

The Northwestern Lutheran

Jan 17
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The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not forsake us, nor leave us, nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8: 57.

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THE YEAR OF JUBILEE 1517—1917



A Blessed New Year to our Readers: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord!"

May the year now dawning on a war-racked, blood-stained world go down in history as the year in which peace was restored, and the world began to recover from the ravages this terrible conflict has wrought!

In these times of distress, the Lutheran church is preparing for the joyous celebration of the four-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. In doing this, we are not unmindful of the sorrow and suffering about us. Our celebration, though one of joy, will not grate on the feelings of the sorrow-stricken, for we rejoice in the Gospel, restored to us in the Reformation; the Gospel that alone can sustain him who has, especially in these trying times, learned to despair of humanity and of himself; the Gospel that brings to the broken-hearted the comfort of a gracious and merciful God. Where the lesson of the terrible visitation of God has been understood, this Gospel will be received with great joy and gratitude. He who has lost all earthly possessions, will, nevertheless, count himself rich beyond expression, having the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ and the assurance of a loving Father in Heaven through Him, the Beloved Son.

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you" — what a promise for the year before us! It is God's promise to you. Do you desire it? Then do not forget the words, "through the knowledge of God and of Jesus

our Lord." If you would have grace and peace, seek knowledge!

It is but natural that we devote much time this year to the study of the history of our church. No Lutheran should neglect to read the historical articles that will, from time to time, appear in his church paper. Every one ought to read at least one good work on the Reformation. In this manner we shall learn to appreciate what God did for us through His chosen instrument Dr. Martin Luther.

Still, when we would seek that knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord by which grace and peace are multiplied unto us, we must go elsewhere — to the Bible itself. There we shall find it. Seek knowledge!

Read your Bible daily.

Do not neglect family worship.

Attend every service.

Come to the Sacrament frequently.

Do this with the earnest desire to know God and the Lord Jesus; do it with prayer for the Divine Teacher, the Spirit of God; — and you will find knowledge; and grace and peace will be multiplied unto you.

Do you appreciate what you have in your Lutheran church; are you a consistent, loyal member? There are other Protestant churches. Many believe that it makes no difference to which church one belongs, as long as it is not the Roman Catholic. Read and study Luther's Small Catechism. Read the series of articles on the Augsburg Confession that will appear in our paper. Compare our Confessions with the Bible you are studying. You will find that your Church teaches the Word of God in its truth and purity, and proclaims, especially, the Gospel in all its sweetness. You will find that other churches err in many doctrines, that in many the Gospel is clouded by legalistic teaching — and you will learn to thank God that He has led you into the Lutheran church. You will love your church, pray for it, and labor in it.

A blessed year of increase in knowledge, in grace and peace — God grant it to our church, to every one of us, for Jesus' sake.

J. B.

COMMENTS

Howard Brown's Charity

Howard Brown had heard a sermon on charity; in his Sunday school the lesson was repeated: "It is more blessed to give than receive." He learnt

that true charity knows no ordinary limitations. Where charity calls, the Christian should give—"even to the coat on his back." Howard was a little fellow and he meant to practice what he had learnt. To him the problem seemed simple enough: just do it. Perhaps the approaching Christmas season kept the subject of charity before his mind. — The other day Howard came home. 'Twas cold and he was shivering with the chill. No wonder! His coat and trousers were gone—what was left of his raiment was but scanty protection against the weather. He told his mother that he had practiced charity, as he had learnt. We are sure that Howard's experience has the force of a demonstration for us. Charity? Everybody knows what it should be; everybody thinks he is practicing it. Little Brown shows us a type of it which does approach the ideal. How futile it appears. His mother will lose no time in explaining to him that one must not take injunctions to be charitable too literally. She will impress upon his plastic mind that charity must be tempered with a consideration of one's own needs. Of course, Howard would learn that very soon in any event. Then, why not admit that there is no charity in man? That it is a pose, a fiction, kept up to deceive others as well as ourselves? The best that can be done is to approximate a charitable spirit—and the most spiritual soul has only made a slight beginning in that. And this puny, weak, and halting device is the means by which so many men and women try to work out their salvation! It may seem cruel to take this crutch away from these spiritual cripples—but it is more cruel to confirm them in their illusion that they are speeding on to perfection like sprinters racing on to their goal. Charity indeed, but divine charity, will bring salvation; if that does not bring it, there is none. Even little Howard Brown, if charity were to be his badge of security, would have had to have a record of thousands and thousands of deeds of charity to insure it. But here, at his first real attempt, which may have been still far removed from true and untainted charity, he learns that in this world of selfishness—one must speak of charity, must listen attentively and understandingly when others speak of it, but must never sincerely practice it. Lutherans may sometimes chafe under the doctrine they hear from their pulpits; they may feel that their human dignity and Christian earnestness is hardly ever taken into account. They should thank God that their church is steadfast amid all the weak moralizing of the times in showing them that all human means are unavailing to bring about that salvation which was only encompassed by the supreme charity and grace of God Himself in Christ Jesus.

H. K. M.

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What is the Church? What is the Church? Every Lutheran knows that the Church is the invisible body of Christ, the communion of all true believers in Him. No visible organization can truly lay claim to the name Holy Catholic Church. The Church is found everywhere where the Gospel is still preached, even in churches that err in many doctrines. Neither pope nor bishop are essential to the Church. What difficulties they have to struggle with who teach that the Church is a visible organization, is illustrated by the following reply of the Living Church to a Jesuit priest:

"The Church Pageant at St. Louis must have been extremely effective, for it roused a worthy Jesuit father to a fine pitch of vituperation. The Rev. J. C. McClorey lectured at St. Louis University October 21st, and enlarged upon the well-worn theme that only the Church of Rome was Catholic. A philosopher once named President McCosh's system of thought "the Assertive Philosophy," and, *mutatis mutandis*, Fr. McClorey seems to belong to that school. He puts the alternative clearly enough: subjection to Rome or separation from Rome; but he fails to see that only Rome's loving to have the pre-eminence makes impossible the third and really Catholic relation of intercommunion with freedom. He is positive that a Church without the Pope is headless; but he forgets that Christ is the Head of the Church, nor does he explain what happens even to the Papal Church when the Pope dies or is deposed.

"It is good that he has set himself the task of disproving facts; because every such attempt makes surer the actual state of things. And the old challenge stands: Name the date when a new Church of England began, and the Act of Parliament by which it was established. If not, be silent."

J. B.

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Mary Orr's Will The will of Mary Orr disposes of a fortune of over two hundred thousand dollars. It will be interesting to note how the courts will interpret some of the provisions made by the testatrix. The whole estate is to be devoted to "purposes of uplift." Various Christian Science organizations are to receive the bulk of the total amount; other portions are set aside for the use of charitable and civic organizations. Miss Orr specified that the "uplift" must have a spiritual trend—that begins to complicate matters; especially when it applies to beneficiaries such as her home city of Bobcaygeon, Ontario. But the sweet charity and all-embracing love of the testatrix is revealed in the provision that no German, Austrian, Bulgarian, or Turk is to share in the benefits that may accrue. Miss Orr's brand of "uplift" is a triumph of modernism. We have no

doubt that when that most uncharitable condition was dictated her features were wreathed in the characteristic saccharine Christian Science smile.

H. K. M.

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“What is a Man Going to Do?”

“What is a man going to do?”—asks the president of a moving-picture show. The reply is simply this, Withdraw from a business you cannot follow with a good conscience! What are you going to do? Read the article we take from the Lutheran Herald and find your answer:

“The ‘Woman’s Home Companion,’ in its campaign against the corrupting influence of the moving-picture shows furnishes some interesting information. The churches and the Christian people in a community could do much to stop the exhibition of defiling and immoral pictures, if they would promptly refuse to patronize these shows and testify against them. Editorially the ‘Companion’ writes:

The president of a moving-picture company which, from its organization, has led the fight for better, cleaner films, discovered three months ago a falling off in the company’s receipts in a certain state in the middle West, we read. He sent an agent into that territory to investigate. This interview, which took place between the agent and the owner of a theater in a city of 5,000, is typical:

“Why have you given up our service?” the agent asked.

“Couldn’t make your pictures pay.”

“Weren’t the pictures good?”

“Yes, too good.”

“What do you mean?”

For answer the theater owner produced his record of receipts for the preceding four weeks.

“Here’s what I mean,” he said, “I wanted to stick to you people. I believe in what you stand for, and I know you produce the finest pictures in the business.

“When I have shown your clean, high-grade pictures during the past month I have averaged \$22 a day—not enough to pay my expenses. When I have shown Blank’s pictures (naming a manufacturer whose product is notoriously suggestive in title and character), my receipts have averaged \$53. I’ve got a wife and kids; I want to be decent. But I’ve got to live. What is a man going to do?” J. B.

THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

Article I.—Of God.

“Our Churches, with common consent, do teach, that the decree of the Council of Nicaea concerning the Unity of the Divine Essence and concerning the Three Persons, is true and to be believed without any doubt-

ing; that is to say, there is one Divine Essence which is called and is God: eternal, without body, without parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible; and yet that there are three Persons, of the same essence and power, who also are co-eternal, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. And the term “person” they use as the Fathers have used it, to signify, not a part or quality in another, but that which subsists of itself.

“They condemn all heresies which have sprung up against this article, as the Manichaeans who assumed two principles (gods), one Good, and the other Evil; also the Valentinians, Arians, Eunomians, Mohammedans, and all such. They condemn also the Samosatenes, old and new, who contending that there is but one Person, sophistically and impiously argue that the Word and the Holy Ghost are not distinct Persons, but that “Word” signifies a spoken word, and “Spirit” (Ghost) signifies motion created in things.”

The first article of the Augsburg Confession treats of God. It is appropriate that a confession of such basic character—the doctrinal charter of the Lutheran Church—should begin with a clear statement concerning God. As the Bible opens its divine pages with the words: “In the beginning God,” so here, God—here is the profoundest theme that can occupy the human mind. Lying as it does at the foundation of all man’s beliefs—as to responsibility and duty, sin and salvation, immortality and future blessedness, as well as to the reality of providence,—with the reply given to it are bound up the temporal and eternal happiness of each individual and the whole of mankind.

But who is God—the Supreme Being, upon whom the destiny of man and all the world is dependent? Our first article clearly states the case, by setting forth the following chief points concerning God:

1. There is only one God, one eternal, individual, undivided Divine essence, a personal God, incorporeal, that is, without parts or members, invisible, a pure invisible spirit; not finite or circumscribed, that is, neither enclosed nor excluded by space; of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the sovereign Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible.

Whoever accepts the Bible is in accord with this fundamental truth concerning God. The Holy Scriptures, from first to last, emphasize with awful earnestness the Oneness of God, the unique and solitary glory of the Eternal Being, in respect of that Being’s sole possession of self-existence, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, and of those supreme rights over all other being, which can attach to the Creator and Sustainer alone. Listen to the voice of God in His Word: “I am the Lord; my glory will I not give to another,” Is. 42: 8; “Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one

Lord," Deut. 6: 4; "There is one God; and there is none other but he," Mark 12: 32; "And God said unto Moses: I Am that I Am," Exod. 3: 14; "Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called: I am he; I am the first, I also am the last," Is. 48: 12; "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God," John 17: 4; "Thou, even thou art the Lord alone; thou hast made, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts; the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all." Nehemiah 9: 6.

This one God is described in His principal attributes as the absolute Being. He is eternal, without beginning and without end, independent of time with its successions and changes. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." Ps. 90: 2. He is without body, incorporeal. "God is a Spirit," John 4: 24. We cannot see God with our bodily eyes, as we could if He too were corporeal, having a body such as we have. Therefore He is invisible. And God is of infinite power, wisdom, goodness. We have some knowledge of these qualities as manifested in creatures, such as angels and men. But in these they are always limited. In God they are infinite, without bounds and limits. Hence He is Almighty. "I am the Almighty God." Gen. 17: 1. Therefore with God "all things are possible." The same infinity belongs to His wisdom. Men are endowed with this in a limited degree. But in God it is infinite, without degrees or measure. He knows all things, even from eternity, and therefore He has decreed all things visible and invisible for the ultimate attainment of the wise and good purpose of His creation. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever." 1 Tim. 1: 17. Likewise God is infinite in His goodness. God is love, and His goodness and kindness know no limit. Who can spell out all that is hidden in God's love and kindness? It is His essence, His nature, His very Life. In love He has revealed Himself as the kind Father and Redeemer of mankind.

2. In this one Divine essence there are three Persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

The same Scriptures present to us three distinct Persons in the one Godhead, not fewer or more, but three; all within the sphere of the Supreme Being. We hear of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as divine Persons, each of whom subsists by Himself, speaks by Himself, acts by Himself, and reveals Himself. Thus the Father says: "I will be His father, and he shall be my son." 2. Sam. 7: 14; "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear

ye him." Matt. 17: 5. And the Son says: "I and my Father are one." John 10: 30. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 17: 5. And of the Holy Ghost it is said: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." 2. Sam. 23: 2. "But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." John 14: 26. Yet these three distinct Persons are not three Gods, but one God, and each of them is God. Thus the name of God is applied to each of the divine Persons distinctly. That the Father is called God needs no proof. Jesus Christ, the second Person, is also called God in many passages of Scripture. Thomas said to Him, "My Lord and my God." John 20: 28. St. Paul says, "He is over all, God blessed for ever." Rom. 9: 5. St. John says, Jesus Christ is "true God, and eternal life." In like manner the name of God is given to the Holy Ghost. St. Peter reproving Ananias for the lie he had told respecting his substance, said, "Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Acts 5: 3.

3. No one of the three Persons possesses the one Divine essence less, no one more; but each has it entire in Himself. In this Trinity none is afore, or after the other; none is greater, or less than another; but all three Persons together are co-eternal and co-equal of the same infinite power, wisdom and goodness. This is also explained in this article by the definition given of the term "Person," which signifies not a part or quality in another, but that which subsists of itself, has its own understanding and will, and is distinct from another, thus excluding the erroneous idea as if the Son and the Holy Spirit were only properties and attributes of the first Person, God the Father.

Yet all three Persons are so related, that never, from eternity to eternity, are they separate, but ever one in their blessed Being. Where the one is, the others are. Where the Father is, the Son and the Spirit are. Where the Son is, the Father and the Spirit are. Where the Spirit is, the Father and the Son are. These three distinct Persons are one God in which we neither confound the Persons nor divide their essence, or substance. And these three in the one infinite Godhead work out in their individual unity, redemption, sanctification, and final glory; the work of the one is also the work of the other.

Thus the Augsburg Confession sets forth the true doctrine concerning God, as revealed in the divine Word; and being the doctrinal charter of the Lutheran Church it is obvious, that our Church, restored through the Reformation of Luther, is not a new Church, alien to the ancient, but the true Apostolic Church, in full accord with its teachings. Our first

article therefore also refers to the Nicene Creed as the expression of the faith of its confessors, which they have in common with the whole Church of Christ in all time.

The Nicene Creed was adopted at a Council held in the city of Nice in 325. It had become necessary for the Christian Church of those days to make a clear and unmistakable statement concerning the doctrine of God. There had been discussions among the theologians about the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. Speculations about its import had arisen, and reason, as is always the case when it is allowed a voice in matters of faith, had devised heresies. Some concluded from the Oneness of God, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are only different forms in which this one God was pleased to make Himself known to men, and that accordingly the different names and activities only indicated different manifestations of the same Supreme Being who alone is God. On the other hand some presumed that what is ascribed to the Son and the Holy Spirit is the work of God through agents created for this purpose, and that it is idolatry to worship these agents, seeing that there is and can be but one God. Thus two sorts of heresies appeared, one denying that the Son and Holy Ghost are divine Persons, but are only different names for the same person under different forms of manifestation, the other assuming that the Son and the Holy Ghost are creatures employed by the Father in the execution of His will. Both rejected the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. To rebuke the dangerous errorists and with a view of setting forth the true doctrine of the Holy Trinity the Synod of Nice was convened.

In compliance with the decree of the Nicene Council our Lutheran Church in her Augsburg Confession condemns all heresies opposed to this article of faith. Mention is made of in our first article of the Manichees, the Valentinians, Arians, Eunomians, Mahometans, and Samosatenes. The Manichees were the followers of a Persian philosopher by the name of Mani or Manes, who lived in the third century. Speculating on the origin of evil in the world he fell upon the notion that there must be another power besides God, and thus while God is the source of all good there must also always have been another principle which is the source of all evil. He denied that the Son is God, or that He was incarnate, or that an atonement was necessary. The Valentinians, followers of Valentinus, a Gnostic teacher, were Gnostics who desired to know everything, including all mysteries. Their aim was to make all revelation conform to the dictates of reason. It was but a natural and rational consequence of the principle, that if any doctrine of the Bible could not be reduced to the level of reason, it must be rejected. Hence the Valentinians denied

that the Word was God and was made flesh. They are the forerunners of the Christian Scientists of our day. The Arians were a powerful party of the fourth century who accepted the teaching of Arius, a teacher of renown and of much influence. He denied that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is "God over all, blessed forever," as the Scripture teach. Eunomius, after whom the sect of the Eunomians was named, was an Arian of the fourth century, and was still more outspoken than his master in expressing his disbelief in the doctrine of the Trinity. The Mahometans are a heathen religion and one that exerts its power for evil over a large portion of the earth, having millions of adherents among oriental people. Mention is made of it in our Confession because it proclaims that there is but one God, whose prophet is Mahomet, thus denying the Trinity of the Godhead, and because it is the declared and bitter enemy of the Christian Church, seeking to exterminate Christianity. The Samosatenes finally were named after Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch in 260, whose heresies troubled the Church for a hundred years. They are sufficiently characterized in our Confession, which says of them: "Who, when they earnestly contend that there is but one person, do craftily and wickedly trifle after the many of Rhetoricians, about the Word and Holy Ghost, that they are not distinct persons, but that the Word signifieth a vocal word, and the Spirit a motion created in things." Thus according to this conception the Word which is the Son of God is but a vocal word, and the Holy Spirit but a motion or power issuing from God.

These ancient heretics are long since dead, and the names of the old heretical parties are preserved only in history; but their heresies still are extant at our time more or less, and continue to harass the Christian people with their strong delusions that are temptations to the flesh. They approach us in various sects and religious organizations of our day, the Unitarians and Universalists, Christian Science and New Religion, Russellism, Lodge religion, notably Free Masonry, etc. Let us beware of them. Let us heed the admonition of the divine Word: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is in the world." 1 John 4: 1-3. J. J.

—"Unlawful means may sometimes prosper, but they are never blessed."

"CONSIDERING THE END OF THEIR CONVERSATION"

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." Hebrews 13, v. 7.

The Apostle Paul admonishes the Hebrews, whose spiritual welfare was so dear to his heart, to follow the faith of those who had spoken to them the Word of God, and to "consider the end of their conversation."

The above words of admonition, written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, are as "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness" to the Christians of the 20th Century as they were to those to whom they were originally addressed. The apostle brings to remembrance the steadfastness of Old Testament prophets who were willing to die for their faith in the promised Messiah, and the triumphant death of a Stephen, the first Christian martyr, who sealed his faith with his blood. He entreats the Hebrews to follow in the footsteps of those who kept the faith, remained loyal unto death, and received life everlasting.

While the word "conversation" is used in the Scriptures to convey various meanings, such as "manner of life," "behaviour," etc., the subject text seems also to refer to spoken words, and giving it this literal interpretation, a few illustrations will show how profitable it is for us to "consider the end of the conversation" of God's saints, as compared with those whose "ending conversation" was without Christ.

When Paul was about to die the death of a martyr for Christ's sake, he exclaimed: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. During his life as an apostle, he admonished his flock to "so walk as ye have us for an example," and in his faithfulness unto death he proved himself a worthy example indeed.

Since the death of Stephen, Paul, Peter, and other saints of God, multitudes have gone to heaven by giving heed to the testimony and example of the righteous, and, on the other side, multitudes have gone into eternity — lost as a result of being lead astray by the influence and example of the wicked. Not only have millions of God's children witnessed in life and death of Jesus power to save, but most infidels, skeptics, and sinners of every grade are constrained to acknowledge the truth of the Christian religion before they die.

Aside from the triumphant final "conversations" of Bible characters, the pages of history record the last words of other saints of God, whose faith it is indeed wholesome to follow, as well as the dying testimonies of the lost, which stand out on the pages of history as a solemn warning to the unbelieving, pleasure-mad, skeptical world.

Since our revered Martin Luther has "spoken to us the Word of God," we are also admonished to follow his faith, "considering the end of his conversation." What was the end of his conversation? "O my heavenly Father, my eternal and everlasting God! Thou hast revealed to me Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ! I have preached Him! I have confessed Him! I love and I worship Him as my dearest Savior and Redeemer! Into Thy hands I commit my Spirit!"

Who, on reading these last words of the great reformer, does not cry out: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" A few more illustrations:

When John Hus, the great Bohemian reformer and martyr, was burned at the stake as a heretic in Constance, Germany, July 6, 1415, he prayed "Into Thy hands, o Lord, do I commit my Spirit. Thou hast redeemed me, o most good and faithful God." When the fagots were lighted, he sang a hymn so loud as to be heard through the crackling of the flames.

The dying words of a Knox, Wesley, Watts, Moody and others, whose faith in Christ triumphed over death, might be added, but the above will suffice.

What a marked contrast to the above are the dying words of infidels, and skeptics. Gibbon, the noted historian and infidel writer, died in London in 1794. His last words were — "All is now lost; finally, irrecoverably lost; all is dark and doubtful."

When the atheist Thomas Hobbes, (1588-1679) drew near to death, he declared: "I am about to take a leap in the dark. If I had the whole world to dispose of, I would give it to live one day."

The noted French infidel, Voltaire, at his death in 1778 cried out: "I am abandoned by God and man. I shall go to hell, and you will go with me, o Jesus Christ."

The infidel Gambetta, who died in 1882, said: "I am lost, and there is no use to deny it."

Thomas Paine, widely known by his connection with the American and French revolution, and by his infidel writings, "The Rights of Man," the "Age of Reason," and others, died in the United States in 1809. Among the last utterances that fell upon the ears of the attendants of this dying infidel, and which has been recorded in history, were the words: "O Lord, help me! Jesus, help me! What have I done to suffer so much? But there is no God, — yet if there should be, what will become of me hereafter? Stay with me. For God's sake, I cannot bear to be left alone. Send even a child to stay with me, for it is hell to be alone. My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

The world has witnessed the triumphant deaths of hosts of brave confessors of the Christian faith, but it never yet heard one of them expressing any regret of having given up this life for Christ, hence we have nothing to lose, but all to gain by "following their

faith," and "considering the end of their conversation," while on the other hand, who among us would care to exchange places at the Judgment bar of Christ, with earth's "famous" infidels?

"O grant that in Thy Holy Word
We here may live and die, dear Lord,
And when our journey endeth here,
Receive us into glory there."

A. H.

TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?

Here is an illustration from life, given by the Missionary Review of the World:

A converted Mohammedan was called before the authorities to answer the charge of reading Christian books. Before judgment was passed, he begged to be allowed to ask a question. "I am traveling," he said; "I look around for some direction and discover two men: one is dead, the other alive. Which of the two am I to ask for advice—the dead, or the living?" "Oh, the living, of course," all cried out. "Well," he added, "why require me to go to Mahomet, who is dead, instead of to Christ, who is alive?"

At Azzimur an intelligent Moor said to Mr. Robert Stevens, a missionary in Morocco: "No, we will not buy your books, for they will make Christians of us." "Exactly so," Mr. Stevens replied. "That a book is capable of doing what you have said, proves it to be a book of power. It changes a man's heart and conduct, and this proves it to be what it claims to be — the Living Word of God." —Selected.

GOD SAVES US FOR SOMETHING MORE THAN HAVING A GOOD TIME

A blacksmith who had for some years been a consistent member of his church was approached by an intelligent unbeliever with the question: "Why is it you have so much trouble? I have been watching you. Ever since you joined the church and began to 'walk square,' and seem to love everybody, you have had twice as many trials and accidents as you had before. I thought that when a man gave himself to God his troubles were over. Isn't that what the preachers tell us?"

With a thoughtful, but glowing face, the blacksmith replied:

"Do you see this piece of iron? It is for the springs of a carriage. I have been 'tempering' it for some time. To do this I heat it red-hot, and then plunge it into a tub of ice-cold water. This I do many times. If I find it taking 'temper,' I heat and hammer it unmercifully. In getting the right piece of iron I found several that were too brittle. So I threw them in the scrap-pile. Those scraps are worth about a cent a pound; this carriage spring is very valuable."

He paused, and his listener nodded. The blacksmith continued:

"God saves us for something more than to have a good time—that's the way I see it. We have the good time all right, for God's smile means heaven. But he wants us for service just as I want this piece of iron. Ever since I saw this I have been saying to him, 'Test me in any way you choose, dear Lord, only don't throw me on the scrap-pile.'—Selected.

RELIGIOUS ECONOMY

The Watchman-Examiner is responsible for this item. We wonder to what extent it applies to some Lutherans: "A New York paper tells of a man who, after practicing law for ten years, became a physician, after practicing medicine ten years entered the ministry, and after being pastor for ten years announced the following discovery: 'On the average, a man will pay ninety cents on the dollar to save his property, fifty cents to have his life, and ten cents to save his soul.'"—Exchange.

CHURCH DEDICATION AT SUGAR BUSH, WIS.

On the first Advent Sunday, Dec. the 3rd, one of our youngest congregations had a great festival day. The congregation is at Sugar Bush, about 7 miles north of New London, Wis.

In April 1915 mission work was begun in the above mentioned village and its neighborhood by the undersigned with the result that services were held regularly in a nearby district school-house. But very soon it became evident that this meeting place was too small to accommodate all the hearers. Hence very often the wish was expressed to organize a congregation and build a church.

The organization was perfected January 11th, 1916, eleven members signing the constitution, quite a number of whom had been members of Emanuel Lutheran congregation of New London. But owing to the great distance, for some even as much as 10 miles, which they had to cover in order to attend services at New London, they asked and received their dismissal from the other congregation and helped to organize the new one. "Grace Lutheran congregation" was the name they adopted, being highly thankful that by the grace of our Lord they were now to have Lutheran services in their midst.

The first resolution to be unanimously adopted after the organization was the erection of a church. Work was begun in the summer. Everyone joined in. It was a matter of gratification to see these Sugar Bush Lutherans working zealously for their church. The Sunday-school got busy collecting money for hymn-boards, the young people had their minds set on an altar with a statue of Christ, the Ladies Aid wished to

donate the pulpit, the carpets and other furnishings, others donated for the pastor's and the mother's room, others for Bibles and an altar spread and electric lighting, one for a bell, the oldest lady placed the order for a baptismal font. The men folks were busy either with shovel, trowel, hammer or team. Others boarded the masons and carpenters free of charge.

Everyone of these zealous Lutherans was smiles when their neat little church, measuring 30x52 feet, of solid brick and tile, valued with all the furnishings and the lots at about \$4,500, was ready for occupancy. It was dedicated on the 1st Advent Sunday. The Lord had favored the day with exceptionally pleasant weather. From all the neighboring congregations guests arrived with congratulations for their young sister congregation. Especially New London was represented by a strong delegation accompanied by the choir which favored the great audiences with beautiful hymns under the leadership of teacher C. Zeige. The Rev.'s G. Boettcher and M. Hensel assisted in the dedicatory ceremonies and delivered inspiring sermons, the former in German and the latter in English to such great multitudes, that very many could not get into the church.

The congregation at present numbers 21 voting and 7 women members, and is supplied from New London for the present. May it prosper to the glory of our Lord and to the salvation of its members.

AD. SPIERING.

THE REVISED FAILURE

The boy's face was a dull red under his tan. He would rather have taken any kind of punishment than face his father, but he went straight to the office.

"I've failed," he said briefly. Then he turned his back and stood at the window trying to whistle.

"Dick," his father called.

The boy turned, the whistle dying on his lips, his eyes full of surprise. He knew how much his father wanted him to pass, yet there was no reproof in his voice; he was even smiling a little, and his grip brought a rush of dumb gratitude to the boy's throat.

"Began to 'make up' too late, didn't you?" his father asked. The boy nodded.

"Well, it was a failure of course; whether it stays a failure or not depends upon what it has done to you. Failure is one of the commonest things in life — failure in a man's business, in his ambition, in his hopes. Jewett failed the other day — do you know what his creditors are going to do?"

"No," the boy answered eagerly.

"Set him up again. It was a magnificent failure — conditions he could not hold out against without dishonesty, so he let everything else go and kept his honor; and his creditors are going to help him on

his feet because they believe in him. Now, Dick, I believe in my boy, and I am going to let him decide for himself. I'll find you a position, or — you can take the year over and try it again. That would be tough, I know — perhaps too tough for you. I shall not say a word if you choose business."

But the boy's head was up now, his eyes clear and determined, looking straight into his father's.

"I'm going to take it over," he declared.—Exchange.

NOT AS A PRINCE, BUT AS A SINNER

It is recorded that when the father of the late Queen Victoria, the Duke of Kent, lay dying, he expressed some anxiety about his soul. His doctor endeavored to comfort him by reminding him of how admirably he had deported himself in the conspicuous position in which he had been placed in the world. But the duke checked him, saying, "No, pastor, if I am to be saved, it is not as a prince, but as a sinner." —Luth. Standard.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Congregation Celebrates A Joint Festival

On Dec. 10th the members of Emanuel's Ev. Luth. Church in the township of Greenwood, Mich., assembled, together with a number of friends, to celebrate a joint festival. This festival consisted of the dedication of the new parsonage, and a mission festival. On this day three services took place. In the forenoon the Rev. H. F. Eggert of Bay City preached the dedicatory sermon in German, using for the basis of his discourse, Matt. 17: 4. In the afternoon the Rev. T. C. Gieschen conducted services in the English language. His sermon on the duty of every Christian as to missionary work, was based on Rom. 1: 16. In the evening the Rev. H. A. Pankow preached a sermon on Luke 14: 16-24.

The American Bible Society

It is now one hundred years that the American Bible society was organized. In this first century of its existence this society has circulated 117,687,591 copies of the Bible. This distribution has reached people that read 150 different languages. It is a splendid record in the best cause.

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