

THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

*"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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ABRAHAM'S FAITH

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Hebrews 11:8-10.

In the biography of Abraham written by Moses under divine inspiration a notable silence respecting Abraham's attitude toward God before his call is observable. While Moses delights in telling us of Noah, for instance, "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God" for he "found grace in the eyes of the Lord," he is completely silent on Abraham before his entry into the public career as to this point. To him Abram was simply Abram, though, it is true, as the name signifies, an exalted father, a man of authority, a prince among men, of moral rectitude, a reproachless character; but he was, as Moses knew him to be, an idolator, having lived seventy-five years after his birth with his idolatrous father Terah in Chaldea worshipping the gods of the Chaldeans. Though a descendant of Shem who worshipped the One and only true God, Abraham was far from such worship, but rather adhered to the religion of Nimrod, the mightiest ruler in his time. Thus Moses introduces Abraham into the history which was destined to become the most important, the most blessed and far-reaching to mankind. And it was at this juncture the call of God came to Abraham to renounce his idolatry and to become the representative of the worship of the true God as well as the bearer of the Lord's blessings to all the nations of the world.

What was the motive that impelled God to raise this chief of idolators to such a high place? It was not the dignity of this man, not his intellectual and moral excellency, not the commanding position he occupied in this world, not any deeds of righteousness he had performed. No, it was solely and alone the unspeakable grace and compassion of God which moved Him to such action. He who had nothing to boast of before God, whose idolatry rather laid bare his soul as impious before his Creator loaded with an inextinguishable guilt of sin, was to be redeemed from the

misery which is the inevitable result of idolatry, through God's love and merciful kindness. In all history of God's Kingdom on earth we find no case similar to the one save that of Paul in the New Testament, who, being a blasphemer, an intolerant hater of Christ and His religion, a bloodthirsty persecutor of the Christians, by the grace of God, became the prince of the Gospel messengers among the Gentiles for all times to come. What miracles of God's grace and mercy these two men — Abraham and Paul — are!

Abraham's Attitude to God's Gracious Call

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."

The Lord's call to Abraham was clear and definite. He was to get out of his country, to leave his kindred and father's house, and move to a land fully unknown to him. It may be that, in a measure, Abraham was prepared for such a call. It is not unlikely that through the mediation of Shem, his father's relative, he had been warned against idolatry, and had been admonished to depart from his idolatrous country for his spiritual security. Be this as it may, Abraham heard the Word of God directly, possibly also indirectly, and by that Word his faith not only was effected, but it became an efficacious power. So profound was his faith in God that it was followed by unhesitating obedience to God's commands. He was ready to go wherever he was sent, "not knowing whither he went," but trusting in God for guidance and direction.

Truly, that is faith; Abraham did nothing on his part to acquire such faith. God simply showered His blessing on him by calling him, and Abraham merely suffered to receive that blessing as into an empty vessel. Looking to God he could see nothing but His lovingkindness reflecting its rays, as it were, in a bright and glorious mirror; nothing but His condescension to men so frail and sinful such as he was, exclaiming without doubt, in his mind before God — "we are but dust and clay in thy sight."

"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the sacred promise."

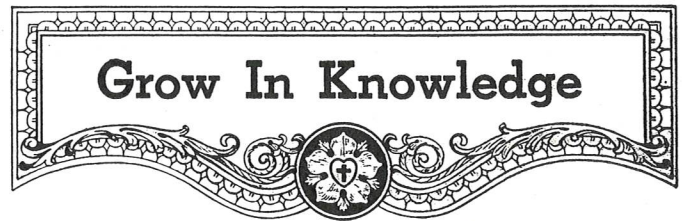
We have here before us Abraham's journey which he pursued through the promised land in obedience to the divine command. After the death of his father Terah at Haran in Mesopotamia, Abram passed through the land Canaan unto Sichern, afterward a city of Samaria. He then went still farther south and pitched his tent on a mountain having Bethel on the west and Hai on the east, and there he built an altar unto the Lord. That was a monument of divine blessing and thanksgiving. Apparently for the first time did Abraham on his journey through Canaan publicly proclaim before the members of his household as well as the Canaanites the worship of the One and only true God over against all idolatrous worship, publishing the name of the Lord, telling them of the kind and merciful disposal of God toward the human race, inasmuch as He has promised a Mediator through whom His wrath and punishment shall be abrogated and salvation once lost in paradise through sin, shall be restored and preserved for all times. That was an act of true faith on the part of Abraham.

Abraham's Faith Based on Divine Promises

Abraham's faith, however, was based on God's promises. These were indeed great and glorious — the most significant and blessed promises ever made to man. What do you say to such promises as these: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," Gen. 12:2, 3. More than once did God make such or similar promises to Abraham. They referred partly to the possession of the land Canaan, partly to the increase and extension of Abraham's descendants, above all to the one seed of Abraham in whom all the nations unto the end of time shall be blessed.

It was not without severe tests, however, severer than any man had ever experienced, that Abraham based his faith on these promises of God. Abraham was childless, his wife Sarai being barren. He was now ninety-nine or one hundred years old, while Sarah was ninety, when they sojourned in Canaan. How shall Abraham's descendants possess this great and promising land? More than this, how shall he become the father of many nations? Above all, how shall the Savior of the world come from his loins, since there was no offspring in sight? It was beyond comprehension, contrary to human reason. Small wonder that Abraham asked God in utter astonishment, "Shall a son be born unto him that is one hundred years old?" Evidently he had at first received the promise with some incredulity. And he requires some sign from God. "Whereby," said he "shall I know that I shall inherit it" — that is Canaan — "and that my seed shall be in number as the stars of

heaven?" Then followed the renewal of God's promises and the covenant God made with Abraham. And sojourning in Canaan, as in a strange land, Abraham implicitly believed in God's promises and kept the covenant, when to his great joy Isaac, the firstborn son of Sarah, his wife, was born, in whom he saw the fulfillment of God's promises, and casting as it were a prophetic eye beyond the ages he saw that the promise made to him was spiritual rather than material, pertaining to the final triumph of his faith that in his seed all the nations of the world shall be blessed, "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." J. J.



ELIJAH THE TISHBITE

(Continued)

II

Enough has been said cursorily of Elijah's outward circumstances. Let us now glance also at his spiritual position, the connection in which he stood with God.

To use his own language, **he stood before the God of Israel**; that was his spiritual station and appointment, the character of his internal life. Dost thou ask who is the God of Israel? Knowest thou the Angel who talked with Abraham in the Terebinth-grove of Mamre; and the mysterious man, who wrestled with Jacob till the morning dawned, and parted from him with the words, "Now shalt thou be called Israel, for thou hast wrestled with God and man, and hast prevailed"? Knowest thou him that appeared in the burning thorn-bush at the foot of Horeb? And the wondrous effulgent countenance, of which the Paternal Deity said in the wilderness, "I will not go with thee, Moses, but I will send my countenance, which shall lead thee?" Knowest thou the living rock, which followed the steps of the wanderers through the wilderness towards Canaan; and the Captain of the host of God, in white armor, who came to Joshua at Jordan, and was the sword of his conquest, and the shield of his help? Knowest thou him well? Christ is his name. He is the Lord, the God of Israel. Thousands of thousands stand before him; before him stand the angels, whom he maketh winds, the ministering spirits, whom he maketh flames of fire; before him stood Elijah.

"Happy are thy people, and happy these thy servants, who stand at all times before thee." So said the queen of Sheba to Solomon. But here is a greater

than Solomon, and how far happier are the servants who stand unmoved before the God of Israel. But no one stands on his feet, in his strength, in his righteousness and beauty. For he bears an iron rod, and beats down with it all that dare to come before him in dependence on themselves, to look upon him in their own strength, to lift up the head before him in their own rectitude and power. Such he will not suffer. But to the worm in the dust, to the poor emptied sinner, lying in his own blood, he says, "Rise up and stand before me; look with confidence on my face, and be not afraid." He who would stand and lift up his brow before him, must first lie before him in the dust, bent and prostrate. How often among the mountains of Gilead may Elijah have lain on the ground? How many tears may he have shed in lonely clefts and caves, before he could say, "As the Lord liveth, the God of Israel, before whom I stand?" Elijah had been reconciled to God in Christ Jesus, the Messiah, and clothed with his righteousness. This is comprehended in the expression used, and confirmed by the circumstance that it was he who nearly a thousand years after was, along with Moses, thought worthy by Christ to be a witness of his glorification on the height of Tabor.

Yet the standing before the Lord expresses something more than merely the state of being reconciled. It indicates also a peculiar relation to God. The expressions, "I stand before the Lord," and "the Lord stands before me," point out two different states of mind, both of which belong to all the children of God. But of some Christians the first, and of others the second may be said to be the prevailing character, and on that account the old mystics frequently distinguish between the apostolic Christian, that is, him who is more occupied in public exertions for the honor of his Lord, and the contemplative Christian who lives more in himself. The Lord stands before me, if his form and presence enter into the inner sphere of my existence, if I discern with the eyes of faith his cross and his wounds, and, as it were, drink deeply of his love-worthiness; and thus rapt in the contemplation of his beauty and grace, of his works and wonders, refresh myself in stillness with the sight of his sacrifice and merits, pasturing by the cool streams of his eternal promises and covenants.

On the contrary, I stand before the Lord, when I desire before all things to have the will of the Lord at all times plainly manifested to me, and when, from one moment to another, my constant care is to do his pleasure and promote his honor. If I keep my eye, as it were, steadily fixed upon the telegraph, to learn the signals of my King, and listen attentively with the ear of my spirit to catch his voice and command both within me and without me; if I watch the glance of his eye to run the way of his commandments, so that my soul, zealous for his cause and honor, would incessantly sing in the words of the poet,

"To know thy will is all my prayer;
Still knocking at the door I stand;
Thy pleasure then, O Lord, declare, —
I only wait for thy command."

When this is the case, I stand before the Lord; and if this be the prevailing character of my life, I belong to that class of Christians whom we may call the apostolic or publicly active. Both expressions might be applied to Elijah, as to all the children of God; but his prevailing character was that indicated by himself in our text — "He stood before the Lord." To be an instrument of the divine will for the hallowing and glorification of his name, was his ardent desire, and his spiritual eye and ear might have said with the watchman in Isaiah, "Lord, we stand on the watchtower continually by day, and keep guard the whole night." His life was a perpetual listening for the voice of God; he sought it in the thunder and in the storm, as well as in the soft rustle of the breeze; he caught its tones in the vicissitudes of his life, as well as in the internal emotions of his soul. Wherever he moved, his course was still but a waiting for orders and a running to execute them: journeying to and fro in the open air, he spent his days in the presence of his eternal King, and "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth," was his watchword. Such was Elijah by the grace of God; thus stood he before the Lord, the God of Israel.

III

Let us now glance at Samaria, the idolatrous city. There stands the man of God in the midst of his enemies, before the tyrant Ahab, and, courageous in God, opens his mouth, and utters words at which the ears of the people tingle. "As the Lord liveth, the God of Israel, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." Elijah! what sayest thou? What a risk! Is not this sporting with the honor of God? Will they not scorn both him and thee, should that which thou hast announced be delayed? Such an issue Elijah fears not. He feels a confident certainty of the matter.

But how could Elijah make such a declaration? Elijah, full of holy zeal for the honor of his God, was inwardly assured that such a chastising judgment would melt the hardened hearts of his countrymen, and restore to the name of God its due honor. He brought this matter before the Lord, as James informs us at the conclusion of his epistle. "Elijah was a man of like passions with us, and he prayed that it might not rain." And "Amen" was the answer sent from above into his soul: "Amen, so be it, into thy hands it is given to open heavens and shut them."

Elijah grasped this Amen of the living God like a sword in his hand; resting upon this Amen, he proclaims the drought with the decision of a God. Around Samaria all nature seemed to shake the head at him, and to laugh his threat to scorn. The luxu-

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riant meadows and fields, and the teeming springs, everywhere united in a cry, "Elijah, thou shalt not have thy wish"; and many hundred bubbling wells and brooks, which poured forth through the land, and the vapory mountains, which form and attract the clouds; all seemed to have conspired to make his prediction false. But Elijah was not mistaken; with the hand of faith he held the Amen of his God, then why pay any regard to nature, outward appearances, and reason? His "Yea" overpowered the "Nay" of the springs, brooks, and clouds; and where everything indicated luxurious vegetation, he said, "As the Lord liveth, there shall be drought"; and as he spoke, the heavens and the earth changed their form. The heavens became as iron and brass, and restrained their influence. The word of the prophet penetrated, like a fever, into the entrails of the earth, with blighting and scorching violence and everything, that was fresh and green, hung its head withering; and all that gurgled and flowed, evaporated into nothing; and all that had breath lay down panting and pining. No dew nor rain fell for three years and a half: such was the effect of the denunciation of a wretched mortal. Of a mortal indeed, but of one who was in alliance and unity of will with the Almighty; and I tell you, ye would do these works also and greater than these, if ye had faith. The children of God exercise rule and authority with Jehovah, but this will not be fully revealed until we are in another state. Then with a word we shall extinguish stars, create new worlds, and possess power to act according to our pleasure? Yes indeed, since our only desire then shall be that the will of the Lord may be done.

We shall now conclude. O my parishioners, so blessed of God, verily, verily, I say unto you, it shall not be more tolerable for you than for the land of Samaria and Israel, if the high places among you are not speedily levelled, the groves rooted up, the images of Baal broken down, before which you also, or at least the majority of you, either grossly or in a more refined manner, bend the knee. Is it then as if the

heavens had already begun to close over us? How is it that the dew of the Spirit falls so sparingly? How is it that so few arise from the dead, and that a copious shower of heavenly rain has so long been unknown in this valley of ours? What is the cause of this? Has there perchance an Elijah come amongst us with his commination? or does Elijah sleep, forgetting to open again that which has been closed? Community of God — little band of true Israelites — people of his possession — thou art Elijah! Thy tongue also is formed to produce clouds and rain, and is a staff, which bursts open the gates of iron. Oh! sleep not, for the prayer of the righteous availeth much, when earnestly offered.

Go, pray — pray for dew and water to this land of drought, and then, from the Amen of thy heart, declare that "The drought will soon be at an end; arise, eat, drink, and be joyful, for there is sound of abundance of rain."

May God in his mercy grant it. Amen.

— Adapted by G.

GREAT MULTITUDES OF PEOPLE

Not only was the Lord Jesus Christ "bruised for our iniquities" upon the Cross, but His whole life was a living ministry in behalf of humanity. Just as the last dark hours on Calvary are, in their atoning work, the climax of His first advent, so the last three years of His public ministry are the culmination of the days, months, and years of His earthly walk.

No one can read the Gospels with intelligence and with a receptive spirit and fail to be impressed by the intense activity of those last three years. On the Cross He poured out His blood for many for the remission of sins; during the triennial in Galilee and Judea He poured out His life in teaching and healing. The four evangelists, each in his own way, but each with simple directness, place before us the picture of those days of perfect love manifest in compassionate deeds and life-giving teaching.

For the public leader of fine and sensitive spirit one of the hardest of trials is the constant notoriety that is the penalty of greatness. And surely this was among the burdens that our Lord carried for us. In purity of character and fineness of perception, He was so far above even the greatest saint that we can but faintly comprehend what the daily notoriety, the enforced contact with hordes of sinful and spiritually blinded humanity, cost His sensitive Spirit.

Matthew is the kingly gospel. It portrays Christ as the Messiah, the promised King of Israel. Thus its author selects, under the guidance of the Spirit, those incidents that combine to reveal the picture of the divine Son of David. Now the necessary corollary of Kingship is prominence. The Sovereign is ever in the public eye. And considering Matthew's particular purpose in writing his Gospel, it is not sur-

prising that we find him emphasizing our Lord's constant contact with the multitudes. No less than fifty times in his twenty-eight chapters does Matthew use the Greek "ochlos" — multitude, and ten times the word "laos" — crowd.

Luke, the gospel of His humanity, likewise emphasizes Christ's unceasing contact with people. Having the largest vocabulary of the evangelist, Luke uses four words for multitude, crowd, people, etc. ("ochlos," "plethos," "sunodia," and "murias") and uses them a total of over seventy times. What a testing this reveals! Surrounded by crowds, multitudes thronging Him, people pressing about Him, our Lord, as Luke shows us, was continuously the center of the searching eyes of those who would only too gladly seize upon the tiniest flaw in His character, the smallest defect in His teaching. And what a tribute to His spotless person is the fact that at His trial no shred of discreditable evidence was brought forth! The long years of scrutiny on the part of keenly hostile critics proved fruitless; only the deliberate lies of false-witnesses could bring even a semblance of legality to that travesty of justice before the high priest.

Mark also, in the brief compass of his sixteen vivid chapters, uses the various words for crowds and people often — well over forty times, in fact. John, however, writes with a different purpose. He is more concerned with the deeper side of Christ's life and teachings, and therefore does not stress so strongly the every-day events. Moreover, his is the Gospel that records the personal discourse of our Lord, particularly those with individuals like Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman. Thus it is doubly significant that John mentions the multitudes more than twenty times.

Consider now that pitiless publicity, as the Gospels reveal it to us. Wherever He went, there were the multitudes. Five thousand He fed, and they straightway misunderstood Him and wanted to make Him King — not according to God's plan but to satisfy their own selfish desires. Scores and hundreds did He heal, and as He healed virtue went out from Him; He paid the price. As He went from place to place they followed Him, these clamoring crowds — humanity, made in the divine image but debased through sin — a spectacle infinitely sad to the heart of the Savior-God. Insistent in their selfish clamor they left Him not even the shore to stand upon, but forced Him to take refuge in a boat. When He would rest His weary body or replenish His Spirit, He had to steal away to some mountain-top apart. Only the house of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus was a haven as His hour drew near.

From the very beginning the crowds were hostile. When He taught publicly in the synagogue of His

native Nazareth, the people first listened gladly. But His declaration of His identity with the Messiah of Isaiah's great prophecy (Isaiah 61) and His searching words turned their narrow minds. "All they in the synagogue," writes Luke, "were filled with wrath." So they sought to throw Him from the brow of the hill. In Gadara, He healed the poor demoniac. But some pigs were lost. And the Gadarenes, though they saw the demoniac clothed and in His right mind, urged the Healer to leave. They were fearful for their pigs!

To be sure, sometimes the crowds heard Him gladly, but their favor was fickle, and they were easily swayed by the false leaders. Finally they escorted Him in triumph through the streets of Jerusalem. Less than a week later they were shouting in a frenzy of fury, "Away with Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him." Of all the hundreds whom He healed, there was not one to support Him in his time of trial. Not only the multitudes upon whom He had looked with compassion, whom He had fed, and whose burdens He had made light — not only the multitudes, but even His chosen disciples forsook Him and fled. In those dark hours, He saw the utter iniquity of the human heart.

We hear, these days, much of the divine nature of man, the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. "All men are divine; the kingdom of heaven is within each one of us," we are told. "The divine spark is there. Only fan it and it will flame up into godliness."

Our Lord knew differently. He saw humanity in those years of His ministry. He saw the rich, the poor, the educated, the ignorant. He walked with them, taught them, wept over them, prayed for them, loved them with divine compassion. Yet this is His estimate of the human heart: "Out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, railings." And when He died for us, He had no false illusions about the loveliness of fallen humanity. He knew degradation and weakness not only of the mob but of the individual. **Yet He loved us and gave Himself for us because He knew what miracles of beauty His atonement would work in the heart of man.** Fallen though we are, He counted our souls precious. Washed by His redeeming blood, clothed upon with His spotless righteousness, the sinner saved by grace becomes a Son of God, a fellow-heir with Christ. This is the wonder of the ages, the supreme miracle of grace. Before it the marvels of science and all the beauties of art fade into insignificance.

Finally, consider the loneliness of the Lord Jesus Christ. True, as Son of God He was always in fellowship with the Father. But, through the great mystery of the incarnation, He was also human and

thus subject to "like passions" (i. e. sufferings) as ours. Crowds do not mean companionship. Multitudes do not warm the discerning heart. In his essay on "Friendship," Sir Francis Bacon says, "But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth: for a crowd is not company and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal where there is no love." Christ loved the multitudes, but they did not truly love Him. And so that reciprocity of love that dispels bleak loneliness was almost impossible for His human nature in so far as the crowds that surrounded Him were concerned. Indeed, even His nearest and dearest — the twelve, His family, His close friends — showed an almost complete blindness to the real heart of His message and ministry. Therefore, He tasted the cup of loneliness, carried the burden of misunderstanding, and, as He went about doing good, endured the complete isolation of the perfect One amid the imperfect and the impure. His life was one of separation, not physical perhaps, but, what was far more real, separation of Spirit.

Does He call us to that separation, that lonely walk today? The world in 1939 A. D. has no whit more use for Christ than it had in 30 A. D.. And those who are indwelt by His Spirit must in the inner reality of heart and soul remain apart from the multitudes of the world. Thus, in our small way, we too share the suffering of His loneliness in the midst of the multitude. But He found solace. "He went into a mountain apart to pray." He communed with the Father. So, too, we in our loneliness will find Him an ever-present Friend, interested in our needs, responsive to our every trial. "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4: 19). F. E. Gaebelein, Litt. D.

Comments

Harry Emerson Fosdick, for many years professor at Union Theological Seminary and pastor of Riverside Church, New York City, is known all over America for his Sunday afternoon radio broadcasts. In a Lenten season sermon published recently in the Pulpit, a periodical of contemporary preaching, calls attention to what he terms the modern world's rediscovery of sin. He points out the great cleavage between modernism and the Christianity of our fathers. "To our fathers sin was a horrid reality, a deep-seated depravity in human nature in which from birth we all shared and from which only the grace of God in Christ could save us." But on the other hand, "Liberal Christianity, however, has on the

whole been very complacent about human nature. Modernism grew up in an era when progress was in the air, with evolution as the process behind life and education as the means of liberating life. It was the time of fresh discoveries, idealistic hopes, alluring prospects, dominant optimism. . . . Now, however, Lent comes again in a difficult year, with such cruel and depraved things afoot in the world as some of us have never seen before." And then he adds: "I do not believe the old theology. I am glad many of the old hymns have dropped from the hymnal never to return." Fosdick does not believe in hell, nor, for that matter, in an atonement for sin through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

The dream, induced by this evolutionistic dope, for the ever higher progress of mankind to its goal of earthly bliss and perfection, has been rudely shattered. Hear Fosdick's wail: "Today we and our hopes and all our efforts after goodness are up against a powerful antagonism, something demonic, tragic, terrific in human nature, that turns our loveliest qualities to evil and our finest endeavors into failure. Our fathers called that sin. If you have a better name for it, use it, but recognize the realistic fact." He tells us that Freud calls it (the original sin) 'the id,' and he says we are born with it." It took Freud to tell us that, otherwise we would not know.

Fosdick cites many instances where the modernistic belief went wrong when confronted by actual life. Scientific inventiveness was to bring in the golden era — it made newer and better weapons for war. "A century ago, in Boston, Horace Mann believed that crime could be practically eliminated in this country by increase in the size and number of our tax-supported schools." And now look at the horrendous crime record in America with bigger and better schools all around. Patriotism has not flowered in our public schools. And so on down the list. Dreams, all dreams, come to nought. "Surely, our fathers were not shadow-boxing. We have mastered physical nature in ways they never dreamed, but we are still up against human nature." Slowly the modernists are awakening from their sweet slumber and must perforce acknowledge the stubborn facts of sin existing all about them.

"What to do about that?" asks Fosdick. Will it help to give every man his fairly equal share in this world's goods?" It is difficult to be a good Christian if you are underprivileged, but I ask you, Do you think it necessarily easier to be a good Christian if you have all the world's goods?" Let Fosdick look into Matt. 19: 23 for the answer to that question. But what then? Science does not help, evolution has failed, education does not really educate without the Christ, communism brings no relief. At last Fosdick has the answer to the fiasco of liberal Christianity —

we must turn to Christ. It is Christ we need. Well and good, it is Christ then. But how can Christ save us? Modernists hate that word salvation, by the way. It is here where Fosdick and his kind fail again miserably. The sacrifice of Christ for our sins? No, no, that is an outworn faith. What then? Christ must redeem our manhood by the force of His example, the power of His life, so that man can follow Him and so become Christ-like. In short, man must save himself. It's the same old story, age-old in its Satanic lies and its futility. Reader, do you properly appreciate the Lenten sermons that you hear at this time in your Lutheran church; do you thank God for them? There, if anywhere, is pointed out to you the true way of salvation — the Christ that died for you.

* * * *

Let's Go! In an editorial by President E. J. Braulick, Wartburg College, belonging to the American Lutheran Church, as reported in the News Bulletin, we read of Luther's famous words at Worms in 1521, "Here I stand, I can do no otherwise; God help me. Amen." President Braulick has nothing but words of praise for Luther's heroic stand before this diet at Worms. 'In consequence of Luther's famous stand the Lutheran Church was founded 'four-square' on the Word of God. It became the Gospel Church. Even today the Lutheran Church is proud of its heritage. It would still know nothing, — no social gospel, no human philosophy of life, no glorified science — nothing but the Bible, as the only 'source, rule and norm for faith and life.'

These are brave words and true words. But we become a little doubtful when our author proposes that Luther's grand expression of an unshakable faith is to be replaced, in his opinion, by the slogan: "Here we go." We are told that, "Dead confessionalism and dead orthodoxy, together with fossilized educational principles and methods, have ruined many a splendid institution." Even so. But what has this editorial writer in mind? These vague phrases are confusing if not misleading. It does not help much when he tells us: "To make an impact on American life we must carry on, must be able to reach newer heights; **Here we Go.**"

We should like to know, if we are to be on our way and under a new slogan, first, go away from what, and then, go where? The deathless saying of our Luther expressed something fixed, something immovably firm on which he stood, namely the immutable Word of God, firmer than any rock. But this new slogan — why are we so addicted to slogans? — implies, to say the least, a shifting of ground, going away from the "dead confessionalism and dead orthodoxy." Does that mean, if anything, that we are to shift our stand on the old established confessions taken from the

Word of God? We should not like to believe that. And then, whither bound, where are we going with our new slogan? To make an impact on American life? We frankly do not understand. Z.

* * * *

Another Welcome Failure We refer to the proposed world conference under church auspices on economic problems. This was put forward by the Federal Council of Christ in America, but the World Council of Churches, meeting at Paris in January of this year, turned this proposition down. This world conference on economic problems was the pet scheme advocated by the Christian Century. The reasons given for the unwillingness to accept the proposal made by the Americans were mainly twofold. First, the European members were unanimous in holding that such a conference would do no good, because the problems now in Europe "are no longer economic but political and psychological. Then, secondly, these European members pointed out that for an international conference "no churches of Germany or of Italy would be permitted to attend." They approved a consultation by a small group.

We have called this a "welcome failure." We rejoice in the fact that the religious enthusiasts of the sectarian churches here in America have been snubbed. Our interest in the matter is not at all small-minded selfishness. All along it must have become clear to any straight-thinking Christian, that these Calvinistic church leaders are becoming altogether too brash in sticking their noses into the state affairs of all the world. It would appear that, if they had their way, they soon would be the ruling power over all the kingdoms and realms of the world. Everywhere they are clamoring for recognition and are ever busy in trying to foist their nostrums for the cure of all the evils in the world upon the nations. The present-day trend is to make America a Christian nation by sticking an amendment into the constitution recognizing Christ as the King of America, and also to act as the moral policemen over the peoples of all lands, ordering them about in the regulation of their home affairs. That is typically Calvinistic since the days of Geneva. These Reformed churches make it their business to boss all mankind as they have lost their job of preaching the Gospel. Z.

* * * *

"Is a Lodge a Church?" That is a question which a reader put to Dr. Crossland, who edits a religious column in certain newspapers. He answered the question in the negative, though admitting that the lodges are religious. He writes: "They borrow freely from the church, using the church's book, the Bible, and centering their ritual in religious history and ideals." And after stating that the service which the lodge renders is limited

largely to its own membership, while the church ministers to millions outside her membership, he concludes with the statement: "The church and the lodge should never be competitors but partners in the high service of God and man."

Since the lodge is admittedly religious, the church and the lodge are either partners or competitors. The general run of sectarian churches look upon lodges as partners, but the church which remains loyal to the principles of God's Word recognizes that the lodges are dangerous competitors of the church. That is true not only in the sense that the loyal and active lodge member is seldom an active church member but above all in the sense that the lodge stands for a type of religion which can not be reconciled with true Bible religion.

The lodge religion is a vague and broad religion, a religion which is designed to suit everybody, regardless of what denomination he may belong to, whether one be a Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, Christian Scientist, Mormon or what have you. It is in its essence a work religion. One who remains a loyal lodge member is assured of a place in "the Grand Lodge above."

The true Christian religion, the Bible religion is of an altogether different type. It is a narrow religion, for says Jesus, "narrow is the way which leadeth unto life." It is a distinctive religion. It does not stand for vague, shadowy ideals but for definite, exclusive truths. It does not see good in all religions but condemns all religions which are not centered in Jesus as the Son of God and only Savior of sinners. Jesus says: "Without me ye can do nothing"; "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

To say, therefore, that the Church and lodge are not competitors but partners rests on a misconception of either the lodge or the church or both. I. P. F.

* * * *

Self-Expression In late years we have heard a lot about the dangers of putting restraints upon the free development of personality. There is a modern school of psychology and pedagogy whose watchword is: No inhibitions. Let the soul be free. Do not force children to do something which they do not want to do; above all, never resort to corporal punishment in the training of your children.

Young people are encouraged to follow their own bent. If it is pleasure and amusement they want, they should not let our outmoded scruples spoil their fun. They should permit no one to put shackles on their souls. They should be free. Self-expression is the thing. That is the new freedom of our day.

Some weeks ago in Iowa an engine with no engineer or fireman in the cab hurtled at a terrific speed down the track for five miles until it crashed headon

into a fast passenger train. This engine was free, but what kind of freedom was it? Freedom to kill and to maim. Some years ago a car was parked on a knoll in a park at a band concert attended by a large crowd. The owner cranked the car and, as it was in gear, it began to move forward down the hill toward the crowd. Realizing the danger, the man at the risk of his own life pressed his shoulder against the radiator to hold back the car until someone jumped into the car, turned off the ignition and put on the brakes. If this car had been left to its own bent, it would have plunged into the crowd and death and destruction would have followed in its wake.

Since the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, the natural inclination of natural man must be curbed and directed into righteous paths. The restraint of the conscience enlightened by the Word of God is needed. The Holy Ghost must be at the throttle and control the steering wheel. Without such restraint and direction the person may be free but free only to lie and cheat and steal, to commit adultery, to wallow in moral filth and to wreck his soul. Jesus recommends true freedom to us in the words: "If ye continue in my words, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." I. P. F.

From a Wider Field

This department of our paper is conducted by Rev. W. J. Schaefer, 4521 N. 52nd St., Milwaukee, Wis. Please mail all communications for it to his address.

A THOUGHT FOR LENT

Daring to stand alone, despised and
Buffeted, estranged from kindred man.

Stayed is the Healing Hand that mocked
The lures of darkness and its kingdom. Against
Him hurled, is the sneering ban!

Oft in His footstep's wake, the devil slunk,
Gnashing his teeth, but through them whis-
Pering softly, still:

"Art Thou the Christ — the Son of God, the
Living? Art Thou immutable — the Savior, the
Victor over hell?"

Here stood that Hero, innocent with holiness
That no man knows, yet bearing all the
Crimson guilt for every race;

Here stood that Friend of Sinners, the Lamb
From heaven sent — in Pilate's court — pleading
Silently, that these enraged would take His
Wondrous grace!

Oh, Pilate! How blind thou wert, how vile thy
Heart with guilt! How threatening the pangs
Of sins thou didst recall!

Vain, vain it is thy trembling hands to
Wash. In fear and unbelief, the stainless
Christ thou didst condemn — the One who
Could remit thee all!

And thou, Oh, maddening mob — hold! Storming
Clamoring cries — but ye are deaf and sight-
Less. — We, too, with you have raised the cry:

"Away with this imposter!" Savage, relentless,
Our angry voices, too, are mingled there; in
Thought and word and deed — we join, "Crucify
Him — crucify!"

We, too, did mock, revile and spurn. We lent
A vigorous arm to drive the piercing nails
Through; we raged in sin — raised up the
Cross with Him. But let us not forget!

No, not like thee, to beat our bosoms in insane
Despair, after the tumult dies — Behold, the
King of Life, in pallor hanging there; But
More — "Oh, Christ, Thou Lamb of God forgive
Us yet!" Paul Katus.

CRUISING MEDITERRANEAN SEAPORTS

After sailing two nights and parts of two days from Gibraltar we arrived at Marseille, France, on the 24th of May, 1937, the first Mediterranean seaport scheduled for our trip across. Before entering the harbor, about three miles outside, we passed the Castle Monte Christo, famous for the story of Count Monte Christo by Alexandre Dumas. It is a huge structure built of solid rock stone, with rotating towers, forming part of a fort, standing in the midst of the sea as unsullied today as it was built centuries ago without any sign of crumbling or decay. As we viewed the castle in close proximity, we can easily visualize what a gruesome place it must have been for Count Monte Christo who according to Dumas novel was imprisoned here for years under great privation and torture, and who finally escaped by managing to be thrown into the sea as the dead body of an abbot who had been imprisoned with him there but had died, after having made the count heir to all his wealth secretly stored on an island some distance away, until he, the count, unfolded himself from the enclosure of a dead body and was finally picked up by a pirate boat by means of which he reached the treasure island.

Passing Monte Christo we enter the harbor of the old French city of Marseilles. It is a magnificent harbor, the chief seaport of southern France and the gateway to the French Colonial possessions, with ships from all the world loading and unloading at its immense docks. We see maritime colors from Asia, from North Africa, from Australia and the Pacific Islands, from England, Scotland, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, from Finland and Greenland, and,

of course, from America. It was an imposing maritime sight. And though we were in the midst of the harbor at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, it took all of an hour to steer the boat clear and anchor it at the docks, destined for it. And not until 1:30 in the afternoon were passengers permitted to go on shore.

I immediately took a taxicab and drove to the American Express Office in the city, getting American Traveller's Checks exchanged for French money, enquiring at the same time as to sightseeings in Marseilles etc. I was fortunate in entering a tourist's sightseeing car which during the time of three hours took us through the principal parts of the city. Let it be remembered that historically Marseilles is one of, if not the oldest city in Europe, having been built and organized six or seven centuries before Christ, probably by Phoenicians, while today with its over a million inhabitants it is a mercantile center of the first rank with business facilities unexcelled due to her immense sea-traffic and imports from northern Europe.

Our tour through the city began on Rue Cannebierre, one of the city's thoroughfares, though not of great length but very impressive as a business center, continuing east and west in a straight line until it widens out into the so-called Prado, a grand parade and rallying place of all that is fashionable in the old Phoenician city, bordered with magnificent villas and ending in one of the most picturesque sea-drives in Europe. Along this sea-coast road which extends for miles outside the city limits we drove enjoying a superb view of the sea and its manifold cliffs. We then returned through the northern section of the city along the hill slopes upon which it is built throughout its length, passing through beautiful parks and flower gardens, as also on the famous road lined with sycamore trees which were then in full bloom. On the way there were pointed out various public buildings, like the large museum with its famous Pont Transbordeur, the Town Hall, the Church of Notre Dame de la Garde which is built on a mountain top and which is reached by a cog-wheel railway, giving a commanding view of the entire city and its harbor.

Between four and five o'clock in the afternoon we returned to the starting point, where we left the sightseeing car. Passing a theater where the Coronation of King and Queen George which had taken place that very week was given in a living picture show in all its splendor, I entered the show-house and saw the movies of that gorgeous event from beginning to end, and as a side issue the Hindenburg disaster which had occurred about two weeks before.

It was after six o'clock in the evening I left the theater, and having lost the sense of direction, I was at a loss to find my way back to the boat which was now my objective. I moved about the busy streets,

until upon inquiry a bus line was pointed out to me which would carry me to the vicinity of the docks. I finally arrived there when, lo, it being long after 6 o'clock, the gates to the inside yards of the docks were locked. I was in a predicament thinking that I must return to the business section for a night-lodging. A dock patrolman, however, showed me a by-path which led into the dock yards; following that I gradually came to my boat, and climbing the gangplank I was glad to be in safe quarters again.

On the day following our cargo liner was scheduled for its departure at 2 o'clock P. M.; ample time for the passengers to stroll about the city. This time I walked all the way from the docks to the heart of the city. I entered some of the department stores, but found that the lady clerks could speak or understand neither English nor German. Strange, that in a city like this not even the English language is spoken by business clerks. Moving about I came to the post office where I mailed some view cards which I had purchased before to friends and relatives in America. Gradually I returned to the boat, when at 12 o'clock noon I was all set for its departure, observing in the meanwhile from the deck how the crew was still loading cargo by means of large dock cranes. That, by the way, is not the crew of the boat, but a domestic crew of the particular seaport. Just what sort of cargo it was I do not remember, but it consisted in large bales, merchandise boxes, barrels, etc.

At 2 o'clock sharp the liner was loosened from the docks by its own crew, to make its voyage, but it was almost 4 o'clock before we were out in the open sea. After a night's sailing we arrived at Genoa, Italy, the following day at about 10 o'clock A. M. This being our destination going across we were obliged to go through the custom house regulations. I did not stay long at Genoa going across, but immediately proceeded to Venice, and from there to Austria via the Brenner Pass. My stay at this port was made, when after a three months' tour through south-eastern Europe I returned for my homebound voyage to Genoa, where the return voyage on another cargo liner though of the same Italian steamship company was scheduled for America on September 10. I arranged it so as to be there several days before that date in order to view

Genoa

Having been here before, in 1931, I noticed remarkable changes made in the improvements and upbuild of the city between now and then. The streets are cleaner, some of them have been widened, and new ones have been constructed, which in respect to cleanliness, architectural beauty and design may well rival with any street in European cities. There is the so-called September Street, built in memory of Mussolinis ascendancy to power during the month

indicated. It runs for blocks and blocks without any cross intersection; mighty corridors for pedestrians ran along the length of the street on both sides, while the walks are paved with mosaics of exquisite designs and colors the whole length of the passage way. The street finally terminates in a newly created park with a triumphal arch of victory. It is one of the grandest streets I have passed through.

But there are other features which have made Genoa famous. Whether one reaches it by land or water, the first conspicuous feature of the city which one instantly notes — since it is near both port and railway station — is the impressive monument to Christopher Columbus. With the neighboring village of Cogoleto as the probable birthplace of the man commemorated by this statue, Genoa is indeed justified in paying the highest tribute to the great discoverer of the new world as her most renowned son, so much the more as she had been the first to receive from him the offer of his plans, but who was also the first — to decline them! As one sits at the foot of this magnificent monument musing over the past, what a host of historical memories pass one's mind! What changes have taken place in the history of the world, what vicissitudes the individual nations have witnessed since Columbus' discovery four centuries ago! What great religious movements have stirred the world? What opportunities for the free preaching of the Gospel have been opened since that memorable event?

Genoa, furthermore, is proud of her illustrious benefactors, to whose memory she has erected beautiful monuments in prominent places of the city. Thus there is the Duchess of Galliera and her husband, who in 1874 presented to the municipality their own magnificent palace — the Palazzo Rosso, containing the most extensive picture gallery in the city, containing many masterpieces of Vandyke and Rubens, opened gratis to all visitors daily. But more than this. But a few months after making this disposition of her splendid palace, the Duchess founded an asylum for the poor with an endowment of four hundred thousand dollars; and, a year later, gave two million dollars for the creation of three hospitals — one for adults, another for children, and a third for convalescents. With their wonderful hydraulic and electrical conveniences and general equipment they are said to rank among the finest of such institutions in the world.

Meanwhile, the Duke of Galliera, equally generous, presented Genoa with four million dollars for the improvement and enlargement of its harbor, on the condition that the city should contribute for that purpose an equal sum. The result is seen in a harbor which with its dockyards, piers and naval passenger station is the pride of Italy, and enables ocean steamers of the largest type to come directly to the land.

To me a particularly imposing feature was the well-paved waterfront with its wide parade surrounding the naval station from where one can view the city at its foot spreading like an amphitheater on the graceful slopes of the Ligurian Alps. No other city in Italy, save Naples, has so glorious a setting. Her splendid semicircle of protecting mountains with a multitude of stately edifices, terrace upon terrace, gives it a most picturesque aspect.

The course of the streets, however, along those mountain slopes, often is very complicated. One forenoon I walked through one of them called Via Doria Pagano in search of the residence of the German evangelical pastor and seamen's missionary of Genoa, whose name is Mathes. Yet I found it so difficult to wind through that not even a pagan, not to speak of a Christian, was able to succeed, hence undoubtedly the name Via Pagano. I finally reached the place I was looking for, and ringing the bell a lady appeared at the door. "Qui est domicile Pastor Mathes?" I asked. "Si, Signore!" she answered and invited me to step inside. In her Italian manner she now began to talk, of which, however, I could not understand a word, until I picked up these words from her lips, "Pastor Mathes absento." Then I knew where I was at; the pastor was absent. The lady was kind enough to show me his rooms, after which I soon withdrew. It is a pity not to be able to converse with people in a foreign country in their own language. One loses much both as to conversation and useful information on the part of the general public. What one needs in latinized countries is sufficient knowledge of French with which one can easily converse with the people.

One more conspicuous sight of Genoa will not be passed by unnoticed by tourists. In a picturesque valley, nearly two miles from the city, lies the Campo Santo, or cemetery of Genoa, which in its number of magnificent funeral monuments has no equal in the world. Like the city of the living, Genoa's city of the dead has for its background an amphitheater of majestic mountains. It first reveals itself as a gigantic quadrangle surrounded by imposing colonnades. Its monuments, some of them colossal, are masterpieces of sculptural art. In the center of the white city stands a circular temple in spotless purity, domed somewhat like the Pantheon at Rome.

Such is Genoa, bearing well its title, La Superba.
J. J.

HOPEFUL SIGNS?

At the recent inauguration of two governors of our states, that of Texas and of Tennessee, religion or religious color at least was very prominent. The one in Texas was hailed as "one of the most religious inaugurals in the history of American commonwealth." The outgoing governor, James V. Allred, delivered a

Bible to W. Lee O'Daniel, his successor. On taking the Bible the governor-elect, W. Lee O'Daniel, said that he had made his campaign for the office on the **ten commandments and the Golden Rule** and asked the people of Texas to pray for him in their homes. At the inauguration of Prentice Cooper as governor of Tennessee, a Lutheran minister (not of the Synodical Conference) opened the ceremonies with a prayer. The governor-elect is a Presbyterian.

The reporter of these events hails this as a great step forward and as a very hopeful sign for the future of America. He concedes that there may be a political gesture in it, yet he says, "It is good to get religion into government, **by whatever means.**" Will men never see that these two will not mix and can not mix and ought not to be mixed? Christ, while visibly on earth, in no wise interferred with the existing government — neither lauding nor criticizing it, nor dictating to it. His rule is simple. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" — that's all. We will do well if we follow in His footsteps.

A NEW EMBASSY?

Not a very great distance from the site of the new German embassy in our national capital at Washington, D. C., another new embassy is in the course of construction and almost completed — the Papal embassy. It is, no doubt, intended to some day house the Pope's envoy. Among all the embassies in Washington, D. C., this new Apostolic mansion ranks as one of the three or four most beautiful structures. What does it mean? Is the Pope preparing for the day when the exchange of envoys with Vatican City (comprising about seven acres of land and about 1000 inhabitants) will be resumed? Rome is ever ready to take her place alongside the great temporal powers and thrones and earthly kingdoms. In fact, she is ready to dominate them as in the days before the Reformation. May we never see the day.

"FEAR NOT, THOU LITTLE FLOCK"

Who is the author of that grand Lutheran hymn which was sung by the courageous Swedish King, Gustavus Adolphus and his army before the Battle of Luetzen? The authorship has been variously ascribed. Some historians ascribe it to J. M. Altenburg, some to J. Fabricius and still others to the heroic King of Sweden himself. Perhaps the question will never be settled to the satisfaction of historians. Recently a letter was discovered by the Historical Museum in Leibzig which is dated February 4, 1832, purported to come from the unpublished chronicals of that period by Professor Johann Born containing these lines: "In Wittenberg the honorable D. Fabricius has informed me (Born) in the presence of D. Hulsemann that Gustavus Adolphus wrote the song, 'Fear Not,' in

prose, which song he sang at Luetzen shortly before the battle, and that he, Fabricius, rhymed it at the king's request."

A GOOD CONFESSION

In a recent number of one of our exchanges (modernist) we read an article by a Presbyterian minister, Clarence Edward Macartnel, that really warmed our heart. His article is such a humble, simple and yet grand confession of faith in the Scriptures, justification, atonement, and all the cardinal doctrines of the Bible that one's heart could leap for joy. Answering the question, "How my mind has changed in this decade," — a question on which a series of articles was written by various men — this Presbyterian minister stoutly maintains that his mind has not changed with regard to any doctrines of the Bible. In his article he takes the "modernist" to task in no uncertain terms and his own church for the shameful expulsion of the "great theologian Dr. J. Gresham Machen." The article is mentioned here only as a comfort to those who in these times often feel a little weariness.

THE RECESSION IN CONTRIBUTIONS

to religion, education and charity calls for consideration. In the period from 1932 to 1937 the American public is **discredited** with having decreased its support of the church by 19 per cent, general benevolence by 28 per cent, community chests by 22 per cent. (Other figures given are "the church 30 per cent, benevolence 29 per cent, community chests 24 per cent, colleges 18 per cent.") The natural reaction would be to lay the blame for this condition on our over-extended depression-recession, but the explanation is not good enough. In that same period our national income is reputed to have increased 77 per cent, or an actual cash increase of \$30,300,000,000 over 1932. Parallel with this cash increase, expenditures for jewelry increased 24 per cent, for theaters 41 per cent, for tobacco 43 per cent, for automobiles 188 per cent, for whisky 100 per cent, for radio sets 220 per cent, for beer 602 per cent. Since 1937 the situation has grown steadily worse, and it cannot be laid to the increase of military preparations. By the way, how have you, as a church member and a Christian, been spending **your** money? That is capable of application to your local church.

—The Lutheran.

CHURCH STATISTICS AGAIN

Of church statistics there is no end. Everybody is collecting church statistics and publishing them. We must confess that we are not especially interested in them because they give us no true basis for judging any one church's spiritual condition — the only thing that really counts. Just numbers tell us nothing.

However, according to Dr. H. C. Webber, editor of the Year Book of American Churches, the total membership is 64,156,895. Of this number 52,379,579 are beyond the age of thirteen years. These have 248,410 churches and the members are distributed among about 200 religious bodies, 98 per cent of which are to be found in the twenty largest divisions. During the year 1937 the membership of the churches has increased twice as fast as the population of the United States; the number of church buildings increased by 1,748. What does it mean to you? W. J. S.

"MODERN MESSIAHS"

Sects and cults have been described as "the unpaid bills of the church." Many a heresy was born of a desire to stress a neglected truth. This truth was then emphasized at the expense of other equally important truths. Error is thus sugar-coated with truth. We witness today the flourishing of more than two-score of bouncing healthy and wealthy isms. This estimate takes no account of literally hundreds of smaller cults which have sprung up. The truth is the land is simply teeming with "faith," offering to solve any problem over night and guaranteeing results.

Our land, and especially our fair city of Los Angeles, is overrun with messiahs. I am not thinking of political quacks who promise in one election to rid the land of evil, but rather of those inspired fakirs who promise to orientate the soul through the machinery of occult religion. In the shrines of hired halls they have set about to rescue truth from the scaffold and put it on the throne.

The average man knows nothing of these new self-styled messiahs, unless he scans the Saturday church page of any metropolitan daily. Since America has made the most of her religious freedom she has also become the Mecca and the sanctuary of every conceivable cult.

Three Nineteenth Century Heresies

During the nineteenth century we gave three great "religions" to the world — Spiritualism, Mormonism and Christian Science. Long before Mother Eddy ever visited Blacksmith Quimby we were treated to a rage of mesmerism. In its wake came Spiritualism, started on its world-encircling march by gentle rappings in a lowly cottage at Hydesville, New York, in 1848. It had its true origin in the Garden of Eden and is the oldest antagonist of true religion. The first spirit medium on record was the serpent in the Garden. The fall of man and the ruin of the world were caused by heeding the counsel of a spirit medium. In its modern form Spiritualism goes back to two American girls, Kate and Margaret Fox. While belief in ghosts has been held for ages, there was no purposeful cultivation of intercourse with the world

of disembodied human beings through mediums until the acts of the little girls at Hydesville started the fad.

The two girls never believed in Spiritualism. Had they known what they started when they fooled their parents, they would not have cultivated such dexterous toes. In 1888 Margaret Fox had this to say: "I loathe the thing I have done." At a public meeting she said: "I am here as one of the founders of Spiritualism to denounce it as an absolute falsehood from beginning to end . . . as the most wicked blasphemy known to the world." Later she became an ardent Catholic.

Spiritualism is definitely condemned in the Bible. "A man or also a woman that hath a familiar spirit . . . shall surely be put to death." (Leviticus 20:27.)

—Dr. J. Dorn.

IRELAND IS PAYING A COMPLIMENT

to the United States. On March 1 a special stamp in two denominations — twopenny and threepenny — was issued by the Irish Republic to commemorate "the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the inauguration of the American Constitution and the installation of George Washington as first President of the United States." Stamp collectors will find it no hardship to place these tributes to their country among their treasures. Each stamp bears the imprint of the Houdon bust of Washington on the left side and the Irish harp on the right. For those who would be embarrassed by the Gaelic inscription at the bottom of the stamp, a translation reveals this legend: "The people of Ireland celebrate the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the American Constitution."

A Year AGO a Yakima, Wash., Journal carried an advertisement for the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism. The notice offered a first prize of \$50, a second of \$25, and five additional prizes of \$5 each, "for the best essays by pupils of high schools and junior colleges of Yakima County on 'The Folly and Futility of Christianity.'" A year of silence followed. The editor of The Sunday School Times, who had learned about the contest, was curious about the outcome and wrote for information to the Association that offered the prizes. Word came back that no essays were submitted.

— I have never been permitted to doubt during the last twenty-seven years that my sins are forgiven, that I am a child of God, that I am beloved of God, and that I shall be finally saved; because I am enabled by the Grace of God to exercise faith upon the Word of God, and believe what God says in those passages which settle these matters. (Gal. 3:26, etc.)

—George Muller (about 1856).

Our Synod

NOTICE — NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT

It having pleased the Lord to call Mr. Rud. Schwartz, a faithful and beloved member of our mission board, from the church militant to the church triumphant, I have appointed Mr. Gustav Kalfahs, 109 West Doty St., Neenah, Wis., to complete the unexpired term as member of the mission board of the North Wisconsin District and also as member of the general mission board of the Joint Synod.

Signed: Walter Pankow,
Pres., North Wisconsin District.

GOLDEN WEDDING

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bosse, members of St. John's Ev. Luth. Congregation at Slades Corners, Wis., were privileged on February 26, in the midst of their children, to celebrate their golden wedding. Mr. Bosse served our congregation for 21 years as an elder. The undersigned spoke on Psalm 37:5.

Edmund Sponholz.

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Zibrowski, charter members of St. John's Church at Caledonia, Minn., were privileged to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding day on March 12, 1939, in the presence of children, relatives, and friends. A special service was held in church in which the undersigned, their pastor, spoke on Luke 24:29. After the service a luncheon was served to all guests.

"The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."

R. Jeske.

Announcements

LAKE SUPERIOR PASTORAL CONFERENCE

The Lake Superior Pastoral Conference will meet April 25 and 26 at Gladstone, Mich., with Pastor Th. Hoffmann. The first session will begin at 9:30 C. S. T.

Papers: What Constitutes a Christian Burial?, C. Henning; The Prophet Micah, H. Hopp; Declarations of Doctrinal Unity between Missouri and A. L. C., G. Fischer (Bring Quartalschrift for July and October, 1938, and January, 1939); Sermon to be read for criticism, A. Gentz; Exegesis 1 Cor. 4, Wm. Fuhlbrigge; Chap. 5, G. Tiefel.

Confessional: T. Thurow, G. Fischer.
 Sermon: Wm. Fuhlbrigge, A. Gentz.
 Please announce. E. C. Rupp, Sec'y.

NEBRASKA DISTRICT PASTORAL CONFERENCE

The above named body will convene in Immanuel's Church, Merna, Nebraska, April 25-27. The first session will be opened at 9 A. M.

Essays: The Evangelical Way of Leading a Lodge Member from Darkness to Light, Pastor R. Bittorf (Divorce, with Special Consideration of Matthew 19, 6-9, Pastor L. Tessmer). Exegesis of Hebrews 8, Pastor L. Gruendemann (1 John 5, Pastor O. Kreie). Continuation of Exegesis of Isaiah 55, Pastor F. Miller (The Moral and the Ceremonial Law in Relation to Each Other in the Light of the New Testament Gospel, Pastor V. Winter).

Sermon: Pastor N. Mielke (Pastor R. Stiemke).

N. B. Arriving pastors may have lunch in the church basement on Monday between the hours of 6 and 8 P. M.

Address announcements to Pastor Venus Winter, 522 N. 11th Ave., Broken Bow, Nebraska.

L. Sabrowsky, Sec'y.

DAKOTA-MONTANA DISTRICT PASTORAL CONFERENCE

The Pastoral Conference of the Dakota-Montana District will meet at the Northwestern Lutheran Academy at Mobridge, South Dakota, from April 11 to April 13, 1939. The first meeting will begin at 9 o'clock.

Papers: John 17, Exegesis on the High Priestly Prayer of Christ, Pastor Bade; Christian Burial — Significance and Form, Pastor Schmeling; Conducting a Practical Sunday School, Pastor Kuske.

Divine Services with Communion on Wednesday evening.

Sermon: Professor Oswald (Pastor Rutz).

Confessional Address: Pastor Lange (Pastor Kuske).

Meals at nominal prices. Announcements should be made to Prof. H. Oswald, Northwestern Lutheran Academy, Mobridge, South Dakota. Herbert Lau, Secretary.

MINNESOTA DISTRICT PASTORAL CONFERENCE

The Minnesota District Pastoral Conference meets, D. v., at Winthrop, Minn., April 18-20, the first service opening at 10:00 A. M.

Essays: Breaches in Intercongregational Ethics and Treatment Thereof, L. Brandes; An Explanation and Demonstration of the Common Service, C. Bolle; Privatseelsorge eines Pastors, W. C. Albrecht; How Can the Custom of Polygamy Among Heathen Be Best Treated by Our Missionaries? Im. Albrecht; Exegesis: Colossians II, A. Schaller; How May a Congregation Utilize Educational Facilities for the Religious Training of Its Children Outside of the Christian Day School? O. Klett; The Boy Scout Movement, A. Baer; Mixed Marriages — How They Effect Our Congregational Life and Pastoral Work? G. Albrecht; Individual Communion Cup, C. P. Kock; Union Movements Within the Lutheran Church. By Request of the St. Croix Conference.

Sermon: R. J. Palmer (R. C. Ave Lallemand).

Confessional Address: P. T. Bast (T. E. Kock).

Please register early with Rev. C. Kuehner.

H. E. Lietzau, Sec'y.

JOINT SOUTHWESTERN MISSISSIPPI VALLEY CONFERENCE

The Joint Southwestern-Mississippi Valley Conference convenes in Immanuel Lutheran Church, La Crosse, Wisconsin (W. Gutzke, pastor), the 19th day of April, at 9:00 A. M. sharp!

Preacher: H. Schaller (J. Schwartz).

Old and Continued Assignments: Herbert Schaller: Exegetical Treatment of Col. 1, 24sq.; Richard Siegler: Matthew 5, 1-7; J. H. Paustian — God's Plan of Salvation According to Ezekiel 36, 17-36.

New Assignments: August Vollbrecht: To What Extent Would We Unify Our Liturgy? (Co-essayist: Arthur Berg.)

Please announce your intended presence or absence to local pastor!
 Richard Wm. Mueller, Sec'y.

DODGE WASHINGTON PASTORAL CONFERENCE

The Dodge-Washington Pastoral Conference will meet April 18 and 19, 1939, at 9:30 A. M., at Iron Ridge, Rev. F. Zarling.

Papers: Martin Bradtke, Stern, Redlin, Schaar, Von Rohr.

Sermon: Marti, Cares.

Confessional Address: Bradtke, Cares.

Please announce to local pastor! G. Redlin, Sec'y.

JOINT CONFERENCE OF SHEBOYGAN AND MANITOWOC COUNTIES

The Joint Conference of Sheboygan and Manitowoc Counties will meet April 25 and 26 at Cascade, Rev. J. F. Boeger, Jr., pastor.

Papers: Exegesis John 3, 22-36, W. Kleinke; Hebr. 9, H. Eckert; John 17, G. Schaefer; Luther as crossbearer, M. Sauer, Polemics in the sermon, J. Wagner; Doctrine of the holy Trinity in the O. T., W. Schink; Women suffrage in a Christian congregation, E. Stoeckhardt; Office of the Keys-Re-instatement, C. Schulz; Have divine revelations ceased? R. Schroth. Edm. Huebner and W. Kitzerow, continuation of their papers.

Confession Address: A. Huber — W. Kitzerow.

Sermon: E. Froelich — G. Berthel.

Please announce and specify if quarters are desired or not.
 Edw. H. Kionka, Secr.

REQUEST

We are in need of hymnals for a mission chapel in which Lutheran services will be conducted for the first time on Palm Sunday. Will the pastors whose congregations have on hand a supply of Lutheran hymnals of the present edition which they can no longer use please notify me.

Herbert Lemke,
 437 Walnut St.,
 Manistique, Mich.

INSTALLATION

Authorized by President A. Ackermann I installed Pastor A. W. Saremba in St. Matthew's Church, Cody, Wis., on Sunday, March 5, 1939. M. C. Michaels.

BOOK REVIEW

A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth. By Adolph Hoenecke, D. D. First President, Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, and Pastor, St. Matthew's Church, Milwaukee, Wis. Translated by Werner Franzmann, Pastor, Salem Lutheran Church, Coloma, Mich. Introduction by John P. Meyer, Professor, Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, Thiensville, Wis. Print of Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Price, \$2.25

These Lenten sermons are a translation of the second series presented in Hoenecke's Passionspredigten, issued in 1910. The Themes are: The Savior in Victorious Prayer; The Savior Betrayed; The Savior Denied; The Savior Accused and Condemned; The Savior Lamented; The Savior Forsaken by God; The Dying Savior.

In our estimation the difficult task of translation has been successful and something has been saved and made accessible to posterity from which we can take great profit. We heartily recommend the collection.

The book is about 5x8, bound in stiff paper, contains seventy-five pages. G.

The Road to Emmaus. Daily Devotional readings, April 10 to May 28, 1939. By F. R. Webber.

Der erhöhte Heiland. Andachten für die Zeit von Ostermontag bis Pfingsten. Von John Schinnerer, Detroit, Mich.

Print of both is from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Price, 5c per copy, postpaid, and \$3.00 per hundred, postage extra.

These are the little books of devotion, German and English, which the Concordia Publishing House is issuing. They contain short meditations and prayers for every day of the period stated above. We recommend them to our readers. G.

The Door of Hope, by Frieda J. Schneider. Pages 172. Price 75c. The Lutheran Book Concern Print, Columbus, Ohio.

"A book of Comfort for the Sick" — so says the title page. The book is divided into four sections: 1. Our Comfort. 2. Our Afflictions. 3. Our Opportunities and Duties. 4. Special Days and Seasons. Each meditation is based on a Scripture passage which is followed by a hymn and a short prayer. The little book ought to find many friends.
W. J. S.

All the Days, by Clark J. Forcey, Th. D. Pages 163. Price \$1.00. Print — Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

It is our conviction that the author of "All the Days" is a humble believer in Christ's substitutionary atonement. We glean this from between the lines. The sermons here offered fail miserably in presenting the two great Bible truths — sin and grace. In some sermons they are not even hinted. Perhaps the author presupposes — but it renders the sermons quite pointless.
W. J. S.

These Men Live, by William Ward Ayer, D. D. Baptist Minister. Pages 135. Price \$1.00. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Eleven Bible characters are treated in this volume — Enoch, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Thomas, Judas, Caleb, Samuel, Samson. The author's style is strongly evangelistic. The author's attempt at bombastic, popular expressions often borders on the ridiculous. He speaks of Methuselah "coming home from some nightclub, or in the wee hours of the morning, from a wild antediluvian party"; of "Divine kidnapping" with reference to the great resurrection; of Abraham "pioneering in faith"; of "spiritual pyorrhea and four out of five have it" etc. Nor is the book sound doctrinally.
W. J. S.

No Other Way by N. M. Ylvisaker. Pages 256. Price \$1.00. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn.

Anyone looking for an interesting treatise on the exposition of the great truths presented in Luther's Catechism, will find them in this book. The author covers the entire field of Christian dogmatics. The author says in the foreword, "It is the purpose of this book, No Other Way, humbly to restate in language that our young people should be able to understand, the deep meaning of Scriptural truths which their catechisms have presented as necessary to know and believe if they shall be in a position to cope with the greater problems which confront them and if they shall hope to build lives which will count in the eyes of God." In our opinion the author has well succeeded in his undertaking. The book ought to find a large circle of readers.
W. J. S.

Book of Prayer for Boys and Girls, by G. G. Neumann. Pages 192. Price 50c. The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, Ohio.

This little volume ought to fill a long felt need. It contains a wealth of prayers suited for the minds of children — morning — evening — before meals — after meals — in sickness and recovery — birthday — forgiveness and grace — church service — confirmation — communion — church seasons — missions — national holidays. The prayers offered are partly prose and partly poetry.
W. J. S.

The Bible Revelation of the Holy Spirit, by John B. Kenyon, Baptist Minister. Pages 159. Price \$1.00. Print, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.

The author's approach to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is interesting and his style is clear and simple. He writes soberly on the subject and takes those to task who have swerved from the Scriptural basis to fanaticism. There is much in the volume that is instructive but also some points on which one is forced to disagree with him. Just to mention one point. Speaking of the Holy Ghost who "plows," prepares the heart for the reception if the Gospel he has this to say on page 95, — "There are two reasons why the plowing is not done: First, we are not faithful in praying that He will do it, For He limits Himself to our prayers and faith."
W. J. S.

The Son of God Rides On. By R. E. Golladay. Sermon Outlines on the Gospel Lessons of the Ancient Church. Print of The Book Concern, Columbus, Ohio. Price, \$1.75 net.

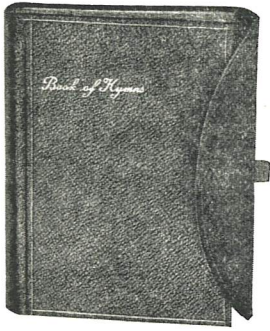
The title of the book may sound strange, to some even rather modern, for a collection of treatises in the ancient Gospels: yet the name is, no doubt, suggested by the Gospel for the first Advent Sunday and again for Palm Sunday. The jacket presents the picture of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem at the beginning of the Holy Week. We presume from a perusal of the book that it lays no claim to being a deep exegetical treatment of the texts, nor even a profound homiletical discussion of the same, but just what the title implies: outlines. Viewed from this angle we must say that it presents a large volume of thought, some of it highly original, to stimulate the reader for his own meditation on the respective text. This is the best use of a book of this nature. With this in mind we recommend the Outlines to our readers.
G.

CASH STATEMENT

8 Month — July 1, 1938 to February 28, 1939

Cash on hand on July 1, 1938	\$ 178.98	
Receipts from Districts	224,598.56	
Revenues	31,240.33	
Extra Receipts:		
Preciously Reported	\$ 2,761.00	
Band Account Closed	4.54	
Receipts from School Bulletin	2,765.65	
	113.30	
Total Cash Available	\$258,896.82	
Disbursements:		
Budget	\$251,570.19	
Chapel at Lena, Wis.	550.00	
	252,120.19	
	\$ 6,776.63	
Minus Collection for Chapels	7,725.26	
Deficit	\$ 948.63	
Budget Debts		
Debt on July 1, 1937		\$447,105.36
Receipts from D. R. C.	\$204,538.25	
Collection for Debts	2,370.49	
Total	\$206,908.74	
Debts Paid	201,432.02	201,432.02
	\$ 5,476.72	
Inmates Deposits Received	\$245,673.34	1,800.00
	\$247,473.34	
Accounts Payable for February	2,950.40	
Budget Debt on February 28, 1939	\$250,423.74	
Church Extension Division		
Debt on July 1, 1937		\$164,420.29
Repayments	\$ 24,984.17	
Interest	3,137.73	
Collections	4,135.63	
Other Receipts	5,758.89	
Total	\$ 38,016.42	
Church Extension Debts Paid	33,965.00	33,965.00
Available for Debts	\$ 4,051.42	
Church Extension Debt on Feb. 28, 1939	\$130,455.29	
Total Debt		
Budget Debt	\$245,673.34	
Church Extension Debt	130,455.29	
	\$376,128.63	
Inmates Deposits	1,800.00	
Accounts Payable	2,950.40	
Total Debt on February 28, 1939	\$380,879.03	

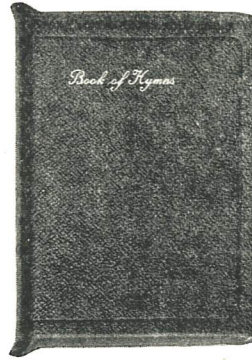
THEO. H. BUUCK, Treasurer.



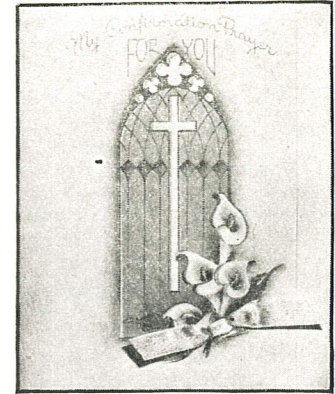
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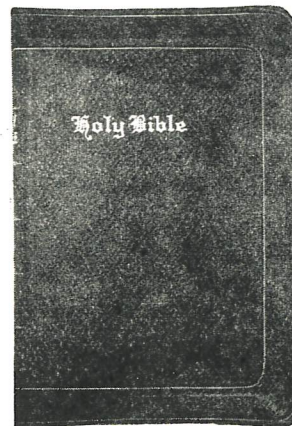
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God comforteth the church. ISAIAH,

CHAPTER 43 B. C. 712.

1 The Lord comforteth the church with his promises.
14 He forgetteth them the destruction of Babylon,
18 and his wonderful deliverance of his people.
BUT now thus saith the LORD
a that created thee, O Jā'qob,
b and he that formed thee, O Īs'ra-el,

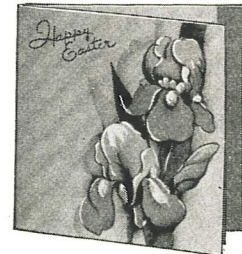
a ver. 7.
b ver. 21.
ch. 41. 2, 21,
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c ch. 44. 6.
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