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Motto: „So ihr bleiben werdet an meiner Rede,
so seid ihr meine rechten Jünger, und
werdet die Wahrheit erkennen, und die
Wahrheit wird euch frei machen.“

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No. 1.

Zum Verständnis des Heilsrates Gottes im Alten Testament.

Jesaja 55, 8. 9.

Alle wahre Erkenntnis Gottes beruht auf besonderer Offenbarung. Was wir durch die Geburt davon mitbringen, auch was wir in der natürlichen Welt davon erfahren, reicht nicht hin, Herz und Gewissen zur Ruhe zu bringen. Zwar „die Himmel erzählen die Ehre Gottes und die Feste verkündigt seiner Hände Werk“, Ps. 19, 1–7. Wir sagen mit dem 104. Psalm: „Herr, wie sind deine Werke so groß und viel! Du hast sie alle weislich geordnet, und die Erde ist voll deiner Güter.“ Aber es bleibt doch dabei: „Wer misst die Wasser mit der Faust, und fasset die Himmel mit der Spanne, und begreift die Erde mit einem Dreiling und wieget die Berge mit einem Gewicht und die Hügel mit einer Wage“, Jesaja 40, 12. Jeremias ruft aus: „Wer ist im Rat des Herrn gestanden, der sein Wort gesehen und gehört habe? Wer hat sein Wort vernommen und gehört?“ Kap. 23, 18. Jeder Bibelleser weiß, wie der erkenntnisreichste Apostel die Wahrheit in Römer 11, 33–36 zusammenfaßt. Die Kirche Gottes lebt von der Wortoffenbarung, der unmittelbaren Offenbarung, durch die er uns sein Herz und seinen ganzen Rat über uns Sünder für die gesamte Weltzeit erschlossen hat. Nun kann es wahr werden, was Jesaias, Kap. 54, 13, und der Herr Joh. 6, 45 bestätigt: „Alle deine Kinder werden vom Herrn gelehrt sein und großen Frieden finden.“

Aber Gott hat uns mit seiner Erkenntnis nicht wie mit einem Wasserschwall auf einmal übergossen und es dabei für alle Zeiten bewenden lassen. Die Mitteilung seiner Heilsgedanken paßte sich den wechselnden Zuständen und der Aufnahmefähigkeit des jeweiligen Zeitgeschlechts an. So dürfen wir auch der wunderbaren Uraus-

stattung der Menschen mit dem Ebenbilde Gottes und ihre Erschaffung in der Zweigeschlechtigkeit als der Voraussetzung und Grundlage aller späteren Heilsmittelung nicht vergessen.

Was uns gleich zu Anfang und später je länger je ärger stört, ist die Tatsache, daß die kommenden Geschlechter sich im großen der Aufnahme und Durchführung jeder neuen Wendung und Vermehrung der Heilspläne Gottes widersetzen und ihn dadurch zu immer neuen Maßregeln veranlassen. In diesem Sinne kann man mit Recht von einer Entwicklung des Heilsplans reden.

Es muß, so schließen wir, im Paradiese doch sehr schön gewesen sein. Der Herr erklärte alle seine Werke für sehr gut. Welch ein Paradies war jener Garten! Und als gar das Weib kam, Fleisch von des Mannes Fleisch, als eine „eser k'negdo“, d. h. als eine ihm in jeder Beziehung entsprechende Gesellschafterin, da ist beider Glück vollkommen und ihre Verbindung so innig und fest, daß der Herr für alle Zukunft bestimmt: „Darum wird ein Mann seinen Vater und seine Mutter verlassen und an seinem Weibe hangen, und sie werden Ein Fleisch sein“, Gen. 2, 24. — Dann kommt die Versuchung und — die Sünde und vernichtet mit einem Schläge alle diese Herrlichkeit und bringt den Fluch über alles menschliche Lebensglück, erfüllt es mit unsäglichem Schmerzen für das Weib, mit Mühe und Plage für den Mann und mit dem zeitlichen Tod für beide. Das paradiesische Leben war verloren.

Nun muß Gott neue Heilsanstalten treffen. Er warf weder Mann noch Weib weg, er vernichtete die erste Schöpfung nicht und schuf keine neue Welt, sondern ließ die alte an dem Fluch teilnehmen und setzte die G n a d e zur Regentin seiner weiteren Pläne ein. In dieser Gnade machte er das Weib, das er zur Mutter aller Lebendigen auf Erden verordnet hatte, dem Teufel zum Gericht, zur Mutter auch des künftigen Heilandes, in dem aller Welt von der Sünde wieder geholfen werden sollte — umsonst, durch den Glauben an seinen Namen.

Nie wieder hat Gott seinen Heilsplan so radikal geändert. Sollen wir wie die ungöttliche, irdisch gesinnte Welt darüber mit Gott hadern? Wir stellen uns vielmehr hier gleich zu Anfang die Warnung des Herrn vor Augen: „Ja, lieber Mensch, wer bist du denn, daß du mit Gott rechten willst? Spricht auch ein Werk zu seinem Meister: Warum machst du mich also?“ Röm. 9, 20. Dazu: „Welch eine Tiefe des Reichthums beide der Weisheit und Erkenntnis

Gottes! Wie gar unbegreiflich sind seine Gerichte und unerforschlich seine Wege! . . . Denn von ihm und durch ihn und zu ihm sind alle Dinge. Ihm sei Ehre in Ewigkeit! Amen“, 11, 33–36. Wer Joh. 3, besonders von Vers 16 an, als den von Gott nun wirksam durchgeführten Heilsrat an seinem Herzen erfahren hat, wird zwar unter dem oft entsetzlichen Leid, das Gott ihm etwa als sein persönlich zu tragendes und ihm seliges Kreuz auferlegt hat, wohl viel klagen, aber mit seinem Gott und Heiland nicht hadern, sondern auf die Stunde seiner Erlösung und Einführung in das ewige Paradies geduldig harren. Unser Trost steht Apgl. Jeremiä, Kap. 3.

Was die Welt ohne den Glauben an den verheißenen Weibesamen zu erwarten gehabt hätte, steht uns in entsetzlicher Gestalt an dem Schicksal des ungläubigen Geschlechts Rains vor Augen. Demgegenüber steht die erste Predigt des Evangeliums von Christo unter den Sethiten durch zehn Geschlechter 2000 Jahre Glauben und Glück wirkend leuchtend in der Weltgeschichte da. Erst die Vermischung mit den geistlich und sittlich unmenschlich verdorbenen Weltkindern entgeistlichte auch das bisher in großer Geduld getragene fromme Geschlecht in dem Maße, daß Gott das gesamte Menschengeschlecht bis auf Noahs Familie durch das Gericht der Sintflut dahinraffte.

Das änderte Gottes Heilsplan in Christo nicht, sistierte aber dessen Ausführung 400 Jahre lang. Selbst die Ruhe bewahrend, die er in Noah dessen Vater Lamech verheißten hatte, bestätigte er den Noachiden die alte Schöpfungsordnung als auch für alle Zukunft unberrücklich feststehend durch einen besonderen Bund, verspricht auch, kein Gericht wie die erlebte Sintflut wieder kommen zu lassen, läßt später die Nachwelt noch wissen, wie in jenen Zeiten die Länder der Erde von den Noachiden bevölkert worden sind, aber die Offenbarung seiner Heilspläne beschränkt er auf die Mitteilung über die zukünftige gegenseitige Weltstellung der drei Söhne Noahs zueinander, Gen. 9, 25–27.

Im Lauf der Zeit unter der äußeren Segnung Gottes üppig und unter dem Nichteingreifen des göttlichen Gerichts sicher geworden, wanderte die gesamte Noachidenschaft in die Ebene Sinear aus, um dort dem Herrn Himmels und der Erde mit ihrer menschlichen Kultur Trost zu bieten. Da fährt der Herr hernieder, vernichtet sie nicht, sondern verwirrt nur ihre Sprache, zerstreut sie ohne Rumor über alle Länder der Erde und beginnt in seinen Heilsgedanken

etwas ganz Neues. Er holt sich aus dem in Sinear gebliebenen semitischen götzdienerischen Geschlecht einen Mann, aus dessen Nachkommen er sich ein frommes Volk bereiten und sein Reich aufs neue — diesmal mit großer Energie — erbauen will. Der Mann war Abraham. Mit dem schloß er einen Bund auf Gnade durch den Glauben, Gen. 15.

Die Geschichte der drei Erzbäter ist in unseren Kreisen allzu bekannt, als daß wir hier weitläufig darauf einzugehen hätten. Wir haben in einem früheren Artikel die Weissagung Jakobs über Juda und seine Brüder in dem Sinn dieser Arbeit zu behandeln versucht. Aber Abraham, nicht Jakob, ist seit der Weissagung vom Weibesamen die eine große Figur im alttestamentlichen Heilsplan Gottes. Wir dürfen uns an der menschlichen Unvollkommenheit der Erzbäter und vieler anderen alttestamentlichen Großen ebensowenig stoßen wie an den mannigfachen äußerlichen gottesdienstlichen und gesellschaftlichen Einrichtungen, die Gott neben dem grundlegenden Sittengesetz diesem Volk zum Gesetz machte. Abrahams Kinder mußten in scharfen Gegensatz zu der religiös verkommenen Völkermwelt gestellt und aus dem Rohen heraus zum Glauben Abrahams und zu willigem Gehorsam gegen den wahren Gott erzogen werden. Das ging damals wie heute nur durch Erweisung großer Gnade, durch viel Belehrung und Schulung auch in den geringsten Dingen und durch langjährige Zucht in ihren Verjündigungen. — Ja, dies Volk stand von Anfang an in einer besonderen Gefahr des Abfalls. Sie waren sich der hohen geistlichen Würde ihres Stammvaters bewußt, suchten und entdeckten besonders vorzügliche Gaben an sich und verachteten alle fremden Nationen. Diesen Hochmut wollte Gott durch besondere Verfügung dämpfen. Darum hatte sich jener Bundeschluß Gottes mit Abraham unter ominösen Vorzeichen für seine Nachkommen vollzogen. Ein tiefer Schlaf, Schrecken und große Finsternis hatten Abraham dabei befallen. Und Gott deutete ihm diese Zeichen: „Das sollst du wissen, daß dein Same wird fremd sein in einem Lande, das nicht sein ist; und da wird man sie zu dienen zwingen und plagen vierhundert Jahr. Darnach sollen sie ausziehen und wieder herkommen mit großem Gut“, Gen. 15, 13. 14. In der ägyptischen R e c h t s a f t sollte Israels Hochmut und „Halsstarrigkeit“, seine besondere Sünde, gedemüthigt werden. Ohnmächtig und bis aufs äußerste geknechtet lag Abrahams Same in des Pharao Gewalt. Zugleich erlebten sie hier aber auch die erste große Gnadenheim-

fuchung des Herrn durch M o s e n und erfuhren in ihrer herrlichen Befreiung, daß keine Erdenmacht den Rat des Gnadengottes zu hintertreiben vermag.

Von der Errettung Israels aus Pharaos Tyrannei an steht die gesamte Ausführung des Heilsplanes Gottes unter der starken Hand dieses einen Mannes. Wir kennen seinen Kampf mit dem mächtigen Herrscher der Erde und seinen durch große Wunder des Gottes Abrahams bewirkten unerhörten Sieg. Zum Schluß reißt er, im Herzen zum Herrn schreiend, seinen Stab über das Rote Meer, öffnet seinem großen Volk den sicheren Durchgang und eräuft das Heer Pharaos in dessen Fluten. Das ganze Volk feiert mit seinem großen Führer fröhlichen Danktag. Hinfort hat Mose es mit dem befreiten, aber immer noch „halsstarrigen“ eigenen Volk zu tun. In den vielfachen Nöten der Wüstenwanderung von 600,000 Mann, ohne die Kinder und viel mitlaufendes „Pöbelvolk“ mitzurechnen, muß der Herr des öfteren helfend und strafend eingreifen, läßt Mose die wildangreifenden Amalekiter schlagen und führt das Volk a n d e n B e r g S i n a i, um nun mit der gesamten Volksmasse den B u n d zu schließen, in welchem er sich auf ewige Zeit in Gnade und Barmherzigkeit als ihr Gott geistlich vermählt. Ja, auf alle Zeit und für alle Ewigkeit. „Werdet ihr nun meiner Stimme gehorchen und meinen Bund halten, so sollt ihr mein Eigentum sein vor allen Völkern, denn die ganze Erde ist mein. Und ihr sollt mir ein priesterlich Königreich und ein heiliges Volk sein“, 2. Mose 19, 5. 6.

Nach vielen äußerlichen Vorbereitungen stand endlich das ganze Volk um den Sinai und erlebte ein Schauspiel, wie es an majestätischer Pracht die Erde nie gesehen hatte und bis an den größeren Tag der Offenbarung Christi auch nicht wieder erfahren wird. Der Herr fuhr in einer hellen Wolkensäule hernieder auf die Spitze des Berges und rief Mose zu sich, um ihn zu heiligen und ihm und den herbeigerufenen Ältesten sein Vorhaben mitzuteilen. Die erklärten dem Herrn die Bereitwilligkeit des Volkes zur Annahme des Bundes.

Als nun der dritte Tag herankam, da hub sich ein Donnern und Blitzen und eine dicke Wolke auf dem Berge und ein Ton einer sehr starken Posaune, so daß das ganze Volk im Lager erschraf. Der ganze Berg rauchte und bebte und hüllte seine Spitze in Feuer, während der Ton der Posaune immer stärker wurde, denn der Herr fing an, mit eigener Stimme in Menschensprache die heiligen z e h n G e b o t e öffentlich zu proklamieren. Die Predigt ging dem Volk

durch Mark und Wein. Sie fliehen von dem Berge und bitten Mose: „Rede du mit uns, wir wollen gehorchen, und laß Gott nicht mit uns reden, wir möchten sonst sterben“, Kap. 20, 19. Moses tröstete das Volk mit der gütigen Absicht Gottes. Er wolle das Volk nicht töten, sondern seine Furcht ihnen ins Herz flößen, um sie vor dem Abfall zu bewahren. Was nun noch folgt, ist eine besondere Warnung vor dem Abfall zum Götzendienste, die Weisung zum Bau eines besonderen Altars und die gnädige Verheißung: „Denn an welchem Ort ich meines Namens Gedächtnis stiften werde, da will ich zu dir kommen und dich segnen“, 20, 24.

So war der Bund mit Israel geschlossen. Aber der treue Gott ließ es bei dieser Gesetzgebung nicht bewenden. Israel hatte ja bisher noch keine Rechtsordnung für das tägliche Volks- und Familienleben. Die mußte Moses auch gleich einrichten, zunächst für die bevorstehende, zeitweilige Wanderung durch die Wüste, aber auch dauernde Anordnungen für die besonderen Verhältnisse des verheißenen zukünftigen Landes. Wir finden diese in den nächsten Kapiteln, von 21 bis 31, dann aber auch in den folgenden Büchern Moses aufgezeichnet; aber wir haben zunächst etwas für die Entwicklung des Heilsrates Gottes in Israel viel Wichtigeres zu besehen. Wir gehen zu Kap. 32 und den folgenden über.

Zunächst mußte Mose 40 Tage lang in intinem Verkehr mit dem Herrn auf dem Sinai umgehen, um für die Zukunft zu lernen und zu schreiben. Da sagte eines Tages der Herr zu Mose: „Geh, steig hinab, denn dein Volk, das du aus Ägypten geführt hast, hat's verderbet. Sie sind schnell von dem Wege getreten, den ich ihnen geboten habe. Sie haben ihnen ein gegossenes Kalb gemacht und haben's angebetet und ihm geopfert und gesagt: Das sind deine Götter Israel, die dich aus Ägypten geführt haben.“ Also schneller Abfall und Bundesbruch! Der Herr ist entriistet, er will dies halsstarrige Volk vertilgen, auch von Mose nicht mehr um Vergebung für dasselbe angegangen sein, — „so will ich dich zum großen Volk machen“, 32, 10. Aber es gelingt Mose, den Herrn wieder zu beschwichtigen. Sein Gebet ist eigentümlich. Er zieht, wie wir zu sagen pflegen, alle Register, er appelliert an des Herrn Ehre. Wenn er das Volk vertilge, so wäre ja alle seine bisherige Mühe vergeblich gewesen, die Ägypter würden ihn verspotten und er würde seinen Dienern Abraham, Isaak und Jakob ja sein Wort in allen seinen großen Verheißungen brechen.

Diesen Gründen konnte der Herr nicht widerstehen, er war beschwichtigt. Wie stark aber Mose selbst über den Abfall des Volks entriistet war, bewies er dadurch, daß er, sobald er ins Lager gekommen war, 3000 der Aufriührrer niederhauen ließ und dem übrigen Volk eine Strafpredigt hielt, die ihnen zwar seine Fürbitte versprach, aber zugleich des Herrn Vergebung in Frage stellte. Mittlerweile treibt ihn die Ehre des Herrn und die Liebe zu seinem Volk, des Herrn Vergebung gewiß zu machen. Er tritt wieder vor Gott, bekennt in großer Trauer des Volkes Sünde und fleht: „Nun vergib ihnen ihre Sünde“, fügt aber in seinem Eifer um das Volk die Worte hinzu: „W onicht, so tilge mich auch aus deinem Buch, das du geschrieben hast.“

Mose meinte es so herzlich gut; er war bereit, sich selbst für das Volk zu opfern. Und doch war dies Wort bei Moses ein schwerer Mißgriff, wie des Herrn Antwort zeigt. Er weist das Gebet zurück, wenn auch nicht in der Form der Entriistung, die Luther dem deutschen Text gegeben hat. Aber die Antwort ist doch sehr entschieden. „Ich werde den aus meinem Buche tilgen, der an mir sündigt. Du geh und richte das Amt aus, das ich dir befohlen habe. Mein Amt werde ich selbst ausrichten, wenn meine Stunde da sein wird.“

Was war denn dem Mose begegnet? Er hatte seine Stellung vor Gott vergessen und ihm ins Amt gegriffen. Sein Heilsplan war ihm ja längst bekannt und nun durch den förmlichen Bundeschluß mit Israel öffentlich festgelegt und vor aller Welt proklamiert worden. Daran konnte keine Silbe mehr geändert werden. Darum hatte der Herr auf Moses erstes Gebet gehört, denn es stand im Einklang mit seinen Plänen. Auch mit dem Zorn Moses über das bundesbrüchige Volk, mit seiner Zertrümmerung der Bundestafeln, der Zerpulverung des Kalbes, mit seiner Beschuldigung Aarons, ja auch mit dem furchtbaren Blutgericht, das er über das so schnell abgefallene Volk verhängt hatte, stand des Herrn Plan in vollem Einklang. Als nun aber Mose in seinem zweiten Gebet seine eigene Person in die Sache mischte, griff er Gott ins Regiment und merkte nicht, daß er ihm in seinem Eifer um das Volk etwas Unrechtes zu tun zumute — einen Unschuldigen mit vielen Schuldigen zu verderben.

Wie war Mose dazu gekommen? Das hören wir etwas später im Text. Da heißt es in 33, 11: „Der Herr aber redete mit Mose von Angesicht zu Angesicht, wie ein Mann mit seinem Freunde redet.“

So war es von Moses Berufung an gewesen. Sich für ganz unfähig haltend, ein so gewaltiges Werk, wie der Herr ihm auszuführen zugemutet hatte, auszuführen, hatte er sich seiner Zeit mit großem Ernst geweigert, den Auftrag anzunehmen. „Mein Herr, sende, welchen du senden willst“, Kap. 4, 13. Aber der Herr hatte ihn schließlich überwunden, ihm seine gesamten Pläne mitgeteilt und ihm die allergrößten Verheißungen gegeben. Er sollte Gottes Faktotum im kleinen und großen werden, mit ihm beredete er alle seine Wege und zog ihn, wenn es ihn gutdünkte, in seine Geheimstube. Mit keinem Menschen war er so intim geworden wie mit ihm, er hatte mit ihm „von Angesicht zu Angesicht geredet, wie ein Mann mit seinem Freunde redet.“ War nun diese Intimität des Herrn mit Mose diesem zu Kopf gestiegen? Überschätzte er nun nicht doch seine Vorzugsstellung und seine Wichtigkeit vor Gott, daß er wähnte, Israels Rettung an seine eigene Person binden zu können? Konnte Gott ihn nicht mehr entbehren? Sein „wonicht“ klang ja wie ein Streif der heutigen Arbeiterverbände. Aus lauter Liebe zu seinem Volk, aus lauter Treue gegen die Ehre des Herrn war er seinem Meister ins Amt gefallen und wurde von ihm hart abgewiesen.

Der Herr läßt sich auch von keinem Mose bestimmen, seinen Heilsplan zu ändern, oder seine Wege zu verbessern. Selbst Nebukadnezar muß schließlich bekennen: „Er macht es, wie er will, beide mit den Kräften im Himmel und mit denen, so auf Erden wohnen; und niemand darf seiner Hand wehren noch zu ihm sagen: Was machst du? Denn alle sein Tun ist Wahrheit, und seine Wege sind recht; und wer stolz ist, den kann er demütigen“, Dan. 4, 32–34. Der Herr schickt Mosen wieder an seine Arbeit, um zu vollenden, was er ihm aufgetragen hatte. Er wiederholt ihm die großen Verheißungen, die er den Vätern gegeben hatte. Er verheißt ihm einen Engel, der ihm vorhergehen, ihm und dem Volk den Weg weisen und ihr sicherer Schutz sein werde. Das Volk aber straft und verwarnt er: „Ich will nicht mit dir hinaufziehen, denn du bist ein halsstarrig Volk, ich möchte dich unterwegs aufreiben. Ich werde einmal plötzlich über dich kommen und dich vertilgen.“ Bisher hatte das Offenbarungszelt Moses, in dem der Herr ihn heimsuchte, mitten im Lager des Volks gestanden. Um das Volk seinen Zorn fühlen zu lassen und ihm zugleich zu zeigen, daß er Mose seine Freundschaft halte, mußte dieser jenes Zelt außerhalb des Lagers aufschlagen. Da erschien ihm der Herr in der Wolfensäule, sodaß alles Volk es sehen

konnte. So schien der Herr mit ihrem Führer wieder versöhnt zu sein, und das Volk faßte neue Hoffnung. Mose selbst aber scheint innerlich noch nicht ruhig geworden zu sein. Er klagt weiter, daß der Herr ihm die Person, die er ihm als Führer verheißen hatte, nicht genannt habe. Dann fleht er: „Laß mich deinen Weg wissen, daß ich's nicht versehe.“ Er wird immer dringender: „Laß doch dein Angesicht mit uns gehen.“ Das sagt ihm der Herr auch zu. Aber dann bricht Mose, immer noch in großer Verwirrung, unbefriedigt heraus: „So laß mich deine Herrlichkeit sehen!“ Und diese Bitte gibt dem Herrn Gelegenheit, eine sehr wunderbare aber uns klugen Menschen sehr nötige Lehre zu geben. Die Herrlichkeit Gottes ist die Erscheinung oder Offenbarung seines göttlichen Wesens, seiner Allmacht, Allweisheit, Wahrhaftigkeit, Barmherzigkeit und Heiligkeit. Davon hat er uns eine ganze Bibel voll gegeben. Wenn wir das studieren und einigermaßen kapiert haben, dann wissen wir zu diesem und zum ewigen Leben genug und übergenug. Im übrigen ist Gott „ein verborgener Gott — er, der Gott Israels, der Heiland“, Jesaja 45, 15. Niemand hat Gott je gesehen, Joh. 1, 18, ja niemand kann ihn sehen, 1. Tim. 6, 16. Er wohnt in einem Licht, da niemand zu kommen kann. Aber da wir nun etwas von Gott wissen, so wollen wir mehr, eigentlich alles wissen, wir wollen sein wie Gott und wissen, was gut und böse ist, wie die listige Schlange uns eingeredet hat. Mittels dieser Täuschung verführte der Teufel Eva und Adam und machte aus dem ganzen Menschengeschlecht lauter Klüglinge, die nun absolut wissen wollen, warum nur Gott die Welt just so gemacht habe, wie sie jetzt ist. Hätte er uns zu Räte gezogen, dann hätten wir ihm gegen Jesaias und Paulus klar gemacht, daß er die Menschen hätte unversehrbar machen und im Paradies behalten sollen; dann hätte er alles Elend verhütet und sich alle die vergebliche Mühe, die er sich hernach in der Verheißung von Christo machen mußte, erspart. Aber siehe da, der allmächtige und allweise Gott geht seinen eigenen Weg und läßt die klugen Menschen schwätzen und murren.

In der Antwort, die der Herr ihm gab, liegt für alle Klüglinge eine Lehre, die wir keinen Augenblick außer Acht lassen dürfen. Wir reden lehrenshalber von der Abweisung zuerst. „Mein Angesicht kannst du nicht sehen; denn kein Mensch wird leben, der mich sieht.“ Merken wir uns doch: wir können nicht. Unsere Erkenntnisfähigkeit Got-

tes war auch vor der Sünde limitiert — trotz des uns anerschaffenen Ebenbildes Gottes; sonst hätte die Schlange uns nicht verführt. Mit dem Sündenfall war sie sofort zerrüttet und erkannte Gott und die ganze Schöpfung verkehrt. Dem leiblichen Tod ging der geistliche voraus. Der Tod ist der Sünde Sold. So mancher Philosoph ist schließlich auch leiblich, alle Klüglinge sind geistlich zugrunde gegangen. Über die Schrift hinaus, ja mit Lästerung der gegebenen Offenbarung wollen sie Gott und die Welt begreifen. Wir sahen kürzlich in einem gottlosen Blatt wieder eine Erklärung über die Möglichkeit der „virgin birth“, die die Notwendigkeit der Zweigeschlechtigkeit aufhebe. In das Kapitel gehört die gesamte heutige Wissenschaft, die die Heilige Schrift beiseite wirft. Sie hat ja so manches uns bisher unbekannt gebliebene Naturgesetz ans Licht gebracht, die Verwendung der Elektrizität, die Fliegerei. Wir werden bald alle Naturgesetze erforschen und den Gott der Bibel gründlich abschaffen. Es gibt nichts Höheres als die menschliche Vernunft und menschliches Gerechtigkeitsbewußtsein. Das lehrt uns, daß die biblische Schöpfung dumm und ungerecht ist. — So sagt die „Wissenschaft.“

Andererseits flaut auch in der Kirche der Glaube an Gottes Wort und der Eifer für das Evangelium sichtbar ab. Wir wollen wissen, w a r u m Gott Welt und Kirche so sonderbar regiert, wir wollen immer wieder die Herrlichkeit Gottes sehen, anstatt sie der Schrift zu glauben.

Und doch gibt es in dieser Welt so viel Herrliches zu sehen und zu erleben. Der Herr antwortet Mose: „Ich will vor deinem Angesicht her alle meine Güte gehen lassen.“ Merken wir wohl: die Güte Gottes. Himmel und Erde sind voll davon, daß wir die Augen nirgendhin aufschlagen können, ohne sie zu gewahren. Jesaias ruft aus: Hebet eure Augen in die Höhe und sehet. Wer hat solche Dinge geschaffen und führt ihr Heer bei der Zahl heraus? Der sie alle mit Namen ruft; sein Vermögen und starke Kraft ist so groß, daß nicht an einem fehlen kann, Kap. 40, 26. Der 104. Psalm zählt gruppenweise die Wohltaten auf, die Gott unaufhörlich in der Natur, an Gras und Bäumen, an Bergen und Meer, an Tieren und Menschen erweist, und der ganze Psalter ist eigentlich nichts als ein einziger großer Preis der Werke und Wohltaten, die Gott uns Menschen tut, damit wir nicht für seine Gnade, sondern auch für die unzähligen Wohltaten seiner Güte Gott

preisen und ihm danken lernen. Jeder Wissenschaftler, der auch nur eins der unzähligen Werke Gottes studiert, wird die Macht und die Güte preisen, wenn sein Herz recht steht. Aber „ein Törichter glaubt das nicht, und ein Narr achtet solches nicht“, Ps. 92. Die Erkenntnis der Güte Gottes kommt erst mit der Erkenntnis der Gnade. Davon redet das nächste Wort des Herrn.

„Und will predigen (das „lassen“ hat Luther hier eingefügt) des Herrn Namen vor Dir“. Da redet Gott von der Predigt der Gnade im Namen Christi und hängt derselben die Worte an: „Wem ich aber gnädig bin, dem bin ich gnädig, und wem ich mich erbarme, des erbarme ich mich.“ Damit will der Herr die absolute Freiheit seiner Gnadenausteilung an die Menschen, die Völker und die einzelnen Personen, bei dieser großen Gelegenheit betonen. Der Herr richtet sich nicht nach den natürlichen Vorzügen oder Nachteilen, der äußerlichen Frömmigkeit oder Gottlosigkeit der zu seinem Gnadenheil Erfohrenen. Mose ist nicht erwählt, weil er so fromm war, dies Volk ist nicht verworfen, weil es so „halsstarrig“ war; ist doch vor Gott niemand unschuldig, 34, 7. Er hat auch Wege, die Widerstrebenden zurechtzubringen. Seine Gnade ist allen Sündern gegenüber frei.

Darauf folgt nun die einzigartige wunderbare Gnadenpredigt des Herrn selbst, wie wir sie herrlicher in der ganzen Schrift des Alten Testaments nicht wieder finden. Mose stand mit dem Volk wieder vor dem Herrn, um, mit neuen Bundestafeln ausgerüstet, schriftlich zu fixieren, was Gott für alle Zeiten dem neuen Schluß hinzugefügt haben wollte. Wie bei der Proklamation des Gesetzes, so predigte der Herr hier in eigener Person. Luthers Übersetzung läßt es erscheinen, als habe Mose diese Predigt gehalten; das ist sehr schade, denn das schmälert ihre evangelische Wirksamkeit. Nein, Gott predigt hier mit eigenem Munde. Hatte der Herr seinem Freunde Mose den Anblick seiner Herrlichkeit verweigert, um ihn zu erhalten, so hatte er ihm auch die schonende Eröffnung gemacht, er wolle seine Herrlichkeit an ihm vorübergehen lassen, ihn neben sich in eine Felskluft stellen und seine schützende Hand über ihn halten, damit er nicht getötet werde. Wenn dann die Herrlichkeit des Herrn vorüber gegangen sein werde, solle Moses ihm von hinten nachsehen. So sah Moses die Herrlichkeit des Herrn, d. h. erkannte sie immer erst hinterher an den großen Einzeloffenbarungen, die

der Herr ihn in großen Wundertaten im Lauf der Zeit erfahren ließ. Die waren ja zum Teil schrecklich in Strafen, Züchtigungen und Aufhebung einer Reihe von Segnungen. Aber nun wollte er dem Mose und seinem Volk kund tun, in gnädiger und herzlicher Liebesgesinnung, was er alles an ihnen ausführen werde. „Und da der Herr vor seinem Angesicht überging, rief er (der Herr): Herr, Herr Gott, barmherzig und gnädig und geduldig und von großer Gnade und Treue, — der da beweiset Gnade in tausend Glied und vergibt Missetat, Übertretung und Sünde, und vor welchem niemand unschuldig ist; der die Missetat der Väter heimsucht auf Kinder und Kindesfinder bis ins dritte und vierte Glied“, 34, 6. 7.

Das ist Gottes Predigt von seiner wahren Herrlichkeit. Sie ist in jedem Wort klar und überwältigend. So, wie die ersten Worte sagen, ist es um Gottes Herz bestellt. Vers 7 handelt von der Gnadenverwaltung unter denen, die er heimgesucht hat; er weiß aber auch, daß keiner unter ihnen unschuldig ist; darum sucht er die Sünden auch der Einzelnen heim an den Kindern bis ins dritte und vierte Glied.

Mose neigt sich eilends zur Erde und betet den Herrn an. Er weiß, daß unter einem solchen Gott selbst dies halstarrige Volk sein Erbe bleiben wird; und der Herr sagt's ihm durch Wiederholung der alten Verheißung zu, das Volk noch einmal vor der Gefahr des Abfalls durch den Götzendienst der Heiden warnend. Nun richtete Mose vor allem einen ständigen Gottesdienst für Israel ein, für welchen das Volk freiwillig reichlich Opfer brachte. Mose empfing neue Ehrung vor dem Volk: Er durfte noch einmal vierzig Tage lang im Geheimen mit Gott auf dem Berge verkehren, und jedesmal, wenn er wieder zum Volke herauskam, um mit ihnen zu reden, glänzte sein Angesicht in so hellem Schein, daß die Kinder Israel nicht in die Heiligkeit hineinzusehen vermochten, so daß er eine Decke überwerfen mußte, wenn er zu dem Volke redete — ein Widerschein der Herrlichkeit des Herrn, der das Volk mit Ehrfurcht vor Gott und Mosen erfüllte.

Nach Fertigstellung der Stiftshütte bedeckte eine Wolke die Wohnung des Herrn, den Weg anzeigend, den das Volk wandern, und die Ruhestätten, wo sie rasten sollten, des Tags in einer Wolken-

fäule und des Nachts in einer Feuerfäule; und Israel trat unter dem von dem Gnadengott ihm gegebenen Führer den Zug durch die Wüste an.

Das Volk war aber wesentlich geblieben, was es von Anfang an gewesen war: „halsstarrig“, immer wieder klagend, murrend und über Moses und Gottes Führung mit beiden hadernnd, wie das vierte und fünfte Buch Mose in mehreren Beispielen, auch von göttlichen Züchtigungen und Wohltaten, uns weitläufig erzählen. Aber insbesondere waren es die furchtbaren Strafen am Ende der Reise, in denen wir jene Drohung von 2. Mose 32, 34 in Erfüllung gehen sehen: „Ich werde ihre Sünde wohl heim suchen, wenn meine Zeit kommt heim zu suchen“. Wir kennen die Geschichte von der Empörung der Rotte Korah. Beinahe 15,000 Mann kamen darin alleine um und in den folgenden Strafen mehr. Und als das Murren in Kades wieder losging, weil des Herrn Pläne ihnen wieder nicht paßten, kündigte ihnen Moses an, daß keiner von denen, die 20 Jahre und darüber beim Auszug aus Ägypten alt gewesen seien, das verheißene Land sehen, sondern umkommen werde, da mußten sie 38 Jahre murrend in jener Gegend hin- und herziehen, bis die Alten alle gestorben und ein neues junges Kriegerheer herangewachsen war. Nur Josua und Kaleb kamen in das Land hinein, und Aaron starb am Hor, und Mose selbst durfte, weil er am Haderwasser nur ein wenig im Glauben schwach geworden war, das Land nur von ferne, vom Berge Nebo aus, schauen, wie uns im letzten Kapitel des 5. Buches Mose erzählt wird.

Auch hier hat unsere Vernunft wieder Anlaß, über den Rat Gottes, der sich in der Überführung seines Volkes aus Ägypten nach Kanaan kundgibt, den Kopf zu schütteln.

Aber damit hören die Wunderwege, die Gott sein Volk führt, nicht auf. Sie mehren sich in aller Geschichte Israels von Stufe zu Stufe.

U g. P i e p e r.

The Wandering Jew

(DER EWIGE JUDE)

One is reminded forcibly of this age-old legend of the Jew who shoved the Christ, bearing His cross, from his door and bade Him to hurry on His way, and on whom the Lord is reputed to have laid the sentence: "Wait thou until I come again". Under this heavy burden the Wandering Jew is compelled to roam about the face of the earth until the second coming of the Christ to judgment. It is but an idle tale, yet it describes the Jew from that time to this. He travels endlessly to the far corners of the earth, nowhere at home, nowhere at rest, wanted by no one, bade to be on his way by many, followed by the maledictions of his enemies. Master is he of trade, adept in many arts and sciences, finding a foothold everywhere in spite of his pursuers, and demonstrating his adaptability to almost any conditions of life. Spurned by the Gentiles, he manages not only to find subsistence among his fellow-men, but easily insinuating himself into all activities of life he is suddenly found to be on the top of the heap in whatever business he engages. He is of a race apart, and cannot seem to mingle his blood with other races without escaping detection. His Jewish blood will tell in the offspring of his mixed marriages. Although many have left the faith of their fathers, yet cannot they easily adopt the Christian creeds. Judaism as a stigma clings to him and betrays him no matter into which society he introduces himself. He is condemned ever to remain a being apart in the loneliness of his race. In short, he does not mix well.

At all times the Jew has been hated and despised. He is tolerated for a time and then is driven forth. Thus it has been since the fall of his holy city Jerusalem to the Roman conqueror Titus in the year 70. The pogroms of Russia at the beginning of our century have been duplicated in harsh cruelty and horror by the Christian peoples of today. It needs not to remind the reader of Jewish misery in Germany, followed by Poland, Italy and other nationalities. It cannot be our purpose here to sit in judgment upon these persecutors of Jewry, as a discussion of the right and wrong of these harsh dealings can serve no useful pur-

pose, being, as it is, a highly controversial subject. Let us rather try to evaluate the deeper reasons for this universal opposition to the sons of Abraham. The tragedy of the Jew is so unparalleled in the history of nations that a knowledge of its deep-seated reason is more than ever necessary in these so troublous times for the Jew. Nor do we intend now to go into the discussion of the racial characteristics to explain anti-Semitism. It is of common knowledge that the Jew's acquisitiveness, his evident thrift from the days of Abraham, his innate cleverness and shrewdness in driving a bargain, his undoubted intellectual ease of acquiring learning, his uncanny gift for figures — all these explain his unpopularity in a measure. Add to this the Jewish trait of versatility through which he can swiftly emerge from his chrysalis of a clinging worm to a gaudy butterfly of domineering contempt for the mere Gentile, and you have a character easily repulsive to his non-Jewish neighbor.

Yet all this does not quite explain the Jew's unpopularity. The above-mentioned traits are often enough displayed by other races. We propose to show the deeper reason for the strange isolation of the Jew. It is to be found, in our belief, in Holy Writ, both in the books so treasured by the Jew, the Old Testament, and in that writing, rejected by him, the New Testament. We cannot expect to find in the shallow unreason of today a full realization of the value of the Bible in answering the question why the Jew has been and is now the most persecuted of men. The cries of inhumanity ring false in the face of so much other cruelty that is practised by men upon their fellow-men. The written Word of God is the last thing in the minds and hearts of present humanitarians. The full and firm belief in this Word, and a clear understanding of its message in the face of the Christ, the Son of God, alone can give us the right clue to this riddle.

From the very beginning, then, this people, chosen of God for the mission of holding His Word in their safe keeping, and destined to proclaim that Word to the nations of the world, has shown its unworthiness for its high estate. It is not that their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were sinners, as have been all the saints of God in this life, but that some of the outstanding vices of these fathers seem ingrained in the Jewish character. The pusillanimity of Abraham in his weak moments, especially in

Egypt, is as well known as the stealing of Esau's birthright by the slippery but thrifty Jacob. How this unbrotherly conduct of Jacob was punished by the dissensions in his own family later on, is another story. The long stay of this tribe under the oppression of the Pharaoh did not obliterate these traits. There, it seems, their materialistic view of life was further developed. Even in their slaving under a hard taskmaster they loved the good things of life. Witness their behavior before the Red Sea, pursued by the Pharaoh. The book of Exodus tells the story. Ex. 14, 11: "And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness". And again, after this people had witnessed that mightiest of miracles, their passage dry-shod through the Red Sea and the destruction of their enemies, when they had come to Elim, did they not murmur, saying: "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots and when we did eat bread to the full: for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger." Ex. 16, 3. Always they were afraid of dying by thirst and hunger, always they looked back regretfully to the melons and fruit of Egypt to fill their miserable bellies. Upon such a people the great wonders done by the Lord God for their salvation and preservation made no lasting impression, nor strengthened their belief.

In this course Israel continued as they were on their way to Sinai. They tempted the Lord at Massah and Meribah, saying, "Is the Lord among us, or not?" Ex. 17, 7. All their murmuring was not against their sorely tried leader Moses, but against the Lord. Ex. 16, 8. It was the Lord whose Word this people received, promised to believe and to obey, but only too soon forgot and cast aside. At the giving of the ten Words through Moses at Horeb, this people promised obedience while fearing for their lives, but even this solemn covenant given them by the Lord was incontinently broken at the very spot where it had been ratified by them. With the making and the worship of the golden calf the

great want of spiritual insight, as well as their stubborn unbelief, was set in a glaring light. This time the Lord would have destroyed them utterly, had it not been for the insistent pleading of Moses. In all Scripture there can hardly be found another such an outstanding example of devotion in a servant of God, or of the wonderful grace and mercy of God, as this episode in the history of Israel. In that unique revelation of the Lord to Moses, Ex. 34, 5-7, where the Lord himself proclaimed His name as "the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth", and yet as the Lord "that will by no means clear the guilty", that revelation so often quoted by His prophets to Israel, God showed His true nature, but the people never could fully understand.

The verdict of the Lord upon this people, "I have seen this people and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people", Ex. 32, 9, shows Israel's character at that time, a character that has not changed, as far as the bulk of Israel is concerned, from that day to this. The long history of the Jews shows this to be true. All the prophets that the Lord in His mercy sent to His people have the same complaint on this hardness of heart. Beyond understanding is the grace, the mercy, the longsuffering of the Lord bestowed upon Israel. Even in His wrath He showed mercy. Calamity after calamity fell upon the Jews as a punishment from God upon their sins. Only the chosen few, the remnant, took it to heart and repented, the great mass of the nation seemed as insensible to kindness as to blows. One cannot read this story of the chosen race without marvelling at the endless patience and richness of repeated mercies of God on the one side, and the repeated rebuffs given to this gracious God by His chosen people on the other. That this people should be oblivious of all the great miracles of grace that their Lord God had performed among them, and at the same time shake off the punishments upon their forsaking of this gracious God, as though they were undeserved, stamps them as monsters of insensibility to both good and evil. Boasting ever of their high station as God's people descended from the Father of faith, Abraham, they yet in their self-righteousness and in their moral blindness could not tolerate the chiding of God's messengers to them. Philistine and Syrian, Asshur and Babylon smote them, but they felt it not. See Isaiah 1, 3-5.

This was that Israel, or what was left of it, to whom God had given His solemn word and promise, under His oath, to send them the Savior out of their midst, whose name was to be "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace", Isaiah 9, 6. And when the Lord God, bound by His word, kept His promise and sent His own Son as that Savior and last messenger with "healing in his wings", Mal. 4, 2, what was His reception from His own people? True to their nature they treated Him as they had treated all the prophets before Him. All His teaching of salvation was rejected by the leaders in Israel, all His warnings were ignored, all His pleadings fell on deaf ears. Is there anywhere in all Holy Writ a more moving and heart-breaking cry than His: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Matth. 23, 37. "Ye would not", that is the explanation of Israel's tragical doom.

And why would they not? Because of that strange spiritual blindness, that would not let them see the true inwardness of God's grace and righteousness. The Jewish race, taken as a whole, never grasped the real meaning of law or gospel. How they had mechanized the law and made it a thing of outward form, the Sermon on the Mount will show. How they spurned all promises of forgiveness of sins in the Gospel, the whole life and teaching of Christ show. They were indeed blind leaders of the blind. And so they have remained. This spiritual hardening of the heart came upon them as a punishment for their stubborn resistance and repeated spurnings of God's love, as foretold in Isaiah 6, 10. Hence our Lord speaks to them in parables, that they might hear but not understand the things of God. How well the Christ understood them is seen, for example, in His parable of the man who planted a vineyard and let it forth to husbandmen, Luke 20, 9-18. All the servants were maltreated and sent empty-handed away, but the son and heir was killed by these wicked husbandmen. The Lord's verdict: "He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others", Luke 20, 16, was perceived by the priests and elders, but not well received; they resented it. In Christ the Jews rejected the corner-

stone of God's kingdom. Upon this cornerstone they fell and were broken, until it fell on them and ground them to powder, Luke 20, 18. Because they crucified the Christ, the very Son of God, it has come upon them what our Lord prophesied, Matth. 23, 36: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation", and verse 38: "Behold your house is left unto you desolate".

This rejection of the Christ was and is the real cause of all the misery under which Judaism groans. This rejection of the Christ was the cap-sheaf of all Judaism's many sins; it was the final breach between its gracious Lord God and His chosen people. In Christ alone is salvation for Jew and Gentile, there is no other way of righteousness before God. And just because God's patience and longsuffering, after so many and so great deeds of kindness and mercy, came to an end with the crucifixion of Christ by the Jews, they are doomed to follow consistently and stubbornly in the path of their leaders in rejecting this Christ. They persecuted the first church at Jerusalem and thus well earned the rebuke of Stephen, Acts 7, 51: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers; who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it". That indictment stands to this day. Hence their city and house is desolate to this day, and they are scattered abroad among the nations of the earth, among peoples that love them not. Pitiably indeed is their case, more for their spiritual blindness and hardness of heart than for the external woes inflicted upon them through the wounds of persecution.

As for their persecutors, much may be said. From the beginning they have acted as described by Jeremiah, ch. 50, 7: "All that found them have devoured them; and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers". The enemies of Israel always vaunted themselves, as though they by their superior strength and wisdom had conquered God's chosen race. But these oppressors of the Jews did not know that they

were merely a rod for chastisement in the hands of the Lord God who was angry with His people for deserting Him. Read Isaiah, chapter 10, the woe of Assyria, the tyrant. "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation", verse 5. The pride of these enemies of Jewry is rebuked thus in verse 15: "Shall the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood." Let all the persecutors of Judaism remember, that only by the decree of the Lord God who ruleth all nations are they permitted to oppress a race which He has given into their hands for His purpose.

It may be argued that these words of the prophets were spoken before the final rejection of Israel. True, but the word of the Lord, Ex. 22, 21: "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him", holds good for all men, and the law of God: Thou shalt not kill, which also surely means that we shall not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, has not been repealed, nor is the injunction of our Lord, Love your enemies (Matth. 5, 44) out of date. All the motions of charity condemn the cruelties practised by man against his fellow-man, be he Jew or Gentile. Let the rabid haters of Jewry remember that He who has given this alien race into their power, may also give them over to like punishment. And it has been well said, that the Christian persecutor of the Jew loses more than his victim, for the Jew may still under oppression remain faithful to his belief, but the persecuting Christian can hardly remain a Christian while baiting the Jew. We shall pass no further judgment here upon the Jew-baiter. It is well for us to remember that what motivates the modern anti-Semites is, especially in one land that shall be nameless, the fanatical hatred of all the milder virtues of Christian love and charity toward his enemies as a sign of weakness that must be uprooted to save the totalitarian state.

On the other hand, the modern trend of the sectarian churches, just now oozing with sickly sentimentality and vaporings of national brotherhood, must be discouraged. When these Christians, so-called, fraternize with the Jew, as believing in the same God, if only under another name, we are to remember that

in the laxness of their religious views these sects are encouraging the Israelite in his rejection of the true God as revealed in Christ. Sectarians of this stripe may well call an orthodox Jew a brother in the faith, for almost any Jew will gladly concede that this Jesus was a good man and a wise teacher. More than that most of these sects do not believe of the Christ.

If we interpret Matthew, ch. 24, 34 correctly, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled", we must believe that the Jew shall remain unto the second coming of our Lord, for it is of the last things that our Lord speaks in this chapter. Certainly he has remained to this day after many generations of man and a many of the nations have had their day and passed. We might well ask why this race persists and for what purpose. It is true that we cannot penetrate beyond the veil of God. Moses asked for that, Ex. 33, 13, but was denied. Our God is the *deus absconditus*, the hidden God, Isaiah 45, 15, and we may not know any more of His hidden ways than He has granted us to know for our own salvation. Rom. 11, 33ff. But this much we know, that the ways of God are ways of grace for the salvation of mankind. May it not well be that the Jew remains on earth for an object lesson to all the world, an example of His grace as well as of His wrath? Above all the races of men has this people been blessed beyond all human understanding, and has been punished as no other race was burdened. May not all men learn from their example with what terrible wrath our God in His justice visits him who persistently and stubbornly rejects the Word of God in unbelief? The world will never learn that lesson. Nor will most of the churches. Men born in sin will always turn away from God's clear Word to the vain imaginings of their own hearts. They will always corrupt this Word by making their own sinful pride, their own reason, the judge of the written Word. As long as men do that, the example of the Jews is wasted upon them. They will persist in detesting the Jew, they know not why.

But to us who still, by the grace of a long-suffering God, hold fast to the Bible as God's inspired Word, from which we may not depart, nor explain it according to the lusts of our heart, the people of Israel must be a constant reminder of the zeal of our Lord, both in punishing the sin of unbelief and in saving us, just

as unworthy, by granting us faith in His Gospel. St. Peter reminds us, 1 Pet. 4, 17: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" Is there no danger among us, even of the Lutheran church, of losing that Gospel? Are we so secure in our heart and mind that we have this Gospel and need not learn it all over again every day? Do we put our whole trust in this Gospel of peace for the sole up-building of the church? The signs are multiplying among us that we are running after other gods to fortify ourselves against the evil day by building up a church great in numbers if not in knowledge. The sects round about us are showing us the way, and there is real danger that we listen to their siren voices to lead us away from the old paths and the old long tried ways. Every time we see a son of Abraham after the flesh we should be mindful of the fact that he is a living example of the untold miseries which befall a man and a whole race that has the Bible, but does not understand it nor believe it.

But let us not despise him. St. Paul, who sadly turned away from the Jew, because of his bitter opposition to the truth, and turned to the Gentiles, has a word to say on this point. It is the well known eleventh chapter in the letter to the Romans. Here St. Paul, the Israelite, argues that God has not rejected His chosen people, as he has kept a remnant of believers out of the mass of Israel. The great multitude of the Jews, indeed, are condemned to unbelief in the true God of Israel, steadfastly refusing to be enlightened by the Gospel and thus be saved. But let not the believer out of the Gentiles despise this fallen race of the Jews, who in their pride will have none of the Christ and His forgiveness of sins. For the loss of the Israelite has been the gain of the Gentile, verse 12. For, in spite of all the foolish boasting of the modern heathens in some lands, vaunting their race and blood, the whole world owes much to the Jew. He was chosen by the Lord out of His inscrutable ways of mercy to receive and to carry on the revelation of God's salvation prepared for all men in Christ, and his holy writings of the Old Testament are so closely bound up with the New that neither of them is complete without the other. The old Latin rhyme: *Novum testamentum in vetere latet*

— *vetus testamentum in novo patet*, expresses a truth that cannot be denied by any discerning reader of both.

Lucifer fell through his pride. The Jew has fallen likewise through his pride in his own righteousness, his own way of salvation. It is not for us, therefore, to despise him but rather to pity him for his sad fate, that he must go on in his blindness denying the Christ in whom alone there is help for the fallen race. Far from adding to his heavy burden of hatred and cruelty, laid upon him by those who are but the rod of God's anger, it is for us to help him, as far as in us lies, out of his unbelief. Always there shall be some whose eyes will be opened. Always there remains the unfathomable depth of God's mercy that may again turn his captivity to rejoicing. For has He not said, Ex. 33, 19: "and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy"? We are but the adopted children of God to share the inheritance that was prepared for all Israel. Fighting down our natural antipathy to the Jew, our aversion to his ways of making money for the carnal enjoyment of this world, let us not look down with too much pride upon one whose end in his unbelief is loss of body and soul. For the Israelite is still a human being, a fellow-man with an immortal soul, for whom first of all the Son of God died upon the bitter tree, so that he too might at the last come to the bosom of Abraham. Be it our care, under the grace of God, to hold fast to the faith in Him who is the "mighty God", Lord of all, and leave the judgment upon our fellow-beings also to Him who shall render a just judgment on that day.

Aug. F. Zich.

Ein Missionsgebet Pauli.

Röm. 1, 8-13.

Der Apostel Paulus hatte seinen Brief an die Gemeinde zu Rom begonnen. Nach üblicher Weise hatte er den Gruß geschrieben, in dem er in großen Zügen das große Evangelium Gottes zusammenfaßt und der Früchte gedenkt, die es in Rom gebracht hat. Eine Gemeinde von Liebsten Gottes und berufenen Heiligen ist da. Gerade dieser Gemeinde will der Apostel einen Brief schreiben, wie er ihn keiner anderen Gemeinde geschrieben hat. Sie soll die ausführ-

lichte Darlegung seines Evangeliums erhalten. Diese Darlegung folgt aber nun nicht unmittelbar auf den Gruß. Der Apostel hat zuerst etwas anderes zu tun. „Aufs erste“ muß er beten. Sein Gebet ist ein Missionsgebet. Wo kann man in Pauli Briefen lesen, ohne dies Missionsgebet anzutreffen? Der Mann, der sagen konnte: „Ich habe mehr gearbeitet denn sie alle“ hätte wohl auch sagen können, er habe mehr gebetet denn sie alle. Darin offenbart sich Missionsgeist.

Wie der Missionsgeist Pauli sich in der Fülle und in der Betonung seiner Missionsgebete kundtut, so besonders auch in dem Inhalt derselben. Das ist nirgends deutlicher als in dem vorliegenden Missionsgebet. Es ist ein Dankgebet und zwar zuerst Dankfagung, an die sich des Apostels Bitte anschließt. Wer mit Dank beginnt hält sich die Liebe, Güte, Gnade und Macht Gottes vor Augen und kann dann kühn und getrost bitten. Wo solcher Geist ist, löst Gott die Frage, die oft so viele Sorgen macht bei allem Missionswerk, die Frage in bezug auf die nötigen Mittel zur Ausführung der Arbeit, die der Kirche aufgetragen ist. Wir sehen das Dankgebet nun näher an. Seinem Gott dankt Paulus durch Jesus Christ. Eine Gnadentat seines Gottes steht ihm so lebendig vor Augen und erfüllt so gar sein Herz, daß er danken muß. Was Gott getan hat, berührt ihn persönlich, innig und stark, als an ihm getan. Wer forschte nicht sofort in dem Leben dieses Mannes nach dem großen Gut, das Grund solches Dankes ist? Da ist ein Leben, über das der Herr selbst das Wort gesetzt hat: „Ich will ihm zeigen, wieviel er leiden muß um meines Namens willen“. Und die Erfüllung dieses Wortes berichtet der Apostel selbst, 2. Kor. 11, 23ff.: „Ich habe mehr gearbeitet, ich habe mehr Schläge erlitten, ich bin öfter gefangen, oft in Todesnöten gewesen. Von den Juden habe ich fünfmal empfangen vierzig Streiche weniger eines. Ich bin dreimal gestäupet, einmal gesteiniget, dreimal habe ich Schiffbruch erlitten, Tag und Nacht habe ich zugebracht in der Tiefe. Ich habe oft gereiset, ich bin in Fährlichkeit gewesen zu Wasser, in Fährlichkeit unter den Mördern, in Fährlichkeit unter den Juden, in Fährlichkeit unter den Heiden, in Fährlichkeit auf dem Meer, in Fährlichkeit unter den falschen Brüdern. In Mühe und Arbeit, in viel Wachen, in Hunger und Durst, in viel Fasten, in Frost und Blöße.“ Nein, in seinen äußeren Lebensverhältnissen hat Paulus die Ursache seines Dankens nicht gesucht.

Ebenso wenig in den guten äußeren Lebensverhältnissen, in äußerem Wohlstand der Christen seiner Zeit. Tausende von diesen leben in Judäa in größter Armut. Die Gemeinden in Mazedonien und in Achaja haben nach Vermögen für ihre notleidenden Brüder Geld gesammelt, und Paulus ist gerade jetzt, da er den Brief an die Römer schreibt, im Begriff, nach Jerusalem zu reisen den Heiligen zu Dienst mit der gesammelten Steuer.

Es sind eben nicht materielle Dinge, die den Grund der Dankagung des Apostels bilden. Damit ist nicht gesagt, daß er ein Asket ist und der Askese das Wort rede. Er verachtet nicht irdische Güter, will, daß Christen derselben gebrauchen als die derselben nicht mißbrauchen. Er freut sich hoch über die Unterstützung, die ihm die Philipper geschickt haben. Was wir aber erkennen ist dies, daß äußere Mittel ihm keineswegs die erste und notwendigste Vorbedingung für Missionsarbeit und Missionserfolge, Missionshoffnungen und für Missionsfreuden sind. Eine Tatsache liegt dem Dank des Paulus zugrunde: Das Evangelium hat seinen siegreichen Einzug in Italien gehalten. Ihm, dem berufenen Heidenapostel, hatte schon jahrelang Rom, das Zentrum der Heidenwelt, gewinkt. Nun waren Boten über Boten von Rom gekommen, die von einer Gemeinde von Christen erzählten. Unter den vielen Tausenden von Menschen in der Welthauptstadt waren Gläubige. Im Verhältnis zu der Zahl der Einwohner der Stadt waren es sicher wenige. Diese Wenigen aber hatten selbst in der Großstadt einander gefunden, sie sind einander bekannt, sie erbauen einander im Glauben. So sagt man in aller Welt vom Glauben in Rom, der sich kräftig im Leben der Gläubigen erweist. Dafür dankt der Apostel. Jeder einzelne Christ zu Rom ist ihm eine teure Gabe. Und welche Möglichkeiten, Gelegenheiten und Hoffnungen für die rasche, weite Ausbreitung der Kirche sind damit gegeben! Wird sich nicht mit der Kunde von dem Glauben der römischen Gemeinde, wo sie hinkommt, das Evangelium selbst ausbreiten!

An dem Lauf des Evangeliums liegt dem Apostel alles. In der innigen Anteilnahme an dem Zustand der Gemeinde in Rom offenbart sich die persönliche Stellung Pauli zum Evangelium, wie er sie ausspricht in den Worten: „Denn Gott ist mein Zeuge, welchem ich diene in meinem Geist am Evangelio von seinem Sohne.“ Die Worte besagen gewiß nicht nur, daß es sich nicht nur um einen rein äußerlichen Dienst handelt, daß der ganze Dienst Pauli in Pre-

digt und aller Tätigkeit aufrichtiger Dienst ist. In seinem Geist dient er Gott am Evangelium von seinem Sohne. Das Evangelium beherrscht sein ganzes Innenleben, sein Seelenleben. Es ist ihm nicht ein Interesse seines Lebens und auch nicht nur Hauptinteresse. Es ist das einzige Lebensinteresse, das er hat und kennt. Sein ganzes Leben gestaltet sich vom Evangelium her und am Evangelio. Wie viel und wie oft erkennt man das beim Lesen der Briefe Pauli. Im ersten Brief an die Korinther, Kap. 9, redet er von seiner Stellung als Apostel, von seiner Freiheit, von seinen Rechten. „Haben wir nicht Macht, zu essen und zu trinken? Haben wir nicht auch Macht, eine Schwester zum Weibe mit umher zu führen, wie die andern Apostel, und des Herrn Brüder und Aephas?“ Er führt aus, wie solche Macht vom Herrn selbst gegeben ist, und fügt dann hinzu: „Aber wir haben solcher Macht nicht gebraucht; sondern wir vertragen allerlei, daß wir nicht dem Evangelio Christi ein Hindernis machen.“ Der Gedanke war dem Apostel unerträglich. Darum macht er, der freie Apostel, sich selbst jedermann zum Knecht, auf daß er ihrer viele gewinne. Er tut alles um des Evangelii willen, auf daß er sein teilhaftig werde. Er tut alles und leidet alles um des Evangelii willen. „Wer ist schwach, und ich werde nicht schwach? Wer wird geärgert und ich brenne nicht?“ Darum ist er auch der Mann, der sich so hoch freut über alle Evangeliumsfrüchte und nicht anders kann als danken, so oft er ihrer gedenkt. Das ist Missions-sinn. Wer ihn hat, ist zur zuversichtlichen und freudigen Missions-bitte geschickt.

Aussichten, Möglichkeiten für die Ausbreitung des Werkes des Herrn hat Paulus erkannt. Es gilt sie auszunutzen. Sein Wunsch und seine Bitte gehen dahin, daß es ihm persönlich gestattet werden möge, nach Rom zu reisen. Damit verbundene Schwierigkeiten vorgerücktes Alter und dgl. schrecken ihn nicht ab. Durch den Willen Gottes möchte er nach Rom. Darum bittet er beständig. Warum aber diese große Sehnsucht und brünstige Bitte, wenn doch Rom das Evangelium hatte?

Die Frage findet ihre Antwort in dem, was Paulus über seine längst beabsichtigte Reise nach Rom schreibt. Das Verlangen, zu ihnen zu kommen, hatte er von vielen Jahren her. Er wurde aber verhindert durch seine Aufgabe in den Ländern, in die ihn Gott geschickt hatte. Nun hat er nicht mehr Raum in diesen Ländern. Er hat alles mit dem Evangelium Christi erfüllt. Was das für ihn

heißt, erkennt man aus Apg. 20, 26. 27. Wo er gepredigt hat, kann er sagen: „Darum zeuge ich euch an diesem heutigen Tage, daß ich rein bin von aller Blut; denn ich habe euch nichts verhalten, daß ich nicht verkündigt hätte alle den Rat Gottes.“ Daß der ganzen Kirche aller der Rat Gottes so gepredigt werde, war ernstes Anliegen der Kirche zur Zeit der Apostel. Als die Apostel zu Jerusalem hörten, daß Samaria das Wort Gottes angenommen hatte, sandten sie zu ihnen Petrum und Johannem. Als das Wort sich ausgebreitet hatte bis nach Antiochien, schickte die Gemeinde in Jerusalem Barnabas dahin. Dasselbe tut hier Paulus. Rom hat das Evangelium. Hat es tüchtige Männer als Lehrer und Prediger, so daß der ganze Rat Gottes gepredigt wird, so daß sie keinen Mangel haben an irgendeiner Gabe, die Christus für seine Kirche erworben und für sie bestimmt hat? Es darf kein Glied des Leibes Christi dürftig versorgt werden, die andern Glieder dulden es nicht. Was Paulus hat an geistlicher Gabe, will er den andern mitteilen und durch die Mitteilung sie stärken und trösten. Dazu möchte er nach Rom.

Aber schreibt er nicht eben seinen langen Brief an die Römer, an eben die Leute, denen er etwas geistlicher Gabe mitteilen möchte? Und ist nicht dieser Brief eine unerschöpfliche Quelle der Kraft, der Lehre, des Trostes, so daß die Gemeinde wie keine andere geistlich versorgt ist? Warum dann das Verlangen, sie zu sehen, damit er ihnen mitteile etwas geistlicher Gabe? Es ist ganz offenbar Pauli Meinung, daß er persönlich gegenwärtig in Rom etwas mitteilen kann, das er schriftlich nicht übermitteln kann. Darin liegt gewiß nicht eine Geringschätzung seines Briefes. Was er schreibt, sind Worte, die menschliche Weisheit nicht lehren kann, sondern, die der Heilige Geist lehrt. Auch ist nicht gesagt, daß der Apostel etwas anderes mündlich mitteilen will als schriftlich. Das aber liegt darin, daß die Anwesenheit, der persönliche Kontakt, die mündliche Rede den Christen besonders Trost und Stärkung bringen wird, denn das ist die Weise, die Gott sich erwählt hat, mit Menschen zu reden. Gottes Gebot heißt: Predigt das Evangelium. Er sendet Zeugen, Boten. Es gefiel ihm, durch törichte Predigt selig zu machen. Paulus wünscht in Rom zu sein, damit er der Gemeinde und den einzelnen geistliche Gabe nach Bedürfnis darreichen kann. So allein kann er mit vollem Segen des Evangeliums ihnen dienen. Eine andere Weise als durch das persönliche Wirken lehrhafter Männer eine Gemeinde recht zu erbauen kennt Paulus nicht. Wie dringend wird

angefichts dessen die Aufgabe der Kirche, Männer nicht nur auszubilden, sondern auch auszusenden zum Dienst des Wortes! Wie oft fehlt es an dem Vertrauen, das Paulus hatte.

Paulus will in Rom nicht nur mitteilen, er will auch empfangen. Es ist ihm gewiß, daß sein Zusammensein mit den Christen in Rom ihm selbst großen geistlichen Gewinn bringen wird. Unter ihnen sein heißt samt ihnen getröstet werden durch ihren und seinen Glauben, den sie untereinander haben. Gehen wir zu weit, wenn wir annehmen, daß der Apostel seine Pläne für seine zukünftige Missionsarbeit im Auge hat? Rom ist ja nicht das Endziel seiner geplanten Reise. Es soll über Rom hinaus nach Hispanien gehen. Dies Unternehmen, das in die späteren Lebensjahre des Apostels fällt, mag mit mehr Schwierigkeiten und Nöten verbunden sein als seine bisherige Tätigkeit. Sollten dem Apostel dabei nie Bedenken kommen? Auch er war kein Übermensch. Wiederholt hat Gott ihm zugerufen: Fürchte dich nicht! Auch weiß er selbst von Ängsten reichlich zu sagen. Nun sieht er zwischen Hispanien und Judäa Rom als Haltestelle, als Durchgangspunkt. Da wird es an Stärkung zur Weiterreise nicht fehlen, denn da ist Glauben. Mit diesem Glauben seiner Brüder rechnet der Mann, wenn er seines Missionswerkes denkt und erwartet nichts anderes als volles Verständnis und warmes Interesse und tatkräftige Unterstützung, die sich darin zeigen wird, daß er von ihnen dorthin geleitet wird, nachdem er zuvor sich ein wenig mit ihnen ergötzt hat, R. 15, 24, d. h. von ihnen erfüllt ist.

So sieht Paulus in freudiger Hoffnung der Zeit eines segensreichen Besuches in Rom entgegen. Er kann sich aber seine Anwesenheit in Rom nicht vorstellen ohne Predigt auch unter den Heiden. Heidenmission ist seine besondere Aufgabe, und Rom ist die größte Heidenstadt. Da will er auch Frucht schaffen wie unter andern Heiden. Nur auf kürzere Zeit will er da sein. Es soll nicht Ruhezeit sein. Was er erbeten hat, hat er erlangt. In jeder Hinsicht hat sein Gebet Erhörung gefunden. Wo solcher Missionsgeist ist, der viel zu danken hat und Großes zu bitten wagt, da wird die reiche Frucht nicht fehlen.

F. B.

John's Message to the Churches of Ephesus, Thyatira, and Philadelphia as a Preachment to Us.

NOTE: This article is the first instalment of an essay read by Prof. A. P. Sitz of Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis., before the convention of the Northern Wisconsin District, held in Oshkosh last summer. About fifteen years ago the same author published an "Historical Survey of John's Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia" (see Q. S. 1923, pp. 19ff. and 113ff.). While the former essay covers all letters, the present one treats only three; and while the former endeavors mainly to portray the historical setting of the letters, the present stresses the application, the message the letters have for our own time.

The essay is here presented by request of the Northern Wisconsin District. The first instalment was to appear in the October number, but the part of the manuscript that had been taken to the printer disappeared in a way so far unexplained. Prof. Sitz kindly agreed to rewrite it.

Of the message of John to the Seven Churches of Asia recorded in Revelation I have for the present discussion chosen his communications to the churches of Ephesus, Thyatira, and Philadelphia, because the essential thought contained in each applies in a peculiar manner to our own church life. We are accustomed to speak of these communications as of the Seven Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, but strictly speaking that is not correct, rather all of Revelation is one great letter of twenty-two chapters addressed to the churches of Asia with the customary greeting in Chap. 1, 4 and the farewell salutation in 22, 20-21. All of it was to be read and considered by all the Seven Churches, yes, by all "who have an ear to hear", as it is expressly stated at the end of each message. But before taking up the study of these three messages and their application to our church life let us for the purpose of orientation consider the following questions: 1) who wrote these messages, 2) what is meant by the expression "angel of the church", and 3) what was the time of writing.

The authenticity of any book of the New Testament is not determined for us by any decree of the church but rather by the internal evidence contained in the book itself and by whatever external evidence we can find and it is our business as kings and priests in the kingdom of God to search and in-

quire diligently into these matters in order to gain the conviction for ourselves that this is indeed the Word of God, as it has been transmitted to us by His faithful witnesses, the apostles. The author of these messages identifies himself in chap. 1, 3, 9, and 22, 8 as John. Now that was a name quite common among Jews, yet he feels no need of identifying himself any further to those churches, though he mentions other details, such as his exile on Patmos, the fact that he beheld this first vision on the Lord's Day, he even indicates the state of mind in which he received them. He is that one John whom they all knew and who knew them so well, their strength and their weakness, that he needed no information about them. He is that venerable aged one in whom it seemed altogether proper that he addressed both old and young among them as "little children" (1 John 2, 12-18, 28) and who now expects that they bow before the sharp words of criticism, yes, before the terrible denunciations contained in portions of these messages, because he is that John of Ephesus, the beloved apostle of Jesus, who had been their pastor for nearly thirty years.

Among the early church fathers who recognize John the Apostle as the author of Revelation Irenaeus is an excellent witness. Born about 115 A. D. he had been in Smyrna in 129. where he became acquainted with the bishop Polycarp, who had been a scholar of John the Apostle. Here is therefore no tradition that has passed through many mouths, but evidence as direct as can be expected. Though Irenaeus frequently quotes from the book of Revelation, he rarely calls the author "John, the Apostle of the Lord", usually he introduces his quotations with the remark: John says in Revelation etc. To Irenaeus it was that John whom all Christians knew by that name.

The individual messages are addressed to the "angel of the church". How are we to understand this term? It goes without saying that heavenly angels are not designated by this term, for such sharp denunciations as recorded in chap. 2, 4f.; 3, 1-3, 15-18 would be improper in addressing heavenly angels. Such preachment can be addressed only to sinful men who can repent. Neither is it reasonable to suppose that

these "angels" were messengers sent by the churches of Asia to John on Patmos. It would have been very unwise for the churches thus to have defied the provincial authorities, who had exiled this great teacher for the very purpose of separating him from the churches.

It seems natural to assume that John is here using a term with which he had been acquainted from his youth in the Jewish synagogue to designate the president or bishop of the church, for which office these Gentile Christians of Asia had as yet no name, when John came to them, because it is quite certain that he introduced that form of church government to the churches of Asia, when he came there about 68-70 A. D., at the time when the Jewish war caused him and Philip the Evangelist to go to the province of Asia. The explanation given in chap. 1, 20 as well as the fact that beginning with chap. 1, 3 the author has in mind the congregations assembled for worship as the place where these messages shall be read, argues for this interpretation of the term "angel". In the Jewish synagogue the term "Sheliach Zibbur" had been used to signify the one who led in prayer and represented the church before the Lord. This term John translated with the Greek word signifying angel or messenger and he used it to designate the men who were to be the leaders in the worship on the Lord's Day. In the Mother Church at Jerusalem such a form of church government with one man at the head (James, the brother of the Lord) had been practised for 20-25 years, when John came to Ephesus. It seems that in the churches founded by Paul a board of elders was in charge. Thus Philippians 1, 1 Paul sends greetings to the bishops, not to the bishop, and at Miletus he meets the elders, not the elder, of the church of Ephesus. As it was natural for John to use the term which he had learned in his youth to designate this office, it was also natural that, when the church now lost touch with the synagogue, the term should disappear, to be replaced by a term with which the Greeks were acquainted: bishop, meaning overseer.

Naturally such a change in the administration of the churches did not come about suddenly, a number of years elapsed before it became general in the churches of Asia. This

would indicate that the early date assigned by some scholars to the writing of Revelation (68-70) is untenable, but there is another indication in the text itself that points to a much later date of composition, that is the attitude of the non-Christian population to the Christians. The book of Acts and the letters of Paul show that there were outbursts of ill-will on the part of Jews and Gentiles against the Gospel on its way westward from Jerusalem, but such outbursts were local and sporadic, not the result of a systematic persecution on the part of the Imperial government. There was an increase of this ill-will against the Christians towards the end of Nero's reign which reflects itself in the letter of Peter (1 Pet. 4, 12f.), but still there was no systematic persecution on the part of the government, nor was there under the reign of the following emperors Vespasian and Titus, nor even in the first years of the reign of Domitian. Only the last years of the reign of this younger son of Vespasian saw such persecution on the part of the government from 93 A. D. to Sept. 96 A. D. But we hear of no cruel tortures inflicted upon the Christians such as the violent local outburst under Nero had brought about at Rome in 64, instead there were banishments to small islands, a fate that even certain members of the royal family suffered on islands near the coast of Italy. That is the situation described in Revelation and that is the fate which John suffered upon Patmos. After the death of Domitian in September, 96, his successor put an end to the persecution and John was allowed to return to his churches, where according to Irenaeus he lived until the reign of Trajan. The Book of Revelation must therefore have been written sometime between 93 and 96 A. D.

As we now turn our attention to the text of these three communications I wish to point out that in order to facilitate our approach to their study and their application to our church life I have sought to reduce the message that each brings to us into one brief statement as follows:

- I. (Ephesus) **Think not that intellectual orthodoxism can take the place of first love.**
- II. (Thyatira) **Think not that pious activity can atone for doctrinal indifference.**

III. (Philadelphia) But learn that God's strength is made perfect in weakness.

The Lord had bestowed especial blessings upon the church of Ephesus. Beginning his mission in Ephesus at the outset of this third journey (probably in 54 A. D.) the apostle Paul devoted three whole years of his precious time to the thorough indoctrination of this church: "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you and have taught you publicly and from house to house testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20, 20-21. 27). To no other church was Paul able to devote so much time, usually the work had to be broken off after a very brief stay due to the fury of persecution or because of an urgent call to work elsewhere. Here in Ephesus the blessed result of this thorough work began to be apparent soon in the giving up of superstitious practices and in the sharp decline in the sales of the shrines of Diana as indicated in Acts 19. Another particular blessing was bestowed upon this church about five years after Paul had departed from Ephesus, when during his first Roman captivity he sent them that epistle so rich in doctrine and exhortation, that Christian scholars and students will never exhaust its spiritual treasures. About the same time the Ephesian church received another particular blessing, when Timothy became its pastor. Of all the scholars of Paul he was in the apostle's opinion the most capable and the most faithful, for concerning him he wrote to the Philippians (2, 20f.): "I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state, for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he has served with me in the gospel." Timothy was still pastor of this church according to 2 Timothy, when the end of Paul's career was at hand. Soon another particular blessing was to be bestowed upon the church of Ephesus, that was the enduring pastorate of the disciple whom Jesus loved, John, the son of Zebedee. Together with Philip the Evangelist he left Palestine while the Jewish rebellion was at its height (68-70)

and came to the province of Asia. Philip took charge of the churches of Hierapolis and Colossae, which, by the way, is the reason why such a prominent church as that of Colossae is not numbered among the Seven Churches of Asia, which were John's field of Labor, who by the time of the writing of the Book of Revelation had served them for nearly thirty years. What church in all Christendom was ever blessed as was the church of Ephesus in the faithful and spiritually endowed ministers of the Word that the Lord bestowed upon it?

At the time when John sent this message the Ephesian church could look back upon about forty years of existence. What results had all these spiritual blessings brought forth? In the words of this message (Rev. 2, 1-7) we have the critical estimation not merely of John, but of Him who inspired these words, the Son of God, of whom John speaks in such majestic terms throughout the first chapter of Revelation. The Lord finds much that is praiseworthy in the life of the church. "I know thy works and thy labor and thy patience . . . and hast borne and hast patience and for my name's sake hast labored and hast not fainted." From its very beginning the church of Ephesus had experienced the hostility of Jew and Gentile against the Gospel and this hostility had increased in the course of time. Timothy in his pastorate seems to have particularly encountered interference and opposition on the part of the Jews, so that Paul feels the need of encouraging and admonishing him to remain at his post (1 Timothy). The difficulties caused by the Gentile population naturally became much more intense, when towards the end of the first century the attitude of the government became definitely hostile. That induced many citizens to show their ill-will, who before had paid no attention to the young Christian community. Yet in spite of all the church had remained faithful and fearless, an untiring witness of the gospel of salvation by the blood of Christ.

Moreover, the careful instruction which the church of Ephesus had received at the hands of its teachers bore other spiritual fruit: "Thou canst not bear them which are evil and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not and hast found them liars. . . . This thou hast, that thou hatest

the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." Discipline was not lax in the Ephesian church. The Lord commends their patience. They showed patience, where patience was in order, with the weak and the erring, but where men were definitely evil, where they refused to be governed by the clear word of the Lord, there patience ceased. Neither were the Ephesians taken in by false prophets, as the Galatians had been taken in by legalistic Jewish teachers. The danger from this quarter seems to have abated by the end of the first century. A new school of false teachers had arisen: the Nicolaitans. We will have occasion to speak of their doctrine more expressly in discussing the message to Thyatira, here it may be sufficient to say that they advocated a way of life that sought to make a compromise between the truths of the gospel of Jesus and the forms of life in Graeco-Roman society. It was clear to the scholars of Paul and of John in Ephesus that one could not bow his knees before the Lord Jesus Christ and at the same time render divine honor to the Roman emperor, that one could not drink the cup of the Lord at His table and at the same time drink of the cup dedicated to some pagan god in the clubrooms of some society meeting in a dining room of some temple. The Nicolaitans taught that the Christian might enjoy this so-called freedom, for he had the superior knowledge that the idol was nothing. With such specious arguments they might catch the unwary, but the Ephesians were not deceived; they hated such theology.

In view of these many praiseworthy characteristics in the life of the Ephesian church what possible criticism might there be? The author answers: "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left the first love." The intense love of the first church had cooled. But they knew their dogmatics and applied them. The most intense feeling which the Lord and the church of Ephesus now had in common was not burning love, but a common hatred: "Thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." But a common hatred is a weak bond of union.

Just how serious is this defect in the eyes of the Lord? Must one not perhaps say that it is indeed to be regretted that the love which the Ephesian church showed in its youth

was no longer burning but that in view of the labors and the patience and the zeal of the church in the work of the gospel this must be overlooked? The Lord Jesus does not take such a complacent attitude. Just how serious this loss of first love is in the sight of the Lord is to be seen in the remedy that He proposes and in the judgment with which He threatens. The remedy is pointed out in the words: "Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works." The Lord does not suggest that certain things be added to their Christian conduct or that certain other things be dropped, there is but one remedy: a return to that first love. The lack of that love is so serious that it will very quickly ruin everything, destroy every vestige of spiritual life. That is clearly indicated in the dire judgment that will come upon them quickly, if there is no return to that first relationship: "Else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Since according to chap. 1, 20 the candlestick is the symbol of the church itself, this means that the Ephesian church will then no longer be a church, at least not in the eyes of the Lord Jesus, no matter how great and glorious it may still appear in the eyes of men. Hence the mere having of true doctrine will avail nothing, where the love of Christ is growing cold in the hearts of men.

Now let us in the light of that truth consider the history of our own church body. Our Lord has also bestowed many blessings upon us. One cannot speak of these blessings without at least referring back to that essential blessing bestowed upon us through the work of Martin Luther, whereby the fundamental doctrines of justification and of the church, after having been obscured by false doctrine for many centuries, were brought into the light again as Paul and the other apostles had taught them. As a result these doctrines have been so clearly set forth that since then there never has been any other cause for their being obscured than the perverse will of man which rejected that which it either did understand or at least might have understood clearly enough. Such a time of general rejection dominated the Lutheran church in the days of rationalism in the eighteenth century, a time of general unbelief in the church itself. The early days of the

nineteenth century brought the so-called awakening, a return to faith, but that clearness and depth of understanding of the gospel which had characterized the church of the Reformation was rarely found. Because many of these Lutherans had not penetrated to that clear proclamation of the Scriptural doctrine of justification which they might have gained by a return to Luther's writings, therefore they were unclear in many other points of doctrine that are based upon this fundamental truth, as for instance the doctrine of the ministry, of the church, of the freedom of a Christian, and of the Lord's Day.

Shortly before the middle of the nineteenth century many of these Lutherans emigrated from Germany to America for reasons that we need not enter upon here. At that time there also came to the state of Wisconsin those who constituted the membership of our synod in its beginnings. High churchly ideas prevailed in some circles, pietism in others, and legalistic practices in both. My own maternal grandfather suffered at the hands of such pietists. He was accused of sinning because he had played secular music in his home. When he agreed to refrain from further playing out of consideration for the weak brethren, he was given to understand that that was not the point, but that he was to repent of a definite sin. Since these pietists were in the majority in the congregation and since the pastor feared this majority, my grandfather and those who agreed with him were compelled to leave the congregation. I mention this merely as an illustration of the lack of clearness in matters of doctrine that prevailed with many.

Many new problems confronted the young synods of the Central West, which in the old home the authorities appointed by the state would have settled in their own way. But the Lord in time raised up capable leaders who had learned in the school of the Holy Spirit that there is only one safe and stable foundation upon which the church of Christ can be built and that is the inspired Word of God. They also realized the value of the Confessions of the Lutheran Church as a touchstone of true Lutheran faith and practice, for the old problems that confronted the fathers turn up again and again in a new garb. Thus arose a sound Scriptural theology which

found in the Word of God the answer to those problems confronting a church cut from its old world moorings and in strange surroundings.

Then there came in the midst of a period of healthy growth in the last quarter of the nineteenth and first quarter of the twentieth century a shock that shook the growing Lutheran synods of the Central West to their very foundation: the controversy concerning the doctrine of election. This drove the pastors and professors who took an active part in that controversy into a more intense study of the Scriptures, particularly of the letters of Paul to the Romans and to the Ephesians. It taught those who would learn most emphatically the need of that humility that bows itself into the dust before the Word of the Lord, because it is His word in whom we have confidence unto the uttermost. It taught them to reject the proud claims of human reason that would set itself up as the judge who must decide what man may accept and what not. And that attitude of childlike faith in the Word was one of the blessings that God bestowed upon them by means of that struggle which caused so much heartache. To us it is also a blessing in the form of a very concrete lesson, moreover if we shall not degenerate into mere yes-men who repeat formulas, we must fight the same battle against our reason. "Was du ererbt von deinen Vaetern hast, erwirb es, um es zu besitzen."

Certainly one cannot speak of the gifts bestowed by the Lord upon our church in this land without referring to the matter of Christian education. There was developed in the Lutheran Church of the Central West a system of Christian education in primary and secondary schools and colleges such as the church has never before been able to foster to such a degree unhampered by any interference on the part of the state. But the particular blessing of the Lord consisted not only in the outward freedom from state interference but above all in the gift of such spiritual leaders who understood that Christian education is not the teaching of the secular branches as one unit and religious instruction as another unit quite distinct, the result of which is a clash in the mind of the student between two conflicting conceptions of life. It was clear

to the minds of these teachers that Christian education must be Christo-centric, that the deed by which God justified us through the blood of His Son and made us kings and priests before Him is the cardinal truth in all human affairs and that as such kings and priests justified by the blood of Christ and standing upon the sure foundation of His word which says: "I am the truth," we approach all things whether they be history or literature or science. And this approach does not lead to bigotry and intolerance but into the freedom of God's children which Christ only can give to His own.

These are some of the outstanding blessings which the Lord has bestowed upon us. Many of our churches have enjoyed these blessings over a longer period of years than had the church of Ephesus enjoyed its blessings, when John wrote the Book of Revelation. What are the results of these blessings among us? Is the love of Christ growing cold and giving way to a smug contentment that boasts of true doctrine?

For several years we have been hearing about numbers of young men who have been carefully trained for the work in the vineyard of the Lord who now stand idle by the wayside. Reports of exploration committees in our synodical papers point out to us that they could be well employed in various cities of the West and South West, where there are no Lutheran churches, yet they are not being sent, because we have not lifted up the hands of those men whose duty it would be to send them. The burden of the synodical debt acts like a blight upon everything, so that many of the crying needs in our institutions, as in the college at Watertown, are not supplied, the constant deficit in the synodical treasuries discourages the men who should be encouraged. Now I am well aware of the fact that the late years have not been prosperous and that many are in need. On the other hand, if only those among us who are not in need had been moved by the first love of Christ of which John speaks, there would be no deficit in our treasuries. Is it not true that frequently those very men who ought to encourage others by word and deed are the ones who say: "We cannot do this; it is beyond our powers!" Thus they discourage others who might otherwise have acted. Do we not fear the judgment of the Lord: "I will come unto

thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick." The world can quickly come to the very brink of disaster. Let us not vainly imagine that nothing can happen to us because we live in America. Before we are aware of it, the Lord, if He so desires, can allow revolution and communism to overturn everything. Then those earthly possessions that we have treasured so highly will be wrested from us and the word of Jesus which we have esteemed so lightly will be denied to us and then shall we be poor indeed, poor in body and poor in soul.

As to that particular gift of Christian education with which the Lord has blessed our church in such a peculiar manner during its existence in this land, who will say that it is truly appreciated among us? There are indeed churches among us, where there is true appreciation among the members of this way of seeing all things as Jesus would have us see them, which Christian education gives to the child, in many other churches Christian schools are kept alive only as the result of the earnest witnesship of faithful pastors and teachers. In other churches there is no interest in the matter at all. It is said: the state can maintain far better schools than we can and Christian instruction can be given by the church as a thing apart. But the schooling that this world gives, no matter how brilliant it may be, produces a way of looking at life that is diametrically opposed to the way in which Jesus would have us look at all things, be they heavenly or earthly. And the resultant clash in the minds of young people who have received such a divided training is one of the chief reasons why hundreds of young people are lost to the church. But the Lord asks: "What shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world (or even a brilliant worldly education) and lose his own soul?"

I fear that we too like the Ephesians are too prone to a sense of smug contentment, because we have and understand true doctrine. Hence we have every reason to seek repentance, that first love of Christ without which all other abilities become hollow and lifeless. And as the Spirit by His life-giving Word recreates that first love, we shall be enabled to appreciate and use for our own benefit those general gifts

which the Lord has bestowed upon us in our church life and we shall consider it a blessed privilege and not a burden to use for the benefit of others the particular gifts which we possess as individuals.

(To be continued)

Quinquagesima

Matthew 16: 21-23

In Christ, our Lord, dear Friends!

“From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things”, our text begins. That prompts us to ask: To what time do the first words of our text: “From that time forth” refer? We find the answer in the occurrence reported by the Evangelist Matthew immediately preceding our text. We find that these words: **From that time forth** refer to the day that Peter made his well-known, admirable confession, saying to the Lord: Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God! — The Lord blessed Peter for this confession. But the Lord also said to him: Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee. You did not arrive at this confession by your own strength, reason or insight. That this was true became evident only too soon. It became evident as soon as the Lord, hard upon this day of Peter’s confession, began to testify concerning His sufferings. The Lord had hardly mentioned the subject, when Peter spoke up once more. But this time it was his flesh which spoke and rebuked the Savior: Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. We are inclined to think that this cannot be one and the same Peter, the Peter who one day confessed to his Lord: Thou art the **Christ**, i. e. the Anointed, anointed also to the office of the High Priest who is to give His life as a sin-offering, and the Peter who, perhaps the very next day, said to the same Christ: Be it far from thee. Do not give up your life, whatever you do! — Yet it is the same Peter. His example may well teach us the lesson, that it is not an easy thing, but a very difficult one, to see the sufferings of Jesus in the right light and to understand them thoroughly. This, indeed, is that one sublime doctrine which we must keep on learning our whole life through. We must, therefore, thank God that by His grace we have a special season for this every year, the sacred Passion Season. During this time the beloved Savior wants to lead us to a thorough understanding of His sufferings. Let us turn this time to good account! Let us make good use of the Passion sermons! Let us encourage one another. Let every one give a good

example, especially he who is called to do so by his office and his position among his brethren. May the Lord Himself bless this time in such a way that we learn the truths He wants to teach us concerning His sufferings.

**SOME BLESSED TRUTHS THE SUFFERING SAVIOR
WOULD BRING HOME TO US DURING
THE PASSION SEASON**

They concern

1. **The kind of sufferings He bears.**
2. **The spirit in which He enters upon His sufferings.**

I

The kind of sufferings He bears.

The Lord gives us a knowledge and an understanding of this truth, for He "began to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed." — Here the Lord teaches us first of all: His sufferings are **necessary**. Did He not show His disciples, how that He **must** go unto Jerusalem and **must** suffer many things? He pointed out to His disciples — and He took pains that they grasped and understood it — that all of His sufferings, which He was now approaching, were absolutely **unavoidable** and **inevitable**. They **had** to be. Not only some, but **all** of them. They would see a host of sufferings descend upon Him, sufferings without number and of many different kinds. But there would be not one which could be left out; there would be not one which would be unnecessary or even accidental. No, every one of His sufferings would be a necessary one. Our Savior showed His disciples that all of His sufferings **must** come upon Him.

How, do you suppose, did the Savior go about this? How did He try to lead His disciples to realize and understand the necessity of His sufferings, so that they could have spoken in this way: Of course, we understand this truth — and this is the conviction of our adoring hearts — that Thou, our dear Lord, **must** suffer all these things, even as Thou sayest. In reporting what our Lord did our text gives us the answer. We read: He began to **shew His disciples** etc. We know that whenever Jesus, our Lord, wanted to show, teach or bring home some truth concerning Himself, He always took up the Holy Scriptures and showed it from them. He did that **in this case too**. We hear that out of His own mouth in other passages. For He said: All things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. Again (Luke 22:37): This that is written must be accomplished in me. And again: The Son of man goeth as it is written of him. — So the Lord showed this to His disciples from **Holy Scriptures**. He showed them: Behold, in

mercy the Father determined to redeem you and all the world. He has sent Me to do this as His servant Who is to be punished and is to suffer for you and all the world's good, as Isaiah says concerning Me. He also foretold every suffering that I am to bear. Therefore, you see, I **must** suffer, and every single one of my sufferings **must** come. The Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in truth. His Word and His Scriptures simply must be fulfilled upon Me. Nothing recorded there dare remain unfulfilled. Otherwise I certainly would not be the obedient Servant of God the Father nor His obedient Son Who goes only the way of your salvation, as determined by the Father. Then the counsel and plan of God would come to naught, and there would be no help for you sinners.

If the disciples would have made good use of that instruction, then from that very hour on they would have looked upon Jesus as the Lamb of God with humble, adoring hearts. And then, when the sufferings themselves came, when that true, sublime Passover, Good Friday, came, the dear disciples would have seen, though with untold misery in their hearts and tears in their eyes, how the Savior was treading the appointed way step for step, how His way of sorrows was exactly as it had been prescribed and described in every detail, how not one of all the previously described sufferings was left out, and how the most extraordinary details of His sufferings became reality. If the disciples had understood all this, what thought would, unfaithfully, have filled their hearts? I believe you can supply the answer. This certainty would most surely have filled the disciples' hearts and would have come to them with a truly divine, heavenly force: Truly, our dear Lord now hanging on the cross is the Promised One, the Helper Who snatches us from the very jaws of hell. Truly, Peter would have been able to say with even greater certainty, with even **greater confidence** of Him Whom he saw hanging on the cross: Verily, Thou, and none other, art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Thou art our Consolation.

Truly, blessed is **he** who has this assurance. In fact, **only** he is blessed who has it, who is confidently certain: Jesus Who once endured great sufferings is, beyond all doubt, my Helper Whom God in His counsel of mercy has provided for me. What a glorious, what a priceless gain is every increase in such assurance! — Brother and sister, **don't you** desire this gain? Then consider this: Jesus **began** to show His disciples that He must suffer many things. He continued with that, as we see from Scriptures, for some time. And yet we see in today's text, and we encounter the same fact later on, even on Good Friday, that in this very point the beloved disciples were far from an understanding of this blessed certainty. But they at least permitted these things to be shown to them. — Yet there will be some among you who will not even let these things be **shown** to them, for they will neglect to come to the Passion services. Dear brother and sister, consider what you are doing! You are despoising your

faithful Savior Who from this day forward invites you in an especially friendly way: Come, today I begin to show you how I must suffer many things, and I will continue doing so through My Word. Can you then calmly stay at home, when you must tell yourself: This hour that I **am spending at home** while in this same hour Jesus in my house of worship is showing His sufferings by the mouth of His servant, this hour I am gaining for myself — I cannot deny it — by despising my beloved Lord? For there is nothing that is hindering me; I can offer no excuse. It simply is not convenient for me, etc. Bear that in mind! And add this consideration: Do you gain more, if you remain at home, or if you go to your house of worship and permit your dear Lord to perform this good work upon you of making you certain that He has redeemed you too with His sufferings? Consider, then, the things that belong to your peace, and come and permit yourself to be enriched in the knowledge of Jesus' sufferings, the knowledge Jesus Himself wants to impart to you.

But along with the truth just heard He wants to teach us that His sufferings are **many and severe**. For we read in our text: He began to shew, how that he must suffer **many things**, and be **killed**. This too the Lord demonstrated to His disciples from the Scriptures, from the statements of the prophets. He reviewed those Scriptures with them thoroughly from that time on and showed them, that many would be offended in Him, would despise Him, yea, consider Him the most despicable of all men. They would number Him among the worst criminals, and as such they would try Him, condemn Him, and deliver Him to death. Those who would do this would be the only men who had the power to do so by virtue of their position and office, the elders and high priests in Israel. Besides they would mock and ridicule Him in all His sufferings, even while He was writhing in the agonies of a terrible death, the death on the cross. For He must die as One who had been pierced, pierced through hands and feet, i. e. He must die nailed to the cross. Thus He would have to endure sufferings that were many and severe, yea, the most horrible death of all **at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes**.

But when He had showed His disciples that the elders and high priests would be His judges who would sentence Him and deliver Him into the terrible death by crucifixion, and that on the cross He would suffer indescribable agonies of body and soul — with that, I say, the Lord had not completed His instructions to His disciples regarding His sufferings. Not at all. You will remember that the beloved Savior once had said: Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. — The elders, accordingly, could kill His, the Lord's, body, but they certainly could not deliver His soul into the torments of hell. Only the holy and righteous God could do that. And that was **the very thing** Jesus showed His dear disciples in these days: A holy God will do this to Me. **He** will

judge Me. He will smite Me. He will lead Me into the dread judgment, so that My soul will labor, labor under the torments of hell. For He, the Holy God, will lay upon Me every penalty that it is possible to inflict. He will make Me cry out as one accursed: My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? — After that the Lord showed the final, and the most blessed, truth concerning His sufferings: why they were so many and so severe, why the holy and righteous God had Him suffer the torments of hell. I, thus He taught them, did not deserve this suffering, but you, Peter, did, and you, John, yes, all of you, My disciples, and all the world. How many sins have you, Peter, and you, John? You cannot count them, but God can. And with every one of them you have deserved the penalty of damnation. The same is true of every man. But be of good cheer. However many and however great your and all men's sins may be, My sufferings are just as many and just as great. For that very reason God meted out so many and such great sufferings to Me that My sufferings might make a complete, full payment of every sinner's debt and release him from the penalty. The full penalty lies upon Me, so that all of you and all the world with you might have a perfect peace.

This was the great cardinal truth which Jesus, as our text says, began to show His disciples and continued to show unto the end. This very same truth He now begins to show us and continues to show us throughout the Passion Season. How rich in blessing this entire time could have been for the disciples for that very reason! With all their sorrowing over the sufferings soon to come upon their dear Lord, they, nevertheless, could have become rich in the peace with God, since day by day they could have become more blessedly certain: Jesus, our dear Lord, suffers so much and so severely for all our sins, so that He might not leave a single one of them to bring down upon us the wrath of God with its punishment and damnation. That would have been an indescribable gain for them. Alas! the beloved disciples did not reap this glorious gain from this blessed season, although they indeed listened to the Lord, whenever He began anew to show them His sufferings in their redeeming, meritorious power. Among us too there will be enough who will remain without this blessing. But again it must be said, that this is because they do not even listen, when the Lord would instruct them. For they simply despise the Passion sermons, through which especially the Lord wants to show them these things. We must say over and over again to such people who wilfully absent themselves from the Passion services: Your conduct is saddening, utterly wicked and sinful. How ungrateful you are that you do not recognize the great benefit the Lord would confer upon you. That benefit is this: He brings home to your heart the power of His sufferings, so that you see this power in all its glory and its certainty, and it becomes a very real and comforting thing to you — the power of His sufferings to atone

for all and each of your sins, to make good for them and cancel them, so that none remains to accuse you. Tell me, is this certainty already so great, such a strong force in your heart, that it victoriously overcomes all the distress caused by your many, many sins? Many a man thinks he has this certainty, but he confounds having the conception and the doctrine of the power and effectiveness of Jesus' great sufferings clear in his head, knowing it, — he confounds that with having it in his heart in a truly assured faith. Let me say, as a warning for you and for myself: Such certainty is still lacking to a very great extent. I say that in the light of my experience. In many cases, when the end is at hand, what trembling, what distress we see! Why? Because in that hour our Evil Foe and our own conscience begin to indict our whole life. Then the man standing face to face with death says to himself: You have not lived as you ought. The fog of faded memory lifts, and a man's sins loom up before him, here one and there another. Oh, God, what straits are encountered here! That would not be the case, if the heart were truly certain of this:

He cancelled my offences,
 And saved my soul from death;
 'Tis He Who ever cleanses
 Me from my sins through faith.
 In Him I can be cheerful,
 Bold, and undaunted, aye:
 In Him I am not fearful
 Of God's great judgment-day.

And if this certainty does not obtain the victory in the heart of the departing sinner, what then? What if he remains in doubt and uncertainty, and cannot pray with a firm trust in the power of Jesus' sufferings: Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit! What then? Take the words God speaks through James as a solemn warning: "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." Then turn to good account this season of blessing. Come to hear the Passion sermons. Come, so that the Lord can do that for your soul which He would so gladly do: He wants to make you certain, that of all your great sins there is absolutely not one that can condemn you, because Jesus suffered so many and such great torments under the avenging wrath of God, that all has been atoned for, paid for; and He wants to give you a heart that is serene, because it is at peace with God, and therefore is able to say:

Naught, naught can e'er condemn me,
 Nor set my hope aside;
 Now hell no more can claim me,
 Its fury I deride.

No sentence e'er reproves me,
 No ill destroys my peace,
 For Christ, my Savior, loves me
 And screens me with His grace.

We cannot even express the glorious gain we shall reap from the Savior's instruction during this Passion Season regarding the kind of sufferings He bears. But great also will be the profit and blessing, when He shows us

II

How He enters upon His sufferings.

The last part of our text speaks of that: "And be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto Thee. But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou art an offence unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

The first thing our Lord shows here is this: He enters upon His sufferings **certain of victory**. He shows that with the words: "And be raised again the third day." But this too He showed His disciples from the Scriptures, for they speak very plainly of His resurrection. Thus in Psalm 16: "Thou wilt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." And Isaiah 53: "He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation?" Verse 10: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days." This then means: He will die, it is true, but He will live again, and that life will not be a natural, earthly life, as we all live it, while here in the body. For that would have been a life whose length (generation) you could tell: The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years. . . . But the Savior will emerge from death into a life whose length cannot be declared, as Isaiah says, a new life in an incorruptible, glorious, spiritual, transfigured body. **That** is what **Isaiah** says, and this truth from Isaiah the Lord taught His disciples most thoroughly during this time. At the same time He showed them in what light they should view Him as He now entered upon His passion, namely, as none other than an heroic warrior and soldier who engages in a mighty battle for all of captive humanity and wins a glorious victory. Do but consider, my dear friends, — in some such manner the Lord taught and expounded the prophets — the things written here concerning Me: I am called the Lord, strong and mighty in battle; My name is Wonderful, Counselor, **the Mighty God**. You read of Me in the 110th Psalm: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy **power**." Hear Isaiah's description of Me: "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul

unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors." Mark it, My suffering as a transgressor, My dying as one accursed is a battle in which I am victor, for I shall rise again, I shall be triumphant, I shall gain by it; I shall carry off the booty and spoils of battle, and shall make a triumphant show of the enemies and have them in derision. Therefore do not look upon Me in My sufferings as One who meets defeat, and do not concede the victory to the enemy, but regard Me as fighting a victorious battle as your Champion and Lord, mighty in battle.

This is what the Lord showed the disciples. If they had really comprehended that, then for **that reason** too the entire season up to Good Friday would have been abundant in blessing for them. What a day Good Friday itself would have been for them! When they heard the Lord say: I thirst, they would have been able to say: Now He is wrestling with death, with our death. Our dear Lord is doing that, and He will be the death of death. He will slay and destroy death, for we know that He will rise again. Again, when they heard Him lament: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" — in the light of what the Lord had showed them they could have said: Now the Lord is wrestling with hell, whose prey we were doomed to be. But He will not meet defeat. He will be the destruction of hell and will conquer it, for He will rise again. — Indeed, they would have spent Good Friday in this way. There would have been sorrow in their hearts, no doubt, and yet there would have been Hallelujahs on their lips. They would have spent the day as the great day of redemption and deliverance for them and all mankind, as the great day upon which the Lord as the conquering Hero fought and won the battle for all the world.

Let us then, by all means, enjoy the blessing of this season by letting the Lord show us His sufferings as His heroic battle in which He is gloriously triumphant. But we want to see Him triumph not over such puny foes as the high priests and scribes, but over the great powers and the supreme potentates among our foes: death and the devil. You may be sure that it will serve you well, if you will let **that** be shown to you in the Passion Season, let it be thoroughly explained to you, let it be impressed upon your heart in all its certainty. That is, let Jesus show you and teach you. It will serve you well in that last hour which is generally called the evil hour. When death draws near, and the devil, who has the power of death, would terrify you, then you will be able to say: Why do you, death, and you, the devil, try to terrify me, as though you really amounted to something? I am unafraid. For with this hour the moment has come for me in which I see revealed in my person the truth that Jesus fought victoriously with you and conquered you, that He has delivered me, a poor sinner, from your clutches, in order to bear me away as the spoil and booty of His battle and to triumph with me in heaven. — That experience can be yours. That can be your gain, if you will not be

a fool who despises the blessing of the Passion Season. Do you want to be such a fool? I hope not. I trust, rather, that you will be wise and make this blessing your own.

But Jesus wants to show **one more thing concerning the way** in which He enters His suffering. It is His perfect **willingness**. We are told of that in our text: "Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned and said unto Peter: Get thee behind me Satan: for thou art an offence unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Of all that the Lord had shown concerning His sufferings only **one thing** had become clear to His disciples: their Lord and Master deliberately planned to go to Jerusalem, where death awaited Him. This filled them with consternation, fear, and terror, for with the exception of Judas they clung to Jesus in fervent love. Peter could not constrain himself; his fear and excitement overwhelmed him. He drew Jesus aside and rebuked Him, i. e. spoke vehemently, and using just such words of entreaty as his alarm and his loving fear and concern for the Lord inspired in him, he pleaded with the Lord: "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." But the Lord turned and answered: "Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou art an offence unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." But what are the things that be of God? What is divine? We answer correctly: God is love. It is divine to love. It is divine to love without any merit or worthiness in the object of love. It is divine to love that which is not worthy of love. It is divine to have a loving compassion on that which is justly damned. It is divine to save, out of love, that which was rightly lost. But the things that be of **men**? That means to love oneself, to seek **one's own ends**. Human were the thoughts of Peter, who wanted the Lord to spare Himself and love Himself — and the devil's thoughts were exactly the same, for the world would remain in his clutches, if the Lord were to spare Himself and were to act in self-love. But the thoughts of the Lord were divine. He did not want to be spared, nor did He desire to spare Himself. Thoughts of love so completely filled His heart, that He thought not of Himself, but only of us, who were lost. So **strong** was the compulsion of His love to rescue a lost world with the sacrifice of the most painful of all deaths, with the pains and penalties of hell, that He became incensed at Peter, the beloved disciple, whom He had praised very highly a short time before, as if Peter were the Evil One, Satan, himself. Love, infinite love, which no tongue can praise in its greatness, depth, power, and fervor — it was this love in the heart of Jesus that **made Him so willing, utterly willing** to bear those great, unspeakable tortures. If Peter had seen that at the time, then two things surely would have happened. For one thing, he would have stood in deep shame before his dear Lord. But then too there would have surged through his heart the deep, soul-refresh-

ing joy: Oh Lord, how you must love me, reprehensible man though I am! — And **that** was his experience, at least on the day of the Great Passion. Why, after the act of denial, did he not resort to the rope like Judas? Why did he amid tears find repentance unto life? Let me tell you that the gate leading to the way of salvation was this one thought: I still am not accursed and lost. I still am certain of one thing: In the heart of my Lord Jesus there still is love for me.

Dear friends, out of the willingness of Jesus to suffer there should flow for us too this great gain, that we are certain of this more than anything else: Jesus loves us. Oh, everything depends on this. This truth must abide in your heart, so that Jesus always means this to you: He loves me. — Alas! you too have often been an **offence** to the Lord, because you savored that which is of men — not that which is divine, not the heavenly things. You too grieve your Lord. And who would say that he does not! But when we realize it, we are ashamed, we would like to avoid Him. Yes, we shy away from Him, do not want to come before Him, we fear Him, as though He would now reject us and have a loathing for us. Friend, if Jesus appears thus to you, then you are lost. If you no longer have this confidence: Nevertheless He does not despise and shun me, but receives me; that is how heartily, how unwaveringly, and boundlessly He loves **me**, **me**, my soul, my life — if you no longer have that, then woe is you! He who can no longer anchor his trust in Jesus' love is lost. He who can no longer cling to this truth: Jesus will not cast me out, — his lot must finally be to be cast out into outer darkness.

Now, must I **still** do a lot of admonishing and urging: Come to the Passion services? In them Jesus wants to show His willingness to descend into death **for you**, and thereby He wants to show you, how much He loves you. In this blessed season He wants to write the greatness of His love indelibly into your heart. He wants to make you certain: Though every one else justly curses and condemns you, and though you rightly fear every one else, do not fear Me, do not shrink back from Me, for I love you and have loved you from everlasting, nor does My love depart from you now. Yea, My love, which suffered the pangs of hell for you, the child of hell, yearns to save you from hell. — Therefore come! Do not despise the Passion Season, its preaching, its blessing! Come, to be shown that which Jesus wants to show you:

O Love, Who once in time wast slain,
 Pierced through and through with bitter woe;
 O Love, Who wrestling thus didst gain
 That we eternal joy might know —
 O Love, I give myself to Thee,
 Thine ever, only Thine to be.

— From Hoenecke, "Wenn ich nur dich habe." Translated by Werner Franzmann.

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

The Sandusky Resolutions on Fellowship with the Missouri Synod. — The resolutions adopted by the Missouri Synod in its recent convention at St. Louis were reprinted in our last October issue. Since then the American Lutheran Church held its convention at Sandusky. Following are the resolutions there adopted in the matter, as reported in the *Lutheran Standard* for November 12, 1938.

“Since our Fellowship Commission and the Commission of the Synod of Missouri have arrived at a doctrinal agreement and since the Synod of Missouri in convention at St. Louis, has unanimously accepted this doctrinal agreement, be it

“Resolved: 1. That we raise our grateful hearts and voices to the Triune God, thanking His mercy for the guidance of the Holy Spirit by which the points of agreement have been reached.

“2. That we declare the Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod, together with the Declaration of our Commission, a sufficient doctrinal basis for church fellowship between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church.

“3. That, according to our conviction and the resolution of the Synod of Missouri, passed at its convention in St. Louis, the aforementioned doctrinal agreement is the sufficient doctrinal basis for church fellowship, and that we are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines. Nevertheless, we are willing to continue the negotiations concerning the points termed in our Declaration as ‘not divisive of Church fellowship,’ and recognized as such by the Missouri Synod’s resolutions, and instruct our Commission on Fellowship accordingly.

“4. That we understand why the Missouri Synod is for the time being not yet ready to draw the logical conclusion and immediately establish church fellowship with our Church. We, however, expect that henceforth by both sides the erection of opposition altars shall be carefully avoided and that just coordination of mission work shall earnestly be sought.

“5. That we believe that *the Brief Statement, viewed in the light of our Declaration*, is not in contradiction to the Minneapolis Theses, which are the basis of our membership in the American Lutheran Conference. *We are not willing to give up this membership.* However, we are ready to submit the aforementioned doctrinal agreement to the other members of the American Lutheran Conference for their official approval and acceptance.

“6. That, until church fellowship has been officially established, we encourage the pastors of both church bodies to meet in smaller groups in order to discuss both the doctrinal basis for union and the question of church practice.

7. "That we humbly pray to the Lord of the Church that He might guide the course of both church bodies so that we may be led to the establishment of full fellowship as an important contribution to the unity of our dear Lutheran Church in America.

"8. That we commend our Commission for its painstaking and thorough work and hereby accept and ratify the report with sincere appreciation and thanks."

It might be well to ponder earnestly the phrases we printed in italics in pt. 5. In the first place, wherever there is a divergence between Missouri's Brief Statement and the Declaration of the A. L. C. representatives the final decision is accorded to the Declaration, the Brief Statement must be "viewed in the light of" the Declaration. — Secondly, there is the emphatic declaration: We are not willing to give up our membership in the American Lutheran Conference. The convention thereby embodied in a solemn declaration the promise given by the newly elected president, Dr. Poppen, in response to greetings by Dr. Gullixson, president of the American Lutheran Conference. Said Dr. Poppen: "The work of the American Lutheran Conference has just well begun, and we say that with full awareness of the implications. We are not saying 'Farewell' to you or your Synod or the American Lutheran Conference, but 'Auf Wiedersehen'!"

M.

Sandusky Resolutions on Fellowship with the U. L. C. A. — We simply reprint the following report contained in the *Lutheran Standard* for November 12, 1938.

"Concerning fellowship with the United Lutheran Church, the Fellowship Convention unanimously expressed itself as follows:

"The illness of representatives of both the United Lutheran Committee and of our own did not permit a satisfactory meeting (the United Lutheran Group lacking a quorum and asking permission to consult the absent members of their Committee). So far three meetings have been held during the last four years. In the first two meetings perfect agreement was reached in two disputed matters, while in a third point only partial agreement has been attained.

"We are fully conscious of the fact that we live in a time when a united front of Lutheranism in our country is of the utmost importance, but we are also convinced that a united front avails little and is not pleasing to God unless it is based upon unity in doctrine and accompanied by Scriptural practice. For this reason and on account of the fact that the negotiations during the last three years showed, under the blessing of God, a marked progress, and since we believe in the guidance of the Holy Spirit who is ever to lead His Church into all truth, be it

"Resolved: 1. That, with gratitude to God and His Holy Spirit, we take recognition of the repeated desires that have been expressed for fellowship between the United Lutheran Church and the American Lutheran Church and for the great progress which has been made towards such

fellowship since conferences between our respective Commissions have been held.

"2. That, we therefore instruct our Committee to resume negotiations with the official Committee of the United Lutheran Church without delay in the interest of removing difficulties, doctrinal and practical, which may now exist.

"3. That, here again we humbly implore the Lord of the Church to guide us, His servants, in our efforts to strengthen the walls of Zion and to make our Church more useful in service and more worthy of His blessing."

We wonder how doctrinal difficulties that separate two church bodies can be removed by a joint committee. Since honest doctrinal confessions are merely the expressions of the heart's convictions, the proper way to remove such difficulties would be to change the convictions of a body first, to win the hearts for the truth, and then let the confession follow naturally. — What can men do to strengthen the walls of Zion? Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. Let us not be deceived as though the Church's strength lay in numbers and organization. Build thou, O God, the walls of Jerusalem. Of Zion it shall be said . . . the Highest himself shall establish her. We pray the 46th Psalm, being still, to know that the Lord is God. M.

Comment by the Lutheran Witness on the Sandusky Resolutions.

— The *Lutheran Witness* for November 24, 1938, reprints the all-important paragraph five of the Sandusky resolutions, and then comments on each of its three sentences. The text of the comment, with the italics retained as found in the *Witness*, reads as follows.

"The first sentence declares that the joint committee report adopted at St. Louis and Sandusky is not in contradiction to the Minneapolis Theses. This document consists of articles agreed to by representatives of the Iowa, Ohio, and Buffalo synods (since 1930 called the American Lutheran Church) and the Norwegian Lutheran Church. They assert that the Bible is definitely inspired and without error; that the Lutheran Confessions are throughout in agreement with the Word of God; that cooperation in strictly church-work presumes agreement in the pure doctrine 'and in the confession of the same in word and deed.' The lodges are defined as anti-Christian societies, separation from which is the duty of a Christian. We can only say that we find the traditional position of the Missouri Synod in these statements. The Minneapolis Theses are incomplete and do not cover every point in controversy. But they contain no error.

"The A. L. C. next declares that it is not willing to give up membership in the American Lutheran Conference. The St. Louis resolutions do not call for such separation. They do, however, record the agreement

between the A. L. C. and Missouri Synod committees (now adopted by both bodies) that 'establishment of church-fellowship between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod *will depend also* on the establishment of doctrinal agreement with the aforementioned *Brief Statement* (Missouri Synod) and the *Declaration* (A. L. C.) *on the part of those church bodies with which the American Lutheran Church is in fellowship.*' (*Proceedings*, p. 226.) This refers to the American Lutheran Conference. The third sentence in the paragraph quoted from the Sandusky resolutions declares the readiness to carry out this promise."

We should have liked to see some comment also on the phrase in the first sentence: that the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod is to be "viewed in the light of the *Declaration*" of the A. L. C. Commissioners, a phrase which according to our understanding makes the *Declaration* the final arbiter. M.

The Lutheran Sentinel on Inter-Synodical Committee Reports. — The *Lutheran Sentinel*, official organ of the Norwegian Synod of the American Lutheran Church, in its issue for December 12, 1938, carried a very noteworthy Declaration by its Editorial Board. The position seems to be well taken. In the following reprint of the document the italics are ours.

"The Sentinel, up to the present time, has refrained from informing its readers as to the results of negotiations between inter-synodical committees of the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church. The committees arrived at an agreement which, with certain provisions, was adopted by the St. Louis convention of the Missouri Synod in June of this year, as a doctrinal basis for future church fellowship with the American Lutheran Church. In our judgment *this agreement leaves much to be desired as a doctrinal basis for fellowship* between synods that have been in serious and mutually acknowledged doctrinal disagreement for decades.

"Since the St. Louis convention, the American Lutheran Church has held its 1938 convention in Sandusky, Ohio, and has, in its resolutions relative to the Inter-synodical Committee Report, made *statements which to us seem to render a continuation of the present move towards fellowship impossible.*

"Until our brethren of the Missouri Synod, now realizing the implications of the St. Louis resolutions in the light of the Sandusky resolutions, have had ample time and opportunity to express, through their official organs, their reactions to the Sandusky resolutions, we deem it proper not to enter into any further discussion of this subject in our church papers."

More than two weeks before this issue of the *Sentinel* arrived at our desk the *Lutheran Witness* had spoken in a comment, which we reproduce in another item. M.

President Dr. Gullixson at Sandusky. — In another paragraph we briefly quoted the response of President Dr. Poppen to the greetings conveyed by President Dr. Gullixson. There is something significant about this exchange of greetings beyond the point we indicated elsewhere. Both the American Lutheran Church and the Norwegian Lutheran Church are milestones in the present union movement. For that reason we reprint the paragraph from the *Lutheran Standard* (for October 29, 1938) telling of the event at Sandusky, underscoring the words of Dr. Gullixson which are indicative of the spirit of the union movement, whether we are aware of it or not.

"In his greetings to our Church, Dr. Gullixson called attention to the fact that both the Norwegian Lutheran Church and our American Lutheran Church are the result of mergers and that because of this these two bodies have 'unique histories in the unfolding process of Lutheran history in America.' In the process of their merging both bodies, declared Dr. Gullixson, learned that the giving up of names of independent existence as separate synods is 'not an agony unto dissolution but unto more vigorous life.' President Gullixson referred to the prominent part played by the Norwegian Lutheran Church and our own body in the formation of the American Lutheran Conference, which, he declared, deserves to be named, 'The Needed Agency in the Unfolding of Lutheran Destinies in America.' In the midst of a world in transiency in both country and city, the distinguished head of the American Lutheran Conference declared that *the Lutheran Church has the duty and responsibility of helping to build America into the nation she is to be* and invoked God's richest blessing and immediate guidance upon our deliberations in the convention.

"In his response, President Poppen asked that our thanks be conveyed to Dr. J. A. Aasgaard, president of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, for the greeting which he sent through Dr. Gullixson and he assured Dr. Gullixson as president of the American Lutheran Conference that what he had said about the possibility of fruitful cooperation in the Conference states our own convictions in that regard. 'The work of the American Lutheran Conference,' affirmed President Poppen, 'has just well begun, and we say that with full awareness of the implications. We are not saying Farewell to you or your Synod or the American Lutheran Conference, but *Auf Wiedersehen!*'"

If the words we underscored were found in the platform of some political party we would pass them by, but when a church body writes them into its program the duty of brotherly love impels us to raise our voice in warning. To conduct the affairs of state properly, God has given us intelligence and the natural law. To the church has been committed the Gospel of salvation. The affairs of the state are regulated by law: by the laws of organization, of finance, of logic, of physical force, of expediency, of compromise; while the church has but one means of doing her work: the testimony of the truth. If the church forgets about her

task and attempts to shift her work to matters of state — be they social, political, economical — the results must prove disastrous to both state and church. The Social Gospel in any form is a will-o'-the-wisp. M.

Dr. Knubel in Sandusky. — Die Amerikanische Lutherische Kirche (A. L. C.) tauschte in diesem Jahre Grüße mit der Vereinigten Lutherischen Kirche in Amerika (U. L. C. A.) aus. Der Präses der U. L. C. A., Dr. Knubel, im Amt seit der Gründung des genannten Kirchenkörpers, erschien persönlich in Sandusky, wo die A. L. C. ihre Versammlung hielt.

Wir nehmen hier Notiz von diesen Vorgängen, weil in der Gegenwart besondere Anstrengungen gemacht werden, die drei großen Lutherischen Kirchenkörper unseres Landes einander näher zu bringen. Als die A. L. C. vor zehn bis zwölf Jahren gegründet werden sollte, wurde ein englischer Name, der „Synode der Mitte“ bedeutete, ernstlich als Name für den neuen Körper in Vorschlag gebracht in dem Sinne, daß dieser eben eine Art Mittelstellung zwischen der liberalen U. L. C. A. und der konservativen Synodalkonferenz einnehmen werde. Daß die A. L. C. eine solche Mittelstellung tatsächlich einzunehmen sucht, zeigt sie unter anderem auch dadurch, daß sie beide Hände zur Verbrüderung ausstreckt, die eine nach der U. L. C. A., die andere nach der Synodalkonferenz. An anderer Stelle bringen wir die Beschlüsse, die in Sandusky über die Annäherung zwischen der Missouri-Synode (Synodalkonferenz) und der A. L. C. gefaßt wurden; hier der Bericht im „Kirchenblatt“ über Dr. Knubels Ansprache.

„Dr. Knubels Ansprache muß als einer der Höhepunkte auf der Synode bezeichnet werden. Er schüttete in seinem Grußwort sein Herz vor der Synode aus und sprach offen und unumwunden von dem Verhältnis zwischen seiner und unserer Kirche.

„Sein Gruß, sagte er, sei umstrahlt vom Glanz der Vergangenheit; zwischen seinem Kirchenkörper und unserem, bzw. den drei Synoden, die zur Amerikanischen Lutherischen Kirche verschmolzen sind, hätten ja so viele enge Verbindungen bestanden.

„Zweitens sei sein Gruß der, mit dem ein begnadigter Sünder seinen Bruder, der von derselben göttlichen Gnade umfassen ist, begrüßt; das sei ja das Grundelement im Luthertum, daß wir uns gerechtfertigt wüßten aus Gnaden allein um Christi willen; diese Gnade aber, die wir über alles hochpreisen, verbinde uns Lutheraner im tiefsten Grunde.

„Drittens sei sein Gruß ganz offen ein Wunsch nach Gemeinschaft mit unserer Kirche. Gewiß könne die Vereinigte Lutherische Kirche auch allein ihren Weg gehen, und wenn es nötig wäre, würde sie ihn ja auch allein gehen müssen, aber es wäre ihr Wunsch nicht, allein zu bleiben. Er konstatierte, daß es eigentlich nur ein Teil eines einzigen Satzes wäre, über den sich die Vertreter seiner und unserer Kirche nicht hätten einigen können, und er sagte rund heraus, daß die von seiner Kirche angenommenen Sätze vom ‚Worte Gottes‘ vor allen Dingen deshalb angenommen worden wären, damit die Glieder seines eigenen Kirchenkörpers selber gestärkt würden.

„Viertens sei mit seinem Gruße herzlichste Hochachtung vor unserer Amerikanischen Lutherischen Kirche verbunden. Er dachte dabei nicht nur an die Vorgeschichte, sondern auch an die Leistungen seit unserer Verschmelzung; er meinte, ein außenstehender Beobachter könne ein besseres Urtheil über unsere innere Einigkeit und unser Zusammenstehen abgeben als wir selber, die wir mitten im Verschmelzungsprozeß stehen. Diese unsere innere Solidarität achte er so hoch, daß er nicht im entferntesten daran denken würde, irgendetwas zu sagen oder zu tun, was sie gefährden könnte. Unsere Existenz sei von Gott, ebenso die seiner Kirche. Wenn zwischen den beiden Kirchenkörpern hier und da offene Türen wären, so hoffe er, daß nichts geschehen möchte, was diese Türen wieder zuschlage.“

„Zum Schluß richtete Dr. Knubel einen zündenden Appell an unsere Kirche. Er wies darauf hin, daß Bischof Meiser von Bayern nach seinem Besuch in Amerika vor zwei Jahren dies Wort gesagt hat: ‚Es ist mir klar geworden, daß ein Stück Zukunft der Lutherischen Kirche in Amerika liegt und daß, wenn es erst einmal gelungen sein wird, die verschiedenen Lutherischen Kirchenkörper Amerikas noch fester untereinander zu verbinden, die Lutherische Kirche der ganzen Welt einen starken und kräftigen Auftrieb erhalten wird.‘ Konfessionelles Luthertum hat unserem eigenen Lande so viel zu schenken, hat der ganzen Welt einen besonderen Dienst zu leisten, hat eine unveräußerliche Verantwortung vor Gott. Wenn wir uns unserer Aufgabe nicht entziehen wollen, müssen wir uns vor Gottes Angesicht fragen, ob wir nicht näher aneinander heranrücken können und so in engerer Gemeinschaft als Brüder zusammenhalten und in wirklicher Glaubensverbundenheit unsere Pflicht erfüllen wollen.“

Soweit Dr. Knubel.

„Dr. Poppen antwortete mit kurzen, aber herzlichen Worten auf Dr. Knubels innige Begrüßung und sprach es aus, daß — allen anderslautenden Gerüchten zum Trost — die Amerikanische Lutherische Kirche auch mit der Vereinigten Lutherischen Kirche in Kirchengemeinschaft zu treten sucht auf Grund echter und biblischer Glaubenseinigkeit.“

Das englische Organ der A. L. C., der „Lutheran Standard“, berichtete etwas ausführlicher über den tiefen Eindruck, den Dr. Knubels Rede gemacht hatte. In einer Nummer (vom 5. November) heißt es:

„The resolutions passed in the matter of continuing with renewed zeal the effort, under God's guidance and blessing, to lay a satisfactory basis for church fellowship with the United Lutheran Church were given tremendous impetus by the personal appearance of Dr. F. H. Knubel, first and only president of the United Lutheran Church, who addressed the convention on Tuesday morning and deeply impressed all who heard him with the earnestness of his desire for the consummation of this fellowship.“

Darauf erfolgte in der nächsten Nummer folgender Erguß:

„Dr. Knubel's address was 'like apples of gold in pictures of silver.' Its golden message, manifestly coming from an honest and good heart that earnestly desires to see closer fellowship between

his church body and our own, was expressed in diction of sterling silver. Had we been a delegate, and had a motion been in order after President Knubel had opened his heart to us, we would have moved for the consummation of closer fellowship with The United Lutheran Church then and there. For Dr. Knubel had approached us in the manner that, according to our deepest conviction, is the most spiritual approach to church fellowship among followers of Christ. He brought to us 'a greeting of sinners to sinners,' humbly confessing that 'the United Lutheran Church in America is conscious of how far from perfection she is in faith and life and work.' And then he added: 'But while thus greeting you as sinners to sinners, there is the consciousness in all of us, whenever we think of our sins, of that changeless, perfect grace of God in Jesus Christ whereby we are justified and sanctified. It is the fundamental element in Lutheranism.' That way lies real hope for closer fellowship among the Lutherans of America, for God Himself has promised: To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word, Is. 66, 2. When we join in humbling ourselves before the God against whom we all have sinned (there being no difference in this regard), God comes closer to us, we come closer to God, and all of us come closer to each other. That way and that way alone lies real, lasting, fruitful Christian fellowship."

So richtig es ist, daß allein der rechtfertigende Glaube die Herzen zu wahrer Einigkeit verbindet, so ist doch auf der andern Seite auch das wahr, daß der Glaube allein aus dem unfehlbaren Gottesworte geboren wird, daß daher der Glaube gefährdet ist, sobald die Inspirationslehre angetastet wird.

M.

Dr. Schuette's Reception in Baltimore. — Dr. Walter E. Schuette, President of the Eastern Conference of the American Lutheran Church, represented his synod as a "fraternal delegate" at the convention of the United Lutheran Church of America in Baltimore. The "Lutheran" for October 19, 1938, reports:

"Very cordially he brought greetings from his body, declaring that that body, like the United Lutheran Church, is thoroughly grounded on the Bible and the Confessions of the Church. He referred to the fact that atheism, materialism and modernism are very seriously affecting the thinking of the Christian world, and suggested the need of a common front on the part of all our Lutheran forces in the defense of the faith once delivered unto the saints. As an illustration, he suggested that the Church use the hammer and chisel in carving boldly its testimony against these dangerous tendencies of the times. Obviously there were those who expected to hear something about the subject of a closer alliance between our several bodies; but not a word was suggested in that direction."

Dr. Melhorn, who was called upon by President Knubel to respond, said in part:

"I ask your notice while you are on the floor of the convention to the reports and recommendations that deal with our relationships with other bodies. Without exception you will see that no surrender of Lutheran principles is involved in the connections we have with the great Foreign, Home Mission and Educational Conference, with the World Council of Churches, with the Lutheran World Convention and with the National Lutheran Council. Indeed we are happy in all of these associations because through several of them we are in co-operation with members and commissioners of the American Lutheran Church, among them Dr. Ralph H. Long, Executive Secretary of the National Lutheran Council and member of the Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Convention. — There is a specific objective in thus directing your attention to items of the program of this convention. The reference permits me to express to you, and through you to your great American Lutheran Church, what is our dominant feeling in the sphere of Lutheran relations. We greet you as a fellow Lutheran. We plead with you as a fellow servant of Christ in times of great anxiety and opportunity. It is our conviction that Lutheranism abroad has at times been so intent upon reflections from and upon what is past as to be unprepared for duties that approached it. There are times when correction should yield place to conquest in order that conquest might work correction. If in your appraisal of this convention you decide that our faith in God, our dependence on grace, our loyalty to the historic confessions are our equipment for advance; if we seem courteous rather than concerned deeply about problems that confronted past generations, and if our sense of need impels us to ask you to share with us an attack on organized evil, you will correctly interpret our desires."

It does seem strange that the "fraternal delegate" of the A. L. C. to the U. L. C. convention should remain silent on a question which occupies a prominent place in the thought of all members of both church bodies. Dr. Hein at Savannah spoke his mind in unmistakable terms.

President Knubel on Growing Unity among Lutherans. — In another paragraph we reproduce the Declaration of a committee of eminent theologians of the U. L. C. A. on the Word of God and the Scriptures. Though there are many important truths confessed in the declaration the significant shortcoming lies in this that Verbal Inspiration is not so much as mentioned; in fact, the impression seems inescapable that the very aim of the statements is to eliminate it, at least to reduce it to the status of an Open Question, a doctrine disagreement on which is not to be considered as divisive of church fellowship. Dr. Knubel was chairman of the committee.

The Lutheran for October 5, 1938, reports in full the sermon preached by Dr. Knubel in the opening service of the recent U. L. C. A. convention

held in Baltimore. His text was Mt. 18, 20: Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. One part of the sermon is inscribed: "Unity among Lutherans Growing." We here reproduce it as we find it in the *Lutheran* on p. 24.

"What is to be said at this time also of the unity of all Lutherans, especially in America? I sincerely believe that it actually exists here (and is growing throughout the world), partly because all Lutheran bodies in America hold genuinely to the same confessions, but chiefly *because at heart we are all devoted to the pure Gospel*. That unity ought to be openly acknowledged by all. It is a joy to know that a rapidly increasing number in all Lutheran bodies are of the same persuasion. It would seem, however, that at the present moment the United Lutheran Church in America is regarded by some bodies as unworthy of that recognition. The immediate reason would appear to be our approach to the Scriptures in that we, with Luther, and the Confessions, believe that the Gospel is the true approach, believe that the Gospel is the center and key of the Scriptures, believe that the Word of God is primarily the Gospel, believe that the Gospel is our chief assurance of the divine character of the Scriptures and especially their inspiration. The crucial difference, developed in recent discussions, rests in the matter of the verbal inspiration of an original text of the Scriptures (which of course does not exist), including every numerical, geographical, historical, or other purely secular statement.

"What is our responsibility in the face of these conditions? We must with our founders rejoice over the fulfilled promise we possess in our own unity, but recognize longingly the greater promises not as yet possessed. We must rid ourselves of any state of mind that finds more pleasure in disagreeing with other Lutherans than in agreeing with them. God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. We must patiently free ourselves of faults as God's grace reveals them to us. We must be mindful of the constant threats to the pure Gospel, this treasure of Lutheranism — threats perhaps more violent and powerful in these days than ever — and pray for the acknowledged unity of all Lutherans in the Gospel. We must appeal to such bodies as do not recognize us, asking them if their present tendencies will not ultimately place other things before the Gospel and thus destroy the divine power and wisdom of Lutheran testimony."

When Dr. Knubel bases all church unity on faith in the Gospel, we heartily agree. Faith in the Gospel is the strongest bond of unity, in fact it is the only bond. In another part of the sermon Dr. Knubel beautifully enlarges on this point. "The Church lives alone by the Gospel and for the Gospel. Her one strength and her one purpose on earth is this gospel of salvation. Her all-controlling message is that God grieves to see men dying inevitably in sin, and saves them by His crucified and risen Son, and gathers together these forgiven sinners in the name of His Son. The point of emphasis is that the Church lives and is held together by

something the almighty God does and not by anything that puny man does. This is just another ideology to the world, a stumbling block to the Jew, foolishness to the Greek, but to us who are saved it is the wisdom and the power of God."

But right here we wish to add that in this way, by faith in the Gospel, not only all Lutherans of America, or even of the world, but all true Christians are united in the *una sancta*. It is an invisible bond, binding together in an invisible body. True, this spiritual unity should also find external expression in church fellowship, but the way to this leads through the medium of confession. Only by means of confession in word and deed can the invisible faith of the heart become manifest before men. Thus, though church fellowship rests ultimately on the community of faith, it must be founded immediately on a common confession. Differences in the confession form a barrier to the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship. To ignore existing differences in the confession militates against the very spirit of the Gospel truth. Unions declared in spite of confessional differences substitute for the organic unity of the spirit produced by the Gospel some artificial form of organization based on legal regulations. To illustrate. The former Iowa Synod, by proclaiming the doctrine of Open Questions and by granting to its members the privilege to preach and teach in the church diametrically opposed views on, *e. g.*, Antichrist, the Millennium, etc., was in so far a union based on human agreement.

The real unity of the Church is the product of the life-giving Gospel, and the external expression must spring from the same source.

Dr. Knubel points to a difference in confession which still keeps several Lutheran bodies of our country apart. It is the doctrine concerning the Scriptures. He is in error when he defines the difference as purely a matter of approach. We agree with him when he says, "the Gospel is the true approach . . . it is the center and key of the Scripture." There is no difference here. The difference arises when Gospel and Scripture are brought into opposition, when the Gospel is used as a subterfuge to attack the inerrancy of the Scriptures in matters not directly of the Gospel content of the Scriptures, such as historical data, etc. In another part of the same sermon Dr. Knubel does just this to a certain extent.

"How significant it is that Luther in his explanation of the third article of the creed *does not say that it is the Scriptures, but that it is the Gospel by which the Holy Ghost 'gathers' the whole Christian Church on earth. How staunchly the Augsburg Confession defines the Church as 'the congregation of saints in which the Gospel is rightly taught' and that 'unto the true unity of the Church it is sufficient to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel.'* Hold it firmly, the Church is gathered together by the Gospel."

Very true, the Church is gathered together by the Gospel, but not by the Gospel in opposition to the Scriptures. M.

Racine Resolutions on Church Union. — From a report in the *Lutheran Witness* for November 29, 1938, we gather the following. "At Racine, Wis., the American Lutheran Conference met in regular convention. . . . It is to the constituent synods of this body that the American Lutheran Church has promised to submit the 1938 articles of union. The convention at Racine accepted the report of its Commission on Lutheran Cooperative Endeavor, of which the salient paragraph reads as follows:

"That the American Lutheran Conference take under further serious consideration the whole matter discussed in the commission's report in regard to the principles and the *modus operandi* of inviting and establishing fellowship and cooperation between the general bodies who are now members of the Conference and those who are not members of the Conference and the whole matter of Lutheran Church unity in order that the American Lutheran Conference may more fully serve as one of the unifying agencies within the Lutheran Church in America."

After adding that "at the same meeting a Commission on Lutheran Church Unity was created to report in two years", the *Lutheran Witness* further comments: "We do not at this time know whether the American Lutheran Church will await the report of this new commission or whether its officers will request the individual synods — Norwegians, Swedes, Danish Church — to declare their acceptance or rejection of the articles through which the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod removed the obstacle of doctrinal disagreement."

What attitude the Swedish Augustana Synod will take in the matter may be gleaned from the fact that this body sent greetings and felicitations on the occasion of the Missouri Synod's Centennial. President Dr. P. O. Bersell delivered the message, saying, among others: "We rejoice over every evidence of closer approachment of Lutheran bodies. Therefore it gladdens us to note that the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod are well on their way to the establishment of mutual pulpit- and altar-fellowship. This is decidedly a forward step, and we pray not only for its consummation but that it may be followed by other similar actions until we Lutherans will all recognize one another as brethren at the altar of the Lord."

Dr. Bersell, however, does not advocate "a kind of tolerance which in the name of brotherly love receives every type of error with open arms." He urges "confessional loyalty", and his synod endorsed his plea that Lutherans "be steadfast and unshaken in our confession." M.

Declaration of the U. L. C. A. on the Word of God and the Scriptures. — Since the main difficulty which was so far encountered by committees of other Lutheran church bodies (the Missouri Synod, and the American Lutheran Church) in discussing doctrinal matters with representatives of the United Lutheran Church in America pertained to the doctrine of inspiration, leading men in the U. L. C. A. prepared a declaration to be submitted to the convention at Baltimore. *The Lu-*

theran for November 2, 1938, reports that "with slight changes the declaration received the approval of the convention." We here reproduce the text as originally submitted, indicating in footnotes the changes so far as we were able to ascertain them from the *Lutheran* and the *Luth. Herold*.

"(In order that all misunderstandings and misconceptions of this declaration, or of any of its parts, may be avoided, the United Lutheran Church in America declares in advance that it does not regard the statements therein contained as altering or amending the Confessions of the Church in any particular, or as changing the doctrinal basis of the United Lutheran Church, set forth in Article II of the Constitution. On the contrary it considers this declaration to be nothing more than a desirable statement at the present time of beliefs which are in full harmony with the Scriptures and Confessions.)¹⁾

"I. We believe that 'the only rule and standard, according to which all dogmas and teachers are to be esteemed and judged, are nothing else than the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testaments' (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Intro., I, cf. Sol. Decl., cp. Summary, 1). We also accept the teaching of the whole Lutheran Church that the Scriptures have this unique authority, because they are the Word of God.

"II. Both in the Scriptures and in the Confessions of the Church, this term Word of God is used in more than one sense. For this reason it is important that we should understand what these different senses are and what we mean when we call the Scriptures by this name.

"III. We believe that, in its most real sense, the Word of God is the Gospel, *i. e.*, the message concerning Jesus Christ, His life, His work, His teaching, His sufferings and death, His resurrection and ascension for our sakes, and the saving love of God thus made manifest in Him.

"We believe that in and through this Gospel the Holy Spirit comes to men, awakening and strengthening their faith, and leading them into lives of holiness. (cf. Explanation of the Third Article in Luther's Small Catechism.) For this reason we call the Word of God, or the Gospel, a means of grace (A. C., Arts V, XX; F. C., Epitome, Ch. II, 4-6, 19).

"IV. We believe that, in a wider sense, the Word of God is that revelation of Himself which began at the beginning of human history, continued throughout the ages, and reached its fulness and completion in the life and work of Jesus Christ our Lord (Gal. 4, 4; Heb. 1, 1ff.).

"We believe that this revelation was given to men chosen and inspired by God Himself to interpret the historical events in which God made Him-

¹⁾ This introduction was changed by the convention. The *Lutheran* says: "Its wording was so altered as to make the declaration independent of any particular controversy or discussion. The amendment made it timeless."

self known, and that this history of His revelation also belongs to the Word of God in this wider sense.²⁾

“V. We believe that the whole revelation of God to men, which reached completion in Christ, the crucified and risen Savior, is faithfully recorded and preserved in the Holy Scriptures, through which alone it comes to us. We therefore accept the Scriptures as the infallible truth of God in all matters that pertain to His revelation and our salvation.

“We also believe that the Scriptures are now, and will be for all time to come, God’s revelation of Himself. And because He continues to make Himself known through them, we believe that the Scriptures also are the Word of God, and this is the third sense in which that term is used.

“VI. We believe that, as God’s revelation is one and has its center in Jesus Christ, so the Scriptures also are a unity, centering in the same Lord and Christ. Therefore we believe that the whole body of the Scriptures in all its parts is the Word of God.

“This should not be understood to mean that we place all parts of the Scriptures on one plane.”³⁾ They have their more important and their less important parts, and the measure of their importance must always be the closeness of their relation to Christ, our Lord, and to the Gospel, which is the Word of God in the most real sense (see above, No. III).

“We believe that there is a difference between the Scriptures of the Old Testament and of the New Testament. The Old Testament is chiefly prophecy; the New Testament, fulfillment of this prophecy. The Scriptures of the Old Testament testify of the Christ Who was to come (Jh. 5, 39; Lk. 4, 21; Lk. 24, 27; 2 Cor. 1, 20). The Scriptures of the New Testament are God’s testimony to the Incarnate Son of God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Who by His suffering, death, and resurrection has reconciled us to God, and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5, 19). Nevertheless, every portion of the Scriptures has its own place in God’s total revelation of Himself.

“We believe that the canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament have been sanctioned by the Lord Jesus Himself and His apostles (Mt. 5, 17f.; Jh. 10, 35; Rom. 1, 2; 1 Cor. 15, 3; etc.). We also believe that the Scriptures of the New Testament were accepted as canonical by the Christian Church under the guidance of the same Spirit of truth of Whom the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, He shall guide you into all truth (Jh. 16, 13).

“VII. We believe that the whole body of the Scriptures is inspired by God. God’s saving truth, which comes to us through the Scriptures,

²⁾ According to the *Luth. Herald* the words we printed in italics were dropped by the convention.

³⁾ The words in italics were dropped by the convention, according to the *Luth. Herald*.

and not otherwise, is God's own revelation of Himself. The writers of the Scriptures have been His agents in its transmission. The power to receive and record it has been bestowed by Him. The act of God, by which this power was conferred, we call by the Scriptural name of inspiration (2 Tim. 3, 16).

"We do not venture to define the mode or manner of this inspiration, since God's ways of using human instruments are past our finding out. But we accept the inspiration of the Scriptures as a fact of which our faith in God, through Christ, assures us, and this assurance is supported by the words of Scripture in which the fact of inspiration is asserted or implied (1 Cor. 2, 12; 2 Tim. 3, 16; 2 Pet. 1, 21).⁴⁾

"The Scriptures are God's testimony to His Son, Who is their center (see above, No. V). They are God's Word, the means through which God leads us to faith in Christ (see above, No. III), and in our faith we see their testimony as God's own. Thus we know that they came from Him, are inspired by Him, and are God's Word.

"VIII. Holding these things to be true, we believe that the Scriptures are :

- "1. The spring from which the saving power of God continuously flows into the lives of men;
- "2. The only source of truly Christian doctrine; and
- "3. The only rule and norm for Christian faith and life."

So far the text. On the action taken by the convention regarding this Declaration the *Lutheran* for November 2, 1938, reports the following details. "The second resolution called for approval of the declaration on the Word of God and the Scripture. This consists of eight items and the introduction. Each item was subjected to careful scrutiny and several delegates spoke concerning them separately and as a whole. But there was no opposition to the declaration in so far as its main significance is concerned. The doctrine known technically as 'The Verbal Inspiration of the Bible' was deemed out of accord with the Lutheran Confessions, and the paragraphs drafted by the Commission and the Committee of Theologians were approved, 'no one contradicting'."

We heartily agree with Dr. W. Arndt, who submitted the above Declaration to a critical review in the *Concordia Theological Monthly* for December, 1938, from which we here quote the seventh point.

"7. Our chief complaint, however, has not to do with the lack of clearness just adverted to, but with the failure of the document to confess the infallibility or inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures in every point. The commissioners reject the teaching of the complete infallibility of the Bible, as we have seen; hence they cannot confess it. They, however, do not hold that those who do accept this infallibility are guilty of taking an un-Lutheran position; their declaration does hence not reject such teach-

⁴⁾ This list of proof texts is missing in the *Luth. Herald*.

ing. In other words, they regard acceptance of the teaching which has been current in the Lutheran Church, that the Bible in all respects is inerrant, as a matter on which the Church need not take a definite stand. It is here where the commissioners seriously err."

We join with Dr. Arndt also in his prayer "that renewed study of the character of the Scriptures and the statements which they make about themselves will lead those U. L. C. A. theologians who have departed from the well-known Lutheran position to return to the rock on which the Church has won its victories, the inerrant Word of God." M.

A. L. C. and U. L. C. Agreement and Disagreement on Inspiration. — When during the past two years representatives of the A. L. C. and the U. L. C. A. met to find a basis for church fellowship their discussion focused upon "The Scriptures, and particularly their inspiration." The *Lutheran* for October 5, 1938, reports that agreement was reached except with reference to one phrase. We here copy the text of the agreement as far as it was adopted by representatives of both church bodies, and then note the difference in the continuation.

"1. The Bible (that is, the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments) is primarily not a code of doctrines, still less a code of morals, but the history of God's revelation, for the salvation of mankind, and of man's reaction to it. It preserves for all generations and presents, ever anew, this revelation of God which culminated and centers in Christ, the Crucified and Risen One. It is itself the Word of God, His permanent revelation, aside from which, until Christ's return in glory, no other is to be expected.

"2. The Bible consists of a number of separate books, written at various times, on various occasions, and for various purposes. Their authors were living, thinking personalities, each endowed by the Creator with an individuality of his own, and each having his peculiar style, his own manner of presentation, even at times using such sources of information as were at hand.

"Nevertheless, by virtue of a unique operation of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3, 16; 2 Pet. 1, 21) by which He supplied to the Holy Writers content and fitting word (2 Pet. 2, 21; 1 Cor. 2, 12, 13) the separate books of the Bible are related to one another, and, taken together, constitute . . ."

Constitute what? The A. L. C. men answered "**one organic whole without contradiction and error (Jh. 10, 35)**"; while the U. L. C. men said "**a complete, perfect, unbreakable whole of which Christ is the center (Jh. 10, 35)**".

Thus it appears that the U. L. C. A. is not ready to accept the statement that the Bible is without contradiction, that it is the infallible truth, meaning particularly "also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters" (Missouri's Brief Statement).

The term "organic whole", or a "complete, perfect, unbreakable whole", is not exactly to our liking. It reminds us too vividly of an error

stressed by representatives of the then Ohio Synod during the inter-synodical meetings of 35 years ago, when they maintained that a doctrine can not be established as scriptural by simply summing up the various statements of the *sedes doctrinae*, but that over and above this the "Schriftganzes", or Analogy of Faith as it was also called, must be consulted. Yes, in the last analysis, it was the "Schriftganzes" that would determine whether a doctrine might stand as the *sedes* presented it, or whether it must be modified to bring it into harmony with other doctrines. This abuse of the analogy of faith was then vigorously opposed by the leading theologians of the Synodical Conference.

The U. L. C. A. expression "*of which Christ is the center*" certainly voices an important Scripture truth. All Scripture is given to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. But when this article is used to crowd out of the picture the inerrancy of the Scriptures in secular or any matters, this constitutes a flagrant abuse, bordering on blasphemy.

Nor can words like the following cover this denial. The theses of the U. L. C. A. representatives continue after the disputed phrase referred to above with these statements:

(2) "They (the separate books of the Bible) are rightly called the Word of God. This unique operation of the Holy Spirit upon the writers is named inspiration. We do not venture to define its mode, or manner, but accept it as a fact.

"3. Believing, therefore, that the Bible came into existence by this unique co-operation of the Holy Spirit and the human writers, we accept it (as a whole and in all its parts) as the permanent divine revelation, as the Word of God, the only source, rule, and norm for faith and life, and as the ever fresh and inexhaustible fountain of all comfort, strength, wisdom, and guidance for all mankind."

We fail to detect in these words a confession to the inerrancy of the Scriptures.

M.

Is a Difference in the Doctrine of Verbal Inspiration Divisive of Church Fellowship? — The U. L. C. A. does not think so. Witness a comment by the commissioners appointed to deal with representatives of the A. L. C. and of the Missouri Synod. The text is found in the *Lutheran* for October 5, 1938.

"The record of our meetings with the commissions of both the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod serves to indicate the great extent of agreement and the slight extent of disagreement. The disagreement relates furthermore to a matter of theological interpretation which in addition applies only to a non-existent original text of the Scriptures. In itself it is not a sufficient warrant to keep the various Lutheran bodies apart, especially as Lutheranism faces the conditions which were declared at length in our Savannah Convention when the commission was appointed.

It is not our judgment that we can regard their views as outside of a Lutheran conception of the Scriptures, much less that they can so regard our views."
M.

Die Weltkirchenbewegung muß aus zwei Gründen verworfen werden, weil sie ein falsches Evangelium vertritt und weil sie unter dem Deckmantel der Religion zur Übertretung des vierten Gebots verleitet.

Die Schrift sagt: „Aber so auch wir oder ein Engel vom Himmel euch würde Evangelium predigen anders, denn das wir euch gepredigt haben, der sei verflucht!“ (Gal. 1, 8). Aus diesem Fluch der Heiligen Schrift können wir ermessen, wie greulich die Sünde sei, das seligmachende ewige Evangelium in ein fortschrittliches Diesseitsevangeliem zu verkehren, die durch Christi bitteres stellvertretendes Leiden aller Welt erorbene Gnade den armen Sündern zu rauben durch Philosophie, an Stelle des Freispruchs für Verdammte ein Beruhigungs- oder Anregungsmittel für Selbstgerechte zu setzen.

Von dem Gehorsam gegen die Obrigkeit nach dem vierten Gebot schreibt der Apostel: „Jedermann sei untertan der Obrigkeit, die Gewalt über ihn hat. Denn es ist keine Obrigkeit ohne von Gott; wo aber Obrigkeit ist, die ist von Gott verordnet. Wer sich nun wider die Obrigkeit setzt, der widerstrebet Gottes Ordnung; die aber widerstreben, werden über sich ein Urteil empfangen“ (Röm. 13, 1. 2.)

Am nun gleich auf den in nachfolgender Schrift beleuchteten Fall zu kommen: aus der rechten Lehre von der Obrigkeit folgt, daß es ein furchtbares Unrecht ist, wenn die Weltkirchenkonferenzen für zwei politische Einrichtungen als notwendig aus dem Evangelium fließend Propaganda machen, nämlich 1. für westliche Demokratie im weitesten Sinne des Wortes, 2. für den westlichen Völkerbund.

An sich darf ein Christ für beides sein. Er darf auch für beide Einrichtungen kämpfen als Bürger oder Politiker, wenn nötig, dabei sogar sein Leben aufs Spiel setzend. Aber das ist nicht eine kirchliche, sondern eine bürgerliche Sache. Keine Kirche darf Demokratie und Völkerbund lehren, so wenig die „Deutschen Christen“ im Namen Christi Nationalsozialismus lehren dürfen. Wenn aber die deutsche Obrigkeit endgültig die beiden westlichen Einrichtungen verworfen hat und sich das öffentliche Leben im Lande der Reformation auf anderer Grundlage aufbaut, dann leisten die Weltkirchen, mit ihrem Bestreben, unter dem Vorwand des Evangeliums Feindschaft gegen die neue deutsche Ordnung der Dinge und Stellungnahme für die westlichen Gegenwerte in allen nichtrömischen Kirchen zu erwecken, den Christen in Deutschland einen schlechten Dienst. Sie suchen sie zu verführen zur inneren Auflehnung gegen die Obrigkeit.

Vor diesem Betrug müssen alle treuen Christen gewarnt werden. Am deretwillen, die auch in deutschen Landen Gott fürchten und an den lieben Herrn Jesum Christum glauben, muß dem scheinheiligen Wesen, das ihnen den Himmel durch ein falsches Evangelium rauben und sie in eine politische Verschwörung gegen ihr Vaterland mithineinziehen möchte, die Maske abgerissen werden.

In gleichem Sinne hat die lutherische Kirche immer gegen den Papst gezeugt. Sie hat ihn als den Antichristen offenbar gemacht, der einerseits das Gnadenevangelium verflucht und andererseits seines Gefallens die Obrigkeiten zu stürzen sucht. Ganz ähnlich macht die lutherische Kirche Amerikas dem Freimaurertum den Doppelvorwurf, es lehre die Rechtfertigung durch Werke und es gefährde als Geheimorganisation im Staate die freien Einrichtungen Amerikas.

Also auch solche Leser, die persönlich für die westlichen Einrichtungen sind, ja es vielleicht sogar pflichtgemäß sein müssen, werden erkennen, daß ein Weltkirchentum, das politische Ideale predigt, den Mythos predigt, Rom und dem Freimaurertum in deren Doppeltendenz gleich ist und mit Christus nichts zu tun hat. Ein in fremd' Amt greifendes Weltkirchentum ist ein Ungeheuer, das nach unferer Gewissensüberzeugung auch den Ländern, in deren Dienst es tritt, keinen wahren Nutzen bringt. Was hat Roms dreiste Machtkirche durch die Jahrhunderte dem armen italienischen Volke genützt? So wird auch die vom Anglikanismus und Kalvinismus regierte Skumene den angelsächsischen Ländern und Frankreich keinen Dauergewinn bringen.

Aber das sei ausdrücklich anerkannt, daß der Staat in diesen Ländern nicht die Aufgabe hat, zu verhindern, daß die abgefallene Kirche sich ihm als Dienerin ausliefert. Der Staat benützt alle politischen Kräfte. Verstehen sich die Kirchen selbst als politische Gegebenheiten, so mag die Staatsführung in ihrem Werke sie mit einsetzen. Der weltliche, moderne Staat kann doch diese Kirchen nicht fromm machen. Und aufheben kann er sie auch nicht. Er muß sie brauchen, wie sie sind. Wir machen weder den englischen und französischen noch den deutschen und italienischen Staatsleuten einen Vorwurf daraus, daß sie die Kirchen, die Politik treiben, für ihre völkischen Hochwerte mit Beschlag zu belegen suchen. Aber eine Kirche, die wirklich das Evangelium treibt, sollten sie mit den politischen Gemeinschaften nicht auf eine Stufe stellen. Sie sollten nie das Ansehen an sie stellen, etwas anderes neben dem Evangelium zu pflegen. Wenn es geschieht, muß die Kirche des Himmelreichs der über ihre Grenze hinausgehenden Weltmacht ungehorsam sein und doch nichts als das Evangelium verkündigen. Freiheit für die frohe Botschaft, weiter geht im Grunde die Forderung, die Christen stellen, nicht.

Aus dem treuen Gehorsam gegen das vierte Gebot entstehen für den nachdenklichen Christen Schwierigkeiten, die überbältlicher Art sind. Es muß ja jeder Christ seiner Obrigkeit, seinem Lande alles leisten, was gefordert werden kann nach dem Wort: „Seid niemand nichts schuldig“. Aber das Verhältnis zwischen den Reichen dieser Welt bleibt bis zum jüngsten Tag ein gespanntes. Niemand liegt mehr am Frieden als dem Christen. In den Gebeten der Gemeinde klingt fortwährend wieder das apostolische Anliegen: „daß wir ein ruhiges und stilles Leben führen mögen in aller Gottseligkeit und Ehrbarkeit“ (1. Tim. 2, 1). Aber einer Täuschung geben wir Christen uns nicht hin. Es gibt keinen dauernden Weltfrieden. Das Verhältnis zwischen den Weltreichen ruht nicht auf Liebe, sondern auf Vorteil und Macht. Wer nicht Hammer ist, wird Anboß sein.

Diese Spannungen sollen und dürfen die heilige Bruderliebe der wahren Christen nicht beeinträchtigen. Christi Jünger müssen selbst auf dem mörderischen Waffenfelde einander gegenüberstehen können, ohne sich als Christen zu entzweien, ohne aufzuhören, mit einander die eine heilige christliche Kirche zu bauen. Denn von der Gemeinschaft in Christo sagt die Schrift: „Hier ist kein Jude noch Grieche, hier ist kein Knecht noch Freier, hier ist kein Mann noch Weib; denn ihr seid allzumal einer in Christo“ (Gal. 3, 28).

Aber Sehnsucht erfüllt doch immer wieder unser Herz, daß wir aus der Herberge dieser Welt in unsere eigentliche Heimat kommen möchten, wo wir nicht nur dem Geiste, sondern auch dem Leibe nach frei sein werden von allem Dienst des vergänglichem Wesens. So gern wir „um des Gewissens willen“ den irdischen Ordnungen gehorchen, ihre ungeheuren Spannungen ertragen und in denselben dem Herrn dienen, so fest steht uns, daß wir hier keine bleibende Stadt haben, sondern die zukünftige suchen (Hebr. 13, 14). Unser Bürgertum ist im Himmel, von wo wir auch den Herrn Jesum Christum als Retter erwarten, der unsern irdischen Leib verwandeln wird, so daß er seinem Herrlichkeitsleibe gleichgestaltet wird, vermöge der Kraft, mit der er sich die ganze Welt untertan machen kann (Phil. 3, 20, 21).

„Sehet zu, daß euch niemand beraube durch die Philosophie und lose Verführung nach der Menschen Lehre und nach der Welt Satzung und nicht nach Christo. Denn in ihm wohnet die ganze Fülle der Gottheit leibhaftig. Und ihr seid vollkommen in ihm, welcher ist das Haupt aller Fürstentümer und Obrigkeit“ (Kol. 2, 8–10).

Vorstehendes wurde von Herrn Pastor Wilhelm Eich aus London seinem Vortrag über das Thema „Führen die Weltkirchenkonferenzen nach Canterbury?“ als Geleitwort an ausländische Leser beigelegt. Vgl. dazu unter „Wüchertisch“ S. 72.

Verordnung der spanischen Nationalregierung, den Jesuitenorden betreffend. — In unserer Aprilnummer (1938, S. 144) berichteten wir von einem Toleranzedikt der spanischen Revolutionsführer, General Franco und Herzog von Alba, in dem weitgehendste religiöse Duldsamkeit proklamiert wurde. Am 3. Mai erließ die spanische Nationalregierung eine Verordnung, den Jesuitenorden betreffend, deren Wortlaut wir hier mitteilen.

„Bei der glorreichen Wiederauferstehung der spanischen Tradition ist die Wiedereinsetzung der Gesellschaft Jesu in Spanien in die ganze Fülle ihrer Rechte ein wesentlicher Bestandteil: 1. um die ihr zugefügte Ungerechtigkeit pflichtschuldigst wiedergutzumachen; 2. weil der spanische Staat das Wesen der katholischen Kirche als vollkommene Gesellschaft in der Gesamtheit der Rechte bestätigt und anerkennt, folglich auch gehalten ist, die juristische Stellung der religiösen Genossenschaften anzuerkennen, die kanonisch approbiert wurden wie die Gesellschaft Jesu seit Papst Paul III. und später durch Pius IV. und seine Nachfolger; 3. weil die Gesellschaft Jesu ein vornehmlich spanischer Orden von großer Allgemeinbedeutung ist, der den

Höhepunkt des spanischen Weltreiches miterlebte und an seinem Geschick so lebhaften Anteil nahm, daß die Verfolgungen, die man gegen ihn ins Werk setzte in der Geschichte immer mit einer spanienfeindlichen Entwicklung Hand in Hand gehen. Schließlich und endlich aber wegen seiner umfassenden kulturellen Wirksamkeit, die so sehr zur Größe unseres Vaterlandes und zur Vermehrung des Wissenschaftsbesitzes der Menschheit beigetragen hat, daß Menendez Pelayo die Verfolgung der Gesellschaft Jesu einen tödlichen Schlag gegen die spanische Kultur und einen brutalen und verblendeten Anschlag gegen die Wissenschaft und die menschliche Bildung genannt hat.“

So berichtet die „Kleine Übersicht“ der „Auslese“ für August 1938 auf Grund einer Mitteilung in den „Eisernen Blättern“, München. M.

Revision of the American Revised Version. — The News Bulletin carries the following announcement: “The American Standard Version of the Bible, unchanged since it was published in 1901, is to be revised during the next five years, according to an announcement made by Dean Luther A. Weigle of the Yale Divinity School, chairman of the American Standard Bible Committee of the International Council of Religious Education. The work will be done under the executive direction of Prof. James Moffat of Union Theological Seminary, and will **‘embody the best results of modern scholarship as to the meaning of the Scriptures’**, and will preserve the ‘simple classic English style of the King James Version’. The American Standard Bible Committee is made up of the leading scholars of America and represents some forty Protestant denominations.”

Note the words in bold face above. Bible translation is a form of Bible interpretation. For that reason not only scholarship is required as a necessary qualification of a translator, but above all a simple faith accepting the Bible as the inspired Word of God proclaiming throughout its pages the justification of a sinner before God through the vicarious work of Christ the Savior alone. M.

Höhlenmenschen auf dem Karmel. — Folgende Notiz entnehmen wir der N. E. Z. N. „Von den wissenschaftlichen Ergebnissen der Ausgrabungen vorgeschichtlicher Menschenreste auf dem Berge Karmel gab nach vierjähriger Arbeit Sir Arthur Keith in einem Vortrag in dem Royal College of Surgeons in London ein anschauliches Bild. Die dortigen Funde sind die umfangreichsten ihrer Art, die je gemacht worden sind, und beweisen, daß dort schon Menschen in Höhlen wohnten, lange bevor die Eiszeit über Europa hereinbrach. Nach vorläufiger vorsichtiger Schätzung umfassen die Funde einen Zeitraum von etwa 100.000 Jahren. Diese Ureinwohner Palästinas stellen eine Menschenrasse dar, die dem Urtypus der weißen kaukasischen Rasse nahe verwandt ist.“

Es erscheint befremdlich, eine solche Notiz unbeanstandet und ohne Kommentar in der N. E. Z. N. zu finden. M.

Büchertisch.

Führen die Weltkirchenkonferenzen nach Canterbury? Ein Augenzeugenbericht über die Oxforder Weltkonferenz mit neuem, hochaktuellem Material von Wilhelm Esch, lutherischer Pfarrer in London. 44 Seiten, geheftet. Preis 50 Pf. — Verlag des Schriftenvereins (E. Klärner), Zwickau, Sachsen.

Dieses ist Heft 4 der Serie „Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn! Zeitfragen im Lichte der Bibel.“ Es ist ein Vortrag, den Herr Pastor Esch am 15. August 1937 in der Ev.-Luth. Dreieinigkeitskirche zu Königsberg gehalten hat. An anderer Stelle bringen wir ein Geleitwort ungekürzt zum Abdruck.

Mit klarem Auge schaut Pastor Esch die Schäden der Zeit. Die Luft ist geschwängert mit Vereinigungsgedanken und -geliüsten. Durch äußeren Zusammenschluß soll die Kirche gestärkt, ihr Einfluß erhöht werden. Dabei geht die Erkenntnis vom wahren Wesen der Kirche verloren, und die Liebe zur Wahrheit flaut ab, so daß schließlich Ja und Nein als zwei gleichberechtigte Wahrheiten behandelt werden.

Hier einige Auszüge aus dem Vortrag.

„Ich glaube, jetzt verstehen Sie zurückblickend, was die Leute in Oxford eigentlich einigte, obgleich sie so uneinig waren. Sie wollten die Macht der Kirche stärken, eine große Weltkirche zusammenbringen, die auf die Weltpolitik, auf das Weltgeschehen entscheidenden Einfluß ausüben, diese Welt äußerlich veredeln und beherrschen soll. Und all die einzelnen dort vertretenen verneinlichen Kirchen versprechen sich durch die Weltkirche eine Zunahme ihres Einflusses auf ihre Heimatwelt“ (S. 13).

„Darum läuft die ganze sogenannte ökumenische Bewegung auf eine Pilgerreise nach Canterbury hinaus. Eine verneinliche nichtrömische Christenheit sucht in äußerlicher, fleischlicher Weise ihre mankend gewordene Position zu stärken. Sie schließt sich zu diesem Zweck zu einer halbpolitischen, unter selbstsichere englische Führung tretenden Internationale zusammen. Das ist vor Gott und Menschen unser lutherisches Urteil“ (S. 13).

„Diesen Leuten geht es nicht um das Evangelium. Es geht ihnen vielmehr darum, die Welt mit weltlichen Mitteln zu verbessern, sie gesetzlich zu reformieren, die europäisch-amerikanische Kultur auf diesem Wege zu erneuern. Sie wollen im Grunde gar nicht die Kirche Jesu und nicht das Christentum. Das Ganze ist ihnen nur Mittel zum Zweck“ (S. 20).

„So führt der Wahn von der Volkskirche, der Wunsch, sich in Krisenzeit von anderen Volkskirchen stützen zu lassen, dazu, dem Weltkirchentreiben unter englischer politischer Führung willfährig zu werden. Wahres Luterium muß aus der Erkenntnis von Gesetz und Evangelium heraus dieses ganze Treiben ablehnen. Das Evangelium wird durch den zugrundeliegenden Wahn von dem irgendwie sichtbaren, menschlich herzustellenden Reich Gottes aufgehoben. Außerdem ist die halbpolitische Weltkirche Feind jedes nicht-englischen oder (bei der römischen Variante) nicht-römischen Staates, der seine Unabhängigkeit verteidigen will“ (S. 34).

Dabei kann selbstverständlich nicht das Heil des Sünders im Mittelpunkt des Interesses stehen; da stehen vielmehr soziale Ordnung, Wirk-

schaftsordnung, Krieg, Völkerbund. Zur Veranschaulichung führt Pastor Esch die Behauptung maßgebender Theologen an: „Es bestehe zwischen dem Kommunismus und der christlichen Kirche eine innere Verbindung, wichtige Grundgedanken seien ihnen gemeinsam“ (S. 16).

Er macht dazu folgende zutreffende Bemerkung: „Wie man auf diesen Bahn kommt, ist ja klar. Das Evangelium sagt, daß wir in Christo alle gleich sind (Gal. 3, 28): Hier ist kein Jude noch Grieche, hier ist kein Knecht noch Freier, hier ist kein Mann noch Weib; denn ihr seid allzumal Einer in Christo Jesu. Daß wir an himmlischen Gütern vor Gott gleich sind, verstehen die fleischlichen Leute nicht. Sie wenden den rein geistlichen Grundsatz auf die irdischen Dinge an. Wenn in der Bibel steht: Wir sind vor Gott gleich, dann sagen sie: Wir müssen alle gleich viel Geld haben, gleich viele Chancen besitzen und die gleiche Macht haben. Auf dieser Verwechslung ruht die ganze Weltkirchentheologie“ (S. 16).

Bei solcher grundsätzlichen Verkennung der Wahrheit, da die Aufgabe der Kirche auf ein ihr wesensfremdes Gebiet verschoben wird, kann es nicht wundernehmen, daß nun auch die auf diesem Gebiete, welches nach Gen. 3, 17 unter dem Fluch liegt, geltenden Regeln von der Kirche adoptiert werden. Aus einem Pfeiler und Grundfeste der Wahrheit wird sie zu einem Zweckerband von Kompromissen. Da, ut des. Wahrheit und Irrtum ziehen gemeinschaftlich am selben Joch. Darüber darf auch nicht hinwegtäuschen, daß man mit großem Ernst und Eifer zu Werke geht. „Daß die schriftlichen Vorarbeiten ernsthafter Art waren, soll natürlich nicht in Abrede gestellt werden, wenngleich sie für wahre Einigung auch nichts bedeuten, da man nicht grundsätzlich der Glaubensmischerei huldigen und nebenbei doch die Wahrheitsfrage ernst nehmen kann. — In der Weltkirchsbewegung vertragen sich alle Wahrheiten mit allen Unwahrheiten“ (S. 12 und 24).

Der einzige Rat, den Pastor Esch zu geben weiß, der aber auch völlig genügt, lautet: „Die Kirche muß allen Machtgedanken der Vergangenheit entsagen und schlecht und recht nichts anderes sein als Kirche des Evangeliums zur ewigen Rettung der Seelen. Dann braucht sie kein Weltbündnis mit abgefallenen Kirchen“ (S. 26).

Es sei noch besonders hingewiesen auf den zumal für Theologen wichtigen Anhang, der allerlei bedeutungsvolle Nachweise und Belege enthält.
M.

The Borderland of Right and Wrong. By Professor Theodore Graebner, D. D. Fourth enlarged edition. XIII plus 122 pages, 5x7½. Paper covers. Price, 40c. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This booklet was printed at first as a part of the Texas District proceedings in 1934. The first reprint was a pamphlet of 27 pages, and treated the subject in eight chapters — now expanded into eleven. On the nature of the essay in general see the review in the Q. S. for July, 1935, p. 218.

At the present moment the chapter on Christian Fellowship is of special importance. We quote with hearty approval the following paragraph.

*"The distinction that is to be made between those who err doctrinally through weakness of understanding and those who tenaciously cling to their error, yet claim the privileges of fellowship (Italics mine. M.) was brought out by Dr. C. F. W. Walther in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1868, as follows: Are we, then, to excommunicate every one as a heretic who should err in some non-fundamental point? Must we at once sever fellowship with a Church that is contaminated with an error of this nature? As already stated, this is not our opinion. What we claim is this: While not to be treated as a heresy, an error in non-fundamentals, if it contradicts a clear word of God, is to be demonstrated as invalid, to be fought and opposed with all patience and instruction. If all means have been exhausted, so that it is clear that it is not a case of weak understanding or lack of comprehension; when also in the non-fundamental error it develops that the erring one consciously and persistently contradicts the Word of God and thereby wrecks the original basis of our faith — such a one is living in mortal sin and is not to be tolerated as a brother in the faith. This applies to church denominations. An absolute unity of faith and teaching is not possible in this life, only a fundamental one. But this does not prevent us from attacking doctrines in non-fundamentals which are against the clear Word of God. Such a Church cannot be regarded as a true Church if it professes officially such errors in non-fundamentals and stubbornly persists in the same in spite of instruction and thereby weakens the organic basis; or also if a Church persists in calling religiously indifferent some departure from the clear Word of God" (p. 49).*

These clear, mild, yet firm words of Dr. Walther carry the true Gospel ring. We shall speak of that a little more in detail anon.

Differences of opinion (of a different nature from the ones referred to by Dr. Walther above) that are not to be treated as heresies, are described by John Musaeus thus (quoted on p. 47f.): "There may be a true and godly peace among churches that have disagreement and controversy regarding ceremonies if only they agree otherwise in the teaching of the faith and of morals. The same may be said about questions that develop as side-issues in the field of doctrine so long as they are of the nature that they can be affirmed or denied without affecting the Christian faith and life. . . . Such questions commonly arise regarding the use of certain technical terms in theology, the interpretation of Scripture-texts, and other matters like these." In cases like these the old theological rule would apply that wherever the Scriptures do not give a decisive answer we must acknowledge our ignorance.

In the quotation from Dr. Walther, antedating his famous ar-

ticle: "Wisse denn Herr XX und jedermann, der es wissen will, usw." by approximately three years, we note that "an error in non-fundamentals" is "not to be treated as a heresy". Fundamental articles of faith are such as directly belong to the foundation of justifying faith, whether they be creative or preservative in nature. An error in one of these will by its presence affect not only the well-being, but the very being of faith itself. Non-fundamental articles touch on doctrines more remote from the center, they have a more indirect bearing on faith. An error will not at once imperil the existence of faith. As far as scripturalness is concerned there is no difference. The most insignificant of the non-fundamental articles is exactly as scriptural as the "*omnium fundamentalissimus*" of justification. Now Dr. Walther in true evangelical spirit maintains that an error in a fundamental article at once disrupts church fellowship, while an error in a non-fundamental, leaving as it does faith intact, calls for brotherly admonition with all due patience and forbearance — but by no means connivance.

We note, furthermore, that he approaches the problem from a very definite angle. He presupposes that the person guilty of an error up to that time was a member of the church in good standing. "Are we to *excommunicate*? Must we *sever* fellowship?" His question is not: May we receive into membership? May we establish fellowship? And note further that he asks: "Must we sever *at once*?" The author, Dr. Graebner, beautifully says: "Let us remember the patience that Jesus had with His disciples when they were astray in their chiliastic hopes and had no understanding of the nature of the Church; let us cultivate the spirit in which Jesus met with love and understanding even the odious personal ambitions that rose in the best of His followers" (p. 44).

To sum up our own opinion on the proper attitude towards an error in non-fundamentals: It is one thing to bear patiently with an erring brother, and it is quite another thing to give confessional status to an error, even though only that of a tolerated doctrine. M.

Zwickau und D. C. F. W. Walther von Gottlieb Herrmann. 20 Seiten. Papierumschlag. Preis 60 Pf. — Verlag von Johannes Herrmann, Zwickau, Sachsen.

Fathers and Founders. By W. G. Polack, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. 79 pages. Paper covers. Price, 20c. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

Diese zwei Geschenke können als Nachflänge zur Jubiläums-Synode in St. Louis, auch wohl als Vorspiele zu weiteren Jubiläen der nächsten Jahre innerhalb der Missionsynode angesprochen werden. Das erste schildert in sieben kurzen Kapiteln die Beziehungen, die D. Walther zu Zwickau hatte: D. Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther; Familie Fschenderlein; D. Walthers Mutter, Johanna Wilhelmina geb. Fschenderlein aus Zwickau;

D. Walthër 1851 in Zwickau; D. Walthër besucht 1860 Tante Pfenderlein in Zwickau; Otto Hermann Walthër in Zwickau; D. Walthërs Urgroßvater in Zwickau.

Im zweiten Heft schildert Prof. Polack die Entbehrungen, Kämpfe, Siege der Väter der Missouri-Synode aus der Anfangszeit dieses Kirchenförpers. Ein Schlußkapitel bringt den Zweck des Büchleins klar zum Ausdruck: "By God's grace these blessings have descended to us. We are the heirs of His love. We ought to be duly grateful" (p. 76). Er erinnert an die Warnung, die Moses an sein Volk richtete, Dt. 8, 12ff., und knüpft daran folgende Ermahnung an seine Synode. "The same warning is certainly not out of place today. The work begun by the Saxon fathers and their coworkers has developed far beyond their fondest dreams; a few thousand followers have increased to more than a million. Large and flourishing congregations make up a large part of our synodical membership; stately churches and schools dot the cities, villages, and countrysides. Flattering compliments are whispered into our ears about our greatness and the efficiency of our organization. How great the temptation, therefore, to forget, as Israel did, Him to whose mercy we owe everything we are and have! How necessary that in all our celebrations at present and in the future the chord of true humility be mingled with our paeans of praise! Oh, that we may rejoice with trembling hearts and, in daily contrition and repentance for all the weaknesses, shortcomings, failures, and sins of the past, which have so often hindered the progress of the Lord's work, pray humbly" in the words and spirit of the 124th Psalm (p. 78).

Beide Hefte sind reich illustriert.

W.

Communion and Confessional Sermons. By Harold L. Yochum. 112 pages, 5x7½. Green cloth. Gold title on back. Price, \$1.00. — The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, Ohio.

Since the number of topics suitable for communion sermons is limited and yet the occasion for such sermons is of frequent recurrence, every pastor will do well to see from time to time how his brethren in the office approach the task. In this sense we recommend the present collection.

To show the style, we reproduce a few outlines and quote a few paragraphs and then present the table of contents in full. Theme: "The amazing wonders of the sacrament." Outline: "It mystifies, yet reassures. It convicts of sin, yet pardons. It humbles, yet exalts. It reminds of death, yet inspires to life. It individualizes, yet unites. O, the amazing wonders of this sacrament!" (p. 11). Theme: "Do you see the Lord at the Lord's table?" Outline: "Many do not see the Lord at the Lord's table. It takes faith to see the Lord at the Lord's table. What a difference it makes when we do see the Lord at the Lord's table!" (p. 52).

On p. 85 the following occurs on the parable of the man without a wedding garment: "In our interpretation of the meaning of this part of the parable, we are somewhat puzzled to know the exact significance of the wedding garment. Some say it is faith; others, a worthy character and life as a Christian; others, the righteousness and merits of Christ. It would seem that the last is the most fitting and Biblical way of understanding that wedding garment. As we come to the feast of salvation which is part of the celebration of the union of Christ with the Church, the marriage-supper of the King's Son and His beautiful bride, there is nothing in us, no quality of character or conduct, that makes us worthy of this great blessing and honor. It is alone the righteousness and merit of Christ which entitles us to a seat at the banquet-table where God's wonderful blessings are set before us." Here we should like to add a caution. Correct though these views be, yet, since Jesus himself states the point of His parable in the concluding words: For many are called, but few are chosen, any attempt to establish the exact meaning of the wedding garment is somewhat beside the mark.

On p. 47 we meet the following comparison to illustrate both the Catholic and the Reformed errors regarding the real presence. "And now let us look at those electric wires again. When the current is turned on, do those wires change into electricity, so that they are no longer wires but merely look like wires? That is what the Roman Catholic idea of the Lord's Supper would say. On the other hand, do those wires merely represent or signify electricity, which does not, however, come through them for our use? That is what the other view, held by most Protestant denominations, would say. No, the wire remains a wire, but it becomes the means of bringing us the electricity; there is a wonderful union of the two, the current which we receive and the wire which conveys it to us. That is what the teaching of the Lutheran Church, and of the Bible tells us with regard to the Lord's Supper. Is it not worthy of our belief? Are we not justified in requiring that all who would receive that sacrament at our altars must hold that belief? We do not ask how; we trust the Lord's wisdom and power. This sacrament tests our faith, and that very test strengthens and rewards our faith."

Let this suffice. The themes and texts for the 18 sermons are as follows. "With desire. Lk. 22, 15. 16. — The amazing wonders of the sacrament. Words of institution. — In remembrance of me. 1 Cor. 11, 23-26. — The two Lord's Suppers. Lk. 22, 13-20. — The order of the holy Communion. Words of institution. — Our sacred fellowship. 1 Jh. 1, 6. 7. — The union in Communion. 1 Cor. 10, 16. 17. — Do you see the Lord at the Lord's table? Lk. 24, 30. 31. — Jesus in the midst. Jh. 20, 19. 20. — In the presence of the holy God. Is. 6, 1-8. — All things are now ready. Lk. 14, 16. 17. — A pattern for our preparation. Lk. 18, 10-14. — The bruised reed and smoking flax.

Is. 42, 3. — The man without a wedding garment. Mt. 22, 11-14. — Is not my way equal? Ez. 19, 23-25. — To refuse to repent — how unreasonable. Jer. 8, 4. 5. — A study in colors. Is. 1, 18. — Remember Lot's wife! Lk. 17, 32." M .

In the Upper Room. Twenty-four sermons on our blessed Lord's Passover and His earthly farewell to the disciples. By Daniel F. Goerss. 7 and 141 pages, 6½x9¼. Cloth. Price, \$1.00. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The texts for twenty of the twenty-four sermons contained in the book are taken from the Gospel according to St. John, chaps. 13-17. In every sermon there is found a simple exposition of the text, presented in simple form and simple language.

There is one thing, however, which prevents the present reviewer from giving the book an unqualified recommendation. It is a serious mixing of Law and Gospel in the exposition and application of "My commandments" etc. in the sermons on Jh. 15, 9-12 and on Jh. 15, 13-17. Witness the following.

"What are the commandments of Jesus? Not the Moral Law expressed in the Ten Commandments, by which is not righteousness but the knowledge of sin and condemnation. No, the commandments of Jesus are His holy Gospel, or the doctrine, or teaching, concerning faith in Him unto justification, or forgiveness of sins, *and the rules and regulations governing the life and conduct of His followers*" (p. 84). The Gospel of forgiveness plus rules of conduct!

Yet, where do we find these "rules and regulations" but in the Ten Commandments according to the third use of the Law? As also the author had indicated on a previous occasion in his definition of a good work. "A good work is anything we Christians think or say or do in faith according to the Ten Commandments for the glory of God and the benefit of our neighbor" (p. 78).

We add two more quotations. "We cannot too often be reminded of the truth that Christianity is *obedience* (Italics here by the author. M.) to all the teaching of Jesus Christ, our Lord, that is, accepting His Word in true faith *and ordering our life according to it*. Of what benefit are contracts, treaties, agreements, pledges, if they are not observed and kept in mutual faithfulness?" (p. 85). "Having thus expressed the depth of this mutual friendship on His part, He next tells them under what condition they can remain His friends: 'Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you'. Let us again be reminded of the fact that the friendship of Jesus does not rest upon an eternal, unalterable decree, *but upon the condition of obedience to His commandments, doctrine, teaching*. Not pietistic, sentimental eulogies of His most holy religion, but doing the will of Christ; not ceremony and nominal Christianity, but knowing *and* (Italics here the author's. M.) doing the will of the Master, Jesus

Christ, — *this* (Italics the author's. M.) is the condition of the friendship with Jesus on the part of His Christians" (p. 90).

Nor is the matter helped very much by words like the following: "Let us gladly imitate His wonderful example and practise this most heavenly and holy precept of love among ourselves. I say advisedly; for it will be for us all at best only a blundering and stumbling imitation; for who among us mortals can love as Jesus loves? Still, by precept and example He demands it. By His grace and Spirit we shall accomplish not a little. True, we cannot have the quantity of His love for one another; but it is also true that by virtue of our union with Him through the Holy Ghost we can have of the quality of His love, which we possess in faith. As He loves us according to the incomprehensible capacity of His infinite divine-human and eternal heart, so we, through the Holy Spirit, can love one another according to the human and finite capacity of our little hearts, which He has blessed and honored with His indwelling" (p. 87f.). — Granted. But as long as our sanctification, perfect or imperfect, is made a condition on the fulfilment of which depends Christ's friendship for us: what a shaky foundation have we for our hope? — and who must not be driven to despair? M.

The Cross from Coast to Coast. Radio messages broadcast in the fifth Lutheran Hour. By Walter A. Maier, Ph. D., Professor of the Old Testament, Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. XIV and 403 pages. Cloth. Price, \$1.50. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The book in its format and general make-up agrees with its predecessors.

Since we have on various occasions — see Q. S. for January, 1936, p. 74; for October, 1936, p. 299; for October, 1937, p. 294 — discussed the peculiarities of Dr. Maier's style of approach and presentation, we here content ourselves with a simple announcement of the appearance of the Fifth Lutheran Hour in book form. The motto of the book is taken from Hab. 2, 14: The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. M.

Gemeindeblatt-Kalender, 1939.

Northwestern Lutheran Annual, 1939.

Amerikanischer Kalender, 1939.

Lutheran Annual, 1939.

Wie in früheren Jahren bringen wir auch diesmal diese vier Kalender unsern Lesern in empfehlende Erinnerung. Jeder kostet 15c. Die ersten zwei werden von unserer Wisconsinynode herausgegeben, die letzten zwei von der Missouriynode. Wie bekannt, bieten sie neben dem Kalendarium allerlei Nützliches und Beflehendes; besonders die Postadressen der mit der Synodalkonferenz verbundenen Pastoren, Lehrer und Missionare. M.

Statistical Year-Book of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, a. O. St. for the year 1937. 248 pages. Paper. Price, \$1.00. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The second page of the book, opposite the title page, carries a picture of the former editor, Rev. Ernst Eckhardt, to whose memory the present volume is dedicated. The first paragraph of the Preface speaks of him as "our late Statistician who served as the editor of this publication of our Synod from 1917 to 1938 and who had already collected, arranged, and prepared considerable material for the present number when, on January 24 of this year, he was unexpectedly, after a brief illness, called to his heavenly reward."

The following evaluation of his work is given. "Pastor Eckhardt may well be called a master statistician. In him there was found a rare combination of sound theological knowledge, an intimate acquaintance with historical facts, with figures and dates, a keen gift of observation, a retentive memory, a highly developed skill of judgment and evaluation, of recording and indexing, an indefatigable desire to work and serve, a spirit of humility, and, above all, a child-like faith in his Savior and an ardent love for his Church. Blessed be his memory!"

Attention is called, in the Preface, to "most valuable historical and statistical material covering the period from 1847 to 1937, prepared by our late Statistician," contained in the volume. These words refer particularly to tables and notes and graphs on pages 150 to 179, presenting first the statistics of the synod as a whole, then, in separate tables, the statistics of the districts. The part dealing with the synod as a whole is divided into four sections, viz., I. 1847-1856; II. 1857-1883; III. 1884-1918; IV.. 1919-1937. But the very first note on II (Note 3) begins with the words: "The second period of statistics comprises the years 1857-1871."

This issue of the Statistical Year-Book, like its predecessors, contains a wealth of reliable information in the most concise form for "every sphere and phase of our church-work." M.

Announcement. — In this number of the *Quartalschrift* again the reader will find a sermon by the sainted Dr. Hoenecke, taken from his volume "*Wenn ich nur dich habe*". Pastor W. Franzmann is the translator.

Pastor Franzmann is publishing a series of seven Lenten sermons taken from Dr. Hoenecke's "*Ein Lämmlein geht*". The pamphlet, so we are informed, will be on the market in the early part of January. M.

* * * *

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Theologische Quartalschrift.

Herausgegeben von der Allgemeinen Ev.-Luth. Synode von
Wisconsin und anderen Staaten.

Jahrgang 36.

April 1939.

Nummer 2.

The Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod and the Declaration of the A. L. C. as the Doctrinal Basis for Church-Fellowship

Committees of the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church, having discussed in a number of meetings for several years the doctrines in controversy between the two church bodies, were ready to, and did, submit to the conventions of their synods in 1938 reports on the result of their deliberations. The matter was brought to the attention of the assembled delegates of the Missouri Synod by convention committee No. 16. Its report "on this momentous matter was unanimously adopted by the convention through a rising vote" (Quartalschrift, Oct. '38, p. 284).* The American Lutheran Church during its convention at Sandusky, Ohio, passed the resolution: "Since our Fellowship Commission and the Commission of the Synod of Missouri have arrived at a doctrinal agreement and since the Synod of Missouri in convention at St. Louis has unanimously accepted this doctrinal agreement, be it resolved: That we declare the Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod, together with the Declaration of our Commission, a sufficient doctrinal basis for church-fellowship between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church" (Jan. '39, p. 51).

Through their church papers as well as their convention reports both church bodies have acquainted their membership with the state of affairs. Besides, the secular press has given this matter nation-wide publicity with the effect that many within and

* We quote from the "Quartalschrift" unless otherwise indicated.

without the Lutheran Church look upon the union of Missouri and the A. L. C.** as already consummated. "Luthertum", a theological periodical, printed in Leipzig, Germany, in its December number of last year, has brought this matter before its readers through a translation of the Declaration of the Representatives of the American Lutheran Church and the Resolutions of the Missouri Synod, and has prefaced it with a commendatory remark. It may safely be said that Lutherans throughout the world are highly interested in a union movement, such as this. It would be more than passing strange if they were not, especially since it has been heralded as being near to a successful completion in a not too distant future.

It needs no special stressing for any one to see that our Wisconsin Synod, having been in fellowship of faith and associated with Missouri in the Synodical Conference since 1872, is vitally affected by the action of the Missouri Synod, accepting the "Brief Statement" and the "Declaration of the Representatives of the American Lutheran Church" as the doctrinal basis for future church-fellowship, at its convention in June, 1938, at St. Louis, Mo. The "Quartalschrift", therefore, has done what it could in keeping its readers informed on the developments by printing the "Declaration", the pertinent Missouri Resolutions of the convention at St. Louis and those of the A. L. C. at Sandusky in the July and October numbers of last and the January number of the present year. But there is one document to which the reader finds no access in the pages of the "Quartalschrift", to which constant reference is made, *viz.*, the "Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States". It should be in the hands of all who wish to arrive at an independent opinion.***

Great and lasting good to our synod will result under God's blessing from a thorough-going study of these documents in the light of Holy Writ and from a discussion of them at our pastoral conferences. May it please the Lord to make this an occasion

** A. L. C. stands for American Lutheran Church.

*** Order from Northwestern Publishing House. The Brief Statement may be had either alone or together with other documents, as the Chicago Intersynodical Theses, the Minneapolis Theses a. o., in a pamphlet with the title "Doctrinal Declarations".

for a reorientation with respect to the legacy handed down to us by our fathers! Such a delving into the storehouse of the Gospel, the priceless treasure of the pure doctrine of salvation, cannot but be beneficial, helping us to a new evaluation of our Lutheran heritage.

One of the committee-recommendations adopted by the Missouri Synod last June reads: "As far as the Missouri Synod is concerned, this whole matter must be submitted for approval to the other synods constituting the Synodical Conference" (Oct. 38, p. 288, 6, c). This having been done, our synod owes the Missouri brethren an answer to the question implied in that resolution. Hence it is within the line of duty of the editors of the "Quartalschrift" as the official theological organ of our synod to discuss on its pages some, if not all, of the questions involved. This article is not devoted to a point by point investigation of the documents submitted to us but rather to a general discussion of the question, whether we can acknowledge them as a sufficient basis for future church-fellowship. This writer desires to give his opinion thereon under two heads.

I. Does the A. L. C. Accept the "Brief Statement" of 1932?

What does the "Declaration of the Representatives of the American Lutheran Church" say? We quote: "Having carefully discussed with representatives of the Hon. Synod of Missouri, in a number of meetings, and on the basis of the Minneapolis Theses, the Chicago Theses, and the Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod, the points of doctrine that have been in controversy between us or concerning which a suspicion of departure from the true doctrine had arisen, we now summarize what according to our conviction is the result of our deliberations in the following statements" (July '38, p. 208), and: "With the other points of doctrine presented in the Brief Statement — we are conscious of being in agreement. We also believe that in regard to the points touched upon in Sections I-IV the doctrines stated in the Brief Statement are correct. However, we were of the opinion that it would be well in part to supplement them in the manner stated above, in part also to emphasize those of its points which seemed essential to us. With reference to Section III and VI, B, we expect no more than this, that the Hon.

Synod of Missouri will declare that the points mentioned there are not disruptive of church-fellowship.

"If the Hon. Synod of Missouri will acknowledge Sections I, II, IV, V and VI, A, together with the statements following after VI, B, concerning our attitude toward the Brief Statement, as correct and declare that the points mentioned in Sections III and VI, B, are not disruptive of church-fellowship, the American Lutheran Church stands ready officially to declare itself in doctrinal agreement with the Hon. Synod of Missouri and to enter into pulpit- and altar-fellowship with it" (July '38, pp. 212, 213).

The Missouri Synod at St. Louis accepted with the whole report of convention committee No. 16 also these points: "That Synod declare that the Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod together with the Declaration of the Representatives of the American Lutheran Church and the provisions of this entire report of Committee No. 16 now being read and with Synod's action thereupon be regarded as the doctrinal basis for future church-fellowship between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church.

"The establishing of church-fellowship between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod will depend on the action taken by each body with reference to the Brief Statement, the Declaration of the Representatives of the American Lutheran Church, and the Report of this Committee as adopted by Synod.

"The establishing of church-fellowship between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod will depend also on the establishing on the part of the American Lutheran Church of doctrinal agreement with those church-bodies with which the American Lutheran Church is in fellowship" (Oct. '38, pp. 287, 288, 2. 6, a and b).

The A. L. C. at its convention in Sandusky, held after the St. Louis meeting of the Missouri Synod, passed among others the following resolution: "That we declare the Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod, together with the declaration of our Commission, a sufficient doctrinal basis for church fellowship between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church.

"That we believe that the Brief Statement, viewed in the light of our Declaration, is not in contradiction to the Minneapolis Theses, which are the basis of our membership in the American

Lutheran Conference. We are not willing to give up this membership. However, we are ready to submit the aforementioned doctrinal agreement to the other members of the American Lutheran Conference for their official approval and acceptance" (Jan. '39, p. 51, 2 and 5).

We ask our readers to note the following facts:

1. The A. L. C. considers the "Declaration" to be a résumé of the deliberations of its representatives and the Committee on Union of the Missouri Synod.

2. On the condition of Missouri's acquiescence to a certain request hinges the willingness of the A. L. C. to declare itself in doctrinal agreement with Missouri.

3. The Missouri Synod having accepted at its session last June the "Brief Statement" together with the "Declaration" and the provisions in the report of committee No. 16 as the doctrinal basis for future church-fellowship, the A. L. C. at its convention in Sandusky *omits the provisions of committee No. 16* in enumerating the documents which are to be the basis for church-fellowship, and wishes the "Brief Statement" to be *viewed in the light* of the "Declaration".

4. The "Declaration", according to its authors, is a document drawn up in part to *supplement* the doctrinal expositions of the "Brief Statement", in part also to *emphasize* some of its points.

This writer has carefully refrained from any attempt at interpretation, but has tried to put down in simple language and in condensed form, what seems to him to be the content of the quotations printed above, in short: facts. Confronted with these facts, what must be our answer to the question: Has the A. L. C. accepted the "Brief Statement" unconditionally and unequivocally? We think, the answer is obvious and must be: No.

It would be beside the point to argue that one and the same truth may be phrased in more than one way. It is beyond dispute, and the Bible itself offers ample proof for it, that this applies also to the doctrines of the Word of God. However the "Declaration" is not, nor is it intended to be, a mere repetition of certain doctrines of the "Brief Statement." It has been written in part to supplement, in part to emphasize certain points of the "Brief Statement." It is, therefore, rather an *addition and explanation*

of the Brief Statement. That is the reason why the A. L. C. considers the "Brief Statement" together with the "Declaration" the basis for church-fellowship. Furthermore: The A. L. C. wishes us to view the "Brief Statement" in the light of the "Declaration." This can mean only one thing: that the "Declaration" sheds light on the "Brief Statement", that it is an *interpretation* of it. It follows, then, that nothing in the "Brief Statement" may be adduced as countermanding a statement of the "Declaration", that everything in "the Brief Statement", on the other hand, must rather be so construed as to be in harmony with the "Declaration". Does not the phraseology of the resolutions of the A. L. C. force this conclusion on us?

If we were dealing with a mere human rivalry between the two large church bodies immediately concerned one would be tempted to admire the deftness with which the A. L. C. at Sandusky tried to outmaneuver the Missouri Synod and to gain the upper hand, after Missouri by its resolutions of last June had committed itself to a certain course. But the members of the A. L. C., as well as we, are well aware that it is God's truth, the saving Gospel of Christ, which is at stake. No one on either side strives to gain honor for himself at the cost of the other. All alike seek the glory and honor of God alone. Therefore we cannot but deplore the present state of affairs, as we see it. But after Sandusky Missouri can and will not remain silent, we hope. For if it would continue now its negotiations with the A. L. C. for the establishment of church-fellowship on the doctrinal basis of the "Brief Statement" and the "Declaration", the result of all deliberations and resolutions, it seems to us, could only be confusion more confounded. The Missourian, henceforth, would tell his questioners: The A. L. C. has accepted our "Brief Statement." Do not forget that when you read the "Declaration". The very fact of their approval of the "Brief Statement" precludes the assumption that any statement of the "Declaration" can run counter to anything said in the "Brief Statement". The A. L. C. man, on the other hand, with just as much right would say: The "Brief Statement" has been accepted by us in the light of our "Declaration" and must, therefore, be understood from this viewpoint.

We make so much of this because we deem it of the utmost

importance to see the situation as it really is, so as not to be swept off our feet by infectious mass-enthusiasm. We must remain sober and willing to face the unpleasant truth, even though we would like to join in giving thanks to our God for a doctrinal agreement, so fervently prayed and hoped for these many years, with those who share the designation of "Lutheran" with us.

Putting aside for the moment the explanation of the purpose of the "Declaration", officially given by the A. L. C. at Sandusky, also the provisions of the committee-report, made part of the basis for church-fellowship by resolution of the Missouri Synod in St. Louis, and other considerations, there still remains a serious objection to what is termed the doctrinal basis for the contemplated union. We mean the weakness inherent in the issuing of two separate statements, one by each of the contracting parties, as proof of confessional agreement. Must not this very thing arouse the suspicion: 1. that it is practically a tacit admission of the impossibility of arriving at a confessional declaration to which both sides give hearty assent; 2. that each side will be inclined to stress chiefly its own statement with its reservations and conditions, minimizing the importance of the other; that, therefore, the concord might well be more ostensible than real? What of the other churches to whom Missouri and the A. L. C. are already tied by the bond of fellowship? We of the Wisconsin Synod and the other constituents of the Synodical Conference as well as the members of the American Lutheran Conference are asked to come to a decision whether or not we can accept a confession on the basis of which church-fellowship is contemplated. But how can we judge its merits when we are confronted with two confessional depositions — one by each of the two church-bodies that are about to recognize each other publicly as brethren in the faith? They give rise to doubts as to seeming or real inconsistencies and conflicting allegations.

All these uncertainties could have been avoided if the two church-bodies, having been separated by divergent opinions in matters of doctrine these many years and now claiming doctrinal agreement, would have come before the Church at large not with two or more but with *one confession* with which they, separately and jointly, declare themselves in full accord. The promulgation of a **unanimously accepted confession** would have served the

cause of clarity and eliminated unnecessary dispute respecting the position these churches are now taking in this or that point of doctrine. It is our conviction: 1. in general, that the saving truth for which we are contending, the love of God, and our Christian duty to God's children — those who profess with us the same most holy faith and those who are enmeshed in error and false doctrine which jeopardize their eternal welfare; and furthermore 2. in particular, that the settlement of doctrinal controversies, which have made a rift between some church-bodies in the past, and the attempt to heal the breach by bringing about church-fellowship, which had been severed for conscience sake on account of doctrinal differences of the gravest nature, — imperatively demand such a confession. A confession which must satisfactorily cover all the controversial points in a language so clear and in terms so succinct, in thetical and antithetical form so exact, as to exclude all ambiguity, so much as that can be done in human language. "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air" (1 Cor. 14, 8. 9).

II. Does Not Toleration of Divergent Views in Matter of Doctrine Give Them Practical Equality with the Publica Doctrina of Our Church?

The points of doctrine in the "Declaration" which the A. L. C. expects Missouri to acknowledge as correct and which have been so acknowledged by the St. Louis convention are not germane to our present discussion. However, we do not wish to be understood as being in whole-hearted agreement with the opinion of our Missouri brethren with regard to them. There are questions we would like to have answered, changes in phraseology for the sake of clarity which we would want to suggest. But here we concern ourselves with the views for which the A. L. C. does not ask assent but merely toleration. They pertain to the following points of doctrine: The Church, Antichrist, the Conversion of the Jews, the Physical Resurrection of the Martyrs and the Thousand Years of Rev. 20 (July, '38, pp. 210. 211 and 12; Oct., '38, pp. 285. 86 and 287). With reference to these, the "Declaration"

says (July, '38, p. 212) "we expect no more than this, that the Hon. Synod of Missouri will declare that the points mentioned there are not disruptive of church-fellowship." The Missouri Synod's answer to this request is qualified thus: "Resolved: . . . 3. That in regard to the points of non-fundamental doctrines mentioned in the Declaration of the Representatives of the American Lutheran Church . . . we endeavor to establish *full* agreement and that our Committee on Lutheran Union be instructed to devise ways and means of reaching this end.

"4. That in regard to the propriety of speaking of the visible side of the Church we ask our Committee on Lutheran Union to work to this end that uniform and Scripturally acceptable terminology and teaching be attained" (Oct. '38, p. 288). Somehow these provisions in the Resolutions of the Missouri Synod must have been lost on the way from St. Louis to Sandusky, for the Sandusky Resolutions of the A. L. C. make no mention of them, except by allusion, but simply accept the "Brief Statement", together with the "Declaration", as a sufficient basis for church-fellowship, and go on to say: "Resolved: . . . 3. That, according to our conviction and the resolution of the Synod of Missouri, passed at its convention at St. Louis, the aforementioned doctrinal agreement is the sufficient doctrinal basis for church-fellowship, and that we are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines. Nevertheless, we are willing to continue the negotiations concerning the points termed in our Declaration as not divisive of church-fellowship, and recognized as such by the Missouri Synod's resolutions, and instruct our Commission on Fellowship accordingly" (Jan., '39, p. 51).

Mark well: The A. L. C. voices the opinion that it finds itself in agreement with Missouri according to the St. Louis Resolutions, when it accepts the "Brief Statement" and the "Declaration" or the "Brief Statement" viewed in the light of the "Declaration" as a sufficient basis for church-fellowship. Then, it alludes to the provisions of the committee-report approved by the St. Louis convention. In the same breath it states frankly its conviction that *it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines*. Its willingness to negotiate further with Missouri concerning points which by Missouri's own admis-

sion are not divisive of church-fellowship can, therefore, not be valued as more than a courteous gesture of one gentleman to another. Undoubtedly the A. L. C. feels justified in the assumption that Missouri has met the condition on the fulfilment of which depended the willingness of the A. L. C. to establish church-fellowship. In other words: The A. L. C. understands Missouri through its action in June of last year has cleared away the obstacle and put its stamp of approval on the toleration of divergent opinions in certain non-fundamental doctrines. In the union of the two church bodies to be consummated sooner or later *two different sets of opinions* in certain points of doctrine would have *equality* of standing, the same "Hausrecht", as stipulated in the "Declaration" and the Resolutions of the Missouri Synod. To understand the full implication of this a word on fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines will not be amiss.

Fundamental doctrines are those whose denial or falsification undermines the very foundation of saving faith, not only vitiating or invalidating it, but making it utterly impossible. Such doctrines are *e. g.* those of the Scriptures, of God, of Christ's redemption, etc. Of non-fundamental doctrines we speak in the sense that a deviation from the Scriptures in these points does not necessarily and immediately destroy saving faith. But they are also Scripture doctrines as well as the ones called fundamental. They are both doctrines of faith (Glaubenslehren). Hence it is by no means a negligible matter, something of not much or minor importance when one holds, and adheres to, erroneous views in non-fundamental doctrines. *If obstinately adhered to* despite ample information and admonition *errors in non-fundamentals become open rebellion against God and His holy Word* and must at last lead into eternal perdition. We must not confound non-fundamental doctrines with theological problems, must not relegate them to the realm of so-called open questions — open because Scripture does not answer them. Dr. A. Hoenecke, the foremost theologian of our synod, says: "Man sucht die Theorie der offenen Fragen zu verteidigen durch eine Missdeutung der von der rechtgläubigen Kirche gemachten Unterscheidung von fundamentalen und nicht-fundamentalen Artikeln. In dem Bewusstsein, dass es die Kirche nie zu vollkommener, sondern nur zu gradweiser Lehereinigkeit

bringe, hätten die Väter durch jene Unterscheidung eine Anzahl Lehren als offene Fragen freigegeben.

“Allein dagegen spricht ja schon, dass auch die nichtfundamentalen Artikel doch als Glaubensartikel von den Vätern bezeichnet werden, also als Lehren, die sie in der Schrift zum Glauben vorgelegt kennen. Wer wird annehmen, dass unsere Väter von einer Lehre, die die Schrift vorträgt und glauben heisst, doch erklärt hätten, man könne davon halten, was man wolle? Sollte Hunnius, der die Lehre vom Abendmahl unter die nichtfundamentalen Artikel setzt, eben damit, dass er sie für nichtfundamental erklärt, haben sagen wollen, die Lehre vom heiligen Abendmahl sei eine offene Frage, es stehe darin jedem frei, nach Belieben zu glauben, was er wolle, und man müsse daher auch diejenigen als Brüder anerkennen, die hier unsere Lehre nicht annehmen? Wir haben ja oben gehört, dass die Unterscheidung zwischen fundamentalen und nichtfundamentalen Artikeln nur in Hinsicht auf das zur Seligkeit notwendig zu glaubende, nicht in Hinsicht auf das um des Ansehens der Schrift willen überhaupt zu glaubende gemacht wird. Während in ersterer Hinsicht Artikel ausgenommen sein können, sind sie es in letzterer Hinsicht nicht.

“Dass es nun die Kirche nie zu vollkommener, sondern nur zu fundamentaler Lehr- und Glaubenseinheit gebracht hat, ist eine wahre, aber zugleich betäubende und die Christen beschämende Tatsache, denn dieser Mangel hat nirgends anders als in dem Fleisch der Christen seinen Grund. Aber die Tatsache des Mangels kann doch nicht das Recht desselben involvieren, und aus der betäubenden Tatsache, dass die Kirche es immer nur zu fundamentaler Glaubenseinheit gebracht hat, ist doch nicht der Grundsatz zu folgern, dass sie es eben nicht weiter zu bringen habe. Wohl werden wir daher die aus Schwachheit Irrenden tragen; aber ihr Irrtum darf nicht als berechtigter Standpunkt, als offene Frage gelten wollen, sondern er darf nur gelten als etwas wider die Schrift Verstossendes und die kirchliche Gemeinschaft zwar nicht sofort, aber doch dann Aufhebendes, wenn er nach gründlicher Widerlegung aus der Schrift und offenbar gewordenem Unvermögen, noch etwas für seine Berechtigung vorzubringen, dennoch sich behaupten will.

“Die Theorie von den ‘offenen Fragen’ steht im Dienste des Unionismus. Der Unionismus (und das ist recht eigentlich

Offene-Fragen-Theorie) hat sich immer gegründet auf die Unklarheit der Schrift. So scheute man sich auch nicht, um die Theorie von den offenen Fragen zu behaupten, selbst die Vollkommenheit der Schrift anzutasten. Man erklärte nämlich, es gäbe Glaubenslehren, welche nicht deutlich in der Schrift offenbart seien. So sollte z. B. die lutherische Lehre vom Sonntag nicht unwidersprechlich klar in der Schrift gelehrt sein. Welche Lästerung wider Gott liegt darin! Behauptet man doch damit, dass Gott Glaubenslehren gebe und fordere, sie zu glauben, ja den Unglauben und falschen Glauben verdamme, und doch selbst nicht klar sage, was zu glauben sei." (Hoenecke, Ev. Luth. Dogmatik I, p. 456ss. Read the whole paragraph 14, pp. 448-458. Compare also F. Pieper, Christliche Dogmatik I, pp. 89-108.)

So much on the distinction between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines and the warning not to mistake the latter for open questions. This classification of the doctrines of faith is man-made, to be sure, but scriptural, nevertheless, in the sense that our orthodox fathers thereby did not violate Scripture. It may well be used by us in the interest of lucidity as long as we do not forget that both kinds are taught in the Bible and are equally binding.

The "Brief Statement" under the heading "Of Open Questions" mentions expressly: "Not to be included in the number of open questions are the following: the doctrines of the Church and the Ministry, of Sunday, of Chiliasm, and of Antichrist, these doctrines being clearly defined in Scripture" (Doct. Decl. p. 57). If this is true — and we are convinced it is, then we are not at liberty to bargain with anyone for toleration of teachings contrary to the doctrine which we have learned (Rom. 16, 17) and rejected by us on Biblical grounds. Is this Missouri's present position when it says in its resolutions: In regard to non-fundamentals "we endeavor to establish *full* agreement"? And further: "In regard to the propriety of speaking of the visible side of the Church we ask our Committee . . . to work to this end that uniform and Scripturally acceptable terminology and teaching be attained"?

Are the "Brief Statement", the "Declaration" and the provisions contained in the Resolutions to be considered the doctrinal basis for future church-fellowship *before* that endeavor has been

made or *after* the desired result has been achieved? We would like to believe the latter. In this case the resolution concerning church-fellowship would have been an unparalleled show of confidence in the A. L. C., an emphatic affirmation that the negotiations would have the desired outcome on which the resolution was conditioned. If that is so, the Missouri Synod was bitterly disappointed by the action of the A. L. C. at Sandusky. It left no doubt of its interpretation of Missouri's resolution. Disregarding Missouri's conditions — if the provisions are meant as such — it accepted the "Brief Statement" and the "Declaration" of its representatives as a sufficient basis for fellowship and capped this with the climax "that *it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines*". To our sorrow we reluctantly admit that the A. L. C. has interpreted the Missouri resolution correctly, if the report in the "Lutheran Witness" is true — and we have no reason to believe otherwise. We read there: "The committee declared . . . that adoption of the report would not be identical with establishing fraternal relations, the report merely pronouncing acceptance of the report of the Committee on Church Union as *a settlement of the doctrinal controversies*" (Oct., '38, p. 289). If by its acceptance of the report of committee No. 16 Missouri declares its doctrinal controversies with the A. L. C. as settled, it has thereby denied at least *the necessity* of agreement in all non-fundamental doctrines.

Is this not tantamount to a toleration of differences in non-fundamentals on the part of the Missouri Synod, even though it pledges itself to work towards full agreement? Is it not the granting of license to preach and teach un-Scriptural doctrines? For if they are not un-Scriptural, why should Missouri wish to work toward a full agreement in these points? If the other views for which toleration is asked are Scriptural as well as our own teaching, then we certainly would not quibble with any one over the choice of language. It would not only be wasted time and effort but wrong for us to insist on having our own way, it would be downright sinful stubbornness.

Should we accept the articles of doctrinal union in their present form, we would find ourselves in a position similar to that of the former Iowa Synod: We would emphatically deny that the views on non-fundamentals mentioned in the "Declaration" under

VI, B, ever had been or are now the official doctrine of our synod, but would have to admit at the same time that we are tolerating them in our midst, thus giving them an official status of some sort, if not by our sanction, then by sufferance.

Approaching the situation, as we see it, from another side, we may well assume that the A. L. C. demands, as we do, that anti-Scriptural doctrines must not be tolerated in the Church. Consequently, the views for which toleration is asked are Scriptural in the opinion of the A. L. C. Our consent, then, to consider them as not divisive of church-fellowship, *i. e.* to consider them as Scriptural would be an admission on our part: God has revealed to us certain doctrines of faith, but has not clearly and unmistakably told us what we really should believe concerning them. That is a denial of the perspicuity and all-sufficiency of the Scriptures. It is nothing short of *blasphemy*. It is the standpoint of a pernicious unionism which has wrought, and is still working, such great havoc in the Church. Then, indeed, all that is left is to confess with the A. L. C. that it is neither necessary nor possible to reach full agreement. Against that we pray with Luther in the first petition: "From this preserve us, Heavenly Father!" For "he that teaches . . . otherwise than God's Word teaches, profanes the name of God among us."

Both the resolutions of the Missouri Synod and of the A. L. C. speak of non-fundamental doctrines. For certain divergent views in some of them, not entertained hitherto by the Synodical Conference, the A. L. C. asks toleration. But in the question which doctrines should be considered non-fundamental the A. L. C. and Missouri do not see eye to eye. Missouri does not place the doctrine of the Church into the class of non-fundamental doctrines, the A. L. C. apparently does. That in itself would be innocuous. Our Lutheran dogmaticians of post-reformation times are not agreed in this respect either. One of them, Aegidius Hunnius, † 1603, places the doctrine of the Lord's Supper among the non-fundamental doctrines. That is not harmful in their case. For they are all of one mind regarding the Scripturalness of both classes of doctrines and insist, therefore, on full agreement in fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines alike. Not so the A. L. C. and the modern Lutherans of our day at home and abroad. They contend: In non-fundamentals the theologians

should have liberty to propound differing views without laying themselves open to the charge of disturbing the unity of faith or breaking the ties of church-fellowship. We know of teachers, occupying high places of honor in the Christian Church, of men calling themselves Lutherans, who speak of Verbal Inspiration as a theory, who deny Miracles, the Virgin Birth, the Atoning Death and the Resurrection of Christ as being necessary for a Christian's faith. Church history is replete with instances showing us the danger of letting down the bars ever so slightly, of opening the flood-gates just a little. The forces of indifferentism, rationalism and unbelief have more than once almost swamped the Church and devastated its green pastures.

Granting for the sake of argument: the views for which toleration is asked seem innocent enough in themselves and further: there have always been churchmen of good repute in their time who have held peculiar, not generally accepted views in certain points of doctrine — what follows? Not the truth of the dictum of the A. L. C., that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in non-fundamentals. Not a spineless yielding to unionistic tendencies, tempting us to establish fraternal relations with others over the sacrifice of the Scriptures as the unfailing guide in all matters of faith and life. Rather that we bow down before our God with humble and contrite hearts and pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit lest we be betrayed by the evil imaginations of our hearts, lest we close our eyes against the bright rays of the sun of truth shining in His Word with a clarity which makes tolerance of divergent views in doctrines of faith a sin. No; we cannot subscribe to articles of union as a basis for future church-fellowship which by declaring certain views as not disruptive of church-fellowship gives them a right, a confessional standing, in the new church-affiliation.

What this writer has attempted to set forth in this article at some length should be our attitude toward those with whom we have no fraternal relations but desire to bring them about. The question: Is this or that view disruptive of church-fellowship? is not in place where so far no church-fellowship existed. We are dealing in a different manner with persons holding membership in our congregation or synod, of course, although an un-Scriptural opinion is and remains false, no matter who holds it.

But if these persons are in our midst and fraternal relations exist between them and us, then the question is warranted: Are their utterances divisive of church-fellowship? We show such an erring brother every consideration and loving patience and bear his weakness, provided he does not publicly preach and teach or in a secretive way disseminate his erroneous opinions as God's truth in spite of our warning. If he should continue, and insist on, doing that, he is not a weak brother any longer but a false teacher with whom Scripture leaves no doubt how to deal. Would we tolerate his false teaching, we would aid and abet him in his sinful course and be equally guilty with him.

To summarize: The following distinctions should be sharply drawn and steadfastly maintained:

1. It is one thing to bear with an erring brother, but quite another to sanction false teaching by tolerating it in our midst.
2. It is one thing to sever the bond of fellowship with a person that is within the fold, belongs to our congregation or our synod. Only after having exhausted all means of convincing the erring brother, only after all efforts have failed to bring him to the acknowledgement and confession of the truth will we finally, in obedience to our Lord, exclude him from our communion.

But it is quite another thing when we deal with the question of receiving an outsider, one with whom we are not now in fellowship, especially a minister or public teacher of the Word, or a whole congregation or synod, into the fellowship of faith. In this case, church-fellowship should not be established until a full agreement in and clear understanding of all points at issue has been reached, be they fundamental or non-fundamental, so long as they are Scriptural — there is no room for other doctrines and opinions in the Church.

M. Lehninger.

What Benefits may be Derived from more Emphasis on the Study of Liturgics

(Concluded)

IV. Luther and the Liturgy

1

The problem at hand was indicated in the previous article: "Intensive study of the period of the Church's history just sketched, which is vaguely called the Dark Middle Ages, is really essential for a proper evaluation of the Lutheran Reformation. The same principles that were applied by Luther and his co-workers in restoring the "*Gottesdienst*" to its proper place in the Christian's life must be applied today."¹) It is not the aim of this essay to make an exhaustive study of the history of the church and its relation to the Liturgy, but to show the need of a careful study of these things as the only means of finding forms best suited to our present liturgical needs. The lack of such knowledge is a chief cause for the present liturgical unrest. On the one hand there are those who by invention or sheer mimicry are introducing forms foreign to the Lutheran spirit into their services and so are gradually accustoming their members to some peculiar, and often unsound, forms. This individualism is apt to destroy the feeling of unity between one church and the Lutheran Church as a whole, and especially between churches of the same synodical affiliation. Often these liturgists are like the people bent on inventions, who in their elation over a new discovery are unmindful of the fact that what they have newly found had long been tried and discarded. Careful study would have saved them much trouble and their congregation and the church unnecessary confusion. Part of the blame, of course, lies with the members who too often seem tired of the simple service and clamor for something new and thrilling, and hanker for the ecclesiastical splendor of their ritualistically rich neighbors. Such lack of knowledge in matters liturgical has also become fertile ground for much misunderstanding. Those who have studied the history of the Liturgy find no common ground on

¹) Vol. 35, No. 2, April, 1938.

which to meet those who lack such knowledge. The so-called liturgical group in its attempt to rediscover some of the lost treasures of the Lutheran Liturgy and to adapt such forms to the present day needs, rather than permit the Church to fall further into liturgical abuses copied from the Reformed Church and others, is being bitterly opposed as one which attempts to turn the clock of history back four hundred years. Clearly a case of misunderstanding. If all were well informed both sides would be helped.²⁾

2

In liturgical reforms there are but two possibilities, either to break entirely with the past, at least as much as this is possible, or to purify that which is at hand. Luther, as we all know, chose the latter course, and the Lutheran Church since then has followed him in this. In his "*Weise, christliche Messe zu halten*" (1523) Luther writes: "Aufs erste bekennen wir, dass wir nicht daran

2) By no means do we agree to all that has been done and is recommended by our own American Lutheran liturgical movements. This also applies to the St. James Society. However, in justification to the work done by these people in recent years it should be said that no attempts are being made to restore forms long forgotten and outdated, but by careful study of the Liturgy they are searching for forms which will replace modern innovations (including those of Rationalism and Pietism) which have been gradually throwing the Lutheran Service from its proper center. I refer our pastors to the work of Dr. A. Wismar in his studies on the Common Service and especially the Preface. (Pro Ecclesia Lutherana, Volume V. The Communion Liturgy. 50 cents.) Others of the group have made special studies of Baptism, Wedding, Funeral, etc., Services. In each case they offer their studies as "attempts" to such forms encouraging others to help them in arriving at more meaningful forms. In most cases they do not even go so far as to try their suggested services themselves. Pastor Carl Bergen has done valuable work in adapting the music of the Latin Propers and Ordinary to the English text. That much of this music has been disappointing to some is not surprising. It must be carefully studied to be appreciated. That our members do not at once like it is no test either. The only fair test is whether our children who learn to sing the Gregorian chants now will later continue to find in them their expression of musical emotion in worship. For the same reason that we condemn the Gregorian chants we could also

denken, noch auch nie gedacht, allen äusserlichen Gottesdienst abzutun, sondern den, so bisher im Brauch ist, aber mit vielen Zusätzen verderbt, wieder zu fegen, und anzuzeigen, welches der rechte christliche Brauch ist. Denn wir je nicht leugnen können, dass die Messe und zu Gottes Tisch gehen eine Ordnung sei, von Christo selbst in göttlicher Weise eingesetzt, welche zur Zeit Christi und hernach der Apostel und ihrer Jünger aufs einfältigste und christlichste ohne allen Zusatz gehalten ist, im Laufe der Zeit aber mit so viel Menschenfündlein vermehrt wurde, dass allein der Name von der Messe und Communion auf unsere Zeit gekommen ist und sonst nichts."³⁾ Instead however of drawing the same conclusion as the Reformed did, that everything but the *Verba* should be dropped, Luther continues to show which "*Zusätze*" please him and can be retained as beneficial to the Christians in the celebration of the Mass. The historic method of Luther is here clearly seen.

Another important passage in this connection are the opening

drop our Lutheran Chorale. It is a well known fact that those who were not brought up in our Lutheran Church do not like the Lutheran Chorale and find its melodies monotonous. The untrained ear and heart will lean to the more subjective hymns and melodies. An interesting illustration of this was brought to my attention recently concerning two congregations. In the one where the children had received a careful religious training, also in hymnody, the people enjoyed the Lutheran Chorale and congregational singing and showed this in their requests for hymns at funerals and weddings. In the other, however, such training had been lacking, and these people usually asked for soloists at special services and requested songs like, "The Old Rugged Cross," "In the Garden," etc. In that church they too undoubtedly sing the Lutheran Chorale at services but because training is lacking, there is no appreciation for them. So the test for the Gregorian does not lie in our first impression of it, but whether, after careful study and application, it proves itself fitting in our Lutheran service. It is my opinion that even if after gaining widespread use, the Gregorian chant should again die out, its influence on the church music of the future will be such as to bring the Lutheran Chorale of the sixteenth century back as the proper pattern for Lutheran hymnody. Read, The Nature and Purpose of Liturgical Music, Bergen, Pro Eccl. Lutherana, Vol. III, No. 1.

³⁾ X, 2235.

words in Luther's "*Von der Ordnung des Gottesdienstes in der Gemeinde*" (1523): "Der Gottesdienst, der jetzt allenthalben gehet, hat eine christliche, feine Herkunft, gleichwie auch das Predigtamt. Aber gleichwie das Predigtamt verderbet ist durch die geistlichen Tyrannen, also ist auch der Gottesdienst verderbt durch die Heuchler. Wie wir nun das Predigtamt nicht abtun, sondern wieder in seinen rechten Stand begehren zu bringen, so ist auch nicht unsere Meinung, den Gottesdienst aufzuheben, sondern in rechten Schwang zu bringen."⁴) Another illustration of Luther's historic approach to the liturgical reform was that he rigidly excluded all that savored of sacrifice, and for this reason dropped the Offertory and the Canon in their entirety. The idea of sacrifice was so deeply imbedded in the hearts of the members that it was impossible to explain it away by purging the Canon of its offensive parts. On the other hand his treatment of the Collects was different. Since, on the whole, they were good although here and there they contained petitions to the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, or Saints, but were not the cause of a deep-seated error, he was satisfied to retain them in a purified form.⁵) He might have correctly interpreted the difference between erroneous sacrifice in the Mass and the Christian's spiritual sacrifice of himself. "In diesem Opfer begreift Paulus das Opfer des Lobes und das Opfer der Danksagung."⁶) Justin Martyr would have given him a good historic basis for such an interpretation: "At the conclusion of this (the sermon) we all rise up together and pray, and prayers being over, there is bread and wine and water offered, and the president sends up prayers and thanksgivings . . . and the people conclude with a joyful Amen."⁷) The false idea was, however, so deep-seated that as long as the

⁴) X, 220.

⁵) As an example, the Collect for Sexagesima contained an invocation of the protection of St. Paul, and its second form invokes the prayers of Mary, John and the patron Saint. Cf. *The Church Year*, Paul Zeller Strodach. 1924.

⁶) X, 1582.

⁷) *Apology I*, 87. Quoted in *Reformation, the Mass, and the Priesthood*, Vol. I, p. 27, by E. C. Messenger, 1936. The two volumes by Messenger will prove valuable for a comparative study of the doctrine of Mass of the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran,

forms remained, no change of words would be able to correct the false notions, and so it was dropped.⁸⁾

Are we to follow in the footsteps of Luther we must concern ourselves also with the history of the Liturgy to Luther and since Luther. Professor J. P. Koehler in review of a recent book on "Studies in the Liturgy" by Webber brings a word of great importance: "The unwillingness to concern ourselves with the historical background (of the liturgy) would hinder the progress of the movement altogether, so that either nothing would come of it, or a development would be promoted, which by virtue of unintelligence, would miss rather than attain St. Paul's mark in Philippians 4, 8. . . . You cannot simply take over such forms of worship from ancient times, when the general conditions, the external forms of the Church, and its means of expression were not the same as ours. That was tried and it failed in the nineteenth century in all fields of art. Why repeat it? For that reason you cannot avoid to concern yourself with the historic background."

I have been repeatedly asked to illustrate such a historic approach to our present problems. It is generally accepted that for some reason our Christians lack an appreciation of the need of frequent communion. Many seem to take a legalized position of attending a certain number of times a year, others satisfy themselves with the minimum of once or twice a year. For this reason the Sacrament is gradually pushed into minor services and in many instances is no longer celebrated on the festivals of our Lord — a thing unheard of a generation ago. The cure lies in proper instruction and preaching on the Sacrament, and in its frequent celebration even if only a few partake.⁹⁾ If however, we compare our Baptismal form with that of Communion

and Reformed Churches from the Roman angle. The book contains very many valuable references to sources and is especially enlightening in the development of the Anglican church. The books are to be found in the Wisconsin University Library.

⁸⁾ Cf. Apology of the Augs. Con., Art. XXIV, 74, Trigl., p. 409.

⁹⁾ A more frequent celebration, which means a shorter service at communion, I have found to be the only solution of keeping people until the end of the service. It is just as important to close a service, as it is to begin it, on time in our day.

we shall readily see that while the former clearly sets forth the need of Baptism and its everlasting blessing, the latter does not give this so clearly in its Preface. Luther recognized the educational value of the Liturgy: "Aber um derer willen muss man solche Ordnung haben, die noch Christen sollen werden oder stärker werden, gleichwie ein Christ der Taufe, des Worts und Sakraments nicht bedarf als Christ, denn er hat's schon alles, sondern als Sünder. Allermeist aber geschieht's um der Einfältigen und des jungen Volks willen, welches soll und muss täglich in der Schrift und Gottes Wort geübt und erzogen werden, dass sie der Schrift gewohnt, geschickt, läufig und kundig darin werden, ihren Glauben zu vertreten und andere mit der Zeit zu lehren, und das Reich Christi helfen mehren. . . . Denn darum sind die päpstlichen Gottesdienste so verdammlich, dass sie Gesetze, Werke und Verdienst daraus gemacht und damit den Glauben unterdrückt haben, und dieselben nicht gerichtet auf die Jugend und Einfältigen, dieselben damit in der Schrift und Gottes Wort zu üben."¹⁰) The question then is whether additions can be made to the present Preface to show the need and the purpose of celebrating the Lord's Supper, by means of the forms. History will show that the early Church especially in the East, had such forms in their Eucharistic Prayer. Can additions be made that will clarify the Preface as we have it? Many of us think so. To find such forms is an extremely difficult task, because the words must be simple, beautiful, dignified, and clear. Dr. Wismar has for many years made a study of the problem and suggests that to the Preface be added a prayer similar to that of the ancient Church.¹¹)

¹⁰) X, 227.

¹¹) Dr. Wismar suggests a form somewhat as follows: It is truly meet, right and salutary, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

For in the beginning Thou didst create our nature in the image of Thy holiness, and when through sin we lost Thy divine likeness and brought death upon ourselves through disobedience to the Law of the first covenant,

Thou, O Father of infinite mercy and unfailing benevolence, gavest us not over to deserved doom, but didst establish the New Covenant, and didst restore us unto Thy favor and unto life through the death of Thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ,

Another example to illustrate the historic approach could be taken from my own experience. Mine is a large country congregation in which the transition from German into English has been rather abrupt. None of the children of school age understand German while the parents of even the younger children were confirmed in German. The alternate German and English service is not satisfactory for obvious reasons and to conduct two services each Sunday morning was out of question especially since the families themselves were divided in their demand for both languages. The fact that much of the Liturgy of the early Western Church was retained in Greek for many years, suggested the thought of using both languages in the liturgy of our services. I was espe-

our Lord (Whom Thou didst of old proclaim through Thy holy prophets, and whom in the fulness of time Thou madest a sacrifice upon the altar of the Cross for the sins of the world).

For this Thy love and grace we are truly bound ever to give thanks unto Thee through the same Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord (Proper Preface).

Through Whom the angels praise, the archangels adore, the heavens and all the powers of heaven, together with the blessed seraphim and with the spirits of just men made perfect, in unanimous exultation laud Thy divine majesty. With them permit us now to lift up our voices, and adoring Thee, to say: (Sanctus. Benedictus).

Yea, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God, heaven and earth are truly full of Thy glory, the glory of grace and truth, which Thou hast shed abroad in Thy Blessed Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who for us humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death of the cross, bearing our sins in His own body and shedding His precious blood for our salvation.

Thereby raising up the fallen world, opening a fountain of healing to them that were perishing, leading captivity captive, overcoming the sharpness of death, bringing life and immortality for all mankind, and securing gifts for the children of men.

Who also, that we might never forget, but ever thankfully remember His perfect Sacrifice and all the unspeakable benefits of His saving death, gave us a wonderful Sacrament and abiding Memorial of His dying love in that He,

In the night in which he was betrayed, took bread; etc.

After the same manner, also, he took the cup etc.

Mindful therefore, of the command which He gave His Holy Church, saying, This do in remembrance of Me, we commemorate

cially concerned with keeping awake in my members the continuity of the church year and the proper understanding of the Epistle and Gospel. The sermon could be made understandable, but to interrupt the Scripture reading with explanations would mar the beauty of the service at the altar. A solution was found in this that the Epistle and Gospel are read in both languages at each service, so that in the German service the English is read as an interpretation of the German for the children and vice versa. The result has been most gratifying. If the Gospel or Epistle are text for the sermon, it is omitted at the altar in the language of the service and read only in translation. Naturally, great

His bitter Passion, and His innocent, life-giving Death (confessing also His glorious Resurrection and triumphant Ascension, as well as the sending of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth and faithful Witness of His Passion, and declaring that He will come again in Glory as the Judge of all). Wherefore, O heavenly Father, we beseech Thee, look with favor upon these Thy gifts of bread and wine, which we set before Thee in obedience to His commandment.

And by Thy Holy Spirit bless and sanctify (†) this bread for the Communion of His body, even that Body Which He gave into death for us.

And bless and sanctify (†) this cup for the Communion of His Blood, even that Blood Which He shed for our sins,

That, according to His Word and Promise, He may come and feed us with His body and give us to drink of His blood.

Grant us that eating the Bread of Life and drinking the Cup of Salvation we may truly rejoice in Thy pardon and forgiveness through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Vouchsafe unto us that by this holy Sacrament of fellowship and unity He may dwell in us, and we in Him as living branches of the true and heavenly Vine, and that we may be made one with all the faithful in His mystical Body, Thy Holy Christian Church.)

(May the partaking of His Body and Blood enable us to follow the blessed example of the love wherein He laid down His life for us, so that we too may lay down our lives for the brethren, the fellowship of saints.)

(Gladden our hearts, we entreat Thee, with the cheering hope that, as by His Body and Blood He liveth in us, we shall together with all Thine elect, rise from the dead to the glories of everlasting life.)

care must be taken to arrange the rubrics so that the congregation will not have to stand too long for that part of the Liturgy.¹²⁾

3

It has been previously emphasized¹³⁾ that the Liturgy is art, and the "art of worship" cannot be legalized. It must always remain an expression of the faith of the church, which means the individual congregation, in the last analysis, the individual worshipper. The genius of Luther reveals itself just in this where Carlstadt, Zwingli, and others could not see clearly. Luther did not cut down the tree in order to trim off a number of dry,

Hear us, O heavenly Father, for the sake of Him Who is even now present in our midst, Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, through Whom Thy children may confidently pray:

Our Father, . . . Amen.

Draw nigh then in full assurance of faith, ye that hunger and thirst after righteousness, and receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

Agnus Dei.

V. The peace of the Lord be with you alway.

R. And with Thy spirit. —

We append this note without further comment for special study and illustration of the point made above.

- ¹²⁾ A remarkable thing is that I heard not a single complaint with regard to this innovation. I find that, if our members clearly see the spiritual benefits derived from any changes, they agree to them. Similarly, not a single complaint was voiced when the Common Service was introduced. To introduce this service however it is necessary to study it carefully with the congregation many months before, and in sermons later occasionally point out the idea of the church year as given in the Propers for the day. Such study should receive equally as much attention in our schools as Hymnology. Incidentally, while none objected to changes as to the contents of the Liturgy, vehement protests arose on the part of a small number when I introduced surplice and stoles. Even though their number was few, I found the change from black to white of no value to warrant its continuance. In other congregations this might be different.
- ¹³⁾ Dass wir hier die Kunst der Liturgie betonen, hat seinen Grund in der Natur des öffentlichen Gottesdienstes. Der Christ braucht ja keine Form, keine verfertigten Gebete, keine Auswahl von Bibelstellen, keine gedichteten Lieder, um seinem Privatgottesdienst Ausdruck zu geben. Dieses alles kann manchem Christen

fruitless, and insect-infested branches, but, after carefully studying the nature of the tree, set to work and slowly culled it. In fact he made no changes until pressure was brought upon him to do so, either by request that he prepare such a form or because of the harmful changes that were made by others. At the close of the sermon on the twentieth Sunday after Trinity (1526) Luther said: "Wir haben angefangen zu versuchen, eine deutsche Messe einzurichten. Ihr wisst, dass die Messe ist das vornehmste äusserliche Amt, das da verordnet ist zu Trost den rechten Christen. Darum bitte ich euch Christen, ihr wollt Gott bitten und anrufen, auf dass er sich das lasse wohlgefallen. Ihr habt oft gehört, dass man nichts lehren solle, man wisse denn, dass es Gottes Wort sei. Also soll man nichts ordnen noch anheben, man wisse denn, dass es Gott gefalle. Man soll auch nicht mit der Vernunft darein fallen; denn **so es nicht selber anfängt**, so wird nichts daraus. Darum hab ich mich auch so lang gewehrt mit der deutschen Messe, dass ich nicht Ursache

ja behilflich sein, solange er der Gefahr entgeht, zu meinen, dass durch das Befolgen dieser bestimmten Formen sein Gottesdienst eine höhere Stufe erreicht (als ohne diese). Für den Privatgottesdienst ist aber weiter nichts nötig als "dass unser lieber Herr selbst mit uns rede durch sein heiliges Wort, und wir wiederum mit ihm reden durch Gebet und Lobgesang" (Walch XII, 2487, Pred. zur Einweihung der Schlosskirche in Torgau). Sobald aber zwei oder mehr sich zum Gottesdienst versammeln, versteht es sich von selber, dass solche Formen gefunden und solche Schriftworte erlesen werden, die einem jeden angepasst sind. Dazu gehören bestimmte Gaben, dass man die höchsten Wahrheiten des Lebens in die einfachste und edelste adäquate sprachliche Form bringt, dass man an ihr keine Zeile, kein Wort ändern oder auch verrücken kann, ohne ihrem Inhalt oder Schönheit abzubrechen. Darin unterscheidet sich Kunst von Künsteleien. Darum bin ich persönlich der Überzeugung, dass mit unseren Übersetzungen der deutschen Lieder nie etwas wird, solange wir nur versuchen, die Strophen und Verse von einer Sprache in die andere zu übertragen. Wir können Gott danken, dass er durch die Englische Kirche unsere Formen wenigstens dem Inhalte nach für unsere englischen Gottesdienste uns gegeben hat. Heute, wie es scheint, würden sich kaum solche begabte Leute finden, die es so gut machen könnten. Luther erkannte schon solche Schwierigkeiten in der Übersetzung der Liturgie: "Ich wollte heute gerne eine deutsche Messe haben, ich

gäbe den Rottengeistern, die hineinplumpen unbesonnen, achten nicht, ob es Gott haben wolle. Nun aber, so mich so viele bitten aus allen Landen mit Geschrift und Briefen und mich die weltliche Gewalt dazu dringet, könnten wir uns nicht wohl entschuldigen und ausreden, sondern müssen dafür achten und halten, es sei der Wille Gottes. Wo nun da etwas gehet, das unser ist, das soll untergehen und stinken, wenn es gleich schön und gross Ansehen hat. Ist es aber aus Gott, so muss es fortgehen, ob es sich gleich närrisch lässt ansehen. Also alle Dinge, die Gott tut, wenn's gleich niemand gefällt, muss es fort. Darum bitte ich euch, dass ihr den Herrn bittet, wenn es eine rechtschaffene Messe ist, dass sie ihm zu Lob und Ehren fortgehe."¹⁴⁾ Since Luther realized that the service was art, he was very slow in making any changes either in form or language. He did not immediately proceed to formulate a German mass, but first purged the Latin mass. It was Carlstadt who introduced German into the

gehe auch damit um, aber ich wollte ja gern, dass sie eine rechte deutsche Art hätte. Denn dass man den lateinischen Text verdolmetscht und lateinischen Ton oder Noten behält, lass ich geschehen; aber es lautet nicht artig noch rechtschaffen. Es muss beides, Text und Noten, Accent, Weise und Gebärde aus rechter Muttersprache und Stimme kommen; sonst ist's alles ein Nachahmen, wie die Affen tun." Erl. 29, 203. Quoted in Luther's *Deutsche Messe*, herausgegeben von Prof. Kawerau, Einleitung S. 3 (Leipzig 1926).

Betreffs des Liedes ist es erstens einmal notwendig, dass wir eine systematische Untersuchung seiner Quellen in Angriff nehmen, ehe wir ans Übersetzen gehen.

"Diese Quellen liegen vor allem in der zeitgenössischen Gebetsliteratur. Für einzelne Kirchenlieder ist der Nachweis dieses Verwandtschaftsverhältnisses längst erbracht." Wo die Quelle direkt ein Psalm oder Schriftabschnitt ist, wird es für einen Liederdichter in der Übersetzung leichter sein. Er muss aber dazu begabt sein. Wer dieses alles versteht, wird sich auch hüten, nicht ohne grosse Not etwas am Gottesdienst zu ändern, denn sobald es sogar den Anschein der Künstelei gibt, ist alles verdorben. Sobald etwas Äusserliches aus dem Reformierten, Anglikanischen oder Römischen Gottesdienst in unsern Gottesdienst übertragen wird, ist es Künstelei, denn wir haben ja nicht denselben Geist. Cf. Forschungen zur Evangelischen Gebetsliteratur, Dr. Paul Althaus, 1927 (\$3.50).

¹⁴⁾ XI, 1786, 35.

mass as early as 1522, and when Luther came back from the Wartburg the Latin service was restored. Carlstadt had dropped the elevation and officiated in official garb. Luther changed all this and restored the mass to its original form. Only when the public demand was there and the people were prepared for a change did he introduce the German mass, not to supplant any other form, but to supply a demand.¹⁵⁾

To use Luther for or against the introduction of certain forms or ceremonials is doing him an injustice. We shall see later that he was not interested in the forms per se. In our day he might not have found it necessary to make such drastic cuts, as for instance in the Canon and Offertory. He undoubtedly would emphasize the more frequent celebration of the Lord's Supper today, just as he recommended a less frequent celebration in his day; he might oppose the use of terms which in the course of the past century have acquired a different meaning for the common man, as for instance the use of the word "Mass", which no longer is synonymous for our people with Holy Communion. Luther's actions permit no mere copying. All his moves and suggestions must be understood with reference to the needs of the case at hand. This also applies to the use of surplice and stole, or the retention of the black gown. Luther does not tell us what

¹⁵⁾ Lochner writes: "Ausdrücklich bemerkt Luther, dass er seine Formula Missae von 1523 nicht 'aufgehoben oder verändert' haben wolle. Sie ist auch der durchgreifendste Typus für die lutherische Kirche geblieben, während von der 1526 gegebenen Form die an das paraphrasierte Vater Unser angehängte Vermahnung hie und da in Agenden übergang, die Danksagungskollekte am Schluss aber in allen ihre Stelle fand." (Lochner, *Der Hauptgottesdienst*, p. 18.) It is also well to note in our day, that before Luther made any changes in the Liturgy he (through his sermons and writings) prepared his members first by pointing out established abuses and after the changes were made continued in this instruction, cf. XII, 1391; XII, 319, 12; XII, 1944, 10f; XI, 617, 19; XI, 413: "Wollte Gott, dass alle Beimesen wären abgetan; so wäre eine Hoffnung, dass uns Gott ein wenig gnädiger würde. — Es sollte nur eine Messe des Tages gehalten und sie als ein gemein Sacrament gehandelt werden; ja, die Woche nur eine Messe wäre noch besser. **Aber dem Dinge ist nicht zu raten, es ist zu tief eingesessen.**" (1522.)

to do¹⁶) Neither would he let the argument stand, that what has been dropped should never be restored. The reason for dropping certain forms must first be considered: whether they were dropped out of loyalty to the Word or out of indifference toward it; whether by these forms the Christians were being misled, or whether because of unbelief many objected to such clear statements of God's Word in these forms. Today we face conditions entirely different from those of Luther's day. He found a Liturgy burdened down with too many dry and infested branches, we have a Liturgy from which so many beautiful and life giving branches have been cut off.

We take for example the question of our Introits, Graduals, Seasonal Offertories, the use of the Lutheran Vespers and Matins, and in them the use of the Psalms, Canticles, Litanies, etc. Would it be better that these clear Words of God in the service, sung by the choir, children, or in some instances by the congregation, be restored to replace the present concert like anthems and many of the subjective hymns? The question is not whether we are accustomed to the ones we have, but whether our

¹⁶) To George Buchholzern Luther writes: "Was aber betrifft, dass Ihr Euch beschwert, die Chorkappe oder Chorrock in der Procession, in der Bet- und Kreuzwoche, und am Tage Marci zu tragen, und in *Circuitum* mit einem reinen Responsorio um den Kirchhof des Sonntags, und auf das Osterfest mit *Salve festa dies* (ohne Umtragen des Sakraments) zu halten, darauf ist dies mein Rat: Wenn Euch Euer Herr . . . will lassen das Evangelium Christi lauter, klar und rein predigen, ohne allen menschlichen Zusatz, und die beiden Sakramente . . . reichen, und fallen lassen die Anrufung der Heiligen, dass sie nicht Nothelfer, Mittler und Fürbitter sein, und die Sakramente in der Procession nicht umtragen, und lassen fallen die tägliche Messe der Toten, und nicht lassen weihen Wasser, Salz und Kraut, und lassen singen reine Responsorialien und Gesänge, lateinisch und deutsch in Procession: so gehet in Gottes Namen mit herum und traget ein silbern und gülden Kreuz, und Chorkappe oder Chorrock, von Sammet, Seiden oder Leinwand. Und hat euer Herr daran . . . nicht genug, . . . so ziehet derer drei an, wie Aaron . . . Denn solche Stücke, wenn nur der *abusus* davon bleibt, geben oder nehmen dem Evangelium nichts: doch dass nur nicht eine Not zur Seligkeit, und das Gewissen damit zu verbinden, daraus gemacht werde. Und könnt ich's mit dem Papst so weit bringen, wie wollt ich Gott danken, und so fröhlich sein." XIX, 1250f.

present forms fully supply our needs and make for a stronger Church. Whatever forms are needed, whatever older parts are to be readapted, whatever innovations must be made, it must be born in mind that the Liturgy and also the order of the minor services is art, and art cannot be legalized, and Luther's words are worth reemphasizing: "Man soll auch nicht mit der Vernunft darein fallen; denn so es nicht selber anfängt, so wird nichts daraus."

There is another point that must be made clear at the outset. While the Liturgy is an expression of the faith of the Church, it cannot be substituted for the Confessions of the Church. This must be especially brought to our members because of the trend in our Lutheran Church toward a Common Service. Members must be warned repeatedly that similarity in the Liturgy does not necessarily mean unity of faith, that even as Christian art in oil, statuary, music, and verse is the common property of all, so also the Liturgy.¹⁷⁾ Just in this Webber has made a distinct con-

¹⁷⁾ That art will gradually acquire characteristics unique to the confessions of the church is also true, for instance Roman Catholic art in many instances has its own peculiarities. — For a similar reason many oppose the use of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds in the services. They maintain that these Confessions have in them elements of the controversy during which they were written and therefore have no place in the Liturgy, because true art is not given to reflections. I am ready to concede this with reference to the Quicumque, but not to the Nicene. Hans Asmussen: *Die Lehre vom Gottesdienst (1937)* has this to say: "Die Auswahl des Glaubensbekenntnisses geschieht unter verschiedenen Gesichtspunkten. Einmal ist zu beachten, dass der Gemeinde kirchlicher Fundus übermittelt werden muss. Diese Erwägung veranlasst mich dazu, im Laufe des Kirchenjahres regelmässig mindestens zweimal, wenn nicht dreimal, das Credo zu wechseln. Ich schlage vor, das Kirchenjahr aufzuteilen in Apostolikum, das Nicänum und Luthers Glaubenslied. Das Athanasianum lasse ich nicht aus Protest fallen, sondern, weil wir so heruntergekommen sind, dass wir den Weg zu ihm noch nicht wieder gefunden haben." P. 238. "Das Nicänum hat eine überaus edle and prägnante Sprache. Beim Glaubenslied kommt zu der markigen Sprache die knorrige, eiserne Melodie hinzu, die als Melodie zu kennen bereits ein grosser Gewinn ist; gehört sie doch zu dem Grössten, was überhaupt je an Musik geschrieben wurde." P. 239.

tribution to our liturgical problems in his recent book.¹⁸) It seems to be the only book ever published which shows the close similarity of the outward structure of the Roman, Anglican, and Lutheran Liturgy, and yet repeatedly emphasizes one point of dissimilarity which apparently was missed by most reviewers of the book. He summarizes these differences in two paragraphs well worth quoting:

“The glorification of man, and of human relationships, has had a profound effect upon doctrine and liturgy. This heresy flourished in the days of Renaissance and of Rationalism, and reached its zenith in our day. This shifting of stress from Christ-centered to man-centered worship is the father of all modern heresies.

“This glorification of man puts human reason, not the Lord, upon the throne. It causes men to deny those parts of Scripture which they cannot understand, and makes them pickers and choosers of doctrine. It prompts them to deny the mysteries of the Virgin Birth, Baptismal Regeneration, the Atonement, the real Presence and the Resurrection, for these are beyond human understanding. This spirit of glorification of man denies sin, for sin dims the glory of man. It denies *sola gratia* and *universalis gratia*, and finds in man a cause for his own salvation. It stresses salvation by works. It makes the outward performance of a ritual, or the hearing of a sermon, or the receiving of a Sacrament, a work of merit. It thinks of the Eucharist as a gift which man offers to God rather than a gift of God to man.

“It exalts the words which man speaks above the words which God speaks, hence it regards prayer as more important than the Word and Sacraments. It is the basis of all unionistic worship. It ignores the Church Year with its stress upon the Savior, and sets up a church year centered upon man and his achievements. It sets aside the preaching of sin and grace, and stresses the preaching of human relationships. It believes in salvataion by slogans. It gives publicity to men rather than to the Gospel. It is the foundation of the social-gospel heresy, for it would save the political and social fabric, which has no soul, and ignore the individual, who has a soul.

¹⁸) Studies in the Liturgy, F. Webber, Cleveland, 1938, p. 173f.

“This glorification of man, so characteristic of liberal theology, has had its effect upon liturgy. The liberalist is ritualistic, but he selects a ritual which places man in the foreground rather than God. It causes men to prefer hymns that speak of man’s thoughts and feelings rather than hymns of praise to the Savior. It substitutes exhibitional anthems and solos to congregational prayer and praise. It glorifies its Good Friday Cantata and its Easter musical program, rather than the doctrinal significance of these things. It loves church organ of the cinema sort, with its cheeplly popular Vox, tubular chimes and echo. It prefers a style of organ playing that indulges in glissando, and accordian-like pumping of the swell pedal and dragging down of diminished sevenths at the end of every hymn.”

4

By what principles was Luther guided in his liturgical reforms? By but one: *Sola gratia*. E. C. Messenger very correctly states, “Luther attacked the idea that the Mass is a sacrifice offered to God, because it would then be a ‘good work’ and as such, fatal to his doctrine of justification by faith.”¹⁹⁾ He knows no other *Gottesdienst*, no other *leitourgia*²⁰⁾ than the service God does for him. What the Christian does in return: praying, praising, giving thanks, bringing offerings is but the fruit of His work through the Holy Ghost by means of Word and Sacrament. In this sense the entire Christian life is a *Gottesdienst*, and the public divine worship but one phase of this life. In his sermon on Matthew 2, 1-12, he writes: “So steht nun Gottesdienst darin, dass du Gott erkennst, ehrest, liebest aus ganzem Herzen, alle deine Treue und Zuversicht auf ihn setzest, an seiner Güte nimmer zweifelst, weder im Leben noch Sterben, weder in Sünden noch Wohltun, wie das erste Gebot lehrt; zu welchen allein durch Christi Verdienst und Blut wir gelangen mögen, der uns solches Herz erworben hat und gibt, wenn wir sein Wort hören und glauben; und die Natur mag ein solches Herz nicht haben von sich selbst usw.” He continues to show that doing the will of God alone is made possible by the power of the Gospel which must previously

¹⁹⁾ The Reformation, the Mass and Priesthood, March, 1936, p. 115f.

²⁰⁾ Quartalschrift 35, 115.

have brought us to faith and keep us in faith. In the same sermon he contrasts the true *Gottesdienst* with the false: "Nun lasst uns sehen den falschen, sonderlichen, parteiischen, mannigfaltigen Gottesdienst, da Gott nichts von geboten, sondern vom Papst und seinen Geistlichen erdichtet ist. Da siehst du mancherlei Stifte, Orden und Klöster, der keines mit dem andern etwas gemein hat; der trägt eine grosse, der eine kleine Platte; der graue, der schwarze, der weisse, der wollene, der leinene . . . Kleider an; der betet diese Tage und Zeit; der isst Fleisch — der eine betet mit dem Stuhl zu Rom, der andere mit der Bank zu Jerusalem. . . . Nun dieser Gottesdienst hat ausgebrochen und noch einen grösseren geboren von sich; da ist kein Ziel noch Mass, Kirchen, Kapellen, Klöster bauen, Messe und Vigilien stiften, Horas aufrichten, Messgewand, Chorkappen, Kelch, Monstranz, Lichte, Weihrauch, Tafeln, Glocken usw. zeugen. Hui, welch ein Meer und Wald ist des Dinges. Hierher ist gegangen aller Laien Andacht, Zins, Geld und Gut, das heisst Gottes Dienst mehren und Gottes Diener versorgen, wie es der Papst nennt in seinem heiligen Recht."²¹⁾

It must be noted that Luther uses the word "*Gottesdienst*" first as an attitude of man toward God (*Herzensstellung*), and then secondly he uses the term to denote the objective forms used in the public divine service as an expression of the faith of the Christian congregation. As the first essential part of the divine public service he considers the objective use of the Word and Sacrament, as the only instruments of grace, denn "der Heilige Geist niemand solchen Glauben oder seine Gabe gibt ohne vorhergehende Predigt und mündlich Wort vom Evangelio Christi, sondern durch und mit solchem mündlichen Wort wirkt und schaffet er den Glauben, wie und in welchem er will."²²⁾ Secondly, he considers the other essential part of the service, the appropriation (*Aneignung*) of such means of Grace through faith,

²¹⁾ XI, 385f. "Daher richtet sich seine Polemik vor allem gegen die katholische Überschätzung des gottesdienstlichen Tuns als solches und der gottesdienstlichen Form, gegen die Vorstellung, als ob diese selbst eine unmittelbar von Gott gesetzte, das Heil bedingende Institution sei." Koestlin, *Geschichte des Gottesdienstes*, Freiburg, 1887.

²²⁾ Quoted in Koestlin, p. 156.

since then first can the worship be in spirit and in truth. "Der Gottesdienst besteht wesentlich darin, dass unser lieber Herr selbst mit uns rede durch sein heiliges Wort, und wir wiederum mit ihm reden durch Gebet und Lobgesang, darin, dass wir auf Zeit und Ort, da wir des eins sind, zusammenkommen, Gottes Wort handeln und hören und Gott unsere und andere gemeine und besondere Not vortragen und also ein stark und kräftig Gebet gen Himmel schicken, auch miteinander Gottes Wohltaten mit Danksagung rühmen und preisen, welches wir wissen, dass es der rechte Gottesdienst ist, so ihm herzlich wohl gefället, und selbst dabei ist."²³) Similarly he writes of the Mass: "Wo wir nicht festhalten, dass die Messe eine Verheissung und Testament Christi sei, wie die Worte der Einsetzung klarlich lauten, so verlieren wir das ganze Evangelium und allen Trost. . . . Wie es widersprechend ist, das Testament auszuteilen oder die Verheissung zu empfangen und ein Opfer aufzuopfern, so ist es widersprechend, dass die Messe ein Opfer sei, derweilen wir die Verheissung empfangen, das Opfer aber geben. . . . Ist die Messe eine Verheissung, so wird mit keinen Werken, mit keinen Kräften, mit keinen Verdiensten dazu gegangen, sondern allein mit dem Glauben. . . . Gott hat mit den Menschen niemals anders gehandelt, handelt auch noch nicht anders mit ihnen, denn durchs Wort der Verheissung," so dass wir . . . "nicht durch unser Laufen, sondern durch sein Erbarmen, Verheissung und Schenkung alles Gut empfangen und haben. Sieh, das ist der wahre Gottesdienst, den wir in der Messe sollen ablegen."²⁴)

That by continuous emphasis of the preached Word Luther undervalues the use of the Scriptures as such in the service would be doing him an injustice. After all we must consider his times. The Word was read in Lessons, Introits, Graduals, Offertories, Canticles, and Psalms, but the common people, and in most cases the priests, did not understand what was read. The mere use of the Word was considered a *Gottesdienst* when accompanied by the proper forms. The natural thing was that Luther finds the only way of enlightening the Christians by the expounding of the

²³) Walch XII, 2494.

²⁴) M. A. Bd. 2, 127, 11f. Quoted in *Die Liturgische Bewegung der Gegenwart im Lichte der Theologie Luthers*, Otto Dietz, p. 40.

Scriptures. That such expounding is equally necessary today no one will deny — nor will there ever be a time when it will not be needed, for which reason the command to the Church is given that she continue to preach. Luther already made the experience that preaching replaced nearly all other forms, especially the reading of the Scriptures, the use of the Psalms etc. In his "*Unterricht der Visitatoren*" he writes: "Weiter weil auch an vielen Enden die alten Ceremonien allenthalben abgetan und wenig in der Kirche gelesen oder gesungen wird, hat man dieses . . . geordnet. . . . Erstlich, mag man alle Tage früh in der Kirchen Psalmen singen, lateinisch oder deutsch. Und die Tage, so man nicht predigt, mag durch einen Prediger eine Lektion gelesen werden, als nämlich, Matthäus, Lukas, . . . etliche Epistel . . . und wenn diese aus sind, soll man wieder vorn anfangen. Und der so liest, soll darauf die Leute vermahnen; zu beten ein Vater unser für gemeine Not. . . . Darnach mag die ganze Kirche einen deutschen Gesang singen und der Prediger eine Kollekte lesen."²⁵)

²⁵) X, 1673. I feel after even my superficial study in the field that the use of the Scriptures in our services has lost the importance that it should have. Not only have the Old Testament Lessons been dropped, but also the use of the Psalter, the Canticles, the Introits, and Graduals, which are all Scripture, and in most cases we read only one Lesson, either Gospel or Epistle, even though we preach on a free text, which all too often has become a topical text. Asmussen in his recent book (1937), *Die Lehre vom Gottesdienst*, touches on what to me seems an important point. "Die Heilige Schrift gehört zu den grundlegenden Momenten des christlichen Gottesdienstes. Ohne sie fehlt dem Gottesdienst das, was ihn erst zu einem christlichen Gottesdienst macht. . . . Wenn man die Frage aufwarf, ob ein Gottesdienst ohne Auslegung der Schrift sein könne, so warf man eine unechte Frage auf. . . . So gewiss wir die Schrift auszulegen haben, so wenig bedarf die Schrift dieser Auslegung. So selbstverständlich wir uns bemühen, die Schrift in unsere Worte und in unsere Welt zu übersetzen, so gewiss sind wir, dass das Wort in sich selbst mächtig und durchsichtig ist." p. 32f. "Ein Gottesdienst kann wohl ohne Schriftauslegung im engeren Sinne sein. Aber er kann nicht ohne die Schrift selbst sein." p. 34. He also refers to the rubric announcing the reading of the Scriptures: "Die beste liturgische Formel beim Verlesen der Schrift scheint mir diese zu sein: 'Höret Gottes Wort, wie es geschrieben steht.' Schrecklich ist das weitverbreitete Substitut: 'Vernehmet in Andacht ein

It was mentioned before that Luther's problem concerning the celebration of the Mass was entirely different from ours. He hoped to bring it about that the Mass should be celebrated only three times a week or even only on Sundays. That there ever should be a time when the Lord's Supper should not form part of the *Hauptgottesdienst* undoubtedly never entered his mind. Nowhere in all his writings can we find any trace where he either places the Lord's Supper above or beneath the preached Gospel. For him it is both one and the same thing. To reject the Lord's Supper or to abuse it means to reject the Gospel. This is so well known to us and references abound so that we need not bring them. To argue for or against the greater importance of either is to argue where Scripture makes no difference except that the Sacrament of the Altar is given only for Christians. "Dagegen ist wiederum zu bedenken, was die für unselige Leute sind, die das Sakrament verachten und so faul und lass sind, es zu gebrauchen. Denn dieselben mögen aus dem Widerspiel dieses Registers ihre Untugend zählen und rechnen. Erstlich, dass sie Gott selbst verunehren in seiner Stiftung und achten ihn für einen Narren, dass er solche unnötige Gottesdienste ordnet. Ja, weil sie nicht glauben, dass ein Gottesdienst seine göttliche Ordnung und gnadenreiche Stiftung ist, so schänden sie ihn mit solchem Unglauben, als einen Lügner und nichtigen Mann; denn Unglaube ist nichts anders denn Gotteslästerung, damit er für einen Lügner gehalten wird."²⁶)

A careful study of Luther with reference to his liturgical reforms will show that he realized the forms of the *Gottesdienst* were the means to an end, that is, that through the use of the means of grace the Church of Christ be established and its future

Wort Heiliger Schrift, wie wir es aufgezeichnet finden.' Man achte auf die Vorliebe zum unbestimmten Artikel." Footnote p. 30. It is always advisable to follow the rubrics carefully, also in announcing the Scriptures. I have a feeling that many of the additions to the rubrics commonly heard in our services and entirely of a subjective nature, as "*Mit Andacht*", originated either in the Reformed Church or during the period of Pietism. Someone has probably traced them.

²⁶) X, 2185. That the celebration of the Lord's Supper is the climax of our Common Service (*Hauptgottesdienst*) is another question, and certainly not debatable.

growth secured; that such forms, as long as they served this end and in no way endangered the Christians to fall into error, could well be retained or even other forms added. There was but one sane approach, that since the *Gottesdienst* was public, that is for a congregation, they were of necessity art, and the art of the Liturgy, before it could be improved, must first be understood. In other words, he approached the reform from a historic point of view. By his reform he was not replacing the Roman Liturgy by another to be strictly adhered to, but attempted to supply the demand of the Christians of his day in their *Gottesdienst*. If we follow Luther in these principles we shall not go wrong.

Luther by no means encouraged individualism in matters liturgical. He knew absolute uniformity would be impossible and undesirable, still he felt that in many things there could and should be uniformity. To quote him only in one letter: "Ob nun wohl die äusserlichen Ordnungen in Gottesdiensten, als Messen, Singen, Lesen, Taufen nichts tun zur Seligkeit, so ist doch das unchristlich, dass man darüber uneinig ist und das arme Volk damit irre macht, und nicht viel mehr achtet die Besserung der Leute, denn unsern eignen Sinn und Gutdünken." If we keep in mind the "*Besserung der Leute*" we too shall fare well. And our people, as pointed out elsewhere, will gladly submit to any changes so made. In all his changes L. is considerate of the individual conscience, even the weak ones. Before changes are made the congregation must be instructed in the need or reasons for such changes, and after they have been made, he is untiring in establishing the newer forms by frequent reference to them. The tendency in our day is to shorten the service by omitting parts of the Liturgy and so robbing it not only of much of its beauty but also of its effectiveness. In this shorter service, however, we wish to introduce all kinds of non-essential, I nearly wrote nonsensical, ceremonial which can serve no other purpose than to appeal to physical senses of man. Let our efforts be in this that our members will be edified, the Word and Sacrament properly emphasized, our children indoctrinated, so that spiritual life among our members be fostered, and then all additions to our service which will beautify the service will not be amiss. I can make no better suggestion than that we begin first of all, as soon as our new hymn book is on the market, to study carefully with our members the

services given, and use first of all what has been prepared for us and as much as possible follow the rubrics, at least until careful study will show us a better way. Then too the Liturgy is only part of our Christian life, and so we as pastors must also keep the proper balance in not devoting too much time to its study,²⁷⁾ but a little more work in the field certainly will not be amiss.

We close our chapter with the closing paragraph of Luther's "*Von der Ordnung des Gottesdienstes in der Gemeinde*" (and incidentally these studies preparatory for the article brought me to a similar feeling often repeated by Luther, "Ein andrer wird's ja einmal hoffentlich besser machen können,") with the hope that what has been written will give at least some incentive to more study in the field. "Anderes mehr wird sich mit der Zeit selbst geben, wenn es angehet. Aber die Summa sei die, dass es ja alles geschehe, dass das Wort im Schwange gehe, und nicht wiederum ein Lören und Tönen draus werde, wie bisher gewesen ist. Es ist ja alles besser nachgelassen, denn das Wort, und ist nichts besser getrieben, denn das Wort; denn dass dasselbe sollte im Schwange unter Christen gehen, zeigt die ganze Schrift an, und Christus auch selbst sagt, Lukas 10: Eins ist vonnöten, nämlich, dass Maria zu Christi Füßen sitze und höre sein Wort täglich, das ist das beste Teil, das zu erwählen ist und nimmer weggenommen wird. Es ist ein ewig Wort, das andere muss alles vergehen, wie viel es auch Martha zu schaffen gibt. Dazu helfe uns Gott! Amen."²⁸⁾

Gervasius Fischer.

27) My first impression of the men, who were making a special study of Liturgics, was that they were doing so at the expense of other important duties, but I later found that it was merely a side issue with them, a hobby, although a serious one.

28) Dass ich in diesem Artikel nicht dem Wunsch entgegengekommen bin, praktische Hinweise zur Verbesserung unsers gegenwärtigen Wirrwarrs zu geben, hat seinen Grund darin, dass wir uns erst alle in den Prinzipien des lutherischen Gottesdienstes klar sein müssen, um irgendeine Anwendung recht zu verstehen. So ist es mein Wunsch, dass wir alle einmal diese Sachen studieren, und die Prinzipien des öffentlichen Gottesdienstes, die die Schrift und Luther uns klar geben, festhalten, und alles, was diesen Prinzipien im Wege steht, beseitigen; denn zu wenig Form ist gewiss besser wie zuviel. Wenn es uns allen dann ernst mit der Sache wird, so werden sich auch mit der Zeit Formen finden,

John's Message to the Churches of Ephesus, Thyatira, and Philadelphia as a Preachment to Us.

(Concluded)

THYATIRA

We now turn our attention to the message which the Son of God sends to the church of Thyatira, the essential thought of which I have summed up into the sentence: Think not that pious activity can atone for doctrinal indifference.

Text: Rev. 2, 18-29

The doctrinal indifference was the result of the teaching of the prophetess Jezebel in Thyatira, and the bishop or angel of the church had not had the courage to protest against this teaching and practice of the Nicolaitans, for although that name does not occur in this message, yet it is clear that this was the doctrine advocated by Jezebel. We read in v. 20: Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

From the very beginning of the gospel missions among the Gentiles the church had had occasion to warn particularly against these two sins. When in the winter of the year 50/51 the apostles and the mother church, assembled at Jerusalem, had agreed that the Gentile Christians were not to be subjected to the ritual of Moses in regard to the Sabbath, circumcision, and the food laws, they thought it necessary to remind them in a special letter, recorded in Acts 15, that they were to avoid adultery and meats sacrificed to idols. And Paul repeats these warnings in 1 Cor.

von denen ein jeder sagen wird, ja das erbaut und dient zur Ehre Gottes. Es wäre gewiss nötig, um den Konferenzen gute Bücher an die Hand zu geben, dass wir auf unserm Seminar eine ordentliche Literatur über Liturgie ankaufen, und diese dann für einen geringen Preis den Brüdern zur Verfügung stellen. Auch sollte dann von Zeit zu Zeit eine ausführliche Kritik dieser Bücher gegeben werden, um den Unerfahreneren behilflich zu sein.

8-10. The special warning against adultery was necessary because the Gentiles in their former life as heathen had had rather loose ideas about the Sixth Commandment, and the warning against the eating of meats offered to idols was necessary because in the cities of the province of Asia and in the cities of Greece the Christians lived in the midst of a society in which there were many kinds of clubs in which men of the same business or profession were banded together. These clubs frequently met in dining rooms attached to Pagan temples, where they ate a common meal with a ritual dedicated to the god of the club. If these new Christians had before their conversion belonged to such clubs, it was not easy for them to withdraw now, for they would make enemies, it might hurt their business, their position in society might be endangered. Hence many of them sought to justify their continuing to attend such banquets by arguing, as we learn from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, that the idol was nothing. And if the Christians were aware of that fact, what harm was there in it for them? But Paul meets this shallow defense in the letter to the Corinthians by pointing out that such eating of meats offered to idols was a definite confession just as the eating and drinking at the Lord's Table is a definite confession saying (1 Cor. 10, 21): "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table and of the table of devils." Paul admits that the idol is nothing, but he argues that taking part in the ritual of a Christless worship, whether you believe in it or not, is not *nothing* but something very definite: it is the worship of the devil. Paul wrote these words to the Corinthians about 56 or 57. This message to the Thyatirans by John was written about 40 years later and by that time these ideas advocating that a Christian might without harm to his soul eat of such meats offered to idols had not died out but had definitely crystallized into a well-known doctrine called the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

They rejected the express warning of the synod of Jerusalem against fornication and the eating of meats offered to idols. The ancient church father Victorinus tells us that the Nicolaitans boasted of a superior knowledge and insight into this matter, which the common run of Christians did not possess, and that by means of this wisdom and by certain formulae which they possessed they

could banish the demonic powers in these meats offered to idols and therefore partake of them without harm to their Christian character. That throws light on the remark in chap. 2, 24 of this message to Thyatira by John, where he says that they boasted of a knowledge of the deep things of Satan, which the rest of the members of the church who did not follow this doctrine did not possess. And as to the sin of fornication, Victorinus informs us that the practice of the Nicolaitans was to discipline such a sinner for 8 days and then he was again received into communion, which certainly was a way of making light of the sin. It showed open indifference over against doctrines that God's Word had clearly taught. But all this under the guise of a superior and more enlightened state of Christianity than that to which the rest of Thyatira adhered. They, the faithful rest, were considered ignorant and narrowminded because they lacked this superior wisdom and so-called freedom. It seems that the Nicolaitans suggested to these faithful Christians that if they followed the teaching of John, then soon other and more grievous burdens would be imposed upon them. But John assures them that such is not the case: I will put none other burden upon you.

Certainly the Christians of Thyatira could not say that they had not known this doctrine that a Christian should refrain from fornication and from meats offered to idols. The letter sent out by the synod of Jerusalem 40 years earlier was also brought to these churches. The scholars and helpers of Paul who founded these churches in the neighborhood of Ephesus certainly also taught these truths. Moreover during the many years of his ministry among these churches John certainly insisted on these truths. Hence it was not entirely with a good and clear conscience that they followed the teachings of the Nicolaitans. And so like all people whose conscience is not free they sought for something to cover up. The result was a peculiar stir and activity in this church. We note the comment of the Author on this point in this message: "I know thy works and charity and service and faith and thy patience and thy works; and the last to be more than the first." No doubt the Nicolaitans were anxious to demonstrate that they were quite as fervent in faith and love as the simple Christians whose mistaken narrowness they desired to correct. Public subscriptions for many different purposes were a common

occurrence at that time. And the church took over this custom of the Pagan society of its day, using it in the interest of God's kingdom (1 Cor. 16, 1; 2 Cor. 9, 1f.). To all this the Nicolaitans gave their hearty support, for it was in keeping with their general principle of retaining the usages of the world about them.

But the Author who sends this message is not deceived by such an outward show of pious activity, it does not in His sight atone for the doctrinal indifference that lies behind it. It was He who said: If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed; it was He who said: Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. It was He who said: He that is of God heareth God's word. Hence this attempt to cover up indifference against the truth of His holy word by a stir of outward activity arouses Him to speak in tones not heard in any of the other messages. In this message *only* He speaks of Himself as the Son of God. In the general introduction to these visions in the first chapter He speaks of Himself as one like unto the Son of Man. But here is the only passage in the entire book of Revelation in which He speaks of Himself as the Son of God. He is indeed the kindly and loving Son of Man to those who receive His word into humble and obedient hearts. But to those who believe that they can play fast and loose with His word He will appear as the Son of God, as the judge of heaven and earth, whose eyes are like unto flames of fire that will penetrate every lying excuse and uncover every shallow activity and show of piety. He will expose it as coming out of a heart that is and remains rebellious against His word. Therefore the Son of God threatens the false and impenitent prophetess and all her followers with the most terrible punishment. Evidently this is not the first warning they have received, for he says: "I gave her space to repent of her fornication and she repented not." And now the punishment shall fit the crime. The warning continues: "Behold, I will cast her upon a bed," that is a banquet couch as at the Pagan clubs to which she and her followers belonged, but the fare set before them will be *tribulation and death*. Tribulation and death to her and her followers, that is the judgment of the Son of God who asserts in this message that He searches the hearts and reins. He will not allow any show of

pious activity to blind His eyes to the fact that here are people who, while they say Lord, Lord to Him, have set aside His plain words with glib arguments.

The Son of God has not changed His character nor His opinion nor His attitude in this matter, for He is Jesus Christ yesterday and today and the same forever. Neither has human nature changed in its essentials, though outward forms and customs may be different today from those days when John wrote these words. And although the name of the Nicolaitans soon perished in the early history of the church, there were always those in all ages of the church who advocated that the church ought to accommodate itself to the ways of the world. There always were and there are now those to whom the words of Paul (2 Cor. 6, 14) are an offence: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

Let us then not vainly imagine that in the outward organization of our synod there are not at least some pastors as well as laymen who in their hearts incline to this loose attitude in order to escape the hostility of the world. Indeed they do not boldly advocate their principle in the open as the prophetess of Thyatira did, for they know that such an attempt would be sternly rebuked. But let us not grow secure because we feel sure that such an attitude would be rebuked, but rather let us in all humility and in the fear of God pray to the Giver of all good gifts that He may preserve this obedience to His word among us; for the past history of the church shows that when the point is reached as in Thyatira that these principles dare come into the open, then there usually is no turning back. The history of the Lutheran church in Europe as well as the history of various Lutheran bodies in our own land points out this lesson very clearly.

This sin of being yoked together with unbelievers in matters of religion, this sin of making concessions to the world and its Christless religion has ruined other Lutheran bodies in the past and is threatening the same fate to others in the present. How shall we hope to escape the same fate seeing that we are made of the same clay? Sin is usually successful, eminently successful in this world. Therein lies its terrible temptation. That in being successful it destroys itself in the end, the sinner fails to realize until it is too late. Thus this sin of making concessions to the

religion of this world brings a certain flare of success, of prestige, of worldly honor. It brings the acclaim of being broadminded, the support of the influential and the wealthy, of society and of politics, but in the end it brings spiritual death. How shall we hope to escape this temptation that has overcome so many, that blinds the eyes of unthinking men?

There is only one safeguard against this danger and that consists in obeying the advice given in this message (v. 25): "But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come and he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." There is only one way of escape, namely that we pray that the Lord may give and continue to give unto us a ministry that is minded like the apostle of the Gentiles who said: "The love of Christ constrains me." But not the love of any kind of Christ, not the kind of Christ that one hears about on a Sunday afternoon over the big radio chains, but the Christ of whom Paul said: God made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We need to pray for a ministry that knows no other glory of God save that which it beholds in the face of Jesus Christ, in the face from which poured forth the drops of blood in the garden, in the face from whose lips came forth the awful cry: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me, in the face of Him who kept faith in the midst of hell and saved us by that faith. Such a ministry will know the meaning of that word of John (1 Jh. 5, 12): He that hath the Son hath life and he that hath not the Son hath not life. Such a ministry will therefore realize that it cannot come to terms nor make agreements with anybody or anything that sets forth not the crucified Christ but man and his doings, that is, salvation by character. Such a ministry will also have the courage of its convictions. It will dare to stand up for this truth in the face of opposition and temptation. And the life of our American society certainly offers enough occasion where the faithful witness who believes that outside of the crucified Christ there is no life but only death, must make a definite confession. He cannot, for instance, compromise with lodgery, which teaches salvation by character. He cannot for the sake of the allegiance which he owes to Him who has purchased him with His blood become the hail-fellow-well-met of those to whom the name of

Jesus is nothing. He cannot practice pulpit-fellowship or any other kind of religious fellowship with those who are not one with him in faith and practice.

And in order that such a faithful ministry be preserved among us we must feel a definite responsibility over against our fellow workers. We are indeed our brother's keeper. We are not to spy upon one another nor to condemn one another in the spirit of self-righteousness, but we are to admonish one another, when necessary, in the spirit of Math. 18, with that objective that we gain the brother, which is the objective of love. Because the truth of God's word is at stake, because immortal souls are involved, therefore we must speak, we dare not be silent, because we might make enemies, because we might lose a friend, or even a whole congregation. We need not only the courage to bear witness against such evil practices, but if that witness be rejected, we need also the courage to declare that such a one who persists in making compromises with the religion of this world is no longer our brother. If the time comes that we no longer have the conviction and the faith to make such a declaration, then that will be the beginning of the end of our spiritual life.

* * * *

PHILADELPHIA

Rev. 3, 7-13

But where shall we find the spiritual strength for such a confession which is fearless just because it looks to Christ first and because of Him to those whom He has bought with His blood? We know from God's word, and bitter experience teaches us every day, that of ourselves we have no such strength, our good intentions crumble to pieces in the face of objection and attack from within and without. May the message which the divine Author sends to His church at Philadelphia point out to us the source of that strength which avails in the kingdom of Jesus. I have sought to sum up the essential thought of this message in the answer that God gave to Paul's cry of need (2 Cor. 12, 9): Learn that *my* strength is made perfect in weakness.

Suffering from some bodily ailment that hindered him in his work as apostle of the Gentiles, the apostle had pleaded with the Lord on three different occasions to heal him of this hindrance,

but the Lord had answered him: My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Paul was to learn and did learn that if any success attended his labors in the vineyard of the Lord, it was not of his doing but that the grace of the Lord had worked through him. In the affairs of this world it may be otherwise, but in the kingdom of our Lord it remains forever true that God's strength is made perfect in weakness. Expressing a similar thought the famous preacher Spurgeon once remarked that God has this principle that He will fill no vessel that has not first become empty.

Just how does the life of the church of Philadelphia exemplify for us this truth that God's strength is made perfect in weakness? A brief retrospect to the experiences of the city of Philadelphia itself will throw some light upon this message concerning the church in its midst. This city had been founded with the purpose of spreading Greek language and culture through this part of Asia Minor. In the words of the message the Author speaks of setting before the church of Philadelphia an open door that no man shall shut. Even in the days before the birth of Jesus the city had served as a door, not indeed to bring the gospel but to bring Greek language and culture to the barbarian population of the interior. So well had it served in this capacity that by the year 19 A. D. the native Lydian tongue ceased to be spoken here and only Greek was heard. But during the course of the first century A. D. the city suffered from recurring shocks of earthquake of such severity that many people fled from the city and that the Roman emperors remitted the taxes a number of times for a period of five years.

Now the Lord Jesus indicates that He has set an open door before the church and no man can shut it. The phrase was readily understood by the readers. Paul had used the expression in a letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 2, 12) to express the idea that great missionary opportunities had opened up in a certain place. Thus the church of Philadelphia was now to do for the gospel what the city once had done for Greek culture.

Why does the divine Author expect great things of this church in the work of evangelizing the surrounding territory? Let us not overlook the first statement: *I have set an open door before thee.* In the first place it is the Lord Jesus and His Holy

Spirit that create the mission opportunities, not men, not churches nor synods. When God pours out His Spirit, then there is an awakening, as in the beginning of the nineteenth century both in this country and in Europe. Therefore if we desire that our mission work shall be blessed, if God shall give an open door before us, it behooves us that we earnestly and repeatedly come before His throne with the petition that He pour out His Spirit upon us and our work. And if we have not this earnest and prayerful purpose, then I fear greatly that all expenditure of monies and sending out of men and passing of resolutions will avail us little.

But although the giving of this open door is altogether the work of the Spirit of God, nevertheless He enumerates certain reasons why He gave an open door of opportunity just to this church. He adduces three reasons: for thou hast little strength, and has kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Let us study these reasons in the reverse order.

The Philadelphian Christians had not denied the name of Jesus. They too had to contend with the enemies of Christ. The Jewish synagogue of the city was particularly active in its opposition to the gospel. The message calls it the synagogue of Satan. To what acts of violence they would go in their hatred of the gospel of Jesus we can gather from the experience of Paul at Lystra, where the Jews stoned him and left him for dead outside of the city. Of this anti-Christian activity of the Jewish synagogue of Philadelphia we also hear in the report of the church father Ignatius, who visited this church of Philadelphia certainly not more than 15 or 20 years after the writing of the book of Revelation. But in spite of such bitter opposition the church has fearlessly confessed the name of Jesus, and that is one reason why the Lord has set before it an open door. Another reason is that this church has kept His word. There is no criticism of this church in the entire message. There are no people in its midst who with smooth arguments have set aside the plain word of the Lord or of His apostles so that they might make compromises with the world and its religion, nor does the Author find this fault in the Philadelphian Christians that their love for Him has cooled. They have kept His word in simple and believing hearts.

Now now follows the third reason why the Lord has set an

open door before this church: for thou hast little strength. In the translation of the King James version it is rendered: thou hast *a* little strength. That obscures the sense somewhat, it must be rendered: thou hast little strength. A queer reason indeed, is it not?

It seems queer to us because we are accustomed to judge by the standards of this world. In the world it is assumed that he will achieve things who makes a boast and a showing of his strength. It is assumed that the nation that can terrify other nations by its showing of strength is going to achieve its ends. Whether this principle is truly the right one even in the affairs of this world may be questioned. I shall not try to settle that point, but this is certainly clear from the words of this message that it is not the principle that leads to any success in the kingdom of our Lord.

Because thou hast little strength, therefore have I set an open door before thee. That is the argument of the Lord. As we have heard, the city itself had suffered frequently from earthquake shocks during the course of the first century A. D. As a result many of the people had deserted the city. There was not much wealth in the city. That reflected itself also in the membership of the church. It is very probable that in numbers it did not equal any of the other six churches and it is certain that it did not count among its members the men of wealth, and position, and influence to be found among the members of the church of Ephesus, the capital, or of Thyatira, the rich manufacturing city. Hence the Philadelphian church was not so greatly tempted to trust in riches and influence and numbers in carrying out the work of the Lord. But that is not the whole explanation, else we should arrive at the conclusion that the only ideal mission church is one that contains no men of wealth or influence. Now as a matter of fact God the Holy Spirit can create in the heart of a multi-millionaire who is called of God the conviction which Luther expressed in the words of the hymn: "With might of ours can naught be done, soon were our loss effected, but for us fights the Valiant One whom God himself elected," whereas a dozen others who are as poor as church mice still believe that one gets things done in God's kingdom by numbers and riches and influence and votes in politics. The point which the Author is making is that the members of the

Philadelphian church have learned the lesson of that humility that looks to the Lord Jesus and His word alone as the source of our strength and not to our own little strength.

And we need to have that particular truth impressed upon our minds that God's strength is made perfect in weakness, because that truth is particularly unpopular today in many Lutheran circles. Men say that the time has come when we must impress the people of our land with the size and numbers, the political and social importance of our church, that it may take its place among the churches of the land. Therefore we must make combinations and mergers. There is the tendency of some to stress those things in the divine services that appeal to the eyes and ears, while that which ought to be the heart of the divine service, the preaching of the crucified Christ and the earnest witnesship that applies this gospel fearlessly to the daily life of the hearers is reduced to a minimum and softpedaled so that it causes no uneasiness. But such witnesship will find no open doors set before it, the Holy Spirit will not be taken in by ballyhoo.

But will not the admission that we have little strength, that we are insufficient of ourselves to do the work that Jesus desires, produce an attitude of indifference, that men will say: If that is the case, then what is the use of concerning ourselves about it? That is the conclusion which the Old Adam draws, but never the conclusion of the New Man, created by the work of the Holy Spirit through the gospel.

There was a time in Peter's life, when he believed in the strength of his Christian character and will power to do the things that Jesus desired. You know what came of that. The Lord did not say to *that* Peter: Strengthen thy brethren. But after warning him of the terrible consequences of this fleshly confidence He said to him: I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. When you have changed your mind, or rather when God has changed it for you, when you too have learned, that you have little strength, then strengthen your brethren. And here is the queer paradox in Christian psychology that the man who has learned in the school of the Holy Spirit that he has no strength at all is the man who can do mighty things in the strength of the Lord. Thus David sings (2 Sam 22, 30): For by thee I have run through a troop;

by my God have I leaped over a wall. The Peter who confided in the strength of his character denied his Lord in the presence of a serving maid. The Peter who midst tears of repentance had learned that he had no strength at all dared to face the court that had condemned his Lord to death and dared to tell that body: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Yes, I find in this Peter who has ceased to confide in his own strength an evidence of true God-given strength which is still more rare and perhaps more difficult to achieve. He not only had the strength to confess his Lord in the presence of his enemies but he had the strength to confess a sin in the presence of his friends. And I do not mean the general admission: "Yes, I too am a sinner," which may mean little or nothing, but the admission of a very particular sin. When the Gentile missions of Paul were quite well under way, Peter came up to Antioch in Syria and while there entered into the homes of Gentile Christians eating with them whatever they set before him. He used that liberty by which Christ has freed us from the laws of Moses. But when later certain Jewish Christians from Jerusalem came to Antioch who did not believe this doctrine of the freedom of a Christian, Peter in a moment of weakness allowed his flesh to rule over him and out of fear of these legalistic Jewish Christians he no longer ate with the Gentile Christians, thereby causing great confusion in the minds of the Christians of Antioch, for now many did not know what was right. Paul tells us in his letter to the Galatians that he thereupon publicly reprimanded Peter, for Peter had given public offence. And Peter did not flare up, he did not declare that Paul had disgraced him as an apostle. He took the reprimand, because it was the word of truth. He bowed before it, and, by the way, it did him no harm, it never does in the eyes of God's children who know that they too must live from day to day by that forgiveness of God through Christ. But this fact that Peter humbled himself before the truth of God is an act of strength that is rarely seen, just because it does not flow out of the will of man but out of the work of the Holy Spirit through the gospel.

When Jesus sent forth the twelve to bear the gospel into the world, there certainly was little show of outward strength as men

figure strength. There were no men of wealth and influence among them, there was little learning, as the world counts learning, with the possible exception of Paul. Moreover these men were poor sinners that lived by the daily forgiveness of God even as you and I. It was not only Peter who sinned, Paul includes himself in the same category, when he calls himself the greatest of all sinners, because he had persecuted the church of God. And even in the midst of his apostolic career he confesses to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 3, 5): Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves but our sufficiency is of God.

Paul faced the proud and hostile Roman world courageously and successfully, and what was the secret of that success? He has revealed it to us in the words (1 Cor. 2, 2): I am determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. There was no attempt to win or hold people to the church by playing up to their worldly interests, by entertaining or amusing them, by appealing to their vanity or their pride, by impressing them with the size or influence or importance of the church-organization to which they belonged. That has often been done since and is done now by many. Let us earnestly search our own ways and let us remember that the apostolic witnesses had no such strength. But they had a God-given confidence in the power of the gospel of the crucified Savior, and before them God gave an open door, so that the Roman world was conquered by that gospel in less than 250 years. That word has not lost its potency now, but the Lord Jesus will open no doors of opportunity before us, no matter how much zeal we may display, no matter how many drives we may inaugurate, no matter how many resolutions we may adopt, unless He can say to us as He said to the church of Philadelphia: Thou hast little strength, and hast kept my word and hast not denied my name.

Therefore I have summed up the essential thought contained in this message to Philadelphia into the mysterious and yet wonderful words of the Lord to Paul: Let my grace be sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. The world sneers at that word. Our reason rebels against it too. But remember that Jesus says: Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. But as we become little children before Him, His Holy Spirit will

teach us to know and love the truths that govern His kingdom and among them this is an outstanding one. And as under the guidance of the Holy Spirit we learn to distrust more and more our good intentions and strength and will power and begin to lean entirely on Christ, we shall learn that this is indeed a truth of God, that though in the world it may be otherwise yet in God's kingdom strength is made perfect in weakness. And as we learn that truth and live by it, doors will be opened before us that had remained closed to us, doors that lead to wisdom and understanding and courage and zeal and a hope that makes not ashamed. Let the world take the highroad of trusting in the inborn goodness of men, we will take the low road of humility that looks to the goodness of God in Christ only and we shall presently discover that it is the King's Highway on which are found the things that eye has not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for them that love Him.

ALEX. SITZ.

Exaudi

Text: John 7: 33-39

In Christ dearly Beloved!

In our text we hear of a festival which the Lord Jesus joined in celebrating, and of an invitation which He addressed to the people at this festival. The festival mentioned here was the Jewish feast of the tabernacles. The festival was celebrated in commemoration of the fact that the children of Israel dwelled in tents during their journey through the wilderness. In the course of the festival the high priest drew water out of the well of Siloah and poured it on the altar. That was to recall the fact that Moses had smitten the rock in the wilderness and that water had gushed out. — You will notice that it is from this circumstance that our Savior took the unusual wording for the invitation He issued at this festival. — We Christians no longer observe this festival today. The Old Testament with its Temple and all its festivals is abrogated. — But the invitation of Jesus, which is the **heart** of our text, still is in force and will continue to be in force for all men.

Therefore let us take as the subject for our devout consideration the invitation:

COME TO JESUS!

1. Why?
2. Wherefore?
3. When?

1

Why?

Because of the end you desire for yourself. This end is none other than that of which Jesus here speaks to the Jews: **"Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me."** Jesus is speaking of His Father in heaven, of our beloved God. It was the desire of our Savior to go to His Father, to God in heaven, after He had completed His work and had run the course of His earthly life, and that, He said, would be soon. Now who among us has any other desire? This wish is entertained by all those who have not become completely intoxicated on that final potion of wisdom which the devil has concocted for the destruction of men. The first time that he set about leading men to their doom he employed this type of wisdom: He dinned this thought into their ears: Ye shall be as gods! You are not inferior to God. — But especially in these last days he attempts to lure poor mankind to its doom through this brand of wisdom: You are not superior to the animal. When you have had your fill of food and drink for the short space of this earthly life, it's all over. But the man who has not let himself be degraded to the level of the brainless brute by this wisdom will remember: There is an eternity, and there is a God. Therefore the end he desires for himself is to come to God. We must admit, though, that there is a vast difference between thousands of such people and Jesus in regard to this desire. He said that He would be on this earth only a little while longer. But that did not make Him sad. As Paul said he had a desire to depart and to be with Christ, so the beloved Savior desired to go to the Father after completing His arduous work. Again the Lord Jesus knew His Father very well, in fact, no one has ever known Him or will know Him as He did. This is **not** the case with thousands of men, who, indeed, have the wish finally, after this earthly life is spent, to come to God, to go to heaven, or to the happy hereafter, or eternity, or whatever expression they use for their desire. But, for one thing, they do not want to hear any talk about a "little while" that they desire to spend here. Far from it, they like it here, only too well. Besides, thousands of them have no conception and no understanding of God and of heaven. They drift on through life with the few wretched, sketchy opinions and thoughts concerning God which natural reason is still able to conceive. Thus also their firm expectation of a better hereafter rests on very shaky ground. Still, they do harbor a certain hope, and they do have this desire concerning their end: to come to God and heaven, and to be really well-off in eternity. Now for

everyone who has this wish and desire for a good, blessed end and of coming to God in heaven, the call is meant: Come to Jesus! If he does **that**, then his wish can be fulfilled. But **only then**.

For we can **desire** this blessed end for ourselves, but we cannot bring it about. Hear the words of Jesus: "**Ye shall seek me and not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.**" That tells you: he that does not find Jesus, does not possess Him, shall not come to God, into heaven. No one cometh to the Father but by the Son, the Savior said on another occasion. By means of his own thoughts, resolutions, works, and conduct no one can come to God in heaven. Do not think, dear brothers and sisters, that it is an unnecessary waste of time and words to present this **very well-known** truth over and over again. A glance at our text will change your opinion on that. There you see that the people to whom Jesus was speaking answered His first reminder of this very well-known truth with very foolish, even mocking remarks. Still they were no heathen who had no Word of God. On the contrary, they were Jews who had the promises of all the prophets. All of them had prophesied only concerning Jesus, and the burden of their message to the people at all times was nothing else than: Come to the Savior! — So, sad to say, it is no secret that among the mass of Christendom who live within ear-shot of the Gospel there are enough of those pitiable people who are very much like the men to whom Jesus was here speaking. They do not know that the main truth the Gospel proclaims to them is: Come to Jesus! They entertain the desire finally to enter heaven, and the older they get, the more lively does this desire become — and yet they have less and less confidence that this wish will be fulfilled. They become ever more painfully aware that there is no evading the fact: You have only a little while ahead of you, — and yet the confidence that they will come to God wanes more and more. This in spite of their increasingly strenuous efforts to make their hope more sure through a more godly, more pious life. My friend, take this advice: Come to Jesus! Otherwise you will not come to God. You're beginning at the wrong end. You want to do it by your own efforts. Hear the judgment which God, through His Law, pronounces on your efforts. It reads: They are all condemned, and you along with them. The reason? Because nothing can stand before the Law, which says: Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written. The man who has grasped **this** truth knows very well to what end he must finally come. He will learn to say: Poor, lost man that I am! I am rightly doomed. I receive my just reward, when I am damned. But I do not want to be lost. It is my very fervent desire to go to heaven, to come to God and to His eternal blessedness. — Now, you poor, terrified sinner, you who are alarmed by your deserved damnation, and yet yearningly long for heaven and its blessedness, hear me: Help has been provided for you. You in your despair over your sin and un-

righteousness are one of the thirsting ones whom Jesus invites for the very purpose of satisfying your fervent desire and longing for eternal bliss with God. Verily, it is because of the end you desire for yourself that the invitation is addressed to you: Come to Jesus! — At this point, dear friends, it is extremely important to learn and understand what this coming to Jesus is like. For although many get to the point where they see that they cannot do anything to come to God by their own efforts, and that it is possible only with Jesus, still they get no farther. The devil deceives men with his lies at all times, and the purely nominal Christians are the liars through whom he spreads this lie: You will surely plunge yourself into nothing but irksome toil and drudgery, into real human misery, if you come to Jesus, in other words, if you are converted to Jesus. — Don't be taken in by this lie. Come to Jesus! Won't you let me tell you

2

For what purpose you are to come to Jesus?

In order to receive. For Jesus calls out: "**Let him come unto me and drink.**" Those words are clear enough. Jesus invites the thirsty, those yearning for salvation, and He wants to give them to drink. They are to **bring** nothing **with them**, no work, no merit, no worthiness; they are to bring nothing, in fact, they have nothing that could be of help to their souls. They are simply to come, just as they are, as men who have nothing to comfort their souls and to satisfy their yearning for salvation, as men who are worthy of nothing. They are to find all that they need, without price, freely, without merit. Yes, without any effort on their part. To obtain natural spring or well water men often have to dig with a great deal of hard work. This is not true in the case of those yearning for redemption and thirsting for salvation. Jesus does not invite the thirsting to hard labor. He does not say: Let him come and — exert himself, plague himself, work, strive, and fight to find comfort and refreshment. No, there is nothing of that here. Jesus says: Let him come unto me and drink; let him come and receive! Jesus is always ready to give. Now the thing He has to give is something wonderful, surpassing everything else in value. It also cost Him infinitely much to acquire it, to earn it. But Jesus did pay the price. He did earn it with His infinitely precious, holy sufferings and death, earned it fully and completely. There is nothing left for us to earn, nothing for us to give. All we need to do is to **take** His merit. That merit is the gift He has for men. — Bitter toil, a labor mid the agonies of death, the terrible torment of hell — that was the price paid to provide a refreshing drink for lost sinners. But Jesus bore that. He let that toil and labor be laid upon Him. When Moses smote the rock in the wilderness, water gushed forth for men thirsting in the wilderness. — A beautiful picture which the

Bible also uses of Christ! Christ is the Rock, the strong, ever faithful Savior Whom God smote for us. He smote Him with the rod of Moses, the Law and its curse. God smote Him and afflicted Him in our stead, and behold, now Jesus is the Rock from which flows forth for us languishing sinners the water that refreshes, that saves from death.

Five founts I know, whence ever flow
 Peace, joy, hope, life, salvation;
 In trial and grief they bring relief,
 In death sweet consolation.

The well art Thou, yea, Jesus, Thou,
 The founts Thy wounds most precious;
 In ev'ry hour of crosses sore
 This draught revives, refreshes.

—Tr. W. H. F.

I repeat, we are not told: Exert yourself, plague yourself, wear yourself out in your anguish of soul, but: Come, drink the water that Jesus gives you. Come and refresh yourself. Come, receive My grace, grace for grace, the whole wealth of My grace, all of My grace which I have won for you with great and gruelling toil, but in great love as well, and which I now hold out to you in the same love. — Dear brothers and sisters, in my faltering way I have attempted to show: it is a blessed thing to come to Jesus. You can see that it is a lie of the devil, when men say that it means plunging into misery and unhappiness, into bitter drudgery and toil, into gruelling labor, if you come to Jesus, if you are converted to the gracious Savior and Bishop of souls. It means nothing less than receiving into your heart His unspeakably sweet grace. It means to accept it by faith and to make it your own. There is another point that I would not pass by. Jesus calls: If **any man** thirst. That means: whoever it may be. — What is this? Are those really free to come who till then had mocked and blasphemed Him? They are. Whoever you may be, and whatever kind of life you may have led, even though till now you may have been a bitter, malicious mocker — and you may have been such a mocker secretly —, all this makes no difference. If your dire need now oppresses you, if you are anguished by fear, if your conscience is afire and makes you thirst and yearn for grace, approach in all confidence. Jesus is not like some givers, who first thoroughly humiliate the petitioner and, after granting the gift, continue to upbraid. Jesus' invitation does not read, If any man thirst, let him come and first have his shame uncovered. Moses does that. Jesus does not. He calls out: Let him come unto me and drink, let him come and be refreshed by My grace. There is no baser lie than that He wants to put poor sinners to shame. By no means. He desires to rescue them out of their shame; not expose, but cover;

not show up their bitter need, but supply it; He desires to give. — Therefore come to Jesus — to receive, to receive His grace by faith and thus to find full satisfaction. Verily, if you come to Jesus to drink, i. e. to accept His grace by faith, then all the yearning of your soul for spiritual and divine treasures will be perfectly satisfied. The Savior promised that with these words: **“He that believeth on me, as the scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”** Here He speaks of the Holy Spirit and His heavenly gifts. These are to be given men in the richest measure, in a cup that overflows, as it were. This truth is often set forth in Scriptures. “Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures,” that means, of blessed delight and joy. “In thy presence is fulness of joy.” “Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.” First of all, those who come to Jesus, in order to drink and to receive His grace, have that **yearning** satisfied, that yearning for righteousness before God, which literally fills the heart of every sinner who is distressed by his sins and whose conscience is tormented by his uncleanness and unrighteousness before God, fills it like a gnawing hunger, like a burning thirst in his soul. Here the words are fulfilled: “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” Oh, their hunger is stilled and their thirst is quenched in the most blessed way through the grace of the crucified Christ. Their hearts bubble over with joy and their lips with praise.

What have I to God to proffer?

Naught but Thee, my highest Good;

But He must accept the offer,

Jesus, of Thy scarlet blood.

Immaculate righteousness I have acquired,

Since Thou on the tree of the cross hast expired;

The robe of salvation for ever is mine,

In this shall my faith through eternity shine.

—Tr., a., W. H. F.

Stain in me Thou findest never;

I am clean, All my sin

Is removed forever.

I am pure, in Thee believing,

From Thy store Evermore

Righteous robes receiving.

Then your heart is full of that blessedness which our father Luther experienced, when he had learned to drink from Christ's well of grace and to receive the righteousness of faith. He extolled it in this way: “It seemed to me that a wide door into heaven had been thrown open to me.” Surely, in that moment he had what he desired, and what we all desire as our end: A free approach to God

in His heaven. He had the desired approach by faith and hope. In the same way all of us who receive grace by faith will have this **yearning** of the soul, to come to our dear God in heaven, completely and fully satisfied. Now we no longer say: Miserable man that I am, I can never come to that place. Now we have Him to Whom we poor malefactors say: "Remember me!" And He grants to our soul the assurance: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." — Yea, most confidently does the Christian who is justified by faith utter these words:

For where the Head is, well we know,
The members He has left below
In time He surely gathers.

Tell me, dear brothers and sisters, is not this the most blessed way you can take, to come to Jesus? Is it not a truly devilish lie, this lie which the world proclaims and which, sad to say, many a nominal, still unconverted Christian believes, the lie that this is a way leading into unhappiness, a way plunging into misery? Once again you have heard the truth: Jesus calls and seeks the lost, not to make them miserable, but He is come to seek the miserable and make them blessed.

Then follow the call: Come to Jesus!

3

When?

Now, at once. Remain no longer a **despiser** of the highest and greatest gift of your gracious God and of the Redeemer Who was crucified for you. I mean the gift He also mentions in our text, the Spirit, Whom all are to receive who believe in Him. These are the highest gifts, the Spirit of Christ and the spiritual, heavenly gifts: peace, joy, and righteousness. Jesus has long since been glorified, and now all things are ready, so that men can receive the Spirit and His gifts. The man who has not yet come to Christ to receive these gifts cannot offer the excuse, that the time for receiving the heavenly treasures had not yet come, that they were not ready as yet. Oh, all things are ready. No, he who did not come did so, because he was a despiser of the mercies, the gifts of Jesus, the spiritual treasures. Poor fools, **thus** to despise the riches of God's goodness! They scurry and hustle and show a flaming zeal, when it comes to the improvement of their earthly fortunes, but they do not lift a finger in matters concerning their eternal good fortune and fate. **Come, I beseech you!** Remain no longer a **hypocrite** who hides behind his impotence in all things spiritual, who may even appeal his case to the Third Article: "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, nor come to Him." Otherwise I would come, of course. What hypocrisy! Indeed you have

no power of your own to come. That stands. But Jesus wants to give you the power. Does He not seek you? He sought you again today. Once again He has declared His saving grace to you, assured you of it, and in the most heart-winning way He has held up to you the blessedness intended for you. All that is His **seeking**. He is seeking you who are lost! Can you count the times He has done this? And if you did not come, then acknowledge the truth in the matter. Give up your hypocrisy. Not your impotence, but your evil will was the reason that you did not come. You would not. — If this cuts you to the quick, oh, then come, let yourself be drawn by Him Who seeks you. Stop being a fool who puts off the most important matter to a time on which He cannot even count. How many of these fools there are! They have, perhaps, enough insight to realize, that they ought to turn to Jesus in all earnestness and no longer resist His seeking, urging and drawing. But there is too much sloth and indifference. They say: Oh, we will all right — before long — yes, very soon. Well, friend, that would be fine, if you were in a position to say even this much: I shall still be on this earth a little while. But you know nothing about this in advance, not even whether you will have a few short days. You have no time for **certain** at all except the present time, the time we call "today." Very well, do not be a fool. Today, when thou shalt hear His voice, harden not thy heart. — Today, today, come to Jesus!

But **then**, come to Jesus to stay with Him. If we have come to Him, then the mind of the beloved disciples will be ours. When many turned away from Jesus, He put the question to them: "Will ye also go away?" Then Peter answered: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Our beloved Savior said in regard to His bodily presence: "Yet a little while am I with you." But He does not say the same in regard to His invisible presence among His believers. No, He is with us **always!** As for us, we want to abide with Him not for a short time only, but always, until our end. We need the beloved Savior and His mercies every hour. Very often we become weak and faint, we are close to exhaustion. We are terrified by the devil and the world, wearied by the battle against sin, harrassed by a distressed conscience. The fiery trial, which we are not to think strange, comes upon us, and then more than ever we languish and thirst. Always, at such times, there is only **one** course we know to follow, namely, to follow the invitation: Come unto me, drink! Come, you weary and heavy-laden soul, I will give you rest. — Let **that** be our course, dear brother and sister, and let us heed the warning, never again to seek refreshment at the wells which yield no water, in the world and its ways. They yield no water, for nothing can satisfy your yearning for heaven and a life of eternal bliss. Take the warning and never again try to be without Jesus.

May our constant prayer be our closing hymn:

Let me be Thine forever,
 Thou faithful God and Lord;
 Let me forsake Thee never,
 Nor wander from Thy Word;
 Lord, do not let we waver,
 But grant me steadfastness,
 And for such grace forever
 Thy holy name I'll bless. Amen.

— From Hoenecke, "Wenn ich nur dich habe." Translated by Werner Franzmann.

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

Our Course in the Present Union Movement. — Lutheranism in America is divided into several bodies, separated by something more than language and European national background, separated, rather, by differences of doctrine. During recent years systematic efforts have been made to bring some, if not all, of these bodies together. We share the desire for unity and rejoice in efforts aiming to bring it about, and pray God to bless the endeavor.

We are convinced, however, that only the truth can really unite, that error, no matter how beautifully camouflaged, is divisive, disruptive of true unity. Only when everyone sincerely embraces the truth of God, and confesses it, will the hearts truly be united. Compromise will produce a sham union, more destructive of real union than open and honest dissent.

Between the various Lutheran synods there have existed in the past mutually recognized differences of doctrine. It is our opinion that, in the interest of true unity, such heretofore controverted doctrines must now be confessed in accordance with the Scriptures in clear, unequivocal terms, under which a former error can in no wise find covering. Anything short of such clarity is inadequate.

By our love toward God and His Word, by our love toward our fellow-Christians and their spiritual welfare, by our love for the true unity of the Church we feel constrained to point out what to us seem inadequacies in the accepted doctrinal basis for the proposed church fellowship. We shall continue to do our duty, as we see it, by the ability which God grants, *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re; sine ira et studio.*

M.

"Viewed in the Light of." — The Sandusky Resolutions endorse "the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod together with the *Declaration*" of the A. L. C. Representatives as "a sufficient doctrinal basis for church fellowship" (No. 2). However, they do not place these two confessional

documents on the same level, they subordinate the *Brief Statement* to the A. L. C. *Declaration* by inserting the clause: "viewed in the light of". Although they accept the *Brief Statement*, yet they reduce it to the level of a secondary norm. Applying an old expression, the *Brief Statement* is given the standing of a *Norma normata*, while the *Declaration* is elevated to the position of a *Norma normans* over against the *Brief Statement*. This must ever be kept clearly in mind when appraising the doctrinal basis for church fellowship between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church.

No matter, then, what doctrine the *Brief Statement* may present, if the *Declaration* contains a reference to the same doctrine, the presentation of the *Brief Statement* must be understood according to the words of the *Declaration*. The *Brief Statement* is very clear both in its thetical and antithetical paragraphs, but all this clearness counts for nothing whenever the *Declaration* refers to the same matter and happens to do so in less definite terms. The *Brief Statement* simply, according to the Sandusky Resolutions, must be **viewed in the light of the *Declaration***, and if that light happens to be dim the clear light of the *Brief Statement* automatically loses its luster and is reduced to the candle power of the *Declaration*.

In our January number we called attention to the fact that both President Dr. Gullixson of the American Lutheran Conference and President Dr. Knubel of the United Lutheran Church of America attended the Sandusky convention of the American Lutheran Church in an official capacity. Both men made a deep impression on the assembly, *e. g.*, Dr. Knubel to such a degree that the editor of the *Lutheran Standard* was ready to move the establishment of church fellowship with the U. L. C. A. then and there. Is it too much to assume that the presence of these two men had some influence on the final shape of the Union Resolutions? We could hardly accuse anyone of jumping at a hasty conclusion if he so assumed. At any rate, the Sandusky Resolutions do demand that the *Brief Statement* must be viewed in the light of the A. L. C. *Declaration*.

M.

Revised Preamble. — In our January number (p. 62ff.) we reproduced the Declaration of the U. L. C. A. on the Word of God and the Bible, according to the text originally submitted to the Baltimore convention. We indicated the changes made by the convention, as far as we were able to ascertain them. Concerning the Preamble we had to be content with the statement that, according to reports, the convention had so radically changed it as to make it "independent of any particular controversy" and to make it "timeless". Since then a revised copy has reached our desk and we here submit the Preamble according to this final revision.

"That the United Lutheran Church in America, in view of the need of the world today for a clear testimony to the saving truth of God in Christ and in the belief that this clear testimony can be given by a state-

ment concerning the Word of God and the Scriptures, adopt the following declaration which it holds to be in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures as interpreted in our Confessions:”

The proof texts, which according to our fourth footnote (p. 65) were omitted in the *Luth. Herald*, are not missing in the official text. M.

“Editors Discuss Possibilities of Furthering Union Movement.”

— Under this heading the *Lutheran Standard* for February 25, 1939, carries the following bit of news.

“Editors representing the church papers and theological journals both of the Missouri Synod and of the American Lutheran Church held a profitable and friendly conference at the Atlantic Hotel, Chicago, on February 8. The meeting was prompted by the official encouragement given by both synods to the holding of such conferences, to discuss matters that are related to the proposed church fellowship between these two church bodies.

“Characterizing the gathering as ‘a historic occasion’, Dr. W. Arndt, one of the editors of the *Concordia Monthly*, expressed his great pleasure over the privilege of meeting some of the editors of the American Lutheran Church whom he had never met before. Dr. Arndt pointed out that **our church papers are not only vehicles of information but agencies for exercising leadership** and that our constituency looks to our church papers to furnish leadership in the direction of union.

“The object of this conference of editors was to see **what can be done on a Scriptural basis so that the negotiations that have proceeded thus far under such auspicious blessings might be crowned with the consummation of church fellowship between the two bodies.** It was the unanimous opinion of those present that the meeting was eminently worth while.

“In addition to Professor Arndt, those who represented the Missouri Synod at the conference were Professor E. J. Friedrich of the *Lutheran Witness* and Professor Theo. Laetsch of *Der Lutheraner*. The American Lutheran Church was represented by Dr. M. Reu of the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, Dr. J. A. Dell of the *Journal of the American Lutheran Conference*, Editor J. Bodensieck of the *Kirchenblatt* and Editor E. W. Schramm of the *Lutheran Standard*. Dr. J. W. Behnken, President of the Missouri Synod, and Dr. Em. Poppen, President of the American Lutheran Church, were also present. Dr. Behnken was asked to serve as chairman of the meeting, and Editor Schramm, as secretary.

“The discussion of some of the obstacles in the way of erecting church fellowship was marked by the utmost frankness and friendliness, and constructive editorial policies on matters directly and indirectly related to the union movement were agreed upon. In order to become better acquainted with the institutions and work of each other’s synods, it was planned to hold future conferences in St. Louis and Columbus. The date of the next meeting was tentatively set for next October.”

Bold face in the foregoing are ours.

As an authorization for holding this joint editors' meeting a resolution of both the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church are cited. The Missouri resolution reads: "6, d) Until church-fellowship has been officially established, the pastors of both church-bodies are encouraged to meet in smaller circles wherever, and as often as, possible in order to discuss both the doctrinal basis for union and the questions of church practice." The A. L. C. resolution is a little briefer: "6. That, until church fellowship has been officially established, we encourage the pastors of both church bodies to meet in smaller groups in order to discuss both the doctrinal basis for union and the question of church practice."

To the undersigned it seems like stretching a point almost to the breaking when these resolutions are made to serve as a motivation for an editors' meeting with the avowed purpose of "furthering union movement" by agreeing on "editorial policies" for "exercising leadership in the direction of union." This, however, is a question that does not concern any one outside the two church bodies who adopted the resolutions. What deeply concerns us is the fact that from now on we may look for concerted efforts of both the Missouri and the A. L. C. church papers in the "direction of union".

Let us put first things first: Let us, as God gives us the ability, set forth the divine truths in the greatest possible clarity, and the truth will unite the hearts. Aiming at union as our main objective may so obsess us that we endeavor to attain it regardless of the cost, and may blur our vision as to the truth. We pray God to avert this danger. M.

Where Does the A. L. C. Stand on the Doctrine Concerning the Scriptures? — By the *Declaration* of the A. L. C. Representatives, endorsed by the convention in Sandusky, the attitude of the A. L. C. toward Missouri's *Brief Statement* is defined in the following words:

"With the other points of doctrine presented in the *Brief Statement* of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod we are conscious of being in agreement. We also believe that in regard to the points touched upon in Sections I—IV the doctrines stated in the *Brief Statement* are correct. However, we are of the opinion that it would be well in part to supplement them in the manner stated above, in part also to emphasize those of its points which seemed essential to us."

It is Section I of the *Declaration* that interests us now. That is the section on "Scripture and Inspiration". The A. L. C. says that the doctrine set forth in the *Brief Statement* is correct. However, the A. L. C. is of the opinion that Missouri's statement needs to be **supplemented**, in part also that certain essential points need more **emphasizing**. In this light then the A. L. C. *Declaration* must be understood. Parts of the *Statement* that they pass over in silence stand approved; but those parts

of the *Statement* on which they make a declaration in so far stand modified, either supplemented or at least differently emphasized.

To this must be added the resolution passed at Sandusky that Missouri's *Brief Statement* is to be "viewed in the light of" the A. L. C. *Declaration*. The A. L. C. *Declaration* is set up as the final arbiter in all matters that are mentioned in both documents.

We now present the three paragraphs of the *Brief Statement* "Of the Holy Scriptures".

"1. We teach that the Holy Scriptures differ from all other books in the world in that they are the Word of God. They are the Word of God because the holy men of God who wrote the Scriptures wrote only that which the Holy Ghost communicated to them by inspiration, 2 Tim. 3, 16; 2 Pet. 1, 21. We teach also that the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures is not a so-called 'theological deduction', but that it is taught by direct statement of the Scriptures, 2 Tim. 3, 16; Jh. 10, 35; Rom. 3, 2; 1 Cor. 2, 13. Since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it goes without saying that they contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters, Jh. 10, 35.

"2. We furthermore teach regarding the Holy Scriptures that they are given by God to the Christian Church for the foundation of faith, Eph. 2, 20. Hence the Holy Scriptures are the sole source from which all doctrines proclaimed in the Christian Church must be taken and therefore, too, the sole rule and norm by which all teachers and doctrines must be examined and judged. — With the Confessions of our Church we teach also that the 'rule of faith' (*analogia fidei*) according to which the Holy Scriptures are to be understood are the clear passages of *the Scriptures themselves* which set forth the individual doctrines. (Apology. *Trgl.* p. 441, No. 60.) The rule of faith is not the man-made so-called 'totality of Scripture' (*Ganzes der Schrift*).

"3. We reject the doctrine which under the name of science has gained wide popularity in the Church of our day, that Holy Scripture is not in all its parts the Word of God, but in part the Word of God and in part the word of man and hence does, or at least might, contain error. We reject this erroneous doctrine as horrible and blasphemous, since it flatly contradicts Christ and His holy apostles, sets up men as judges over the Word of God, and thus overthrows the foundation of the Christian Church and its faith."

These statements seem to be as clear as may be desired. To mention a few points. (1) They confess the uniqueness of the Holy Scriptures as being the Word of God. (2) They present verbal inspiration as plain Scripture doctrine. (3) They stress, thetically and antithetically, the inerrancy of the Scriptures. (4) They vindicate for the Scriptures the sole authority of presenting and judging doctrine. (5) They finally maintain that the Scriptures set forth every individual doctrine in special

sedes doctrinae, not subject to modification according to some mysterious *analogia fidei*, or *Ganzes der Schrift*.

However, these statements evidently do not satisfy the A. L. C. To emphasize properly and to supplement them they drew up the following three paragraphs.

"a) The Bible (that is, the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments) is the Word of God, His permanent revelation, aside from which, until Christ's return in glory, no other is to be expected.

"b) The Bible contains a number of separate books, written at various times, on various occasions, and for various purposes. Their authors were living, thinking personalities, each endowed by the Creator with an individuality of his own and each having his peculiar style, his own manner of presentation, using at times even various sources at hand, Num. 21, 14; Jos. 10, 13; Lk. 1, 1-4. Nevertheless by virtue of inspiration, *i. e.*, the unique operation of the Holy Spirit, 2 Tim. 3, 16; 2 Pet. 1, 21, by which He supplied to the holy writers contents and fitting word, 1 Cor. 2, 12, 13, the separate books of the Bible constitute an organic whole without contradiction and error, Jh. 10, 35, and are rightly called the Word of God.

"c) Since the Bible is the Word of God, it is the only source, rule, and norm for faith and life and the ever fresh and inexhaustible fountain of all comfort, strength, wisdom, and guidance, a means of grace, for mankind, Jh. 5, 39; Rom. 1, 16."

A close comparison of the two documents will reveal the fact that points 1, 2, and 4, selected from the *Brief Statement*, are found also in the A. L. C. *Declaration*, although in somewhat different phraseology, yet sufficiently clear. Some new thoughts are presented, *viz.* that the Bible is the sum of the canonical books; that the separate books were produced on various occasions, etc.; that the authors' personalities, each with characteristics of his own, were not suppressed during inspiration. To all of these "supplements" we take no exception.

There is another addition which calls for a clearer statement to make it acceptable. Where the Bible is called the only source (c) there also the term "a means of grace" occurs. The *Brief Statement* speaks of the "Means of Grace" in paragraphs 21-23. When one speaks of the Word of God as a means of grace, it becomes necessary to specify. The Word of God is twofold, Law and Gospel; but only the word of the Gospel is a means whereby God would convey His grace to us. Inspiration alone does not make the Bible a means of grace. The letter, the Law, equal to the Gospel in point of inspiration, killeth, 2 Cor. 3, *et al.*

The two clear statements, 3 and 5, mentioned above are not clearly found in the A. L. C. *Declaration*. The matter seems to be covered by the following sentence: "By virtue of inspiration . . . the separate books of the Bible constitute an organic whole without contradiction and error."

If this statement were found in an ordinary essay on the Word of God one would pass it by without further ado; but when we find it in

an official document written for the express purpose of supplementing and properly emphasizing certain matters of the *Brief Statement*, and when we are further told that this sheds the proper light on the *Brief Statement*, it becomes our duty to investigate closely.

We notice what may be vital differences. In the *Brief Statement* the truth that the Holy Scriptures are without error and contradiction is presented as an evident corollary of their inspiration; the *Declaration* connects the two truths by interposing the thought that the "separate books of the Bible constitute an organic whole." This may be intended merely to ward off an atomistic conception of the composition of the Bible; but when it is made to link inerrancy to inspiration, one naturally asks, Why? Is the connecting thought necessary to establish inerrancy? The *Brief Statement* does not use it, why does the *Declaration* insert it? What is the meaning of "organic whole"? Does this term roughly correspond to the *Ganzes der Schrift* of the *Brief Statement*?

A clear answer to these questions is imperative.

A few historical remarks may show this.

Especially during the intersynodical conferences held in 1903 and 1904, opponents of the Synodical Conference urged that the sum total of the various statements contained in the *sedes doctrinae* is not sufficient to establish any doctrine. After the several elements presented by the *sedes* have been embodied in a definition, this definition must be tested with the *Schriftganzes*, which will determine whether the doctrine shall stand as contained in the *sedes*, or whether it must submit to some modification, addition or subtraction, to make it harmonize with the rest of Scripture doctrines. To illustrate. Because God's universal plan of salvation is to save all who believe, the doctrine of election must embody the *intuitus fidei*. The *Brief Statement* plainly rejects this use of the *analogia fidei*; does the "organic whole" of the A. L. C. *Declaration* open a back door to readmit it?

The former Ohio Synod was a staunch supporter of the inerrancy of the Scriptures in every detail. Witness the many refreshing remarks by Dr. Lenski in his great commentary. The former Iowa Synod showed a different attitude. Because of this difference the amalgamation of the two synods into the A. L. C. was held up for two years. A joint committee had drawn up the following confessional paragraph for the constitution of the new body: "The Synod accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired and **inerrant** Word of God and the only source and guide of faith and life." This paragraph met with violent opposition from the Iowa Synod. Particularly was it reported that one of their leading theologians threatened to tender his resignation if this confessional paragraph were allowed to stand. So firmly was he convinced of the error of its position. He wanted the word "inerrant" to be transposed so that it no longer would apply to the Scripture as a whole, but merely in so far as it is "source, norm, and guide of faith." The Iowa Synod agreed to this, while the Ohio Synod demanded a confession to the inerrancy of the Scriptures in their entirety.

Finally a compromise was effected. The confessional paragraph was adopted in the form the Iowa Synod demanded: "The Church accepts the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life." But there was an appendix added to the constitution giving the following "official interpretation" of the confessional paragraph: "The Church believes (on what grounds? M.) that the canonical books of the Old and the New Testament in their original texts are, as a whole and in all their parts, the inspired and inerrant Word of God, and accepts these books in the now generally recognized texts as substantially identical with the original texts and as the only inspired and inerrant authority, source, guide, and norm in all matters of faith and life." If this "official interpretation" means what it says, why then the strenuous opposition to confessing this truth in the body of the constitution?

What does it mean when the Iowa Synod says: The Church believes? or accepts? Not many years before the Buffalo-Iowa-Ohio merger was effected, Dr. Reu published an article in the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, in which he maintained that there are particularly three views held by American Lutherans of all bodies concerning the inerrancy of the Scriptures: For some it is an article of faith; some limit the inerrancy to matters of faith and life, denying it in other matters; while a third group accepts the inerrancy, but grants every body the privilege of denying it. This latter group in theory is ready to admit the possibility of errors in the Scriptures, but maintains that actually no error so far has been established. Dr. Reu stated their view in the following. "Weil sie zugeben müssen, dass der Beweis für die absolute Irrtumslosigkeit der Schrift aus Jh. 10, 35 und 2 Tim. 3, 16 allerdings keineswegs zwingend ist, darum sind sie nicht gewillt, dem die Kirchengemeinschaft aufzusagen, der in solchen und ähnlichen Fällen von der Möglichkeit oder Tatsächlichkeit eines Irrtums redet."

We pointed out at the time (see Q. S. for July, 1931) that this position is untenable. If these people have no Scripture ground on which to stand, then their assumption of inerrancy is merely a human opinion, and not an article of faith; or if they nevertheless consider it as such, then they become guilty of adding to the Scriptures, teaching something as a matter of faith which God does not so present to us, they usurp divine authority.

Dr. Reu's article appeared more than a decade ago. But the same error reared its ugly head also in very recent times. The American Lutheran Conference publishes a theological *Journal*, of which Dr. J. A. Dell, a member of the A. L. C., is the editor-in-chief. In the December number of this magazine (1938) there appeared several articles on the Scriptures, one by a Rev. J. P. Milton on "The Bible as the Word of God." The Rev. Milton is an Augustana Synod pastor in St. Paul, who also teaches some classes in Luther Seminary. From this article we here quote a few pertinent paragraphs.

"We have said that there are two parts to the Bible — the human framework, or the body, and the Divine soul, which is the revelation of God and of His will and Word in Christ" (p. 25).

The "framework" he defines as follows: "The history, the geography, the biography, the science (where it is intended to be such), the details of everyday life, the food, the clothing, the furniture, the houses, the moneys" (p. 25).

We do not object to this metaphor. If any one wishes to compare such matters as mentioned by the Rev. Milton to a framework he may do so without becoming guilty thereby of violating in the least the dignity and authority of the Scriptures. Only he must attempt no more by the metaphor than to express proximity to, or remoteness from, the central truth of the Bible, and dare not use the figure to exclude such statements from the body of the Bible truths altogether. For what the Rev. Milton calls the framework is just as much a matter of inspiration as is, *e. g.*, Jh. 3, 16.

To what every Christian, however, must object most vigorously is the following question with the answer the Rev. Milton gives. "Let us look at these two parts one at a time: **How can we know that the human framework of the Bible is true?** . . . There is only one answer that a person who admits that there is a human framework and who is not bereft of intellectual honesty can give. **We not only may but we must study these things critically, just as we would similar details in any other ancient document, to see if the Bible statements are supported or contradicted by known facts from other sources**" (p. 25).

The treacherous deception of this position becomes evident in the sentence we printed in bold face. The inerrancy of the Bible concerning its "human framework" does not rest on any assurance given to our faith by God, it rests on critical investigation by man.

Although the Rev. Milton, like Dr. Reu a decade ago, maintains that the Bible has victoriously come out of every critical investigation, this does not alter the case: theoretically the possibility of error is granted. The Rev. Milton says: "We need not be afraid to do that! If this human framework is true it cannot be proved false; and speaking hypothetically still, if it be not true, is it not better to know it? God knows that this human framework of the Bible has been subjected to criticism, and not all of it either fair or scientific! But the truly remarkable thing is this, that even hostile and destructive Biblical criticism has not proved the human framework of the Bible to be false, although it often arbitrarily assumed it to be false for the sake of an hypothesis or a theory" (p. 25).

Yet he is not quite sure of himself. He adds by way of explanation: "I do not mean to say that there may not be minor errors and discrepancies in the Biblical text as we have it today, additions or omissions or corruptions which have originated in the process of transmission and which it is the legitimate function of textual criticism to discover, and if possible,

to correct; we have seen that process at work in the progress from the Authorized to the American Standard version of the Bible" etc. (p. 26).

And what may Dr. Dell, the editor-in-chief, have to say about this glaring attack on the inerrancy of the Scriptures? He says in "Editor's Chat": The Rev. Milton "also teaches verbal inspiration" (p. 12).

In view of this historical background, past and present, we cannot but regard the *Declaration* on the "Scripture and Inspiration" as unsatisfactory. Nothing short of an unequivocal acceptance of the *Brief Statement* on inspiration can be considered as sufficient. Since, however, the A. L. C. *Declaration* chooses to replace the clear words of the *Statement* by some phrases of uncertain meaning, the question remains still to be answered: Where does the A. L. C. stand on the doctrine concerning the Scriptures?
M.

Intersynodical Ministerial Conferences. — Since both the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church passed resolutions encouraging the pastors of both church bodies to meet in smaller circles to discuss matters of doctrine and practise, repeated requests reached the Editorial Committee of the *Concordia Theological Monthly* for practical suggestions regarding such conferences. In response, the January number of the *C. T. M.* submitted the following.

"1. It might be well to start in the discussion with a study of the Minneapolis Theses of the American Lutheran Church, which are very brief and will make possible a rapid survey of important Christian doctrines. They were printed in the September, 1930, issue of the *Concordia Theological Monthly* and are contained in the brochure called *Doctrinal Declarations*, which can be purchased at Concordia Publishing House for 25 cents.

"2. Next the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod might be studied. It was printed in the May, 1931, issue (German) and the June, 1931, issue (English) of the *Concordia Theological Monthly* and is likewise contained in the brochure *Doctrinal Declarations*, just referred to. Coming chiefly from the pen of the sainted Dr. Pieper, who was noted for the clarity of his doctrinal utterances, this document deserves to be studied again and again, and our own pastors, who have studied the document before, will benefit from repeated perusals of it as well as those of the American Lutheran Church.

"3. In the third place, the *Declaration of the American Lutheran Church Representatives* should be studied and the resolutions which the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church passed concerning it. The importance of these documents is obvious. And since very properly a great deal of interest is shown in these various declarations, the *Concordia Theological Monthly* will soon offer a discussion of certain points in them concerning which questions have been asked. It is hardly necessary to add that all concerned will have to guard against misunderstandings pertaining to some of the points involved.

"4. Above all, the matters of Christian practise referred to in the resolutions of the Missouri Synod should be given attention. The respective resolution says very correctly: *Resolved*, That, since for true unity we need not only this doctrinal agreement but also agreement in practise, we state with our synodical fathers that according to the Scriptures and the Lutheran confessional writings Christian practise must harmonize with Christian doctrine and that, where there is a divergence from Biblical, confessional practise, strenuous efforts must be made to correct such deviation. We refer particularly to the antichristian lodge, anti-Scriptural pulpit- and altar-fellowship, and all other forms of unionism.'

"It may be wise if conferences will assign papers on the topics of practise mentioned in this resolution in order to have a basis for discussion. These papers need not be long. What is important is that the principles of the Word of God touching these questions of Christian life be carefully looked at and their application to present conditions be courageously undertaken.

"5. In conclusion, it seems self-evident to us that the meetings should not be given a controversial character. While fellowship cannot be established as yet, there should be cordiality in the treatment one side accords the other. The purpose of these meetings would be to arrive at a deeper understanding of the unity in doctrine which has been pronounced by the resolution both of the American Lutheran Church and of the Missouri Synod. There should be joint contemplation of the great truths of the Holy Scriptures, and in this way the Holy Spirit will create the unity of all the individual members for which we are praying. Here, too, one must remember the importance of the Word. The sweet Gospel of the Savior has to bring us together and keep us united. It is our firm conviction that, if the great essentials of the Word of God are studied and unity has been found to exist with respect to them, questions of practise and differences in non-fundamental teachings will be easily adjusted."

Since we are decidedly of the opinion that it always will be of great advantage to have one's senses sharpened for the detection of any possible error by a thorough study of the respective truths, we deem it advisable — since mutually recognized differences of doctrine till now separated the two church bodies, and since the danger constantly lurks that a remnant of some former error may still be hiding under a seemingly satisfactory phrase — that every one prepare himself for the joint meetings by a diligent study of the clear presentation of the Gospel truth contained in Missouri's *Brief Statement*. Such study should enable one to recognize more readily the imperfections, omissions, and indefinite statements in the *Minneapolis Theses* and the *A. L. C. Declaration*.

While it would be highly improper to conduct the suggested meetings in a deliberately controversial spirit, the opposite would be just as serious a mistake. It is our Christian duty to uphold the truth under all circumstances, whether in a joint confession or in a controversy. When a controversy does arise, it is not for us to evade it, but to confess the truth over against all opponents, politely yet resolutely.

According to our way of looking at it, differences in doctrine and practise, in so far as the latter is only an application of the former, are not for us to "adjust." Differences in externals, in adiaphoristic matters are proper subjects for adjustment, but Christian doctrine and practise has been determined for us for all time by the Word of God. There is nothing to adjust, but to confess. M.

"How the Bible is God's Word." — Under this heading *The Lutheran* for February 22, in the column for Young People, discusses the declaration adopted at Baltimore. After some introductory remarks it briefly summarizes the eight statements of the *Declaration* and then further illustrates by five special questions. Of these we here reproduce the second and the fourth.

"2. *Are there different theories of the method of inspiration in the Lutheran Church?* — Yes. These declarations leave *liberty* to each Christian in this matter. It is *the result* of inspiration that counts rather than *the method*. Did God use Bible writers much as an executive uses a stenographer? Did He enable the writer to select the true from the false and leave him complete liberty to present it in his own way and according to his own personality? Did He reveal all truth to the writers, including the truth about the universe, the world itself and of all that science has since discovered to be true? Or did He reveal only saving truth, truth about Himself and His Son and our salvation?

"4. *Does not modern science contradict the Scriptures?* — God did not inspire the writers of the Scripture to know all truth. He gave men minds to use in investigation and discovery. For instance, the laws governing the use of airplanes have been learned through the painful processes of many years. It is not necessary that men should know how to fly in order to be saved from their sins. Bible writers wrote with the background of their age and its scientific beliefs. *The one thing that they were called to do, was to reveal God to men.* The truth of God's relationship to them through Christ, the truth of their relationship to each other through Christ, this was the truth that the authors of Scriptures were inspired to tell. Conflict between science and religion comes when either claims too much territory. Some of the world's greatest scientists have been most simple and childlike in their acceptance of the truth of Scriptures."

Will elucidation of this nature, confusing moreover, as it does, God's acts of inspiration and revelation, be conducive to increased faith in the inerrancy of the Scriptures? M.

Proof for the Inspiration of the Bible. — Speaking of the Baltimore *Declaration* on the Word of God, *The Lutheran* for February 22, in its Young People's column, asks the question: "*Where do we find the best proof for the inspiration of the Scriptures?*" It answers this question in the following paragraph.

"Dwight L. Moody once said, 'I know the Bible is inspired because it inspires me.' In the lives of Christian people of all the ages we see the same power at work that has changed our hearts. It is a different power than is found in any other book. It is absolutely unique. One cannot account for this power without believing that the Scriptures are inspired. *What the Scriptures claim to be is proved in the lives of Christian people.*"

It is true that the Bible proves its divine origin by the fruits it produces, but Moody's statement looks too much like *Erfahrungstheologie*, and should not have been quoted without comment. What would become of inspiration if any one failed to feel the inspiring influence emanating from the Bible? This is not an idle question. There are moments even in the lives of the most advanced Christians when all feeling subsides to the vanishing point, when doubts assail us, when the soul is shrouded in darkness, when the sorrows of hell compass us about and the snares of death prevent us. What then, when we have nothing but our momentarily dead feeling to comfort us? This is dangerous theology.

The best proof for the inspiration of the Bible is the fact that this Book of Life assures us also of the glorious fact that it is not man's word, that it is the Word of God himself, given to us by inspiration. 2 Tim. 3, 16; 2 Pet. 1, 19-21. M.

Propaganda for Union. — A Lutheran Laymen's Society of New York has recently been very active in pushing unionism. Not long ago, on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary, it adopted the following resolutions.

"Whereas: A large majority of the members of the Lutheran Society, Inc., believe that the progress of Lutheranism in this country can best be served by one general body, and they therefore favor a union of all existing bodies with such territorial organizations as the particular mission of the Church may require, be it

"Resolved: That we spread this resolution on the minutes of the Society and that we instruct the secretary to send copies of this resolution to the executive officer of each of the seventeen general Lutheran bodies in the United States, to all organized bodies of Lutheran laymen in this country which can be contacted, and to the National Lutheran Council."

Reported in *The Lutheran* for February 22.

M.

Un-Lutheran Ideas in the Union Movement. — Underlying very much of the present enthusiasm for church unions are particularly two ideas which are really antichristian in nature and destructive of true church work. They are the ideas that numbers add weight to the truth of God and its testimony, and that it is the task of the church to work for social, economical, political improvement. At the recent twenty-fifth

anniversary meeting of the New York Lutheran Society, its president, Mr. Henry G. Waltemade, said among others, as *The Lutheran* reports:

"When one looks ahead and tries to visualize twenty-five years hence, it seems a long time, but when one looks back it seems to have gone so quickly. However, the past twenty-five years, although now seemingly a short time, have not been without accomplishment of purpose.

"We have brought together our Lutheran men, both clergy and lay, and have united them into one organization irrespective of synodical differences.

"Tonight you have heard read a resolution unanimously adopted at a recent meeting, urging the consolidation of all synods, making for a solid and united Lutheran Church.

"This is the only answer if our Church is to continue to grow and prosper, if we are to maintain our place of leadership in Protestantism, if we are to continue to enjoy the respect of all Christian denominations.

"It is my sincere hope and humble prayer that not only will our Church unite itself but that the time is not far distant when all religious bodies will join forces vigorously to oppose and drive from our midst those irreligious and un-American groups which not only threaten our democratic form of government but also are threatening our own Christian Church.

"Our Lutheran people have made for the finest in American citizenry. They have honestly toiled and labored for their families and themselves, so that this great nation might be proud of them and their ancestry. They have been builders of both character and country, unlike the many who today believe that government must maintain them rather than that they contribute to government.

"And, yet, when we go into the halls of our legislatures, our courts and our administrative branches of government, we find very few Lutherans.

"This is entirely due to the lack of solidarity of our people. We have not sufficiently interested ourselves in our civic and political activities. We have not been able to make those in authority conscious of our strength.

"This spring we are planning to hold a Mass Lutheran Service of all Lutheran men to be followed by a luncheon. This will be our initial venture in this direction. It is hoped that not only will we have the co-operation of our members but also of all clergy and Lutheran men.

"Let us now go forth resolved that upon entering our second twenty-five years of existence, we will, with God's help, unite our Church, bring together our Lutheran people, assume our place of leadership in Protestantism, and join with our fellow-men to preserve our American principles of government and the right of freedom of worship."

Bold face in the foregoing are ours.

M.

Agreement on Inspiration. — A commission, consisting of eight representatives from the U. L. C. A. and eight representatives from the A. L. C., met in Pittsburgh on February 13 to continue the discussion on the inspiration of the Bible. For the point at which the discussions had been deadlocked in previous meetings, see Q. S. for January, p. 66. Now the *News Bulletin* for March 3 reports:

"During recent years the greatest stumbling block to agreement has been the matter of the inspiration of the Scriptures. With regard to the following statement, however, the two commissions were in complete accord: *By virtue of a unique operation of the Holy Spirit by which He supplied to the Holy Writers content and fitting word the separate books of the Bible are related to one another, and taken together, constitute a complete, errorless, unbreakable whole of which Christ is the center.*"

This agreement of the joint commission will be submitted for approval to the biennial conventions of the two church bodies in 1940.

M.

Sign on the Dotted Line. — The *Journal* of the American Lutheran Conference for March, 1939, carries an editorial by J. Tanner, member of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, in which occurs the following paragraph: "In some quarters all this (subscribing to the Lutheran Confessions, etc.) is not accepted as sufficient proof that one is an unadulterated Lutheran. Specific statements (theses) must be prepared setting forth, logically and completely in concise phrases, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Subscription to these theses constitutes the narrow gate through which one enters into pulpit and altar fellowship."

The same number of the *Journal* refers to an open letter by Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, President of Augustana College, in which he says among others: "I question the method of attaining fellowship which consists in one party offering a document to the other to be signed on the dotted line. Indeed it is just this method which will preclude our coming closer. It is my contention that we are to meet each other as Lutherans, and not as suppliants asking for the right to be called Lutherans by others who have decided what Lutheranism is. The question is ultimately not an intellectual question, and cannot be solved merely by formulae."

It is true, a church body that would try to force its views on another church body, or on an individual, would by its overbearing conduct become guilty of disrupting the unity of the church; on the other hand, a church body that casts suspicion of domineering on another church body when the latter presents a set of theses which in concise phrases contain its confession and asks if you are ready to subscribe to them, is equally guilty of disrupting the unity of the spirit.

Dr. Bergendoff wants us to "meet each other as Lutherans." What's in a name, especially when church bodies are separated by mutually acknowledged differences of doctrine? Should such differences simply be ignored? That would be violating the truth. Should they be cleared away by a joint committee which formulates a set of theses? That would

be hitching the cart before the horse. No committee is competent to clear away existing differences of belief. When it comes to confessing, every man must stand by himself, also members of joint committees cannot confess for others. Joint confessions should not vaguely hope for acceptance by the general body, but they presuppose a community of faith. After by the help of the Holy Spirit through the Word of truth community of faith has been effected, then a joint committee will be of great service in formulating a confession.

One thing that must absolutely be demanded of any such joint statement is that it clearly and unequivocally set forth the truth of God in those points that formerly had been in dispute. Any one who is asked to accept such joint confession is duty-bound before God and the church to make diligent inquiry to ascertain whether or not any former error can still hide behind the phrases of the new document. The authors and sponsors of the new joint confession have the solemn obligation to show that no reasonable question of ambiguity can be raised, that all former differences of doctrine have been clearly eliminated.

That will not be signing on the dotted line.

M.

Verboten. — Vor etlichen Tagen ging uns folgende kurze, inhaltschwere Notiz zu:

„An die Bezieher der Allgemeinen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirchenzeitung. — Auf vielfache Anfragen hin können wir nur mitteilen, daß die Kirchenzeitung am 21. Dezember 1938 verboten wurde. Leipzig, 25. Januar 1939. — Der Verlag: Dörffling & Franke.“

Wir sind erschüttert durch das Eingehen des gediegen redigierten Blattes. Möge Gott uns ferner gnädig sein und über uns ein solches oder ähnliches, durch unsere Undankbarkeit reichlich verdientes, Gericht nicht verhängen.

M.

D. Dr. Hermann Menge †. — Am 8. Januar, einen Monat vor Vollendung seines 98. Lebensjahres, starb Dr. Menge, der früher durch Lehrbücher der Klassischen Sprachen, in den letzten Jahren noch weit mehr durch seine Bibelübersetzung in unsern Kreisen bekannt war. Die Bibelübersetzung, mit der er nicht Luthers ersehen, wohl aber durch „philologische Genauigkeit“ den Lesern zu ihrem „Bibelstudium gute Dienste leisten“ wollte, hat er im Ruhestand begonnen und vollendet. An seinem 85. Geburtstag (7. Februar 1926) schrieb er das Vorwort zur ersten Auflage. Seither sind etwa 200,000 Exemplare der Menge-Bibel ausgegangen. Eine Besprechung dieser Arbeit erschien in unserm Blatt im Januar 1932 aus der Feder Prof. Piepers.

M.

Religionsfreiheit in Spanien. — Wie nach General Francos Sieg die Religionsfreiheit in Spanien fahren werde, war nicht leicht vorauszusehen. General Franco hatte „religiöse Duldsamkeit“ angekündigt (D. S. April 1938, S. 144). Es war aber auch die volle Wiedereinsetzung des Jesuiten-

ordens proklamiert worden (D. S. Jan. 1939, S. 70). Jesuiten und religiöse Duldung! Nun bringt die „Abendschule“ vom 2. März eine interessante Zusammenfassung des von den Nationalen in Aussicht genommenen Programms.

„Es ist wohl bekannt, daß der letzte Papst, Pius XI., General Francos Regierung in Spanien als legitim anerkannt hat. Schon in 1933 hatte der Papst die Regierungsbeamten in Madrid exkommuniziert, den Präsidenten, sein Kabinett und alle Glieder des Parlaments, weil sie für Vorlagen gestimmt hatten, die gegen die katholische Kirche gerichtet waren. Im September 1937 kam dann die Nachricht, daß der Papst einen Hirtenbrief, unterzeichnet von seinem eigenen Gesandten in Spanien, von zwei spanischen Kardinalen und 46 Prälaten, mit Wohlwollen angenommen habe, in dem man sich für Franco und seine Partei aussprach. Im Mai 1938 wechselten dann die Insurgentenregierung und der päpstliche Hof diplomatische Gesandte, und der Vatikan erkannte damit die Franco'sche Regierung als zu Recht bestehend an.

„Schon lange haben Protestanten nicht recht gewußt, wie sie von der Lage in Spanien denken und reden sollten. Das Loyalisten-Regiment in Madrid war, wenn man glauben darf, was man hört und liest, stark vom Kommunismus angesteckt; und daß der Vatikan für Franco so energisch ins Geschirr ging, mußte auch verdächtig sein, wenn man sich ins Gedächtnis zurückrief, wie es vorher unter päpstlicher Regierung dort aussah.

„Jetzt hört man, daß das Mundstück der Nationalisten, Jose Femartin, sich über das Programm ausgelassen hat, das diese Partei für die katholische Kirche in Spanien entworfen habe, wenn sie siegreich aus dem Kampf hervorgehe, ein Programm, das ‚mehr papistisch ist als der Papst selber.‘ Es wird darin eine Staatskirche geplant, die tatsächlich nur ein Werkzeug für den Staat bildet, der durch die Religion seine politischen Zwecke erreichen will. Das Programm schreibt vor: 1. Die katholische Kirche ist die offizielle Kirche des Staates; — 2. Kein Lehrer darf angestellt werden, der den katholischen Glauben, öffentlich oder privatim, verleugnet oder demselben opponiert; — 3. Kein anderer öffentlicher Gottesdienst wird erlaubt, und privatim nur durch besondere Vergünstigung und Erlaubnis des Staats; — 4. Alle katholischen Satzungen und die kirchliche Gerichtsbarkeit werden in die Staatsstatuten aufgenommen; — 5. Die katholische Kirche erhält die Aufsicht über das Unterrichtswesen, die Presse und überhaupt über Veröffentlichung ‚dogmatischer Sachen‘; — 6. Kirchengeneigentlichkeit, das die Obrigkeit konfisziert hat, soll dem Staat gegeben werden, aber dafür soll der Staat die Kirche finanziell erhalten; — 7. Dies alles soll durch ein Konkordat geregelt werden.“

Soweit der Bericht der „Abendschule“. Allem Anschein nach bedeutet der Sieg Francos eine Stärkung der antichristlichen Macht des Papstes.

M.

Ein anderes Bild aus Spanien. — In einer anderen Notiz haben wir nach Angaben in der „Abendschule“ Francos Programm über die künftige Stellung der Kirche in Spanien berichtet. Wie wäre wohl die Kirche ge-

fahren, wenn die Loyalisten gesiegt hätten? Das „Kirchenblatt“ (der A. L. C.) schreibt editoriell am 11. März: „Wie fürchtbar die Noten die Kirche in Spanien verfolgt haben, läßt sich in allen Einzelheiten heute noch nicht überblicken. Das Gesamtbild wird entsetzlich ausfallen, wenn man nach vereinzeltten Mitteilungen urteilen darf.“ Darauf druckt es folgende Notizen aus der „Münchener Katholischen Kirchenzeitung“ ab.

„Man konnte nun Einzelheiten über den Tod der Bischöfe von Almeria und Cadix erfahren. Diese Bischöfe mußten für den Kreuzer Jakob I. Kohlen aufladen und während der Fahrt dieses Schiffes die Kessel speisen. Wenn sie dann, müde geworden, einen Augenblick auszuruhen versuchten, begossen die Matrosen den Fußboden, damit die Masse sie daran hinderte. Nach einigen Tagen wurden die Bischöfe mit anderen Gefangenen in ein Netz gestopft und ins Meer geworfen.

„über die Zahl der Opfer der katholischen Männerorden in der spanischen Revolution macht Vater Ledit auf Grund amtlicher Erhebungen folgende Mitteilung: 1467 Ordenspriester, die unzweifelhaft ermordert wurden, sind namentlich festgestellt. Dazu kommen noch 3000 Vermißte, die auf geheimnisvolle Weise verschwanden. Die Höchstzahl der Opfer stellen die Dominikaner mit 97; im ganzen sind 29 Ordensgenossenchaften betroffen. Die Gesamtzahl der gefallenen Welt- und Ordenspriester sowie der Ordensschwestern beträgt nach der Schätzung Ledits etwa 11,000.“

Kinder, es ist die letzte Stunde, schreibt Johannes (I, 2, 18). Der Glaube nimmt ab, und der Antichrist erstarrt. M.

Karl Barths reformierte Auffassung von der Aufgabe des Staates. — Bald nach dem Weltkriege, der den Zusammenbruch des bis dahin so beschaulich geführten religiösen Lebens gebracht hatte, machte D. Karl Barth viel von sich reden (Auslegung des Römerbriefs; Prolegomena zu einer Dogmatik; zahlreiche kleinere Schriften), indem er an die Stelle der Subjektivität der Erfahrungstheologie die Forderung autoritativer Geltung des Gotteswortes — allerdings nicht gleichbedeutend mit der Bibel — stellte. Hierzulande wurden seine Gedanken hauptsächlich durch Vorträge D. E. Brunners bekannt. Als Hitler ans Ruder kam, wirbelte die hiesige Presse viel Staub auf, als D. Barth sich weigerte, den vorge schriebenen Treueid zu leisten (vgl. D. S. Okt. 1934, S. 293; Apr. 1935, S. 145) und deshalb aus Deutschland weichen mußte. Er wirkte seither in Basel.

D. Barth stammt aus reformierten Kreisen und huldigt reformierten Anschauungen. Das trat besonders klar zutage, als er sich letzten Herbst in die Sudetenfrage einmischte. Ein Satz aus einem Briefe an einen Prager Theologieprofessor mag dies zeigen.

„Jeder tschechische Soldat, der dann kämpft und leidet, wird dies auch für uns und — ich sage es jetzt ohne Rückhalt — er wird es auch für die Kirche Jesu tun.“

In der reformierten Presse unsers Landes begegnet man solchen und ähnlichen Ansichten auf Schritt und Tritt. M.

Büchertisch.

„A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth“. — Es ist schade, daß uns die Franzmannsche englische Übersetzung der zweiten Reihe von Hönede's Passionspredigten nicht früh genug zuhanden kam, um sie noch in der vorigen Nummer der *N. S.* anzeigen zu können.

Nun hat Herr Prof. Meyer in seiner „Introduction“ zu dem Büchlein so ziemlich alles gesagt, was sich zu dessen Empfehlung sagen läßt. Von meinem Herrn Kollegen immer wieder dazu gedrängt, will ich — natürlich nicht über die englische Übersetzung, für die Prof. Meyer die Verantwortung übernommen hat, — sondern über ein paar Punkte in der Art und Weise der Hönede'schen Predigten selbst, die mir besonders nachahmungswert erscheinen, etwas sagen.

Hönede war vor allem kein Kanzelredner im modernen Sinn, der durch äußerliche Redekunst der Gemeinde, dem großen Publikum oder auch seinen Kollegen im Predigtamt imponieren wollte. Er war allem Paradiere der natürlich-menschlichen Redekunst herzlich feind und predigte so **einfältig und kindlich**, daß auch die Ungebildeten ihm mit Verständnis und inniger Andacht zuhörten, als rede die Schrift in eigenen Worten zu ihnen.

Dabei war Hönede bis aufs äußerste **konkret**. Das bedeutete gerade hier wie auch sonst, daß er im kleinen wie im großen historisch zu Werke ging und das Evangelium auch mit seinen eigenen Gedanken und Worten so vortrug, daß seine Zuhörer alles, was er sagte, mit den Augen ihres Geistes lebendig vor sich gehen sahen. Gerade in der Predigt der Leidensgeschichte erschien Hönede als einfältiger **Erzähler**, der alles, was er sagte, selbst erfahren hatte und damit seine Zuhörer bis ans Ende fesselte.

Nun war Hönede nicht nur selbst ein vom Evangelium tief ergriffener, sondern auch ein durch langjährige christliche Erfahrung und gründlich psychologische Durchbildung gerade in den verschiedenen Seelenstimmungen, die Gottes langjährige Schulung wirkt, reichlich erfahrener Mann, der auch zum Meister in der **Anwendung** von Gesetz und Evangelium in Strafe, Drohung, Warnung, Trost, Ermunterung, Lockung auf die verschiedensten Zuhörer geworden war und insonderheit das stellvertretende Leiden unsers Herrn in all seinen Phasen bis zur Gottverlassenheit und seltigem Abscheiden so direkt und kräftig den von der Sünde geängstigten Christen ins Herz predigte (vgl. die letzte Predigt von der Gottverlassenheit Christi), daß man sich schon mutwillig verstopfen mußte, wenn man nicht selig dadurch gestört werden wollte. **Wie selten ist das!**

überaus lehrreich für uns Prediger für die Anwendung des verschiedenen Gotteswortes auf einzelne Sünder sind auch die Predigten über den Verrat des Judas und die Verleugnung Petri. Und die Predigt an die „Töchter Jerusalems“ ist gerade in unserer Zeit von besonderer Bedeutung. Doch genug! Muß es denn sein, daß wir nun englisch werden, vom direktesten Kontakt mit dem Inhalt und der Weise der Predigt Luthers abgeschnitten dem verlotterten, Gesetz und Evangelium überall vermischenden Geist des englisch-amerikanischen Sektentums, der zunehmenden Verweltlichung und kirchlichen Verziehung unserer Jugend anheimfallen, — ist das

nicht mehr aufzuhalten, so kann man sich über solche Übersetzungen deutscher Musterpredigten, wie "A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth" nie bringt, nur von Herzen freuen und ihnen fleißiges Studium von seiten unserer jungen Prediger wünschen. Aug. Pieper.

Proceedings of the Thirty-Sixth Convention of the Ev. Luth. Synodical Conference of North America, assembled at Watertown, Wis., Aug. 4-9, 1938. 142 pages, stapled. Price, 25c. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

Already in our October issue we called attention to this report and discussed parts of it. We shall not repeat now (see Q. S. Oct., 1938, p. 295).

A very timely essay was read by Prof. E. E. Kowalke on "Social Problems and the Gospel", in which he clearly defines the generic differences between the field of activity assigned by God to the Gospel and the social problems and on the other hand points out how the influence of the Gospel in justifying the individual will be felt also in his changed attitude toward the social problems.

Very much space is naturally devoted to a report on the one foreign mission, the Negro mission, which the Synodical Conference has carried on now for sixty years, and which recently has been expanded to include work among the Ibesikpos of Nigeria.

A committee, appointed two years ago, had prepared a draft for a new Constitution and By-laws. After due deliberation and revision "it was resolved to submit this Constitution with its By-laws to the constituent synods for adoption."

The valuable essays contained in the report and the fact that the text of the proposed new Constitution and By-laws is also found in it, make it desirable that every pastor procure a copy. M.

Walther and the Church. By Wm. Dallmann, W. H. T. Dau, and Th. Engelder (Editor). Foreword by F. Pfothenauer, D. D., Honorary President of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, a. O. St. 140 pages, 5x7½. Gray cloth covers, with Maroon title-stamping on front cover and backbone. Price, \$1.00. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This book presents, in an abridged form, an English translation of three monographs of Dr. Walther: "The Voice of Our Church on the Question Concerning the Church and the Ministry" (translated by Dr. Dau); "The Proper Form of an Evangelical Lutheran Congregation Independent of the State" (translated by Dr. Engelder); "The Evangelical Lutheran Church the True Visible Church of God on Earth" (translated by Dr. Dallmann).

Each of the three collaborators contributed also an essay on Walther. The undersigned wishes to call especial attention to Dr. Dallmann's presentation, in his usual pithy style, of "Walther's Respect for the Congregation". While in other parts of the book the

remarks on the various manifestations of the church on earth are not always as clear as might be desired, Dr. Dallmann's are. The congregation is a glorious thing, worthy of all respect, because of nothing else than that to it apply the words of Peter: "Ye are a royal priesthood". Locality, organization, and the like, count for nothing, what makes the congregation glorious is the fact that it consists of pardoned sinners, beloved children of God, who possess and administer the full treasure of spiritual blessings merited by Christ on the cross. Wherever that is the case there is the church of God in full glory, be it ever so small in number, of primary or secondary formation. And Dr. Walther showed his respect for the congregation, in any form, by ministering to it as to children of God.

Dr. Engelder in his essay on "Walther a Christian Theologian" renders to our present generation of pastors a valuable service by pointing out and substantiating with copious quotations from Dr. Walther's writings, and other sources, that only he is deserving of the title of a Christian theologian who faithfully adheres to both the formal and material principle of Biblical theology.

Dr. Dau's contribution is "An Appraisal" of Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, D. D.

Very valuable is also the "Synoptic Review" of the three works of Dr. Walther, prepared by Dr. Pfothenauer. M.

Daily Devotion Series.

Wings of God, July 28 to September 17, 1938. By O. P. Kretzmann.
Thy Kingdom Come, September 18 to November 8, 1938. By Walter E. Hohenstein.

Redeemer, Come! November 9 to December 31, 1938. By Fred H. Lindemann.

Precious Words of Jesus according to St. John. January 1 to February 21, 1939. By Martin Walker.

Behold the Lamb of God, February 22 to April 9, 1939. By L. B. Buchheimer.

The Road to Emmaus, April 10 to May 28, 1939. By F. R. Webber.
Herr, hilf! 9. November bis 31. Dezember 1938. Von G. Harms.

Mein Erlöser, Aschermittwoch bis Ostern. Von Heinrich Hansen Boumann.

Der erhöhte Heiland, Ostermontag bis Pfingsten. Von Joh. Schinnerer.

The titles of these pamphlets, issued by the Concordia Publishing House for 5c per copy, indicate the general content. — They are now classified by the Post Office Department as "Periodical Publications", and, hence, can no longer be shipped at the reduced book rate. Parcel-post rates will be charged. M.

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"Thou Art Peter, And On This Rock."

A Study on Matthew 16, 13-20

Published by request of the Arizona Conference

For the sake of convenient marshalling of the facts we divide our study into five sections:

- I. *Brief Remarks on the Greek Text.*
- II. *The Gross Roman Understanding.*
- III. *The Interpretation of Certain Commentators.*
- IV. *Prevalent Lutheran Preaching.*
- V. *The Key to Luther's Exact Exposition.*

I

To begin our study it is well to underscore briefly some of the important words in the Greek text. 1. There is the famous play upon the words "*Petros*" and "*petra*." But it needs no pointing out that the words are not identical, as some would have us believe. Any child will note the difference in the words themselves; and no sharp acumen is required to find that their content is not the same.

2. Of key importance is the "*taute*" that modifies "*petra*." Indeed, the interpretation of the whole passage hinges directly on the antecedent to this one word. For "*taute*" refers back to a very specific thing. He who carefully follows its trajectory will find the key that will unlock to him the understanding of the passage.

3. Too few have seen the significance of Christ's "*k'ago*" at the beginning of verse 18. It is but a tiny word, and though we may lightly pass it by, or in translating misplace it, as the Author-

ized Version evidently does, it nevertheless clinches the proper exegesis of the passage. In so doing it again shows the meticulous care of the Holy Spirit in reporting to us the Word of Christ and God. Far from any hint of carelessness, with the Holy Ghost it is verbal inspiration to the degree of jot and tittle; and well it is for us that it is so.

In passing let us take note that Peter's confession expresses the quintessence of the Christian faith, namely, that Jesus is both Son of man and Son of God in one Person, the God-man. Here we have Christ's question, "Who do ye say that I (the Son of man, v. 13) am?" Peter's reply is, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And it is interesting to mark that wherever one encounters in Scripture an expression of faith in epitomized form, reduced, so to say, to the compass and conciseness of an epigram, it invariably sets forth Christ as the God-man. Here Peter. So also Thomas cried of the resurrected man Jesus, "My Lord and my God!" The centurion under the cross exclaims, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" And even Eve, in the very beginning of the history of salvation, when she mistakenly thought her firstborn the promised seed of the woman, joyfully said, "I have the man, the Lord!" It is such confession the Holy Spirit defines as the essential in Christianity. For He says, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God."

II

We turn to the gross Roman understanding of our passage. We all know that it is the cardinal one upon which the pope bases his claim of sole authority and power in the Church. His position, of course, is untenable. Not only that Christ's dictum, "One is your Master, even Christ; all ye are brethren" has forever blocked the pretensions of pope or any other to rule over the Communion of Saints, but that the power to bind and loose was never made the exclusive property of even a Peter. It was expressly given to all the disciples by Jesus in John 20. And in Matthew 18 the Lord accords this authority directly to the Church, and therewith to each individual believer. Whence He also says, "Let him be unto thee as a heathen and a publican." But the pope reserves this right to himself alone.

He furthers the gross understanding that would make Jesus

say, "I am building My church upon thee, Peter, the rock." No-where does the Lord say, "Peter, upon thee will I build My Church." Yet if that were true, what have Peter and the pope in common? What power might have been given to Peter is therefore far from having been conferred upon the pope. The leap that must be taken to get from Peter to the pope is so great that the authority, power, and prestige with the leaper himself fall into the yawning abyss that separates the one from the other.

For although it is doubtless true that St. Peter was at one time in Rome, and very probably met his death there, certain it is that Eusebius is in error when he writes in his history that Peter lived in Rome and ruled from the bishop's throne twenty-five years. We wonder who preached Peter's jubilee sermon? No doubt St. Paul; and it was at this time beyond peradventure that 1 Cor. 15, 10 received its initial use as the classic jubilarian text.

But a little history and a few dates and a little arithmetic mix up into a nitroglycerin that destroys this silver jubilee utterly. We know that Peter was active in the early years of the infant Christian Church in and about Jerusalem and the Holy Land. We find him definitely resident at Jerusalem in the year 44, when James was put to death by Herod Agrippa. When Paul and Barnabas laid the question of circumcision before the council of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, Peter was dwelling at Jerusalem and took a leading part in the discussion. That was in the year 51. But in 52 he visited Antioch and gave occasion by his dissembling for Paul to withstand him to the face, Gal. 2, 11ff.

Again, if Peter ruled as bishop in Rome, how is it that when St. Paul addressed his letter to the Roman church in 58 he should so pointedly neglect to salute Peter, this gentleman who was so careful to greet his many friends, kinsmen, and acquaintances in the world-city's congregation? And how will it be explained that when St. Paul wrote his epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and the one to Philemon, all of which he wrote while he lay in bonds in Rome itself during the years 61-63, that he makes no mention of Peter, he who fills his epistle to the Colossians with greetings from those with him? The answer is obvious: Peter was not in Rome at that time. But now the generally accepted date of Peter's death is 67. Certain it is he was no longer alive in the year 70. Where then is there room for an

episcopate of a quarter century's duration in Rome? It is excluded.

But let us grant that Peter had been there as bishop twenty-five years or more, where is the transfer of peculiar personal power and of foundational prestige from his own person to the pope? This alleged transfer of a falsely constructed peculiar prerogative from Peter to the pope is the corner stone in the edifice of Romanism. Take it away and the whole collapses. If we apply the cardinal principle of the Lutheran, that is to say the Scriptural, faith here, we shall see that the basic stone of Catholicism is a block cast out of the wet papier mache and fabric of ecclesiastical intrigue, lust for power, and tyranny, frozen into the consistency of stone during the centuries by the winds of cold calculation, deceit, arrogance, and chilling terror. For the fraud can be detected when put to scrutiny under the lens Luther rightly sets as the prime in the Christian faith, "Gottes Wort soll Artikel des Glaubens setzen, und sonst niemand, auch kein Engel!" (Would that this principle were in lively and purposeful use among us! How it would clear away much uncertainty and hesitance!) But the fires of final judgment will suddenly lick up this papier mache fraud, and down will crash the proud superstructure in utter ruin.

For applying Luther's principle we ask, "Where is the Word of God that tells us that Peter's allegedly exclusive personal power was transferred to the pope?" Luther would say, "Im Rauchloch; da lies es!" That is, there is none. But and if the pope be identical with Peter in powers, prerogative, and piety, he must also appropriate to himself the term Jesus so roundly and emphatically applied to His disciple but a few moments after He had called him blessed: "Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto Me; for thou mindest not the things of God." And so it has ever been with the pope: he has been an adversary always to the humble faith of the Christian; and sitting in the temple of God he has become to many an insurmountable stumbling-block in the way of salvation.

Luther finishes off the pope's claims, as well as Roman Catholic theology's arbitrary, rough-shod, bear-like, clumsy methods in exegesis, thoroughly exemplary of that Jesuitical maxim, "The end justifies the means", in broad fashion when he writes,

"Ja, sprichst du, (der Papst) will wahrlich aus Gottes Wort und aus Gott herkommen, denn er führt in vielen Dekreten den Spruch Matth. 16, 18: 'Du bist Petrus, und auf diesen Fels will ich meine Kirche bauen, und will dir die Schlüssel zum Himmelreich geben', etc. Das soll so viel gesagt sein: Der Papst zu Rom ist Herr über die ganze Christenheit. Traun! das möcht's tun! Wer hätte sich des hohen Verstandes versehen zum heiligsten Vater? Man möchte doch einen armen Gesellen zuvor verwarnet haben, ehe er sich so tief und hoch versündigt, und den Papst einen Esel, Narren, Abgott, Teufel hiesse. Wohl mir, dass ich heute mich hart eingenesselt, es kam mich schon der Schafshusten an vor grossem Schrecken von solchem hohen Verstande des Papstes, und möchte leicht geschehen sein, wo ich nicht Hosen angehabt, ich hätte es gemacht, das die Leute nicht gerne riechen, so bange und angst ward mir vor solcher päpstlicher, hoher Weisheit.

"Doch wundert mich, warum seine Heiligkeit so einen dunkeln Spruch für sich genommen hat, so doch viel hellere Sprüche in der Schrift zur Sache gedient hätten, als erstlich der 1. Mos. 1, 1. 2: Im Anfang (das ist, zu Rom) schuf Gott (das ist, stiftete) Himmel (das ist, den Papst) und Erden (das ist, die christliche Kirche); die Erde war wüste und leer (das ist, die christliche Kirche ist dem Papst unterworfen, etc.) Dieser Spruch hätte viel mehr getan. Item, Jes. 1, 3: Der Ochse kenne seinen Herrn (Das ist, der Papst zu Rom ist Herr über alles) und der Esel die Krippe seines Herrn (das ist, die Christenheit ist des Papstes leibeigen), und der Sprüche die ganze Schrift voll, die alle viel heller vom Papsttum reden, denn Matth. 16."

III

If short shrift can be made of the pope's pretensions, the understanding that Jesus did actually found His Church upon Peter, the Apostle and the man, cannot be so lightly dismissed. It is not impossible that the "*taute petra*" has direct reference to Peter. The play on words lends color to it. There are not a few men of note in the exegetical world, godly men, who accept that interpretation. They direct our attention to passages that employ terminology similar to that which appears in Matthew 16. Peter himself in his First Epistle, ch. 2, vs. 4-6 writes, "Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house." Men are spoken

of as living stones in the Church's building. St. Paul in his letter to the Galatians calls Peter and James and John "pillars" in the Church. We need not describe the function of pillars in a well-designed building. Remember the fate of the Philistines and their temple when Samson bowed his strength upon its pillars. And it remains true that in and through these pillars in the Church Jesus works His will and establishes His strength to the end that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And this estate of being pillars in the Church is not confined solely to apostles like Peter, James, and John, but is extended by promise to all such who in patience overcome. Rev. 3, 12 publishes the promise, "He that overcometh, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God."

Still more pointed is the passage Eph. 2, 19-22. "So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone; in Whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in Whom ye also were builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." Christ is the chief corner stone. Now such in the language of Scripture is something other than the corner stone we know, which, highly polished and containing a sanctuary for documents and mementoes, is often laid in a niche saved for it on some corner of a new building, occasionally after the building itself is completed. Not so in Biblical times. Take the corner stone of the temple at Baalbeek. It was 70 feet long, some 16 feet high, and about 20 feet wide, so formidable a mass of stone and of such tremendous weight that engineers of today wonder how it was moved and placed. You may be sure if such a corner stone were removed, the building would at once collapse. Remove Christ, the chief corner stone, from the Church and it falls into utter ruin, as the history of the Church has time and again proved, and as the modernists of our own time are in the process of demonstrating.

But now it is said here that the apostles and prophets make out the foundation of the New Testament church. (The prophets here mentioned are, of course, not the Old Testament worthies, but those in New Testament times of whom Jesus said, "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: some of

them shall ye kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogs, and persecute from city to city." And St. Paul in Ephesians 3, 5 indicates the same thing when he says, "As it hath now been revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit." See also 1 Cor. 12, 28f.) In the foundation of the Church are laid great and tried stones, rocks upon which are written the names of Peter, and John, and James and many others: not only those of the Twelve, but of many another not only of their own time, but of the times since. Why should it seem impossible for these prophets to include such great ones as the foremost and most evangelical of the church fathers, a Cyprian, an Athanasius, Ambrose and Augustine, a Bernhard of Clairveaux, and the greatest of all since St. Paul, Martin Luther? Dare we not think of a goodly number of men even in the church in America? Prophets of no mean stature indeed.

But the fact remains that while Peter often assumed a leadership among the apostles natural to his character, he was far from being anything in the nature of a corner stone; neither is he found greater than the others, but is laid in the foundation along with the others, the "apostles and prophets." In this sense therefore many accept the passage Matthew 16 to mean that St. Peter is indeed a "*petra*" upon which the Church of Christ is built, but never in the exclusive sense of the Vatican. And to make this interpretation doubly secure God had one of the seven angels show John the holy city. His description includes the significant words, "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

In this connection let us be warned of a grave danger and temptation that assails the Christian theologian where controversy over the truth of Scripture is concerned. Many a one is tempted strongly to negate in Matthew 16 any meaning akin to what we have just carried out in this section of our study. This is done largely not only to avoid joining the issue more closely with the Romanist, but also, if the truth be told, often for lack of industry, acumen, and determination to follow the Scripture into those shadings that seem to lend some color to false conceptions, but in fact do not. The victory of truth does not follow our affirmation or denial; neither does it in any wise depend upon our argument, nor upon our cunning or shrewd ability. It rests solely with the Word of God, which still is and always will remain the

power of God ; let it be repeated with emphasis, the power of God. Would that this were always present with us !

John's dictum concerning Christ: "He must increase, but I must decrease" is applicable in every respect to the Gospel, with whose message Jesus is so closely knit, that Scripture simply identifies Him with it and calls Him "The Word." The Gospel I preach must be on the increase in my life and works and being ; I myself must decrease with all the native wisdom, powers, arguments, shrewdness, cunning, and whatever else is mine own. Let every word of God therefore keep its apparent sense, even though that should appear to make the combatting of error more difficult. Finally, it is the greatest of errors in the kingdom to combat error with any degree of error. Error must be met with the truth, lest confusion become more confounded ; but truth is found nowhere else but in the Word of God ; that which is written, and as it is written. So in the matter of our passage we may readily say with the Scripture itself, and that without in the least lending support to Roman Catholic pretensions, that children of men are foundation stones in the building of God, and that Peter is one of these on which the Church is built, and one of the greatest.

IV

We now come to the interpretation of this passage that is generally given in Protestant circles, quite particularly within the Lutheran Church. This interpretation is rather universally credited to Luther, but erroneously. It reads, "When Christ said, 'On this rock I will build My church', He had reference to the faith of Peter, the personal faith." It is apparent that this is a case of unclear exposition and of seeking an explanation, if not any explanation, that will avoid the issue raised by the Roman view. The unclearness is but the more beclouded since there is some truth to the interpretation, provided one is perfectly clear in one's use of the word "faith". Faith and faith are not the same. Our old church fathers differentiated between a '*fides quae creditur*' and '*fides qua creditur*', between a '*fides objectiva*' and a '*fides specialis*'. That is, they distinguished between the use of the term "faith" as meaning the content of the faith not only of the Christian, but of Christendom : that which is the *Inhalt des christlichen Glaubens* ; and the use of the term "faith" meaning the personal, subjective and individual faith in each Christian that

accepts the promises of the Gospel for his own. (Whether the word "*pistis*" is used in Scripture only in the subjective sense, as Cremer and others insist, does not lie within the scope of our discussion; if Cremer's contention be accepted, however, it would rule out the above interpretation completely, as we shall see.)

It is the sense "*fides objectiva*" conveys that lends some truth to the prevalent interpretation. The subjective sense is shut out. For if the foundation be built on the personal faith of a Peter, where is the Church's foundation when a few moments later the Lord is compelled to say to him, "Get thee behind Me, Satan"? The foundation of the Church is more secure, must be far more solid than the vacillating personal faith of the Christian. The foundation material must be of far higher quality and durability, so that, when put to the severe strains in testing, the record may not show cracks and flaws, to wit: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Or, "O ye of little faith!" And it be necessary for the Master "to upbraid them with their unbelief and hardness of heart." For personal faith is more or less of the process of shifting. Once it is adamant and of tough texture; again it is like a rope of sand. Even the faith of the father of the faithful fluctuates between the pinnacle of offering his only son Isaac and the abyss of abandoning his Sarah to the dangers of the Egyptian court.

It is evident therefore that Jesus cannot refer to the personal faith of St. Peter as being the rock on which the Church is built. Neither does He so much as mention faith in any of His words to Peter. While it is true that Peter apprehended Christ as the Son of the living God by faith, it is equally true that on this occasion Jesus does not bestow His direct praise upon faith, as is so often His wont, but directs it elsewhere. We must therefore exclude prevalent Protestant interpretation of Christ's words.

Careful consideration of the words of the Master will lead us to the right understanding of the matter. For Scripture yields to the diligent searcher its meaning, to him who is ready to take every thought captive under obedience to Christ, and cultivates the attitude, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

V

Let us hear what it is the Lord Jesus says to Peter. He had asked, "Who say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and

said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father Who is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Jesus pronounces Peter blessed. Why? Because of his confession? Not primarily. Or does Jesus say, "Blessed art thou, Simon; great is thy faith"? The little word **for**, as so often the little words in Scripture, offers the key that opens the door to solution. It points out and underscores that which is the root and stem of Peter's blessedness. Let us strip the words of Christ down to the essentials and we have, "Blessed art thou, Simon, for . . . My Father Who is in heaven hath revealed it unto thee." So then it is not Peter's confession that is the source of his blessedness, but it is nothing other than the revelation of God the Father. The revelation of the Father to Peter that Jesus of Nazareth, this poor Rabbi, is none else than the Son of the living God: that is the height of blessedness: for it spells the loving favor of God and binds up within itself everlasting life and happiness for him to whom it is revealed. Flesh and blood have naught to do with it; natural abilities and acuteness can gain us nothing here: it must be revealed to us by the grace of God.

We proceed to another much-neglected key-word, too often looked upon as only another telegraph pole along the line of our streamlined intellect. It is the little word **and** of the next sentence. It connects that sentence in our text very closely to the foregoing. True, the crucial words are **upon this rock**; but the importance of the **and** is lifted out, if we again strip the sentence to its essentials and read, "And . . . upon this rock I will build My church." Which rock? Now it is extremely important to trace the trajectory of the word *taute* to its antecedent and it will lead us to it. It falls upon this particular rock, the rock upon which blessed Simon's blessedness rests: the rock of the revelation of the Father; "**for My Father hath revealed it unto thee.**" But the revelation of God is conveyed by His Word. It stands like a rock in the midst of the storms of time. Nothing moves it. Let heaven and earth pass away, this rock of the Word shall not pass away. He that builds upon this rock, when the winds blow, and the rains descend, and the floods come, his house falls not.

Read the Scriptures from cover to cover and you will find they describe all else as evanescent, passing, unstable; but the Word of God as unmovable, sure, solid, eternal, having certain fulfillment; that which cannot be broken.

Every man who builds on the rock of God's gospel revelation builds well and permanently. On this God's Church is founded. The Church, like its foundation, abideth forever. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. For the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation. There is no need to adduce the hundreds of passages of Scripture that speak of the Word of God as the eternal foundation of the Church. Every word in the Bible that speaks of the Gospel as being the vehicle, the source, and the sustaining of salvation by faith, by the same token speaks of it as being the foundation of the Church. Take away the Word of God, and whereon shall faith rest? Take away faith, and where is the Church?

God has revealed His truth in the Gospel. We know no other record of His grace and mercy. We may state from the Word itself and from experience that it is the only way of salvation. But now the fountainhead of the Gospel, the manifestation and personification of God's mercy, is none other than Jesus Christ, the Son of God, "God manifest in the flesh", and "God blessed forever, Amen." In Him the Godhead dwells bodily. He who would know God must know Jesus Christ. It is impossible for man to know God save in the man Jesus of Nazareth. Only He has the words of eternal life. No one cometh to the Father but by Him. The Master Himself says, "No one knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." In short, Christ is the revelation of God to man. And so Luther rightly says that if a man would know God, let him hasten to the manger at Bethlehem to adore the Babe; let him with ancient Simeon take the six-weeks old child in his arms; watch the man Jesus at work and heed the words that fall from His lips; follow Him to the cross; see the man buried; and rejoice in His resurrection. Then also he will see Him ascend into heaven and see a man seated at the right hand of God, Ruler over all things. In short, he will have learned to know God.

Christ, therefore, is the full content of the Gospel. Without Christ there is no Gospel; and outside the Gospel there is no Christ to be apprehended. We may safely state that Christ and

the Gospel are one; that Christ is not only the content of the Gospel, but the personified Gospel. Indeed, Holy Writ simply speaks of Him as the Word, the Logos. Christ is the living Gospel; and the living Gospel is Christ. Finally all things in heaven and on earth are gathered together in Him.

If the Scriptures call the revelation of God, the Gospel, the rock, so also the content of that Word, Christ Himself, the Rock. In truth, the Holy Spirit proceeds to identify the two, for He has St. John write, "The Word was God"; and then, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." But to return to the term **rock**. How often both Old and New Testaments bring that famous passage, "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner." And of the Church it is said, "Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." Again it is written, "The Rock which followed them; and the Rock was Christ." And, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." No Christ, no Rock, no corner stone, no foundation, no Gospel, no salvation, no Church. In fine, the passage in question tells us that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church, for it is built on the rock, the revelation of God, personified in the Rock, Jesus Christ.

Just this, we are happy to state, is the understanding Luther entertains. To quote, St. L. Ed. VII, 285: "Die Meinung Christi ist kurz in diesem Satze ausgesprochen: Das ist meine Kirche, welche diese Offenbarung hat, welche du, Petrus, hier bekennst. Als wollte er sagen: Wahrlich, du hast's getroffen, denn da stehet's alles auf; das ist meine Kirche, welche diese Offenbarung hat, dass ich Christus, des lebendigen Gottes Sohn bin. Auf diesen Felsen will ich meine Kirche bauen. Da soll's auf stehen, wer da selig soll werden; da soll's auch wohl bleiben, obgleich alle Pforten der Hölle dawider wüten sollten. Denn ich bin Christus, des lebendigen Gottes Sohn, darum soll sie niemand aus meiner Hand reissen. . . . Denn ich bin der ganz zuverlässige und unüberwindliche Grund der Kirche (das ist, derjenigen, welche, wie du, glauben und bekennen.)"

In another place Luther says, "Joh. 6, 63, spricht der Herr: 'Meine Worte sind Geist und Leben.' Demnach müssen diese Worte Matth. 16 auch Geist und Leben sein, nämlich wenn er spricht: 'Ich will meine Kirche auf diesen Felsen bauen.' Hie

muss Bauen ein geistlich, lebendig Gebäu sein. Fels muss ein lebendiger, geistlicher Fels sein. Kirche muss eine geistliche, lebendige Versammlung sein, ja so lebendig, dass es alles ewig lebet. Denn Fleisch ist kein nutz, usw., es stirbt und lebet nicht ewiglich. So ist nun dieser Fels allein der Sohn Gottes, Jesus Christus, und niemand anders, wie denn die Schrift voll ist, und wir Christen wohl wissen. Bauen oder gebauet werden auf diesen Fels, kann nicht mit Gesetzen oder Werken zugehen, denn Christus wird nicht mit Händen oder Werken ergriffen, sondern muss durch den Glauben und Wort zugehen. Also kann auch die Kirche nicht durch sich selbst oder durch eigen Werk sich geistlich oder lebendig machen, sondern durch den Glauben wird sie gebauet auf diesen Fels, und also geistlich und lebendig, so lange sie auf den Fels gebauet bleibt, das ist, bis in Ewigkeit."

In conclusion and as a clinching concours for the exposition given we turn to the little but important word *k'ago*. We so often read across these little words and fail to accord them the honor due them; and for our disdain they in turn punish us by refusing to yield full understanding of the content of a passage. Here *k'ago* is such a word. Our German translation with its simple *und* failed to give it its proper weight. The Authorized Version did better when it set, "And I say also unto thee." Better still is the wording of the American Standard Version, "And I also say unto thee." To have given the words *k'ago de soi lego* their full weight the emphatic order, poor English though it be, would have had to be employed, "And *also* I say unto thee"; German: "Auch ich sage dir."

K'ago adds to the foregoing statement of Christ, "Blessed art thou, Simon, . . . for My Father hath revealed it unto thee." Not only that, but it very closely connects this statement with the following words of the Master, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church." In the first statement we have, "My Father hath revealed it unto thee"; in the second, "I also say unto thee". Let us say it this way to bring out the tremendous import of Jesus' words, "My Father hath revealed it unto thee; and I also reveal unto thee", etc.

What boldness of speech is this on the part of the Man of Galilee! He not only says, "I agree with the Father", but He places Himself alongside Him. Does God reveal? So do I. Is the Father's revelation blessed and full of blessing? No less is

mine. Is the Father's word fraught with power? So is mine. If the Father speaks a word, I am privileged to add, and do add, to it.

But the important thing for our present consideration is that the *k'ago* of Christ substantiates and accents the interpretation we found from the text to be the true one. For by the simple *k'ago* Christ not only endorses the revelation of the Father as being the significant and great thing, but He adds His own word of paramount promise to it.

Once more we see how closely woven is the warp and woof of the Word of God. The Holy Spirit not only left no broken threads, but each thread, every knot, the most delicate shading of color: all fit into a perfect pattern. That pattern is divine. Inspiration? To the jot and tittle!

We lay no claim to anything hinting at an exhaustive study of Matth. 16. We trust that another will have been led by this treatise, as Luther says, "*Es besser zu machen*", that is, to put the whole of this much discussed passage to close scrutiny.

E. Arnold Sitz.

What Does It Mean To Fear God?

An Address delivered before the Michigan State Teachers' Conference, held in Stevensville, Michigan, October 28, 1938

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You have asked me to address you on the fear of God.

Who is this God whom we fear?

We meet Him in the very first verse of the Bible: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. There you have God, the Creator of heaven and earth.

Heaven and earth, that is the world, the universe in which we live and of which we are a part. This vast world with all its diversified forms of existence owes its being to God. If God were not the Creator there would be no heaven and earth. He gave to the world its existence and also the forms in which it is to exist. Think of the vastness of the world, and then try to conceive the vastness of Him who created it, in whose hands the vast world is but a tiny toy.

And then try to think what it may mean to stand before our Creator, who made us what we are according to His pleasure. What does it mean to fear Him?

We know a little about the world, we have contact with it through our senses: we see, we hear, we touch, we taste and smell. Yet this is only a very limited contact, we observe merely phenomena, the real essence remains hidden from our senses. Moreover, the phenomena are discernable to us only in part. Take our sense of hearing as an illustration: when the number of vibrations falls below or rises above a certain number, our ear no longer can distinguish the tones. Likewise our eyes can perceive only the colors of the spectrum. We know from other sources that there are "colors" below the red on one end of the spectrum; we call them infra-red, but we cannot see them. There are "colors" on the other end of the spectrum which we call ultra-violet.

Our eyes reach out into space, we behold the stars millions of miles remote from our earth. We reenforce our sight by powerful telescopes, and what appeared to the naked eye as mere nebulae presents itself through the telescope as world-systems and systems of world-systems. And the end has not yet been reached. Rather, the impression forces itself upon our mind that far more wonders lie beyond the reach of our present telescopes than come within their range. What a large world, of which we see only a very tiny part!

Going into the other direction, we have armed our eyes with wonderful microscopes, and what appeared to our naked eye as an indivisible atom presents itself under the microscope as a veritable universe in miniature. The end has not yet been reached. Rather, the discoveries of the past suggest that ever greater wonders of smallness lie beyond.

God is the Creator of all this.

Look at the world again. It is made up of what we call elements, each element having its own properties, each one showing a very definite reaction toward other elements, as we study them in Chemistry. There are also physical reactions, some very closely related to the chemical, as e. g. when chemical processes produce physical heat etc., others purely physical as in electro-magnetism and gravitation. We speak rather glibly about gravitation, but no one so far has been able

to explain just how objects can mutually exert a drawing influence on each other.

Whence did these relations come, which we call the laws of nature? They are included in the word: God created the world. God in the beginning gave to all matter its peculiar, diversified properties.

Look at the world again. We observe many processes that cannot be accounted for by the laws of chemistry and physics. There are the peculiar phenomena of botany and zoology. Physical and chemical processes are involved, yet they alone are not sufficient to explain the facts. By summing up these two sciences under the common head biology we name that mysterious force, it is life.

What is life? Even such as deny the existence of a special "vital force," as does e. g. the Britannica, must admit their inability to explain life as the sum of purely physical and chemical processes. "When the chemical and physical ledger is added up, it does not give a unified description of what has actually occurred when, e. g., a migrant bird makes its journey." Generalizing, the Encyclopedia says: "It must be allowed that life is a unique kind of activity, for the formulae of matter and energy, electrons, protons and electro-magnetic radiations or etherwaves, as at present understood, do not suffice to describe (a) the everyday functions of the body in their orchestration, (b) the purposive behavior of higher animals well-endowed with brains, (d) the phenomena of development and heredity, or (e) the facts of evolution." In other words, life is more than the sum of purely physical and chemical processes, but what it is we are unable to say.

Life is included in the statement of Scripture that God created heaven and earth. Life is a masterpiece of God's handicraft.

Life as such is not God's greatest masterpiece. There is a form of life separated from the ordinary forms of plant and animal life by a gulf that has not been bridged and is too firmly established to be ever bridged. This is the personal life of man. Man's life in many respects resembles the life of animals, many functions in his life being perfectly paralleled in the animal kingdom; but there is one thing that absolutely

sets him apart in a class by himself. Man has an ego, he is endowed with self-consciousness and self-determination.

This is a form of life which we study in psychology, a life which manifests itself in the production of literature and art, a life which unfolds itself in the history of individuals and nations.

Also this personal life is included in the act of God's creation. We find personal life in this world because God called it into being and put it into the world.

Do we begin to realize who God is?

Let us contemplate the matter a little further. When we consider this world, or any part of it, we take it for granted that every object occupies a definite place in space, clearly circumscribed, occupied by this one specific object to the exclusion of every other object. We take space for granted. We take it for granted that space is three-dimensional, we measure its length and breadth and height. We take this for granted so much so that if anything does not occupy space it is simply non-existent. It is far beyond our conception that God should not be so limited, that He dwells in omnipresence, and that He merely created space as a form for the world's existence.

We accept it also as axiomatic that all events take place in time. If any event does not require at least an infinitesimal fraction of a second, it simply is not action, it is absolute rest. And again it is beyond our conception that God should not be bound by time. Yet also time belongs to those things which God created in the beginning, it is a form He shaped for the history of heaven and earth. He is not subject to time. He can act in time and without time. He dwells in eternity.

When we see things happen, we look for an adequate cause. If we can find a cause we consider the matter as explained; but when no adequate cause is found we are mystified. So deeply ingrained in our system is the idea of cause and effect that a causeless happening, a really spontaneous process, is a contradiction in terms. Again this is something that God created together with this world and as a form for its existence. He is beyond the laws of cause and effect.

He can operate by causes or without them, yes in the face of all causes. He is omnipotence in person.

The same we find to be the case when we turn to the laws of the mind. We take it that nothing is simpler and less controvertible than the axiom that two times two is four. Even the inventor of the theory of relativity did not apply it to this truth. Two times two do not relatively speaking equal four, but absolutely, at all times, under all circumstances. All our calculations in business, in mechanics, in science are based on this truth. We cannot conceive even the remotest possibility that in any case this truth might not hold good. Yet God is not governed by our form of calculation. It is a form He created for the control of affairs on earth. He gives us a little glimpse of His independence when He reveals himself as the Triune, three distinct persons, each one of which is perfectly and completely God, and yet not three gods, but absolutely one. God is the Lord over the law of numbers.

As it is with the law of numbers, so it is also with all other laws of logic, the law of identity, of contradiction, of the excluded third. God is not subject to them. We know that all men are lost in sin, and that God would have them all saved. Some are saved, others are not. We ask, why are some saved, and God answers: By My grace alone. We conclude, then others are lost because God's grace did not extend to them. God says emphatically, No, they are lost by their own fault. We conclude, then God must have detected a slight difference in the people, the first class must have been a little more amenable to His grace. He answers, No, there is no difference, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All laws of human logic are violated in this judgment of God. He is not subject to them. He is Lord over them.

This is just a brief sketch of who God is, as He is revealed to us in the very first verse of our Bible. Do we need to be told that we must fear Him? What can we do? He owes us nothing. He made us what we are, and He can do with us as He pleases. We cannot call Him to account. He is not subject to our laws nor to our reasoning. He is always justified when He speaks, He is always clear when He judges. Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast

thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? Therefore, who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?

This is really too much for us, to be so absolutely helpless over against God, to be so helplessly delivered into His unchecked power. This is terrible. What other emotion but fear, fear bordering on despair, yes the fear of wailing and gnashing of teeth, could spring up in our hearts under such conditions? We are delivered into the hands of one who can destroy body and soul in hell.

Yet more terrible than this is the fact that we dare to oppose this God, that we can but for a moment forget the awe in which we must stand of Him. Yet such is the case. We are sinners, and by our sin we challenge the authority of God. We dare Him to assert His authority. We forget that though the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing, though the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed, aiming to break their bands asunder and to cast away their cords from them, yet He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. We often fear where there is nothing to fear, where no one can harm us, but we forget the fear of the Lord.

It thus becomes necessary that God continually thunder in our ears, Fear God, and give glory to Him. It is necessary that God attack us with heavy plagues to remind us of His fear.

But what good would it do? Sin is too deeply rooted in our hearts to be driven out by threats and punishments.

But let us take another look at God. He created us in the beginning, and He created us anew in the fulness of time. God, who by merely withdrawing His Spirit might have returned the entire world to its original nothingness, or by a word of His mouth might have hurled us into the torments of hell, did neither of these two. He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish but have eternal life.

Can we grasp it? God, who in the beginning gave us all we have and are, God, against whose authority we rebelled,

whom we tried to dethrone, against whom we set up ourselves as gods who want to determine for themselves what is good and evil, this God loved us, loved us, not with a Platonic love, saying, I pity you, but I am sorry I cannot do anything for you. To save you from your plight, for which you have no one but yourselves to blame, or even to relieve the situation, would cost too much. I love you, but I can not help you. No, God commended His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. He spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all.

Picture to yourselves what this means. We cannot understand the relation that exists between God the Father and the Son. It was most intimate. The Father loved the Son, and the Son loved the Father. The Son was with the Father, He was in the Father's bosom, He and the Father were one. A love and harmony in which both were happy beyond measure, a happiness far surpassing our understanding. Human parents are happy in the love of their children; nothing so hurts them as to lose their children. Yet parental love and the happiness it brings is but a faint shadow of the unspeakable love that united Father and Son in the Godhead, and of the mutual happiness they enjoyed.

Now turn your eyes to Calvary. There you behold the Son hanging on the cross. Yes, the Word, by which we had been created in the beginning, had, in order to bring about a salvation of the sinful creature, been made flesh, had taken upon himself the form of a servant, had become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. There was to be a new creation, and in order to bring it about, God had laid on His Son the sins of us all. He had made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin. God, now seeing in His Son only the sinful, rebellious world, turned His love into fierce wrath. The Son still continued to love His Father with a perfect love. In bearing our curse He sought comfort from His Father. The load became almost unbearable. His eyes were dimmed, He did not understand anymore what it was all about. He turned to His Father for an explanation and for relief: My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?

The curse was removed by the sacrifice of the Son.

Reconciliation was effected. Creation was saved, a new creation it is rightly called.

This is God. Him we are to fear. That cannot be a fear of terror and despair; it is a fear mingled with love, a fear dominated by love and gratitude.

Yet even this fear of love does not grow spontaneously in our hearts, as we might expect. God himself must implant it and patiently nourish and preserve it. "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him." The Holy Spirit, by the life giving power of the Gospel, calls me to faith, creates faith in my doubting heart, nourishes and preserves it.

This is another view of the same God whom we are to fear.

We have already indicated that fear of God may be of different kinds.

When we hear of a God who is all-powerful, who can do with us as He pleases — He can dash us to pieces with no more than a breath of His mouth, He can, if He so chooses, hurl us body and soul into eternal torment — shall we not stand in awe of Him! Must we not tremble, uncertain as we are of His intentions? When we, moreover, become aware that we have aroused His fierce anger because we have frivolously transgressed His holy will, must not our fear assume such proportions that we are driven to despair?

On the other hand, when we realize that God's love toward us is unbounded, that He stands ready to use all His perfections in our interest, to make us truly happy; when we realize that God was ready to sacrifice His "best and dearest" in order that we might be spared the eternal agony we had so fully deserved; when we furthermore realize that God is anxious that we should take the proper attitude over against His salvation, that He does not spare any effort to produce it in our hearts: shall we then not fear Him, always anxious lest we do something that might displease Him, that might disturb the beautiful relation existing between Him and us? When we own something that we treasure highly, we are always fearful lest through some oversight or neglect or fault of ours our treasure be marred or lost.

What a vast difference between a fear that trembles before the righteous wrath of God, and the fear which trembles at the thought of offending the object of its love!

What fear, then, is meant when Luther in the explanation of all commandments insists that we should fear and love God?

This question may not be easy to answer, and on the other hand, it ought not prove so very difficult.

Since Luther combines fear with love, it would seem that he has a fear in mind which may well co-exist with love in the heart, a fear mingled with love, or, as it were, growing out of love. Such is, indeed, the case.

Yet Luther also has the fear of dread and despair in mind. Witness the following words from his explanation of the conclusion of the ten commandments: "God threatens to punish all that transgress these commandments. Therefore we should **dread His wrath** and not act contrary to these commandments."

In the Large Catechism Luther gives a fuller explanation of the Conclusion of the Decalog. If we read his words carefully we shall notice that at times he refers to the fear of dread, at others to the fear of love, without clearly marking the transition.

We quote from a few paragraphs. "Now there is comprehended in these words both an angry word of threatening and a friendly promise — to terrify and warn us, and, moreover, to induce and encourage us to receive and highly esteem His Word as a matter of divine earnestness, because He Himself declares how much He is concerned about it, and how rigidly He will enforce it, namely, that He will horribly and terribly punish all who despise and transgress His commandments; and again, how richly He will reward, bless, and do all good to those who hold them in high esteem and gladly do and live according to them. Thus He demands that all our works proceed from a heart which fears and regards God alone, and from such fear avoids everything that is contrary to His will, lest it should move Him to wrath; and, on the other hand, also trusts in Him alone, and from love to Him does all He wishes, because He speaks to us as friendly as a father, and offers us all grace and every good."

Again. "Learn, therefore, from these words how angry God is with those who trust in anything but Him, and again, how good and gracious He is to those who trust and believe in Him alone with the whole heart; so that His anger does not cease until the fourth generation, while, on the other hand, His blessing and goodness extend to many thousands, lest you live in such security and commit yourself to chance, as men of a brutish heart, who think that it makes no great difference how they live. He is a God who will not leave it unavenged if men turn from Him, and will not cease to be angry until the fourth generation, even until they are utterly exterminated. Therefore He is to be feared, and not to be despised."

Again. "Therefore, although proud, powerful, and rich worldlings are now to be found who boast defiantly of their mammon, with utter disregard whether God is angry at or smiles on them, and dare to withstand His wrath, yet they shall not succeed, but before they are aware, they shall be wrecked with all in which they trusted; as all others have perished who have thought themselves more secure and powerful. And just because of such hardened heads who imagine, because God connives and allows them to rest in security, that He either is entirely ignorant or cares nothing about such matters, He must deal a smashing blow and punish them, so that He cannot forget it unto children's children; so that every one may take note and see that this is no joke to Him. . . . But terrible as are these threatenings, so much the more powerful is the consolation in the promise."

Thus Luther, almost in the same breath, speaks of these two kinds of fear as though they co-existed and cooperated in the heart of the same man. Yet they are of such a nature that they mutually exclude each other. For how can there be any room for a fear born of a guilty conscience that dreads the righteous wrath of God, where there is a fear born out of love because of His infinite goodness by which He completely covers all sins?

Yet Luther is no more inconsistent, nor his statements self-contradictory, than is the Bible itself. The Bible triumphantly exclaims: There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth

is not made perfect in love (1 Jh. 4, 18). On the other hand, that same Bible preaches both kinds of fear.

It speaks of a fear of God which is synonymous to faith and hope. Out of a wealth of passages that might be cited we refer to but three. Listen to Ps. 31, 19: Oh how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men. Note the parallelism of the members of this verse. It speaks of the great goodness of the Lord, and then in two parallel statements declares that He laid it up for them that fear Him, that He prepared it for them that trust in Him. The fear of God and trust in God are here used as expressing practically the same idea, they are synonymous. The same is true in the following verse taken from Psalm 33 (v. 18): Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy. Fear and hope appear as synonyms. And again, Ps. 147, 11: The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

On the other hand, the Bible demands of these same people a fear born out of extreme dread. When Jerusalem trembled before its mighty enemies and wished to avert the danger by entering into an alliance with some strong nation, the Lord sent the prophet Isaiah with the following message: Say ye not, A confederacy, to (i. e. concerning) all them to (concerning) whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself: and let him be your fear and let him be your dread (Is. 8, 12, 13). They dreaded their enemies, but the Lord claimed that if there is any one to be dreaded it is none other than He himself.

A similar fear is demanded by Jesus of His disciples when He sent them out to preach. His words are familiar as St. Matthew has them (10, 28): Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. Jesus holds out before the minds of His disciples, whom He is sending forth to preach the Gospel of peace to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (v. 6), the terrible fact that God is able to destroy them body and soul in hell if they, to mitigate the

opposition of men, alter in the least the message committed to them, and on the strength of this fact asks them to fear.

St. Luke reports the same saying of Jesus (12, 4. 5), but stresses certain parts of it more than does St. Matthew: I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

This does, indeed, look like a contradiction, but neither Luther nor the Scriptures seem to be aware of it. It will be futile, then, to argue the question whether the fear of God spoken of in the Catechism is the fear of dread or the fear of love. Luther speaks of both, just as the Bible demands both.

I realize that a conclusion of this kind will leave us all rather perplexed and little satisfied. It was necessary, however, to state the case thus bluntly; for once the situation is fully grasped the solution is comparatively simple. **The solution must be found in the nature of the persons of whom these contradictory kinds of fear are demanded.**

We Christians are of a dual nature. We are in one person a new man and an old man, we are flesh and spirit. Of these, St. Paul says in his epistle to the Galatians (5, 16. 17): This I say then, Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

We know whence the spirit comes in us, the new man: it is born of the Holy Spirit by Water and the Word. We know its nature: it trusts in Jesus Christ and His righteousness, purchased and won for us by His innocent suffering and death. Our new man rejoices in the blessings God has bestowed on us. He loves God because He first loved us. Our new man cannot fear God from an evil conscience, our new man has a good conscience because our sins have been forgiven. According to our new man we fear God out of love.

We can even go so far that we declare, in as much as we are a new man we have no need of the Law which tells us that

we must fear God. We fear Him properly by the very nature of the new man. The loving fear of God is born in us together with the birth of the new man out of the grace of God. St. Paul repeatedly declares that we are not under the Law, because and since we are under grace, that for the righteous there is no Law. And St. John assures us that the love born of God, the love which we experience and cultivate in our new man, will drive out all fear.

On the other hand, we know from our daily experience that the Old Adam is still with us. We know the nature of our Old Adam. According to our Old Adam we believe that our relation to our God is regulated by our own achievements. If we do good, we have a right to demand a reward; and if we do evil we may expect punishment. Every other way of determining our relation to God is considered as ruinous folly by our Old Adam. To assume that God is merciful, that His mercy is free, that His mercy is so unlimited that He offers us forgiveness of all our sins without any condition, without any merit or worthiness on our part, is denounced by our Old Adam as undermining public morality and decency; because if the incentive of reward and merit for doing good is removed, morality must collapse.

But this is the Old Adam in his more respectable form, guided by natural probity. Yet this form of the Old Adam, as a rule, does not prevail. As a rule, Old Adam simply follows his own lusts, as St. Paul mentions some in Gal. 5, 19.: The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.

Our Old Adam is incorrigible. No matter whether he wears a respectable cloak or follows his licentious lusts shamelessly, he always persists in his ways, he is stubborn as a mule, yes, the most stubborn Missouri mule will appear docile and tractable, a shamefaced piker in comparison with Old Adam.

While our new man needs no Law to fear God, our Old Adam can never be induced to fear God properly. He will never fear God out of love, as does our new man; all that can

be done about him is that he be clubbed into a trembling dread before God.

This dual nature of Christians must be taken into consideration when speaking of the fear of God. And since these two natures are never separated in the heart of a Christian, since Old Adam is never entirely overcome until death, though a Christian is dominated by his new man, therefore we shall always find that the two kinds of fear are spoken of simultaneously.

This is beautifully set forth in the sixth article of the Formula of Concord: "Although men truly believing in Christ and truly converted to God have been freed and exempted from the curse and coercion of the Law, they nevertheless are not on this account without Law, but have been redeemed by the Son of God in order that they should exercise themselves in it day and night. . . . The preaching of the Law is to be urged with diligence, not only upon the unbelieving and impenitent, but also upon the believers, who are truly converted, regenerate, and justified by faith. For although they are regenerate and renewed in the spirit of their mind, yet in the present life this regeneration and renewal is not complete, but only begun, and believers are, by the spirit of their mind, in a constant struggle against the flesh, that is, against the corrupt nature and disposition which cleaves to us unto death. On account of this Old Adam, which still inheres in the understanding, the will, and all powers of man, it is needful that the Law of the Lord always shine before them, in order that they may not from human devotion institute wanton and self-elected cults; likewise, that the Old Adam also may not employ his own will, but may be subdued against his will, not only by the admonition and threatening of the Law, but also by punishments and blows, so that he may follow and surrender himself captive to the Spirit. . . . Thus the Law is and remains both to the penitent and impenitent, both to regenerate and unregenerate men, one and the same Law, namely, the immutable will of God; and the difference, so far as concerns obedience, is alone in man, inasmuch as one who is not yet regenerate does for the Law out of constraint and unwillingness what it requires of him, as also the regenerate do according to the flesh; but the believer, so far as he is regen-

erate, does without constraint and with a willing spirit that which no threatenings, however severe, of the Law could ever extort from him."

So far the Formula of Concord.

Applying these general truths, which hold good of all our works, specifically to the fear of God, we may say: The fear of God is and remains one and the same, the difference is alone in man. "For the Old Adam, as an intractable, refractory ass . . . must be coerced to the obedience of Christ, not only by the teaching, admonition, force, and threatening of the Law, but also oftentimes by the club of punishments and troubles." But insofar as a Christian "is born anew by the Spirit of God, and liberated from the Law, that is, freed from this driver, and is led by the Spirit of Christ, he lives according to the immutable will of God comprised in the Law, and does everything from a free, cheerful spirit" (F. C., S. D.).

What, then, does it mean to fear God? That depends on the God-fearing subject. Is the God-fearing subject an unregenerate man, or the Old Adam in a Christian, then the only kind of fear that he is capable of is the slavish fear of dread and terror; is the God-fearing subject a regenerate person, the new spiritual man in Christians, then the fear of God which he exhibits is a childlike reverence, born of faith and love. And since in a Christian both natures live in close proximity, and since the new man can carry on his beautiful fear of God only under a constant severe struggle against the determined opposition of the flesh, the fear of God as demanded by the Law will assume different aspects, depending on who is addressed by the commandment. Fear not, Moses said to the people at Mt. Sinai, Fear not, for God is come down to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not (Ex. 20, 20).

It is almost needless to add that the fear of God as practiced, or rather suffered, by the Old Adam is always sin, displeasing to God, being the very opposite of the faith in which God delights; while the fear of God of the new man is a good work of the first magnitude.

Addition. A few months after the foregoing lecture had been delivered, Dr. J. T. Mueller published a short article in the *Concordia Theo-*

logical Monthly (Dec., 1938) on the meaning of "Fearing God", of which especially his closing remarks are concise and to the point. We take the liberty to append them here.

"A few corollaries may help to illustrate what has been said above and impress the Scriptural truths regarding filial fear of God more lastingly upon the mind.

"1. To our stubborn, rebellious Old Adam the Law says: Fear God, or He will punish you. — To our humbled, but believing heart the Gospel says: Fear not, for Christ has redeemed you.

"2. We are afraid of God inasmuch as we are Old Adamites. — We are not afraid of God inasmuch as we are His children in Christ Jesus.

"3. Just as the Law and the Gospel are more than contradictory (*plus quam contradictoria*; Luther), so also the Scriptural 'Fear!' and 'Fear not!' are contradictory, and each must be understood in its peculiar sphere. The Law cries: Fear, O sinners! The Gospel cries: Fear not, O ye redeemed!

"4. We must not say that the threatening appendix of the Law is meant only for the ungodly who transgress God's commandments; for it is meant also for believers, namely, inasmuch as they are still Old Adam-ridden. The Old Adam of believers is just as corrupt as the Old Adam of unbelievers.

"5. While the proper use of the Law by Christians is that of a *rule* and of a *mirror*, it is to them also a *curb*, namely, inasmuch as they still are flesh. It is as a *curb* that the Law addresses Christians in their natural corruption: Fear His wrath.

"6. The difficulty which faces the Christian theologian whenever he distinguishes between the Law and the Gospel faces him also when he inculcates the Ten Commandments with their demand for true, godly filial fear. Only that minister can teach the Ten Commandments rightly who can rightly distinguish between Mount Sinai and Mount Calvary."

M.

Menschenfischer . Mt. 5, 1=11.

Ansprache, gehalten zur Schlußfeier des Schuljahres 1938-1939
im Predigerseminar zu Thiensville, Wisconsin.

Was der Herr einst zu Petro sagte nach dem wunderbaren Fischzug, der in unserm Text berichtet wird, das gilt allen Predigern des Evangeliums, das gilt besonders auch Ihnen, den Gliedern der abgehenden Klasse: Von nun an wirst du Menschen fahen.

Es ist um den Menschenfang ein eigenes Ding. Er hat seine eigenen Regeln. Die Regeln des gewöhnlichen Fischfangs gelten nicht. Wer den Menschenfang nach den Regeln des gewöhnlichen Fischfangs betreiben wollte, würde wohl viel saure Mühe und Arbeit

davon haben, er möchte wohl auch Erfolge, nach menschlichem Urteil sogar recht große Erfolge, erzielen, aber das Endergebnis nach dem Urteil des Herrn würde doch lauten: Nichts gefangen.

Die Geschichte des wunderbaren Fischzugs sollte für Petrus ein Anschauungsunterricht davon sein, daß der Menschenfang seine eigenen Regeln hat, die der Vernunft stracks zuwiderlaufen und nur im Glauben angeeignet und angewandt werden müssen. Lassen Sie mich in Kürze ein paar Worte über diese Regeln sagen, indem ich meine Bemerkungen an einzelne Ausdrücke in unserm Text anschließe.

Die ganze Nacht gearbeitet.

Mancher Prediger des Evangeliums meint, der Erfolg hänge von seiner Arbeit ab und werde erzielt, wie man ihn in weltlichen Vereinen erzielt. Seine Arbeit in der Gemeinde müsse nach denselben Regeln verrichtet werden, wie sie in der Leitung menschlicher Vereine angewandt werden.

Wenn einer in weltlichen Vereinen Erfolg haben will, wenn er zahlreiche Mitglieder werben und diese zu eifriger Betätigung anregen will, so ist es ratfam, ihnen bisweilen Unterhaltung zu bieten. Die Unterhaltung mag verschiedene Gestalt annehmen; es mag sich um Festessen, um Konzerte, um Vorträge, um dramatische Aufführungen, um Gesellschaftsspiele u. dgl. handeln. All dieses lockt Glieder an und macht ihnen Lust zu rühriger Arbeit, besonders wohl auch zu willigerer Entrichtung der Beiträge.

Die Versuchung liegt uns Predigern sehr nahe, solche Mittel auch in unserer kirchlichen Arbeit zu verwenden. Ich brauche es nicht weiter auszuführen, wie sehr unsere Kirche dieser Versuchung erlegen ist und welche Unterhaltungsmittel, oft recht bedenklicher auch vor der Welt anrühiger Art, hie und da angewendet werden, um Glieder zu gewinnen, sie für kirchliche Arbeit zu interessieren und sie bei der Kirche zu halten.

Wer sich solcher Mittel bedient, hat viel Arbeit davon. Fragen Sie irgendeinen der vielbeschäftigten Pastoren unserer Tage, wieviele Zeit und Kräfte die Vorbereitung von allerlei Unterhaltungen erfordert. Er kann wohl mit Petrus sprechen: Die ganze Nacht gearbeitet.

Wenn er ehrlich ist, wird er mit Petrus hinzufügen müssen: Und nichts gefangen.

Damit soll nicht gesagt sein, daß sich durch solche Mittel der äußere Haufe einer Gemeinde nicht vergrößern und eine gewisse Be-

geisterung der Glieder nicht anregen ließe. Aber äußerliche Größe ist noch kein Zeichen wirklichen Erfolgs im Menschenfang. Wer durch Unterhaltungen irgendwelcher Art Leute anzulocken sucht, erweckt dadurch bei ihnen, bei den neuen und bei den alten Gemeindegliedern, falsche Vorstellungen von der Art, dem Wesen, der Aufgabe, dem Zweck der Kirche, ja er nährt in ihren Herzen Gefühle und Neigungen, die dem Wesen der Kirche schnurstracks zuwider laufen. Er regt im Namen der Kirche den äußeren Menschen an, als ob das so etwas Großes wäre, — wobei dann aber der innere um so mehr verkümmern muß. Wenn die Kirche sich solcher Mittel zu ihrem Bau bedient, sinkt sie eben dadurch auf das Niveau eines weltlichen Vereins herab; und Glieder, die sich durch solche Unterhaltungen haben anlocken lassen, glänzen in der Regel durch Abwesenheit, wenn die Kirche ihre geistlichen Güter verwalten will. Durch die verkehrte Arbeit des Pastors irreführt suchen sie das Reich Gottes in solchen Dingen, die nicht dazu gehören. Das Reich Gottes kommt eben nicht mit äußerlichen Gebärden (Mt. 17, 20). Das Reich Gottes ist auch heute noch nicht Essen und Trinken, sondern Gerechtigkeit und Friede und Freude in dem Heiligen Geist (Röm. 14, 17).

Wir sehen jetzt davon ab, daß ein Prediger, der so viel Gewicht auf Unterhaltung legt, sich in demselben Maße selbst der Fähigkeit beraubt, die geforderte Treue auf die Verwaltung der geistlichen Güter zu verwenden. Sein Herz wird zu sehr von der eingebildeten Wichtigkeit der äußerlichen Mittel geblendet. Und wenn einer etwa sagt, er suche durch die äußerliche Unterhaltung nur erst einmal das Zutrauen der Leute zu gewinnen und sich so eine Gelegenheit zu schaffen, um ihnen das Evangelium zu verkündigen, so ist das einfach nicht wahr. Wäre sein Herz von der überschwenglichen Größe und Herrlichkeit des Evangeliums wirklich ergriffen, so würde er seine Zeit nicht mit solchen Äußerlichkeiten verplempern.

In der Welt gilt heute das Spezialistentum. Wenn sich auch hie und da Stimmen dagegen erheben, so dringen sie doch nicht durch. Zumal gründet man gerne für besondere Zwecke, die man erreichen möchte, besondere Vereine, die in straffer Organisation zielbewußt arbeiten. In der Welt hat das seine Berechtigung. Straffe, gut funktionierende Organisation sichert einen gewissen Erfolg, während Mangel an Organisation den Erfolg gefährdet.

Diese Wahrheiten wendet man auf kirchliche Arbeit an. Man gründet innerhalb der Kirche, in der Ortsgemeinde und über deren

Grenzen hinaus, Vereine für spezielle Zwecke. Die Leitung solcher Vereine erfordert viele Arbeit, oft geld- und zeit- und kraustraubende Arbeit. Außerlich scheint auch oft die Mühe recht gut angewendet zu sein. Die Vereine leisten etwas auf ihre Art.

Doch wird das Endurteil auch hier lauten: Nichts gefangen. Ja, je energischer derartige Vereine innerhalb der Kirche geleitet werden, desto mehr mögen sie die eigentliche Arbeit der Kirche, den Menschenfang für Christum, in Frage stellen.

Die Kirche ist der geistliche Leib Christi. Alle ihre Glieder sind durch den gemeinsamen Glauben an Christum innig miteinander verbunden und verwachsen. Seid fleißig zu halten die Einigkeit im Geist durch das Band des Friedens, sagt Paulus. Es gehört mit zu den Aufgaben des Menschenfangs, daß die Glieder der Kirche sich geistlich immer enger aneinander anschließen.

Was ist die natürliche Folge des Vereinswesens? Gewiß schließen sich die Glieder eines tüchtig geleiteten Vereins eng aneinander, dazu bilden sie ja einen Verein; aber je stärker die Konzentration im eigenen Verein, desto größer wird leicht der Abstand von Gliedern anderer Vereine derselben Gemeinde und von der Gemeinde überhaupt, desto mehr wächst auch das Gefühl der eigenen Wichtigkeit und die Lust zu dominieren — auch über die Gemeinde.

Der Schade ist oft unberechenbar.

So könnte noch viele Arbeit genannt werden, die sich für weltliche Vereine gehört, die aber in der Kirche nebensächlich ist oder gar, wie Petrus es später einmal ausdrückte, nicht taugt (Apg. 6, 2). Wir könnten reden von gut geregelter Finanzwesen, von Armen- und Krankenunterstützung, von schönen eindrucksvollen Gottesdienstformen, von Zusammenschluß und Bildung von großen Kirchenkörpern u. dgl. Dingen mehr. Doch die Zeit erlaubt es nicht.

Zimmer würde es sich wieder zeigen: Die ganze Nacht gearbeitet, und nichts gefangen. Der Menschenfang, von dem Christus redet, wird ganz anders betrieben. Wie? Der Herr Christus spricht:

Werfet eure Netze aus.

Das ist eine sehr einfache Regel. Und um Petrus zu zeigen, daß zum Menschenfang wirklich nicht mehr gehört als dieses, nennt Jesus ihm einen Ort, an dem nach aller menschlichen Erfahrung keine Fische zu erwarten waren: Fahre auf die Höhe, sprach er.

Darin besteht die ganze Kunst des Menschenfangs, daß man das Netz auswirft.

Das Netz hat uns Gott selbst zubereitet. Es ist das Evangelium von Christo, dem Sünderheiland. Also hat Gott die Welt geliebet, daß er seinen eingeborenen Sohn gab, auf daß alle, die an ihn glauben, nicht verloren werden, sondern das ewige Leben haben (Jh. 3, 16). Das ist das Netz, wie es der Herr Jesus selbst kurz beschreibt. Fürwahr, er trug unsere Krankheit und lud auf sich unsere Schmerzen. Wir aber hielten ihn für den, der geplagt und von Gott geschlagen und gemartert wäre. Aber er ist um unserer Missethat willen verwundet und um unserer Sünde willen zerschlagen. Die Strafe liegt auf ihm, auf daß wir Frieden hätten, und durch seine Wunden sind wir geheilet (Jes. 53, 4. 5). Petrus selber erklärt später von dem Netz: Es ist in keinem andern Heil, ist auch kein anderer Name den Menschen gegeben, darinnen wir sollen selig werden (Apg. 4, 12). Ja, Gott war in Christo und versöhnete die Welt mit ihm selber und rechnete ihnen ihre Sünden nicht zu, und hat unter uns aufgerichtet das Wort von der Versöhnung (2. Kor. 5, 19).

Dieses Netz gilt es auszuwerfen. Dieses Wort gilt es zu verkündigen. Die Welt ist voller Fische, die bereit sind, in dieses Netz zu gehen. Man fängt sie an den unwahrscheinlichsten Stellen. Durch Jesaias läßt der Herr uns sagen, daß sein Wort nie leer zurückkomme.

Diese Wahrheit hat jeder Prediger des Evangeliums bisher erfahren dürfen. Nehmen wir den Apostel Paulus als Beispiel. Menschlich geredet war doch wenig Aussicht in Ephesus, eine Gemeinde zu gründen. In Ephesus stand der berühmte Tempel der Diana. Ganz Ephesus war stolz auf diesen Tempel und auf die Göttin. In Ephesus zog ein blühendes Gewerbe seinen Hauptgewinn aus der Herstellung kleiner goldener und silberner Nachbildungen dieses Tempels. Durch den bloßen Verdacht, daß das Ansehen der Göttin angetastet werde, konnte die ganze Stadt in Aufruhr versetzt werden. Sollte es möglich sein, in dieser für Diana schwärmenden Stadt auch nur eine Seele für das Evangelium zu gewinnen? Paulus warf das Netz aus, und eine blühende Gemeinde entstand.

Ein anderes Beispiel. Korinth war eine Handelsstadt mit dem üppigen und leichtfertigen Leben, wie es in Handelsstädten üblich ist. Wird hier nicht das Evangelium mit lauter Hohn und Spott begrüßt und einfach abgewiesen werden? Doch auch hier gingen die menschlichen Fische zahlreich ins Netz. Gerade von dieser Stadt versichert uns Paulus, daß er sich sorgfältig davor gehütet habe, das Evangelium

durch äußerliche Beigaben den Leuten mundgerecht zu machen. Wir möchten meinen, gerade in dieser Stadt wäre es angebracht gewesen, durch allerlei Unterhaltungen und sonstige Lockmittel dem Evangelium bei den Leuten Eingang zu verschaffen. Paulus aber schreibt: Ich hielt mich nicht dafür, daß ich etwas wüßte unter euch ohne allein Jesum Christum den Gekreuzigten. Er warf einfach das Netz aus. Der großartige Erfolg ist bekannt.

Das Menschenmeer ist allenthalben voller Fische, die sich durch das Evangelium fangen lassen. Mögen die Menschen auch in üppigkeit leben und den Schein ausgelassener Fröhlichkeit erwecken, ja, mögen sie ganz in Stolz über einen vermeintlichen Vorzug ihrerseits aufzugehen scheinen: innerlich sind sie allzumal verlorene und verdammte Sünder. Trotz alles gegenteiligen Scheins wird ihr Herz von geheimer Unruhe und Angst gequält. Sie sind heilsbedürftig, wissen aber ihr Bedürfnis nicht zu befriedigen. Wenn dann das Evangelium, die frohe Botschaft vom Heil in Christo, ihnen verkündigt wird, so tut der Herr hier einem und dort einem das Herz auf, daß sie acht haben auf das, was verkündigt wird, und zum Glauben an Christum kommen.

Darum werfet eure Netze aus; nicht mehr, nicht weniger.

Dazu gehört aber, daß ein Prediger das Netz gut kennt. Sie, die heute unsere Anstalt verlassen, haben sich hier unter der Anleitung Ihrer Lehrer drei Jahre bemüht, mit dem Netz bekannt zu werden. Glauben Sie ja nicht, daß Sie es nun kennen. Ihre Lehrer stehen alle schon über 30 Jahre, etliche bald 50 Jahre in der Arbeit, ja, einem Ihrer Lehrer ist es durch Gottes Gnade vergönnt, heute sein 60stes Amtsjahr zu vollenden. Aber keiner von Ihren Lehrern hält sich dafür, daß er nichts mehr am Netz zu lernen habe, daß er ein vollkommener Meister in der Handhabung des Netzes sei. Wir müssen lernen, solange wir leben.

Nun hat es aber mit dem Auswerfen des Netzes noch eine ganz eigene Bewandnis: Wer das Netz recht auswerfen will, muß selbst in dem Netz gefangen sein. Wenn ein Fischer sich in sein Netz verwickelt, ist er nicht imstande, es auszuwerfen. Hier aber ist es gerade umgekehrt: Je fester einer sich selbst in das Netz verwickelt, desto geschickter wird er es auswerfen. Das Wort Gottes ist uns nicht nur als Werkzeug gegeben, unsere Arbeit damit zu verrichten, es ist uns vor allen Dingen zu unserer eigenen Erbauung gegeben; und je mehr wir seine tröstende, lebendig machende Kraft am eigenen Her-

zen erfahren, desto mehr werden wir in der Fähigkeit wachsen, es zum Trost und zur Stärkung anderer zu gebrauchen.

Also werfet eure Netze aus.

Dabei wird es uns gehen wie Petrus. Er protestierte zwar, er habe trotz anstrengender Arbeit während der ganzen Nacht nichts gefangen, erklärte sich aber bereit, auf das Wort Jesu sein Netz auszuwerfen. Und nachdem er den wundervollen Zug getan hatte, war er ehrlich genug zu bekennen:

Ich bin ein sündiger Mensch.

Was soll dieses Bekenntnis? Will Petrus damit der allgemeinen Wahrheit Ausdruck geben, daß er gleich wie alle Menschen in Sünden empfangen und geboren war? daß auch das Dichten und Trachten seines Herzens böse war von Jugend auf? daß auch aus seinem Herzen arge Gedanken hervorgingen: Mord, Ehebruch, Hurerei, Dieberei, falsche Zeugnisse, Lästerung? Wollte er bekennen, daß er täglich viele Sünden begehe in Gedanken, Worten und Werken gegen Gott und seinen Nächsten?

Das hätte ja alles der Wahrheit entsprochen, und Petrus war auch gewiß bereit, ein solches Bekenntnis zu tun. Aber was sollte das in diesem Zusammenhang? Es scheint, daß er mit den Worten: Ich bin ein sündiger Mensch, etwas anderes sagen wollte.

Ihm war ein Schrecken angekommen über den Fischzug. Warum? Hätte er sich nicht freuen sollen, daß ihm nach der verlorenen Nachtarbeit nun unverhofft ein solch reicher Segen in den Schoß fiel? Nun war der Tag nicht verloren, sondern hatte mehr eingebracht, als er gehofft. Hätte er sich nicht besonders freuen sollen, daß der Herr so überaus freundlich gegen ihn war? Warum freut er sich nicht? Warum bekennet er erschrocken: Ich bin ein sündiger Mensch?

Petrus hatte zwar zu Jesus gesagt: Auf dein Wort will ich das Netz auswerfen. Aber die Weise, wie er das sagt, besonders die Verbindung, in der er es sagt: Meister, wir haben die ganze Nacht gearbeitet, und nichts gefangen; aber auf dein Wort will ich das Netz auswerfen, lassen es so erscheinen, daß Petrus nicht gerade mit großer Freudigkeit ans Werk ging. Seinem Herrn zu Gefallen wollte er es ja tun, aber Erfolg erwartete er nicht viel, eher den Spott der Leute für sein törichtes Unternehmen.

In dieser Stimmung war er hinausgefahren. Und nun der unerwartet große Zug. Da kam es ihm plötzlich zum Bewußtsein,

wie wenig er doch dem Herrn zutraute, wie ungläubig er eigentlich war, wie er mit seinem Kleinglauben den Herrn gröblich beleidigt hatte. Und von diesem auffallenden Gefühl überwältigt spricht er: Herr, gehe von mir hinaus, ich bin ein sündiger Mensch. Er meint seinen Kleinglauben.

Wenn wir ehrlich sein wollen, haben wir auch oft Ursache mit Petrus zu sprechen: Ich bin ein sündiger Mensch. Der Kleinglaube plagt uns sehr.

Der Herr stellt uns an eine Gemeinde mit dem Auftrag und der Verheißung: Werfet eure Netze aus, daß ihr einen Zug tut. Wir denken, wenn wir eine schöne Kirche hätten, eine wohlklingende Orgel, einen gut geschulten Chor u. dgl., dann würde es viel leichter sein, eine Gemeinde des Herrn zu sammeln und zu erbauen. Wir meinen, wir müssen unsern Gottesdienst liturgisch schön ausschmücken; wir müssen den Leuten Unterhaltung bieten: gesellige Zusammenkünfte, Konzerte, Festessen, Schaustellungen u. dgl. Wir glauben, wenn wir die Finanzen der Gemeinde auf eine gesunde Basis — die aber im Lichte des Wortes Gottes oft eine recht ungesunde ist — bringen; wenn wir für die verschiedenen Glieder der Gemeinde Vereine gründen: Männervereine, Frauenvereine, Jugendvereine, auf die Weise ließe sich allenfalls etwas erreichen. Aber nur Evangelium predigen, das sei doch veraltet, damit richte man nichts weiter aus, als daß man sich den Spott fortschrittlicher Leute zuziehe.

Ich bin ein sündiger Mensch.

Der Herr weist uns an, ihm die Kinder der Gemeinde zuzuführen, sie in der Zucht und Vermahnung zum Herrn zu erziehen. Wieder kommen uns Gedanken: Ja, wenn wir eine voll eingerichtete Schule hätten mit voll besetztem Lehrerkollegium und vor allen Dingen mit allen möglichen Fächern von hochklingendem Namen auf dem Stundenplan; wenn wir eine Schule hätten, die der Staat anerkennt und von deren Leistungen die Leute reden, dann könnten wir auf Erfolg rechnen. Wenn wir den Bibelklassen allerlei Unterhaltendes, Interessantes bieten, ja, dann. Aber den Kindern nichts weiter als eine schlichte christliche Erziehung bieten, die Bibelklassen in die einfältige Erkenntnis des Evangeliums einführen — damit läßt sich doch heute nichts ausrichten.

Oder wenn der Herr uns in leitende Ämter in seiner Kirche stellt, uns zu Lehrern an höheren Lehranstalten, oder zu Synodalbeamten macht, wandelt uns leicht der Zweifel an: Welchen Zweck

hat es, immer nur theologische Fragen zu behandeln; wenn wir etwas erreichen wollen, müssen wir über andere Dinge, über Philosophie, Literatur, Kunst reden und schreiben. Oder wir denken: Welchen Zweck hat es, daß wir als eine solch unbedeutende Körperschaft unser Zeugnis des Evangeliums reden? Das macht bei der Welt keinen Eindruck. Wenn wir Erfolg haben wollen, müssen wir uns mit anderen verbinden, daß wir ein großer imponierender Körper werden. Wenn dann vielleicht mit der Lehre und mit der Praxis auch nicht alles ganz sauber steht, das schadet nicht viel, die große Zahl ist die Hauptsache, die gibt unserm Zeugnis den nötigen Nachdruck.

Was heißt das anders als dem Herrn den Glauben verweigern, wenn er zu uns spricht: Werfet eure Netze aus — nicht mehr, nicht weniger. Doch dazu kommt es bei uns sehr schwerlich, daß wir mit Petrus bekennen: Ich bin ein sündiger Mensch. In der Regel halten wir unsern Kleinglauben noch für besondere Vorsicht und Weisheit.

Hier gilt es bekennen und beten: Ich glaube, Herr, hilf meinem Unglauben.

Von nun an wirst du Menschen fahen.

Das ist ein Wort der Verheißung, das der Herr zu Petrus sprach. Er will ihm dadurch Mut machen, will ihm aber auch zugleich zeigen, woher allein aller Erfolg im Menschenfang kommt.

Bei diesem Wort der Verheißung soll Petrus an die vergangene Nacht und an den soeben getanen Fischzug denken. Wie hat er sich nicht samt seinen Gefellen in der Nacht aufs höchste angestrengt, mit allen Kräften und mit aller Kenntnis, die ihn langjährige Erfahrung gelehrt, gearbeitet! Aber mit aller Arbeit hatte er auch nicht einen Fisch ins Netz gebracht. Nichts gefangen! Auf des Herrn Wort hatte er soeben das Netz ins Meer gesenkt, und sofort hatte es sich mit Fischen gefüllt.

Es war klar, daß Petri Anstrengungen den Erfolg nicht schaffen konnten, der war allein ein Gnadengeschenk des Herrn.

Es wäre eine grundverkehrte Anwendung des Wortes Jesu, wollten wir daraus den Schluß ziehen, das Predigtamt bedeute ein Leben der Ruhe und des Müßiggangs. Wenn Jesus sagt: Du wirst fahen, so will er allerdings, daß Petrus und alle, die er zu Menschenfishern macht, in diesem Beruf arbeiten sollen, so daß es vor Menschenaugen gar den Schein gewinnt, als ob sie das Fangen allein

besorgten. Das weiß jeder treue Prediger, der in diesem Berufe alt und grau geworden ist; das wissen auch Sie, die Sie sich auf diesen Beruf vorbereitet haben. Es gilt Arbeit, treue Arbeit, fleißige Arbeit, oft sehr mühevollen Arbeit. Ohne Arbeit gibt der Herr keinen Erfolg.

Was aber der Herr mit seiner Verheißung sagen will, ist dieses, daß der Erfolg nicht von unserer Arbeit, sondern allein von seinem Segen abhängt.

Wir glauben oft, daß ein begabter Pastor mehr Erfolg haben müsse als ein weniger begabter. Wir glauben, eine klare Darlegung der Wahrheit müsse um deswillen durchschlagen, ein begeisterter Vortrag müsse die Herzen entzünden. Nein, sagt Jesus durch seine Verheißung und veranschaulicht es durch sein Wunder, den Erfolg gibt er allein.

Das ist zu unserm Trost gesagt.

Da steht einer vielleicht auf einem aussichtslosen Felde. Er gibt sich redlich Mühe, er arbeitet mit aller Treue und Gewissenhaftigkeit. Aber Erfolg ist nicht zu sehen. Dann geschieht es leicht, daß man ungeduldig wird, daß man neidisch auf andere schaut, denen der Erfolg nur so in den Schoß fällt, daß man sich mit Selbstvorwürfen quält, ob man überhaupt zum Amte taugte. Zu unserm Troste setzt der Herr die Verheißung her, daß er, er allein, den Segen gebe. Darum gilt es nur auf den Beruf zu schauen. Hat uns der Herr als Menschenfischer an einen bestimmten Ort gestellt, so will er, daß wir da das Netz auswerfen sollen, unbekümmert um den Erfolg, nur daß wir treu seien im Auswerfen. Für den Erfolg macht er uns nicht verantwortlich. Er macht uns auch keinen Vorwurf aus etwaigem Mißerfolg. Den Erfolg bestimmt er.

In den Worten des Herrn liegt vor allem ein Antrieb zur Demut.

Gar zu leicht geschieht es, daß wir, wenn uns Erfolg beschieden ist, diesen unserer eigenen Tüchtigkeit und Arbeit zuschreiben. Wir sehen vielleicht gar auf andere herab, denen augenfälliger Erfolg versagt ist, als ob wir mehr wären als sie. Bald fühlen wir uns zu Größerem berufen. Wir fühlen uns zurückgesetzt, wenn wir nicht die erwartete Anerkennung finden. Wir drängen uns auf und mischen uns in Dinge, die uns nichts angehen. Wir hadern mit Gott und Menschen, wenn wir nicht an große Gemeinden berufen werden. Das alles, weil wir den Erfolg unserer Arbeit nicht dem

Segen des Herrn allein zuschreiben, sondern für uns selbst Verdienst in Anspruch nehmen.

Es gibt keinen sichereren Weg, die Kirche des Herrn, unsere Arbeit in der Kirche, ja uns selbst zu verderben, als daß wir die Erfolge, die uns beschieden sind, unserer eigenen Tüchtigkeit zuschreiben. Der Herr verheißt uns, daß er uns den Segen zu unserer Arbeit geben will, wie es ihm gefällt. Das ist ein mächtiger Antrieb zur Übung in der Demut.

Wer sollte aber durch die Verheißung des Herrn sich nicht ermuntern lassen, den Herrn brünstig um seinen Segen zu bitten! Der Erfolg unserer Arbeit liegt ihm ebenso am Herzen wie uns. Wir erkennen die Not der Welt, wir erkennen auch, daß die einzige Rettung der Menschen darin besteht, daß sie vom Netz des Evangeliums gefangen werden. Darum wünschen wir uns rechten Erfolg bei unserer Arbeit. Gott wünscht dasselbe, nur viel brünstiger als wir. Deshalb hat er uns ja eben zu Menschenfischern berufen. Und er hat es verheißt, daß wir Menschen fassen sollen. Warum sollten wir nicht getrost und mit aller Zuversicht ihn darum bitten?

Über die Art der Erhörung machen wir dem Herrn keine Vorschriften. Wir wissen, daß er zuweilen sein Netz auswerfen, sein Evangelium predigen läßt gar zum Gericht über die mutwilligen Verächter, zu ihrer Verstockung. Ob und wie weit das bei unserer Arbeit der Fall sein soll, überlassen wir dem Herrn. Der Erhörung unserer Bitte sind wir doch gewiß. Sie wird in jedem Fall zum großen Teil darin bestehen, daß der Herr uns selbst immer tüchtiger macht das Netz für ihn auszuwerfen, nicht mit allerlei selbsterfönnener Arbeit, sondern in einfältiger Verkündigung des Evangeliums, im Vertrauen auf seine Verheißung.

Dazu wolle der Herr Sie segnen.

M.

The Seventh Sunday After Trinity

Text: Matthew 16:5-12

In Christ dearly Beloved!

At the very beginning of our Gospel-lesson that subject is mentioned which certainly is of supreme importance to natural man, bread. The beginning of our Gospel-lesson likewise shows us by the example of the disciples, how strongly the flesh, the inborn, sinful nature of man, is inclined toward cares about earthly bread. This is truly a plague afflicting the whole world. Everywhere men are taken up

with cares about material things. What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we put on? In general they ask: On what shall we live? There is no end of questions. Earthly care is an inexhaustible source of ever new questions, which, however, are only the old ones repeated anew, because they all center around one and the same thing: bread, the earthly, daily bread.

Earthly care is a sin. For God forbids it with His: Take no thought! (Have no cares!) Natural men, the men of the world, regard care as an excellent virtue. They say: Only a thoughtless man will live along without a care; a prudent man will have great and many cares. This again confirms the truth that the wisdom of the world is nothing but foolishness. All the superwise, anxious worrying will not do a bit of good. The thought that it will serve some good purpose is the greatest falsehood. On the contrary, this is the truth of God, that cares, just as they are sin, so also are always harmful, dangerous, pernicious. This is the very truth our Lord teaches in our Gospel-lesson. Let us therefore consider:

THE PERNICIOUS EFFECTS OF EARTHLY CARE

1. It smothers spirituality and seals the heart against God's Word.
2. It smothers a man's grateful remembrance of the divine help he has experienced and blinds his eyes to the faithful care of the heavenly Father.
3. Thus earthly care not only entails a heavy loss for this present life, but only too easily the greatest loss of all, that of eternal life.

I.

It smothers spirituality and seals the heart against the Word of God.

We have an example of the way earthly care smothers spirituality in the disciples as portrayed in our text. As our text reports, they had again come to the other side, namely, of the Sea of Gennesaret. They had sailed from the west to the east side of the lake. They had forgotten to take bread. They soon were troubled about this. Bread could be easily procured on the west side, but this may not have been such an easy matter on the east side. We have no intention to praise the disciples for forgetting to take bread with them. If they reproached themselves for this forgetfulness, that was very much in order. But the disciples evidently went much farther than this. They worried as to whether bread could be found, and they were quickly full of fears as to whether they would get enough to eat that day. In short, at once they were deep in care over bread, about getting enough to eat; they were deep in earthly care, carnal care. That was wrong. To perform our temporal duties punctually, as our calling demands it, is right; whatever goes beyond that is of evil, is wrong, is sin. Our dear Savior shows us this too by rebuking the

disciples for it. As always He had seen and known the thoughts of their hearts from the first moment. He saw how they once again had permitted their hearts to be tossed about by cares for earthly bread. The Lord said to them: **"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."** Now what reaction would you expect in the disciples upon hearing words such as **Pharisees and Sadducees?** For the words Pharisees and Sadducees had nothing less than a hellish ring; they had a ring only of shameful arrogance, malevolence, and impudence toward God and of hostility and devilish cunning toward Christ. A little lamb will most certainly recoil at the sight of a lion or wolf. Thus the disciples should have experienced a wholesome alarm at the mere mention of Pharisees and Sadducees. Though these two groups were not the Roaring Lion himself, threatening to destroy also them, the disciples, still they were ravening wolves in his service, who could be most dangerous to them too. So we might have expected the disciples to have thought to themselves: Oh, why are we again worrying about earthly bread? The heavenly bread giving life eternal is all-important. Dear Master, we thank Thee for Thy warning against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. We know very well what the leaven of the Pharisees is: it is their teaching, their boasting of themselves: We are good people, and in our own good works we have such a glorious righteousness before God, that the kingdom of heaven must be ours here and eternally. We know also the leaven of the Sadducees; it is this that they say: Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. If we do not beware of that, then we shall lose Thee, the Bread of Life, and shall go to our doom. Therefore we will beware and will watch, so that we seek first the kingdom of God. But Thou, our dear Lord and Master, must above all preserve our souls at all times, as Thou hast done at this moment. But things did not take the course we would expect. Rather, this is what happened: Since the disciples' minds at the time were completely occupied with earthly bread, they had hardly heard the word "leaven" from their Lord's lips, when they thought that the Master too was concerned about earthly, daily bread and about the stomach. They said: **"It is because we have taken no bread."** We might find it amazing that the disciples thought, the Lord, who otherwise was always concerned about the highest and greatest thing, the kingdom of God, was admonishing them, after they had forgotten to bring bread, to beware of buying bad bread, or bread from bad people. We might find it astonishing that they did not notice at once, that their Lord was dealing with sublime, spiritual things and not with badly-baked or well-baked bread. But there is nothing here that need astonish us. The disciples' minds were already busy with bread, and so at the word "leaven" their minds fastened on it even more. We simply see from the example of the disciples that when earthly cares occupy the heart, the heart at once ceases to be a good heart, a heart that has a ready understanding for

spiritual things. We see that through earthly cares spirituality is smothered, that the thoughts of the kingdom of heaven recede and are crowded out by thoughts concerning this earthly life and earthly welfare.

That which was true of the disciples in this case is true of many Christians. They are not content with doing that which God wants, namely, that they work, work with their hands the thing which is good, for themselves and their families (Eph. 4:28), that they prove themselves faithful stewards in that which is less, in temporal things (Luke 16:19), that they provide for their own that which is at hand (1 Tim 5:8). They are full of cares: What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we put on? They do not carry out God's assignment, which is to **pray, to work, and to use their earthly goods with prudent frugality (Matt. 14:20)**. They want to take over the care which God has reserved unto Himself. And to all of them earthly cares become a thorny thicket (Matt. 13:7, 22). The care-filled mind, the sinful mind consecrated to the belly, grows rank; before long it has outstripped everything else; the divine, spiritual, heavenly mind is choked. This mind loses its power to govern the heart and soul and disposition. When it does govern Christian people, the kingdom of God remains the most important thing to them, and they think of it and its righteousness with an earnestness accorded to nothing else. They are easily and quickly reminded of it, always understand and note all spiritual hints at once, and thus their hearts are spiritually intelligent and heavenly-minded. They readily let themselves be guided on the way to life eternal. But this is not at all the case with many. The same thing happens as in the case of the disciples. Everything that happens turns their minds toward earthly things. They need only to hear about leaven, and they think of earthly bread. Before long even Christ becomes to them a Man whose real and foremost purpose is to benefit them in regard to their earthly life, Who is our comfort above all, because He provides bread for the hungry, makes the sick well, and can rescue our little ship out of the storms of life's troubles. There was a time, when in almost all Christendom there was only this knowledge of Him, that He had come as a Leader to happiness in this life on earth. Now that is what happens today. In such Christians who let themselves be governed by earthly-mindedness, the heavenly-mindedness is finally choked to such an extent that they seek after Christ and want to make Him their king, only because He can provide earthly bread and fill the stomach. It comes to the point where they consider themselves very religious, if they merely cry out to Christ in sickness: Make me well! — in hunger: Give us bread! — in trouble: Help, lest we perish! — and they know nothing of this nature: Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee! Have mercy, that I may not die in my sins, but live! As an ever bigger and bigger thing does daily bread, the temporal, bodily life appear to them; it becomes the only

thing that they regard and consider. Of less and less consequence does eternal life therefore seem to them; it becomes more and more an unimportant matter; at least it is a thing to which you need devote your thoughts and attention but very little. Truly, when a Christian has once vacated his heart to earthly care, then the spiritual, heavenly mind is smothered, not only in this sense that he becomes very indifferent toward the heavenly, divine things, the great matter of the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, but that by and by he is again filled completely with the aversion and resentment of the flesh against it.

The necessary consequence of all this is that heart and mind become sealed to God's precious Word. First of all, as far as the **understanding** of it is concerned. Do we not see that in the disciples? The earthly care in their hearts, which was concerned only with the bread for the body, led them astray at once, locked, as it were, their hearts' door to Jesus' Word, so that they could not penetrate into it with a salutary understanding. That repeats itself again and again in the case of those Christians whose hearts are filled and dominated by earthly cares. We must ever witness this result in such people: the Word takes no hold in their hearts. As much as they are taught and instructed, still their knowledge remains poor and meager. They listen, but they do not learn anything. They learn, at best, to repeat, parrot-like, this or that divine teaching, but they are devoid of understanding, and they do not taste the Word of God with a true perception. Something of the Word and its teachings remains lodged in the head and the memory, but it does not penetrate into the heart with a saving knowledge. It cannot; the heart is full of earthly cares. There is no room for the Word. Surely, a Christian filled with earthly cares is sealed against the understanding of the divine Word. It is impossible for such a man earnestly to seek the understanding of the divine Word. He can't, that's all. Cares have again made him one who receives not the things of the Spirit of God.

But most always those Christians in whose hearts cares grow rank are sealed against **the hearing** of the divine Word. This is true of many in this way, that they, indeed, go to the house of God with some regularity, but still **hear without a trace of devotion**. The sermon has hardly begun, when their thoughts wander to temporal things. There is always something that at once leads the soul to busy itself with earthly affairs. Such a Christian attends preaching and still is completely absent. He knows hardly a thing said in the sermon. The earnest reflection does not even occur to him, that, after all, he ought to be in God's house to listen to the sermon and pay attention to it. But what could possibly induce him to listen, since, in his opinion, it does not help him in his earthly affairs and troubles? Thus earthly cares seal the heart of many Christians for the hearing of the divine Word with true devotion. It will happen without fail that such people finally become so sealed to the hearing

of the Word, that they come to God's house for the preaching of the Gospel only at rare intervals. There simply cannot be a static condition for a Christian. If he does not go forward, he will go backward. He that has in this respect, to him shall be given; from him that has not shall be taken even that which he has. If the Christian who gives himself over to earthly care more and more is no longer earnestly concerned about penetrating into the understanding of the divine Word, he soon will not even consider it important to pay much attention to it, and finally finds it sufficient to hear a sermon now and then, a sermon from which, after all, he has but little benefit for this life.

We have learned to know the most pernicious effect of earthly care: it smothers spirituality and seals the heart to the Word of God. But pernicious and harmful is also another effect to which we now direct our attention.

II.

It smothers the grateful remembrance of the divine help a man has experienced and blinds his eyes to the faithful care of the heavenly Father.

This is another grave harm which is produced in a Christian by earthly cares. It is this that he looks into the future with nothing but faint-hearted anxiety and fails to look back, to days gone by, with a grateful remembrance of the goodness of the heavenly Father which he experienced in such rich measure. The Lord rebuked the disciples for that, saying: "O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?" This word of rebuke hits all Christians who let themselves be made slaves of earthly care. They look into the future with anxiety, fear, and trembling, wondering how it will turn out. It is an appalling thing to realize how little faith the slave of care really has. He trembles and worries, as though for him there were no God in heaven Who can do whatsoever He wills. If we look at it in the right way, it is truly abominable the way a Christian with his earthly cares denies the true faith in God, the trust in His faithfulness and goodness. Anxiously to torture yourself with earthly cares really means to live in this spirit: There is no God, at least not for me; I must shift entirely for myself. When the people who are such slaves of care look back to days gone by, it is not with a believing heart which thanks God, but with a faith-less heart which thinks of the past only with bitterness and resentment. All they see there is poverty, need, and want. They always view themselves only as being people who are held down to a bare, scant living and to poverty. Therefore they are far from raising such songs of thanksgiving as this: O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever. Why, they say, a lot we

have to be thankful for! We just got by at the most and that only after a lot of uncertainty, anxiety, and bitter struggling. That just then they have the best reasons to raise songs of thanksgiving they do not see at all. They simply lack the mind of faith which also in looking back to the lean days gone by rises up to such a song of thanksgiving as this: It is of the Lord's mercies, that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness (Lam. 3:22). Oh, it is terrible how earthly care can gradually make a Christian entirely blind, so that he no longer sees anything of the love of God in his life. Most detestable is the way earthly care by and by makes Christians completely insensible to the love and goodness of God, so that they no longer know anything of gratitude toward God, but live on in the basest ingratitude. As an evil worm destroys fine fruit from the core out, so earthly care is the evil worm which eats away and destroys the core of a Christian, namely, faith, which above all is faith in God's love, goodness, and compassion.

The Savior said to the disciples: "Do ye not understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?" He recalled to them the divine goodness, love, and faithfulness they had experienced at His hands not only in a general way, but He reminded them of very definite facts, of wonderful and glorious benefactions: the two miracles of feeding, when five thousand and again four thousand were fed, and they along with them. There may be no such miracles in the strict sense of the word which the Lord can recall to us. But like a miracle happening before the very eyes of believing Christians is the way their entire life is full of the deeds of God's love and goodness. It is, therefore, not in vain that the Lord calls to them: Do ye not remember? For they see in their lives the many instances of God's protection, deliverance, and supplying of their needs. They remember them with deep emotion and in adoration of God's faithful reign over them. He will be our guide even unto death, they too will say. The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. No matter how uneventfully a Christian's life may have unfolded, still he too has experienced danger and with God's help has lived through it, and he is, therefore, constrained to join in the song:

Praise to the Lord, Who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
Who, as on wings of an eagle, uplifteth, sustaineth.

Yes, he knows of many a trouble of which he can say:

What need or grief
Ever hath failed of relief? —
Wings of His mercy did shield thee.

No matter how insignificant a Christian's life may appear by itself, still it is a wonderful thing by virtue of God's daily, faithful

reign over it. We also hear many a dear Christian tell about this in his life and experience. And even though things happened in his life that happened to thousands and thousands of others as well, still he praises the fact that he so often could plainly perceive the hand of God.

It was not in vain that he was taught to say:

Ponder anew What the Almighty can do,
If with His love He befriend thee.

That is not true of the slaves of care. They do not see in their lives an abundance of evidence constraining them to cry out:

Thy love is, Lord, so very great,
Our hearts are filled with wonder. (Tr. W. H. F.)

They have eyes only for different evils that have come upon them, but they see nothing of benefits calling forth their praise. Fretfully they mention that they have been at the point of starving, but they say nothing about the fact that still they, together with many, many thousands, had their hunger satisfied. The distress they suffered in various troubles is vividly before their eyes, but that the Lord delivered them — they are blind to that. They remember the desperate hours, when they were almost at the end of their resources, but not the great faithfulness which, contrary to their expectations, delivered them. It is appalling how such Christians, who are afflicted with the loathsome disease of earthly care, keep a record only of the evils that they have experienced, but not of the good that the Lord has done for them in countless demonstrations of His faithfulness. And the more their loathsome disease poisons their heart, mind, disposition, and thoughts, the more useless is it to call out to them: Do you not remember? Do you **still** not understand? On the contrary, the longer they live on under the pall of care, the less they understand. Oh, how they are to be pitied! Let us see that

III.

Earthly care entails a heavy loss even for this earthly life and only too easily the greatest loss of all, that of eternal life.

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. This is God's plan, particularly for Christians also. Where is the Christian with whom God has not dealt according to the rule: We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God? There are various tribulations which God prepares for His own. Thus it may happen that a Christian is worried, not because he had **forgotten** to take bread along for himself and his loved ones, but that he **had** none to take and to distribute. If he is the kind of man who does not try to remedy matters with his cares, but lives by his faith, then this will be his thought:

Ponder anew What the Almighty can do,
If with His love He befriend thee.

Then he remembers the times of old and the way in which God helped countless times. He remembers how His dear Lord most miraculously fed the thousands. And he says to himself: Surely, the old God still lives. Nor has His arm been shortened. And my dear Lord and Redeemer is still with me always unto the end. How much more readily will a Christian comfort himself with all of God's promises for his times of need, the more he remembers how often in the past God has made them come true. Certainly, this is your experience as well, dear fellow-Christian: You see and remember, that the Word of the Lord is right and all his works are done in truth. (What He has promised He will most surely do.) You, therefore, say in all your troubles: Why should I be filled with care? The Lord careth for me! This is true, because He has said it. Besides I have experienced this in abundant measure.

Thus a rich comfort enters into the life of all beloved, true Christians, though there be many troubles. They remember the great things God has done, true to His Word; they therefore rejoice in hope. They are truly blessed people. Their hope diffuses a bright, cheering glow over all the perplexities and anxieties of life.

But those pitiable Christians who let themselves be governed continually by earthly care rob themselves of all this rich comfort. In their hearts there is no grateful remembering of the many benefits enjoyed; they do not understand what a glorious God is the Father in Christ, and therefore there is also no comfort in their hearts against the woe and the misery, the trouble and the anxiety of this life.

You Christians who in this life carry the burden of many troubles and perplexities, accept this counsel from your God: Do not yield yourselves to care. Surely, you do not better your situation in the least, and you procure no help for yourselves.

By anxious care and grieving,
 By self-consuming pain,
 God is not moved to giving;
 By prayer thou must obtain.

You may be sure that thereby you will not gain that which we would gladly grant you with all our heart, namely, that life be made easier for you. On the contrary, through your heavy-hearted and anxious care you only rob yourselves of the comfort which makes life easier for you, the comfort namely: God careth for you. Therefore you will make the course of your life not easier, but just so much harder through your heavy-hearted care.

Our cross and trials do but press
 The heavier for our bitterness.

Truly, earthly care is very pernicious even as far as this life is concerned. It brings in its wake this great, heavy loss, the loss that makes everything in life still more bitter: you cannot take comfort in God.

But it is still more terrible to contemplate that earthly care only too readily can cause the greatest loss of all for a Christian, the loss of eternal life. For all the slaves of care do not, alas! fare as well as did the dear disciples. The Lord rebuked them once more with the words: "How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?" That struck home. The disciples were ashamed of their foolishness in thinking that Christ had wanted to warn them against nothing more important than that they should not buy bread in the wrong place. They were ashamed of their earthly care, which had led them into such unspiritual, childish, and foolish thoughts. Now it was as though a veil had been torn away from their eyes. Now again they were spiritually intelligent. They understood that they were to beware, not of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Now again they were spiritually intelligent. They understood that it was all-important if they wished to attain eternal life to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees concerning their own righteousness and of the doctrine of the Sadducees which made the belly their real god and a life devoted to the belly the truly happy one.

Only too many Christians, sad to say, end up this way: they do not permit themselves to be cured of the malady of earthly care, but continue in the grip of cares. Mark well, dear fellow-Christians, because of the flesh clinging to us there is hardly a Christian who is not assailed by cares. But he permits God's grace to help him, so that he does not become ensnared by earthly cares, does not become their slave. But he who actually continues in them and is governed by earthly cares more and more completely, — he will not be able to take heed and beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees. That earthly care has such consequences is plainly taught in our text. What else accounts for it that the Savior warned the disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees just when they **were full of care?** Surely, it is evident that faith cannot endure side by side with earthly care. Just as the victim of care, because he does not have faith, cannot trust that God will care for him in bodily and earthly things, but relies upon his own care, and aims to help himself in that way, just so does he, having no faith, not trust in Christ's righteousness but in his own works and conduct. If he does not trust God for the piece of bread for the next day, how can he have the kind of heart that entrusts its life for eternity to God? The motto of the man of care in regard to earthly matters is: A man must rely upon himself, and it is the same in regard to spiritual matters. You will find, dear fellow-Christian, that the situation is none other than this: the Christians who have become completely immersed in earthly care do not really comfort themselves with Christ, but with their own works. In fact, out of the very circumstance that they have so many cares, worry so much, and take things so hard, out of this they fashion

a respectable portion of righteousness before God. The result: the man who remains in the grip of care becomes a Pharisee. And a Sadducee too. Do not think, you who are one of those Christians who remain in the bonds of earthly care in spite of God's many admonitions, — do not think: But the Sadducees were rich people. Though they were rich, still their goal was to enjoy life. Their belly was their god. And you, the man of cares, you too think of nothing else except the physical, earthly life. There is no evading it, also your god is the belly. You are a Sadducee like those of old. The only difference is this: Those Sadducees of old were garbed in costly linens and fine purple, and you are one garbed in a poor working-man's clothes.

Therefore take heed. The Pharisee is doomed. For only through faith is a man justified and saved. The Sadducee is doomed. For he that liveth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. Therefore I pray you, beware of cares which can make you both a Pharisee and a Sadducee, and thus cause you to lose eternal life.

Learn to be ashamed of care as of the most repulsive folly, which leads you to believe that you can do more for yourself than the Almighty God. And that you may be ashamed of your cares in the right way, comfort yourself at all times with His promise: The Lord careth for you. May the faithful God help us all, so that we may not forfeit eternal life through our folly, but that we may finally inherit it with great rejoicing. Amen.

— From Hoenecke, "Wenn ich nur dich habe." Translated by Werner Franzmann.

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

Sechzig Jahre im Amt. — Im diesjährigen Schlußgottesdienst des Seminars konnte auch auf die Tatsache Bezug genommen werden, daß es Herrn Professor August O. W. Pieper vergönnt war, sein sechzigstes Jahr im Predigtamt zu vollenden. Nachdem er im Jahre 1879 seine theologischen Studien in St. Louis beendet hatte, trat er zunächst in das Pfarramt ein und bediente in 23 Jahren nacheinander Gemeinden in Keewaunee, Menomonie und Milwaukee (Markusgemeinde). Im Jahre 1902 wurde er als Professor an unser Predigerseminar berufen, eine Stelle, die er heute noch bekleidet. Seit unsere Wisconsinssynode im Jahre 1904 sich mit der Gründung der Theol. Quartalschrift ein fachmännisches Organ für „Lehre, Predigt und Praxis“ schuf, gehörte Herr Prof. Pieper als Mitglied der Fakultät mit zum Redaktionskomitee und hat durch regelmäßige Beiträge dieser Zeitschrift das Gepräge geben helfen, das sie trägt. Wir danken mit dem Jubilar dem Herrn für seine reichen Segnungen, die er ihm und durch ihn der Kirche erwiesen hat, und bitten, daß er ihm seine Gnade ferner bewahren wolle.

M.

Concordia Theological Seminary Centennial. — On June 2, our older sister, Concordia Theological Seminary of St. Louis, observed the one hundredth anniversary of her service to the Church — a service centering in the fitting out of young men for the ministry of the Gospel. Three services were held, one of which was a special Academic service for commemorating the event. What blessings God in His unmerited grace has conferred on the Lutheran Church, particularly in our country, during the past one hundred years through the instrumentality of Concordia Theological Seminary, will be known in full only on that day when all hidden things shall be revealed. In the mean time we join our sister institution in raising songs of praise, in seeking pardon for our shortcomings, and in consecrating ourselves anew to faithfulness in our calling, imploring our Father in heaven to sanctify and preserve us in His Truth.

Our seminary was represented at the celebration by Prof. Aug. F. Zich, who delivered the following greetings.

“Brethren, fellow Christians and co-workers of the Missouri Synod.

“In bringing to you the greetings and best wishes from our seminary at Thiensville, and therewith from our Wisconsin Synod, allow me to express our feeling of rejoicing over the wonderful grace and mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in granting to you the inestimable boon of that pure Gospel which this seminary has held fast and proclaimed through its thousands of trained pastors and preachers for a hundred years. We all know that the clear understanding of the pure Gospel, the remaining faithful to it through so many storms, trials and temptations that would tend to rob us of God’s inspired Word, and the success in spreading that Gospel to the far ends of the earth — that all this is due to the sustaining power of the God of salvation. It is not to men, that we give glory and honor today, for they were but the tools in the hands of our loving Father. It is rather to this Father of all grace and mercy that we direct our praise and thanksgiving, as the real founder and supporter of this seminary. Not our learning nor our tireless labor made this school great as a blessing to thousands. What made this institution a great and moving force for the saving of souls was none other than the pure Gospel that was so steadily taught here. In our day, when many schools of theology for the training of the future spiritual leaders of the church have lost this pure Gospel and have undermined the authority of the Bible, denying its inspiration by God in all its parts, it is a matter of the greatest rejoicing for all true believers, that our Lord in His unfathomable goodness, longsuffering and truth has kept unto us some nurseries of the saving faith as this one here.

“We of the sister synods, therefore, rejoice with you this day, and join with you in song of praise to Him who alone can save this dying and trembling world, through the sole means of the simple preaching of His Gospel. We also pray with you that this saving

Word of God may be granted to us here and elsewhere until the harvest is done. God in His mercy grant it." M.

Dr. Fuerbringer Sounds a Note of Warning. — It has been the custom of Dr. Fuerbringer in the past to evaluate, in the *Lutheraner*, the achievements of the triennial delegate meetings of his synod. He has done so again, in the *Lutheraner* for May 9, 1939, concerning the centennial meeting of June, 1938.

Nearly a year has passed since then, and many significant things have happened in the meantime, enabling the reviewer to see more clearly some implications of the most important resolutions adopted at St. Louis. Before the convention lay the report of the Committee on Church Union concerning negotiations carried on with representatives of the A. L. C., embodying particularly also a doctrinal **Declaration** of said representatives of the A. L. C. A committee (Number 16), to which this report had been referred for study and recommendations, reported in the main favorably, and the convention, adopting the report of Committee Number 16, declared that by its action it had established a doctrinal basis "not only for further negotiations" but "**sufficient and adequate for future church fellowship.**" — Since the report of the Committee on Church Union had been in the hands of the Delegates to the centennial convention scarcely more than a month, time for thorough study was inadequate. The committee had spent three years on the matter and had the advantage of personal discussions in six meetings with representatives of the A. L. C., while the delegates had nothing but the text of the **Declaration**, which must laboriously be compared with the **Brief Statement**, which it was to "**supplement**" and to "**emphasize**" differently. For this reason many are of the opinion that the resolutions of the convention were premature, final action should have been deferred to the convention of 1941.

In the meantime two events of major importance have transpired. In October, 1938, the A. L. C. met in Sandusky, and in adopting resolutions on the union matter stressed particularly that the **Brief Statement** of the Missouri Synod, when adopted by the A. L. C., must be "**viewed in the light of the Declaration**" of its own representatives, and then announced to the world that the A. L. C. is "**not willing to give up its membership**" in the American Lutheran Conference. — On February 13, 1939, representatives of the A. L. C. met with representatives of the U. L. C. A. in Pittsburgh and came to an agreement on the doctrine of Inspiration which must be regarded as not satisfactory.

With these developments, which show in part the far-reaching implications of the St. Louis resolutions, before him, Dr. Fuerbringer wrote his review of the centennial convention. His evil fore-bodings are not groundless, and we all shall do well to take his warning to

heart. We here reproduce some pertinent paragraphs, underscoring some of Dr. Fuerbringer's remarks.

“Es liegt, gerade wenn wir jetzt in das zweite Jahrhundert unserer Geschichte treten, alles daran, dass der demokratische Charakter der Synode so viel als möglich gewahrt wird und dass bei der Mannigfaltigkeit der Geschäfte die Synode nicht allmählich aufhört, ein beratender Körper zu sein. Ich glaube, einigermaßen die Sachen und Angelegenheiten der Synode zu kennen, und **doch konnte ich nicht immer gleich die Tragweite der Vorschläge erkennen**. Wie weit dies bei Pastoren- und Laiendelegaten, die vielleicht zum ersten Male einer Synode beiwohnten, der Fall war, steht dahin. . . . Und wie es von der grössten Bedeutung ist, dass die Komiteen sorgfältig ausgewählt werden und angestrengt und gewissenhaft arbeiten, so müssen auch pflichtgemäss alle Delegaten den Sachen eingehendes Interesse bewahren und scharf aufmerken und dabei anhalten mit dem Gebet, dass die Synode auf dem rechten Wege bleibe, **keine Schwächungen des Schrift- und Bekenntnisprinzips eintreten**, alle Sachen zum allgemeinen Besten erledigt werden und nicht Gruppenbildungen und Sonderinteressen sich zeigen. Gerade wenn ich die Geschichte der lutherischen Kirche in America vergegenwärtige, sehe ich nach dieser Richtung hin eine besondere Gefahr, der wir mit Gottes Hilfe entgegen wollen.

“Das ist vielleicht ein **offenes Wort**, aber es schien mir nötig, gerade einmal diesen Punkt zu betonen. Ich . . . halte es für nötig, dass das mittlere und jüngere Geschlecht in Synodalsachen aktiv ist. . . . Aber am Herzen liegt mir, dass das mittlere und jüngere Geschlecht unter Vermeidung aller Kirchendiplomatik in den **Fuss-tapfen der Väter wandeln und nach den Grundsätzen der Väter handeln möge** in dieser Jetztzeit und gerade auch in den neuen **Verhältnissen**, die unsere Zeit mit sich bringt, und in den grossen Veränderungen, die vor sich gehen, die **alten schriftgemässen und in der Erfahrung bewährten Grundsätze anwenden möge**. . . .

“In bezug auf andere Sachen erfüllen mich mancherlei Bedenken, wenn ich an Beobachtungen denke, die ich mache, an Aussprüche, die ich höre und lese, an Strömungen und Richtungen, die ich wahrnehme, und ich kann es nicht leugnen, dass mir manches Sorgen verursacht, dass ich Veränderungen wahrnehme, erst ganz klein und kaum beachtet, die aber weiter greifen, . . . dass, wenn es so weitergeht, unsere Synode in zehn Jahren ein ziemlich anderes Gesicht tragen wird. Ich denke z. B. an die Hinneigung zur Zentralisation, an das Streben, in der Öffentlichkeit eine Rolle zu spielen, an das Interesse, die Macht und den Einfluss eines grösseren Kirchenkörpers zur Geltung zu bringen, die Grenzen zwischen Geistlichem und Weltlichem, zwischen Kirche und Staat zu fließenden zu machen, an die Meinung, dass die Kirche als Kirche auch die Aufgabe habe, die sozialen Zustände zu bessern, an das Abnehmen der Entschiedenheit in der Lehre, in der kirchlichen Stellung, in der Praxis, an die

Nachahmung von Gebräuchen und Weisen anderer Kirchen, an unionistische Neigungen und an anderes mehr. Dies sind Gefahren in unserer Zeit und in unserm Lande. Und dann nehme ich mir vor, noch sorgfältiger an meinem Teile das Erbe, das uns geworden ist, treu zu hüten, noch entschiedener auf das Rechte hinzuweisen und vor Gefahren zu warnen, noch treuer im Gebet, in der Fürbitte, in der Arbeit, im Studium, im Lehren und im Amte zu werden. 'Es kommt die Nacht, da niemand wirken kann', Jh. 9, 4."

We thank the venerable Doctor for his timely warning. M.

The A. L. Cf. on the Social Problem. — The present strenuous efforts in the direction of a closer union between the several groups of Lutherans in our country have focused the general attention principally on the doctrinal differences separating the Lutheran synods, particularly the one concerning Inspiration. However, we dare not overlook the fact that there are other influences, apparently more or less closely related to the union movement, at work in shaping the future policies of our Lutheran Church. There is, to mention but one, the so-called Social Gospel. The A. L. Cf., in its recent convention in Racine, adopted the following lengthy declaration.

"A. Statement of Principles. 1. The Church of Jesus Christ has the duty to supply guidance to the consciences of men on the pressing moral problems of the age, and at this time particularly on the mutual relations of capital and labor, and their position in present day society.

"The Lutheran Church stands ready to acknowledge its need of self-examination on this and kindred problems; to humbly confess its lack of understanding at times of the crying needs brought about by the rapidly changing complex of our modern economic and social life; and to pledge itself to give renewed attention to these things whereby peace may be brought to the warring elements of labor and capital, and to that great middle class which, technically, belongs to neither of these two categories.

"However, we are of the unflinching conviction that the Church of Jesus Christ has in its hands, in Word and Sacraments, the only remedy that can cure the ills in any sphere of organized society. Hence, we give emphasis to the following points.

"2. Through its emphasis upon the teaching of the Word of God, particularly with respect to sin and grace, the Lutheran Church can give guidance and supply the power needed to remove the tension between capital and labor. It is convinced that the cure is in the Gospel of redemptive forgiveness through Jesus Christ, which, accepted in faith, takes away guilt, makes man a new creature, and enables him to live a new life in love to God and his fellow men.

"3. An adequate answer to the question of right relations between employer and employe must recognize the fundamental necessity of changing self-centered and self-seeking individuals into men

and women who love God, and who love their fellow men as objects with themselves of God's redemptive love in Christ Jesus.

"4. Any emphasis upon the necessity of individual conversion and regeneration becomes one-sided unless it is also emphasized that the reborn individual cannot live his life as a Christian isolated from society but must live it in relation to his fellow men.

"5. The Church should not identify itself with any political party or political pressure group, but should assume an attitude of awareness, with faithful and courageous testimony, judging all social movements in the light of God's Word. It is the duty of the Church to enlighten its membership and awaken their consciences in order that the will of God may be done in the social as well as the private affairs of men.

"B. **Declaration of Attitude.** Therefore Be It Resolved, 1. That we endorse the stand taken by the Oxford Conference on Life and Work, that 'Labor has intrinsic worth and dignity, since it is destined by God for man's welfare. The duty and right of man to work should therefore alike be emphasized. In industrial process, labor should never be considered a mere commodity. In their daily work men should be able to recognize and fulfill a Christian vocation. The workingman . . . is entitled to a living wage, wholesome surroundings and a recognized voice in the decisions which affect his welfare as a worker.' (The Church and the Economic Order.)

"2. That the Conference stands for the right of employe and employer to organize for collective bargaining; the safeguarding of all workers against harmful conditions of labor and occupational injury and disease; insurance (without diminishing personal responsibility) against sickness, accident, want in old age and employment; and the abolition of child labor, by which we understand the work of children under conditions that interfere with their physical development, education, opportunities for recreation, and spiritual growth.

"3. That we stand for release from work at least one day in seven and a reasonable work-week commensurate with the productivity of industry and the physical and spiritual well-being of the laborer, to the end that labor may increasingly share in the cultural, educational, wholesome recreational and religious opportunities available. Conditions of work for women should be regulated so as to safeguard their personal welfare and that of the family and the community.

"4. That we also emphasize that it is the responsibility of the worker and the employer to work for the public good and not to abuse their power by trespassing upon the legitimate rights of others. If they are to achieve permanent blessings, both laborer and employer must build upon a spiritual rather than a materialistic basis, and to this end both stand in need of the continued ministrations of the Christian Church.

"5. That we take steps to arrange for conferences at important

centers on the relation of the Church to social problems, detailed information to be submitted to, and approved by, the Executive Committee."

Dr. Reu, who reports this declaration in the *Kirchl. Zeitschrift* for January, 1939, significantly prefaces it with the remark: "Bei ihrer Tragweite fragt man sich, ob sie den Delegaten früh genug vor der Tagung vorgelegt worden ist, damit sie dieselbe gründlicher prüfen konnten, als das während der Tagung selber der Fall gewesen ist."

A thorough study of the principles evolved and the practical attitude suggested seems imperative. M.

A. L. C. — U. L. C. A. Agreement. — An agreement on Inspiration having now been reached by representatives of the A. L. C. and of the U. L. C. A. (as reported in our April number, p. 154), the other two points on which joint statements had been formulated by the committee as early as 1936, but which the synods did not yet formally adopt, will now be submitted for final action together with the report on "Inspiration and the Holy Scriptures." The text is as follows:

"We recommend that the A. L. C. and the U. L. C. A. adopt the following resolution:

"I. That all persons affiliated with any of the Societies or Organizations designated in the Washington Declaration of the U. L. C. A. as 'Organizations injurious to the Christian faith', should sever their connection with such society or organization and shall be so admonished; and members of our churches not now affiliated with such organizations shall be warned against such affiliation. Especially shall the shepherds of the flock be admonished to refuse adherence and support to such Organizations.

"II. That Pastors and Congregations shall not practice indiscriminate pulpit and altar fellowship with Pastors and churches of other denominations, whereby doctrinal differences are ignored or virtually made matters of indifference. Especially shall no religious fellowship whatsoever be practiced with such individuals and groups as are not basically evangelical."

Taken from *Luth. Standard* for March 25, 1939.

Note the modifiers, the subjunctive mood, and in general the mild, spineless terms employed. Compare with the words of the St. Louis convention of the Missouri Synod: "Strenuous efforts must be made to correct" etc. (Resolution 5. — QS., Oct., 1938, p. 288).

M.

"Errorless." — In the April number we briefly, and without comment, reported the agreement representatives of the A. L. C. and of the U. L. C. A. reached in Pittsburgh on February 13, 1939. For the convenience of our readers we now print in its entirety the "Doctrinal Statement on Inspiration and the Scripture" as adopted in Pittsburgh.

For further details of the negotiations see this magazine for January, 1939, p. 66f.

1. The Bible (that is, the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments) is primarily not a code of doctrines, still less a code of morals, but the history of God's revelation for the salvation of mankind and of man's reaction to it. It preserves for all generations and presents, ever anew, this revelation of God, which culminated and centers in Christ, the Crucified and Risen One. It is itself the Word of God, His permanent revelation, aside from which, until Christ's return in glory, no other is to be expected.

"2. The Bible consists of a number of separate books, written at various times, on various occasions, and for various purposes. Their authors were living, thinking personalities, each endowed by the Creator with an individuality of his own, and each having his peculiar style, his own manner of presentation, even at times using such sources of information as were at hand. Nevertheless by virtue of a unique operation of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3, 16; 2 Pet. 1, 21), by which He supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word (2 Pet. 1, 21; 1 Cor. 2, 12, 13), the separate books of the Bible are related to one another and, **taken together**, constitute a **complete errorless, unbreakable whole, of which Christ is the center** (Jh. 10, 35). They are rightly called the Word of God. **This unique operation of the Holy Spirit upon the writers is named inspiration.** We do not venture to define its mode, or manner, but accept it as a fact.

"3. Believing, therefore, that the Bible came into existence by this **unique cooperation** of the Holy Spirit and the human writers, we accept it (as a whole and in all its parts) as the permanent divine revelation, as the Word of God, the only source, rule, and norm for faith and life, and as the ever fresh and inexhaustible fountain of all comfort, strength, wisdom, and guidance for all mankind." (Under-scorings are mine. M.)

As a whole, this *Statement* (taken from the *Lutheran Witness* for April 18, 1939) is inadequate. There are several expressions to which a Christian will take exception. The phrase "taken together" seems to be an equivalent of the phrase "organic whole" in the A. L. C. *Declaration*, and is open to the same objections. One might object to presenting the act of inspiration as a "cooperation of the Holy Spirit and the human writers". Yet, since the *Statement* itself modifies "cooperation" by the limiting pronoun "this", which refers to the description of the act as given in No. 2, by strict rules of interpretation "cooperation" may not be considered as objectionable if the presentation given in No. 2 is correct, particularly if the statement is taken at face value: "This **unique operation of the Holy Spirit UPON the writers is named inspiration.**"

There are, however, two ideas expressed which call for a closer study. One is contained in the word "errorless".

A simple question will clarify the objection. Why "errorless"?

why not "inerrant"? While the term "inerrant" would predicate of the Scriptures an inherent attribute, "errorless" might serve to state merely a fact which must first be established by due investigation. "Inerrant" makes of this article an *a priori* doctrine of faith, while "errorless" would reduce it to the status of an *a posteriori* historical opinion.

For illustrative material see the item in our April number entitled: "Where does the A. L. C. stand on the doctrine concerning the Scriptures?" (p. 143ff.)

Note that also the A. L. C. *Declaration* avoids the term "inerrant". Where the Pittsburgh agreement now reads "errorless" the A. L. C. *Declaration* has "without . . . error".

In our time and day a clearer confession to the inerrancy of the Scriptures is needed. M.

"Of Which Christ Is the Center." — In another paragraph we pointed out the inadequacy of the term "errorless" in the Pittsburgh agreement. A second expression which calls for closer study is the one given in the heading of this item.

In speaking of the "unique operation of the Holy Spirit, by which He supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word", an operation which is named "inspiration", the books of the Bible are described as "related to one another" and "taken together" as constituting "a complete errorless, unbreakable whole, of which Christ is the center."

When presenting the content of the Bible, it is proper to refer to Christ as the center. The Bible is not interested in all the historical events, nor in the individual doctrines, nor in the sublime specimens of spiritual poetry etc. except in so far as they stand in relation to Christ. The Scriptures in all their parts simply testify of Christ. — When speaking of the proper approach to the Bible, it again must be stressed that Christ is the key. To any one who refuses to use this key the Bible will ever remain a sealed book — in spite of all acumen and learning.

But when speaking of Inspiration, it is misleading to join the two matters. A mention of Christ as the center of the Scriptures in this connection cannot but create the impression as though this fact had some influence on the act of inspiration itself, as though there were degrees of inspiration: the closer to the center, the more reliable the inspiration, and, a necessary corollary, only where the relation of a Biblical statement to the center is discernable are we obliged to accept it as binding. Rather, as a matter of fact, the content of the Bible as such has nothing to do with the act of inspiration. The most insignificant items, as far as their inspiration is concerned, stand exactly on the same level as the most concentrated statements concerning Christ. All Scriptures are given by inspiration, and cannot be broken, every little jot or tittle must be fulfilled.

It has become a favorite subterfuge to quote Luther as providing a gauge for measuring the intensity of inspiration, when he says: **Was Christum treibt**. Luther uses this phrase in his introduction to the Epistle of St. James, and there makes it the criterion for judging the apostolicity and canonicity of any writing purporting to be Scripture: a book not proclaiming Christ may boast the most eminent of the prophets or apostles as its author, it simply dare not be considered as apostolic or canonical. But once the canonicity of a book is established by the fact that it teaches Christ, then all its parts stand on the same level as far as inspiration is concerned.

Here are some of Luther's pertinent sentences. "Dass ich meine Meinung darauf stelle, doch ohne jedermanns Nachteil, **achte ich sie** (die Epistel St. Jakobi, als Ganzes genommen) **für keines Apostels Schrift**; und ist das meine Ursache: . . . Aufs andere, dass sie will Christenleute lehren, und gedenkt nicht einmal in solcher langen Lehre des Leidens, der Auferstehung, des Geistes Christi. . . Darinne stimmen alle rechtschaffene heilige Bücher überein, dass sie allesamt Christum predigen und treiben. **Auch ist das der rechte Prüfestein, alle BÜCHER zu tadeln, ob sie Christum treiben oder nicht.** . . . Was Christum nicht lehrt, das ist noch nicht apostolisch, wenn es gleich St. Petrus oder Paulus lehrete. Wiederum, was Christum predigt, das wäre apostolisch, wenn's gleich Judas, Hannas, Pilatus und Herodes tät" (St. L. XIV, 129).

The embodiment of the phrase "of which Christ is the center" in a statement on Inspiration creates the impression that passages in the canonical books, speaking directly of Christ were given with a greater degree of inspiration, while in others, not directly referring to Christ, inspiration might have faded away to the vanishing point.

This unwarranted confusion of two unrelated matters casts serious reflections on the sincerity of the Pittsburgh agreement, and makes it unacceptable. M.

The Missouri Committee on Lutheran Union on the Pittsburgh Agreement. — In the *Lutheran Witness* for April 18, 1939, the Committee on Lutheran Union of the Missouri Synod published the following official comment on the Pittsburgh agreement.

"The undersigned consider the sentence in the Pittsburgh statement: 'Nevertheless, by virtue of . . . Christ is the center' inadequate. The phrase 'taken together' makes the statement ambiguous because it may be understood in a limiting sense, and the sentence lacks the explicit, unequivocal declaration of the verbal inspiration and of the inerrancy of the Holy Scripture in all its parts which the situation demands. In view of present-day controversies we consider such an unequivocal, definite avowal necessary.

"As to further statements in the A. L. C. and U. L. C. agreement we find the first sentence in No. 1, 'The Bible . . . is primarily not a code of doctrines, still less a code of morals, but the history of God's

revelation', etc., open to misunderstanding. This applies also to the phrase used in No. 3 'unique cooperation of the Holy Spirit and the human writers.'

"Two members of our commission, Drs. Engelder and Arndt, together with President Behnken, met with members of the A. L. C. commission and were informed that the A. L. C. commissioners, by accepting the above statement, did not intend to recede from the position on the doctrine of Inspiration as set forth in the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod and the *Declaration* of the A. L. C. representatives and adopted by the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod. Naturally we must await official declarations from the A. L. C. authorities and shall publish them as soon as they have been received."

So far the pronouncement.

In an "Editorial Opinion" on the same matter it is condemned as a "grievous sin against the Eighth Commandment, which bids us to put the best construction on everything, to question the attitude of the A. L. C. on this matter." Yet the A. L. C. representatives cannot be absolved from gross negligence. They know enough theology to evaluate the terms employed in the agreement, and they are sufficiently informed on the stand of prominent U. L. C. A. leaders concerning Inspiration. It was their plain duty to insist on unequivocal terms, clearly setting forth the truth in a formerly controverted doctrine. They failed to do so but, instead, affixed their signatures to an ambiguous statement. They thereby, in fact, betrayed the truth and sacrificed principle to the desire for union.

M.

Dr. Dell on Inspiration. — In our April number (p. 149) we referred to the editor-in-chief of the *Journal of the A. L. Cf.* as approving of the Rev. Milton's views on Inspiration. The May number of the *Journal* carried another article on the same subject, entitled "Some Thoughts on Inspiration", written by Prof. Hjalmar W. Johnson, Ph. D., of Augustana College, Rock Island. The denial of Verbal Inspiration is more shockingly open in this article than it was in the previous one by the Rev. Milton. While Dr. Dell ordinarily devotes a brief editorial to the various articles in the *Journal*, he in this case extended his remarks to a formidable rebuttal, staunchly upholding the Lutheran doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration. He lifted his criticism out of the "Editorials" and placed it immediately after the offensive article of Dr. Johnson as an "Addendum."

His definition of Inspiration is tersely stated in the following: "*Verbal inspiration* and *inspiration* are the same thing. If the Bible is inspired, it is verbally inspired. If it is not verbally inspired, it is not inspired at all. By verbal inspiration we mean that God not only inspired certain men at certain times, but also moved them to write down the proper words that would preserve His revealed truth to future generations."

He quotes with approval from the *Brief Statement*: "We teach also that the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures is not a so-called 'theological deduction', but that it is taught by direct statements of the Scriptures, 2 Tim. 3, 16; Jh. 10, 35; Rom. 3, 2; 1 Cor. 2, 13."

The objection that inspiration was merely an experience granted to the persons of the holy writers he meets in this way. "If you do not believe that the words of the Bible are inspired, what has become of inspiration? You have then only inspired men, but they are all dead. Is what they wrote reliable? . . . If only men are inspired, and not the words which they wrote, . . . how can we say that we believe the Bible 'as a whole and in all its parts' is the Word of God? The Bible in all its parts is words, nothing but words. If there is no verbal inspiration, the Bible is not inspired. — When we therefore speak of verbal inspiration we are speaking of the **fact of inspiration**, and not of some 'man-made theory' as to the method of inspiration. . . . When a Lutheran believes in the inspiration of **the Bible**, he believes in verbal inspiration. — Why does he believe in inspiration? . . . Because the Holy Spirit has used the words of Scripture to convince him. The Holy Spirit used **the words of Scripture** to convince us that **the words of Scripture** are reliable."

In addition, he refers to an editorial he wrote for the September number of the *Journal* (1938), from which we quote the following paragraph: "If there is so much agreement among us, what is all the argument about? All the argument is about the fact of inspiration, and there is none at all about the method. The difference among us is that while we all say 'The Scriptures are inspired', we do not all seem to mean the same thing. For some seem to wish to reserve to themselves the right to reject some of the Scriptures or some portions of some of the Scriptures as uninspired and unreliable. You can see that this denies the **fact of inspiration** as concerns those rejected portions, and has nothing to do with method."

"When you surrender verbal inspiration, Dr. Dell says, you surrender the Bible." From all of which it appears that his stand on Inspiration is sound, and that worthy Homer must have been nodding when he gave the Rev. Milton a clean bill of health. M.

Not Willing to Give up Membership in the A. L. Cf. — What does membership in the A. L. Cf. mean to the A. L. C.? The *Journal of the A. L. Cf.* in its May, 1939, issue carried an article by Prof. Hjalmar W. Johnson, entitled "Some Thoughts on Inspiration". The editor-in-chief of the *Journal*, Dr. Dell, did not agree with the ideas presented in this article. Why then did he not refuse to admit the article, why did he publish it? Here is his answer:

"Because pressure was brought to bear by his (Dr. Johnson's) brethren."

Pressure was brought to bear! And Dr. Dell had to print what in his heart he condemned as erroneous views, as an actual "surrender

of the Bible." That is what membership in the A. L. Cf. did mean in this case.

Here is a sample of what Dr. Johnson's article contained and what Dr. Dell had to print with a wounded conscience. In Part II, "The human element in Inspiration", the following paragraph occurs:

"The human element appears also with sad realism in the imprecatory psalms. 'Pour out thine indignation upon them and let the fierceness of thine anger overtake them' (Ps. 69, 24). Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth. . . . The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked' (Ps. 58, 6. 10). 'Let his days be few . . . let his children be fatherless and his wife a widow. Let his children be vagabonds and beg. And let them seek their bread out of their desolate places' (Ps. 109, 8. 9. 10). 'Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the rock' (Ps. 137, 9). **In these passages the human, or shall I say inhuman, element is sadly evident."**

Is membership in a body that puts such a strain on a man's conscience worth preserving? And is it a separatistic spirit that makes anyone hesitate to join hands, and that prompts him to raise a voice of warning? Unspiritual opposition of the flesh? M.

Büchertisch.

A Summary of Christian Doctrine, A Popular Presentation of the Teachings of the Bible. By Edward W. A. Koehler, Instructor in Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Ill. Koehler Publishing Co., River Forest, Ill. Bound in cloth, stamped title. 292 pages, with index. Price, \$2.00.

In the Foreword we read that "the author in writing this Summary of Christian Doctrine was guided by no other consideration than this, What does God say in His Word? and has, therefore, documented his statements with pertinent Bible references. . . . The reason for writing this Summary was to provide students with a suitable manual to be used in connection with the Bible as the basis for class discussion of Christian doctrines. Between the Catechism, used in elementary instruction, and the larger works on Dogmatics, used in theological seminaries, we have at present no book which in a concise form and yet in a fairly comprehensive manner systematically treats the doctrines of the Scriptures."

We agree with the author when he voices the hope that this Summary may be of use to pastors, teachers in parish and Sunday schools, and also to the average layman. A book of this kind, where the doctrines are so clearly yet concisely stated with the Scripture proofs and citations from the Lutheran confessions and verbatim

quotations from some dogmaticians, should prove of great value to any diligent student and seeker after the truth of salvation. The doctrines are presented under the usual headings, beginning with the Holy Scriptures and ending with the Last Things, all in eleven parts.

On paging through this volume we find every doctrine, necessary for the Christian to know, fully and adequately presented. There is no quibbling here on such important topics as verbal inspiration, on the time of creation, p. 31, on the *intuitu fidei*, p. 171, and unionism, p. 219. We are, therefore, all the more sorry to read on the question of the local congregation, p. 221, that the "local congregation is the only **organization** (bold ours) of the visible Church recognized in the Scriptures, Matth. 18, 17. 20. Synods and similar organizations, formed by a number of congregations, **exist only by human right** (bold again ours), and do not possess the prerogatives and powers of the local church." The proof of that statement has never yet been adduced from Scripture, and Matth. 18 in no wise covers the case. If the synods are made up of congregations, and the congregations of Christians, then why in heaven's name are not the synods made up of Christians? And if made up of Christians, are they not churches? It will go hard with the author, or any one else, to show that the churches of Galatia or Ephesus were of the same makeup and organization as our local congregations, Lokalgemeinden or Pfarreien.

We are sure that the author did not mean to treat the question on the place of hell in a spirit of levity when he says, p. 276: "As we do not wish to go there, it is of no interest for us to know where it is." Still the effect of this sober statement may be to move the risibles.

On the whole this is a valuable book, all the more so since it is so well gotten up in its outward form of binding, firm, strong paper, very readable type, and especially its comprehensive index, which last makes the work usable. We heartily recommend this Summary.

Z.

Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States. A history of the development of parochial schools and synodical educational policies and programs. By Walter H. Beck, A. M., Th. M., Ed. D., Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska. XIII and 445 pages, 6x9. Cloth, with gold title stamping on front and backbone. Price, \$2.50. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

An interesting and instructive book, which should be in the hands of every pastor, teacher, and school-board member in our circles.

In the Introduction the author laments that "General histories of education in the United States, as also State and Federal educational histories and surveys, contain but fragmentary, unimportant, and very general references, if any, to Lutheran elementary schools.

Consequently the Lutheran elementary-school movement . . . is little known or understood by the student of education in regard both to its extent and to its character and influence" (p. V). Then he announces that "the present study is an endeavor to supply a coordinate and objective study, tracing the parallel historical development of some twenty Lutheran elementary-school systems and the educational policies and programs of all those Lutheran synods which sponsored them at some time during their history. The history of each system is presented in its synodical, State, or national aspects rather than in its congregational and local aspects, which would be a physical impossibility because of the wide scope such a coordinated study must assume" (p. VII).

Concerning the sources the author used he says that they "are chiefly taken from the original records of the *Proceedings* of the many Lutheran synods, written in German, English, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and Slovak, the German language predominating because of the influence of immigration. Congregational records were extensively consulted for details of administration to illustrate policies and practises; synodical and congregational histories were studied for important factors and influences which determined similarities and differences in developments; State, national, and educational histories and treatises were likewise consulted to determine the relationships and attitudes and other public factors which affected the schools in various ways" (p. VII f.).

As a result of this mode of procedure the book, although mainly presenting the history of Lutheran elementary education, also serves as a valuable guide through the general history of the Lutheran Church in America.

The fifteen chapters into which the book is divided lead the reader from colonial times to the most recent developments. There follows a Bibliography covering 16 pages, and a Topical Index covering 13.

From a book replete with interesting material it is difficult to select any particular episode as especially fascinating and instructive. To the undersigned it was a pleasure to relive the exciting times of the "Bennet Law Fight", some fifty years ago, in Wisconsin, vividly portrayed in chap. XI, pp. 225-250.

If we ask, how were the schools organized in the early days, we find the answer on p. 57: "The similarity in the regulations in the existing school codes, whether brief or detailed, show that there was a rather general agreement among Lutherans in the various Colonies and States concerning the conduct, control, and work of the school. . . . In summary therefore the following provisions prevailed: The church council, board of trustees, or school committee had control of the school property, provided for its maintenance, called and examined teachers, determined the subject to be taught and the books to be used, visited and inspected the school, supervised its operation,

and set the salary of the teacher, tuition-fees, length of school-day and term." — And on the efficiency of the system we read: "In an era when education was largely left to chance and individual efforts, to make-shift schools, dame schools, moving schools, and to itinerant teachers with few responsibilities, the Lutheran schools stand out as definitely organized and properly supervised schools, under the direction of well-educated pastors and capable schoolmasters, fostered by synodical organizations and controlled by local church boards" (p. 84).

The parochial schools were commonly known as "German" schools, although from the beginning their Christian character was emphasized. Yet "the general use of this term gave prevalence to the idea that, if the school was not a German school, there was no particular reason for its existence, especially if other educational facilities were available. Therefore, as members of the Church adopted the English language, more and more did their support of the German school languish" (p. 70f). And "the establishment of public schools (in Pennsylvania by the enactment of the public-school law in 1834) brought about a rapid decrease in the number of Lutheran schools" (p. 73f.).

At first the Lutherans of Pennsylvania opposed the establishment of public schools as they "would very much injure the German schools, especially in regard to the religion taught in them, and would very likely destroy them" (p. 63). And they protested "that the compulsory support of non-denominational schools would be an infringement upon religious freedom" (p. 63). Soon, however, the attitude of Lutherans changed. Witness the following resolution adopted by the East Pennsylvania Synod in 1853: "*Resolved*, That we regard the Common School System of Pennsylvania as **now** constituted as the pride and ornament of our State, founded by the sage counsels and enlightened wisdom of clear heads and honest hearts, and any and every effort to engraft upon it features of an obnoxious sectarian character we regard as a stab aimed at its vitality, whose only consummation can be its utter subversion and overthrow" (p. 83).

The loss of interest in the parochial school system is deeply to be deplored. For, as the author rightly says in the conclusion of his book: "To the Lutheran Church in general, particularly to the bodies maintaining the existing systems, the parochial school must ever represent a treasured heritage worthy of preservation and further extension" (p. 416). M.

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† Professor A. F. Zich †

Very early on June 24 our brother in Christ, Professor August F. Zich of our Theological Seminary at Thiensville departed this life, and our Heavenly Father in His inscrutable wisdom and tender mercy translated him suddenly from the Church militant into the Church triumphant.

August Friedrich Zich was the son of Christian and Ernestine Krueger Zich. He was born on the 12th day of June, 1868, near Stargard, Pomerania, in Germany and reached the age of 71 years and 12 days.

As a young boy he came with his parents to this country and the family settled on a farm near Waterloo, Wis. Having been baptized in early infancy he attended the Christian day-school at Waterloo. After due preparation he was confirmed by Pastor J. J. Meyer. Having spent a short time in high school, he soon was enrolled in our Northwestern College at Watertown and was graduated in 1890. He continued his studies in the Theological Seminary of our synod, which at that time was located in Milwaukee, and finished its prescribed course in June, 1893.

He entered the ministry in the congregation near Sutton, Minnesota, where he was ordained and installed on his 25th birthday, on June 12, 1893. On September 6 of the same year he was joined in marriage to Caroline Lau. This union was blessed with eight children, one of whom, a daughter, Dorothy, preceded her father in death in 1926 at the age of twelve years.

His second charge was the congregation at Sleepy Eye, Minn. For fourteen years, from 1897 till 1911, he wrought here in the Lord's vineyard. Then he became pastor of St. Paul's Church

at Green Bay, Wis., where he labored for twenty years. Lastly he was called to a professorship in our Theological Seminary, where he held the chair of Isagogics, Old Testament Exegesis, Church History and Homiletics for the last eight years of his life, from 1931 to 1939.

From 1909 to the time of his removal to Green Bay the deceased was president of the old Minnesota Synod. In 1928 he became president of the North Wisconsin District of our Joint Synod, a position he held till he accepted the call to the Seminary. In the same year 1928 he was made a member of the editorial staff of our English Church paper, the *Northwestern Lutheran*. In all these positions and others not mentioned, to which the confidence of his fellow-Christians had called him, he served his synod in all humility and faithfulness according to the measure of the valuable gifts with which our God had endowed him.

In this hour of our bereavement we magnify the Lord our God and raise our hearts in gratitude to Him that He has preserved our brother in His word and faith and has granted him a blessed end through Jesus Christ our Savior. For ourselves we pray:

“My God, for Jesus’ sake I pray,
Thy peace may bless my dying day.”
Amen.

The funeral services were held on June 28 at 2 o’clock P. M. at Grace Church in Milwaukee, of which the deceased was a member. The pastor, Rev. W. Sauer, preached the English sermon on Matth. 25, 21. Prof. J. Meyer gave a German address on Rom. 3, 23. 24. Dr. L. Fuerbringer, President of Concordia Theological Seminary of St. Louis, spoke for the faculty there, Pastor H. C. Wehrs for the South Wisconsin District of our sister synod of Missouri, and Pastor F. Schumann for the Fox River Valley Conference, a member of which Professor Zich had been while pastor at Green Bay. The undersigned read the obituary and a telegram sent by President K. Schweppe on behalf of the faculty of Dr. Martin Luther College at New Ulm, Minn. Hymns by the congregation, by the male choir of Grace Church and a chorus of forty students and graduates of the seminary were a fitting frame for the addresses.

Interment was made at Graceland Cemetery. Pastor Sauer read the commitment service. Six candidates of this year's class were the pallbearers.

* * * *

To put a true estimate on a man and his life work so soon after his departure is by no means an easy task, the more so when he like the deceased has held such an important position in the church which is concerned with the training and molding of the future pastors of our synod. The undersigned is fully conscious of the difficulty and shall endeavor to avoid the pitfall of a shallow and perfunctory eulogy. He hopes the few remarks he will make shall redound to the glory of God in whose service the deceased was privileged to stand for forty-six years.

The colleague. The members of the faculty of our Theological Seminary feel most keenly the loss of a valued coworker. Not only did Professor Zich his allotted work conscientiously and to the best of his ability, but his counsel in the faculty meetings, given after careful consideration of the question under discussion, bore the stamp of a character ripened in the school of experience. He was seldom, if ever, rash in his judgment, but rather slow and hesitant. His advice was almost invariably for moderation.

The theologian, scholar and educator. Our sainted colleague was a student by inclination. While in the practical ministry he did not neglect his theology. His sermons were the fruit of a careful searching of his texts according to the Greek or Hebrew original. But besides being a good theologian, he possessed a remarkable knowledge of literature in general — more than the average college-bred man. He did not merely know but enjoyed the works of the poets and writers of all ages. He appreciated the ancient literature of the classic periods of Greece and Rome. He was familiar with the outstanding literary works of Germany and was at home in the literature of England and America. This naturally broadened his vision, kept him in contact with all that is human and thus helped him to understand men and their problems, gave him "Menschenkenntnis", knowledge of human nature. This knowledge, deepened by his long pastoral practice, stood him in good stead in his dealings with the students in private or in the class room, which he did not enter without painstaking preparation for his lectures.

The editor. Professor Zich's many articles in the *Quartalschrift* and the *Northwestern Lutheran* are well known and speak for themselves. He could, and did, wield his pen with telling effect in the interest of Lutheran conservatism. He warned consistently against the dangers which beset our Lutheran Zion in our day from within and without. An inveterate foe of all sham he fought unyieldingly against the "Grossmannssucht", the tendency in the Church of trying to gain recognition in this world by the pressure of mere numbers and to entangle the Church with the political and social affairs of the community and the state. With a fine clarity of vision he exposed all attempts at uniting the different church bodies in order to be able to present to the outside world an imposing array of numbers on our membership rolls with the purpose of influencing civic bodies, legislatures or other functionaries of city or state government and thus making the power of the Church felt in the affairs of the world. He emphasized that the only power of the Church is the Gospel; that it is doctrinal unity, full adherence to every word that the Lord has spoken and strict separation from everything contrary to the Word of God — may the error seem ever so insignificant — which alone enables the Church to accomplish its God-appointed task, *viz.*, the salvation of sinners.

The Christian gentleman. The deceased walked in true humility before his God. He was deeply conscious of the fact that he lived only by the grace of God, that his Christianity and all he might have accomplished in the service of the Church were the unmerited gifts of a gracious God. This conviction which kept him aware of his own shortcomings made him an agreeable companion to others whom he treated with the consideration due a fellow-sojourner on the way to heaven. Although not polished according to the standards of polite society, perhaps too forgetful of what is called good manners, too neglectful in external matters he was, nevertheless, a Christian gentleman in the real sense of the word, who met his fellow-man with a tact born of a true conception of the value of an immortal soul in the eyes of God.

M. Lehninger.

The Christian in His Human Relations

NOTE: This essay of our departed colleague, Prof. Aug. F. Zich, was read by him to the convention of the Nebraska District Delegate Conference at Plymouth, Nebr., June 15-19. That was only a few days before the Lord called him out of this world on June 24. The essay had been intended by Prof. Zich also to be his contribution to the present issue of this magazine. It is herewith submitted to our readers as it was found among his papers. M.

In his famous and world-moving reformatory writing entitled: "On the Freedom of a Christian," of 1520, Martin Luther sets up two principles on the basis of Scripture. The first one is that a Christian is a free master over all things, and subject to no one; the second is that a Christian is a willing servant of all, and subject to everybody. He solves this seeming contradiction in his masterly way by explaining that every Christian has a two-fold nature: spiritual and physical. As a living soul the Christian is a spiritual person, a new man; but in his flesh and blood, in his corporeal make-up, he is a carnal, old man, living in externalities. Luther quotes 1 Cor. 9, 19, where St. Paul declares that he is free from all men, and 1 Pet. 2, 9, where the Christians are called "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people", to prove the spiritual side of a Christian. It is through faith, and faith alone, in the promises of the Gospel that a Christian has become a new man. Here Luther refers to Mark 16, 16, also to Rom. 10, 10: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness", and finally to Eph. 5, 30: "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones". According to Luther's famous syllogism: "Christ is a Lord of all things — what belongs to Christ is mine — hence I also am a Lord over all things", it is our faith in the Lord God our Savior that fixes our relation to God. To quote Luther once more: "The Gospel comes with the divine promise: Wouldst thou fulfill all commandments, look here, believe on Christ, in whom I promise and assure you all grace, righteousness, peace and freedom — 'glaubst du, so hast du; glaubst du nicht, so hast du nicht.'" Christian liberty

then is in Luther's words: "That is just that faith which effects not that we are idle or do evil, but that we are in need of no work to attain piety and salvation." It is the spiritual estate of the Christian.

But the Christian is not only a redeemed soul through his faith, he is still on earth and among his fellowmen in his bodily wants and duties. Of this Luther also speaks: "Although the Christian through faith has all things, yet he remains in this bodily life on earth and must rule his own body, and be in touch with people." Here is where the Christian is given his opportunity to do good works in the service of his fellow-men. Such good works would not be necessary were we altogether spiritual and leading a life of perfect faith only, which we shall never do perfectly in this life till judgment day. Such good works in the service of his fellow-men are the natural fruit of the Christian's faith in Christ. John 1, 12. Matth. 7, 17. 18: "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, etc." These good works are also necessary for the discipline of our flesh which resists the spirit. Rom. 6, 22: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." 1 Cor. 9, 27: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."

The driving force in the Christian for these good works is the love he bears toward God and man. John 13, 34: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another". John 15, 12; Rom. 13, 8: "Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." 1 Cor. 13, 4; 1 John 4, 11. 12. In Luther's words: "A Christian is free from all laws and, out of pure choice in his liberty, he freely does everything that he does, not in self-seeking or to gain salvation, for he is already filled and saved. Thus there flows from faith love and desire for God, and from that love a free, willing, cheerful life to serve his neighbor for nothing." As Christ served us, so are we ready and willing to serve our fellow-men, and towards this must all our good works be directed. John 13, 14; Phil. 2, 1-4. For such service Christ has set us an example when he said,

Matth. 20, 25-28: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Phil. 2, 5. 6. This free and willing service of the Christian, sacrificing himself for others, is his thankoffering to God for His service in saving men.

From the foregoing words of Scripture and expressions of Luther's let us summarize the principles governing the relation of the Christian to his fellow-beings, broadly outlined. First, then, it is faith that takes hold of all the heavenly gifts won by Christ and promised to us in His Gospel. Thus we share all that is Christ's, and thus are made free from all other masters, be they sin or death or hell or men or angels — we are free men subject to no one. This faith, in the second place, remains not inactive, but is richly productive of good works according to the will of God and following the example of God who does no evil. Then, thirdly, these good works are needful for the old Adam only, not to win heaven, but to exercise our faith and to curb the flesh resisting the Spirit. Were we altogether spiritual there would be no need of Christ's precept and example to overcome our lusts for the ungodly things of the flesh. That struggle between the Spirit and our flesh goes on until death. The driving force behind our good works, in the fourth place, is love. This is the love begotten from God's love, who loved us first, and is the deep affection a Christian feels for His Savior. This love is to be turned toward our fellow-men, our neighbors, for thus we fulfill the law of God. And finally, all our good works are to be the unselfish service rendered to our neighbors, after Christ's example. It is here where our love must help us to overcome our inborn selfishness, greed, hatred, ingratitude, arrogant self-will, that hinder us from unselfish service. And so a Christian of his own free will makes himself subject to everyone who needs his help. Thus he is to live among his fellow-men, loving all, doing good to all, and injustice to none. And all this stems from faith, so that as Luther well says: "The Christian through faith ascends to God, from God he descends again through love to men, and yet always remains in God." If we keep these principles in mind it will be easier for us to understand our duties toward our fellow-men in

whatever relation to them we may be placed. All these relations must be ruled by the cardinal law of love.*)

I

The Christian's Relations to His Fellow-Christians in the Church

In Luther's words, "The soul of man has nothing else, neither in heaven nor on earth, wherein it lives piously, freely and as a Christian, but the holy Gospel. John 11, 25; John 14, 6; Matth. 4, 4. The soul can do without all things except the Word of God, and without that Word of God it can be profited by nothing." Ps. 119, 33; Ps. 107, 20: "He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions." That the Word of God be proclaimed, and its knowledge kept alive, is therefore the first concern of every Christian. He needs it not only for himself as the bread of life, without which he cannot live, but he is also concerned about bringing the Gospel of salvation to others. Ever mindful of the Lord's final injunction and commission to His disciples, Matth. 28, 19, he knows it to be his duty to help wherever he can to preach the Gospel. He is filled with the zeal of Paul, Rom. 1, 11: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established."

*) From a note found among Prof. Zich's papers, a note which must have been a perfectly clear reminder to himself but which for an outsider remains somewhat indefinite, it seems that in this connection he wished to append a quotation from Luther's treatise as found in the *N. L. C. News Bulletin* for April 7, 1939. Here is the text:

"Both expressions are true: Good and devout works never at any time make a good and devout man, but a good religious man does good and religious works; sinful works never make a sinful man, but a sinful man does sinful works. Thus on every account the person must first be good and religious in advance of good works. Good works follow and proceed from a religious and good person. It is as Christ said: *An evil tree bears no good fruit, a good tree bears no evil fruit*, Mt. 7, 18. Now it is evident that the fruits do not bear the tree, nor do the trees grow on the fruits, but rather the trees bear the fruits and the fruits grow on the trees. And since the trees must precede the fruits, and since the fruits do not make the trees good or evil, but the trees make the fruits, so also must a man be personally religious or sinful in advance, before he does good or evil works. We see the same thing in all kinds of handicrafts. A good or bad house does not make a good or bad carpenter, but a good

Now the rule that it is not good for man to be alone applies also to the gathering together of Christians into what we call the church. For his own safety and edification in godliness the Christian is not to stand alone, but to join himself to his fellow-believers in the same Gospel. He needs the fellowship of his Christian brethren to cheer him on his way and to help others in their troubles and difficulties. Besides, he knows that he cannot alone so effectively preach the Word of God to a dying world as in company with his fellow-Christians. It is a labor of love for him to help those who believe in Christ, as well as seeing to it that the Gospel be proclaimed to unbelievers. Thus he, of his own free will and gladly, joins his brother-Christians in the flesh to form an outward gathering of Christians, which we also call a church. He gladly and willingly undertakes the duties and bears the burdens that such an association imposes on him. The greatest and best good work, flowing from faith, that he can do, is to help spread the good news of salvation. That must take precedence over everything else.

Nor does it matter whatever make-up, constitution, or mode of procedure is prescribed for such an outward gathering of Christians, so long as a well considered order be observed. For such outward observance of any order, freely adopted, or evolved

or bad carpenter makes a good or bad house. No work makes a workman of the same quality as the work, but as the workman so is his work. Thus also are a man's (religious) works to be understood: his works are good or sinful just according as it stands with him in faith or unbelief, and not the other way round, in such a way that he is good or believing according as his kind of works. Just as works do not make a man a believer, so also they do not make him religious. But just as faith makes one religious, so also does it produce good works. Thus, therefore, works make no one religious. A man must be religious before he can do the works. And it is evident as a consequence, that only faith coming from pure grace through Christ and His Word, is sufficient to make a person religious and save him, and that no works and no commandments are necessary to a Christian for his salvation. He is free from all commandments. Quite voluntarily and without recompense, he does all that he does without thereby seeking his own advantage or salvation. He already has sufficient, and he is already saved through his faith and the grace of God. What is done is done just to please God thereby."

So far the words of Luther which Prof. Zich wished to quote in this connection.

M.

by the exigencies of time and place, our Lord has given us no instructions, except that there be an order, and that there be but one master — the Christ. Whether this gathering of Christians constitute themselves a congregation tied to a certain locality with agreed limits, whether these congregations combine into a synod or have the presbyterial or episcopal system, the Lord has left to our Christian liberty. It has never been proved from Scripture that the Lord ordained the form of the 'Lokalgemeinde' or local congregation as we have it today. This was simply a matter of choice and historical development. But whatever the arrangement of this Christian gathering may be, it must always be remembered that the Christ is the master of the house in His capacity as the head of the communion of saints. No man is to be lord and master within His church. Matth. 23, 10; "Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant."

But although no order or constitution of these outward gatherings of Christians be prescribed, yet is our Lord and Master a God of order. 1 Cor. 14, 33: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." Thus He has enjoined, 1 Cor. 14, 40: "Let all things be done decently and in order." The purpose of the church, for which it was called into being and is being protected by the Lord, to preach the Gospel, is frustrated when there is no well considered and well established order of proceedings within the church. In the communion of saints all believers are priests and kings, having but one Master, Christ. But in the outward form of that church, in the association of the hearers of the Word, there must be some systematic rules defining the duties, the persons for specified activities, the leaders that are to preside and direct these activities of the gathering in an orderly manner. Thus we read in the letter to the Hebrews, 13: 7: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God", and in verse 17: "Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls." The Greek term for rule here is *ἡγέομαι*, meaning to lead, guide, and is spoken of the public preachers and teachers of the Word. In Rom. 12, 8: "He that ruleth with diligence", and in 1 Tim. 5, 17: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they

who labor in the word and doctrine", St. Paul employs the Greek term *πρόσθημι*, which Luther correctly renders "vorstehen", to preside, direct, rule. All these passages seem to refer to the men who were set over the flock and who labored to teach, and direct its life. The need for such order, therefore, was felt in apostolic times and under the conditions of society then prevailing. These forms flow naturally out of the Gospel, which has the power to create them according to the needs of the flock as given by the country and the times in which they live. All organizations and forms of order agreeable to the Gospel, and ruled by it for its own propagation, are acceptable to the Lord of the church.

Such order, to be God-pleasing, must be for the furtherance of the Gospel in arranging the different offices and duties for the calling of men by the flock to serve the work of the Lord in the church. The erecting of such offices, the adoption of the rules governing their conduct, all the more or less complicated machinery for the outward running of the necessary labor within the church, should be arrived at through the free and untrammelled choice of the members of the flock, in open meeting, under public discussion, and, wherever possible, by the majority vote of the gathering. In the same manner should the calling of the officers, the pastors for public preaching and teaching, the presiding elders, the treasurers, secretaries, etc., be accomplished. But when such an order of rule in the church, affecting its outward activities, is freely adopted by any gathering of Christians for the purpose of teaching the Word, then it should be expected of every member of that flock to submit willingly and freely to these adopted rules and ordinances, as being not of men, although through men, but as from God, always providing that these freely adopted orders do not contravene the Word of God itself, for we are to obey God rather than men. The impelling motive, again, is here the love that the Christian bears towards men, his fellow-Christians and his neighbors. We can change these orders, rules, constitutions, as we see fit, always, of course, guided by the Word of God, to adjust our work to the changing conditions in which we find ourselves. But as long as these rules and institutions are in force the Christian will freely and gladly accept them, not because he must, or grudgingly, but because he wants to, moved as he is by love for the brethren.

This applies to the local congregation, as we call it. The freely adopted constitution, the duly elected officials, the well prescribed and duly limited duties of these officials, the order of service — all these are to be looked upon by each member of the flock as binding upon him through brotherly love. As there are diversities of gifts, 1 Cor. 12, 4, each and every member of the body of Christ, 1 Cor. 12, 27, is to freely and gladly serve this body according to the gifts received from the Lord. The preachers, pastors, bishops, helpers, and whatever else is required to do the Lord's work, are themselves a gracious gift of God to the church, as is so plainly set forth in 1 Cor. 12, 28-31, and in Eph. 4, 11. Hence it would be a disobedience to the will of God, if the church would not avail itself of these gifts from God through an orderly placing of them in their respective offices, as it would be a denial of the Lord's will, if one would refuse to be employed in such duties of the church and in the service of the Lord, hiding rather his light under a bushel and burying his talent in a napkin.

This also applies to that larger organization of the church in its outward form, the synod. This larger body is nothing more nor less than a gathering of Christians. It constitutes itself by the free agreement of Christians gathered in local congregations and their members. It is formed for the one purpose to spread abroad the Gospel more efficiently and more widely, watch over its purity, and for brotherly cooperation in the prescribed work of the Lord. The Synod has but one reason for being, just as the local congregation and the church as a whole — to preach the Gospel of salvation. It is, therefore, idle to speculate and argue on the question whether the synod is a church in the sense of the Scriptures, or whether the local congregation, so-called, is the only form of outward church organization instituted of God, and therefore of greater authority and power than the synod. If the synod, consisting of Christians, freely gathered and organized to preach the Gospel, is not a church, then what in heaven's name is it? There may be functions given to the church, exercised in different ways by the synod than by the local congregation, but in essence they are the same. It is the duty of the local congregation to preach the Gospel by the printed word as well as by mouth, to train future pastors and missionaries, to place these in their various fields, but, we ask, how many local congregations

are there that can thus fully obey Christ's command to "teach all nations"? To obey this command more fully we unite ourselves into a synod body, and thus such a gathering of Christians into a synod is a God-pleasing work.

The motive behind joining a local congregation must be the love of the Christian for the Word of God, and the willingness to serve his brethren in that church. The Christian joins of his own free will. The same motive must be the impelling force for any congregation or sets of congregations to band together in a synod. The constitution and by-laws, the avowed purposes, the resolutions of synod to put these objectives into effect — all these the members of synod, the individual Christian as well as the local flock, must consider binding upon them, as long as all these are according to the Word of God and are freely arrived at. The member of synod is to feel himself bound not by compulsion, as of man-made laws, but out of love for the brotherhood, which needs his aid and cooperation. In this light are the budgets adopted by synod, after full and free discussion, by majority vote, to be regarded by the members of synod. They are to do all that in them lies to raise their full share in contributions to this budget. It is here, if anywhere, that the selfishness, niggardliness of the old Adam, hiding behind fault-finding and grumbling, is to be firmly met by the spirit of love in the doing of good works. Again, in the function assigned to synod of watching over the purity of doctrine and saintliness of pure lives, it must be the part of the synod member to respect such rules and regulations as have been freely adopted by synod, so as not to interfere with the clearly prescribed duties of the duly elected officials, or to raise the cry of popery over some disciplinary measure taken by these officials in the line of duty. It is, of course, true of all of us, that we have a decidedly legalistic trend of heart and mind, also that we are all tempted by the authority conferred upon us, to exercise this power autocratically or harshly. Popery arose in just that way, that the priest or bishop was eager to rule the church, and we do well to guard against it in ourselves and in others. But where the spirit of love rules the hearts, that spirit that asks only to serve others and not to overmaster his brethren of the faith, the member of synod, be he president or district visitor, board member or committee man, will so govern his words and actions that they serve the one Lord

and Master to the interest of His great work of saving souls. An ideal state, you say, and not to be perfectly attained on earth by sinful men, yet an ideal to be set firmly before all our eyes, and for the reaching of which goal we may well implore the help of our Master, assured of His strength through the Spirit.

It is in this way, when we all cooperate out of love to our Savior and the redeemed by His blood, in a spirit of helpfulness and mutual trust in one another, always ready and willing to serve, that the body of Christ, the church of God on earth, is to be built up and edified in true peace and harmony until He come and the harvest is done.

II

The Christian's Relation in the Family and Home

The family is the substructure or foundation upon which all society is built. When the family goes to pieces, when homes are disrupted, society soon disintegrates. That is a lesson that even the godless bolsheviks of Russia had to learn. As the basis of all human society, the possibility of men to live together in an orderly fashion, the Lord God has founded the family even in the garden of Eden. The family is older than the fall of man. In His Word God has also laid down the rules how the family is to be planted, constituted, ruled and held together. After the fall of man this gift of God's grace has also suffered corruption through sin. Polygamy, adultery, fornication, divorce have played havoc with family life, as it is this day.

Amidst all this decay of family life, as shown especially in broken homes, the Christian family and home is to stand as a light in a sin-darkened world. In the Christian home the unbelieving world is to see the power of the Gospel that rules the family members. For the Christian home is to be a house where God dwells in His Word, where He rules and is obeyed, where He blesses and is acknowledged as the Giver of all good things. It is to be the school where all the Christian virtues, flowing out of the faith in God's Word, are to be exercised, such as love, patience, forbearance, goodness and truth. Out of the Christian home are to come the children which are to carry on, not only as good citizens in the state, but what is even more important, as the future members of the church. The family circle of the Christian home is to be

ruled and held together by that love which is the fruit of faith in Christ Jesus.

And first, in the marriage relation of husband and wife. Marriage instituted of God, if it is to be God-pleasing, should be founded on the Word of God. How the marriage relation between one man and one woman is to be contracted in every case has been shown in Scripture in such stories as that of Isaac and Rebecca, Gen. 24, the marriage at Cana, John 2. Detailed instructions on the relations between husband and wife may be found in the seventh chapter of first Corinthians. We are here told that marriage is useful to avoid fornication, that husband and wife are to render due benevolence to one another, as neither in marriage has the sole power over his or her body. This refers especially to the use of each other's body in the sexual relations where one is not to defraud the other, or deny himself to his spouse. The general rule seems to be: "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." 1 Cor. 7, 20. Marriage is no sacrament, it is entered into through the free choice of the contracting parties, but, once married, neither of the two is to seek freedom from these bonds.

Thus the Christian husband or wife will not seek divorce, although living together may be difficult and entail much grief or trouble. 1 Cor. 7, 28. It is here where the Christian is given his best opportunity to exercise patience, longsuffering, kindness, forgiveness, truth, uprightness in dealing with each other, bearing one another's burdens — all the forms of true love which is the fruit of faith. It is understood that this love is not built upon personal attractions alone, or even upon carnal lust, which the unbelieving world is wont to call love and which has no lasting quality. The love called for here is that love which is founded upon the love of God, flowing from the trust and faith that in this marital relation also it is God who has brought the two together for their own good, so that the trials incident upon marriage may be for the exercise of this faith. It is a love that overcomes all rebuffs and evils in obedience to the Lord's will.

In this regard also the true happiness and success of marriage depends upon a strict observance and obedience to the will of God as revealed in His Word. Now the Lord has set His face against divorce, Matth. 5, 32; 1 Cor. 7, 10. Until death do them part is

the will of the Lord. In keeping the marriage bed undefiled, in the purity of their lives, 1 Cor. 6, 15, the Christians in their marriage relations are to bear witness to the godless world of license and debauchery. It is a sad commentary on the weakness of Christian morality when divorces become ever more common among the members of our congregations, for there it is shown that we have not acted as the salt of the earth, but have rather become infected by the corruption all about us.

There is but one remedy against this corruption, and that is that we as Christians show the world that we are bound by the Word of God. God has well ordered the marriage relation. The husband is to be the head of the wife, Gen. 3, 16, but the wife is not to be the slave of the husband, for both are in the Lord, who alone is the Master of all. "But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." 1 Cor. 11, 3. Husband and wife are bound together by the bonds of faith and love, and both are bound to the head of all believers in faith and love to Christ. This hallows the marital bonds. "Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord." 1 Cor. 11, 11. That is why St. Paul exhorts Christian people thus: "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God", and then goes on to apply this cardinal rule of the Christian's service by addressing married people, Eph. 5, 21-33; Col. 3, 18, 19; 1 Pet. 3, 1-7.

Submission to the Lord will produce as a natural result in the believing Christian submission to others for the free service of his fellow-men in whatever relation he may be placed. It is a submission born out of faith in Christ, who loved us first and who humbled Himself to serve us, so that we also might freely and gladly serve one another. There is no compulsion about it except the compelling force of love. Out of that love the husband will not abuse his position from God as the head of the wife by tyrannical or harsh treatment of the weaker vessel, but give honor to the wife as "being heirs together of the grace of life", 1 Pet. 3, 7. Out of that same love the wife will gladly submit herself unto her own husband, "as it is fit in the Lord." 1 Pet. 3, 18. Thus she will emulate the example of the holy women, such as Sarah who "obeyed Abraham, calling him lord." 1 Pet. 3, 6.

There should be no place for the modern paganism of women's right and emancipation of women from the order that God has prescribed so plainly. The havoc that these ungodly notions have wrought within the marriage estate and the home is incalculable, it is so great. Where, on the other hand, husband and wife live in the firm trust in each other, always exercising the love kindled at the throne of grace for each other, there, in part at least, may be realized that ideal of marriage set forth by St. Paul in Eph. 5, 23-33. Here marriage is glorified as the likeness of the relation between Christ and the church, where the love of the bridegroom Christ for His bride the church is beautifully portrayed as the great example and the moving incentive to love between those in the purely human marriage relation.

In such a home, where true Christian love reigns, all the other members of the household will cheerfully submit themselves to the laws of God set down for their guidance. Blessed is the home that is gifted of God with children. For the propagation of the human family wedlock was instituted of God. Gen. 1, 28 and ch. 3, 16. All the pains and sorrows of childbirth, all the worries and cares of raising children, are cheerfully borne by Christian parents who remember the Word of the Lord: "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." Ps. 127, 3. There children are not a burden, but a joy. There the responsibilities incident upon the care of the offspring are willingly assumed. There race suicide and the use of contraceptives is regarded, as it should be, as a most wicked practice.

But the responsibilities of Christian parents do not end with providing them with meat and drink, house and home, clothing and shoes. Children are to be trained in the way they should go. They must be trained to obedience, albeit not in harshness, Col. 3, 21. But that obedience must be a cheerful, willing obedience from the heart. That cannot be attained by mere schooling in the arts and sciences of this life which leave the heart and the emotions untouched. The child must be trained in the belief that he is a child of God, bought by the blood of Jesus, an heir of His kingdom. It is training in the Word of God that is needed. This was enjoined upon the people of God as we read in Deut. 6, 7, and Ps. 78, 4: "We will not hide them from their children, show-

ing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength and his wonderful works that he hath done."

This is the first and most important duty of the parents to their children, to train them in the Word of the Lord by precept and example. Eph. 6, 4. Where father and mother are not apt to teach, or where they cannot find time, there is nothing left but to send these gifts from God to a school where all training and education is conducted in the fear of the Lord, as set forth in His Word, and for the building up of their faith in the Lord their Savior; for only thus can truly strong Christian character be built in the child, and only thus can a truly Christian world outlook be wrought in them. The Christian home must ever remain the nursery and training ground of our future members of the body of Christ, the church. There is nothing that can really take its place. To undertake this task conscientiously and gladly in serving our children unto godliness our Christian love for our children must prompt us.

In this way children will grow up in the Christian home that obey their parents, as Scripture demands of them. They will honor, serve and obey their fathers and mothers out of respect and love for them and in the fear of the Lord. For before their eyes is held the example of the child Jesus who, after revealing His glory in the temple, "went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them". Luke 2, 51. They will give heed to the admonitions of the Lord: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." Eph. 6, 1-3; Col. 3, 20. According to the gifts that they have received from God, and in their station, they will serve and thankfully provide in their turn for father and mother, and not cast these off in their old age to the tender mercies of strangers or the state. 1 Cor. 7, 17.

This applies also to other members of the household, such as servants. When St. Paul exhorts these, Eph. 6, 5-8, to be obedient to their masters, he is speaking to slaves, whom he does not incite to run away, but to stay and do their duty "with fear and trembling, in the singleness of your heart as unto Christ." Thus the phrase 'in the Lord' bases all obedience, service and labor for others on the faith in the Lord, toward whom out of love and gratitude all this service is to be directed. Slavery as an institution has disappeared, but the relation between master and man still

persists. In our complex economical state, where the direct contact between master and man is often lacking, in the hurly burly of the machine age, in the rush and pressure of the jobs to be done, it still would make for greater peace in the labor situation, avoid strikes etc., if our workers would remember the golden words of St. Paul: "Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." Eph. 6, 6. And if the masters would regard the workers in the spirit of Christ, heeding the admonition: "And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven: neither is there respect of person with him", Eph. 6, 9, how many labor troubles might be avoided. For in Christ is neither master nor man, but all are of equal value to Him. Thus would the Christian worker do his job, not with an eye to the clock or forever grumbling at his pay, stalling whenever he can, shirking when he is unwatched, but freely and gladly giving full service with an eye to his Lord. The general rule here too must be as laid down in 1 Pet. 3, 8-14.

III

The Christian's Relation in the State or Commonwealth

Due to the common disregard of the Word of God, the truth about government enunciated in Romans chapter thirteen: "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God", has been almost forgotten. The modern theory that Scripture did not, nor could not, take into account the conditions of the modern civilization, and hence is not binding for all time, is but a cloak for the sinful disobedience to God's ordinances in the hearts of unbelieving men. Great confusion and harm has come to society through this unbelief. The selfishness, the greed, the lust for power, hinders men from accepting God's Word in this particular also.

But so is it not to be with the believing Christian. He knows, or should know, that "every soul is to be subject unto the higher powers." For the sake of God, then, is the Christian subject to his government. He does not hold with the sectarian view that only republics and democracies are God-pleasing forms of government. He accepts the teaching of his Lord, that he is to submit "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to

the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him." 1 Pet. 2, 13. 14. Whether his government be a monarchy or a democracy, a totalitarian rule of the fascist and nazi type, whether the ruler be a king, or a president, or a dictator, the Christian knows that he is to obey them that have the rule over him. Nor does it affect his obedience how his government came to be, whether by revolution or a constitution accepted by all citizens, by the greedy grasp of a strong tyrant or the free election at the polls, if that government has the power over him he accepts it and obeys it. There is but one exception that the Christian makes, and that is when his rulers ask him to do what God has forbidden, or forbid what God has bidden him to do; then he must obey God rather than men. Acts 5, 29. In other respects he obeys the wicked and tyrannical rulers as well as the mild and just.

The Christian accepts his government, be it good or bad, as a gift from God, knowing full well that any government, no matter how unjustly it may rule, is better than no government at all — anarchy. For this purpose did our Lord institute government that it punish the evil-doers and protect the law-abiding. Government is to do justice, but no discerning person expects full and complete justice under any government here on earth. The rulers and judges are often weak and sinful men, but God has set them over us and has given them the sword, so that crime and rascality may not run riot over the land. Evil-doers will not respect the laws of God unless enforced by the sword given by God into the hands of the authorities. The rulers may be rascals themselves, but, as Luther says, God rules the wicked rascals by another set of rascals.

It is not the fear of punishment, however, that is to drive the Christian to obey all government, for the Christian is not an evil-doer. The Christian submits himself to all authority for conscience sake, as St. Paul has it in Rom. 13, 5. The motives behind our willing obedience to that government that has power over us is well described in 1 Pet. 2, 15.16: "For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." The Christian looks upon the obedience that he renders to all rulers as a service to Christ

in good works. He well knows that he is living among godless men in an evil generation, which knows not good deeds from faith in the Christ; he knows that if he joined with the evil-doers the name and cause of Christ would be blasphemed; he finally is well aware that this world watches the Christian narrowly to see whether his professions of faith, love, humility are a sham when put to the test. He proves his Christian faith to the world by his good works performed out of love in the service of his fellow-men. So, although a king and priest before God, he makes himself a servant in this also, that he of his own free will, voluntarily, cheerfully and gladly, subjects himself to the laws of his government. Exhortations to do that are found in other Scripture passages, besides those quoted, as in Tit. 3, 1, and many more.

In this too he follows the example of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who also, being Lord of all, humbled himself, Phil. 2, 5, so that He submitted to the jurisdiction and authority of the weak and unjust judge, Pontius Pilate. Acknowledging his authority as from God He said: "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." John 19, 11. Illuminating on this point is also the matter of the tribute money demanded of Jesus as recorded in Matth. 17, 24. Peter freely admits that his Master was in the habit of paying tribute money, and our Lord, after declaring that "the children are free," yet makes provision for Peter to find the money to pay this tribute, "lest we should offend them." Matth. 17, 25-27. So do the free children of God pay their taxes willingly and gladly. That willingness and ready payment of taxes is naturally a hateful thing to the old Adam in the Christian, but here also the good works are from faith in spite of our sinful flesh. The old Adam in us always objects to our free and willing service in pure unselfishness, because he is by nature selfish, greedy, cruel, and domineering.

With love it is also gratitude to God that moves a Christian to do his duty by the government. All law and order for the protection of the good citizen and for the punishment of the wicked is a gracious gift of God to society safeguarding its life, property and virtue. That must prompt us to come to the aid of our government whenever we are called to serve it. As all government has its power from God, the Christian may well serve as an

officer in that government. Religious enthusiasts, like the old time Anabaptists, have denied this. But the well-instructed Christian has learned from the clear Word of God that he may without offense to his conscience serve as a judge or a juryman, as governor or president, as an assessor or sheriff, provided always, that he has been called to such duties in the orderly way.

The supreme sacrifice asked by government of a citizen is to take up arms for his country. It is according to Scripture that Luther answered the question of whether a Christian may be a soldier or not in the affirmative. Nor does his obedience to the call to arms depend upon his own private judgment on the justice of the war. The responsibility for that rests with his government and not with him, for if the decision of taking up arms in a war were left to each and every citizen's decision no country could defend itself. Properly constituted governments have the sword as a gift from God, and that power has been delegated to the rulers whether they have come to office by a free election or by the arrogance of tyrannical assumption of power, or by the inherited thrones of kings. The only question for the Christian is: Has the government power over him, does he live under its jurisdiction and if so, nothing is left him but to obey for conscience's sake. Biblical examples and precepts are not wanting. Abraham went to war to rescue his nephew Lot. Gen. 14, 14. The wars of the Israelites against the heathen tribes of Canaan were ordered by God to extirpate these wicked peoples for their abominable sins against the Lord. John the Baptist did not repulse the soldiers that came to him in the wilderness of the Jordan for baptism, Luke 3, 14, but exhorts them: "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages." Our Lord deals with soldiers, as in the case of the centurion who came to Him for help. Matth. 8, 9. He protects the servant of the high priest from harm against Peter. Luke 22, 51. And St. Paul is content under the watch of soldiers; far from inciting them to mutiny, he brings the Gospel to them. Acts 28, 16; Phil. 1, 11.

War is indeed a chastisement of God upon mankind, which He sends or permits for His own ends. Greed and selfishness, the lust for rule and power, are the constant causes of war. These shall not cease until the end of days, as our Lord has foretold. Matth. 24, 6. Love of country and patriotism are by no means

forbidden to the Christian; and these involve fighting for one's country. Truly, the Christian is a child of peace and a peacemaker, Matth. 5, 9, he prays for peace in his days and for his country, but as a lover of peace he is ready to go to war against those who disturb the peace of the state. 1 Tim. 2, 2. The Christian is a peace-lover, but no pacifist in the accepted sense of the word today. Pacifism is an outgrowth of religious enthusiasm (Schwärmerei) inherent in the Calvinistic sects that have left the firm ground of the Scriptures to follow their own reason. These are thus led into endless confusion so that they apply the fifth commandment to war and will not recognize the power of the sword placed into the hands of government. Pacifists try to influence especially the young against war, persuade them that war is not Christian, that it is murder, that they have a right to refuse obedience to the state when they are called to the colors. Quite frequently this pacifism is but a cloak to hide their fanatical zeal for the establishment of a visible kingdom of God, for which a Christian may even take up arms in the support of a moralistic world rule over other powers. In this sense these pacifists are the real war mongers. This is quite consistent with their Calvinistic history and traditions.

But if the Christian is a good citizen in that he is ever ready to render cheerful and willing obedience to the government that has the rule over him, he nevertheless does all in his power to keep these two ordinances of God, the state and the church, apart. History has emphatically taught that nothing but misery can result from mixing the state and the church. A church ruled by the state is not free to worship God according to His will, as witness the Established Church of England and the troubles of the German state church. A state ruled by the church results in tyranny and intolerance, as witness the Catholic countries. The Christian will, therefore, exert his influence to keep the church free from entanglement with the state. He is guided here not by experience only, but by the clear teachings of the Word of God, as laid down in Matth. 22, 21: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Also Acts, 5, 29. Of his own free will and choice the free Christian will do his duty to the commonwealth as a good citizen in upholding the rule and constitution of his government; he will exercise

the franchise at the polls where that is granted to him; he will hold office when duly elected or appointed; he will join a posse to pursue and catch the criminal when so ordered, serve as soldier or hangman as his civic duty may dictate.

In conclusion, may we sum up the duties of a free Christian in all his relations with his fellowmen in the present world as proceeding from his faith in that Lord and Christ who has freed him from all domination by men only to use his freedom willingly and unselfishly for the service of men. A Christian is not driven to his duties toward his neighbors by the lash of the law, or the necessities of his environments, but he is moved by the love of Christ in him toward those whom Christ out of love has also redeemed with His blood. The good works proceeding from faith are for the Christian a preaching of the Gospel unto salvation for all men. He remembers that it is his purpose in life, "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of the crooked and perverse nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Phil. 2, 15. Thus in all his relationships with men he heeds the admonition of his Lord, 1 Pet. 2, 12. 15. 20. 21; ch. 3, 8-11; and ch. 4, 15. In all his relations with men the Christian shows forth his faith through love, patience, understanding, modesty, humility, peacefulness, cheerfulness in service. The strength and power so to serve is given him from God who upholds his free spirit. 2 Pet. 1, 5-11. In this way the true Christian makes this a better world for all men. To this help us, dear Father in heaven.

A. F. Zich.

Do the Recent Declarations of the A. L. C. Warrant the Establishment of Fraternal Relations?

An essay, read on June 27, 1939, before the Pastoral Conference of the Southeastern Wisconsin District of the Ev. Luth. Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States

For three years the Missouri Synod, through a committee, carried on negotiations with the American Lutheran Church, also represented by a committee. The ultimate aim of these negotiations was, according to the Waverly resolutions of the A. L. C., the "establishing of pulpit and altar fellowship," according to the Cleveland resolutions of the Missouri Synod, the "effecting of true unity on the basis of the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions."

The outcome of the negotiations was that the A. L. C. representatives declared their willingness to accept the *Brief Statement* of the doctrinal position of the Missouri Synod, however with certain reservations. They drew up a *Declaration* of their own for the purpose of supplementing and re-emphasizing the *Brief Statement*. The Missouri commissioners, in turn, accepted the *Declaration*. — A double statement of doctrine naturally does not make for clarity.

To make the situation still more complicated, the Missouri Synod in its St. Louis convention of 1938 accepted both documents as a sufficient doctrinal basis for church fellowship, but added some provisions as recommended by its Committee No. 16. The Sandusky convention of the A. L. C., in October, 1938, also accepted the two afore-mentioned documents, but ignored the recommendations of the Missouri Committee No. 16, and, instead, added some provisions of its own.

The question now confronting us of the Wisconsin Synod, who did not take part in the deliberations, is briefly this: Do the recent declarations of the A. L. C. warrant the establishment of fraternal relations? Although we were not consulted when the *Brief Statement* was drawn up by our sister synod of Missouri, we tacitly accepted it when it was published. Can we also accept the A. L. C. *Declaration*, *sine* the St. Louis provisions, *cum* the Sandusky stipulations? For this is the form in which the document is presented to the church by its authors.

In order not to engage in wild guessing, it will be well to investigate what standards the Word of God lays down to govern the establishment of fraternal relations with any individual or church body. Since this is not to be an academic discussion of an academic question, but a practical attempt at the solution of a practical problem, illustrative material will be taken only as it is found in connection with the recent negotiations.

I

Four simple demands of Scripture may be registered.

1. Members of the church must all speak the same thing. 1 Cor. 1, 10; Rom. 15, 6.
2. The speaking of the church is restricted to the Word of God. 1 Pet. 4, 11; Dt. 4, 2.
3. Even a slight deviation from this norm is extremely dangerous. Gal. 5, 9; 2 Tim. 2, 17.
4. Any one who deviates in his teaching from the Word of God is a false prophet and must be avoided. Tit. 3, 10; Rom. 16, 17; Mt. 7, 15.

1.

Members of the church must all speak the same thing.

This is stated by St. Paul in just so many words in 1 Cor. 1, 10: Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that *ye all speak the same thing*, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Christians as Christians are perfectly joined together in the same mind. They are spirit born of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not produce different, conflicting types of children for God. He may dispense diversities of gifts, but He is ever the same Spirit, and will ever in regeneration instill one and the same mind into the new-born children of God.

We need not now enlarge on this sameness of mind among Christians. Suffice it to mention briefly that believers are agreed on sin, its nature, its origin, its effects, etc. Believers are also agreed on grace, its absolute spontaneity, sufficiency, means, fruits, etc. There may be different degrees of understanding, differences

in the intensity of the experience, yet as far as the essence is concerned all believers are perfectly agreed.

Since Christians are by the operation of the Holy Spirit perfectly joined together in one mind, it is but natural that they all speak the same thing. The same thing, Paul says, not necessarily in the same manner. The teacher will present the same thing in an entirely different way from the historian, the historian from the systematizer, the systematizer from the poet, the poet from the orator, and so on. Possibilities for variation are almost unlimited. Yet the truth spoken must be ever one and the same thing. The approach of an historian, *e. g.*, dare not lead to the speaking of a different thing from that spoken by a teacher.

The result must be as Paul states it in Rom. 15, 6: That ye may with one mind and one mouth *glorify God*, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That the A. L. C. did not speak the same thing with us in the past requires no lengthy demonstration. The difference was recognized by both them and us; witness the mutual aloofness observed for years by both church bodies.

But does not the A. L. C. speak the same thing with us now? Let us assume that the A. L. C. representatives spoke exactly as the convention would have spoken which received their report; and let us assume that the Sandusky convention in its resolutions correctly reflected the mind of the whole synod; let us assume that they imagine to have accepted the Missouri *Brief Statement* wholeheartedly: why then their own *Declaration* at all, in which they purport to supplement and re-emphasize the *Brief Statement*? If the *Brief Statement* requires supplementing and re-emphasis, is this not sufficient evidence that according to the inmost conviction of the A. I. C. it does not speak the same thing the A. L. C. men have in mind, at least not properly and completely? If they intend to speak the same thing, why did they fail in their Sandusky resolutions to take cognizance at all of the important recommendations of Committee No. 16, which Missouri by resolution made a part of the union instrument? Or, if they were in hearty agreement with the *Brief Statement*, why do they insist that the document must be viewed in the light of their own *Declaration*?

Do they speak the same thing with us? They do not even speak the same thing among themselves. They admit that within

their own ranks there are differences of opinion concerning the church, concerning a preliminary resurrection of martyrs, etc. Now, differences of opinion may happen through weakness and it may require years of patient endeavor to eliminate them. But that dare not prevent a church body from making a clear confession on the mooted question: stating the truth and condemning the error. Yet what does the A. L. C. do? In their *Declaration* they expressly ask tolerance for divergent ideas, and in their Sandusky resolutions they state it as their principle "that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines."

This is the undisguised Open-Question theory of the former Iowa Synod. But where a spirit of non-committal is rampant there will be no speaking of the same thing.

2.

The speaking of the church is restricted to the Word of God. 1 Pet. 4, 11; Dt. 4, 2.

We are not concerned now with what we may speak as citizens, as business men, as scientists, and the like, provided we do not contradict any statement of the Scriptures. We are concerned with what we may speak, confess, teach in so far as we are members of the church. Here the words of Peter apply: If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (1 Pet. 4, 11).

The church has a very definite field assigned to it where it may, yea, must speak. Peter calls it the oracles of God. Whatever God has revealed, that the church must proclaim. Paul claimed as much for himself when he declared to the elders of Ephesus that he had not shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God (Acts 20, 27).

The revelations of God, that is the ground we must cover in our speaking, that is also the ground to which we must absolutely limit ourselves. Moses says: Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you (Dt. 4, 2).

There are certain things in the Scriptures concerning which

I may have my private opinion, concerning which a discussion among Christians may be not only highly profitable but edifying, but concerning which I may not speak as with authority; nor may any one else do so.

Let me illustrate by pointing to three different things that fall under this head. There are what may be called theological problems. For instance, in 1 Sam. 17, 58, we read: And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite. This conversation took place after David had slain Goliath, yes after he had been in the employ of Saul for some time as harpist. Saul knew David, knew his family: what then is the meaning of his peculiar question referred to above? Since Scripture does not supply an answer, we dare not speak as though we knew the answer.

There are, furthermore, many passages that contain what is technically known as a *crux interpretum*. The difficulty of interpretation may be of different kinds. As an illustration of one kind we cite Eph. 4, 12: *For (pros)* the perfecting of the saints, *for (eis)* the work of the ministry, *for (eis)* the edifying of the body of Christ. Are the three *for's* coordinate, are any subordinate, and if subordinate, then how? It will be highly beneficial to study, to discuss this passage, but no one may speak with authority.

As a third case in point I would mention text-critical questions. Let me refer to Jh. 1, 13: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. As the text reads in our English and German Bibles, and we may add in the Latin Vulgate and in the Greek Testament as handed down from the early church, it speaks of the regeneration of believers; but there are indications that the original reading had the singular, thus referring to the birth of Christ.

To this category of questions on which each one may have his own opinion but on which no one dare presume to speak with divine authority, do not belong the so-called non-fundamental articles. Just as the principle under discussion demands of the church to remain silent on matters not clearly revealed in the Scriptures, just so it demands of the church to speak in clear and unmistakable terms on non-fundamental doctrines.

The distinction made by our teachers between fundamental and non-fundamental articles of faith takes notice of the fact that some articles are absolutely indispensable for faith, ignorance or a denial of them will not only vitiate faith but make it utterly impossible; while others are not so essential, faith may continue to thrive though the believer be ignorant of their existence or even in his ignorance deny their validity. A wide range of opinion is possible concerning the classification of certain doctrines. We refer to the fact that even the doctrine of the Lord's Supper has been counted among the non-fundamentals.

Though the articles of faith vary greatly in point of importance for the generation and preservation of faith, in another respect they stand absolutely on the same level: they are all given by divine revelation. Even the least among the non-fundamentals is not man-made, either in whole or in part. Nor is there any difference in the degree of clearness. The non-fundamentals are revealed as clearly as are the fundamentals. To be sure, all articles of faith are mysteries, and it may so happen that concerning some non-fundamental our curiosity has more questions to ask than concerning a fundamental, but that does not infringe on their clarity. What God wants us to know about them He has clearly set forth in the Scriptures.

The church, then, must speak in clear tones about the non-fundamentals, must proclaim them as the oracles of God.

With regard to some non-fundamentals the *Declaration* of the A. L. C. representatives merely asks the Missouri Synod to declare that divergent views "are not disruptive of church fellowship." The A. L. C. convention at Sandusky used stronger language: "We are firmly convinced that it is *neither necessary nor possible* to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines."

Now it is a sad fact, established by experience, that full agreement in all non-fundamentals has never been attained, and probably never will be attained; but that is due to human weakness, particularly to the stubbornness of our Old Adam, to which we fail to offer the proper resistance. If then with blushing face, with a broken spirit and a contrite heart the above quoted words were spoken and forgiveness implored from a merciful God, they would be in place and acceptable. But the Sandusky resolution does not read like a confession.

As a statement of principle, as a doctrinal basis for church fellowship these words are blasphemous.

The same applies to the other term: "necessary." In case a person is not sufficiently instructed to be familiar with all non-fundamentals he may be a member in good standing of the confessing church in spite of his ignorance. But when a teacher in a church body, or any other member, demands it as his privilege to hold views not in agreement with God's clear revelation, be the doctrine ever so non-fundamental, a granting of his petition would be tantamount to rejecting God's Word.

As the oracles of God!

How to deal with erring brethren will be taken up later.

3.

Even a slight deviation from the norm is extremely dangerous.

Some one may say that the differences still separating us from the A. L. C. are insignificant. There was a time when serious differences existed, chiefly concerning God's eternal election of grace and concerning conversion.

While the A. L. C. does not yet seem ready to condemn as un-Scriptural the phrase *intuitu fidei*, at least it admits that it is extra-Biblical, the Scriptures *do not say* that election took place *in view of persevering faith*, and it counsels against the use of "this terminology" for the "sake of clarity." And concerning the matter itself the *Declaration* clearly states "that the fact that *we have come to faith . . . is due . . . solely and alone to this eternal election.*"

We are very happy to acknowledge this progress and heartily thank God for this signal victory of the Gospel truth.

While formerly there were those among our opponents who declared that the conversion of a sinner was due not only to the grace of God but in a certain sense also to the conduct of the sinner, the A. L. C. *Declaration* now emphatically denies that there is any contributing factor, either effective or preparatory, either positive or negative, in man, and declares that God "creatively" produces faith.

Again we rejoice.

Compared with this progress the remaining differences seem of rather minor importance.

To name some.

We find the expression: "He (God) purposes to justify those *who have come to faith*." While according to the Scriptures justification in the blood of Christ, purchased in His death and proclaimed in His resurrection, is offered to a sinner through the Gospel and received by him through faith, the A. L. C. Declaration apparently makes of faith a prerequisite of justification, a condition to be met or an attitude of the heart to be first produced before God will justify. Yet, because the *Declaration* does not expressly define faith as a condition to be met by the sinner, and because the phrase may be understood in the sense in which we frequently say that God justifies a believer, why make so much of it?

The *Declaration* says concerning the church that in "defining its *essence*" it is "permissible to speak of a *visible* side of the church", meaning thereby the "use of the means of grace."

The distinction made by Dr. Walther in one of his colloquies with representatives of the Iowa Synod that "essential" (*wesentlich*) might be understood as denoting: 1) a part of the essence, and 2) something without which a thing cannot exist, does not apply. In the latter sense he was ready to allow the statement that the use of the means of grace is *essential* to the church; but not in the former. As stated, this distinction, and everything Dr. Walther said on the basis of it, does not seem applicable, and all deductions drawn from Dr. Walther's words are misleading. The *Declaration* does not use the term "essential", but clearly speaks of "*defining the essence*", thereby hopelessly eliminating the second of Dr. Walther's assumptions. — Yet some may think, What harm can a little logical confusion do?

In passing I mention also statements of the *Declaration* concerning Inspiration: The Bible as "an organic whole" is "without . . . error."

Paul emphatically declares that errors, however small, are dangerous things to trifle with. He says: A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, Gal. 5, 9.

The error into which the Galatians were falling was a false attitude over against circumcision, the assumption that by submitting to circumcision and observing the Sabbath and other ceremonies they could make their justification more secure. They

stressed the Gospel, they confessed redemption by Christ, but they wanted to supplement the Gospel by some exercise of their own. Paul warned them of the far reaching consequences of this "little" aberration. Before long they will lose the Gospel, in principle they have denied it already.

Paul, in another place, compares error to gangrene. Their word will eat as doth a canker (*gangraina*), 2 Tim. 2, 17.

We may observe this process going on before our very eyes. Till about ten years ago the Ohio Synod was a staunch supporter of verbal Inspiration. During the time of their amalgamation with the Iowa Synod there raged a heated controversy about a proposed confession to the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Ohio favored, Iowa opposed the insertion of "inerrant" before "Word of God" in the constitution. It was omitted in the confessional paragraph and relegated to an appendix.

What happened since? The A. L. C. entered into a confederation with other Lutheran bodies, called the American Lutheran Conference. A person but needs to mention the fact that the Augustana Synod is a member in good standing of the A. L. Cf. Ohio men, although still confessing the inerrancy of the Scriptures, accept this strange bed-fellowship. Look at a few leading men. Dr. Lenski is dead, but we do well to remember his championing of plenary verbal inspiration. So is Dr. Hein dead, but his bold testimony on inspiration before the second Lutheran World Convention may continue to live. — Dr. Reu's stand on inspiration I do not venture to define. At the Eisenach Lutheran Convention he clearly spoke of the three constituent factors of inspiration: the *impulsus ad scribendum*, the *suggestio rerum*, and the *suggestio verborum*. Then followed his anniversary article in the *Kirchl. Zeitschrift*, in which the Scriptures were declared to be *de facto* errorless, although *inerrancy* could not be vindicated for them even on the basis of Jh. 10, 35, and 2 Tim. 3, 16. In recent days, more satisfactory statements have been published by Dr. Reu.*)—Dr. Dell, editor-in-chief of the theological *Journal*

*) Dr. Reu has since, in the July number of the *Kirchl. Zeitschrift*, published the first instalment of his lecture delivered at the Luther Academy at Dubuque, 1938, on the theme: "What is Scripture and how can we become certain of its divine origin?" — The position he takes in this lecture will be carefully studied and reported later. M.

of the A. L. Cf., in a recent editorial emphatically identified "inspiration" and "*verbal* inspiration". — The stand of the three Ohio men here mentioned seems to be the exponent of the stand generally taken by the former Ohio Synod.

On the other hand, consider what the A. L. C. in its *Declaration* dares to offer to the church! No more than "without contradiction and error", and this via the expression "organic whole". No wonder they are ready to declare themselves in agreement with the U. L. C. A. on a statement that the books of the Bible "when taken together" are "errorless". And they accept the significant addition: "of which Christ is the center"; as though proximity to, or remoteness from, the center made any difference in the degree of inspiration.

Moreover, recently there appeared in the *Journal* of the A. L. Cf. an article in which the author speaks not only of the "human" but of an "inhuman" element in Scripture, in the imprecatory Psalms. Yet Dr. Dell admitted the article, though under protest.

Obsta principiis! What would happen to us if we entered into fellowship with a body tolerating such views on inspiration? Remember the leaven and the canker, against which Paul warns.

4.

Our next point requires no elaboration, nor do we need to enlarge, for our present purpose, on the distinction between a heretic and a schismatic.

Any one who deviates in his teaching from the Word of God is a false prophet and must be avoided.

Tit. 3, 10: A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject.

Rom. 16, 17: Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Mt. 7, 15: Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

II.

Another question of a more general nature would concern the procedure we are to follow over against such as err in some point.

That will depend, to a great extent, on the manner in which they err. Roughly speaking, there are two classes of errorists.

1. Such as err deliberately.
2. Such as err out of weakness.

1.

a) We omit from our present discussion all those that reject the Word of God entirely, or against their better information teach contrary to any of its clear doctrines.

b) There are others who err, or connive at error for ulterior motives, avowedly with the best of intentions.

Their manner, and the proper attitude to take over against them, may be clearly seen from the Epistle to the Galatians. We sum up under four heads.

(1) Throughout the Epistle to the Galatians Paul speaks of men who were trying to persuade the Christians of these congregations to submit to circumcision. He also mentions the observance of days and months and seasons and years. Since he informs us that the Galatians had turned from his Gospel "so soon", and since he wrote to them without delay when he received the information of their threatening defection, the remark about the observance of years can hardly have been intended in the sense that they had actually observed a sabbatical year, but that they have accepted this custom in principle. By beginning to observe the Sabbath days and the New Moons they have given evidence that they adopted the entire Mosaic calendar, including the sabbatical and great jubile years, as binding.

Occasionally Paul calls all this a being in bondage under the elements of this world. Opinions may differ as to the precise meaning of elements: they may refer to the forms of our natural life, *e. g.*, the categories of space and time; or they may aim at the basic principle of practical philosophy, which in all systems is salvation by character, in some form or other. What Paul means to say is clear. The men that troubled the Galatians tried to persuade them that by following certain rules of conduct in temporal matters eternal spiritual values could be produced.

The entire part of the epistle, consisting of chapters 3 and 4, is devoted to a presentation of the truth that justification comes as a free gift from God to be received by a sinner in faith without

any merit or worthiness on his part; while in the third part, chapters 5 and 6, Paul stresses the truth that the sanctification of a Christian is not an independent development, but is entirely the fruit of the spirit, of faith which has apprehended justification by grace.

From the fact that Paul saw fit to develop these truths it is easy to infer what the error was that the trouble makers were injecting into the hearts of the Galatians: it was, in short, this that the Gospel must be supplemented by the observance of certain requirements of the Mosaic law. They did not reject the Gospel of salvation through Christ entirely, no, they claimed to accept it; only they meant to improve on it, to cast it into a better mold. And this they called a "second Gospel" (chap. 1, 6. 7), or a more "perfect" form of the Gospel (chap. 3, 3).

(2) This was an error for which there was no excuse. The entire matter had been thoroughly discussed at the Council in Jerusalem. There it had been shown to the satisfaction of the entire church, and not even the opponents had been able any longer to raise the slightest objection, that justification is free, and that sanctification is necessary, a necessary fruit of justification and a necessary exercise of the Christian. Any one teaching otherwise was branded as a trouble maker subverting the souls of the Christians. Acts 15.

There was no excuse for the errorists that troubled the Galatians, and no Eighth Commandment could shield them against the public censure by Paul.

The same holds true today. The questions on which the Missouri Synod and the A. L. C. tried to reach an agreement were not new issues. They had been discussed in the church, from the time of our fathers down, from every possible angle and the truth of the Scripture had been clearly set forth. The terms used both to confess the truth and to cover an error, their direct meaning and their implications are the common property of all. Nobody publicly using any of them may complain of being misunderstood or of being falsely charged with error when his words are taken at the current rate of exchange.

(3) In the conclusion of his epistle to the Galatians Paul analyses the motives of the trouble makers. We hold our breath, for does not Paul thereby make himself guilty of a gross violation

of Mt. 18, and a flagrant transgression of the Eighth Commandment? Is he not judging hearts and making public their secret sins? He charges the seducers of the Galatians that they only desire to make a fair show in the flesh (chap. 6, 12), that they adjust their preaching of the Gospel for the purpose of avoiding persecution for the cross of Christ (chap. 6, 12). He charges that in spite of their display of concern for the Law of Moses they are not at all interested in the Law. When they preach circumcision they are merely seeking personal glory (chap. 6, 13).

Paul is not violating any ethical principle, nor is he usurping judgment which God has reserved for Himself. Since the Council at Jerusalem no one who presumed to be a leader in the church could plead ignorance in the matter of circumcision — a common Christian might be weak in knowledge, but in one who aspired to leadership ignorance would have been criminal. Since the Judaizing teachers in Galatia were familiar with the Jerusalem resolutions, their defiant preaching of the condemned error admitted of no other interpretation than the one given by Paul.

Nor may the Eighth Commandment be invoked today in a plea for the A. L. C. representatives. Their refusal to accept without reservation the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod can not be laid to ignorance. The Synodical Conference did not hide its light under a bushel. Think of the controversy in the late seventies which led to a disruption in the early eighties; think of the articles in the theological magazines during the following years; think of the large intersynodical free conferences beginning in spring, 1903 (Watertown); think of the ten years of discussions by the Intersynodical Committee, culminating in the *Chicago Theses*; think of the three years of negotiation with the Missouri Committee on Lutheran Union: if leading theologians of the A. L. C. after all this cannot produce anything but an indefinite, ambiguous *Declaration* they certainly cannot plead ignorance, and it is no undue judging of hearts if any one looks for a different explanation of their attitude.

They do not reject the *Brief Statement*, but they supplement it, offering their *Declaration* as an improvement. Why? What are their motives? I do not intend to analyse them in detail. I merely wish to show that the question is legitimate, and the A. L. C. representatives owe the church an explanation.

One of the dangerous, unevangelical motives behind the entire present union movement does not require keen psychological and theological analysis to detect. It is announced quite openly.

The Savannah resolutions of the U. L. C. A. speaking of the "desire for Lutheran church unity" have the following to say: "3. It is still further strengthened when we consider the present state of our nation. The forces of evil in the social order are not only deeply entrenched, but highly organized. Crime has become a business. Hostility to Christ and His Gospel has created organizations for anti-Christian and anti-religious propaganda. Not only are there among us Societies for the Promotion of Atheism, but in every great center of population there are organized and active groups which openly proclaim their purpose to secure, in our land, the establishment of a godless State, based upon an utterly materialistic theory of life. These things should warn us that this is a time when Christian men and Christian groups should draw together, if only for the resistance of evils which, if unchecked and unopposed, will involve our whole social fabric in destruction." (Q. S. for Jan., 1935, p. 64.)

The Waverly resolutions of the A. L. C. declare a "better understanding between the divided Lutheran forces of this country" to be "*imperative to meet* the increasing dangers of atheism, modernism, and secularism."

The theory here raises its head, unblushingly, that the testimony of the Gospel alone is not sufficient to overcome atheism, modernism, and secularism in their new garb, the added momentum of united forces, externally united, is necessary for the victory. It is insinuated that the differences separating Lutheran bodies are of comparatively little weight, they might be overcome by an "understanding". Minimizing doctrinal differences and ascribing to mere numbers the spiritual power to overcome atheism, etc., is a motive in the union movement fraught with the gravest dangers.

From the two sets of resolutions it is not difficult to trace the faulty evaluation to its source. The root appears to be the deception of what is commonly known as "social gospel". We Lutherans must come to an understanding concerning our differences and must establish the closest possible relationship in order to save the social order, lest our whole social fabric be in-

volved in destruction. This is on a level with what Paul calls making a show in the flesh and avoiding the hardships of persecution.

We may follow this line of thought a little farther. It is the function of civil government to remedy social evils. Behind the movement for Lutheran solidarity lurks the utterly un-Lutheran motive voiced by a speaker recently as follows: "When we go into the halls of our legislatures, our courts, and our administrative branches of government, we find very few Lutherans. — This is entirely due to the lack of solidarity of our people. . . . We have not been able to make those in authority conscious of our strength." (Q. S. Apr., 1939, p. 152f.)

Similar sentiments may be met not infrequently.

(4) Following the example of Paul in his dealings with the Judaizing trouble makers in Galatia we must take a decided stand against any and all deliberate errorists. We may assume that the Judaizers in Galatia, humanly speaking, were quite sincere. They were concerned about the proper respect due to the Word of God as contained in the law of Moses. To them it seemed that the Gospel, as commonly preached, set aside the Law to a certain extent, and they wished to protect it in its proper place. They feared that the setting aside of the Law as a factor in justification might lead to carelessness in sanctification. Their intentions, humanly speaking, were good. But Paul does not give them credit for it.

The intentions of the A. L. C. representatives may in a certain sense be good. When they, *e. g.*, say that God "purposes to justify those who have come to faith", their aim may be to safeguard the Scriptural doctrine of subjective justification. When they say that the books of the Bible "constitute an organic whole" etc., their aim may be to ward off an atomistic theory of the Bible. But that does not excuse them for the ambiguity of their statements.

Just as little as Paul is ready to give the Judaizers credit for their good intentions is he ready to compromise with them; in unmistakable terms, at times with apparently undue harshness he condemns them. He says they "trouble" the Galatians, they "pervert" the Gospel of Christ, chap. 1, 7, and then continues with the well-known curse so offensive to unionistic ears, v. 8 and

9. In chap. 3, 1, he asks the Galatians who "bewitched" them. Although Paul does not wish to be understood literally, yet his word contains, in an undertone, a reference to the satanic power inherent in false doctrine.

In the passage chap. 5, 7-12, we find expressions of "troubling" and "hindering"; we find a negative statement that the errorists' "persuasion" is not of Christ; there is the threat of impending judgment. Lastly there is the wish expressed that instead of circumcision the errorists might practice excision. To preach castration as a way to righteousness would be a no more pernicious error than to preach circumcision, but it would at once brand them as devotees of the heathen goddess Cybele, whose priests were eunuchs.

Our age is addicted to soft-pedaling, we are afraid to call a spade a spade. A resolute rejection of error is in place. We do not wish to be misunderstood as though we advocated rudeness, as though we regarded firmness and rudeness as interchangeable terms, or considered rudeness as a characteristic of orthodoxy: rather we recommend a strict observance of the old *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*, with the emphasis on the second half.

2.

There are others who have not had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the controversies raging in the Lutheran church of our country, they may also lack the training to see through the intricacies of an error, especially when couched in ambiguous terms. Of such a type were the members of the Galatian congregations. They were troubled, they were hindered in their course. They erred, but they erred in ignorance.

a) We might dismiss this group from our present discussions. The recent declarations emanating from the A. L. C. were drawn up by men who would rightly resent it as an insult if we treated them as weak brethren erring out of ignorance. If we here speak of the proper mode of meeting errorists that err out of weakness, it is by way of contrast. The treatment due a weak brother is entirely out of place when dealing with responsible leaders.

b) In the Epistle to the Galatians Paul is dealing with weak brethren, trying to win them back from the error of their way.

He is not dealing directly with the trouble makers. He refers to them always in the third person, chap. 1, 7: there be some that trouble you; chap. 5, 10: he that troubleth you . . . whosoever he be; or simply "they", chap. 5, 12; 6, 12, 13. Paul is advising the troubled consciences of the Galatians. How does he do it? Observe the following.

(1) He throughout the epistle emphasizes the fact that the bonds of brotherhood have not yet been dissolved. He addresses them as churches, as groups of Christians, as people who have not yet forfeited that title of honor before God, chap. 1, 2.

He is very profuse in the use of the word "brethren" as a title of endearment. At least nine times he so addresses them, especially in those sections where he makes direct appeals to their heart. It would well repay any one's time and effort to investigate the individual passages and study the emotions surging in Paul's heart, as they find expression in his use of the term "brethren" and the emotions he thereby tries to arouse in the hearts of his readers. The passages, as I hurriedly gathered them, are: chap. 1, 11; 3, 15; 4, 12, 28, 31; 5, 11, 13; 6, 1, 18. They may err, they may have faltered in running the course of truth, they may be extremely foolish, yes, in their folly they may even look upon Paul as their enemy: he still considers them his brethren, as one with him in the faith, although that relation is gravely endangered. They do not put up the proper resistance to their seducers, chap. 1, 6; 5, 7, 10.

He goes a step beyond this. He takes occasion to assure them that he has confidence in their Christian sanity. He may be at a loss how to present the truth to them most effectively, chap. 4, 20, yet he does not doubt the basic soundness of their mind, chap. 5, 10, and hopes that they will walk (the original has the future tense, expressing the firm conviction that his words will find the proper response with them) according to the rule that in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, chap. 6, 15, 16.

(2) Yet, though he calls them brethren and actually regards them as such, he does not minimize the danger, nor does he mince words regarding their own guilt in the matter. Although they are being troubled by the false teachers, who with enticing words are beclouding the issue and keeping them in a fog, yet the Galatians

themselves are to blame that they yielded to the error. The call they received from Christ should have been a sufficient light to them, and Paul cannot understand that they were so soon removed from Him that called them, chap. 1, 6, to accept a perverted Gospel, chap. 1, 7. He does not hesitate to call them foolish, lacking in the spiritual judgment which might properly be expected of them. To impress upon them how deeply he is puzzled by their failure, he repeats the harsh word, adding an adverb of degree: *so* foolish, chap. 3, 1. 4. He tells them that Christ, who has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, has brought justification, the blessing of Abraham, upon us, yes, has established for us the adoption of sons — that Christ has become of no effect unto them, they are fallen from grace, chap. 5, 4.

(3) How does Paul try to bring these erring brethren back from their error to re-embrace the truth? His entire epistle is the answer to our question. It would far exceed the compass of this paper to make a thorough study of the letter, a few summarizing remarks will have to suffice.

In the first part Paul removes a difficulty for the Galatians. They had been led to regard with suspicion any thing Paul might say, since they doubted his genuine apostleship. He shows in chaps. 1 and 2 how he had been called directly by God, and how his Gospel message had been recognized by the former apostles as perfectly identical with their own. — Having removed this obstacle, he proceeds to show in chaps. 3 and 4 that justification is by faith alone in the redemption of Christ; that the purpose of the Law is not to supplement the Gospel, but merely to serve as a schoolmaster, till the fulness of time should come. — In the last part, chaps. 5 and 6, he shows that faith is not an inactive theory in need of supplementing by good works, that obedience is not something to be practiced separately, independently of faith, but rather that according to the very nature of faith sanctification must be cultivated in connection with it, as its legitimate fruit.

Paul, however, is not satisfied with an abstract statement of the correct doctrine, throughout his presentation flows a constant appeal to the hearts, as is evidenced by the frequent use of the word brethren. We here take notice of two special forms of the appeal.

On several occasions Paul refers to the experience of the

Galatians. In chap. 3 he declares that their experience is sufficient to decide the issue: This alone would I learn of you, v. 2. The Galatians had received the "spirit", the new Christian life with all its manifestations. Paul asks them to remember the source, v. 2. 5. Before Paul had brought the Gospel to them there was no trace of the spirit, now it was flourishing among them. Paul also leads them to the throne of God and asks them to answer his question as in the presence of God. He therefore, he says, that ministereth to you the spirit, v. 5. When facing our God in the privacy of our closet, we forget about our works as necessary complements to the redemption of Christ; we forget about our faith as a possible factor in God's election of grace; we forget to look for the human element in the Scriptures; we forget to treat Antichrist as an historical question; we forget the difference between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines. Before Jehovah's awful throne we become poor sinners who live only by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Another appeal to their experience we find in chap. 4, 15. When Paul brought the Gospel to Galatia, they were lifted out of their despair to a living hope. They congratulated themselves on this happy event. They were overjoyed. After the Judaizers had begun to trouble them things began to change. Paul, therefore, asks them: Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? The Galatians had had wonderful experiences, and surely they would not want them to go to waste. Have ye suffered (experienced) so many things in vain? (chap. 3, 4).

Paul uses still another approach. In his perplexity and his inability to visit the Galatians personally he resorts to the use of an "allegorical" interpretation of the story of Abraham. Some exegetes take it upon themselves to apologize for Paul. They say, allegory is an illegitimate method of interpretation, but when God himself says that a story is to be understood allegorically then this method is permissible. This is a very shallow, superficial remark, doing Paul a great injustice.

Permit me to quote a sample of allegory from the Epistle of Barnabas, X, 3: "He mentioned the swine (Dt. 14, 8) for this reason: you shall not consort, he means, with men who are like swine, that is to say, when they have plenty they forget the Lord, but when they are in want they recognize the Lord, just as the

swine when it eats does not know its master, but when it is hungry it cries out, and after receiving food is again silent." Paul's argument has nothing in common with such inane dallying.

Paul uses the story of Ishmael and Isaac as illustrating God's principle of grace, a truth he expects every attentive reader to find in the story without difficulty (chap. 4, 21). Ishmael was born after the flesh, that is, in unbelief, when Sarah and Abraham tried to supplement the promise of God with their own devices. Read Gen. 16. Isaac was born by the promise, that is the promise *kat' exochen* dating back to Paradise. Although humanly speaking Ishmael had everything in his favor, nevertheless he was cast out. God's principle is grace alone, this is clearly set forth in the "allegory."

This is Paul's treatment of weak brethren.

Both classes of errorists must be kept clearly apart. While it would be a violation of brotherly love to treat weak brethren as though they were deliberate errorists, it would be a denial of the truth to deal with deliberate errorists as though they were weak brethren.

III.

So far we have studied principles as though we had the A. L. C. *Declaration* before us without further complications. There are, however, other factors which demand our attention. Only after we have duly weighed them can we arrive at the real meaning of the *Declaration*.

1.

There is, first of all, the fact to consider that the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod are not dealing with each other in open convention — a physical impossibility — but through representatives. Naturally both sides chose competent, leading men, including some of their most eminent theologians.

To evaluate the work of a committee we must study the instructions it received.

The situation might have been something like this. Each of the two church bodies is publishing church papers, both professional and popular. Both church bodies have publishing houses from which emanate theological books. The books and magazines published by both bodies are also widely read by members of the

other body. The A. L. C. people know pretty well what Missouri is teaching, and vice versa.

Furthermore, there is the fact that both bodies geographically cover to a great extent very much the same territory. Missouri pastors and A. L. C. pastors live and work in close proximity. There might have been held free conferences in wider or more limited circles. The doctrinal differences which since the days of our fathers separated the two bodies might have been thoroughly discussed. A sure result would have been that the pastors of one side would get a pretty thorough understanding of the position of the other. A result might have been that in the course of time both sides in their free deliberations by the power of the truth were drawn more closely together, that during the free voicing of opinions they learned that as far as they personally were concerned the doctrinal positions of both sides were identical, save, perhaps, in phraseology. — As a Biblical precedent with most pleasing results we mention the colloquy St. Paul had with a group of John's disciples he met in Ephesus (Acts 19, 1-7).

If thus throughout the rank and file of both synods mutual understanding of each other's position, and agreement, had been reached, both synods might then have appointed a committee to formulate the doctrines once more and to draw up a joint confession.

Such was not the case. The synods as such were as yet not in agreement on certain doctrines. The instructions given to the committees reveal this.

The A. L. C. representatives received the following instructions from their synod:

"Be it resolved that the Church authorize its President to appoint a committee to confer with those synodical bodies with which we are not in fellowship *with the end in view of establishing pulpit and altar fellowship.*"

One of the reasons for this instruction is stated thus in the second *Whereas*:

"Whereas a better understanding between the divided Lutheran forces of this country is imperative to meet the increasing dangers of atheism, modernism, and secularism." (For the entire text of the Waverly Resolutions see Q. S. for January, 1935, p. 63.)

The Missouri resolutions in the first *Whereas* acknowledge the receipt of an invitation from the A. L. C.

"Whereas the A. L. C. has addressed a communication to our Synod, seeking to establish 'pulpit- and altar-fellowships', and has appointed a committee to *confer with us to that end.*"

The resolution embodying the instructions to the Missouri committee reads as follows:

"Resolved that we declare our willingness to confer with other Lutheran bodies on problems of Lutheran union with a view towards effecting true unity on the basis of the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions." (For the text of the Cleveland Resolutions see Q. S. for July, 1936, p. 201.)

These were the instructions.

Beginning with the last, we wonder how true spiritual unity between two synods can be "*effected*" by a joint committee sitting in conference. True unity is a matter of the heart, not of the conference room. It exists where the hearts are bound together by a common faith. Unity is not the result of committee negotiations, committees can do no more than formulate confessions; and if true unity does not precede, agreements formulated by committees will not as such bring it about.

To effect true unity were the instructions given by the Missouri Synod to its representatives.

The A. L. C. representatives had different instructions: to establish pulpit and altar fellowship.

The practice of pulpit and altar fellowship is an act of confession, and to make arrangements for establishing pulpit and altar fellowship between two synods is well within the scope of committee work.

However, the establishing of pulpit and altar fellowship should not be made an end in itself, because such fellowshiping, such act of confession, in order to be true, must rest on a common faith. To set up pulpit and altar fellowship as the goal to strive for cannot but warp the view, blind us to the true values of things, and make us forget the importance of the unity of the spirit, the prerequisite of a common confession. It may also tend to make us indifferent to doctrinal questions; by the very aim we set up they are reduced to the level of means to an end, if not of side-issues.

Such were the instructions given to A. L. C. representatives and communicated to the Missouri Synod in the formal invitation.

Missouri should have declined to confer *on this basis*. Yet they accepted, and at the same time modified the stipulations by the instructions they gave to their representatives. Here is the beginning of confusion which marked especially the end of the negotiations in the issuing of a separate statement by each of the conferring committees.

More might be said about the inadequacy of committee conferences for the establishment of unity. We refrain.

However, we add, on the low value of doctrinal agreement reached by a joint committee, a paragraph which coming as it does from one of the most liberal constituents of the A. L. Cf. seems all the more significant: "Doctrinal agreements that are reached by means of colloquies, so often result from external pressure that it almost becomes a rule. But no one gives up anything. The whole thing gets to be a kind of opportunism which in reality closely approaches the hypocritical. The contracting parties may, perhaps, not be conscious of this at the outset, but it shows up later." (*Folkebladet*, organ of The Lutheran Free Church; quoted in the *Letter* of the Norwegian Synod to the Pastors and Professors of the Missouri Synod.)

Let this suffice.

2.

In 1929 the delegate convention of the Missouri Synod appointed a committee, of which the sainted Dr. Pieper was a member, for the purpose of drawing up a brief statement of the doctrinal position held by the synod. The delegate convention of 1932 approved of the statement prepared by the committee and thus gave the document a quasi-confessional status. The purpose was not only to let the church know what Missouri believes, but as Dr. Fuerbringer pointed out in his review it was meant as a rallying call, a testimony, an invitation, it was to serve as a basis for attaining unity of the Lutheran Church in the truth ("dass diese Sätze dazu dienen möchten, eine Einigung der lutherischen Kirche in der Wahrheit zu erzielen").

The Missouri Committee on Lutheran Union naturally was under obligation to use the *Brief Statement* as a basis for nego-

tiations. This in turn forced the A. L. C. representatives to declare definitely their attitude toward this Missouri document. Which they did. They expressed their willingness to accept the *Brief Statement* — with certain reservations. The document, according to their opinion, stands in need of “supplementing” and re-“emphasizing”.

It was their privilege to do so. But under these conditions one has a right to expect that they specify the several articles and sections to which they take exception in their present form. Instead, they drew up an independent *Declaration* on the various contested doctrines leaving the reader puzzled. Even a laborious comparison with the various paragraphs of the *Brief Statement* does not always bring a clear answer to the question, Now do they, or don't they? Do they accept as is, do they supplement, do they re-emphasize? A case in point is their presentation of Inspiration and the Scriptures.

This lack of clarity makes the A. L. C. *Declaration* unacceptable as a confessional basis.

The stand of the A. L. C. representatives was ratified by the convention of the synod in Sandusky. The resolutions adopted in connection with the report of the committee contain several statements which demand our special attention as forcing a certain definite approach to the *Declaration*.

Concerning the relation of the *Declaration* to the *Brief Statement* two formulas occur. The second point of the resolutions declares the *Brief Statement* **together with** the *Declaration* a sufficient doctrinal basis for church fellowship, while the fifth point defines the relation more specifically as: the *Brief Statement* **viewed in the light of** the *Declaration*.

This goes beyond the “supplementing” and the re-“emphasizing” demanded by the *Declaration*. This reduces the *Brief Statement* to the level of a secondary document, giving the deciding authority to the *Declaration*. It certainly makes a difference for the interpretation of a document whether it has merely supplementary character in its relation to another document, or whether it is to be considered as the authoritative norm over the other.

At Sandusky another resolution was adopted having a bearing on the *Declaration*. The *Declaration* contained the following

promise: "We recognize it as *our duty to do what we can* to bring about the acceptance of these doctrinal statements by the bodies with which we are now in church-fellowship" (meaning the A. L. Cf.). — The convention at Sandusky toned down this promise considerably. "We are *ready to submit* the aforementioned doctrinal agreement to the other members of the A. L. Cf. for their official approval and acceptance." And this only after declaring emphatically: "**We are not willing to give up this membership**" (in the A. L. Cf.).

What does membership in the A. L. Cf. mean? It means in general an endorsement, *e. g.*, of the unionistic practices of the Norwegian Lutheran Free Church, defended in challenging tones by its official organ (*Folkebladet*): "Its pastors and congregations will continue to invite whom they will to preach in their churches, whether it is a Lutheran or a Reformed pastor or some other speaker" (quoted by Dr. Graebner in *The Problem of Lutheran Union*, p. 89).

It means endorsement of the action of the Norwegian Lutheran Church when they ruthlessly overrode the conscientious scruples of the minority, who objected to the Madison *Opgjoer*, and forced them by despotic majority rule to either acquiesce in what their conscience condemned, or to leave the body.

It means . . . but why continue? Let an incident of recent date suffice to illustrate what it means. Dr. Dell, editor-in-chief of the theological *Journal* of the A. L. Cf., who is a staunch supporter of Verbal Inspiration, in May published an article on Inspiration by Prof. Hjalmar W. Johnson of Augustana College. The following sentences are sufficiently characteristic of the spirit pervading the article. "The human element appears also with sad realism in the imprecatory psalms (Psalm 69, 24; 58, 6. 10; 109, 8. 9. 10; 137, 9, are quoted.). **In these passages the human, or shall I say inhuman, element is sadly evident.**" Why then did Dr. Dell admit the article? His answer is: "**Because pressure was brought to bear by his (Dr. Johnson's) brethren.**"

This is what membership in the A. L. Cf. means. And the A. L. C. has declared itself unwilling to give it up.

As a third pronouncement of the Sandusky resolutions which must be carefully considered for a proper evaluation of the A. L.

C. *Declaration* we quote the following: “We are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines.”

In passing we remark that we fail to find a clear definition of the term non-fundamental. The use of this term by the teachers of our church is not uniform. Some use it in a wider sense so as to include questions, *e. g.*, concerning the propagation of the soul, the perpetual virginity of Mary, the exact nature of the end of the physical world, the season of creation, the stature of the resurrection body, particularly of children, the day of creation of the angels, etc., in other words, theological problems. Others restrict it to actual doctrines. — The *Declaration* lists the following: concerning the Church and concerning the Last Things, *viz.*, Antichrist, conversion of Israel, a double resurrection, and a Millennium. Evidently the Sandusky resolutions had these points in mind.

As to the matter itself, it is a sad fact that full agreement in all points of doctrine will never be reached here on earth. This is due to the general weakness of human nature and to the constant interference by our Old Adam. This is a fact that should stimulate in us incessant watchfulness and humble prayer; but it dare not be used as a pretext to grant license of divergent teaching in any doctrine of the Scriptures, in other words, to give confessional standing to error.

Because those who at the present time stress the fact that perfect unanimity is unattainable and that, hence, church fellowship under certain circumstances may not be denied to an erring brother or even an erring church body, like to quote Dr. Walther as their champion, it may serve some purpose to define our stand in words of Walther.

Dr. Reu, in an address delivered before a mixed conference and since published in the *Kirchl. Zeitschrift*, quotes from an article of Dr. Walther (*L & W*, 1868, beginning in the April number, p. 100) among others: “Niemals hat die Kirche einen höheren Grad von Lehreinheit erreicht denn eine Einheit in den Fundamentalartikeln, und bloss ein fanatischer Chiliast könnte hoffen, dass die Kirche je einen höheren Grad erreichen wird.” Dr. Reu quotes again: “Wir sind weit davon entfernt zu wünschen, dass brüderliche Gemeinschaft mit einem Einzelnen oder

Kirchengemeinschaft mit einem Kirchenkörper aufhöre, wenn diese in ihrer christlichen Erkenntnis nicht dogmatisch korrekt sind. . . . Sobald . . . die Bereitwilligkeit vorhanden ist, sich bedingungslos dem ganzen Wort Gottes zu unterwerfen und nichts festzuhalten, was wider die Grundlage des christlichen Glaubens . . . streitet, so reichen wir einer solchen Person gerne die Hand der brüderlichen Gemeinschaft und sind herzlich willig und bereit, mit einem solchen Kirchenkörper Kirchengemeinschaft zu haben."

These quotations might give the impression as though Dr. Walther would enthusiastically endorse with all its implications the Sandusky resolution "that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines." But when they are read in their proper connection they present an altogether different picture.

It may not be superfluous to add that we know ourselves in hearty agreement with the truths expressed by Dr. Walther, especially in the sense in which he presented them.

For the sake of brevity we shall not quote extensively from the article from which Dr. Reu quoted, but rather from a set of theses that cover exactly the same ground and appeared in the same volume of *L & W* (p. 318. 319).

Thes. X. "Dass die streitende Kirche keine höhere Stufe der Einigkeit als die einer fundamentalen erreicht, beweist nicht, dass in der Kirche irgendein Irrtum wider Gottes Wort *gleiche Berechtigung* mit der Wahrheit haben könne oder zu dulden sei."

Thes. VII. "*Kein Mensch hat die Freiheit und keinem Menschen darf die Freiheit gegeben werden*, anders zu glauben oder zu lehren, als Gott in seinem Worte geoffenbart hat, betreffe dies nun . . . fundamentale oder nicht-fundamentale Lehren . . ."

Thes. VIII. "Gegen alles Abgehen von der Lehre des Wortes Gottes hat die Kirche *inzuschreiten* . . ."

Thes. XIV. "Dass es christliche, in der Schrift enthaltene Glaubenslehren gebe, welche darin *nicht klar, deutlich und unmissverständlich* enthalten und dass diese eben darum zu den offenen Fragen zu rechnen seien, streitet wider die Deutlichkeit . . . der hl. Schrift . . ."

I cannot refrain from quoting one short sentence from the above-mentioned article: "Soll man *dadurch Frieden stiften*, dass

man die Sache, weil sie keinen Fundamentalartikel des Glaubens betrifft, für eine offene Frage erklärt?" (p. 112).

The situation in the A. L. C. is this, as the Missouri Committee No. 16 reports, *e. g.*, concerning the conversion of the Jews: "The A. L. C. representatives do not state that their church teaches in opposition to ours that there will be a universal conversion of all Jews. They do state, however, that some find this doctrine indicated" etc. And similarly regarding some of the other points.

Because of this condition they demand toleration. Instead of that, they should have clearly confessed the truth in the respective doctrines, should have frankly admitted existing conditions and given assurance that every effort will be made to correct the erring brethren and to lead them to a better understanding of the truth. Then, in the spirit of Walther, we would have been glad to extend a hand of welcome.

To demand equal standing of mutually exclusive divergent views even in a non-fundamental article of faith, to declare such article to be an open question, is a violation of the truth, and vitiates the entire *Declaration*.

4.

Simultaneous with the doctrinal discussions between the A. L. C. representatives and the Missouri Committee on Lutheran Union, the A. L. C. carried on negotiations also with U. L. C. A. representatives. The points discussed were lodgery, unionism, and Inspiration. While on the first two points an agreement was reached at an early date, but not published, negotiations on Inspiration were not successfully terminated till February 13 of this year in the famous Pittsburgh agreement.

Before approaching a study of the Pittsburgh agreement it will be well to remember that leading men in the U. L. C. A. deny Verbal Inspiration and refuse to equate the Scriptures with the Word of God. No more evidence is needed than the inaugural address of the late Dr. Chas. M. Jacobs, when inducted into office as President of the Philadelphia seminary, 1927 (See Q. S. for October, 1927, p. 326).

It is outside the scope of our present discussion to study minutely the stipulations of the Pittsburgh agreement on Inspira-

tion, it will suffice to point out a few of its ambiguities. It maintains that the Scriptures are "errorless", but fails to ascribe inerrancy to them. The books of the Bible are errorless "when taken together". Their freedom from error is linked with the fact that "Christ is their center".

This was accepted as sufficient by the same A. L. C. representatives who had told the Missouri Synod that they subscribed to the doctrine of Inspiration as confessed in the *Brief Statement*, and who fail to see that by accepting the Pittsburgh agreement they have receded from their former position.

We pass by the agreement on the lodge question, but quote in full the paragraph on unionism.

"That Pastors and Congregations shall not practice indiscriminate pulpit and altar fellowship with Pastors and churches of other denominations, whereby doctrinal differences are ignored or virtually made matters of indifference. Especially shall no religious fellowship whatsoever be practiced with such individuals and groups as are not basically evangelical."

Note how the last sentence lets down the bars and opens wide the doors to the practice of — if not indiscriminate, then at least discriminate — pulpit and altar fellowship with members of other denominations, provided only that they may still be considered as "basically evangelical."

What shall we say of the A. L. C. *Declaration* if its authors at the same time subscribe also to an agreement with the U. L. C. A., of which a few samples have been given above?

5.

A few brief remarks will suffice concerning some information coming from the Missouri Committee on Lutheran Union. Members of this committee directed some questions on the matters mentioned in the foregoing to the A. L. C. representatives. They received an oral answer, which to them seemed satisfactory. They were promised the same answer in writing.

A copy of the written reply has not reached us.

It seems evident that any explanation given by the A. L. C. representatives must be unsatisfactory. The Synod body itself acted in Sandusky. Only this body is in a position to explain its action.

The A. L. C. *Declaration*, taken by itself, is ambiguous and unsatisfactory in several respects. Viewed in the light of later developments, it would be worse than a waste of time to consider it seriously as a possible basis for church fellowship. M.

Reformation Festival

Text: Hebrews 13, 7. 8

In Christ Jesus dearly Beloved!

We celebrate the Reformation Festival, as you, dear fellow-Lutherans, well know, to commemorate the work begun on the 31st of October, 1517. That was the work of reforming the Church, or the work of purifying it of the evils which had crept into it through the Anti-Christ, the Roman Papacy.

We celebrate this festival with heartfelt, joyful gratitude toward God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord and King of the Christian Church. For the Reformation is His work. Thereby the Lord Jesus showed Himself as the same yesterday, and today, and forever; ever the same in His love for His Church, the same in His concern for its preservation, the same in faithfully keeping His word: the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church, and the same in might and power to crush the devil and His anti-Christian hordes and to liberate His Church.

But true as that is, we do not forget the man through whom the Lord of the Church, our forever blessed Savior Jesus Christ, the Lord Sabaoth, has redeemed His Church from Papal corruption. With words of joyous praise and with grateful hearts we remember this day our dear Doctor Luther, the true, genuine Reformer by the grace of God. True, the Calvinists and sectarians tell us it is not Christian to say anything in the Christian Church that is in praise of men. But that does not disturb us. For this is what the Word of God itself tells us: "Remember them which have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." So it is thoroughly Christian and pleasing to God, if we on this Reformation Festival erect to our beloved Father Luther a grateful memorial of praise. We must, however, do this according to the direction of our text.

That is what we shall do under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Our theme, therefore, is:

**THE MEMORIAL OF PRAISE, WHICH WE ON
THIS REFORMATION FESTIVAL ERECT IN
HONOR OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER**

1. He has spoken unto us the Word of God;
2. He persevered unwaveringly in the faith in the Word;
3. Through the Word he always sought solely the honor of the only Savior.

1

He has spoken unto us the Word of God.

We are fully justified in erecting this memorial in his honor through our *words of praise*. Surely, he has spoken unto us the Word of God. He did that *in the most wonderful way* by letting the precious Bible *itself*, all of the Holy Scriptures, speak to us once again. For who knew anything of the Scriptures, the Word of God, under the Pope? The Bible was forgotten, buried, hidden, suppressed by the Anti-Christ with all the power at his command. Who could even have hit upon the thought that the Bible, the beloved Word of God, was to reappear and be returned to Christendom, yes, was to take its place among the people and speak to them as never before! Our gracious, merciful *God* did have that thought. Luther himself extolled that fact, when he said: "After these mad liars had gained such a foothold and had made a mockery of all Scripture, God could stand it no longer and set me to work, without my planning or knowing it, with the result that I hurled several passages concerning indulgences against the devil and once more directed the people to the right faith."

God, however, wanted to return to Christendom not only several passages of Scriptures, but the whole Bible. Again He led Luther, without his planning or knowing it, to undertake this most beneficial work. Luther was on his way home from Worms in the year 1521, after the Pope and the Emperor had excommunicated and outlawed him. He himself thought of nothing else than getting back to Wittenberg and waging the fight against the Pope and the devil there. But in accordance with God's plan he was brought to the Wartburg by the Elector of Saxony. There

God not only protected him from the claws of the Anti-Christ, but led him to begin the most praiseworthy and beneficial work of the whole Reformation, that of translating the Bible into German, thus giving the Bible, the Word of God, back to the German people and indeed to all Christendom. While still at the Wartburg he finished the New Testament, and as early as the fall of 1522 it appeared in print. In the year 1534 the first complete German Bible appeared. — Now the precious Word of God could again speak to the people through Luther's translation. And truly, it spoke to them as if it were speaking in the original Hebrew and Greek words inspired by the Holy Ghost. For Luther was eminently successful in his translation. It retains the original, inspired words with a high degree of *faithfulness*, and it gives us those words so accurately, so correctly, and in such an idiomatic German, that we cannot wonder enough over it. We praise that rightly. Have not the men all over the world who have any knowledge of the subject been praising it for three hundred and fifty years? That is the *most wonderful way* in which Luther has spoken the Word of God to us: he gave the beloved Bible to all the people through his translation.

But we do not forget the other way, also truly wonderful, in which he spoke the Word of God to us, namely, his *wonderful exposition* of what the Bible itself says. For Luther preached nothing but the *old doctrine* of the divine Word in all *purity and clarity*. We utter this praise confidently in the face of all liars who assert the opposite. Luther had hardly begun to teach, when they at once opened their lying lips. Luther himself on one occasion counted up all the old orthodox teachers who agreed with him, and said: "I say this, not because I think very much depends upon what the teachers asserted (whoever they may be, as long as the meaning of the Scriptures is plain), but that I might meet half-way the simple people, *who think that Luther wants to introduce something entirely new.*" That was, and is to this day, the lie of the Anti-Christ: Luther preached *a new doctrine*. But it remains a lie, and Luther's words are true: "It is not my doctrine, it does not come from my hand, but it is a gift of God. For — I appeal to our dear Lord God — I have not composed it in my own head, it did not grow in my garden nor did it flow forth from my fountain, nor is it born of me, but it is God's gift and not a

human invention." — "Yes," he said, "they assert that Luther wants to introduce something new, but he does nothing else than lead the people back to the Scriptures." In all truth, the Scriptures and once again the Scriptures, "it is written" — *that* guided Luther in all his interpreting. He did not interpret a passage of Scriptures according to *his* thoughts — he condemned that most severely — but always through other *passages of Scripture*. Therefore his teaching is *pure*. It is *wheat without chaff*, God's thoughts unadulterated by *human thoughts*. — Therefore his interpretation is also *very clear*. Who since the time of the Apostles had taught us as admirably as he to divide Law and Gospel, even as the Word of God divides it! The man who is competent in this chief art of a preacher who wants to lead people to salvation is certainly a good scholar of the past master, Luther.

But we also praise Luther's interpretation of Scriptures, because he expounded and declared the Word of God very plainly, thoroughly, and convincingly. He said on one occasion: "You must handle the Bible very carefully, reverently, prayerfully, and with an anxious heart, if you would penetrate into its meaning." That was his method of using the Bible, and in his interpretations that bore precious fruit for all the world. For it is certain that to this day Luther stands in a class by himself in his manner of interpreting Scripture. When he had a Law-passage before him, he surely knew how to pierce deep into your soul with it and to fill you with terror over the thunder of God's anger. But he understood equally well how to bring out the sweet comfort of a Gospel-passage in such a way that your heart was filled completely with the assurance of saving grace. — Again, we must marvel at the very *wide scope* of his interpretations. Not only that, they are *thorough*. That means, he goes right to the heart of a matter and brings it to the surface. Though our beloved Luther often used *many* words in teaching a certain thing, his was not the style frequently used today. Today many a man writes thick volumes, but it is much like some object wrapped in five hundred pages of old newspaper. The statements they make in that big volume are like the wrappings of worthless papers, out of which finally a most insignificant little article emerges. — But when Luther talked at some length, he was simply offering the meat of the Word in many small pieces, but every little piece is *meat* and everyone is

sweet, savory and nourishing for the Christian. — But equally often did Luther use only a *few, very few* words, and *still* he went to the bottom of the Word of God and expounded it thoroughly.

I mention one other thing which makes Luther eminent as an interpreter of the Word of God: he taught the Word of God *very comprehensively*. He said in one of his writings against the Calvinists: "We absolutely want to have all articles of Christian doctrine pure and certain, be they great or small (though none of them are small or trivial to us), and are not willing to yield *even a tittle* of them." He gives the correct reason for this too: "And that *must* be, for the doctrine of Scriptures is our only light to light our way, to guide us, and to show us the way to heaven." That is certainly true. But is it not attempting a great deal to have such a certain and clear knowledge of *all articles* of faith? Indeed it is. But by God's grace it was not too much for Luther. He truly presented the *entire doctrine* of Scriptures in his works. In his memorial address at the death of Luther Melancthon said: Use Luther's books diligently, for we shall have need of his testimonies very often in the future. He wanted to say: If we ever need counsel in regard to doctrine, we will surely find it in Doctor Luther's writings. For he had presented the teachings of the Bible. And that is true.

Let that suffice for the memorial consisting of *words of tribute and praise* which we erect to honor Luther as a teacher who truly spoke to us the *Word of God*. But shall we not erect this memorial to him in some other way also? Certainly!

Let us erect this memorial to him through *faithful hearing of the Word*. For by *faithfully hearing* the precious Word of God and the preaching based upon it we actually erect a memorial to honor Luther, the faithful and blessed servant of God. Such faithful hearing, particularly of public preaching, surely demonstrates that people *value and treasure* that which Luther by the grace and power and working of God was able to accomplish, namely, to speak the Word of God to us through his wonderful interpretation of the Bible. If Lutheran Christians did indeed make a great ado with their praise in *words*, but failed to show it in deeds, in faithfully using the precious Word of God restored by God through Luther, could it be said: They honor Luther, they remember the

great man of God, Luther, and show him true honor? It is apparent that they are not the true children of the God-fearing Luther who himself thought so highly of God's Word and of reading and hearing it faithfully. Luther said: "If a man could lay a *single passage* of the Gospel on a scale for weighing gold and could see what great riches were given him with it, he would consider all the kingdoms of this earth but dross in comparison with it." He said: "Even though we now understand the Word of Christ, to the extent that we now hear and read it, yet as far as understanding it perfectly is concerned, nothing like that will come in this life, but the longer and the more you learn out of it the less you know and the more *you have to learn.*" And again: "Surely, you cannot read too much in the Scriptures, and whatever you read, you cannot read too well, and what you read well, you cannot understand too well." Must you not agree, dear fellow-Lutheran, that it certainly cannot be said of Lutherans who are indifferent and lazy about hearing preaching: Behold, these are people who honor the memory of Luther in their hearts? In our former fatherland there are many splendid monuments to Luther; — but the churches are sadly empty. The statues of marble and bronze say: There once lived a man named Luther; — and the empty churches say: They know nothing of a man like Luther. Brothers and sisters, let everyone of us, by faithful hearing of preaching, prove himself a walking, living memorial in honor of Luther. Let us fill our dear church to the last seat. *Full* Lutheran churches are the finest monuments to the memory of Luther. If that is the case among us, let it not only remain thus, but let us always improve upon it. Rest assured, thereby we show to God as well the right gratitude, pleasing to Him. In our Father Luther, who himself was devoted to the Holy Scripture with such great zeal and with the greatest reverence and humility, in him the truth is forcefully demonstrated, that if a man continues in Jesus' words, then Jesus' Word and truth also makes him free, so that he is not daunted by any might or power of this earth, nor allows anything to guide or lead him, or even to mislead him. That is what we further say today in praise of Doctor Luther.

Luther persevered unwaveringly in the faith in the Word.

In view of *his* loyalty to the faith it is right that we erect this memorial in his honor with our *words of praise*. Surely, he manifested loyalty to the faith, a faithful, trusting obedience to the Word of God. Many were the trials this great man of God experienced. Through them the devil came at him, to move him to yield something of God's Word. No doubt many a loss could have been avoided for the Lutheran Church, and many an advantage gained for it, if something of God's Word had been yielded. But though even some of Luther's co-workers wavered in this or that point, lost their courage, and talked of yielding, our great Luther stood firm. His heart was so deeply rooted in the Word by faith, that for him there was no such thing as giving in and *yielding*, and also no *fear and trembling*. Let come what may, he thought, let every imaginable advantage be lost to us, it matters not. The Word must stand. If that stands, then we have enough. The Word must preserve us, and it will surely do so. Luther himself enumerates in one passage some of the trials he had to endure because of the preaching of the pure Word of God. He enumerates them in such a way as to show that they became increasingly dangerous. He said: "I believe that I alone (I will not speak of the old Fathers) had to suffer the attacks of more than twenty evil hosts, let loose by the devil as so many storm-winds to buffet me." — But Luther would not let himself be torn from the Word. He did not allow himself to be *terrified* by the fierce enmity of the Anti-Christ, nor to be *taken in* by his deceitful offers.

That was the first enemy the devil put into play against him the Anti-Christ, the Papacy. As Luther says in the above-mentioned passage: "First I had the Papacy arrayed against me." The Pope used all the power he had. He sought to frighten Luther by outlawing and banning him, brought the full power of the empire to bear upon him. Luther was to be intimidated into retreat from his stand on the Word. However, the Word of God held Luther completely under its sway, so that there was no question of retreat, nay, not even of fear. At the very beginning, when Cardinal Cajetan reminded him that there would certainly

be no prince to intercede for him and his cause, to defend his doctrine, and where would he stay then? — even then Luther answered with the courageousness of faith: “Under the heavens!” The thought that he might have to stand alone on the Word did not make him soft. Nor could later threats accomplish that. He said at one time: “It will not help you to rage and bluster, but the more you rage and rant, the more arrogant will we, with the help of God, be toward you, and the more will we despise your displeasure.” — Again he expressed it thus: “You will not break down God’s Word, but it will break you in pieces.”

A weapon of the Evil One more dangerous than force is the siren-like lure of various advantages. The devil’s helper, the Pope, tried that often. As early as 1518 they tried to weaken him with fine promises and to persuade him to recant the teaching of the divine Word. He himself said of that: “I know I would be most favorably regarded and would endear myself to them, if I should speak this single words: *Revoco*, I recant. But,” he said, “I will not become an heretic by recanting the conviction through which I have become a Christian and by betraying my blessed faith.” In the face of all advantages held out as inducements he said: “I would sooner die, be outlawed, be exiled, and have curses heaped upon my head.” Especially during the Reichstag at Augsburg it was the strategy of the devil and the Anti-Christ to dangle advantages before the eyes of the Evangelicals, *i. e.* the Lutherans, and thus to bring them to the point where they would not adhere as stoutly to the Word and would be open to negotiations. In the face of it many did become weak and many were filled with anxious concern. To one such anxious soul Luther wrote: “I have committed the matter to God’s care, and I hold that I have the matter very well under *my* control, as long as Christ and I remain united. Therefore set your mind at rest; we will allow nothing of the Gospel to be surrendered.” And to Melancthon, who became only too weak and was disposed to give in, Luther wrote: “You should be able to see clearly enough from your experience that Christ and Belial can in no way be united, and that you dare not think of any unionizing, as far as religion is concerned. Furthermore, what the friendly citation (the invitation of the Papists) had in back of it, we can see clearly enough. But I for my person will not retreat the breadth

of an hair." — Thus Luther would neither be intimidated by the threats of the Anti-Christ nor be misled by his friendly overtures, but in firm faith stood steadfastly on the Word.

And we may further praise his loyalty to the faith thus: He did not permit himself to be misled by the misuse of the precious Gospel, practiced by false friends of the restored Word. These people, who shamefully misused the Gospel, afforded Luther a trial almost more severe than even the Pope had. He himself said in the above-quoted passage: "When I was nearly exhausted by fear (namely of the Pope) the devil tore another great hole in my house by bringing up Muenzer and his rioting, and thus he almost blew out the light I had kindled. But Christ had barely stopped up this hole, when he shattered several panes in my windows by bringing up Carlstadt, and now he blew with such fury, that I thought he would sweep everything away." *Muenzer* too had been led astray by Carlstadt's wild enthusiasm. Now he began to raise havoc. Now the terrible peasants' rebellion accompanied by murder and slaughter went raging through the land, and men were told: it is time to practice the true liberty of the Gospel in real earnest. Carlstadt came with the claim that he was going to bring about the real reformation and purification of the Church, and then he set in motion in Wittenberg the most terrible disorder and stripped the churches of all statues, pictures, etc. without rhyme or reason. Then men said on all sides: Now you see how pernicious the new teaching of Luther is. Murder, rioting, and the most abominable disorders are its fruits. Behold in that the freedom of the Christian by faith which Luther preaches! Luther himself says of the trial he underwent as a result of Carlstadt's riotous course: "My *enemies* have not hit me such telling blows as those now delivered by *our friends* — I mean Carlstadt. Here, the devil thought, I will take the heart out of Luther and soften his stout spirit." Again: "The devil started that, in order to disgrace the restored Word." Surely this temptation lay very near for Luther: You dare not preach as freely, fully, and frankly of the liberty of a Christian through faith as you did before. You must repress some of that. But Luther's faith was far removed from that. He said: "And though the devil should make still stronger and still more vicious attempts, still he will not make us weary any sooner than that he

should achieve the task of dethroning Christ from His place at the right hand of God." — Thus he endured in true faith in the Word; and although the priceless treasures of the Word were so shamefully misused, still Luther did not stop presenting them to all the world.

Moreover, in his loyalty to his faith he would not be swayed from the pure Word of God either by the bitter enmity he experienced in such rich measure or by the *friendship* of the Spirit-enthusiasts, the followers of Zwingli and Calvin. In the passage referred to above he said in regard to this: "After that came the Sacramentarians and Anabaptists and tore open all the doors and windows to extinguish the light (as they thought)." — Luther here makes it plain that this was the most dangerous trial. Luther himself described them as people "who also wanted to be praised as being fine people, who had the *Spirit in full measure*, and could preach, write, and interpret *better* than others." — That, in fact, was the talk among these people: The Spirit! The Spirit! That is the main thing. Luther sticks to the *letter* of the Bible too much. There is really no Spirit in him. He cannot lead the people to true spiritual Christianity. Yes, Luther further said of them, they assert that is of *some account*, to be sure, that our Gospel had begun to be spread and that the doctrine had been purified a bit. But that was not enough. You must attack the thing more thoroughly and achieve a higher plane. — But as much as these Spirit-enthusiasts showed their bitter enmity in slandering Luther, belittling him, and casting suspicions on his Christianity, he never ceased abiding humbly in the Word, and shunned all this business of rising higher through your own spirit. He always termed this latter as the most dangerous way devised by the devil. He did not allow himself, at the prospect of pleasing men, to be misled into going beyond the clear and plain Word of God.

But the trial just reported was not the greatest one brought to bear upon him by the Spirit-enthusiasts and Sacramentarians, who were so called because it was especially in the doctrine of the Sacraments, of Baptism and the Holy Supper, that they followed their own spirit and not the Scriptures. These followers of Zwingli and Calvin sought to establish ties of friendship in various ways. Luther was pressed with the plea: Why don't you yield from your teaching for the sake of love, especially since only

a few articles of faith are in question, and besides, through this union with the Reformed, great advantages will be scored for the entire evangelical church. Luther was hard put to it then. But he regarded no pleading and no reproaches. In his faith he had an eye only for the Word. "I rest my case with this," he said in a review of the question, "that as long as I live I will not take the stand of the Sacramentarians, and I know that Zwingli and his associates do not write the truth concerning the Sacrament." — "A love," he said, "which is to supersede God's Word is of the devil." He always abided by this principle: the Word is God's and not ours, and we have no right to yield something of the Word, or else we usurp God's place. Of course, that earned for Luther a bad name and dissatisfaction even among those who wanted to be counted good Evangelicals. Yet Luther's faith bore this cross like every other to the glory of God.

We are perfectly justified in praising all this in honor of his memory. But we want to erect this memorial to him in this way as well that we follow the faith which we behold and praise in him. Our text expressly calls upon us to do that: "*Whose faith follow after!*" Very well, then let us be Lutheran Christians according to Luther's pattern in this, that we are not intimidated by any threat, let its source be what it may, to retreat from the Word of God. These are times in which many Lutheran brethren are being threatened. Even though the devil does not threaten them through the Anti-Christ, the Papacy, as he did in days past, even with the danger of death, he now threatens them through the great number of the godless, who like the Anti-Christ, only by different methods, want to overthrow everything bearing the name of God, the worship of God, religion, and all divine ordinances. He threatens our Lutheran brethren, through these riotous fellows, with the danger of cutting off or impairing their property, their earning power, and their sustenance, if they are still determined to honor the Word of God and the truth of Jesus Christ. They are pressed to give it up. But do not do so, my Lutheran brethren and sisters. Follow Luther in his faith. Do not let yourselves be intimidated by any threat to retreat from the truth, the Word of God. Let us also be the kind of Lutheran Christians who are not led away from the Word of God through *false friendships*, the *friendship with unbelievers*, with *worldlings*. Oh,

how they delight in it, if a Lutheran Christian allows himself to be led on by their seductive promises of all kinds of advantages, until he reaches the point where he departs from the Word of God and becomes one of those spineless Christians who follow the principle: Nowadays you can't hew so close to the line of the Bible and its teachings. You have to take the times into account and be liberal. You have to give and take. — Why, *that* is just what the devil wants. If he once gets hold of your *finger* in that way, then he will very soon have your whole hand. Here let us be men, Lutheran Christians after Luther's pattern: High above all the advantages of this world stand God's Word and truth. — Nor let us be swayed by friendship with *false believers, the sectarians*. They come to us Lutheran Christians, dangling before our eyes the great advantages which can be gained for the whole Church, if we Lutheran Christians would let love reign and would practice brotherhood with all, and would not adhere so rigidly to the letter of the Scriptures. But let us not become *soft* at the prospect of this supposed friendship and love, not even when this friendship afterwards turns into enmity and the slander that we are loveless and have no heart for the Christian Church. Dear Lutheran Christians, let us stand fast on the letter of the Scriptures, exactly the way Luther did, so that this counts for us above everything else: It is written, here in the Bible, word for word — and by that we abide, and no friendship shall supersede that. Remember, the Savior says of Christians in general: *Ye are the salt of the earth*. Surely, it is rightly said of true Lutherans today: Ye are the salt of the earth. Why? Because we alone in this our day still stand fast on the written Word, while all the world places reason above Scriptures. Luther said that he wanted to abide in the Word, in order that he might not work harm to many souls. Therefore let us also adhere to the Word. Who will still check the great evil of Christianity, namely, that it no longer adheres firmly to the written Word, if we Lutheran Christians, whose glorious honor it has been that we cling unwaveringly to the letter of the Word, — if we also would depart from it! Therefore let us preserve our crown of honor and continue as before in true, believing adherence to the Scriptures, to the glory of God above all, but also as a living memorial in honor of Luther.

Through the Word he sought always and solely the honor of the only Savior.

We only speak the truth, if we utter this praise in honor of his memory. It was not for himself that Luther sought anything. He once said: "I do not desire to become a cardinal, and seek neither gold, honor, money or wealth." Again he said: "Why should a miserable man such as I seek honor and glory! — He who does that does not hide his light under a bushel, but when something of note is done, he is loud in praise of his part in it." Nowhere do we find that in Luther, nowhere words of this kind: I beg you, behold what I have accomplished. Rather, the contrary is true. Thus he spoke: "It is not our work that now takes its course through the world. It is not *possible* for a man single-handed to undertake and carry on such a movement." — Nowhere does he claim that the thing originated in his own head. On the contrary, he said: "It has gone this far without my suggestion and counsel, and it shall also be brought to completion without *my* counsel." — At another time he humbly cried out: "Who is Luther!" Whoever knows the history of Luther must say that there has not been another man so distinguished and great who sought absolutely nothing for himself, either in wealth, in high rank, or even in honor as did the great man of God, Luther.

He sought solely the honor of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever, that was his motto. Accordingly he used all his abilities and powers to further Jesus' honor. "I am certain," he once said, "that my word is not mine, but Christ's Word. Therefore my mouth also must belong to Him, Whose Word it speaks. Jesus *alone* is our *redemption and life* through His Gospel." That was the one thing which, from the very start, he wanted to praise in honor of Jesus, and which he actually did praise. "Our only concern has been," he said, "as it is at the present time, that men might be instructed purely and clearly concerning the merits of Christ and His mercies." — Again he said: "I have a higher treasure in heaven, namely, Jesus Christ, and *to that I cling*, holding to His work, righteousness, holiness, and wisdom. I want to know *nothing at all* about my works nor those of any other man, but I believe solely

in Christ." And again: "Lock the door on reason and tread your wisdom under foot, and do not let them meddle in the things the Son of God tells you, found in His Word, and let that be enough." Therefore he called out to all preachers: "Thus a Christian preacher should teach, that he knows nothing *but Christ* with His righteousness and goodness, so that a man seeks his glory only in the true treasures of Christ's perfections." Luther was such a preacher. He preached the Word in such a way, that all his teaching was directed to this one end: All honor to Jesus Christ, because He *alone* is our salvation. And the man who knows Luther's writings has to say: That is not saying one word too much in praise of Luther.

There was another glory of Jesus which Luther steadily proclaimed: Jesus alone, absolutely alone is our help in all our troubles. How far removed he was from saying: You need only trust me, I will take care of you. He directed the people only to that One upon Whom he himself relied. Think of his beautiful words: "There is no need to worry, they cannot tear Jesus down from heaven." Again we say: It is the pure truth that all of Luther's statements regarding the adversities of Christendom, as we find them in the history of Luther's entire life, which others have recorded for us, or in all his writings, which we have before us in print — all these statements, I say, run out in this one thing: not to us, but to Christ the glory. They run out in this:

With might of ours can naught be done,
 Soon were our loss effected,
 But for us fights the Valiant One,
 Whom God Himself elected.
 Ask ye, Who is this?
 Jesus Christ it is,
 The Lord Sabaoth,
 And there's none other God,
 He holds the field forever.

Let this be the case with us, dear fellow-Lutherans. Let us honor Luther's memory by proving ourselves worthy of the praise, that we, as his true spiritual children, sought nothing but the glory of Christ. Let us always become manifest as *such* who *by faith* have placed their hope entirely upon Christ. In sincere faith may

our lips constantly utter this praise, that we, the unjust, can be just only through the *one* Christ. Let none be revealed as one of the accursed men who build on their own righteousness and despise the righteousness of Christ, and who, thus, give the glory to themselves and rob our dear Savior of it. The man who does that and calls himself Lutheran surely brings disgrace upon the name of Luther. Let us become manifest as such who live a life of *love* to the Savior, and who are ready to sacrifice themselves to Him with all their gifts, wealth, and powers. In that way let us in these last dark days be lights that shine to the glory of Christ. People who live to the world and the god called mammon, as nearly all do these days, and still call themselves Lutheran, — they are a disgrace to the name of Luther, the true man of God, who surely wore himself out and sacrificed himself in the service of Christ.

God help us, that we may be genuine Lutheran Christians, true children of the Reformation or purification of the Church. Blessed are we in that case. Finally another purification of the Church is coming, in which the Lord Jesus will winnow the wheat from the chaff. Then we true Lutheran Christians will be the good wheat, and Jesus gathers that into His garner. Yea, blessed are all true Lutheran Christians! — That is the truth of God! Amen.

* * * *

REQUEST. Pastor Werner Franzmann furnished the translation of a sermon from Hoenecke's "Wenn ich nur dich habe" for each number of the current volume of this magazine. Will you kindly indicate to the managing editor: 1) Would you like to see the series continued in the Q. S.? — 2) Would you be interested to have the entire series of "Wenn ich nur dich habe" translated and published in book form?

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

N. E. L. K. — Wegen Raumangel konnten wir in der vorigen Nummer die erfreuliche Nachricht nicht mehr bringen, daß die vor einem halben Jahr verbotene N. E. L. K. seit dem 9. Juni wieder erscheint. M.

Does This Make Sense? — Take the doctrine of Inspiration and the Scriptures. This is set forth clearly and correctly in the first article of Missouri's *Brief Statement*. The A. L. C. representatives avow that they accept the *Brief Statement* on this point as virtually correct. The U. L. C. A. published the *Baltimore Declaration* on the Word of God and the Scriptures. Why? Let H. Offermann of Philadelphia tell us. In an "Interpretation" from his pen "of the Baltimore Declaration" (in the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* for July, 1939) we read the following: "The commissioners of the Missouri Synod submitted as a basis of discussion an official document (*Brief Statement*) which sets forth the doctrinal position of their own Synod. The first article of this document deals with the Scriptures. In discussing this article, it became evident that the commissioners of the United Lutheran Church were **unable to accept the position taken by the Missouri Synod.**"

Thus the A. L. C. accepts, the U. L. C. rejects the *Brief Statement* in this point. How far, then, may the A. L. C. and the U. L. C. be apart in this doctrine? The one says yes where the other emphatically says no. They are so far apart that they jointly sign the *Pittsburgh Agreement*. Thesis and antithesis in a happy synthesis! *Difficile est satiram non scribere.* M.

"Elasticity" of the Baltimore Declaration. — The *Lutheran Church Quarterly* for July, 1939, carries a "Symposium" on the *Baltimore Declaration*, written by three contributors. The third of these, dealing particularly with the "Implications of the Baltimore Declaration for Christian education", speaks of the "evident elasticity" of the document, which he defines in these words: "The *Declaration* is **intended** to set forth **terminals between which varying conceptions** of the Word of God may be held" (p. 296). He regards this as a valuable feature "when one desires to bring together groups who have common traditions and interests, but *whose views of the Word of God are at some variance*" (*ibid.*).

He develops his main theme by using the creation story as an illustration. He says: "The story of Genesis tells *how people explained* the way in which God had created the world" (p. 300). Yes, taking Gen. 2 as a second creation story, he recommends a study of both stories "to discover two ways in which the *how* question was answered", and urges "a discriminating open-mindedness in regard to the *how* of creation as set forth by scientists" (*ibid.*) He wants the Bible stories of creation "to stand

because of their beauty and intrinsic worth" (p. 301), but would let the more mature pupils "discard the scientific import" (p. 299).

While he admits that not all subscribers to the *Baltimore Declaration* will accept his interpretation of the creation story, he nevertheless maintains emphatically that it "lies within the bounds established by that *Declaration*" (p. 302).

What a comment on the *Pittsburgh Agreement!* M.

Action of the Wisconsin Synod in the Union Movement. — When the doctrinal agreement, reached by representatives of the Missouri Synod and of the American Lutheran Church and later approved by both church bodies, was officially reported to the President of the Wisconsin Synod, the Rev. John Brenner, about a year ago, he appointed a committee to study the matter and to submit its findings to the convention of the Wisconsin Synod since held in Watertown, Wisconsin, from August 2 to 9 of this year. After reviewing the various steps taken in the course of its work, the Committee summarized its findings in the following paragraph:

"III. On the basis of its observations, deliberations, and discussions the Committee is of the opinion that the doctrinal basis established by the Missouri Synod and by the American Lutheran Church, particularly in view of the proviso by the American Lutheran Church that the Missouri *Brief Statement* must be viewed in the light of the American Lutheran Church *Declaration*, is not acceptable. Not two statements should be issued as a basis for agreement; a single joint statement, covering the contested doctrines thetically and antithetically and accepted by both parties to the controversy, is imperative; and, furthermore, such doctrinal statement must be made in clear and unequivocal terms which do not require laborious additional explanation. The sincerity of any theoretical statement must be evidenced by a clean church practice."

The line of action suggested by the Committee to the Synod was referred to a committee of the convention, upon recommendation of which the Synod unanimously and without alteration adopted the following resolutions.

"IV. The Committee recommends to the Synod the following resolutions for adoption:

"1. We endorse the stand of our committee as indicated by its opinion and findings in Section III of its report.

"2. We hold:

"A. That the Sandusky resolutions and the Pittsburgh agreement have made it evident that there was no real doctrinal basis for church fellowship between the Honorable Synod of Missouri and the American Lutheran Church;

"B. That under existing conditions further negotiations for establishing church fellowship would involve a denial of the truth and would cause confusion and disturbance in the Church and ought therefore to be suspended for the time being;

“C. That when these implications of the Sandusky resolutions and Pittsburgh agreement, as mentioned in ‘A’ and ‘B’, have thus been officially recognized and made known to those within and without our Synodical Conference, confidence will be restored to a point where negotiations can be resumed, first to remove these obstacles and then to establish true doctrinal unity.

“3. We recommend:

“A. That our Wisconsin Synod address a letter to the Honorable Synod of Missouri informing that body of our stand;

“B. That the President of the Synod be instructed to appoint a committee, of which he himself shall be a member, the duty of which committee shall be to gather carefully all available information on current union endeavors within the Lutheran Church and to report to the Joint Synod or to the several Districts, if they so desire, on the developments of the movement.”

So far the resolutions. — Much as our Synod desires the establishment of fraternal relations between the various Lutheran bodies of our land, it purposes with the help of God to enter upon any union on a clean and clear doctrinal basis only, without any admixture of unionistic leaven.

M.

Das Kreuz als christliches Symbol. — Ende Juni berichteten italienische Tageszeitungen von einem Fund in Herculaneum, der für die Geschichte des Christentums von besonderer Bedeutung sei. In einem dürftigen, offenbar von Sklaven bewohnten Raum einer großen Villa wurde im Verputz einer Mauer ein verholtes Holzkreuz von etwa 60 zu 45 cm gefunden, das nach Meinung des Leiters der Ausgrabungen als ein christliches Kreuz zu betrachten ist und als Beweis dafür dienen kann, daß dieses christliche Symbol schon weit früher, als man bisher annahm, gebraucht wurde. Das “Giornale d’Italia”, das diese Nachricht zuerst brachte, hat ausgesprochen, daß das älteste christliche Kreuz sei, das man bisher kenne; das Blatt veröffentlicht nun einen längeren Brief des Leiters der Ausgrabungen, in dem diese Angaben und Deutungen bestätigt werden.

Vorstehendes ist der N. C. L. K. vom 21. Juli 1939 entnommen. — Herculaneum wurde am 24. August 79 bei einem Ausbruch des Vesubs verschüttet.

M.

„Ein feste Burg“. — Dieses Lied voll inniger Glaubenszuversicht entspricht nicht den Anforderungen, welche „Deutsche Christen“ an ein Kirchenlied stellen. Wie die N. C. L. K. berichtet, wird die Herausgabe eines national-kirchlichen Gesangbuchs in Vorschlag gebracht. Die N. C. L. K. begrüßt diesen Vorschlag, „damit reiner Tisch gemacht werde zwischen den ‚Deutschen Christen‘ und der Kirche.“ Sie hegt aber leise Zweifel an der Ausführung, wie ihre Randlosse zeigt: „Aber bitte, nicht bloß Vorschlag,

sondern Ausführung! Nicht bloß den Mund spizen, es will gepfiffen sein.“

Einer der Leitfäden, wie sie laut M. E. L. K. ein gewisser Richard Süßmuth entwickelt, lautet: „Alle Kirchenmusik, die sich entweder musikalisch oder textlich an das Kirchenchristentum anlehnt oder bindet, lehnen wir ab.“ Was das heißen soll, wird in folgendem näher dargelegt. „Ein Blick in unsere seitherigen Gesangbücher genügt, die Notwendigkeit einer radikalen Erneuerung des Gemeindegesangs zu erkennen. So müssen z. B. alle Lieder, die in jüdischem Sinn vom Seelenheil, von Sünde, Buße, Höllestrafe usw. reden, die in althebräischen Namen und Erinnerungen schwelgen, restlos verschwinden. Wir müssen aber auch alles, was uns vergangene Zeiten in einem weichen und süßlichen musikalischen Gewande hinterlassen haben, ablehnen; hierher gehören z. B. die meist kraftlosen Melodien des pietistischen Zeitalters. Wir müssen uns aber auch von der starren Kirchentonnusik abwenden. Der Deutsche Christ soll frisch und fröhlich singen in einem seiner Art gemäßen Tonsthem (Dur).“ Was hier über die „Süßlichkeiten“ vielen Melodien aus pietistischem Zeitalter gesagt wird, trifft leider zum Teil zu, aber die Aburteilung über die „Kirchentonnusik“ ver-rät doch einen bedauerlichen Mangel an Verständnis für diese Art der Musik.

Daß „Ein feste Burg“ wegen seiner „althebräischen Namen“ (z. B. „der Herr Zebaoth“) und dem darin ausgesprochenen Minderwertigkeitsgefühl (z. B. „wir sind gar bald verloren“) im künftigen nationalkirchlichen Gesangbuch keinen Platz finden kann, versteht sich wohl von selbst. Aber leider wird der Strom der segensreichen Wirkungen, die von dem Liede ausgegangen sind, auch in anderer Weise abgegraben. Dieses christliche Glaubenslied ist schon häufig als ordinäres Schlachtlied mißbraucht worden. Dieser seine heilsame Wirkung hemmende Mißbrauch soll jetzt historisch-theoretisch gerechtfertigt werden. Nach dem „Theol. Literaturblatt“ behauptet Geh. Reg.-Rat D. Dr. Georg Wolfram, Univ. Prof. i. R., das Lied sei „als ‚aktuelles Glaubens- und Kampflied‘ gegen die Türken“ entstanden. „Der ‚Fürst dieser Welt‘ sei kein anderer als der Türke, das ‚Reich‘ in Str. 4 das ‚heilige römische Reich deutscher Nation‘.“

Ja, es bleibt dabei:

Der alt böse Feind
Mit Ernst er's jetzt meint.

M.

Die Lutherische Kirche in Frankreich. — In der Augustnummer der Polnischen Freikirche berichtet Pastor W. Bodamer über die infolge des Weltkrieges von der Sächsischen Freikirche abgetrennten lutherischen Gemeinden in Frankreich. „Die Elsassische Freikirche zählt 9 Gemeinden. An 15 Orten wird gepredigt. Seelen, die zu der Freikirche gehören, sind 564, solche, die zum heiligen Abendmahl berechtigt sind, 393, und Stimm-berechtigte 129. Am Sakrament haben letztes Jahr teilgenommen 1311. . . . Die Einnahmen in den 9 Gemeinden beliefen sich im Jahre 1937 auf 149,562.90 französische Franken. . . . Die 9 Gemeinden werden von 5

Pastoren bedient, 4 davon arbeiten im Elsaß, 1 in Paris. . . . Die Elsässische Freikirche gibt zwei Kirchenblätter heraus, eins in der deutschen und das zweite in der französischen Sprache. Sie unterhält auch eine Lungenheilanstalt.“

A Change in Russian Tactics. — The aim of the present rulers of Russia is to stamp out all religion. The method they followed till the most recent times was persecution. This is now to be replaced, or at least supplemented, by education. The Baptist and Reflector, according to the News Bulletin, quotes the Russian Commissar of Education as follows: "For the moment we will change our fighting tactics against the Church. During the past twenty years we have used every sort of force in our fight against religion. That period is at an end. The new period will witness a spiritual fight against religion. This fight will call for even greater effort than violence. Above all we shall need a large number of highly trained and cultured propagandists. When the second period shall be closed, then the third and last period will be entered upon, in which religion in the Soviet Union will exist only as an historical memory."

When Jesus builds His Church the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. But what when we through indifference prevent His kingdom from gaining or retaining a foothold in our midst? M.

Apis-Kult in Ägypten. — Der N. E. L. A. entstammt folgende Notiz die heiligen Stiere der Ägypter betreffend. „In der Nähe von Zagazig wurden 12 große Granitsarkophage, die früher die Mumien der heiligen Stiere enthalten hatten, entdeckt. Die Totenstadt ist zwar ausgeraubt worden, aber die innere Ausschmückung von drei Sarkophagen ist genügend erhalten, um erkennen zu lassen, wie sich die Ägypter das Fortleben der heiligen Stiere dachten. Nach ägyptischem Glauben wurden die Stiere durch die Gottheiten, die ihre Schutzherren waren, in die Versammlung aller Götter eingeführt. Besonders wichtig war, wie die kurzen Inschriften zeigen, ihre Vereinigung in dem Mond. — Kleine Kammern, die in der Nähe der Sarkophage der heiligen Stiere gelegen waren, enthielten winzige Steinsarkophage, in denen Mumien von heiligen Falken lagen, deren Eier daneben in den Krügen bestattet waren. Die Sarkophage stammen aus dem 4. vorchristlichen Jahrhundert.“

Presbyterian Fundamentalists Adopt a New Name. — After two and a half years of litigation the little fundamentalist body of Presbyterians has decided to drop the case and to replace their rather meaningless name, chosen at first, by a more significant one. The *Presbyterian Guardian* for March, 1939, carries an editorial on the matter, from which we quote the following.

“A two and a half year old infant is about to be re-named. After March 15 the denomination which, since June, 1936, has been known as The Presbyterian Church of America, will be called The

Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In spite of the fact that a unique testimony and a distinctive reputation have become associated in the public mind with the name 'The Presbyterian Church of America', that name will soon become history. . . . Today a new name is about to replace the old. A church of nine thousand ministers feared the little handful of about a hundred ministers. Goliath trembled before the slingshot of David. The nine thousand took from the hundred the only things they could take — their properties and their name. What they did not and could not take from them was the presence of the Lord God of Hosts."

While we disagree with this little church body in several important points of doctrine, yet we rejoice that they are not ashamed to choose for themselves a name expressing adherence to the Scriptures as the inspired Word or God and to Jesus Christ the Crucified as our only Savior.

M.

Spirit of the Watertown Convention. — The Watertown convention of the Wisconsin Synod had some very serious business to attend. The result of three years of doctrinal negotiations between the Honorable Synod of Missouri and the American Lutheran Church was brought to the attention of our Synod through the proper channels. The convention was fully aware of its responsibility; but the delegates came prepared. The whole matter had previously been submitted to the pastoral conferences of the Synod, and there had been thoroughly discussed.

In Watertown a committee was appointed on the first day, to which the matter was referred. The Committee held many and extended open meetings, which were always well attended by interested delegates, everybody freely expressing his views and asking questions. Also on the floor of the synod the question was freely discussed at different times. When the Committee brought in its final report this was unanimously adopted without any alterations.

The aim of the convention was twofold. On the one hand the delegates were firmly resolved, with the aid of God, to avoid everything that in any way might smack of unionism. On the other hand they were just as fearful lest by their action real unity in the truth might be obstructed. The undersigned was present during the entire convention and had the opportunity of sitting in on most of the Committee's meetings. He was deeply impressed by the unmistakable manifestations of this spirit of twofold responsibility, which led to the adoption of the resolutions reported elsewhere in these columns.

M.

Büchertisch.

The Historic Lutheran Position in Non-Fundamentals. By Theodore Graebner. 31 pages, 5x7½. Paper covers. Price, 15c per copy, postpaid. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The purpose of this pamphlet is not hard to guess: it is to justify certain resolutions adopted by the centennial convention of the Missouri Synod in 1938. The author himself formulates the matter in the following sentence of his introduction. "The question naturally arises whether, in taking this position, our Synod has entered upon a new method of disposing of doctrinal differences, that is to say, whether in extending tolerance to certain non-fundamental points of doctrine, it has forsaken the historic Lutheran position" (p. 3).

To compile source material is always a very delicate task, and to attempt the task on a scant 31 pages is courting disaster. In adducing source material it is imperative not only to study the sentences themselves but their context, particularly also the aim of the author in writing his book, or essay. Accordingly, to review the present pamphlet properly would require an article of not less than 31 pages. Since this is out of the question, a few samples must suffice to illustrate.

An historical definition of the term *non-fundamental* should have been given at the beginning of the investigation. That would help the reader considerably. It is postponed till p. 27, "Some Conclusions". B, 4: "The term 'non-fundamental' is the genus and 'problems of theology' is the species. In other words, every so-called problem, whether in the field of dogmatics or in exegesis or in ecclesiastical practise (casuistry), is a non-fundamental issue in theology; but not every non-fundamental is a mere problem."

The principle set forth in the point immediately following is very important. "5. With reference to church-fellowship, *non-fundamentals may be divisive* when these concern a doctrine or historical statement clearly set forth but consistently ignored or denied in the public doctrine of a religious body; while problems of theology are not divisive at any time." This is well illustrated by the controversy concerning the individual Communion cup.

Since the Lutheran writers do not always follow the same definition of non-fundamental, some including, some excluding theological problems, this fact should have been clearly indicated before adducing their opinions on the divisive or non-divisive nature of non-fundamentals. There are, however, sufficient indications in the quotations themselves, and a reader, duly forewarned, can avoid hasty conclusions, when he takes due notice of expressions like these: "field of *exegesis*" (p. 4), "certain leeway in the *theological statement* of certain truths" (p. 5), "*mode of expression*" (p. 9), "an erring *interpretation*" (p. 9, footnote), and others. To illustrate:

Luther did not insist on the use of "his formula that the body of Christ is 'in, with, and under' the bread if only he believed in the Real Presence" (p. 21). The famous controversy between the Swabians and the Saxons concerning the omnipresence of the human nature of Christ during the state of exinanition was not regarded as divisive of church fellowship since no point of doctrine was denied by either party and the issue merely "concerned a *problem* in dogmatics raised through the effort . . . of rendering clear to the understanding all that is involved in a Scriptural doctrine" (p. 11-13).

In view of the foregoing, the fifth objection, which the author registers on p. 30, should have received a different treatment. The objection reads in its core: "Is it not dangerous to spread abroad our readiness to accept those of orthodox faith who *differ from us in some point of exegesis, teaching, or practise?*" The author replies: "This danger can by no means be denied. But it is not a danger of our making. It is of a piece with the *abuse of liberty* against which the Church must always be on her guard. . . . In other words, this objection *proves too much* and hence proves nothing." This answer does not satisfy because of the ambiguity of the terms involved. Are the three points mentioned on the same level? What does "teaching" mean: a doctrine itself, or the mode of presentation? What does "practise" cover: liturgics and ceremonies, or unionism, lodgery, and the like?

Concerning the question whether or not the means of grace belong "*essentially*" into the concept of the Church, we read on p. 24: "Dr. Walther admitted that he 'had no hope of coming to an agreement on this point'; yet he declared that he 'did not regard this difference as divisive of church fellowship'." From this quotation the reader might gain the impression as though Dr. Walther today would not seriously object to Art. III of the A. L. C. *Declaration* on the Church: "In connection with the doctrine of the Church the question debated was whether it is permissible to speak of a visible side of the Church when defining its essence. We declare that to do so is not false doctrine if by this visible side nothing else is meant than the use of the means of grace." According to the above quotation Dr. Walther would heartily endorse the vague words of the report of Committee No. 16: "Your Committee finds that our synodical fathers conceded that the Word and the Sacraments may *in a certain sense* be considered as belonging to the essence of the Church." A certain sense: *what* sense? Dr. Walther was not the man to leave the definition of so important an article of faith in suspense; he clearly specified in what sense he could admit the definition of the Iowans, and anyone appealing to the testimony of Dr. Walther in this question dare not fail to quote his official pronouncement during the Buffalo Colloquy: "Endlich erklären die Genannten" (the Missouri colloquists, headed by Dr. Walther) "*wenn unter Wesen alles das verstanden wird, ohne was die Kirche nicht entstehen und bestehen kann, dass auch sie Wort und Sakrament zum Wesen der Kirche rechnen*" (Buffalo Colloquy, p. 9).

In conclusion we briefly refer to the last objection the author tries to meet. It reads: "7. But where will be our synodical discipline if these distinctions are not fully understood" (p. 31). To this he replies in part: "To this let me say that we do not depend upon discipline for our preservation in the truth. . . . We intend to trust in the power of the truth and the love which it creates in its adherents rather than in discipline." We just wonder, are truth and love, on the one side, and discipline, on the other, mutually exclusive? Is not discipline the practical application of truth and love to a specific case? M.

A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. By Martin Luther. A new abridged translation by Theodore Graebner, D. D., Professor of Philosophy and New Testament Interpretation, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. 282 pages, 5¼x8. Blue cloth. Gold title on front and backbone. Price, \$1.95. — Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.

As the title announces, the present translation of Luther's great commentary is an abridgment of the original. To what extent, may be seen from a statement in the "Preface": "We were resolved not to present this entire mass of exegesis. It would have run to more than fifteen hundred pages ordinary octavo." Accordingly, Luther's work is here condensed to less than one-fifth of its initial volume. Necessarily, not only "references to problems which were of importance in Luther's day" but "which have no particular significance to-day" were eliminated, but also instructive elaborations on important truths were reduced to sketchy forms. One does not have to read far to discover traces of this "streamlining".

The process of "streamlining" also had the effect of toning down the virile language of Luther. Almost the mighty rushing and gushing mountain torrent of the original has become, in parts of the translation, a murmuring brook meandering softly through the meadows. The translator is aware of this. He pleads guilty of "many a passage . . . which seemed weak and ineffectual when compared with the trumpet tones of the Latin", and he begs the reader to "accept with indulgence where in this translation we have gone too far in modernizing Luther's expression" (Preface). To the present reviewer, who merely sampled the book, clarity seems to have suffered occasionally. After explaining that (in chap. 1, 1) to be called "by men" means to "go wherever they like and speak for themselves"; and to be called "by man" means to "have a divine call extended to them through other persons", how shall one understand the following: "Paul declares that the false apostles were called or sent neither by men, nor by man"? And what is the point of contrast when the translator continues: "The most they could claim is that they were sent by others"? Then Paul himself is introduced as saying: "But as for me I was called neither of men nor by man but directly by Jesus Christ" (p.

11). The original is clear: "*Ut maxime gloriantur, quid possunt illae viperae amplius gloriari, quam quod venerint vel ab hominibus, h. e., a se ipsis, nemine vocante, vel per hominem, h. e., ab aliis missi? . . . Ego vero neque ab hominibus cet.*" (Erl. I, 32. — The St. Louis edition translates: "So hoch sie sich auch rühmen mögen, was können diese Ottern mehr rühmen, als dass sie gekommen sind entweder von Menschen, d. h., von sich selbst, indem niemand sie berufen hat, oder durch Menschen, d. h., gesandt von anderen? . . . Ich aber bin weder von Menschen usw.") — In this connection very pertinent remarks by Luther on the importance of the call are lost in the process of abridgment.

We deplore the "streamlining", not so much that it was done — the translator on the whole did a very creditable piece of work — but that it seemed necessary in order to get a hearing for Luther at all before a modern public. Let those who understand Latin or German read Luther's "Galatians" in the original, or at least in the German. They will be well repaid. And may the present abridged translation serve to whet the appetites, lead to a renewed study of Luther, and bring back to life and operation the great Gospel truths of the Reformation. M.

Problem Sermons for Young People. By Rev. J. Theodore Mueller, Th. D., Ph. D., Professor of doctrinal and exegetical theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. Green cloth, with gold title on front and backbone. 124 pages, 5x7½. Price, \$1.00. — Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Several thoughts flashed through the reviewer's mind on reading the above title of a very timely topic. The passage loomed in which John speaks of the special problems of young men, 1 Jh. 2, 13. 14. Then questions arose which appear to be basic for all ages at all times, particularly also for the young people of our own day, such as, What must I do to be saved? (Acts 16, 30), What is truth? (Jh. 18, 38), What think ye of Christ? (Mt. 22, 42). The author did not expressly include these basic problems. The problems he treats pertain to special phases of sanctification, while matters of justification are tacitly — all too tacitly in the opinion of the present reviewer — presupposed. This applies not only to the selection of questions as such, but also to the presentation of the several questions themselves. The solution must in every case be firmly anchored in the redemptive work of Christ. The author follows the method indicated in the Preface: "The only solution of the problems of our present-day Christian youth lies in their *faithful following* of Jesus Christ." Note that he presupposes "*Christian*" young people, such as stand justified by faith in the vicarious work of Christ; yet even so a mere exhortation to "follow" Jesus Christ is not sufficient. To mention a particular instance. In the second sermon, on overcoming temptation, we read the beautiful sentence: "Satan is a defeated foe and can tempt us as such only, while *Christ's own glorious victory is ours* and we can fully overcome him in the strength of that divine victory" (p. 37). Yet,

in the elaboration this truth almost disappears from sight and Christ's victory in the wilderness is used as an example for us to imitate.

In the fourth sermon, on choosing pleasure, the nature of an offense should have been presented more clearly. The statement: "We offend someone if by *false doctrine* or *wicked life* we induce him to do something contrary" etc. (p. 74) is too narrow, omitting as it does the more difficult question of giving offense by an improper use of adiphora. This is somewhat corrected in the third part of the sermon by the statement: "It rules out all sinful pleasure, of course; but it rules out also all other pleasure *that might hinder the salvation* of anyone" (p. 76).

The undersigned does not wish to be understood as condemning the book. Far from it. The problems chosen by the author for discussion are very important and vexing ones to our youth, and he treats them in a clear and masterful way. The field he covers will be seen by a glance at the table of Contents. There are seven questions, and we append to each the Scripture text on the basis of which it is discussed: The question of I. Christian Chastity (Gen. 39, 1-23); II. Overcoming Temptation (Mt. 4, 1-11); III. Effectual Prayer (Jh. 16, 23-27); IV. Choosing Pleasure (1 Cor. 10, 31-33); V. Happy Marriage (Gen. 24, 1-67); VI. Worthy Ambition (1 Pet. 4, 10); VII. A Truly Christian Life (Rom. 13, 14).

May God bless the book in the hands of both pastors and the young people committed to their care. M.

Jesus Appeared. By William Dallmann, D. D. 87 pages, 5x7. Paper cover, with artistic front. Price, 30c. — Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wis.

In connection with eleven appearances of the risen Jesus the author presents the faith-inspiring, invigorating Easter message in a refreshing way. In style he runs true to form, as witness the following: "If a man say he hath faith, but have not works, can that faith save him? The devils also believe, *and their hair stand on end*" (p. 25).

The undersigned disagrees with the author's remark on p. 24: "After much debate *Peter rose up* and in a fine speech *admitted he was wrong* and Paul right." This is said of the Council at Jerusalem. In Antioch Peter tacitly admitted that he was wrong (Gal. 2, 11ff.), but in Jerusalem he together with Paul championed the Gospel truth against the Judaizers. — The author makes the above statement because he identifies Peter's visit to Antioch (Gal. 2, 11) with the events related in Acts 15, 1.2. This is not likely. Not only that Peter is not mentioned in Acts 15, 1, but the account throughout, both in Acts and in Galatians, creates the impression that Peter was one of the leaders of the Jerusalem church to whom the appeal from Antioch was made.

The eleven appearances are to 1. Mary Magdalene; 2. the other women; 3. Peter; 4. James; 5. the two of Emmaus; 6. the other disciples; 7. Thomas; 8. the seven; 9. those in Galilee; 10. those on Mt. Olivet; 11. Paul. M.

Martin Luther in English Poetry. Selected and edited by W. G. Polack, St. Louis, Mo. 80 pages, 4½x7½. Paper. Price, 25c postpaid. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

Prof. Polack for years has collected so-called Luther poems, of which he now offers to the public sixty, which he considers choice poetic gems. On the principle that guided him in the selection he says in the Preface: "The editor and compiler has not merely assembled all poems on Luther available to him but has selected them so as to cover more or less the outstanding episodes of the great Reformer's career. Rather free use has been made of selections from Robert Montgomery's 'Luther', that great epic poem on the Reformation which was one of the 'best sellers' in England about three quarters of a century ago and which really deserves to be republished here in America." M.

Minutes of the Eleventh Biennial Convention of the United Lutheran Church in America, Baltimore, Md., October 5-12, 1938. 595 pages. — The United Lutheran Publishing House, Philadelphia, Pa.

Although no doctrinal essay is contained in this report there is very much doctrinal matter handled on its pages, outstanding among which are the theses on "The Word of God and the Scriptures", p. 470-474. Other matters that may be mentioned are the "Call to the Ministry", p. 65 and 106; "Ordination" and "Recall", p. 72 and 106; "Women as Congregational Representatives", p. 55-58; 178-182; "Relationships to American Lutheran Church Bodies", p. 467-469; and the like. M.

The Burden Made Light. By Alfred Doerffler. St. Louis, Mo. VI and 103 pages, 5¼x7¾. Leather-grained blue paper covers. Price, 35c, postpaid.

The Yoke Made Easy. By the same author. VI and 119 pages, 5¼x7¾. Leather-grained red paper covers. Price, 35c, postpaid.

Both by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

These are the same books in paper covers which in the cloth editions sell for 75c. For a brief review see Q. S. for April, 1931, p. 159; and for July, 1935, p. 219. M.

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