

# The Holy Spirit's Work In The Congregation And The Present Day Charismatic Movement

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[Presented at the New Ulm Pastor's Conference  
November 5, 1985]

## Outline

Theme: The Holy Spirit's Work In The Congregation And The Present Day Charismatic Movement.

### I. What it is.

#### A. Sanctification in the wider sense.

##### 1. Baptism

- a.) Infants
- b.) Adult

##### 2. Lord's Supper

##### 3. The Word of God

- a.) Law
- b.) Gospel

#### B. Santification in the narrower sense.

##### 1. The fruits of the Spirit.

##### 2. The daily Christian life.

- a.) Good works
- b.) Prayer
- c.) Christian Hope

##### 3. Preserved in the faith.

- a.) Means of Grace
- b.) Watch out for opportunities.

### II. How it is done.

#### A. Through the word.

##### 1. Preaching

- a.) Law
- b.) Gospel

##### 2. Teaching

- a.&b) Same as above

##### 3. Exhortation

- a.& b) Same as above

##### 4. Christian Discipline

- a.&b.) Same as above

##### 5. Counseling

- a.&b) Same as above

##### 6. Evangelizing

- a.&b) Same as above

##### 7. Living

- a.&b) Same as above

#### B. Sacraments

1. Baptism
  - a.) Adults
  - b.) Youth
2. Lord's Supper
  - a.) After adult instruction
  - b.) Regularly
  - c.) Often.

### III. What it isn't.

#### A. Pentecostalism in general

1. Two classes of Christians
  - a.) Those who have it.
    - 1.) Make a decision
    - 2.) Keep making a decision
  - b.) Those who don't.
2. Two types of Baptism
  - 1.) By water
  - 2.) By spirit.

#### B. Pentecostalism's effects on the Lutheran Church.

1. Pan-Lutheranism
  - a.) Scripture dethroned.
  - b.) All barriers between church bodies broken down.
2. LCMS.
  - a.) Is present.
  - b.) They are having a difficult time dealing with it in certain areas of their synod.
3. WELS.
  - a.) Has raised its ugly head in our circles
  - b.) Has caused problems which were corrected.

## Introduction

Contrary to the opinion of some in the New Ulm Conference the Holy Spirit is still alive and well and working in our congregations. In spite of our reliance upon tradition for getting things done in this area, the Holy Spirit is still working in our midst. Today we want to find out what the work of the Holy Ghost is in the congregation, how it is being done and finally what it isn't. Instead of the traditional tirades against the theme committee, I would like to commend them. It is evident they know their theology since this topic is well outlined by several Lutheran Theologians. Koehler outlines the work of the Holy Ghost in the following manner "1) By the Law He works in man knowledge of sin and contrition of heart; 2) By the Gospel He calls penitent sinners to Christ; 3) He converts them by working faith in their hearts; 4) He justifies them through this faith; 5) He sanctifies them in this faith; 6) He preserves them in this faith unto salvation."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Becker outlines the work of the Holy Ghost in the following fashion: "1. The Person of the Spirit. 2. Contrition: The "Strange Work" Of The Holy Ghost. 3. Conversion. 4. Faith. 5. Justification. 6. A Holy Life. 7. The Gifts Of The Spirit. 8. Preservation."<sup>2</sup> So instead of using Northwestern humor, which has caused many to wonder if the Holy Spirit has taken a vacation, I commend the theme committee for their selection of the topic. By the way the theme committee is made up of Pastor Lothert and Pastor Liggett.

## The Outline

I would like to refer you to the outline for today. As you can see from the references above it is not original, but it is an attempt to take us from introduction to conclusion in a fairly direct path. The basic outline of our topic for this morning: Theme: The Work of the Holy Ghost in the Congregation. 1. What it is. 2. How it is done. 3. What it isn't.

### I.

#### What It Is

First of all let's take a look at what the work of the Holy Ghost is in general and then in particular to the work He is doing in our congregations. The work of the Holy Ghost has been customarily described with one term: Sanctification. Our Lutheran theologians have taken sanctification and divided it into the wider sense and the narrower sense.

#### *Sanctification In The Wider Sense*

Let's first of all look at the work of the Holy Ghost in the wider sense. This work is outlined by Koehler in points 1-4 which were referred to in the introduction. The Holy Ghost works through three different instruments. First of all God's Holy Word, secondly Holy Baptism and thirdly the Lord's Supper. The first and foremost instrument is the Word. He uses the Law to convict mankind of its sin and the Gospel to create faith in man's heart which assures him his sins are forgiven. Once a person is convicted of their sins by the Law they begin their search for salvation. The Holy Ghost provides the church with the Gospel to end that search. The Word is the main tool the church uses day in and day out to convict and convince mankind.

#### *The Sacraments*

But the Holy Spirit also works through two other means of Grace once people have been convicted of their sins. He works through Baptism which creates faith in infants and seals faith in adults. He works through the Lord's Supper which assures the penitent sinner the body and blood they are eating and drinking in, with and under the bread and the wine is the Lord's who has squared things between them and God.

## *Sanctification In The Narrower Sense*

Sanctification in the wider sense is done by the Holy Ghost as He inspires local churches to use both the Law and the Gospel. He is the one who is using the Word to convict and convince and the Sacraments to convince people they belong to God. Once sanctification in the wider sense has taken place, sanctification in the narrow sense can begin. Sanctification in the narrower sense can be described in three different ways: 1. The fruits of the Spirit. 2. The daily Christian life. 3. Preservation in the faith.

### *The Fruits Of The Spirit*

First of all sanctification in the narrower sense is clearly described in God's Holy Word as fruits of the Spirit. I Corinthians 12:1-4 "Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.... I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit....There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit." Romans 12:6 "We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith." Ephesians 4:11-12 "It was he who gave some...to prepare God's people for works of service, so,that the body of Christ may be built up." Galatians 5:16; 22-26 "So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature....But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires." Pieper points out that Sanctification in the narrower sense is the work of the Holy Ghost when he says "It is the Holy Ghost who produces the activity of the new man; the new man remains the organ of the Holy Ghost. All these points are set forth in the Formula of Concord; "From this, then, it follows that as soon as the Holy Ghost, through the Word and holy Sacraments, has begun in us His work of regeneration and renewal; it is certain that through the power of the Holy Ghost we can and should co-operate, although still in great weakness. But this (that we co-operate) does not occur from our carnal, natural powers, but from the new powers and gifts which the Holy Ghost has begun in us in conversion, as St. Paul expressly and earnestly exhorts that as workers together with Him we receive not the grace of God in vain. (2 Cor. 6:1) But it is to be understood in no other way than that the converted man does good to such an extent and so long as God by His Holy Spirit rules, guides, and leads him, and that as soon as God would withdraw His gracious hand from him, he could not for a moment persevere in obedience to God. But if this were understood thus, that the converted man co-operates with the Holy Ghost in the manner as when two horses draw a wagon, this could in no way be conceded without prejudice to the divine truth." (Trigl. 907, Sol. Decl., II, 65 f.) To the question as to who takes the initiative in generating the individual spiritual impulses or individual good works, the new man or the Holy Ghost, Scripture answers that the first suggestion and impulse to every good work proceeds from the Holy Ghost."<sup>3</sup>

### *The Daily Christian Life*

Sanctification in the narrower sense is displayed by Christians in their every day lives in which they perform good works, regularly turn to the Lord in prayer and remain constant in their Christian hope for both life and death. Pieper praises Luther for his description of the importance of good works in the daily life of a Christian. "Luther's hymnic praise of good works is entirely Scriptural. 1. Good works have such a great value because they are done according to the norm of God's will. While all works that are not done according to God's will are worthless, all works which flow from obedience to the will of God, the supreme Lord, are great and precious. 2. Good works are God's work. He is the *Causa Efficiens* of them. While the new man of the Christian co-operates in performing them, this co-operation is so completely subordinate to God's operation that the Christian does the good only so far and so long as God works in and through him. Scripture expressly calls the good works of Christians God's work, God's operation (Phil 2:13, 2 Cor. 3:5, I Cor. 12:6-11; Eph. 2:10). And

who will dare to place a low valuation on the works of the great God? Luther indeed would have all works that are mingled with the article of justification trampled under foot as blasphemy (St.l. IX:245) But such works are not God's works but accursed (Gal. 1:8), works of the flesh and the devil. 3. Good works have great value for all Christians because they serve as *Testimonia Spiritus Sancti Externa* for their state of grace (Luke 7:47; I John 3:14). 4. Scripture furthermore declares that they are worth more than heaven and earth in that, while heaven and earth will pass away, the good works of Christians abide. All the earthly possessions of men, of Christians, too, will be consumed by the fire of Judgment Day, but the good works of Christians, also those performed by means of their perishable possessions, will not be consumed, but will follow them into eternity (Rev. 14:13) and will be crowned with an eternal reward of grace (Matt. 5:12, 19:29; 10:42; Gal. 6:9). Why, it is only for the sake of the good works of the Christians, among which the preaching of the Gospel ranks first, that the world is being preserved. (Matthew 24:14; I Pet. 2:9). 5. Accordingly, the Christians are admonished to make the most of their short stay on earth by performing good works (Gal. 6:10; Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5), *and the pastors are directed to teach good works with all diligence* (Titus 3:8,14; I Tim. 6:17ff.). For what purpose does God leave Christians in this world? As soon as a man comes to faith in Christ, he no longer belongs in this world; his true home is heaven (Phil. 3:20; John 5:24). But God wants him to stay in this world for a while in order to serve Him on earth, particularly in the cause of the Gospel. The ultimate purpose of our life on earth is the performance of good works."<sup>4</sup>

### *Prayer*

Good works are only a part of a Christian's life. Another important part is prayer. Paul told the Romans 8:15 "For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." As Christians we can be in daily communication with our God through our prayers.

### *Christian Hope*

Another part of a Christian's life is Christian Hope. Thanks to the Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts we have hope in life and death. We know the Lord is taking care of us through thick and thin. We also know when life comes to an end we will simply join our Lord in heaven.

### *Preserved In The Faith*

The third part of sanctification in the narrower sense is the fact the Holy Ghost preserves us in the faith. The Holy Ghost not only brings us to faith but also preserves us in it. Koehler describes this work in the following words: "While God could, indeed, preserve us in faith without the use of any means whatsoever, He has not promised to do so. It has pleased Him to deal with us only through His word. If then, we wish that faith be preserved in us, we must learn and ponder His Word, and keep it in our hearts. Whatever occupies our attention will work on our hearts. Neglecting to use the Word of God means spiritual starvation, spiritual suicide. The light of faith continues to burn as long as the Word of God supplies oil for our lamp."<sup>5</sup>

### *Watch Out For Opportunities*

The Holy Ghost also is the one who wants us to watch for the many opportunities we have as Christians to practice what we believe. But Luther makes the point that it is very difficult to put this into practice. "This is correctly taught, but not easily learned; rightly preached, but not so soon believed; correctly impressed upon the heart, but not easily followed; well said, but poorly practiced....Were we to confess the truth, we would have to admit that we seldom think of the fact that we must at last depart and leave this life; and for that reason our mind is not constantly set on our eternal home. Add to that our faintheartedness: we always stand in fear of

death, we mourn and tremble under our misfortunes. All of this shows that we do not look for the blessed hope as we should. But every Christian needs to learn this article: “Whoever does not direct and prepare his heart for yonder imperishable life, but continues to cling only to this temporal perishable life, does not understand what Baptism, Gospel, Christ, faith, mean. We have not been baptized unto this life; we are not called Christians in order that we might be burghers, peasants, masters, servants, mistresses, maids, rulers, subjects, laborers, householders. But for this we are baptized, for this we hear the Gospel and believe in Christ, that we may set aside all these vocations (though we abide in these vocations here on earth as long as it pleases God and therein serve God, each one in his appointed calling) and turn from this world to another existence and life where there is neither servant nor master, neither maid nor mistress, neither wife nor husband, but where we are altogether equal and one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28), which equality begins here in faith, but yonder is made perfect in sight (I Cor. 15:53), where there is no death, but only eternal and imperishable life, no sin, but only righteousness and innocence, no fear nor sorrow, but only security and joy, no dominion nor authority nor power, but God alone will be All in All; in short, where God and Christ Himself is with all His elect and saints. Unto this eternal life we have been baptized, unto this life Christ has redeemed us by His blood and death, and to reach this life we have received the Gospel. As soon as the child is baptized and clothed in the chrisom, he is from that hour dedicated unto eternal life, so that henceforth throughout his life he is only a pilgrim and stranger in this world, prepared and ready to leave this temporal life, always hoping and looking for yonder enduring life.” (St. L. IX:930ff)<sup>6</sup>

### *Sanctification*

The name that has been ascribed to the work of the Holy Ghost is Sanctification. Sanctification in both the wider and narrower sense is what the Holy Ghost is doing through the Word and sacraments He has entrusted to the church on this earth. Now that we have seen what the work of the Holy Ghost is in the congregation, let's take a look at how it is done.

## II. How It Is Done

Koehler summarizes the method quite clearly when he says: “While the external circumstances and conditions attending this work vary, the means employed. and the method observed are always the same. There are not several different ways by which the Holy Ghost leads men to heaven, but only one (Eph.4:4-5; John 14:6).”<sup>7</sup>

### *Through The Word*

The Holy Ghost does His work in the congregation simply through the word. The two basic teachings of the Bible are to be clearly outlined for the people. “How does the Law assist in the work of sanctification? The Law continually prepares the way for the Gospel. Since the Christian, having the old evil flesh clinging to him, is ever inclined to make light of the sin which still adheres to him, it is necessary that the Law continually show him his sinfulness and damnableness. Where the knowledge of sin ceases, there also faith in the remission of sins, faith in the Gospel, has come to an end. (cf. Luther against the Antinomians, St. L. XX:1646), and thus the Gospel, the only source of sanctification is choked off. Again, according to his flesh the Christian is always inclined to follow his own ideas as to what constitutes a saintly, God-pleasing life, and he will look upon certain sins as virtues and upon certain virtues as sins. And in view of this fact that by nature he is but dimly conscious of the holy will of God, he is in constant need of the revealed Law as a “rule” to show him at all times the true nature of the God-pleasing life and truly good works. But we must bear in mind that the strength to do good works and to abstain from evil works is supplied solely by the Gospel. Paul admonishes the Christians ‘by the mercies of God’ (Rom. 12:1) to present their bodies a sacrifice unto God. The only thing that will create the

love of God and of the brethren in us is “because He first loved us” (I John 4:19,11). In every case the Gospel must write the Law of God into our hearts. Luther reminds us that those preachers who use the Law instead of the Gospel to effect sanctification are to blame for the paucity of sanctification and good works.”<sup>8</sup> To summarize these words we are all to believe the Word works. The word is what we are to use as the main tool of work in the congregation.

### *Preaching*

The Holy Ghost works through the Word we preach every Sunday morning. I am a firm believer the main name of the game in the Lutheran Parish Ministry is preaching. We are to preach the Law in all its severity and the Gospel in all its beauty. We are to take our listeners to the very depths of hell and also to the very glories of heaven. We are to spend a good share of our time each week in preparing for our sermons. The only Law and Gospel most people in our congregations are going to hear is what flows from our mouths in the pulpit. We are not to be story tellers or entertainers. But we are also not to be a drone who bores our people to death with our inanimate delivery.

### *Teaching*

Another way the Holy Ghost works in the congregation is through the teaching of the Law and Gospel. Bible Classes, Confirmation Classes, Ladies Aid Meetings, Youth Group Meetings, even the Church Council meetings give us an opportunity to teach the Law and Gospel. If we are permitting any organization within our church to be just a social group we are hindering the work of the Holy Ghost in that group. The church on this earth has not been established to be a social club for saints. It has been established to be a training center for God’s people. A place where God’s people come and learn about their salvation. A place where they can come and learn how to live God-pleasing lives as Christian youth, adults, spouses, parents or anyone else they might be.

### *Exhortation*

I guess this next way of getting the Word out could also go under teaching but I would like to place it under a new heading since it is something quite new that is being done in many congregations. I would like to call this exhortation. Exhortations to parents, spouses, council members, day school staffs and many other groups. These exhortations are directed to groups of people with common interests. These exhortations can be Marriage Enrichment Seminars in which we focus on the Law and the Gospel as it applies to marriage. It can be parenting retreats as we focus on what God’s Word has to say about parenting. It can be pre-marital counseling as we strive to show young couples what God’s word has to say about marriage. Now I know what most of us will say to this point. Add 12-24 hours to each day and it will be possible. I guess I would like to challenge those who have special interests in any of the above or other items of interest to be bold enough to develop their own program that can be shared with others. I would like to encourage even more boldness on the part of those with particular talents to video tape retreats and seminars so fellow Christians in the area and throughout Synod might share in your God-given talents. Whether we like it or not the people are clamoring for focused Bible Studies on areas of life in which they are hurting. The heterodox churches video tapes and movies put us to shame as they address the problems of teenagers, marriage, parenting, money management just to name a few. For the time being, many are choosing to use these well prepared presentations which need to be corrected at certain places in the tapes, but which by and large are doctrinally sound. The Holy Spirit works through the exhortations we give to special interest groups in our parishes. If you don’t believe it, ask those who have had a marriage enrichment seminar, or a parenting seminar, or a pre-marital counseling program.

### *Christian Discipline*

Another way the Holy Spirit goes to work through the congregation is when there is an active program of Christian discipline. As the Elders and Pastors keep a close tab on those who have failed to attend church or communion the Law and the Gospel are preached. The delinquent members are warned they are endangering their eternal home by their failure to hear the Word and receive the Sacrament. The delinquent members are assured that both God and their fellow Christians love them and want them back in the church. I know from personal experience this area of work in a congregation is gut wrenching, time consuming and at times seems fruitless. But I am sure all of us have experienced the same joy of seeing someone who was dealt with faithfully attending church and the Lord's Supper. Even though those victories seem few and far between, they make all the efforts in Christian Discipline worth it. May none of us ever shy away from confronting those who have removed themselves from the fire of God's Word.

### *Counseling*

The Holy Ghost gives us a tremendous opportunity to go to work on peoples' hearts in our counseling. More often than not the people who show up in our office with their problems have had the Law preached to them in all its severity. They have become convinced some sin they have committed is unforgivable. They have become convinced no one, not even God loves them. They have become convinced life is not worth living and death won't be any better. It's at times like these we need to lay the Gospel in all its beauty upon these people. We need to show them the reason they are feeling so rotten is because Satan has gotten a firm grip on their hearts. We need to show them God loves them and God proved it by sending His Son to die even for the stupid things they have done in their lives. We need to assure them everything is OK between them and God. Now is the time for them to cling to what God's Word has to say. Now is the time to ask the Lord for strength to lead a God-pleasing life. Now is the time to really get in touch with God by attending church and communion, by regularly reading God's Word.

### *Evangelizing*

The Holy Ghost also works in our congregations through evangelizing. Many of our congregations don't have an organized evangelism program, which isn't all bad. More and more experts on the subject are calling into question the methods that have been crammed down the throats of people this past decade. The value of door to door canvassing and the quicky course in Christianity are being called into question. More and more of the experts on evangelism are going back to one-on-one sharing of the Law and Gospel. Going back to the fact that the only way most people will come in contact with Christ is through a friend or relative. The statistics used to prove this point are very shocking. Over 90% of all converts are led to Christ through a friend or relative who has privately shared the Gospel with them. Very few people have been or are being won for Christ by a super-organized evangelism effort. What does this say to us? Preach man, preach. Preach the Law and the Gospel in all its simplicity every Sunday. Give the people in the pew a simple message they can share with their friends and relatives.

### *Living*

The comment has been made "the only Bible many people will read is the life of a Christian." The longer I am in the ministry the more I am convinced of that fact. If we really want our people to believe the Law and the Gospel, we had better make sure our own personal lives reveal it. If we are like a bull in a china shop as we deal with people both within and without the congregation people have the right to question our love for God. If we have questionable habits in our daily lives people have the right to question our sincerity. If we are not among the leading financial supporters of our congregation how can we ever expect anyone to learn good giving habits? If we wait for weeks or even months to get our babies baptized how can we expect our people to



do any different? If we fail to attend the Lord's Supper on a regular basis, how can we ask our fellow Christians to do what we don't do? If we don't behave ourselves in our many different meetings, but run rough shod over those present, how can we expect our members not to do the same? The same goes for our image in the community. We have the light of the world dwelling in our lives. Let's show it. Let's see to it the members of our community look upon us as a kind, loving Christian who is not only concerned for the welfare of our church or school or self, but also concerned for the welfare of our fellow citizens in the community. When the Lord called us into the ministry, He did not call us to live in a closet where the only thing we contemplate is our navel.

### *Sacraments*

So the main way the Holy Ghost works in the congregation is through the Word. As we use the Law and the Gospel in our preaching, teaching, exhorting, disciplining, counseling, evangelizing and living the Holy Ghost will be hard at work. The other way the Holy Ghost works is through the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

#### *Baptism*

The Holy Ghost works through the sacrament of Holy Baptism by placing faith into little infants. The simple act of Baptism has such wonderful power because the Holy Ghost works in it through the Word. Baptism is something that is not to be looked upon lightly. I sometimes wonder if some of the traditions we have developed with regard to Baptism don't hinder the working of the Holy Ghost. First of all whoever said we are to baptize our infants in an elaborate ceremony? A ceremony we have to wait weeks for in order to get grandma and grampa, auntie and uncle in from Tim-buck-too, South Dakota? Is there anything wrong with baptizing shortly after birth in the hospital? I guess the greatest benefit, and only benefit, I can see from a baptism ceremony in front of the congregation is to serve as a reminder of the individual members' baptisms. But wouldn't a ratification of baptism serve the same purpose? The more I hear of Infant Death Syndrome and the counseling problems which erupt after an unbaptized infant dies the more I am convinced to encourage Baptism as soon as possible. If the couple wants it done in the hospital OK, if in the church within a week or so OK.

#### *Sponsors Or Witnesses*

There is another area in the baptism of infants I wonder about, namely the use of sponsors or witnesses. First of all I would like someone to prove to me with a scripture passage we are to use either one. Are we really comprising our faith with witnesses? Are we hindering the work of the Holy Ghost by encouraging the people to have sponsors? Do they serve any good purpose in this day and age? What legal rights do they have in the raising of our children if we die? I feel we could serve our members much better if we would point out to them they need a will in which they select fine Christian people to be the guardian of their children in case of the death of both parents. Since our Wisconsin Synod is becoming a melting pot for people of many races, nationalities and religions, since most people are not listening too closely when we go through that section in Adult Class in baptism concerning sponsors or witnesses, I would suggest we forget the whole system of sponsors and witnesses and have the parents bring the child, who is their God-given responsibility, to the baptismal font.

#### *Adults*

The baptism of adults is another matter. I am sure the majority of us truly enjoy. The baptism of adults is a very visible way of showing the members of the congregation the Holy Spirit is alive and well and working in

our congregations. Both the person being baptized as an adult and the members of the congregation are awed at the way the Holy Spirit has gone to work on their hearts. The examples of adults being baptized in the Bible are simply being repeated every time the Holy Spirit gives us the privilege of doing the same to a confessing adult.

### *The Lord's Supper*

The Lord's Supper of course is another one of the means the Holy Spirit works through in our congregations. I am sure it would not take much of an investigation into the WELS statistical report to find that those congregations who have high per communicant communion attendance are the same ones who have high bible class attendance, high giving statistics, high church attendance. The Lord has given us a meal by which the Holy Spirit can come and do even more work on the hearts of the recipients. The Lord Himself has encouraged us to eat and drink his true body and blood often. As congregations we can either help or hinder that command by some of our outward practices. One outward practice that really gripes me in the congregation the Lord has called me to is this crazy idea people can leave the church before communion is served. Until I moved to this area, I had never seen or heard of such practices in our Wisconsin Synod. I could not believe it the first time I served communion and the majority of the members of the congregation exited the church like a herd of buffalo or maybe more fitting in this area a herd of hogs. Are we encouraging a lackadaisical approach to the Lord's Supper when we dismiss these people before communion? Are we encouraging irregular attendance when we let people turn their backs on the very body and blood of the Lord which is waiting for them at the altar? I know we can't call early dismissal from church in order to avoid communion a sin, but is it very wise? The means by which we ask our people to register for communion can also serve as a deterrent to communion attendance. If the only way they can sign up is to visit the pastor on a Friday or Saturday, how many in their busy schedules are going to remember? If they really have something they have to get off their conscience you can bet they will find us. The easier we make it for them to register for communion, the more often our members are going to receive the very body and blood of our Lord given and shed for their sins. I would encourage all of us to get rid of all hindrances we have placed in peoples' way to attend the Lord's Supper. Let's encourage all members to stay for the entire communion service and let's make it as easy as possible to sign up for communion without compromising our Close Communion practice. Since the Holy Spirit works through the Lord's Supper let's give Him as many opportunities as possible to keep busy.

### *How It Is Done*

To summarize how the work of the Holy Spirit is done all we have to do is use two words: Word and Sacraments. The Holy Spirit uses the word to convict and convince. He uses the Sacraments to even further convince those who have been convicted. May all of us do everything in our God-given power to use these tools the Holy Spirit works through. May we keep our eyes, ears and minds open to the many different ways the Holy Spirit can go to work in our congregations. Some may be tried and true, some will be new. Let's always be on the lookout for ways we can deliver the word to the people of both our community and congregation.

## III. WHAT IT ISN'T

Now let's take a look at what the work of the Holy Spirit in the congregation isn't. Just this heading indicates the prejudice of this writer against the Charismatics or the Pentecostals. The more I read about the effect the charismatic movement is having upon main stream Christianity the more I question if just the opposite person from the Holy Spirit is working in these peoples' hearts. The more you read about the dissension and lack of love that comes as a result of charismatics getting involved with a church the more you wonder if they are the devil's disciples in disguise. Prof. Koelpin of our DMLC faculty and Prof. Gerlach, formerly of the WLS faculty, have written what I would call the definitive articles on the charismatics. Granted

each paper was written about 10 years ago, but both papers are very applicable to 1985. The charismatics have not changed their tune these past few years.

### *Pentecostalism In General*

Let's take a brief look at Pentecostalism or the charismatic movement in general which separates them from Lutherans. First of all they believe there are two classes of Christians. Those who have it and those who don't. By the way, unless any of you are hiding something from the rest of us, none of us present in this room have it. What do those who have it got? They have come to the platform. They have made a decision for Christ. They are continuing to make that decision each and every day of their lives. They have got the spirit and they are going to make sure we hear it. The other class of Christians is we poor peons who don't have it. We don't have the spirit. We have not made a decision for Christ. We can't point to an exact day when the good Lord gripped our hearts and gave us the message to serve Him. They believe our pointing to our Infant Baptism is a cop-out because we were not intellectually capable of making a decision for Christ.

### *Luther*

Dr. Pieper points out that this dividing of people according to their experience or not is something even Luther could not tolerate. Pieper points out "The moderns are right from their standpoint in ruling out faith as the cause of sanctification. The faith which they have in mind is wholly or in part the product of man, the result of man's self-decision or the product of scientific demonstration. Such faith is an impotent thing. Like all the works of man's hands, it must fail. In the words of Luther: "as it (*fides acquisita*) is a human fiction and a dream, causing no real change of the heart, so it also accomplished nothing and is followed by no improvement." (St. L. XIV:99)<sup>9</sup> Dr. Pieper speaks on this same point later on in volume three "He who disregards this truth is headed for a fall. There is, in the last analysis, only one thing that causes the loss of faith, and that is self-confidence-the synergistic idea that salvation does not depend solely on God's gracious operation, but also on the 'self-determination,' the 'correct conduct,' of man. That brought about Peter's fall. Trusting in his own ability to sustain his faith he declared: 'Although all shall be offended, yet will not I,' ●●●●●●●●. Others may fall, but I will observe the right conduct. Jesus predicted what the result of this self-confidence would be. 'Verily I say unto thee,' He said, 'that this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice' (Mark 14:30). Only a few hours later Peter cursed and swore that he did not know the Lord Jesus. Luther calls this attitude of unwillingness to depend on God's Grace for salvation the 'vicious, insidious decepton' which still stirs in the flesh of the Christians and must be suppressed constantly and mercilessly if the first are not to become the last. Against this 'insidious deception' Paul is warning the Philippians when admonishing them to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, he tells them that it is God who works in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure. And because synergism nourishes, fosters, and strengthens this 'insidious deception' by teaching that perseverance depends not only on God's gracious operation, but also on man's proper conduct, it constitutes a menace to Christianity....As no one was ever converted by following the synergistic prescription, so no one will persevere in faith and obtain the end of faith by doing what the synergist prescribes. Luther says: 'By our own strength we can in no wise escape the craftiness by which Satan beguiled Eve. He will corrupt our minds from the simplicity that is in Christ unless the Lord, moved by our humble prayer, sustains our course. For here the 'free will' can achieve nothing; nor does the 'first grace', as they call it, suffice; perseverance is needed which depends not on the will of man, but on God's preservation (*est non violentis hominis, sed sustentantis dei*).'" (St. L. IV:1008f.)<sup>10</sup>

### *Two Types Of Baptism*

The charismatics also divide Christians according to their type of Baptism: those baptized by the Spirit and those baptized by water. "While charismatics seemingly lay great emphasis on God's grace, yet in actual

practice they view what they call the baptism of the Spirit as a reward for good works. It is generally agreed by those who emphasize the “baptism of the Spirit” that the Holy Ghost will come only if we “fulfill the conditions” for his coming. The “baptism” will come only to those who earnestly desire it, who pray for it with confidence that it will come, who have cleansed their hearts from all sin, and who “yield” themselves wholly to the Spirit. These are called the indispensable conditions that must be fulfilled before the Holy Spirit will enter the heart. Much is said about the price that must be paid and the sacrifice that must be made if the Spirit is to come. No matter how much lip service is paid to grace, such language clearly betrays a system of pure and simple work righteousness. The Bible teaches that the Spirit cleanses us by his indwelling, not that we must cleanse ourselves as a preparation for his coming.”<sup>11</sup> Kurt Marquardt said of this topic “Now friends, the church is not like one of those great passenger ships that have a second-class section and a first-class section. Pentecostal literature (encouraging the seeking of Spirit-baptism and tongues) speaks of ordinary Christians and Spirit-filled Christians. God’s ship is a one-class ship. Either we are Spirit-filled Christians or we are not Christians at all.”<sup>12</sup> (12)

### *Pentecostalism’s Effects On The Lutheran Church*

I would hope we all can see that whenever Pentecostalism raises its ugly head in the midst of Lutherans there is going to be trouble. In pan-Lutheranism (all the different Lutheran Church bodies excluding LCMS, WELS, ELS, CLC) the charismatics have had a field day. When there are no doctrinal barriers that need to be broken down, when scripture has been dethroned, it doesn’t take much to find a group of people wanting to get the Spirit. Since the pan-Lutheran church bodies have little or no scruples about the doctrine of fellowship the charismatics, in their midst, are free to roam wherever they wish. One classic example of this is the large Lutheran charismatic assembly which takes place in the Twin Cities every winter.

### *LCMS*

The effects of the charismatics upon the Missouri Synod can also be seen. If you believe everything you read in Herman’s yellow sheet you will believe the charismatics are proceeding to jerk the Missouri Synod apart. The problem the Missouri Synod is having with the charismatics is an unwillingness to deal with them. No one in authority wants to be the bad guy and force the charismatics I hand. But it is evident from what Herman is writing there are forces within the Missouri Synod who want those who publicly profess to be charismatics to be dealt with according to Matthew 18 and Romans 16.

### *WELS*

Now we come to the one we have all been waiting for, our own dear Wisconsin Synod. The charismatics have had their effect upon our congregations. The charismatic movement has raised its ugly head in several different areas of our synod. Every time charismatics pop on the scene there is discension and eventually division. The beautiful thing I see flowing through each incidence of the charismatics raising their ugly heads in our midst is they were dealt with. Sure they were not dealt with as quickly as some of the purists in our midst would like them to have been dealt with, but they were dealt with. So all of us can praise God we still have enough doctrinal integrity in our midst to recognize the charismatics for what they are and do something about it when they show up not only on our doorstep but in our midst.

### *The Effect Upon Our Members*

But even though the charismatic movement has been dealt with whenever it has occurred in our Synod doesn’t mean we should become complacent and believe it won’t come back again. Many of our people are asking what is wrong with our Wisconsin Synod. Why are we seemingly standing still or growing very little?

Why do so few of our people attend Bible Study? Why do so few attend the Lord's Supper regularly? Why do less than 50% attend church each Sunday? Why are the majority of our members such niggardly supporters of the Lord's Kingdom? The answer to these questions is not as one man regularly has shouted out in some of the congregational meetings I have been privileged to attend "What we need around here is a revival." The answer to these questions is to see to it we continue to faithfully use the Means of Grace the Holy Spirit has entrusted to us. The answer is to encourage our people to know where the church is on Sunday morning, where the communion rail is when the Lord's Supper is waiting for them, where their Bibles are in their homes, what God has in store for them as Christian parents, children, spouses, employers, employees, students, teachers, preachers, farmers, or whatever they might be. The answer is the Holy Spirit is still alive and well and working in our midst whenever the Word and Sacraments are being used. May all of us praise God for sending the Holy Spirit who is working very hard in each and every one of our Lutheran Congregations.

Thank You.

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## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> Edward Koehler, *A Summary Of Christian Doctrine*. St. Louis, Mo., Concordia Publishing House, 1952. p. 130.
- <sup>2</sup> Siegbert Becker, *The Holy Ghost And His Work*. Milwaukee, Wis., Northwestern Publishing House, 1984. p. 3.
- <sup>3</sup> Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*. St. Louis, Mo., Concordia Publishing House, 1952. Vol. III, pp 14-15.
- <sup>4</sup> Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 60.
- <sup>5</sup> Koehler, *A Summary Of Christian Doctrine*, p. 177.
- <sup>6</sup> Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 86.
- <sup>7</sup> Koehler, *A Summary Of Christian Doctrine*, p. 130.
- <sup>8</sup> Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 17.
- <sup>9</sup> Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, p.p. 10-11.
- <sup>10</sup> . Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, p.p. 94-95.
- <sup>11</sup> Becker, *The Holy Ghost And His Work*, p.p. 44-45.
- <sup>12</sup> Arnold Koelpin, "The Charismatic Movement And Evangelism Today." *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 71 Number 1, January 1974, p. 29.