

The Northwestern Lutheran

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

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SEEING JESUS

Christ and His cross is all our theme:

The mysteries that we speak
Are scandal in the Jew's esteem,
And folly to the Greek.

But souls enlightened from above,
With joy receive the Word;
They see what wisdom, power, and love,
Shine in their dying Lord.

The vital savor of His name
Restores their fainting breath;
But unbelief perverts the same
To guilt, despair, and death.

Till God diffuse His graces down,
Like showers of heavenly rain,
In vain Apollos sows the ground,
And Paul may plant in vain.

SEEING JESUS

"We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth." John 1:45. That is what the church is proclaiming to a sinful world if it is about its allotted task. "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." That is particularly our message during the holy season of Lent. Lenten observance is now being much discussed and with different people takes on different forms; Lenten injunctions and Lenten dispensations are holding the attention of many. No injunction for this time is more deserving of attention than that given by the Savior to His disciples as He gathered them to Himself for His last memorable journey to the Holy City: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again." Humble and prayerful consideration of the suffering Savior ought to mark this holy season. Yet, how fared the Savior's invitation with His first disciples? "And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." These words of Luke 18 apply, sad to say, to many so-called disciples of this late day. They are not even gathered to the Master in this holy time, but have their own man-made Lenten way which they fol-

low. Spiritually they are like poor Bartimaeus sitting a beggar and in darkness beside the Savior's path at the gates of Jericho. The blind man, "hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." That must be the church's message particularly in this time. And while we proclaim it and the object of His passing let us, remembering us of the disciples of old, join with Bartimaeus in the cry: "Thou son of David have mercy on me: Lord, that I might receive my sight." Such a prayer offered up with faith and humility will not fail of great Lenten blessing. Read Luke 18:42. G.

COMMENTS

The Pope's Purse By design or accident the newspapers of a few weeks ago spread a rumor that was designed to cause some worry in the hearts of loyal Romanists. The news purported to relate at some length of the financial straits to which the papal treasury was reduced. It was said to be on the verge of bankruptcy; nothing but heroic efforts on the part of its managers and supporters appeared to be able to save the situation. The whole story sounded rather incredible to any one who stopped to think of the splendid history of Rome in financial affairs. That any doubts as to the solvency of the Vatican were quite unnecessary is now publicly acknowledged by an inspired communication that takes pains to describe the financial system on which papal credits are founded. Besides the movable and immovable property in and about the Vatican, the see of Rome possesses a capital fund of about \$120,000,000 which is invested to bring annual returns of about \$3,000,000. This money is invested principally in England, Spain, and America. Much of it was invested in Mexico but we are assured that the unfriendly attitude of the Mexican government caused Rome to withdraw its funds. In addition to this substantial income, the pope is annually the recipient of Peter's pence, a levy collected throughout the Roman Catholic world from every individual member of the church. This is said to be about one million dollars every year in normal times. Exact figures are not usually available. During the war the Peter's pence seems to have shrunk somewhat, as also the returns on some of the investments, but the shrinkage was not enough to cause Rome any serious inconvenience, for the normal expenditures are said to

have been but \$1,700,000 a year and the income surely has not been reduced from four millions to anything near that figure. If the worst comes to the worst, Rome can at any time change its mind about accepting the annual grant made to it by the Italian government. When the popes lost their lands in 1870, which were taken over by the newly formed Italian state, the settlement, called the law of guarantees, stipulated that the Italian government was to pay into the papal treasury annually the sum of \$700,000. This fund has never been touched by the popes; they prefer to assume the pose of injured innocence and will not be consoled for the loss of their temporal powers.—Rome's purse, it is seen, is far from empty. This gentle reminder that it has suffered a trifle from the world war will undoubtedly serve to fill it better than ever before.

H. K. M.

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Bolsheviki Dispose of Church The fate of the Orthodox Church of Russia at the hands of the new powers in that turbulent country has been a cause for speculation ever since the Czar has fallen. For the time being a solution appears to have been arrived at. A dispatch reports that the following orders disposing of the church problem have been given by the Lenine government: All property, including real estate, buildings, fixtures, and ceremonial and art objects, are to revert to the state. Religious organizations may be granted the free use of any of these properties, providing they are used for religious purposes exclusively. Religious freedom is guaranteed to all if the practitioners do not mix in questions of political character, or do not restrict the liberty of the individual, or do not in any way hinder the progress of the Republic. Religious prejudice is to be no valid ground for refusing any demands the public service may make upon the individual. Marriage and birth records are to be executed in the future with civil authorities. In all public schools and in all schools that model their course after the public schools religious instruction is to be discontinued.

In this summary manner the whole church question is handled. On the face of it, the solution does not appear to be unjust. Whether Russia is able to stand so much cold blooded reasoning in the matter of its church remains to be seen. We have been told that the Russian peasant is almost entirely dependent upon his church and his pope (priest) for his ideas; if that be true the revolutionary government has raised up against itself a formidable menace to its own future safety. Even the most courageous will not make any predictions regarding the political future of Russia. For that reason this solution of its church question can now be considered nothing more than temporary. It may be assumed that the principle of religious freedom is the one thing that will survive any further changes. That would constitute a positive gain. H. K. M.

THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

Article XXVII—Of Monastic Vows.

What is taught amongst us touching the Vows of Monks will be better understood, if one call to mind what was the state of monasteries, and how many things were every day committed in the monasteries, contrary to the Canons. In Augustine's time, cloister-fraternities were free; but afterward, when discipline was corrupted, vows were everywhere laid upon them, that, as it were in a newly-devised prison, the discipline might be restored again. Over and besides vows, many other observances by little and little were added. And these bands and snares were cast upon many, before they came to ripe years, contrary to the Canons. Many through error fell into this kind of life unawares, who, though they wanted not years, yet they wanted discretion to judge of their strength and ability. They who were once got within these nets, were constrained to abide in them, though, by the benefit of the Canons, some might be set at liberty. And that fell out rather in the monasteries of nuns than of monks; although the weaker sex ought more to have been spared. This rigor and severity displeased many good men heretofore, when they saw young maids and young men thrust into monasteries, there to get their living. They saw what an unhappy issue this counsel had, what offences it bred, and what snares it laid upon consciences. They were grieved that the authority of the Canons was wholly neglected and contemned in a thing most dangerous. To all these evils there was added such a persuasion concerning vows, as, it is well known, did in former times, displease the monks themselves, if any of them were somewhat wiser than the rest. They taught that vows were equal to baptism: they taught that by this kind of life they merited remission of sins, and justification before God; yea, they added, that the monk's life did not only merit righteousness before God, but more than that, because it observed, not only the commandments, but also the counsels of the Gospel. And thus they taught, that the monk's profession was better than baptism, that the monk's life did merit more than the life of magistrates, of pastors, and such like, who, in obedience to God's commandment, followed their calling, without any such religions of man's making. None of these things can be denied: they are to be seen in their writings. What occurred afterward in the monasteries? In old time they were schools for the study of sacred letters, and other branches of knowledge, which were profitable to the Church; and thence were pastors and bishops taken: but now the case is altered. It is needless to rehearse what is notorious. In old time they came together into such places to learn: but now they feign that it is a kind of life taken up to merit remission of sins, and justification; yea, they say, it is a state of perfection, and prefer it to all other kinds of life, the kinds that God ordained. We have therefore men-

tioned these things, not to excite odium, exaggerating nothing, to the end that the doctrine of our Churches touching this matter might be understood.

First, concerning such as contract marriage, thus they teach among us: that it is lawful for any to marry, that are not adapted for a single life; forasmuch as vows cannot take away God's ordinance and commandment. The commandment of God is, "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife:" 1 Cor. 7:2. And not only the commandment, but also the creation and ordinance of God, compelleth such unto marriage, as without the special work of God are not exempted; according to that saying, "It is not good for man to be alone." Gen. 2:18. They therefore that are obedient to this commandment and ordinance of God, do not sin.

What can be said against these things? Let a man exaggerate the bond of a vow as much as he will, yet can he never bring to pass that the vow shall take away God's commandment. The Canons teach, "that in every vow the right of the superior is excepted:" much less therefore can these vows, which are contrary to God's commandment, be of force.

If so be that the obligation of vows has no cause why it might be changed, then could not the Roman Pontiffs have dispensed therewith. For neither is it lawful for man to disannul that bond, which doth simply belong to the law of God. But the Roman Pontiffs have judged very prudently, that in this obligation there must equity be used: therefore they often, as we read, have dispensed with vows. The history of the King of Aragon, being called back out of a monastery, is well known; and there are examples in our own time.

Secondly, why do our adversaries exaggerate the obligation, or the effect of the vow; when in the meantime they speak not a word of the very nature of a vow, that it ought to be in a thing possible, ought to be voluntary and taken up of a man's own accord, and with deliberation? But it is not unknown, how far perpetual chastity is in the power of man. And how many a one amongst them is there, that doth vow of his own accord, and well advised? Maidens and youths, before they know how to judge, are persuaded, yea, sometimes also compelled to vow. Wherefore it is not meet to dispute so rigorously of the obligation, seeing that all men confess, that it is against the nature of a vow, that it is not done of a man's own accord, nor advisedly.

The Canons for the most part disannul vows, which are made before fifteen years of age; because that, before one come to that age, there seemeth not to be so much judgment, that determination may be made concerning a perpetual life. Another Canon, permitting more to the weakness of men, doth add some years more; for it forbiddeth a vow to be made, before one be eighteen years of age. But which of these shall

we follow? The greatest part have this excuse for forsaking monasteries, because most of them vowed before they came to this age.

Last of all, even though the breaking of a vow were to be reprehended, yet it seems not to follow directly that the marriages of such persons are to be dissolved. For Augustine, in his 27th quest. 1st chap. **Of Marriages**, doth deny that they ought to be dissolved; and his authority is not lightly to be esteemed, although others afterward have thought otherwise. And although the commandment of God, touching wedlock doth free most men from vows; yet our teachers do also bring another reason concerning vows, to show that they are void: because that all the worship of God, instituted of men without the commandment of God, and chosen to merit remission of sins and justification, is wicked; as Christ saith: "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men:" Matt. 15:9. And Paul doth everywhere teach, that righteousness is not to be sought of our own observances, and services which are devised by men; but that it cometh by faith to those that believe that they are received into favor by God for Christ's sake. But it is evident that the monks did teach, that these counterfeited religions satisfy for sins, and merit grace and justification. What else is this, than to detract from the glory of Christ, and to obscure and deny the righteousness of faith? Wherefore it followeth, that these common vows were wicked services, and are therefore void. For a wicked vow, and that which is made against the commandments of God, is one of no force: neither, as the Canon saith, ought a vow to be a bond of iniquity. Paul saith, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace:" Gal. 5:4. They therefore who wish to be justified by vows, are made void of Christ, and fallen from grace. For they also who attribute justification to their vows, attribute to their own works what properly belongs to the glory of Christ. Nor truly can it be denied, that the monks taught that they are justified by their vows and observances, and merit the remission of sins; nay, they invented yet greater absurdities, and said they could transfer their good works to others. If any man wished to expand these things so as to excite odium, how many things might he rehearse, whereof the monks themselves are now ashamed! Moreover, they would persuade men that these invented religious orders are a state of Christian perfection. Or is this not attributing justification to works? It is no light offence in the Church to propound unto the people a certain service devised by men, without the commandment of God, and to teach that such a service doth justify men: because that the righteousness of faith, which ought especially to be taught in the Church, is obscured, when those marvelous religions of angels, the pretence of poverty and humility, and of celibacy,

are cast before men's eyes. Moreover the commandments of God, and the true worship of God, are obscured, when men hear that monks alone are in that state of perfection: because that Christian perfection is this, to fear God sincerely, and again, to conceive great faith, and to trust assuredly that God is pacified toward us, for Christ's sake; to ask, and certainly to look for, help from God in all our affairs, according to our calling; and outwardly to do good works diligently, and to attend to our vocation. In these things doth true perfection and the true worship of God consist: it doth not consist in singleness of life, in beggary, or in vile apparel.

The people doth also conceive many pernicious opinions from these false commendations of the monastic life. They hear celibacy praised above measure: therefore with offence of conscience they live in marriage. They hear that mendicants only are perfect; therefore with offence of conscience they keep their possessions, and buy and sell. They hear that the Gospel only giveth counsel not to take revenge: therefore some in private life are not afraid to avenge themselves; for they hear that it is a counsel, not a commandment. Others do think that all magistracy and civil offices are unworthy a Christian man. We read examples of men, who, forsaking wedlock, and leaving the government of the commonwealth, have hid themselves in monasteries. This they called flying out of the world, and seeking a kind of life which is more acceptable to God: neither did they see that God is to be served in those commandments which he himself hath delivered, not in the commandments which are devised by men. That is a good and perfect kind of life, which hath the commandment of God for it. It is necessary to admonish men of these things. And before these times Gerson did reprehend this error of the monks concerning perfection; and witnesseth, that in his time this was a new saying, that the monastical life is a state of perfection. Thus many wicked opinions do cleave fast unto vows: as that they merit remission of sins, and justification, that they are Christian perfection, that they do keep the counsels and commandments, that they have works of supererogation. All these things (seeing they be false and vain) do make vows to be of none effect.

SPIRITS, NEW AND OLD

There are numerous indications that the old and threadbare spiritualism of fifty years ago believes itself ready for a revival. Stories in the magazines employ the handy device of spirits in increasing numbers. Serious articles appear, signed by well known men, with the object of popularizing the "new revelations." In recent years there have been many books published in the interest of the belief in spirits. The most pretentious organization to spread the spirit lore is the Psychical Research Society.

This group of modern spiritualists boasts a few famous names and proceeds to make the most of its opportunities by constantly referring to these famous men, who would surely not be interested in anything that was not worth while. Among them Sir Oliver Lodge, the British scientist, is the foremost. Coming before the public now in the guise of an apostle of spiritualism is Sir A. Conan Doyle, hitherto known as an ingenious compiler of mystery stories with very material solutions.

It might interest readers of the Northwestern Lutheran to find out just what Doyle thinks about his new faith. It may be a fair sample of the mental attitude of most spiritualists and may dispel in many minds the fear that there might be something "in it." If, after getting Doyle's views, there is any inclination to delve further in this jumble of unbelief and credulity, there is no help for the victim—he deserves his fate.

Doyle confesses that he was originally a materialist. He thought that human existence was entirely a matter of chemical reactions and physiological processes. It is significant that the great lights of spiritualism have with few exceptions been materialists, that is, unbelievers of the grossest kind. They believed nothing that could not be demonstrated to them by laboratory proofs.

Doyle thinks he has changed, now that he believes in spirits. He is deceiving himself; he has merely added the spirits to those other elements in his laboratory that may be seen and felt and smelled. He was prevailed upon to add the spirits to his world because he believes that there is proof for their existence.

The means by which their presence is proved are the old ones. There are mediums, men or women, that act as reporters and tell others about what they see and hear in regard to the spiritual world. The whole conversion hinges on the reports of these mediums.

Mediums, be it said, are men and women who appear to have a particular sense that enables them to receive messages from the spirit world. Not all men have this sense. Very few have it. Doyle confesses that he himself is singularly free of all mediumistic qualities. The medium swoons away, or goes into a trance, then it begins to mumble words: I see this or that. Attendants at these exercises, called séance, may then ask questions and the medium may answer them. Often the messages are written "through automatic writing where the hand of the medium is controlled, either by an alleged dead human being, as in the case of Miss Julia Ames, or by an alleged angel, as in that of Mr. Stainton Moses." Table-tilting and other mechanical devices have not entirely gone out of fashion with the spirits, as Sir Arthur further confides.

From these messages it is now accepted spiritualistic doctrine that the human soul, upon death, departs for a sphere immediately in the neighborhood of the

earth. It has a sort of shadowy body which is imperceptible to the living excepting when the medium lends his good offices. It seems to wear spiritual clothes and seems to have some sort of occupation. It meets its friends of earthly life, as far as they have died, and avoids the enemies of the former life. It takes, at first, a sort of faint interest in its living friends, but despairing of making them understand, the spirit gradually acquires the habits and interests of the new sphere. Impartially, the good and the bad are admitted to this spirit life and the "weight of evidence" would indicate that there is little if any difference in their lot. But Sir Arthur courageously assumes that the bad ones are subject to a number of restrictions and disadvantages which the righteous are spared. It seems, after all, to be a sort of old fashioned purgatory into which the spirits enter. From here they pass on to a higher sphere, with which we have "as yet" not been able to establish contact.

It is not entirely clear whether Christ has passed out of this first sphere or not. Modern spiritualism graciously gives him a special place in their scheme of things. The mediums, some of them, have reported that the spirits know something about a Christ Spirit, the highest which they know, and that the Christ Spirit has especially come down upon earth to bring it heavenly benefits.

Sir A. Conan Doyle stoutly maintains that these affairs of the spirits are not a science but a religion. By methods that are not even clever but excessively crude he tries to show that Christianity is more nearly approached by the spiritualist than by any other form of faith,—of course. Just how seriously his statement that it is a new and better Christianity is to be taken, can be seen in his readjustment of the one Christian doctrine above all others, the atonement of Christ for our sins. He says: "People are alienated (from Christian faith) because they frankly do not believe the facts as presented to them to be true. Their reason and their sense of justice are equally offended. One can see no justice in a vicarious sacrifice, nor in the God who could be placated by such means. Above all, many cannot understand such expressions as the 'redemption from sin', 'cleansed by the blood of the lamb', and so forth. So long as there was any question of the fall of man there was at least some sort of explanation of such phrases; but when it became certain that man had never fallen—when with our fuller knowledge we could trace our ancestral course down through the cave-man and the drift-man, back to that shadowy and far-off time when the man-like ape slowly evolved into the ape-like man—looking back on all this vast succession of life, we knew that it had always been rising from step to step. Never was there any evidence of a fall. What then becomes of the atonement, of the redemption, of original sin, of a large part of Christian mystical philosophy? Even if

it were as reasonable in itself, as it is actually unreasonable, it would still be quite divorced from the facts.

"Again, too much seemed to be made of Christ's death. . . . In my opinion, far too much stress has been laid upon Christ's death, and far too little upon his life. That was where the true grandeur and the true lesson lay."

In this strain Doyle goes on to rehabilitate the Christian religion. It is almost a sacrilege to repeat his words. But from them every Christian can see what spirit animates the unbelief that calls itself spiritualism or psychical research. It is after all so puerile and silly a thing, to believe what mediums tell you when they are in a trance, especially when nearly every one of prominence has been caught in barefaced frauds, that one could not speak of it without ridiculing it, if it did not wound the Christian heart so sorely with its horrible godlessness. This small sample of spiritualism should be enough warning to steel every true Christian against it forever.

H. K. M.

MAY THE PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS LIVE

The Nebraska State Council of Defense at a meeting held in December adopted the following resolutions:

"Whereas, From investigations which have been conducted by the Nebraska State Council of Defense, it has become very apparent that the teaching of German in some of the private and denominational schools of the state has had an influence which is not conducive to a proper and full appreciation of American citizenship, therefore,

Be It Resolved, That the Nebraska State Council of Defense earnestly requests that no foreign language shall be taught in any of the private or denominational schools of Nebraska and that all instruction, whether secular or religious shall be given in the English language. And, the Council earnestly asks the cordial co-operation of all private and denominational school authorities of Nebraska in putting into effect this request, and we again urge that the public school authorities of Nebraska see to it that no foreign language shall be taught in any of the grade schools of our state."

As can be seen by the preamble, the resolution is aimed solely at the parochial schools of the Lutheran Church, all other denominational schools in Nebraska being of a negligible quantity. Officials and committees of the Wisconsin and Missouri Synods appeared before the Council in behalf of our schools. But all remonstrances were futile, and every effort made to secure a modification of the resolution proved to be of no avail. Very properly the Church authorities then recommended our congregations to drop the teaching of German in their schools entirely.

What effect this will have on our parochial schools and how the Lutheran Church will fare in consequence remains to be seen. It must naturally cause some inconveniences, necessitating as it does a material change in the plans of study. In certain localities the congregations have voluntarily decided to discontinue their schools. But it should be noted that our parochial school system itself is not necessarily endangered by any such drastic steps as taken by the Nebraska Defense Council. The parochial school has not been fostered and maintained merely to propagate the German language. What has endeared it to parents and their children, pastors and congregations is something wholly beyond the propagation of a language. Practically the only reason for the existence and continuance of such schools is to be found in the command of the Lord to preach the Gospel. We know that what our children need above everything else is such a training in which from beginning to end the Gospel predominates and shines forth as the saving light.

Why, then, should we be disinclined to continue our schools and thus put our children, as far as their spiritual welfare is concerned, in jeopardy just because some state authorities deemed it their duty in the name of patriotic devotion to the country to request that all instruction in the schools be given in the English language? For the sake of our children and the welfare of the church we should be ready to sacrifice all we have, even the language that is most dear to us.

We have heard the remark that the Lutheran Church will stand and fall with the German language. If that should mean that the pure doctrine of the Word cannot be preserved but by the continuation of the German language and that correct preaching of the Gospel hinges on the use of that language alone, then such a view will not hold. May we not perhaps, as German Lutherans have unreasonably entertained such or similar thoughts, especially when considered in connection with the Gemeinde-Schule? We need not unnecessarily abolish German, but where conditions are such as we now have to contend with in Nebraska, we should willingly adjust ourselves to the situation rather than be neglectful of our highest duty towards our people and our country. C. E. BERG.

CONFESSION OF CHRIST

The Savior said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven." It is also written, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

It may have been enough in the past to simply be known as a church member; but in view of the great amount of untruthfulness in doctrine and unfaithfulness in conditions in a great many churches, it is not out of place to stop a moment and ask ourselves, Am I genuinely confessing Christ before men: i. e., before the world, not merely before other Christians. There

are many definitions of the terms "Christian," "Sinner," "Salvation," etc.; yea, more, various "Views" as to Christ Himself, who and what He was, etc.; but to genuinely confess Christ is to confess one's belief in Him as He is set forth in the Word of God. Of necessity it includes confession of oneself as a guilty, lost sinner before God, with no hope of salvation other than through that atoning Sacrifice, even the death and resurrection of the Son of God.

We should be sure though that we are not confessing or standing to a falsehood, a false representation of Christ; because much is preached and called "Christian" that merely aims at making better conditions between man and man. The teaching of "Socialism" in various forms is very subtle and is creeping into many so-called evangelical pulpits, and is deceiving multitudes. Progress, improvement, betterment of social conditions; that is the slogan of the world reformers. And that is as far as "Natural religionists" go. But be not deceived. The fundamental doctrine of the "Cross of Christ"—i. e., the doctrine of man's utter unrighteousness by nature, necessitating the entire repudiating of the "Flesh," with all its supposed "Goodness" as well as its sinfulness, and casting oneself upon the Grace of God in the person of the crucified and risen Son of God—is as offensive to the unsaved "Natural man" today as in the days of Christ and the apostles. More especially if such persons are "Religious."

It will hardly be called an aspersion on the present day quality of manhood to say that we lack the sturdy courage of past generations. Over refinement has produced a degree of moral cowardice. Do we not generally shrink from what we think is a humiliating confession of ourselves as being lost sinners, saved by Grace alone? How many Christian business men, for instance, would blush and stammer perhaps, if some one should ask them in their office before their clerks, "Do you know your sins forgiven?" or simply, "Are you a Christian?"

It cannot be expected that the world will pat us on the back if we confess truly to the Christ of the New Testament fully as He is set forth there. Christ said, "Ye shall be hated of all men for My Name's sake." We cannot escape opposition if there is faithful confession of Christ.

Some ministers will say even, "Oh, there is no need of people being humiliated by acknowledging that they are lost sinners; its enough if they say they are not what they ought to be, and want to be better." But let us think of the great humiliation of Christ, the Lord from heaven, in His expiatory sacrifice for our sins; and let me ask you if you do not recognize that you are not merely a little wrong, a sort of hypothetical sinner, but really one of the "Ungodly" for whom Christ died; actually a "Child of wrath, even as others," as the great apostle Paul humbly acknowledged himself.

The "Exceeding sinfulness" of our sins is shown by the greatness of the Sacrifice it took to expiate it. The one is the measure of the other. That is, if there had been but one sinner—you or I, say—that needed the propitiatory sacrifice, I believe it would needed to have been the same as Christ's actually was for the whole race.

Jesus Christ, the Rock of Ages, is the same always—"Yesterday, and to-day, and forever." There is no hint in the Word of God that He is to be adapted as to His person or work to the "Changed conditions" in these latter times. Spiritual conditions are not changed in fact, and Christ is the "Savior of men" just the same now, and in the same way as when it so was written by the inspired penman.

Reader, can you not say with me—and this is my confession:

"Lord, I am Thine, bought by Thy Blood,
Once a vile guilty slave of sin:
Thou didst redeem me, O my God,
And now Thy Spirit dwells within.
Thou hast my sinful wanderings borne
With love and patience all divine;
A brand as from the burning torn,
I own that I am justly Thine."
—The Gospel Message.

WHY DO WE NOT CO-OPERATE?

Why do we of the Synodical Conference not co-operate with the National Lutheran Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare? In answering this question, we are not attempting to defend ourselves against the calumnies of those who apparently have made it their business to cast aspersions on us at every opportunity. That would be a waste of time and energy. Or, is there any hope for such who, like a certain Wisconsin daily paper, immediately draw from the fact that some Lutherans did not attend the recent Madison meeting the conclusion that these Lutherans are less loyal than those who were present? That meeting was held by representatives of certain religious organizations for the purpose of planning a campaign for funds to be used for religious work among their member serving in the Army and Navy. If these men had represented the Episcopal or the Catholic Church, would Methodists who did not attend by their non-attendance have branded themselves as luke-warm, or even disloyal, citizens? No man with but a vestige of sanity would make such an assertion. Why, then, the insinuations in this case? Though both parties concerned bear the same name, they are not one in doctrine and in practice and, consequently, do not work together at other times and in other matters. Why should members of the Synodical Conference now attend a meeting arranged by and for the National Commission? And, besides, what has this all to do with our relation to the government?

We write this for the information of our readers

and, incidentally, of such outside of our circles who may feel the desire to judge us fairly, because the necessity of concerted action on the part of all Lutherans has in these days been urged so strongly that many may have been misled to believe that the success of the Lutheran Church in her work for her soldier and sailor sons actually depends on such co-operation. The remarks of the Rev. J. A. Stub in his Madison address tend to convey this impression. He is quoted as follows:

"These 200,000 boys in the service are doing more to uphold the name of our church than all the speeches and reformation celebrations put together. I come in behalf of these boys to ask you to give all that you possibly can in energy, faith, money and sacrifice. This is the only thing for us to do. We can return to our doctrinal, racial or synodical differences after the war if we must. But now we should be one and one indissoluble behind our boys. This is the greatest opportunity that our church has had to put itself right before our boys and the great American people. I feel sure that the Lutheran church will rise to the occasion; it has the men, energy and faith to make good."

This very plea of the Rev. Stub for concerted action ought to suffice to show our readers why we cannot co-operate with the National Commission. The mention at this time of racial difference must be considered most unfortunate, as it might create wrong impressions. Racial differences would not cause any Lutheran body to hold itself aloof from this movement, and just as little would synodical lines prove an obstacle to fraternal co-operation. But the speaker admits that there are doctrinal differences between the various Lutheran synods, and these differences do and should forbid co-operation in religious work. Now the chief object of the National Commission is to do religious work for those who have joined in the movement.

- According to its program, it
- "Provides and equips Lutheran Army and Navy Chaplains.
 - "Cares for all Protestant interned aliens.
 - "Inspires to prayer, thanksgiving, repentance, supplication, intercession.
 - "Places at least one burden-sharer, a camp pastor, in over 200 camps.
 - "Strengthens as needed every Lutheran church near a camp.
 - "Sends personal friends as pastors with the man to foreign lands."

The tentative budget brings out the same fact:

1. Equipments for Chaplains	\$ 25,000.00
2. Secretaries' salaries and expenses	18,000.00
3. 150 Camp Pastors, salaries, expenses	400,000.00
4. Assistance to churches near camps, workers, etc.	40,000.00
5. Interned Aliens	20,000.00
6. Work in France	50,000.00
7. Buildings, Brotherhood, Co-operative, etc....	125,000.00
8. Literature, especially direct campaign to 165,000 men	35,000.00
9. Office expenses, etc.	12,000.00
10. Emergency expenses, care of wounded, finan- cial campaign, etc.	25,000.00
	\$750,000.00

To co-operate fully with the Commission, would mean that we make it one medium through which we preach and perform our pastoral work among our members with the flag.

Now, if we can do this in the camps, what grounds have we to refuse to practice altar and pulpit fellowship with those represented in the Commission at home? How could we continue to warn our members against the unionism and lodgism of, for example, the General Synod, while we commit their sons and brothers to the spiritual care of pastors belonging to that body, and help strengthen its small congregations near the camps?

That would be the very opposite of putting our church right before those of her boys who know what she stands for, while it would further confuse and mislead those who are weak in knowledge.

The reference of the speaker to this war work as the greatest opportunity for our church "to put herself right before the great American people" smacks very strongly of opportunism. The Church goes about the business of the Father single minded for His honor and the welfare of souls, without anxiously scanning the features of the public for signs of approval. Our duty is to be right with God, not to put ourselves right before men. And we are not right with God if we make light of differences in doctrine and practice. No emergency that could possibly arise can warrant a departure from the rule of the Divine Word, which is ever the same, in peace and in war, at home and in the camp.

We, too, feel that our church is now being put to a test; but the test is this: Will she in these troubled times prove faithful to the doctrines and principles she professes? Grant God that she may, casting all human considerations aside, adhere steadfastly to His word; and may He lead her forth out of her trials chastened and strengthened. Let that be our sole concern and prayer as Lutherans.

Not that it is immaterial to us what our fellow citizens think of our church. We feel more deeply than a personal insult any slur cast upon her fair name. But the only God pleasing way to put ourselves right before our country is to be faithful to His Truth in our preaching and practice. True Lutheranism is true patriotism. Loyal members of our church are loyal citizens of our country. Any act against the best interests of our country that may have been committed by those who bear our name stands disavowed by the confessions of our church and is earnestly condemned by us. But if our position on the relation of Church and State and the functions of each is misunderstood and misinterpreted by some, the fault does not lie with us. Our duty is simply to voice the Truth of God; and if we perform this duty faithfully, we will also be rendering the best service to our beloved land. An advantage gained at the expense of the Truth will prove a curse to the Church.

While we cannot, for these reasons, unite with the other Lutherans in this war work, we do not want our position interpreted as one of opposition and obstruction. We are willing to confer and act with the Commission in external matters, whenever the necessity may arise; for instance, in dealing with the Government, arranging the time and place of worship within the camps, etc. We will avoid all duplication in the erection of buildings for the use of our soldiers. Thus there is nothing to prevent agreeable relations between the two committees, each doing to the best of its ability the work of the bodies it represents.

But why not co-operate in these externals at least, if that can be done without the violation of our principles? We have seen that this is not necessary for the successful prosecution of the work. As conditions are now, there will be no duplication, excepting where our conscience demands it, in preaching and pastoral work. Thus the efficiency of the Lutheran Church, considered as a whole, is not cut down in the least through the lack of an organic union.

Why should we, then, needlessly enter into a relation that might prove very confusing to our people and to the public? Again and again we meet in the religious and the secular press interviews and notices that create the impression that all Lutheran bodies are united in the Commission. A strong undercurrent of unionistic hope for the future of our church is distinctly noticeable in some of the literature dealing with this subject. "All denominational fences are down," reads an invitation issued in a certain district. To belong to the Commission, would make us responsible for what its representatives say and write and would weaken our testimony against the unionistic views some of them express. Thus we deem it best not to enter into an organic union with the Commission, even if this were limited to external matters. If the sole aim of all concerned is to provide for the spiritual wants of Lutheran soldiers and sailors, this aim will be achieved if every Lutheran does all he can to support the committee that represents him. Great sacrifices must be made, and we find our people ready to make them.

Our Lutheran Church Board for Army and Navy has now called and placed twenty-four camp pastors, while in all about one hundred ministers are looking after our boys. Five chaplains have been appointed by the Government and are already in the service, eight are on the waiting list. It is planned to erect about twenty barracks, two of which are already under construction. Support the cause, bring your gift to your pastor!

J. B.

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