

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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The Price Of Perfect Love

John 19, 25-27

WHAT the Lord our God seeks in you and me and in all men can be summed up in the one word *love*. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Just this is our sin and guilt, however, that we have all defaulted in that love and default in it daily. Yet this is the glory of our Christian faith that we may still know ourselves to be dear children of God for time and eternity. It rests on the blessed assurance that with a perfect love rendered to God in our stead Christ our Savior made good our default and removed its curses from us.

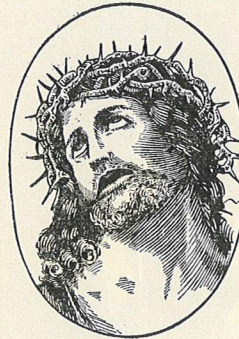
Behold the Crucified Savior Paying This Price

The Savior was now nailed to the cross. With one malefactor crucified at His right and another at His left He was truly numbered among the transgressors. His Jewish accusers made Him the object of bitter scorn and mockery; Roman soldiers treated Him with levity and indifference. Yet there stood by the cross a small group who loved Him: His mother, his brother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, Mary Magdalene, and John, His beloved disciple.

His Last Will and Testament They loved Him because they had richly witnessed and tasted His love. Even now as they were standing near the cross they received further evidences of it. They heard their Lord and Master pray for His enemies who had crucified Him and were putting Him to scorn. They were about to hear Him cheer the penitent dying malefactor with a gracious promise of Paradise. Yet they were to experience even a further revelation of His perfect love. John himself tells us: "When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother: Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother!" It was the dying Savior's last will and testament for the two who in human relationship had been nearest to His heart. That both of them understood

its loving import is indicated by John's further statement: "And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."

He Provided For His Mother and His Disciple In His infinite Savior's love Jesus was now engaged in bringing the greatest of all battles to a victorious finish, the battle of redeeming all sinners from sin, death, and hell. It meant bearing the shame and pain which they had merited, it meant being forsaken of God in their stead and going into death for them. Yet in the midst of it all the Savior's



loving heart still gave tender thought to the needs of those who in a special way had been committed to His love on earth. He took note of the grief and sorrow that was now piercing His mother's heart like a sword; He perceived the loss which she was suffering in being bereft of her beloved son. Though He would rise again in glory He would no longer be visibly at her side as her stay and support. In perfect filial love He therefore provided for her comfort and her future earthly care. Referring to the disciple at her side Jesus said to His mother: "Woman, behold thy son!" In John she was henceforth to see and find a substitute son to comfort her and to give loving care to her in her needs. "Behold thy mother!" John was even now doing a son's part for Mary. Jesus asked him to go on doing this as long as she would need a son's care on earth. In thus providing for the mother of Jesus John would himself be comforted. For as the beloved disciple of Jesus, who of all men had stood closest to the Lord, John was like-

wise suffering a deep loss in being henceforth deprived of the Savior's visible presence. No longer would he be able to converse with Him and recline beside Him on the same couch at table in tender, familiar companionship. What could better compensate for this loss than to be daily associated with the mother of Jesus who had likewise been very close to Him?

He Took Care of Their Spiritual Welfare As Jesus filled the earthly needs of His mother and His beloved disciple, His love — just because it was perfect — at the same time provided also for their spiritual well-being. John who of all the apostles was most fully aware of the sublime mystery of Christ's deity could best help Mary in her inevitable weakness of seeing in Jesus too much her son, her own flesh and blood. Under John's spiritual care she would be fostered in seeing in Jesus what she, too, needed above all to see in Him, namely her divine Savior from sin. From what she as His mother knew of the infancy and childhood of Jesus, Mary, on the other hand, could lead John to see even more clearly that the Only-begotten of the Father had indeed taken on our flesh and blood.

He Did the Father's Will As we see our crucified Savior providing for His mother and His beloved disciple we are again made aware also of His love to the Father in heaven. For what was it that made Him ready to sever even the closest earthly bonds? It was His perfect love in which He desired to carry out the mission of redemption for which the Father had sent Him into the world. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

Embrace His Perfect Love in Faith

Our text has given us but a brief glimpse of the Savior's perfect love which marked His whole life from birth to the bitter end on Calvary's cross. With it He paid our great debt of love. This is the love that He rendered to God as our substitute, so that clothed in it by faith we might have all our defaults in love covered up in God's holy sight and enjoy His fatherly love now and for all eternity.

(Continued on page 85)

Editorials

Reason God has bestowed upon the human race the gift of reason. It is one of the powers which distinguishes man from the beast. God has given it to man in order that it may be man's servant. But because of sin, reason has all too often become man's master.

If this was the case only among those who have openly opposed God and have announced to the world that they are rationalists and not Christians, we would, no doubt be spared a great deal of difficulty in the visible church. But because reason is such a treacherous power of the sinful flesh, which clings also to the Christians, there have arisen countless large and small controversies within the church which have been engineered by reason and supported by pride and ill-will.

Reason takes hold upon a person and says: "Surely, God wants you to do what is practical and what is logical. Look at God's Word again. Restudy it and see if it does not leave room for the light reason is throwing upon its truths by means of scholarship and research."

If reason then gains the mastery over humble submission to the Word of God it has pride as its sworn ally to prevent losing its gains and it has ill-will at its disposal to ward off the influence of those who would seek to relegate it to its proper position of servant and not master.

Apparently, reason has won the greatest mastery in the church among those whose education and position have been on a high level.

Melanchthon was both a scholar and a prominent man. Zwingli, too, belongs in that category. Emerson Fosdick is noted for his learning and has held a very prominent position. The rationalist movement which plagued the Lutheran Church in Europe evidently had its origin in the universities. It is needless to say that a great percentage of the difficulty with which Lutheranism has had to contend in the United States has arisen from reason's conquests among the leaders of the church.

Reason being what it is, no one among us, in the pew, in the pulpit, or behind the teacher's desk dare ever cease to "search the Scriptures" with all humility that God's Word may dominate our reason and control our belief and our practice.

God's Word is clear and plain in itself. It becomes dark and beclouded when reason is permitted to project itself between our hearts and the Holy Spirit's enlightening operation.

We must never become so carnally secure as to suppose that we need not "watch and pray" lest reason become the master instead of the servant among us. We have a very great sufficiency of the Old Adam. It becomes us in this season and in all seasons of the church year to make frequent visits to the Garden of Gethsemane to learn continually from our blessed Savior: "Not my will, but Thine be done."

AHLERT H. STRAND in *Lutheran Sentinel*.

Christian Obedience By *obedience* we mean, obedience to God, to the *Word* of God, which is the only test of true obedience. Those who trust God will also trust His Word and render obedience to that Word. Both go hand in hand. Page through your Scriptures and mark this characteristic in all the great heroes, Noah, Abraham, David, the prophets, and the apostles. Read the Epistles and mark how the writers ever presuppose this truly Christian virtue on the part of their readers. Remember what the Prophet Samuel told King Saul when the latter excused his disobedience to God who had commanded Saul to smite Amalek "and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass?" Instead of obeying the Lord, Saul "spared Agag, and the best of the sheep." When Samuel took Saul to task for his disobedience, Saul said he kept "the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord the God." What did Samuel say to Saul? Did he tell him "well, if that is what you want the sheep for, it's all right and God will surely be pleased with your sacrifices?" Nay! This is what Samuel told the king, "hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in *obeying* the voice of the Lord? Behold, *to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams*" (1 Samuel 15:22).

The flesh, certainly, is not willing nor able to obey God and His Word. The flesh is proud and self-sufficient and boasts of its enlightened reason. Therefore "they that are in the flesh can not please God." Only those whose heart and mind have been enlightened by the Spirit of God, through the Word, will be willing to lean entirely on God and His Word and take God at His Word in humble obedience. Noah's reason, his flesh, certainly mocked God's command to Noah to build an ark on dry land 120 years before the flood. But he did it in humble obedience while the world of men jeered and mocked and laughed him to scorn. Abraham took his son, his only son whom he loved and was willing to slay and sacrifice him in obedience to the Lord's command. Don't think for a moment that Abraham's flesh and reason agreed with the Lord. They scored Abraham for being so foolish to believe that such a command could possibly come from the Lord and argued that Abraham must have heard, perhaps, the devil's voice but surely not the voice of God, for God would not be interested in the killing of his son, his only son. But Abraham refused to listen to flesh and blood. He knew the voice of God. And though he was not able to understand the way of God he was ready to obey. We know from the Bible how right and wise he was to be obedient. And always it was the *Word* of the Lord that they obeyed.

That is still the mark of the Christian today — obedience, humble, child-like obedience to the Word of God as it is recorded in the Bible. That Word is the only light and lamp that illumines the Christians path and way.

He knows no other. It may be hard at times to follow, it may seem to be foolish at times, it may seem to be unnecessary at times to the flesh and reason, but like

Noah, Abraham and Paul the Christian is ready to be "a fool for Christ's sake" and obey God to the letter.

W. J. S.

Our Suffering Savior

II.

ISAAIAH in his great chapter on our suffering Savior (52, 12 — 53, 12) calls Him the Servant of the Lord (52, 13; 53, 11). St. Paul tells us that Jesus, though He was in the form of God, "took upon him the form of a servant" (Phil. 2, 7). As Servant of the Lord He became obedient, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Jesus was obedient, not only now and then, He was obedient all the time. There was not a moment in His life when He was not obedient. His sufferings were an act of obedience.

The Obedience of Our Savior

Sin had entered into the world "by one man's disobedience" (Rom. 5, 19). Adam set aside the solemn, yet easy, commandment of God not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In spite of this clear commandment he stretched forth his hand to take of the forbidden fruit.

Adam's disobedience. — The result was that not only he himself forfeited the blessings of the Lord who had created him, but being the head and representative of the human race, he brought condemnation upon all of us and passed on to his descendants a human nature that is infested with original sin, a nature that not only has no desire to do the good and holy will of God, but which simply cannot. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts. "Every imagination of the thoughts of a man's heart is only evil continually" (Gen. 6, 5).

Disobedience brought the curse down on our heads. Jesus came to take away the curse by His obedience.

Jesus' obedience. — Was Jesus obedient? The question is not: Did He always do what is good and right? but: Did He do what He did because the Father commanded it? Did He do His Father's will even when it involved unpleasant and painful things? Did He do it willingly, or did the Father have to use force or coercion?

Yes, He was obedient. Paul says so with just that word twice, in Rom. 5, 19, and in Phil. 2, 8. — We look also at a few other passages.

In the Old Testament the promised Messiah, speaking in the 40th Psalm, says: "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart" (v. 8). We know well what is in our own heart: many thoughts that we would blush to reveal. Jesus' heart was clean. When we do the things that God commands in His Law, we often do so very reluctantly. Jesus delighted to do God's will. — The same truth is expressed in Is. 50, 5: "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back."

As the promised Messiah spoke in the prophecies, so He also spoke when He appeared on earth in the fulness of time. He testified: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6, 38). Again: "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5, 30). Yes, He called it His meat, by which He lived and which refreshed Him, "to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4, 34). When He was about to leave the world He addressed these words in His highpriestly prayer to His heavenly Father: "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17, 4).

Active and Passive Obedience

We must take a little closer look at our Savior's obedience.

When we speak about Christ as doing the will of His Father, we dare not overlook the Law. In the Psalm passage quoted above the Messiah spoke about the law of God as being in His heart. So it was. There were no evil lusts in His heart. All His thoughts, all His desires, all His feelings could pass the closest inspection and scrutiny according to the Law. It was His delight to do the things of the Law. The Scriptures use very strong language about Christ's relation to the Law.

Doing. — We know that we do not have the Law of God in our heart. We do not delight to do His will. The Lord must give us sharp commands. He must try to induce us into obeying by promises of a reward. He must drive us with threats of severe punishment. Yes, He must often apply the rod, because, as our Formula of Concord says, "the old Adam, as an intractible, refractory ass, is still a part" of us and "must be coerced to the obedience . . . oftentimes by the club of punishments and troubles." Thus the Law is laid on us as a heavy burden. In the same manner also, although Jesus had the Law in His heart, it was laid on Him as a burden. When God sent forth His Son into the world, made of a woman, He sent Him "made under the Law" (Gal. 4, 4), just as we were under the Law.

Jesus was obedient, not because of any promises or threats, but because that was the very purpose for which He had come. "I am not come to destroy (the Law) but to fulfill" (Matth. 5, 17). And He did fulfill the Law "without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1, 19), so that no one could convince Him of any sin

(see John 8, 46). His life was spent in practicing love to His heavenly Father and in doing good to His fellow men.

Suffering. — But Christ's obedience included more than just doing the things commanded in the Law. Paul says that He was "obedient unto death." The obedience of Christ included all the things that He suffered.

Note the strong language which Jesus Himself used. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. *This commandment have I received of my Father*" (John 10, 17, 18).

In the Garden Gethsemane we see how Jesus struggled in His obedience of suffering. He dreaded to drink the bitter cup. He pleaded with His Father if there were no other way to carry out our salvation. Three times He prostrated Himself before His Father and "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears" (Heb. 5, 7). But not for a moment did He waver in His willingness to do His Father's bidding. "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matth. 26, 39).

This being the case, that Jesus even in every part of His sufferings performed an act of obedience, our teachers coined the terms *active* and *passive obedience*. If used in this way they will not be subject to misunderstanding as though in His passive obedience Jesus was forced to undergo something against His will, yielding only to superior pressure. The Formula of Concord explains the meaning in this way: Jesus rendered to His heavenly Father an obedience "*by doing and suffering, by living and dying.*"

Christ's Obedience Vicarious

The word *vicarious* is used to express the thought that Jesus rendered His obedience in our stead.

In our stead. — Being the Son of God Jesus was above the Law, it was He who together with the Father and the Holy Ghost had given us the Law. If He was made *under the Law* that could not be for His own sake. He

had nothing to gain by it personally. He was made under the Law for our sake, in our stead. St. Paul says that Jesus was made under the Law "to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Christ did not redeem us with one half of His life, while He lived the other half in His own interest. He did not pay for our sins merely with His suffering and death, no, also His obedience in righteous living was rendered for us.

Second Adam. — Paul compares Jesus with Adam, and tells us what each one of these two achieved for us, the one by his disobedience, the other by His obedience. "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one the many shall be made righteous" (Rom. 5, 18, 19). As Adam was the representative of the whole human race, and by his sin brought the judgment of condemnation upon us all, so also Christ is the representative of the whole human race, and by His acts of righteousness, by His obedience, won for us the verdict of justification.

Substitution. — The idea of substitution is found presented in the Scriptures in many different ways. The most common is by the preposition *for*, meaning *in stead of*: Christ gave Himself *for us*. — It is expressed in the terms of a purchase, and the price that is paid. God "purchased the church with his own blood" (Acts 20, 28). In a purchase the price and the value of the article purchased are supposed to balance, so that one takes the place of the other. — It is found in the expressions denoting a redemption. To redeem and to ransom mean that a price is given in stead of a slave or a prisoner, who then is set free. — It is strongly brought to our mind in the comparison with a sacrifice. In a sin offering the animal took the place of the sinner, it was killed in his stead and burnt on the altar. Christ gave Himself as a sacrifice for our sins.

The obedience of Christ was vicarious. He took our place under sin, and now covers us with His own righteousness. St. Paul says: "God

hath made him to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5, 21).

In speaking about our suffering Savior we shall in our next study, God granting, give attention to the result which Christ achieved for us by His vicarious obedience.

J. P. M.

The Price Of Perfect Love

(Continued from page 82)

As we embrace Christ's saving love in joyful faith it becomes also a constraining example for us, an example which we will want to follow more and more in heartfelt thankfulness. Even in the brief glimpse of this love as it lies before us in our text we will see rich implications for a Christian life. It will move us to improve our own show of filial love, to purge our friendships of selfishness and faithlessness. As we see Jesus even on the cross amidst the shame and pain of His redemptive mission giving thought to the needs of His mother we are moved to suppress the thought that our own tasks and problems in life could rightfully keep us from providing our parents with needed comfort, help, and care. As we see Jesus severing all earthly bonds to carry out the Heavenly Father's will we are constrained to let no earthly bonds, dear as they may be in themselves, stand in our way in doing the will of our God and Savior. As we see Jesus providing for Mary and John in such a way that also their spiritual needs were met we are moved to give thought not merely to the earthly welfare of those who are specially committed to our love but to provide above all for the need of their souls.

C. J. L.

NOTICE

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Siftings

BY THE EDITOR

"It is abundantly clear that inter-faith marriages have unfortunate results for organized religion," writes Murray H. Leiffer in a series of articles on mixed marriages. And he quotes the words of a mother as typical "We send the children to my husband's church (Lutheran). It doesn't make any difference, as long as they believe in God. They will choose anyway when they get older. If you train them Catholic they will go Protestant, and if you train them Protestant they will go Catholic." And a father "I'm Catholic — not perhaps as rabid as some of the older ones. I don't believe in their educational system and don't intend to send my child to a Catholic school. While I will expose him to the Catholic religion and see that he is taught the Catholic religion, I won't oppose his being taught other religions either. Most of the difference is in ritual and that isn't too important." This indifference often tends toward another direction "Often one or the other of the couple (more likely the husband) has 'given up' religion, leaving the partner free to do as he or she wishes in attending church and in training the children. For example, in one family the husband is Roman Catholic, but has ceased attending. The wife had a Presbyterian background, but attends a Baptist church near by. The five children attend that church with their mother; none has been baptized." It is safe to conclude, in general, that mixed marriages occasion either indifference or family discord. How could it be otherwise?

* * * *

The *Lutheran* is fond of Bishop Oxnam and takes no pains to hide it. Their latest release about the Bishop includes these interesting comments: "There would be joy among Roman Catholics if Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam were to decide to spend the next twenty years in Afghanistan or even on the moon. A half-dozen times in the last three years the bishop had achieved front-page head lines in American newspapers by accusing the Roman Catholic hierarchy of plotting to gain political power. Roman Catholics want to destroy the separation of

church and state which is guaranteed in the U. S. Constitution, Bishop Oxnam told a big audience in Washington on January 27. 'The Roman Catholic Church does not believe in separation of church and state. Nor does it believe in religious liberty,' he said. As a closing shot he added, 'A dictator who goes to Mass is still a dictator.' Roman Catholics, he said, are in the strange and indefensible position of damning Stalin and blessing Franco.' Rome prides herself on being "always the same" — except when it is convenient to be something else!

* * * *

Sometimes book reviews can be revealing. Dr. Otto W. Heick recently reviewed "This Is Luther" (E. M. Plass, Concordia). He concludes his review, "The book comes short of its purpose mainly for two reasons: 1) The author seems to be unacquainted with most of the excellent books written on Luther since the beginning of this century. . . . Consequently the author (2) fails to divorce himself from the traditional interpretation of Luther on the part of the Orthodox school (the old Lutheran teachers of the 17th century, Ed.). Yet Luther and our Orthodox fathers were actually miles apart in their theology. Therefore to approach Luther from this point of view means nothing less than to misinterpret him." Dr. Heick is an eminent scholar but scholarship is evidently no insurance against vaporization of thought. Professor Plass' book presents Luther mainly by letting Luther speak for himself. His book is generously coated with quotations from Luther. This whole thing reminds us of a picture drawn by a poet who describes Shakespeare failing in an examination on "King Lear" because Shakespeare had not read Bradley's indispensable "Commentary on Shakespeare." It seems then, according to Dr. Heick's logic, that Luther would not understand himself today because he hadn't read the modern interpretations of his works. Luther needs no "modern interpretations" to be understood. To read Luther, as he wrote, is to understand him.

The Northwestern Lutheran

Euthanasia has come up again in New York. A petition signed by 379 Protestant and Jewish clergymen asked the state legislature to enact a law making possible the merciful ending of a life of suffering when there is no hope of recovery. They said: "We believe in the sacredness of human personality, but not in the worth of mere existence. . . . We no longer believe that God wills the prolongation of physical torture for the benefit of the soul of the sufferer. For one enduring continual and severe pain from an incurable disease, who is a burden to himself and his family, surely life has no value. We believe that such a sufferer has the right to die, and that society should grant this right, showing the same mercy to human beings as to the sub-human animal kingdom." It is shameful that 379 clergymen should have lent their name to such a petition. The Christians understand that it is GOD who "turneth man to destruction and sayeth return ye children of men" and that God "chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

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"Congregational singing at funerals is not being practiced nearly as much as it was in former years," comments the *Lutheran Companion*. "Usually only a soloist or a quartet contributes sacred songs. In many cases the songs used are quite sentimental in character and often indefinite in their expression of the Christian hope. 'Beautiful Isle of Somewhere' is characteristic. Very seldom does the congregation join in singing a strong and virile hymn of the Christian faith. . . . It is only the Christian who can sing 'songs in the night.' No experience in life is so overwhelming as to silence his hymns of praise. And when he goes home at last, why should not his fellow believers thank God for the faith that triumphs over every foe — even death itself? Let us have more singing at our Christian funerals. Let us sing hymns of faith and hope and victory. We journey toward Paradise with singing." Where local conditions permit, it is certainly a fine custom to sing hymns which confess our Christian faith and hope. If this is falling into disuse we are surely losing much.

Where Do We Stand?

IV. We Resist The Trend

BY PROFESSOR E. REIM

IN a previous article in this series we described the broad, sweeping, powerful trend toward unification which is so characteristic of our day, in various spheres of life, but particularly also in the field of the Church. In our last issue we undertook to judge this trend, our verdict being that in the main it is unsound, misleading, unscriptural, and therefore dangerous. We made due allowance for the fact that the desire for widening the area of true Christian unity is in itself, of course, a perfectly legitimate one. We emphasized the need for great care in arriving at a judgment in this matter. We found cases where the need for doctrinal unity was recognized. But we also found that in most instances this need was sadly ignored. Therefore we could not but arrive at the unfavorable verdict mentioned above. Therefore we resist the trend.

We Refused in 1938

We have been doing that since 1939, when our Synod at its Watertown Convention refused to sanction the St. Louis Agreement of 1938 which had been submitted by our sister synod for our approval. In that case the need for doctrinal agreement had been recognized. The *Declaration* of the American Lutheran Church was meant to remove the differences that were keeping the synods apart. At that time our criticism was directed mainly at the fact that this *Declaration* did not adequately settle the old controversies. Others began to object because it implied that something less than *complete* doctrinal agreement was required for union. We found it necessary to restate our objections from time to time, the last occasion being in 1947, when the American Lutheran Church, having declared that the attempt to achieve doctrinal agreement had failed, issued its *Friendly Invitation*. In this document the A. L. C. Commissioners said in so many words that full agreement was not necessary, that the remaining differences lay in "areas where there exists an allowable and wholesome latitude of theo-

logical opinion on the basis of the teachings of the Word of God." Thereby they have, if nothing else, removed all doubt as to the correctness of our judgment of 1939. The trend was an unsound one. It needed to be resisted.

Other Developments

In the meantime the trend was developing more and more clearly. Other situations occurred which made it necessary that we take a stand and voice our convictions. When our Seminary faculty was invited to participate in a conference of theological faculties from all other Lutheran Seminaries to discuss the problems of Lutheranism in America we expressed our willingness to take part, provided, however, that we be given the assurance that the doctrinal differences between the various Lutheran bodies be considered the foremost problem. This assurance was never given, even though both invitation and answer were repeated in subsequent years. In a similar manner our Seminary student body not only declined to become a member of a pan-Lutheran Association of Lutheran Seminarians because this Association ignored the primary requirement for fellowship, namely doctrinal agreement, but at the same time lodged a vigorous protest with the student body of a sister Seminary which was sponsoring the invitation.

Synodical Conference

The biennial conventions of the Synodical Conference have given us another opportunity to resist this modern trend. There we have debated the issues of union and unionism, Scouting (the same trend in a slightly different form), and many similar matters. And here it has become clear that in many of these things we do not stand alone. In this connection must be mentioned a standing Committee on Inter-synodical Relations that has been created by the Synodical Conference for the express purpose of making it possible to discuss these incidents as they

occur. We have made use of this opportunity to the best of our ability. It will also be remembered that on one of these issues, that of Scouting, our Synod has addressed itself directly to our sister synod of Missouri. Negotiations between committees representing the two synods are under way at this very time.

Our Church Papers Testified

An additional way for demonstrating our stand is offered by our church papers. During all these years we have been using the pages of our *Theological Quarterly* (*Quartalschrift*), for the purpose of exposing, analyzing, and resisting this trend. We have been more sparing in the use of our other official publications, *Gemeindeblatt* and *Northwestern Lutheran*, since our chief aim was to bring our objections to the attention of those with whom we were dealing, rather than to air our grievances before the largest circle of readers that we might be able to reach. Yet some of our readers may remember our articles of 1947. And more recently the pages of our *Northwestern Lutheran* carried an earnest warning against a dangerously unionistic intersynodical organization calling itself Lutheran Men in America. Here it would have been meaningless to discuss this problem only in our *Theological Quarterly*. Since the movement is directed at laymen, and since active recruiting has been carried on in our midst in spite of plain warnings that have been issued locally, the columns of our *Northwestern Lutheran* were obviously the proper place for bringing this matter to the attention of our people.

Missouri Pastors Oppose the Trend

This is by no means a complete listing of our efforts. But it does show that we have not been sitting idly by, helplessly watching the rising flood. On the contrary, we have been doing our utmost to stem the tide, to strengthen the dikes, to repair the break-throughs — even as large groups of our Missouri brethren are working vigorously and systematically to cope with this same movement as it confronts them in their own synod. This listing will further show that we are not merely facing a few isolated problems, as for instance that of Scouting, which has

been standing rather unduly in the foreground, but that there is a definite relation between these various incidents. They are part of a larger problem, just a few of the many different phases of the great modern trend toward unification.

These are our efforts at resistance. What have been the results?

What Success Have We Had?

It is not easy to point to certain definite, clear cut victories in this struggle. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that our efforts have earned us more than a little measure of hatred. The pastor who happened to write the articles by which our members were warned against the Lutheran Men in America movement was subjected to a violent attack launched against him by representatives of this organization in the columns of the public newspapers of Milwaukee. One of these same papers has repeatedly, for reasons unknown to us, held up pastors of our synod to public scorn because of a stand that they took in regard to certain veterans' organizations. The going has been anything but smooth. And yet it would be a grave mistake to assume that our work has been in vain. On the contrary, it is the firm conviction of this writer that our testimony has not been without its fruit. Just how much our efforts contributed to the setting aside of the 1938 Agreement between the American Lutheran Church and Missouri is not for us to say. That both synods have, however, officially declared that no doctrinal agreement has been reached certainly does vindicate our statements of 1939. We are also convinced that not everything that has been said in committee sessions has been said in vain. It would be wrong not to recognize sincere efforts that have been made to deal with some of these problems. But it has not been possible to keep up with the rapid flow of incidents.

We Shall Carry On

So we resist the trend. So we shall, with the help of God, continue to resist this trend. If anyone should still ask why we do this, when it is clear that it would be so much easier and more comfortable to go along with the crowd, to adapt one's self

to the times, and to shrug off the responsibility, then our answer is that we continue to resist because this trend has already been judged, not by ourselves, but by the Word of God. When that Word tells us to mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, and *avoid* them, then it cannot be right to *fraternize* with them, to establish spiritual relations which ignore these plain warnings of Scripture. In this matter we are to be moved not merely

by concern for our Synod, but for the Church at large. And only God's Word may decide the issues.

In these trying times we need to recapture some of that earnestness which spoke out of a recent Radio Sermon which emphasized the need of complete adherence to every word of God. For the sake of the cause we are reprinting this sermon at least in its pertinent part. You will find it in another column of this issue. We hope it will be read and taken to heart.

The Church In My Neighborhood

(NOTE: The following theme on the above subject was written by a University of Michigan student from one of our congregations, as an assignment in English.)

THE church in my neighborhood is the church of my faith. Because of this intimate association I am well acquainted with its teachings, principles, policies, and its role in the community. I am happy to be affiliated with this church, because I am convinced that its position in the aforementioned matters is correct. I am thankful for the privilege of being a member of the church in my neighborhood.

..... Ev. Lutheran Church is the name of my church. It was founded in the year 1855, and has grown from a handful of pioneer members to an organization which numbers more than 1,800 souls. Many walks of life and many racial strains are represented in its membership. It possesses a fine church plant of five buildings. It draws its support from and depends for its maintenance on the voluntary contributions of its members. It has the usual number of church societies, choirs, and the like; these, however, are of secondary importance and concern.

Because it occupies itself strictly with the functions which the Lord has delegated to it, my church exerts a real influence through its membership. The Church is a spiritual institution and must engage only in spiritual matters. It is responsible for man's spiritual well-being. It ful-

fills its functions by ministering to man's spiritual needs. It makes him a Christian, a child of God, through the only agency that can make Christians: the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And it helps to preserve him in his Christianity by the same means.

The Lutheran Church does not concern itself with secular affairs, such as politics, uplift programs, and the like. It leaves these affairs to the secular institutions and agencies: the government, welfare organizations, the police department, and the like. It believes in and upholds the scriptural principle of strict separation of Church and State.

However, it does exert a powerful and salutary influence on the community and on the world. It does not believe that men can be made moral by giving them a better education, a better job, better homes, better environment, but that men must first be transformed into spiritual beings before there will be a change in their conduct of life. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." It follows Christ's injunction: "Cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside of them may be clean also."

By effecting this change from within, it believes men will be changed outwardly also. Thus it exerts its influence upon the community and the world. It makes men what Christ wants them to be, when He says: "Ye are the salt of the earth; ye are the light of the world." It makes them good Christians who, in turn, become the best citizens; who abhor evil and

strive after the good; who make their influence felt in all walks and phases of life.

This is an influence which no other agency can effect. Education is not enough; there are many educated people in jail! Good environment is not enough; many scoundrels walk in high places! Reformation is not enough; it only makes men respectable

sinners! The transformation of the individual is the only hope of the world.

The church in my neighborhood, my church, is committed to its God-appointed commission of making men good Christians that they may also be good citizens. I am happy to be a member of the church in my neighborhood!

In The Footsteps Of Saint Paul

Peter's Vision in Joppa and Mission in Caesarea

BY DR. HENRY KOCH, MORRISON, WISCONSIN

WE are dwelling more extensively on the preparatory stages of the bringing of the Gospel to the Gentile world with a very distinct purpose, since this is a very important and decisive phase in the spreading of the kingdom of God. The hearts and minds of the men, who were to bring the Gospel message to the heathen, had to be changed and they had to be taught by the Holy Spirit Himself. The Jewish apostles were reluctant to break down the barrier between the Jew and Gentile. They felt, that at least some portion of the mosaic law would have to be accepted and fulfilled by the Gentile to secure admission into the kingdom of God. The Jews had their proselytes of the gate, the Christians would have to have something similar. The whole world view of the Jewish Christians and apostles had to be changed. That the Gentile should be placed on the same level with the Jewish Christian was something unheard of. The Holy Spirit had to open their eyes as to the real and deeper meaning of so many passages of the Old Testament, in which the coming of the Gentile world into the light of the kingdom was foretold. Had they forgotten the prophecy recorded in Isaiah (ch. 60): "The Gentiles shall come to thy light." "The forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." They knew the prophecy, but had to learn the real meaning and manner of its fulfilment.

A Modern Parallel

To us this all seems rather self-evident. For the apostles it was a hard lesson. We know how Paul had to rebuke Peter for falling back in

to old error. It was so difficult for the apostles to give up the cherished idea of the chosen Jewish race. They were so easily tempted to try to embody portions of the Jewish law as an essential element of the new Gospel message. The millennialists of today, who believe in the general conversion of the Jews and who ascribe to them a leading role in the coming 'millennium,' have not learned this lesson to this very day. The advocates of a Social Gospel with their strange mixture of Law and Gospel and their emasculation of the true Gospel have the same wrong world view. Let us not chide the apostles and early Christians unduly. Must we too not be on our guard lest we become confused and then confuse others? Visible churches or denominations, which believe and create the impression as though salvation were only possible within their own gates, are guilty of the same sin. They magnify the importance of their own church wrongly and minimize the real nature and significance of the Invisible Church, outside of which there is no salvation. No visible church can make such a claim.

It is not necessary for us to attempt to retell the story of the visions of Cornelius and Peter, told so beautifully by Luke in chapters 10-11 of his Book of Acts, and all that followed these visions. Let us rather ponder their inner significance and the ensuing events.

Arguing with the Lord

Peter could not refrain from arguing with the Lord, when he beheld that sheet let down by four corners. He boasted, that he had never eaten

anything common or unkosher. The Lord evidently must have made a mistake. In this respect the Pope of Rome, who professes to be the successor of Peter, follows in Peter's footsteps. He is constantly arguing with the Lord: Should the Lord have meant this? Peter at least finally submitted to the Word of God, the Pope does not. He casts aside the clear teachings of Holy Writ and proclaims his own way of salvation of good works aided by the grace poured in from high and the meritorious intercession as well as the superabundant treasure of good works of the saints. Peter, we are glad, at least learned his lesson. The Pope refuses to be taught by the Holy Spirit and His clear Word. Over the: "Thus saith the Lord" he places his: "Thus saith the Pope." When Rome has spoken, it is final.

When the Lord said to Peter: "What God hath cleansed, that call thou not common (unkosher)" and requested him to kill and to eat, he actually told him that the old Mosaic law concerning kosher foods (Levit. 11) was repealed. Paul had learned his lesson more quickly and permanently than Peter. He wrote to the Colossians (Col. 2, 16-17): "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are the shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." All the restrictions of the Mosaic law are now removed.

A New Understanding

The sheet, held together at its four ends and containing all manner of animals, symbolized the four corners of the globe. From the east and the west as well as the north and south the souls were to be gathered in. No longer could the Jews call the Gentiles dogs. Before God they were all on an equal footing, all sinners. Christ's atonement was wrought for all, irrespective of race or nation.

Once Peter had listened, when Jesus rebuked the Pharisees: "There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things, which come out of him (evil thoughts and words as well as deeds) those are they that defile a man." At the time he did not understand his Master. Now he was beginning to grasp the real meaning of these words a little better.

A Momentous Visit

Peter did not hesitate to accompany the men from Caesarea to their master Cornelius after the Lord had told him: "Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them" (Acts 10:20). He wanted to exercise precaution, however, by taking six men of the congregation in Joppa along with him as witnesses. This was a very wise act on his part, for later on he had to give an account before the brethren in Jerusalem (Acts 11:1-3). It only helped him to prove his case. We are told: "When they heard these things, they held their peace (!) and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18). Had not his divine Master once said, "that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established"? (Matt. 18:16). This wise precaution we too should observe in all of our dealings within the Church. Many a servant of Christ had to suffer much heartache because of such a neglect. Peter's conduct is worthy of praise and imitation.

When Peter arrived at the home of Cornelius, the centurion knelt before him and wanted to worship him. Peter immediately raised him up, saying unto him: "Stand up, I myself also am a man" (Acts 11:26). Peter's self-styled successor lets the people kneel before him and kiss his hands. How different!

Peter Preaches Fundamentals

Peter's initial words in his sermon before the Cornelian household reveal unto us, that Peter had profited by what the Holy Spirit had wanted to teach him: "Of a truth, I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons. But in every nation he that feareth and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." These words of Peter do not mean, that it does not matter what you believe as long as you are sincere and lead a righteous life. This is unfortunately the opinion of only too many, who stress deeds and reject creeds. If this were the case, then it would have been needless for Peter to have preached to Cornelius, whose prayers and alms had already ascended to God (Acts 10:4). On the contrary, Peter preached the fundamental doctrines concerning salvation. Peter wanted to stress another fact:

Race and nationality play no role in salvation, are no hindrance. Christ died for all. Now He is the Savior of all. At the end of all time He will be the supreme judge of the quick and the dead. If Peter had preached indifference toward belief in Christ, it would be in direct contradiction to what he had once confessed before the Sanhedrin after the healing of the lame beggar (Acts 4:12): "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." There may be many ways leading to Rome and Canterbury. There is but one way to heaven, through faith in Christ Jesus. Nothing more, nothing less.

The Cross of Christ Alone

That the barrier between Jew and Gentile had been broken down was the lesson that Peter and the other apostles had to learn and did learn. This was the preparatory work the Holy Spirit had to perform in the hearts and minds of the apostles and early Jewish Christians before He could send them out into a hostile, bankrupt, and corrupt world to preach the only saving Gospel. The offense and foolishness of the preaching of the Cross of Christ was the only possible message. Neither

heathen idolatry nor a syncretism or mixing of all ancient heathen religions nor the various philosophical systems offering a substitute for the decrepit religions could save souls in a morally bankrupt world. The Gospel of Christ is the only power of God unto salvation to Jew, Greek or Gentile alike as Paul later on confessed to the Romans (Rom. 1:16). It is folly on the part of governments to try to establish one world government. It is folly on the part of the visible church to try to establish one religion by eliminating the crucified and risen Lord. The folly of such enterprises reminds one time and again of the futile attempt of building the Tower of Babel. There is, however, but one Gospel for a sin-ridden and bankrupt world. This too seems to be folly in the opinion of the wise and self-righteous of this world, but through this foolishness of the Cross alone the Lord wrought miracles of conversions through Paul and the other apostles. This fact we should like to have our kind readers bear in mind in our discussion of the preparatory stages before we return to Antioch and behold Paul and Barnabas setting out for their most important mission into the Gentile world. We shall return to Antioch presently and witness the departure of the first missionaries.

Not One Word Of God Shall Pass Away

(Excerpt from a Radio Sermon by Pastor Richard Stiemke)

Submitted by request — E. R.)

"... But until all this comes to pass (namely the end of all things, Matthew 5:17-19) not one word of God shall pass away, not *one* word shall be abrogated. *All* of God's Word is binding upon a Christian. He has no right to set aside any part of it. He dare not add to it or take away from it. He who loves God has respect for *all* of His commands and follows them.

"Those who think that it is not necessary to follow God so carefully in everything, listen carefully to these words of Christ: 'Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.'

"Mark these words! Fasten them in your minds, you who are leaders in churches, you who are instructing the young in the ways of righteousness, you who are interested in your soul's salvation, you who want to be sincere Christians! These words require strict adherence to the written word of God in every respect. According to human judgment some portions of the word of God seem more important than others, but to God everything that He has revealed through His Holy Writers is important. We dare not break or set aside any command of God, even such as in the opinion of men are of least importance. But should anyone become guilty of breaking even only one of

the least of the commandments, he, the Lord says, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. There is a solemn warning in the word 'least' and in the word 'one.' For if he already is called least who breaks one of the least requirements, how then shall God rate him who tampers with several of these least requirements, or with one or more of the greater requirements?

"Men may applaud those whom they classify as liberal; they may call

those great who in their foolish wisdom, by what they believe, teach, and practice, set aside portions of God's word, which they classify as non-essential; they may even admire and honor as broadminded those who set aside some of the great essentials — not so God. God, here on earth and later in His heavenly kingdom, will regard him as great who believes and does all that His word requires, and him least who sets aside even the least requirement of His word."

elevator girl had trimmed a scrubby spruce tree with some strands of tinsel and a few gaudy ribbons, and placed it in a corner near the large cell where the service was held, no one would have guessed the nearness of Christmas. When the pastor arrived, a number of men were playing checkers in the "chapel." No one seemed to know the familiar strains of, "Hark! the herald angels sing," and so the missionary had to sing solo. In spite of these handicaps, the latter preached his Christmas sermon, in the firm confidence, that here, too, the Word of God would not return unto Him void.

Institutional Mission

Christmas In Our Mission

NO matter where Christmas is celebrated, whether amid fragrant pines decked with festoons of snow, or under Spanish moss hanging down from aged shade trees; whether in crowded metropolitan areas, or in quiet rural communities; whether in a magnificent cathedral, or in a humble chapel — there is a charm associated with Christmas which cannot be equalled by any other festival.

Thousands of our Christians have undoubtedly experienced this anew during the recent holidays, when they heard the old, sweet story of a Babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes and lying in a manger, of a pious young mother fondling her Child, of shepherds watching over their flocks by night, and of angel choirs singing: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"

We, who are engaged in institutional work, were by no means left untouched by the joy and spirit of Christmas, as the following description, we hope, will show.

Christmas at the Asylum

After our patients had been prepared for the coming of the Christ-child during the Advent season, they were treated to a beautiful recital of Christmas music on Sunday afternoon, December 19, by the A Capella Choir of the Lutheran High School, under the direction of Mr. Paul J. Jungkuntz. Between four and five hundred patients had assembled in one of the large dining halls of the institution. They showed in various

ways how much they appreciated the carols of those Christian boys and girls. Favorable comments were also made by attendants, nurses, and members of the Occupational Therapy staff. On December 25 and 26, Christmas services were conducted in the chapel. Hymns, such as, "Oh, come, all ye faithful," — "From heaven above to earth I come," and, "Now sing we, now rejoice," were sung with fervor by the congregation. The festival sermon was based on St. Paul's Christmas message: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. 1, 15.) At the close of the service, every patient received a bag of sweets prepared by our Volunteer Workers.

Thus, while the festivities at the Asylum were not as those in our city churches, the very simplicity which characterized them made them impressive. And we do not doubt that the blessed Christmas tidings, which were proclaimed in word, song, and picture, brought comfort and cheer to those unfortunate people in their mental gloom.

Christmas at the House of Correction

The Christmas celebration at the House of Correction began on December 21 when the writer conducted services on the sixth floor of the Safety Building for those prisoners who, because they cannot be trusted on the premises on Blue Mound Road, are locked up in cells. Had it not been for the fact that the colored

On December 25, another service was held in more dignified surroundings, namely, in the neat little chapel of the House of Correction, which had at least been decorated for the occasion. The men who gathered for the service were all Lutherans. They joined the pastor whole-heartedly in singing several of our Christmas hymns and expressed their appreciation for the message which seemed to have gone home with them. Two days later, on December 27, a group of twenty-five people from our congregations gave a simple, but impressive Christmas program, consisting of numerous carols that were sung either by all present — about 100 prisoners had congregated in the mess hall — or by the numbers of the group. The carols were interspersed with four readings describing Christmas customs in various parts of our country. This was followed by the distribution of bags of candy among the men. After the program, the guests were served a fine lunch that had been prepared by prisoners.

Christmas at the Infirmary

While many of the inmates of the Infirmary have but few friends in this world, they are not forgotten at Christmas time. To begin with, the institution itself was decorated with a number of Christmas trees and poinsettia plants in the chapel and the wards, and in one of the sun parlors the large manger belonging to the institution had been set up. During the week preceeding the holidays, various civic and church groups could be seen going through the wards and distributing gifts, or singing carols. Neither did our Lutheran people forget the old folks.

On Sunday, December 19, the Lutheran High School Choir, after its concert at the Asylum, repeated portions of it in the three wards on the first floor. According to a time-honored custom, a children's service is held annually in the chapel on the afternoon of Christmas Day. This year it was a group of children from Bethesda School that repeated portions of its service of the previous night, and then caroled as they marched through the corridors and the wards. Then followed the distribution of gifts. And what a surprise did the old people have! For all the ladies there was an apron and some candy. The aprons had been sewed by members of three of our Lutheran ladies' societies. The old men were given ties, cigars, and candy. Needless to say, all were happy and thankful for what they had heard and received.

On Tuesday, December 28, Christmas services were held in the sun parlors for the invalids who are unable to attend chapel services. At 9:00 o'clock, a communion service was conducted for the men, and at 10:00 o'clock for the women. So far as this writer is concerned, the latter service was the climax of the entire season, inasmuch as, just before the celebration of Communion, a Jewish lady, who last July had voluntarily asked to be instructed, in the presence of thirty women, confessed her faith in the Savior and through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism was received into the Christian Church — a thrill that comes perhaps but once in the life of a missionary, and a positive proof of the power of God's Word. May the gracious Lord "strengthen and preserve her steadfast in His Word and faith unto her end!"

WM. LOCHNER.

tradictory obligations? Such things are not of God.

There is the possibility that one could participate in some of the things mentioned without denying. An invitation from the world to preside religiously at some of its functions perhaps could be accepted but in so doing the truth of God which applies to the given situation must be spoken. Anything less is denial. When speaking to the worldly people this would include rebuke. We doubt that one so bold as to step on the pet philosophies and cherished good deeds of the unregenerate would endeavor himself to them or be welcome among them again. What is more, the ill-will and hatred of the world would be unnecessary provoked.

For the most part, it appears that those who go along on this mistaken missionary policy do not follow the course of clear-cut confession. The question is not asked, "What testimony of God directly applies and is needed?" but, "What am I expected to say?" In so doing it is quite possible that words truly Scriptural in themselves can be spoken, but here we must recognize a further truth. A sound sermon preached in one of our churches may be rank denial if preached at a public function. A funeral address which, when spoken over a true Christian, is a beautiful testimony of salvation in Christ could well become blasphemy when spoken over an unbeliever. The difference lies not in the words, but in the circumstances. Words in themselves may be true but under certain situations they create the wrong impression and thus become false. A denial exists, not in what is said, but in what is omitted.

Behind this great urge to preach the "Gospel" even if it involves compromises and contradictions lies the basic error that salvation can be brought about without repentance. A repentance, not in the general and abstract sense of the word, but in the personal sense, an individual confession of besetting sins and making the proper amends. Christ Himself, Paul, Peter, John, and every other Biblical prophet preached, "Repent!" In bringing about repentance the Law which rebukes and corrects cannot be excused. Through it the way is opened for faith. Then a soul can be saved. When men hesitate to deal with issues, when they avoid rebuke

Mission Work -- True Or False?

IN the reckoning of conservative Lutherans there are certain practices which are deemed a gross violation of sound scriptural principles. Foremost among these are the toleration of lodge idolatry and self-righteousness, officiating at the funerals of unbelievers, participating in public school baccalaureate services and other community and state religious functions, joining with others of differing beliefs in union services or religious work. Whenever a laxity and indifference to sound doctrine and an unconcern for scriptural principles enters into a church its outward manifestation is first seen in a break down of upholding these very things once considered vital to honest confession. In defense and justification for such action there now comes with monotonous regularity the stock explanation, "It's an opportunity to do mission work, to preach the Gospel, to get at the sinner."

No doubt there are many who realize that the thing is not entirely right, and yet, they consider it sufficiently excused by this one injunction of Jesus, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." Now, no one would question that Jesus so instructs, but is it not also true that we are enjoined to flee idolatry, to

have a righteousness that exceeds that of the Pharisees, to rebuke and admonish, to confess and deny not, to avoid those who teach contrary doctrine. The question arises, does the command to preach the Gospel have precedence or does it set aside the command to flee idolatry and the others? Where is it so written? Where in Scripture are there words or examples that it might be assumed? It won't do to set Scripture against Scripture and then with human reason decide what is to be done.

Is this right, that while we are carrying out the matter of preaching the Gospel, we commit the sin of condoning false righteousness or the followshipping of idols? Scripturally speaking, that is a strange proposition. And yet, that is what we are asked to believe. To save sinners we are to commit sin. Is there anything more absurd! Really, this is an insult to God, a charge against His wisdom. Does an all-knowing God, who loves us, put us into this impossible position that when we confess Him in one point we must of necessity deny Him in another? Is His intelligence so limited that in revealing what He desires for our sanctification He charges us with con-

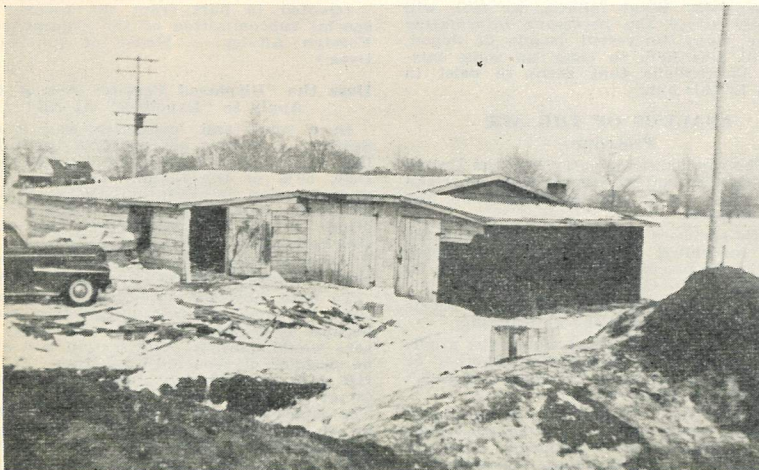
and correction, then they "prophesy smooth things." True, no one is offended, but is any one saved? If we would "get at the sinner" can we do without the very word the sinner needs? O men of little faith, who fear to rebuke the sins of our day! O men of little understanding, who think they are thereby saving souls!

Happy to say, the matter is not so perplexing. God is not so confusing. In His words and directions to us He does not involve us in contradictions, compromises and denials. He says, preach the Word, flee idolatry, rebuke self-righteousness, avoid false doctrine, but these do not exclude each other. We both preach the Gospel and flee idolatry. By doing one we do the other. Paul shows us just exactly how this is to be done. It is not an impossibility for believers. It has been done by the children of God for centuries throughout the world. Let us be wary of the "fear words" that are used to explain away the wide-spread falling away from sound confession that is being found among us. Of John the Baptist we read, "He confessed, and denied not; but confessed." The triple expression emphasizes that John's testimony of Jesus Christ was so presented that there could be no misunderstanding of what was meant. Let us do likewise!

G. S. SYDOW.

CHURCH DEDICATION
Goodview Lutheran Mission
Goodview, Minnesota

The transformation of a furniture factory into a church gives the village of Goodview, on the outskirts of



The Property Before It Was Remodeled

Winona, Minnesota, its first house of public worship. This was accomplished through the efforts and willing cooperation of the members of St. Matthew's Church, Winona.

Volunteer crews from St. Matthew's Church worked when time was available to remodel the former furniture shop into a church. The roof was torn down and the adjoining build-



Volunteer Workers Produced These Results

ings dismantled, so that only the four walls remained. After an entry had been built, a new roof was completed. With this work done, a Vacation Bible School was conducted for three weeks in June, 1948, with an enrollment of 49 pupils.

Later in the summer building operations were continued, and church services were held while the interior was being finished. The first service, held on August 15, had an attendance of 63. In the Fall a Sunday school, which numbers 35 pupils,

was begun. Working late hours for many nights during the Fall months, men of St. Matthew's Congregation finished the interior for the Christmas Eve service. The chapel, 20x55 feet, seats about 150 persons. The building, including the original purchase price, cost approximately \$4,800.

Besides financial donations and uncounted hours of labor, gifts which

give the chapel a churchly appearance include, a new altar and pulpit, hymn-board, altar cross, baptismal font, altar letters, fifty hymnals, service books, dossal, altar linen, altar cloths, carpet, collection plates, light fixtures, piano, and illuminated steeple cross.

With gratitude to God for the opportunity to provide Goodview with a place for worship and Sunday school purposes, many members of St. Matthew's joined the worshipers at Goodview on Sunday, January 16, 1949, for dedication services.

Pastor H. C. Nitz, president of the Western Wisconsin District of Synod, preached the sermon in the morning service, and Pastor Albert Eberhart, South St. Paul, preached in the evening.

This mission project, begun and financed by St. Matthew's Church, is being sponsored jointly by St. Matthew's Church and the Mission Board of the Western Wisconsin District.

"The Goodview Lutheran Mission — Wisconsin Synod," as the name plate on the church designates the building, is an evidence of what can be accomplished, with the Lord's blessing, in extending the Kingdom even though there is a lack of workers and there are shortages in the

church extension fund, when a congregation in a position to do so, helps found another church.

A. L. MENNICKE.

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Lorenz
Poplar Creek, Wisconsin

On Sunday, February 6, 1949, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Lorenz of St. John's Lutheran Church of Poplar Creek, Wisconsin, were privileged to observe their golden wedding anniversary. May the gracious God keep them unto eternal life!

E. BECKER.

SIXTIETH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr. and Mrs. Otto Kutsch

Mr. and Mrs. Otto Kutsch, members of Christ Ev. Lutheran Congregation of Saginaw, Michigan, Route 6, were privileged by our all-merciful God to celebrate their sixtieth wedding anniversary on January 6, Epiphany. A special thank-service was held in the church. The undersigned based his message on Psalm 9, 1-2, calling attention to the great blessings, both temporal and spiritual, which the Lord has bestowed upon them during the past sixty years of wedded life, for which they have cause to praise and to thank Him with their whole hearts; also commending them to His gracious care and protection for the evening of their lives. The choir joined by singing "Beautiful Savior" and "Jesu, geh voran auf der Lebensbahn."

The jubilarians brought a thank-offering of \$5.00 for foreign missions, Friends and relatives presented them with a purse of \$115.00 which they dedicated to the local building fund.

G. M. CARES.

REFLECTIONS OF A PASTOR ON THE NEWS OF THE DAY

The average citizen is avid for news. He wants to read, hear, see the latest goings on in the world. He wants to know the latest developments at the United Nations Conference. He is keenly interested in the presidential campaign. He keeps himself informed on the standing of the major football teams of our great universities.

But how about the attitude of the average man on reading the Word of

God in the Bible which shows him the way to Heaven? Would he switch to another station on his radio if Jesus, our Lord, were on the air? What interest would he show if Christ would reenact the scene of His crucifixion on his television set?

A Christian can measure his standing with his God by his reaction to these two phases of information. What is your standing?

A. SYDOW.

NOTICE

During the latter part of the month of July, 1949, St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Ixonia, Wisconsin, will celebrate the centennial of its founding.

The committee in charge of the centennial booklet would like to obtain a picture of Pastor Alex Lange, who served the congregation from 1866-1877.

Will anyone who has a picture of Pastor Lange, or information concerning the location of such a picture, please communicate with the undersigned. Please do so by March 15, 1949.

Safe return of the picture is guaranteed.

WILLIAM F. WINTER,
Lutheran Theological Seminary,
Thiensville, Wisconsin.

THE DISPLACED PERSON'S ACT OF 1948

Since the passage of the "Displaced Person's Act of 1948," the Committee on Relief has received a number of requests for help and information both from pastors and from members of various congregations within Synod. While helping to get aliens into this country under the "Displaced Person's Act of 1948" or through normal channels of immigration does not come within the scope of the work of the Committee of Relief, nevertheless we are happy to afford whatever helpful information we can. For that reason the "Displaced Person's Act" has been studied and boiled down to its essentials. What follows, we feel, will not only afford the necessary information for the many interested people of Synod, but will also help to clear up some mistaken impressions that seem to exist in regard to this act.

ANALYSIS OF THE ACT Procedure

1. The applicant for entry into the United States should contact the nearest American consul and make his application in the usual manner.
2. His sponsors or sponsor should file the form "Individual Assurances" in triplicate with the Displaced Person's Commission in Washington, D. C.
3. These "Individual Assurances" forms are available at any Federal Building.
4. The American Consul where the applicant files for entry will decide whether or not the applicant is a "Displaced Person" in accordance with the act.
5. After the "Individual Assurances" have been validated by the Displaced Person's Commission in Washington, they are forwarded to their European Headquarters where a thorough investigation is made of the applicant. This investigation usually takes several months. As soon as the in-

The Northwestern Lutheran

vestigation is completed and if the applicant withstands the investigation, a visa is issued.

Reception and Transportation

1. "Upon the issuance of an immigration visa, a duly authorized representative of the Commission shall immediately notify the International Refugee Organization or other responsible authorities in order that adequate provisions may be made for transporting the applicant to a port of embarkation and thereafter to the United States.

2. "At the earliest time practicable the Commission shall arrange for notifying interested individuals or agencies of the granting of the visa and the expected dates of embarkation and of arrival in the United States, in order that appropriate arrangements for reception and transportation in the United States may be made in behalf of the applicant."

(Quoted from Federal Register —
October 6, 1948.)

Priorities

Priority for admission to the United States shall be given to the following groups:

1. Eligible Displaced Persons who have been previously engaged in agricultural pursuits and who will be employed in the United States in agricultural pursuits.
2. Eligible Displaced Persons who are household, construction, clothing and garment workers or eligible Displaced Persons possessing special educational, scientific, technological or professional qualifications.
3. Eligible Displaced Persons who are the blood relatives of citizens or lawfully admitted alien residents of the United States within the third degree of consanguinity.

Within the preferences just mentioned, priority shall be given, first, to eligible Displaced Persons who during World War II bore arms against the enemies of the United States; and secondly, to eligible Displaced Persons who on January 1, 1948, were located in Displaced Person's camps and centers.

Definition of Displaced Person or Refugee

The Congress of the United States has followed the intricate definition found in the Constitution of the International Refugee Organization (a commission of the United Nations). The definition, briefly, is this: A Displaced Person or Refugee is one who, as a result of the actions of Axis governments, or their allies, or the quisling regimes, has been deported from, or has been obliged to leave his country of national or former habitual residence. In other words, a Displaced Person or Refugee is one who was compelled to undertake forced labor or who was deported for racial, religious or political reasons. This definition, however, does not apply to anyone who is of German ethnic origin. People of German ethnic origin, even though they may have been forced to flee their homelands, are unofficially classified as "Expellees" and have little or no standing under the provisions of the International Refugee Organization.

(Quoted in part from the report of a special subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs — House of Representatives.)

Does the "Displaced Person's Act of 1948" Apply to "Expellees" At All?

In a small and ineffective way it does. Section 12 of this act provides the following: "After June 30, 1948, and until July 1, 1950, 50% of the regular normal German and Austrian immigration quotas shall be available exclusively to persons of German ethnic origin who were born in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, or Yugoslavia who on the effective date of this act reside in Germany or Austria."

To date, however, no visas have been issued to those covered under this section because it is too hazy as to just what persons would qualify. The section will either be changed or repealed altogether. In fact, HR 1344 has already been introduced in Congress which would repeal this section. The sponsoring Congressman holds that it is not fair to set aside 50% of German and Austrian quotas when they have applicants born in their own country who must wait as a result of this particular section of the act.

CONRAD FREY, Financial Secretary.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The General Synodical Committee will meet at the Northwestern Publishing House, 3616-32 West North Avenue, Milwaukee 8, Wisconsin, in the week of May 15. The General Mission Board will begin its sessions on the preceding Thursday.

JOHN BRENNER.

CALENDAR OF CONFERENCES

ASSOCIATION FOR LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOLS

The sixth annual convention of the Association for Lutheran High Schools will be held in St. Louis on April 22 and 23. Special attention will be given at this convention to the problems of "Financing Lutheran High Schools," "Public Relations," "A Functional Program in English," "The Ministerial Curriculum," and "Sex Education in Lutheran High Schools." The officers of the Association for the current year are Paul W. Lange, President; Carl S. Meyer, Vice-President; E. F. Sagehorn, Secretary; Martin Duensing, Treasurer.

PAUL W. LANGE, President.

ORDINATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

(Authorized by the Proper Officials)
Installed

Pastors

Schaadt, John, in Zion Church, Eau Galle, Wisconsin, by Gerhard Kionka; Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, February 6, 1949.

Machdanz, Arnold H., in St. John's Church, Pardeeville, Wisconsin, by E. C. Schewe; assisted by H. Geiger and J. H. Kohl; Sexagesima Sunday, February 20, 1949.

Peterson, E. F., in St. Paul's Church, St. James, Minnesota, by E. C. Schmelzer; assisted by R. A. Haase, W. F. Rolf, L. Richmann, R. L. Ehlen, E. T. Heyne, P. Walther, R. C. Beisel, D. W. Lau, H. W. Degner, M. Wierzig; Sexagesima Sunday, February 20, 1949.

Schaller, Gilbert, in St. Mark's Church, Carbondale, Michigan, by F. C. Dobratz; assisted by K. Geyer; and in Holy Cross Church, Daggett, Michigan, by F. C. Dobratz; assisted by T. Hoffmann, K. Geyer, A. A. Gentz, C. Krug, A. A. Schahow; Sexagesima Sunday, February 20, 1949.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Pastor

Peterson, Emil F., 319 9th St., So., St. James, Minnesota.

Schaller, Gilbert, Daggett, Michigan.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND THANKS

Northwestern College acknowledges with sincere thanks the receipt of the following gifts:

From the Ladies' Aid of First Lutheran Church at La Crosse, \$10.00 for the dormitory; from N. N. of Watertown, \$75.00 for

the Library Fund; from the Cedarburg Congregation through Rev. Bleeke, \$43.10 for the Library Fund; in memory of Miss Hertha Voje, \$5.00 for the Organ Fund, from Rev. and Mrs. H. Gieschen and Miss L. Hillemann; in memory of Mrs. William Kansier from the congregation at Town Ellington and Stephenville, from members of the family, relatives, and friends, a total of \$207.00; in memory of Mr. Frank Schroeder, Dale, Wisconsin, \$20.00 for the Library Fund.

E. E. KOWALKE.

* * *

The Music Department of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, gratefully acknowledges the following memorial wreaths and gifts: in memory of Mrs. Arthur Lutz, Caledonia, Minnesota, from relatives and friends, \$10.00; in memory of Teacher Paul Mohrhoff, Monroe, Michigan, from the Michigan State Teachers' Conference, \$5.00; a gift of \$10.00 from our piano teacher, Miss Cassie Erickson, New Ulm; a gift of \$100.00 from Dr. Howard Vogel, New Ulm. Total: \$125.00.

EMIL D. BACKER,
Music Department.

ANNOUNCEMENT

In a special meeting held on February 24, 1949, the Board of Education, Wisconsin Synod, called Mr. Emil Trettin as its new Executive Secretary to fill the vacancy caused by the departure of Mr. F. W. Meyer.

Mr. Trettin has notified the Board of the acceptance of that call.

The Board of Education,

REV. HENRY GIESCHEN, Secretary.

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

July 1, 1948 to January 31, 1949

Receipts

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Cash Balance July 1, 1948..... | \$ 53,441.20 |
| Budgetary Collections: | |
| General Administration | \$187,801.36 |
| Educational Institutions..... | 43,434.94 |
| Home for the Aged..... | 2,874.63 |
| Spiritual Welfare Commission | 2,172.74 |
| For Other Missions..... | 359,566.56 |
| Indigent Students | 1,899.78 |
| General Support | 13,218.87 |
| School Supervision | 565.29 |
| Revenue | 88,767.20 |
| Total Budgetary Collections and Revenues | \$700,301.37 |

Non-Budgetary Receipts:

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Proceeds from Bonds Reserved for Northwestern Lutheran Academy Dormitory | 65,000.00 |
| U. S. Government Bonds Sold | 200,000.00 |
| Payments on Mortgage Receivable | 2,500.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 760.00 |
| Total Receipts | \$ 868,561.37 |
| | \$ 1,022,002.57 |

Disbursements

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Budgetary Disbursements: | |
| General Administration | \$ 22,321.65 |
| Theological Seminary | 34,405.59 |
| Northwestern College | 91,778.89 |
| Dr. Martin Luther College..... | 79,743.24 |
| Michigan Lutheran Seminary | 38,979.44 |
| Northwestern Luth. Academy | 20,193.94 |
| Home for the Aged..... | 10,694.09 |
| Missions-Gen. Administration | 215.80 |
| Indian Mission | 57,869.61 |
| Negro Mission | 17,736.98 |

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| Home Missions | 225,131.45 |
| Poland Mission | 8,726.56 |
| Madison Student Mission..... | 1,361.64 |
| Spiritual Welfare Commission | 2,467.04 |
| Winnebago Luth. Academy.... | 250.00 |
| General Support | 34,110.00 |
| School Supervision | 4,169.51 |

Total Budgetary Disbursements \$650,155.43

Non-Budgetary Disbursements:

| | |
|--|------------|
| Payments on Northwestern Luth. Academy Dormitory | 74,834.38 |
| On West North Avenue Property | 174,369.82 |

Total Disbursement \$ 899,359.63

Cash Balance January 31, 1949 \$ 122,642.94

C. J. NIEDFELDT, Treasurer.

DONATIONS SENT DIRECTLY TO TREASURER'S OFFICE

For January, 1949

For General Administration

| | |
|--|----------|
| Mr. and Mrs. Homer W. Scheppe, 513 So. Adams St., Glendale, California | \$ 25.00 |
|--|----------|

For Church Extension Fund

| | |
|--|----------|
| In memory of Prof. E. R. Bliedernicht, by: Willard, Lester, John, Herman, Henry, and their families, and Mr. and Mrs. H. Raabe | \$ 10.00 |
|--|----------|

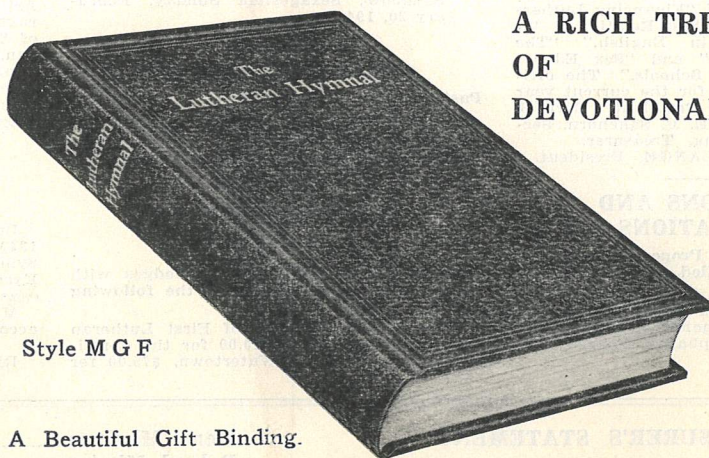
For Building Fund

| | |
|--|----------|
| In memory of Mr. F. W. Meyer, from the Michigan State Teachers' Conference | 10.00 |
| Mr. and Mrs. Homer W. Scheppe | 20.00 |
| | \$ 30.00 |

C. J. NIEDFELDT, Treasurer.

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| Name, date, and year in black on white insert..... | 1.25 |
| Gold Cross, No. 5, size 5/8 of an inch..... | .40 |
| Gold Cross, No. 9, size 1 1/8 inch..... | .70 |

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