beyond doubt and above the call of duty in the Old and the New World, in our country's East and Midwest, as colporteur and teacher and pastor and synod president. By the same token, there is no question about Muehlhaeuser's inclination to prefer a mild, unionistic type of Lutheranism to the more confessional, "Old Lutheran" approach.

Talis rex, qualis grex, the classical proverb says. The synod Muehlhaeuser founded in 1849-1850 and led from 1850 to 1860 demonstrated in its earliest years the spirit and stance of its leader. Appeals for men and money were directed as a matter of course to Mission societies not strictly Lutheran. Already in 1851 the body resolved that:

the President be empowered as soon as possible to send off a plea by letter to the German-Protestant Society in Barmen with the urgent request that it would especially be mindful of Wisconsin the next time it is sending out pastors.^x

In time the overseas assistance would become a crucial point in the Wisconsin Synod's internal struggle over the confessional issue.

Meantime the weak and erroneous doctrinal approach to confessionalism and fellowship manifested itself in a variety of unsound practices by the body as a whole and by member pastors and congregations. Union congregations and Lord's Supper celebrations, the same pastor serving both Lutheran and Reformed groups, employing Reformed materials for liturgical and educational purposes—these are some of the objectionable practices that need not be extensively treated here. Suffice it to use them as examples of an unwholesome practice that in itself was evidence of an erroneous view of the doctrine of fellowship and of a lack of appreciation for sound confessionalism that plagued the Wisconsin Synod for much of its first two decades.

However, before the second decade was completed a remarkable about-face had taken place. When the formal Wisconsin-Missouri colloquy was held October 21-22, 1868, in Milwaukee, the participants found themselves in full agreement when they discussed "open questions," other points of doctrine, and various controversial issues. Professor Walther himself magnanimously bestowed the accolade of orthodoxy when he reported in *Der Lutheraner*: "We must admit that all our reservations about the honored Wisconsin Synod not only have vanished but have been put to shame. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift."^{xi}

Walther correctly identifies the cause for the remarkable change in the Wisconsin Synod's position on confessionalism and fellowship. He views this development first and last as an occasion for praising God's grace and thanking Him for His indescribable gift. We should do the same in these anniversary deliberations of our district and always. In instance after instance in the early history of the Wisconsin Synod God's good grace can be seen working to achieve His purpose in spite of the faults and failings of Men.

A case in point is the constitution adopted in the May 1850 meeting. The drafting was done by Muehlhaeuser but in the adopted form the confessional stand is surprisingly firm. It is spelled out most clearly in the section regulating the ordination of licensed candidates. This is the stipulation:

At ordination each candidate is pledged to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as well as the other Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and he is to be asked the following questions:

- 1) Do you believe that the fundamental doctrines of Holy Scripture are purely, essentially, and correctly contained in the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and the other Evangelical Lutheran Confessions?
- 2) Are you firmly resolved to make them the norm of doctrine in your important office and to teach constantly in accord with them?^{xii}

Koehler describes how the constitutional manuscript was altered with some references to Scripture and Confessions crossed out and the terms *reines Bibelwort* and *reines Bibelchristentum* inserted.^{xiii} There is no reason to doubt Koehler's conjecture that the Basel-flavored insertions represent Muehlhaeuser's original intention but that they were rejected by the other founding fathers, who favored the more confessional wording. Sometime later Muehlhaeuser—a man convinced against his will by other founders at Granville, but of the same opinion still—must have derived some sort of satisfaction in having the last, if unofficial, word by penning in the changes.

The incident merits a comment or two. God in His grace gave us a founding father in Muehlhaeuser who had great zeal for the Gospel cause and a great ability to win friends and influence people. To this man, whose training and experience had not fostered the firmest brand of confessionalism, God gave along with the leadership qualities also the ability to yield a point when confronted by the better cause. God led Muehlhaeuser to the presiding chair at Granville but he also filled other chairs with Wrede, trained by Ludwig Knak who stood firm for the Lutheran Confessions, and with Weinmann, whom even the most anti-Wisconsin *Lutheraner* article praises for his orthodox stand.^{xiv} The result was a better official position than might have been expected at Granville.

The record supplies another interesting instance of Muehlhaeuser's willingness to yield to the better opinion.^{xv} It illustrates also the determination and aggressiveness with which the gracious Lord endowed Muehlhaeuser's successor, the second synodical president, John Bading. When Bading began work in Calumet, he immediately bucked the system. He rejected the licensing practice and insisted on prompt ordination. When Muehlhaeuser came to Calumet to do the ordaining, Bading and he got into a second dispute. Bading wanted to be pledged to the whole body of Lutheran Confessions; Muehlhaeuser tried to avoid this by speaking slightly of *papierne Scheidewaende*. However, the fledgling pastor had his way, while the venerable leader yielded.

The scene at Calumet suggests and symbolizes a large chapter of early Wisconsin history and clearly sounds this essay's leitmotiv of grace. What happened there foreshadowed the key development in Wisconsin's second decade, the replacement of the Muehlhaeuser regime with its easygoing fellowship practices by the more confessional stance of the Bading era. And this happened unexpectedly, not as man would have thought things should happen but as God wanted them to happen.

That Bading entered and remained in the Wisconsin Synod, let alone served as its president from 1860 to 1889 with time out for European fund raising in the mid 1860's, is nothing short of a miracle. He began his training as one of the original Hermannsburg class but did not complete it there. The society's records state of this original class: "After a four-year training there were left in the Mission House eight of the twelve enrolled. Two the Lord had taken away by death, two others became unfaithful."^{xvi} Bading was one of the latter two. In official reports Harms supplies the detail that the two were dismissed "because the earthly work became too much for them" and remarks:

God forgive them the deep concern they thereby caused us all and open their eyes that they realize their sin. The Lord has thus far heard our prayer in that one of them is deeply sorrowful over his sin and has asked for forgiveness, which was also heartily granted him, even though his request for readmittance to the school could not be granted.^{xvii}

Thus instead of being a Harms missionary in Africa, Bading became a Langenberg missionary in Wisconsin.

Discouraging experiences at his first Calumet post caused Bading to consider joining the Missouri Synod and it was only District President Fuerbringer's advice that kept him in Wisconsin.^{xviii} Soon his abilities were recognized. He served as synodical secretary and in 1860 was elected president. His first presidential address already marks a turning point in Wisconsin's doctrinal history.^{xix}

In 1862 the presidential call for confessionalism is clear and compelling.^{xx} However, more of the training of the Holy Spirit and more of the working of God's grace would be needed

before there would be a full appreciation of sound confessionalism and God-pleasing fellowship in word and deed, in doctrine and life. The middle years of its second decade were crucial in the Wisconsin Synod's doctrinal development.

This winnowing time brought with it one test and crisis after the other. The struggle for confessionalism had begun back in Europe over the Union issue. It had been brought to our land by "Old Lutherans" and had been revived and intensified in the clash with the native development of "American Lutheranism." In 1856 Wisconsin had rejected this "American Lutheranism" by resolving:

The newly fabricated so-called Definite Platform is definitely rejected by us, the Evangelical Lutheran Wisconsin Synod because it recognizes 1) that the U.A.C. is grounded in God's Word, 2) that accepting the so-called Platform amounts to nothing less than a definite suicide of the Lutheran Church.^{xxi}

Then in the mid 1860's came two developments that brought Wisconsin to the proverbial crossroads.^{xxii} One was the General Council founding and the other was the problem of the relations between Wisconsin and the Langenberg Society triggered by Bading's overseas collection effort. Through these events the Lord of the Church achieved His purpose for the Wisconsin Synod, employing to this end a variety of aids and abilities He had been graciously supplying.

The Lord's grace preserved and blessed the continuing testimony of the more confessionally minded members of the synod. Bading's name has been mentioned in this connection. Others, such as Koehler and Reim, could be added. Much of the confessional testimony was produced in the area of the Northwestern Conference.^{xxiii}

One name stands out above all the rest. In 1863 Adolph Hoenecke joined the Wisconsin Synod and was sent to the Farmington congregation. He had studied at Halle and was one of the university theologians who responded to the call of the mission societies for volunteers for service in America with the stipulation that a European post would be made available after some five or six years of foreign service. By the time those years had passed Hoenecke was so busily engaged in the work that he gave no thought to exercising the option to return to Europe. After a few years at Farmington Hoenecke was called to the newly founded Watertown school as dean of students and theology professor. The combination of the training previously received and the study the new post required was ideal in fitting Hoenecke to fill the role of chief theologian of the Wisconsin Synod in the crucial developments of the very next years.

Among the influences that helped turn the Wisconsin Synod into a more confessional direction, the Missouri Synod, its publications, and Dr. Walther are frequently mentioned. This too was a blessing God's grace granted Wisconsin when it needed help so badly. Having said this, one may add that the importance of Missouri in Wisconsin's development may well be exaggerated. Twenty-five years ago when Wisconsin was offering Missouri much unsolicited advice regarding fellowship and unionism, the preface to the lesson usually was the obvious *captatio benevolentiae* device of suggesting that Wisconsin got so much direction from Missouri in the 1850's it wanted to return the favor in the 1950's. Perhaps that theme was overplayed. Some got the impression that back in the 1850's and 1860's it was almost a heathen mission operation with Missouri in mission and with Wisconsin playing the other role. To mention this is not to deny that blessings came to the Wisconsin Synod via the Missouri Synod. But these were transmitted much more by the example that Missouri was providing in the way of a confessional practice than by instruction in periodicals that was seldom edifying and often misinformed.

The Lord found other avenues whereby He could exert a wholesome influence from the outside on the doctrinal position of the Wisconsin Synod. Aid came from the Pennsylvania Ministerium, by that time one of the most conservative synods in the East, and there were close and helpful contacts with C. F. Schaeffer. Muehlhaeuser was acquainted with W. Passavant of the Pittsburgh Synod. The neighboring Iowa Synod may have had its problems with “open questions” in and outside the Confessions but on the whole it knew where it stood on the broad issues of relations with the Reformed. On occasion Iowa men attended Wisconsin Synod conventions and Prof. S. Fritschel in 1867 preached on, of all subjects, election at a Wisconsin convention service.^{xxiv}

Through these gifts of God’s grace and through His continuing guidance the Wisconsin Synod was able to meet and master the great tests of its doctrinal position on confessionalism and fellowship that came its way around 1866-1867, the watershed years for Lutheranism in America. The first test was set in motion by the coincidence of the establishment of the Watertown school, the need for financing, Bading’s fund-raising trip in Europe, and the growing sense of confessionalism in the Wisconsin Synod itself.

This frequently told story, familiar to most in the assembly, can be given very condensed treatment.^{xxv} As the Wisconsin Synod more and more sought to check forms of a Lutheran-Reformed ministry, the mission societies on their part sought to prevent this elimination of familiar practices. The best leverage the societies could find to exert pressure was the collection campaign of Bading and of course the familiar aids of the past. Wisconsin was confronted by the threat that overseas assistance would be cut off if the body persisted in its confessional endeavors.

The Wisconsin reaction in 1867 was indicative of the problem facing a synod that has come to a fork in the road of its doctrinal pathway. There were majority and minority reports on the crucial question before the convention, with the majority report strongly rejecting unionism and the minority report combining a rejection of “doctrinal union” with a justification of the acceptance of aid from those whose membership in the Union was involuntary and protesting.^{xxvi} The minority report was adopted but efforts to prevent the inclusion of the majority report in the published minutes were defeated. The societies themselves soon confronted the Wisconsin Synod with an accomplished fact of broken ties. By 1869 the Wisconsin Synod itself renounced all “claims on the collection gathered for it in the Prussian State Church.”^{xxvii}

Meanwhile the General Council development created for the Wisconsin Synod another test of its confessional position. In 1866 Wisconsin had shared in the planning for the organization of a confessional Lutheran Synod by combining the withdrawing element of the General Synod with independent synods, chiefly in the midwest. However, when the “Four Points,” questions regarding altar fellowship, pulpit fellowship, lodge membership, and chiliasm, became an issue at Ft. Wayne in 1867, the Wisconsin delegation formally protested the Council’s indecision and declared that they must report unfavorably to the next convention of their body.^{xxviii}

That convention of 1868 resolved that it must have a better statement on the “Four Points” from the next Council convention or it would be compelled to withdraw. The 1868 Pittsburgh meeting of the General Council failed to produce the desired statement in spite of a protesting minority report in which Bading joined with Pastor Adelberg of New York and President Klingmann of Michigan.^{xxix} In his next year’s presidential report to the Helenville convention, Bading described the unsatisfactory outcome at Pittsburgh and the convention emphatically voted to put its 1868 withdrawal resolution into effect.^{xxx} It thus became the first of

a number of synods to withdraw from the General Council for reasons that had to do with confessionalism and the doctrine and practice of fellowship.

More important was the positive result. The Wisconsin Synod could now join in the effort to found the Synodical Conference. This phase of Wisconsin's doctrinal history was begun when the 1868 Missouri-Wisconsin colloquy resulted in a mutual recognition of doctrinal orthodoxy, was furthered when the unity was formally recognized in 1869 by Wisconsin at Helenville and by Missouri in Ft. Wayne, and was consummated in July 1872 when Wisconsin became one of the six charter members of the Synodical Conference. The Conference in a *Denkschrift* itself set down its *raison d'être* which has been broken down into these three points:

1. The Synodical Conference founders were intent on preserving the Lutheran Confessions as a living force in the church;
2. They insisted that the church must hold to all doctrines of Scripture;
3. They recognized that Scripture determines fellowship practices.^{xxxii}

This was the confessional position on the doctrines of Scripture and fellowship to which God in His grace had led the Wisconsin Synod from small and poor beginnings and in spite of erring and hesitant steps.

This was the position on Scripture and fellowship in which God in His grace maintained the Synodical Conference and the Wisconsin Synod for many years well into this century. This was the position for which under God's grace the Wisconsin Synod contended in the conflicts during the last decades before the Synodical Conference's rupture in 1963.

Major national and international events in this century's history provided a variety of occasions for the Lutherans in America to develop more and more the unionistic outlook that had been nurtured already when the various churches were young on the frontier. Ethnic and language differences had served as a brake for the time being. Then came World War I and the cooperation that led to numerous mergers and the National Lutheran Council. It was followed by World War II and more cooperation that produced bigger mergers and a bigger Lutheran Council in the USA. In between came the granddaddy of all our country's depressions that placed a premium, also in the churches, on elimination of waste, duplication of effort, and competition.

In those circumstances it was not easy to maintain the fellowship standards of Scripture to which the Synodical Conference was dedicated, the precept that doctrinal unity must come first and only then, as a result and fruit, joint worship and church work. The Missouri Synod in the middle third of the century undertook an energetic effort at outreach in home and foreign missions, in evangelism and broadcasting, and in other areas, an effort in many ways most commendable. But in the big and busy outreach, in the many discussions and negotiations with other Lutheran bodies the old Synodical Conference fellowship stand began to be less stand and more wavering and retreat. Exceptions were no longer proving but disproving the rules. Familiar Bible passages had to be given new twists.^{xxxiii} When the Missouri Synod's fellowship theology shifted, the whole Synodical Conference was threatened.

The Wisconsin Synod might easily have been dragged along by the much larger sister synod. It was beset, though on a much smaller scale, by the same turmoil and temptation in the world round about it. It had problems also in times of war and depression. God in His grace, however, supplied guidance and leadership and strengthening with the result that the Wisconsin Synod continued to uphold the Scriptural doctrine of fellowship.

For over a decade, one single issue after the other was debated in conventions and publications: 1938 Union Resolutions, Scouting, Military Chaplaincy, Joint Prayer, Cooperation in Externals, Common Confession. Even at this late date it is painful to recall the sorry list.^{xxxiii}

By 1953 and especially 1955 the pattern of unionism behind the single instances was being seen more clearly and opposed more vigorously.^{xxxiv} It was by and large a thankless task to be constantly saying no, to be forever championing the unpopular cause. The Lord supplied the stamina and the patience to continue the testimony that had to be given to those in fellowship, though erring in fellowship.

Eventually came the last-ditch effort of developing statements on the chief doctrines at issue, with theologians from all Synodical Conference synods participating in the effort. A statement on Scripture acceptable to all synods was drawn up.^{xxxv} Before the Antichrist statement was given full attention at the synodical level, an impasse was reached by the committee drafting the statement on fellowship.^{xxxvi} Since what Wisconsin and its Norwegian ally were contending for was the Bible truth that doctrinal unity is the requisite for all forms of spiritual fellowship, the impasse in the discussions on the doctrine of fellowship could have but one outcome. Fellowship with Missouri and membership in the Synodical Conference were terminated.

In this long controversy the Lord of the Church not only enabled the Wisconsin Synod to retain the position on fellowship to which it had been led in an earlier era of its history, but also in the controversy effected greater clarification and appreciation of the old position. The terminology “unit concept of fellowship “ is a case in point.^{xxxvii} This may have troubled some momentarily when first encountered but by now it has become for all a valuable tool in teaching and applying the Bible truths regarding spiritual fellowship.

In the long course of dealing with Missouri, that began as far back as 1939 and was not terminated until 1961, some understandably became impatient and reached the conclusion that a break in fellowship with Missouri was long overdue. To some this conviction came in 1953, to others in 1955, to still others in 1957, to others later. No one has ever argued that it was morally wrong for them to leave the Wisconsin Synod when their consciences and their convictions regarding Romans 16:17 told them that that was the right thing to do. However, the Wisconsin Synod held and holds that the Romans passage in question is not correctly interpreted when it is understood to preclude the duty and opportunity of admonishing further the church body or smaller segment thereof that has fallen into error. Passages that urge us to endeavor to preserve the bond of fellowship and to help the weak compel us to reject the stand and the charges of those in the Church of the Lutheran Confession.^{xxxviii} It is our prayer that God’s grace might recall them from the byway into which they were led in the fellowship controversy with Missouri. This is a byway, we hasten to add, about which we readily and humbly say, “There but for the grace of God go I.”

By now it has become clear that while this fellowship controversy was running its course, the Missouri Synod was encountering difficulties in the matter of the doctrine of Scripture. In 1961 and 1963 the official position was acceptable. Missouri also accepted the excellent final Synodical Conference statement on inspiration and inerrancy. For that matter, the “official” position in 1974 is also acceptable. But the sharp division in the Missouri Synod symbolized by the rival seminaries in St. Louis is caused by and gives evidence of a difference regarding Scripture, with one party espousing historical-critical interpretation, Gospel reductionism, and something less than inerrancy. This is, however, no occasion for gloating, or saying “we told you so,” but rather of realizing again how thankful we ought to be that God’s grace has protected us from such destructive errors which can take hold so quickly and do damage so extensively.

Gratitude for that grace will motivate us to see clearly the blessing and treasure bestowed on us in the Biblical doctrine of Scripture and fellowship and then to act accordingly. This means, first of all, guarding and cherishing the twin treasures. The two go together. Without the

true doctrine of Scripture there can be no true doctrine of fellowship, for the latter is dependent on the former. Likewise, without the true doctrine of fellowship there cannot long be a true doctrine of Scripture, for weakness in the former inevitably undermines the latter. The worst mistake we could make in the years ahead would be for us to try to defend the Scriptures against a host of attackers by seeking out Bible friends as allies and establishing fellowship with them, even though we are not doctrinally united. The bad means would eventually frustrate the good end.

The Wisconsin Synod is the spiritual heir of the Synodical Conference. Ours is a goodly heritage and a great responsibility. May God's grace continue to keep us in the right pathways of Scripture, confessionalism, and fellowship. May we be grateful to that grace and remain faithful in word and deed, in doctrine and practice, in internal and external relations, as a church body and as individuals.

Part Two: By God's Grace a Confessing Confessional Church in the Doctrines of Justification and Salvation

In the very broad but all-important doctrines of justification and salvation a number of historical developments call for treatment under the assigned theme. First and foremost is the continuing controversy in Lutheranism in America over the doctrines of conversion and election. This was a matter of concern for the Wisconsin Synod off and on for fifty years from 1879 to 1929 and then again in the 1950's when the "Common Confession" was under discussion. One of the early Wisconsin published notices of the conversion-election controversy that surfaced in 1872, that flared in 1877, and that seriously disturbed the church from 1880 on occurs in the Oct. 1, 1881 *Gemeinde=Blatt*. A report of the special Ohio Synod convention written by "G" (Prof. A. Graebner), after rejecting the *intuitu fidei* approach, concludes the announcement of Ohio's withdrawal from the Synodical Conference with the remark:

Thus one of the two large synods which up to the present has been joined with us in the Synodical Conference, has withdrawn from this association. With regret we see our previous older sister go its way, most especially because we are not able to call out to her in farewell: "Thou art our sister; be thou the mother of thousands of millions."^{xxxix}

This early notice indicates that from the very first the Wisconsin Synod was committed to the Missouri side in the election controversy. In fact, Koehler relates in some detail an incident that saw already in the early 1870's at a Missouri Watertown conference Hoenecke tangle with Stellhorn, then Missouri's Watertown professor, in the matter of conversion, so intimately related to election that it became an essential part of the controversy.^{xi}

Humanly speaking, Wisconsin had reason to side with Ohio against Missouri in the controversy. In the mid 1870's the "state synod" argument developed in the Synodical Conference, with Walther and his body pushing hard for a state district system and central theological seminary and most of Wisconsin resisting the proposal. It was an organization matter without doctrinal implications *per se* but feelings ran high, as the record shows.^{xli} If human inclinations had had their way, opposition to Walther in this matter might have been transferred improperly to the election controversy. The Lord prevented any such development. Through His Word He guided Wisconsin to stand with Walther and even offer instruction on occasion.^{xlii}

Wisconsin took official action on the election controversy in a joint session with the Minnesota Synod at La Crosse in the spring of 1882. In the course of the convention's deliberations on the regularly assigned topic of conversion the question of causation inevitably

introduced the subject of the believer's election. At this point Professor Hoenecke was granted the floor to deliver, as the minutes say, "a coherent presentation of the doctrine of election" which was then "also reviewed in its essential points" by a member of the Minnesota Synod.^{xliii}

The doctrinal statement of the cause and comfort of election was then by vote declared to be the position of the two synods. There were a few dissenting voices but, on the whole, both synods were motivated by God's Word and grace to confess the Bible doctrine of election and to reject the *intuitu fidei* approach. The solid stand with Missouri at the subsequent Synodical Conference meeting came as a matter of course and consistency. A firm unity of faith was welded between Wisconsin and Missouri in the heat of controversy by the Lord of the Church, who did not desert it in the hour of need.

The election and conversion controversy periodically surfaced on the American Lutheran scene in subsequent decades and Wisconsin was given a part to play in two major inter-synodical discussions of the disputed doctrines. Let those who in recent years have built up an impression of Wisconsin isolationism realize that in the early decades of this century Wisconsin was not that at all, showing itself willing, under God, to do everything possible to aid in the reestablishment of unity in the doctrines of conversion and election and in the process making a good confession of the truth bequeathed to it.

In the intersynodical discussion of conversion and election running from 1902 to 1907 Wisconsin's part was not inconsiderable and there were wholesome results it helped bring about. The Iowa *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* points to a pivot role in the discussions when it says of a *Gemeinde=Blatt* description of the unity endeavors:

Furthermore we rejoice over the manner in which the writer of the quoted lines writes about that which separates the Synodical Conference from other Lutheran synods. We have become accustomed, when there is a discussion of this point in the Missouri camp, for this to be done in a rude, juridical, condemnatory manner, that it is noteworthy when this for once is done differently and we are glad to take notice of it.^{xliv}

Actually, the main promoter of the series of conferences was Pastor M. Bunge, formerly of Iowa, who held membership in Wisconsin from 1902 to 1910. He promoted the poorly attended Beloit conference and then served as head of the committee to arrange for another meeting. This was held in the spring of 1903 at Watertown and joint Wisconsin had more men in attendance than any other synod. Random discussions strayed into the subject of the analogy of faith, which was discussed at the fall Milwaukee meeting and the Detroit meeting in the spring of 1904. Hoenecke chaired an agenda meeting in Chicago to prepare for the Detroit conference. Koehler wrote a significant article on the analogy of faith theme which called for proper interpretation of the Romans 12:6 passage and a rejection of all attempts to force clear passages to mean, not what they say, but what conforms to some system of doctrine.^{xlv}

Incidentally, the Detroit gathering sparked a discussion of prayer fellowship which demonstrates that the Synodical Conference always held to the position Wisconsin maintained in the controversy with Missouri in the 1950's. An explanatory article in *Lehre und Wehre*, in fact, clearly spells out the unit concept of fellowship, even if it does not use the term. In the article Bente argues, "If we can become one with the Ohio men in prayer, we will also have to invite them to our altars..."^{xlvi}

At the two Ft. Wayne conferences in 1905 and 1906 the discussions centered first on election and then on conversion. The record shows that Wisconsin men, notably Hoenecke and Koehler, aided in the effort for a proper understanding of the Ephesians 1:4 passage, especially the "in Him" phrase.^{xlvii} Years later Stellhorn, a main Ohio spokesman at the conferences, would

admit the validity of their arguments grudgingly, even if he would not yield the point of doctrine. Stelhorn wrote: “Even if our fathers in interpreting this passage made a grammatical error in this that they took the words ‘us in Him’ together in the meaning of ‘us as being in Him,’ yet they had a right conception of the matter.”^{xlviii}

Even though no change in the Wisconsin doctrinal position was thereby effected, the 1902-1906 intersynodical conferences have been described because they rightfully belong in a paper on the theme, “By God’s Grace a Confessing Confessional Lutheran Church.” To be confessional in doctrine means, not only possessing the doctrine, but also confessing the doctrine to others, teaching it whenever the opportunity arises, doing everything possible to win the errorist for the truth. This is a most proper anniversary thought. In this matter the fathers two generations back set us a good example.

And so have the men of the late 1910’s and the 1920’s. Another intersynodical discussion of conversion and election took place in those years. Under the impress of the imminent Reformation anniversary Lutheran union and unity endeavors were undertaken. As Pastor Schlemmer in a 1920 Minnesota District paper recounts, Sibley County Lutheran pastors of various synods joined in a discussion of conversion and election in the framework of a critique of the Norwegian “Madison Settlement.” After a series of local conferences the pastors found themselves in agreement, rose as one man to sing *Nun danket alle Gott* and said a *Vater unser* together. Pastor Schlemmer, being a good Synodical Conference man, is quick to assure his hearers that this was the one and only instance of joint worship.^{xlix}

Enlarged meetings followed at St. Paul and doctrinal statements were signed by 555 pastors, 150 from the Joint Wisconsin body. The Minnesota Synod, already in the process of becoming a Wisconsin Synod district, and others took up the matter on an official basis and soon the intersynodical meetings were under way. Wisconsin shared in the effort that produced the Intersynodical or Chicago Theses. This final opportunity to enlarge the sway of the Synodical Conference doctrinal position died aborning when Missouri summarily rejected the results and when Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo reached their own agreement. There is, however, also a positive side to the endeavor. For one thing, in this instance too Wisconsin was ready and eager to be confessional in the doctrines of conversion and election, with emphasis on the *confess* part of the word. It made the most of every opportunity to testify to its position. Secondly, any number of veteran pastors of that era were very ready to acknowledge that they on their part thereby became more appreciative of and confessional in the Scripture truths regarding election and conversion and thanked the grace of God for this gift.

The Lord also granted Wisconsin the opportunity to be confessional in this manner in the doctrine of objective justification. The Synodical Conference, already in the first conventions, was led by God to a firm and full appreciation of objective or universal justification as taught clearly in II Corinthians 5:19 and many other passages.

Some Lutheran synods feared that faith would be lost in the shuffle if this truth would be widely accepted. They voiced objections. In the controversy on this point, that stretched over decades, steadfast testimony to the Bible truth was proclaimed in Wisconsin’s pulpits and publications.¹

It is against this background that the special concern given the subject of justification in the “Common Confession” discussion in the early 1950’s is to be understood. The heated conference debates, the special pamphlet published, the prominent place on the 1954 Synodical Conference agenda indicate how vitally Wisconsin was concerned that the grace of God, which had given it so much, might not be minimized by any slight to the Bible’s gospel proclaimed in

the doctrine of objective justification. One of the Wisconsin Synod *Quarterly* articles closes with this pertinent word that supplies a fitting conclusion to this section:

One cannot oppose any doctrine of God's Word with impunity...one error begets another...But whoever molests the doctrine of justification stabs the gospel in the heart and is on the way of losing entirely Christian doctrine and personal faith and of falling into the arms of heathenism, even if he ever so much emphasizes justification through faith.^{li}

Much more could be said to demonstrate how graciously God nurtured the Wisconsin Synod in the doctrine of the gospel. This point is all-important and fundamental. However, the key matters of election, conversion, and objective justification have been given at least minimum attention. Let one additional point suffice. It is in the nature of a negative, a reply to the contention raised by some that somewhere back in the 1920's the Wisconsin Synod lost the gospel, specifically the "Wauwatosa Gospel." After a half century one can look back at the origin of the Protes'tant Controversy with somewhat more clarity and charity, understanding and objectivity than was possible in previous decades. What emerges more and more, for this observer at least, is the view that the controversy was basically an anti-establishment reaction to the realignment and augmentation of administration machinery in our circles necessitated by the 1917-1918 shift from federated to merged synodical structure. Inevitably the controversy began to be cloaked and shrouded in a doctrinal coat of many colors even to the point that saving and losing the gospel was deemed to be at stake.

Admittedly, much of the establishment's administrative policy and procedure was not of the highest order. It is not in place for this essayist to belabor this point; the district most directly involved made the point a decade ago.^{lii} The essayist is quite ready to grant that Mequon's present modern church history teaching is inferior to that offered in Wauwatosa and that *Quarterly* writings over his initials are insignificant and uninspiring compared to what appeared in that periodical when its name, language, and address were different. In this point there is total agreement between *Faith-Life* and this essay.

There is disagreement, however, on the basic Protes'tant contention that somehow the Wisconsin Synod belittled and lost the gospel in the course of the controversy. God's grace to us in that sorry controversy, His grace to both sides, prevented the loss of the saving gospel. To sum up the matter, an incident from early American Church history can be utilized. In the heated Hutchinson controversy in the Bay Colony in the 1630's Ann claimed that only Cotton and her brother-in-law were proclaimers of grace and that all the other ministers were "legal preachers." At a high point in the controversy John Cotton himself, addressing a boatload of Puritans leaving for England, encouraged them to report in the mother country that both sides in the controversy stood for grace, that both sought to magnify the grace of God, one party the grace within man and the other party the grace toward man. Cotton concluded with the assertion that if anyone wanted to strive for grace, the very place of the controversy was the best place for them.^{liii} Let that reference conclude the discussion on this point.

Part Three: By God's Grace a Confessing Confessional Church in the Doctrine of Church and Ministry

This final section deals with a very intimate, unique gift of God's grace to the Wisconsin Synod. All branches of the Lutheran Church in our land had an opportunity in the frontier, immigrant situation to give searching attention to this point of doctrine and to strike out on new

pathways in the practical application of the doctrine to American religious conditions. It is not surprising that this area of doctrine received more attention than any other in this country. What has been said holds especially true in the history of the Wisconsin Synod.

Shortly after the turn of the century questions about church and ministry came to the fore at the Wauwatosa seminary and throughout the circles of our church body. The firsthand account supplied by Koehler presents the needed information and insight and there is no reason to depart from it in any vital point or for that matter, to rehash it extensively.^{liv}

Before the turn of the century in Synodical Conference circles the generally held church-ministry position was one that emphasized the local congregation and its spiritual leader, the pastor. This was quite natural in view of the Stephan debacle in Missouri and later battles of the Saxons with Grabau, who overstressed clergy power, and with Iowa, which did this to a lesser degree. The big question was: Does the congregation have the Keys? The answer was obvious. Soon an inordinate emphasis was placed on the local congregation as a unique form of the church with the Keys and the pastor of the local congregation as the one God-pleasing and divinely instituted form of the ministry. When this view was infrequently challenged, usually at the instigation of teachers, the traditional view regularly prevailed.

The well-known Cincinnati case caused a rethinking of the position. In Cincinnati a Missouri congregation excommunicated a man who sent his child to public school instead of the congregation's school. After appeals and much strife the Synod ruled against the congregation and suspended it. The congregation sought aid and comfort from Wisconsin and soon Wisconsin had a group supporting the Cincinnati congregation and another seeking to uphold the action of Missouri officials.

The Cincinnati case was important because congregational excommunication was pitted against synodical suspension. The question changed from: Does the congregation have the Keys? to the version: Does the synod also have the Keys? The Wauwatosa men, Koehler, Pieper, and Schaller, using their special talents began a fresh study of the pertinent Scripture passages. Matthew 18, for example, was viewed without the blinders of the local congregation and was found to be lacking in endorsement of any one single form of grouping of believers as a special, unique institution of God.^{lv} This was God's grace at work, granting gifts, channeling their use, and blessing the efforts.

In *Quartalschrift* articles, conference papers, and classroom lectures the Wauwatosa men expounded this fresh insight into a Bible doctrine to their brethren, often very unreceptive brethren at the outset.^{lvi} In time, they gained their point and by now the pastor or teacher in the Wisconsin Synod who has doubts about the Wisconsin church-ministry position is atypical and probably ripe for transfer to another Lutheran body.

Opponents of ours on this point frequently raise the charge that Wisconsin's alleged downgrading of the local congregation is in conflict with the founding fathers of the Synodical Conference and a "mo-ern" innovation and aberration. Sometimes the charge is put in the form of the assertion, "Koehler and Pieper had to wait until Hoenecke died before they dared advance their new church-ministry ideas."

Two counter statements are in place. For one thing, the Bible and sound interpretation should settle the matter, not a reverence for the fathers. Walther and Hoenecke would be the very first to bow in reverence to the Bible and sound interpretation. For another thing, it should be realized that not every Walther and Hoenecke quotation is pertinent to the question at hand. Statements of theirs that are frequently quoted in this connection actually relate to congregational and not synodical possession of the Keys. If Hoenecke is to be quoted on the

point, then as apt a word as can be found is his description of Koehler's oral conference treatment of the teacher's call as "worthy of careful study."^{lvii}

Another related issue frequently raised by opponents is the question how the confessional Synodical Conference with its commitment to doctrinal unity could so long tolerate the church-ministry differences that existed between Missouri and Wisconsin. It is true that a similar disagreement would likely cause difficulties if it presented itself when the establishment of new fellowship ties was being considered. But the church-ministry question arose when Missouri and Wisconsin were in fellowship and when it arose the dividing line was by no means along strict synodical boundaries. Furthermore, the fact that each synod seemed to practice what the other preached made for the conclusion that this was more a question of application than of doctrine.

All this helps explain why a difference going back to the first decades of this century was still being debated almost a half century later. In 1946 the Synodical Conference appointed a special "Interim Committee" which was to deal with church-ministry questions and which served until 1952 without any notable success in settling the issues.^{lviii} The church-ministry differences were not yet resolved when the Synodical Conference split. How much effect the difference had in causing the split is an interesting question that perhaps cannot as yet, at this relatively early date, be answered. One can surmise that a view from long range may indicate that this difference at least helped create a situation that tended to frustrate efforts to maintain unity.

Are the Thiensville Theses of 1932 to be regarded as a compromise unworthy of church bodies claiming to be confessional in doctrine?^{lix} The Theses represented an agreement but it is arrived at only by substituting the term, "God's will and order," for the actually debated point, "divine institution." If the effort was to be regarded as the last word on the subject, it would have to be dimly viewed as a compromise. If, on the other hand, it was to be a first step of establishing the area of agreement in preparation for getting at the core issues, then it is another matter. For this alternative the stronger case can be made. No further steps to agreement can be reported because within three years Missouri's discussions with Lutherans not in the Synodical Conference had begun and other issues pushed this matter into the background until the Interim Committee's efforts previously described.

In any event and regardless of the answer given to questions that have been raised, we all appreciate the blessing we have in the Scriptural insights granted us by a gracious God in our church-ministry position. It is a Scriptural position. One final question suggests itself. If we cherish this position and if it is a position so uniquely ours and so unfamiliar to others that Finnish Lutherans refer to it as the *Wisconsinische Sonderlehre*, why aren't we a little more zealous in sharing what we have with others?

True enough, we are ready to discuss with others. We have a brief summary in *This We Believe*. We can point to articles in past issues of our periodicals. Yet it can be persuasively argued that we owe a little more to the person who is just getting acquainted with us and asks, "What is the Wisconsin church-ministry position?" Should not being confessional in doctrine mean that our gratitude for the grace that made us so will motivate us to be zealous in sharing our doctrinal insight with others?

To observe synod anniversaries by building dormitories at our worker training schools and by expanding our mission efforts, is good and God-pleasing. It would also be a good and God-pleasing 125th anniversary observance to mark the occasion by publishing a confessional book about the Wisconsin position on the church-ministry doctrine with adequate treatment of the exegetical, the historical, and the doctrinal sides of the issue.^{lx} Two 1975 articles are a beginning but only a beginning. God's grace has been lavishly expended on the Wisconsin

Synod for 125 years in the effort to make it confessional in doctrine. Under that grace let us continue to make our doctrinal stand a confessional one and also increase our efforts to confess the doctrine imparted to us as long as it is given us to observe synod anniversaries.

ⁱ Willmar Thorkelson, *Lutherans in the U.S.A.* (Minneapolis, 1969), pp. 39 and 37.

ⁱⁱ Much of the material in this essay was previously presented to the Western Wisconsin District's 1974 convention under the title, "By God's Grace—Confessional in Doctrine."

ⁱⁱⁱ *Verhandlungen der Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin* (Watertown, Wis., 1860) p 16. The early Wisconsin Synod Proceedings, from 1849 to 1857, are available in a photostatic reproduction of a printing of the original manuscripts in Volume XXXIX of Northwestern College's *Black and Red* and are published in one volume with the Proceedings of 1858 to 1869. This translation and all subsequent ones are by the essayist, unless otherwise indicated. Hereafter reference to Wisconsin Synod minutes will be cited as *Wisconsin Proceedings* with date.

^{iv} August R. Suelflow quoted in *Lutheran Witness* LXXXXXI (Jan. 16, 1972) pp. 16-17.

^v The 1860 convention minutes, pp. 11-13, indicate how the body responded to President Muehlhaeuser's plea that he be relieved of the burdens of the office.

^{vi} J. D. (Johannes Deindoerfer) reporting in *Kirchliche Mittheilungen aus und über Nord=America*, 1854, 1, col 5.

^{vii} Typical examples are a characterization of Wisconsin as "New Lutheran" in XVI (Dec. 27, 1859) p. 78 and an attack on its intersynodical parish manners in XIX (Nov. 12 and Dec. 10, 1862) pp. 41-45 and 58-60.

^{viii} Joh. Ph. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod* (St. Cloud, Minn., 1970) p 40. Hereafter cited as Koehler, *History*.

^{ix} F. Lochner, "Wisconsinische Angriffe auf vermeintliche Missouriische Eingriffe," *Lutheraner* XIX (Dec. 10, 1862) p. 59.

^x *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1851*.

^{xi} C. F. W. Walther, "Weider and Friedensbotshaft," *Lutheraner*, XXV (Nov. 1, 1868) p. 37.

^{xii} *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1851*. Constitution, Article VI, 9.

^{xiii} Koehler, *History*, p. 41.

^{xiv} F. Lochner, "Wisconsinische Angriffe auf vermeintliche Missouriische Eingriffe," *Lutheraner* XIX (Nov. 12, 1862) p. 41. The article does not, however, fail to include a reference to Weinmann's millennial views.

^{xv} Koehler, *History*, p. 45.

^{xvi} *Hermannsburger Missionsblatt*, I (January 1854) p 6.

^{xvii} Georg Haccius, *Hannoversche Missionsgeschichte*, 3 vols (Hermannsburg, 1909-1920) II, 48. The clash between Bading and Harms seems to have involved the former's unwillingness to participate fully in the scheduled afternoon work detail.

^{xviii} Koehler, *History*, p. 45.

^{xix} *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1861*, p. 6.

^{xx} *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1862*, p. 6.

^{xxi} *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1856*, final paragraph.

^{xxii} Reference is made to the oft-quoted *Lehre und Wehre* item with the Hercules analogy in March 1868, p 93.

^{xxiii} Koehler has a special section headed "The Northwestliche Konferenz," pp. 49-51.

^{xxiv} *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1867*, p. 1. The sermon text was Ephesians 1:3-7, a passage to be extensively and intensively debated in the intersynodical conferences of the first decade of this century.

^{xxv} All Wisconsin Synod publications dealing with its history feature this story.

^{xxvi} *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1867*, pp. 22-23.

^{xxvii} *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1869*, pp. 13-14.

^{xxviii} *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Gemeinde-Blatt*, III (Dec. 1 and Dec. 15, 1867), 1 in both issues.

Hereafter cited as *G-B* with identifications.

^{xxix} *G-B*, IV (Dec. 15, 1868), 1.

^{xxx} *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1869*, pp. 7 and 24.

^{xxxi} Armin W. Schuetze, "Lessons from the Past," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* LXIX (January 1972), 3-12.

^{xxxii} An outstanding example is the handling of Romans 16:17 in the "Statement of 44." An extensive treatment of this development is found in the twenty-fifth anniversary issue of *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XLIII (November 1970).

^{xxxiii} The controversial items are discussed in numerous pamphlets of the time. Representatives of the Wisconsin position are the series of tracts issued in the mid 1950's and *Where Do We Stand?* a collection of E. Reim's *Northwestern Lutheran* articles published in 1950.

^{xxxiv} *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1955*, pp. 77-88.

^{xxxv} *Synodical Conference Proceedings, 1958*, pp. 42-46.

^{xxxvi} The "Antichrist Statement" appears in the *Synodical Conference Proceedings, 1960*, pp. 40-44. These 1960 *Proceedings* also contain the "Statements on Fellowship" of the four synods following p. 160. The 1962 *Proceedings* reprint the Wisconsin Synod "impasse" resolution and the 1962 resolution calling for a dissolution of the Synodical Conference, pp. 62-66.

^{xxxvii} See the Wisconsin "Statement on Fellowship" in the attachment to the 1960 *Proceedings* of the Synodical Conference, p. 9.

^{xxxviii} "Church of the Lutheran Confession" writings on the subject are *Concerning... Church Fellowship*, Revised Edition of 1961 and "Mark...Avoid" a pamphlet by Paul Nolting, published in 1970.

^{xxxix} *G-B*, XVII (Oct. 1, 1881), 23.

^{xl} Koehler, *History*, pp. 157-158.

^{xli} Koehler's objective account is found on pp. 144-147 in his *History*.

^{xlii} Material on Wisconsin-Missouri correspondence relating to some extreme statements is found in Koehler, *History*, pp. 158-159, and in *Moving Frontiers*, C. Meyer, ed., (St. Louis, 1964) pp. 273-274.

^{xliii} *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1882*, pp. 33-35.

^{xliv} *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, XXVI, 5, pp. 237-238.

^{xlv} J. P. Koehler, "Die Analogie des Glaubens," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* (then *Theologische Quartalschrift*) I, 1-3 (1904).

^{xlvi} F. Bente, "Warum können wir keine gemeinsamen Gottesdienste mit Ohioern, und Iowaern veranstalten und abhalten?" *Lehre und Wehre*, LI (March 1905), pp. 110-111.

^{xlvii} J. P. Koehler, "Kurz=gefasster Bericht," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* (then *Theologische Quartalschrift*) II (Oct. 1905), pp. 269-278.

^{xlviii} F. W. Stellhorn, *Der Schriftbeweis des lutherischen Katechismus* (Columbus, 1912), p. 415.

^{xlix} P. Schlemmer, "Die jetzigen Einigungsbestrebungen in der lutherischen Kirche," *Minnesota District Proceedings*, 1920, pp. 18-62.

^l A representative article is J. Meyer's "Objective Justification," *Wisconsin Theological Quarterly* XXXVII (Jan. and April 1940) 31-41 and 107-122.

^{li} This A. Pieper quotation is the conclusion of the article referred to in Note 50.

^{lii} *Western Wisconsin District Proceedings*, 1962, pp. 48-49.

^{liii} John Winthrop, *Journal 1630-1649*, ed. by James K. Kosmer (New York), I, 209.

^{liv} Koehler, *History*, pp. 230-239.

^{lv} Koehler, *History*, p. 236.

^{lvi} The articles treating various aspects of the subject begin with A. Pieper's "Menschherrschaft in der Kirche" running through the 1911 volume.

^{lvii} Koehler, *History*, p. 232.

^{lviii} Reports of this "Interim Committee" are found in the *Synodical Conference Proceedings*: 1948 (p. 135-144), 1950 (pp. 105-106), 1952 (pp. 142-145).

^{lix} Koehler's unenthusiastic discussion of the Thiensville Theses along with a reproduction of them is found in his *History*, pp. 283-239. Interesting background material is presented by *The Faithful Word* under "Basic Documents in the Church and Ministry Discussions," VII, 1 (pp. 23-31) and 2 (pp. 10-21).

^{lx} The current *Quarterly* volume will be offering two articles on the subject, an exegetical-dogmatic treatment by H. Vogel and a historical study by C. Lawrenz.