

Theologische Quartalschrift.

Herausgegeben

— von der —

Allgemeinen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin
und anderen Staaten.

Redigiert von der Fakultät des Ev.-Luth. Seminars
zu Chienerville, Wis.

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.“

Joh. 8, 31. 32.

Preis per Jahrgang \$1.50.

Jahrgang 38.

1941.

Inhaltsverzeichnis zum 38. Jahrgang.

Abhandlungen	Seite
Worship (Continued) M.	1, 101
The Doctrine of the Antichrist. M. Lehninger	7
Das rationelle Wissen um Gott. P. Peters	22
Sermons from Hoenecke's "Wenn ich nur dich habe" translated by Werner Franzmann	41, 68, 208, 292
Von der Ausführung des Heilsrats Gottes im Alten Testament. Aug. Pieper	81, 167
Religious Instruction in the Free Church of Germany. P. Peters	90, 194
The Minneapolis Meeting of the American Lutheran Conference, November 13-15, 1940. Norman A. Madson	125
"In the Interest of Lutheran Unity." Geo. O. Lillegard	132
Closing Address. M.	161
Die rechte Stellung zum Erkenntnisprinzip der christlichen Lehre. M. Lehninger	181
Der Sinaibund, der Bund mit dem unmündigen leiblichen Samen Abrahams. Aug. Pieper	233
Studies in Galatians. M.	241
Romans 16, 17. 18. Walter A. Schumann	260
The Formation of the New Testament Canon. Blume	272
 Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen	
Ist dies etwa Kirchengemeinschaft?	49
Statement by the Missouri Synod Committee for Lutheran Union	49
Dr. Engelder's Clear Testimony at Detroit	52
Dr. Arndt at Detroit	53
Dr. Ellis B. Burgess Brings Greetings from the U. L. C. A. to the A. L. C.	55
Pittsburgh Agreement Ratified by the U. L. C. A.	58
A. L. C. and Missouri	60

	Seite
Pittsburgh Agreement Approved by the A. L. C.	62
Dr. Long on the Membership of the A. L. C. in the A. L. Cf.	63
Japan Creates National Christian Church	63
Situation of Lutheran Churches in Japan	64
Mission Policy in Japan	64
“The New Church and the New Germany”	65
On Opening a Parochial School	69
Employment of Non-Lutherans in Synodical Institutions	70
Milwaukee City Public Schools	70
Masons and the Public School	71
Downfall of France Due to Lodge Activity?	72
The Christless Lodge	72
Was the Church at Jerusalem Communistic?	72
Federal Regimentation of the Youth	73
An Ever Timely Warning	74
Scouting	75
“In a Strategic Position”	76
President Brenner’s Letter (of January 10, 1941)	132
The Columbus Conference	133
“Conference Closes Ranks for Action”	138
Dr. P. O. Bersell at Detroit	141
Union by Enterprise?	142
Dr. Knubel’s “Gulping” at Omaha	143
New Commission on Fellowship	144
D. Neu über die Vereinigungsbeschlüsse von Omaha	145
Die Zukunft der Vereinigungssache	147
„Die deutsche Mission Ende 1940“	149
Hungerstnot in China	150
„Jahresrückschau“	150
Are Other Celestial Bodies Inhabited?	151
“The Columbus Conference and Its Repercussions”	226
Is the Missouri Synod Veering?	229
Ft. Wayne Resolutions on the Union Matter	300

	Seite
Co-ordination	303
Lutheran Intersynodical Conferences	305
Religious Liberty	305
The Protestant Novena condemned by the Augustana Synod	307
Lutheran Church Union at Saginaw	308

Büchertisch

A. Besprechungen

The Spirit of the American Lutheran Church. P. H. Buehring	77
Report of the twenty-third regular convention of the Norwegian Synod of the American Ev. Luth. Church	7
Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Convention of the Ev. Luth. Synodical Conference of North America	152
Churches and Sects of Christendom. J. L. Neve	153
Studies in the Liturgy. F. R. Webber	156
Does the Modern Papacy Require a New Evaluation? B. C. Gohdes	158
The Lutheran Hymnal	231
Report of the twenty-fourth regular convention of the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church	309
Why Was I Not Told? E. W. Marquardt	310
Every-Day Science for Christians. Theodore L. Handrich	310
The Social Teachings of Moses and of Representative Prophets. Hartwig Dierks	311

B. Kurze Anzeigen

Evangelisch = Lutherischer Hausfreund = Kalender 1941. Martin Willfonun	160
Amerikanischer Kalender für deutsche Lutheraner auf das Jahr 1941. J. L. Müller	160
Lutheran Annual 1941	160

Theologische Quartalschrift.

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

Jahrgang 38

Januar 1941

Nummer 1

WORSHIP

(Continued)

III

Through prayer our faith in God our Father is exercised.

Some people regard prayer as a means of grace, assuming that by the very act of praying our faith is nourished and our sanctification increased. Prayer is not a means of grace. There is a vital difference.

The means of grace are the word of the Gospel and the sacraments. They come from God. God gave us the Gospel. God gave us baptism. God gave us holy Communion. In the means God is active. He is teaching us. He is offering us grace, conveying it to us, sealing it to us. The means are filled with divine power. By the very offer they make they create faith and sustain faith.

Prayer is the very opposite: God is not speaking, we are speaking; thus our prayer is not God's Word, it is our word. In prayer not God is doing something, we are doing something. This is the case so manifestly that people have often tried to make a meritorious work out of prayer. As some people boast of their fasting, announcing to the world by their sad countenance in what an holy exercise they are engaged: so others boast of their praying. Although these exercises are far from meriting God's favor, yet all three classes of hypocrites are right in so far that praying as well as alms-giving and fasting are works of men.

Then praying is not a means of grace.

It would cause a sad state of affairs if prayer were to be

classed with the means of grace. We Christians, particularly those who are most sincere in their prayers, realize how far from perfect our prayers are. We do not devote the time to prayer that we should. Nor are our prayers as devout and fervent as they should be. While we pray we cannot keep worldly thoughts, even sinful thoughts, from flitting across our hearts. What, if prayer were a means of grace? Could such — imperfect — praying give us the assurance of faith?

We need stronger means of grace. We need the assurance coming from God, given to us in His Word and sealed in His sacraments, that He will hear our prayers, imperfect though they be. Paul gives us such assurance in Rom. 8, 26-27: Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Although prayer, then, is not a means of grace, yet it is of great value for strengthening our faith.

Our prayer is a part of our sanctification. A Christian being born again of the Holy Spirit will practice a new way of living. Although his Old Adam is still clinging to him making him very sluggish, although he meets with fierce opposition from the devil and the world, yet the Christian will painfully labor and struggle to lead a new life of obedience to the will of God. According to his inward man he delights in the Law of the Lord, and he will try to put the works of the Law into practice, no matter how much his Old Adam may loathe and detest them.

In the Law we find the Second Commandment, which demands of us to call upon the name of God in every trouble, to pray, praise, and give thanks.

It is very much against our nature to call on the name of God in trouble. That means that we prostrate ourselves before His throne, humble ourselves and admit that we are doomed without His aid. More. Not only do we need His assistance, He will have to do it all if we are to be helped. We cannot do anything. That confession is hard to make. If we could only do something, be it ever so little, that would save us at least some honor. We

would prefer to offer God pay for His help; but to come to Him and confess our utter helplessness, to ask Him to help us because of ourselves we perish, that is too humiliating for our Old Adam.

But that is exactly the attitude of the new man in us. God redeemed us through the sacrifice of His own Son and by patient work of the Holy Spirit taught us to cast ourselves entirely on His mercy and to cry Abba, Father. We know that only in this spirit can we be saved. Therefore, no matter how much our flesh resents it, we practice prayer. As soon as we relent in this exercise the old flesh will gain ground and our new man will weaken. As a part of our sanctification, as a part of our struggle against our Old Adam to keep him under, and as a part of the training for our new man, we daily exercise ourselves in prayer, calling on the name of the Lord in every trouble.

As with our petitions, so it is with giving thanks. If our thanking is to be more than a mere polite formality, if it is to involve the admission that we have nothing, absolutely nothing, of ourselves, that we owe all we are and have to God alone, our Old Adam will simply refuse to give thanks in that sense, while our new man knows of no greater pleasure. — We see that our sanctification is exercised in the giving of thanks.

We have just looked at the repulsiveness for our Old Adam of praying and giving thanks. But do we always think so far? Do we not often walk along in our course without giving much thought to matters? We receive our earthly blessings, our food and drink, our clothing and shelter as matters of course, and simply forget to thank God for them. And when we fear a shortage we begin to worry instead of to pray.

Someone may object, why call prayer in every form an exercise of *sanctification*? Do not the unbelievers also pray? Even Gentiles? Yes, in a sense, they do. And often they pray more fervently and more devoutly than do the Christians. Think of the Pharisee in the temple, we cannot challenge his sincerity. Think of the prophets of Baal on Carmel who cried aloud and cut themselves with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. With their sincerity and devotion they put many a Christian to shame. How then can we say that in prayer we exercise our sanctification?

We have mentioned already the two main facts: Christians do not consider their prayers a meritorious work, and they pray to the God who through Christ reconciled them to himself in the Spirit. Wherever this is not the case there seriousness of prayer and devotion are nothing but developments of sin to a higher degree. If a man offers his prayers to God as a work for which he expects a reward, then the more serious he is, the more pronounced will be his demand of a reward. Instead of bringing him closer to God, his prayer has merely set forth in bold relief his utter estrangement. If a man does not pray to the true God and Father in Christ through the Spirit, if he prays to false gods, again, the more devout he is the greater his separation from the true God.

Although we Christians must admit that we lack in fervor and devotion when we pray, yet we must also insist that in spite of our shortcomings our prayers are a form of sanctification. And as every good work that we perform in sanctification, every act of obedience to any of the commandments of God, serves to train, to exercise, to strengthen our new spiritual powers so also every act of obedience to the Second Commandment.

There is more to be said. Prayer advances our sanctification in a special way.

Prayer is a good work according to the first table of the decalog. While the commandments of the second table teach us how to love our neighbor, those of the first table bring us face to face with our God. While serving our neighbor the thought of God may fade somewhat and recede to the background. The thought of God is never lost out of sight entirely; Luther prefaces the explanation of every commandment with the words: "We should fear and love God." Yet we see the need of our neighbors more concretely before our eyes. It may stir us to action more directly than the commandment of God.

When we pray, however, we cannot do so without using the name of God, which He gave us for this very purpose that we might call upon Him. He has some great and terrible names; and He has some sweet and comforting names. We are reminded by the very use of God's name who He is, who we are, what He has done for us, what He promised still to do. The very fact that

we are using the name of God forces us to remember what He has revealed to us concerning himself. A prayer which uses the name of God lightly hardly deserves the name prayer. When we thus practice sanctification according to the Second Commandment, we are by the very nature of our act forced to use the Word of God according to the Third Commandment and to cultivate fear, love, and trust in God according to the First Commandment.

Still more may be said.

The more we pray, the more we realize how imperfect our prayer is, both our thanksgiving and our petitions. Our prayer will take the turn it took with the disciples: Lord, teach us to pray.

We know how willing the Lord is to hear this prayer. He will teach us by revealing himself more and more to us in His Word. He will teach us by strengthening and increasing our faith, so that thereby we become also better prayers. This He will not always do by heightening our feelings and emotions. He may do it, and He very frequently does so, by depressing us. Think of the many Psalms of David. The Lord taught him to pray by laying heavy burdens on him. Think of Paul who was so very anxious to preach the Gospel and to win souls for Christ. He had his thorn in the flesh. And when he fervently prayed to the Lord and besought Him that this thing might depart from him, when he three times had repeated the prayer, the Lord gave him the answer: My grace is sufficient for thee.

A disappointing answer from Paul's point of view, but a great strengthening of his sanctification. Paul was interested in his own health, because a great task had been assigned to him. He was to carry the Gospel to the ends of the world. Did that not require a man of robust health? So we think, and so Paul may have thought. But the Lord deepened his understanding by sending him that thorn in the flesh, moreover by persecution when his work in some places seemed barely begun, even interrupting his work by imprisonment. Paul's work did not depend on his personal health and freedom: My grace is sufficient for thee. It was a painful lesson, but a wholesome one.

God has many ways of answering our prayer for a strengthening of our sanctification, many ways much more effective than the easy roads we like to pick.

We expect a strengthening of our faith and progress in our life of sanctification as a fruit of our prayers. Rightly so. The main reason is this: our praying will lead us into the Word of God.

If we wish to approach God with the assurance that our prayer is welcome, there is only one way of gaining that assurance. Our own heart, as Jeremiah says, is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. In our heart we may imagine that our prayer will be acceptable. We begin to pray boldly. Suddenly we become aware how unworthy we are, and our boldness is gone. And our prayer is gone. Or we may realize our great sinfulness, and our heart cannot even find the courage to begin to pray. Woe to a man if he has nothing more on which to base his confidence than his deceitful and desperately wicked heart.

In order to approach the throne of God properly, we must have better ground to stand on. What a terrible thing if we cannot pray because we hesitate! And what a still more terrible thing if our prayer, begun in high spirits, suddenly collapses! In order to avoid such calamity a Christian will make sure of his ground. He will make sure of the forgiveness of his sins from God's promise in His Word sealed in the sacraments. He will make sure of God's promises to hear prayers addressed to Him.

What strengthening of faith by prayer thus based on the means of grace!

There still remains to consider God's answer to our prayer. It was briefly touched in the foregoing. No prayer will ever remain unheard; none will remain unanswered. The answer may not always be of the kind we expect. It may be that for a long time we do not seem to be getting any answer at all. But that is the fault of the heaviness of our eyes and ears. All our prayers are heard "speedily" (Lk. 18, 8); they are heard even before we utter them, as Isaiah says: Before they call, I will answer (chap. 65, 24).

And what will God's answer be? In detail His answer will vary according to circumstances, so that probably no two answers will ever be perfectly alike. Yet basically all answers will center in one point: they will strengthen our inner man. God will open

our eyes that we behold the wondrous things out of His law (Ps. 119, 18), and may from rich experience talk of His wondrous works (v. 27). He will help us to overcome the inborn inclination toward self-righteousness, He will turn away our eyes from being fascinated by vanity (v. 37). Thus both positively and negatively shall we receive an increase in sanctification: that we may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that we walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; that we are strengthened with all might in patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; that we give thanks to God our Father who made us partakers of the inheritance of the saints (cf. Col. 1, 9-12). As St. James says, God will give liberally to all men that pray for wisdom (chap. 1, 5); and as Jesus promises, He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him (Lk. 11, 13), the Holy Spirit with all His gifts and graces.

Much more might be said on this point how our prayers help to advance our Christianity, but this may suffice to illustrate the truth.

(To be concluded.)

M.

The Doctrine of the Antichrist.

THE CHURCH FATHERS.

From the earliest times the history of the Christian Church is replete with accounts of the attempts of the church fathers to interpret the locus classicus for the doctrine of the antichrist 2 Thess. 2. They all without fail identified the "man of sin" of whom Paul speaks in this passage with the antichrist mentioned by John in his first epistle (2, 18). But scanning the writings of the first centuries of the Christian Era for an answer to the question, who he is, we run into a veritable gamut of differing opinions, from Irenaeus to Augustine in the Occident, from Origen to Theodoret in the Orient. Some hold that Nero or another Roman emperor is the prophesied antichrist, some that a future world-conqueror is meant; others claim he will be an outstanding errorist who will arise within the Church. Origen and his followers are

inclined to think of antichrist as being an immaterial quantity, the spiritual power of darkness intensified to the highest potency.

THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH.

In the Middle Ages, after the ascendancy of the papacy to its unprecedented power over state and church alike, the Waldensians (founder Peter Waldo about A. D. 1170), having suffered cruel persecutions at the hand of the hierarchy, identified Rome with the Babylon of the Apocalypse and the pope with antichrist. John Wyclif (†1384), an eminent scholar of the university of Oxford and fervent English patriot, openly spoke against the papal antichrist. He also wrote the antipapal tract "*De Christo et suo adversario Antichristo.*" He had supporters not only in his native England but also on the Continent. Still we may well say that up to the time of Luther's reformation there was no full recognition of the "mystery of iniquity", personified in the pope, for no one since the days of St. Paul had a full grasp and understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ until God in His own good time raised up Martin Luther.

LUTHER.

That Luther had been a devout and zealous member of the Church of his day is a well-known fact. When he was troubled by the deep conviction of his sinfulness, when he was groaning under the wrath of a righteous God and the expectation of eternal damnation, he made faithful use of all the means his Church offered him to work out his own salvation. Seeking peace for the anguish of his soul he forsook his studies at the university and the congenial company of his friends to become a monk. Such a step of self-denial he had been taught by the Church to consider the surest way to escape the wrath to come. As he himself afterwards tells us, he did the most menial work in the monastery and castigated himself in every conceivable manner. But all in vain! He was a true son of the Church who meekly obeyed its precepts and in all sincerity revered the pope in Rome as the Holy Father of all Christendom, the head of the Church and the vicar of Christ here on earth.

All this was changed when through his diligent study of the written Word of God he came to a true knowledge of the Gospel

of Christ, when God through the Gospel opened his eyes to the blessed truth that not our own, but a foreign *i. e.* Christ's righteousness justifies us in the sight of God. From now on he took his stand on the Scriptures as the sole norm and guide for the faith and life of a Christian. He now proclaimed in the pulpit and lecture hall as well as in writings the justification and forgiveness of sins by the free grace of God for Christ's sake through faith alone. No good works, be they enjoined by Moses or by the Church, can save, but faith alone which apprehends the salvation Christ has wrought through His atoning blood, shed on Calvary. Christ is the only and allsufficient mediator between God and man; we need no other, neither priest, bishop nor pope. When he was peremptorily ordered to recant, he refused. He could not yield and would not, for his conscience was bound by God's Word. For this his uncompromising stand he encountered the implacable enmity of the pope and his cohorts. The controversy was finally brought to a culmination by the excommunication of Luther from the Church which the pope executed through a bull. Thus the pope revealed himself as the sworn enemy of Christ and His blessed Gospel. And from that time on Luther held steadfastly to the conviction that the pope is the very antichrist, and never wavered from this position to his end. One glance into the index of his writings gives ample proof of this. The references to the pope as the antichrist in his works cover two full pages of the St. Louis edition.¹⁾

¹⁾ „Darum hat sich der Antichrist schlechterdings wider und über Gott erhoben und sich an Christi Statt gesetzt, die Gnade weggeworfen und den Glauben verleugnet. Denn er hat so gelehrt: Der Glaube nützt nichts, wenn er nicht Werke hat; und durch diese falsche Meinung hat er die Wohltat Christi gänzlich verfinstert und vertilgt und an die Stelle der Gnade Christi und seines Reiches hat er die Lehre von den Werken und ein Reich der Zeremonien aufgerichtet, und es mit lauter Narrenwerk befestigt, und so die ganze Welt von Christo, der doch allein im Gewissen wirken und herrschen sollte, hinweggerissen und mit Gewalt in die Hölle gestoßen.“ (IX, 243.)

„... Dieses sind Widerschriften stückweise, die Christo nur in gewissen Stücken zuwider sind, dergleichen die Schwärmer sind. Ein anderer ist wider den ganzen Christum, und dieser ist das Haupt von allen, dergleichen das Papsttum ist. Denn der Hauptartikel christlicher Lehre ist dieser, daß Christus unsere Gerechtigkeit sei. Wer nun diesen angreift, der nimmt uns den

THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS.

Of course, to be a good Lutheran it is not necessary to agree with every view Luther has held, to consider all his exegetical and historical statements as binding. But it is quite a different matter when we hold views which are contrary to, or out of harmony with, a doctrine set forth explicitly in one or more of the generally accepted public confessional writings of the Lutheran Church. Should such be the case, then we cannot very well lay claim to the name of an orthodox Lutheran. At the time of their induction into the ministry our pastors and professors have solemnly avowed that they are in full agreement with the teachings of the Lutheran Confessions, that they subscribe to them as being a faithful rendition and a correct interpretation of the doctrines of the Word of God. Can we extend the hand of fellowship to, and enter into fraternal relations with, a man who in spite of this public avowal not merely holds but also publicly proclaims convictions diverging from the tenets of our Church? Who demands for himself the right to his divergent views and their dissemination, irrespective of his oath of office? Who is not willing to relinquish his office into which his Church has called him, although he is out of harmony with the doctrine of that Church? Decidedly not. But could we not at least grant tolerance to such men as hold and teach views in so-called non-fundamental doctrines, *e. g.* the doctrine of the antichrist, which are

ganzen Christum, und ist der wahre Widerchrist; die übrigen tun ihm dazu Vorshub. Einer, der Kezerei wider die Person Christi anrichtet, ist nicht ein so großer Kezer, als der Kezerei wider das Verdienst Christi stiftet.

„Es gibt zweierlei Arten von Gerechtigkeit, meine Gerechtigkeit und Christi Gerechtigkeit. Das Evangelium predigt, daß wir in die Gerechtigkeit Christi sollen gesetzt, und von unserer Gerechtigkeit in die Gerechtigkeit Christi versetzt werden. Also spricht Paulus: ‚Wir werden ohne Verdienst gerecht aus seiner Gnade durch die Erlösung, so durch Christum Jesum geschehen ist‘, Röm. 3, 24. ‚Christus ist uns von Gott gemacht zur Weisheit, zur Gerechtigkeit, zur Heiligung, und zur Erlösung‘, 1 Kor. 1, 30. Aber der Papst hat neue Lebensarten angeordnet, durch welche man die Gerechtigkeit vor Gott zuwege bringen soll, nämlich die eigenen Genugthuungen. Wenn der Papst dieses lehrte, unsere Gerechtigkeit sei nichts, und die Gerechtigkeit Christi sei es allein, durch welche wir gerecht würden, so sagte er ebenso viel, als: Darum ist die Messe nichts; folglich hat das Klosterleben und die eigenen Genugthuungen keinen Nutzen; und also würde das ganze

contrary to and at variance with our Confessions? To do so would either be a denial of the perspicuity of the Word of God or an admission on our part that the Lutheran Confessions are not fully consonant with the Scriptures in all matters of doctrine. Hence, our answer to this last as well as to the first question must be a decided no.²⁾

Reich des Papstes umgekehrt. Sie sprechen zwar, das Verdienst Christi mache uns selig, aber sie mischen die eigene Gerechtigkeit mit ein. Das heißt wahrhaftig Christum verwerfen, ja, Christum vertilgen, und ‚den Sohn Gottes für Spott halten‘, Hebr. 6, 6.“ (IX, 1435 s.)

„Darum hat sich der Papst erhoben über Gott und sich an Gottes Statt gesetzt, auf daß er an Gottes Statt angebetet und ihm gedienet, und das Wort Gottes und der rechte Gottesdienst abgetan und unterdrückt werde.

„Denn siehe an seine Dekrete und Canones, so wirst du finden, daß die übertretungen der Satzungen des Papstes viel ernster gestraft werden denn die übertretungen der göttlichen Gebote; ja, den Herrn Christum, den man allein anbeten und ehren soll, tritt er mit Füßen und lästert ihn, will aber, daß man seine Lehre annehme und ehre, will gefürchtet sein, und will, daß man dem glauben und trauen soll, das er lehrt. Solches heißt ja, meine ich, sich setzen über den verkündigten und geehrten Gott. Darum wird er billig genannt der Antichrist. . . .

„Ich meine ja, solches heiße sich erheben über Gott und sitzen im Tempel Gottes; nicht zwar im Himmel, darin der unoffenbarte und verborgene Gott in seinem göttlichen Wesen wohnt, sondern an der Stätte Gottes, des verkündigten, der sich im Worte lehren und offenbaren läßt, und an der Stätte Gottes, dem man dient.

„ . . . und daß ich es kurz sage, er hat Christum ganz und gar begraben, und die Gerechtigkeit zugeeignet seinen Menschenfügungen und falschen Gottesdiensten, die er ohne und wider Gottes Wort erdacht und aufgesetzt hat. Das heißt ja, meine ich, sich überheben über alles, das Gott genannt wird.“ (I, 1062 s.)

²⁾ „So gewiß wir nach der Schrift das Papsttum für den Antichrist halten, so gewiß diese Lehre auch ein Teil unsers Bekenntnisses ist, so gewiß ist doch richtig, was Quenstedt sagt: Non autem dicimus, quaestionem hanc de antichristo esse talem, cujus decisio omnibus christianis ad salutem scitu sit necessaria, vel ignoratio per se damnabilis. Und in der Darlegung des status controversiae äußert er sich über die Wichtigkeit dieser Lehre dahin: Non est quaestio de fundamentali aliquo articulo fidei, cujus ignoratio vel negatio damnat, sed de articulo fidei non fundamentali. Es ist aber im Auge zu behalten, daß die Begriffe ‚fundamental‘ und ‚nicht fundamental‘ sich auf die Seligkeit und nicht auf die kirchliche Gemeinschaft beziehen. Wir sprechen dem, der diesen Artikel nicht glaubt, die Seligkeit nicht ab, wohl aber die lutherische Kirchengemeinschaft.“ Hoenede, Ev. Luth. Dogmatik. Bd. IV, S. 222 f.

One word before we proceed: Let him who confounds *non-fundamental* with *non-Scriptural* take note that his definition of this term is not that of the universally recognized orthodox teachers of our Church, that he introduces a *novum* which can only confuse the issue. Let him be warned that he is indicting the confessions of the Lutheran Church as "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matth. 15, 9) and therefore falling under the verdict of Christ in the same passage: "In vain they do worship Me". No, we cannot, must not champion the cause of such as arrogate to themselves under the guise of academic freedom the right to spread in the pulpit and lecture hall or through the religious press opinions which run counter to the *doctrina publica* of our Church.

That the Lutheran Confessions call the pope the antichrist and prove this assertion in many places and in divers ways is so apparent that there is no room for argument on this point. We quote from the Triglot Concordia.

The Apology of the Augsburg Confession. Article XV (319, 18, 19): "If the adversaries defend these human services as meriting justification, grace and the remission of sins, they simply establish the kingdom of Antichrist. For the kingdom of Antichrist is a new service of God, devised by human authority rejecting Christ, just as the kingdom of Mahomet has services and works through which it wishes to be justified before God; nor does it hold that men are gratuitously justified before God by faith, for Christ's sake. Thus the papacy also will be a part of the kingdom of Antichrist if it thus defends human services as justifying. For the honor is taken away from Christ when they teach that we are not justified gratuitously by faith, for Christ's sake, but by such services; especially when they teach that such services are not only useful for justification, but are also necessary, as they hold above in Article VII, when they condemn us for saying that unto true unity of the Church it is not necessary that rites instituted by men should everywhere be alike. Daniel 11, 38 indicates that new human services will be the very form and constitution of the kingdom of Antichrist."

Article XXIII (p. 371, 25): "Therefore this law concerning perpetual celibacy is peculiar to this new pontifical despotism. Nor is it without reason. For Daniel 11, 37 ascribes to the king-

dom of Antichrist this mark, namely, the contempt of women". Cf. 319, 18.

The Smalcald Articles. Part II, Article IV (p. 475, 10. 13): "This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Antichrist, who has exalted himself above, and opposed himself against Christ, because he will not permit Christians to be saved without his power, which, nevertheless, is nothing, and is neither ordained, nor commanded by God. This is, properly speaking, to exalt himself above all that is called God, as Paul says 2 Thess. 2, 4.

S. A. Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope (p. 515, 39): "Now it is manifest that the Roman pontiffs, with their adherents, defend (and practise) godless doctrines and godless services. And the marks (all the vices) of Antichrist plainly agree with the kingdom of the Pope and his adherents. For Paul, 2 Ep. 2, 3, in describing to the Thessalonians Antichrist, calls him an adversary of Christ, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God. He speaks therefore of one ruling in the Church, not of heathen kings, and he calls this one the adversary of Christ, because he will devise doctrine conflicting with the Gospel, and will assume to himself divine authority".

And again (p. 517, 41): "This being the case, all Christians ought to beware of becoming partakers of the godless doctrine, blasphemies, and unjust cruelties of the Pope. On this account they ought to desert and execrate the Pope with his adherents as the kingdom of Antichrist, just as Christ has commanded, Matth. 7, 15: Beware of false prophets. And Paul commands that godless teachers should be avoided and execrated as cursed, Gal. 1, 8; Tit. 3, 10. And 2 Cor. 6, 14 he says: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what communion has light with darkness?"

Finally S. A. Of the Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops (p. 521, 57): "Therefore, even though the bishop of Rome had the primacy by divine right, yet since he defends godless services and doctrine conflicting with the Gospel, obedience is not due him; yea, it is necessary to resist him as Antichrist. The errors of the Pope are manifest and not trifling."

Formula of Concord. Sol. Decl. X. Of Church Rites (p. 1059, 20): "And in the article of the Papacy the Smalcald Articles say (p. 475): Therefore, just as little as we can worship the devil himself as Lord and God, we can endure his apostle, the Pope, or Antichrist, in his rule as head or lord. For to lie and to kill and to destroy body and soul eternally, that is wherein his papal government really consists."

THE SCRIPTURES.

The sedes doctrinae for the doctrine of the Antichrist is 2 Thess. 2. The term *antichrist* does not occur in this passage at all. The apostle John alone of all the writers of the New Testament employs it, and he speaks of the one Antichrist as well as of many antichrists, 1 John 2, 18. 22, also 4, 3 and 2 John 7. From him this term which he coined is evidently borrowed to designate the personage Paul pictures in our Thessalonian passage because of its eminent aptness for summing up in one word the characteristics ascribed to him by Paul. A glance into the history of New Testament exegesis proves that the Church from its earliest time understood under the Antichrist him of whom the apostle speaks in 2 Thess. 2. But while this is undoubtedly true the question concerning us now is whether, on the basis of this passage, we are not only justified but rather whether we are constrained to believe that the pope is the Antichrist.

We read (v. 3): "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day (of Christ) shall not come, except there come a falling away first (*hē apostasia*), and that man of sin (*hō anthrōpōs tēs anōmias*) be revealed, the son of perdition (*hō hyiōs tēs apōleias*)". The apostacy from whom or from what? The apostle has no thought here of a political defection. In the whole passage no mention is made of politics or purely sociological matters. His thoughts rather dwell on things which belong to the sphere of religion. The context admits of but one answer, the apostle means the falling away from Christ and His Gospel (1, 8).³⁾

³⁾ „Was der Antichrist vertritt, sind kräftige Irrtümer, Lüge, und die dem Antichrist anhängen, haben die Liebe zur Wahrheit, das ist, zur christlichen Wahrheit, nicht angenommen und gehen ewig verloren, B. 10–12. Auch Zünemann, der sonst den ganzen Abschnitt mißversteht, sagt in bezug

The papacy condemns, execrates, anathematizes in the strongest terms any one that believes a man is justified before God by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone without the deeds of the law. Of that the annals of the Church give ample proof and the Council of Trent (1545-1563), whose canons and decrees are the authorized confession of the faith and discipline of the Roman Catholic Church, shall give witness to the truth of our statement. We quote (Trident., sess. VI, can. 11. 12. 20): "If any one saith, that men are justified, either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ, or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and is inherent in them; or even that the grace, whereby we are justified, is only the favour of God; let him be anathema. — If any one saith, that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake; or that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified; let him be anathema. — If any one saith, that the man who is justified and, how perfect soever, is not bound to observe the commandments of God and the Church, but only to believe; as if indeed the Gospel were a bare and absolute promise of eternal life, without the condition of observing the commandments; let him be anathema."

Of the doctrine of justification Luther — and with him agree all truly evangelical Christians — says: it is the one article, *qui solus ecclesiam Dei gignit, nutrit, aedificat, servat, defendit; ac sine eo ecclesia Dei non potest una hora subsistere*" (St. L. XIV, 168). What the air is for the physical life, that is the doctrine of justification through faith without a man's own works for the spiritual life, as F. Pieper puts it (Christl. Dogm. III, 530).

auf die apostasia richtig: Nicht Abtrünnigkeit im politischen Sinne, sondern einzig und allein religiöse Abtrünnigkeit, das heißt, Abfall von Gott und der wahren Religion, kann mit der *apostasia* gemeint worden sein. Zu dieser Annahme zwingt, 1. was im unmittelbaren, inneren Zusammenhang mit der Apostasie von dem *anthrōpos tēs hamartias* ausgesagt wird, 2. die Charakteristik der *apostasia* B. 3 durch *anomia* B. 7 und 3. der konstante biblische Sprachgebrauch. Vgl. Act. 21, 21; 1 Tim. 4, 1. Als unstatthaft ist hiernach auch die Ansicht zu verwerfen, daß an eine Mischung von religiösem und politischen Abfall zu denken sei." F. Pieper, Christl. Dogmatik, Bd. III, S. 528.

Is any greater apostasy conceivable than this falling away (*apostasia*) from the Christian religion? ⁴⁾

In Paul's time this apostasy was still hidden. He speaks of it as the mystery of lawlessness (*to mystērion tēs anomias*) in verse 7, but the lawless one (*ho anomos*) shall be brought out from behind the veil, shall be revealed (v. 8). Something is now, *i. e.*, at the time Paul writes, holding it down. What that is the Thessalonian Christians knew; the apostle reminds them that he had told them about it (verses 6. 7). But then already the mystery of the lawlessness was at work (*energeitai*). Since Luther's reformation this mystery stands uncovered, revealed (*apokalyptesthai*) before the eyes of the Christians. It is the pope of Rome. He is the man of the lawlessness *kat' exochēn*. Everything God in His mercy has laid down in His Word to save a sin-ridden world he has overthrown or abrogated. There is no commandment in the decalogue he has not perverted. For the worship of the triune God in spirit and in truth he has substituted his idolatrous ceremonies. By his authority man is taught to call upon Mary and the so-called saints in his hour of need. The sinner is to look for intercession with God to sinful men like himself whom the pope has canonized after their death, while the Scriptures say: "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus", 1 Tim. 2, 5. The preaching of the Word has been almost entirely abandoned in favor of the performance and observation of certain rites. The Lord's Supper has been mutilated. The error of the transubstantiation of the elements into

⁴⁾ "The fact that this apostasy will occur in the Christian Church is beyond question; otherwise it would not be an 'apostasy'. The man of the lawlessness will be its head. Yet some have thought of a Jewish apostasy, the Jewish national rejection of Christ, and also of the Jewish political apostasy from imperial Rome. Others think of a general moral falling away from such standards of morality as existed in the pagan world, or of an anarchical apostasy from the established governments of the world. None of these interpretations will do." Lenski, 2 Thess., p. 416.

„Paulus, der den Antichrist beschreibt, deutet klar genug an, daß derselbe in dem Abfall, nämlich von Gottes Wort, hervortrete, also aus der Kirche hervorgeht. Ausdrücklich bezeugt dies auch Johannes (2. 19).“ Cf. 1. Joh. 2, 19. Sönedef, Ev. Luth. Dogm., IV S. 219.

the body and blood of Christ, which the priest can work at will by the magic of his blessing, has given rise to the abomination of the mass, the offering of the unbloody sacrifice of Christ for the living and the dead. In the stead of the Gospel of free grace stands the "gospel" of workrighteousness which leads man to seek his salvation by doing works prescribed by the Church. Verily, the pope is the man of the lawlessness of whom Paul speaks. And as such he is the son of the perdition. Not perdition in a general sense, but the perdition beside which there is no other, the eternal perdition, damnation in the everlasting torment of hell.

A graphic picture, indeed, Paul paints for us of Antichrist! The prince of darkness his father, the perdition his mother, this man of lawlessness is himself lost and, as an instrument of perdition, he leads those who entrust themselves to his guidance to their doom. He is not Satan himself, as some think, but is a human being, as the text plainly states.⁵⁾ His presence (*hē parusia autu*) is according to Satan's operation (*kat' energeian tu satana*, v. 9) in all power and lie-signs and lie-wonders,⁶⁾ which on the surface have all the earmarks of being wrought with the help of the omnipotent God. We are forewarned not to fall into his snares, for, the apostle continues, his presence is, furthermore, with all deceit of unrighteousness (*en pasē apatē adikias*, v. 10). "This is the possessive genitive: alle Täuschungskünste, wie sie der Ungerechte ersinnt (B. — P. 26), all the different kinds of deceptions which unrighteousness employs" (Lenski, 2 Thess., p. 437).

⁵⁾ „Der Antichrist ist nicht Satan selbst, auch nicht eine Personifikation desselben, sondern ein Mensch (2 Thess. 2, 3), dessen Kommen nach der Wirkung Satans geschieht (2 Thess. 2, 9). Der Antichrist wird also deutlich vom Satan, dem Urheber, als dessen Werk unterschieden. Doch ist dieser Mensch nicht ein Geschöpf Satans und heißt nicht Mensch der Sünde, als der in der Sünde seinen Ursprung hätte, sondern als Mensch ist er Geschöpf Gottes.“ Hönedé, Dogm. IV S. 219 f.

⁶⁾ „Mit Recht weist Luther darauf hin, daß sich die Gewalt, welche das Papsttum ausübt, nur aus diabolischer Wirkung erkläre. Es ist nicht bloß wider Gottes Wort, sondern auch wider alle Vernunft. Niemand liebt es; selbst die eigenen Anhänger lieben es nicht; aber alles fürchtet sich, betrogen und gefangen gehalten durch den Schein der Frömmigkeit und durch die Zeichen und Wunder der Lüge.“ J. Pieper. Dogm. III S. 531.

He is the one "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (v. 4).

The pope sets himself up as the authoritative interpreter of the Word of God. His decrees in matters of faith and worship must be obeyed, for he alone has the keys and, therefore, the power to absolve and condemn. Cf. Luther in the Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article IV. What is the temple in which he is sitting? Surely, Paul, speaking by the inspiration of God, does not mean the sanctuary (*ho naos*) in Jerusalem, the imminent fall of which Christ had so clearly predicted, Matth. 23, 38; 24, 2. Luke 19, 44. For this temple in our passage is to endure until judgment day. Evidently no sanctuary of wood or stone, built by the hand of man, is here meant, but the holy Christian Church, the spiritual temple of the Lord, in whom the believers by means of the Word and the Sacraments "are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. 2, 19-22. Cf. 1 Cor. 3, 16; 1 Tim. 3, 15; 2 Tim. 2, 20. Here Antichrist sits, has established himself. There is where we must look for him. After his revelation by the hand of God he shall be found in the same place where all the children of God are found, in the midst of the Christian Church. The pope claims the rule over all Christendom. He usurps for himself the divine prerogative to sit in judgment over everybody and everything. He is the source of all wisdom and all knowledge. He is the judge over all, but he must not be judged by anyone. Not even the Word of God out of the mouth of any other human being can judge him. Rather does he judge the Word of God, since he alone is able to determine what the meaning and intent of the Scriptures are. God speaks through him who is Christ's vicar on this earth, and through him alone. And when the pope speaks *ex cathedra* he is infallible.⁷⁾

⁷⁾ „Das Sitzen des Antichrists im Tempel ist Bezeichnung des antichristlichen Reichs als eines festen, ferner Bezeichnung der Herrschaft des Antichrists als einer über die Herzen und Gewissen der Christen, denn das Sitzen im Tempel als Gott und das Sichüberheben über alles, was Gott und Gottesdienst heißt (nämlich was nach Gottes Offenbarung mit Recht so heißt), ist Annahme der geistlichen Herrschaft über Herzen und Gewissen durch falsche Lehre unter Beseitigung der rechten Lehre. Der Anti-

Before the Lord's day would come, this man of the lawlessness had to be revealed (v. 3). At Paul's time the mystery of lawlessness was already at work. However, something was holding it down (*to katechon*); and only after he that now was holding it down (*ho katechōn arti*) had gotten out of the way would Antichrist be revealed (v. 6. 7). What the terms *to katechon* and *ho katechōn* mean his Thessalonian readers knew, for the apostle had told them when he was with them (v. 5). We do not know, and all speculation on our part is idle. Neither Jesus in his eschatological discourses nor any one of the Biblical writers throw light on the subject. Hence we do best to be content in the conviction the Lord would have disclosed to us what and who has withheld (held down), if it would be necessary for us to know. Not until he that is holding it down shall get out of the middle (*ēk mēsu genētai*) shall the time come when Jesus shall consume him with the spirit of his mouth (*anēlei*) and shall destroy him (*katargēsei*) with the brightness of his coming (v. 8) (*anaireo* = put out of the way, kill, slay; *katargeo* = put an end to, do away with, annul, abolish.) With the breath of His mouth, His Word, the Lord will kill Antichrist. A powerful serpent (Gen. 3), even

Christ ist also keine Weltmacht, nicht grobes, wüßtes Anstürmen gegen alles Christliche mit äußerlicher Gewalt, sondern ein Herrschen über die Gewissen und Herzen der Christen unter dem Schein des Gottesdienstes und Christentums.“ Hönedé. Dogm. IV, S. 220 f.

„Zum andern ist das Papsttum nicht außerhalb, sondern innerhalb der christlichen Kirche, weil es viele Glieder der Kirche unter sich hat, vor allen Dingen die getauften Kinder, sodann auch Erwachsene, die trotz der verführerischen Umgebung durch das gelegentlich laut werdende Evangelium allein auf Christi Verdienst vertrauen. Ferner: Daß der Papst niemand untertan, sondern der Oberste in Kirche und Welt sein will, ist eine allgemein bekannte Tatsache. Trotzdem er den einzigen Weg zur Seligkeit verflucht und abtut, behauptet er doch, daß nur die Menschen selig werden können, die sich ihm unterwerfen. Er ändert Gottes Wort und Gebote nach seinem Belieben, er will alle richten, aber von niemand gerichtet werden, ja er nimmt ausdrücklich die Unfehlbarkeit für sich in Anspruch.“ F. Pieper. Dogm. III, S. 530 f.

„Im Papsttum findet sich Zug für Zug wieder, was die Heilige Schrift vom Antichrist aus sagt. Hier findet sich nicht nur Abfall und falsche Lehre im allgemeinen, sondern Erhebung des Menschen in den Tempel Gottes an Gottes Statt (man denke nur an die beiden neuesten Dogmen: immaculata conceptio und Infallibilität); hier tritt menschliche Autorität an die Stelle

when its head is crushed, is still dangerous in its death-struggle. Through Luther's reformation the Lord has dealt Antichrist the death blow. Nevertheless, he still needs watching lest he do harm to the unwary. But on that great day, when He shall appear in His glory, at His epiphany (*epiphaneia*) on judgment day He will abolish, do away with Antichrist utterly.

In our passage God Himself through Paul paints a picture for all to behold. All that do not wilfully blind their own eyes can recognize Antichrist. This description fits only one in all the history of the world: The pope or rather the papacy, the succession of popes. Though one follows the other through the centuries the papacy, the system or institution which every single pope represents, remains the same throughout the ages.

Modern theologians, among them many bearing the name Lutheran, do not agree with Luther and our Confessions in the statement that the pope is the Antichrist described in 2 Thess. 2: "*Haec doctrina praeclare ostendit, papam esse ipsum verum Antichristum*". Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article IV (p. 475, 10). We note a few of their objections. The pope cannot be the Antichrist, for

der Heiligen Schrift, menschliche Gerechtigkeit an die Stelle der Gerechtigkeit Jesu Christi; hier werden menschliche Gebote über Gottes Gesetz erhoben; hier werden Schriftstellen, die auf Christum gehen (z. B. Jes. 28, 16; Ps. 72, 11; Matth. 28, 18; Apok. 5, 5), auf einen Menschen, den Papst, angewendet; ja hier maßt sich ein Mensch die höchste Gewalt nicht bloß auf Erden, sondern durch Ablass, Kanonisation Verstorbener, Transsubstantion u. dgl. auch im Himmel an; hier behauptet ein Mensch jure divino rechtmäßiger und alleiniger Inhaber aller geistlichen und weltlichen Gewalt auf Erden zu sein, so daß er aus eigener untrüglicher Machtvollkommenheit nicht bloß Gottesdienste ordnen und Glaubenssätze verkündigen, sondern sogar die Seligkeit vom Glauben an seine göttliche Autorität abhängig machen will; hier findet sich Verachtung der göttlichen Ordnung (Zölibat); hier findet sich Trachten nach der Weltherrschaft, Bühlen mit der Weltmacht, Ausnutzung der Weltmacht für egoistische Zwecke, Benutzung unheiliger Mittel angeblich zu heiligem Zwecke; hier finden sich Ströme vergossenen Märtyrerblutes; hier finden sich läugerische Zeichen und Wunder (man denke nur an Luise Lateau, Lourdes und Marpingen, an die wunderthätigen Marien- und Heiligenbilder usw.) usw. usw. Das alles sind so charakteristische Züge, daß wir nicht umhinkönnen zu sagen: Der Papst ist der Antichrist." Philippi. Lehre vom Antichrist, S. 67.

- a) the apostasy, the falling away must come first — ergo! What greater apostasy is conceivable, what could deserve being called “the apostasy” in the absolute sense of the word more than the fact that the pope rejects the Gospel *in toto* by anathematizing the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*, the doctrine of justification, that a man is saved by faith in the merits of Christ?
- b) The Antichrist is a single person, not a plurality, according to the Scriptures. Hence the papacy, the succession of one pope after the other, cannot be the expected Antichrist. J. Andreas Quenstedt, †1688, aptly disposes of this objection by saying: *Antichristum certam et unicam personam fore, scriptura nullibi dicit. . . . Scriptura enim saepe singularem numerum pro plurali ponit, sic Joh. 4, 37 allos. — alius est, qui seminat, et alius, qui metet, non unus, sed multi intelliguntur.* (Hoenecke, Dogm. IV, p. 224.)
- c) The question of the pope — in our or at any other time (jewelig) — being Antichrist must be considered a purely historical one. Hence, it is said, whether the pope is the Antichrist is something which cannot receive an absolutely indisputable answer, cannot be answered with certitude of faith. But do not these objectors suffer under a self-delusion? In effect they state, the Bible does not say in so many words that the pope is the Antichrist. That is undoubtedly true. But if that is a good argument, where do we end? What, ex. g., of another truism: The Bible does not mention the lodge by name as a sinful institution, ergo — —? Are we ready to draw the obvious conclusion? The Old Testament nowhere states the Messiah would appear in Jesus of Nazareth. That was an “historical” question for the people of His day. Even as they, comparing Old Testament Scripture with the words and works of Jesus, came to acknowledge, and thus to trust in, Jesus as the Christ of God, so must we likewise, on the basis of Scripture and from the words and works of the pope, recognize that in the papacy with its self-perpetuating succession the Antichrist stands revealed before our eyes. However much

the popes may differ one from another as individuals, as incumbents of their office they all claim to be the head of the Church with power of sovereignty over all men in secular and spiritual matters. They, one and all, approve of the resolutions and decrees of the Council of Trent, condemning the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ and its confessors.

In conclusion we reiterate with a conviction based on the clear and unmistakable words of Holy Writ Luther's dictum:

"Haec doctrina praeclare ostendit, papam esse ipsum verum Antichristum."
M. Lehninger.

Das rationelle Wissen um Gott.

Die Frage nach dem rationellen Wissen um Gott wird immer wieder gestellt werden müssen, weil die Heilige Schrift an verschiedenen Stellen von ihr handelt. Der locus classicus hierfür ist bekanntlich Römer 1, 19ff. Aber schon das Alte Testament enthält viele Anhaltspunkte für eine Antwort auf unsere Frage, wie das Luthers Auslegung der Genesis und z. B. auch des Propheten Jona wiederholt bezeugt. Auch das Neue Testament bietet uns neben Römer 1 noch andere Stellen, so z. B. Römer 2, 14f. und Apostelgeschichte 14 und 17, die uns alle über die Bedeutung dieser Frage nicht im Zweifel lassen. Denn es gehört letzten Endes mit zu der rechten Unterscheidung von Gesetz und Evangelium, daß wir uns auch über die natürliche Gotteserkenntnis im klaren sind. Es ist unsere Aufgabe, den Herrschaftsbereich der Ratio genau abzugrenzen und zu erkennen, was in die Sphäre der Ratio hineingehört und was nicht. Wir können aber gar nicht von der Ratio sprechen, ohne uns vor die andere Aufgabe gestellt zu sehen, der Bedeutung des Sündenfalles für das natürliche Wissen des Menschen um Gott gerecht zu werden. Denn letzten Endes kommt alles darauf an zu zeigen, was die verderbte Vernunft in religiösen und sittlichen Dingen vermag und was sie nicht vermag. „Darum ist es gut“, so heißt es in der Apologie, „daß man dieses klar unterscheidet, nämlich, daß die Vernunft und freier Wille vermag, etlichermaßen äußerlich ehrbar zu leben, aber neu geboren werden, inwendig ander Herz, Sinn und Muth kriegen, das wirket allein der heilige Geist“ (Müller, 219, 75). Mit andern

Worten, wir haben uns stets vorzusehen, der Vernunft nicht das einzuräumen, was allein dem Heiligen Geist und der Kraft des Evangeliums zukommt, andrerseits der Vernunft nicht das abzusprechen, was ihr trotz des Sündenfalls immer noch geblieben ist. Darum fährt die Apologie an der obengenannten Stelle fort: „Und wird doch ein rechter Unterscheid gemacht unter äußerlichem Weltleben und Frömmigkeit, und der Frömmigkeit, die für Gott gilt, die nicht philosophisch äußerlich ist, sondern inwendig im Herzen. Und diese Unterscheid haben wir nicht erdicht, sondern die heilige Schrift setzet solches klar.“

Angeichts dieses großen Unterschiedes zwischen der natürlichen und geistlichen Gotteserkenntnis dürfen wir erstere weder über- noch unterschätzen. Freilich, die geistliche Gotteserkenntnis können wir gegenüber der natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis nicht hoch genug einschätzen und würdigen. Nichts weniger als unsere Seligkeit hängt ja von der rechten Einschätzung unserer geistlichen Gotteserkenntnis ab. Darum ist zuerst und vor allem vor einer Überschätzung der natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis zu warnen. Das tut die Apologie, indem sie unser Zitat also fortsetzt: „Über diejenigen, die ihnen selbst erdichten und erträumen, als vermügen die Menschen Gottes Gesetz zu halten ohne den heiligen Geist, und als werde der heilige Geist uns Gnade geben in Ansehung unsers Verdiensts, haben diese nötige Lehre schändlich unterdrückt.“ Auch in dem letzten Jahrgang der „Quartalschrift“ (Nr. 2, Ste. 142f.) findet sich ein entsprechendes Zitat aus einem Referat von Hermann Gikmeier, „Wer ist der wahre Gott“, das folgenden Wortlaut hat: „Wir dürfen also die natürliche Gotteserkenntnis nicht überschätzen. . . . Diese natürliche Erkenntnis hat mit dem Christentum an sich nichts zu tun, hilft dem Menschen nicht vor Gott und macht ihn nicht besser und frömmere. Sie ist auch nicht eine Vorstufe der Besehrung. . . . Trotz aller natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis glaubt ein Heide doch nicht an monon aethinon theon, sondern einen Gott, den er sich nach seinen eigenen Gedanken selbst gemalt hat, welcher wahrhaftig kein Gott ist, sondern lauter nichts, ein Göze.“

Gegenüber einer solchen treffenden Beurteilung der natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis, die uns der gnädige Gott stets erhalten wolle, fragt man sich, ob wir uns denn weiter Gedanken über die natürliche Gotteserkenntnis machen brauchen. Diese Fragestellung führt nur zu leicht dahin, daß wir uns in unserem theologischen Denken gar nicht

über die Grenzen der Ratio klar werden, gar nicht näher auf die Frage nach der natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis eingehen und darum falschen Vorstellungen betreffs dessen, was die Vernunft und freier Wille vermögen und was sie nicht vermögen, anheimfallen. Und indem wir dann auch die Grenzen zwischen beiden Erkenntnissen nicht mehr ziehen, verlieren wir die geistliche Erkenntnis im Unterschiede von der natürlichen Erkenntnis zu würdigen. Darum haben wir uns hier nach der Bedeutung der natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis für das Leben der Menschen zu fragen.

Ohne diese natürliche Erkenntnis gäbe es keine „Gottesfurcht“,¹⁾ keine bürgerliche Gerechtigkeit im Lande. Wieviel Lob einem solchen äußerlichen Leben und den guten Werken gebührt, sagt uns wiederum die Apologie: „In diesem Leben und im weltlichen Wesen ist je nichts besser denn Redlichkeit und Tugend, wie denn Aristoteles sagt, daß weder Morgenstern noch Abendstern lieblicher noch schöner sei, denn Ehrbarkeit und Gerechtigkeit, wie denn Gott solche Tugend auch belohnet mit leiblichen Gaben“ (M., 91). Und wie anerkennend sich Luther über diese natürliche Tugend auslassen kann, geht aus seiner Würdigung des Lebens Abrahams vor seiner Berufung hervor: „Daß will ich wohl glauben, daß wenn man von äußerlichen Tugenden reden will, er gar ein ehrlicher Mensch und, soviel der Natur möglich, ein sehr frommer Mann gewesen ist, der nicht der Unzucht, Geiz oder andern schändlichen Lüsten nachgegeben, sondern solche blinde Anreizungen der verderbten Natur mit Vernunft und Mäßigkeit überwunden, oder ja im Zaum gehalten hat“ (St. L. Ausg. I, 731).

Ohne diese natürliche Erkenntnis des Menschen gäbe es keine guten Gesetze und keine ehrbare Obrigkeit, „zur Rache über die übel-

¹⁾ Nach 1. Mose 20, 11 sprach Abraham: „Ich dachte, vielleicht ist keine Gottesfurcht an diesen Orten“. Luther läßt Abraham die Worte so wiederholen: „Darum, da ich dieselbe (verstockte Bosheit) gesehen habe, muß ich bekennen, daß ich gedacht habe, es müßten an keinem Orte mehr Leute sein, bei welchen noch einige Gottesfurcht zu finden wäre“ (I, 1350). Hier scheint Luther unter „Gottesfurcht“ die äußerliche Frömmigkeit zu verstehen. Ganz unzweideutig spricht er sich hierüber zu Vers 8 aus: „Es hatte Abimelech auch vor der Ankunft Abrahams Gott erkannt und seine Untertanen gottselig regiert, aber dieselbe Erkenntnis Gottes war allgemeiner Natur: jetzt aber, da er Abraham zu hören bekommt, lernt er Gott gleichsam etwas näher ansehen, insofern er weiß, daß Abraham werde der Vater sein des gebenedeiten Samens“ (I, 1335).

täter und zu Liebe den Frommen“ (1. Petr. 2, 14). Auch gäbe es kein Volk, das diesen Gesetzen gehorchen könnte. Professor Söneck in seiner Dogmatik (Bd. IV, Ste. 205ff.) spricht sich besonders ausführlich und klar über das Vermögen der Obrigkeit in moralischen und religiösen Dingen und über das Gebiet für die Tätigkeit der Obrigkeit aus. Aber das, worauf wir in unserer Zeit besonders den Finger zu legen haben, ist doch dies, daß die Obrigkeit, eben weil sie im Besitz der Vernunft und damit des ganzen Vermögens ist, welches die Schrift derselben zuschreibt, auch imstande ist zu regieren und für Ordnung im Lande zu sorgen, ohne daß ihr irgendeine andere Macht zu Hilfe kommen muß. Es ist eine sehr beklagenswerte Vermengung von Staat und Kirche, wenn der Obrigkeit von Kirchen diese Fähigkeit abgesprochen oder wenn ihr dieselbe nur zum Teil zugestanden wird. Als ob diese Kirchen dann dazu berufen wären, das zu erlassen, was nach ihrer Meinung der Obrigkeit, weil sie nur nach der natürlichen Vernunft zu regieren hat, abgeht. Dieser Einmischung in den Aufgabenkreis des Staates haben sich die Jahrhunderte hindurch sowohl die römisch-katholische wie auch die reformierte Kirche schuldig gemacht.

Ohne natürliche Gotteserkenntnis wären die Völker ohne Religion. Ohne Religion! Soll damit die Religion der Völker bejaht werden? Ist nicht die Religion der Menschen die größte Lüge, zu der sie sich versteifen können, nämlich die Irrlehre von der Werkgerechtigkeit und der Selbstgerechtigkeit und die Verwandlung der Herrlichkeit Gottes in ein Bild, gleich dem vergänglichen Menschen (Röm. 1, 23)! In der That so und nicht anders haben wir die Religion zu beurteilen. Aber wir haben sie auch von der Seite der natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis aus zu beurteilen, so wie es Luther und Walthers tun. Luther sagt z. B.: „Denn einen Gott haben ist nicht Mose Gesetz alleine, sondern auch ein natürlich Gesetz, wie Paulus Römer 1 spricht, daß die Heiden wissen von der Gottheit, daß ein Gott sei. Das beweiset auch die That, daß sie Götter haben aufgeworfen und Gottesdienste angerichtet, welche unmöglich gewesen wäre, wo sie nichts von Gott wüßten oder dächten. Sondern Gott hat ihnen offenbart durch die Werke Röm. 1“ (XX, 151f.). Und Walthers sagt irgendwo in seiner Kirchenpostille (Episteln), daß es kein Volk der Erde gibt, mag es auch noch so roh und ungebildet sein, welches nicht seine Religion und Gottesdienste hätte. Ohne Religion wäre aber ein Volk ohne letzten Rest

von natürlicher Gottesfurcht, ja ohne die natürliche Gotteserkenntnis. Wo aber Religion noch ist, und kein Volk ist ohne Religion, da ist der Beweis erbracht, daß einem solchen Volke die natürliche Erkenntnis noch nicht ganz abhanden gekommen ist, daß es in etwas noch ein äußerlich ehrbares Leben führt. Die Tatsache, daß die heidnischen Religionen die größte aller Lügen von der Werkgerechtigkeit predigen, darf uns nicht zu der Schlußfolgerung verleiten, vor der uns Luther in seiner Schrift wider die himmlischen Propheten warnt. Er sagt dort: „Daß nun die Heiden des rechten Gottesdienstes gefehlt haben und Götzen an Gottes Statt angebetet, was ist das wunder? Fehleten doch die Juden auch und beteten Götzen an Gottes Statt an, ob sie wohl Moses Gesetz hatten. Und fehlen noch jetzt des Herrn Christi, die doch Christus Evangelium haben“ (XX, 152). Wir dürfen eben nicht den Heiden auf Grund ihrer falschen und verderbten Religionen den wirklichen Besitz einer natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis absprechen, auch nicht übersehen, daß diese natürliche Gotteserkenntnis in und nicht neben ihren falschen Religionen mehr oder weniger zum Ausdruck kommt. Gleich einer Goldader in wüsten Gesteinmassen liegt diese natürliche Erkenntnis in den heidnischen Religionen verborgen. Und wir untersuchen selbst diese falschen Religionen, um eben die Spuren dieser natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis in ihnen zu finden. Wenn und wo wir sie finden, urteilen wir nicht, daß die Religionen deswegen nun wahr sind, sondern daß sie ein steter Beweis für die natürliche Gotteserkenntnis des Menschen sind.

Se nachdem sich die natürliche Gotteserkenntnis in der Religion eines Volkes geltend macht, wird in diesem Volke noch etwas von natürlicher Gottesfurcht und bürgerlicher Gerechtigkeit zu finden sein, wird man zwischen Religion und Religion unterscheiden können. Luther tut dies betreffs der babylonischen Religion im Vergleich mit den andern Religionen. Von ihr sagt er in der oben schon angeführten Stelle (Bd. I, 731): „Die babylonische Religion hat den allergrößten Schein gehabt; sintemal sie Gott gedient hat unter dem Namen eines Lichtes, welches die allerbequemste Form oder Figur der göttlichen Majestät ist. Wie denn die heilige Schrift Gott auch ein Licht nennt 1. Joh. 1, 5; Ps. 104, 2. Neben diesem sehr scheinbarlichen Gottesdienst haben sie auch einen ehrlichen Wandel und züchtiges Leben geführt; daher es denn gekommen ist, daß diese Religion auch der heiligen Väter Nachkommen angenommen haben.“ Wie Luther hier die Religion eines Volkes und dessen bürgerliche Gerech-

tigkeit in ein Verhältnis zueinander setzt, haben das auch heidnische Religionslehrer getan, wenn sie nach den Gründen für den Niedergang ihres Volkstums suchten. Die Griechen haben die Bindung an die Gottheit und durch sie an Stand und Staat hoch eingeschätzt. Nach Aeschylos soll die menschliche Gemeinschaft nicht frei auf sich stehen, sondern zu ihrem Heil mit der Gottheit verbunden sein, sich nach den göttlichen Satzungen richten und diese wieder nach ihr. Er gab sich nicht damit zufrieden, das Göttliche einfach als unerforschlich zu verehren, er wollte ihm auch einen Sinn für die menschliche Sphäre, für die Polis abringen. Auch für Sophokles ist der Glaube an das göttliche Walten und an die Gesetze der religiösen Reinheit die Grundlage des Staates, ohne die er haltlos zusammenbrechen würde und deren Wert gerade an dem gefunden und starken Staat sichtbar wird. Eine Verweltlichung der Religion würde den Staat in seinen Wurzeln bedrohen. Die Polis kann die oberste Instanz nur bleiben, insofern sie den Vorrang der göttlichen Forderungen anerkennt und Gott und nicht einen Menschen als Vorsteher festhält. Euripides dagegen war Individualist. Er löst sich aus den alten Bindungen, die bei Aeschylos und Sophokles in dem Zueinander und Gegeneinander von Gottheit und Staat liegen, und macht aus dem göttlichen Nomos einen menschlichen Nomos. Er will, daß der menschliche Nomos im Interesse des Staates geübt wird und daß das Interesse der Gesellschaft oberste Instanz sei. Er ist es darum, der die fortschreitende Verweltlichung der Religion in die Moral hinein und damit die Zersetzung des Staatsgedankens feststellt. Bei ihm herrscht nicht mehr die Ehrfurcht vor den göttlichen Satzungen als Bindungen für den Staat vor wie bei seinen Vorgängern. Aber diese Ehrfurcht vor dem religiösen Fundament des Staates, wie wir sie nicht nur bei den Griechen, sondern auch bei den Babyloniern und andern Völkern finden,²⁾ ist eine Folge davon, daß die Menschen die

²⁾ So z. B. im Gesetzbuch Hammurapis. Obwohl es sich in diesem Gesetzbuch nur um areligiöse Gesetze handelt, so zeigen uns doch Einleitung und Schluß des Ganzen, wie bewußt diese Gesetze auf die Gottheit zurückgeführt werden. Der Schluß der Einleitung zu diesen Gesetzen lautet: „Als Marduk, um die Leute zu lenken, dem Lande Heil zu erwirken, mich entbot, habe ich Recht und Gesetze in der Landessprache geschaffen, den Leuten Wohlbehagen geschaffen.“ Der Schluß des Ganzen nennt ausführlicher den Zweck, wozu das Gesetz gegeben worden ist: „Rechtssatzungen, die Hammurapi, der mächtige König, festgesetzt hat, wodurch er das Land wahres

Rechtsforderung und die Rechtsbestimmung Gottes, to dikaioma tou theou (Röm. 1, 32) erkannt haben. Und es darf uns nicht über-
raschen, wenn sie selber die Verkennung derselben als eine Vermelt-
lichung ihrer Religion angesehen haben. Religion und Volksleben,
Religion und Staatsleben gehörten und gehören bei den heidnischen
Völkern aufs engste zusammen, stehen in dauernder Wechselwirkung
zueinander. Aber nicht anders verhält es sich bei den Völkern im
christlichen Zeitalter und bei sogenannten „christlichen“ Völkern.

Wenden wir das Gesagte auf die Völker an, in denen die christ-
liche Kirche Jahrhunderte hindurch das Evangelium hat predigen
können, so sind wir ja geneigt, von diesen Völkern als von „christ-
lichen“ Völkern zu reden und ihre Kultur als eine „christliche“ Kultur
zu bezeichnen, dabei aber die natürliche Religion und Sittlichkeit
eines solchen Volkes aus den Augen zu verlieren. Es ist natürlich
nicht in Abrede zu stellen, daß Christen auf ihre Umgebung als Salz
der Erde und als Licht der Welt stark einwirken, so daß die größten
Formen des Götzendienstes im Laufe der Zeit verschwinden. Aber
wir haben uns besonders im Hinblick auf die Seelsorge zu fragen,
wie viel von dem Leben eines „christlichen“ Volkes auf die natürliche
Frömmigkeit zurückzuführen ist, wie viel davon ganz unabhängig
vom Christentum einen wesentlichen Teil des Volkslebens von jeher
gebildet hat. A. F. C. Wilmar schreibt in „Kirche und Welt“ (Wer-
telmann 1872, Bd. I, Ste. 20): „Ein großer Teil unserer pastoralen
Wirksamkeit, sowie der pastoralen Wirksamkeit unserer Väter und
Vorbäter ruhte, verhehlen wir uns das doch nicht, keineswegs direkt
auf dem christlichen Glauben, sondern nur indirekt, direkt ruhte sie
auf der deutschen Sitte oder der deutschen Gesinnung oder der
deutschen Natürlichkeit, welche dem deutschen Volke von Gott aus be-
sonderer Gnade aus der Urzeit her bewahrt und dann als der christ-
liche Glaube verkündet wurde, durch Christus soweit gefestigt wurde,
daß dieselbe sich nicht so schnell, wie die Gaben anderer Völker, ver-
zehrte.“ Zudem Wilmar dann auf das Familienleben, die Haus-

Geil und eine gute Regierung hat bekommen lassen. . . . Mit Hilfe meiner
Schutzgötter habe ich sie in Frieden geleitet, in meiner Weisheit habe ich
sie geborgen, damit der Starke nicht den Schwachen bedränge, Witve und
Witve ihr Recht bekämen. . . . Sammurapi, der Herr, der wie ein leiblicher
Vater zu den Menschen ist, hat sich den Worten Marduks seines Herrn ge-
beugt. . . . und hat Wohlbefinden für das Volk auf ewig bereitet und dem
Lande Recht verschafft.“

sucht, auf das starke Gefühl für Grundbesitz, auf das Privatrecht und auf die hiermit verbundene Treue und Dankbarkeit der Deutschen aufmerksam macht, schließt er den Absatz mit den bezeichnenden Worten: „Das geistliche Amt hat es leicht gehabt in Deutschland eintausend Jahre lang.“ Dann fährt er aber fort: „Gesetz und Glaube fanden an den Deutschen nicht zwar zuvorkommende oder entgegenkommende Herzen, wie man wohl sagt, denn diesen synergistischen und jedenfalls der Mißdeutung ausgesetzten Ausdruck lehnen wir ab, aber willige, offene Herzen, und zwar solche, welche durch eine besondere Art von civilis iustitia für die Aufgabe des göttlichen Gesetzes, dann auch des Evangeliums, eigens präpariert waren. Und auf alle diese Dinge haben wir mit unserer geistlichen Wirksamkeit allezeit rekurrieren können — es hat sich gar vieles bei uns von selbst verstanden.“

Die Tür, die Wilmar dem Synergismus vor der Nase zugeschlagen hat, hat er selber wieder geöffnet, um eben den Synergismus doch noch rein zu lassen. Er hat sich auf der dünnen Schicht der civilis iustitia trotz aller Vorsicht viel zu weit vorgewagt. Einmal hat Wilmar nicht deutlich zwischen Gesetz und Evangelium unterschieden, indem er von der Aufnahme des göttlichen Gesetzes und des Evangeliums zugleich redet, zum andern nähert er sich — es handelt sich um das Jahr 1872 — bedenklich den modernen Theorien eines Stapel mit seiner Nomoslehre, wenn er von einer besonderen Art von civilis iustitia spricht, die die Herzen für die Aufnahme des Gesetzes, dann auch des Evangeliums eigens präpariert. Stapel, der nicht ein von Gott allgemein bindendes Gewissensgesetz anerkennen will, sondern immer nur den besonderen Nomos eines Volkes, der aus der Natureligion stammt, läßt in einem jeden Nomos ein Moment der Sehnsucht und der Erwartung, die er als eine Bereitschaft der Rechtfertigung bezeichnet, liegen. Nicht nur, daß er das Gesetz als eine Art und Aufgabe des Volkes bezeichnet, sondern die Volksnomoi sollen auch als Träger einer „Bereitschaft der Religion“ unter den 2. Artikel unsers christlichen Glaubens gehören. Hier wird offensichtlich die natürliche Gotteserkenntnis und Sittlichkeit als etwas dem Evangelio Verwandtes hingestellt. Dies geschieht leicht in einer Zeit nationaler Erhebung, wo sich die natürlichen sittlichen Kräfte eines Volkes geltend machen und wo dann der Versuch gemacht wird, einen Zusammenhang zwischen diesen und dem Christentum herzustellen. Um so mehr haben wir als christliche Seelsorger die Aufgabe, die natürliche Frömmigkeit in ihre Grenzen zu weisen.

Das hat Vilmar bei seiner Einschätzung des deutschen Volkslebens leider nicht getan, wenn er in „Theologische Moral“ 1871 schreibt: „Kein Volk in der Welt, auch Israel nicht ausgenommen, hat von dem gnädigen Gott ein so tiefes Dankgefühl, einen solchen Dankbarkeitsfönn als einen Segen für die Ewigkeit, als das Mittel, die Erlösung von Christo vor allen andern Völkern zu fassen und sich anzueignen, empfangen, wie das deutsche; eine Mitgabe, durch welche sogar unser Heidentum, soweit das an sich möglich ist, geheiligt erscheint. Unser ganzes Volksleben in politischer und sozialer Beziehung ist einzig auf Wohltun von der einen und auf Dankbarkeit (Treue) von der andern Seite fundiert. Undank war bei uns ein Rationalverbrechen — dem identisch, was wir jetzt Hochverrat nennen und unbedingt der schimpflichen Ausrottung aus dem Volk durch schmäbliche Hinrichtung verfallen.“ Es kann natürlich nicht in Abrede gestellt werden, daß es graduelle Kulturunterschiede unter den Völkern gibt. Der Segen Gottes hat sich verschiedentlich auf die Völker verteilt. Das gehört mit zu dem Fluch und Segen, der sich nach dem Sündenfall auf die Menschheit gelegt hat (1. Mose 9, 25ff). Es wird wohl heute noch wahr sein, was Ratzel in seiner Völkerkunde sagt: „Nicht Klüfte, sondern Gradunterschiede trennen die Teile der Menschheit, Rassen, Völker usw. voneinander. Die Menschheit ist ein Ganzes, wenn auch von mannigfaltiger Bildung.“ Zu diesen Gradunterschieden gehört auch das religiöse Leben eines Volkes, wie wir uns dies schon von Luther haben zeigen lassen. Um so mehr haben wir die Aufgabe, den Menschen davon zu überführen, daß er bei aller natürlichen Frömmigkeit, die er haben mag und die wir ihm nicht absprechen wollen, doch ein verlorener und verdamnter Sünder ist und daß seine Gerechtigkeit — auch seine bürgerliche Gerechtigkeit — vor Gott wie ein unflätig Kleid ist. Nur so wird der Seelsorger ein Schuldbewußtsein hervorrufen, das die nötige Voraussetzung für die Predigt des Evangeliums bildet.

Trotzdem bleibt dies eine wahr, was Vilmar behauptet, daß ein groß Teil unserer pastoralen Wirksamkeit auf der natürlichen Sittlichkeit des Volkslebens ruht. Dies lehrt besonders die Heidenmission. So wahr es ist, daß die christliche Mission unter den Heidenvölkern vielen Entartungen im Volksleben der Heiden begegnet, wie Kindermord, gemeinen geschlechtlichen Ausschweifungen, vielen grausamen Macheakten und unmenschlichen Unbarmherzigkeiten und dergl., so findet sie doch göttliche Schöpfungsordnungen vor, in

denen die mannigfaltigen Verhältnisse des natürlichen Lebens ihre Ausgestaltung gefunden haben. Die christliche Mission ist weit davon entfernt, diese Naturordnungen zu vergewaltigen. Sie geht vielmehr in sie ein. Sie denkt nicht daran, die mannigfaltigen Formen und Gestaltungen des staatlichen, bürgerlichen und gesellschaftlichen Lebens, wie sie in „christlichen“ Ländern zurecht bestehen, einfach auf das heidnische Volksleben zu übertragen. Es wird sich noch manches im Familien- und Gesellschaftsleben des einen oder anderen heidnischen Volkes finden, das auf einer höheren moralischen Stufe steht als so manches in zivilisierten und „christlichen“ Ländern. Kurzum, gerade die Mission lehrt uns, wie wir das Volksleben in all seinen Ausgestaltungen beurteilen und würdigen lernen müssen, wie wir denn überhaupt die vollklichen Voraussetzungen für unsere Arbeit nicht übersehen dürfen. Solche Voraussetzungen sind die Sprache, denn ohne sie könnte der Missionar nicht predigen. Solch eine Voraussetzung ist die Religion, denn ohne sie gäbe es gar keinen Anknüpfungspunkt für die Predigt. Man vergleiche, wie der Apostel Paulus sich derselben in Athen als Anknüpfungspunkt bediente (Apgsch. 17, 22). Solch eine Voraussetzung ist das Gewissen. Ohne das Gewissen ist kein Volk. Infolgedessen ist es auch nicht ohne Schuldbewußtsein, so wahr es ist, daß den Heiden das Gesetz in ihr Herz eingegraben ist. Solch eine Voraussetzung für die Seelsorge ist aber auch die bürgerliche Gerechtigkeit, die sich innerhalb der Schöpfungsordnungen Gottes, in denen sich auch das Heidenvolk bewegt, mehr oder weniger gehalten hat. All diese Voraussetzungen geben uns immer wieder Veranlassung, die Sprache, die Religion, die Gesetze, denen das öffentliche und Privatleben untersteht, zu studieren. Wenn aus keinem anderen Grunde, so doch aus dem der Missionsaufgaben und -interessen heraus haben wir uns mit der natürlichen Religion abzugeben.

Es gehört mit zu der Tradition der lutherischen Kirche, daß von Anfang an Luther und Melanchthon bei all ihren vielen anderen Aufgaben sich auch dem Studium der heidnischen Religionen gewidmet haben. Luther hatte einen Hauptgrund, weswegen er sich z. B. mit der Lehre des Islam befaßte. Es war dies nicht ein allgemeines Missionsinteresse. An eine Mission unter Mohammedanern hat Luther nie gedacht. Dem Missionsgedanken unter den Türken kommt er wohl dann am nächsten, wenn er gefangenen Christen den Rat gibt, ihren Herren in der Gefangenschaft treulich zu die-

nen und durch diesen Dienst „das Evangelium und den Namen Christi zu schmücken und zu preisen, . . . der Türken Glauben damit zu Schanden zu machen und vielleicht viele zu bekehren“ (XX, 2191). Missionare ins Land zu schicken und eine Missionstätigkeit unter den Mohammedanern zu entfalten lag Luther in der Stunde, wo es sich um den Sieg des Christentums oder des Islams handelte, vollends fern. Er wußte sich aber um so mehr von polemischen und apologetischen Interessen geleitet, wo immer er sich um nähere Kenntnis des Islam bemühte. Aber Luther begnügte sich nicht mit einer mangelhaften Kenntnis der Religion der Mohammedaner, über die das ganze Mittelalter nicht hinausgekommen war. Was ihn sogar von Melanchthon vorteilhaft unterscheidet, ist die Tatsache, daß er sich nicht mit mehr oder weniger zufällig erlangten, ungeprüften Nachrichten begnügt, sondern sogar um ein einwandfreies Quellenstudium bemüht war. Darum wollte er den Koran kennen lernen, ja ihn sogar übersetzen. Zunächst hat er 1530 ein Vorwort zu dem „*Libellus de ritu et moribus Turcorum*“ geschrieben (XIV, 298ff.). Seiner ursprünglichen Absicht kam er aber am nächsten, als er 1542 die Herausgabe einer lateinischen Streitschrift gegen den Koran folgen ließ, deren Verfasser der um 1300 lebende Dominikanermönch Ricoldus war (XX, 2218ff.). Diese Schrift hatte er bereits im Jahre 1530 zusammen mit der *Cribratio* des Nikolaus von Cusa gelesen.³⁾ Als Luther aber in der Fastnacht 1542 zum erstenmal eine lateinische Übersetzung des Koran zu Gesichte bekam und sie mit der *Confutatio Ricoldi* vergleichen konnte, reifte in ihm der Entschluß, eine deutsche Übersetzung des Korans herauszugeben.⁴⁾ Luther, der Übersetzer der Bibel, trug sich mit dem Gedanken, den Koran zu übersetzen! Dazu ist es leider nicht gekommen. Als aber Bibliander den Koran im Jahre 1543 in Basel herausgab, der Rat zu Basel es aber verbieten wollte, hat Luther diesen um die Freigabe der beschlagnahmten

³⁾ Nikolaus Cusanus, 1401 zu Bues bei Trier geboren, lehrte, daß zwar das Christentum die vollkommenste aller Religionen sei, daß aber in den übrigen Religionen, auch im Islam, Momente der Wahrheit anzuerkennen seien.

⁴⁾ Luther klagt darüber, daß der Koran von Ricoldus „sehr übel verdolmetscht sei“ und daß er „noch wünschte einen Kläreren zu sehen“. Er sieht es aber für nützlich und notwendig an, „dieses Büchlein zu verdeutschen, weil man kein besseres hat“ (XX, 2218f.). Der Koran im Original ist erst im 17. Jahrhundert in Deutschland erschienen.

Biblianderschen Koran Ausgabe gebeten. Das Buch soll vielmehr ausgehen: „Christo zu ehren, den Christen zu gut, den Turken zu schaden, dem teuffel zu verdrieß“. ⁵⁾

Diese Stellungnahme Luthers zeigt uns deutlich, welche eine Sachkenntnis der Reformator besaß und mit welcher Objektivität er an die dem Christentum so feindliche Religion herantreten konnte. Ihn gerecht zu werden, war ja bei allem grundlegenden Gegensatz sein Bestreben. Das lehrt uns vor allem seine Vorrede zu dem Büchlein: „Von der Religion und den Sitten der Türken“, 1530 herausgegeben. In dieser Vorrede tadelt er die früheren Verfasser von Schriften über den Islam und den Koran, die „das Gute, das in demselben ist, entweder übergehen, ohne es widerlegt zu haben, oder es verhehlen. . . . Dieser Mann aber“, so heißt es weiter, „wer auch immer der Verfasser dieses Buches gewesen sein mag, scheint die Sache mit der größten Treue zu behandeln. . . . Denn er erzählt die Dinge so, daß er nicht allein das Böse, das sich bei ihnen findet, berichtet, sondern daneben auch das sehr Gute, das sie haben, dem gegenüberstellt, und es so preist, daß er unsere Leute durch den Vergleich mit ihnen straft und tadelt“. Und würden wir das, was ehrbar und lobenswert ist, verschweigen, so etwa fährt Luther fort, dann würden wir der Sache mehr schaden als nützen. Denn nichts ist leichter zu widerlegen als schändliche und unehrbare Dinge. „Aber gute und ehrbare Dinge widerlegen“, das heißt der Sache nützen (XIV, 300f.). Luther war der erste, der sich von der unschönen Kampfweise mittelalterlicher Theologen freimachen konnte, nur das Verwerfliche und Anstoßende im Islam aufzudecken, das Gute, Schöne und Wertvolle aber zu verschweigen. Darum konnte Luther in dieser seiner Vorrede kühn bekennen und behaupten: „Aus diesem Buche

⁵⁾ Dieses Zitat, wie die, die auf Melanchthons Stellung zum Islam Bezug nehmen, entnehme ich der lesenswerten Dissertation von Manfred Köhler, „Melanchthon und der Islam“, Ein Beitrag zur Klärung des Verhältnisses zwischen Christentum und Fremdreigionen in der Reformationszeit. Leipzig 1938. Diese Dissertation ist um so lesenswerter, weil Köhler den Maßstab, den die moderne Religionswissenschaft an die Religionen legt, klar herausstellt. Als moderner Religionswissenschaftler behauptet er freilich, daß Luther und Melanchthon der eigentlichen religionswissenschaftlichen Arbeit ferngestanden haben. Zu diesem Urteil gelangt er vor allem, weil „Luther in erster Linie das Ziel im Auge hatte, daß für den Christen dem Islam jegliche Überzeugungs- und Anziehungskraft genommen werde“, also ein polemisch-apologetisches Ziel.

nun sehen wir, daß der Türken oder des Mahomet Religion in den Ceremonien, fast möchte ich sagen, auch in den Sitten, einen viel schöneren Schein habe als die der Unrigen, auch der Mönche und aller Geistlichen“ (301). Luther ließ dem Islam, was ihm zukam, und war dann um so eher imstande, einmal den Papisten zu Gemüte zu führen, daß all ihre Möncherei sich nicht mit den Sitten und Zeremonien mohammedanischer Priester und ihrer Anhänger vergleichen lasse, um dann aber den wesentlichen Unterschied zwischen dem Christentum und dem Islam um so deutlicher hervorkehren zu können. Und der wesentliche Unterschied besteht für Luther darin, daß für den Islam das Wort Gottes nicht Grundlage der Religion ist und daß er als Produkt der menschlichen Vernunft dem Reiche der Finsternis angehört. Drei Punkte hebt Luther besonders heraus, die er am Islam geißelt: Mohammeds Feindschaft wider Christum, seine Störung des weltlichen Regiments und die Vielweiberei (XX, 2126ff.). Aber vor allem die Tatsache, daß der Islam eine trinitarische und christologische Kezerei sei und in einer Linie mit Arius stehe, ist für Luther das Entscheidende. Trotz oder gerade deswegen hat sich Luther näher mit dem Islam befaßt, um imstande zu sein, vor dieser falschen Lehre zu warnen und sie zu widerlegen.

Es ist aber auch nicht von geringer Bedeutung, in diesem Zusammenhang Melanchthons Stellung zum Islam kennen zu lernen. Ihn bestimmte nicht allein das Interesse des christlichen Theologen, sondern das des Historikers. Eigentlich war Melanchthon in der Lage, den Islam viel besser kennen zu lernen, als Luther es vermochte. Einmal war sein Haus ein internationaler Treffpunkt für Theologen aus den verschiedensten Ländern. Bei einer Gelegenheit waren nicht weniger als elf fremdländische Gäste zugegen, die je eine andere Sprache sprachen, darunter das Hebräische, das Pannonische, das Genetische, das Türkische und das Arabische. Melanchthon ist direkt mit Arabern in Berührung gekommen, wie auch mit Studenten und Missionaren aus Ländern, wo der Protestantismus mit dem Islam zusammenstieß. Auch wird Melanchthon auf den vielen Konferenzen, an denen er teilnahm, mit Männern zusammengetroffen sein, die den Islam aus eigener Anschauung kannten. Sodann hat Melanchthon seine Freunde ausdrücklich aufgefordert, ihm mitzuteilen, wenn sie etwas über die Türken wüßten. Auch stand er im regen Briefwechsel mit seinen vielen Freunden, die aus Pannonien, Ungarn, der Türkei, aus Italien, Afrika und Spanien ihm manches

Wertvolle über den Islam berichten konnten. Kommen hinzu die vielen Schriften, die über den Türken und seine Religion berichteten und die Melanchthon kannte und las, oder zu denen er ein Vorwort schrieb und deren Inhalt sogar von Melanchthons Mitarbeit zeugt. Dennoch bleibt es eine Frage, ob Melanchthon seine Kenntnisse des Islam auf Quellenstudien, wie es Luther getan hat, oder nur auf den Forschungen und Berichten anderer aufgebaut hat. Ob der Koran für Melanchthons kirchenhistorische Tätigkeit als Quelle gedient hat, läßt sich nicht einmal beweisen, obwohl er Luthers Arbeiten auf diesem Gebiet erwähnt und ihm, so muß man geradezu annehmen, auch bei diesen Studien zur Seite gestanden haben wird.

Zum Verdruß der Religionswissenschaftler hat Melanchthon ebenso sehr wie Luther den Absolutheitsanspruch des Christentums vertreten und das Für oder Wider Christum als das Entscheidende bei der Beurteilung einer Religion betont.⁶⁾ Ebenfalls hat er in Sachen der natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis den Mohammedanern Gerechtigkeit widerfahren lassen. Melanchthon hat die Summe mohammedanischer Lehren als rationalistische Religion bezeichnet, da Mohammed aus ihr alle Artikel ausgeschieden hatte, die nicht mit der Ratio vereinbar waren. Infolgedessen stellt Melanchthon nicht in Abrede, daß die Mohammedaner um Gott wissen, erwähnt vielmehr, daß sie den Schöpfer der ganzen Natur anrufen.⁷⁾ Er be-

⁶⁾ Quid est totum regnum Mahometicum, nisi blasphemia in Filium? Hic est enim nervus illius regni, quod Christus non sit Deus, et non sit redemptor generis humani: Tollit personam et officium: id est, tollit ea quae sunt propria personae et officii" (Ste. 90). Wie Köhler über Melanchthons Einstellung zum Islam urteilt, sei nur an einem Beispiel gezeigt: „Noch in der letzten Vorlesung vor seinem Tode über Jes. 53 kommt Melanchthon auf das mohammedanische Unverständnis gegenüber dem Sühnetode Christi zu sprechen. Er ist so sehr im lutherischen Denken befangen, daß er unwillkürlich die im eigenen Lande auftretende Opposition gegen das sola fide auch in andere Religionen hineinprojiziert. Der articulus stantis et cadentis Ecclesiae ist die Wegscheide für alle wahre und falsche Religion, zu der auch der Islam zählt. Melanchthon setzt gleichsam die Apologie des Apostel Paulus fort, wenn er zu den Juden und Heiden, für die das Kreuz ein Ärgernis bedeutet, als neueste Gruppe dieser Kategorie die Mohammedaner fügt" (91).

⁷⁾ "Invocant Mahometistae Deum universae naturae conditorem . . . Turci etsi dicunt se invocare unum Deum, conditorem coeli et terrae. . . Intelligunt esse aliquid numen" . . . Mahometistae retinent particulam doctrinae: dicunt esse Deum et esse eum iudicaturum et resuscitaturum mortuos, daturum iustis vitam aeternam" (50).

zeichnet sogar den Artikel des Islam von der Einheit Gottes als einen großen Artikel. In einem Gespräch, das zwischen einem Hieronymus de Lasfi und Suleimann (1520–1560) geführt worden ist, fragt der Sultan Hieronymus nach Luther, ob er ihn kenne und gesehen habe, und in welchen Dingen Luther eine Änderung in Europa herbeigeführt habe. Als ihm Hieronymus antwortete, daß Luther den abergläubischen Gottesdienst aufgehoben habe, habe Suleimann geantwortet, daß Luther wohl ein großer Mann sei, aber noch nicht an das Licht gekommen sei, dessen sich die Mohammedaner erfreuten. Melanchthon bemerkt hierzu, daß dies wohl eine beachtenswerte Erzählung sei, weil die Mohammedaner mit ihrem Artikel von der Einheit Gottes glauben, etwas Großes zu bekennen — und es ist ein großer Artikel, fügt er hinzu.⁸⁾ Wo immer er aber dieses Bekenntnis der Mohammedaner anführt, unterläßt er es nie hervorzuheben, daß Heiden und Türken bei diesem ihren Bekenntnis dennoch von dem wahren Gott abirren, weil sie leugnen, daß er der Gott sei, der seinen eingeborenen Sohn als Erlöser in die Welt gesandt habe. Die Folge sei dann auch die, daß sie Gott nicht als ihren Gott bekennen können,⁹⁾ daß sie einen Gott haben, der menschlichen Vorstellungen und Wünschen entspricht, einen anthropomorphen Gott. Sich des Artikels von der Einheit Gottes rühmen ohne Christum heißt in völliger Unwissenheit des Dreieinigens Gottes und der Heilstatfachen leben. Darum enthält der mohammedanische Glaube nur ein „dogma plausible prophanis ingeniis“ und die Lehre des Mohammed enthalte letzten Endes nichts anderes als einen Bestandteil des Gesetzes. Weil er die mohammedanische Religion als Gesetzesreligion ansieht, weiß Melanchthon natürlich auch von einzelnen Bestimmungen der Heiden und Türken zu sprechen, die sich mit Geboten des Dekalogs decken, in denen den Anhängern des Propheten sauberes Eheleben, Mildtätigkeit und Freigebigkeit, sogar nützliche und karitative Leistungen geboten werden.¹⁰⁾

⁸⁾ „Illa quoque sunt digna memoria: quia Mahometistae putant se aliquid magni dicere, quod tenent articulum de unitate Dei; est magnus articulus“ (50).

⁹⁾ Nemo igitur Epicureorum, nemo Mahometistarum, nemo Iudaeorum, nemo adversariorum Evangelii poterit canere hunc verum: Deus meus es tu“ (94).

¹⁰⁾ Mahometistae, at alii, tantum docent particulam Legis de quisbusdam externis et civilibus officiis. . . . Ita duo praecepta utilitatis

Indem Melanchthon die muslimische Religion auf den Kenner des Gesetzes bringt, stellt er ein für allemal fest, daß jede heidnische Religion nichts von dem enthält, was uns das Evangelium offenbart, daß sie aber als Gesetzesreligion allein auf dem Gesetz aufgebaut ist. Melanchthon stellt selber die Frage, was denn der Unterschied zwischen der christlichen Lehre und den heidnischen Religionen sei und beantwortet sie auf diese Weise: „Alle andern Secten, Heidnische, Mahometische etc. sind grausame verdampfte Abgötterey, und haben daneben nur ein Stücklein vom gesetz, von eußerlichen Sitten. Aber vom Evangelio, von vergebung der Sünde durch den Son Gottes, Ihesum Christum, wissen sie nichts“ (95). Ohne dieses Wissen ist all ihr Tun Werkgerechtigkeit, ihr Kultus geschieht ex opere operato, ihre Haltung ist gottlos. So entschieden wendet sich Melanchthon gegen heidnische Religionen, obwohl er es ist, der den Mohammedanern einen großen Artikel zugesteht, den von der Einheit Gottes und daß sie Gott als Schöpfer anrufen. Melanchthon hat sich die ganze Frage nach der natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis nicht leicht gemacht, sondern fein säuberlich zwischen Gesetz und Evangelium geschieden. Und so fein, wie er zu unterscheiden vermochte, konnte er auch das, was zusammengehörte, zusammenstellen. So z. B. wenn er den Nachweis erbringt, daß die mohammedanische Religion sich in nichts von der Philosophie, ganz vom Judentum zu schweigen, unterscheide. Auch die Philosophie ist eine Gesetzesreligion, eine Erscheinung der religio naturalis. Plato, Xenophon, Mahomet, sie alle kennen den Gesetzeswillen Gottes. Aus der Lehre des Gesetzes ist eben die Philosophie entstanden, wie wir dies von der mohammedanischen und jüdischen Religion auch sagen müssen. Aber über diese allgemeinen Ausfagen über Gott und seinen Willen, die alle aus der revelatio generalis abzuleiten sind, kommen denn auch die mohammedanischen und jüdischen Religionen nicht hinaus trotz ihres Ein-Gott-Glaubens. So sind Philosophie und Religion, Religion und Philosophie auf einen Kenner zu bringen.

Durch Luther und Melanchthon ist der lutherischen Kirche eine klare Erkenntnis in bezug auf das rationelle Wissen des Menschen

causa utcunque retinet: Non occides, et: Non furtum facies. Ethnici, Hurcae, hoc sciunt: Non occides, Non moechaberis, etc. — Ethnici, Mahometistae, seu Turcae, possunt etiam regere mores externos honesta disciplina in coniugio legitime, praestare castitatem, dare eleemosynas, sobrie et temperanter vivere, etc.” (53).

um Gott gegeben worden, indem dieses Wissen als eine Gesetzes-erkenntnis und die Religionen der Völker als Gesetzesreligionen charakterisiert worden sind. Damit ist von vornherein nicht nur eine klare Scheidung zwischen Gesetz und Evangelium vollzogen worden, sondern zugleich auch eine klare Scheidung zwischen Religion und Christentum. Wo immer in der Kirche die Frage nach dem rationalen Wissen des Menschen um Gott beantwortet wird, entscheidet es sich, ob wir noch zwischen Gesetz und Evangelium, zwischen natürlicher und geistlicher Erkenntnis, zwischen Religionen auf der einen Seite und Christentum auf der andern Seite einen grundlegenden Unterschied hervorkehren. Unsere Antwort auf diese Frage muß es klar machen, ob für uns die Religionen der Völker nur auf das rationale Wissen der Menschen zurückgehen, ob sie rationalistische Gebilde sind im Gegensatz zum Christentum, das sich auf die Offenbarung Gottes in Christo gründet. Unsere Antwort muß zeigen, ob es unsere Meinung ist, daß die Religionen der Völker eine besondere Offenbarung zur Voraussetzung haben und darum auf gleiche Stufe mit dem Christentum zu stellen sind, oder ob das Christentum allein eine solche Offenbarung Gottes für sich in Anspruch nehmen kann. Unsere Antwort muß schließlich zum Ausdruck bringen, ob wir das Christentum für die allein wahre, die anderen Religionen für falsche halten. Die Religionswissenschaft wirft ja diese Frage nach der wahren Religion auf, aber indem sie einen „Consensus aller Religionen“ fordert und vom „Geist des christlichen Universalismus“ spricht, legt sie kein Bekenntnis zur Wahrheit ab. Köhler zeigt, wie die von der Religionsphilosophie aufgeworfene Frage nach der wahren Religion schon zur Reformationszeit gestellt worden ist und daß Melanchthon sie kennt. Auch daß ihm das Problem, wie es bereits in Nathan auftritt und in der Ringfabel in Angriff genommen wird, nicht fremd ist. Köhler selber entzieht sich der Beantwortung dieser Frage in seiner Arbeit, wo er auf den behaupteten Vorrang Mohammeds vor Christus zu sprechen kommt und dies als den Hauptgrund bezeichnet, weswegen Melanchthon den Islam verworfen hat und dann fortfährt: „Ob diese Ueberordnung berechtigt oder eine bloße Anmaßung ist, läßt sich mit wissenschaftlichen Mitteln nicht entscheiden. Das ist eine Glaubensfrage.“

Wo es sich um eine Glaubensfrage handelt, die sich nicht mit wissenschaftlichen Mitteln entscheiden läßt, da sollte doch — man müßte es gradezu annehmen — der bekennnistreue Theologe am

besten dazu imstande sein, zwischen Religion und Religion zu unterscheiden und in das Wesen einer Religion einzudringen. Aber diese Fähigkeit spricht Köhler dem bekennnistreuen Theologen, in diesem Fall Melancthon, ab. Und wenn wir näher nach der Ursache fragen, so antwortet Köhler: „Weil er auf dem Boden der Verbalinspiration steht und darum Maßstab und Wertmesser, die er an das gesamte innere und äußere Geschehen der Menschen legt, der Bibel entnommen hat.“ Und weil ihm niemals der Gedanke kommt, „daß es Gott dem Herrn aller Zeiten und Länder und Völker gefallen haben könnte, vor und nach seiner Offenbarung in Jesus Christus anderen Völkern in anderen Ländern die ihrer Art gemäßen Führer zum Glauben und Sittlichkeit zu senden“ (Ste. 121). Das ist nun eine Antwort, die nichts zu wünschen übrig läßt. Sie bringt uns zum Bewußtsein, um was es geht.

Es geht zuletzt um das eine, ob wir bei der Beantwortung unserer Frage nach dem rationellen Wissen des Menschen um Gott der Schrift folgen wollen oder nicht. Sie ist es ja, die die Frage nach der Wahrheit beantwortet, sie ist es, die uns sagt, wie es um die Wahrheit in den Religionen der Völker bestellt ist. Der Apostel Paulus erwähnt es zweimal im ersten Kapitel des Römerbriefes, wie die Völker mit der Wahrheit umgegangen sind, daß sie „die Wahrheit in Ungerechtigkeit aufhalten“ (Vers 18) und daß sie „Gottes Wahrheit verwandelt haben in die Lüge“ (Vers 25). Nur wer sich von diesen Worten der Schrift leiten läßt, wird in das Wesen fremder Religionen eindringen können, ohne die Wahrheit zu verleugnen. Der bekennnistreue Theologe braucht sich wahrlich nicht in Vorwürfen und verleumderischen Erfindungen gegen die heidnische Religion ergehen, um den Nachweis zu erbringen, wie die Völker mit ihren Religionen „die Wahrheit in Ungerechtigkeit aufhalten.“ Er muß aber zeigen, warum die Heiden ohne Entschuldigung sind, muß zeigen, daß ihre Gottlosigkeit und Ungerechtigkeit nicht aus Unwissenheit hervorgeht, sondern ihrem eigenen besseren Wissen widerspricht. In der Tat, die Heilige Schrift selber sagt uns, inwiefern Gott den Heiden und jedem natürlichen Menschen erkennbar ist und was Römer 1, 18 und 25 mit der Wahrheit gemeint ist, die in sie eindringt, die sie zu einem gottgemäßen Verhalten nötigt, und doch nicht sich in ihrem Wandel und Leben durchsetzt und zur Geltung kommt. Genug der Möglichkeit, um von dieser Wahrheit auf Grund von Römer 1 zu sprechen, wie es Luther und Melancthon getan

haben, und wie wir nicht anders heidnische Religionen daraufhin prüfen und erforschen wollen. Nur daß wir unterscheiden zwischen der Wahrheit, die die Heiden besitzen, indem ihnen die *notitia Dei* in ihre Herzen eingeschrieben worden ist, und der Wahrheit, die uns das seligmachende Evangelium von Jesu Christo offenbart hat.¹¹⁾

So hat denn der christliche Theologe mannigfachen Grund, sich um das natürliche Wissen des Menschen um Gott, wie es uns die Schrift und unsere Bekenntnisse lehren, zu bemühen. Nicht weniger als bei Luther und Melanchthon spielt dabei das polemisch-apologetische Interesse eine Rolle. Wir sind heute sogar den Fremdreligionen mehr ausgesetzt als Luther und Melanchthon zu ihrer Zeit. Nicht nur deswegen, weil uns die Religionswissenschaft unserer Tage mehr als je in eine Diskussion über die Weltreligionen hineinzieht, sondern weil die Völker im Laufe der Jahrhunderte nach der Reformation einander viel näher gebracht worden sind, besonders durch die beiden letzten großen Weltkriege. Dadurch sind wir dem Einfluß fremder Religionen und Philosophien, die dem Evangelio widersprechen, ausgesetzt. Wie haben wir da nicht zu wachen und zu beten, daß uns nicht die klare Erkenntnis der Wahrheit genommen werde. Wie haben wir als Theologen doch die Aufgabe, uns immer mehr in den Stand zu setzen, recht zu leiten und zu führen bei der Beurteilung fremder Religionen. Wie gehört das doch hinein in unsere tägliche Seelsorge, wo wir dauernd Fragen gegenüberstehen, die sich auf Weltereignisse und auf die Religion und das Leben der Völker der Welt beziehen. Kommt hinzu unser Missionsinteresse, das sich auf viel mehr Völker erstreckt als zu Luthers und Melanchthons Zeiten. Zu unserer Missionsaufgabe gehört eben auch die, daß wir die Religion und das Leben der Menschen kennen lernen müssen, unter denen wir missionieren wollen. Und wenn das auch nur dem Missionar gelingt, der jahrzehntelang inmitten eines heidnischen Volkes missioniert hat, so sind doch die Grundsätze für die Beurteilung eines Volkes, wie sie von Luther und Melanchthon niedergelegt worden sind, von so entscheidender Bedeutung, daß wir sie niemals und nirgendwo außer acht lassen dürfen, sondern sie uns immer wieder vergegenwärtigen müssen. Wenn darum in unserer

¹¹⁾ Was den Begriff "aletheia" anbelangt, sei hier zunächst nur auf Stöckhardt's Kommentar zu Römer 1 hingewiesen. Auf diesen Begriff näher einzugehen, sei einem weiteren Artikel über dieses Thema vorbehalten.

„Quartalschrift“ Ausführungen über dies unser Thema in zwangloser Fortsetzung folgen, so geschieht das in der Überzeugung, daß es sich um ein Thema handelt, das uns, wie jedes andere theologische Thema, zwingt, die Frage zu stellen: Was jagt die Schrift? Es geschieht aber auch in der Überzeugung, daß wir die Grundsätze für die rechte Beurteilung fremder Religionen in unsern Bekenntnisschriften und in Luthers und Melancthons Schriften vorfinden und daß diese Grundsätze von uns heute wiederholt in Seelsorge und Mission zur Anwendung gebracht werden müssen. P. Peters.

The Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Text: 1 John 3:19-20

“And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.”

“There was a great calm,” those are the beautiful closing words of today’s Gospel, which tells of the voyage of Christ and His disciples over the Sea of Gennesareth. The wind was at rest. The waves subsided. Calm returned to the sea. Calm returned also to the hearts of the disciples. Their fear of perishing left them. The hope of rescue returned. Their hearts were at rest. Theirs must have been a great peace and contentment.

That is evident to everyone who has come out of the storm into calm waters. You do not have to sail over the sea to get into storms. Cares and troubles too are storms which toss a man to and fro. They can strike great fear into the heart. How often does not a man feel as if he must perish in the storm-tossed waves! There are still other waters and waves of which we may say with the Psalmist: They are come in unto my soul; they have passed over me. These are the distress and affliction of a believing soul concerning its eternal salvation. But, thanks be to God, even in these severe storms, which arise against the believer, his heart ever and again can, yea, shall become calm. We can rebuke the wind and the waves. Such great power has God given unto men. We rebuke them with God’s Word, with passages like today’s text. And we do not do it in vain. A great calm, a blessed calm, comes into our hearts. It is of this that we shall speak today.

EVEN IN THE STORM OF SEVERE AFFLICTION THE BELIEVER’S HEART KNOWS A BLESSED CALM

Let us:

1. Contemplate attentively this blessed state of heart.
2. Gain a better understanding of its great significance.

I

Let us contemplate this blessed state of heart.

The holy apostle John makes us realize what a sublime thing that state is when he says: **We shall assure our hearts before him, if our heart condemn us.** Here, then, he is speaking of a wonderful peace of heart in the midst of the greatest unrest, of a firm confidence in the midst of temptation unto despair; of a living hope in the midst of hope-killing fears. For when the heart, **our heart**, condemns us, this spells nothing but unrest, faint-hearted despondency, hopeless despair. Yet in the midst of all this the heart is to become calm.

For believing hearts there are times of calm without severe storms. At such times the sky is bright. The sun of grace is unclouded. The soul has a lively knowledge of the grace in Christ. It vividly realizes the full redemption in the blood of the Lamb. It sees the approach to God opened wide before it. It knows, with a blessed assurance, that it is reconciled to God. It also feels the hand of grace that sustains it, the streams of love that pour down upon it from God, the heavenly Father. It enjoys and tastes grace and all its delights. It has an **experience** of salvation unmarred by any doubts. It is clearly aware of the witness of the Holy Spirit. It sees in itself the work and the activity of the Holy Spirit. God's Word is dear to it. Like sacrificial incense, prayers ascend freely to the throne of God. The thoughts and desires are devoted to God. — How pleasant such times are! Of course, storms of affliction are not lacking entirely, but — they do not alarm the soul. Though storms of tribulation come, the soul is not shaken. It says to itself: The situation is bad, but haven't you your God? Why will you be cast down? With its faith it is firmly anchored in God's faithfulness and grace, and — so the storms of tribulation have no power over it.

Again, there are afflictions that arise out of the sinful lusts, but — they are not able to wrest the soul completely away from the right to the wrong course. It says: What are all the pleasures of earth compared to the pleasure and joy I have in Christ? Without doing the soul any damage, yes, without disturbing it particularly, the storm passes over.

The really bad storms, those that come raging over the Christian soul with devastating power and that threaten its destruction, are of a different nature. They are the **doubts on the question: Am I standing in grace?** The anchors which till then bound the soul to God tear away. The heart loses its firm confidence: You have a gracious God. It loses its joyful realization of grace. It no longer sees any evidence that it is a new creature through God's grace. It prays — but its prayers are like a cry that is swallowed up by the wind. It would like to taste God's grace once more, but all seeking for it is like throwing an anchor into a bottomless sea, where it finds no hold. It laments: Why art Thou so far from helping me, and from the words

of my roaring? — Those are storms that fill the heart with despair and fear, with a deadly unrest. And yet in the midst of it all rest, peace, and calm are to reign. The Christian can, yea, **must** rebuke also such severe storms.

But how? How are we to turn such a despondent heart into a hopeful one, such a restless heart into a calm one? Our text gives us the words which have the power to rebuke the wind and waves and to conjure the storm of affliction. They are the words: **God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things.**

God knoweth all things. He knows you too, dear Christian. He knows your heart and the deepest depths and the most secret ways of your heart. You, too, a Christian with Spirit-anointed and Spirit-enlightened eyes, have learned to know your heart and its nature. Yes, in times of affliction you realize as fully as never before the depth of corruption that is in your heart. At such times the hidden abomination in it is raked up before your opened eyes. You then learn to know your heart as being desperately wicked as well as deceitful, as a sepulchre full of decay, full of anti-godly thoughts, full of enmity against God, full of mistrust, full of discontent. You know that yourself. How much more fully, do you think, is this known to God Who knoweth all things? His eyes penetrate much, much deeper than yours. Far better than you does He see in your heart the abundant evidence of spiritual death. Far, far better than you does He perceive how your remorse, your faith are still pitiful patch-work; and how you are still held by your flesh with many a captive bond.

At this point you may well cry out: Stop! You are cutting my heart to the quick. Do you call that stilling the storm, the affliction and dire distress of the soul, when you hold up before my eyes the fact that God knows the corruption of my heart, my worthlessness, my damnableness much better than I do! You are not stilling the storm, you are only adding to its fury.

And I say: Not at all. Just listen! Did not God know the ways of your heart before you were born, from eternity? Most certainly. Even then He knew the ways of your heart through and through, and your entire conduct throughout your whole life. He knew your heart through and through, what it was and what it would be like, down to its most hidden depths, when you as a new-born child, with all your sinful corruption, were brought to Him in Baptism. He knew how much you would waver, stagger, and stumble; how you at one moment would be over-confident and in the next bereft of hope; how you would now rejoice in Him, but soon forsake Him; how you would now trust Him fully, but soon again mistrust Him. Thus He knew you in your utterly wretched condition. Yet He did not prevent the baptismal water from conferring on you the grace of adoption. Surely it was within His power to do so. Later He did not

keep the saving Word from you, so that you could not have heard it. He could have done **that** too as a matter of mere willing. He did not keep from you the cup of grace, containing the blood of Christ, did not prevent your lips from touching it, and your heart from drinking life and salvation. He certainly could have done that too, had it been solely a matter of His power. He certainly could have taken you, miserable wretch, who wavered and staggered so much, you who were utterly unworthy, and could have kept you distant from all grace. But he did **not** do so, although He **knew** your utter unworthiness. Now, if in spite of your unworthiness, known to Him long before, yes, from eternity, if He in spite of that turned His grace to you, to you, when you were a little child laden with the filth and curse of sin, when you could not even cry out: I am so undeserving and unworthy, why will you, now that you recognize your damnableness, now that you are overwhelmed by your death in sin, and now that you cry out: I am totally unworthy before God, totally undeserving of His grace — why will you **now** think that you are shut out from grace? Tell me, has your unworthiness undergone any change? Not at all. Only, now first you see fully what God recognized in you long, long ago. And yet he most certainly bestowed His grace upon you long ago in your baptism. No, say rather: My unworthiness did not hinder or prevent God from bestowing His grace upon me at that time; therefore it shall not now hinder me in clinging to God's grace by faith, though I truly recognize my unworthiness and my corrupt state, and really feel the death which sin brings in its wake.

In spite of this the afflicted soul says: The fact that I am totally unworthy and sunk in the mire of sin's corruption, that would not hinder me in believing that I am nevertheless a partaker of grace, and that I have a gracious God. But faith — that's just my trouble. There is not a trace of such a faith and its comfort in me. I am without hope, full of despair; my heart condemns me, telling me that I have no share in God's grace.

Very well, in this extremity remember that your heart is not the last court of appeal. Remember that your case does not, finally, depend on your heart's feeling of comfort or feeling of despair. No, God is greater than your heart. And what does that mean? Does it, by chance, mean this: When your heart does not speak to you of the experience and enjoyment of grace, then too God's grace concerning you must lapse? When your heart despairs of your salvation, then God too must be at His wits' end concerning it? When your heart condemns you, telling you that you are without any righteousness, then too the righteousness won for you by Christ must become invalid to God and before God? Don't you see that then your heart would be greater than God, and would compel Him to do and think regarding you as your heart feels and experiences?

But now God is greater than your heart. If there is nothing

in your heart but death, and sin there exercises its power, bruising and slaying you, and not granting you even a taste of grace, still grace is mightier than sin, and God is greater than your heart. While your heart tortures itself, quakes, and agonizes under doubts as to your salvation, there is in the heart of God nothing but certainty and confidence that you must be saved. He Himself says: My righteousness shall not be abolished. That is the righteousness which He had Christ gain for you through His suffering and death. Yes, that righteousness is Christ Himself, Who won it for you. Therefore your heart may be terrified by the damning voice of your sin, and it may seem to you that your righteousness had succumbed to your sin. It matters not, for God is greater than your heart; your righteousness is in His hand, namely Christ, the Lamb of your redemption; and this righteousness feels no fear before your sin's damning sentence and your heart's despairing wail.

Now you see how you may still the storm of affliction. When afflicted, you must not consult the feelings of your heart. Say to yourself: It is not necessary that I feel the power and comfort of faith, stirring my heart, making me certain, and giving me a sweet enjoyment of grace. I can bear it cheerfully that my heart condemns me, as though there were no faith in me, or as though my faith were nothing. Because of that I still dare not harbor thoughts of despair and lament myself as lost and damned. For I dare not blaspheme the most gracious God Who says to me: **I am greater than your heart.** Therefore:

Though my heart spake naught but "Nay,"
God's Word, more sure, all doubts shall lay.

(Tr. by W. H. F.)

If you, dear Christian, will in this way rebuke the storm of affliction with the **eternally unchanging Word of God**, then you can calm your heart, even though it condemn you. God's promise in the Word will save you and therefore also preserve you in the justifying faith unto the end.

This is a blessed thing, to be able to calm your heart in the storm of affliction — to calm it, mark you, **before God**. That is the most blessed thing about it. That means that it is a different way than the accursed and damning one followed by frivolous and fleshly-minded men. Whenever they are frightened by their sins, and their heart begins to place them before God, the Holy Judge, and to condemn them, they immediately set to work to banish such thoughts of God in order to get some peace of mind. They may in this way calm their hearts, **but not before God**. But the afflicted believer who rebukes the storm of affliction with the immovable Word of God attains a condition most blessed in this, that though indeed he places himself before the holy God in His majesty, he yet can become master

of his self-condemning heart and can calm it **before God**. Surely, that is an extremely blessed state of heart. It is also of very great importance.

Therefore let us:

II

Recognize its great significance.

This state is a testimony of very great **significance**. It testifies to something entirely different than appearances would lead us to think. Such times of severe distress, when the believer's heart condemns him, and he barely calms his heart with the divine truth that God is greater than his heart, might be looked upon as times of poor spiritual health for the Christian. It might seem as though he were not making satisfactory progress as a child of God, yes, as though God did not really look upon him as His dear child because of a fundamental shortcoming. But this state of affliction appears thus only to those people who have no deep insight and but little judgment in spiritual matters.

Quite the contrary is true. This very condition, in which you quiet your heart against the waves of great distress, and you really succeed in doing so, is a true and clear indication, a reliable witness of true childhood with God. For thus speaks the apostle: Hereby do we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart. So it does not testify **against** your being a child of God if you, in the distress of affliction, must wrestle with a heart that condemns you, and if you must fight with the sword of the Spirit, and in that way alone can calm your heart before God. On the contrary, it bears clear and decisive testimony **for** your being a child of God. Because of such distress you are not to think that you belong to the sham Christians, and that your faith is an illusion. You are, rather, to conclude from that, in accordance with the divine teaching and instruction given here, that you belong to the sincere Christians, and that your faith, thank God, is entirely of the right order. Does not God scourge every son whom He receiveth? Does He not chastise His children? Now, thus He deals with you too. In that way He testifies to you what you are to Him: His child. We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, are we not? It is into this school of discipline that God takes us by means of such distress. Thus He testifies to you that through His gracious working in you you are really engaged in working out your salvation, and that in spite of all else your state is as good as it possibly can be.

Accordingly, this spiritual condition is also a very **comforting** testimony. For this fact always remains our best comfort that we are called and are the children of God, and that finally we are to be heirs also and thus be saved. The evidence for that we have in the

very fact that God humbles us deeply and lets us experience much distress at such times when our heart condemns us and finds rest only in this, that we, without any uplifting sensations in our hearts, cling only to the Word. At such times our sorrow is turned into joy; out of the very darkness, seemingly invincible, a comforting light breaks forth. For that reason the upright Christian can thank his God for such times of distress, following the example of all the saints of God, Ps. 118:21, and can also be truly willing to bear the cross of severe affliction, Ps. 119:71, since he well knows that it must serve the one purpose of exalting him to glory with Christ, Ps. 18:35; Rom. 8:28-30.

Such comfort is the experience of the true and sincere Christians, not of the sham Christians, the impenitent and the frivolous. Not of the impenitent, because they, whenever their heart begins to condemn them on account of their sin and unworthiness, follow an entirely different course than the true Christians. Then the latter have, so to speak, an ear only for the damning voice of their own heart and an eye only for the sinful, accursed figure which they, according to the damning judgment of their own heart, present in the court of a holy God, the figure which their heart shows them in the mirror of the law. Theirs, surely, is not the course of casting only a fleeting glance in that direction, and then quickly turning away and banishing all thought as to what manner of men they are, James 1:24. But such is the way of the impenitent. Whenever their heart begins to condemn them and cause them uneasiness, it does not occur to them to pause, to pay attention to the damning voice and to give ear to it. Far from it. They seek, rather, to silence that voice. They are not the kind of people who, sorrowfully and tearfully, are willing to have their full misery of sin exposed to God's sight. No, they want to cover up and conceal everything before God. Such men surely will not appear before God with the lament: Alas! my God, Thou Holy One, my heart condemns me, and that justly, because of my totally corrupt state in sin, nor can my heart do anything else, but I comfort myself with Thy Word, that Thou art greater than my heart and dost graciously absolve me. There is nothing, nothing they shun as much as appearing before the holy countenance of God. So we need not fear that they might apply to themselves the great comfort which here is given to all true Christians for times of affliction.

Neither can the frivolous enjoy this comfort. They have no earnest desire to be saved. To give themselves over to pleasure in this world, to enjoy life, to be honored, to make a great show and to nurse their vanity — ah, in such things they are very much in earnest. But in regard to their souls' salvation? Never. Nor is it their way, when their heart troubles them now and then with its damning thoughts, to become a bit more earnest, to pay some attention, and to entertain anxious thoughts regarding their salvation. Their way is not to

venture into God's presence with words such as these: Oh, my God, my heart condemns me and makes me fearful of my salvation, and I have no other comfort in my great distress concerning my salvation than Thy Word, which says that Thou art greater than my heart, that Thou certainly harborest for me thoughts of salvation, and that Thou wilt save me. That, you see, would mean becoming serious regarding the soul's salvation. That is not the style of the frivolous. So again we need not fear that they might appropriate the precious comfort of today's text to themselves, though it does not apply to them at all.

Neither the impenitent nor the indifferent can gain that comfort. There is, therefore, no foundation for the fear that we might overdo the work of bringing comfort, that we might make the impenitent and indifferent only more hardened and more secure.

Only those actually enjoy this comfort for whom it is given, the afflicted children of God. For them there can never be too much comfort. They need a rich measure of comfort. God wants to see abundant comfort offered them. For He says: **Comfort, comfort ye my people.** It is as if He would say: Give them a rich measure of comfort. To this one thing His children must cling, if they are to win the victory in their severe battles and storms. That is just what our gracious heavenly Father wants. It is His will that always light be sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. It is His will that upon those who here go through heavy storms and great unrest the words may be fulfilled: There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did rest from His. Amen.

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

CORRIGENDUM

We wish to call the attention of our readers to an omission on p. 265 of the October number, 1940, of the "Quartalschrift", which has robbed the paragraph under "C. A Review of our Synod's Course" of its sequence. Between the third and the fourth sentence of this paragraph the two sentences are to be inserted: "Here we face a real test of our sincerity. It will be remembered that our Wisconsin Synod had no part in shaping the agreement". (Continue with the fourth sentence: "It has also been shown that this was due etc. etc.")

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

Ist dies etwa Kirchengemeinschaft? — Kanzel- und Altar-Gemeinschaft besteht nicht zwischen der Amerikanischen Lutherischen Kirche und der Vereinigten Lutherischen Kirche. Dadurch lassen sich die beiden Körperschaften aber nicht abhalten, gewisse kirchliche Arbeit gemeinsam zu betreiben. Folgende Notiz ist einem Bericht im „Luth. Herald“ vom 31. Oktober 1940 entnommen.

„Daß die Zusammenarbeit der verschiedenen Lutherischen Kirchen unſers Landes einen guten Schritt vorwärts getan hat, zeigte sich, als der Bericht die angenommene Empfehlung brachte, die gemeinsame Arbeit der Amerikanischen und der Vereinigten Lutherischen Kirche unter den Negern gutzuheißen. Ein von beiden Kirchenkörpern gutgeheißenener Beschluß sorgt für die Ausbildung von farbigen Pastoren und Diakonissen und beabsichtigt, selbständige Kirchen ins Leben zu rufen. Der Plan ist, daß dem Neger die bestmögliche Gelegenheit gegeben werden soll, seine Talente zur allgemeinen Wohlfahrt zu entwickeln. — Ein ähnlicher Schritt für die bessere Verständigung zwischen den obengenannten kirchlichen Körperschaften wurde unternommen, als man die Zusammenarbeit in der Einheimischen Mission in Texas guthieß, die von Pastoren beider Synoden in Gang gesetzt worden ist.“

Ist das Kirchengemeinschaft? Wenn nicht, was ist es? Und wenn, warum dann nicht volle Gemeinschaft?

Diese Frage wurde auch auf der Versammlung der Amerikanischen Lutherischen Kirche zu Detroit aufgeworfen und eingehend behandelt, aber nicht überzeugend beantwortet. Der *Lutheran Standard* vom 9. November 1940 berichtet:

“This matter of intersynodical cooperation in Colored and Mexican Missions (Wie der deutsche Bericht, siehe oben, andeutet, handelt es sich um Mission unter Mexikanern in Texas. — M.) was the subject of some little discussion and the question was raised *whether the question of church fellowship is involved in it*. President Poppen expressed the conviction that this question is not involved. The proposed cooperation is comparable to that now existing between our Church and the U. L. C. at their Seminary in Rajahmundry, India, and to the cooperation achieved in the field of Inner Missions here in the home land. We are not thinking of establishing a fourteenth district of our A. L. C. in the Colored Mission field, but of helping our colored brethren to establish the Afro-American Church as a self-governing, self-supporting body.” M.

Statement by the Missouri Synod Committee for Lutheran Union.
— It was known for some time that the Missouri Synod Committee on Lutheran Union had prepared a document setting forth in final form what in the Commissioners' estimation still prevented the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship between their own synod and the A. L. C.,

to be more specific, what they considered as objectionable in the A. L. C. *Declaration*, in the Sandusky *Resolutions*, and in other recent acts of the A. L. C. A copy of this *Statement* was not available till now. Since the Detroit convention of the A. L. C., however, the text has become public. The statement is addressed to the Fellowship Committee of the A. L. C., and is signed by W. Arndt, Chairman, and F. H. Brunn, Secretary, in the name of the Missouri Synod Committee for Lutheran Union.

The text follows.

"You have requested us to state candidly what in our view after the 1938 resolutions of the Hon. American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod still stands in the way of actual church fellowship between our church bodies. We appreciate the spirit in which this request is made, believing that it reflects both the desire to see church fellowship between our two bodies established and the earnest wish to do nothing which is contrary to the will of our heavenly Lord and King. Our first sentiment must be one of gratitude toward God for having blest our joint efforts in that remarkable degree which the resolutions of 1938 manifest. It is our prayer that full unity in doctrine and practice may be established and maintained.

"In answering the question as to what prevents the immediate declaration of church fellowship, we point first to the relations which, on the one hand, the Hon. A. L. C. sustains toward its sister synods of the American Lutheran Conference and which, on the other hand, our own church body sustains toward its sister synods in the Synodical Conference. It would not be right or wise, we believe, that our churches should enter into a fellowship which the sister bodies on either side object to or are not willing to share. The situation presents a problem to your church body and likewise a problem to our Synod for which, we hold, solutions must be found before we can declare fellowship to have been established.

"In addition there have arisen questions to which we have pointed in the course of our joint discussions since 1938, questions which have disturbed the minds of men in Synodical Conference circles. The first one of these pertains to the sentence of your official doctrinal Declaration of 1938, 'God purposes to justify those that have come to faith.' The fear has been voiced that here there is implied an assumption of an interval between the creation of faith and the justifying act of God, and possibly a denial of the doctrine of objective justification. You, the Commissioners of the A. L. C., have given us a satisfactory declaration on this point, stating that according to your teaching 'justification takes place, of course, in the same moment in which man comes to faith,' and you have declared, 'We adhere to the doctrine of objective or universal justification.'

"Next, several items in the resolutions adopted by your Hon. church body in Sandusky in 1938 have aroused misgivings. One of these resolutions states, 'We are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines.' It has been held by some that the sentence is too sweeping, granting complete freedom of teaching

regarding doctrines that are non-fundamental. You gave us a statement which satisfied us, reading, 'It was asked whether it was not true that all Scripture doctrines are binding, whether they are fundamental or non-fundamental'. The answer was: 'To be sure, everything that the Scriptures teach is God's Word and therefore binding.' The statement was included in our Sandusky resolutions because Point 3 of the St. Louis resolutions could be understood as meaning that for the time being the *Declaration* given was sufficient and disagreement in those well-known points was to be tolerated, but that actual establishment of church fellowship cannot take place until agreement even in those points was reached. While we are ready to continue the discussion on these points, certainly the erection of church fellowship should not be made contingent on the result of these deliberations; church fellowship is justified and can be practiced even if no agreement is reached on these points.' — We noted with gratitude your assurance, expressed also in the Sandusky resolutions, that you are willing to discuss the non-fundamental points mentioned in your *Declaration*, viz. Antichrist, conversion of Israel (Rom. 11, 25), physical resurrection of the martyrs (Rev. 20, 4), beginning of the Thousand Years (Rev. 20), as also the attainment of uniform terminology in speaking of the church, in the hope that full unanimity in these points also may be reached. It is understood, of course, that, as you say, everything that the Scriptures teach is God's Word and therefore binding.

"Another statement in the Sandusky resolutions which caused apprehension in our circles is the following: 'We believe that the *Brief Statement* viewed in the light of our *Declaration* is not in contradiction to the Minneapolis Theses.' It was held that through the phrase 'in the light of' the endorsement of the doctrinal content of the *Brief Statement* by your Hon. church body became meaningless. On this point, too, you have given us an explanation which we have found satisfactory, saying in effect that you consider all points of doctrine contained in the *Brief Statement* to be Scriptural, though you do hold that with regard to the above mentioned five points the divergence you specifically referred to is not divisive, and that your endorsement of the doctrinal content of the *Brief Statement* does not extend to all points of argumentation and exegesis.

"Finally, the statement in the Sandusky resolutions with reference to membership in the American Lutheran Conference, 'We are not willing to give up this membership,' has caused some questioning in Synodical Conference circles. It was held that here the A. L. C. definitely stated it was unwilling to leave the A. L. Cf. even if its sister synods refused to place themselves on the same confessional basis, both of doctrine and practice, as the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod. You have given us a declaration on this point which we found satisfactory, reading, 'This is no absolute statement, but one conditioned by the future development of the A. L. Cf.'

"We are confident that the Hon. A. L. C. will give its approval to your above quoted declarations and that we may be privileged to report

to our own church body when it meets in 1941 that these difficulties have been removed.

"Another difficulty which in our opinion must be adjusted before church fellowship between our two bodies can be established pertains to relations of your church body to the Hon. U. L. C. A. The church papers have reported that through the adoption of paragraphs on unionism, lodge membership, and the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures by the commissions of the A. L. C. and the U. L. C. A. all obstacles in the way of fellowship between these two bodies have been removed. While we certainly would rejoice if the U. L. C. A. should place itself on the foundation on which your Hon. church body and our own synod are standing, we do not see how the Missouri Synod could enter into church fellowship with the A. L. C. if the latter establishes fellowship with a church body which does not share our joint doctrinal basis. The item of chief importance is the so-called *Pittsburgh Agreement* on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, an agreement which particularly later developments have proved to be inadequate.

"Furthermore, before fellowship can be established we hold that there must be some assurance that with respect to church practice there will not be a disturbing, disruptive divergence. Concerning all matters of church practice we are painfully aware that we ourselves fall far short of the goal. However, if there is to be a fraternal relation and cooperation, a certain degree of uniformity is indispensable. The chief points which come into consideration pertain to unionism and membership in lodges. It is our conviction that in principle there is here no difference between our two bodies. But the fear is frequently voiced in Synodical Conference circles that in carrying out the Scriptural principles respecting opposition to these evils the difference between our church bodies is too great to be ignored. It ought to be mentioned too that with respect to prayer fellowship it seems that in the A. L. C. a more liberal practice is followed than that which obtains in the Missouri Synod. We wish to state our firm conviction that ordinarily prayer fellowship involves church fellowship. With respect to these practical questions we entertain the hope that through joint conferences and the cooperation of the officials of our two church bodies, the presidents of the general bodies and the presidents of the various Districts, the necessary uniformity may be achieved.

"In conclusion, we wish to thank you for the spirit of candor and friendliness which you unflinchingly manifested at our meetings. Our prayer is that our joint efforts may be crowned with success. May God richly bless your convention and make it an important factor in the promotion of true Lutheranism."

Thus far the text of this most important document.

M.

Dr. Engelder's Clear Testimony at Detroit. — Three members of the Missouri Synod Committee on Lutheran Union, among them Dr.

Engelder, attended the recent convention of the A. L. C. at Detroit. At first the impression prevailed that they were there upon invitation from that church body "to answer questions desiring explanation from them and to ask questions, if they had any to ask." The report, however, of Dr. Arndt to *The Lutheran Witness* (Oct. 29, 1940, p. 379) leaves no room for doubt that they themselves had taken the initiative: "The president of the A. L. C., Dr. Em. Poppen, upon inquiry had stated that a *delegation of our committee would be welcome.*"

During the discussion on the implications of a closer association of the A. L. C. with the Missouri Synod, specifically on the question what bearing it would have on the present affiliation of the A. L. C. with the American Lutheran Conference, President Dr. Poppen with great seriousness and with deepest regret admitted that the sister synods in the A. L. C. teach doctrines and tolerate a practice which are not in harmony with the position of the A. L. C. Then a remark was made about having them "sign on the dotted line" (meaning Missouri's *Brief Statement* and the A. L. C. *Declaration*), but the opinion was voiced that it need not be required of the sister synods to accept these doctrinal statements formally, provided only that they acknowledge the Scriptural truths confessed in them.

At this point Dr. Engelder stepped forward to the microphone: "*But of course the Missouri Synod expects your sister synods in the A. L. C. to accept the Brief Statement. We do not mete with two measures: if we expect you (the A. L. C.) to accept the Brief Statement, we surely expect it from every other synod that is to be in unity with us.*"

May the Lord bless this clear testimony, to halt the advance of rank unionism, which, as the above mentioned discussion indicates, is encroaching dangerously close on us. M.

Dr. Arndt at Detroit. — As Chairman of the Missouri Synod Committee on Lutheran Union Dr. Arndt, on October 15, 1940, delivered himself of the following address to the A. L. C. convention at Detroit.

"My colleague, Dr. Engelder, Dr. Karl Kretzmann and I come to you as representatives of the Missouri Synod Committee on Lutheran Union, and we bring you cordial greetings and the best wishes of this committee.

"Whoever has studied the history of the Lutheran Church in America will be reminded by our visit of the years from 1872 to 1881 when the Ohio Synod, now a part of the A. L. C., and the Missouri Synod marched shoulder to shoulder in the Synodical Conference and jointly built the Lutheran Zion in this country.

"Will those great days return? Will not only the former Ohio Synod but the former Iowa and the former Buffalo Synod as well, both now likewise component parts of the A. L. C., be brought into fellowship with the Missouri Synod and our sister synods in the Synodical Conference? That is our fervent wish and prayer, and our being here is a token of the sincerity of these our sentiments.

"It is our conviction that there are still obstacles hindering the immediate establishment of church fellowship between our bodies. Owing to the kind invitation of your committee that we draw up a formal statement setting forth what in our opinion still hinders the establishment of church fellowship between our bodies, we have submitted such a statement. It is not necessary that I dwell on its contents now. Your president has made it available for all of you in mimeographed form. We should like to ask you to give the points we mention your prayerful consideration.

"Some of the obstacles which we enumerate are of such a nature that they cannot be disposed of in a hurry but that considerable time and patience are required in adjusting them. We should like to plead with you not to let this delay perturb you, just as we tell our own people not to lose courage and become impatient because of the apparent slowness of progress. What is important is, not that we quickly present a united front, but that we become thoroughly one and united in our doctrinal convictions and in the assurance that we are brethren and belong together, so that the ultimate declaration of fellowship is merely the announcement of a situation which has already come to be a fact.

"Unity of doctrine, unity of conviction, unity of faith — we hold that this is a treasure which no church body can prize too highly. When we held our meetings with your Hon. committee and discussed one Scripture doctrine after the other, and when it became apparent that on all of the main doctrines of God's Word we were in full agreement, all of us were deeply moved, our hearts were filled with gratitude to God, and we saw in it an evidence that our heavenly Lord has not yet forsaken His Church, but still grants His Holy Spirit. And when in 1938 our church bodies declared that in the respective documents there had been achieved the doctrinal basis for future church fellowship, what expressions of joy were there not heard on all sides? Praise God from whom all blessings flow — that is what hearts felt and lips spoke. Can their work remain unfinished — God forbid! Let us, God helping us, move forward to the consummation.

"Since our committees form but a very small section of our church bodies and therefore most of our pastors could not be present at the discussions, the intersynodical conferences of pastors of our two bodies which have been held, and are being held, throughout the length and breadth of the United States are of extreme importance. May the number of such meetings increase and the unification process thus be accelerated.

"When Ohio, Missouri, and other synods in 1872 formed the Synodical Conference the factor which drew these bodies together was the conviction that in the teachings of the Lutheran Church we have not speculation but the unadulterated truths of God's Word; that when Luther inaugurated the Reformation he not merely ushered in a new age, but through God's grace gave back to the Church the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ, assigned to the Cross its proper place at the center, and in general adhered to the teachings which have been proclaimed with great power for all ages by

the inspired prophets and apostles. These doctrinal treasures — of that the fathers were sure, are preserved for us and set forth in the Lutheran Confessions. Because our fathers had these Confessions and had found in them the pure teachings of Holy Scripture they considered themselves very rich. The conviction of the scripturalness of Lutheran teaching filled them with holy enthusiasm. Have these convictions changed since 1872? Have they been proved false? Perish the thought! We reply, 'The Word of the Lord endureth forever.' Luther to all of us is still the great Reformer of the Church, and the teachings brought before us in the Lutheran Confessions are still the hope of sinning, suffering, despairing, war-torn humanity. To the spreading of these truths your church body and ours have dedicated themselves. What a great thing it would be if we could jointly carry forward the flag of genuine Lutheranism, and in a day of doctrinal indifference and skepticism encourage each other to remain strong, loyal and uncompromising in the confession of the old saving truth.

"Let us not think that the task of preaching this truth is hopeless. It is true that the divine character of the Holy Scriptures, their inerrancy or infallibility, is violently attacked, and that church body which places itself solely on the Scriptures is said to have for its basis an outmoded, crumbling, collapsing foundation. Likewise the bold proclamation that in the Lutheran Confessions there is enshrined in its purity the gold of Scripture doctrine is regarded as manifesting a narrowness of outlook which is strangely out of harmony with the spirit of the modern age. Against all such talk and criticism let us defiantly say:

The Word they still shall let remain
And not a thank have for it.
He's by our side upon the plain
With His good gifts and Spirit.

The Word won the victories of the Church in the past; it will win them today. May this conviction help to bring us, the sons of Luther, together in a God-pleasing fellowship. O Lord Jesus, so say I, and I know you say, O Lord Jesus, grant it for the sake of Thy divine love."

Dr. Arndt, who delivered the foregoing address, was introduced to the convention in Detroit by Dr. M. Reu, who used concerning him, among others, the following words: "In the Missouri Synod, brethren, there is very much that is good. I do not say that all is good, but in the Missouri Synod there is very much that is good, and most of that I find embodied and personified in Dr. Arndt. When we worked together we learned to honor and esteem him and — I use now the singular — I learned to love him as a brother, taking that term in the *strict Biblical* sense." M.

Dr. Ellis B. Burgess Brings Greetings from the U. L. C. A. to the A. L. C. — The U. L. C. A., assembled at Omaha, Nebr., which after much "gulping" ratified the *Pittsburgh Agreement*, even before this step

had been taken, sent Dr. Ellis B. Burgess to Detroit to convey to the convention of the A. L. C. there assembled the greetings of the U. L. C. A. The text of his address follows.

"It is with a warm heart that I bring to the A. L. C. on her tenth anniversary the congratulations and good wishes of the U. L. C. A. During these ten years you have solved many of your merger problems in such a fine constructive way, that all of the merging churches have been blessed of God.

"It is with a trembling heart that I bring to you a tender of fraternity such as only brothers of a common faith can give. In war times such as these, when the passions of nations are at fever heat, it is natural that men with a great faith in things enduring should draw closer together. And it is in harmony with the eternal fitness of things that a visitor from the A. L. C. should be found on our convention floor at Omaha at the self same hour when a visitor from the U. L. C. A. stands here. May it please the great Head of the Church to use both messengers as His own!

"My position here recalls a similar experience in Holy Trinity Church of Greenville, Penna., thirty-two years ago, when the wars of the General Council and General Synod were raging. Introduced to the Pittsburgh Synod of the General Council in convention assembled, I faced the most intense audience of my experience, and knew that a higher hand than mine had planned the visitation. Most of the pastors there would be glad to see the war end; but at the same time many of them still 'carried a gun' when General Synod men were around.

"What the visitor of 1908 said on that occasion has long since been forgotten; what the Lord said lingers in blessing among the churches of western Pennsylvania to this day. What the visitor of 1940 may have to say to you will be as quickly forgotten; what the Lord may have to say to all of us in the deep recesses of our hearts may be cherished by generations yet unborn.

"When we analyse the thought of our Lutheran leaders on the general subject of better understanding and closer cooperation among us at the present day, there are three appeals that command attention.

"First, there is no Lutheran Synod in America which can afford to be indifferent about the quality of the seed-wheat sown in its parishes. Here is life that produces more life; and it must be pure. Raise the standards of the ministry as high as you will; the U. L. C. A. will follow as her natural life unfolds. The ministry for our Lutheran Church in America in future years must be the trained and the most highly disciplined our Church has ever known in any land. Men of indifferent faith will never be able to meet the challenge that is even now being heard in all our parishes.

"Second, the distinction between seed and soil, taught in the Scriptures, must be taken into fuller consideration. What do you expect of your Negro Lutherans in the south, but a generation or two out of slavery? What do you expect of the lily-white Lutherans who are less than one

generation removed from the blue-clay soil of Pan-Protestantism whence they have been gathered? When I think of the pastors who serve on such unproductive soil, and still witness a good confession before heaven, earth and hell; who gather a limited harvest every year, and still maintain a high confessional standard; I hail them as brothers whatever their synod may be. Some day these faithful pastors will all be numbered among the elite in Zion.

"Third, we must be more patient with one another, as harvests ripen more or less irregularly in our several fields. Hot house methods for merger purposes are highly unbecoming in any church that lives by the Word of God. 'So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.' Mark 4, 26-29.

"Men of the A. L. C., our harvest is come in America. Everywhere the reapers are gathering their sheaves of golden grain. Whether fully aware of it or not, we are laboring in the most productive fields the Lutheran Church has ever known since the time of Reformation. Where many another group has faltered, failed and fallen in America during the last twenty-five years, acknowledging the bankruptcy of its faith, the Church of the Reformation has forged ahead and gathered a golden harvest. What has been wrought during that period will undoubtedly have a profound influence upon the thought and life of the Lutheran Church throughout the world. All that it means only God can tell. Let the reapers be at peace!

"Our business as synods is to see to it that there is as little contention among the reapers as possible. When any man tells you it is dangerous for the A. L. C. to cultivate the friendship of the Missouri Synod, or of the U. L. C. A., you can tell him that it would be more dangerous not to do so. The welfare of the Lutheran Church throughout the world at the present moment depends in large degree upon the cooperation of all American synods. How can we cooperate, and still uphold our separatistic policies? What answer can we give to our children for the failure of a divided church to guard their spiritual heritage?

"Your visitor reports that the Executive Board of his church has taken favorable action in regard to cooperation in work on behalf of the American Negro. Whatever he can do, within or without the bounds of the National Lutheran Council, to widen the horizons of such mission work, he will do. Your visitor is not in position to report the action of his church on the *Pittsburgh Agreement*. Whatever that action may have been, he has learned to know the thought of the pastors of the U. L. C. A. well enough to say that it is only a question of time until all our differences will be resolved in the ever-rising tide of our common faith. After being a guest-preacher in more than one thousand of our pulpits, I know

that many pastors pray for your successes as they pray for their own. Our common prayers are far in advance of our halting fellowships. The Common Service Book which we gave you, may represent nothing more than our scholarship; but these common prayers, rising from thousands of family altars, reflect our common faith.

"Let there be no strife between your pastors and our pastors, I pray you: for we are brethren. And may the day soon come when all our people shall sing their songs of harvest home together, never to be divided again in earth or heaven."

The foregoing address, as the reprints in the A. L. C. church papers indicate, was enthusiastically received by the Detroit convention. M.

Pittsburgh Agreement Ratified by the U. L. C. A. — We reprinted the text of the *Pittsburgh Agreement* in the July, 1939, number of our *Quartalschrift*, pp. 215 and 216. It consists of three articles, on which a committee of the U. L. C. A. had come to an understanding with a similar committee appointed by the A. L. C. The first article concerns the matter of affiliation with "organizations injurious to Christian faith," meaning the lodges. The second regulates pulpit and altar fellowship with "pastors and churches of other denominations," which must not be "*indiscriminate*," and must be avoided altogether with "such individuals and groups as are not basically evangelical." The third article treats of Inspiration and is divided into three paragraphs. While on the articles about lodge membership and about fellowshiping with members of non-Lutheran denominations an early agreement was reached by the two commissions (1936), the third caused lengthy discussions, the bone of contention being the question concerning the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Not till February 13, 1939, did the colloquists reach the following agreement:

"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)."

This *Pittsburgh Agreement*, as it is called because the meeting of February 13, 1939, was held in Pittsburgh, was submitted to the recent convention of the U. L. C. A. in Omaha (October 9-16, 1940), and adopted after lengthy discussions. "Sharp dissensions were expressed. The chief point of difference concerned the use of the word *errorless*" as applied to the Scriptures (*News Bulletin* for October 25, 1940). The president of the U. L. C. A., Dr. F. H. Knubel, welcomed this "discussion on the inspiration of the Scriptures: for there has been no argument for the past four hundred years, and anyone can quote Luther and support any opinion." Yet he was ready, as *Time* for October 25, 1940, quotes him, to do some "gulping" and to swallow the articles of agreement. "He threw the weight

of his great influence on the side of accepting the Agreement," because, as he said, "to reject it would be to discredit the past, present and future of the United Lutheran Church" (*News Bulletin*). Thereupon the convention under this brisk leadership of their president decided to follow him in "gulping" the Agreement. However, some prominent delegates, a district president, members of the "Commission on Relationships," and others recorded their dissent from the action of the convention.

How difficult the men in Omaha found it to ratify the *Pittsburgh Agreement* appears also from the first report of the convention in the official organ of the U. L. C. A. In *The Lutheran* for October 23, 1940, one may read the following: "Three points had to be decided, according to the report of the commission, before we can advance toward merger with the A. L. C. *We must admonish our pastors to steer clear of membership in lodges. We must be careful about letting preachers of other denominations preach in our pulpits, and of allowing members of other denominations to receive Communion in our churches. We must declare that we believe there are no errors in the Bible.* It must be pointed out that these issues were not expressed in such naive terms in the declaration of our commission." The report in *The Lutheran* concludes: "Following a powerful personal plea by Dr. Knubel for progress toward Lutheran unity in America, the three points were *conceded.*"

Although one dare not, for the sake of the truth, overlook the sulking and growling opposition to the *Pittsburgh Agreement* within the ranks of the U. L. C. A., yet we may rejoice that the Scripture doctrine of Inspiration has won recognition to a degree of late almost unheard in that body. We hope that the men who succeeded in wresting from the U. L. C. A. a declaration of the inerrancy of the Scriptures will under the gracious guidance of the Holy Ghost strive and succeed to make the statutory confession of the body the heart-confession of all its members.

This was our reaction when the first, incomplete, report reached us about the Omaha convention. We still try to cling to this hope in spite of the sentiment expressed in one of the pertinent resolutions adopted at Omaha, which *The Lutheran* for October 30, 1940, reports. Three recommendations were before the convention. The third, which was adopted first, simply continued the Commission on Relationships to American Lutheran Church Bodies. The first approved the *Pittsburgh Agreement*, as reported above. The second contained an interpretation. We reproduce the text in full.

"2. We recommend that the U. L. C. A. approve in principle the considerations set forth in the (this) second section of this report, *herewith recording its understanding that the three Articles of Agreement herewith submitted (Pittsburgh Agreement. — M.) do not in any wise alter the fundamental position of the U. L. C. A. and that they are not contrary to or contradictory of the positions set forth in the Washington Declaration of 1920, the Savannah Resolutions of 1934, or to the Baltimore Declaration of 1938.*"

The Lutheran for November 6, 1940, in an "Across-the-Desk" paragraph, takes exception to the *Time* article quoted above, but lodges no protest against the "gulping," which we mentioned. M.

A. L. C. and Missouri. — The negotiations carried on since the Sandusky convention, 1938, between a committee of the A. L. C. and another of the Missouri Synod were referred to a special committee in Detroit. The text of this committee's report we herewith reprint, not in the form in which it was originally submitted, but in the final amended form in which it was reported to us as adopted by the convention.

"Intersynodical Relations

"A. Relation to the Missouri Synod

"As far as the negotiations of the Committee on Union of the Missouri Synod and our own Union committee are concerned, we rejoice over the fact that they apparently have been carried on in the spirit of candor and mutual confidence.

"We likewise rejoice that the final statement of the Union committee of the Missouri Synod requested by our Committee is written in the same spirit.

"This statement covers three points: 1) The correct understanding of a sentence of our doctrinal Declaration of 1938; 2) Several misgivings aroused in Missourian circles by items in our Sandusky resolutions; 3) The question of our relations to our sister synods of the American Lutheran Conference and to the United Lutheran Church of America. We take them up point for point.

"1. Concerning the first point, we are surprised that the sentence 'God purposes to justify those that have come to faith' could be so wrongly construed as 'implying an assumption of an interval between the creation of faith and the justifying act of God.' We say with our commissioners: 'Justification takes place, of course, in the same moment in which man comes to faith.' — Concerning the so-called objective or universal justification, we state that we adhere to this doctrine without excluding, however, the declarative nature of the individual justification in the moment of faith, of which the Scriptures speak so often.

"2. Concerning the second point — misgivings about several items in our Sandusky resolutions — we declare: Recent events prove that in the interest of a correct understanding of the St. Louis resolutions of 1938, it was necessary to include in our resolution a statement like this: 'We are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines.' We declare that by including this or a similar statement we did not want to cast any doubt on the binding force of any Biblical statement. We concur with our commissioners and say: 'To be sure, everything that Scriptures teach is God's word and therefore binding.' However, for clarity's sake we add: Not every traditional explanation of a Scriptural statement is binding. The traditional explanation may not be

the sense intended by the Holy Ghost and therefore may make further study under His guidance necessary; and, since human shortsightedness and sin may preclude the finding or the universal acceptance of the divinely intended sense, we thank God that it is not necessary for establishment of Church fellowship to agree in every explanation of a Scriptural statement.

“At Sandusky we declared: ‘We believe that the Brief Statement viewed in the light of our Declaration is not in contradiction to the Minneapolis Theses.’ Our Commissioners said the following in explanation of the phrase ‘viewed in the light of our Declaration.’ ‘This phrase says three things: 1. In regard to the question concerning the essence of the Church, the Antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, the physical resurrection of the martyrs, and the reign of a thousand years mentioned in Rev. 20, we accept the Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod, only with the limitations set forth in our Declaration; 2. In regard to the other points mentioned in our Declaration we accept the corresponding points of doctrine in the Brief Statement as they are either supplemented in our Declaration or *emphasized as to those points which seemed essential to us*. Thus the doctrine of the Holy Scripture has been emphasized which seemed essential to us; 3. In regard to the Brief Statement in general this phrase intends to say that we are conscious of our agreement with *the points of doctrine* contained therein, without, however, on our part sharing the exegetical or other lines of argumentation in every case, and without feeling obligated in every case to employ the same terminology.’ — With this explanation of our Commissioners we fully agree. Since now and then something is considered as a ‘point of doctrine’ which hardly may be thus called we are glad that our Commission, for clarity’s sake, exemplified which statements of the Brief Statement are by us not called ‘points of doctrine,’ for instance, the statement that ‘Adam before the fall had a scientific knowledge.’

“3. The third statement of our Sandusky resolutions that caused some questioning in Synodical Conference circles is: ‘We are not willing to give up our membership in the American Lutheran Conference’. This leads already to the third part of the memorandum of the Missouriian Committee on Union, namely, the question of our relation to other Lutheran bodies. Here we state:

“Concerning our relation to the American Lutheran Conference we concur with the declaration of our Commissioners saying, that the above mentioned resolution of Sandusky ‘is no absolute statement, but one conditioned by the future development of the American Lutheran Conference.’ — We entertain the confident hope that our sister synods of the American Lutheran Conference will occupy the same ground in these matters now occupied by us. (With regard to our relation to the United Lutheran Church we refer you to another section of this report.)

“4. The Memorial of the Missouriian Union Committee finally expresses the fear that there might be too great a difference in the treatment

of such practical questions as unionism and membership in lodges, to permit fraternal relation and cooperation. As far as 'Unionism' is concerned our standpoint is publicly stated, and as to membership in lodges the difference is hardly so great as some fear.

"Referring to prayer we are still convinced that prayer fellowship is wider than church fellowship, but we do not consider this difference as church-divisive and believe in the course of time it will be overcome completely."

So far the text of the union resolutions adopted at Detroit as far as the Missouri Synod is concerned. The relation of the A. L. C. to the U. L. C. A., mentioned in the above resolution, we take up in a separate item. M.

Pittsburgh Agreement Approved by the A. L. C. — According to press reports, the motion to establish fellowship with the U. L. C. A. was not carried in the Detroit convention of the A. L. C. However, the *Pittsburgh Agreement* was ratified, in spite of the fact that the Missouri commissioners had declared it to be unsatisfactory. (See Dr. Arndt's report on the Detroit convention in *The Lutheran Witness* for October 29, 1940.)

The convention committee, to which the matter of intersynodical relations had been referred, submitted four recommendations.

"1. We thank God that our Commissioners were instrumental in bringing about the *Pittsburgh Agreement*.

"2. We accept the *Pittsburgh Agreement* in the sense in which it was accepted by our Commissioners.

"3. We rejoice that the U. L. C., assembled at Omaha in convention, approved the *Pittsburgh Agreement* and consider this a great achievement for conservative Lutheranism in our country.

"4. We confidently hope that the action taken will be reflected in all official publications, in the teachings of the seminaries, in preaching and instruction, and in the practical life and discipline of the Church."

Whether these recommendations were adopted as submitted, or in amended form, we do not know at this writing (Nov. 5), but adopted they were, as the *Lutheran Standard* for November 9, 1940, reports. We here reproduce the pertinent paragraph.

"Our discussion and action at Detroit with reference to our relation with the U. L. C. was prefaced by the glad news that the U. L. C., at its Omaha convention, had overwhelmingly approved the *Pittsburgh Agreement*. That Agreement was unanimously adopted by the Fellowship Committees of both bodies in joint session in Pittsburgh, Pa., on February 13, 1940 (should read 1939. — M.) . . . At Detroit we accepted the *Pittsburgh Agreement*, fully convinced that this Agreement is in complete harmony with our own 'Declaration' and the Missouri Synod's Brief Statement'. We rejoiced over the fact that the U. L. C. had likewise approved the *Pittsburgh Agreement* and saw in that approval an evidence of the

strength of conservative Lutheranism in that Church body. We expressed the confidence that the action taken by the U. L. C. will be reflected in all its official publications, in the teachings of its seminaries, in its preaching and instruction, and that such action will strengthen the practical life and discipline of both our church bodies. We encouraged the pastors of the U. L. C. and of our own Church to meet in smaller groups to discuss questions of doctrine and practice in order to understand each other better and strengthen their faith."

One does not have to be a mind-reader to sense, on seeing this report, the tenseness of conflicting feelings clashing under an apparently calm surface. Our fervent prayer is that the Lord of the Church may strengthen the spirit of conservative Lutheranism, in our land and everywhere. M.

Dr. Long on the Membership of the A. L. C. in the A. L. Cf. — According to press reports the A. L. C. at Detroit reiterated its desire to remain affiliated with the A. L. Cf. "despite any move which might be taken toward closer relationship with the Missouri Synod." This resolution, as the convention declared, "is not an absolute statement, but one conditioned by the future development of the A. L. Cf." When the matter was up for discussion, Dr. Ralph H. Long is reported to have declared: "*We are not willing to give up a relationship of ten years for one that does not yet exist.*" M.

Japan Creates National Christian Church. — A news dispatch from Tokio, Japan, reports that delegates of the six largest Protestant Churches there, including the Lutheran, formally announced the creation of a National Christian Church, entirely in control of Japanese officers. It was further reported that denominational divisions will be retained. This result of two months of deliberation, aiming at the formation of a new organization conforming to Japan's new religious law, was announced at a mass meeting of 5,000 Japanese Christians, October 17.

In addition to the Lutheran, the new Church embraces the Presbyterian, the Reformed Church, Methodist, the United Church of Canada, Congregational, Evangelical, United Brethren, Disciples, Baptist, and Holiness denominations. Greek Catholics are also included in this new organization, but no Roman Catholics. The Episcopal Church is the only major Protestant group not at present represented. Bishop Abe, who is expected to be elected supreme head of the Church, explained that the question of ordaining bishops and ministers apparently was delaying the decision of the Episcopal Church.

Whether churches will be able to function outside the framework of the new Church is not yet known. The National Church program requires the cessation of foreign financial assistance and places schools, hospitals, and social workers entirely in Japanese hands. The missionaries legally are permitted to remain in Japan but Bishop Abe said: "Many con-

scientifically feel it is difficult to continue work under the new organization." He believes it unlikely that many new missionaries would come to Japan although their entrance is not prohibited.

A preparatory committee, including 85 representatives of the various denominations, all Japanese, have been appointed to elect the head and choose a name for the Church and formulate a creed.

(Taken from the *News Bulletin* for November 8, 1940. — M.)

Situation of Lutheran Churches in Japan. — Under the new law religious groups, to be recognized, must have at least 50 congregations and 5,000 members. In order to comply in every respect delegates to the recent biennial convention of the U. L. C. voted to combine U. L. C. congregations in Japan with those of the Lutheran Gospel Association of Finland.

The new organization is called Nippon Sukuin, which means "the denomination of the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church." This union creates a body of 13 ordained missionaries, 25 women missionaries, 60 Japanese pastors, 56 congregations, and 7,400 members. To retain proper contact with their home countries, the United States and Finland, the missionary organizations will remain separate but the Church will function as one united whole.

(Taken from the *News Bulletin* for November 8, 1940. — M.)

Mission Policy in Japan. — Further light is shed on the situation of Christian Churches in Japan by a statement of "desirable" mission policy approved by the International Missionary Council. It follows:

"1. That the Boards definitely recognize that a new period in missionary service and relationships is opening in Japan and that far-reaching changes are required by the new trends in the nation and in the Church. In many cases these changes are a continuation of mutually accepted processes which have been going on for a number of years, increasing the responsibilities of the Japanese Church.

"2. That each Board communicate its recognition of this fact to the Japanese Church body to which it is related, inviting the recommendations and proposals of that body and pledging that these recommendations and proposals will be given the fullest consideration. It should be borne in mind that the Japanese Church is known to be earnestly seeking a basis for missionary service and relationships more appropriate to the new situation.

"3. That, in the meantime, the Boards recognize that the situation may make it desirable for the missionaries to modify, or withdraw from their present services with the Church or Church institutions.

"4. That those missionaries who can adjust themselves to the new situation be urged to continue their residence in Japan for Christian wit-

ness and personal contact and for such Christian service as they can render."

(Taken from the *News Bulletin* for November 8, 1940. — M.)

"The New Church and the New Germany." — This is the title of a book by Charles S. MacFarland, who has been in Germany on no less than seventeen occasions and who has conferred with leading churchmen and state officials of the New Germany as spokesman for the Ecumenical Movement of Protestant Churches. The title of this book raises the question wherein the newness of the Evangelical Church in Germany consists. The New Germany is apparent to everyone. But the New Church? It is evident that MacFarland could not answer this question in 1934. But can we answer it today? Has this question not defied till now all attempts at an answer! What changes has the Evangelical Church in Germany undergone and what changes is it undergoing in its relationship with the New Germany and under the influence of National-Socialism?

The latest development along these lines of which we are informed is the one which *Die Evangelisch-Lutherische Freikirche* mentions in its November issue, 1939. We read: "Für die Deutsche Evangelische Kirche ist nach Kriegsbeginn ein geistlicher Vertrauensrat gebildet worden, der dem Leiter der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirchenkanzlei, Dr. Werner, zugeordnet ist; es gehören ihm an die Landesbischöfe D. Marahrens in Hannover und Schultz in Schwerin sowie Oberkonsistorialrat D. Hymmen in Berlin. Der Vertrauensrat ist vom Reichsminister für die kirchlichen Angelegenheiten empfangen worden und hat Anfang September seine Arbeit aufgenommen. Er hat diejenigen Entschliessungen zu fassen und Massnahmen zu treffen, die sich aus der Verpflichtung der evangelischen Kirche gegen Führer, Volk und Staat ergeben und ihren geordneten und umfassenden Einsatz zu seelsorgerlichem Dienst am deutschen Volke zu fördern geeignet sind."

This "geistlicher Vertrauensrat" or Spiritual Council brings to a head the endeavors of Church-minister Kerrl in finding a common basis on which Church and State can discuss all problems and moot questions. How necessary such a Church Council is, which has the confidence of the government and at the same time represents the different parties within the Church, we can conclude from a statement in MacFarland's book: "And when finally the effort to find an adequate leadership is consummated, the great task of the New Church will still lie ahead. Until that leadership is found, the New Church itself will not have really come into being and the tremendous issues which have been set forth in this volume will remain unsettled and unsolved" (p. 144). Even today we must say that the new Church has not yet come into being. The "Vertrauensrat" is the nearest thing to an adequate leadership. Compared with the "Oberkirchenrat" of the old Church D. Reu says of this Spiritual Council: "Damit ist die

Leitung der früheren unter dem Oberkirchenrat noch keineswegs gleich geworden, ihr aber doch bedeutend näher gerückt". (*Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 1940, Ste. 446.)

A most lamentable fact in the Church History of the New Evangelical Church is without doubt this that the National Socialistic government had to deal with a church which was far from being an organically united body. Lutheran, Reformed, and United are the three creeds of this Church. The Faith Movement of German Christians and the New Reformation Movement of the Confessional Christians together with a third party, which is gradually in the making but which has not committed itself as to its confession, were and are divided not only in regard to religious and doctrinal but also to political principles. The two above mentioned parties together with the third party, which would like to compromise between the two constitute the main factors of the New Church in Germany. All endeavors, however, to create an understanding between the different parties within the Church are being hampered by the difficult question as to the relation of Church and State. In order to realize how difficult and even momentous these issues are, I shall here summarize those principles, which were discussed by Kirchenminister Kerrl and the members of the Vertrauensrat.

Special emphasis was of course laid on the first and main principle, that of separation of Church and State, of the province of faith and reason and religion and politics. The second principle reads that national-socialistic ideology is binding on the German and determines and forms his whole development, even that of the Christian German. We are informed in the following paragraph that the German Evangelical Church is in conformity with this demand of National Socialism, since it has learned from Martin Luther that true Christian faith has its setting in the realm of national order as instituted by God. This is emphasized in view of a political universalism or internationalism, if I may so translate "Universalismus", as sponsored by the Roman Catholic Church and the ecumenical bodies of the Protestant Churches of the World. The third principle refers to the aim of National-Socialism to eradicate the political and religious influence of the Jewish race on the life of the German people. The Evangelical Church by virtue of the order, whereby God preserves the created world, affirms this endeavor on the part of National Socialism and emphasizes the contradiction between the gospel of Jesus Christ and the legalistic and Zionistic religion of the Jews. According to the fourth principle the Evangelical Church states that it is duty bound to preach the Revelation of God in Christ as it has been done by the great Reformers and especially as it has been taught by Dr. Martin Luther. In the fifth and final paragraph the Evangelical Church does not want to assert that there can be an "einnötiges Verständnis", i. e., necessarily a common understanding of the gospel-message. If

such a thing is possible; we read on, it at least cannot be arrived at before the organization of the Church is complete and even then not, if the discussion of questions pertaining to the Church and her doctrines are not conducted in the spirit of veracity and concord.

The result of the discussions carried on by Kirchenminister Kerri and the present members of the "Vertrauensrat" are as follows: First of all a new emphasis is laid on the separation of temporal and juridical affairs of the Church on the one hand and of spiritual and theological affairs on the other hand. The former are to be submitted to the Ecclesiastical Chancery of the Evangelical Church, the latter to the Spiritual Council and to the Synodical Body of the Church. The Ecclesiastical Chancery is responsible to the government for all its actions, since the Evangelical Church is a "corporation under the public law." This Chancery has the legal affairs of all the Evangelical State-Churches in Germany under its jurisdiction. The second gain is the renewed emphasis laid on the unity which is to be realized by the Synodical Body. It is not to be called in session in order to give one or the other party an opportunity to gain a victory over the other, but to impress upon all the need for unity, however the confessions of the various bodies may differ from each other. This Synodical Body is to be called into session by the president of the Ecclesiastical Chancery and will also be adjourned by him. The third result is the emphasis laid on the necessity of preventing any endeavors within the Church, which are contrary to the National-Socialistic government and to the national unity of the German people. Therefore disciplinary laws will be enacted, which will be embodied into the laws of the State. Despite these laws the evangelical freedom of conscience, to translate literally the phrase "die evangelische Gewissensfreiheit" of the pastors and the church-officials is guaranteed.

Regarding the relation of Church and State, Dr. Werner, president of the Ecclesiastical Council of the Evangelical Church, has undoubtedly spoken a word most worthy of note, the more so since it is of more recent date (January 16, 1940). Over against the superintendents and members of the Church Council in Danzig he emphasized the radical change which the German State has undergone in the last twenty years, it not being anymore a "Machteinrichtung" nor a government as Luther knew it, but rather a government of an autonomous people. Hitler would say as MacFarland has it: "Government and people in Germany are not opposed to each other but are identical." Not a certain government is autonomous any more, but the Volk, the people as such, composed of Christians and non-Christians, Protestants and Catholics. Consequently the Evangelical Church, whose members are a vital part of the German nation, must see to it that they enter into a true relation with the State. Till now that has not yet been accomplished. But it must be a foregone con-

clusion of everyone, Dr. Werner continues, that the Church cannot separate itself from the State without also separating itself from the German people and on the other hand it must be theoretically evident to everyone, that the State cannot be opposed to the Church, without doing harm to the people, who are again identical with the government. Only then would this be possible if Christianity had lost so much ground in Germany, that Christian citizens of Germany cannot anymore be regarded as a vital part of the German people. Should it come to that, then the State or government would not be guilty of such a development, but the simple fact that the gospel, as preached by German theologians, is not strong enough to influence the German people to such an extent as heretofore. Therefore the main question cannot be, Dr. Werner concludes, what kind of an organization the Church is to have, but how are the pastors in Germany to preach the gospel so as to work in their hearers a true understanding of the gospel truth. Only then would there be a real genuine relation of Church and State.

Indeed the title of MacFarland's book is very appropriate: "The New Church and the New Germany." Yet we have to confess that even we today have to bide our time in answering the question in regard to the final character of the Evangelical Church in Germany, although headway has been made since 1934 as far as the organization of the Church and the relation of Church and State in Germany are concerned. But whatever the final development may be, we have every reason to be convinced that the New Church in Germany will never — if present Church leaders have a word to say — become a Free Church or a strictly Lutheran Church or a Church having one actual confession. We have reason to be convinced that the New Church will again embody different confessions, the Lutheran, the Reformed, that of the United Church, of the New Reformation Movement, and of the Faith Movement of the German Christians — all united of course in some "common" confession as for instance the one embodied in the Constitution of the German Evangelical Church of July 11, 1933, and signed by leaders of all German Evangelical Landeskirchen. Despite such a "common" confession, which will be nothing new as far as the confessions in the German Evangelical Church in Germany are concerned, still this Church will be — there is no doubt in our minds as to that — a new State Church. It will be a new State Church in which the two provinces of State and Church will be separated and defined more clearly than in the State Church of imperial Germany. It will be a State Church which will be loyal to the National-Socialistic government, even as the old State Church was loyal to the Kaiser. It will however endeavor to serve the German people more than was the case in the State Church of imperial Germany. But — and that is our final question, which we cannot answer now — will the gospel

of Jesus Christ be preached in this New Church more than before in its fulness and purity despite all the different confessions? If that should be the case — and we can only pray that it will — then such a turn of events will alone be the work of the Holy Ghost, “who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel,” then all these, who believe in this true Gospel, will alone in Germany belong to the one true Church of Jesus Christ, the Old and always again the New Church.

P. Peters.

On Opening a Parochial School. — Under the heading “What is necessary to open a school?” the *News Service* of the Missouri Synod Board of Christian Education for October, 1940, carries a leading article, which contains much food for thought. We quote a few paragraphs which require no comment but are worthy of prayerful pondering.

“A thorough indoctrination of the laity is necessary in order that pure doctrinal and Scriptural church practice may continue. Occasionally, in congregations where the standards of indoctrination are low, a very few well-informed and staunch members together with their pastor are, humanly speaking, the only guardians of purity in Lutheran doctrine and practice.” — Here we insert a sentence from another paragraph of the same article: “The leaven of a few well-informed and indoctrinated members will make the ministry of a church easier, happier, and more blessed, than if there were no such members at all.” — The first quoted paragraph continues: “This will help us recognize the importance of the parochial school, the only agency which allows for a maximum of indoctrination. — *The full import of this point may be hard to grasp as long as we still have an imposing number of parochial schools.* Practically all our congregations enjoy the benefits of our parochial school system, because most of them draw members from congregations with schools, and often these are the leading members. *If we should once lose our schools, our loss would not be fully apparent until the following generation,* and then it might be too late. *People in general would then not be able to understand the cause of conditions,* and the few seeing clearly would find it difficult to obtain a hearing. It has always been that way. Many church bodies which have lost their schools are in that position today.”

Why, then, not open schools?

“Everyone has heard objections to the parochial school. We have been told that some parochial schools are inefficient. That is granted without an argument. But if we are fair, we will count also the inefficient public schools and compare percentages. What is more, there are also inefficient lawyers, physicians, merchants, and *preachers of the Gospel* (And are not some of these frequently found among the loudest in denouncing the parochial school system? M.). Many in every profession, trade, and calling are inefficient. We must look at the institution as a whole, and at fundamental principles.”

What makes a school efficient?

"It is not necessary to have a school plant which is modern in every respect. The English are astonished at our facilities for education. We would be surprised at the poor physical equipment in many of the schools of England. *There they stress the character and the qualifications of the teacher.* — A Lutheran pastor has a good foundation for becoming also a good teacher, because he has the most important pre-requisite of a teacher, a humble Christian character. *That will overcome much of the lack in school equipment.* These latter needs will be taken care of as the institution grows and wins the favor of the congregation."

Sunday schools, catechumen instruction, an hour of week-day religious instruction are inadequate to take the place of a full-time parochial school. "The mistaken policy of defending a minimum of instruction in part-time institutions becomes apparent. The reference here is not to the use of part-time agencies where they must be employed temporarily for want of something better, but to a *feeling of satisfaction with inadequate arrangements.*"

A parochial school is an unmerited gift of God. "The greatest requirements, those that will assure us of success in establishing more schools, are fear of God, love of God, and faith in God and His promises, — and all these come from God. That is comforting. He will supply our needs, unless we despise the blessing which He is ready to grant us."

M.

Employment of Non-Lutherans as Instructors in Synodical Institutions. — The convention at Detroit adopted the following resolution: "In engaging teachers for our educational institutions, loyal active members of the A. L. C., who are capable in their fields shall be given the preference. If none such are available, Lutherans of other bodies shall be employed if possible. If Lutherans of other bodies are not obtainable, *Christians adhering to other denominations may be employed.* In no case shall non-Christians be engaged to teach in our educational institutions."

M.

Milwaukee City Public Schools. — The administration of Milwaukee public schools is becoming an increasingly difficult problem. The child population is shrinking in proportion to the total population. The assessed property valuation is falling. The birth rate continues low.

Ordinarily, it would seem that the cost of operating the school system would drop, in view of the smaller percentage of children to educate, and that the decrease in tax revenue resulting from a reduced assessed valuation would not be a disadvantage.

But here is what actually is happening: Milwaukee rapidly is growing to be a city of adults, a community in which an abnormal number of children are in the higher grades.

High schools are crowded. Two elementary schools will be closed this fall. Thirty rooms in various elementary schools were closed in February because of the drop in enrolment. Plans are being made to close 15 other rooms by the end of the semester.

Days of Large Families Seem to Have Gone

The 1940 school census showed that the 129,648 children enrolled in the public and parochial schools when the term ended last June were members of 67,141 families and that 682 children had come from orphanages. The average number of children per family, on the basis of census figures, was 1.93. Large families belonged to an earlier era.

In number of school age children (4 to 19, inclusive), Milwaukee this year has fallen below its 1920 school census figure, in spite of the fact that the city's total population has increased by more than 132,000 in those 20 years.

Yet there were nearly 25,000 more children in school last June than in 1920.

The new school census totals 130,330 children of school age, as compared with 157,160 in 1930 and 130,801 in 1920.

Only one out of five persons in the city is a child of school age. A decade ago it was one of four.

A significant point is that enrolment in high schools now is about four times larger than in 1920 and more than 70% greater than a decade ago. Elementary school enrolment is slightly ahead of 1920, but about 7,000 behind 1930.

Enrolment in the 13 high schools last June was 38,354 and in the 88 elementary schools, 53,977.

Year	School Census (Ages 4-19)	Total Pop.	Ratio	Total		
			Census to Total Pop.	Public School Enroll.	High School	Elemen- tary
1920	130,891	457,147	28%	58,422	7,451	50,971
1930	157,160	578,289	27%	79,604	18,666	69,938
1940	130,330	589,558	22%	82,331	28,354	53,977

— Milwaukee Journal.

P.

Masons and the Public School. — The Rev. Benjamin Essenburg, Associate Editor of the *Christian Cynosure*, in an article on "Which School?" cites a resolution passed by the Supreme Council of Masonry in 1921:

"We approve and reassert our belief in the free and compulsory education of the children of our nation in public, primary schools, supported by public taxation, which all the children shall attend and be instructed in the English language only, without regard to race

or creed, and we pledge the efforts of the membership of the Rite to promote by all lawful means the organization, extension and development to the highest degree of such schools and to continually oppose the efforts of any and all who seek to limit, curtail, hinder or destroy the public school system of our land."

On this the Rev. Essenburg comments tersely: "This . . . puts the ban on all Christian education in Free Christian grade schools supported by churches, parents, or both. This means that the hundreds of Christian grade schools maintained by Christian parents should cease to exist."

He then briefly points out the dire consequences: "A Christless education in the schools paves the way for the Christless religion in the lodge."

Only too true.

M.

Downfall of France Due to Lodge Activity? — The *Christian Cynosure* for September, 1940, carries an interesting item on the new order in France. Marshal Petain is endeavoring to reestablish the "work, family and fatherland" idea among the people, but is being thwarted in his efforts by Freemasonry, which is charged with "sapping the morals of France". The Petain government has now ordered the dissolution of Freemasonry and all other secret societies. The *Cynosure* quotes from *Le Nouvelliste* of Lyon: "Our foreign enemies never would have been able to succeed against us if France had not been literally assassinated by the venom of secret lodges."

Food for thought.

M.

The Christless Lodge. — A *Cynosure* reader, the wife of a Masonic Past Master, who formerly "encouraged her husband to go (to the lodge meetings) because" she "thought it was good and wholesome", in a contribution to the *Cynosure* mentions as first among the "sins" of Masonry: "Hoodwinking a Christian and teaching him that virtuous works will save him." Then she makes the startling statement: "No matter what a man's faith when he takes the first vow of Masonry, he is definitely not a Christian if he takes the second." Though this is an overstatement, it sharply points the paralyzing effect lodge-membership has on faith.

To tolerate lodgery in our churches means to be blind to the central truth of the Gospel.

M.

Was the Church at Jerusalem Communistic? — In an article by H. J. Currens (in *The Lutheran* for August 21, 1940), on the principles of church organization, occurs the following remark in parenthesis: "We must remember that the early organization of the church was truly communistic. All property became common property and was administered to all by the leaders."

Although no Bible passage is quoted the reference is evidently to Acts 2, 44, 45, and the more elaborate record in chap. 4, 34-37. Concerning this case Lenski, in his commentary, tersely remarks: "Those who call this communism have yet to learn that it was the opposite, the product of something that communism never dreamed of" (p. 117). Carefully weighing the tenses Luke uses and the connectives, etc., Lenski summarizes as "the main idea, namely: how they all considered and treated their possessions, not as belonging just to the owner, but as something in which the rest were to share as need arose" (p. 117). "What Luke describes is a fine display of Christian charity" (p. 118).

That the underlying idea of the Jerusalem arrangement of providing for the needy was not communism is made evident beyond doubt by the Ananias incident. The sin charged against this church member and his wife was not that they had withheld some of the money, in violation of the communistic principle, but that they had lied about it. Their right of personal ownership is upheld by Peter in a way that one almost gets the impression as though Ananias had considered communism the ideal form of Christian living: "Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?" (Acts 5, 4).

No, not communism but active charity, the fruit of the spirit, was the basic principle governing the management of affairs in Jerusalem. M.

Federal Regimentation of the Youth. — Efforts, recently much increased, to place the schooling and training of the youth of the land directly under federal control are due not only to a general tendency toward centralization and to growing paternalism in government, but to the discovery of an appalling unfitness of our youth, both physically and morally, for building up our national defense.

A correspondent of *Life*, as quoted by A. C. Stellhorn in the *News Service*, recently wrote: "A prime story of the week in war-jittery Washington is the recognition that prospective American soldiers are in no shape to fight Hitler's tough, unpampered blitz-kriegers. The New Dealers have come around to the Dorothy Thompson view that Americans — particularly Americans of fighting age — are a *swarm of softies*." (Italics ours. M.)

To this Mr. Stellhorn adds a paragraph from a letter by Mr. Sterling E. Edmunds, member of the St. Louis Bar, stating: "Our entire population is demoralized in nearly every sphere — in the family relations particularly, in the field of labor, and in that of government. The old virtues as we knew them have been supplanted by opportunism and expediency. . . . Our children grow up without any standards of conduct founded upon moral and religious principles. . . . I still retain an appreciation of the worth of my early

Presbyterian training and its *self-restraining principles*." (Italics ours. M.)

Solomon's oft repeated recommendation to apply the "rod of correction" in the training of a child (Prov. 22, 15; 13, 24; 23, 13. 14; 29, 15) has been conspicuous by its absence far too much in modern methods of education. Self-expression was heralded as the only proper way consistent with the dignity of the child. Even learning must be accomplished to a great extent by playing games.

If the results of this un-Biblical method of training now become painfully evident, what should be the remedy? Federal regimentation, as embodied in the Child Labor Amendment? In that case the remedy would be worse than the evil it is intended to cure. The answer is contained in the question itself.

A word of warning is in place. We quote from the *News Service*: "We are now primarily interested in this matter (Federal youth control) as a measure to make up for child and youth training in the home, the school, and the church. Warnings have long ago been sounded against the false philosophies of child training, particularly the discouragement of discipline on the part of parents and teachers. In late years far too many people have prided themselves on having overcome the old-fashioned way of making children behave and obey, of making them work and do things they did not like, of truly preparing them for the hard knocks of life. And this spirit has also been very noticeable among us Lutherans and among some teachers and pastors. As a result we have also entirely too little real seriousness and real Christian manhood and womanhood in our circles."

M.

An Ever Timely Warning. — Under the heading "The Peace of a Strong Faith," *The Watchman Examiner* for September 5, 1940, carries an article, from which we quote a few sentences. "Men are queer. They get excited about what is happening away off somewhere, to the neglect of immediate tasks. . . . They will be concerned with the far-away dangers and let themselves become absorbed therein, when all the while there is work at hand waiting to be done. Farms are to be made, factories run, homes developed in godliness and duty, human services to be performed, and spiritual ministries to be bestowed. — Do not forget the immediate task in these destroying days. Learn to leave some of the distant disorders with God. . . . Our supreme duty is to stay in our place, attend to our personal duties, manifest faith and hope in God through Jesus Christ, and cheerfully work instead of worry. We are to lay our fears in God's hands and take up His promises, confident that in the long run wrathful and proud men will fail before a patient but immutable Christ."

This is the Scriptural conception of the call. God has placed each one of us into a special station in life and wants us to be faithful in the discharge of just those duties so assigned to us, and "that charity be

practiced in such ordinances" (A. C. XVI). Remember the motto at the end of the "Table of Duties" in the Catechism:

"Let each his lesson learn with care,
And all the household well shall fare."

M.

Scouting. — Our attitude toward Scouting has ever been that this movement, in spite of its praiseworthy aim of developing a healthy character in the youth of our land, cannot be endorsed by the Lutheran Church because of the self-righteousness which it fosters in its organization. Our convictions were strengthened by an article which Mr. Herbert C. J. Schillinger contributed to the *School Journal* (for October, 1940, p. 60ff.) on "The Religion of Boy Scouting." He bases his remarks on a book by Barry Chalmers, "The Boy Scout and His Law." The book is "approved by the chief Scout executive," who recommends it to all who are "interested in discovering what lies at the heart of the Scout movement."

We reproduce a few of the quotations which Mr. Schillinger lists from the book.

"Friendliness and kindness and service and clean living are *the foundations of every religion in the world*" (p. 169). "Do we think our way the only right way? If so, we have a lot to learn and we had better begin to learn it at once" (*ibid.*). "In the Scout law we have the key to the kingdom of righteousness" (p. 172). It is "in itself a *religion* of a very excellent sort" (p. 171). Scouting "is practical Christianity. It believes in '*salvation by character*' and the 'brotherhood of man'. It believes that it can best serve God by serving God's children" (pp. 172, 173).

These few quotations show sufficiently that the religion of Scouting is the religion of the lodge.

We add that Mr. Schillinger is a parochial school teacher in Cleveland. Blessed the school where the children hear such Gospel testimony against the lodge spirit.

While rejoicing over this testimony, we read several items in the A. L. C. *Lutheran Standard*, one which praised the Boy Scouts very highly, and another which urged all Lutheran boys who planned a trip to the New York World's Fair on "Lutheran Day" (August 3) to bring their Scout uniform to wear in the parade and at the flag raising ceremony. Later the *American Lutheran* (for October, 1940) reported editorially: "From the beginning to the end of that day the thousands of visitors from the nation were constantly reminded of the fact that *the Lutherans were testifying concerning their faith*. At 10 A. M. the Lutherans took charge of the Flag Raising on the American Common. From there the parade, which included various bands and representations from *Boy Scout and Girl Scout Organizations* as well as delegations from our Sunday schools, proceeded to the Washington Statue where a large wreath was placed in the name of Lutheran Sunday school children. At 12 noon and 6 P. M. Lutheran services were held at the Temple of Religion." As *The Bond*

for September, 1940, reports, one of the speakers in these services remarked "that the *Boy Scout program helps our boys to realize more fully our obligation and duties to God, our country, and our fellowmen.*" — The *American Lutheran* continues: "A Lutheran organist gave an organ recital at 5:30 P. M.. The great mass gathering of the day which attracted upwards of 7,000 people to the New York City Plaza listened to our Dr. Walter A. Maier and a large Lutheran mass chorus."

How can Scouts, who represent a religion as outlined by Mr. Schilling on the basis of an authentic Scout source, set forth before the world the Lutheran faith?

And when a church begins to boast her ability of doing such "big things," can one help but fear that she is on the verge of losing both her true perspective and her soul? M.

"In a Strategic Position." — To the A. L. C. assembled in Detroit Dr. E. E. Ryden, President of the A. L. Cf., brought greetings on the tenth anniversary of the Church. In his address he stressed, among other things, the "strategic position" of the Conference, which also was organized ten years ago, as having been ably utilized by the A. L. C. in recent years. Here is the pertinent part of his address as published in the *Luth. Standard* for November 16, 1940.

"Finally, I would say that it is generally recognized that we as a Conference *occupy the most strategic position* of any body in the Lutheran Church in America with reference to the whole problem of Lutheran Church unity. We are neither the most conservative body, nor the most liberal. We stand, as it were, in the center, ready to stretch forth the hand of fellowship to the right and to the left, eager to draw into real spiritual communion the brethren on the right and on the left. In this task your own Church, as a constituent part of the Conference, has already rendered a distinct service through your negotiations with the Missouri Synod and the U. L. C. The thing which happened last Friday in Omaha, when the U. L. C. ratified the Pittsburgh Agreement, was a real achievement for the A. L. C. and a genuine victory for its leadership. We rejoice over the things you have accomplished and believe that you have charted the course which we as a Conference must follow: to fellowship with those of our Lutheran household of faith who are willing to fellowship with us, and to work with those of our Lutheran household of faith who are willing to work with us. Thus only shall we be able to fulfill our destiny as a Lutheran Church in America, and thus only shall we be able to carry out our God-given task."

On this part of Dr. Ryden's address Dr. Graebner (whose article in the December number, 1939, of the *American Lutheran* will be still fresh in every one's memory) comments in the *Lutheran Witness* for November 26, 1940, as follows:

"Dr. Ryden overlooks a few things.

"He overlooks the fact that the Conference is not so far from the 'left' extreme, since it has in its midst a body as 'liberal' in many respects as the U. L. C. (the Norwegian Free Church) and has in his own (Swedish) synod men as radical as any in the extreme left of the U. L. C., men who will never stomach 'Missouri'. He forgets that he has in his own body also men who will fight against compromise, men who sincerely grieve over the doctrinal decay which has crept over the Augustana Synod and who would look upon fellowship with the U. L. C. as apostasy from confessional Lutheranism. He overlooks the fact that synods within the A. L. C. have publicly and by resolution protested against the laxity in doctrine and practice which has offended them in their own A. L. Cf. 'brethren'. And he overlooks finally that he can entertain no hope of fellowship with 'Missouri' as long as the official organ of the Swedish synod prints attacks on the doctrine of verbal inspiration (December 16, 1933) and on the doctrine and government as set forth in the Augsburg Confession (January 25, 1940), and as long as its leaders take the unionistic position lauded as 'the most strategic position among Lutheran bodies' in this presidential address."

The last remark is the most important. The very spirit of the words on occupying a "strategic position" is thoroughly unionistic, un-Lutheran. And where this spirit prevails there is little hope that any decisive steps will be taken to correct the shortcomings mentioned besides, which, by the way, are liable to crop out time and again in the most faithful church bodies as long as we continue here on earth. M.

Büchertisch.

The Spirit of the American Lutheran Church. By P. H. Buehring, A. M., D. D., Professor of Historical Theology in the Ev. Luth. Seminary, Columbus, Ohio. 116 pages, 5x7½. Cloth. Title on front and backbone. Price, 85c. — The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, Ohio.

The book, which is dedicated to the memory of the Rev. Carl Christian Hein, D. D., "Pastor, Scholar, Executive, Diplomat, who devoted the best efforts of his life to the promotion of true Christian unity", in the first three chapters sketches a brief history of the three synods, Buffalo, Iowa, and Ohio, which in 1930 merged to form the American Lutheran Church. Then in the last chapter it presents the birth and the spirit of the A. L. C. as resulting from the "clearly distinguishable elements that have been contributed to it by the three constituent synods . . . each of which had developed its own peculiar characteristics" (p. 92). There is appended the Constitution of the A. L. C.

It was with mingled feelings that the present reviewer read the book. There is much cause for rejoicing over the rich blessings God bestowed

on these church bodies individually and jointly, over the ready response which they showed toward God's grace, over the fruitful labors which they performed. Yet there is also much cause for grief over human shortcomings, the saddest part being that some of these shortcomings do not seem to be recognized as such. To illustrate we shall assemble a few quotations on the doctrine of Election and Conversion, although others, especially concerning Open Questions, might serve as well.

Of the former Ohio Synod we are informed that "only twice in its long history was any serious question raised concerning the orthodoxy of the synod by men in its own midst" (p. 73f.). "The second time when the orthodoxy of the majority of the synod was questioned by a minority, was at the beginning of the predestination controversy" (p. 74). That was in the years immediately following 1877, when Dr. Walther had presented a series of theses on the doctrine of Election, which the overwhelming majority of the Ohio Synod pastors rejected as a "new doctrine." Then, in 1881, "the synod resolved to withdraw from the Synodical Conference, (1) because the Missouri Synod had 'set forth and definitely adopted a doctrine concerning election which we cannot accept';" and which they felt it their duty to brand publicly as *Calvinizing* (p. 75f.). Nowhere in the book did we run across a remark that the author considers this a mistake, rather he gleefully reports: "When the smoke of battle finally cleared away, it was found that only a small number had withdrawn and gone over to Missouri, while the loss was more than made up by the addition of a considerable number of pastors and congregations who left the Missouri Synod and came over to Ohio" (p. 76). And he lauds the Iowa Synod that it "at once openly and bravely stood shoulder to shoulder with Ohio" in the great predestinarian controversy (p. 83), and hails Dr. Stellhorn as Ohio's great "specialist on predestination and conversion" (p. 80).

Concerning the first error that was charged against the Ohio Synod by members from its own ranks, because the unionistic formula of distribution was used in the Communion liturgy: "Jesus Christ says, This is my body"; the author openly admits: "Of course, the action of the synod in this case was a mistake" (p. 74). Why not also concerning the *intuitu fidei* error?

The recent action of the A. L. C. at Detroit, when upon advice of President Dr. Poppen the whole union question was referred to the districts, was in keeping with the spirit of the Ohio Synod, which demands that "no steps of primary importance were taken by the general convention, until the various districts had considered the matter and expressed their opinion" (p. 101).

The book is profusely illustrated with well-chosen pictures. M.

Report of the twenty-third regular convention of **The Norwegian Synod of the American Ev. Luth. Church**, 1940. 91 pages. Price, 35c. — Lutheran Synod Book Co., Mankato, Minn.

Besides the usual business transacted at Synod meetings this report contains two very timely and instructive essays.

To take up the second one first, Pastor Geo. O. Lillegard, on the topic "*The Principle of the Separation of Church and State Applied to our Times*", calls "attention to some of the pitfalls and dangers that beset the Christian citizen in free America in his efforts at maintaining and observing the principle of the separation of Church and State today." Under the two headings "I. When the Church interferes with the State" and "II. When the State interferes with the Church", he assembles a vast amount of material, instances of encroachment by either one institution on the domain of the other.

The other essay is by Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker on "*The Question of Non-Fundamentals in the Light of Scripture*". In the present union movement some people make very much of a distinction between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines, declaring that agreement in all non-fundamentals is neither possible nor necessary for the establishment of church fellowship. The essayist maintains that "the distinction becomes a sinful one and subtly dangerous if it is maintained that some teachings of Scripture are of such nature that we may hold divergent views regarding them. . . . Where the Word of God has spoken . . . it will ever be a matter of fundamental importance whether we trust in Christ or not, and whether we in faith are willing to accept His Word of Truth or not" (p. 24.25).

As a starting point for his presentation the essayist uses the fact that "in our prayers and devotions and in our daily companionship with Christ, we" — whether we be infant children or number among the deepest theologians — "are not thinking in terms of an involved set of doctrines. It is the One Great Presence, Christ, Who is the sum and substance of all our longings and hopes and aspirations. . . . For it is faith, not knowledge, which lays hold of God's saving grace in Christ." And "if our study of the dogmatic system of theology leads us away from this simplicity of faith . . . it has not served its real purpose" (p. 15).

What is the meaning, then, of dogmatics? "The promise is that he who in faith has accepted Christ, has no half-Christ, or quarter-Christ, but he has the whole Christ with His every blessing and gift and is full heir of heaven" (p. 15). And "the normal thing is that a new-born child of God will continue on to live in this new relation, associate more and more intimately with his heavenly Father, enjoy the good things at His hand, love, grace, care and protection, his whole blessed inheritance as a child of God. And thus it will be his divine privilege to know this Father better day by day and year by year, recognize and distinguish Him from every other pretended and deceiving fatherhood" (p. 16). And "thus Christ, the foundation of our faith, and of the Church, is one, though there may be many doctrines concerning Him, by which His person and natures, His attributes, His work and saving grace are described and defined" (p. 18). By all of which "Christ is identified as that one Christ Who is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto the Father by

Him. As such He is the one foundation of the church and of faith" (p. 20). Yes, Christ "who has identified Himself with all doctrines contained in Scriptures, with all facts of history, geography and so forth which are mentioned there, and with every word written there as being His very own" (p. 21), this Christ is the foundation of our faith, and "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid" (p. 14).

What bearing may all this have on the present union movement, or any union movement? We cannot search the heart, we must have recourse to a man's confession. "But . . . it is not for us to decide that one doctrine may be removed or changed and another disregarded as being unimportant" (p. 21). "We judge not by a part of a man's confession, or a part of the confession of a church denomination, but by the whole. One may say: I believe in Jesus Christ and follow this confession with that obedience of faith which accepts His every word and teaching and shepherding. Another may, with seemingly the same earnestness, say: I believe in Jesus Christ, but in the same breath reject much of what he says. Reduced to a simple formula, it would read thus: I believe in Jesus Christ, but not the one who says that infants should be baptized, or the one who forgives sins freely, or the one who makes it necessary to sever connections with the secret lodge, or the one who claims that His very body and blood are given in the sacrament of the altar. I do not believe in that Christ Who was born of a virgin, or the one who predestinated some unto the adoption of sons and eternal life. *Thus they have laid another foundation than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ Who is described by, and identified with, every word of Scripture*" (p. 26).

This essay is not a matter for a single reading: it must be studied and pondered. M.

* * * *

Alle hier angegebenen Sachen können durch unser Northwestern Publishing House, 935-937 North Fourth Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, bezogen werden.

Theologische Quartalschrift.

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

Jahrgang 38

April 1941

Nummer 2

Von der Ausführung des Heilsrats Gottes.

Besondere Vorbemerkung: Wenn wir unsere bisherigen Artikel über den Heilsrat Gottes ausdrücklich als von der Ausführung desselben handelnd überschrieben, so geschah das mit vorbedachter Absicht und in dem Bewußtsein, im Einklang mit dem 11. Artikel der Konfordinformel zu handeln, der Lehre von der ewigen Wahl, welcher in der Darstellung immer und immer wieder vor der Gefahr warnt, den ewigen Ratschluß Gottes von der Wahl aus diesem selbst nach den Gesetzen der menschlichen Vernunft zu konstruieren. „Denn daraus nehmen und fassen ihrer viele seltsame, gefährliche und schädliche Gedanken, entweder Sicherheit und Unbußfertigkeit, oder Kleinmütigkeit und Verzweiflung, . . . daß sie reden: Weil Gott seine Auserwählten zur Seligkeit versehen, ehe der Welt Grund gelegt ward, Eph. 1, und Gottes Versehen nicht fehlen, noch von jemand gehindert oder geändert werden kann, Jesai. 14; Röm. 9: Bin ich denn zur Seligkeit versehen, so kann mir's daran nicht schaden, ob ich gleich ohne Buße allerlei Sünde und Schande treibe, Wort und Sakrament nicht achte, weder um Buße, Glauben, Gebet oder Gottseligkeit mich bekümmere; sondern ich werde und muß doch selig werden, denn Gottes Versehen muß geschehen; bin ich aber nicht versehen, so hilft es doch nicht, wenn ich mich gleich zum Worte hielte, Buße täte, glaubte usw.; denn Gottes Versehen kann ich nicht hindern oder ändern.“ . . .

„Und solche Gedanken fallen auch wohl gottseligen Herzen ein, . . . daß sie denken: Wenn du aber nicht von Ewigkeit zur Seligkeit versehen bist, so ist's doch alles umsonst, und sonderlich, wenn sie auf ihre Schwachheit sehen und auf die Exempel derer, so nicht verharret, sondern wieder abgefallen sind.“ §§ 10. 11.

Welch schreckliche Seelenqual und welch eine kirchliche Zerrüttung der eben beschriebene Mißbrauch der menschlichen Vernunft in Gottes Wort anrichtet, haben alle diejenigen unter uns erfahren, welche unsern großen Streit über die Lehre von der Gnadenwahl mitdurchgemacht haben. Die Vernunft ist dem natürlichen Menschen der absolute Maßstab für alle menschlichen und göttlichen Dinge und Verhältnisse in Raum, Zeit und Zahl. Es geht durch alle Philosophie der oft ausgesprochene Gedanke: Wenn Gott nicht nach den Grundgesetzen unserer Vernunft denkt und handelt, so geht er uns nichts an!

Um allen derartigen Schlußfolgerungen aus dem Wege zu gehen, haben wir unsern bisherigen Artikeln über den Heilsrat Gottes die Überschrift Von der Ausführung des Heilsrates Gottes gegeben. Der Heilsrat Gottes ist nach Röm. 9, 10–13; Eph. 1, 1–14 und vielen andern Stellen ein aus dem Wohlgefallen Gottes in Christo in der Ewigkeit vor aller Zeit gefaßter und ist als solcher „eine Ursache, so da unsere Seligkeit und was zu derselben gehört, schafft, wirkt, hilft und befördert; darauf auch unsere Seligkeit also gegründet ist, daß die Pforten der Hölle nichts dawider vermögen sollen“, § 8. Aber als solcher ist dieser Rat ein Geheimnis, das niemand zu erforschen und mit seiner Vernunft zu reimen vermag.

Es gibt nur eine Weise der segensreichen Betrachtung der Wahl Gottes, das ist die geschichtliche, welche zeigt, wie sie zuerst in Abraham, Isaac und Jakob, dann in allen leiblichen Nachkommen derselben nach Gen. 12, 1–3 zeitlich realisiert worden ist.

Der am Volke Israel verwirklichte Heilsrat zerlegt sich geschichtlich in mehrere klar wahrnehmbare Abschnitte. Den Anfang des ersten haben wir in der Geschichte der drei großen Erzväter darzustellen versucht. Es gehört aber noch ein anders Stück dazu, das nicht übersehen werden darf. Es ist die Geschichte der Ausführung des Abrahamssamens aus der ägyptischen Knechtschaft und der Einführung desselben in das verheißene Kanaan.

Sofort nach der allbekannten Gerechterklärung Abrahams, Gen. 15, 6, schloß der Herr einen förmlichen und feierlichen Bund mit ihm und fügte demselben die klare Verheißung hinzu: „Deinem Samen will ich dies Land (der zehn Heidenvölker Kanaans) geben.“ Aber gerade diese Verheißung stand unter dem vorausgehenden Vorbehalt,

daß sie erst nach 400 Jahren verwirklicht werden könne, weil bis dahin jene Völker zum Vernichtungsgericht noch nicht reif seien. Abrahams Same müsse vorher eine lange Zeit der schrecklichsten Knechtschaft durchmachen, Gottes Gericht über jenes Volk erleben und die errettende Gnade des Herrn durch viele und große Wundertaten kennen lernen.

Abrahams Same wohnte seit Josephs und Jakobs Zeit im Anfang recht wohllebig in Ägypten, und gerade in dem ihnen angewiesenen fruchtbaren Gosen; dort vermehrten sie sich schnell und hielten als ein Geschlecht von besonderer religiöser Tradition den einheimischen Ägyptern gegenüber desto fester aneinander, je mehr sie von diesen als Viehzucht und Ackerbau treibende Ausländer verabscheut wurden. Aus Furcht vor deren schneller Vermehrung und aus der Sorge, daß sie sich im Falle des Einfalls einer fremden Macht zu den Feinden des Landes schlagen möchten, fingen die Ägypter an, sie mit schwerer Arbeit zu bedrücken und ihre Vermehrung durch Ermordung alles männlichen Nachwuchses zu verhindern. Damit begann aber auch der Gott Abrahams das geweissagte Gericht an dem Volk Ägyptens zu vollziehen.

Das wollen wir hier nicht in seinen Einzelheiten schildern, nicht die Erweckung Moses, nicht die Sendung der Zehn Plagen, die die Ägypter gegen die Forderung des Herrn, sein Volk auszuziehen zu lassen, nur desto störriger machten. Wir sehen es ja jetzt wieder mit eigenen Augen, daß Völker, die von der Herrschucht über andere Völker einmal fest ergriffen wurden, durch keine Vorstellungen zu kurieren sind, bis Gott endlich mit seinem Gericht dreingreift und die Schuldigen in ihrem eigenen Blute badet. Erst nach der Tötung der Erstgeburt der Ägypter, als im ganzen Ägyptervolk „kein Haus war, da nicht ein Toter war“, — brach der Hochmut des Volks zusammen und brachte dem Samen Abrahams die Freiheit mit Gewalt.

Aber warum mußte auch der gesegnete Abrahamssame all diese Not mit durchmachen? Für Israel war dies ein schweres aber nötiges und heilfames Stück göttlicher Erziehung, der Erziehung zu seinem Beruf: des Segens Abrahams selbst teilhaftig zu werden und denselben andern Völkern zu übermitteln. In Ägypten sollten sie erst einmal das eigentliche Wesen der gökendienerischen Welt gründlich kennen lernen. Ägypten war zu dieser Zeit das erste Kulturvolk der Erde. Hier floß aller Reichtum dieser Erde wie in einem großen Fangbecken zusammen. Hier entwickelte sich das, was die Welt Kultur

nennt, zur höchsten Blüte. Hier hatten seit mindestens 3000 Jahren die weisesten und gewaltigsten Könige der Erde die Herrschaft geführt. Hier war, wie der Prophet Hesekiel 15, 49 von Sodom sagt, „Hoffart und alles vollauf und guter Friede, den sie und ihre Töchter hatten“. Hier war menschliches Wohl und menschliches Glück. Aber Ägypten war auch zugleich das größte Sodom seiner Zeit, die härteste Tyranin über ihre eigenen Untertanen und eine grausame Wüterin gegen alle unterjochten Völker. Das Gräßlichste an Ägypten war aber seine Religion. Zu Abrahams und Moses Zeit bildete die oberste Gottheit des unteren Niltals die Dreieheit *Isis*, *Osiris* und *Horus*, als engste Blutsverwandte im Verhältnis von Schwester, Bruder und Sohn zueinander stehend so innig miteinander verheiratet, „daß die Mutter als bloßer Schauplatz der Geburt betrachtet wird, der Vater sein eigener Vater und sein eigener Sohn, der Sohn, der im Grunde dem Vater gleich, also das Produkt seiner eigenen Zeugung ist“ (Georg Ebers: „Durch Gosen zum Sinai“ in Riems Handbuch). So bildeten sie das Zusammenwirken der Naturkräfte in den Jahreszeiten zu ihrer dreigestalteten Gottheit aus. Die Tätigkeit des Horus wurde wissenschaftlich und populär in unglaublich unflätiger Sprache dargelegt und weiter erzählt.

Um das Aufkommen einer so unkeuschen Volksreligion für geschichtlich ausgeführt zu halten, muß man sich ins Gedächtnis rufen, daß die Ägypter *Samiten* waren, Gen. 9, 22ff. Mit dieser angeblich durch die Priester, die zugleich als die eigentlichen Weisen verehrt wurden, erdachten Religion hing deren ganzes Beerdigungswesen: die Einbalsamierung und das Aufbewahren der Leichen, die Erbauung von Totenkammern für die Vornehmen, die Errichtung der Pyramiden als Königsgräbern, der rätselhaften Sphinx und der Göttertempel sowie anderer Prachtbauten zusammen, deren Herstellung Hunderttausenden von Zwangsarbeitern das Leben gab und kostete. — Das war Ägyptens glänzende Kultur und die stolze Pracht dieses Herrenvolks, die dem Samen Abrahams jahrhundertelange Angst und unmenschliche Qual als augenscheinlich unabwendbares Schicksal aufzwang, bis der Gott Abrahams sie durch große Gerichte aus ihrer Not erlöste und unter Wundern und Zeichen als sein Volk unter Mosen in die Wüste führte.

Was sollte diese unsäglich schwierige Ausführung Israels in und durch die Wüste? Sie war die andere Erziehungsmaßnahme

des Herrn für sein Volk. Es sollte durch immer wiederholte Erfahrung der Allmacht des Herrn, seiner großen Güte und Geduld, seiner besondern Liebe und Treue auf ihn in aller Not trauen, an ihn glauben lernen. Diese Reizung zum Glauben hing gleich nach dem Auszug an. Ein Familienheer von 600,000 Erwachsenen, ohne alle Kinder unter 20 Jahren und viel mitreisendes „Pöbelvolk“ zu zählen, also wohl eine Million Menschen zusammen mit ihren Schafen und viel anderm Vieh (Exod. 12, 37f.), von Raamses und Suchoth an aufs hitzigste von der gesamten kriegsgeübten Macht Pharaos verfolgt und bei Hiroth und Baal Zephon vor dem Meer stehend — vom Untergang zu retten, war menschlich unmöglich. Das Volk schrie in Verzweiflung und haderte mit Moses, und Moses vertröstete es mit dem bevorstehenden Eingreifen des Herrn; dann schwieg er — menschlich getrost inwendig? — Nein, sein Herz rang heimlich im Gebet mit Gott, weil er die Möglichkeit der Errettung nicht sah. Da sprach der Herr zu Mose, seine innere Angst beantwortend: „Was schreiest du zu mir? Sage den Kindern Israel, daß sie ziehen, du aber heb deinen Stab auf und recke deine Hand über das Meer und teile es voneinander, daß die Kinder Israel hineingehen mitten hindurch auf dem Trocknen.“ Wir wissen, was folgte. — Nun lese man bei dieser Sache zugleich Kap. 15, das Lied Moses und Miriams, so wird jeder Gläubige erkennen, daß das vorhergehende Wunder der Ausführung des Volks mit der Durchführung desselben durch das Rote Meer und die Erlösung der Ägyptischen Kriegsmacht in demselben eines der größten Rettungswunder ist, das der Herr seit dem Gericht über Ägypten an seinem Volk getan hat. Als solches wird dasselbe in der gesamten Schrift des Alten Testaments, besonders bei dem größten aller Propheten, vgl. Jesai. 51, 9ff., als das Prototyp aller zukünftigen Erlösungen aus Assur, Babel und des Endgerichts angeführt.

Und was sagt nun die ungläubige und halbgläubige moderne Gelehrsamkeit zu dieser Großtat des Herrn? — O, die geschichtliche Tatsache der Ausführung Israels aus der Knechtschaft des in jeder Beziehung gewaltigsten, auch kulturell allen andern Mächten der Erde voranstehenden Volks der Erde ist eine absolut feststehende geschichtliche Tatsache.

Aus der Wüstenführung erinnern wir hier nur noch an das Schlagen des Felsens in der nahen Wüste Horeb, die dann die Bezeichnung Massa und Meriba erhielt, an die Wachteln und das Man,

zuletzt an den Sieg über Amalek bei Raphidim, dem der Herr dabei völlige Ausrottung schenkt, vgl. 4. Mose 24, 20.

Jetzt kommen wir zu den Ereignissen an dem Berge Sinai selbst. Es war im dritten Monat nach dem Auszug aus Ägypten und noch elf Tagereisen (vgl. die Stationen in 4. Mose 33) bis nach R a d e s an der Grenze des verheißenen Landes. Jetzt, ehe es weiter geht, will der Herr mit diesem Volk unter Zeichen und Wundern seinen Bund auf Grund der dem Vater Abraham gegebenen Verheißungen schließen: Dies Volk soll unter allen Völkern der Erde das Eigentumsvolk des Herrn, ein heiliges Volk, ein Königreich von Priestern des wahren Gottes werden. Nur eins ist nötig: dem Abrahamsbündnis muß auch ein Abrahamsgehorsam (Glauben) entsprechen. Jetzt erscheint der Herr in einer dunkeln Wolke auf des Berges Spitze unter Donnern und Blitzen und dem stärker und stärker werdenden Schmettern und Heulen einer „starken“ Posaune. Hier redet der Unglaube der Welt von einem ganz natürlichen Gewitter; worauf wir später antworten werden. Im zwanzigsten Kapitel heißt es vom Hauptgesetz, den zehn Geboten: Und G o t t redete alle diese Worte. In V. 19 bezeugt das Volk, welches diese Rede mit seinen leiblichen Ohren gehört hatte, fliehend zu Mose: „Rede du mit uns, wir wollen gehorchen, und laß G o t t nicht mit uns reden, wir möchten sonst sterben.“ Vgl. hier die Parallele 5. Mose 5, 25 und das hin und wieder in der ganzen Schrift wiederholte Zeugnis, daß der Herr vom Himmel herab mit seinem Volke geredet habe.

„Deinem Samen will ich dies Land geben“ — lautete des Herrn Verheißung.

Die fernere Aufgabe des Volks war also die Ausrottung der zehn Völker Kanaans mit der Schärfe des Schwerts. Das waren Völker derselben Abstammung von Ham oder Kanaan wie die Ägypter, dazu kamen die sodomitisch gezeugten Nachkommen der Töchter Lots, die Moabiter und Ammoniter, alle jetzt reif zum Gericht. Dies Gericht wollte der Herr jetzt durch sein Volk I s r a e l ausführen. Im Kampf mit ihnen durfte kein Kompromiß, kein Friede, keine Verschwägerung, überhaupt keine menschliche Gemeinschaft gemacht werden. Es galt nur erbarmungslose Ausrottung. Aber nicht etwa sollten sie alle oder viele zugleich etwa durch ein augenscheinliches Eingreifen des Herrn überwunden werden, sondern I s r a e l, dies e i n e Volk des Herrn, sollte das durch des Herrn verheißene Hilfe besorgen. Das ließ sich menschlich nur in langer Zeit

und mit unerfütterlichem Glauben an ihres Gottes Verheißung erreichen. Eben dazu hatte der Herr sein Volk seine Allgewalt an Ägypten und seine Treue in der Wüstenwanderung unter Mose erfahren lassen. Zu demselben Zweck sollte das Volk Gottes durch das großartigste Geschehen seit der Gründung von Himmel und Erde, d. h. durch die Offenbarung Gottes am Sinai mit der Gesetzgebung und dem Bundesschluß vollends fertig gemacht werden. — War es dazu jetzt fertig? — Wir müssen jetzt zu dem Geschehen am Sinai zurück.

Literarisch ist die Gesetzgebung auf Sinai durch die Erzählung von den sogenannten „Rechten“, die Moses geschrieben hatte, durch die Erzählung von dem großen Abfall Israels, der Abgötterei mit dem Goldenen Kalbe, durchbrochen, ohne daß Moses von der Sünde wußte. Er erfährt sie erst durch den Herrn selbst. Jene Rechte, die für den Gottesdienst Israels in der Zukunft geschrieben waren, sind entweder von dem Grundgesetz abgeleitet und enthalten immer wieder die Warnung Israels vor dem Götzendienst der Erzbäter und der kanaanitischen Heiden. Trotzdem fällt das Volk in den verbotenen Götzendienst. Moses war bisher des öfteren vom Herrn auf den Berg gerufen worden, um, von seiner Hand bewahrt, seine Herrlichkeit zu schauen; selbst den Ältesten des Volks als dessen Vertretern vor Gott war dies zum Zweck des Bundesschlusses durch Opferblut und gemeinschaftliches Bundesmahl wenigstens teilweise gewährt worden, wie wir in Kap. 20 lesen. Der Hauptzweck dieser Erscheinungen des Herrn war, dem Führer des Volks, Mose, das von ihm selbst auf zwei Tafeln geschriebene Gesetz, das Bundesbuch, zu überliefern. Das dauerte aber diesmal vierzig Tage und vierzig Nächte, ohne daß das Volk etwas von ihm hörte. Dies wird für dieses die Begründung der Abgötterei. Nun wird des Herrn Verhalten und seine folgende Rede sehr wunderbar. Er schlägt nicht sofort mit verzehrendem Zorn auf das abgefallene Volk drein, sondern bespricht die Sache noch auf dem Berge mit seinem Knecht Mose. So sprach er jetzt auf dem Berge zu Mose: Geh, steig hinab; denn dein Volk hat's verderbet, d. h. sich selbst und alles, was ich bisher an ihm getan habe, zunichte gemacht. Er erzählt ihm den ganzen vorgefallenen Greuel. „Sie sind schnell vom Wege getreten, den ich ihnen geboten habe, ich sehe, daß es ein halsstarriges Volk ist.“ Dann fügt er, zu Mose redend, hinzu: „Und nun laß mich, daß mein Zorn über sie ergrimme und sie vernichte (Luther: auffresse), so will ich dich zum großen Volk

machen.“ — Sind das nun nicht schreckliche Zornesworte? Nein, das sind Worte unendlicher Gnade und Liebe des allmächtigen, so schönöde verleugneten Gottes Abrahams. Um das zu verstehen, muß man sich vergegenwärtigen, was in Kap. 33, 11 von der Art und Weise, wie der Herr mit Mose zu reden pflegte, gesagt ist: „Der Herr aber redete mit Mose von Angesicht zu Angesicht, wie ein Mann mit seinem Freunde redet.“ Er kennt Mosen als den auch hier einzigen Mann, der in seinem ganzen Hause treu ist; 4. Mose 12, 7. 8. Ja, daß er bereit ist, mit seinem Volke verworfen zu werden. „Und nun laß mich“; aber er weiß genau, daß Mose ihn nicht „lassen“ wird. Der Herr will von Mose um Gnade für ihr beiderseits so heiß geliebtes Volk angefleht werden. Und auch Moses kennt des Herrn Herz sehr wohl. „Ich laß dich nicht“, denn du redest ja jetzt menschlich mit mir. So kommt er dem Herrn mit drei großen Gründen, warum er Israel nicht verwerfen darf: Du hast bisher dein Volk mit großer Kraft und starker Hand aus Ägypten geführt, soll das alles umsonst sein? Willst du zum Gegenstand des Gespöchts aller Welt werden? Gedenkst du nicht daran, was du deinen Dienern Abraham, Isaak und Jakob geschworen hast? — Moses weiß, daß der Herr keinem dieser Gründe, besonders dem letzten nicht, widerstehen kann. So fährt der Text fort: Also gereute den Herrn das Übel, daß er seinem Volke zu tun gedachte.

Was Moses nun zum Volke redete und dann mit dem Götzenbilde tat, ist allbekannt. Er ließ durch treue Leviten dreitausend der Gözendiener umbringen und versprach diesen „Füllung ihrer Hände“, d. i. Bekehrung mit ihrem zukünftigen Amt. Weniger wird die heilsgeschichtlich so wichtige Unterredung Moses mit Aaron recht erkannt. Dieser hatte das Götzenbild auf des Volkes Verlangen aus dem Schmutz der Feiernden gegossen. Darüber strafte ihn Moses mit großem Ernst. Aarons Versuch zur Selbstrechtfertigung schändet nur den so hochgestellten Mann. Wir würden heute auf Absehung eines solchen unwahrhaftigen und feigen Mannes bestehen und — damit etwa uns selber das Urteil sprechen? Dies war nicht einmal Aarons einzige Verführung. Dies 4. Mose 12 und tröste dich der großen Geduld des Herrn, die Aarons Züchtigung aufschob, bis seine Zeit kam heimzuziehen.

Es sind noch zwei Dinge in Kap. 32 besonders zu erklären. Luther übersetzt Vers 25 etwas unverständlich: „Da nun Mose sahe, daß das Volk los worden war (denn Aaron hatte sie los gemacht durch

ein Geschwäg, damit er sie fein wollte anrichten).“ Es heißt im Urtext: Als nun Mose sah, daß das Volk o r d n u n g s l o s geworden war, weil Aaron ihm die Zügel hatte schießen lassen, zum Gespött seiner Feinde, da trat Mose usw. Zu der „Händefüllung“ der Leviten vgl. 5. Mose 33, 8–11.

Am nächsten Morgen kündigt Mose dem ganzen Volk an, daß es eine große Sünde begangen habe und daß er versuchen wolle, ihre Sünde durch Gebet vor dem Herrn zu versöhnen. Er bekennt des Volkes Sünde als eine große und fleht doch nur: „Nun vergib ihnen ihre Sünde“, setzt aber im Überschwang des Gefühls die Worte hinzu: „Wo nicht, so tilge mich auch aus deinem Buch, das du geschrieben hast.“ Lang brauchte dies Gebet ja nicht zu sein; aber es war eben so tief und herzlich wie das von Mose in seiner stummen Angst am Roten Meer geäußerte, als der Herr ihm in seinem wortlosen Herzensflehen zugerufen hatte: Was schreiest du zu mir? Hier erkannte der Herr Moses aus seinem Zusatz: „Wo nicht, so tilge mich aus deinem Lebensbuch.“ Das war nicht Übermut oder Unbedachtsamkeit, sondern ein Ausspruch seiner heißen Liebe gegen sein Volk und seines unwandelbaren Glaubens an des Herrn Treue gegen Israel. Paulus hat später (Röm. 9, 3) dasselbe Gebet für Israel aus demselben Herzen getan. Luthers Übersetzung von Vers 33, die den Herrn antworten läßt: Was? Ist ein Stück Mißverständnis des hebräischen Worts *mi* und läßt des Herrn Antwort als einen Ausruf des Entsetzens erscheinen. Das ist aber im Urtext nicht mehr als ein energisches Relativ im Sinne von „werimmer“. Vgl. nur The American Standard: *whosoever* etc.

Im Schluß dieses Artikels kündigt der Herr Mose an, daß er sein am Sinai mit dem Volk angefangenes Werk in aller Treue, aber auch in unnachlässigem Ernst vollenden werde. — Davon, will's Gott, im nächsten Heft.

Aug. Pieper.

Religious Instruction in the Free Church of Germany ¹⁾

We cannot conceive of an orthodox Lutheran Church anywhere, which does not desire and seek adequate agencies for the religious instruction of its youth. Since Luther has appraised religious instruction in terms which have not been equaled and since he has contributed in many ways to the advancement of Christian education, it belongs to the tradition of the Lutheran Church in all lands to further and to defend the religious instruction of its youth. We as members of a Lutheran church-body in America will not overlook the fact that nowhere did the Lutheran Church ever have greater and better opportunities to create agencies for religious instruction than in our country, where the separation of Church and State is not only embodied as a theoretical principle into the laws of the land, but where this law has been put into effect for almost two hundred years. We therefore have every reason to speak of America as the land of opportunities, opportunities for teachers and pastors, who are called to teach the youth of the Church. But since our college days, when we wrote compositions on the theme: "America, thy name is opportunity" we have undoubtedly learned that there is a vast difference between the mere existence of these opportunities and the use or misuse made of them by those at whose disposal they have been placed. A church body with fewer opportunities may disseminate more Christian knowledge among its members because of a greater zeal and more intense application to the work than a sister-church which can lay claim to many more opportunities because of its environments, its size and its means, but which fails to take full advantage of its opportunities. Have we always and are we constantly taking advantage of all our opportunities given and granted to us by our Lord? This question we should ask ourselves when considering and reviewing the work of religious instruction done

¹⁾ This article was originally a paper read to the Milwaukee Teachers' Conference in session February 28 and is here being presented to our readers with but slight changes.

in a Lutheran Church under altogether different prerequisites than ours as far as environment, size and means are concerned.

Religious instruction in the Ev.-Luth. Free Church of Germany! This theme will at the very outset have a twofold interest for us. On the one hand we are interested in the past history of the German Free Church in as far as it presents to us the educational agencies which are or which have been at the command of this our sister church. On the other hand our interest will also center on the possibilities and opportunities of this Free Church for religious instruction in present day Germany. In present day Germany! That implies above all the question whether the National Socialistic government is impeding and thwarting the Church in her essential work of feeding the lambs belonging to the fold or whether it is providing, as far as its jurisdiction is concerned, ample opportunity to the churches for such instruction. We'll do well to answer this question first of all in the hope of gaining a clearer insight into the conditions under which our brethren in the Free-Church are laboring.

At the very outset we must endeavor to gain a clear picture of the German State schools in as far as they imparted Christian instruction to the youth of the land and were therefore always welcomed by both the Evangelical and the Roman-Catholic State Churches. The German State Schools including the Volksschule, the Gymnasium and the Lyzeum were Christian Day Schools. However contradictory it may sound to us, it was the German State which established Christian Day Schools, Seminaries and Theological Faculties for the training of school teachers and pastors. These Christian Day Schools, in as far as they actually taught the Christian doctrine, the Catechism and Bible History, were a realization of the schools which Luther had envisaged. Luther wanted different kinds of schools, he wanted the school for the common people, in which they might be fitted for the various callings of life; he wanted the Latin Schools, to which he gave most prominence; he wanted the Universities, which he wished to see reformed. But as he tells us in his "Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation" the "chief and most common lesson in schools of all kinds should be the Scriptures and for young boys the Gospel; and would to God each town", he adds, "had also a girls school, in which girls might be taught the Gospel

for an hour daily, either in German or Latin." ²⁾ The main course of these Christian Day Schools was to be and actually was for decades and centuries until the present time the Catechism and Bible History. Apart from the inroads which rationalism and liberalism made into these schools and apart from the fact that these schools were State Schools and not Church Schools, we nevertheless are face to face with schools which imparted Christian instruction to a whole nation for centuries and which consequently had the greatest influence on the people of Germany. Religion was the main subject in the curriculum of these schools. In some German states at least pupils who failed in religion received no diploma. This instruction received from the very first day on which the boy or girl entered school and then from year to year was preparatory to the instruction which they were to receive from their pastors in view of their confirmation. And even after their confirmation the daily religious instruction in these schools did not cease. In the Gymnasium, the college for boys, and in the Lyzeum, the college for girls, the religious instruction in the Catechism and Bible History continued to be imparted. Comparing the opportunities for religious instructions which the German youth had over against the opportunities which our American youth had and has, we can only say that a comparison is hardly justified, especially if we consider the Protestant youth of our country. Only a limited number of churches and congregations offer our Protestant youth religious instruction in Christian Day Schools. By far the largest number of our Christian youth is dependent upon the Sunday School for its religious instruction. Whatever the faults of the Christian Day School in Germany have been and whatever its future in present day Germany may be, we have every reason to remember the work done by these schools and by their Christian school-teachers with a grateful heart. Certainly Germany as the land of the Reformation has done much, very much for the spread of Christian knowledge within its own boundaries and beyond, and above all has done much for the dissemination of Christian knowledge among the youth of the land. And as this youth grew up they formed especially in our country the nucleus of many a Lutheran congregation. The immigrants

²⁾ Comp. "Luther on Education" by F. V. N. Painter, Concordia Publishing House, pp. 138f.

from Germany, who came to our shores in great numbers, including laymen, teachers and pastors — had received their Christian instruction in these Christian Day Schools and not only the teachers and preachers, but also the laymen knew their Catechism, the Bible Stories, the hymns of their hymn book by heart. They read and studied our Lutheran Confessions and Luther's works, they knew the psalms and recited and prayed them in the hour of illness and death, they taught their children the Lutheran Catechism as they had learned it and thus assisted pastors and teachers in their work of religious instruction. Was not Luther's burning desire for the instruction of the youth fulfilled beyond the expectations which he could have had when looking into the future?

But must we speak of these Christian Day Schools as a thing of the past? And if so, what changes have taken place? Let us but realize through what drastic changes the German nation has passed since the World War, changes which no nation of so many millions of people has ever undergone in the history of the world. From a constitutional monarchy it passed over to a republic and from a republic through internal revolution to dictatorship. What change did this bring about in the educational system of Germany? This one far-sweeping change that the full control of education was brought into the central government by a national ministry of education. During the empire and the republic the various German States had been fairly free in developing their own school-system. Today the States are only administrative units each under the control of a Reichsstatthalter or governor, who is responsible to the National Ministry of the Interior. In other words all the activities of the country, the political, the economic and cultural are totalitarianized. But the actual changes in the schools of Germany are not to be found so much in the modification of the century-old institutions themselves³⁾ — although new kinds of in-

³⁾ The "Allgemeine Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung", November 29, 1940, reports an important change in regard to the "Hauptschule", which in the future will play a great part in the school-system of all of Germany. We cite: "Die Hauptschule umfasst die vier letzten Jahre der Volksschule, führt aber über das übliche Ziel der Volksschule hinaus. Sie soll den besonders begabten Teil der

stitutions have been created⁴⁾ — not so much in the forms of education, but rather in the spirit and purpose of education. The National-Socialistic government regards the instruction of the German youth — not only the instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic — but in its whole philosophy of life and its ideologies as its very own work. In a regulation concerning the Hitlerjugend we read “dass die gesamte Jugend im Sinne der national-sozialistischen Staatsidee körperlich, geistig und sittlich erzogen wird.” If the Churches want to give their youth religious instructions apart from the instruction which they receive as Deutsche Jugend, they are at liberty to do so. But the Church as such must provide its youth with this religious instruction and not depend upon the State and State officials to do it. If the State carries its plan through and remains consistent it will bring about a complete separation of Church and State as far as religious instruction in the public schools is concerned. But this cannot be accom-

Volksschüler bis zu einem Drittel der Gesamtzahl umfassen und wird schulgeldfrei sein. Mit der Einführung der Hauptschule ergibt sich weiter die Möglichkeit, die bisher sechsklassige Aufbauschule, die ländliche Schüler zum Abitur hinführen sollte, in vierklassige, grundsätzlich mit Internat verbundene Anstalten umzuwandeln, zahlenmässig zu vermehren und dadurch den Mangel an Nachwuchs für die wissenschaftlichen Berufe zu beheben. Diese Ankündigung des Reichserziehungsministers bedeutet eine Fortsetzung der Schulreform mit sehr bedeutsamen Auswirkungen.”

⁴⁾ Chief among these new types of school and extra-school institutions are the Hitler Youth Organization, the land year (Landjahr), the labor service (Arbeitsdienst), national political education institutes (Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalten), and the Adolf Hitler school. The labor service (Arbeitsdienst) is primarily an educational activity, not an economic remedy for unemployment. The National political education institutes came into existence in 1933 and besides thorough general instruction and character development devote much attention to the various forms of physical training. The Adolf Hitler schools are 6-year schools similar to the national political institutes except that they are units of the Hitler Youth. Graduation from these schools is marked by a certificate of maturity which admits the possessor to a university. Comp. “Education in Germany” by Alina M. Lindegren, United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education-Bulletin 1938, No. 15.

plished in a day or two — not even in a totalitarian State.⁵⁾ The National Socialistic government had to emphasize two things repeatedly and enforce them by retracting old and enforcing new laws. It had to decree that no German citizen shall be forced to take part in the religious instruction of the State Schools. And then it had to bring about a fundamental change of the State School from a Confessional School into a Non-Confessional school.

Since religion was a part of the curriculum of every state school, it had become compulsory for every German citizen to take religion. I have mentioned the old ruling of some German states, at least of Bavaria, that any one failing in religion received no "Reifezeugnis", since religion ranked higher in the school than even Latin and Greek. From this ruling we can already conclude that the Christian day school demanded of every pupil that he take part in the religious instruction of the school. But special laws were enacted in the different states of Germany which imposed upon every German boy the duty of taking part in the religious instruction of the school. The courts under the regime of National Socialism still had to deal with such laws which but recently had been enacted. Thus the minister for public education in Thuringia, a German State noted for its liberalism, had made a ruling in July of 1933 that every child of school age had to receive religious instruction. When a father, a follower of Ludendorff, asked the school authorities to exempt his two children from religious instruction — they attended two different schools — the authorities refused. When he then took matters into his own hands, he was fined. Again the minister of education in Württemberg had de-

⁵⁾ Therefore the Ministry of Education is making itself guilty of an inconsistency in its "Neuordnung des höheren Schulwesens" of 1938 in retaining and changing the courses of religious instruction, instead of simply excluding them from the curriculum. "Die Evangelisch-Lutherische Freikirche" of the 12th of June, 1938, cites a paragraph from this "Neuordnung": "Von der Veröffentlichung neuer Religionslehrpläne sehe ich (Reichsminister Rust) ab. Für den Unterricht ist zu beachten, dass alle Stoffe ausscheiden, die geeignet sind, die Einheitlichkeit der Erziehung zu gefährden." The "Freikirche" adds: "Unsere Freikirche hat schon früher stets geltend gemacht, dass die Erteilung des Religionsunterrichtes überhaupt nicht zu dem Aufgabengebiet des Staates gehört, dass es vielmehr Sache der Kirche

creed under the regime of the Nazis that all schools in Württemberg must be regarded as confessional schools, *i. e.* as schools in which either the Protestant or the Roman Catholic religion is taught. This decree was also protested and had to be changed. How was this change brought about? In the most democratic way. By popular vote. Whether the people in all the States in Germany have voted on this question I do not know. But I know of Bavaria and Württemberg that they voted in favor of non-Confessional Schools, *i. e.* in favor of the "Deutsche Volksschule" or "Gemeinschaftsschule", and not in favor of the "Konfessionsschule". We are inclined to ask how it is possible that the Protestant and Catholic population in Germany could ever vote for the non-Confessional School over against the Confessional School. Were they not perhaps forced to do this? This was not the case, because the minority in Württemberg, for instance, which voted for the continuation of the Catholic "Konfessionsschule", was granted this school on the basis of the recent agreement with the pope, the Concordat. Why then did the majority cast its vote for the non-Confessional School? There are perhaps two answers to our question. First of all the party influence of National Socialism is very strong not only on the Protestant but also on the Catholic voters. And then, when the Catholic voters voted for the non-Confessional Schools, they were not granting the State the right to rob them of the religious instruction for their children. The religious instruction continues to be given by both the Catholic and Protestant churches to all who desire to have their children receive such instruction. The school hours have been arranged accordingly, so that the children find the necessary time to attend the religious instruction one or two hours a week. In other words the present German school system conforms to ours wherever the "Gemeinschaftsschule" has taken the place of the "Konfessionsschule". But wherever the "Konfessionsschule" is still in existence, no parents are forced to have their children take part in the

ist, den Religionsunterricht zu erteilen. *Wir haben diesen unsern Standpunkt auch dem zuständigen Reichsministerium neuerdings unterbreitet.* (Our emphasis.) Unsere Kirche hat diesen Grundsatz auch praktisch verwirklicht. Die Kinder unserer Freikirche nehmen am Religionsunterricht der Staatsschulen nicht teil, sondern werden von den Pfarrern der Freikirchen selbst unterrichtet."

religious instruction of this school. Parents do not have to appeal to the court any more, as the parent in Thuringia was forced to do, to have their children exempted from religious instruction. Also teachers are not forced by law and because of their profession as schoolteachers to give religious instruction in the school in which they are teaching. If they are conscience-bound to any religion outside of the one professed by the two State Churches they can refuse to teach religion. But above all, parents can withdraw their children from the religious instruction in the school without falling under the reproach of being Dissenters. Dissenters in Germany originally also signified a group of people who did not belong to the recognized State Churches. But gradually they were regarded as such who did not belong to any church at all, as unbelieving, godless people. Therefore Dissenters in Germany readily heaped "disgrace" upon themselves and their children when leaving the State Church and not permitting their children to take part in the religious instruction in the State School. This has been done away with in present-day Germany. The law simply groups all Germans into three groups: 1. Members of a church, whether of State Church or Free Church is immaterial, and members of a "Weltanschauungsgemeinschaft". 2. "Gottgläubige" who are not members of a Christian church, but adherents of "Teutonic" cults and bodies. 3. "Glaubenslose", who claim to be without a religion and at least do not belong to any religious organization. They all are on an equal footing over against the German Government and their standing is not jeopardized if they belong to one or the other religious or non-religious group. That is the status of things concerning religious instruction in the state school of present-day Germany. The German school-system is of course still in a state of development. The last word concerning it cannot be said. But the guiding principles which are bringing about this development are evident and conform to the principles which have also developed our whole American school-system. From the viewpoint of separation of Church and State we can only welcome this development. From the viewpoint of religious instruction of the German youth the loss of the Christian Day School as such is only to be regretted and lamented. And in asking ourselves what will replace the Lutheran Catechism and

Bible History in the State Schools we have to answer: National-Socialistic philosophy and ideology — then we are indeed facing the question who will gain and win the German youth: the State or the Church.

This is the issue which the Christian Church in Germany is facing. And not only the Free Churches, but also the Evangelical Church is aware of this issue, not to mention the Roman Catholic Church. It is an issue which we in our democratic America are also facing even if under different aspects. The question for us is whether the Humanities as taught by our university professors and as imbibed by our public school-teachers and American youth attending Colleges and Universities are going to be the influencing factor in the development of our American youth or whether sound Christian instruction is going to shape our youth's future. In comparing the youth of America with the youth of Germany we perhaps take for granted that the latter is at a great disadvantage because of the attitude of the German government towards the Christian Church. What is this attitude? We can only touch on this question in as far as it will serve to give us a clearer view of the setting in which we find the Ev.-Luth. Free Church in Germany.

It is evident that the question "Whose is the child" is much more under fire in Germany at present than in any other country. One feels himself in the midst of this conflict when reading the National-Socialistic "Parteizeitung". There the question is being aired with all the passion and vim that extreme party members can muster. The conflict becomes especially pointed when opposing claims of the Catholic Church and the National-Socialistic Party clash. Here the claims are alike. Here it is where two totalitarian forces meet. Let us not overlook that the education of the child will always be the dividing line between State and Church, where both will meet and cope with each other. Either the Church fully takes over the education of the child, as in the Middle Ages, or the State lays claim to it, as in present-day Germany, or there will be a compromise between both, in that both State and Church educate the child as in America. Of course the National-Socialistic statesmen again and again have declared that the religious

instruction of the youth is wholly up to the church,⁶⁾ but will the outcome despite this basic division be any other than that the State has nine-tenths of the child and the Church but one-tenth and that part also under the influence of National Socialism? It is significant that the Church at present has to work out an altogether new course of religious instruction for the adolescent youth and new means and ways of approach to this youth. Bereft of the old Christian Day School, bereft of its Youth Organizations, by which it had formerly been able to exert quite an influence, it now has to seek new educational agencies to offset the strong influences to which the German youth is exposed, many of them Anti-Christian. Therefore an appeal has been sent out in a memorandum to all the congregations of the Evangelical Church for a "Gesamtplanung der kirchlichen Unterweisung" embodying an assignment of lessons for the youth of the Church beginning with his school age and running through all the stages of his youth. Special Bible Classes are also being organized for the young people attending the High Schools. The main emphasis will undoubtedly be laid on the "Jugendstunden" to be compared with our Bible Class instruction. But will the German youth attend these Jugendstunden? If we ask ourselves how well our Bible-Classes are attended, we may not have great difficulty in finding an answer in regard to the youth in Germany, which essentially is not different from our youth. The educational problems which the Evangelical Church in Germany is facing today are not easily solved. But if the Evangelical Church making a new attempt at the instruction of its youth finds itself at a disadvantage, it has every reason to consider that it is reaping what it has been

⁶⁾ The following statements are taken from "Religionsfreiheit", Amtliche Dokumente, Worte führender Männer. Herausgegeben von Gotthilf Herrmann 1936, p. 28: "Es muss Grundsatz für den Nationalsozialisten sein, 'religiöse' Fragen nicht in allgemeine Aussprachen hineinzuziehen." Again: "Christus hat gesagt: 'Mein Reich ist nicht von dieser Welt.' Und in jenes Reich wird sich auch der Nationalsozialismus niemals einmischen. Das ist eine Aufgabe, die der Kirche allein überlassen bleibt. Was aber weltliche und politische Dinge angeht, so ist dafür allein zuständig und massgebend die Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei und der nationalsozialistische Staat", p. 48.

sowing. It has been preaching Christian State Schools, has even regarded them as a fixture for all times and is now learning and realizing that a State school need not always be a Christian State school. Again the Evangelical Church has never felt itself so responsible for the Christian instruction in the State Schools as for instance has the Roman-Catholic Church. Religious instruction in the State Schools of German States with a preponderance of Catholic population, as in Bavaria for instance, was always conducted by Catholic priests and supervised by the Catholic Church. These priests were salaried by the State, were State officials, but at the same time they were ordained priests, bound to the Roman Catholic doctrine by their vows. It thus becomes evident that the Catholic Church never had to establish Konfessions- or parish schools. The German Government offered the Catholic Church every opportunity for the religious instruction of its youth. Theoretically the same state of affairs pertained to the Evangelical Church. But practically they were not the same. The Protestant teachers of religion in the State Schools were not trained in the Seminaries of the Church, but in Seminaries established by the State. Such teachers regarded themselves as State officials — what they actually were — not as teachers called by the Church or by a congregation and responsible to the Church for what they taught. And since the 19th century their work in the school was not being supervised anymore by the pastors of the State Church. Up to that time the Evangelical pastors had been school-superintendents. But the tendency on the part of Protestant school teachers was to become altogether independent of the Church in their work. The result was that the Church did not have a direct influence on the children until they attended the confirmation class. The Sunday School and its influence on the child could naturally not be compared with the school and its influence. The big question for the Protestant Church in Germany today is, what it can do for the instruction of its young people in order that they may become faithful members of the Evangelical Church and despite all influence exerted on it by State organizations and State schools remain true to their Church. The responsibility lies with the Church. The Evangelical Church in Germany is realizing this responsibility to some extent and is devoting more time and efforts to this work. The Lutheran Free

Church with its emphasis on the separation of Church and State and on the educational duties of the Church to its youth did and does not depend upon others to do this work for it, but from the very beginning sought means and ways of meeting its responsibilities. In how far it has succeeded in the past and what the outlook is for the future the following sketch of its educational agencies and activities purposes to show. P. Peters.

(To be concluded)

WORSHIP

(Conclusion)

IV

Prayer is indispensable in the work of the Church.

When we think of church work what is it that we consider as most essential? If any one attends our sessions he hardly can help but take with him the impression that we know of nothing more important than men and money, and of the two money takes the precedence, since we still have a goodly supply of unemployed candidates.

We discuss money matters. When mission opportunities offer themselves, frequently even when they are practically thrust upon us, our main worry is: are the necessary funds available, or can we raise them? — We talk about budgets and quotas.

It is perfectly legitimate to regulate the supply of men and moneys. A Christian is not slovenly in such matters. He is a steward appointed by God, and God expects him to be faithful. He is not to squander the gifts of God, nor is he to hoard them for himself niggardly.

We see how Paul acted in the matter of men for missions. He was very careful in their selection. Timothy had the qualifications not only to be an efficient assistant to Paul but also to develop into a possible successor. Because he was uncircumcised, and thus would have proved a hindrance for the Gospel with the Jews, Paul circumcised him. — John Mark was an able helper, yet Paul refused to take him along on his visit to the Galatian churches. While Paul had preached to the Galatians on his first

journey "through infirmity of the flesh" (Gal. 4, 13), John Mark had deserted the cause before they got to Galatia. If Paul had taken him on his visit to these churches, he would have given offence. How could Paul exhort the Galatians effectively to enter the Kingdom through much tribulation if in his own company he had a man who had avoided tribulation? Paul apparently raised no objection to John Mark's work in Antioch, nor did he object when Barnabas took him as his companion to revisit Cyprus (cf. Acts 15, 36-40). Ten or twelve years later Paul considered John Mark as a valuable assistant in Rome (cf. Col. 4, 10-11), and during his last imprisonment he asked Timothy to bring him along to Rome "for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (2 Tim. 4, 11).

Just as Paul exercised great circumspection in the choice of his helpers, so he instructed Timothy and Titus to be careful in the selection of elders, of deacons and bishops for the congregations. Titus faced a rather difficult situation in Crete. The Cretians, as one of their own poets had said, are always "liars, evil beasts, slow bellies"; and the congregations were beset by "many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers" which the bishop must rebuke sharply and stop their mouths (cf. Tit. 1, 10ff.). For that reason Titus must be very careful in ordaining elders, and Paul points out to him the qualifications to look for in prospective candidates (cf. Tit. 1, 6-9). — In 1 Tim. 3, 1-13 Paul speaks at some length about both bishops and deacons and their wives.

Paul has some more to say in the matter. In his last epistle, his farewell epistle to Timothy, who was to carry on the work after Paul's now imminent death, he says among other important things: And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also (2 Tim. 2, 2). Instructing, training, examining the workers in Christ's kingdom was considered by Paul as very important in the establishing and maintaining of the church.

And so it must be to us. We do well to discuss our institutions, our colleges, our normal school, our seminary.

Nor did Paul balk at discussing money matters in connection with his church work.

To be sure, he never demanded any remuneration for himself;

rather, he considered that as his greatest reward that by his free preaching he could pave the way for the free Gospel of Christ. What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel (1 Cor. 9, 18), a power which the Lord had given him to edification (2 Cor. 13, 10). He preferred to work day and night with his own hands to supply the wants of himself and his fellow laborers, whom he trained to do their Gospel work in the same spirit (cf. Acts 20, 34; 2 Cor. 12, 18). He had learned the difficult art, which every servant of the Word must strive to master, both to be full and to be hungry, to abound and to suffer need, and therewith to be content (Phil. 4, 11-12).

Yet Paul never relinquished his right to accept remuneration for his work. Even over against the Corinthians he stressed it: If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others are partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? (1 Cor. 9, 11-12).

He stressed that it was a deliberate abstinence on his part when he did not use this *power*, which was rightly his.

Paul also discusses the salary question theoretically. It is an order of the Lord that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel (1 Cor. 9, 14). The Lord had applied to the work of preaching the general ethical principle that the workman is worthy of his meat (Mt. 10, 10), or the laborer is worthy of his hire (Lk. 10, 7). Paul refers to the generally accepted custom that they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar (1 Cor. 9, 13). In the Law God had extended this principle even to threshing oxen, who should not be muzzled (Dt. 25, 4). Paul adds that this was not written for the oxen — they can't read — but to impress deeply into our hearts this inviolable truth of God (cf. 1 Cor. 9, 9-10).

Paul gives also some very practical hints concerning the handling of money matters, particularly concerning the raising of funds. Read 2 Cor. 8 and 9. In 1 Cor. 16, 2 he urges regularity in giving: Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store. And he even uses technical terms taken from bookkeeping and accounting, "concerning giving and receiving" (Phil. 4, 15).

Yet in all this Paul always keeps it very clear that the raising

of moneys interests him only in so far as it is a "fruit" of the Gospel (Phil. 4, 17) produced by people who "first gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Cor. 8, 5), so that the work is not done as "of necessity", as being purely a business matter, but "cheerfully"; by men made "cheerful givers" through the superabundant grace of God in Christ (2 Cor. 9, 7; 8, 9). Giving for the support of needy brethren and to defray the expenses of church work is simply a part of Christian sanctification, which the Old Adam tries to hinder in every way, but which must be preached and practised in the power of the Gospel.

Both men and moneys are important in church work. We do well to exhort one another. But if these matters are a constant source of complaint, that would be a clear indication that there is something basically wrong with our sanctification. Nothing will successfully remedy the situation except a strengthening of the new man in us.

More serious, however, than this chronic complaint is our backwardness in prayer. That also is an indication of a lack in sanctification. Not only that our prayers often seem to be offered in a perfunctory way, if not even in the spirit of doing God service, the fact that we stress financial matters in our meetings and hardly mention prayer, indicates that our spiritual evaluation of things is distorted. Though men and moneys are important for the success of the Kingdom, prayer is incomparably more important.

Jesus himself taught us this truth. In the Lord's Prayer He incorporated the petition: Thy kingdom come. This second petition is flanked by the other two: Hallowed be Thy name, and: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. When we pray that the holy Word of God "may gain approbation and adherence among other people and proceed with power throughout the world, that many may find entrance into the Kingdom of Grace" (Cat. Maj.), we are taught to do so in view of the holy name of God, trusting that He in His gracious and good will would break and hinder every evil counsel which would not let His kingdom come. — Not a syllable about men and moneys. The kingdom is God's and its spreading is alone a gracious gift of God, for which we pray.

Paul had the spirit of Jesus. He performed all his work

with prayer. One of the first things we hear about him after his conversion is that he was engaged in prayer. On many occasions special mention is made of his prayer: when taking leave of fellow Christians (cf. Acts 20, 36; 21, 5), when in prison (Acts 16, 25), in danger of shipwreck (Acts 27, 35); these few instances give us a glimpse of his mode of procedure. In most of his epistles he assures his readers that he is making mention of them before God in his prayers, both thanking God for past blessings and invoking a continuation of them in the future. The more he prayed the more the conviction grew in him that God's grace alone opens hearts to attend to the Word and to receive the Kingdom in faith.

When Paul had his first trial in Rome which ended in his acquittal he attributed this happy outcome to the prayers of the Christians. To the Philippians he wrote: I know that this shall turn to my salvation *through your prayer* and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (ch. 1, 19). Similarly he wrote to Philemon: I trust that *through your prayers* I shall be given unto you (v. 22).

Before his imprisonment, when he suffered a persecution in Asia which was so severe that he despaired of life (2 Cor. 1, 8) and which lingered in his memory as a fight with beasts in an arena (1 Cor. 15, 22), he attributed his escape to the incessant petitions of the Christians. God which raiseth the dead delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet continue to deliver us, *ye also helping together by prayer for us* (2 Cor. 1, 11).

He often asked his readers to support him in his work with their intercession for him. We find not only such general remarks as: Brethren, pray for us (1 Thess. 5, 25), he specified: Pray for us, *that the Word of the Lord may have free course* and be glorified, even as it is with you (2 Thess. 3, 1). When he exhorted the Colossians to continue in prayer he added: Withal praying also for us, *that God would open unto us a door of utterance*, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: that I may make it manifest as I ought to speak (chap. 4, 3-4).

When Paul planned his visit to Rome, intending to stay with the brethren a while and then "*by them*" to come into Spain, he was anxious for their intercession: Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit,

that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them who do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God and may with you be refreshed (Rom. 15, 30-32).

It does not require long elaborations to apply Paul's methods to the church work of our Synod. The complaint of Jesus still is true to fact in our day: The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few (Mt. 9, 37). Fields white for the sickle are awaiting our attention. What shall we do? Shall we hold a round-up to corral young men for the service? We have not used all young men yet the Lord placed at our disposal. There are still, not many, but some young men standing ready to enter the work. They are just waiting, and anxious, to be called. Or shall we inaugurate a drive to collect the necessary funds? Our Lord has a different answer: Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest (Mt. 9, 38). If we can earnestly with all our heart plead with the Lord to send laborers into His harvest, do you think that we can then niggardly withhold the necessary funds for the work? or permit the available candidates to stand idle one moment longer?

If our heart is in the work and we thus implore the Lord, He will be most willing to prosper our work. It is His work. He sacrificed His only-begotten Son to make a success of it. Will He now withdraw His help? Having spared not His own Son, will He now not with Him also freely give us all things? Is the slowness of progress in our Synod's work causing us anxiety? Is it eating our hearts out? What do we suppose it is doing to our God? And how may God be feeling about us whom He adopted as His children and whom He trusted that they would do this work for Him with the same eagerness as He himself performs it? And how great will be the joy of our Father when He sees that we have His work at heart, and when He sees us turn to Him in prayer for His blessing? He will help us beyond our fondest hopes.

If we wish to see our Synod prosper and our work succeed, let us turn to God in prayer. Our prayer is indispensable in the work of the church. But our prayers are also assured of an answer and great things will be accomplished in God's kingdom.

V

Joint prayer with others is a form of church fellowship.

The highest form of church fellowship has place when we together with others kneel at the same altar to receive the body and blood of our Savior as a token of the forgiveness of our sins, for a strengthening of our faith and love. By taking Communion we proclaim the death of our Lord. We confess that we are lost sinners, unable to avert the impending doom by our own merit or worthiness. But we do not despair. We trust that the sacrificial death of our Savior was a perfect ransom price sufficient to cover our guilt completely. The death of Christ makes us all alike, it makes us sinners and righteous at the same time, sinners in ourselves, righteous, perfectly righteous, for Christ's sake. This is what we exhibit by partaking of Communion.

What a disgrace would we heap on Christ if we in any way attempted to supplement His work of redemption! What can we do, what can we suffer that might be worthy even to be mentioned in connection with Christ's work and suffering? We should blush in shame only to think that we would try to add to the blood-bought redemption of Christ, for our most strenuous labor and our most severe pain are as nothing when compared to the hell-agony the Son of God suffered on the cross.

When we take Communion we by that very act proclaim the death, the terrible death, the all-sufficient death of our Lord.

Can we invite to our Communion table such as would improve on the death of Christ by their own efforts?

There are such. There are those who ridicule the idea as preposterous that we should be saved by a foreign righteousness. How can God hold anyone but myself guilty for my offenses? How can God in fairness punish another in my stead who is innocent, while I, the culprit, escape? And on the other side, how can God in fairness credit me with the righteousness another had to procure by His death on the cross? No, they say, that would be a gross violation of the most elementary justice. If there is to be any salvation it must be a salvation by character. This is what they teach in their own organizations, and they also organize the youth of the land to inculcate this principle.

Do they proclaim the death of Christ? They often speak

most highly of Christ. They call Him a very wise teacher, who had a wonderfully deep insight into the relationship between God and man, also between man and man. They demand that we listen to what Christ has to say, particularly in the Sermon on the Mount. They praise Christ as a model man who perfectly practiced what He preached, and in whose footsteps we must walk if we wish to attain His glorious goal.

Do they deny His death? Not the fact. Christ was, they say, so far above the people of His day, His teaching was so far advanced ahead of His time that people did not understand. The result was that they opposed Him and killed Him. He died as a martyr for His cause.

Thus they do not deny the fact of Christ's death, but they do deny its real essence. They deny its significance. Who was it that died on Calvary? just Jesus, the man of Nazareth? No, the Son of God who had become a man for the very purpose that He might undergo death. But His deity is totally disregarded by those that acclaim Him merely as our teacher and example. — Regarding the purpose, they see no purpose whatever in the death of Jesus. To Him it was an accident, and on the part of the people it was plain bigotry. A martyr's death.

That is the attitude many take towards the death of the Lord. Can we invite them to our Communion table? And what, if they invite themselves?

It is evident that we cannot, in the sense of the apostle, "show the Lord's death" if we practice altar fellowship with such as stake their hope of salvation on their own character. To offer our own character as a supplement to Christ's supreme sacrifice is plain blasphemy. And for us to kneel at the same altar with such "obscurers of the glory of Christ's merit" (A. C. II, 3), would make us partakers of their sin and would vitiate and destroy our own confession.

What has just been said concerning altar fellowship naturally applies with equal force to every form of joint worship. If we conduct joint services with others, if we invite a guest preacher to officiate in our assembly, or if we seek spiritual edification in other churches, we must first make sure that they agree with us "concerning the doctrine of the Gospel" (A. C. VII, 2).

How shall we know whether there is agreement?

There is only one way of finding out. Since we cannot look into the hearts of men we must be guided by their confession. The Lord alone tries the hearts and reins. He knows what is in man, yes, He understands the thoughts of men afar off. He alone knows them that are His. This divine prerogative of judging the hearts He has granted to no one outside himself. It would be a violation of the divine majesty if we in any way attempted to pass judgment on hearts.

Yet while on the one hand we must refrain from judging hearts, we must, on the other hand, very carefully examine the confession of men.

Entire church bodies promulgate confessions, sometimes elaborate documents in which they set forth their faith. Thus Lutherans in 1580 published the Book of Concord. Synods today in the confessional article of their constitutions make their doctrinal stand known to the world by declaring their agreement with the Book of Concord. Synods may also publish specific confessions on points not covered in the Book of Concord; *e. g.*, on the lodge question.

It is not always sufficient, however, to read the printed statements of church bodies in order to understand their confessional status. Some churches *e. g.* have a fine confession concerning the anti-Christian lodge. Yet some of their congregations seem infested with lodge members — and nothing is done about it, neither by the local congregation nor by the synod. The confession on this point has become a dead letter.

Confession is therefore of two kinds, confession in word and confession in deed. Both confessions must agree. Only the two taken together constitute a real confession. And wherever there is a clash between the two, deeds must be considered as speaking louder than words. A practice not in conformity with the promulgated doctrine annuls the finest spun theory, vitiates the oral confession and for all practical purposes supersedes it.

The confession then, the confession by word corroborated and substantiated by a sound practice, indicates the stand of a church body, also the stand of an individual.

It now becomes our solemn duty to scrutinize carefully the confession of an individual and of an entire church body before we enter into church fellowship. This is not merely a logical de-

duction from the above premises, we are directly enjoined to do so by the Word of God. We shall consider a few pertinent passages.

The churches in Asia Minor were at an early date troubled by the beginnings of a heresy which later was known as Gnosticism. It was not yet the fully developed system as represented in later years by men like Basilides and Valentinus, yet traces of it are clearly discernable. Since it embodied traits taken over from Judaism it might be called a Judaistic Gnosticism. Already in Paul's day the trouble began. It was no longer the same Judaizing tendency that threatened the Galatian congregations. That form of error seems to have been successfully curbed in its initial stages by Paul's powerful Epistle to the Galatians. But Judaistic Gnosticism was not so readily overcome. Paul seems to have had it in mind when he warned the Colossians against "philosophy and vain deceit" (ch. 2, 8). After Paul's death, when John was bishop at Ephesus, there arose an errorist who was by many Christians considered as the father of Gnosticism, Cerinth, who caused much trouble to the churches in Asia Minor and to their spiritual leader, the Apostle John.

John warned his flocks by word of mouth and in his epistles. We quote from his first epistle "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God" (ch. 4, 1-3).

Since it was characteristic of the Gnostic error to deny the human nature of Christ by assuming that it was altogether sham or that the spirit of Christ occupied a human being only temporarily, John stresses the point: Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. In this direction the Christians must probe very carefully, since Gnostics used deceptive, captivating language.

The personal sincerity of the Gnostics in general need not be questioned. Apparently there were very many devout men among them. Yet this fact does not mitigate their error, and John does not hesitate to warn his readers with such offensive words: *Believe not every spirit*. Since the Christians knew what heresies were being spread surreptitiously, they would have been remiss in

their Christian duty of watchfulness if they had too readily received and believed every spirit. They must *try* the spirits.

How can they do that? John directs their attention to the *confessions* which men confess. "Every spirit that *confesses*", or that "*confesses not*". Beyond the confession they cannot go; but the confession they must search thoroughly, both that of word and that of deed. What would the confession of deed include? If anyone had been known to have held formerly some Gnostic views, to have proclaimed and defended them, then the confession of deed naturally would include also this that he formally renounce his error. Yes, if he now sees his error, sees how he had endangered his soul's welfare, and had harmed the church by spreading it, he will naturally feel the spiritual urge, irrepressably, to clear himself and to undo as far as possible the harm he has done. Paul is an example of this kind of confession. He had persecuted the church. Read his epistles and see how frequently he refers to it, praising the grace of God which had saved him. St. Augustine may be cited. He had written many books, but toward the end of his life he wrote retractions, in which he unsparingly criticized the errors of his former works. In both cases, Augustine's as well as Paul's, there are no qualified statements, no glossing over of unpleasant facts, but an unequivocal revoking of error and a clear statement of the truth.

Not everyone may be able to muster the courage of a Paul and an Augustine. This may be due to various causes. In some cases men may perhaps not be able to see clearly their former errors: others may feel that they owe certain considerations to people with whom they have associated themselves; still others may consider themselves bound by obligations toward their forebears who held to certain erroneous views, which their successors now hesitate to condemn for fear lest they appear to disown their spiritual fathers. In cases like these and in others too many and too varied to enumerate we must show every consideration possible. We are then dealing with "bruised reeds" and "smoking flaxes" which the Savior would not have us break or quench (cf. Is. 42, 3); nevertheless even then an unequivocal confession is imperative.

There are other cases in which such as have formerly held errors turn about and accuse those who wish to scrutinize their new confession, of uncharitableness, perhaps also of inability and

unwillingness to do any straight factual thinking. That attitude does not bespeak regret over former false teaching, and must make us all the more cautious over against their new confession.

Whatever may be the external circumstances, John cautions us not to be gullible in this matter, but to scrutinize carefully the confession of every spirit.

John was merely repeating what our Lord himself had taught him. Jesus warned us to beware of false prophets which come to us in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. He directed us to test them carefully by observing their fruits (Mt. 7, 15-16). And on another occasion, because He foresaw that many false prophets would arise in these last days, personally devout men, sincerely assuming that they had the truth about Christ and knew where to find Him, He added: Take ye heed; believe not (Mk. 13, 21-23).

Paul, who was ever ready to confess his former error, insisted in very emphatic words, that grate on sensitive unionistic ears, that no communion is possible with such as deviate from the Gospel truth in their confession. In Gal. 1, 8-9, he pronounces a curse on all who preach any other Gospel, applying the curse also to an assumed, though impossible, case that he himself or an angel from heaven should be involved. In 2 Cor. 6, 14 he warns against being unequally yoked together with unbelievers. He admonishes the Roman Christians to mark them which cause divisions and offences *contrary to the doctrine* which they had learned, and to *avoid* them (ch. 16, 17). An unqualified avoiding certainly does not admit of prayer fellowship. These three passages may suffice to show Paul's uncompromising insistence on harmony in the confession as a basis for church fellowship.

Naturally, Paul was not interested in disrupting the unity of the Church. He had learned from the Lord that carefulness concerning the purity of the Gospel and faithful watching against insidious errors, far from disrupting the communion of believers, serve rather to strengthen the spiritual bonds. For that reason, while warning sharply against error, he did not tire in encouraging the Christians to cultivate unanimity in word and deed. That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 15, 6). 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 (1 Cor. 1, 10). Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 6, 3).

Some one may object that it is simply impossible here on earth to attain and to preserve perfect unanimity of confession, impossible to exclude every error; a certain allowance must be made, a certain leeway given; certain errors must be excepted as being of minor significance and not disruptive of church fellowship. We admit the impossibility of attaining perfection, but we reject the inference that therefore license for differences of doctrine should be granted. The Lord, who knew the imperfection of our human nature better than we do, and who was very patient in dealing with the weak, never compromised by granting anyone the privilege to differ even in what men might consider as non-fundamentals. Nor did the apostles after Him limit their demand for agreement to what they regarded as fundamentals.

Perfection is not attainable for the individual Christian, neither in sanctification nor in spiritual understanding. Due to the Old Adam in us we suffer daily lapses into sin, and due to the same Old Adam our Christian knowledge is frequently tinged even with coarse errors. The apostles themselves were no exception. When Christ was about to ascend into heaven, they still had notions of an earthly kingdom which He would establish. Yes, in the house of Cornelius Peter seems to intimate that he had up to that moment doubted concerning the universality of the Gospel. Similarly perfection cannot be attained in any church body; and we are far from demanding a revival of the Donatists' error. Yet just as in the individual the ever present imperfections do not furnish an excuse for relenting in our efforts, just so in church bodies the sad fact that error cannot be eradicated altogether dare not be used as a pretext for granting license and for conceding confessional tolerance. An error is a deadly thing, and our aim for which we continue to strive is perfect purity of doctrine in all our members.

Some one else may object that while church bodies in their Confessions officially proclaim a false doctrine, yet there may be members in those very bodies who do not share these erroneous views, yes, who are not even aware of the fact that their church officially teaches an error. Granted. But by their holding mem-

bership in the church they stand before the public eye as supporting the error; and if anyone fellowships with them he cannot but appear as condoning it. When Absalom rebelled against his father, we are told, there went with him 200 men out of Jerusalem, that were called. Yet, although they "went in their simplicity and knew not any thing", they were rebels in fact nevertheless (cf. 2 Sam. 15, 11).

Concerning all who deviate from the clear doctrine of the Gospel, John warns in his second epistle: If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (v. 10-11). John certainly does not want us to be rude in our manners, yet he points out the urgency of avoiding even the appearance of fellowship with heterodox teachers.

Would John, who denounced a formal greeting as offensive, as involving a denial of the truth, would he have consented to prayer fellowship in such cases?

When we speak of prayer fellowship, or joint prayer, we are not thinking of simultaneous prayer. Many Christians may pray simultaneously without being joined in prayer. Each one is praying for himself. A Christian of the orthodox faith may pray simultaneously and in the same room with adherents of heterodoxy; yes, a Christian may pray in the midst of cursing and blaspheming unbelievers, without having his prayer sullied thereby. But that is not the point under consideration.

The question is concerning such cases as Jesus describes in Mt. 18, 19, that two agree on earth to pray for some benefit. Then joint prayer results. One man leads in prayer and the other adopts his words and makes them his own petition by saying Amen, or in some other way. Is such joint prayer church fellowship?

There are some who maintain that the two, prayer fellowship and church fellowship, are not co-extensive, that there are cases where *e. g.* a joint communion would be a violation of the confession, while joint prayer would be God-pleasing. It is difficult to follow their line of reasoning. In both cases men approach the throne of God to receive His blessings and to offer up their thanksgiving. In both cases they pretend a unity of heart, par-

ticularly concerning the proper approach to God, a unity which among men can be established only on the basis of a common confession. But just this common confession is lacking. While one confesses the truth in its purity, the other allows certain adulterations. How then can they, without violating God's majesty, jointly appear before the throne of God as though their contradictory treatment of divine revelation were a matter of indifference? God revealed His truth, but we declare by our action that we do not hold it in high esteem. That would be base ingratitude.

Jesus was approached by the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well with a similar question. She asked about the proper place to pray. Should it be Mt. Gerizim in Samaria, or Jerusalem? Jesus gave her a very sharp answer: Ye worship ye know not what (Jh. 4, 22). With these words Jesus referred to the mixed religion of the Samaritans the origin of which is told extensively in 2 Kgs. 17, 24ff. They feared the Lord, and served their own gods; but in reality they feared not the Lord (v. 33-34). This is what Jesus condemns in their prayer, it is not a prayer in spirit and in truth (Jh. 4, 23), such as the Father seeketh.

Already after the return from Babylonian exile the leaders of the Jewish people refused fellowship to the Samaritans when the latter offered them their aid in rebuilding the temple, saying that they were seeking God like the Jews (cf. Esra 4, 2). Zerubabel's answer may sound rather gruff: Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel (Esra 4, 3). Yet the principle he enunciated is correct. When we pray to our Father in heaven we must not be double-tongued, confessing the Word of God in all its fulness, and yet keeping company with such as would make additions or subtractions.

This brings us back to our starting point. In true prayer we approach God as Him who is our Father through Jesus Christ. We rejoice in His Word in which He graciously announces to us His Fatherhood. We treasure every truth He reveals in His Word and we jealously guard it against the slightest falsification. We dread to appear before God in a way as though we were indifferent toward His gracious revelation.

May God help us not only to keep our worship pure, but to increase daily in the fervency of our prayers. M.

Rogate

TEXT: LUKE 11:9-13

In Christ dearly beloved!

Often tramps and beggars are a real nuisance indeed. You hear many complaining about it. It's true that some days one of these fellows comes hard on the heels of the other. Some are very impudent and demand this or that. Some begin by telling long stories, and finally, after they have delayed you and wasted your time, they come out with their request. And often, when we think that we won't give anything, we give anyway, just to get rid of these fellows. — It is well that things do not stand this way between God and us poor sinners. If we are Christians and pray often and at length to our Father in heaven, we can be certain that we are not at all **bothersome** to Him. It is not true that He would rather not see us importuning Him and knocking at His door. The very opposite is true. God **wants** us to ask. A Christian must ask and pray. But he must do it in the right way, in a way pleasing to God.

A CHRISTIAN PRAYS ARIGHT

1. How does he pray aright?
2. What moves him to pray aright?
3. What does he gain through praying aright?

I

How does he pray aright?

The Lord gives a description of true prayer in these words of exhortation: "**And I say unto you: Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.**" The first thing that we gather from these words describing true prayer is this: To pray aright means to pray earnestly. These are words which point to that: ask, seek, knock. That is what the Christian is to do, when he prays. Then he prays as Jesus teaches and requires, i. e. he prays aright. Therefore a Christian is not satisfied, let us say, to rattle off the Lord's Prayer or employ a few hasty words of prayer in order to dispatch a speedy petition to God in his troubles, because God, after all, **did command**: Call upon Me in the day of trouble. No, to him praying is not a mere form, not merely a complying with Christian usage, not merely a proper devotional exercise for the time of trouble. By no means! The true Christian regards asking and praying as the true remedy to which he is directed and on which he must lay hold. As the weary wanderer leans on his staff and is supported by it, so to the hard-pressed Christian asking and praying are the staff on which he

leans and by which he supports himself. What the weapon is to the warrior under attack, namely, the means of warding off the enemy, that is what asking and pleading with God is to the Christian, the weapon which he takes up against all his enemies, against every trouble. In times of trouble the man of the world regards his wisdom, his prudence, his plans, his own powers, his good friends etc. as his help and confidence. That is what asking and praying are to the true Christian. That is his best wisdom, prudence, plan, his power and might. He asks and prays with the actual intent of **actually gaining** that which he lacks, with the conviction that otherwise he would not gain it, since it is a certain fact:

By anxious care and grieving,
By self-consuming pain,
God is not moved to giving;
By prayer thou must obtain.

Therefore he **asks**, and that not only once, but if necessary, two or three times; he **seeks**. And if it is required, he does not let it go at that, but he **knocks**. He does not give up, he only becomes more **persistent** and constant and persevering in his asking, praying, and pleading, as one who knows: I have no other means of procuring certain help in my need than my asking and praying. That, dear brethren and sisters, is what it means to pray **earnestly**, — to pray with the fully serious intention that through it you want to **accomplish** something toward your help. That is the prayer of which it is written: The effectual, **fervent** prayer of the righteous man availeth much.

But that will certainly be the case only if there is paired with it the other thing which Christ describes in our text as the true nature of prayer, namely: To pray aright means to pray **confidently**. Jesus points to that with the assurance: **and it shall be given you, and ye shall find, and it shall be opened unto you**. So he alone prays aright who asks and prays in the **confidence** that it is certainly and truly as Jesus here declares, that asking and praying is governed by the rule: **“For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened!** He is confident that this **cannot fail**. A true man of prayer not only prays with the earnest intention: I now **want** to effect something with God through my asking, seeking and knocking, but also with the confidence: I **shall** accomplish something with it. My praying must bring me help, it must be like the dove of Noah to me and bring me an olive-leaf in the floodwaters of my need. That is true prayer: this confident, believing, trusting prayer. This alone **can** please God. Without faith it is impossible to please God with your person, with your works, with your thoughts, with your words and prayers. And just as all prayer without confidence is no good, so too it **accomplishes nothing**.

He that wavereth when he asks, let him not think that he shall receive anything, says God's Word. — That, then, is the description of true prayer. Let us briefly sum it up: First, it is earnest, bold and persistent; and, secondly, it is confident and trusting, just as is natural to the faith of a Christian.

Let us now apply this to ourselves. — When you call to mind that a true man of prayer prays **earnestly** and therefore also **perseveres** in prayer, in asking and pleading, you get a very saddening thought: You cannot speak of a **persevering** prayer in the case of many, because there has not even been a **start**. Among Christians you would not look for such who do not pray at all. But it is possible that there are such who know nothing of praying, nothing of prayers of thanksgiving, not even of supplications to which our Savior urges in our text. So if that means you, let not the admonition of Jesus be in vain for you. How terrible if you do not pray! How terrible it is, if you are one of those who have no **time** to pray, or do not take the time to pray, to ask, to bring their needs before God. And still they have time to ask men, to seek them out, and to knock at their doors. What contempt for God this is! How terrible it is if you are one who finds no joy in prayer, in asking, who feels no impulse to pray, and who experiences no heartfelt longing to come before his God. Truly, such a man is still **without God**, far from God. Therefore I say: Let this truth sink deep into your heart, that a man cannot be a Christian, if he does not pray. — But even though all of us gathered here, yes, all the members of our congregation, really pray, still we must all feel ashamed, when we apply to ourselves the truth as to what **true** prayer means. It surely is a fact that often we do not pray **earnestly**. When we offer prayers of thanksgiving, then, we must admit, the words often apply: This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth and honoreth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. Even when we offer supplications, **earnest** praying is lacking. The **bold approach** to God is lacking, the determination to procure help through our **asking**. — Again, **confident** asking is sadly lacking in us. May God have mercy on us! Oh, we pray in sickness for ourselves and our loved ones; but in our eyes the medicine bottles are, after all, a much more dependable remedy than our petitions; we trust the former more than the latter. When we pray, is this the thought of our hearts: "Amen, yea, yea, it is certain, it will truly be done", — you ask, and therefore you shall also receive, there is no doubt about it? Or isn't this the thought of our hearts: **Perhaps** things will turn for the better now, — but who knows? Oh, how often we pray, and still no calm comes into our hearts. Why? Because we do not understand well enough to ask and pray earnestly and confidently. And what, then, is lacking more in all of us than **perseverance** in prayer, the asking and praying at all times for ourselves and for others, for the family and for our beloved Church!

With our praying we could open the floodgates of divine grace and cause them to pour out over our congregation and our homes; but we do not do it. We do not pray enough. "Ye have not, because ye ask not". Therefore the streams of blessing are lacking. — Let us humble ourselves. Let us amend our ways, let us pray earnestly and persistently. But what's to be done toward that end? You will hear it, as we consider:

II

What moves the Christian to pray aright.

As different as Christians are, still it is always **one** and the **same** thing that makes us pray and ask aright. There is only one thing that makes a man pray with earnestness, boldness, and confidence. And what, do you suppose, is this **one thing**? It is trouble, you will say. And that is true. As much as we Christians differ, whether we be poor or wealthy, high or low, there is trouble of all kinds for every one. Oh yes, who learns to know the manifold troubles of people better than a minister! And it is true: Trouble teaches prayer. That is as it should be. Trouble is to **drive** us into prayer. The Lord says that too. But still it does not **make** us pray aright. Rather, the one thing that really makes the heart of man a temple with an altar on which the right offerings of prayer are brought — that is the knowledge of God in Christ, the Savior of sinners. But it is a blessed and saving knowledge of God you gain, when you know the great God in His Son Christ, the Savior. It is a blessed knowledge when you know the great God as Him who sent the Christ, made of a woman and made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. To know God in Christ means to know Him not as the One Who through Moses gives the Ten Commandments which condemn us as children of the devil, but as the One Who gives the Son Who reconciles us with Himself and makes Him our Father and us children, so that all who believe in Jesus receive the adoption and the spirit of adoption, with the result that we no longer dread God, but have boldness toward Him and cry: Abba, dear Father!

Don't you see, dear brethren and sisters, that the Savior very evidently had just this in mind when He said: "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?". It is very evident that here the Savior wants to show the disciples and us and all Christians in a comforting way, why we may at all times and in all places ask God with full, complete confidence, yes, why we must,

in fact, cannot but be certain in our asking that we shall receive whatever we ask. This is so **because we, even we Christians, when we pray to God, may ask Him as our Father, just as a son asks his father, as dear children ask their dear father.** When we ask Him, then we know we are asking a Father who is completely **reconciled to us.** Remember, we pray in Jesus' name. He has not only commanded us, as Moses commands: I tell you: Pray! — so that we pray upon His command and promise, but we are to pray as such who through faith in His merits are fully **reconciled** with God. We come before God with our praying and pleading, and we know that there is nothing in us, nothing whatsoever, that might cause God to be angry with us. Again, whenever we pray, we are certain that there is present in the heart of God nothing which could **hinder** Him in fulfilling our petition. If I had to think that there were still in the heart of God some bitterness and anger, then I would have to be worried, lest this anger might come to life when God hears my petitions and pleas in trouble, and lest this anger might seal and embitter his heart, — so that he would leave me unheard. But this sad state of affairs does not obtain. Oh, we know God in our dear Savior Christ as a **completely reconciled** Father, in whose heart there is no vestige of anger toward us, which might prevent Him from fulfilling our petition.

And this fully reconciled Father is the All-Wise and the All-Knowing. When we ask Him and call upon Him in trouble and know not which way to turn, then we know too that our Father in heaven certainly is not **prevented** from helping us, because He too might not know a way of doing so. No lack of counsel and knowledge **prevents** God our Father from helping us and fulfilling our petition. "Unto His sceptre yield thee; He is a Prince most wise" (tr. W. H. F.). We need not fear that God for lack of wisdom by mistake might give us a stone, when we ask for bread. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! He knows very well what is good for us. "He knows the time for joy, and truly, will send it when He sees it meet."

This reconciled Father is, moreover, the Almighty. His might and His contriving know no limits, as is the case with us earthly fathers. Ye **know** how to give to your children, Jesus says. And it is true, we can still give, we still have something to give, and we do not have to say: Dear child, you are crying for bread; all I have is stones, but no bread. But it does happen at times that our power is at an end. We would like to, but, alas! we **cannot.** But now we know that no lack of might and power hinders our Father in fulfilling our petition. We know, with God no thing is impossible. It is something great for which I ask, but not too great for my Father, so that He is not able to provide it. Something that we class as impossible can never hinder Him in granting my petition.

For means it fails Him never,
 He always finds a way,
 His deeds are blessing ever,
 His path like brightest day.
 His work **no one can hinder**,
 His labor cannot rest,
 If He designs His tender
 Children should all be blessed.

Now add to all this that the reconciled Father is an inexpressibly **loving** Father, love itself. His love is like a broad, broad sea that would pour itself continually over our hearts and lives, to fill us to overflowing with delight in Him. His love is a great, mighty glow of fire within Him, so that His heart burns with yearning for us and is constrained to have compassion on His sons and daughters, on all His beloved children in Jesus. — His love is like a mighty, brilliant sun sending forth rays of blessing, in which there is no change from light to darkness, but a constant shining, i. e. a constant giving, and a will to give, that which is good and perfect. It is a sun before which nothing shall remain hidden, but which would cast its illuminating and gladdening rays into every darkness of tribulation and into every hidden grief. Verily, we know **this**, that there is in our heavenly Father's heart a love that impels and **constrains** Him in such a way, that He wills with all His heart to give upon our pleading and praying, and that He finds the greatest joy in doing it. He therefore urges us through His beloved Son: Ask, and I will give; yea, do but seek, and you shall find much more than you expected, yea, be bolder still and knock, and I will open, open wide the door and pour out my gifts in full abundance, to bring perfect joy to you children and to Me, your Father, as well. We earthly fathers — how evil we are, still defiled with sin. We too have love and give in love to our children, as far as our knowledge and ability reach. Yet at times sin makes even the love for our dear ones grow cold. The real driving power of fervent love is lacking. Not so with God. The stream of His love always flows with a full flood; the fire of His love always burns with constant heat; the light of His love always shines with equal brilliance. — Now consider this, know God in this light and realize that nothing, verily nothing, prevents him from fulfilling your petition. No anger prevents Him, and no lack of wisdom, no lack of power. But there is something that always constrains Him, makes Him willing, joyous, and eager to give. That driving power in your Father is His most heartfelt, unchangeable, ever-faithful love for you. If you know **that**, have such a knowledge, well, **then** I do not see how you can have any doubts, when you pray, why you should not pray with full confidence. — Surely, it holds true that this knowledge makes us pray with great confidence, i. e., pray **aright**, as it should be, makes us pray with the assurance: Yea, yea, so shall it be.

Now we also know what is lacking in every case, if we do not pray and plead aright. The trouble which ought to drive us to prayer is not lacking. It is there, in material as well as in spiritual things. Neither is the desire to find welcome relief lacking in us. Oh, we feel our trouble. It oppresses us. And we do cry out, call and pray for help. Sometimes our misery drives us to our secret chamber and down to our knees in praying and asking. We pour out our hearts to God, we reveal our troubles to Him. And we arise; but our hearts have found no relief through prayer. They have not become easier under their burden, no more joyful in the midst of tribulation, no lighter and brighter in the darkness, no more serene in our unrest. We do not arise with the comfort in our souls: Truly, my soul waiteth upon God: from Him cometh my salvation. Why is that? Is it perhaps because we do not use enough words or the right kind? Thank God, it does not depend on the words. They may be few or many. God will hear just a few sighs. He understands them well enough, if only the sighing is of the right kind. No, dear brothers and sisters, there is this one lack: we do not have the right confidence toward God as the Father. God indeed has us in His heart as His children, but we do not have Him in our hearts as the gracious, almighty, all-knowing, most loving Father. There is no evading it: we lack faith in the Father, confidence. For that reason we know not how to pray aright. It is a fact — who can deny it! In our troubles a few kind friends give us more courage than our utterly gracious God; a smart doctor with a good remedy means more to us than the all-wise God, and a little money in the bank more than the almighty God. It is true that our faith toward the Father is a lame, a lifeless, puny thing. Faith is not a living force in our hearts, and therefore we do not know how to pray aright, and hence there is such little comfort gained through prayer. We could be much better off, but we foolish people keep all help at arm's length. We always think: We have already gone to church so much to let the Father teach us faith; we don't need that any more. When we do come, we always think: We have learned everything long ago, and we hardly need to pay as close attention as before. Alas! I know my own sad condition well enough. But I do not want to speak of myself. I point you to a man like Luther. How much he bemoaned the fact that he indeed knew the doctrine of God the Father passably well, but when it came to taking to heart with full confidence just the one truth, for example: God is almighty, he was still sadly lacking in that. — There you are, and still there are many among us who can spend Sunday forenoons elsewhere than in church. They have more important work to do, more important gatherings to attend, more important things to read, to hear, to ascertain, and to learn than the doctrine of God the Father. Let them bear the burden they are preparing for themselves. But

let us think of our best interests. That means being guided by this truth:

When in the hour of utmost need
 We know not where to look for aid;
 When days and nights of anxious thought
 No help or counsel yet have brought:

Then this our comfort is alone,
 That we may meet before Thy throne,
 And cry, O faithful God, to Thee
 For rescue from our misery.

And it means understanding how to do it. Then blessed are we! — For if we pray aright, it is not in vain.

III

What does a Christian gain through praying aright?

Everything that he needs. First of all the most necessary thing. And what might that be? Here it is: "**How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?**" What? If many were asked to say **What**, according to their opinion and their desires, they would say: Health, a high income, plenty to live on, a pleasant life, good days, etc. Those are the things for which they ask and pray for the most part, yes, they pray **solely** for them. Indeed, many a man who lets his prayers, his earnest prayers, pass in review before his memory might find that he really was on his knees a number of times praying fervently to God, but once it was because there was a shortage of everything for the house, another time because there was sickness, again another time because a grave danger threatened him etc. But he cannot recall that he ever implored God fervently and wholeheartedly: Oh God, my heart is utterly corrupt, so earthly-minded. What will become of me? Make me heavenly-minded, renew a right spirit within me!

That explains why he finds that many a prayer was not heard according to the words of his prayer. Tell me, would God deal lovingly with us if He would answer only our prayers for temporal things fully and completely, and thereby produce no other result than that of strengthening us in our earthly-mindedness and our worldly-minded striving and living? — Therefore do not think that God does not answer such prayers at all, or that we are not to pray for such earthly things. We may pray for absolutely all things, and God will also hear all such prayers. But we are to pray in the right order, and then God will also hear our prayers. And this always remains the Alpha and Omega of all for which we are to pray: The Holy Spirit. This is the supremely needful thing. That is the Spirit of Christ, because Christ sends Him from the Father. If you do not have the Spirit, woe unto you! He who does not have Christ's Spirit, is none of His, neither Christ's nor God's, is not God's child, not a

new man, for such a man is born only of the Spirit; — he is dead, for the Spirit giveth life. What need I say more to show how necessary the Holy Spirit is. Without Him we are, to put it in **one word**, accursed, damnable, unclean, lost. How we need to pray for Him! And God will give Him. We shall receive and gain Him upon our praying aright. Then we are people after Jesus' own heart: Seek ye first the kingdom of God! And then we know no other way of asking for **all these things**, i. e. for temporal things, than that of confidence. In fact, now we are able to do it aright. And we find an answer to our prayer. We receive what we ask for, everything, everything that we need: Spiritual things, bodily goods, life and survival unto the last breath. — This is a faithful saying.

A right-praying, believing child of God will confess just that with praise and thanksgiving to the heavenly Father. Let me in conclusion mention the beloved David as an example. We know that he prayed much and fervently, for the Holy Spirit most of all, but for bodily and temporal things too. Now what was his experience? Was he spared anxiety and grief? For example, were His loved ones preserved for him upon his prayers? Oh no, we hear of his great burden of grief over the death of his first child. Did he experience only joy in his growing children? Oh no, his son Absalom fairly broke his heart. — Did he always fare well and enjoy all treasures? Oh no, once he had to flee and had hardly a piece of bread to eat. — Accordingly, at times he lamented that when he prayed God remained so distant from him and closed His ears. But did he then say: I must admit things do not always take their course according to God's Word and promise; my experience also is a case in point. Rather, he said: "The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. For the Word of the Lord is right, and all his works are done in truth."

And we say the same thing:

The Lord His Word has never broken,
 Nor left His covenant of grace.
 Each promise that His truth hath spoken
 To blessed fact doth yield its place.
 In Him are not deceit and guile,
 These are the Serpent's spawn most vile.

(Tr. a W. H. F.)

We call out to each other:

But trust thou now, and all doubt spurning,
 Cling to His Word, the pledge of grace;
 This Word knows never change or turning,
 Continue, then, in hope thy race,
 And thou His truth's great might shalt see
 To make His Word come true for Thee.

(Tr. a W. H. F.)

We extol pleading and praying as our glorious strength and power in every weakness, as our support and stay under every burden, as our shield and buckler against every trouble, and we rightly persist in confessing:

Praying saves from ev'ry need,
Pray, and let no doubt disarm thee;
Art thou poor? God thee will feed;
And when world and hell alarm thee,
Do but pray, and thou shalt see:
God thy mighty Stay shall be.

(Tr. W. H. F.)

Amen.

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

The Minneapolis Meeting of the American Lutheran Conference, November 13-15, 1940.

"In dealing with a body such as the American Lutheran Church, a first duty would seem to be an ever-present consciousness of its unionistic spirit." That these words, forming the very first sentence in the three theses submitted by the Norwegian Synod's Committee on Union in its "Letter" of November 22, 1938, to its brother pastors and professors in the Missouri Synod, were not an expression motivated by mere suspicion and a lack of true charity, was made clear beyond the peradventure of a doubt at the meeting of the American Lutheran Conference held in Central Lutheran Church of Minneapolis (Dr. J. A. O. Stub, pastor), November 13-15, 1940.

Since the American Lutheran Church, at its Sandusky convention in 1938, had stated that it *was not willing to give up* its membership in the American Lutheran Conference, it was but natural that a feeling of apprehension should arise in the hearts of those who had had their misgivings about what the American Lutheran Church had said relative to this matter in its "Declaration" to the Missouri Synod convention, at St. Louis, in 1938. But when, in subsequent colloquies between the union committees of the Synodical Conference this *unwillingness* was referred to, we were assured that this was "not an absolute statement." The American Lutheran Church would have to be given sufficient time to bear testimony to the bodies with which it was united in the American Lutheran Conference.

It was this testimony which we expected to hear at the Minneapolis meeting of the Conference. But if what was there uttered by the members of the American Lutheran Church be testimony to the truth of the doctrines for which we have contended in the Synodical Conference these

many years, then we fear that the *unwillingness* to leave the Conference will have to be considered "an absolute statement."

The representatives from the American Lutheran Church were there in sufficient numbers to establish a real opinion from their ranks. Such men as Dr. Reu, Pres. Poppen, Dr. Schuette, Dr. Long *et al.*, spoke clearly and definitely. And they were not gainsaid by anyone, lay or clergy, from their synod. The matter of doctrine simply did not enter into the discussions. They wanted union. And as for the thought of wanting to give up their membership in the Conference, Dr. Poppen asked the members of the Conference to forget about it. Such talk evidently emanated from circles outside of their synod. Dr. Schuette made the statement: "*Separation from the Conference has never even remotely been dreamed of.*" But he urged that they must exercise caution. Since the American Lutheran Church occupied a *strategic* position it must exercise *strategy* if it is not going to frustrate the possibility of uniting all Lutherans.

The working committee on Lutheran Church Unity had submitted a report to the convention, in which it "in the presence of the present grave emergency with which Lutheran foreign missions throughout the world are faced" called upon all Lutheran bodies in America to unite in this common enterprise, "praying that God may help us to understand fully that this is an opportunity for service which He has placed before us, and that He would have us put aside, for the time being, all our misunderstandings and differences, in order that we may be obedient to His will." It was this (the 2nd paragraph) part of the report which called forth the liveliest discussion. Dr. Bersell of the Augustana Synod referred to the paragraph in question as "a mouse brought forth by the labors of a mountain." It was especially that clause, "*for the time being*", which they did not like. And it was finally stricken. It was during this discussion that Dr. Schuette said: "Let's get together without that little clause, 'for the time being.' We are agreed with the United Lutheran Church and Missouri. But Missouri is having a peck of trouble on account of her fellowship with the Wisconsin and the Norwegian Synod."

No one who listened attentively to the various speakers could fail to note the attempt which was being made to alienate the Missouri Synod from the other synods in the Synodical Conference. In fact, when the question arose as to whether negotiations for closer co-operation with any member of the Synodical Conference were to be initiated through approaches to this federation of Lutheran bodies or through dealings with the Missouri Synod directly, it was frankly stated: "We would rather deal with Missouri than with the Synodical Conference." And as a result, when arrangements were to be made for the calling of a general Lutheran conference, the resolution passed was this: "That invitations to the conference be extended to the presidents of the American Lutheran Conference, the United Lutheran Church, and the Missouri Synod," the Synodical Conference being completely ignored.

As with the formation of the National Lutheran Council during the

hectic days of World War I, No. 1, "*the urgency of the times demanded it*", so now it was "*this hour of crisis*" which was urged as a valid reason for forgetting about our differences in order that we might be obedient to God's will. Dr. Bersell did not hesitate to speak of the pulpit and altar fellowship which the Augustana Synod had had these many years with the United Lutheran Church, and no voice of protest was raised by any member of the American Lutheran Church against Augustana's position. As to getting at the real source of the evil (unfaithfulness to the plain word of God) not a word was uttered. But we were told by Dr. Bersell: "This may be God's hour for the Lutheran Church."

What a mockery does it not become, then, to speak as did the American Lutheran Church at its Detroit convention (October 10-17, 1940): "We entertain the confident hope that our sister synods in the American Lutheran Conference will occupy the same ground in these matters (its relationship to the Missouri Synod) as occupied by us." While at St. Louis in 1938, at Sandusky in 1938, at Detroit in 1940, Missouri was being told that the American Lutheran Church's remaining in or leaving the Conference was contingent upon developments in the Conference, at Minneapolis we were told that such leaving had *not even remotely been dreamed of*. There is no deep theological acumen demanded for the settling of this question. Simple honesty in keeping one's plighted word is all that is needed.

Norman A. Madson.

"In the Interest of Lutheran Unity" *)

As is known to our readers, the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church have agreed on a set of doctrinal statements which, it is claimed, settle all doctrinal differences between them in matters of church-divisive importance. Some of us, however, have not been satisfied that actual agreement had been reached and have expressed our objections to the statements at issue accordingly. For this we have been severely criticized as "separatists and fanatics." But "history repeats itself." When the Norwegian Synod adopted "Opgjor" in 1912, those who objected to it as a compromise were publicly attacked by Dr. H. G. Stub for deserting the old Norwegian Synod doctrine and adopting a fanatical "New Missourianism." But then Dr. J. N. Kildahl of the Norwegian United Church published a frank statement, asserting that "Opgjor," so far from being "Synod doctrine," contained only the anti-Missourian teachings for which he had always contended, — thus justifying every objection that the

*) The editing committee of the *Quartalschrift* was planning, since Dr. Reu's essays were mailed to the pastors of the Wisconsin Synod, to prepare a critique of them some time after the pastors had time to study them for themselves. Since, however, Pastor Geo. O. Lillegard, Secretary of our Norwegian sister synod, published a discussion of the second of Dr. Reu's essays in the *Lutheran Sentinel* (for January 13 and 27, 1941) we are herewith making it available also to the readers of the *Quartalschrift*, as was suggested to us by a pastor of the Norwegian Synod. M.

"Minority" had raised to it. So now, Dr. M. I. Reu, the leading theologian of the American Lutheran Church, publishes a pamphlet, entitled "*In the Interest of Lutheran Unity*," which demonstrates that he is as far from adopting "old Missouri" teachings as ever. For in this pamphlet he makes propaganda for "anti-Missourian" views on *Unionism* and on *Scripture*, which should open the eyes of all but the wilfully blind to the hollowness and futility of the so-called "doctrinal agreements" between his church and the Missouri Synod. His pamphlet was offered free to all Lutheran pastors, and practically all except those of the Missouri Synod received copies. It is, therefore, a public document, officially endorsed by the American Lutheran Church, so that we must judge the doctrinal statements of the A. L. C. in the light of the fuller discussion in Dr. Reu's pamphlet. We shall not here discuss the first essay on "*Unionism*," but only point out that it contends for views regarding prayer-fellowship which the Missouri Synod hitherto has condemned even to the point of barring from its fellowship anyone who actively proclaimed such views. We shall, however, consider more at length his essay on "*What is Scripture, and How Can We Become Certain of Its Divine Origin?*"

After studying this essay, we understand better why the A. L. C. was not satisfied to accept Missouri's "Brief Statement" on the Holy Scriptures without adding three paragraphs of their own, in which the fact was emphasized that "the authors of the Bible 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." For the chief peculiarity of Dr. Reu's essay is that it throughout stresses the *human* side of Scripture and attacks those whose sole concern is to demonstrate its *divine* origin for "degrading the authors of the Biblical books to dead writing machines who without any inner participation wrote down word for word what was dictated to them by the Spirit." He says that "we meet this doctrine in the Lutheran Church occasionally already during the sixteenth century, more frequently in the seventeenth century although it can hardly be called the earmark of the presentation of all orthodox dogmaticians"; and adds that "there are hardly many among us who cling to this *mechanical theory*." (p. 68.)

When we compare Dr. F. Pieper's thorough presentation of the orthodox doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture in his "*Christliche Dogmatik*," we find that he defends those whom Dr. Reu attacks, and proves in detail that there never were any Lutheran teachers who thus "degraded" the authors of the inspired word to mere machines. He says, to quote a brief section: "It is, then, an historically untrue statement to say with regard to the orthodox doctrine of inspiration, as e. g. Luthardt does: 'The relationship of the Holy Ghost to Scripture is thought to be, not this that He works by means of the intellectual activity of the Biblical writers, but only externally by means of the hand of the writing persons.' Cremer gets even farther away from the path of historical veracity when he says con-

cerning the (Lutheran) dogmaticians' doctrine of inspiration: 'This doctrine was an out and out innovation. Only the idea of ecstasy was lacking to bring about a renewal of the doctrine of Philo and the old Apologetes, which the Church had with one accord given up in opposition to Montanism. But the lack of this idea only made matters worse, in that the mantic inspiration was degraded to a mechanical inspiration.' We see that Cremer lost complete control of the historical facts as well as of himself when he wrote the words quoted above. The ridicule which modern theologians heap on the expressions 'amanuensis, calami (pens),' etc., does neither their intelligence nor their truthfulness credit." (I, 279-80.) (Tr. from the German by G. O. L.)

The contrast between Dr. Reu's treatment of the doctrine of Inspiration and Dr. Pieper's is complete. We shall in later articles call attention to some of the differences in detail. Here we shall make only the further general observation that Dr. Pieper's presentation inspires faith in Scripture as in truth the Word of God, while Dr. Reu's although aiming to build up faith in the divine origin of Scripture, leaves one with the impression that the whole matter is pretty difficult and doubtful, with nothing better to build upon at times than "a certain holy awe" which, Dr. Reu says, "kept me always from the assumption of errors in the original copies of the Scripture and its parts; even the mere possibility of errors seemed to me excluded by this reverential fear." P. 70.) Now it is good and right that we all have such reverential fear over towards Scripture. But it helps no man to "become certain of the divine origin of the Bible" to advance such subjectivistic arguments. The one answer to every doubt concerning Scripture is the word of Scripture itself. This truth Dr. Reu, indeed, admits also; but only in such a manner that it comes as a sort of "last refuge," instead of being the initial basis, the sole solid foundation, for faith in Scripture as the Word of God.

It is not strange, then, that the liberal United Lutheran Church, with its many modernistic theologians who openly deny the inspiration of Scripture, should be able to "gulp down" the statement on Scripture which committees of the U. L. C. and A. L. C. had agreed upon. For that statement was in all essentials the same as the paragraphs which the A. L. C. made a part of its agreement with the Missouri Synod, and which leave room for such teachings as these of Dr. Reu with their antagonism to orthodox Lutheran doctrine. So we have this strange situation, that the United Lutheran Church agrees officially with the American Lutheran Church on the doctrine of Scripture, and the American Lutheran Church agrees officially with the Missouri Synod, but the U. L. C. at the same time rejects the Missouri Synod's doctrine. "Two things equal to the same thing are equal to each other." By all the laws of logic, the U. L. C. and the Missouri Synod ought to be officially agreed on the doctrine of Scripture; but as a matter of historical fact, they are not; and yet the A. L. C. agrees with both! Such are the results when broad-minded "middle-of-the-roaders" hold out their hands to both right and left and seek to become

the connecting link between opposing parties. There is something worse than self-deception or intellectual dishonesty at the root of such a situation. It is unfaithfulness to the Word of God, building the walls of Zion with untempered mortar, calling good evil and evil good. And the only remedy is repentance and a return to the sound principles of the Bible which the orthodox dogmaticians and "the fathers" championed.

* * * *

In an earlier article we called attention to Dr. M. Reu's essay on "What Is Scripture?" published under the title "*In the Interest of Lutheran Unity*," and criticized its emphasis on the human elements in Scripture instead of the divine. Another strange feature of this essay is its failure to distinguish between *revelation* and *inspiration*. In fact, it confuses the two concepts completely, arguing throughout for the inspiration of Scripture on the basis that it is "the history of the revelation and self-disclosure of God in its gradual development from the first beginnings to its final consummation" (p. 52), and that its writers received revelations from God. After reading Dr. Reu's involved argument, we understand why the American Lutheran Church was not satisfied to accept the Missouri Synod's *Brief Statement* on the Holy Scripture without adding qualifying paragraphs of their own. *The Brief Statement* gives an excellent definition of Inspiration, but the word "revelation" occurs nowhere in it. So the A. L. C. had to add this: "The Bible . . . is the Word of God, *His permanent revelation*, aside from which, until Christ's return in glory, no other is to be expected."

But the fact is that God has revealed Himself to men by His work of creation (Ps. 19, etc.), as well as by His Word, and continually reveals His power and glory by His government of the world and His care for the Church of Christ. Furthermore, it is quite possible to believe that the Bible contains "the record of revelation" (Reu) without therefore believing in it as God's own word. For even a purely human history might present a correct record of the deeds and words by which God revealed Himself to men. Dr. U. V. Koren stresses the orthodox Bible doctrine on this point in his address on "The Inspiration of Holy Scripture," 1908, "We can see from Scripture itself that there is a difference between revelation and inspiration. While we by revelation understand a direct communication by God to man of things which man otherwise could not know, inspiration is a unique, powerful operation of the Holy Ghost upon the men whom He has chosen to be His instruments whether for speech or for writing. While revelation is given by God through 'the Word' who from eternity 'was with God and was God', inspiration is given by God the Holy Ghost. Even the patriarchs had revelations, but they were not inspired to write them down. The prophets had revelations, but not all of them were inspired to communicate them in writing. Thus we have no writings of the prophets Elijah and Elisha. St. Paul had revelations and was inspired to write them down. Of St. Luke it is not said that he had any

revelation, but the Church of God has always recognized that his writings are inspired." (Tr. from the Norwegian by G. O. L.)

It is important to recognize the distinction between *revelation* and *inspiration*, not only because it is a scriptural distinction, but because all those who deny or question the inspiration of every part of Scripture invariably confuse them and base their objections to the inspiration of certain parts of the Bible on that confusion. Thus they may accept John 3, 16 as inspired, because it is obviously a revelation of God's love, but will not be so sure about Gen. 12, 6 or 1 Cor. 7, 25 or 2 Tim. 4, 13, because they are not such revelations. If a certain part of Scripture does not have direct religious value, but deals only with "historical, geographical, and other secular matters," they do not see why it should have to be accepted as the inerrant, inspired Word of God at all. Or they will, like Dr. Reu, seek to measure the value of Scripture passages by "their distance from the center," Christ, or by "the stage of revelation in which they are found." (P. 48.) In this way, Dr. Reu even is led to contradict 2 Tim. 3, 15-17 and to argue that the "all Scripture" in it cannot mean "every Scripture passage," because not every Scripture passage, although written down under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, etc. (f. e. the passage Gen. 12, 6; 'and the Canaanite was then in the land'). So according to this it is only "the whole of Scripture" that can be considered "profitable," not every single part of it; and we can understand better why the A. L. C. had to *supplement* the Missouri Synod's *Brief Statement* with this: . . . "the separate books of the Bible constitute an *organic whole* without contradiction and error, John 10, 35, and are rightly called the Word of God."

In this connection, Dr. Reu inveighs against those who on the basis of 2 Tim. 3, 15f. regard "all doctrinal statements on the same level, like the paragraphs of a code of laws so that one could dive into it (Scripture) at random, pick out a truth in the form of a Scripture passage and apply it to the given case. — Many a so-called Scripture proof of the old dogmatics was manufactured in just that way. As Hauck once said, sometimes the whole house of Scripture was ransacked and what was found at times in the most obscure place furnished the Scriptural basis for a certain dogmatical thesis. And a still greater evil crept in. The idea was encouraged that the whole divine revelation consisted in nothing but the transmission of specific truths and concepts, and that consequently the whole of Christianity, established on this basis, would be primarily or exclusively a matter of the intellect." (P. 47-8.) But it is just with regard to such statements that Dr. F. Pieper says in his "*Christliche Dogmatik*," p. 243-4: "The Scripture-principle is abandoned and in place of it the human ego installed as teacher in the Christian Church, — through the demand that the Christian teachings should be drawn not from the Scripture passages which treat of the individual doctrines (*sedes doctrinae*), but from 'the whole of Scripture.' This phrase, which certainly yields no intelligible meaning, was given new popularity by Schleiermacher" (the father of

Modernism). "But this senseless phrase has been adopted by practically all the chief representatives of modern theology, from the most extreme 'left' to the farthest 'right.' We find it also in Ihmels and Hofmann" (Theologians whom Dr. Reu quotes with approval). "Kliefoth has correctly called — this contrast between the whole of Scripture and the individual Scripture statements 'a phrase that cannot be realized in practice'. The fact is that we can come to the whole of Christian teaching only by taking the individual doctrines out of those passages — these always to be viewed in their context of course — which treat of the doctrines concerned." (Tr. from the German by G. O. L.)

Dr. Pieper also says (p. 68-9): "Modern theologians — apply a whole series of bad names to the deducing of the Christian doctrine from Scripture, such as: Intellectualism, Biblicism, letter-theology, mechanical understanding of Scripture, treating Scripture as if it were a textbook of laws, a code of laws fallen from heaven, a paper pope, etc." Since most of these "bad names" are found in Dr. Reu's essay, directed against those who hold to the traditional Lutheran doctrine of inspiration, we do not see how we can escape classing him with these "modern theologians," though he may, indeed, occupy the extreme "right" among them. But he who sits at all with scoffers at the inspiration of every jot and tittle of God's Word cannot be counted with those who obey that word. (Ps. 1, 1.) Nor is it possible to build orthodox doctrine with Modernistic bricks. On the contrary, those who try to occupy a "middle-of-the-road" position between Modernism and orthodoxy on any point of Bible doctrine must come under the condemnation of Rev. 3, 15. 16: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

Geo. O. Lillegard.

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

President Brenner's Letter (of January 10, 1941).

Rev. E. E. Ryden, D.D.,
2310 Twelfth Street,
Moline, Illinois.

Dear President Ryden:

The invitation to a general Lutheran conference which you in your letter of December 30 extend to our Synod in the name of the Fifth Convention of the American Lutheran Conference has been duly received.

After having consulted with the executive committee of our Committee on Lutheran Church Union, I beg to say the following:

While we most assuredly consider it the duty of Christian love to do good also to those who are not within our fellowship, we do not find it proper and for the good of the Church to do this as a church and in

cooperation with religious bodies with which we are not united in doctrine and practice.

Past experience does not warrant the hope that in such cooperation "a clear line of demarcation can be drawn between bodily help and mission work proper", particularly not when the invitation states as purpose of the conference "to further the spirit of closer sympathy and understanding among all Lutheran groups in America", and "to discuss the entire question of a general Lutheran cooperation with respect to the distressed foreign missions, as well as such other matters of common interest and practical cooperation as the proposed conference may find it advisable to consider."

It is our conviction that the only right approach between our Lutheran bodies is by way of doctrinal discussion, and that practical cooperation must be the expression of true spiritual unity.

For these reasons we feel ourselves constrained to decline the invitation of the American Lutheran Conference. Any aid that we may find occasion to give to suffering missions will have to be in accord with the principles we hold on the question of church fellowship.

Sincerely yours,

(signed) John Brenner.

The Columbus Conference. — The Conference held in the Deshler-Wallick Hotel at Columbus, Ohio, on January 20, 1941, is generally looked upon as an important milestone in the history of the Lutheran Church in America. Avowedly it was called to consider practical problems confronting the church, growing out of the second World War, but the ulterior motive apparently was the desire to exploit the present crisis in the interest of church union. Significantly the "original urge for such a Conference" came from the Commission on Lutheran Church Unity, created about two years ago by the A. L. Cf. In the report submitted by this Commission to the Minneapolis convention of the A. L. Cf. (Nov. 13-15, 1940) the third paragraph received special attention. The Preliminary Committee, to which the report was referred, re-worded the paragraph, eliminating certain incongruities but retaining the basic idea. It was re-written another time by a special committee "composed of Dr. E. E. Ryden, Dr. M. Reu, and Dr. P. O. Bersell" (*Journal of Theology*, Jan. 1941, p. 84) and adopted by the convention. We here reproduce both paragraph 3 and paragraph 2, which it presupposes. (Italics are ours.)

"In the presence of the great emergency with which Lutheran foreign missions throughout the world are faced, and, in view of the fact that the Lutheran Church of America alone is in a position to come to their rescue, we are firmly convinced of the necessity of the closest cooperation on the part of all Lutheran groups in this hour of crisis, to the end that these missions may not perish. We are persuaded that such cooperation

not only is demanded by the exigencies of the situation but that it will constitute the acceptance of a God-given task. We therefore solemnly call upon all Lutheran bodies in America to unite in this common enterprise, praying that God may help us *to understand fully that this is an opportunity for service which He has placed before us. While we do not want to deny nor minimize the differences in doctrine and practice still existing between the Lutheran bodies of our country, we nevertheless deem cooperation in this hour of need all the more possible, since we know that, if desired, a clear demarkation line can be drawn between bodily help and mission work proper, and that the individual body remains free to determine the sphere of its cooperation.*"

This was the preparatory paragraph 2. Now follows paragraph 3, determining the course to be taken on the basis of the foregoing.

"In order to bring about the desired unity of action and purpose as indicated in the foregoing paragraph, and *in order to further the spirit of closer sympathy and understanding among all Lutheran groups in America, we advocate the calling of a general Lutheran conference to discuss the entire question of Lutheran cooperation with respect to the distressed foreign missions, as well as such other matters of common interest and practical cooperation as the proposed conference may find it advisable to consider; and we instruct the President of the A. L. Cf. to invite the Presidents of the U. L. C. A. and the Synod of Missouri to join him in extending an invitation to all Lutheran general bodies in America to such a conference.*"

In accordance with this resolution the Columbus Conference was duly called by President Dr. Ryden in the hope, as he himself phrases it, "that much could be accomplished in *promoting better understanding and closer sympathies among Lutherans* if an opportunity of this kind could be afforded them to come together and discuss in a friendly manner their common problems, as well as the differences and misunderstandings which still keep them apart" (*Luth. Companion*, Feb. 6, 1941). To this he adds the following: "The question may well be asked, Is God once more using a world-wide catastrophe to compel the Lutheran Church to seek real 'unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace'? Is He once more opening our eyes to a realization of how we have permitted divisive forces to rob us of our vision, to paralyze our initiative, and to dissipate our strength?"

The Columbus Conference, as Dr. Sebelius reports in the *Luth. Companion* for February 6, 1941, was attended by representatives of the following bodies: The United Lutheran Church in America (4 delegates); The Missouri Synod (3); The American Lutheran Church (6); The Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (5); The Augustana Synod (3); The Lutheran Free Church (1); The United Danish Ev. Luth. Church in America (2); The Danish Ev. Luth. Church in America (2); The National Lutheran Council (2); The American Lutheran Conference (2).

The Suomi Synod had officially designated a delegate, but he "failed to appear".

Thus not many of the Lutheran synods of our country stayed away from the Columbus Conference, a fact which inspired Dr. Ryden to preface his editorial in the *Lutheran Companion* on "Lutherans Grapple with War Problems" with the following words:

"It was a notable array of Lutheran leaders which assembled in Columbus, Ohio, on January 20. In some respects it was absolutely unique in American Lutheran history. It was the first time that a Lutheran gathering in this country had been characterized as an All-Lutheran Conference, but it was virtually that. Of the 4,910,300 Lutherans of America, 4,500,000 were represented by their presidents and other appointed delegates. All of the five constituent groups in the A. L. Cf. were there, as were also the U. L. C. A. and the Missouri Synod, which forms the greater part of the Synodical Conference. Thus all three of the major divisions of the Lutheran Church in this country participated in the Columbus Conference. . . . And truly the problems with which the Columbus Conference grappled on that momentous twentieth of January, 1941, were both national and international in character. Indeed, they reached beyond all earthly lines and boundaries and into the sphere of the heavenly and eternal, for *they had to do with that Kingdom of which the Lord Christ is the divine Head and which is not of this world.*"

And Dr. Sebelius opens his report with the exultant shout: "It is almost too good to be true. But it is, nevertheless, true, and the event makes history in the Lutheran Church in America."

"Does this event mean the achievement of inner unity among Lutheran groups in our country?" asks Dr. Sebelius in his report. He answers, in substance, "No", just as little as Columbus had actually discovered America when he noticed "twigs and green foliage upon the surface of the waters", saw the "flight of birds", and felt the "balmy breezes" which could come only from some nearby fertile land.

Since this was the manifest spirit in which the Conference was called, and this is the spirit in which it is appraised by its sponsors, we dare not judge reporters of the secular press too harshly if they gave a somewhat distorted account of the event. According to Dr. Ryden, they informed the country "that 'the Missouri Synod, its membership heretofore distinctly a separate unit', had 'pledged cooperation to the National Lutheran Council to further church unity in the face of the international crisis', adding that spokesmen for the Missouri Synod had 'expressed willingness to cooperate in foreign mission enterprises, aid in army camp work, and suggested future conferences to establish a basis for Lutheran unity'."

The meeting was begun with prayer and Scripture reading.*) Dr. Poppen was in charge of the opening devotions. "The closing prayer of the Conference was offered by Dr. W. H. Greever, secretary of the U. L. C. A." (Dr. Sebelius' report).

Since, as stated in the resolutions of the A. L. Cf., "the present grave emergency with which Lutheran foreign missions throughout the world are faced" was the occasion for calling the Conference, Dr. Long was given an opportunity to present the situation on the mission fields in some detail. He said that there were three major problems that presented themselves to the Churches in America and more particularly for us Lutherans to consider and solve:

"1. The Peace Treaty that will eventuate after the war is over. What privileges and rights will this treaty grant to the Church? — that surely is a matter in which we must be interested. We should be represented at the Peace Table.

"2. The problem of relief and reconstruction. This is not merely a philanthropic and humanitarian matter. *It should be faith's expression of love to fellow Lutherans in distress.*

"3. Finally there was the problem of the orphaned missions, to which the delegates at the Columbus Conference were invited to give their special attention. Dr. Long stated that there were 166 missions in all affected by the war. Of these 54 were Lutheran. Altogether 3,000 missionaries are affected."

The pitiable circumstances under which these missionaries are carrying on must touch the heart of every one. Their budgets have been cut from 25 to 80 per cent., or even more. Some are endeavoring to get along on 10 per cent. of their normal income, while some have lost their source of income altogether.

In the discussion which followed Dr. Long's report Dr. Bersell "*voiced the hope that an expression for cooperation between all bodies present might come out of the meeting.*" Here we quote from Dr. Sebelius' report: "A tense moment was approaching at this point of the proceedings, and it arrived. Dr. Behnken, the President of the Missouri Synod, arose to define the position of his church group."

Dr. Behnken's address is summarized by a reporter in the *Luth. Standard* for Feb. 8, 1941: "He gives the view of the Missouri Synod on the matter of a coordinated plan to aid the missions. He says the con-

*.. Just before our going to press the writer of this item received a personal letter from President Dr. Behnken, in which the assurance is given: "With reference to the opening and closing of that meeting with joint prayer, I want to assure you that we made it very plain to Chairman Ryden that this was not our meeting, that we were there only in an unofficial capacity. . . . I also told him that we assumed no responsibility for the opening of the meeting with a prayer. . . . Dr. Ryden informed the conference after the opening that the Missouri representatives wanted it known that they were there in an unofficial capacity." — Not in one of the reports on the Columbus meeting that came to the writer's attention was this protest mentioned. M.

scientific scruples held by his group should not, in any way, be mistaken for stubbornness. He feels, he says, that unless there be agreement in doctrine between all the groups, there can be no real cooperation in actual mission work. They are naturally interested, he says, in actual relief work and are willing to help." — "We want to give relief", so Dr. Ryden quotes him at this point, "but we believe that that relief must and should be confined to physical and personal relief." — "But, he insists", so the *Standard* continues, "we must all get down to the very heart of the matter, which is God's Word and its interpretation, before there can be real unity among all the groups of Lutherans."

Here we insert the pertinent part of Pastor Lawrence Meyer's report in the *Luth. Witness* for Feb. 4, 1941. Pastor Meyer was one of the three men who represented the Missouri Synod at the Columbus Conference.

'It was quite natural that at a meeting of the various Lutheran bodies the question of union should creep in. This gave the Missouri representatives an opportunity once more to state clearly that doctrinal unity must be established before a cooperative status can be effected. Dr. J. W. Behnken mentioned some of the differences in doctrine which still keep American Lutheran bodies apart, and urged discussion of our differences as the way to unity. — It was a pleasant experience for the representatives of our Synod to hear from various representatives of other Lutheran bodies how clearly they understood our position. Dr. L. W. Boe emphasized that Missouri's willingness to take over the responsibility for the personal and physical relief of some of these orphaned missions was not to be interpreted as cooperation on the part of the Missouri Synod with the Lutheran World Convention but as a coordination of relief efforts. Coordination, he said, means 'not to hinder the other man's work.'

The effect that Dr. Behnken's testimony had is voiced by Dr. Sebelius as follows: "That position was already known to all present and presented no modification even now. And yet the Conference wanted to believe that with respect to the mission problem under consideration there might be found some satisfactory way out. 'Love believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things' (1 Cor. 13, 7). The exchange of views that held the attention of the Conference for a while made it clear, however, that the position of one group was entitled to as much respect as the position of another and that the matter of conscientious scruples might very well exist in more than one group."

"Out of the discussion which followed", as Dr. Ryden's editorial puts it, "came finally the adoption by unanimous vote of a resolution stating that the Missouri Synod was willing to take over a part of the responsibility for the care of Lutheran orphaned missions."

The wording of the resolution was prepared by a subcommittee of eight, among whom were the three delegates of the Missouri Synod. The resolution reads: "Whereas, the American Section of the Lutheran World Convention has assumed responsibility of caring as far as possible for the orphaned Lutheran Missions throughout the world, and — Whereas, the Missouri Synod has offered to take over part of this responsibility, — Be

it therefore resolved, that this body encourage the American Section of the Lutheran World Convention or its Committee to arrange for such coordination of effort and/or allocation of fields, as are agreed upon by the Committee of the American Section of the World Convention and the Committee of the Missouri Synod."

The matter of the orphaned missions thus having been disposed, "then came a second resolution, also adopted unanimously." It pertained to the "*spiritual care for draftees* at the military training camps." After Dr. C. E. Krumbholz, executive secretary of the Department of Welfare of the National Lutheran Council, had given a description of the situation in the camps and near-by communities, and Dr. N. M. Ylvisaker, president of the National Chaplains' Association, had addressed the Conference on the seriousness of the situation "Dr. Behnken and Dr. Long were asked by the Conference to be a committee to consider ways and means for the coordination of the Church's work in the training camps."

We may inject a remark here that the National Lutheran Council, meeting in Columbus on January 22 and 23, established a "new department to supervise the spiritual work among the soldiers and sailors who have been drafted for the training camps" and appointed Dr. N. M. Ylvisaker, mentioned above, as the "head of this important work" (*Luth. Companion*).

A third resolution was adopted by the Columbus Conference. The mover called it a *Doxology Resolution*.

"Resolved that we, the participants in this Conference, hereby express our satisfaction over the fine spirit evidenced in this Conference in the frank discussion of American Lutheran problems, which has *revealed a definite community of interests*, and which augurs well for increasing mutual understanding and enlarging sympathies in the future. We express the hope that, as occasion may demand and specific common tasks and problems confront us in which coordination of effort is desirable, a similar Conference be held for mutual consultation and that we ask the convener of this meeting to issue the call for such an official conference in consultation with the officers of the general bodies. *It is our sincere desire also that in due season a Conference may be held to consider the whole problem of the fundamentals of Lutheran unity.*"

The president of our Wisconsin Synod, Pastor J. Brenner, had also received an invitation to attend the Columbus Conference. After consultation with the Synod's committee on Union matters he declined. We reprint his letter in another item.

M.

"Conference Closes Ranks for Action." — In another paragraph of this column the reader will find the report of an eye-witness to the recent meeting of the A. L. Cf. in Minneapolis. Pastor N. A. Madson and Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker, both members of our Norwegian sister synod, attended the meeting and listened to the discussions. On the basis of copious notes Pastor Madson wrote the report for our *Quartalschrift*. We here add a few paragraphs from reports and comments in the *Luth. Companion*. The

title at the head of this present item is taken from an editorial in the issue for November 28, 1940. The Rev. L. M. Stavig, secretary of the Conference, reports in the issue for December 5, 1940, under the significant title: "A Forward-Looking Church Meeting".

From Secretary Stavig's report.

"Extended consideration was given on the second day of the Conference to the report presented by the Commission on Lutheran Church Unity. . . . Two very significant resolutions were passed by the assembly. The first of these provides for 'the calling of a general Lutheran Conference to discuss the entire question of Lutheran cooperation with respect to the distressed foreign missions, as well as such other matters of common interest and *practical cooperation as the proposed Conference may find it advisable to consider.*' The president of the A. L. Cf. was in this resolution directed 'to invite the presidents of the U. L. C. A. and the Synod of Missouri to join him in extending an invitation to all Lutheran general bodies in America to such a Conference.' — A second resolution of possible far-reaching significance was that which provided for a Committee on Reorganization of the A. L. Cf."

To this we add a resolution on Home Missions.

"Following a general discussion a resolution was passed providing 'that the Commission on Home Missions be instructed to study in conjunction with Commissions of the U. L. C. A. and Synodical Conference, if possible, the problems of Mexican, Indian, Jewish, Negro, and Mountain Missions, to the end that some method of inter-synodical approach and support may be devised'."

From the editorial.

"The climax was reached when the convention adopted a resolution offered by Dr. L. W. Boe calling for the election of a special committee consisting to a large extent of laymen to study the whole problem of a reorganization of the Conference along the lines which had been indicated in the discussions and to submit its recommendations to the next convention. — The movement to solidify the Conference organization was given encouragement by the repeated assurance of the representatives of the A. L. C. that its fellowship negotiations with the Missouri Synod and with the U. L. C. A. should under no circumstances be interpreted as a step toward organic union with either group. *Indeed, Dr. E. Poppen, president of the A. L. C., actually pleaded with the delegates not to put such a construction on the above-mentioned negotiations, and declared that his body has no other plan or desire than to continue as a member body of the Conference.* Thus the Conference closed its own ranks and knitted more firmly the ties of Christian fellowship which bind its groups together, during those heartening days of the decennial convention.

"But the A. L. Cf. did not content itself with seeking merely to solidify its own organization. It surveyed the whole situation of the Lutheran Church in America and throughout the world today, and it sought to become a unifying influence to bring together the entire Church in a spirit of mutual understanding and a ministry of Christian love. After

listening to its Commission on Lutheran Church Unity, through Dr. M. Reu, declare that the present desperate plight of Lutheran foreign missions constitutes a definite call from God to the Lutheran Church in America to unite all its resources to come to their rescue, the convention instructed its president to invite the presidents of the U. L. C. A. and the Missouri Synod to join him in extending a call for a general conference of all Lutheran groups in America, not only to consider the plight of the distressed missions, but also to discuss other matters of practical Lutheran cooperation. — *If the plans for such a conference are realized, it may become one of the most important moves ever made toward the ultimate goal of closer unity among the Lutherans of America. Thus the decennial convention not only sought to close its own ranks, but the ranks of American Lutheranism as well.*"

We should like to call attention to two facts. The first is the consistency of President Dr. Poppen. The view has been expressed as though Dr. Poppen reversed himself in Minneapolis. It is the opinion of the undersigned that he did nothing of the kind. He consistently steered a very straight course. Two years ago, at Sandusky, he replied to the greetings of Dr. Gullixson, then president of the A. L. Cf.: "The work of the A. L. Cf. has just well begun, and *we say that with full awareness of the implications.* We are not saying Farewell to you or your Synod (Norwegian Luth. Church) or the A. L. Cf., but *Auf Wiedersehen!*"

These words require no comment. They announce a very clear policy, from which Dr. Poppen did not veer in the least when in Detroit he admitted openly that the sister synods in the A. L. Cf. teach doctrines and tolerate practices which are not in harmony with the position taken by the A. L. C. In these words he merely mentioned some of the "implications" of which he had voiced awareness in Sandusky; but in no wise did he even remotely hint that a change of affiliation might be imminent. This was the impression, also, of a Wisconsin Synod man present at the meeting in Detroit. He reported to us at once: "He (Dr. Poppen) did not draw the necessary conclusions as to the future action of the A. L. C. made imperative by this statement of affairs." Nor does the resolution adopted at Detroit indicate any contemplated change.

We have so far not reported the wording in which it was originally submitted (in mimeograph): "We cannot expect that our sister synods over-night declare their position to the doctrinal agreement arrived at between the Synod of Missouri and our A. L. C., still less that practices deeply rooted in some of their circles are overcome at once." The form which was substituted and adopted, we have already reported in our January issue; we repeat it for easier comparison: "We entertain the confident hope that our sister synods in the A. L. Cf. will occupy the same ground in these matters now occupied by us."

Then followed the plea in Minneapolis to the A. L. Cf. not to misconstrue these declarations, as though the A. L. C. had cooled in the least toward its sister synods in the A. L. Cf. — We here insert a brief paragraph from the Rev. Harold L. Yochum's report about the Minneapolis

convention in the *Lutheran Standard* for Dec. 7, 1940: "President Poppen voiced the attitude of all of us when he declared: 'We want you to quit talking as though the A. L. C. has any intention of leaving the A. L. C. *None of us have advocated that.* Won't you please quit saying that.' Over and over the assurance was given that we value our associations in this Conference too highly to give them up for any other."

No matter what other charges may be preferred against Dr. Poppen, at least he did not vacillate in the course he pursued. The most that may be said is that since Minneapolis there can no longer be any doubt about the intentions of the A. L. C.

The second point to which we should like to draw attention is this that the present emergency problems of some foreign mission fields are being exploited in the interest of unionism. Questions of doctrine are pushed aside and an attempt is made to yoke synods together in joint or "co-ordinated" relief work with little or no regard to the differences in their respective confessional stand which still separate them. The plight of the missions is regarded as a call from God to the churches to forget their differences for the present and to unite in rescue work — an un-Scriptural and dangerous procedure. We may thank God that the president of our Wisconsin Synod was not caught napping. See his letter in a separate item of this column. M.

Dr. P. O. Bersell at Detroit. — Dr. Bersell is president of the Augustana Synod. We had heard numerous references to his words of fraternal greeting addressed to the A. L. C. assembled in convention at Detroit, but we had so far not seen the text of his message. Now the *Lutheran Companion* for January 23, 1941, carries it. The address is too long to reproduce here in its entirety, but we shall quote a few striking paragraphs, retaining the headings of the parts from which they are taken.

"Confidence in United Lutheran Church."

"If such an agreement is entered into, you will enter into fellowship with a great group of Lutherans. I spoke to that convention and I referred to the confidence that the Augustana Synod has in the U. L. C. A., not because of certain agreements, but because we know the history of that Church and we know the trend of developments within that Church, because we have confidence in the leadership of that Church, and because we know of the direction in which the vast majority, even of that body, desires to go, and on the basis of that knowledge and on the basis of that confidence there is and there must be fellowship between us. — All is not well in the U. L. C. A. All is not well in the Augustana Synod. All is not well in the A. L. C. We are still a militant Church, a Church full of human frailties and faults in spite of which God's Kingdom must advance."

"Not Interested in New Theological Thesis."

"I would like to make two statements. The one is that the Augustana Synod is interested in continuing our fraternal fellowship, and establishing

such fellowship where it is not today, on the basis of our knowledge of one another, on the basis of Christian confidence, the one in the other. The Augustana Synod is *not interested in writing any new theological thesis*. There were enough of them written in the sixteenth century to last until Judgment Day. We as a synod have made our confession concerning the faith that is once and for all delivered unto the saints. And may I, with your indulgence, President Poppen, say to this convention what I have said to you privately, *that if the A. L. C. is waiting for the Augustana Synod to 'endorse your note' to the Missouri Synod, if you want us to be a co-signer to the agreement, if you are waiting for us to adopt those articles as a premise for your concordat with the Missouri Synod, you may as well forget about it, right now.* — If you ask us whether the track is clear for you to go ahead with such an agreement, to settle once and for all the differences that have existed between Missouri and the A. L. C., mindful of its spiritual and historical background, and knowing your own spiritual and historical background, then we say, God bless you and God speed the day that all things that separate may be settled at the council tables and before the altar of the Lord to effect that cooperation and that unity which we all so highly desire."

"Pleasant Relations with American Lutheran Church."

"There comes to us the challenge of the foreign mission appeal and the challenge of presenting a united front as a Lutheran Church, not over against the Roman Catholic or the Reformed forces, but alongside of them as over against the enemies banded together to destroy the Church."

All italics in the quotations, except in the paragraph headings, are mine. Can a unity on such a basis as suggested here be pleasing to our Lord? Mark particularly the last paragraph quoted above, which requires no reading between the lines. M.

Union by Enterprise? — Which way lies union? It is our conviction that a unity of faith will express itself in unity of confession by word and deed. A joint confession and joint participation in church enterprises will flow naturally from a previously existing community of faith; on the other hand, engaging in joint enterprises without a previous agreement in faith is unionism, pretending a unity which in reality does not exist. Such pretense will then work the havoc all untruth works, it will dull the senses to the importance of the truth, and to the truth itself. A greater external harmony and readiness to cooperate may indeed result, but it will have been reached at the expense of the Gospel truth. Faith produces work, and the attempt to produce faith by engaging first in work is hitching the horse behind the cart. As in an individual, so in church bodies. While it is true that both the individual Christian's faith and the church body's community of faith may be practiced and exercised by works of love, and will grow in the exercise, yet to ignore deliberately existing differences of faith and doctrine and to endeavor to bring about church unity by engaging in joint enterprises is actually nothing but a subtle form of synergism, ex-

pecting spiritual life from man's own efforts. This, however, is the process advocated by the A. L. C.

In another item we remark in passing that the attitude of the A. L. C. is basically wrong. In the same editorial in which the *Standard* resents the suggestion of unity by separation, the majority stand of the A. L. C. is described in the following words:

"A third group — doubtless the largest — is convinced that *the A. L. C. may be used of God to help bring about a union of all Lutheran groups in America* but that the time is not ripe for pressing the matter; that we shall help bring about that consummation by cultivating friendliness with one another across synodical fences rather than pointing out the nature of the factions that exist in other bodies; that such inter-synodical agencies as the National Lutheran Council are a God-given opportunity for the cultivation of friendliness and for effective cooperation in matters of common interest and common responsibility; that it is *high time to complement and supplement the writing and discussing of theses with more joint work for God and against the forces of apathy and evil at home and abroad.* Are all those who have such convictions either church politicians or under the control of church politicians?"

"Yes, there is full freedom of speech in the A. L. C. and if we differ with one another we say so. By and large, however, such a situation makes for strength rather than for weakness — the strength of Christian democracy versus the inherent weakness of totalitarian conformity. For these differences on practical procedures do not keep us from working in fraternal and effective unity with one another and with approachable Lutherans outside our own body. We have learned in our ten years as a merged church that there is more to Christian unity than agreement in school theology; that a unity of heart and spirit, fostered by Christ, centered in Christ's Word, and finding expression in joint enterprise in Christ's work, is of supreme consequence. By a spiritual affinity we are drawn to those who show such a spirit, whether they be members of the U. L. C. A., of the Missouri Synod or of some other synod. That way, rather than the way of separation, lies union for the Lutheran Church of America."

Here the thought is reiterated in fine sounding phrases that the A. L. C. occupies a "strategic position" by following the golden mean, or rather, by denouncing a common confession as "agreement in school theology" and a "totalitarian conformity." It may reach out both to the right and to the left and thus bring both extremes of the Lutheran churches closer together. And the method it would employ to attain the goal is "*more joint work.*" — Were Euodias and Syntyche drawn together in spirit by joint church work? Read Phil. 4, 2. 3. M.

Dr. Knubel's "Gulping" at Omaha. — In the *Kirchl. Zeitschrift* for December, 1940, Dr. Reu reprints an entire article written by a special correspondent for the *Christian Century* on the Omaha convention of the

U. L. C. A., from which we quote the paragraph on the "gulping" of President Knubel.

"No wonder that Dr. F. H. Knubel, the president of the U. L. C., said he could swallow all this only by 'gulping'. Gulp he did, however, for it was not until he threw the entire weight of his great prestige, acquired during 22 years in the presidency, into the scales in behalf of the Agreement that it was voted through. Even now, as I leave the convention at midnight a day before it closes, the executive board is holding a protracted debate on a proposal to reconsider before the meeting adjourns. If this does not occur the action is sure to be challenged in many of the 31 synods. To an outsider, the amazing thing is that an action of such great importance would be taken without thorough discussion throughout the church in advance."

Since so much was made of this "gulping" in the secular press, Dr. Gerberding, President of the Northwest Synod, wrote a few words in explanation, replying particularly to the *Century* correspondent.

"In reference to the President's statement that he could swallow the Pittsburgh Agreement only by 'gulping', he says the United Lutherans 'were forced, considerably against their will' to accept it. I wonder if the correspondent never *willingly* took medicine that he had to 'gulp'. The vote was not an unwilling vote. It was not only 'the entire weight of his (President Knubel's) prestige' which swayed the delegates to adopt the Agreement overwhelmingly. It was rather the proofs he gave that the Agreement was in accord with what the U. L. C. had always stood for, and that to reject it now would be a step backward. If an observer can interpret the significance of the 'gulping', it was occasioned by a general distaste for reaching agreements by means of formal statements and fine distinctions of language rather than by mutual confidence between brethren confessing to a common faith and trying to live up to it."

The last remark expresses a deep truth. Unity of faith cannot be achieved by agreements, no matter how formally correct the statements or how fine the distinctions of language. A community of faith must be present first, produced by the Spirit through the Word of the truth, then agreement to a joint confession will follow naturally, and no "gulping" will be required.

M.

New Commission on Fellowship. — Up to the convention at Detroit, October, 1940, the A. L. C. had two committees on Lutheran church fellowship, the one to confer with a similar committee of the Missouri Synod, the other with a Committee of the U. L. C. A. The convention at Detroit dismissed the two commissions and provided for the appointment of one new commission to continue the negotiations with the two afore-mentioned Lutheran church bodies. This commission has now been appointed, according to a report in the *News Bulletin* for January 24, 1941 (confirmed later by an announcement in the *Lutheran Standard*).

"During the meeting of the Executive Committee of the A. L. C. January 7th the personnel of the new committee was named. Those appointed

are: the Rev. Dr. Emanuel Poppen, president of the A. L. C.; the Rev. E. F. Brandt of Oak Harbor, Ohio; the Rev. Dr. P. H. Buehring, Columbus, Ohio; the Rev. August Engelbrecht, Mendota, Ill.; the Rev. Theodore Fritschel of New Hampton, Iowa; the Rev. Dr. K. A. Hoessel, Milwaukee, Wis.; the Rev. L. Ludwig of Portland, Oregon; the Rev. Dr. M. Reu, Dubuque, Iowa; and the Rev. Dr. Walter E. Schuette of Sewickley, Pa."

According to the printed minutes of the Detroit convention (p. 243) Dr. Poppen had served on both of the former committees; Dr. Buehring, Dr. Hoessel, and Dr. Reu on the committee for Missouri; Dr. Schuette on the one for the U. L. C. A.; the Rev. Brandt, Rev. Engelbrecht, Rev. Fritschel, and Rev. Ludwig, then, are new appointees, while seven of the former committee members were dropped. (If my memory serves me right, Dr. Reu was mentioned at the time as serving on the committee of the A. L. C. when the Pittsburgh Agreement was concluded; and the way he speaks of this document in his comments confirms the impression. M.)

M.

D. Reu über die Vereinigungsbeschlüsse von Omaha. — über die Beschlüsse der Vereinigten Lutherischen Kirche haben wir in der Januarnummer kurz berichtet. Es muß befremden, daß in diesen ausdrücklich erklärt wird, die W. L. K. wolle damit nicht in Widerspruch zu der Deklaration von Baltimore von 1938 treten, weil doch bekannt ist, daß letztere in direktem Gegensatz zur missourischen Lehre von der Inspiration aufgestellt wurde. Ganz offen gibt nun auch Herr D. Reu in der „Kirchlichen Zeitschrift“ vom Dezember 1940 seiner Enttäuschung Ausdruck. Wir bringen seine Ausführungen hier zum Abdruck, weil wir im Einklang mit unserer Synode der Überzeugung sind, daß weitere Vereinigungsverhandlungen in gemeinschaftlichen Kommissionen bei dem gegenwärtigen Stand der Dinge nur Unheil anrichten können. (Siehe unsere Watertowner Beschlüsse.) Die Wahrheit ist genügend bezeugt worden. Nun gebe man dem Zeugnis Gelegenheit zu wirken.

Herr D. Reu stellt zunächst sämtliche Beschlüsse der W. L. K. und der W. L. K. das Pittsburgher Agreement betreffend zusammen und fährt dann fort:

„Was sollen wir zu all diesem sagen? Wir freuen uns natürlich von ganzem Herzen, daß die W. L. K. die drei Sätze des Pittsburgh Agreement mit großer Majorität angenommen hat, und erkennen darin auch wirklich einen Beweis dafür, daß das konservative Element in dieser Kirche erstarkt ist, wofür wir besonders Präsident D. Knobel zu danken haben. Aber die Wahrheit verlangt es auch zu sagen, daß diese unsere Freude doch noch durch allerlei getrübt ist. Der erste Beschluß billigt wohl das Pittsburgh Agreement, führt aber mit der Hinzufügung des Partizipialsatzes 'believing that (the adoption of the Agreement) will lead to full pulpit and altar fellowship between us' einen eigentümlichen Grund für diese Billigung ein. Zur Annahme des Pittsburgh Agreement sollte nur eins führen, nämlich die Überzeugung, daß es mit der Schrift stimmt. Kirchenpolitische Gesichtspunkte sollten dabei entweder überhaupt nicht in Betracht kommen oder doch

nur in ganz sekundärer Weise. Hier ist es der einzige Grund, der erwähnt wird. Nun haben ganz gewiß viele für die Annahme der Sätze gestimmt, weil sie von ihrer Schriftgemäßheit überzeugt sind, aber genannt ist nur die Hoffnung auf die aus der Annahme resultierende Aufrichtung von Kanzel- und Altargemeinschaft.

„Auch der zweite Beschluß enthält Elemente, die einen stützig machen. Damit daß er sagt: 'We approve in principle the considerations set forth in the second section of this report,' scheint er die Annahme derselben doch stark einzuschränken. Man wird aber noch mehr stützig, wenn man die Fortsetzung des zweiten Beschlusses liest: 'Herewith recording its understanding that the three Articles of Agreement herewith submitted do not in any wise alter the fundamental positions of the U. L. C. A. and that they are not contrary to or contradictory of the positions set forth in the Washington Declaration of 1920, the Savannah Resolutions of 1934, or the Baltimore Declaration of 1938.'

„Soll das heißen, daß das Pittsburgh Agreement nur eine durch die Verhältnisse wünschenswert gewordene weitere Ausführung des im Konstitutionsparagrafen niedergelegten Bekenntnisstandpunktes ist und daß auch der im Pittsburgh Agreement enthaltene Satz über die Schrift zwar über die bekannte Baltimore Deklaration von 1938 hinausgeht, aber doch nicht im Widerspruch zu ihr steht? So möchte es die Liebe auslegen, und wenn diese Auslegung richtig ist, würde der zweite Beschluß sein Befremden verlieren. Eines will bloß nicht recht dazu stimmen, nämlich der Umstand, daß die Baltimore Deklaration gerade im Unterschied und Gegensatz zu der damals schon von uns vorgelegten Form, ohne Irrtum und Widerspruch' angenommen wurde, während man jetzt zu dem 'irrtumslos' sich bekennt. Ich kann sehr gut die Rücksichten verstehen, die zur Vorlegung dieses zweiten Beschlusses geführt haben, aber sie scheinen mir wieder auf kirchenpolitischen Gebieten zu liegen, und Rücksichten solcher Art sollten in Dingen, von denen das Agreement handelt, nicht bestimmend wirken. Sie schaffen auch keine wirkliche Überzeugung, und nur feste Überzeugungen werden das auf diesem Gebiet nicht immer leichte praktische Handeln erzeugen und zum Beharren dabei führen. So wie der zweite Beschluß lautet, klingt er als eine Einschränkung des ersten, und der künftige Kirchenhistoriker, der einerseits das Handeln in Baltimore genau kennt und Einsicht in das Protokoll unserer letzten Sitzung in Pittsburgh nimmt, wird schwerlich anders urteilen können. Das Pittsburgh Agreement ist in seinen ersten zwei Sätzen allerdings nur Wiederaufnahme der entsprechenden Washington Erklärung, aber in seinem dritten Satz, der Ausführung über die Schrift, geht es in dem Sinn über die Baltimore Deklaration von 1938 hinaus, daß hier ausgesprochen wird, was auszusprechen man sich in Baltimore noch geweigert hat. Wie gut und notwendig war es unter diesen Verhältnissen, daß es von unserer eigenen Kirche in Detroit unmißverständlich ausgesprochen worden ist, in welchem Sinn und Umfang sie dem Pittsburgh Agreement zustimmt: 'With the definite conviction that this Agreement is in complete harmony with our Declaration and the Brief Statement.'

„Am dritten Beschluß fällt auf, daß die Kommission der U. L. A. mit

allen anderen lutherischen Kirchenkörpern 'with a view to organic union' verhandeln soll. Hier verfolgt man ein Ziel, das wenigstens vorderhand noch phantastisch und vielleicht für immer bedenklich ist. Jedenfalls hat unsere Kirche durch ihre Kommission von Anfang an erklärt, daß sie mindestens zur Zeit an keine organische Verbindung mit andern Kirchenkörpern denkt, und die beschlossene, aber noch zu ernennende neue Kommission hat keine Autorität, in dieser Richtung zu handeln. Verständlich ist, daß als Basis für solche Unionsverhandlungen nichts anderes als die historischen Bekenntnisse der lutherischen Kirche dienen sollen. Es bleibt bloß die Frage, was damit gemeint ist. Soll das heißen: Der Umstand, daß ein lutherischer Kirchenkörper nach seiner Konstitution auf den symbolischen Büchern unserer Kirche steht, ist ausreichende Grundlage, auf der man sich mit ihm organisch zusammenschließt; oder soll damit eine gegenseitige Vergewisserung verbunden sein, daß die doctrina publica und das kirchliche Handeln der in Betracht kommenden Kirchenkörper den Bekenntnisschriften unserer Kirche entspricht? In welcher Form diese Vergewisserung vor sich geht, ist von geringer Bedeutung, sie selber aber ist unerläßlich. O wie würden wir uns gefreut haben, wenn die Omaha-Beschlüsse nicht so bedenkliche Limitationen in sich zu tragen schienen; und wie würden wir Gott danken, wenn sie in der gesamten lutherischen Kirche unseres Landes — auch bei uns selber fehlt es vielfach — ohne Einschränkung durchgeführt würden!"

So weit Herr D. Neu. Wir fügen nur hinzu, daß uns seine Bedenken sehr milde gehalten und ausgedrückt erschienen. M.

Die Zukunft der Vereinigungssache. — Da echte Kirchengemeinschaft in Bekenntnisgemeinschaft besteht, die auf Glaubensgemeinschaft beruht, so haben wir uns von Anfang an nicht viel von den Vereinigungsversuchen der jüngst vergangenen Zeit versprochen. Wir haben unsere warnende Stimme dagegen erhoben, daß man sich eine äußere Vereinigung als Ziel stecke und um dieses Ziel zu erreichen, Verhandlungen zwecks Aufstellung eines gemeinsamen Bekenntnisses veranstalte. Lehrbesprechungen an sich halten wir für gut; aber wenn sie von vorne herein als Hauptziel Kirchenvereinigung bezwecken, können sie kaum anders als schädlich wirken. Vor nahezu zwei Jahren hat unsere Synode durch formellen, lange und ernstlich erwogenen Beschluß gebeten, um der Wahrheit willen die Vereinigungsverhandlungen vorläufig zu sistieren. Unsere Warnung wurde zum Teil mit Spott ("denying by testifying"), zum Teil mit Entrüstung (Mangel an Fähigkeit oder gutem Willen zu objektivem Denken), nicht immer mit viel Verständnis ("Plea for sanity and charity") zurückgewiesen.

Jetzt scheinen infolge der Versammlung der Amerikanischen Lutherischen Konferenz in Minneapolis die Vereinigungsbestrebungen zum Abbruch gekommen, zum wenigsten stark ins Stocken geraten zu sein. Man faßt die Beschlüsse von Minneapolis so auf, als ob sich die Amerikanische Lutherische Kirche dadurch mit sich selbst in Widerspruch gesetzt habe. So schreibt z. B. Th. L. im „Lutheraner“ vom 17. Dezember 1940:

„Wir fragen: Wie stimmen die mit so großer Freudeigkeit von der American Lutheran Church gefaßt worden sind, mit den kaum

vier Wochen später in Minneapolis getanen Aussprachen und gepflogenen Verhandlungen? In Detroit: „Unsere Gliedschaft in der Conference hängt von den weiteren Entwicklungen in der Conference ab.“ In Minneapolis: „Unsere Gliedschaft in der Conference ist uns lieber als irgendeine andere.“ Wir können diese Aussprachen nicht verstehen und beklagen sie von Herzen.“

Wir teilen diese Ansicht nicht, sondern glauben, wie wir in einer andern Notiz darlegen, daß die U. L. A. unter der Leitung ihres Präses, Dr. Poppens, durchaus konsequent gehandelt hat. Man muß nur in die Beschlüsse von Detroit nicht mehr hineinlesen, als sie wirklich besagen.

Wir können aber nicht umhin, unsere Befürchtung auszusprechen, daß die Sache wahrer Einigkeit durch die Verhandlungen, besonders seit Sanderud, Schaden gelitten hat. Das gegenseitige Vertrauen ist untergraben, wie die Frage im „Lutheraner“ zeigt. Wir möchten raten, daß man jetzt wenigstens dem Wortzeugnis, das wahrlich reichlich genug geschehen ist, Gelegenheit gebe, in aller Stille seine Wirkung zu tun. Unter gegenwärtigen Verhältnissen können sonst die bestgemeinten Reden nur reizen und die Herzen erbittern; oder auf der andern Seite die Gewissen der Wahrheit gegenüber abstumpfen.

Um zu veranschaulichen, was wir mit der erstgenannten Gefahr meinen, zitieren wir einen kurzen Abschnitt aus dem *Luth. Witness* vom 10. Dez. 1940 und eine kurze Erwiderung darauf aus dem *Luth. Standard* vom 4. Jan. 1941.

“It was often stated in these discussions (on the prospects for Lutheran union) that the A. L. C. is torn by several factions — one in thorough and complete harmony with ourselves and the enemy of un-Lutheran practice; another, which had its spokesmen at Detroit and pleaded for union with the U. L. C.; and a third, conservative in tendency but giving heed to church politicians in their midst. . . . *It remains now that we encourage the strong element in the A. L. C. which wants union on a Scriptural basis to unite their forces with those who believe as we believe in the Norwegian and Swedish synods, and also in the U. L. C. It now begins to appear that separation is the only possible way to union.*”

Wir enthalten uns des Urteils, ob das sehr taftvoll geredet war. Den *Standard* hat die Bemerkung erbittert. Unter der Überschrift „*Which Way Lies Union?*“ zitiert er den oben angeführten Satz aus dem *Witness* und bemerkt dazu:

“Separation, they believe, marks the path towards such union, *and it would seem that they consider it their duty to accelerate such a progress of separation within our own A. L. C. by ‘encouraging the strong element’ that sees eye to eye with them in everything. Just what that element should do to get into the Missouri orbit and out of the A. L. C. orbit without severing their organic ties with the latter Synod and effecting organic ties with the former Synod they do not make clear.*”

Ja, wie der *Standard* dann weiter ausführt, mag die U. L. A. innerlich in ihrer (falschen — M.) Stellung gefestigt aus solchem Angriff hervorgehen. Er gibt zu, daß verschiedene Meinungen — Strömungen — in der U. L. A. gefunden werden, aber eine Lostrennung einzelner Personen oder

Gruppen vom Synodalkörper stände nicht zu erwarten. Er führt zum Beleg Fälle von energisch gemachten und kräftig unterstützten Vorschlägen an, die aber niedergestimmt wurden, und sagt dann z. B.:

“Is the brother who had such convictions now minded to pull out of our Church because his mind did not prevail in that matter? *Ask him and see!*”

Gott erbarme sich seiner Kirche in diesen letzten betäubten Zeiten und bewahre uns in Gnaden, daß wir übel nicht ärger machen. M.

„Die deutsche Mission Ende 1940.“ — Soeben ging uns die Dezembernummer der „Allgemeinen Missions-Nachrichten“ zu. Dem Umfange nach ist diese Missions-Zeitschrift seit Beginn des Krieges stark verkleinert. Es ist ein Blättchen von zwei Seiten, das vor uns liegt. Wir teilen daraus zwei Notizen mit, deren eine einen Überblick über den Stand der deutschen Missionen gibt, während die andere ein ergreifendes Bild von der allgemeinen Notlage in China zeichnet.

„Wenn auch die Nachrichten von den deutschen Missionsfeldern, besonders denen im feindlichen Gebiet, sehr spärlich und lückenhaft sind, so kann man doch ein allgemeines Bild von der Lage der deutschen Mission geben, das wenigstens in großen Zügen zutrifft. Nach der letzten Vorkriegsstatistik arbeitete die deutsche evangelische Mission mit 1589 europäischen und 13,233 eingeborenen Arbeitskräften und hatte eine eingeborene Christenheit von 1,448,809. Diese ganze Arbeit war ausgebreitet über Afrika, den vorderen Orient, Indien, Niederländisch-Indien, China, Japan und der Südsee. Wenn man versucht, die Einwirkung des Krieges statistisch zu erfassen, dann kann man die deutschen Missionsfelder in drei Gruppen einteilen. Die erste Gruppe wäre die, wo die Arbeit der Missionare gänzlich lahmgelegt ist. Die Missionare sind entweder nach Deutschland zurückgeführt oder in Kanada, Nigieren, Südafrika, Indien, Sumatra und Australien auf verschiedenen Plätzen interniert, ihre Frauen und Familien teilweise mitinterniert oder unter Polizeiaufsicht ohne die Möglichkeit, weiterzuarbeiten. Dabei handelt es sich um Arbeitsfelder, auf denen insgesamt 716 europäische und 7,300 eingeborene Kräfte in der Arbeit standen und etwa eine Million eingeborene Christen gesammelt waren. Es ist von diesem Schicksal also etwa die Hälfte des missionarischen Einsatzes und zwei Drittel der eingeborenen Christenheit der deutschen evangelischen Mission betroffen. Geographisch handelt es sich dabei im wesentlichen um West- und Ostafrika, den vorderen Orient, außer Iran, die Gohnerische Mission in Indien, von der höchstens noch der deutsche Präses in der Arbeit steht, und ganz Niederländisch-Indien. Die zweite Gruppe wären die Missionsfelder, die im wesentlichen von den deutschen Missionaren entblößt sind, wo aber die Fortführung der Arbeit von Missionaren neutraler Länder, die vorher schon in Arbeitsgemeinschaft mit der deutschen Mission standen, getragen wird, so etwa bei der Basler und Leipziger Mission in Indien und der Neuerdettelsauer Mission in Neuguinea, bei der vielleicht noch einige deutsche Missionare in der Arbeit stehen. In diese Gruppe fällt das Arbeitsgebiet von etwa ein Zehntel der deutschen Missionkräfte mit über 2,000 eingeborenen Mitarbeitern und etwa 90,000

Christen. Die dritte Gruppe deutscher Missionsfelder ist diejenige, in der entweder die Arbeit ganz ungehindert fortgeht wie in Abessinien, Japan und China, dort, abgesehen von den schweren Nöten des chinesischen Krieges; oder in der nur ein verhältnismäßig geringer Teil der Missionare bis jetzt interniert zu sein scheint, wie Südafrika. Dabei handelt es sich um das Arbeitsgebiet von 688 europäischen und 3,748 eingeborenen Arbeitskräften und etwa 400,000 Christen. Insgesamt ist die deutsche Mission bedeutend schwerer betroffen als im vorigen Kriege. Hoffentlich entspricht die Treue der Missionsgemeinde dieser Not, damit sie bereit ist, wenn sie zu neuer Saatzeit gerufen wird.“

M.

Hungernot in China. — Der Dezemberrummer der „Mg. Missionsnachrichten“ entnehmen wir einen Teil eines Berichts über eine Synodalversammlung der Basler Missionskirche in China.

„In China herrscht eine furchtbare Teuerung. Der Preis für den lebenswichtigen Reis ist im letzten Jahr um das Achtefache gestiegen. Der Hunger steht vor den Gemeinden, vor allem vor der Tür der Pfarrer, Lehrer und Bibelfrauen, die auf die Hilfe der Kirche angewiesen sind. Es ist ergreifend, aus diesem Bericht zu hören, daß bei Anfang der Synode alle Angestellten der Kirche aufstanden und durch ihre Vertreter der Kirche sagen ließen, sie wünschten nichts anderes als nur das äußerste Lebensminimum, nämlich für das ganze Jahr 5 Zentner Reis und 40 Dollar. Sie waren bereit und gewillt, die Armut der Kirche bis zum letzten zu teilen. So konnte man sich bald einigen. Die Angestellten der Kirche vom Pfarrer bis zur Bibelfrau baten nur um das Minimum des Lebensunterhaltes, und die Gemeinde steigerte ihre Gaben, Opfer und Steuer bis zum Maximum dessen, was unsere armen chinesischen Bauern und Pächter leisten können.“

Wiewohl wir der naheliegenden Versuchung, daß wir uns durch die erbarmenswerte Notlage in Glaubensmengerei drängen lassen, um Abhilfe zu schaffen, mit allem Ernst widerstehen müssen, so dürfen wir doch dieses wiederum nicht zu einem Vorwand werden lassen, uns der Ausübung unserer Nächstenliebe an den Notleidenden zu entziehen.

M.

„Jahresrückschau“. — Der „Evangelisch-Lutherische Hausfreund-Kalender“ 1941 enthält folgenden Rückblick aus der Feder des Herausgebers, D. Martin Willkomm, auf die Arbeit unserer Glaubensbrüder in Deutschland während des vergangenen Kriegsjahres: „Auch das kirchliche Leben und die kirchliche Arbeit ist in diesem Kriegsjahre nicht gehindert worden, sondern hat ihren Fortgang genommen. Manche unserer jungen Pastoren tragen den Ehrenrock der Verteidiger des Vaterlandes und dienen mit der Waffe; ihre Arbeit in der Heimat wird von den Amtsbrüdern mit getan, die noch zu Hause sind, darunter von solchen, die früher im Auslande tätig gewesen sind, und denen ihr Arbeitsfeld zur Zeit verschlossen ist. Und unsere Gemeindeglieder sollen es aufs neue lernen, daß unsere Kirche keine „Pastorenkirche“ ist, daß vielmehr auch sie, die Laien, mit verantwortlich sind und mithelfen sollen, damit die Gottesdienste und das Gemeindeleben gepflegt und gefördert werden, und daß auch in Lese- und Gesangsdiensten ein großer Segen

liegen kann. Auch unsere Hochschule ist in der Kriegszeit trotz der Notzustände, unter denen auch sie zu leiden hat, nicht eingegangen, sondern hat ihre Arbeit weiter tun können. Unser Blatt ist regelmäßig ausgegangen und hat als Bindeglied zwischen den hin und her zerstreuten Gemeinden und auch zwischen der Heimat und unsern Soldaten draußen seinen geringen Dienst tun dürfen. Auch das Buchgeschäft unsers Schriftenvereins besteht in der Kriegszeit weiter und darf der Verbreitung guter Bücher dienen. So kann dieser Rückblick auf das hinter uns liegende Kriegsjahr nur ausklingen in einem von Herzen kommenden Dank!“

Ganz diesen Ausführungen entsprechend, jedoch mehr im Hinblick auf das gegenwärtige Verhältnis von Staat und Kirche in Deutschland, schreibt der Allgemeine Präses der Ev.-Luth. Freikirche, Pastor P. G. Peterßen, an den Unterzeichneten: „Hier in unserer Arbeit haben wir keine Schwierigkeiten. Es wäre durchaus unrecht, das behaupten zu wollen. Unsere Arbeit vollzieht sich ohne Hemmung.“

Unser Gebet ist, daß der Herr der Kirche auch in diesem zweiten Kriegsjahre seinen Segen auf die Arbeit unserer Glaubensbrüder in Europa legen wolle.

P. P e t e r s.

Are Other Celestial Bodies Inhabited? — At the Luther Academy, held in the Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, during the past summer, Dr. A. Pilger lectured on “*The New Cosmology*”; the lecture is being published in the *Kirchl. Zeitschrift*. In it Dr. Pilger touches also the question “whether other celestial bodies might not be inhabited.”

His answer was: “It stands to reason that suns are uninhabitable. Their temperatures of from 3,000 to 16,000 degrees at the surface forbid this. Only planets come into question. But the number of suns having planets seems to be very small. *Our solar system is really an exceptional world* (Italics mine. — M.) And if there were other planets, a number of conditions prevailing here on earth would have to be duplicated there, *e. g.*, the distance of the planet from its sun, the mass of the planet (if the earth had a diameter of 9,500 miles instead of 8,000, it would be *aquis submersa*), the obliquity of its ecliptic, even an adequate amount of dust in the atmosphere, etc., in order to sustain life there. The possibility that all these conditions could be found in another planet is so insignificantly small, that Alfred Russel Wallace in his *Man's Place in the Universe* computes the chances of other planets being inhabited by human beings as one against one hundred millions of millions.”

Dr. Pilger then points out in particular that neither Venus nor Mars offer conditions favorable for inhabitation.

The cosmology of the Bible is clearly geo-centric, not in the mathematical sense of the term, but because the heavens with sun, moon, and stars are presented as serving the earth, and here on earth is the arena in which the saving and sin-forgiving grace of God wages its dramatic battle against the powers of darkness and achieves its signal victory.

M.

Büchertisch.

Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Convention of the Ev. Luth. Synodical Conference of North America. Assembled at Chicago, Ill., Aug. 1-6, 1940. — 99 pages. Price, 20c. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

We of the Synodical Conference still adhere to the custom of long standing that we devote a great portion of time at our meetings to a discussion of doctrinal matters. Rightly so, for the Scripture truths are the only source of our strength. How can a church hope to plan and do the work of the Lord properly without refreshing itself by copious draughts from the springs of living water? Two important essays were submitted to the convention at Chicago, one by our colleague, Prof. A. Schaller, the other by Prof. Theo. Laetsch, D.D., of St. Louis. Prof. Schaller's theme was "The Brotherhood of Faith", which he presented "I. As a gift of God; II. As a fountain of blessings; III. As a sacred responsibility."

Regarding Prof. Laetsch's essay the undersigned should like to make a few suggestions. The theme was: "The Holiness of God"? After a lengthy introduction (covering more than four pages) the following thoughts are developed very thoroughly: "God's holiness manifests itself I. In its transcendence over all created things; II. As an ethical quality in His absolute sinlessness and impeccability; III. In creating man in His own image, in demanding holiness of all His creatures, in His threats directed against every form of unholiness and every unholy person, in the temporal and eternal punishment of all sinners." The time at the disposal of the essayist was necessarily limited. The reader will notice that the second part speaks of God's holiness as it is popularly presented. While it is necessary to stress this aspect, this might well have been done in the introduction, in order to gain time for the other points, which as a rule do not receive the careful attention they deserve, *viz.*, that holiness predicates sublime awfulness of God (I), and is not a quiescent but a transitive attribute (III). Then, perhaps, time could have been gained to develop a very important truth, touched by the essayist only in his concluding paragraph:

"Thank God, He is not only the holy and mighty God, sitting in majesty on His high and lofty throne; He is not only the holy and righteous God, the Judge of the living and the dead; He is also the *holy and all-merciful Savior*, whose holiness is manifested in sanctifying sinners, in finding ways and means to separate, to deliver the sinner from guilt, the penalty, and the power of sin, and thus to make the children of wrath, sons of God and heirs of eternal salvation."

May we hope that this aspect of God's holiness will receive a fuller treatment at some future date.

The business transactions were of exceptional importance at the 1940 convention, especially the action taken with reference to Lutheran Church Union. The committee report, which was adopted, was reprinted in these

columns, October, 1940, p. 284f. These resolutions have been overtaken by subsequent events, and now may almost appear as obsolete in some respects. The Minneapolis convention of the A. L. Cf. brought many things out into the open which were not so plainly discernable to everybody before. There is, actually, a straight logical line followed by the A. L. C., beginning in Waverly and leading through Sandusky and Detroit directly to Minneapolis. The Wisconsin Synod called attention to this in its meeting at Watertown in August, 1939. The Watertown resolutions are embodied in the official record of the Synodical Conference, as are also the illuminating 10 points submitted by Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker, speaking for the Norwegian Synod.

The Proceedings under discussion contain a detailed report on the only mission endeavor carried on by the Conference, the mission among the Negroes of our own country and in Nigeria, Africa.

For 68 years the Synodical Conference has been an instrument in the hands of God to strengthen the bonds of faith which unite the constituent synods and to provide an opportunity to perform joint Gospel work. May He continue to bless His church. M.

Churches and Sects of Christendom. By Dr. J. L. Neve, Hamma Divinity School of Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio. 634 pages, 6x9. Green cloth covers, with gold title on front and backbone. Price, \$3.00. — The Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Ia.

A wealth of material is presented in this volume, and it is made easily accessible by a detailed Table of Contents, although the reference to the pages is not uniform throughout, nor always quite correct (e. g., "VI. Institutions of Ecumenic Lutheranism" is found on p. 249, not 247). After a chapter dealing with "Introductory Matters" under six different heads, the book itself is divided into fourteen chapters, as follows: I. "The Eastern Orthodox Churches and Related Organizations", with two parts of together twelve divisions (pp. 47-93). — II. "The Roman Catholic Church", again with two parts of together thirteen divisions (pp. 94-165). — III. "Old-Catholic Church and Its Relatives", three subdivisions (pp. 166-170). — IV. "The Lutheran Church", eight subdivisions ((pp. 171-263). — V. "The Reformed and the Presbyterian Churches", five subdivisions (pp. 264-352). — VI. "The Anglican and Episcopal Groups", ten subdivisions (pp. 353-377). — VII. "The Methodist Church Family", two parts with together eleven subdivisions (pp. 378-463). — VIII. "The Union Bodies", two subdivisions (pp. 464-495). — IX. "The Congregationalists", four subdivisions (pp. 496-502). — X. "The Baptists, Their Predecessors and their Relatives", three subdivisions (pp. 503-532). — XI. "Quakerism and the Quakers" (pp. 533-545). — XII. "Rationalist Group (The Unitarians and Universalists)", two subdivisions (pp. 546-568). — XIII. "The Adventist Bodies" (pp. 569-575). — XIV. "Movements

and Organizations Independent and Unrelated", three subdivisions (pp. 576-592). — Appendix. "Some Movements Which Affect the Church Contents", discussing Problems of church union, Modernism and conservative theology, and Buchmanism (pp. 593-623). — The entire "Table of Contents" covers fifteen pages of the book, and is supplemented by an "Index" of more than ten pages.

The author does not present a history of the various churches and sects, although naturally all reference to their historical development could not be avoided, but he strove to present the characteristic peculiarities and tendencies of the several bodies. In doing this he drew not only on the official confessions but also on the writings of prominent members and on endeavors fostered by them. One may doubt whether a correct balance has always been observed.

The title itself at once raises the question: What is the difference, if any, between a church and a sect? The author does not evade. On fully eight pages he discusses this question, maintaining: "There must be a distinction between church and sect. All churches have their own sects. Some have many, some have few. There will be sects as long as there is a Church. . . . Sects rise and fall with the strengthening or weakening of the Church. Sometimes they have a mission in calling attention to the shortcomings of the Church. Some cease to maintain their sect character when the Church or the churches reform on the points that called them into life. In some cases they then develop back into the character of the original type against which they reacted, or they pass out of existence" (p. 36f.).

Among the six special traits of the sect, the third is presented as basic: "All writers on comparative Christian Symbolics agree in naming as the outstanding motive for most of the sectarian movements the endeavor to represent visibly and tangibly a congregation of the truly regenerated. The revival practice is the means of realizing this goal" (p. 39).

True as this is, and true as is also the charge that sects usually stress *peculiar tenets*, e. g., "touching the form of organization, the method of conversion, the teaching and mode of baptism; demands regarding holiness, . . . ; foot-washing as a condition of membership" etc., yet right here greater care should have been applied in the use of the terms "fundamentals and non-fundamentals". These terms today call for a most careful definition, and sectarianism dare not simply be traced to a "tendency to lose sight of the right distinction between fundamentals and non-fundamentals" (p. 39).

Instead of selecting some special chapter for closer scrutiny — a procedure which in its very nature could not do justice to a book of this type — we rather quote a few sections in which the author discusses the method of approach to the study of Symbolics. It is a far cry from the topical, tabulated presentation of Comparative Symbolics, e. g., by G. B. Winer or M. Guenther's *Populäre Symbolik*, to the

method employed by Dr. Neve in the present volume. We quote from "Introductory Matters":

"Symbolics must be expanded into a science to show not only what a church once was and therefore now ought to be, but what it actually is today as the result of historical development. To be sure, the treatment must include the confessional principles which have an actual life in a church body. The many 'unconscious' factors of its existence, however, must also be disclosed. . . . We shall do well, however, to remember that students can be very much misled by taking all kinds of misdevelopments as normal and by looking on mere accidentals as very important. Distinction must be made between fundamental traits and mere notions. The essential traits in a communion usually have their roots in the original history of the group and in the Confessions produced by the group. This is important in the present day method of the study of churches and sects: *All* factors that characterize the life of a group must be considered. Let us indicate just a few fundamental points of interest: Is the general character of a church marked by catholicity or by tenets leading into sectarianism? Is it liturgical or anti-liturgical? Is it intellectually doctrinal or inclined toward the mystical? Is it theological or practical? What is the attitude to theological education and to catechetical instruction? Is the church conservatively denominational, indifferent, or unionistic? What is the church's appreciation of Scripture, of theology, of preaching? What is the significance of baptism, of the Lord's Supper? What is the conception of the Church and of the ministry? Does the church foster the immediacy of the means of grace, or does it emphasize the sacramental conception? Is salvation fundamentally a gift of God or an achievement of man? Can there be distinction between good works as a 'new obedience' and moralism as civil righteousness? What is the attitude to moralism and to legalism? What is the distinction between Law and Gospel? What is the type of the church's piety? What is the attitude to the relation of church and state? What is the attitude to the world? What is its stand in regard to liberalism in theology and to humanism? What principles should lead us in responding to the Social Gospel? Consideration should be given to the racial and the national influence upon religion and the church. Statistics and their meaning in the different cases are also of interest" (p. 42f.).

And again: "The matter of *comparison* in the present-day historical type of Christian Symbolics is a vexing question. The scholars do not want to dispense with it. . . . True, this topical method offered a convenient way for polemics, but the much needed historical approach does not receive its right. . . . But how is it to be done after the topical method has disappeared? We have become convinced that the solution of the difficulty lies in a certain distinction that must be made. Comparison must be made only where it is historically motivated. One can and must compare between Eastern Orthodoxy

and Rome; also between Catholicism and Protestantism; between Lutheranism and Calvinism; between conservative Protestantism and Socinianism. But it is unhistorical and unnatural, for instance, to compare the conservative Protestantism of the Reformation with Methodism, except with regard to the distinction between objective religion and its subjective type, the purely educational and the purely evangelistic types. This, however, is a distinction which reaches into the genius of many groups. Similarly, the different attitude among the denominations to the concept of baptism calls for a comparative discussion. The attitude toward grace, also, and no less the question of its mediation to the soul, constitutes a comparative problem full of lessons for practical church work" (p. 44f.).

It is the present reviewer's opinion that comparison dare not stop at these basic questions. A different attitude in the central matters will naturally be reflected in the treatment of other doctrines and practices, and a comparison may well be made in regard to such points also.

M.

Studies in the Liturgy by F. R. Webber (429 Baker St., West Roxbury Sta., Boston, Mass.). 23 pages, 9x5½. Red cloth, gold title on front and backbone. — Ashby Printing Co., Erie, Penna.

This book was published three years ago, yet it is not for that reason in the least antiquated today. That we did not call attention to it earlier is due in part to the fact that no review copy reached us.

The author needs no introduction, he is well known by such books as "Church Symbolism", "The Small Church", and many magazine articles on matters liturgical.

Wherein lies the lasting value of the present volume? Chiefly in this that the author successfully accomplished the task he set himself in writing it. These are the opening words of the Preface: "In putting out this volume we are advocating nothing and suggesting nothing. This fact cannot be too strongly stressed. Mindful of the controversial nature of the subject, one is compelled, in writing about it, to assume an impersonal attitude toward it, and to state general facts without becoming partisan. The object is to explain the more important parts of the church service, so that our clergy, seminarians, organists and lay members in general, may have a little manual written in popular rather than technical language."

Although the author emphatically, and repeatedly, denies that he is "advocating" anything, yet, being a man of firm convictions, he cannot but offer strongly suggestive criticism in his discussions. His is not at all an "impersonal attitude." Fortunately. The basic idea from which he endeavors to shed light on every detail of the subject under discussion is found in a short sentence on p. 15: "The whole structure of our liturgy is based upon the facts that man is a poor, helpless sinner, and is saved only by the grace of God in Christ."

This thought is expanded somewhat on the same page: "The true reason for liturgical forms of worship is not merely to make the hour of worship interesting and attractive. It is not to add mere prettiness to the house of God. It is not to go only so far as to create an emotional or a devotional atmosphere. It is not a device to attract people of the sort who come and sit in their pews and look on, making up their minds meanwhile whether they like it or disapprove. While there is no sin in making the hour of worship as attractive as possible, while it is well to avoid crudity, and while a devotional atmosphere has its value, yet the fundamental reason for our liturgical form of worship is *to instruct the people*. . . . In addition to this didactic use of the liturgy, it is also a means whereby *man may worship the Triune God*. . . . Out of gratitude for Word and Sacrament he ought to worship the Eternal God with prayer, praise and the giving of thanks."

On p. 28 (on the Introit) we read the following generalization: "In the sad days of liturgical corruption, weak hymns of a highly subjective and sentimental type were provided, and these were intended to express the thought for the day. Thus the words of men were substituted for the inspired words of the Psalmist; and weak sentimentalizing in regard to one's personal moods and feelings took the place of the splendid devotional thoughts of God's Word. In all periods of liturgical decline the emphasis has been shifted from the words which the Lord speaks to man, to the words which man would speak in regard to himself. In times of liturgical purity, an objective worship of the Savior, not a catalogue of man's feelings, is the great central theme of the Service, and of all its parts."

This is correct. Only the relation between the two phenomena should be stated more clearly. "Liturgical corruption" is not primarily a cause, but rather a symptom. In Pietism, e. g., the attention was focused more on the Christian's subjective reactions than on God's objective gift of salvation, and this shift was reflected in the liturgy. It is important to bear this in mind. If we observe a certain decline in the spiritual life of our church today, the remedy is not to be found in a reform of the liturgy. That would be hitching the cart before the horse.

There are many things in the book the undersigned should like to discuss, but that would by far exceed the scope of a review. Yet a few items may be mentioned by way of illustration.

In chap. XIV: "Is a Revision of the Service Necessary?" the author discusses also the proper tempo of congregational singing. He quotes with approval from a certain source: "In the eyes of the people, slow, dragging singing seems identical with church singing" (p. 203). Yet, are slowness and dragginess really synonymous? Are they even related methods of rendering music? And if not, does slowness, without dragging, harm the rendering of the stately, majestic

chorals? It is the present reviewer's opinion that the "racing", now in vogue in many places, is much more objectionable. An incident may illustrate. The late professor of music, Prof. F. Reuter, of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., was an advocate of staid singing, assigning approximately a second of time to every quarter note (about 70 quarters to the minute). One Sunday evening he was at the organ, the undersigned was in the vestry. The hymn was "*Fahre fort*". The congregation began to drag, Prof. Reuter improvised an inspiring interlude, and in the next stanza, what a change in the singing! The tempo remained the same, slow and stately, but all dragginess had disappeared.

Another item by way of illustration. The undersigned was recently asked about the meaning of the *Epiclesis*. Pastor Webber records some interesting conjecture concerning this part of the Greek Orthodox Communion liturgy. After explaining its present use he adds: "The *Epiclesis*, or prayer to the Holy Ghost, may not at first have been a consecratory prayer at all, but an act of adoration to the Holy Ghost for His sanctifying work in general, and an entreaty that the earthly elements in the Eucharist be sanctified also" (p. 165). The conjecture assumes that the *Epiclesis* is a remnant of a great Trinitarian Hymn of Thanksgiving, originally found in the liturgy.

The book with its fifteen chapters can be of great service to any one seeking a clearer insight into the problems of liturgics. M.

Does the Modern Papacy Require a New Evaluation? by C. B. Gohdes, Litt. D., Professor of History, Capital University, Columbus, Ohio. 263 pages, 6x9. Cloth. Gold title on front and backbone. Price, \$2.25. — Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Ia.

This is a clarion call to arouse America to the dangers threatening her democratic institutions from the politico-ecclesiastic machinations of Rome. "Without apology, save for our inadequacy to a theme so important and timely, we send this book forth upon its career as a protest against the recent breach made in the time-honored relations that have obtained in the past between state and church. The Church of Rome, through the action of our chief executive, has passed from the status of one church among many to that claimed by it, a church with special privilege." (Preface.)

In these words both the cause and the occasion for writing the book are clearly stated. As the title indicates, the author does not aim to present a history of the papacy nor to review its doctrines in the light of Scripture, rather, both history and doctrine are used as the source and the criterion for evaluating the papacy of the present day. "Checking the one by the other, we have come to the conclusion that Rome aims at a religious domination of the world by gaining universal acceptance of its false tenets and principles and, at the same

time, by obtaining such political influence as will aid in the attainment of the former objective" (p. 8).

Granted, in general; yet in the evaluation of details a mere application of this rule will not suffice to appreciate Rome's actions fully. Take the pope's stand against birth control, mentioned on p. 96f. There is more to it than merely an "opportunity to show the power of the Roman organization". Birth control is revolting to our natural conscience; and the papacy seeks to establish its anti-Christian power by posing as the guardian of morality, and by thus securing its hold upon the consciences of men. It is, as the author points out on p. 101 in speaking about the popularity of Pius XI: "His strenuous advocacy of international peace; his pleas for interracial tolerance; his promotion of harmonious relations between the masses and the classes; above all, his consistent challenge to Russian communism: these factors constituted the secret of the popularity of Pius XI. . . . Power, won by means of leadership in the pursuit of *aims which all lovers of justice and humanity approve* (Italics mine. — M.) is for the pope a lever in the achieving of an aim less frankly disclosed than the halt he endeavors to call to the extension of bolshevism and the ravages of war. The pope's diplomatic successes are intended to be stepping stones to universal headship."

On p. 218ff. the author suggests some practical action to be taken in the matter. Among others he mentions the following: "We expect every applicant for American citizenship to renounce under oath every foreign political authority." Accordingly our naturalization agencies should lay before all applicants "the literary product of the pope's political wisdom" and demand "unequivocal repudiation of it." Again, we should demand of candidates for office "who are members of the Roman communion" a "frank and clear-cut statement of faith and policy" as far as it pertains to their "attitude to Rome as an arbiter of political problems."

We ask, *cui bono?* What assurance would such procedure give us? Particularly as long as politicians, no matter how much they privately may hate Rome, find it to their advantage to soft-pedal, or even to come to some working agreement with the Roman Church? And, discounting for the present Jesuitic *reservatio mentalis*, demanding an oath as indicated by the author would give to those of the Catholic faith an opportunity to complain of persecution and to pose as martyrs, an opportunity which, though without any real basis in fact, they would be only too ready to exploit to the limit.

Church history teaches a different lesson. If the political stranglehold of the papacy is to be broken, the pope must be dislodged from the hearts of Christians and their consciences must be set free. What the armies of mighty monarchs, what a French embargo on precious metals, what the exposure by the Humanists failed to accomplish, Luther achieved single-handed by preaching justification by grace through faith in the vicarious atonement of Christ. As long as the

lodge spirit of salvation by character is rampant, as long as we by cultivating Scoutism do yeoman's service to that spirit, as long as we encourage respect for numerical strength and outward measures in spiritual matters, Rome has nothing to fear. More, the papacy is not an unfortunate accident in the world, it is a judgment from God because men received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. A political oppressor may be met with political weapons, but the only way to meet a judgment from God properly is repentance. M.

Evangelisch-Lutherischer Hausfreund-Kalender 1941, 57. Jahrg. Herausgeber: D. Martin Willkomm, Berlin-Zehlendorf, Johannes Herrmann Verlag, Zwickau (Sachsen). Preis: 50 Pf.

Amerikanischer Kalender für deutsche Lutheraner auf das Jahr 1941. Literarischer Redakteur D. J. T. Müller — Statistischer Redakteur: P. S. Michael. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Preis 15 Cents.

Lutheran Annual 1941. Published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Price 15c.

Wir dürfen wohl voraussetzen, daß die beiden amerikanischen Kalender jetzt schon weite Verbreitung gefunden haben und von deutschen und englischen Lutheranern als „Wegweiser zu unsern Kirchen“ fleißig benutzt werden. Der Kalender unserer Glaubensbrüder in Deutschland ist zu unserer Freude nach langer Reise „wohlbehalten“ angelangt und enthält unter anderem eine „Jahresrückschau“ und „Worte des Gedankens zum 100. Geburtstag der Jugendschriftstellerin Margarete Lenk.“ Das Statistische dieses Kalenders bringt eins nicht: Die verhältnismäßig große Zahl der Pastoren der Freikirche, die unter den Waffen stehen.

Wir gestatten uns noch auf einige Fehler in der statistischen Rubrik der Amerikanischen Kalender aufmerksam zu machen. Sie lassen sich wie folgt gruppieren: 1. Der Name ein und desselben Professors wird zweimal geführt: G. Oswald als Professor von Northwestern Lutheran Academy und als Professor von Northwestern College. Beide Male Seite 50. Vgl. dagegen „Gemeindeblattkalender“ 1940, Ste. 55-56. Der Name des Unterzeichneten wird auf Seite 50 und noch immer auf Seite 51 geführt. 2. Es fehlen Namen: R. A. Fenske und G. Meyer, Professoren an der Northwestern Lutheran Academy, ersterer Direktor der Anstalt (Seite 50; vgl. Gemeindeblattkalender 1940, Ste. 56). 3. Namen von Tutoren werden falsch, bzw. unverändert geführt: G. Martin und E. A. Knief als Tutoren der Northwestern Lutheran Academy. Der „Gemeindeblattkalender“ 1940 enthält die beiden Namen: E. Knief und G. Meyer (Ste. 56), der von 1941 den Namen Oscar Siegler. P. Peters.

* * * *

Alle hier angegeben Sachen können durch unser Northwestern Publishing House, 935-937 North Fourth Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, bezogen werden.

Theologische Quartalschrift.

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

Jahrgang 38

Juli 1941

Nummer 3

I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it
is the power of God unto salvation to every
one that believeth. Rom. 1, 16.

Closing address delivered in the chapel of the Theological Seminary
at Thiensville on June 6, 1941. M.

In Christ Dear Brethren and Sisters. — In particular I address myself to you, dear members of the Graduating Class.

You have completed the course of studies prescribed in our seminary. You are being presented today to the church as candidates for the holy ministry, to which you promise to devote your life. In what spirit will you conduct your work, your work of studying and meditating, of teaching and preaching? Let the same spirit be in you which was also in the apostle Paul, as he sums it up in our text. Cultivate that spirit, and avoid the dangers which threaten it.

I

When Paul says that he is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ he wants to express first of all his great joy in the *precious content of the Gospel message*.

He sums this up in the one word *Christ*. It is the Gospel of *Christ*, the Gospel which *brings Christ* to us.

Who is Christ? Paul spent his life in preaching Christ. He suffered persecution, he was ready to lay down his life for Christ's sake. Let Paul tell us what he meant when he calls the Gospel the Gospel of *Christ*.

Paul had founded the congregations in Galatia. When later in his epistle to them he summarized his message he said that Jesus

Christ had been evidently set forth before their eyes as *crucified*. Similarly he wrote to the Corinthians that he had determined not to know anything among them save Jesus Christ, and Him *crucified*.

Christ crucified, that is the content of the Gospel. If you allow this truth to fade you will be losing the Gospel. All the miracles that Jesus performed, the great Sermon on the Mount, which is hailed throughout the world as the greatest gem of wisdom, will lose their value if you detach them from the fact that Christ was crucified.

Christ was crucified. He became a curse for us in order to redeem us that we who were under the curse might receive the adoption of sons.

Christ crucified means that you and I are sinners and right-ly completely washed away in the blood of the Crucified One, and who by His death have been raised to new spiritual life: saints.

eous at the same time: sinners, utterly helpless and hopelessly doomed, in ourselves, who by all their efforts can only increase their own damnation; and yet sinners whose guilt has been com-

Christ crucified, that is the great fact in which we rejoice. But Christ crucified is to the world foolishness and a stumblingblock. Many would be ready to accept the Gospel and join the church if it were not for this one thing: Christ crucified. Christ crucified takes away from us every shred of our own glory. Therefore the world hates Christ crucified. The world will readily grant that Christ was a wise teacher, they will hail Him as a model man who led an exemplary life, but never will they accept Him as the only Savior, through whose substitutionary death alone we may hope for grace with God.

Herein lurks a great danger for you that you become ashamed of Christ, and compromise with the world.

The world is filled with organizations that teach "salvation by character," yes, they have youth organizations which train boys and girls to build up their own character by doing a good turn a day. And you shudder not at this very idea? You would hesitate to take a stand against it? would be ready to tolerate it among your flock?

Salvation by character and everything that is connected with it is the direct opposite of salvation by Christ crucified. The two

cannot be held simultaneously by the same heart. We are confronted with a plain *either — or*.

Even within the church there appear trends which antagonize Christ crucified. I am not now thinking of such churches which declare directly that a man must by his own works make satisfaction for his sins; I have in mind a more subtle attack. Christ's merits are offered to us in the Gospel. We are to add nothing to them, but simply to accept them in faith and enjoy them as a free gift of grace from God.

Faith, thus, is nothing but the receiving hand of a beggar to hold the gracious gift of God. But do we not frequently feel as though faith were a *condition* demanded by God which we must meet before God will justify us in Christ? Do we not often fix our eyes on faith much more than on Christ crucified, whom we embrace in faith?

What does that indicate? This, that we are not yet ready to say with Paul, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Christ is to us not yet all in all; we bank to a certain extent on the fact that we believe in Him.

Here is a task for you; here is a battle for you. You must earnestly cultivate the spirit which rejoices in Christ crucified.

II

When Paul says that he is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ he voices, furthermore, his heart's joy over *the nature of the Gospel message*.

He sums this up in the word: *power of God*. The Gospel which brings us Christ crucified is a *power of God unto salvation*.

How do we come to accept Christ crucified as our only hope of salvation? To believe in Christ is against our nature. By nature we cannot get away from the idea that salvation *depends on our own efforts*. We think heaven must be *earned*. We must merit God's favor. If we have committed anything wrong, *we* must atone for it.

We feel so keenly about this, as is shown by the remarks of the common people as well as the most elaborate systems of the greatest philosophers, that we cannot but condemn the Gospel of Christ as subversive of order and decency on earth. Who will make any effort to avoid sin and to do good if forgiveness is free

and all guilt has been canceled by Christ crucified? Vice can even now not be checked by all the laws and police forces, it will turn the world upside down if salvation is made so easy in Christ crucified, and if no credit is held out for good behavior to stimulate men's efforts.

To overcome this inborn idea, to deny our finest ideals, to accept Christ crucified as our only Hope, we must undergo a radical change of heart, a new birth. It is beyond our power either to perform, or to begin, or to cooperate, or even to prepare for it. The creative power of God is required.

Thank God, we have it in the Gospel. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

Here again is a danger. Even Christians often doubt whether the Gospel alone is really sufficient to win members for the church and to hold them with the church, in other words, to create and preserve faith. They maintain that we must offer the people some other inducements. If we arrange icecream socials, card parties, bazaars, and other entertainments, that will draw the people and hold them with the church. Or, they say, we must make our church services more attractive, have a more elaborate liturgy, finer music, and more interesting topics to discuss in our sermons.

What does all this mean? It means that we *do not implicitly trust in the power of the Gospel*. But remember, you cannot convert a single sinner with a chicken dinner, nor can you comfort an afflicted soul with all the entertainments you may devise. Rather, the stressing of such things in the name of the church will becloud the real issue in the hearts of men and strengthen them in their earthly-mindedness.

Today this danger threatens us in another form. Corruption is rampant in the world. What do we do about it? We arrange Lutheran mass meetings to impress the politicians with our numerical strength. We parade our leaders before the world to impress it with our erudition. We gather quotations from secular writers to show how highly they rated a Luther and other great churchmen.

Friends, with all our numbers and with all display of human greatness you cannot add one ounce of strength to the power of the Gospel. Rather, the more you stress these external things,

the more you will becloud the real source of our strength. You will act as though ashamed of the Gospel.

Other things might be mentioned, e. g., the stress on finances, on organization, on leadership, and the like; yet no matter how helpful these things may be externally, they become extremely dangerous when invoked to supplement in the least the power of God in the Gospel.

III

When Paul says that he is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ he gives expression to his joy especially also in *the source of the Gospel message*.

He simply calls it the word of *God*. God himself formulated the Gospel message for us. When He worked out our salvation in Christ He did not call in human witnesses to record the events as best they could from their observations. He himself selected men, trained them for their mission, and taught them the very words in which to deliver the message both orally and in writing. The Gospel is the word of God *given by inspiration*.

This fact must fill you with reverential awe before your Bible. There God himself in all His majesty and all His love for lost sinners is standing before you and speaking to you. When you open your Bible, you are not simply reading another book like dozens you may have read before. It is the only book of its kind, and every word in it must be precious to you. It is the Word of God.

To be sure, it is written in the language we use every day in our conversation with other people. It shares the limitations of our daily speech. We know that we cannot adequately express our thoughts, our desires, and especially our feelings in our language. There is always something left in our heart for which we cannot find the proper word. The Bible is written in just this limited language, and hence cannot give us a full view of God's inmost thoughts, will, and feeling toward us.

Yet it was God himself, who knows a little more about language than we do, who provided to the writers the exact word He wanted them to use in giving us the Gospel. Hence you must stand with reverent awe before each word, study it ever to pene-

trate deeper into its meaning, and tremble lest you should alter it in the least.

This you must do to every word of the Bible. There are some parts of the Bible that speak directly of Christ, of His person, of His work, of His office. We find these in the New Testament history and the applications in the epistles; we find them in the Old Testament types and prophecies. There are other parts of the Bible that may seem to have little or no connection with Christ. Shall we take the former and say, About these we must be very careful; while concerning the latter it makes not so much difference whether we accept them, or doubt them, or even deny them? Remember, it was the same God who in His infinite wisdom and love spoke the important words, and the same God who spoke the words we may be tempted to call unimportant.

Do not begin to set yourselves up as judges over the Word of God, but with joyful awe accept every part. Else, how could you say, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ?

The temptation has ever threatened the church, and it is raising its ugly head again in our day, that we grant license to differ in non-essentials. While no one on earth may ever come to a full understanding of the Gospel — we know in part —; while Jesus was very patient with the weak and ignorant — He did not break the bruised reed —; and while we are earnestly warned not to spurn the weak brethren: yet it is an entirely different thing when someone *demand*s tolerance for an error in an ever so unimportant part of God's Word. Here is the parting of the ways.

You may be branded as narrow-minded fanatics, you may be charged with obstructing unity in the church, it may greatly reduce our numbers: yet if you truly rejoice in the Gospel of Christ as the word given to us by the great God himself, you will bear it confidently, clinging to every word, every syllable, every letter of the Bible.

Let this then be the spirit you cultivate in yourselves and in your hearers that with all your heart you rejoice in the Gospel of Christ, and carefully avoid every way of being ashamed of it. God confirm you in this spirit through His Gospel.

Von der Ausführung des Heilsrats Gottes im Alten Testament.

Der Bund Gottes mit seinen Geschöpfen.

Wenn wir von einem Bunde Gottes mit Menschen oder anderen seiner Kreaturen reden, so ist von vornherein klar, daß das Wort „Bund“ nicht in demselben Sinne gebraucht ist wie in Bündnissen, die von zwei oder mehr Menschen miteinander geschlossen werden. Solch ein Bündnis ist zwischen dem allmächtigen Gott und seinen ihm gegenüber nichtigen Kreaturen an und für sich unmöglich. Die Parteien sind der Art nach ungleich. Über die Allmacht Gottes lese man etwa folgende Stellen nach: Dan. 4, 32; Ps. 33, 9; Jesai. 40, 13–26; Röm. 11, 32–36; Matth. 28, 18; Act. 17, 25. — Und über die Nichtigkeit des Menschen; Ps. 103, 15; Ps. 39, 6. Wir haben hier nicht Raum, den Wortlaut abzudrucken.

Bedenken wir die Tatsache, daß das Wort Bund über 350mal in der Bibel vorkommt, so liegt die Vermutung nahe, daß der häufige Gebrauch dieses Ausdrucks in der mehr phantasiereichen, bildlich-anjhaulichen Darstellungsweise der orientalischen Völker liegt als in der nüchtern-sachlichen und begrifflich-logischen Weise der westländischen Völker. Das Muster jener Darstellungsweise ist das Buch Hiob in allen seinen Teilen, besonders in den Reden Gottes, Kap. 38ff.

Nun kann man die rein begrifflich-logische Auffassung biblischer Wahrheiten auch zu weit treiben; und darin liegt der alle Religion vernichtende Ursprung des Rationalismus. Und doch können wir sie nicht entbehren, wenn wir im Verständnis des Heilsrats Gottes klar sehen wollen. Es handelt sich um die wesentlichen Elemente des Evangeliums und um die persönliche Gewißheit unsers Seligwerdens. Zu dieser begrifflich reinen Fassung des Wortes Bund zwingt uns die Schrift selbst, wenn sie dasselbe auf wesentlich verschiedene Personen und Verhältnisse anwendet. Wenn zwei oder mehr Menschen wie Abraham mit den Amoritern Mamre, Eschol und Aner, oder Abimelech mit Abraham und dann mit Isaak, Laban mit Jakob, David mit Jonathan, Könige mit anderen Königen einen Bund machen, so ist das ganz etwas anderes, als wenn es sich um einen Bund Gottes mit Menschen oder mit Tag und Nacht, mit der Erde und dem Himmel handelt. Etwas ganz besonderes ist der durch

Abraham vorgebildete, in Christo geschlossene Heilsbund mit uns verlorenen Sündern. Zene zwischen Menschen geschlossenen Bündnisse beruhen immer auf Gegenseitigkeit. Jede Partei hat bestimmte Leistungen zu garantieren und hofft dabei auf gewisse Vorteile oder Gewinne. Es sind wesentlich menschliche Kontrakte oder weltliche Geschäfte.

So ist es in keinem von Gott mit Menschen oder mit anderen seiner Kreaturen gemachten Bunde. Dieser ist immer einseitig. Gott tut dabei alles allein, und die Menschen oder andere Kreaturen spielen darin lediglich die Rolle der Empfänger und Genießenden. Natürlich haben alle diese Bündnisse ein gemeinsames Element, ohne das sie nicht unter den Begriff Bund gefaßt werden könnten; es ist das Element der mehr oder minderen Festigkeit und Dauer und der Zuverlässigkeit.

Den stärksten Schein menschlicher Zweiseitigkeit bietet uns der bekannte Bund Gottes mit Noah. Aber auch dieser ist, recht gesehen, nur ein Bund Gottes für Noah.

Um was handelte es sich in diesem Bunde? — Der Herr hatte um des im sittlichen, geistlichen und kreatürlichen Leben total verdorbenen Menschengeschlechts willen seinen Schöpfungsseggen (Kap. 2, 4–7) zeitweilig aufgehoben, um dies Volk im Wasser der Sintflut zu erlösen. Nur Noah und seine Familie sollten samt allerlei von Gott ausgesuchten Tierpaaren zur Fortpflanzung ihrer Arten mittels einer schwimmenden Arche und durch darauf folgende Wiedersegnung erhalten werden. Noah war zwar kein Heiliger, aber ein, an dem Maß seiner verdorbenen Zeitgenossen gemessen, frommer, das heißt hier: rechtschaffener, mit Gott wandelnder Mann, der noch Günst und Gnade vor ihm gefunden hatte. Dem teilt der Herr mit, daß es ihn reue, diese ganz unmenzlich verdorbenen Menschen geschaffen zu haben, und daß er beschlossen habe, sie mit der Erde zu vertilgen. Und das führte Gott nun auch aus, ohne sich mit Noah zu beraten oder seine Mitarbeit zu fordern. Mit Noah aber wollte er einen Bund zu seiner und der vorhin genannten Tiere Erhaltung und Wiedersegnung machen. So hatte er im Anfang alle Kreatur gesegnet (Kap. 1, 28–30). Mittlerweile kam es nun zur Vertilgung der Bösen und zur Erhaltung der rechtschaffenen Menschen und der genannten Tiere mittels der Arche.

Wer hat nun den Plan zur Vertilgung der von Gott verurteilten und zur Erhaltung der noch unverdorbenen Menschen durch

eine Arche erdacht? Wer hat den Befehl zu ihrem Bau und die Anweisung zu ihrer zweckmäßigen Einrichtung gegeben? Wer hat alles verwendete Material: Tannenholz, Pech und Berg, Hammer und Nägel dazu geliefert? Wer schuf die Unmenge der den großen Kasten tragenden Gewässer und bewahrte diesen über ein Jahr lang vor Schiffbruch? Wer lenkte den Raben und die Tauben zur Ankündigung der Unzeit und der Zeit des Endes der Fahrt? Wer trieb die Tiere in Paaren zur rechten Zeit in die Arche und schuf das Futter für die lange Fahrt? Wer steuerte das Schiff sicher durch Wind und Wetter? Wer hielt drohende Seuchen und das Hinsterben auch nur eines einzigen der Inassen der Arche ab? — Derartige Fragen könnte man noch viele tun, und die Antwort müßte jedesmal lauten: Der Herr allein, nicht er und Noach auch nur gemeinschaftlich.

Aber hat nicht Noach dennoch ein gut Teil Arbeit im Bau der Arche geliefert? Hat er nicht das Vieh füttern und die Ställe in Ordnung halten müssen? Jedenfalls war er als Repräsentant des Hauptgeschlechts der Erde auch Regent der gesamten Bewohnerschaft der Arche und hatte als solcher den Kopf und die Hände voll genug. Das ist nicht zu leugnen. Aber worin steckt nun hier die Gegenseitigkeit der Leistungen und der Vorteile wie z. B. im Bunde Abimelechs mit Abraham? Der Herr verspricht Noach die Rettung seiner selbst und jener Tiere und nimmt ihn durch Befehl und Unterweisung in allen seinen Handgriffen im Bau der Arche in seinen Dienst als Knecht, aber auch als das vornehmste Objekt seiner rettenden Gnade; darauf heißt es in Kap. 6, 22: „Noach tat alles, was ihm Gott gebot“. — Und was hat nun Noach getan zu der Wiederherstellung des ursprünglichen Schöpfungsregens, ohne den die errettete Welt doch bald hätte wieder zugrunde gehen müssen? Hier findet sich Noachs Name gar nicht mehr als Subjekt in irgendeinem Satz. Es heißt in Kap. 9, 1–17, dem Schlußkapitel des Berichts über die Sintflut: „Und Gott segnete Noach und seine Söhne — mit Fruchtbarkeit, mit der Herrschaft über alle Tiere und mit Speise, gerade wie er es ursprünglich getan hatte. Gen. 1, 28–30; weiter: mit Schutz ihres Lebens gegen reißende Tiere, mit Wiederherstellung der obrigkeitlichen Gerichtbarkeit wider das Verbrechen, mit „eurem Samen nach euch“, mit allerlei lebenden Tieren. „Daselbe sagte Gott auch zu Noach.“ — Alles, und gerade diese Hauptfache, tat Gott ohne Noach für ihn und die Tiere.

Und wer hat denn die Garantie für die Erfüllung aller dieser Verheißungen übernommen? Das hatte Gott schon in Kap. 8, 21. 22 trotz der auch jetzt noch vorhandenen Verderbtheit der geretteten Menschen getan. „Ich will hinfort nicht mehr schlagen alles, was da lebet, wie ich getan habe. Solange die Erde stehet, soll nicht aufhören Samen und Ernte, Frost und Hitze, Sommer und Winter, Tag und Nacht.“ Und in V. 11 heißt es in demselben Sinne: „Und ich richte meinen Bund also mit euch auf, daß hinfort nicht mehr alles Fleisch verderbt soll werden mit dem Wasser der Sintflut, und soll hinfort keine Sintflut mehr kommen, die die Erde verderbe.“

Und welches war nun das Zeichen, der sichtbare Beweis dieser göttlichen Garantie? Es steht da: „Meinen Bogen habe ich gesetzt in die Wolken, der soll das Zeichen sein des Bundes zwischen mir und der Erde. Und wenn es kommt, daß ich Wolken über die Erde führe, so soll man meinen Bogen sehen in den Wolken. Alsdann will ich gedenken an meinen Bund zwischen mir und euch und allem lebendigen Tier in allerlei Fleisch, daß nicht mehr hinfort eine Sintflut komme, die alles Fleisch verderbe.“ Noah selbst konnte diese Verheißung wohl empfangen, aber zu ihrer Erfüllung auch nicht einen Strich tun; es war Gottes Günst und Gnade, liebende Anerkennung und Ehrung der Rechtchaffenheit Noahs, daß der allmächtige Gott ihn im Bau der Arche mitarbeiten ließ; er hätte alles ganz allein mit einem einzigen Wort schaffen können. Der Weinbauer Noah wäre schwerlich ein fertiger Schiffsbaumeister geworden, wenn Gott ihm nicht dabei Kopf und Hand geführt hätte.

Die Bedeutung des Ausdrucks „einen Bund machen mit“ ist hier, wo es sich um einen Bund zwischen dem allmächtigen Gott und seinen schwachen Kreaturen zu ihrer Rettung handelt, nach der Redefigur der Euphonie zu verstehen, nach welcher eine Anzahl von verschiedenen Instrumenten, ob sie stärker oder schwächer sind, alle nach demselben Grundton mit seinen regelmäßigen Akkorden gesetzt werden müssen. Wir gebrauchen diese Redensart oft, ohne es zu gewahren, besonders in der familiären Kindererziehung. Wenn das dreijährige Mariechen mit dem Griffel auf der Tafel krizelt, so ergreift die Mutter wohl des Kindes ganze Hand und macht aus der Krizelei eine leserliche Zahl oder auch wirklich lesbare Buchstaben daraus. Oder: wenn Karichen beim Vater im Auto sitzt und das

Steuerrad mitanfahst, so sagt Vater wohl: Karlsruhen fährt schon ganz schön. Nach dieser Weise ist Noahs Tätigkeit an der Arche in dem von Gott mit ihm gemachten Bunde zu verstehen.

Wir gehen jetzt zu dem vom Herrn mit Abraham geschlossenen Bunde über. Hier handelt es sich um das Eine, was not ist, um Gottes Heilsrat für alles, was auf Erden in Sünden verloren ist; um die einzige Weise, wie wir selig und fromme Christen werden sollen und können.

Wer und was war Abraham? Seine menschliche Herkunft steht in Gen. 11, 10 und dort weiter in V. 26–31. Abraham hatte mit seiner Verwandtschaft eine Zeitlang in Ur in Chaldäa gewohnt, dem südwestlichen Teil des jetzt durch den Hammiten Nimrod beherrschten Weltreichs, in dem Zweifströme-Gebiet des Euphrats und des Tigris, wo sich diese vereint in den Persischen Meerbusen ergießen. In diesem Gebiet herrschte Götzendienst und gräßlicher Fleischesdienst. Wenn es in Josua 24, 2 heißt, daß Israels Vorfahren Tharah, Abraham und Nahor anderen Göttern gedient hätten, so gilt das wohl hauptsächlich von Tharah und weniger von Abraham und Nahor, weil Tharah damals noch als der Führer des Hauses galt. Wir machen hier nur darauf aufmerksam, daß Abraham die Tochter eines anderen Weibes Tharahs, also seine Halbschwester, geheiratet hatte, die schon in Kap. 11, 10 als unfruchtbar bezeichnet wird. Darauf kommt später alles an; vgl. dazu auch Jes. 51, 1. 2. Weil zwischen Kanaan und Ur in Chaldäa die undurchdringbare große Wüste lag, heißt es in Jes. 41, 9, daß der Herr Abraham und seinen Samen von den „Enden“ der Erde und von ihren äußersten Winkeln hergeholt und ihn zu seinem Knecht berufen habe. Abraham heißt dort Gottes „Dhabi“, mein Geliebter. Er stammte im 10. Gliede von Sem ab, der als Erstgeborener Noahs das erste Gottesreich auf Erden gründen sollte, 1. Moj. 9, 26.

Uns ist es aber nicht sowohl um die leibliche Abstammung Abrahams als um seine Bedeutung für das Reich Gottes zu tun, und dafür ist der vom Herrn mit Abraham geschlossene Bund die erste Quelle. Im übrigen ist dieser Bund im ganzen Neuen Testament als Heilsrat Gottes durchweg bestätigt. In der ganzen Schrift ist dies der Bund von dem Einem, was not ist, von der praktisch wichtigsten Frage für alle Sünder auf Erden: Was soll ich tun, daß ich

selig werde? Apg. 16, 30. 31. In der Geschichte Abrahams ist dieser Bund in allen seinen einzelnen Stücken aufgeführt. Von diesem Heilsrat ist die ganze Schrift voll, alle Propheten des A. T., alle Evangelisten, die Worte des Herrn selbst und aller Apostel, besonders die Schriften des Apostels Paulus. Sie predigen immer wieder diesen in Abraham gemachten Bund Gottes als den Rat Gottes für alle, die auf Erden als Sünder selig werden wollen. In Abraham ist dieser Bund zuerst deutlich geoffenbart, in Christo ist er zu Tat und Wahrheit gemacht worden.

Wir studieren die Geschichte der Bundeschließung Gottes mit Abraham in der Reihenfolge, wie die Schrift sie uns bietet. Sie steht zunächst in Gen. Kap. 12–22. Später wendet sie sich zu dem Bunde mit Abrahams Söhnen. Sie erzählt uns nämlich von Anfang bis zu Ende von Gottes großen **G n a d e n v e r h e i ß u n g e n** und von Abrahams **G l a u b e n**, aber auch von den aus seinem Glauben erwachsenen Werken und Früchten.

In Kap. 12, 1. 2. 3 finden wir alle Verheißungen Gottes an Abraham in ein paar große und allgemeine zusammengefaßt. Sie stehen aber hier nicht in sachlicher, viel weniger in geschichtlicher Reihenfolge. Sachlich ist es wohl so: Ich will dich segnen und du sollst ein Segen für ein großes Volk und ein Fluch für alle deine Feinde werden. Ich will deinen Namen so berühmt machen, daß alle Geschlechter auf Erden gesegnet werden sollen. Wir deuten im Folgenden viele Einzelheiten nur an, um Raum zu sparen. Man muß, um klar zu sehen, den Text in der Schrift selbst nachlesen. — Schwerlich hat Abraham diese allgemeinen Verheißungen jetzt schon ganz verstanden, aber er mußte sie im **G l a u b e n** annehmen, sonst hätte er die folgenden nicht bekommen. In Kap. 12, 4 heißt es: Da zog Abraham aus (von Haran nämlich), wie der Herr zu ihm gesagt hatte — im **G l a u b e n**. Sein Weib Sarai und sein Nefte Lot zogen mit ihm; ob er wußte, wozu, steht nicht da. Von Haran aus kam Abraham nach **S i c h e m** und dann noch **B e t h e l**. Er erhält die Landesverheißung und opfert **j e d e s m a l i m G l a u b e n** durch einen Gottesdienst. Später kommt er nach dem Südlande (Negeb). Bei einer Feuerung im Lande geht Abraham als zeitweiliger Gast nach Ägypten. Da Sarai trotz ihrer 65 Jahre noch eine große Schönheit und deshalb noch haremsfähig war, fällt Abraham **z e i t w e i l i g i n U n g l a u b e n** und sucht durch Unwahrhaftigkeit und Drangabe ihres Lebens sein eigenes Leben zu

retten. Das war nicht Glaube, sondern ein Stück Unglauben gegen Gott und zugleich Untreue gegen den Pharao. Deshalb mußte er sich von diesem hart strafen lassen. Vgl. hierzu Kap. 20. In Kap. 13 ist Abraham anscheinend selbstlos gegen Lot. Darauf bekommt er die Verheißung, daß der Herr das ganze übrige Land nach allen Himmelsrichtungen hin ihm und seinem zukünftigen sehr großen Samen geben wolle, was er glaubt und gläubig nach Hebron kommt. Nach dem Sieg über die Könige des Ostens, Kap. 14, und dem Segen Melchisedeks weist er im Glauben das Geld des Königs von Sodom ab, weil er an die Verheißung des Herrn glaubt. In Kap. 15 erhält er eine neue Offenbarung des Inhalts: Fürchte dich nicht, Abraham, ich bin dein Schild und dein sehr großer Lohn. Dies Kapitel lassen wir hier unerklärt, um es später genau zu analysieren. In Kap. 16 läßt er sich durch Sarai, die an ihrer eigenen Fruchtbarkeit verzagt hatte, zu der Nebenehe mit ihrer Magd Hagar verführen, weil er sich auf menschliche Weise selber Samen verschaffen wollte; das war Unglaube. Hagar wird schwanger, gebiert Ismael, wird von Sarai mit Einwilligung Abrahams wegen ihres Hochmuts vertrieben, und der Engel des Herrn muß die Sache im Sinne Gottes wieder gut machen. Mit der Zeit war Abraham 99 (also Sarai 89) Jahre alt geworden. Jetzt erscheint ihm der Herr wieder und spricht: Ich bin der allmächtige Gott (el schaddai), wandle vor mir und sei fromm, d. h. vollkommen im Glauben, und ich will meinen Bund mit dir verwirklichen und will dich sehr mehren. Abraham betet im Glauben den Herrn an und bekommt noch einmal die Verheißung großen und herrlichen Samens; wieder glaubt er; da bekommt er den Befehl, seinen früheren Namen Abram in den zukünftigen Abraham und Sarais in Sarah zu wandeln. Neu ist hier die Verheißung für beide, daß große Völker und auch Könige und Fürsten von ihnen beiden kommen werden. „Und ich will aufrichten meinen Bund mit euch und eurem Samen nach euch bei euren Nachkommen, daß es ein ewiger Bund sei also, daß ich euer Gott sei und eures Samens nach euch, und will euch und eurem Samen geben das Land, da ihr jetzt Fremdlinge innen seid, nämlich das ganze Land Kanaan zu ewiger Besetzung, und will ihr Gott sein.“ — Darauf folgt das Gebot der Beschneidung alles Männlichen, selbst Ismaels und alles Gefindes im Hause. Abraham glaubt; und von Sarah heißt es: Ich will

sie segnen und von ihr will ich dir einen Sohn geben und sie segnen. Da fiel Abraham gläubig auf sein Angesicht, lachte und sprach in seinem Herzen: Soll mir hundert Jahr alt ein Kind geboren werden, und Sarah neunzig Jahre alt gebären? Das war Verwunderung, aber auch starker Glaube. Abraham fügt hinzu: Ach, daß Ismael leben sollte vor dir! Des Herrn Antwort war: Auch darin will ich dich erhören; er glaubte; „aber dein Erbe soll Isaak sein, den Sarah dir gebären soll.“ Auch Ismael soll zwölf Fürsten zeugen; Abraham glaubt und führt den Auftrag zur Beschneidung an seinem ganzen Hause durch. Ismael ist 13 Jahre alt. Kap. 18. Der Herr erscheint dem Abraham im Hain Mamres bei Hebron. Drei Männer kommen zu ihm; er bewirbt sie freundlich (Die drei Männer bilden ab den Herrn und zwei Engel). Der Herr fragt Abraham: Wo ist dein Weib Sarah? Er erhält die Antwort: Drinnen in der Hütte. Da sprach der Herr: Ich will wiederkommen über ein Jahr, so soll Sarah einen Sohn haben. Abraham und Sarah waren alt und wohlbetagt, also daß es Sarah nicht mehr ging nach der Weiber Weise. Auch sie lacht innerlich bei sich selbst, nicht laut. Es war ihr innerlich doch lächerlich.

Der Herr spricht zu Abraham: Warum lachet die Sarah? Ums Jahr von diesem Tag an will ich wieder zu dir kommen, dann soll Sarah einen Sohn haben. Meint sie, daß dem Herrn etwas unmöglich sei? Sarah leugnet, daß sie gelacht habe. Das war nicht Unglaube, sondern freudige Verwunderung und Glaube.

Kap. 21. Sarah ward schwanger und gebar dem Abraham einen Sohn in seinem Alter um die Zeit, die ihm Gott geredet hatte, und er hieß seinen Sohn Isaak, den ihm Sarah gebar. Abraham war hundert Jahr alt, da ihm Isaak geboren wurde. Sarah wiederholt: Gott hat mir ein Lachen zugerichtet; wer dürfte von Abraham sagen, daß Sarah Kinder säuge und hätte ihm einen Sohn geboren in seinem Alter! Und das Kind ward entwöhnt; und Abraham machte ein groß Mahl am Tage, da Isaak entwöhnt ward. Eitel Freude und Jubel des Glaubens!

Kap. 22. Des Glaubens Sieg in Abrahams Verjuchung in dem Gebot, seinen Sohn Isaak in Morija ihm zum Brandopfer darzubringen: Der Herr spricht: „Ich habe bei mir selbst geschworen, daß ich deinen Samen segnen und mehren will wie

die Sterne am Himmel und wie den Sand am Ufer des Meeres, und dein Same soll besitzen die Tore seiner Feinde.“ Abrahams Glaube und Sieg.

Jetzt gehen wir zurück zu Kapitel 15. Warum haben wir das bisher aufgeschoben? Antwort: Weil gerade dies Kapitel die ganze nachfolgende Geschichte, wie wir sie in den einzelnen Kapiteln gefunden haben, zusammenfaßt und mit einer besonderen Bundesaktion bestätigt.

Man würde Kap. 15 falsch verstehen, wenn man die hier dem Abraham gesprochene Gerechtigkeitsklärung als auf das erste oder gar einzige Zeugnis von seinem Glauben hin gesehen ansähe. Dann wäre ja Lukas 8, 12–14 immer noch möglich gewesen. Dies Kapitel gibt vielmehr nur die wesentlichen Punkte an, um die es sich in den folgenden Kapiteln von 12–21 handelt. Das sind die Verheißungen von Abrahams zukünftigen *S a m e n*, und seinem natürlichen Zweifel daran, da er ja keinen Sohn habe; dann von der Art und Weise, wie der Herr ihn durch das Anschauen des großen Sternenhimmels als Bild der Menge seines zukünftigen Samens zum Glauben bringt und daraufhin seinen Glauben ihm zur Gerechtigkeit rechnet. In Vers 7 weist ihn der Herr auf die Geschichte seiner Führung aus Ur in Chaldäa hin mit der Verheißung, daß er ihm das Land Kanaan zu besitzen geben wolle. Aber Abraham ist auch *j e t n o c h n i c h t* ganz von der zukünftigen Erfüllung der Verheißungen überzeugt, indem er spricht: Herr, Herr: Wobei soll ich's merken, daß ich's besitzen werde? Darauf gibt der Herr ihm den Auftrag zur Herbeischaffung der Tiere, mit deren Halbierung man in Chaldäa gewöhnlich einen großen oder wichtigen Bund schloß, zu dessen Bestätigung beide Parteien zwischen den zerteilten Tieren persönlich hindurchgingen. In Vers 11 scheucht Abraham die Masgeier, die hier die Feinde des bald fertigen Bundes abbilden, davon, weil er diesen Bund nicht der Gefahr der Zerstörung aussetzen will. Im Dunkel des Abends fällt er in einen tiefen, unruhigen, schreckhaften Schlaf, den ihm der Herr dahin deutet, daß sein Same zunächst 400 Jahre lang eine böse Zeit werde durchmachen müssen, dann aber, nachdem Abraham in Frieden gestorben sein werde, dennoch errettet und dann in das verheißende Erbe Kanaan eingeführt werden solle. Zur Bestätigung dieses Bundeschlusses geht der Herr in Gestalt einer rauchenden und leuchtenden Fackel zwischen den zerteilten Tierhälften hindurch, *A b r a h a m a b e r n i c h t*. Schon das zeigt, daß dieser

Bund ein einseitiger Bund ist. Darauf bezeichnet der Herr ihm im einzelnen die zehn Völker, deren Land Abrahams Same einmal einnehmen sollte.

Aber dies Kapitel steht nun nicht selbständig für sich da, sondern weist auf die teils schon vorhergehende und dann auf die in den nächsten Kapiteln folgende g a n z e Berufungsgeschichte Abrahams von Kapitel 12 bis 22 hin, und zwar als Darlegung der aufeinanderfolgenden Einzelverheißungen und auf die jeder Verheißung folgenden angedeuteten oder ausdrücklich bezeugten Glaubensakte Abrahams hin, so daß wir zu der Erkenntnis kommen müssen: Abraham war habituell der Mann des Glaubens von seiner Berufung an. Sein Glaube war nicht immer vollkommen, hat ihn aber trotzdem gerecht und schließlich selig gemacht. Auf diese Weise sollen alle Sünder selig werden.

So ist es also nicht ein einmaliger oder auch zeitweiliger Glaube, auf welchen hin Abraham gerecht erklärt worden ist, sondern auf den Glauben hin, der sein ganzes Verhältnis zu Gott von seinem fünf- undsiebzigsten Lebensjahre an bis zu seinem hundertsten als ihm eigentümlich darstellt. Dieser Glaube ist nichts anderes als Vertrauen auf die ihm von Gott gegebenen und immer wiederholten Verheißungen eines Sohnes, aus dessen Lenden der Sünderheiland kommen und die ganze verlorene Sünderwelt durch vollkommenen Gehorsam und stellvertretendes Leiden und Sterben mit dem gerechten Gott versöhnen soll, und der sich selbst mit oft wiederholter Berufung auf Abraham für denjenigen erklärt, im Glauben an welchen Gott mit der Welt versöhnt sei und deshalb sie wie den Abraham in ihrem Glauben für gerecht erklärt. So heißt es Joh. 8, 56: Abraham, euer Vater, war froh, daß er meinen Tag (Zeit der Erscheinung) sehen sollte, und er sah ihn und freute sich. Des Herrn Bund mit Abraham ist ein Bund seines Glaubens an Christum. Darum lehrt die ganze Schrift Alten Testaments und später noch deutlicher und stärker im Neuen Testament: Wer an Jesum Christum, den vom Himmel herabgekommenen Menschensohn, glaubt, der ist vor Gott gerechtfertigt, selbst wenn er ein Verbrecher wäre wie der Schächer am Kreuz. Joh. 3, 13-18. Und wie das Alte und Neue Testament lehren und predigen, so sollen wir als rechte Prediger, Lehrer und Laien diesen Glauben als das eigentliche Evangelium mit allen seinen Konsequenzen selbst glauben und bekennen. Das bedarf freilich einer neuen Ausführung.

Wir wiederholen nur noch einmal: Der Bund Gottes mit uns Sündern zur Seligkeit ist wie im Abrahambunde ein einseitiger Bund, in welchem Gott alles allein tut durch Jesum Christum, und wir gar nichts dazu getan haben, sondern nur Empfänger der Gnade Gottes sein können. Wer sich auf seine eigenen Gesetzeswerke vor Gott steift, hat an dem Bunde Gottes mit Abraham, das ist, an dem Evangelium von Christo, nicht teil.

Am allerstärksten zeigt sich die Einseitigkeit des Bundes mit seinen Creaturen, wenn wir seinen Bund mit den leblosen Creaturen, mit Sonne, Mond, Wolken, mit Tag und Nacht, genau ansehen.

Wir weisen hier zunächst auf den Propheten Jeremias Kap. 31, 33–37 und Kap. 33, 20–26 und V. 38–41 hin. Da redet der Herr und sagt im Gegensatz zu dem von Israel so viel gebrochenen alten Gesetzesbunde, er wolle in dem durch Christum zu machenden neuen Bund sprechen: „Ich will mein Gesetz in ihr Herz geben und in ihren Sinn schreiben, und sie sollen mein Volk sein, so will ich ihr Gott sein, und wird keiner den andern Lehren und sagen: Erkenne den Herrn; sondern sie sollen mich alle kennen, beide klein und groß, spricht der Herr, denn ich will ihnen ihre Missetat vergeben und ihrer Sünde nimmer mehr gedenken. So spricht der Herr, der die Sonne dem Tage zum Licht gibt, und den Mond und die Sterne nach ihrem Lauf der Nacht zum Licht, der das Meer bewegt, daß seine Wellen brausen, Herr Zebaoth ist sein Name: Wenn solche Ordnungen abgehen vor mir, spricht der Herr, so soll auch aufhören der Samen Israels (der geistliche), daß er nicht mehr ein Volk vor mir sei ewiglich“ (Vgl. Joh. 6, 45 und die vielen angegebene Parallelstellen).

Der neutestamentliche, in Christo gefaßte Bund ist in seinem Inhalt ein zwiefacher: Vergebung der Sünden, die der Herr allein dekretiert hat, und die daraus fließende Erkenntnis des Heilsgottes, sobald ihnen dieser Bund in Christo geoffenbart wird. Daß diese Erkenntnis durch den Heiligen Geist im Evangelium ihnen übermitteln, verkündigt werden soll, das ist hier als selbstverständlich nicht erwähnt; Christus selbst, die Propheten vor ihm und die Apostel nach ihm waren die Boten. — Diesen Bund der Sündenvergebung vergleicht nun Gott mit dem Bunde, den er dem Ursprung und der Dauer nach aus lauter Offenbarungsdrang

mit den Grundelementen der Weltordnung gemacht hat. Wenn sein Bund aufhören wird mit Sonne, Mond und Sternen, mit der Feste, den Gewässern, daß sie ihren Beruf und Dienst nicht mehr erfüllen sollen —, dann wird auch sein in Christo beschlossener Bund der Sündenvergebung und rechter Gotteserkenntnis aufhören, das heißt n i e, solange diese Weltordnung Gottes besteht. Und sie besteht bis an den Tag, an welchem die Sonne der Gerechtigkeit, unser gekreuzigter Heiland, durch den und um des willen alle Dinge geschaffen sind, wiederkommen wird zu richten in Herrlichkeit alle Kreatur.

Als er sie schuf und sie in ihren Dienst rief, hat er sie erst gefragt, ob sie auch wollten? Nein, ungefragt schuf er sie, ein jegliches nach seiner Art und Natur, und sie gingen aus in der ihnen reichlich gespendeten Gotteskraft und Gottestrieb, jubelnd ihren Beruf zu erfüllen. Dafür haben wir ja im 19. Psalm, Verse 1–7, die wunderbar ansprechende Schilderung von der freiwilligen und kräftigen Art, wie die seellosen Urgeschöpfe der Welt ihren Lauf ausrichten. Naturgemäß sind sie im Psalm personifiziert: „Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre (Herrlichkeit) Gottes, und die Feste verkündigt seiner Hände Werk. Ein Tag sagt's dem andern, und eine Nacht tut's kund der andern. Es ist keine Sprache noch Rede, da man nicht ihre Stimme höre“, — und von der Sonne: „Er hat der Sonne eine Hütte in denselben gemacht. Und dieselbe gehet heraus wie ein Bräutigam aus seiner Kammer und freuet sich wie ein Held zu laufen den Weg. Sie gehet auf an einem Ende des Himmels und läuft um bis wieder an dasselbe Ende, und bleibt nichts vor ihrer (lebengebenden) Sitze verborgen.“

Ja, sie alle predigen die Majestät und die Herrschaft des Richtenden und die ununterbrochene Fürsorge des Höchsten, die keine Blume und keinen Grassalm, kein Rindlein und kein Fischlein vergift, viel weniger einen Kranken im Lazarett oder einen auf dem Schlachtfelde Verblutenden ohne Trost und Hoffnung umkommen läßt.

Und wie die stummen Werke der Schöpfung ohne Zwang ihren Beruf erfüllen, so und viel kräftiger tut es d a s W o r t G o t t e s in der Bezeichnung „Gesetz des Herrn“, d. i. das Evangelium, das uns von ihm als Gottes ewige S a ç u n g gegeben ist. Denn so stellt der genannte Psalm Vers 8–15 die Kraft desselben dar: Das Gesetz des Herrn ist ohne Wandel und erquicket die Seele. Das Zeugnis des Herrn ist gewiß und macht die A l b e r n e n w e i ß e usw. usw. bis zum Schluß. — Der Herr

hat seinem Wort die geistliche Kraft gegeben, die verlorene Sündermwelt durch den Glauben an Christum selig und fromm zu machen — erst selig im Glauben, dann fromm in der Freude und Dankbarkeit des Glaubens.

Macht hier jemand den Einwurf, daß man die Alleinwirksamkeit Gottes in und an den Kreaturen der Schöpfung doch nicht auf sein Wirken in und an den Objekten des Abrahamsbundes übertragen könne, weil es sich in jenem um sein Wirken an und in toten Kreaturen handele, die doch weder ja noch nein sagen, weder zustimmen noch seinem Willen widerstehen könnten, der Abrahamsbund es aber mit Lebendigen, Vernunft und Willen besitzenden Geschöpfen zu tun habe, die doch Gott berücksichtigen müsse. Dieser Einwurf ist aber der Grundfehler aller Rationalisten und Philosophen, wie besonders Erasmus ihn in seinem Buch vom freien Willen gegen Luther zu verteidigen suchte. Die Rationalisten beachten nicht die andere Grundlehre der Heiligen Schrift, daß der natürliche Mensch in allen geistlichen Dingen tot, g e i s t l i c h tot sei und gerade deshalb dem geistlichen Willen Gottes nur widerstreben könne. Siehe vor allem 1. Kor., Kap. 1 und 2. Da heißt es zum Schluß: Der natürliche Mensch vernimmt nichts vom Geiste Gottes, es ist ihm eine T o r - h e i t und k a n n e s n i c h t e r k e n n e n, denn es muß geistlich gerichtet (beurteilt) sein. Dieser Lehre ist nun insonderheit das ganze N e u e T e s t a m e n t voll. Hierher gehören auch die schon früher angeführten Worte des Herrn (Joh. 7, 37 und 43), daß sein Wort unter seinen Feinden nicht „fange“ und daß sie sein Wort nicht hören d. h. nicht leiden können. Ja, es kostet den Heiligen Geist mehr Arbeit, die geistlich Toten und durch natürliche Menschenweisheit verblendeten und verstockten Herzen zu heiligen, als es ihn kostet, die leblosen Kreaturen wie Sonne und Mond in der Erfüllung ihres Berufs zu halten. Tut hier der Heilige Geist nicht alles allein, so sind wir Sünder verloren. „Ohne mich könnet ihr nichts tun“, Joh. 15, 5. Darum sagt ein bekannter Kirchenvater ganz richtig: non est gratia ullo modo, quae non est gratia omni modo. Auf deutsch heißt das: „D a s i s t ü b e r h a u p t k e i n e G n a d e, d i e n i c h t i n j e d e m S t ü c k G n a d e i s t.“

M a c h t r a g. — In Kap. 18, 17–19 findet sich ein Nachtrag zu der Geschichte der Verheißungen Gottes an Abraham und seines sieghaften Glaubens an dieselben, den wir nicht übersehen dürfen, weil er von der größten praktischen Wichtigkeit ist. Er ist wesentlich

eine E r m a h n u n g an alle Abrahamskinder, die Geschichte des Abrahamsbundes ihren Nachkommen mit dem höchsten Fleiß einzutreiben, mit der schließlichen Begründung, daß es dem Herrn nur so möglich sei, alle dem Abraham gegebenen Verheißungen zu erfüllen, daß in ihm alle Geschlechter auf Erden gesegnet werden sollen, wie es Kap. 12, 2. 3 angegeben ist. — Diese Ermahnung hat aber in allen bekannten alten Übersetzungen: der Septuaginta, der Vulgata, auch noch bei Luther und der King James den Fehler, daß sie die Anfangsworte von Vers 19 „ki j'da'thiv-l'ma'an ascher“ mit „Ich weiß, er wird befehlen“ übersetzt. Das kann schon deshalb nicht richtig sein, weil dies Wissen den Herrn mit dem 78. Psalm und vielen anderen Stellen der Schrift, auch des Neuen Testaments, in Widerspruch setzt. Die Juden haben gerade den Abrahamsbund ihren Kindern nicht eingetrichtert, sondern lehrten sie hauptsächlich den ihnen als Unmündigen zur Übung ihres Gehorsams vorgeschriebenen Zeremonialgottesdienst, — weshalb sie schließlich von Gott verworfen wurden. Vgl. Gal. 3 und 4, Matth. 8, 11. — Die eben zitierte hebräische Phrase heißt aber auf deutsch: „Denn ich habe ihn erkoren, damit er seinen Kindern befehle usw.“ oder: „Ich habe ihn d a z u erwählt, d a ß er usw.“ oder in irgendeiner Wendung, die den Sinn herausbringt, daß der Herr bei seinen Verheißungen an Abraham zugleich die A b s i c h t h a t t e, daß er seinen Kindern und Nachkommen eben diesen mit ihm gemachten Bund mit höchstem Fleiß treiben und bei ihnen als das eine Große wichtig machen sollte. — Diesen Sinn haben auch alle neuere deutsche Übersetzungen von Bedeutung wie E. Raußsch, Schlachter, Menge hier gefunden und betont. — Für uns amerikanische Abrahamskinder ist die Erkenntnis, daß wir in unserer Wahl zu Abrahamskindern dazu besonders erwählt worden sind, den Abrahamsbund unsern Nachkommen in seinem wahren Sinn einzutrichtern, das stärkste Inzentiv zur Treue. Nun wir das nicht, wie soll sich insonderheit die Verheißung von Kapitel 12, 2. 3 erfüllen?

A u g. P i e p e r.

Die rechte Stellung zum Erkenntnisprinzip der christlichen Lehre.

Es ist unter uns allgemein anerkannt, daß in der christlichen Kirche nichts gelehrt werden darf, was nicht auf die Schrift fundiert ist. Wir anerkennen die Heilige Schrift im ganzen wie in allen ihren Theilen als Gottes Wort, als Gottes Offenbarung an die sündige Menschheit zur Seligmachung der verlorenen Welt durch den Glauben an das vollkommene Sühnopfer Jesu Christi. Sie ist die unfehlbare Wahrheit, der Quell und untrügliche Wegweiser für Glauben und Leben. Es hat darum selbstredend keine Lehre ein Recht in der Kirche, die sich nicht als klare Schriftlehre erweisen läßt. Jergendwelche Schlußfolgerungen von einer Schriftlehre aus können nur dann Anspruch auf Geltung in der christlichen Kirche erheben, dürfen nur dann als Kirchenlehre ausgegeben werden, wenn sie selber als Lehre der Schrift durch klare Aussprüche derselben bewiesen werden können. Weil der Mensch nicht dazu imstande ist, aus seinen natürlichen Geisteskräften Heil und Seligkeit zu erlangen, weil er seit dem Fall geistlich blind, tot, ja Gotte feind ist, darum hat Gott in seiner unendlichen Liebe zu uns in seinem Wort, in der Bibel, geredet. Alles Gott, sein Wesen und seinen Willen betreffend, was außerhalb des Bereiches dieser seiner Selbstoffenbarung liegt, bleibt für uns trotz der natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis, die der Mensch auch nach dem Fall noch hat, eine terra incognita. Jeder Schluß, den wir selbständig, ohne durch ein Bibelwort gedeckt zu sein, aus einem Wort der Schrift in Sachen, die Gott und unser Heil betreffen, kurz in göttlichen, geistlichen Dingen ziehen, muß daher a priori als ein Trugschluß angesehen werden. Es gibt ja tausenderlei, über das wir gern Aufschluß hätten, worüber die Bibel schweigt. Ziehen wir da nun unsre eigenen Schlüsse, folgen wir da unsern eigenen Gedanken, so werden wir unweigerlich in Irrtum verstrickt werden, werden zu Falle kommen und in seelengefährliche Irrlehre geraten, weil das Dichten und Trachten des menschlichen Herzens eben böse ist von Jugend auf. Tritt jemand gar mit seinen eigenen Gedanken und Folgerungen vor die Öffentlichkeit und beansprucht für sie Geltung in der Kirche, dann ist er damit zu einem Irrlehrer und falschen Propheten geworden.¹⁾

¹⁾ Höncke, Ev. Luth. Dogmatik. I, S. 333ff.

In der christlichen Kirche darf nichts Geltung haben als Gottes Wort allein. Und jede Lehre muß die Prüfung an Gottes Wort bestehen, ehe sie als Kirchenlehre auftreten darf. Hiermit stimmen alle die nicht, für welche die Heilige Schrift nicht die einzige Quelle der Wahrheit ist. Die römische Kirche verneint zwar die Inspiration der Schrift nicht, stellt aber ihre Tradition neben sie als gleichberechtigt.²⁾ Die reformierten Kirchen leugnen ebenfalls den Artikel von der Inspiration nicht, stellen aber neben das geschriebene Wort Gottes das innere Zeugnis des Geistes, der unabhängig von der Schrift unmittelbar im Menschenherzen sich betätigt.³⁾ Auch findet sich unter ihnen die Anschauung, daß die menschliche Vernunft bei Aufstellung und Auffassung der Lehren der Schrift mitzureden habe.⁴⁾ Schon die Väter der reformierten Kirchen, Zwingli und Calvin, haben diese Gedanken vertreten, wenn sie dieselben auch nicht auf dem ganzen Gebiete der christlichen Lehre konsequent durchgeführt haben. Die modernen oder liberalen, die sogenannten „wissenschaftlichen“ Theologen maßen sich das Recht an, in der Schrift den Wahrheitsgehalt aus seinen Hüllen herauszuschälen. Sie setzen also die menschliche Vernunft zur Richterin über die Schrift und machen sie damit zur Norm, nach der alle Lehren beurteilt werden müssen.

Im Grunde genommen, kommt alles auf die Stellung zur Schrift an. Führt jemand in einem Punkte falsche Lehre, so wird zunächst zu untersuchen sein, wie er zur Schrift steht. Solange für ihn die Schrift in allen Stellen das unfehlbare Wort Gottes ist, ist auch gegründete Hoffnung, ihn von seinem Irrtum zu überzeugen. Hält einer dagegen trotz klarer Zeugnisse der Heiligen Schrift an einem ihm aus eben dieser Schrift nachgewiesenen Irrtum fest, so wird klar, daß er sich nicht unter die Autorität der Schrift beugen will, daß also seine Stellung zu Offenbarung und Inspiration eine falsche ist. Steht jemand in der Lehre von der Schrift nicht mit uns auf demselben Boden, dann ist es ein vergebliches Bemühen, mit ihm in andern Lehren, die zwischen uns strittig sind, zur Einigkeit kommen zu wollen.

Woher kommen eigentlich die Abweichungen von der christlichen Lehre? Oder fragen wir lieber: Woher kommen unter Christen,

²⁾ Günther, Symbolik. S. 91 unten.

³⁾ Stump, The Christian Faith. S. 297, Fußnote.

⁴⁾ Günther, Symbolik. S. 112.

d. h. solchen, die sich als Jünger Jesu bekennen und dafür gehalten werden wollen, die vielen Lehرداریenzen? Wir reden jetzt nicht davon, daß es so viele Menschen gibt, die sich trotz ihrer Bekanntschaft mit dem Christentum doch beharrlich weigern, den Namen Christi zu bekennen. Es soll also nicht die Rede sein von den vielen Gottlosen und offenbaren Ungläubigen, wie den Heiden, Juden, Mohammedanern, Unitariern. Was es mit solchen Leuten auf sich hat, darüber wissen wir aus der Schrift genaue Auskunft zu geben. „Der natürliche Mensch vernimmt nichts vom Geist Gottes; es ist ihm eine Torheit und kann es nicht erkennen, ou dynatai gnōnai; denn es muß geistlich gerichtet sein“ (1. Kor. 2, 14). „Niemand kann Jesum einen Herrn heißen ohne durch den Heiligen Geist“, Oudeis dynatai eipein Kyrios Jesus, ei mē en tō pneumatī hagiō (1. Kor. 12, 3). Von den sich im Unglauben verhärtenden Juden, die von Kindesbeinen an unter dem Schall des Wortes Gottes standen und die Jesus in nimmermüdem Erbarmen zu gewinnen suchte, sagt er schließlich: „Ihr habt nicht gewollt“, kai ouk ēthelēsate (Matth. 23, 37).

Sedoch wir wollen jetzt speziell nach der Ursache der Lehrruneinigkeit unter den Christen forschen. Und auch hier läßt uns die Schrift nicht im Stich. Sie gibt den Bescheid: „Das hat der Feind getan“ (Matth. 13, 25. 28. 39). Die Juden, Glieder des auserwählten Gottesvolkes und der Kirche jener Tage, widersetzten sich Jesu, dem ihnen und ihren Vätern verheißenen Messias, bei seinem öffentlichen Auftreten und fielen so in den allerschrecklichsten Lehrrirtum, daß sie wohl vorgaben, an den im Alten Testament geweissagten Messias zu glauben, und dabei doch ihren ins Fleisch gekommenen Heiland von sich stießen. Und der Herr sagt ihnen auf den Kopf zu: „Ihr seid von dem Vater, dem Teufel“, ek tou patros tou diabolou (Joh. 8, 44). Jesum, der selber die Wahrheit ist und ihnen die seligmachende Wahrheit verkündigte, verwarfen sie und bewiesen sich damit als Teufelskinder, „denn er ist ein Lügner und ein Vater derselbigen“ (cf. 1. Joh. 3, 8). An der Welt und der Christen eigenem bösen Fleisch hat er nur zu bereite Bundesgenossen. Denken wir bloß an die jüdischen Irrlehrer, die in den galatischen Christengemeinden so ernsthafteste Störungen anrichteten, daß Paulus in seinem Brief an die Galater mit bewegtem Herzen, weil ihn um den Glaubensstand und die Seligkeit seiner dortigen lieben Christen hangte, belehrte, lockte, warnte und strafte; wie er in glühendem Eifer für die Sache des Herrn Jesu und seines Evangeliums mit den härtesten Aus-

drücken die Judaisiten als Verführer an den Pranger stellte. Schon im Paradies brachte Satan Eva dadurch zum Fall, daß er ihr Zweifel an der Wahrheit des ihr gegebenen Wortes Gottes suggerierte. In den Gemeinden Galatiens wurde die Lehrverwirrung, die sie geradezu mit dem Untergang bedrohte, dadurch angerichtet, daß Zweifel an der Botschaft des Apostels, auf die die dortigen Christen ihren Glauben gründeten, erhoben wurden, ob sie nämlich wirklich das unverfälschte Evangelium Christi sei. Paulus sah sich genötigt, sein Evangelium von der freien Gnade energisch zu verteidigen. Aus dieser Notwendigkeit heraus schrieb er seinen Galaterbrief, in welchem er den Artikel von der Rechtfertigung, daß Gott den Sünder aus lauter Gnade um Christi willen von seiner Sünde lospricht und ihn für gerecht erklärt, und daß die Gerechtigkeit vor Gott nur durch den Glauben ohne Zutun irgendwelcher Werke seitens des Menschen sein eigen wird, so herrlich darlegt. Er steht in der festen Überzeugung und im Vollgefühl dessen, daß seine mündliche Verkündigung genau dasselbe ist, was er jetzt schriftlich niederlegt, nämlich das feste und gewisse Wort Gottes. Ja er ist seiner Sache so gewiß, daß er über jeden, und wäre es auch ein Engel vom Himmel, den Fluch ausspricht, der Evangelium anders predigt, als er es tut und getan hat. Diese hochtröstliche Wahrheit, die allen menschlichen Empfinden und Denken zuwider ist, ist es, gegen die der Feind unserer Seelen allewege Sturm läuft. Und weil wir diese Wahrheit nur aus der Schrift schöpfen können, so sucht er uns darüber unsicher zu machen, ob die Schrift denn auch wirklich unbedingt verläßlich, ob sie das unfehlbare Wort Gottes ist. Denn ist uns die Bibel als das untrügliche Wort Gottes unsicher gemacht worden, dann kann natürlich von Glaubensgewißheit eigentlich gar nicht mehr die Rede sein. Wollen wir uns selber vor falscher Lehre behüten und anderen, die mit uns den Namen Christi bekennen wollen, aus seelengefährlichem Irrtum herausheifen, dann müssen wir hier einsetzen und uns vergegenwärtigen, wie im Grunde genommen jeder aufrichtige Christenmensch, eben weil er ein Christ ist, zur Schrift steht.

Jesus sagt zu Nikodemus: „Es sei denn, daß jemand von neuem geboren werde, ean mē tis gennēthē anōthen, so kann er das Reich Gottes nicht sehen“, und wiederum: „Es sei denn, daß jemand geboren werde aus dem Wasser und Geist, ex hydatos kai pneumatatos, so kann er nicht in das Reich Gottes kommen“ (Joh. 3, 3. 5). Paulus redet in demselben Ton: „Nicht um der Werke willen der Ge-

rechtigkeit, die wir getan hatten, sondern nach seiner Barmherzigkeit machte er uns selig durch das Bad der Wiedergeburt und Erneuerung des Heiligen Geistes, esösen hēmas dia loutrou palingenesias kai anakainōseōs pneumotos hagiou“ (Tit. 3, 5). Ebenso Jakobus: „Er hat uns gezeuget nach seinem Willen durch das Wort der Wahrheit, apekyēsen logō alētheias“ (Jak. 1, 18). Und Petrus: „Die da wiedergeboren sind, nicht aus vergänglichem, sondern aus unvergänglichem Samen, nämlich aus dem lebendigen Wort Gottes, das da ewiglich bleibet, anagegennēmenoi . . . dia logou zōntos theou“ (1. Petri 1, 23).

Wir Christen sind, was wir sind, durch die Wiedergeburt geworden, nämlich Kinder Gottes, das heißt Gläubige. „Ihr seid alle Gottes Kinder durch den Glauben an Christum Jesum, hyioi theou“ (Gal. 3, 26). Es ist Jesu Wille, daß wir uns unsers Kindtschaftsverhältnisses recht bewußt sein sollen. Er lehrt uns Gott als unsern Vater anreden. Wie viel Trost und Glaubensstärkung liegt nicht für uns Sünder in dem Gedanken: Der starke, ewige Gott ist mein Vater. Ich bin trotz allem sein Kind, das sich auf seine Hilfe in jeder Not verlassen darf. Wir kennen Jesu Mahnung an seine Jünger: „Werdet wie die Kinder, genēsthe hōs ta paidia“ (Matth. 18, 3). Und es war ein kleines Kind, das er ihnen als Beispiel vorstellte, paidion. Kinder, zumal kleine Kinder, schauen zu ihren Eltern mit vollem Vertrauen auf. Jedes Wort, das der Vater redet, ist dem Kinde unumstößliche Wahrheit. An dieser Sachlage wird auch dadurch nicht das geringste geändert, daß dem Kinde des Vaters Rede oft ganz ungreiflich ist. Es nimmt das vielmehr als ganz selbstverständlich hin. Es gehört zu den betäubenden Erfahrungen im Menschenleben, wenn schließlich die Stunde kommt, in der sich das Kind nicht länger der Erkenntnis verschließen kann und widerstrebend zugestehen muß, daß sein Vater nicht unfehlbar ist, daß sein Wort auch bei aller guten Meinung nicht immer wahr ist. Jedoch die Kinder Gottes brauchen nie zu fürchten, mit ihres himmlischen Vaters Wort solch eine schlimme Erfahrung machen zu müssen. Er ist selbst die personifizierte Wahrheit, darum kann sein Wort niemals etwas anderes als schlechthin Wahrheit sein (Joh. 17, 17). Ja, es ist die Wahrheit, wenn es im Gesetz alle Welt und uns an den Abgrund der Hölle stellt und uns zeigt, daß wir ihr nach Gebühr, so viel an uns ist, verfallen sind. Gerade so, wie es, Gott sei Dank, die Wahrheit ist, wenn es im Evangelium aller Welt und uns die Vergebung aller Sünden und Gerech-

tigkeit vor Gott zuspricht von wegen des blutigen Sühnopfers, der satisfactio vicaria, Jesu Christi und uns den Himmel aufstut, und wenn es den erschreckten Gewissen den Glauben an die freie Gnade Gottes in Christo ins Herz predigt. Alle Kinder Gottes glauben diesem Wort ihres Vaters im Himmel und vertrauen darauf im Leben und im Sterben. Jesus sagt: „Meine Schafe hören meine Stimme“ (Joh. 10, 27) und „Wer von Gott ist, ho òn ek tou theou, der höret Gottes Wort“ (Joh. 8, 47). Es ist die Art der Schafe Jesu Christi, daß sie die Stimme ihres guten Hirten hören. Dadurch kennzeichnen sie sich als zu seiner Herde gehörig. Die Kinder Gottes sind von ihrer Wiedergeburt an so beschaffen, daß sie das Wort Gottes ihres Vaters hören, seine Stimme vernehmen, die heute aus der Bibel zu ihnen spricht. Vor allen verstandesmäßigen Erwägungen steht das bei ihnen so. Weil der Geist, der in der Schrift redet, ihnen Zeugnis gibt, daß sie Gottes Kinder sind (Röm. 8, 16), trauen sie darauf, daß sie in der Bibel Jesum hören, dessen Worte Geist und Leben sind (Joh. 6, 63), der zu ihnen Worte des ewigen Lebens spricht (Joh. 6, 68). Und es verschlägt ihnen gar nichts, daß der Inhalt voller Geheimnisse für menschliches Begreifen ist.

Erst hinterher, entweder aus Gedanken, die aus dem natürlichen Menschenherzen aufsteigen oder von außen her an uns herangebracht werden, kommen Bedenken auf. Haben wir wirklich heutzutage das Wort Gottes, das Christus, die Propheten und Apostel einst in mündlicher Verkündigung der Welt gebracht haben?

Es steht geschrieben: „Nachdem vorzeiten Gott . . . geredet hat zu den Vätern durch die Propheten, hat er am letzten in diesen Tagen zu uns geredet durch den Sohn“ (Ebr. 1, 1. 2). Und der Sohn hat vor seiner Himmelfahrt den Aposteln aufgetragen: „Gehet hin in alle Welt und prediget das Evangelium aller Creatur“ (Mark. 16, 15). Zur Ausrichtung dieses Auftrags hat er ihnen den Heiligen Geist verheißen und gegeben. „Gleichwie mich der Vater gesandt hat, so sende ich euch“. „Nehmet hin den Heiligen Geist“ (Joh. 20, 21. 22). Der soll sie in alle Wahrheit leiten und sie erinnern alles des, das er ihnen gesagt hat (Joh. 16, 13; 14, 26). Und das zu dem Zweck, daß durch ihr Wort auch andre Menschen an ihn gläubig werden (Joh. 17, 18–20). Die Apostel waren sich so sicher, daß sie unter der unfehlbaren Leitung des Heiligen Geistes standen und ihre Predigt Gottes eigenes Wort war, daß Paulus sagen konnte: „Welches wir auch reden, nicht mit Worten, welche menschliche Weisheit lehren

fann, sondern mit Worten, die der Heilige Geist lehrt“, en didaktois pneumatos (1. Kor. 2, 13).

Die Tage des Erdenwandelns Jesu, als die Menschen mit ihren leiblichen Ohren die holdselige Rede seines Mundes hören konnten, sind längst dahin und seine Apostel schon lange tot. Wie sind wir spätgeborenen Christen denn wiedergeboren worden und zum Glauben gekommen? Darauf weiß doch jeder Christ zuverlässige Antwort zu geben. Genau auf dieselbe Weise, wie die Leute zur Zeit Christi und seiner Apostel; durch dasselbe Wort des Evangeliums, durch dieselbe Taufe. Wohl haben wir sie nicht selber gesehen und haben sie nicht selber predigen hören, aber ihr Wort samt Taufe und Nachtmahl haben wir in der Heiligen Schrift. Für das Alte Testament und seine Geltung als Gottes Wort verbürgt sich Jesus selbst. Wie oft beruft er sich nicht den Juden gegenüber zum Beweise seiner Lehre als göttlicher Wahrheit auf die Bibel Alten Testaments in der bestimmten Erwartung, daß damit die Sache erledigt ist! Er ruft ihnen zu: „Suchet in der Schrift; denn ihr meint, ihr habet das ewige Leben darin; und sie ist's, die von mir zeuget“ (Joh. 5, 39). Ebenso bestimmt treten die Apostel für den alttestamentlichen Kanon ein. Paulus schreibt in seiner 2. Epistel an Timotheus: „Weil du von Kind auf die Heilige Schrift weizt, kann dich dieselbe unterweisen zur Seligkeit durch den Glauben an Christum Jesum, hiera grammata . . . dynamena se sophisai eis soterian dia pisteos tes en Christo Jēsou. Denn alle Schrift, von Gott eingegeben, pasagraphē theopneustos.“ usw. (3, 15. 16). Und Petrus redet in seinem 2. Brief von den Schreibern des Alten Testaments, wenn er sagt: „Die heiligen Menschen Gottes haben geredet, getrieben von dem Heiligen Geist, hypo pneumatos hagiou pheromenoi elalēsan apo theou anthrōpoi“ (1, 19–21). Auch die Schreiber des Neuen Testaments wollen bemußtermaßen ihre Verkündigung als Gottes Wort angesehen haben. Paulus sagt, das Wort göttlicher Predigt, welches die Thessalonicher von ihm empfangen haben, sei mit Recht von ihnen nicht als Menschenwort, sondern als Gottes Wort aufgenommen worden, und setzt bekräftigend hinzu: „wie es denn wahrhaftig ist, kathōs alēthōs estin“ (1. Theff. 2, 13).

Aber gilt denn das, was von der mündlichen Predigt der Apostel gesagt wird, ohne weiteres auch von ihren Schriften? Es ist von vornherein nicht recht ersichtlich, warum das nicht der Fall sein soll. Es müßte doch der Beweis geführt werden, daß sie, wenn sie sich zum

Schreiben niedersehten, mit einem Male der göttlichen Inspiration verlustig gingen, so daß sie wohl mit Worten, die der Heilige Geist lehrt, reden, aber nicht schreiben konnten. Eine solche Annahme ist so lange widersinnig, wie sie nicht aus der Schrift bewiesen werden kann. Über das Alte Testament brauchen wir deswegen in dieser Verbindung nicht viele Worte zu machen, weil Christus selbst so oft seine Göttlichkeit bezeugt. Aber auch für das Neue Testament müssen wir durchaus dieselbe Göttlichkeit in Anspruch nehmen. Johannes sagt in seiner 1. Epistel: „Was wir gesehen und gehört haben, das verkündigen wir euch, apangellomen kai hymin . . . Und solches schreiben wir, kai tauta graphomen hēmeis“ (1, 3. 4). Bei Paulus ist es nicht anders. Den Thessalonichern schreibt er im 2. Brief (2, 15): „Haltet an den Sätzen, in denen ihr gelehrt seid, es sei durch unser Wort oder Brief, eite dia logou eite di' epistolēs hēmōn.“ Den Korinthern sagt er (1. Kor. 14, 37): „So sich jemand läßt dünken, er sei ein Prophet oder geistlich, der erkenne, was ich euch schreibe; denn es sind des Herrn Gebote, ha graphō hymin hoti kyriou estin entolē.“ Wenn er im 2. Korintherbrief von der Versöhnung schreibt, sagt er (5, 20): „So sind wir nun Botschafter an Christi Statt, denn Gott vermahnet durch uns, hyper Christou oun presbeuomen hōs tou theou parakalountos di' hēmōn.“ Schließlich noch einmal Johannes in seinem Evangelium (20, 31): „Diese [Zeichen] aber sind geschrieben, daß ihr glaubet, tauta de gegrapta hina pisteuēte. . . und daß ihr durch den Glauben das Leben habet in seinem Namen, kai hina pisteuontes zōen echēte en tō onomati autou.“

Wenn von dem geschriebenen Wort unser Glaube und unsre Seligkeit abhängt, dann müssen wir uns auf jedes Wort unbedingt verlassen können. Wären etwa den Schreibern nur die Gedanken, die Sachen von Gott eingegeben, es ihnen aber überlassen geblieben, sie in die rechten Worte zu kleiden, für die göttlichen Gedanken selber den adäquaten Ausdruck zu finden, so wäre immer mit der Möglichkeit, ja der Wahrscheinlichkeit zu rechnen, daß sie in menschlicher Schwachheit bisweilen den intendierten Sinn nicht getroffen hätten. Von wirklicher Glaubensgewißheit könnte dann keine Rede sein. Es wäre uns mit einer Inspiration, die etwas anderes als Wortinspiration ist, nicht geraten. In der Tat lehrt denn auch die Bibel gar keine andre als die Verbalinspiration. Christus führt Joh. 10, 35 seinen Beweis aus dem einzigen Worte „elohim“ in Psalm 82, 6. Aus dem Wort „meinem Herrn“ im 110. Psalm (Vers 1) beweist er

den Pharisäern, daß der Messias wahrer Gott ist (Matth. 22, 43. 44). Paulus zeigt Gal. 3, 16, daß aus dem Singular „sperma“ in Genesis 22, 18 hervorgeht, daß mit dem Samen Abrahams, durch den alle Völker gesegnet werden sollen, Christus gemeint ist. In diesem Zusammenhang soll noch einmal auf ein schon vorher angeführtes Wort des Paulus hingewiesen werden, nur sehen wir es jetzt im Zusammenhang mit dem Vorhergehenden an. 1. Kor. 2, 12. 13: „Wir aber haben nicht empfangen den Geist der Welt, sondern den Geist aus Gott, daß wir wissen können, was uns von Gott gegeben ist; welches wir auch reden, nicht mit Worten, welche menschliche Weisheit lehren kann, sondern mit Worten, die der Heilige Geist lehrt, ouk en didaktois anthrōpinēs sophias logois, all' en didaktois pneumatōs.“ Derselbe göttliche Geist, den die Apostel empfangen haben, daß sie wissen können, was ihnen von Gott gegeben ist, lehrt sie auch, wie sie in seinem Auftrage das andern verkündigen können, was ihnen Gott geoffenbart hat. Und wie könnte es auch anders sein! Handelt es sich doch dabei um die heimliche verborgene Weisheit Gottes (1. Kor. 2, 7): „Laloumen theou sophian en mystērō, tēn apokekrymmenēn.“ Das Evangelium ist gemeint, von dem es im Zusammenhang weiter heißt (2, 9): „Was kein Auge gesehen hat und kein Ohr gehört hat und in keines Menschen Herz gekommen ist, was Gott bereitet hat denen, die ihn lieben. Uns aber hat es Gott offenbart durch seinen Geist.“ Schon wenn es sich um Dinge des natürlichen Lebens handelt, also um etwas, das nicht über dem Begriffsvermögen des menschlichen Geistes liegt, ist es oft so schwer, die Gedanken eines andern ganz exakt wiederzugeben, daß man ihn, wo möglich, wörtlich zitiert, damit sich ja kein Irrtum einschleiche. Ist es dann aber nicht ein geradezu frevelhafter Gedanke, Gott könne irgend etwas versehen oder unterlassen haben, um das Wort von seiner Gnade in Christo zu übermitteln? Dem Gott, der das Blut seines Sohnes daran gewendet hat, die Sünder zu erlösen, so lieb hat er uns und so sehr dürstet ihn nach unsrer Seligkeit, dürfen wir nicht zutrauen, daß er den Autoren der biblischen Bücher zwar seine Heilsgedanken offenbart, aber sich dann nicht weiter darum gekümmert habe, wie sie diese Botschaft, ob mündlich oder schriftlich, an den Mann brächten.

Wir haben gesehen, die heiligen Männer Gottes waren sich dessen bewußt, daß es der Geist Gottes war, der durch ihren Mund redete und ihnen die Feder führte. Und derselbe Heilige Geist, der sie in-

spirierte, ist es auch, der die Kinder Gottes, klein und groß, gelehrt und ungelehrt, davon überführt, daß Gott selber in der Bibel redet, so daß sie sich darauf verlassen im Leben und im Sterben. Das testimonium Spiritus sancti internum befähigt sie, allem Widerspruch ihrer eigenen Vernunft, allem Hohn und Spott und dem Vorwurf einer unwissenschaftlichen Haltung zum Trotz schlicht mit Christo, seinen Aposteln und Luther dabei zu beharren: „Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn.“

So steht jeder Christ von vorn herein zur Bibel, weil sie für jedes Kind Gottes das Wort seines himmlischen Vaters ist, daß sie für ihn die unwandelbare Wahrheit ist, der einzige Quell aller christlichen Lehre. Allen Christen ist es aus dem Herzen gesprochen, wenn wir uns mit der Konkordienformel bekennen „zu den prophetischen und apostolischen Schriften Alten und Neuen Testaments, als zu dem reinen, lautern Brunnen Israelis, welche allein die einige, wahrhaftige Nischknur ist, nach der alle Lehrer und Lehre zu richten und zu urteilen sind.“⁵⁾ Trotzdem sind leider nicht bloß ganze Kirchengemeinschaften, wie die katholische und die reformierten Kirchen, in ihren öffentlichen Erklärungen, sondern auch fast ausnahmslos alle, die in der theologischen Welt etwas gelten, diesem unsern Bekenntnis zuwider.

Die römische Kirche hat als ihr Erkenntnisprinzip neben der Heiligen Schrift mit Einschluß der Apokryphen die mündliche Tradition,⁶⁾ deren Hüterin sie zu sein vorgibt. Daß bei dieser Nebeneinanderstellung es dahin kommt, daß die Schrift nach der Tradition ausgelegt wird, hat die Geschichte reichlich gelehrt. Schließlich gibt

⁵⁾ „Primum igitur toto pectore prophetica et apostolica scripta Veteris et Novi Testamenti, ut limpidissimos purissimosque Israelis fontes, recipimus et amplectimur et sacras litteras solas unicam et certissimam illam regulam esse credimus, ad quam omnia dogmata exigere, et secundum quam de omnibus tum doctrinis tum doctoribus judicare oporteat.“ Trigl. Sol. Decl. p. 850, 1.

⁶⁾ „If any one receive not, as sacred and canonical, the said books [die Bücher der Bibel mit Einschluß der Apokryphen] entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin vulgate edition [!]; and knowingly and deliberately condemn the traditions aforesaid; let him be anathema.“ Waterworth, The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent (Tridentinum). Sess. IV, p. 19.

die Kirche, das heißt aber ihr Oberhaupt, der Papst, bei Lehrentscheidungen den Ausschlag. Luther drückt das in den Schmalkaldischen Artikeln so aus: „Der Papst rühmt, alle Rechte sind im Schrein seines Herzens (in scrinio sui pectoris), und was er mit seiner Kirche urteilt und heißt, das soll Geist und Recht sein, wenn's gleich über und wider die Schrift oder das mündliche Wort ist“ (Trigl. Art. Smal. p. 494).

Die reformierten Kirchengemeinschaften bekennen sich, wie die Lutheraner, zur Autorität und zur Inspiration der Schrift. Warum dann aber schon seit der Reformationszeit die Trennung zwischen den Lutheranern und Reformierten? Gewöhnlich wird in Beantwortung der Frage auf die zwischen Luther einerseits und Zwingli und Kalvin andererseits bestehende Differenz in der Abendmahlslehre hingewiesen. Ersterer weigerte sich, von den Einsetzungsworten, so wie sie lauten, abzugehen, wollte auch keine davon abweichende Meinung in der Kirche dulden. Letztere, hinwiederum, wollten sich durchaus nicht auf den Wortlaut festlegen lassen, sondern behaupteten, diese Worte uneigentlich oder bildlich verstehen zu müssen. Daran zerstückte immer wieder der Versuch zur Einigung der beiden protestantischen Parteien. Zwinglis und Kalvins Haltung in der Abendmahlsfrage ist symptomatisch für die reformierte Stellung zur Schrift. Denn es war das philosophische Axiom „finitum non est capax infiniti“, das sie nötigte, von den klaren Worten abzugehen. Dieser rationalistische Sauerteig durchsetzt die den Reformierten eigentümlichen Lehren. In der Lehre von der Person Christi zeigt er sich als Nestorianismus. In der Lehre von der Wahl als absoluter Determinismus, der aus Gründen der Logik die ewige Verdammnis der Mehrzahl der Menschen fordert und dem klaren Zeugnis der Schrift von der Universalität der Gnade ins Angesicht schlägt. Folgerichtig müssen das Evangelium und die Sakramente ihre Bedeutung als Gnadenmittel verlieren. Sie werden Zeichen der Gnade Gottes genannt. Aber was will das sagen, wenn die Worte von der allgemeinen Gnade doch nach Kalvin nur den zur Seligkeit Erwählten gelten! Der Geist Gottes, der auf die Menschen einwirkt zur Seligkeit und zur Verdammnis, muß außer und neben dem Wort, nicht durch dasselbe tätig sein.

Zwingli sagt, der Heilige Geist brauche keinen „Wagen“ (vehiculum). Der Glaube komme nicht aus dem gepredigten Wort, sondern durch unmittelbare Wirkung des Heiligen Geistes. „Ipse

tractus internus immediate operantis est Spiritus.“ (F. Pieper, Dogm. III, 150). Calvin weist die Christen, um ihrer Erwählung gewiß zu werden, nicht auf das äußere Wort (*externa praedicatio*), nicht auf die allgemeine Berufung (*universalis vocatio*), sondern auf die besondere (*specialis vocatio*), die in der inneren Erleuchtung des Heiligen Geistes besteht (*interior Spiritus illuminatio*). Der Heilige Geist wirkt nicht durch Wort und Sakrament, sondern unmittelbar. Hodge, ein namhafter reformierter Theologe aus neuerer Zeit, sagt: “In the work of regeneration all second causes are excluded.” “Nothing intervenes between the volition of the Spirit and the regeneration of the soul.” “The infusion of a new life into the soul is the immediate work of the Spirit.” “The truth [in the case of adults]” — gemeint ist die Vorlegung der Wahrheit des Evangeliums durch das äußere Wort — attends the work of regeneration, but is not the means by which it is effected” (ib. 140. 141). Die Frage, ob Gottes Gnade über alle Menschen gehe (*gratia universalis*) oder nur über die zur Seligkeit Erwählten (*gratia particularis*) beantwortet Hodge, ohne sich um die klaren Worte der Schrift zu kümmern: “It cannot be supposed that God intends what is never accomplished — that He adopts means for an end which is never to be attained. This cannot be affirmed of any rational being who has the wisdom and power to secure the execution of his purposes. Much less can it be said of Him whose wisdom and power are infinite” (F. Pieper, Dogm. I, 29).

Die moderne Theologie, mag man sie heute „positiv“ oder „liberal“ nennen, hat an die Stelle der Schrift als Erkenntnisprinzip der Lehre das „Ich“ des Theologen gesetzt. Die Sache bleibt sich gleich, ob man „Erfahrung“, „christliches Erlebnis“ oder „Glaubensbewußtsein“ sagt. Aus seinem Inneren, aus seinem „Ich“ holt der Theologe hervor, was er glaubt, und baut auf diesem Fundament sein System christlicher Lehre auf. Warum er das tut? Wenn er sich selbst Rechenschaft von seinem Glauben ablegen wollte, würde niemand mit ihm darüber rechten. Anders aber wird es, wenn er damit vor die Öffentlichkeit tritt. Wem will er damit nützen? Vielleicht fühlt er sich gedrungen, vor aller Welt ein Bekenntnis seines Glaubens abzulegen. Jedenfalls kann er doch nicht erwarten, daß ihm andre zufallen sollen, kann er für seine unerwiesenen Behauptungen nicht Geltung beanspruchen. Doch wollen die Positiven unter ihnen a posteriori das, was sie in ihrem gläubigen „Ich“ gefunden

haben, von der Schrift normieren lassen, wollen aus der Schrift die Wahrheit ihres Glaubens beweisen. Schon die Unmenge der verschiedensten Ansichten, die dabei zutage gefördert werden, sollte uns vor dieser Methode der Darstellung der christlichen Lehre einen heilsamen Schreck einjagen. Ist diese Art zu lehren nicht im Grunde närrisch? Woher hat denn das „gläubige Subjekt“ seinen Glauben? Wenn nicht schließlich aus dem geschriebenen Worte Gottes, ist er keinen Schuß Pulver wert. Hat er ihn aber aus dem Wort, warum bekennt er das nicht frei und offen? Und führt auch andre hin zu dem Quell, aus dem Wasser des Lebens sprudelt, zu dem Christus der Bibel, der so gern allen verschmachtenden Seelen zu trinken geben möchte, daß sie in Ewigkeit nicht dürsten wird? Aber freilich, auch wir haben alle Ursache, unser stolzes Fleisch täglich in ernstester Buße fest am Zügel zu halten, wenn wir nicht in denselben Sumpf geraten wollen, in dem die moderne Theologie steckt. Wie viele Theologen, so viele Ansichten! Nur in dem einen einig: Schrift und Gottes Wort dürfen nicht identifiziert werden; die Schrift kann nicht als autoritatives Erkenntnisprinzip für Glauben und Lehre anerkannt werden. „Falsche Lehre“ ist ein verpöntes Wort, denn ein jeder hat doch als Wissenschaftler das Recht auf seine eigene Meinung, wenn das „Ich“ des Theologen Erkenntnisprinzip in geistlichen Dingen ist.

Die amerikanisch-lutherische Kirche hat in jüngster Zeit eine Bewegung erlebt, die auf Einigung im lutherischen Lager abzielt. Vieles Herzen schlugen voll froher Hoffnung. Manch ein Gebet hat seinen Weg zum Throne Gottes gefunden, daß es eine Einigung in der Wahrheit werde. Die Enttäuschung blieb nicht aus, als es sich zeigte, daß in den lutherischen Kreisen unsres Landes nicht volle Einigkeit herrscht in bezug auf die Stellung zur Schrift. Wird das Haus der zukünftigen geeinten lutherischen Kirche nicht auf den Felsen Grund des Wortes Gottes gebaut, dann wehe uns, wenn wir uns an dem Bau beteiligen! Dann helfen wir unsrer lutherischen Kirche ihr Grab schaufeln. Eine Bitte haben wir heute so sehr nötig, wie je: „Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort!“

Dein Wort ist unsers Herzens Truß
 Und deiner Kirche wahrer Schutz;
 Dabei erhalt uns, lieber Herr,
 Daß wir nichts anders suchen mehr!

M. Lehninger.

Religious Instruction in the Free Church of Germany

(Conclusion)

In speaking of the Free Church in Germany we must mention two different movements in its history. We must speak of a movement going back to the forepart of the 19th century when single congregations declared their withdrawal from the State Church because of its strong unionistic and liberal tendencies. Such congregations were those of Friedrich August Brunn in Hessen-Nassau and later on congregations of Louis and Theodor Harms in Hannover. On the other hand we have to speak of a movement brought about by laymen forming a Lutheran Society and finally leaving the State Church because of its unionistic and un-Lutheran practises. In the beginning these little groups were without pastors seeking however to contact true Lutheran pastors in Germany and America. As long as they were without a pastor they had recourse to "Lesegottesdienste" in place of "Predigtgottesdienste."¹⁾ Finally in 1871 Pastor H. Ruhland, a member of the Missouri Synod, was called and in 1876 four congregations organized the "Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Saxony and other States." Soon after the congre-

¹⁾ It is worthy of note that since the outbreak of the war many congregations of the Free Church deprived of their pastors, who have been enlisted, are having recourse to "Lesegottesdienste". While the "Lesegottesdienst" is nothing unusual in the Free Church, the members of the Evangelical Church in Germany will without doubt regard it as an innovation. In the "Nachrichten aus der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche, mitgeteilt durch das kirchliche Aussenamt", dated February 1, 1941, we are informed under the heading "Laiendienst" of the following interesting particulars: "Der bestehende Pfarrermangel, verstärkt durch die zahlreichen Einberufungen, hat dazu geführt, dass viele Gemeinden ohne eigenen Pfarrer sind. Es ist ein erfreuliches Zeichen echten kirchlichen Lebens, dass in zahlreichen Fällen Gemeindeglieder in die Lücke getreten sind, um als "Lektoren" im Lesegottesdienst der Gemeinde zu dienen. Das Landeskirchenamt Hannover hat eine Verordnung erlassen, nach der diesen Lektoren die Genehmigung zur freien Wortverkündigung durch den zuständigen Landessuperintendenten gegeben werden kann. Aber darüber hinaus gibt es auch Gemeindeglieder, die nicht nur Lesegottesdienste, sondern auf Wunsch der Gemeinden ausdrücklich Predigtgottesdienst halten. Dafür haben sich z. B. in einem Kirchenkreis ein Staats-

gations in Hessen-Nassau joined them and today this Synod numbers 52 pastors, 55 congregations, 124 preaching-stations²⁾ and 12,000 souls.

What did or rather what could these little congregations do for the religious instruction of their youth? Our first guess may be that they could do no more than to withdraw their children from the religious instruction in the State Schools, so that they might be instructed exclusively by the pastor of the congregation. Or did they do more? Did they perhaps even take their children out of the State Schools altogether and establish Parochial Schools? And even if they founded Parochial Schools, could they endeavor to establish higher schools of learning for the confirmed youth? These questions — however they must be answered — will at least make it apparent to us what a great task these little congregations had taken upon themselves when leaving the State Church and organizing independent congregations into a Free Church.

We can first of all rest assured that the charter-members of the Free-Church never thought of letting their children take part in the religious instruction of the State Schools, even if they thereby drew upon themselves and their children the ill-repute of Dissenters.³⁾ Having left the State Church, be-

sekretär a. D., ein Studienrat, ein Lehrer zur Verfügung gestellt. Sie wurden feierlich der Gemeinde vorgestellt und in ihr Amt eingeführt. In zwei Orten in Thüringen fanden seit langem keine Gottesdienste mehr statt. Zwei jüngere Männer, ein Angestellter und ein Arbeiter, übernahmen den Gottesdienst abwechselnd an den beiden Orten; sie waren einfach ihrem inneren Ruf gefolgt. In einem andern Kirchengebiet fanden sich auf einen Aufruf hin etwa 150 Älteste, Lehrer, Pfarrfrauen zusammen, die bereits Lesegottesdienste gehalten hatten, oder die dazu bereit waren; sie werden jetzt in Lehrgängen für diesen Dienst zugerüstet."

²⁾ The surprisingly large number of preaching stations in the German Free-Church testifies more than anything else to the fervent missionary endeavors of the pastors of this Church.

³⁾ There will have been exceptions to this iron-clad rule even in the early days of the Free-Church. Still the principle that the Church alone is to impart religious instruction has always been emphasized by this Free-Church and always has been put into practise (comp. Theologische Quartalschrift 1941, p. 96).

cause of its un-Scriptural tendencies, the members of these first congregations also realized that the Christian day school of Saxony did not any more deserve the name "Konfessionsschule", at least not the name of Confessional school in the sense of pure Lutheran doctrine. Therefore a paragraph in the constitution of the congregation in Planitz reads: "The congregation being duty-bound by the Word of God to give its youth Christian instruction will endeavor to establish a 'christliche Gemeindeschule' under the direction of an orthodox teacher." The ministry of education however did not sanction this paragraph. The so-called "Dissidentengesetz" did not grant a congregation of Dissenters the right to establish a school. Despite this set-back the parents of this congregation nevertheless did not permit their children to attend the public school any longer but appointed a teacher to instruct them. Soon after the congregation or rather the teacher received permission on the strength of a paragraph in the German law providing for private schools to open such a school. This implied however that a private school could only be established by an individual, in this case by the teacher of the congregation, but not by the congregation itself. Without a teacher the congregation also was without a school. And since it often had great difficulty in finding and calling school-teachers it repeatedly was in danger of losing its school. There was no "New Ulm" to fall back on when in need of a teacher. And to call a teacher from the ranks of the teachers of the State School presupposed that such a teacher had to be well founded in the Lutheran doctrine, that he was willing to leave the State Church and to join the Free Church and that he was ready to sacrifice his position, an old age pension, and to accept the call of a little congregation offering but a meagre salary. Despite these difficulties this parish school flourished and was maintained by the congregation for 66 years.

A congregation doing so much for the education of its youth prior to its confirmation will certainly not neglect it after its confirmation. But what educational agency did it have at its command to continue the religious instruction of its adolescent youth? We have our Bible-Class. The Free-

Church took over the old and trusty agency, the "Christenlehre", also called "Katechismusexamina" from the Evangelical Church. Pastor and teacher would change off in conducting this "Christenlehre" which was attended by the young people of the congregation till to their 18th year. We may take for granted that the majority of the youth of this congregation attended the "Christenlehre". For fifty years it was conducted every Sunday afternoon. Yet we are told by the pastor of the congregation, the successor of Ruhland, the sainted Dr. Willkomm, in his history of this congregation that the attendance did grow less in the course of time. From 1920 on the Christenlehre therefore became a part of the regular Sunday morning service following the reading of the Epistle. In other congregations it was conducted immediately after the service, men and women also remaining to review their Catechism and to answer those questions which were too difficult for the young people to answer. As a part of the regular morning service I have learned to know the "Christenlehre" in the Free Church and have gained the conviction that it cannot be replaced by any other educational agency for our confirmed youth that we know of at the present time, not by our Bible Classes, not by the Bible Studies in the young people's society. Up to the present day "Christenlehre" is still a part of the service in many congregations of the Free Church.

A congregation coping continually with the difficulties of finding adequate teachers for their parish schools also gave thought to establishing a Proseminar or "Lateinschule", where young men could receive the preparatory education prior to entering a Theological or Teacher's Seminary. In 1876 a "Lateinschule" was actually opened and none other but Dr. Stöckhardt was called as director of this school being assisted in his work by the pastor of the congregation. Dr. Stöckhardt however was called to St. Louis two years later and the school of necessity had to be dropped. Nonetheless the indefatigable congregation planned to reopen this school. Their well-formed plans did not materialize because the pastor whom they called four years later as director did not accept. A second call was not sent out.

But can a congregation do more for its youth than what these good Christians in Planitz had already undertaken? Yet there was no doubt in their minds that there were still many opportunities to be taken by the forelock. As Luther wanted different kinds of schools so also they wanted them. From 1875 to 1914 a "Fortbildungsschule" or vocational school was conducted once a week in which English and Stenography were taught. The teachers of the parish school served as teachers of this school also and the pastor was not to be outdone but included religious instruction in the curriculum. As soon as vocational schools became a matter of course in Germany this school was given up by the congregation after having been maintained for forty years. And last but not least a Kleinkinderschule, a Kindergarten was opened in 1880 and continued for 25 years with but one brief interruption.

The congregation having thought of just about all the different means of Christian instruction, it nevertheless did not overlook the need of its youth — and it is the need of the youth of all lands and climes — for enjoying Christian fellowship in its endeavor to keep away from the temptations of the world. Therefore a "Jünglings- und Jungfrauenverein" were organized meeting every second Sunday of the month to read good Christian literature, to sing hymns from the Missionsharfe and to play musical instruments. With their instruments they certainly also undertook Wanderungen, a passion of the German youth. Mention is even made of a Turnverein and a Kegelbahn. A Jugendrat was appointed by the congregation to supervise the activities of the young people.

Germany is the country in which the national youth movement was to play such a commanding role in the life of Germany's youth in that it became a loud and energetic protest against the intellectualism of a generation of elders, which had tried to feed their youth not only with the husks of intellectualism, but also with the husks of a Christless religion giving them stones instead of bread. But it dare not be overlooked that the national youth-movement of Germany prior to the World War was a reaction and rebellion against the divine order, the family, and as such also a rebellion against the commandment of God. In the post-war years however all

of Germany's youth was lined up in organizations, the many political parties of Germany vieing with one another and with the churches for an influence on the youth of the land. Both the Roman-Catholic and the Evangelical Church had large youth organizations, the latter having world-wide relationship with the youth organizations of all lands, especially with those of America. Conditions were radically changed under the regime of National Socialism. Germany's youth was organized into one political organization, the "Hitlerjugend", and the large youth organizations of the churches were forbidden. The Christian youth was still permitted to meet as a separate group, but not for any other purpose than for religious instruction. This ruling greatly affected the young people's work in the State Churches, while it had no visible effect on the young people's work in the Free-Church. The youth met as before for the purpose of receiving instruction in the Bible or Catechism and of enjoying Christian fellowship. The reason why the young people's work in the Evangelical Church received such a set-back lies in the fact that these youth-organizations had been organized independently of the congregations and that they were dependent upon many activities outside of the scope of religious instruction and Christian fellowship, while the young people's work in the Free-Church was carried out by the congregations and centered on the one thing needful.

Yet it is here that we will have to retrace our steps to answer the question whether the good example of the congregation in Planitz in establishing a parish school was followed by the other congregations of the Free Church. With the exception of one other congregation this was to my knowledge not the case. Although the parents of the other congregations also withdrew their children from the religious instruction of the State Schools, still they did not succeed in attaining to that what the congregation in Planitz had succeeded in doing.

How must we account for this? Some of the reasons are quite evident from the foregoing. Since only accredited teachers could be called the congregations were often at a loss where to find teachers even when having the good intention of opening schools for their children. On the other hand many

congregations not numbering more than 100 to 200 souls were not able to raise the moneys for a school and for the salary of a school-teacher. A third difficulty consisted in the fact that the German parish school had to compete with the high standard of the German State School, even with that of the Elementary School. "Die öffentlichen Schulen bieten eben zu viel" is one of the reasons stated in the "Geschichte der Freikirche" by Rev. Wöhling in regard to conditions in Denmark which however also pertain to Germany. While our parochial schools in the pioneer days of our country did not have to compete with an old established public school-system, but on the contrary in many vicinities even preceded the public school, this certainly cannot be said of the parish school in Germany. These and other reasons were relatively speaking an insurmountable obstacle for the establishment of parish schools. And all the reasons which made it so difficult for them to establish schools also made it difficult to maintain their schools, even if once established. This must not only be said of the one other parochial school in Chemnitz, which was opened soon after this congregation was organized, but finally also of the large parochial school in Planitz. Not as if this congregation had not gallantly fought for the maintenance of its school. In the post war years the enmity of the Social-Democratic Government against all confessional and private schools was very great and even at that time the school was about to be closed. Under the National Socialistic Government the law to permit private schools was radically changed. It has not been annulled, as one might be led to believe. But it remains true that private schools in Germany under the present regime will be rare exceptions. An exception to the rule is permitted in places where the public schools are not offering an adequate course of instruction. Otherwise it is regarded as self-evident that the German boy and girl attends a public school.⁴⁾ Consequently many private Roman-

⁴⁾ The wording of this law in regard to private schools is as follows: "Nach nationalsozialistischen Grundsätzen dürfen private Schulen und Erziehungsanstalten nur errichtet und betrieben werden, soweit für den Unterricht und die Erziehung durch öffentliche Schulen nicht ausreichend gesorgt ist. Grundsätzlich werden auf dem Gebiete

Catholic schools had to be discontinued. The school in Planitz was not closed immediately after the law had been passed. Representatives of the congregation conferred with the authorities in Leipzig concerning the future of their school for months. At the same time the congregation had difficulties in finding teachers to whom they could extend calls, several of their old teachers having resigned after many years of faithful service. The financial support of the school had grown to be an always heavier burden for the congregation, while the number of children of school-age had greatly diminished after the World War. We read that in 1936 112 children were still in attendance, the congregation numbering about 700 communicants. But this number is small compared with the attendance of former years. And because of the new law concerning private schools the future of this parish school was jeopardized. It was discontinued in 1938 after a duration of 66 years. Its history will always impress us with the struggle and the sacrifices of a Free Church congregation for the maintenance of its school.

Another chapter in the history of the Free Church of Germany are the endeavors of this church to train young men for the ministry. Before the Seminary in Zehlendorf was founded the Free Church had a Proseminar in Steeden and a Seminary in Uelzen. In Steeden where the movement for a Free Church originated in the middle of the nineteenth century we find a school which even supplied the Missouri Synod with prospective preachers and missionaries. This school had been established by Rev. Brunn following the advice of Dr. Walther. Dr. Walther had hit on the plan of founding a Proseminar in Germany after his connections with Löhe had been broken off and had induced Rev. Brunn to undertake this task. Here young men were instructed for a year, some for two years and then sent to America where they could finish

des allgemeinbildenden Schulwesens künftig die Erziehungsaufgaben durch öffentliche Schulen wahrgenommen. Jedes gesunde deutsche Kind, das unter geregelten häuslichen Verhältnissen aufwächst und den Auslesevorschriften der höheren Schulen genügt, hat grundsätzlich die öffentliche Schule zu besuchen" (Die Evangelisch-Lutherische Freikirche 1938, S. 95).

their studies in the institutions of the Missouri Synod. Thus between 200 and 300 young men were prepared for the ministry in this little sequestered town of Germany. While the Missouri Synod helped to a certain extent to finance this preparatory school yet the greatest burden was placed on the shoulders of Brunn, who travelled through all of Germany preaching at mission festivals and lecturing in mission classes on the little school in Steeden with its big objective of supplying the Missouri Synod with pastors. By means of these lectures Brunn induced young men to enter this school and Lutheran Christians to promise financial support. For about eighteen years Pastor Brunn taught young men in this school until failing health caused him to discontinue this work.⁵⁾

A second Free Church Seminary was founded by the Hermannsburg Free Church in Uelzen, Hannover, in 1897. This Free Church was a part of the great movement sponsored by Ludwig Theodor Harms. It was not until the year 1908 that it joined the Free Church in Saxony. In the meantime however it preferred to train its future pastors in its own theological school, so as not to be forced to call pastors from other Free Churches or even State Churches with whom it was not affiliated. The Free Church of Saxony at this time could not call a theological institution its own but sent its young men to St. Louis. The World War, however, prevented young men from crossing the Atlantic to study in America. But even then the pastors of the Free Church never thought of advising the young men of their congregations to study theology at a German university. The Breslauer Freikirche, the oldest Lutheran Free Church in Germany, has always had recourse to the German universities in training young men for the ministry. Not so the Free Church of Saxony. After the war, however, the need for candidates of theology was felt more and more and the Synod of 1920 decided to open a "Theologische Hilfs- und Beratungsstelle" in Leipzig to enable

⁵⁾ In this connection I wish to refer the reader to the article by Rev. A. Brunn in "Ebenezer": "Our Transoceanic Connections" which does full justice to the educational work of Brunn in supplying the Missouri-Synod with prospective preachers and missionaries.

those who were desirous of becoming pastors to study here until they could again attend Concordia in St. Louis. Advised by the Missouri brethren to enlarge this institution, they sent a call to St. Louis for a third professor and even bought the vacant buildings of the "Seemannserholungsheim" in Klein-Machnow in the Brandenburger Mark. Here the first lectures were held by D. Stallmann and Prof. Kirsten in 1922. In the winter of 1923 Dr. Martin Willkomm was called as "Rektor" of this school, while Prof. Metzger arrived from St. Louis in 1924 to assist the brethren and to teach theology in Germany for the remaining years of his life. Now the faculty consisted of four professors, the student-body numbering about fifteen to twenty students. The Free Church could lay claim to its own "Theologische Hochschule",⁶⁾ something which no Free Church in Germany at present can do.

I am often asked whether this institution gives students a complete theological training or whether it is not to be compared with the institution in Steeden, which had been a Proseminar, or with the Seminary of the Breslauer Free Church, which only has the purpose of giving its students the finishing touches of their theological training after having attended a German university for the prescribed number of years. It is not one or the other. It is a Lutheran Seminary which gives young men a complete training for the ministry. The students studying at this institution are required to have the "Abitur" of a German Gymnasium and to take a theological course of four full years, at the end of which they write their first examination. This is followed up by two years of practical work in a congregation under the supervision of a pastor. In the course of these two years the candidate of theology is not only supposed to assist the pastor of the respective congregation in his work, but is also by private study to prepare himself for his second examination. The second examination is held by a special "Prüfungskommission" in-

⁶⁾ This was the name which was finally given the Seminary in Zehlendorf. Zehlendorf, a suburb of Berlin, is the postal address of the Seminary and this name is therefore always used in connection with that of the Seminary itself.

cluding pastors and the faculty and this committee decides whether the candidate is to be eligible for a call or not. At least fifty students have graduated from the institution in the course of the twenty years since its founding and the majority of them are serving in the Free Church of Germany, the others in Poland, South America, Denmark and Alsace. Looking back to the work which has been accomplished at this seminary we may well say that it has been signally blessed by the Lord in its work and that it has made evident the close unity and fellowship existing between the Free Church of Germany and the Synods of our Synodical Conference.

Another question is often asked concerning this school. Will it not also succumb to the almost insurmountable difficulties which every non-State school has to cope with in Germany? Is there not every reason for asking this question since the School of Theology at Bethel near Bielefeld was closed by the government and since the "Bekennnisfront" was not permitted to open new theological schools as it had intended and begun to do? Still there is an essential difference between the Theological School at Bethel and the Seminary at Zehlendorf. As to the former the government dealt with this school as with a state school over which it had jurisdiction. Likewise it also dealt with the theological faculties of the universities as with state institutions and with the professors of these faculties as with state officials. When the number of University students studying theology fell far below par in the years just prior to this war, a number of faculties were ordered by the government to discontinue their work for the time being, although most of them have again been permitted to take it up. This course of events brought about a lively discussion in theological circles whether the German government would not sooner or later force all theological faculties of the universities out of commission and leave it to the Churches to establish their own theological seminaries. We do not doubt that such a revolutionary change of conditions in the Evangelical Church would help to draw dividing lines between the different confessional parties within the Church and to have a strong influence on the doctrinal stand of each party.

There is a third question which one is usually called upon to answer in reference to the Theologische Hochschule in Zehlendorf. Is there such a need for a Seminary in the Free Church to justify the efforts and sacrifices which have to be made? This question has always been answered by the Free Church in the affirmative. A Church most certainly has the duty to train young men for the ministry and cannot simply place this work into the hands of those on whose theology and teaching it has no influence, in this instance into the hands of the university professors. The second reason why this cannot be done is that even those theological faculties of the German universities which call themselves Lutheran are not Lutheran. Not only because they are teaching non-Lutheran doctrines, doctrines pertaining to the inspiration of the Bible, to the Sacraments, the Church, and others, but their attitude toward the truth of the Christian religion is fundamentally different from ours. They do not see their duty as professors in the mere teaching and preaching of divine truth as revealed in Scriptures, but in seeking and developing truth as they find it. They deem it impossible to give a final answer to the question: "What is truth," and therefore do not draw any consequences from the fact that different confessions are taught in one and the same Church. Now the doctrines taught by the different Church parties in the Evangelical Church are not in accord with one another, do not represent one doctrine. Therefore the Free Church cannot entrust its young men to the theological professors teaching at the universities. The only other possibility for the Free Church would be to again send its young men across the Atlantic in quest of theological learning at Seminaries of the Synodical Conference. But will that not be out of the question altogether in the future? The present war excludes every possibility for the time being. And after the war! Will not the political, social and economic changes brought about by this second World War all the more exclude the possibility of sending young men from Germany to America for the sake of studying theology at our Seminaries? Will not the bond of a common language be torn fully asunder after the war? Certainly it will always be a good thing for our Lutheran

Churches in Germany and America to foster an exchange of students as it had been thought of repeatedly prior to this war. But for German students to gain their full theological education at our Seminaries in the future is still more out of the question than after the World War. Therefore we can only hope and pray that the Free Church of Germany will always find means and ways of training its young men for the ministry in its own Theologische Hochschule.

And this Theologische Hochschule will more than ever have to be the stronghold of Lutheranism in Germany teaching the Lutheran doctrine, training Lutheran students to preach it and to inculcate it upon the youth of the land. But does the past history of the Free Church give us the assurance that the educational agencies at its command will suffice in the future to indoctrinate its members with the Lutheran doctrine? There is no doubt that the Free Church is seriously handicapped in this that it is without parochial schools. However it is aware of this handicap and is making every effort to offset it as far as possible by a very thorough "Religionsunterricht".

On the other hand the Free Church in Germany has a decided advantage over our Church in America in the opportunities offered to it for the indoctrination of its adolescent youth and the adults. We have already spoken of the Christenlehre in which young and old take part. We can also mention the mid-week services, which do not only take place during Lent and Advent, but throughout the whole year with the exception of the summer months. And these services are held for the special purpose of giving the members of the congregation a knowledge of the whole Bible. The sainted Dr. Willkomm, pastor of the congregation in Planitz, is said to have preached on all the books of the Old Testament in these mid-week services in the course of the many years as pastor of this congregation. Again the special courses of lectures on Biblical subjects which were repeatedly held in the post-war years, were not only supposed to serve those, who otherwise could not be induced to attend the regular services, but also the members of the congregations. And the members responded to the appeal of their pastors to be present at these special services, not only from a sense of duty, but also be-

cause of their desire to increase their own knowledge of the Bible. In other words, the members of the Free Church in Germany can still be prevailed upon to study the books of the Bible and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church in Christenlehre and in mid-week services. That this work of indoctrination, whereby the adults are benefited especially, is an essential part of the church work as such no one will doubt. We must ask ourselves whether here in America we still have the opportunity and means of doing just this work. The fact that we can still give our youth a good Christian education with the help of the parochial school should not induce us to overlook the other phase of our church work, the indoctrination of the adult. Therefore this study of the religious instruction in a sister church of ours should lead us to a comparison of the work done here and there. And such a comparison must also make us aware of our lack of opportunities for religious instruction, whether they are to be traced back to circumstances obtaining in our country or to our own remissness. But more than such a comparison will eventually make us conscious of our own needs and wants. The test to which all Christian Churches will be put in the trying years ahead of us will make it evident how deeply and lastingly the Christian doctrine has been inculcated on young and old in our churches and how much the spirit of our synodical fathers, who were willing to sacrifice much for the sake of pure doctrine, is moving and guiding us in these "perilous times". The final analysis here and there will depend upon the use which we have made of the Word of God, which has been intrusted to us for the very purpose of implanting it into the hearts of young and old not only by preaching alone but also by teaching. And not only by the teaching of young and old for a brief period of time, but by a teaching which goes on through life and which embodies all that Christ has commanded us to do according to his own express command (Matth. 28, 19; John 21, 15).

Religious instruction is indeed a vital issue in the work of every Christian congregation and church. Yet let us not forget that the injunction of our Lord to teach all nations all things whatsoever He has commanded us is accompanied by the blessed promise: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

P. Peters.

The Ninth Sunday after Trinity

TEXT: MATTHEW 6, 19-23

In Christ Dearly Beloved!

In the Gospel of St. John, 3, 31-33, John the Baptist says regarding the Savior: "He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." — These verses tell us why no man receives the Lord's testimony; that is, by his own reason or strength. The reason is that the Savior's testimony and words are directly contrary to the words and thoughts of men, the children of the earth.

As proof for this we need not even point to the great things: sin, righteousness, judgment, eternal life. It becomes apparent even when we turn our attention to earthly goods. Men's words and thoughts on the question: What position are we to take toward earthly goods? are known well enough. Diametrically opposed to them are our Savior's words. This soon becomes evident in regard to Christ's precept in our text:

LAY NOT UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES UPON EARTH, BUT IN HEAVEN

1. This is the precept of Christ.
2. It has the full assent of all true Christians.
3. But it is an offense to all nominal Christians.

I.

This is the precept of Christ.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but in heaven. This precept is clear and decisive. The clearness lies in the words "for yourselves". That means: You are not to lay up treasures "for yourselves". You are not to gather earthly treasure with an eye to yourselves. That is the way of men according to their natural, sinful make-up. Some lay up earthly treasure, because their heart clings lovingly to it, and they see man's happiness in great possessions and wealth (Matthew 19, 22). Others lay up treasure because they aim in that way to secure a real enjoyment of life for themselves (Luke 12, 19). Again others gather earthly treasure, because riches bring honor in the eyes of the world (1 Tim. 6, 17). Still others lay up treasure on earth, because, they think, wealth lifts one up above all care (Luke 12, 19; Matth. 6, 34). So they gather for themselves, for

their own enjoyment, for the satisfaction of their heart's desires. — They **lay up**. That tells us: They are **intent** on increasing their goods; they make it the **object** of their work, yes, of their life to acquire ever more earthly goods, to add farm to farm and house to house, to put away ever greater amounts or put them out at interest.

When God blesses a Christian's work, then more and more treasure accumulates in his hands too. But just this is the difference, that treasure accumulates in his hands through God's blessing, but **he** does not gather **for** himself. Rather, he regards himself as God's steward also over temporal goods. Therefore the Savior here does not prescribe to a Christian upon whom God's blessing bestows more and more treasure: Put away everything beyond your needs, that you may not violate the prohibition: Lay not up for yourself treasures upon earth. We are told 2 Cor. 12, 14: The children ought not to lay up for the parents but the parents for the children. This one thing the Lord forbids a Christian: to lay up treasure **for himself**, to gather out of love for treasure, out of joy in possessions; out of a desire to increase his treasures, with the object of gaining an easy life, enjoyment, and honor by means of treasure. The man who lays up treasure in that way sins in doing so. If a man can gather in such a way that, though he possesses it, it still is no different than if he did not possess it (1 Cor. 7, 30), then his gathering would not be sin. But if he gathers in this way that the treasures **themselves** are dear to him and are his delight, then his gathering is sinful. Here there is a finely-drawn line between that which is right and that which is evil in the Lord's eyes.

Therefore, dear Christians, a man has to examine his heart diligently and conscientiously in this matter, lest he be one who, **after all**, does lay up treasure for himself or at least is **at the point** of doing so and accordingly of traveling the broad way (Matt. 7, 13, 14). Nor should anyone think that it is not so very important to stay within the right bounds in this and to watch himself **unflinchingly**, so that he does not become one who is bent entirely on laying up treasure for himself. Surely, the Savior did not intend His precept to be taken as strictly as all that. If you think that, dear fellow-Christian, then you are greatly in error and only show that you have not rightly considered and weighed this precept of your Savior.

For the decisiveness, the sharpness, and pointedness of this precept is apparent from the words: **Lay not** up for yourselves treasures upon earth. — **But** lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. Here the Savior very sharply and cleanly and decisively divides and separates the two kinds of laying up treasures, namely, the laying up of treasures on earth and the laying up of treasures in heaven. The **one**, gathering treasure on earth, is **forbidden** you, and the **other**, gathering treasure in heaven, is **commanded** you. From the **one** you are to **flee**, and the **other** you are to **pursue** with great earnestness.

The one is to have **no place** in your life, and to the other your life is to be **completely** dedicated. To the **exclusion of the one** Jesus wants the **other** entirely. There can be no straddling here. The Savior does not say: Lay up for yourselves treasures on earth through honest work, only do not forget, above all, to gather treasure in heaven. The Savior speaks of a clean-cut division: **Not** treasures on earth are the ones you are to gather, **but** treasures in heaven. No **division** of the life, the energies, and the time of Christians between gathering of treasures on earth and gathering of treasures in heaven is here granted. **Nothing** of a Christian's life, time, and energies is to serve the gathering of treasures on earth. On the contrary, **everything** is to serve the gathering of treasure in heaven. Then lay up such treasures, dear Christians. That is right; the Savior prescribes it; it is pleasing to God. If you have a burning desire for the treasures of heaven, so that you want to lay up more and more of them, if you are as greedy for them as not even the greatest miser is greedy for money, then that would be pleasing to the Savior.

And you surely know what the treasures in heaven are. They are eternal life, and everything included in it, *e. g.*, a home in heaven, a heritage in heaven, glorious beauty, crowns, honors, joys, praise and glory. And how you gather them you know as well. Walk in **faith**. Thereby you lay up life and salvation, heritage and honors, crowns and joys. Walk in faith which worketh by love in **good works** and does good to everyone, especially to them of the household of faith, and you shall reap, if you faint not. The treasures in heaven are **lasting, imperishable**; an **eternal** inheritance, an **incorruptible** crown, an **eternal** life, over which even death has no power and might, though otherwise it despoils everything (John 5, 24; Rom. 6, 9; 1 Cor. 15, 23).

To the precept that a Christian is **not** to lay up treasures on earth, **but** in heaven, the Savior adds a weighty reason, when He says: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. That again is a sharp, cutting word. I beg you, dear Christians, weigh it well. The Savior teaches that those who make it their purpose in life to lay up earthly goods, to amount to something and become wealthy, as is the way of the world, certainly and surely have earthly goods as their treasure. And because those things are their treasure, therefore, too, their heart is in the goods of this world. They, with their noblest powers and their noblest part, their heart, belong to earthly goods, their treasure. That is the god to whom they live. As our beloved Father Luther said: Whatever a man loves is his god. For his heart is directed toward that; he is occupied with it day and night, he goes to bed with it and wakes up with it, be it money or goods, pleasure or honor.

Many a man who calls himself a Christian and yet after the manner of the flesh knows nothing besides this: you have to lay up money and goods and get ahead, for that, after all, is why you are

in this world — such a man indeed imagines that he certainly wants to serve God too. But, dear Christian, I ask you, how are you going to manage to combine the two, the desire to lay up treasure and to serve God at the same time? Don't you know that your heart is with the treasures? What is there left over for God? Perhaps your mouth to utter Christian phrases, or your foot to carry you to church. But that is no good before God without your heart. You know it is an abomination to God when men "tread" His courts, *i. e.*, throng into His churches and draw nigh unto Him with their lips, but have their hearts far from Him (Matt. 15, 8; Is. 1, 12). God looks upon the heart. With the heart man believeth. Therefore it certainly is divine teaching that all who lay up treasure and have their heart in that and that alone are slaves of mammon, idolaters, and can never at the same time serve God, nor do they do so. Of this our Father Luther says: You may gather external, worldly things as much as possible, with God and with honor, **not to satisfy your own pleasure and greed, but to relieve the need of others.** The man who gathers thus shall have God's blessing and approval as a pious Christian. **This truth you cannot change, and you cannot bargain away any of it.**

And mark well: If your treasure is earthly goods to the end of your life, since you love and gather them and since your heart, more exactly, you yourself are in them, then that will have eternal consequences. You must share the fate of your treasure. Your treasure is goods of this earth; they pass away, they are destroyed, for the earth shall be consumed by fire. Accordingly, you will go along into destruction, into the torment, where the consuming worm does not die; where the fire is not quenched. Certainly, it is a better lot to have your heart with the true God in Christ than with goods and property, riches and treasure. God is the living God, and those that belong to Him shall live in eternity. Behold, all this your faithful Savior recalls to you, when He says: Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also; and therefore He gives you this earnest and decisive precept: Lay **not** up for yourselves treasures upon earth! **But** lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.

In this connection, dear Christians, let me remind you that though we are not to lay up treasures for ourselves, we certainly are to do so for others. We are to work with our hands the thing which is good, that we may have to give to him that needeth (Eph. 4, 28). We are to use earthly goods to make friends in heaven for ourselves, that they may receive us into everlasting habitations. Thus the Lord our Savior admonishes (Luke 16, 9). Through our benevolences we can secure such people who will have to bear witness in the last judgment that our faith was fruitful in good works. Those are good friends. They are worth incalculably much before God. In that way the earthly treasures can serve him who does not lay them up for himself, in laying up treasures in heaven. And he that would handle treasures

prudently makes them serviceable to himself in that way (Luke 16, 8. 9).

We have considered the precept of Christ: Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but in heaven! What reception does it find in Christendom? On the basis of our text we answer in part:

II.

It has the full approval of all upright Christians.

Why is this true, and why can it not be otherwise? We learn the reason from the Lord's words: *The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light.* This is certainly true. The eye is there for the whole body and is to serve as its light. It is, as it were, to shed light on all its movements and activities. Because a man has eyes which see for the whole body, it is just as if the whole body were full of light, and as if all its members, hands and feet, could see in all their undertakings. But that is true only if the eye is sound. If it sees aright, then the whole body will make the right motions in all its acts and efforts, the foot will take the right steps, the hand will grip everything correctly.

In these words concerning the eye our Savior is, of course, aiming at spiritual things. With the eye He means as much as the spirit of man. The healthy eye is the spirit of man which has the **right** knowledge and view of spiritual things. And **when** can we say that a man has such an healthy eye? Why, when his spirit is enlightened by God and the Holy Spirit. That is true of the upright Christian. The Holy Spirit enlightens him. By what means? Through the Word of the Lord. The Holy Spirit leads him into all truth. Where? In the Word of the Lord, for there the truth is revealed. Now just for this reason it is true, nor can it be otherwise, that an upright Christian receives the precept of the Lord with sincere approval and is also heartily willing to follow it. In an upright Christian the spiritual eye is his spirit, not the spirit he has by nature, but the one enlightened by the Holy Spirit through the Word of the Savior. Therefore such an upright Christian has a view of spiritual things that is in full accord with his Savior's words regarding them. As a result he, according to the enlightened spirit and the inward man, also finds pleasure in his Savior's precept: Lay **not** up treasures upon earth, **but** in heaven. He finds it right as right can be. He is not offended in it because it is so sharp and incisive. He does not, with an offended and disgruntled mind, set himself above this precept. He does not say: That's asking too much; that's carrying religion too far; that fails to recognize that you live, must live, in the world. On the contrary, out of a deep knowledge, a thorough-going conviction, and a clear insight he says: It must be exactly like that; just this precept: Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but in heaven, must

be the correct and only wholesome one for me and for all who would be saved.

It is good for every upright Christian that this is true of him. It is good for him that he thus heartily approves of Christ's precept and wants to let it stand as the absolute guiding-rule for his life. The Savior indicates this with the words: *The whole body shall be full of light.* The upright Christian whose **spiritual** eye is healthy will fare as well and favorably in his spiritual life as the man whose **physical** eye is healthy fares in his bodily life. Then the whole body is full of light, because the eye as the light benefits all members of the body. Then a man won't blindly plunge into an abyss. The foot too is full of light and sees as it were, namely through the eyes, where it is going and can find the right, smooth road. Thus it is spiritually. Then the whole man is full of light and walks in the light. Because a man has a healthy spiritual eye, a spirit enlightened by the Holy Spirit through the Word and endowed with heavenly knowledge and a divine realization and view of the things eternal, therefore he in general walks in God's ways, the ways of light, of life. Now darkness, eternal perdition, will not come upon him (John 12, 35). Now he walks as a child of light (Eph. 5, 8.9), as one made meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. 1, 12). Because he walks in the light it is true of him: Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. He walks in Christ as the light, because he walks in Christ's Word; therefore he experiences the truth of Christ's promise: I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of **life** (John 8, 12).

Therefore, dear Christian, rejoice and be glad, if you are earnestly and sincerely guided by Christ's precept: Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but in heaven. That is a good sign. Your eye is healthy. If, then, they ridicule and mock you, because you do not scramble and chase for gold, the god of the world, as they do, and you do not gather together with them, very well, you know that they are gathering nothing but the food of rust and moths. But you gather the inheritance in light, the eternal, imperishable treasures in heaven. It matters not at all that those fools call you a simpleton. Wisdom itself, Jesus, calls you wise (Matt. 7, 24). Surely, it makes no difference, if for a short while the ignorant have their sport by taunting you as a fool. Ere long the end will gloriously reveal **you** as the wise and prudent and them as the fools. To this latter truth we briefly direct our attention.

III.

The precept of Christ is an offense to all nominal Christians.

Why is that true? The Savior explains it in these words: *But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.* Again the Savior uses the bodily eye as an illustration. If the physical eye is

sick or evil and looks at everything awry, or does not see at all, then the whole body is in darkness and has no light in any direction. The Savior now applies that to spiritual things and says: *If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!* The Lord means to say: If your spirit is blind and darkened, so that it understands nothing of spiritual things, then you are in a most appalling darkness. We know this is the miserable condition of all men by nature. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2, 14). But a man who counts himself among Christians and wants to be called a Christian should no longer be thus darkened in his spirit and mind. Of him it should be true: Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.

But alas! only too many in Christendom are only nominal Christians, merely natural, fleshly men under the guise and name of spiritual men or Christians. Either they were never enlightened in their spirit, or the divine light of the Holy Spirit has again been extinguished in their spirit through their sin. Now the spirit, which through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit is to be an eye with a clear vision for spiritual, heavenly things, is once again a sick, dark, blind eye. All spiritual doctrines again appear to it as foolishness. All divine directions which are designed to tear them away from the earth and its ways and to set their feet entirely on heavenly ways — such directions again are most unreasonable in their eyes. So too this precept of Christ: Lay not up treasures upon earth but in heaven! is a terrible offense to them. Oh, how their money-hungry souls hate such teachings! How bitterly opposed is their ignorant heart to such wholesome guidance! How foolish it is in their judgment, to devote oneself to the achievement of eternal treasures above all things, treasures you do not need now and which, in their opinion, you can acquire easily enough! How unreasonable it is, according to their way of thinking, not to strive with all your powers for earthly goods, which do not come so easily to any man.

Dear Christians, that is indeed a terrifying darkness. Therefore all those ought to be thoroughly alarmed who find that in them too there is a deep and sinful offense at this precept of the Savior: Lay not up treasures upon earth, but in heaven. They ought to tell themselves: Woe unto us! Have we again become children of darkness in whom Satan has full sway? Is that the reason why we are in this condition? Happy are they, if that thought leads them to a lasting terror over their former way and makes them recoil from it.

For it is fatal, if a man continues thus to the end, so that the precept of Christ, here before us, remains an offense to him! Then, clearly, that is not a negligible failing, but a sign of complete spiritual death; it is not an incidental error, but a testimony that he again is

in the chains of darkness. Now he walks in night and stumbles, because there is no light in him (John 11, 10). Because he does not follow the light of Christ, he is the great fool who with his laying up of treasure aims to be wise and to really build his house of happiness, but has built it upon sand, so that there is a great fall when the end comes (Matt. 7, 27). Great and terrifying is the darkness of the soul **through which** man comes to such a fatal fall. And greater still will be the darkness **into which** he falls, yon outer darkness, in which there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Permit yourself to be preserved from that, dear Christian. Now your eye is healthy; you have the Holy Spirit and you understand spiritual things. But specks of dust will get into the healthiest eye and will obscure good vision. Many specks of dust get into your spiritual eye every day. Therefore make it your concern that the Holy Spirit keep your eye clear-visioned with His excellent eye-ointment, the Word, so that you may ever find pleasure in Jesus' precept: Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but in heaven! Amen.

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

"In the Interest of Lutheran Unity"

NOTE: In our April number we reprinted parts of Pastor Geo. O. Lillegard's critique of Dr. Reu's position on *What is Scripture?* as voiced in his pamphlet *In the Interest of Lutheran Unity*. Since then Pastor Lillegard sent us, under three sub-titles, further scathing criticism of the subtle errors contained in the above named essay. They deserve careful study. M.

MODERNISM IN "THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH"

The movement within the Christian Church called "Modernism" has as its chief characteristic the readiness to compromise with "science-falsely-socalled" and to accept "the assured results" of scientific research as authoritative for Christian teaching. The consistent advocates of Modernism re-write the Bible to suit their evolutionary, "scientific" theories and leave it some authority or significance only in a very narrow religious field. But most Modernistic Christians are not consistent; they retain more or less of Christian truth along with their childish faith in "Science" and seek to harmonize the contradictory principles of the Bible and Science with each other or combine them in the muddled manner that it is so painful for any honest thinker to contemplate, whether he be Christian or atheist. Thus there are Lutherans also who may follow the Bible in most things, but who yet will desert the principle: "Scripture alone!" for the Modernistic principles of "Science" in such doctrines as that of Creation. Even in Dr. Reu's essay on "What is Scripture?" we

find concessions to Modernism which we had not expected in the writings of one who has been so widely heralded, also in Missouri Synod publications, as "a great Luther scholar." In describing the manner in which God revealed Himself to sinful men, he says: "He is about to withdraw that thick, impenetrable veil by which He had covered His face in order that we might look into His face and heart once more. Not all at once, but step by step. As in creation He chose to go the way of gradual development, so now in this self-disclosure to man. And Scripture is the history of this gradual revelation or self-disclosure" (p. 51). "Thus Scripture contains the history of God in His relation to mankind, the history of the revelation and self-disclosure of God in its gradual development from the first beginnings to its final consummation; from the first hardly noticeable lifting of the veil to the full withdrawal of the same, thus enabling us to behold Him as He is" (p. 52).

Now it is not true that God in the first place hid Himself from men. It was man who, when he sinned, hid himself from God (Gen. 3, 8) and lost the perfect knowledge of God which He had from creation. And from the very first God revealed His love to sinners and gave them the promise of the Redeemer, so that they by faith in Him could be saved (Gen. 3, 14ff.). This revelation was, then, a sufficient and clear revelation to Adam and Eve, as well as to Abraham and other Old Testament saints, not "a hardly noticeable lifting of the veil." The reference in Dr. Reu's essay on "Unionism": "Surely no one will seriously maintain that assurance of faith and knowledge of the Son of God can be present only where every one — believes the 'days' in the creation account to have been 24-hour days, and assumes that the Trinity is as clearly revealed in the Old Testament as in the New. That would be an untenable position" (p. 37). According to this, we must assume, then, that God "in creation chose to go the way of gradual development," although there was nothing "gradual" about the work of creation at all according to Scripture. "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast" (Ps. 33, 9). The whole world was created in six days, these days being so obviously and clearly six ordinary days that a man loses the right to call himself a Scripture theologian if he in any way casts doubt on the interpretation of the word "days" and allows that it *might* mean long periods of time, even whole "eras." Cf. Exodus 20, 11. Yet Dr. Reu includes*) this among

*) Here I should like to add a caution in order to strengthen the charge against Dr. Reu. Pastor Lillegard is right in making his attack. Dr. Reu treats the nature of the creation days as being in itself a matter of indifference, or rather, he is willing to compromise with any one who contrary to the testimony of Moses is ready to make concessions to a science falsely so called. Who are we to declare anything that God has revealed as being too insignificant for our closest attention! Or how dare we trifle with God's own words! If any one will grant license here because the nature of the creation days may not affect our faith directly he thereby parts company with those who tremble at every word God spake. — The case would be different if some one, because of an exegetical difficulty in the text of Moses itself, hesitates to become dogmatic re-

the "non-fundamental doctrines" which "are chiefly found in the more or less *obscure* texts" (p. 37) and says that those who insist on definiteness of teaching in such a matter "expose themselves to the charge of conceit!" (p. 38).

This is not only a concession to Modernism; it is the wide-open door by which all Modernism has entered the Christian Church. For the whole evolutionary system of Modernism rests on the false assumptions, first, that modern Science has proved the earth to be millions of years old and to have been developed only very gradually into what we see today; and secondly, that the law of evolution is a divine law which applies to every one of God's works, including His revelation of Himself. There is a great deal in Dr. Reu's essays which points to his acceptance of this evolutionary principle. Thus he reduces the prophecies in Is. 40; 5, 9 and 35; 2, 4 to mere types of the Messiah's salvation, by calling them "a divine revelation of the leading away into captivity and the deliverance therefrom", (p. 52); whereas the Lord Jesus Himself has made it very clear that such prophecies spoke directly of Him. Cf. John 5, Matthew 3, Luke 7, etc. Dr. Reu also assumes that it was not till "the kingdom of David and Solomon was broken down," that "the hope for a worldly Messianic reign was also shattered and room was made for a new hope, one that still contained the expectations of earthly glory, but which was completely permeated by the waiting for a spiritual deliverance, the deliverance from sin and death" (p. 54). The fact is that true believers in the earliest Old Testament times also rejected every thought of a "worldly Messianic reign" and looked for a spiritual deliverance as the one thing needful. Read Hebrews 11. Nor has "the hope for a worldly Messianic reign" died away among false believers even since the Jews were scattered to all the corners of the earth. On the contrary, it is shared not only by unbelieving Jews today, but by millions of nominal Christians who ought to know better.

In 1924 Dr. C. M. Zorn published a book entitled "The Whole Christian Doctrine in Genesis 1-5," in which he showed that "already in the first five chapters of Genesis the *whole Christian doctrine* is clearly revealed." This book might have been written as a direct answer to the argumentation in Dr. Reu's essay. Instead of quoting and analyzing that

garding the length of those days. To cite an example. The well known Lic. Wilhelm Moeller in his recent book *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments in heilsgeschichtlicher Entwicklung* makes the following statement: "Der 7. Tag ist bestimmt als jetzt noch andauernde Periode gemeint — die Schlussformel fehlt hier übrigens — (s. noch Hebr. 4, 4. 10); dann sollte man aber bei den andern Tagen diese Auffassung auch für möglich, wahrscheinlich oder sogar für nötig halten" (p. 49). Recognizing an exegetical difficulty and treating it as such is to confirm the absolute authority of the Scriptures in the matter. Else why bother about the difficulty? To ignore an exegetical question would do just as little honor to the Word of God as to declare any of its doctrines to be a matter of indifference.

essay more here, we shall conclude with parts of the preface and conclusion of Dr. Zorn's book, and ask that those who may find it hard to distinguish between the orthodox doctrine and Dr. Reu's presentation study this whole book, or the corresponding chapters in Dr. Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik*.

Dr. Zorn writes: "Luther and all truly orthodox theologians recognize and testify that *the Old Testament reveals Christ*, that *the whole Christian doctrine is taught* in it, even though the glorious light of the New Testament was not yet shining. They agree perfectly with the great apostle Paul who testified before Agrippa and the Roman governor Festus: 'I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying *none other things* than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that would rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles' (Acts 26, 22. 23). They agree perfectly also with our Lord Jesus Christ Himself who, when opening the disciples' understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, said: 'All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the *law of Moses* and in the *prophets*, and in the *psalms, concerning me*' (Luke 24, 44; read also 45-47). "But just this is being denied by almost all theologians of our time, even by such as still call themselves Lutheran and Christian, in spite of this clear evidence of Scripture. They deride it as being old-fashioned and reject it as being unscientific. And just like the worldly-wise scientists of this world teach a gradual development or evolution of man from the brute state, or at least from a very low beginning, to the present high state of culture, just so these theologians teach that Holy Scriptures offer a revelation and knowledge which similarly developed itself out of barely noticeable beginnings until it finally reached the maturity and perfection of the New Testament. They deny that the Old Testament teaches *everything* that the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles taught. They teach, on the contrary, that the Old Testament reveals *none* of the fundamental doctrines of salvation with clear, plain, unmistakable words, reveals none of the doctrines which Christ and His apostles taught. The clear and specific messianic prophecies of the Old Testament they reduce to mere 'types' which concern themselves only with people and events of the Old Testament. But a saving knowledge of Christ and true faith could not be wrought in the hearts of men by such mere 'types.' Hence they do not admit any clear and specific Christian doctrine in the Old Testament, but distort it and make of it a shallow book of morals, and so forth. Thereby they take from all those who permit themselves to be deluded and misled by them the correct knowledge and understanding of the Old Testament and the spiritual blessings connected with it" (p. 5.6).

In conclusion Dr. Zorn says: "To say, therefore, as some so-called 'believing' and 'Lutheran' theologians say and teach, that the Old Testament believers from barely noticeable beginnings gradually developed these doctrines (the Christian teachings such as that of the Trinity, etc.), and

that they gradually came to this knowledge, that the Old Testament never definitely, clearly, and unmistakably teaches those facts of salvation which Christ and His apostles taught, is ignorance, science falsely so called, false doctrine, deceit, and all Christians must earnestly be warned against it.

"But after all a Christian reader might say: yes, I see that the whole Christian doctrine is taught in the first five chapters of Genesis; but did the faithful during the first 1500 years also clearly recognize, know, and proclaim these doctrines?"

"We answer: 1) that they did so surely was shown in this (Dr. Zorn's) little book. 2) Adam and Eve through their fall into sin lost — the image of God —, they no longer possessed the blessed and perfect knowledge of God. But they had not lost the memory of it. They certainly knew what they had lost. Thus they still had a purely intellectual, though dead, knowledge of that divine truth which until the fall they had known and discerned spiritually and perfectly. But when the Lord God showed them their sin and graciously gave them the Gospel-promise, they were regenerated. . . . Now they again spiritually knew and discerned what they had lost. . . . And all those who were regenerated by the Word of God and believed, had the same spiritual and living knowledge which Adam and Eve had and proclaimed. Aye, the Christian doctrine was clearly known by the faithful of the first 1500 years, known and proclaimed."

Let this remain the teaching of "Missouri," and the fears of its friends today will soon be dissipated, though ever so many essays "in the interest of Lutheran unity" blur and confuse the clear teachings of God's Word by the specious misinterpretations and piously phrased denials of revealed truth.

THE CLEARNESS OF SCRIPTURE

It is an essential part of faith in Scripture as the divinely inspired Word of God that we accept and believe the words as they stand without trying to harmonize them with our own reason or with human science and philosophy, nor adding to, and subtracting from, them by the interpretations and explanations of popes, theologians and church councils. God has made His word so clear that no mere man can make them more clear and plain than they already are (cf. Ps. 119, 105, etc.). All departures from the saving truth are due, not to any unclearness or uncertainty in Scripture itself, but to the stubborn prejudices and wilful blindness that too often are found even in those who believe in God. Just as sins against the Law of God are due to the old Adam which regenerated persons also have, not to any indefiniteness or unclearness in the commandments themselves, so the heresies and doctrinal errors which disturb the Christian Church are due to the mental, moral and spiritual weaknesses of Christians, not to any lack of clearness or simplicity in the doctrinal statements of the Bible. Thus nothing could be more clear and simple than, for example, the words of Christ in the institution of the Lord's

Supper. Yet Christians have disagreed seriously on the meaning of those words, — because they put human *interpretations*, based on reason, above the Word alone.

Still we read in the essay, "What is Scripture?" by Dr. Reu, which we have been reviewing in a series of articles: "The Scriptures are clear and perspicuous *per se*; their perspicuity is the basis and presupposition for all exegetical work in the Church. *But this perspicuity must be rightly understood.* — The perspicuity of Scripture is a growing thing and here John 16, 13 with its promise, 'The Spirit will lead you into all truth,' is to be supplied. It is a fact that the Church did not from the very beginning understand every phase of Scripture, but during the course of history, under the guidance of God, the meaning of Scriptures *becomes* ever plainer and clearer. Centuries passed and St. Paul was not understood, and Luther himself had read his Bible for years, being certainly an honest seeker after truth, and did not find the right understanding of Rom. 1, 17 with its term 'righteousness of God,' until God Himself opened his eyes. If the Church continues faithfully to ponder the Word of God, if it makes ever more complete use of all auxiliary branches of study (such as grammar, lexicography, history, etc.) and if it makes moral progress, then the Spirit will lead the Church in corresponding measure, but in His own time, into the comprehension of Scripture, often in opposition to errors that may arise from time to time" (p. 74).

Compare with this the words of Dr. Fr. Pieper in his "Christliche Dogmatik": "God has arranged the Holy Scripture so that any error in Christian teaching is impossible, *so long as we remain in simple faith on His Word* (cf. John 8, 31. 32; 1 Tim. 6, 3). Hence also Luther's constant admonition never to put an interpretation (gloss) in place of the words of Scripture themselves (in place of 'the naked Scripture'). 'The Word they still shall let abide!' It is a characteristic of the Lutheran Church that it bases its doctrine not on an interpretation, not even on the interpretation of Luther, but on the Scripture words themselves; while Papists and Reformed demonstrably stand, not on the words of Scripture itself, but on an interpretation of the Pope, or of Zwingli, Calvin, etc." (pp. 390-1; tr. from the German by L.).

Thus, the reason why Luther so long misunderstood the clear words of Rom. 1, 17 was simply that his mind had been prejudiced by the interpretations of the Catholic theologians who by their "systems of theology" and their rationalistic speculations had beclouded and perverted the plain statements of Scripture. To argue that the Spirit had not led "the Church" into a full understanding of such passages as Rom. 1, 17, until "God Himself opened his (Luther's) eyes," is to disregard the historical fact that the early Church and unnumbered individual Christians down through the centuries understood them correctly and had a full knowledge of saving truth. It is, furthermore, a false "enthusiasm" to assume that "the Spirit leads men into all truth" in any other way than by means of the written Word itself, — as if it took some special revelation from on high, or some

Quakerish "illumination" of the Spirit to enable a man to understand the Scriptures! The Modernist professors at the University of Chicago, under whom we studied some New Testament exegesis and History of Interpretation, insisted that no man could understand the Bible aright until he had gained a full knowledge of the historical circumstances under which it was written as well as of the grammar, lexicography, etc., of the Bible, besides imbibing the "scientific" (i. e. evolutionary) spirit. Thus they sought to undermine all faith in the Bible as God's saving Word. Dr. Pieper says in answer to such claims: "We must hold fast to this that a definite understanding of Scripture in no manner depends on an acquaintance with its secular-historical background, since the whole historical background which is necessary for a sure understanding of the meaning of Scripture is given in Scripture itself" (p. 442). But Dr. Reu follows the Modernist principles, instead of refuting them, and at the same time states the orthodox principles, with the result that he also undermines faith in the Bible as the clear word of God, the only light on our way.

In this connection, Dr. Reu argues that "the understanding of Scripture by the Church, and here again especially by those who have been called upon to interpret Scripture, precedes the understanding by the individual members" (p. 75). If this is not "Romanism," then the Roman Catholic Church does not teach "Romanism" either. Dr. Reu says, indeed, that it "is not Romanism; it is only a statement of a fact, and long experience of the Church." But we deny that it is a fact and assert on the contrary that "the understanding of Scripture by the individual members" has as a matter of historical record preceded "the understanding of Scripture by the Church." Individuals like Athanasius had to wage bitter controversies in order to get "the Church" to accept the doctrine of the Trinity which the Bible teaches from Genesis 1 on to the end. Individuals like Luther had to live a life of unceasing warfare to get even a part of "the Church" to accept the central doctrine of justification by faith alone, which the Bible so clearly teaches throughout. Furthermore, if "the Church" has to make clear the meaning of Scripture before an individual can be sure of what it means, and if "the Church" in turn can become clear only by a gradual historical development of Bible interpretation, then it is the Church which is the real authority for faith and life, not the Bible at all. Therefore Dr. Pieper calls it a "departure from the Scripture principle" when men in any manner refer to "the Church, the doctrinal decisions of the Church (Councils, Synods), the Pope, etc." (p. 244) as authorities for what we shall believe.

That Dr. Reu really means to cast doubt on the clearness of Scripture is indicated also by his statement: "Although we do not deny that now and then a heathen soul can find the way of life by mere Bible reading without the help of any spoken word of the preacher or missionary or Christian layman, this is certainly not the rule but an exception. Therefore we Lutherans do not believe that distribution of the Bible among non-Christians is the better part of missionary work." We do not know what

authority Dr. Reu has for speaking for Lutherans in general here. We for our part have had some experience in the foreign fields and are certain that by far the best part of the mission work done in heathen lands is that of Bible distribution. Most missionaries have "darkened counsel" by their stuttering efforts at "explaining" the Bible to the heathen. But if they have put the Bible into their hands in an adequate translation they have done much good. Difficulties with understanding the Bible arise for the heathen only when the Bible has not been accurately translated or when key-words of the Bible, like *e. g.* God, are misrepresented by the substitution of an idol-name for the literal translation, as has been done in some editions of the Bible in China. Then, indeed, the Bible will need to be "interpreted" and "properly safeguarded" by the preaching of the missionary, if it is not to be misunderstood. Otherwise it is the Bible itself which also in heathen lands is God's means of grace for the conversion of the heathen. As Luther says: "The Scripture *without any interpretation* is the sun and *all light*." Referring to the words of institution of the Lord's Supper as an example, Luther says: "Even if I were a Turk, a Jew or heathen, who accepted nothing of the Christian faith, but heard or read these words about the Sacrament, I would have to say: I do not indeed believe the Christian doctrine; but this I must say: If you wish to be Christians and hold to your doctrine (on the basis of the words of Scripture), then you must believe that Christ's body and blood are eaten and drunk in the bread and wine bodily" (Quoted in Pieper, p. 392-3). Thus we know of Reformed missionaries in China who complain that their converts understand the Sacrament in what is essentially the Lutheran (the Scriptural) way! In short, the missionary's real task, as well as the faithful pastor's, is to persuade the people to study God's own Word — study it so thoroughly that they can correct their teachers if they in any way depart from the simple teachings of that Word, — not to "explain" or "interpret" the Bible to them as if they could not understand it without such explanations. That is something that should be left to Romanists, Christian Scientists with the blasphemous "Key to Holy Scriptures," and other heretics.

It does not help matters that Dr. Reu also admits that the written Word of God, in and by itself, is a means of grace. For he adds, "In conceding this we do not take back what we formerly said about the circulation of Bibles as a sufficient means of missionary activity" (p. 77). It is characteristic of his essay throughout that truth and error are set side by side in it; where they obviously contradict each other, it is merely asserted that they do not contradict each other, and with that assertion we are to be satisfied. The tragedy is that such muddled, contradictory teachings should now be broadcast in our own circles also, the doors having been opened wide for them by the Missouri Synod's insistence on continuing to hold conferences with those who do not agree with the clear, definite teachings of Walther, Pieper and "old Missouri." We have met with only too many evidences accordingly that brethren in the faith who should

have known better have been infected by this uncertain, "yes and no," Modernistic-orthodox attitude to Scripture and Scripture doctrine. We say, therefore, with St. Paul: "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. I have confidence in you through the Lord that ye will be none otherwise minded; but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be" (Gal. 5, 8-10).

THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE

It is a fundamental part of Lutheran doctrine, as opposed to Roman Catholic and rationalistic, Modernistic teaching, that the Holy Scriptures are in themselves sufficient and perfect, "able to make us wise unto salvation" (2 Tim. 3, 14); "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple" (Ps. 19, 7). As Dr. Pieper says in his "Christliche Dogmatik": "It is self-evident that by surrendering the perfection of sufficiency of Scripture, the Scripture principle is abandoned. For if Scripture needs to be supplemented by anything outside of itself, then the Christian Church is thereby, *eo ipso*, torn away from its foundation, the word of the apostles and prophets, and is made to stand on the person of the one allegedly supplementing it" (p. 385 — Tr. from the German by L.). In this connection he points out that although Scripture is "not a textbook of ordinary human science," yet when "Scripture in passing touches on such things as belong in the field of natural science, then it always is right, all assertions of human 'science' to the contrary notwithstanding" (p. 384).

But Dr. M. Reu. whose essay "What is Scripture?" we have been reviewing, limits the sufficiency of Scripture strictly to "religious problems, because the religious field alone is its province; other problems may be solved by science" (p. 76). Therefore it is that the A. L. C. has objected to such statements as this in the Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod: "We teach that the first man was not brutelike nor merely capable of intellectual development, but that God created man in his own image — *endowed with a truly scientific knowledge of nature*, Gen. 2, 19-23." That man was created "in true knowledge of God and in true righteousness and holiness" is something they can accept because that is in the "religious field." But to say that the first man was "endowed with a truly scientific knowledge of nature," they will not accept, in spite of Gen. 2, 19-23, because that encroaches upon the field of "science," — as if human science could ever arrive at any real knowledge of the intellectual equipment of the first man, before the Fall, apart from the inspired Word of the Creator himself!

Furthermore, although Dr. Reu says that "Scripture is also sufficient for the individual Christian; it offers him enough light, so that he can find the way to the Father," yet he adds: "— but if he independently studies the Bible he should not despise nor ignore the assured results of the Church's theological scholarship, although it is to be used with discrimination." If he had said: "the Confessions of the orthodox Lutheran

Church," we could agree, since those Confessions teach nothing else than the Word of God in a clear and systematised form. But this phrase "the assured results of theological scholarship" is a favorite expression of Modernists and Higher Critics and points more often to their destructive criticism and godless perversion of Bible teaching than to sound doctrine. Therefore it is that we do not ask any layman to be guided by anything whatever than the Word itself and point to our Confessions, not as *guides* to an understanding of the Bible, but as *proofs* that our Church teaches nothing but Bible truth. The fact is that more people have lost their faith by paying too much attention to "the assured results of theological scholarship" than through anything else; and that the wisdom of the Lutheran principle, "the Word *alone*" is repeatedly demonstrated by the manner in which learned theologians go astray from the simple truths of the Bible, misleading all those who "in their simplicity go with" them (2 Sam. 15, 11).

In this connection Dr. Reu also says that it "is better not to use it (the term 'perfectio'), because it is so often misunderstood"; and then goes on to ridicule those Lutheran dogmaticians who have maintained that to charge "Holy Scripture with a single barbarism," in language and style, would be "a by no means insignificant blasphemy." Here, too, Dr. Pieper defends those whom Dr. Reu attacks, showing in detail that the old Lutheran dogmaticians were entirely correct when they claimed, both that the language and style of the original Hebrew and Greek Testaments were the very best for their purpose, and that the texts handed down to us are in every essential the same as those originally written by the prophets and apostles. Dr. Reu's remarks on these points reveal a strange ignorance of the conclusions of modern Greek scholars, whose researches, like those of archaeologists, confirm the claims made for the Bible by believing theologians from the beginning.

There are other things in Dr. Reu's essay which are contrary to the sound doctrine stated so fully and clearly in Dr. Pieper's great work. But we believe we have pointed out most of the errors which our readers need to know about in order to arrive at a correct judgment regarding the nature of the proposed union between the Missouri Synod and the A. L. C. Since there is disagreement even regarding the very foundation of all teachings, the Word of God itself, it is vain to assume that agreement can be real and lasting on any of the teachings of that Word. Those who have been trying to assure our people that Dr. Reu and the A. L. C. now stand as one with us on the doctrine of Scripture, over against the liberal U. L. C., have the facts against them. Dr. Reu, indeed, claims that "the position taken by him in this pamphlet ("What is Scripture?") is in full consonance with Luther's standpoint" (p. 83). But Dr. Pieper proves that the position taken by *him* agrees fully with Luther's standpoint; and we have showed some of the points on which Dr. Reu and Dr. Pieper take opposite sides. There will, undoubtedly, be those who will insist that Luther and Pieper and Reu all teach the same thing — there is no essential difference be-

tween them. We have been repeatedly told, even during this last year after the publication of Dr. Reu's essay, that he and the A. L. C. agree with the Missouri Synod on Scripture. We submit that those who claim this are guilty of "wishful thinking," to say the least, and are closing their eyes to the facts. It was not without reason that Dr. Koren, in his last address to the Norwegian Synod, made his essay on the Inspiration of Scripture his "testament" to the Synod. He saw how all the weaknesses and errors in the Lutheran Churches of America were rooted in false or inadequate ideas regarding Scripture and its authority; that the real battle for true Lutheranism would have to be fought on that front. The sum and substance of the whole matter is that only the Word of God can create true spiritual unity; only where the Word of God is accepted as the sole authority to the utter exclusion of every other factor can there be profitable discussion regarding Christian doctrine; only where doctrinal discussions and agreements are based on the Word alone, accepting nothing but what the Word teaches and everything that the Word teaches, can there be real unity. By this touchstone, the A. L. C. agreement with the Missouri Synod is not one that we as true Lutherans can accept or endorse. We hope and believe that the Missouri Synod will also retrace its steps and undo, in this year of grace, 1941, some of the harm done to the cause of conservative Christianity by the acceptance of the 1938 resolutions on Union with the A. L. C.

Geo. O. Lillegard.

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

“The Columbus Conference and Its Repercussions.” — The Columbus meeting, discussed in these columns in our April number (pp. 132-138) was a thoroughly unionistic affair, in which representatives of the Missouri Synod, according to reports in the secular press, participated wholeheartedly. In order to correct this false impression and to undo as far as possible the offence given unintentionally, Dr. G. V. Schick published an article in the *Lutheran Witness* for May 13, 1941, under the caption heading this item. Already in our April report we were able to call attention in a footnote (p. 136) to the actual confessing done by our Missouri brethren at Columbus. We were, therefore, very happy to read Dr. Schick's article in the *Witness*, and herewith reproduce it in full.

“Under the caption ‘Meeting on War Relief’ the *Lutheran Witness*, in its issue of February 4, 1941, page 43, published a brief report concerning the now historic Columbus Conference assembled January 20 of this year. The meeting received its impetus from a resolution adopted by the convention of the A. L. Cf., at Minneapolis, Minn., instructing its President ‘to invite the President of the U. L. C. A. and of the Missouri Synod to join him in extending an invitation to all general Lutheran bodies in America to such a conference’ as was to have as its purpose, according to a previous section of the resolution, the discussion of ‘the entire question of Lutheran cooperation with respect to the distressed foreign missions, as well as such other matters of common interest and practical cooperation as the proposed conference may find it advisable to consider.’ Leaders of nine Lutheran bodies and of the National Lutheran Council had appeared in response to the invitation. Our own Synod was represented in an unofficial capacity by three men, with President J. W. Behnken at their head. Discussion in the two sessions which were held centered around possible aid that might be extended to the orphaned Lutheran foreign missions and around coordination of efforts to provide for the care of Lutheran draftees in Army camps.

“A garbled newspaper account, which failed to appraise the actual situation properly, gave nation-wide publicity to the report that ‘the Missouri Synod, its membership heretofore distinctly a separate unit,’ had ‘pledged cooperation to the National Lutheran Council to further church unity in the face of the national crisis’ and had ‘expressed willingness to cooperate in foreign-mission enterprises, aid in Army camp work, and suggested further conferences to establish a basis for Lutheran unity.’ To remove the embarrassing impression that our officials at Columbus had struck out in a new direction and were seeking to achieve Lutheran unity through cooperation in externals rather than through discussions aimed at first establishing unity of the Spirit as a basis for all other cooperative enterprises, it is but fair that careful consideration be given to the following text of our President's statements before the conference, always

bearing in mind that what he said was motivated by the unwarranted hope 'that an expression for cooperation between all bodies present might come out of the meetings.'

"In the course of the day's discussions Dr. Behnken said:

"It is not our intention to drive a wedge into the National Lutheran Council. It is a matter of the individual body whether or not to belong to this organization. Let me state also that we appreciate the repeatedly expressed recognition on the part of the representatives of the various bodies represented here concerning the conscience scruples held by Missouri with reference to 'cooperation even in externals.' This is not an oddity on our part. It is truly a matter of conscience with us. Frankly stated, I had misgivings about affixing my signature to the call for this meeting. We definitely adhere to the Biblical principle that unless there is agreement in doctrine, there can be no cooperation in any form in the dissemination of the Gospel. We are intensely interested in actual relief work. We want to give relief, but we believe that that relief must and should be confined to physical and personal relief.

"This applies also with reference to work among the soldiers and sailors. We are certainly interested in this work. I dread the thought that the young men from our congregations must face the dreadful and shocking temptations as described by Dr. Ylvisaker after visiting forty-two Army camps and cantonments. I shudder at the shocking aftermath and the bitter heartaches in many homes such as I witnessed twenty years ago. But there is something worse, something which I not merely dread, but fear, and that is wrong teaching, false doctrine. I think of the earnest warning of my beloved Lord: 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.'

"Much as we desire to relieve physical distress in foreign lands and to work among the soldiers and sailors in the various cantonments, we are not at all interested in making such emergencies an effort to bring about Lutheran unity. We of the Missouri Synod, and I know that I can speak here also for all the constituent synods in the Synodical Conference, believe that just the reverse must be done. We believe that you must touch the very heart and the core of the matter and reach agreement in doctrine. The Lord says: 'Endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; one Lord, one faith, one Baptism,' etc. If such real unity is achieved on the basis of God's Word, then all other matters will become self-evident.

"Gentlemen, you know that we do not have agreement in doctrine. By way of example let me say that we believe in verbal inspiration. You know that not all accept this. There are some Lutheran bodies in which teachers are permitted publicly to attack this doctrine and thus to deny that in every word of the Bible God speaks to me. With us this is a basic matter.

"Again, there is no agreement with reference to the doctrine of the Church. There is much confused thinking and teaching on this point. Many confuse the visible with the invisible Church.

"I have merely mentioned examples. I might mention other differences of doctrine. May these suffice.

"Unity can be achieved only through the discussion of our differences in doctrine on the basis of the Word of God. To believe that unity can be achieved, or even only remotely striven for, through a cooperation in matters such as relief, etc., is a fallacy. Thus, while we cannot cooperate with any one who is not at one with us in faith, we are, however, ready to do our part in our way to bring physical and personal relief to the orphaned missionaries and to work among the soldiers and sailors."

"These clear, yet moderate words of our President require no commentary to point out that Synod's established position was upheld most ably in trying times when sentiment is likely to run away with convictions. That the position of our Synod was respected is shown by the resolutions which the conference adopted. In regard to our Synod's giving support to orphaned Lutheran missions it was resolved to 'encourage the American Section of the Lutheran World Convention or its committee to arrange for such coordination (not cooperation; the Ed.) of effort and/or allocation of fields as are agreed upon by the committee of the American Section of the World Convention and the committee of the Missouri Synod.' The resolution pertaining 'to the spiritual care for draftees at the military training camps' requested Dr. Behnken and Dr. Long of the National Lutheran Council 'to be a committee to seek ways and means for the coordination of the Church's work in the training camps.'

"In view of our President's statements before the Columbus Conference there can be no doubt in our minds that whatever tangible results may grow out of the labors of these committees, there will be no compromise of our Scriptural position that there can be cooperation in the work of the Church only when unity of doctrine has become a reality. It is true that, because of existing abnormal conditions in the world situation, our Synod has found it advisable in a limited measure to coordinate its own endeavors to meet the arising problems with the efforts of other Lutheran bodies of our country. However, those optimistic appraisals which hail the 'working agreement' between the Missouri Synod and the National Lutheran Council as a 'notable milestone in the history of American Lutheranism,' if that expression implies progress in the direction of Lutheran unity, are altogether beside the mark."

So far the article by Dr. Schick.

In our opinion the last paragraph, particularly the last statement, is not quite reassuring. We still fear the camel's head. Moreover, another point should be added. The Columbus Conference was opened and closed with joint prayer, in which the Missouri representatives did not par-

ticipate and against which President Dr. Behnken had protested beforehand. See the footnote mentioned above: "I (Dr. Behnken) also told him (Chairman Ryden) that we assumed no responsibility for the opening of the meeting with a prayer."

It is to be deplored that the offence ensued. All within our power should be done to correct it. We are still of the opinion that the course pursued by our President Brenner was the stronger and truly God-pleasing testimony (see *Q. S.* for April, 1941, p. 132). M.

Is the Missouri Synod Veering? — This anxious question was forced into our hearts and on our lips by a series of articles and editorials recently appearing in the *American Lutheran* and the *Lutheran Companion*.

The February issue of the *American Lutheran* carried an article from the pen of Dr. W. Arndt, dealing with "Foreign Missions and Inter-synodical Cooperation," from which we quote the following: "The question arises whether we Missouri Lutherans, who are not in fellowship with the bodies sponsoring the Lutheran World Convention, *can with a good conscience participate in this endeavor. I believe we can.* Participation does not mean approval of the doctrinal position of the bodies with which we are cooperating. It does not mean church fellowship. It is simply the employment of a common agency for the performance of a Christian duty and does not include joining in religious worship."

The March number of the same magazine contained an article by Pastor H. F. Wind, president of the Associated Lutheran Charities. The author deplores the fact that due to the present competition and division among Lutheran groups "most communities today have little respect for Lutheran efforts, because they are so scattered and poorly conducted. . . . *There are few Lutherans in key positions in state or national agencies. . . . Lutherans just 'don't rate,' largely because their forces are so scattered.*" Pastor Wind characterizes this situation as "a sin and a shame." ("Lutheran Union and Human Welfare" is the title of his article.)

The *Lutheran Companion* (Swedish Augustana Synod) devoted two lengthy editorials to the articles by Dr. Arndt and Pastor Wind (March 27 and April 3), saying: "*This is an important forward step* in Missouri Lutheran church polity, and opens up great possibilities for co-ordinated Lutheran effort. It not only indicates that more *forward-looking leaders* are coming into positions of power and influence in the Missouri Synod, but also that that great Lutheran body is finding it more and more difficult, in face of the perplexity and staggering problems confronting the Church today, to *maintain its spirit of self-satisfied aloofness and isolation* from other Lutherans. In fact, it would not be difficult, in view of the present world situation, to point out abundant reasons why the Missouri Synod needs the counsel and support of other Lutheran groups more than they need hers."

Is this view of the situation that Missouri is ready to leave its old

moorings, that it is veering in its course, resented by the *American Lutheran*, or branded as a gross misinterpretation of the two above mentioned articles? An editorial in the May issue contains the answer. "The editor of the *Lutheran Companion* believes that *these articles indicate a change of sentiment* in the Missouri Synod concerning cooperation in external matters, or in the words of Dr. Arndt, 'the employment of a common agency for the performance of a Christian duty.' **This is true.**"

Naturally, the *Lutheran Companion* rejoices with "thanksgiving to God" that "the editor of *The American Lutheran* admits very frankly that all this indicates 'a change of sentiment' in his body." He counts this as one among "a number of hopeful signs on the Lutheran horizon" and voices the anticipation that "the day of more complete understanding is not as far removed as some may think" (May 15, 1941).

We quote another paragraph from this editorial.

"We have been led to suppose all these years that it was the Missouri Synod that would have nothing to do in the way of practical cooperation in externals with other Lutheran groups until absolute agreement in all doctrinal questions had been achieved. Our good friend, Dr. J. W. Behnken, President of the Missouri Synod, to a certain extent reiterated that position at the Columbus Conference when he said: 'Unity can be achieved only through the discussion of our differences on the basis of the Word of God. To believe that unity can be achieved or even only remotely striven for through a cooperation in matters such as relief, etc., is a fallacy.'

"Having said this, however, Dr. Behnken and the other Missouri Synod men at Columbus on January 20 voted in favor of a plan for effective Lutheran co-ordination in the matter of relief for orphaned foreign missions and for work among service men, and since then have given evidence of a real concern that the understanding reached at Columbus may be carried out with all honesty and sincerity. All of which proves once more that the heart often has reasons which the head will never know. Whenever a consecrated Christian personality, moved by the Spirit of Christ, is face to face with a perplexing dilemma, the law of love will always triumph."

In other words, the editor of the *Lutheran Companion*, rather gleefully, points out a clash between the confession of mouth and of action on the part of the Missouri men at Columbus.

All of which fills us with deep concern. Is the Missouri Synod, the staunch champion of confessional Lutheranism in the past, really veering in its course? We hope and pray that this may not be the case, and we hope that the Missouri Synod will find ways and means of effectively dispelling the impression created by the *American Lutheran*. M.

Büchertisch.

The Lutheran Hymnal. Authorized by the Synods constituting the Ev. Luth. Synodical Conference of North America. 852 pages, 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ x8 $\frac{1}{2}$. Blue cloth. Gold title on front and backbone. Price, \$1.50. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The Hymnal, which has been anxiously awaited by many congregations, is here. The time is too short to review it thoroughly, a few random remarks must suffice.

The book opens very easily and stays open, and wherever it is opened one is impressed with the clearness and neatness of the print. The size of the book does not appeal to the undersigned. The preface, in its opening sentence, states as the purpose of this collection of hymns: "for use in church, school, and home." But the book is too bulky to be conveniently carried back and forth between home and church or school. The result will be that people leave their books either at home or in church. That is to be deplored, especially when one remembers what their *Gesangbuch* meant to our fathers. It was, next to the Bible and the Catechism, in many cases even more so than both, their daily companion from which they drew nourishment, comfort, and strength for their faith. Only the final Judgment Day will reveal how much spiritual life was sustained by the daily use of the hymnal. The custom of our fathers, which has been waning rapidly during recent years, should be revived and encouraged as much as possible. The bulkiness of the present volume, it is to be feared, will prove a serious drawback. Even if a person owns two copies, one for home and one for church, this very fact will stand in the way of developing that intimate familiarity which marked the attitude of our fathers toward their hymnbook.

The Preface is signed by the chairman of the committee. If any names were to appear, then certainly all committee members who faithfully labored to the last on the project should have been mentioned.

How painstakingly all members of the committee worked, the undersigned had occasion to observe several times when he took the opportunity to sit in with them. Every hymn was carefully considered as to its content and its form. Particularly translations were studied and restudied, and many were rejected which, though fluent in form, deviated too much from the original in thought.

Two cases may serve as illustrations, one from the Advent hymn *Macht hoch die Thür*, the other from *Wie wohl ist mir, o Freund der Seelen*. In the latter, *der Seelen* is plural in form; but did the poet think of a number of souls, or did he rather have his own soul in mind? (*Der Seelen* may be a more solemn form of the

singular.) Compare *Jesus, Lover of my soul*. The meaning, most likely, is: *Wie wohl ist mir, mein Seelenfreund*. The committee adopted as the best solution: *My soul's best Friend* (No. 362; cf. Book of Hymns, No. 151, Hymn Book, No. 109). — In *Lift up your heads* (B. of H. 245; H. B. 138) the second line of the second stanza formerly read: *Mercy is ever at His side*. The question turns about the meaning of *Gefährt*; is it *der Gefährte*, as Miss Winkworth assumed, or *das Gefährt*, meaning *Fahrzeug*, a vehicle? The close association with other royal insignia (crown, scepter) led the committee to adopt the latter: *His chariot is humility* (No. 73).

Great care was also devoted to the selection of proper melodies for the various hymns, the music to be in agreement with the general tenor of the text; another aim being to embody as many good melodies as possible, and to avoid repetitions. Yet, hurriedly glancing over the index of tunes, I find that at least four melodies are suggested for seven different hymns each, while for some hymns a choice of two or even three different tunes (e. g., the above mentioned *Lift up your heads*) is offered.

The collection contains a total of 668 hymns, carols, etc., plus 170 pages of liturgical material.

May the Lord bless its use for the spiritual edification of our congregations and all their members.

M.

Theologische Quartalschrift.

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

Jahrgang 38

Oktober 1941

Nummer 4

Der Sinaibund, der Bund mit dem unmündigen leiblichen Samen Abrahams.

Gal. 3, 23 - 4, 31.

In dem Bunde Gottes mit Abraham stand eine doppelte Verheißung: die eine große, daß durch ihn und seinen Samen gesegnet werden sollten alle Geschlechter auf Erden; die andere geringere, daß sein Same das Land Kanaan zum irdischen Erbe bekommen solle, Gen. 12, 7; 13, 15; 15, 18. Die letztere ist nicht von Isaak und dessen Sohn Jakob geredet. Isaak steht noch mit seinem Namen als Vermittler des ersten Bundes an die spätere Nachkommenschaft Abrahams in Gen. 18, 17-19. Ihn und seinen Sohn Jakob führte der Herr die besonderen Wege, die uns bis zum Schluß der Genesis weitläufig beschrieben sind. In und mit ihnen kommt der spätere Abrahamssame nach Ägypten. Von diesem leiblichen Samen hatte der Herr gleich in dem ersten Bund mit Abraham zu ihm gesagt: „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 400 Jahre. Aber ich will richten das Volk, dem sie dienen müssen; darnach sollen sie ausziehen mit großem Gut.“ Das Land, in welches sie ausziehen sollten, war, wie wir schon in Exod. 3, 8 lesen, das Land Kanaan, dessen heidnische Völker ebenfalls zum Gericht reif waren. Seit jener Abrahamsverheißung waren nun 430 Jahre verflossen. Der Herr hatte sein Volk nicht vergessen; aber dies Volk hatte seines Abrahamsgottes, des Herrn (Jehovahs), fast total vergessen und war trotz aller seiner Plagen mit dem ägyptischen Götzendienst und seinen Lastern so gründlich durchtränkt, daß es zwar täglich über sein Elend schrie, aber von den Sünden Ägyptens nicht

mehr lassen konnte. „Da erhörte Gott ihr Wehklagen und gedachte an seinen Bund mit Abraham, Isaak und Jakob und sah drein und nahm sich ihrer an“, Exod. 2, 24. 25, und sandte ihnen Moses zur Ankündigung des bevorstehenden Gerichts über Agypten und zur Ausführung der „Kinder Israels“ in das ihnen verheißene Kanaan, ein Land, „da Milch und Honig innen fließe“.

Wir setzen hier die Berufung und Ausstattung Moses zum Führer des Volks, seine Verhandlungen mit Pharaoh, die 10 Plagen, die Weihung Israels für den Herrn, die wunderbaren Erweisungen der Macht und Gnade des Herrn gegen dies Volk auf der Wanderung von Suchoth an bis nach Rephidim in der Sinaiwüste als allgemein bekannt voraus. Nur die eine große Wundertat der Vernichtung Pharaohs und der ägyptischen Heeresmacht im Roten Meer, die Mose besonders zur Belehrung des Volks besang, können wir nicht unerwähnt lassen. — Was sollten denn diese und alle die vielen späteren Erweisungen der Macht und Gnade des Herrn an diesem Volk ausrichten? Es handelte sich durchweg um deren Erziehung zum Glauben Abrahams. Sie, die im Glauben Verwahrlosten, sollten an den Gott ihrer Väter wieder glauben lernen als an den einen wahren Gott, „der Himmel und Erde besitzt“, Gen. 14, 22, und damit allem Götzendienst der Heiden entwöhnt werden. Aber bisher waren alle Wunder des Herrn und alle Worte Moses an ihnen vergeblich gewesen. Ja, als ein von Art halstarriges Volk murrten sie bei jeder geringen Not und empörten sich schon jetzt des öfteren wider die Führung Moses, die doch des Herrn Führung war. Das ging so weit, daß Mose ein paarmal nahe ans Verzagen kam. Noch in Rephidim — nur eine Station vor dem Berge Sinai — schrieb Mose zum Herrn: „Wie soll ich mit dem Volke tun? Es fehlt nicht weit, sie werden mich noch steinigen“, Exod. 17, 4. Wieder schuf der Herr Rettung, aber ohne des Volks Anerkennung zu gewinnen.

Um Moses zu stärken und mit neuer Hoffnung auf das endliche Gelingen seines übernommenen Werks zu erfüllen, sandte der Herr ihm Jethro, den alten Priesterfürsten Midians, seinen Schwiegervater, der sich mit der Zeit ganz zum Herrn gewendet hatte, mit einem menschlichen, vom Herrn gebilligten Rat zu Mose, er solle sich als oberster Führer des Volks in seiner übergroßen Mühe auf seine Verhandlungen mit dem Herrn beschränken, zur äußeren Re-

gierung des Volks Unterführer bestellen und „Du selbst stelle dem Volk Rechte und Gesetze, daß du sie den Weg lehrest, darin sie wandeln, und die Werke, die sie tun sollen.“ Kap. 18, 18.

Mose erkannte das auch für richtig und befolgte Sethros Rat; wahrscheinlich fing er mit der Ordnung des Volks schon in Rephidim an und führte ihn mit der Niederschrift der „Rechte“ durch. Es waren rechtsgültige und für die Umstände der Wanderung dauernde Statuten, die das gesamte gesellschaftliche Leben des Volks regeln sollten. Wir finden diese schon in Kap. 21. Sie erfahren zum Teil je nach den jeweiligen Lagen des Volks, eine Änderung und laufen so durch alle die ersten vier Bücher Mose.

Zunächst kommt es nun kraft der Erziehungsweisheit des Herrn am Berge Sinai zu einer förmlichen und ungemein eindrucksvollen Bundesschließung des Herrn mit dem bisher so mühsam hierher geleiteten Volk, dem Leiblichen, aber geistlich ganz vollkommenen, ja, bereits im ägyptischen Götzendienste verfunkenen Abrahamsjamen.

Den Wortlaut des Bundes finden wir in Exod. 19, 4–9. Er kommt direkt aus der Gnadewolke, in welcher der Herr mit Mose hier verkehrte und ihm befahl: So sollst du sagen zu dem Hause Jakob und verkündigen den Kindern Israel:

„Ihr habt gesehen, was ich den Ägyptern getan habe, und wie ich euch getragen habe auf Adlersflügeln, und habe euch zu mir gebracht. 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.“

„Das sind die Worte, die du den Kindern Israel sagen sollst.“ Mose legte allen von ihm erwählten Ältesten und dem ganzen Volk diese Worte vor, und alles Volk antwortete wie Ein Mann: „Alles, was der Herr geredet hat, wollen wir tun.“ — Als Mose diese Antwort des Volkes zurückbrachte, fügte der Herr zur Ermunterung Moses hinzu, er wolle in einer dicken Wolke (Wolken säule) zu ihm kommen und so mit ihm reden, daß das Volk selbst seine Worte hören und Mose konstant glauben solle.

Nach besonderer dreitägiger Vorbereitung des Volks auf die

persönliche Erscheinung und Gesetzgebung des Herrn, traten die versprochenen Zeichen ein. Während das unten an den Berg geführte Volk von Furcht ergriffen und nur Mose und Aaron mit ihm zum Herrn in die Wolke hinaufgestiegen waren, hörte alles Volk mit ihren eigenen Ohren Gott mit eigenem Munde (Kap. 20) also reden: „Ich bin der Herr, dein Gott usw.“ (die bekannten 10 Gebote).

Ehe wir nun in der geschichtlichen Betrachtung des Sinaibundes fortfahren, müssen wir hier eine besondere Ausführung machen, die uns zum rechten Verständnis desselben nötig erscheint. Sie betrifft beide, den Inhalt und die Form des Sinaibundes (Exod. 19, 4–9) im Unterschied von dem mit Abraham in Gen. 15–23 geschlossenen Bunde. Dessen Eigentümlichkeit bezeichneten wir als einen „einseitigen“, weil der Herr dabei alles allein tat und Abraham nichts. Jener Bund bestand in lauter unbedingten Verheißungen, die nur in Glauben empfangen werden konnten; und auch den Glauben wirkten die Verheißungen als Gottes Gnadenwort mit göttlicher Kraft; sie bekehrten, heiligten und erhielten ihn im Glauben bis ans Ende, weil sie über Isaak hin in Christo selbst mündeten, Joh. 8, 56. So und nicht anders sollen wir armen Sünder vor Gott gerecht und selig werden. Im Sinaibunde aber, mit dem geistlich verdorbenen Abrahamsjamen geschlossen, stehen zwar auch die herrlichsten Verheißungen (Exod. 19, 6), aber der Herr macht sie abhängig von des Volkes Gehorsam und ihrem Halten seines Bundes, W. 5. Das verspricht das Volk zwar ruhig und getrost, W. 8, hält aber sein Versprechen nicht, sondern bricht es bald durch die Vergötterung des Goldenen Kalbes und durch immer wiederholten Ungehorsam. So kommt es, daß die große Masse des Volkes nicht einmal nach Kanaan hineinkommt, viel weniger die ewige Herrlichkeit mit Abraham erreicht. Auf dem Wege des Sinaibundes kann kein Sünder selig werden, weil keiner ihn halten kann. Wer bei sich selbst mit dem Gott aller Welt einen zweiseitigen Bund macht, dessen Erfüllung von seinen eigenen Leistungen abhängt, kann nicht selig werden. Die Schrift hat es alles in einen einzigen Spruch zusammengefaßt: „Aus Gnaden seid ihr selig geworden durch den Glauben; und daselbige nicht aus euch; Gottes Gabe ist es; nicht aus den Werken, auf daß sich nicht jemand rühme“, Eph. 2, 8. 9. Vergleiche hier schon Jeremia 11; Kap. 31 und Kap. 32 und Kap. 33.

Darauf ruht das dreifache Motto unserer Kirche: „Sola scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide!“

Wir gehen jetzt zu der Gesetzgebung selbst und ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung über. Sie war eine d o p p e l t e der besonderen Art nach. Voran (Kap. 20) stehen die heiligen zehn Gebote. Der Herr redet sie mit eigenen Worten aus der Wolke heraus. Moses ist mit Aaron bei ihm, das ganze Volk steht unten am Berge und hört alle diese Worte unter den angekündigten Wundern und Zeichen mit ihren eigenen Ohren. — Nun brauchen wir die Gebote selbst hier nicht zu erklären. Bei uns kennt sie jedes Schulkind. Mit der modernen ungläubigen und der zum Teil noch rechtgläubigen Theologie, die die Entstehung aller Religion mehr oder minder rationalistisch erklärt und die O f f e n b a r u n g, wie die Schrift selbst sie lehrt, auch in Israel für eine „kindliche“, dem unentwickeltesten Kulturzustande des Volkes angepasste Offenbarungsweise hält, — mit der w o l l e n wir nichts zu tun haben. Wir stehen auf dem Standpunkt des N e u e n Testaments, unsers Herrn Christus und seiner inspirierten Apostel. Wenn deren Endossament der Worte Moses und der Propheten von der Schöpfung, von der Sünde, von Abraham, von der Gesetzgebung am Sinai, vom Heil im Kreuze Christi nicht mehr absolut gelten, — dann machen wir das Buch zu.

Wie Moses die Gesetzgebung auf Sinai darstellt, so ist sie gewesen, nicht um ein Haar anders. An ihrer Spitze stehen die Z e h n Gebote. Sie sind ganz a l l g e m e i n und gelten j e d e m V o l k und jedem Sünder auf Erden, auch denen von dem geistlich verkommenen leiblichen Abrahamsamen, den er durch Moses aus Ägypten an den Sinai führte, um sie in Kanaan anzufiedeln und dann, wenn sie auf dieser Wanderung das G e h o r c h e n gelernt hätten, sie durch Abrahams Glauben an den verheißenen Sünderheiland selig zu machen. Um sie und ihre Kinder d a z u z u e r z i e h e n, gab er ihnen zuerst das allen Völkern und Menschen geltende M o r a l g e s e z der 10 Gebote und dazu das durch Jethro angeratene und vom Herrn gebilligte b e s o n d e r e Ordnungsgesetz und Statutengesetz, das nur so lange dienen sollte, als sie „nepioi“, d. h. Unmündige, Unreife und Unselbständige wären, Gal. 4, 1–11 und 21–31.*) — Dies b e s o n d e r e Gesetz ging

*) Leider haben auch Luther, die King James und die American Standard das nepioi in Gal. 4 mit „Kinder“ wiedergegeben. Die Vulgata hat „parvuli“.

nun kein anderes Volk an als den leiblichen, in Ägypten geistlich verwahrlosten Samen Abrahams, den der Herr durch Mosen aus Ägypten geführt hatte und in der Wüstenwanderung zum Glauben Abrahams zurückführen wollte. Daß die späteren Juden sich selbst unter dies Gesetz stellten, war ihre eigene Schuld und ihr Verderben.

Was sollte denn nun dies allen Völkern und Menschen gegebene Moralgesetz (die Zehn Gebote) den besonderen von Mose dem Sinaivolk mündlich und schriftlich gegebenen „Rechten“ gegenüber, die schon vom 21. Kapitel des zweiten Buchs Mose anfangend dies ganze Buch bis zu Ende und dann das ganze dritte und vierte, ja auch das fünfte noch durchlaufen? Der Herr hatte es selbst so klar und überzeugend als das eine große und wichtige Gesetz dargestellt, daß das Volk selbst sofort nach Anhörung desselben es dafür erklären mußte. Der Herr hatte es unter den sichtbaren Zeichen der Wolke und des Feuers auf dem Berge geoffenbart, er hatte es eben unter den schreckhaftesten Wundern und Zeichen mit eigenem Munde in die leiblichen Ohren des gesamten Volkes gepredigt. Er hatte es in von ihm selbst gemachte und mit eigener Hand beschriebene und Mose vor Zeugen übergebene Steintafeln für die Dauer festgelegt und es an den Kopf aller anderen Gesetze und Rechte gestellt. Warum und wozu?

Dies Gesetz ist die Regel und Richtschnur, nach welcher, der Maßstab, mit welchem am jüngsten Tage alle Menschen gemessen und gerichtet werden und jeder empfangen wird nach dem er gehandelt hat bei Leibes Leben, es sei gut oder böse, 2. Kor. 5, 10. Darum hat Gott dies, das große Gesetz allen Sündern in Herz und Gewissen geschrieben, damit sie keine Entschuldigung haben, Röm. 2, 6–16.

Dies Gesetz allein wirkt ins Gewissen und schafft die Furcht vor Gott (nicht das, was die Schrift sonst Gottesfurcht nennt, denn die kommt erst mit dem Evangelium), sondern das bloße Wehen und Zittern vor der Majestät, vor dem Gott, der da heim sucht der Väter Missetat an den Kindern bis in das dritte und vierte Glied, die mich hassen, und tue Barmherzigkeit an Tausenden, die mich lieb haben und meine Gebote halten (Vgl. hier auch Luthers Erklärung zum Schluß der Gebote). Diese selbe Furcht vor dem eifrigen Gott und Herrn muß nicht nur in das Herz derer kommen, die erst bekehrt werden sollen, wie der bekehrte Schwächer zu dem unbekehrten sagt: Und du fürchtest dich auch nicht vor Gott, der du doch in gleicher Verdammnis bist? Ja, diese Furcht vor dem heiligen und eifrigen Gott muß noch in jedem Christen im Hintergrunde wohnen, wie

David Ps. 119, 120 sagt: „Ich fürchte mich vor dir, daß mir die Haut schauert.“ Diese Furcht vor Gott schufen die „Rechte“ Moses (Kap. 21, 1) an sich nicht; denn es waren zeitweilige äußerliche Verordnungen. Aus dem Grunde sind auch diese immer wieder von dem stärksten Gebot des Moralgesetzes, keinen Götzen zu dienen, durchbrochen; V. 23 scharft das noch einmal besonders ein, und die beiden letzten Verse von der Errichtung eines bescheidenen stufenlosen und keusch zu bedienenden Altars und mit der Warnung vor einem mit dem Meißel behauenen und dadurch entweihten Altar leiten die nun in Kap. 21 folgenden Rechte ein, die mit dem geschichtlichen Verlauf der Wanderung die drei mittleren Bücher Moses füllen.

Was nun den Inhalt der von Mose gegebenen „Rechte“ oder Ordnungen des Volkslebens Israels betrifft, so sind sie einigermaßen, wenn auch nicht streng, klassifiziert. Vorausgesetzt ist durchweg die Kenntnis des vom Herrn gepredigten Moralgesetzes und eine wenn auch nur noch schwache Furcht vor demselben. Ihr Zweck ist die Heiligung des ganzen Volkslebens. Mose fängt mit dem Familien- und Hausleben an, geht gleich hierbei zur Warnung vor dem Götzendienst über und kommt in Kap. 22, 18–20 auf die Rechtspflege (in V. 28 sind unter „Göttern“ die Obrigkeiten zu verstehen), und fordert gleiches Recht für die Mächtigen und Machtlosen. Darauf folgen schon hier Verordnungen über die Hauptfestzeiten und wieder Warnungen vor Götzendienst. Dann steigt Moses zum Herrn in die Wolke, um sich Anweisung über die Volksnachfeier des geschlossenen Bundes zu holen (das Bundesbuch, das Bundesblut und das Bundesmahl, Kap. 24), bleibt 40 Tage und Nächte bei Gott und gibt nach der Aufforderung zu einem freiwilligen Heboffer jetzt ausführliche Anweisungen zum Bau der sogenannten Stiftshütte als der zeitweiligen Gotteswohnung. Das geht von Kap. 25 in einem Zuge bis Kap. 31, der Anweisung zur Einweihung derselben. Die ganze Sache wird aber durch die Erzählung von dem Götzendienst des Volkes und dem Goldenen Kalbe unterbrochen, die der Herr selbst dem bei ihm weilenden Mose mit den Worten schildert: „Steige hinab, dein Volk, das du aus Ägypten geführt hast, hat's verderbt. Sie sind schnell von dem Wege getreten, den ich ihnen geboten habe, und haben sich ein gegossenes Kalb gemacht und es angebetet. Ich sehe, daß es ein halsstarriges Volk ist. Und nun laß mich, daß mein Zorn über sie ergrimme und sie auffresse (vertilge), so will ich dich zum großen Volk machen.“ Das war der

erste grobe Bundesbruch des Volkes. Wäre es nur auch der einzige und letzte gewesen! Auf die so herzliche Fürbitte Moses schob der Herr zwar die *M u s f ü h r u n g* seiner Drohung auf, fügte aber auch hinzu: Ich werde ihre Sünde wohl heimsuchen, wenn meine Zeit kommt heimzusuchen, ebenso warnte er sie, daß er sie in ihrer abgöttischen Gefinnung in seinem Eifer einmal unversehens vertilgen könnte. Aber nun wurde auch das Gebaren des Herrn gegen das gestrafte Volk ein viel härteres. Bisher hatte er in der Mitte des Volks, im Ruhelager Israels selbst, gewandelt und in Gnaden mit ihnen verkehrt. Jetzt kündigte er ihnen an, daß er nicht mehr *m i t t e n* in ihrem Lager mit ihnen ziehen werde, und ließ Mosen eine neue Hütte fern vom Lager als *Stiftshütte* aufschlagen, wo er mit dem treuen Führer wie mit seinem vertrauten Freunde verkehren wolle und zu dem der Einzelne im Volk hinauskommen müsse, um seine Weisung zu erfahren. Und bald gewahrte auch das Volk über der draußen erbauten Hütte Moses die bekannte Gnadenwolke. Mose selbst legte, an seiner eigenen Weisheit und Kraft verzagend, wieder so heiße Fürbitte für sich und das Volk ein (er vergriff sich dabei mit dem Gesuch, den Herrn in seiner ganzen Herrlichkeit zu sehen, was ihm Gott abschlug), bewog ihn aber zu einer **Erneuerung** des von dem Volke gebrochenen Bundes, und zwar so, daß Mose neue steinerne Tafeln hauen, mit denselben zum Herrn in die Wolke kommen mußte, wo der Herr sie wieder mit den Worten der ersten, von Mose dann zerbrochenen, Tafeln selbst beschrieb und dann unter denselben Erscheinungen den Bund mit dem Volke von neuem schloß, Kap. 34. Die Predigt aber, die der Herr bei dieser Gelegenheit hielt, ist überaus herzlich und herrlich. Sie zeigt die neue Weise an, wie er von jetzt an das halsstarrige Volk in überschwänglicher Gnade, aber auch mit unerbittlichem Ernst gegen die halsstarrigen Übertreter behandeln werde. Mose verkehrte jetzt mehr mit dem Herrn in der Wolke, und wenn er die Botschaften, die er empfing, dem Volke mitteilte, trug sein Angezicht einen solchen Glanz, daß alle, die es schauten, geblendet wurden. Schon im letzten Teil von Kap. 34 und dann in den folgenden bis zum 38. Kapitel wird die Vollendung der Arbeit an der Urstiftshütte wieder aufgenommen, alle ihre Einzelheiten bis auf die Decken geschildert, in Kap. 39 die Priesterkleider beschrieben, bis zum Schluß in Kap. 40 die vollendete Wohnung eingeweiht und bezogen wird.

Das dritte Buch Moses, *Levitikus*, ist mit Ausnahme

von ein paar geschichtlichen Erzählungen rein z e r e m o n i a l-
g e s e t z l i c h: Vorschriften für den Gottesdienst bis auf die geringste
Kleinigkeit. Am Ende von Kap. 26, 46 heißt es wörtlich: „Dies
sind die Satzungen und Rechte und Gesetze, die der Herr zwischen ihm
und den Kindern Israel gestellt hat auf dem Berge Sinai durch die
Hand Mose.“ — Kap. 27 ist ein Nachtrag über besondere Gelübde
und Zehnten und schließt mit den Worten: „Dies sind die Gebote,
die der Herr Mose gebot an die Kinder Israel auf dem Berge Sinai.“

U u g. P i e p e r.

(Fortsetzung folgt.)

Studies in Galatians

For several years the undersigned read St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians exegetically with the Junior Class of our Seminary. It was suggested that the material of this course be made available to the readers of the *Theol. Quartalschrift*.

The aim of the course was not to hand to the students a final and definite interpretation of every passage, which they must adopt on their teacher's authority, but rather to point out to them the facts that should be taken into consideration as having a bearing on the problem. Naturally, the general truth which Paul so forcefully presents in this short letter admits of no question, but the specific aim of some statements and particularly the thought-connection in many cases may be conceived in various ways. For example, just think of the scores of interpretations the little remark in ch. 3, 20 has found: God is one.

Similarly, it will not be the aim of these present studies to provide a ready-made exegesis, but rather to assemble some helps which should enable the reader to do his own research work, which, after all, is the only satisfactory method insuring the most lasting results.

In this first installment it will be in place to discuss some isagogical matters.

1. Who were the Galatians?

The name occurs several times. In the address Paul calls his readers "the churches of Galatia". In ch. 3, 1 he exclaims, "O foolish Galatians". He refers to these churches also in 1 Cor.

16, 1, where, speaking of the "collection", he mentions some orders which he has given to the "churches of Galatia".

The word Galatia reminds one of Gaul, the similarity of sound being even greater in the original: *Galatia* and *Gallia*. The affinity of the names is embodied in a variant reading of 2 Tim. 4, 10. Both our German and our English versions have it that Crescens departed to *Galatia*, while other manuscripts have to *Gaul*.

There is more than just a similarity of sound. The two names are connected etymologically. There is an ethnological connection between the inhabitants of Galatia and those of Gaul.

About the year 280 B. C. three chiefly Celtic tribes (there was a little admixture of Germans) pillaged the Greek city of Delphi, famous for its oracle of Apollo. They were the Tectosages, the Tolistobogi, and the Trocmi. Here remember the opening sentence of Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*: *Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres, quarum . . . incolunt . . . tertiam qui ipsorum lingua Celtæ, nostra Galli appellantur.*

About this time King Nicomedes I of Bithynia had trouble in his country, which he felt unable to suppress successfully. He heard of the marauding Celts and engaged them to help him quell the insurrection. This they did in 278 B. C. But Nicomedes got more than he had bargained for. Once in the land, the Celts decided to stay. They settled around the three cities of Ancyra, Pessinus, and Tavium. This thereafter was the kingdom of Galatia.

It remained independent for less than one hundred years. In 189 B. C. the Galatians were subdued by the Romans under the leadership of their Consul Manlius. Galatia continued as a kingdom, but under Roman supervision, till 25 B. C., when Amyntas, the last king of the Galatians, died.

A question which is much discussed by students of the Epistle to the Galatians, and which very likely will never be conclusively settled, is what is meant by *Galatia*. Some assume that it is the original territory of the Galatians, others assume that it is the Roman province. The church fathers do not touch this question till after 350 A. D., *i. e.*, till after the Roman province had been dissolved for more than a half century.

The Book of Acts contains no account of Paul's activity in northern Galatia, the original territory of the Galatians, or of

the founding of congregations there by him or by anybody else. On his second journey, which carried him to Philippi, Thessalonica, and other Greek cities, Paul is reported to have "gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia" (Acts 16, 6), but no missionary activity is recorded, since the Holy Ghost, as Acts 16, 9 plainly shows, hurried His messengers on to Europe. When Paul on his third journey was on his way to redeem his promise made to the Jewish synagogue at Ephesus (Acts 18, 19-21) he traversed in order "the country of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples" (Acts 19, 23).

What is meant by "the region of Galatia" and "the country of Galatia"? Be sure to compare the map, in order to get the full import of St. Luke's remarks.)

It is advisable to study the first of these two passages first, since the second presupposes the facts recorded in the first. The two words "region" and "country", which we find in our English Bible, are the same word in the Greek: *chōra*. The Greek in Acts 16, 6 reads: *tēn Phrygian kai Galatikē chōran*. Note the definite article with the noun and the two adjective modifiers in the attributive position: the country which is Phrygian and Galatian. The most natural assumption seems to be that Luke is referring to a territory which might rightfully be called either Galatian or Phrygian, *i. e.*, a parcel of land which had originally belonged to Phrygia but which in 25 B. C. had been joined to the province of Galatia. Call it Phrygian Galatia or Galatian Phrygia, both terms would convey about the same idea as the Greek *tēn Phrygian kai Galatikēn chōran*.

Since only parts, the eastern parts, of Phrygia had been annexed by the Romans to Galatia, and since Paul on his third journey was headed for Ephesus, the expression in Acts 18, 23 no longer offers any difficulty: *tēn Galatikēn chōran kai Phrygian*. It was Galatian territory and Phrygian which Paul had to cross on his way.

This still leaves us without a single clue as to the founding of congregations in original Galatia. Yet the fact that the Judaizers pounced upon these congregations as a promising field for their nefarious activity, the fact that Paul in his epistle treats the matter as of great consequence, and also the fact that Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, written during his stay at Ephesus,

about Easter, 56 A. D., mentions the Galatians as well known to the Corinthians, point to the eminence of these churches. They are an important part of Paul's field; and yet not a word about his missionary work in northern Galatia.

These and other considerations, soon to be mentioned, induce the undersigned to look for these churches in southern Galatia, which Paul covered on his first mission journey.

Students who assume that the Galatians of Paul's Epistle are not ethnographically such, but are called Galatians because they were included in the Roman province by that name, point to the preference which Paul and Luke give to certain designations. Paul seems to use chiefly the political names, while Luke prefers the ethnographic. When Paul, *e. g.*, in Rom 15, 26; 2 Cor. 9, 2, mentions Achaia he is speaking of the Corinthians, who were, indeed, included in the Roman province by that name, but were of a different Greek tribe from that of the original Achaians. Similarly he mentions Macedonia and Asia (see 1 Cor. 15, 5; 16, 19). Luke, on the other hand, speaks of Lycaonia and Pisidia (Acts 14, 6, 24) although these countries were included in the Roman province of Galatia. Similarly he mentions Mysia, Greece, Bithynia (see Acts 16, 7; 20, 2). — This is interesting, though hardly conclusive. In Acts 18, 12 *e. g.*, Luke uses Achaia for the Roman province.

2. Some Facts Concerning the Galatian Churches

It has been pointed out before that the Galatian churches were properly Paul's field. He had brought the Gospel to this territory, and he had founded these churches. In the epistle itself he refers to the fact in an emphatic, appealing way. My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, ch. 4, 19. Birth pains he experienced when he brought the Gospel to the Galatians, and birth pains he experienced a second time when he labored to rescue them from the enticing error of the Judaizers.

In the light of this fact must be understood the statements in verses 11 and 14 of the same chapter. Paul expresses the fear that all the labors he had spent on the Galatians might, after all, prove futile in spite of the fact that at first they had received him with open arms, rejoicing over his coming with the Gospel as

though an angel from heaven had visited them, yes, Jesus Christ Himself in person. These statements corroborate the claim made in v. 19 that he is the founder of the Galatian churches.

Paul was not alone when he brought the Gospel to Galatia. He had a colaborer. In ch. 1, 8. 9 he uses the plural "we". When Paul uses the plural he means the plural. With us the plural of the first person is frequently only a matter of form. Either out of modesty, or out of the very opposite, we say "we" where we mean a plain "I". Not so Paul. He uses the singular when he alone is concerned, and when he uses the plural some one else is to be understood besides himself. If, as we assume, the congregations of Galatia are the ones founded by Paul on his first mission journey, then the co-founder referred to in ch. 1, 8. 9 is Barnabas, Paul's companion on that journey.

Before Paul wrote his Epistle he had made two visits to these congregations. In ch. 4, 13 he speaks of his *first* coming to Galatia in such a way that only two visits in all can be understood to have taken place till then. He says *to proteron*, which means the first time of two. — Again, if the Galatian congregations were located in the southern part of the Roman province of Galatia, the two visits can easily be accounted for from Acts. The first visit is reported in detail in ch. 13 and 14; while the second, planned by Paul according to ch. 15, 36, is summarily recorded in ch. 16, 1-6.

When Paul in ch. 4, 8, speaks of the Galatians as people who formerly "did service unto them which by nature are no gods", we infer that the main body of the Galatian churches consisted of Gentile-Christians. By accepting the Mosaic Law as binding upon them also and as necessary for salvation they were in essence reverting to the original heathendom, although the outward form of their new service differed from their former practices.

This fact again agrees perfectly with the account in Acts concerning the constituency of the churches founded in southern Galatia. Although Paul and Barnabas made it a point to contact the Jews first, and although they apparently received a hearty welcome from them, yet when the Gentiles were declared eligible to the blessings of the Gospel directly, without first becoming Jewish proselytes, the great mass of the Jews, particularly the leaders, strenuously protested and instigated persecutions against the messengers of a law-free Gospel. Antioch in Pisidia is typical, and

what happened there was repeated, with modifications, in the other cities. Read Acts 13, 44-51.

In ch. 2, 4. 5 Paul assures his readers that the matter at stake in the council held at Jerusalem, Acts 15, was the *continuance* of the pure Gospel with them, *hina hē alētheia tou euangeliou diameinē*. They had received the Gospel, but would they continue to enjoy it? Not if the Judaizers had their way. They were bent on adulterating the Gospel by supplementing the work of Christ with their own circumcision and other exercises according to the Law of Moses. Paul championed the cause of a law-free Gospel in Jerusalem, as he had done in Antioch. On the outcome of the deliberations depended whether the Galatians would be permitted to *keep* the law-free Gospel they had received.

The Jerusalem Council took place shortly after Paul had submitted his report on his first mission journey to the congregation at Antioch, which had sponsored the undertaking.

It would be difficult to find a justification for the use of *diameinē* if the law-free Gospel had not been brought to the Galatians prior to the Council at Jerusalem. But the only congregations founded by Paul up to this time were those of southern Galatia. He had not yet even set foot in Galatia proper.

From the way Barnabas is mentioned in Gal. 2, 1. 9. 13 it is evident, not only that he was well known, but also highly respected by the Galatians. When Peter's example confused the other Jewish Christians in Antioch, even Barnabas, yes the beloved Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

Paul labored together with Barnabas in Antioch (Syria). Together with Barnabas he undertook the first mission journey, the Holy Ghost having expressly designated these two men as His choice for this work (Acts 13, 2). But before Paul undertook his second visit to southern Galatia he and Barnabas were separated. Barnabas went to his home land, Cyprus, and Paul with another companion to Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch.

If the congregations addressed in the Epistle to the Galatians were founded at a later date than the Council at Jerusalem, it is difficult to understand how they came to know and revere Barnabas, as they evidently did. After his separation from Paul Barnabas disappears from the record of St. Luke, nor does Paul mention him in his epistles. But with the people visited by Paul

on his first mission journey it was different, they held Barnabas in high esteem. Even before their conversion the people at Lystra had regarded Barnabas as the supreme ruler of the Greek pantheon. They called him Jupiter (Acts 14, 12). Thus the esteem in which Barnabas was held makes it almost certain that the Galatians of the Epistle were none other than the congregations in the southern part of the Roman province. To assume that the addresses were located in northern Galatia would present insurmountable difficulties, problems insoluble from the New Testament records.

One more fact should be noted. When Paul brought the Gospel to these people, he testifies that in their first enthusiasm they received him as an angel of God, ch. 4, 14, even as Christ Jesus. The first joy of having received the Gospel is frequently marked by unusual exuberance. It may well be assumed that other newly converted Christians treated Paul as did the Galatians; compare e. g. Lydia in Philippi (Acts 16, 15), but the attitude of the Galatians made an especially lasting impression on Paul. Even when penning his letter, they stood before his mental eye as they were congratulating themselves on having received the Gospel, ready, if that were possible, to pluck out their own eyes for the benefit of the man that brought it to them (ch. 4, 15). And all this in spite of the fact that Paul came to them as a sick man seeking recovery of his impaired health (ch. 4, 14).

All of this agrees with Luke's record of Paul's first mission journey. Paul and Barnabas came to the higher altitudes of Antioch in Pisidia from the malaria-infested lowlands of the Pamphylian coast. They must have landed in the harbor of Attalia. They stopped at Perga. But they did no mission work there now, and John Marcus departed from them (Acts 13, 13. 14). They did mission work in these cities on their return trip (Acts 14, 25). The assumption is not far-fetched that both Paul and Marcus contracted the disease; but while the latter was discouraged and went home, Paul simply pushed on to higher altitudes and continued his work in spite of his weakened condition.

Nor is the comparison of his reception by the Galatians to that of an angel of God very far-fetched. After the miracle in Lystra the people called Paul Mercurius because he was the chief speaker. Mercurius, in Greek mythology, was the messenger of

the gods, a son of Jupiter. Hence: "angel", even "Christ Jesus" (Gal. 4, 14). — Compare also the somewhat startling reference to angels in Gal. 1, 8, which, however, was quite appropriate in the case of the southern Galatians, easily understood and most effective.

3. The Occasion for Writing the Epistle

A superficial reading of the epistle will readily reveal the fact that the Gospel doctrine was threatened in Galatia in such a way that Paul feared it might be lost entirely. This danger did not arise from within the congregations. Errors threatened also other churches, *e. g.* Corinth. The first epistle of Paul to this church shows that errors even in articles of prime importance were held there. Yet there were some differences. While the Corinthian errors certainly vitiated the purity of doctrine and in this sense ultimately endangered not only the well-being but the very existence of the congregation, the error in Galatia, in spite of its seeming insignificance, was a stab at the very heart of the Gospel. While the errors in Corinth were traceable to insufficient education of the members, the errors in Galatia were injected by outside influences.

For this reason Paul clearly distinguishes between the seducers and the members of the congregations. He refers to the intruders as "some that trouble you" (ch. 1, 7). He addresses the Galatians as "you", and calls the seducers "they" (ch. 4, 17; 5, 12; 6, 12). He even refers to the seducers in such a way as though they were personally unknown to him: "he that troubleth you . . . whosoever he be" (ch. 5, 10).

The purpose of the epistle, then, was to fortify the Galatians against the insidious heresy which threatened them.

It was an error which, if unchecked, would change the very Christian faith into actual heathendom only thinly veiled. At the time before they had learned to know God they did service to them which by nature are no gods; and now, heeding the enticing words of the errorists, they were on the verge of turning again to a state of bondage (ch. 4, 8-11), which would mean that all the labors Paul had bestowed on them were lost. They would be idolators again as before, only under a different guise.

On the surface, the error did not look so treacherous. They were not asked to give up Christ, to renounce Him and persecute

His adherents, as did the Jews. The errorists that troubled the Galatians are described in Acts 15, 5, as men of the sect of the Pharisees *which believed*. The participle of the perfect tense is used, *pepisteukotes*, showing that they, having once accepted faith in Jesus, now continued actually to stand in the faith. There is no doubt about their Christianity, nor sincerity. But they are spoken of, further, as saying that it was needful (*dei*) to circumcise them (the heathen as they sought to enter the church) and to command them (*i. e.* to establish the rule in every case) that they must keep the law of Moses. This they considered necessary because otherwise the Gentiles could not be saved (Acts 15, 1).

This then was the position these men took. They devoutly believed in Jesus Christ as the promised Savior. There is no salvation without Him. But in order to secure one's part in Jesus Christ one must wholeheartedly submit to the Law of Moses. Only by observing his commandments can a man's connection with the Savior be established and maintained. In other words, Jesus is indeed the God-appointed Savior, but His work of redemption must be supplemented by our own efforts at obedience to the Law of Moses. In justifying a sinner God looks at the merits of Christ, but He also looks at the sinner's own achievements.

This error plainly violates the great "either — or" of the Gospel, either by works on the basis of merit and worthiness, or without works, excluding works in every form, on the basis of pure grace for Christ's sake. Under present conditions, as brought about by sin, the first alternative spells death and damnation, while the second alone, but without doubt, leads to salvation. A combination of the two is impossible. The Gospel is robbed of its comfort, the virus of self-righteousness ruins it.

This same error, which attacks the very heart of the Christian faith, was insidiously injected into the Galatians' way of thinking. They were made to believe that they must submit to circumcision in order to be saved. They also began to observe days, and months, and times, and years, because they considered these exercises as contributory to their justification. This was what alarmed Paul and induced him to write his letter.

To this must be added the quickness with which this error gained a foothold and spread among the Christians of Galatia.

Paul voices his astonishment, he simply cannot understand it that they are so soon (*houtōs tacheōs*) removed from Him that called them (ch. 1, 8). To be sure, it happened in Paul's absence (ch. 4, 18); but he had visited them only a short time before, and on that occasion had delivered to them the very resolutions adopted by the Council at Jerusalem against the error of the Judaizers (Acts 16, 4), and had in this way established the churches in the faith (Acts 16, 5). And now this sudden defection! Paul exclaims: O foolish Galatians, who hath *bewitched* you? (ch. 3, 1). His loving, anxious heart undergoes birth pains a second time for his Galatians that their faith may remain and Christ be formed in them (ch. 4, 19).

The introduction of this false, Gospel-destroying error in Galatia was the principal cause for the Epistle. In connection with it there were others.

As long as Paul was held in high esteem by the Galatians there was little chance of luring them away from his Gospel, but if the Judaizers succeeded in discrediting him, it might afterwards be so much easier to make them accept the error. It was a daring attempt. One could hardly believe that it might succeed. It would rather seem that an attempt to besmirch the good name of the beloved apostle would rebound as a boomerang on the heads of those who did so. Yet, the Judaizers tried, and apparently succeeded.

They represented Paul to the Galatians as an apostle of inferior rank, as one who at best had received the Gospel message from secondary sources. He had not been with Jesus during His earthly career, had not been called by Him like the Twelve, had not heard Him nor seen His miracles, was really inadmissible as a witness. More. He had not even been with Peter for any length of time before he preached to the Galatians. They, the Judaizers, on the other hand, were among those that continued in "the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2, 42), they heard Peter daily. Their way of presenting the Gospel was far more reliable than Paul's.

This insinuation was a contributory cause for Paul's writing. In the very salutation he emphatically presents himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ. Not an apostle of men, whom men had chosen, prepared, instructed, sent forth. Not an apostle through

the instrumentality of a man. Jesus had, indeed, notified Paul by a man, Ananias, of what it meant to be an apostle (Acts 9, 6ff.). He had, furthermore, moved the congregation at Antioch by the Spirit to release Paul from their service and to commission him for the special work He wanted him to do (Acts 13, 1ff.). Yet, in spite of all this, no man was instrumental in making Paul an apostle. He was called to that position by Jesus Christ Himself.

Not only in the salutation does Paul emphasize his immediate apostleship, he devotes the entire first part of the letter to establishing just this point: he had received his Gospel through a revelation from Jesus Christ; the other apostles, and with them the whole church at Jerusalem, had acknowledged Paul's work as a proper way of preaching the Gospel, as differing in no respect from their own; yes, even the foremost among the apostles, Peter, had on a certain occasion submitted to a correction from Paul.

Paul is sure of his apostleship, and he uses his apostolic authority in ridding the Galatians of the insidious error of the Judaizers. Mark the beginning of the fifth chapter: Behold, I Paul say unto you.

Aimed at discrediting Paul with the Galatians was also the slur that he did not seem to be consistent in his preaching and practice. He was vacillating. Paul alludes to this in ch. 5, 11: If I yet preach circumcision. The *yet* in this sentence is evidently not temporal: if I to this time still preach circumcision; rather, it denotes degree: if I in the least preach etc., if I grant circumcision any place at all in my Gospel message.

Thus the Judaizers seem to have represented Paul as a man who, while preaching in Galatia, had denounced circumcision as unnecessary to salvation, but who was not so sure of his ground and might on other occasions acquiesce in, yes even recommend circumcision.

The occasion for these slanderous remarks was very likely the fact, well-known to the Galatians, that Paul had circumcised Timothy before he chose him as his companion and assistant on his second journey (Acts 16, 1-3). Timothy was a Christian before he was circumcised, he was known and highly esteemed as a Christian. Paul did not circumcise him as though otherwise his salvation might be less secure. If the question of salvation had in any way been involved Paul would have strenuously opposed

Timothy's circumcision, as strenuously as he did that of Titus (Gal. 2, 3); and if Timothy had accepted circumcision under such conditions against the advice of Paul, Paul would have denied fellowship to him and would least of all have chosen him for his fellow-laborer.

All of this is evident, not only from the report of the event in Acts (ch. 16, 1-3), but even more so from a closer consideration of the time and circumstances. Paul had testified for a law-free Gospel against the Judaizers in Antioch (Acts 15, 1. 2). On account of this question he had been delegated by the Antioch church to testify in their stead before the church at Jerusalem. Paul had taken the uncircumcised Greek Titus with him to Jerusalem and made a test case out of him. After the signal victory for the law-free Gospel he had returned to Antioch, and after some time revisited the congregations founded on his first journey. He delivered the Jerusalem decrees to them. And then and there he circumcised Timothy.

He did not feel anything self-contradictory in the act, nor did the congregations, who were firmly established in the faith by the Jerusalem decrees which Paul delivered to them.

Paul's action in Timothy's case must be explained from other considerations and motives. Paul circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters (Acts 16, 3).

Paul knew that in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision (Gal. 5, 6). Paul also knew that all things belong to Christ and must serve His Kingdom, even circumcision not excepted. If he would win people for Christ, he must place himself in their position and fight through their battles in his own heart and conscience. Thus for Christ's sake Paul became unto the Jews as a Jew and unto them that are under the Law as under the Law (1 Cor. 9, 20). And he carefully avoided everything that might prove a stumbling block to any one's faith (1 Cor. 8, 13). The circumcision of Timothy was in perfect accord with the Jerusalem decrees, which advocated tender consideration for Jewish sensibilities.

This action of Paul in Timothy's case, which plainly showed that his Gospel preaching was thoroughly law-free, so much so that he was able to make even circumcision subservient to the Gospel, was twisted by his opponents into an accusation of inconsistency.

That was a second contributory cause to Paul's writing his epistle.

The Judaizers, in addition, seem to have charged Paul also that he in his ambition to gather in great numbers of converts from the Gentiles toned down some of the demands of the Law that might be unpopular. What this charge implied may be gathered without difficulty from a practice not altogether unknown in our day. A home missionary in a new field may be tempted, *e. g.*, at first to hold back somewhat with his testimony against the lodge. A clear testimony on this point might frighten the people away and hamper the (outward) growth of the congregation.

But Paul did nothing of the kind. He was a true preacher of the Gospel. He knew that if he in any way tried to please men he then could not be the servant of Christ (ch. 1, 10). For him it was not a question of mitigating the demands of the Law in order to make his Gospel more acceptable, for him it was a question of *either — or*, either by the Gospel alone, or else by works alone. A combination of the two is impossible, so that if any one in the slightest degree introduced the works of the Law into the question of justification, he thereby automatically placed himself under obligation to the whole Law (ch. 5, 3). And this simply spells a curse (ch. 3, 10).

Paul must warn his Galatians against this mixing of Law and Gospel. He defended himself against the charge of toning down the Law.

The adulteration of the Gospel by an admixture of Law together with the concomitant attempt to rob Paul of his reputation as a faithful apostle of Jesus Christ was of recent development. Before the coming of the Judaizers the Galatian congregations had enjoyed a normal, healthy development. They prized the Gospel as a rich blessing from God, and considered themselves happy in its possession. There were many and loud expressions of self-congratulation (*makarismos*, ch. 4, 15). They were running well (ch. 5, 7).

They themselves were to blame, at least in part, that a change was threatening to develop. Paul had warned them. He had a witness with him who seconded him in his warning. He uses the plural: "*we* said before" (ch. 1, 9).

It is not difficult to guess on what basis Paul had sounded the warning. He had experienced the opposition of Judaizers in Antioch. There he had seen how fanatic they were and what disturbance they caused (Acts 15, 1. 2). He had met another group of the same errorists in Jerusalem (Acts 15, 5). While in both cases they had not succeeded to gain a foothold in the congregations for their error, yet, in Antioch at least, they had not been won for the truth. In Jerusalem they were put to silence by Peter's convincing testimony (Acts 15, 12), while it does not appear that the results were as favorable as that in Antioch. The congregation in Antioch, it is true, did not grant admittance to their error; but perhaps they might look for better success in other congregations not yet so firmly established in the Gospel.

It is possible that reports of their nefarious activities reached Paul while he was laboring in Antioch after the Council of Jerusalem. There is a tone of uneasiness in his suggestion to Barnabas to revisit the congregations of Galatia "to see how they do" (Acts 15, 36). Hence Paul and Silas confirmed the churches and established them in the faith by delivering to them in writing and in additional oral explanations the Jerusalem decrees (Acts 15, 41; 16, 4. 5; 15, 30-32).

Yet in spite of this warning the Galatians admitted the Judaizers and stood in danger of being led astray by them. They had not yet fully accepted their error. In his entire epistle Paul never speaks in such a way as to even hint that the error had gained a firm foothold. But the poison had been injected and was in the process of doing its destructive work. In ch. 1, 6 he expresses his astonishment that they permit themselves to be removed (*metatithesthe*). He always speaks of the errorists as attempting to disturb the Galatians, never as having won them over; cf. ch. 1, 7; 4, 17; 5, 10. 12; 6, 12. The errorists have impeded the healthy progress of the congregations (ch. 5, 7), and the forms which Paul employs to characterize their activity indicate that they had won some adherents, cf. besides the passages cited above also ch. 4, 10. 11; 5, 4.

The condition in Galatia seems to have been similar to that of Antioch (in Syria) when the Judaizers arrived. There was a great dissention and feelings ran high. But while in Antioch Paul and Barnabas had held their ground against the errorists, the

Galatians do not seem to have been able to ward off the attack.

What should they do? The most likely procedure to suggest itself to them would be to send an appeal for help to Paul, who not only had brought the Gospel to them in the first place but had shown great concern in forewarning them against the very error which was now causing their trouble.

Did they do this? Did they send a letter or a delegation to Paul?

One cannot read the epistle without getting the impression that Paul has authentic information on the prevailing conditions. He knows that the Galatians, although they have not gone over into the enemy camp, yet are not showing the proper resistance, they are hesitating, they are yielding. Some are submitting to circumcision. They are introducing Sabbath observance, which means in principle the adoption of the entire Mosaic festival calendar. Paul is so well informed that he can use very strong language. He wonders, he cannot understand, how they could turn so quickly. He calls them foolish, who must have permitted themselves to be bewitched. The use of such invectives would have been entirely out of place if Paul had merely suspected that something was wrong in Galatia. When he says about the Judaizers, "whosoever he be" (ch. 5, 10), this does not indicate lack of information, but is to impress the truth that nothing can save them from bearing their judgment even though they be angels from heaven.

How did Paul get this information? It cannot have been by hear-say. If Paul had had nothing but rumors he would have been duty-bound to disbelieve. He might have asked for information, but he could not have raised the serious charges as he did.

It may have been that the Galatians wrote him a letter. But then Paul would very likely have referred to it in his reply, as he does in his first epistle to the Corinthians (ch. 7, 1).

Most likely the congregations of Galatia sent a delegation to Paul. It is a peculiar fact that this epistle does not convey any greetings besides Paul's own, not from a group nor from individuals. Yet Paul was not alone. In the salutation he mentions "all the brethren which are with me". Who were these? And why did they not send greetings? The matter becomes clear at once if we may assume that they were delegates from the Galatian churches. Having been sent from the troubled congregations they

were afraid of the error and were in basic agreement with the truth of the Gospel as Paul preached it, but were themselves too inexperienced to defend it. Thus Paul could mention them in the salutation as being of one mind with him and as approving of his letter, but could not mention them as sending greetings, seeing they themselves would carry back his letter.

4. Time and Place of Writing

In ch. 4, 20 Paul expresses his burning desire to visit the troubled Galatians personally. In spite of the information he has about their difficulties and their attitude toward them he still is in doubt. When he tries to visualize the situation there still remain many unanswered questions offering insoluble problems. A personal visit would greatly help to answer them. Then also he could change his voice, he could warn them that are unruly, he could comfort the fainthearted, he could support the weak, and he could do all this with patience toward all (cf. 1 Thess. 5, 14). He could give them their portion of meat in due season (Lc. 12, 42).

Why does he not visit them?

His words give the impression that this is simply impossible for him. Why was it impossible at this time? We must study the history of Paul's mission work for a time when he might receive visitors, hear detailed reports, discuss a difficult situation thoroughly, write a letter without the services of a penman, but when it was impossible for him to leave, or to travel at will.

The first thought that presents itself may be: imprisonment!

According to 2 Cor. 11, 23, written likely in the fall of 57, Paul had then already been in prison frequently. But these imprisonments seem to have been of short duration, as the one in Philippi (Acts 16, 23) or as when he was hailed before court in Corinth (Acts 18, 12). Luke does not mention them all in his narrative, and Paul himself refers to them only in a general way. We know, however, of three major imprisonments after the time of 2 Cor. 11. In 58 Paul was made a prisoner at Jerusalem. After a few days he was transferred to Caesarea, where he spent two years. During the winter of 60-61 he was transported to Rome. There he remained for another two years. As appears from various remarks in the New Testament he was acquitted, but later made a prisoner again, and executed.

We have several epistles in which Paul speaks of his bonds, but Galatians is not among them. Nor do the various circumstances concerning Galatia seem to fit well into the picture of these extended imprisonments.

Unless our assumption that the addressees of Galatians are the congregations founded by Paul on his first journey is all wrong, in which case we know nothing of the history of the recipients of this important epistle, Paul cannot have written his letter during any of the later imprisonments. Paul clearly speaks of two visits to Galatia (ch. 4, 13), but by the time he was made a prisoner in Jerusalem he had visited them at least three times (Acts 13, 14ff.; 16, 1ff.; 18, 23). There may have been a fourth visit from Ephesus, at least Paul kept up his contact with the congregations, as is evident from 1 Cor. 16, 1.

What kept Paul from visiting the Galatian congregations at this critical moment cannot, then, have been his imprisonment which began in 58. The epistle must have been written at an earlier date. We can even set a certain limit of two dates between which it must be placed. In Acts 16, 1, the second visit is mentioned (about 51 A. D.). It must have been after that. In Acts 18, 23, the third visit is mentioned (about 53 A. D.). It must have been before that. That would point to the time Paul spent in Macedonia and in Achaia. His remark in ch. 1, 6 that the change took place very rapidly, suggests that the time was not very long after the second visit, hence not toward the end of his 18 months' activity in Corinth, rather during the beginning.

It will be difficult to fit the epistle into the brief imprisonments recorded by Luke, and it will be equally difficult to fit any other imprisonments into Luke's record, to suit the conditions of Galatians. Although Paul suffered much persecution and was hurried from city to city due to it, yet only twice was official action taken against him by the police: in Philippi and in Corinth, as mentioned above. The one night Paul and Silas spent in prison in Philippi leaves no room for all that was involved in the composition of Galatians; and it is doubtful if Paul even was incarcerated in Corinth.

Something else must have detained him from going to Galatia. What may it have been?

In his account of Paul's second journey Luke more than in other parts of his book stresses the fact that Paul constantly stood

under an immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit. Paul's goal seems to have been Ephesus, but he was forbidden by the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia (Acts 16, 6). Where should he preach? Paul seems to have thought of the important cities near the Bosphorus, soon to become famous in early church history, Nicaea, Nicomedia, Chalcedon; but again the Spirit suffered them not to go the Bithynia (Acts 16, 7). In Troas Paul received positive instruction to go to Macedonia. Paul's departure from Philippi, from Thessalonica, from Berea is sufficiently accounted for by the principle Jesus laid down in Mt. 10, 23. Luke does not tell us why Paul left Athens, but he does tell us how the Lord commanded him to continue his work in Corinth unafraid (ch. 18, 9).

May this, then, have been the reason why Paul could not visit the Galatian churches in their distress? God had work for him in Corinth which, barely begun, was not so soon to be interrupted; and to this act of God's over-ruling providence, so it seems, the church owes this precious gem among Paul's epistles. May we cherish it properly.

Other considerations corroborate this assumption. We turn to Paul's epistles to the Thessalonians, which he wrote during his stay at Corinth. In the first epistle, ch. 1, 8, he remarks that the conversion of the Thessalonians was known not only in Macedonia and Achaia, which was but natural, but also in every place it was spread abroad. Which places does he mean? Besides Macedonia and Achaia, Paul had done mission work in Galatia only. Can he have Galatia in mind? How could the news of the conversion of the Macedonians have reached Galatia? And how could Paul know that it had reached there?

We remember that Timothy, Paul's associate, hailed from Galatia and was highly esteemed in his home congregation (Acts 16, 1-3). We remember also that Timothy had a very pious mother, who reared him in the knowledge of the Scripture. Is it an improper stretch of the imagination to assume that Timothy reported to his mother the experience he gathered on his first mission venture, and the success the Lord had granted?

But how could Paul know that such a report had reached Galatia? Mark the peculiar statements he makes to the Thessalonians: "so that we need not to speak anything; for they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you"

(I, 1, 8, 9). There is somebody to whom Paul wants to break the good news about the conversion of the Thessalonians, but before he can say one word they themselves begin to talk about it, showing that they are fully informed. Who may these mysterious, yet so well informed people be? If we assume that a delegation from Galatia reached Paul shortly before, everything becomes clear.

To this we add another observation. Paul calls attention to traces of persecution which he shows in his body. They are so bad that they have apparently ruined his handwriting. He must write this epistle with his own hand, but just look at the clumsy letters (ch. 6, 11. 17).

The Galatians themselves knew of the stoning Paul underwent in their very midst (Acts 14, 19. 20), which may have left him marked for life, and a stone may also have crippled his hand. Paul had also more recently undergone severe persecution. The wounds of the unmerciful beating he received in Philippi, followed by the torture of clamping on the stocks, may barely have had healed superficially when he wrote to the Galatians. If they knew about this from Timothy's report, Paul's references acquire a new significance.

The remark about Paul's writing with his own hand demands a little closer attention. Paul was in the habit of dictating his letters and of adding his greetings in his own hand. Compare Rom. 16, 22; 2 Thess. 3, 17; 1 Cor. 16, 21; Col. 4, 18. Why did he not also dictate the letter to the Galatians in a similar fashion? Evidently because he was alone, at least none of his companions was near him to whom he might have entrusted the work of taking down his dictation. This points to the first weeks of Paul's stay in Corinth. According to Acts 17, 14, he left Timothy and Silas at Berea; and although they afterwards joined him at Athens, yet they did not stay with him but were sent back to Macedonia (1 Thess. 3, 1. 2. 5). Only after Paul had been in Corinth for some time did they return from this mission (Acts 18, 5).

All of these considerations point to the first weeks of Paul's stay in Corinth as the likely date of this letter. And then, Galatians would be the first epistle in the New Testament that we have from Paul's pen.

M.

(To be continued)

Romans 16, 17. 18

NOTE. — By resolution of the Synod both the English and the German essays read before the Wisconsin Synod convention at Saginow are to appear in the "Quartalschrift." We are here offering to our readers the essay by Rev. W. Schumann, an exegetical study of Romans 16, 17. 18. The German essay is to follow in the January issue of the "Quartalschrift."

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. (V. 17.)

"For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (V. 18.) (Authorized Version.)

Whether we read the admonition of Paul isolated and torn from its context or in its proper setting, the meaning of it is equally pointed and unmistakable. When we study it closer in its setting we shall see in it the deep quality of love which is the basis of all spiritual knowledge and brotherly admonition. And it is in the spirit of love and truth that we approach the text. The purpose of an exegesis on the text is obvious. Our synodical essays are pointed to the times and reflect the current problems confronting the synod, and therewith, in a general way, they constitute a slice of our synodical history. In a more significant sense they present the spirit and essence of our theology. The former is of secondary importance; the latter, of primary. With the consciousness of this and its implications we approach the theme of our paper.

There are some who say that our passage is a digression, thrown pell-mell into the midst of the salutations of chapter sixteen. A sudden and new flash of thought came to Paul, and, in the impulse of the moment, he threw it parenthetically and haphazardly into the greetings. A cursory thought is of cursory significance, of course, and so treated.

Again there are others who move to the opposite pole. In the admonition, they say, we have the key to the cast of the letter to the Romans, a proof of its polemical character. They hold that Paul has blasted the primacy and particularism of the Jews in his epistle. Consequently their great enmity against Paul,

and — the warning on Paul's part to the Romans. These scholars shift the emphasis of Paul's letter from Chapters 1-8 to the Chapters 9-11.

Both interpretations are false. The first we dismiss as superficial psychologizing and humanizing of the Word of God; the second misses the point of Paul's letter entirely. We may add here that the second interpretation is a theme with variations. With the diversity of explanation, however, the motif finally is the same. This approach to the letter with its exegesis is chiefly the product of a long line of scholars in Germany who have a highly developed ability to "sweatbox" any evidence to the support of their theses. For details see Stoeckhardt's commentary on Romans.

This brief reference to the errors of approach to our text is not made to anticipate what the words of the text themselves must prove. The thought is rather to show the need of a sober approach in the spirit of "Lord, speak, Thy servant heareth."

Before we proceed to examine the text itself it might be well to establish in bold strokes the continuity of thought and to fix the admonition of Paul in the letter. The letter is divided into two parts: the first, Chapters 1-11, is doctrinal; the second, Chapters 12-16, evangelically admonitory. The theme of the letter following the usual, but somewhat more extensive tripartite introduction, is presented in Chapter 1, 16. 17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." In short the theme is the "Righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel". In the doctrinal section the theme is supported by an argument composed of four subparts: first, all men are unrighteous and under God's judgment, 1, 18-3, 20; second, man is justified without the deeds of the law by faith, through the redemption in Christ Jesus, 3, 21-5, 21; third, the blessed fruits of justification follow, Chapters 6-8; fourth, the blessed fulness of heathen and Israel is redeemed in Christ, Chapters 9-11.

Paul developed his argument, as is generally conceded, in a quiet and calm tone. In the presentation of his great theme there is no place for polemics. Here is a theme most high and divine;

here we have the spiritual mystery of God's righteousness revealed in Christ; here is the very heart and essence of God's love. Of polemics we find nothing. Certainly we know that Paul projects the divine truth and the Gospel Righteousness in an antithesis over and against the Righteousness of the Law. There is, however, no pointed attack here against a special group of errorists.

The tenor and tone of the second part of the letter is equally calm. In this part, Chapters 12-16, Paul is admonitory. His admonitions are evangelical and loving, motivated by the grace of God. Justification by faith permeates the Christian's life in all its details. The Christian is a new man. God has declared him just in Christ. As a result he functions as such, presenting his body as a living sacrifice: he is humble; he obeys the government; he walks honestly; he puts on the Lord Jesus Christ; he understands the weak in faith; he is not a stumbling block to his brother; he glorifies God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Finally Paul beseeches the Romans to pray that he might be able to come to them and take a rest after the completion of his contemplated travels.

In Chapter 16 Paul comes to the close of his letter with the accustomed greetings. Tenderly and in brotherly love he salutes the members of the congregation in fifteen successive verses, all introduced in good Greek style with the beautiful word *ἀσπάζομαι*. Our word "salute" is prosaic and cold. The German *särtlich begrüessen* comes much closer to it. After fifteen verses of individual greetings, Paul generalizes somewhat in Verse 16: salute one another with a holy kiss. This holy kiss was an old established ceremony, publicly signifying fellowship. A general greeting now follows: "There salute you all the churches of Christ." Here was beautiful and God pleasing unity: unity in the congregation; unity between Paul and the recipients of his letter; unity also between Rome and the other Christian congregations, who either through representatives present at Cenchrea or through messages sent to Paul wished to join in the greetings. This unity, splendidly presented in verses 1-16, is a gift of the Holy Ghost, a function of faith, a spiritual knowledge, definite and pointed, based on the teaching, the doctrine, which they had learned. We emphasize this point of unity involved in the greetings of the first

sixteen verses and stepping over the text, for a moment, we point here to the obedience, *ὑπακοή*, of verse nineteen. In this verse following our text Paul writes: "For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf; but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil." We see in short that our text is framed in, surrounded by the brotherly greetings and the acknowledgment of the churches of Christ (v. 1-16) and the obedience generally known (v. 19).

Such is the setting of our text. Everything is in line, nothing out of plumb. The admonition follows naturally and logically out of what precedes it, and it continues just as logically and naturally into what follows. This admonition has its appointed place in the letter, and it has the precision and incisiveness, which the Holy Ghost desired.

Paul begins his admonition with *παρακαλῶ*, I admonish you. Like the *ἀσπάζομαι* above, so also *παρακαλῶ* implies the loving and kind. In loving and prayerful earnestness Paul writes as a brother to brethren, *ἀδελφοί*. In view of the seriousness of the warning to come we might have anticipated a stronger term such as *παραγγέλλω*, a word from military life, well understood in Rome, "I command you." Paul does not use the peremptory speech of a top sergeant, nor is there need of a club. He is speaking to Christians, to men whose autonomy has been shattered, to men who are slaves of Christ and at the same time sons of the King of kings. We translate the copulative *δέ* with "now". It is here used as a simple transitional particle.

Upon the *παρακαλῶ* Paul continues with the usual infinitive, *σκοπεῖν* in our text. This verb is derived from a sturdy old Greek root *σκε/οπ*, parent of a long line of Greek — and English words, too. The noun *σκοπός* is a watchman, a look-out man, a guardian, a scout. The verb means "to look out", "to guard watchfully". We can best demonstrate its meaning with the hand: "to shade the eyes and critically examine". This also is the etymological meaning of our English word "sceptic". Paul then writes: Now I earnestly admonish you, brethren, critically, watchfully to examine, or to look out for those causing divisions and death-traps contrary to the doctrine which you on your part learned. The objective participle construction dependent on *σκοπεῖν* is idiomatically and melodiously arranged in classical sequence. The

first article, *τούς*, belongs to *ποιούντας* at the end of the clause. The eleven words sandwiched in between article and participle are the objects of the participle with modifying clauses. The present participle active of *ποιέω* is articularized and therewith used substantively. The two objects of *ποιούντας*, *τὰς διχοστασίας καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα*, are translated with "divisions and death-traps". *Ποιέω* is a flat, rather foot-loose word in any language. Compare "facere" in Latin, "to make" in English, "machen" in German. Its objects often determine the translation. We may translate it adequately with its two objects: "those causing divisions and death-traps".

The literal meaning of *διχοστασία* is a "standing apart", especially between persons. Paul uses the word twice in his letters, here in our text and in Gal. 5, 20. In the Galatian passage he speaks of the manifest works of the flesh, among them *ἐριθείαι, διχοστασίαι, αἵρέσεις*, "strife, seditions, heresies". Cremer, in his *Biblisch-Theologisches Wörterbuch*, translates it with "Uneinigkeit". The word does not occur in the LXX. In the Apocrypha it appears once. Cremer translates it with "Verwirrung" here and continues: "Daran schließt das Wort bei Paulus an, bei dem es einige Male vorkommt in einem an *αἵρεσις* anstreichenden Sinne von Parteilungen durch Uneinigkeit in der Lehre, welche die christliche Gemeinde verwirren, Gal, 5, 10. Die *διχοστασία* ist Parteibildung, eine Vorstufe der Sekte und der Häresie; jene löst den Zusammenhang der Gemeinde, diese löst sich von dem Zusammenhange". Paul has in mind the opposite of true unity, beautifully emphasized in his list of greetings and based on their well-known obedience to the doctrine. Lenski says to the word that it signifies "the opposite of unity or 'thinking the same thing in accord with Christ', and 'with one accord with one mouth glorifying God'." (Rom. 15, 5.6.) We have here a warning to keep a sharp look-out, critically to look for errors that lurk here or there, that may hide anywhere, errors that may bring a split and finally a schism among those whose life is grounded and rooted in Christ in every detail. The smallest error may have the most dire consequences.

A second accusative object characterizes the errorists: They cause *τὰ σκάνδαλα*, death-traps. *Τὰ σκάνδαλα* is the crooked stick in a trap on which the bait is placed, the trap-spring in short. To be caught means death, hence death-trap. *Σκάνδαλον* is a

strong term. It is used twelve or thirteen times in the New Testament and always has the connotation of what is fatal. In Matthew 13, 41 Jesus says: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that *offend*, and them which do iniquity". In Matthew 16, 23 Jesus turned and said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an *offence* unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men". In Matthew 18, 7 Jesus says: "Woe unto the world because of *offences*! for it must needs be that *offences* come; but woe to that man by whom the *offence* cometh". 1 Cor. 1, 23: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a *stumbling block*, and unto the Greeks foolishness". In Romans the word is used in 9, 33; 11, 9; 14, 13; and finally in our text. Everywhere the idea of the fatal prevails. Paul warns that the Romans keep open a searching eye for such who disrupt the unity. Their teachings often are death-traps. Souls caught in the death-traps are lost. Cremer says: "*σκάνδαλον* ist formal dasjenige, was entweder um Gottes und des Glaubens willen verworfen werden muß oder verworfen werden zu müssen scheint, letzteres 1 Cor. 1, 23; Gal. 5, 11. Inhaltlich ist Ärgernis dasjenige, was dem heiligen Heilswillen Gottes entgegengesetzt den, dem es gegeben wird, in Gegensatz zu Gott und damit ins Verderben bringt. *Σκάνδαλον* is a greatly heightened term over *διχοστασία*. Permit the latter and you may have the former. On this Jesus says in a generalized *ὅς ἂν* sentence in Matthew 18, 6: "But whoso shall offend (*σκανδαλίση*) one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

It is most important carefully to note the articles used by Paul in the participial structure of our verse. We might add parenthetically that the "little" words of a language are in many respects the most significant. Indeed many of them come out only with the intonation of spoken language, at times even with a gesture. Our old Prof. Ernst used to say: "Wer die kleinen Wörter, wie Artikel, Partikeln und Präpositionen einer Sprache kennt, der kennt die Sprache." The choice of the precise word to cover a thought is the most essential thing in any language; the melody of the idiom, however, and its finer shadings lies in the "little" words.

There are four articles in the clause of our text: *τούς, τάς* and *τά, τήν*. We shall come to *τήν* later. *τούς* articularizes the participle *ποιῶντας*, used substantively. The participle is in periodic position and separated from its article, in perfect Greek idiom, by eleven words. *τάς* and *τά* belong to their respective nouns. We take these articles, *τούς, τάς* and *τά* as generic. The generic article marks a whole class of objects as distinguished from other classes. Very often this article is not translated in English. We translate: "be on a sharp look-out for those who cause divisions and death-traps." The description of the false teachers is very general. It is clear that there were no errorists present in Rome or active in the congregation; it is also evident that Paul was not here thinking definitely and solely of a special class of these, such as the Judaistic opponents and their doctrines. Paul has in mind the whole troupe of errorists.

It is sometimes argued that these articles are definite articles with demonstrative force. Such explanation is loose and inexact. The article *ὁ, ἡ, τό* by its very nature as an article is definite, and although the demonstrative uses of the article have disappeared in Attic and in New Testament Greek, outside of expressions like *ὁ μὲν . . . ὁ δέ*, the article still has something of the demonstrative force. It points out and denotes, but *not* in the sense of the Greek demonstratives as "here", "there" and "yonder". The article points out individual or particular things or persons as distinguished from others of the same kind. In this sense the article is restrictive, of limited significance. The article also points out a whole class of objects or persons as distinguished from other classes. In this case it is generic, or representative of a whole class. The context must establish where the article particularizes and where it generalizes. What does the context establish in our text?

If the articles particularize we search for some previous mention of the false teachers, especially in close context. We find none close or far. Are we to conclude that Paul has in mind representatives of the righteousness of the law in the doctrinal section of the letter? In this section Paul had delineated the natural antithesis of the righteousness of the Gospel and the righteousness of the law. Furthermore he had done this in an unpolemical, purely objective manner, as is generally conceded.

Are we to conclude that Paul makes definite reference to the Judaizers in Greece and Asia? Paul does not fight so loosely and carelessly with grammatical weapons. If Paul had had particular reference to special errorists in our text he would have defined them closely. The Greek language is a very good tool for that. Furthermore Paul does not enter a fight against the enemy through the back door. He is as candid and open as he is fearless.

We hold that the articles are generic from the very framework of the immediate context surrounding and enclosing the admonition. It flows out of the unity of the greetings preceding it; it is based on the *ὑπακοή*, the obedience following it. In addition it has the inner support of the *διδασχῆ*, the teaching, defined in the same breath, and last but not least, the generalization in v. 18, *οἱ γὰρ τοιοῦτοι*. Paul writes that the divisions and death-traps are "contrary to the doctrine which you (emphasized) have learned." The word *διδασχῆ* occurs twenty-nine times in the New Testament. It is used twenty-eight times in the singular, once in the plural. (Heb. 13, 9.) The *διδασχῆ* is the teaching or doctrine of the apostles and prophets; it is the teaching of Christ; it is the teaching of the Father in heaven. We quote a few of the passages:

John 7, 16: "Jesus answered them and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me."

Acts 5, 28: The chief priest to Peter: "Behold ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

Titus 1, 9: "Holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath no God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." In Romans 6, 17 Paul writes: "God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

This teaching is a very specific one. It is the specific term for the Biblical doctrines, all of them, without exception. The noun *διδασχῆ* is passive in meaning. It is the teaching that has been taught (*διδασχῆ—διδάσκω*). The article *τῆν* is particular here.

This fact is clinched by the particularizing, restrictive relative clause, ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε, "which you on your part have learned." The errors of the false teachers are παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν; they are contrary to the well-known teaching. Luther's "neben" for παρὰ is at best weak. Παρὰ with the accusative means "opposed to", "contrary to." It covers all errors.

We quote Lenski here: "The doctrine is *one*, the divisions and the death-traps of error are always *many*, plural. The fact is worth noting. The latter also keep varying in their attacks against the one doctrine. ~~Much false ado is made about the word~~ "doctrine", in order to blacken and degrade it. "Doctrine" is the adequate statement of the divine realities and facts concerned with our salvation. It is telling and thus teaching just what these realities (ἀλήθεια) are. What sane man would spurn and ignore this διδαχὴ? False doctrine is telling falsehoods about these realities, telling that they are not true, and that the opposite is true. The first falsehood, uttered by the liar from the beginning in Gen. 3, 5 is the classic example; Paul names him in v. 20."

Paul concluded the sentence with ἐκκλίνετε ἀπ' αὐτῶν "definitely lean away from them". ἐκ is an intensifier, like the Latin "per" and like our "utterly". "Stay away from them entirely", Paul admonishes. We note the force of ἐκ and ἀπό.

Paul continues in verse eighteen with the demonstrative correlative pronoun, οἱ γὰρ τοιοῦτοι, "for such kind". It is again most important to notice this generalization of the apostle in "such kind". It is attached to v. 17 with γάρ — causal. Paul asserts two things of "such kind": first, they are not slaves of Christ; secondly, they thoroughly deceive the innocent. The relation to Christ determines the relation to the Christian. The choice of δουλεύω is significant. It is the pivotal point of the argument in the verse. A Christian is a slave. His original so-called autonomy has been shattered. A new man has emerged whose intelligence, will power, emotional life, indeed all that he is to the marrow of his bones, is in the employ of God's will through the power of the Gospel. As such he is not captain of his own soul; he is a slave of Jesus Christ, obedient in every detail. The διδαχὴ of Christ is the gracious good will of Christ and the Father in heaven. The Christian does not lacerate or compromise

any doctrine, whether it be close to the center or not, whether it be a fundamental or a so-called non-fundamental doctrine. There are no ragged edges. There is the complete obedience of a *δοῦλος*.

False teachers are not slaves of Christ. They serve their own belly. *Κοιλία* is the whole belly, the entire cavity; often the uterus; also the innermost part of man, as the seat of thought and feeling. Cf. John 7, 38. It is a general term covering any organ in the abdomen. For the Greek it had an even wider meaning than indicated here. Paul felt no impropriety in using the term. False teachings enslave man to his belly. The speech is figurative. Man not a slave to Christ, as outlined above, is a slave to himself and to his flesh irrespective of the height of his ambitions and designs, and the idealism of his objectives. In the sight of God such objectives are service of the belly. They are excrement. The American vulgate supplies a plain term for it. Note also the present tense of reality in the verb *δουλεύουσιν*.

Since the false teachers are not slaves of Christ, but of their own belly, Paul makes a second assertion of them. "By means of flattering and pious words they thoroughly deceive the hearts of the innocent". The verb *ἀπατάω* is intensified like *κλίνω* of the previous verse with *ἐκ*. They *thoroughly* deceive the hearts of the innocent. *Καρδιά*, the object of the verb, is a very common word in the New Testament. It represents the character of the person; it is the source and fountain of his religious life. In an earlier chapter (6, 17) Paul thanked God that the Romans "obeyed from the heart (*ἐκ καρδίας*) that form of doctrine (*τύπον διδαχῆς*) which was delivered you". The form of the doctrine is the complete Gospel teaching in its full scope and doctrinal entirety which takes hold of the heart of the Christian and in turn creates the power of complete obedience, out of the heart, in every detail of the teaching.

It is to the heart, the most vital spot, that the errors of the false teachers are directed. The well-grounded Christian, wary and alert with piercing, scrutinizing eye will recognize them. Those simple, innocent hearts, not wary of evil, however, will be gravely endangered. The German "arglos" covers the Greek *ἄκακος*. Trench in his "New Testament Synonyms", says of *ἄπλοῦς, ἀκέραιος, ἄκακος, ἄδολος*: In this group we have some of the rarest and most excellent graces of the Christian character set forth; or perhaps, as it may rather prove, the same grace by aid

of different images, and with only slightest shades of real difference. . . . ἄκακος: He who himself means no evil to others, oftentimes fears no evil from others. Conscious of truth in his own heart, he believes truth in the hearts of all: a noble quality, yet in a world like ours capable of being pushed too far, where, if in malice we are to be children, yet in understanding to be men; if "simple concerning evil", yet "wise unto that which is good," . . . We may say, that as ἄκακος (— 'innocens') has no harmfulness in him, and the ἄδολος (— 'sincerus') no guile, so the ἀκέραιος (— 'integer') no foreign admixture, and the ἀπλοῦς (— 'simplex') no folds."

False teachers utterly deceive "by means of flattering and pious words", διὰ τῆς χρηστολογίας καὶ εὐλογίας. χρηστολογία is an affectation of kind speech. χρηστός means good, kindly, serviceable. It is so good that it sounds like a blessing, εὐλογία. In reality it is a pious fraud.

In this connection we quote a page from Lenski's Interpretation of Romans: "Paul's admonition is devitalized in its application to us today by a specious use of the historical principle of interpretation. Who are 'those causing the divisions', etc.? In the first place, the well-known Judaizers, who mixed law with Gospel; then, as First Corinthians shows, a number of others, some with philosophical, some with false moral teaching. Now it is insisted that Paul's words can be applied only to these errors, and that today we cannot invoke Paul's admonition unless we are able to point to exact duplicates of these errors. Generally the case is narrowed down to the Judaizers of Paul's day, who demanded circumcision and observance of Jewish ceremonialism. And even these are painted in pure black, as men who rejected the entire Gospel. But look at those Judaizers mentioned in Acts 15, 5: 'Certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed', former Pharisees, now believers, yet errorists. In Jerusalem they dropped their error, in Galatia some appeared as separatists to divide the churches and to draw them into their separatism. He who knows his Bible will not be deceived. Paul's injunction is not to keep away only from total rejecters of the Gospel — what Christian ever needed such a warning? His injunction is to keep away from believers who are errorists and teach falsely. Not only the exact duplicates of the errorists of

Paul's day are to be shunned, as though no new ones could arise, as though new ones do not divide, tear, and set traps, as though all errorists new and old, great and small, are not related, all in the same class; but, according to Paul himself (15, 4), 'whatever things were written before, for our instruction were they written,' to be fully applied, not devitalized, evaded. Give up the effort to make Paul even a mild unionist." (p. 198.)

In v. 19 Paul gives the reason for his admonition (γάρ). "For your obedience has come to all; over you, therefore, I rejoice, but I wish you to be wise toward the good, unmixed, however, to the bad." The obedience of the Romans was known throughout the church. It is not a fractional obedience. It is complete, because the Romans are slaves of Christ. Their reputation rests on their obedience to the διδαχή, the doctrine. This doctrine is the citadel of their integrity. Over this the apostle is exceedingly happy. Because of the integrity and spiritual health of the Roman congregation Paul wrote a purely instructive letter. There was no need of polemics; there was, however, a need for a general admonition, lest they who stand — stand so well as the Romans — might fall into errors. "I wish you to be wise unto the good on the one hand; unmixed, on the other hand, to the bad." We have a balanced statement here, μέν-δέ. The good, τὸ ἀγαθόν, although neuter, refers back to the doctrine of v. 17. The neuter does not bother us here. It is in good Greek usage. So also is σοφούς, "wise ones." The connotation in σοφός is "skilled", "an expert"; in German, "geschickt", "geübt". ἀκέραιος, as we noticed in Trench's explanation above, means "with no foreign admixture", "unmixed", from ἐράννυμι, "I mix". The term is used of wine not mixed with water and of metal unalloyed. It is freedom from foreign and "disturbing elements" (Trench). Paul's words in v. 19 present a full explanation of the general warning against all errors in the preceding verses 17 and 18. In the verses 1-16 and in v. 19 there is a complete frame around Paul's admonition.

To strengthen and encourage the Romans Paul adds, "the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet swiftly." The Romans will not fight alone. God is with them. He will trample upon or crush (συντρίψει) Satan, the author of all false teachings, under your feet swiftly, ἐν τάχει. Here is a reference to Gen. 3, 15. Philippi in his commentary on Romans explains:

“Die Verheißung des Protevangeliums ist zwar durch den Kreuzestod Christi objektiv ein für allemal erfüllt, aber sie gewinnt ihre fortgehende subjektive Realisation innerhalb der Gemeinde Christi durch jeglichen Glaubenssieg derselben über den durch den Versöhnungstod gerichteten und überwundenen Satan.” (p. 700.) Philippi adds a sentence of Bengel: “Quaevis victoria fidei, novum dolorem affert Satanae.” “Every victory of faith, brings a new pain to Satan.”

Our thoughts also turn to Luther as we read v. 20:

“Mit unsrer Macht ist nichts getan,
Wir sind gar bald verloren;
Es streit für uns der rechte Mann,
Den Gott hat selbst erkoren.
Fragst du, wer der ist?
Er heißt Jesus Christ,
Der Herr Zebaoth,
Und ist kein andrer Gott.
Das Feld muss er behalten.”

Paul appropriately closes with a prayer: ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ μεθ' ὑμῶν. “The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.”
Walter A. Schumann.

The Formation of the New Testament Canon

The history of the New Testament canon is that section of the historical discipline in theological study that endeavors to answer the question: “By what process did the 27 books contained in our New Testament — composed severally under various external conditions, at different times, and by a truly remarkable variety of individuals — in the course of about three centuries come to be regarded by the Christian Church as God’s inspired word of the New Covenant, an infallible norm of faith and conduct, worthy to be ranked as a *New* Testament beside the writings of the prophets of the *Old* Testament, and therefore suitable for reading in church and authoritative when appealed to in theological discussion?”

It must be clear at the outset that there is a fundamental

difference between the study of canon and that of introduction to the various Biblical books. The latter (isagogy) has to do with the *actual* origin of the books of Scripture; it treats of matters of authorship, date, situation, contents, and the like. In other words, the introductionist has to tell us what the books of the Bible really *are*. The New Testament canonist has an altogether different task. He must follow the separate books of the New Testament through a veritable maze of conflicting opinions, of quotation and misquotation, of allusion and innuendo, of charitable exposition and vitriolic digression, of pros and cons, on the part of the early Church Fathers; he must continually interrogate his witnesses as to the extent of their New Testament canon, very much as did the Roman proconsul at Scili in Northern Africa, who on July 17, 180 A. D. asked the prisoners before him charged with the "crime" of Christianity: "What do you have in your church book-case?" To be sure the modern questioner will not always receive as lucid and direct a reply as did that Roman proconsul ("Our customary books — *i. e.*, the Gospels — and in addition the letters of that holy man, Paul"), but he is generally able to get a pretty fair picture of the state of opinion concerning the canon of the New Testament at any particular time. The history of the canon is then the history of opinion held by the church's leaders concerning the right of the several New Testament books to be included in the collection of truly apostolic writings. For most of the New Testament books that opinion is an almost unanimous affirmative from the beginning on. A few that were accepted as canonical at an early date seem to have fallen under a cloud as time went on, and doubts concerning their canonicity were expressed; others officially appear as candidates for canonicity only at a later date (*i. e.*, though we know of their presence and use quite early, they are not mentioned by name until late) and are therefore marked as suspect by some and directly rejected by others. Therefore, the mere fact that a patristic writer fails to mention a certain book or perhaps even rejects it, is no argument against that book's genuineness. Nor is its inclusion in some father's canon an argument for its apostolicity. It isn't only the modern church that is afflicted with cranks among its Biblical scholars.

The Origin and Character of the New Testament Writings

For the purpose of canon history it is important to bear in mind that, although the books of Scripture were all divinely given through the instrumentality of human agents, with the sole exception of the Revelation of John (1:19 "write the things which thou hast seen") the books of the New Testament were not so far as we know produced in response to any special revelation or command from God, but were rather brought into being under the same general conditions as were those which prompted the oral preaching of the apostles; that is to say: Christ had given his disciples the general command to preach his Word and make disciples of all nations (Mt. 28:19); he had promised to send them the power of the Holy Ghost, who should support them in their witnessing "unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8); at Pentecost that Holy Spirit was given them in a very special degree; and this Spirit then prompted (*impulsus*) them, when the occasion was given, not only to oral preaching (Peter at Pentecost, Paul to the Athenians) but also to written composition (Peter to the churches of Asia Minor — I Peter; Paul to the church at Rome — Romans). Essentially therefore the apostles' written word is identical in authority with their spoken utterance; in both writing and speaking the Holy Ghost "taught them all things" and "brought all things to their remembrance whatsoever Jesus had said unto them" (John 14:26); when they wrote as well as when they spoke it was the divinely given Spirit of Truth who "guided them in all truth" (John 16:12) (*illuminatio*); they spoke *and wrote* "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (I Corinthians 2:13), so that of their written works as well as of their oral preaching that applies which Jesus said of his disciples in his prayer to his Father in Heaven (John 17:8); "I have given unto them *the words* (*τὰ ῥήματα*) which thou gavest me." These writings are then but the written statement of the content of their oral preaching and must till the end of time remain the immovable foundation of Christ's Church of the New Covenant, Ephesians 2:20-21: "Ye . . . are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy

temple in the Lord”) and together with the revelation granted through the prophets of the Old Testament the one *canon* (measuring stick) of faith and conduct for Christ’s church here upon earth.

The impelling motive that prompted the individual New Testament writer will have varied from case to case; now it must be sought in the general needs and conditions of the church as a whole (Mark); now in the peculiar conditions prevailing in some local church or group of churches (Galatians, Corinthians). But for the bulk of the New Testament the following characterization would hold true: **“The New Testament is the literary precipitate resulting from the impingement of the Christian movement upon the Gentile world.”** That too is why the language is Greek throughout.

The Earliest Collections as Steps in Canon-Making

The work of collecting some of the New Testament books into smaller and larger groups must have been begun early in the Apostolic Age. But again we can point to no direct command of God for such collecting. The external need of collecting the writings of the apostles must have grown out of the same situations as those were that called forth these writings in the first place. The church had had need of these writings of the apostles while the ambassadors of Christ yet lived; how much more would not the Church feel the need of these writings when the apostles had died? For in effect, in his writings the individual apostle lived and preached and admonished again.

The epistles sent by the apostles were read, we know, to the congregations to whom they were addressed. Paul gives explicit directions for such procedure Colossians 4:16 and I Thessalonians 5:27. But these early Christian congregations would not be satisfied to give such a letter but a single reading. The letters would be carefully preserved in the congregation’s book-chest, like that of the Scilitan martyrs, to which we have already referred. And the treasured letter, we may be sure, was preserved not as a museum piece but in order that it might be read and studied time and time again. Deep in the second century Polycarp of Smyrna writes thus to the Philippian church (3:2): “Paul . . . being absent wrote unto you epistles, by which, if you pore over

them, you shall be able to be built up unto the faith which was given unto you."

It would furthermore be but in the very nature of things if neighboring congregations would exchange their apostolic letters, and if each congregation would copy the neighbor's letter and thus add it to its own church collection before returning the neighbor's letter to the recipient church. Paul himself had pointed the way for the making of such a local neighborly Pauline epistle corpus at Colossae and at Laodicea, for he had directed the Colossians and the Laodiceans to exchange his letters to them (Colossians 4:16). And eager as Paul's hearers had been to hear God's word from his lips ("when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God" — I Thessalonians 2:13), how much more eager for every written word coming from the beloved pastor himself would they not be when word spread that Paul was a prisoner or had perhaps already been executed?

History does not record the names nor the place of residence of those Christians who were particularly zealous in the collection of the Apostolic writings. But *that* such work was done we do know: St. Peter himself knew a collection of Paul's letters (II Peter 3:16). Therefore we may be certain (so far as certainty is possible with any historical reconstruction) that the collection of the letters of Paul did not come about by their fortuitously drifting together as it were but rather as the result of conscious and energetic action on the part of some individual or group of individuals, perhaps of one of the leading apostolic congregations; Corinth, for instance. Names, dates, places — all escape us. So too does the immediate motive: was it the knowledge of the great apostle's death? was it a renewed interest in the life and work of the Apostle to the Gentiles awakened by Luke's publication of his two-volume work, *Luke-Acts*? If the latter, the Book of Acts would have provided a sufficient clue to lead the searcher to just those congregations that were in possession of the principal letters of Paul. However these things may have been, the greatest student of New Testament canon history (and that because he not only knew his subject from A to Z but also accepted the New Testament for that which it pretends to be) Theodor Zahn, concludes that in the 80's of the first century the 13 letters of Paul

accompanied by Hebrews were collected by the church at Corinth and made available to Christians everywhere. (II Peter 3:16 need not refer to such a church collection as posited here.) The individual inquirer may wish to quarrel with the date and place. But of this there can be no doubt: **Long before the first century was over someone somewhere** (but strategically located for purposes of dissemination) **brought together the extant writings of Paul, added by way of appendix as it were the Epistle to the Hebrews and made these writings available to the then rapidly expanding Christian world.** For we shall see that early in the second century the so-called "Apostolic Fathers" all have and reflect just these writings. Soon this early Pauline Corpus together with Luke's Acts is reflected in every Christian writer and is given the name: "The Apostle" (ὁ ἀπόστολος).

Early in the second century a similar Gospel corpus must have been made containing our canonical four Gospels. And this *collection* soon became known as "The Gospel" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). Hence we get our strange Greek designation for the separate Gospels: *κατὰ Ματθαῖον*, etc. This *κατά* is distributive: the whole collection is "The Gospel"; one section is "the part by" Matthew, another, "the part by" Luke, and so on. The second century writers refer to the Gospel collection as "the four-fold Gospel" (τὸ τετράμορφον εὐαγγέλιον). The Didache of the early second century knows the *written Gospel* (N. B. *not* Gospels) as divine.

This then is the fundamental canon (Urkanon) of the church, *The Gospel* and *The Apostle*. We know so little about the early history of the remaining books of the New Testament (the so-called Catholic Epistles and John's Revelation) that it would be hazardous to make any statement whatsoever concerning their manner of approach to the canon. It does seem clear that the three epistles of John circulated as a Johannine Epistle Corpus from the first as we shall see. But — and this is what is important — when the disciples and hearers of the apostles begin writing (*i. e.*, just as soon as we have evidence for a New Testament canon at all) **in language and in thought they reflect these remaining eight books of the New Testament as well**, not in such a manner to be sure as would satisfy a scientist with a microscope or an engineer with a vernier caliper, but with

sufficient clarity so that we today who know and love the Lord Jesus as they did may be sure that they knew and valued these other writings, by Peter, James, John, and Jude, and trusted them as the very Word of God.

So from the very first the Christians' appeal is to the written apostolic and prophetic Word, not to the authority of the bishop of Rome or to any other human authority. In fact the first Roman bishop who tried to be a pope, Victor, (c. 190 A. D.) failed miserably in the attempt. He tried to force the churches of Asia Minor to accept the date for Easter in vogue at Rome. Polycrates of Ephesus (Eusebius H. E. 5:24) replied to Victor and firmly and not-so-politely told Victor to mind his own business, denying the Roman's claim to infallibility or any right to dictate to other churches.

We have several times alluded to dissemination and distribution of these collections of New Testament books. Now distribution implies multiplication or production, or, in modern terms as applies to books — publication. We are not warranted in reading into the second century the conditions that prevailed several hundred years later when in the days of Ambrose and Eusebius (Eusebius H. E. 6:23) Christian libraries became regular Christian publishing houses, or societies for the propagation of Christian knowledge. Nor would it seem to be altogether scholarly to assume that the church of the second century went into the publishing business in the manner of the renowned publishers of Cicero, Horace, Pliny, and Martial at Rome: those famous ancient publishing houses of the Sosii, of Atticus, of Atrectus, of Trypho, Secundus, and Valerinus. To be sure there was a great amount of literary activity (*i. e.*, publication) in the pagan world during the first three centuries of the Christian era. In fact if we count the number of papyrus manuscripts of Greek authors written from the third century B. C. to the seventh century A. D. we find that the first three centuries of the Christian era saw produced more than twice as many of these "literary" papyri as the third, second, and first centuries B. C. and the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries A. D. *combined*. (762 as against a total of 362, U. of Wisconsin Studies, No. 9, Madison, 1923). These figures may not mean much but they at least bear witness to considerable pagan literary activity during the years of Christianity's

rise. The early Church lived in an atmosphere of publication. Again, the men who turned to Christianity during these years must have had considerable experience of publication and its products before their conversion. After the ex-magicians at Ephesus (Acts 19:19) had burnt their magical papyri rolls, Luke estimates the value of the destroyed books at \$10,000. There must have been several thousand *published* books thus burned, for private scrawls or unpublished manuscripts, be they actually in themselves or be they but deemed ever so valuable, have no commercial value declarable in dollars and cents.

So to be sure the early church carried on its work against a background of tremendous literary and publication activity on the part of the surrounding pagan world; but I want it clearly understood that I am not implying that this church made publication rather than evangelization by word of mouth its primary method of "making disciples of all men." I do not believe that the evidence warrants such a conclusion. And I say this in conscious opposition to a whole school of modern writers on the subject. But I am certain that the early church not only preached the Gospel and collected the known writings of the apostles at a very early date, but that it also published these works in its own way and in doing so adopted and very nearly monopolized, if it did not outright invent, a revolutionary development in book-making, the leaf-book (codex).

From early times the papyrus roll had been the only form of book. Vellum was occasionally employed, as recent finds at the newly excavated Roman fortress at Dura-Europos on the Euphrates prove, but papyrus was the standard writing material, and the roll its universally accepted form. Some Egyptian sacred texts are on rolls a hundred feet long or longer (133 feet the longest). But for practical purposes the roll rarely exceeded thirty-five feet. The height varied from ponderous tomes of *Schmoeker* proportions (19 inches high) to handy pocket rolls of five inches or less. A height of from nine to ten inches would be the normal size roll. Yet such an average 32 to 35 foot roll would obtain only one of the longer Gospels or a single book of Thucydides but no more (written on one side; cf. Ezekiel 2:10 "written within and without"). Aside from being cumbersome to handle and extremely perplexing when one sought a single pas-

sage in a work with whose entire content one was but imperfectly acquainted (here cf. Luke 4:17 Jesus opened the roll and found the place where it was written: Jesus *knew* the book of the prophet!), the papyrus roll could not contain all of "The Gospel" nor all of "The Apostle". So in the earliest days each book had its own history, and it would have been just as hard for the early Christians as it would be for us today to think of, let us say, the collected letters of Paul as a unity without actually being able ever to hold those collected letters in one's hands at one time. The nearest the ancients ever came to collecting papyrus rolls physically in order to show their consanguinity of content was when they placed rolls of related content into containers which on ancient representations of them look for all the world like min-buckets. Not a very enlightening arrangement!

Until quite recently it has been supposed that the papyrus roll continued in full use up to the early years of the fourth century and that it was then replaced by the vellum codex. But discoveries in Egypt have shown recently that not later than the early part of the second century the experiment was tried of using the codex form for papyrus. It seems that this, if not actually the invention of the early Christians, was at any rate largely employed by them; for though the roll continued as the popular format for works of pagan literature all through the second and third centuries, the vast majority of Christian writings are in codex form. So that (and let us again underscore divine providence as an element not only in the production but also in the preservation and distribution of these our most sacred writings) when the church had collected its New Testament into the groups we have come to know as the Four Gospel Corpus, the Pauline Letter Corpus, and the remaining writings (cf. the Old Testament Law, Prophets, Writings) it was now possible, though utterly unheard-of before, to contain each of these collections in a single papyrus leaf-book; and examples of such Pauline and Gospel codices of an early date have actually been found.

From an early date certain writings (gospel, acts, apocalypses) began to appear which pretended to be of apostolic origin though actually they were non-apostolic and frequently even of heretical origin (Docetic, Gnostic). Paul himself had to contend with such forgeries: in II Thessalonians he reveals that the Thessalonians have been disturbed by such a spurious letter in their attitude

toward the return of Christ to judgment (2:2-3); he therefore attests the genuineness of this his letter to them by his signature (3:17). And here he draws special attention to this signature ("so I write") as compared with his simple "The salutation by the hand of me Paul" of Colossians 4:18. Obviously the church at Colossae had been subjected to such attempts at swindling likewise. First Corinthians (16:21) is likewise authenticated by this autograph signature.

In fine, the early church was flooded with a deluge of apocryphal literature; there were gospels: according to the Hebrews, of the Ebionites, according to the Egyptians, of Philip, of Matthias, of Peter, of Thomas, and a Preaching of Peter; there were other gospels aside from these whose names are no longer known but of which fragments in Greek, Coptic, and Ethiopic have turned up in recent years; there were the infancy gospels like those of James and Thomas (all pseudonymous of course) which elaborated by means of mythical and fictitious additions the simple and noble canonical narrative of the conception, birth, and youth of our Savior; then there were "gospels" retelling (and generally with a strong heretical coloring) the passion story (Gospel of Peter, Acts of Pilate, Gospel of Bartholomew), there were "acts" ostensibly of John, Paul, Peter, Andrew, and Thomas; there were apocryphal epistles and epistle collections, like the Letters of Christ and Abgar, and the correspondence of Paul and Seneca, and there was a whole raft of apocalypses (Peter, Paul, Thomas, the Virgin Mary, Stephen). Some of this apocryphal New Testament literature seems to have been merely Christian romance, *i. e.* fiction using the apostles as its chief characters and depending on a universal interest in the love-story motif, and on an inclination toward tales of adventure and of the marvelous for a wide reading circle (Paul and Thekla, infancy gospels with their tales of the boy Jesus, "Peter" in his "Acts" making a dried herring swim, animals like Balaam's ass frequently speaking). But the bulk of this material is something other than more or less innocent fooling; it is obviously tendentious and relies on the methods of fiction to get across its heretical doctrines ("John" in his "Acts" reports: "When I sat at meat he would take me upon his own breast; and sometimes his breast was felt of me to be smooth and tender, and sometimes hard like unto stones." Again:

“And oftentimes when I walked with him, I desired to see the print of his foot, whether it appeared on the earth; for I saw him as it were lifting himself up from the earth; and I never saw it.” Or — John reports that at noon on Good Friday Jesus appeared to him in a cave on the Mount of Olives and explained that to the crowd below only he appeared to be crucified. The Gospel of Peter has Jesus say on the cross: “My, my power, thou hast forsaken me.”) Also, much of this material is outright pornography. Still, this apocryphal literature must have had a tremendous vogue as the many papyrus finds of it prove. A number of Christian writers reflect a knowledge of one or the other of these apocryphal works; a few take this or that work seriously, but there can be no better evidence for the nicety of judgment and the clarity of vision of the early Church as a whole than the fact that the vast majority of these works were never considered for the canon at all, and those few that did slip into a position of candidacy under the aegis of some church leader who had a weakness for that sort of thing were, though tolerated at the fringe of the canon for some time, promptly branded by the church as a whole as disputed and therefore unreliable as a norm in faith and conduct.

If you would permit it, I should like to conclude my discussion of the formation of the New Testament canon right here. So far as we are concerned, the New Testament canon has been described to its completion. But you will naturally object that I really have not yet begun to describe the New Testament canon formation at all, that I have not yet said a thing about Marcion, Heracleon, or Basilides, of Hippolytus, Autolytus, or the Canon Muratori, that I have not yet uttered a single one of those outlandish names that we have all come to consider a necessary evil in New Testament canon study. In view of what we generally understand by the study of the canon such a complaint would be entirely justified. However, before I continue with a brief résumé of the New Testament canon at stated intervals from the Apostolic Fathers down to just before 400 A. D., I should like to pause for a moment to criticize our general attitude toward study of the canon. We often take the position that this is a “pretty ticklish subject”; sometimes we feel toward the student of the canon as some persons feel toward the student of New Testament textual

criticism: that he is exposing himself to too much factual knowledge and is thereby endangering his faith; as though in these matters the strategy of the ostrich were after all the best policy! In these two matters, textual criticism and canon history, I firmly believe that we fundamental Lutheran Christians have often unwittingly (yet none the less actually) allowed the unbelieving critic to jockey us into a position where we tacitly permit him to conduct our research for us on his own terms, and while withholding assent to all *his* conclusions, we still have no positive convictions of our *own*. Why? Because the negative critic has told us so often and so long that there are so and so many textual variants in the New Testament text, and that the church fathers have such a variety of opinion on the constituency of the New Testament canon that we have an understandable timidity about approaching these subjects and have let the unbeliever at least dictate our major attitudes on these subjects to us. What the critic is careful to pass over in silence is the one important point that we know hundreds of times (this is no figure of speech but a cold mathematical statement) more about what the apostles of Jesus Christ actually said than we know about the text of *any ancient author*. Still, I have yet to meet the student of the classics who is tearing his hair because he cannot be sure precisely what Thucydides or Pindar said on a certain occasion. The case of the canon is a similar one: the critics would have us believe that the making of the canon was a veritable Battle of the Bible from the beginning, with the separate books now in and now out of the canon, so that in the Darwinian sense the New Testament today is but a case of the survival of the fittest for battle, not necessarily of the genuine, the apostolic, the best.

I furthermore firmly believe that the best way to combat that evil is to approach the story of the canon not from the *negative* point of view of the raging controversies of the third and fourth centuries, but from the *positive* side of the early collections of Gospel and Apostle, of emphasis on the great facts we do know positively and not of stress on those details on which there may have been some doubt in the past. To be sure, we cannot make these matters as clear as the multiplication table. The historical data are lacking for that. And to the unbeliever anything we say will be but begging the question anyway. Nor will we take

away a jot of the divinity of Scripture by such an approach: the divine mystery of inspiration must remain just that. But when words are written with reed and ink on papyrus and when books are physically handed from man to man, these things are phenomena in the world of men and justifiable subjects for historical study. Nor will such study lessen the glory due divine providence: it can but heighten that glory by making clear how here too the Almighty has used the things of men to effect the purposes of God. — But to return to the canon:

To be sure from time to time doubts were expressed about the genuineness of this or that book. The reasons given were dogmatical or historical. Sometimes the objector was misinformed; sometimes his own theological position was not beyond reproach. But we shall see that these objections were but minor jogs in the straight road that eventually led to the full recognition of the twenty-seven book canon as we know it today.

The New Testament Canon as Revealed at Stated Periods

I. *The Time of the Apostolic Fathers; The Age of Reflection*

The term "Apostolic Fathers" is a modern word used to designate as a group the following earliest Christian writers and writings outside the apostolic circle itself:

Clement of Rome, one of the earliest of Roman bishops, presumably the Clement mentioned Philippians 4:3 as Paul's follower, though this is by no means certain. About 96 A. D. he addressed a letter to the Church at Corinth in the name of the Roman congregation.

Barnabas wrote his letter perhaps about 120 A. D. The "letter" is rather a homily in the Alexandrian manner and was itself regarded as scripture by Clement of Alexandria and Origen. But the work cannot be by Barnabas, the companion of Paul.

Papias, says Irenaeus, was a companion of Polycarp and a hearer of John. He was the bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia in the reign of Trajan (98-117).

Epistle to Diognetus. About 130 an anonymous Christian writes this letter to Diognetus a pagan in response to the latter's question what Christianity is. Its sixth chapter is deservedly famous. It begins: "What the soul is in the body, that the Christians are in the world." It breathes the spirit of Paul and knows the Gospels as the real revelation of God.

Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, c. 107-117, was taken to martyrdom at Rome and on the way wrote the seven letters for which he is famous.

Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, had in his youth been the disciple of John at Ephesus and fellow-disciple of Papias there.

The Shepherd of Hermas is a sort of apocalypse and may well be the work of the Hermas mentioned Romans 16:14, though the Canon Muratori denies this. If actually by Hermas, the work dates not long after the year 100.

The Teaching of the Lord by the Twelve Apostles (The Didache) is our earliest example of the church manual. Its date is about 110 A. D. It echoes Matthew very palpably as well as several New Testament epistles (I Corinthians, II Thessalonians, I and II Peter, Hebrews, Jude) and knows the written Gospel as divine. It was published in 1883 and has thrown a great deal of strange and interesting light over the simple organization, faith, and worship of the early Christian communities. Its provenance is unknown.

A careful study of the text of these writers has convinced the essayist that **the Apostolic Fathers knew and used the New Testament as it is constituted today**. They quote and allude directly only on a few occasions (Barnabas 4:14 quotes Matthew 22:14 as *scripture*; Polycarp *Philippians* 12:1 quotes Ephesians 4:26 as *scripture* in a way that proves that to him Old Testament and Paul's letters are on the same level as inspired writings.) The four Gospels are quoted and alluded to abundantly, not by name to be sure, but by text. Separate writers have favorite Gospels: thus — the *Didache* and *Ignatius* seem to have a great preference for Matthew, but that is readily understandable. The Acts and the Pauline corpus are repeatedly reflected, and it is certainly a mere chance that *Colossians* and *Philemon* so far as I can see are nowhere alluded to. But the Pastoral Epistles are the very stock in trade of Polycarp of Smyrna and of Ignatius of Antioch; *Hebrews* is practically the framework of *Clement's Letter to the Corinthian Church*; I and II Peter are known to the *Didache* and II Peter seems to have been a great favorite with *Hermas* (he uses it in his argument no fewer than four times). *Hermas* (Mand. XI, 9) and Polycarp (4:3) both allude to James 2:1 in such a way as to prove that they know the epistle; *Didache* 2:7 must have *Jude 22* as its background. Papias knew the

Revelation of John as an inspired apostolic writing; in fact, that is just the reason why Eusebius, the great opponent of the Apocalypse, does not hesitate to reject Papias' excellent witness to the early state of the New Testament canon, on the ground that Papias is too *dense* to be taken seriously. (Note: Papias' theological views are Eusebius' reason for disqualifying him as a legitimate witness.) Both Papias and Polycarp use I John, and Polycarp treats I and II John as though he regarded them as *one epistle* (he conflates I John 4:2f. with II John 7 — Polycarp 7:1). It would seem to be a safe and fair assumption that these three little epistles circulated as a corpus from the start, so that he who has any one may be assumed to have all three. At any rate, the early writers often regarded the three as forming one letter; Irenaeus quotes II John 7:8 and I John 4:1-2 as from "The Letter of John", and there is no valid reason for supposing that any one of the three ever circulated without the others before the Peshitto Syriac canon of A. D. 411 (it accepted only three Catholic epistles, I John, I Peter, James).

We must not fail to quote one instance where archaeology has given factual evidence for the use before 150 A. D. of the four-fold Gospel in Egypt. In 1935 Bell and Skeat published in London a little work entitled "The Fragments of an Unknown Gospel". The document here published consists of two leaves (4 pages) plus a fragment of another from a papyrus codex whose date the leading palaeographers put no later than 150 A. D. The "gospel" seems to be a gospel harmony (and certainly not apocryphal). But what is important is that the words and phrases of all four canonical Gospels are interwoven to produce this harmony: John 5 and 9; Matthew 8:2-3; 22-16; Mark 1:40-42; 12:14; Luke 5:12-13; 20:2). Proof sufficient that early in the second century the canonical Four Gospels were *the basis* for the life of our Lord in far-off Egypt.

II. *The Age of Increasing Clarity of Reference; The Time of the Apologists and of the Growth of the Sects*

In the days of the Apostolic Fathers the writers of the church had and rejoiced in the possession of the sacred apostolic word. There was no need of talking much *about* that revealed word — the Word itself was the all-important thing. In this word the men just discussed lived and moved and had their being. But

soon conditions in the world and in the church itself were shaped in such a way that it became necessary for the church to talk *about* its sacred writings as books and as the writings of individual apostolic men. The reasons for this were twofold:

First, the church undertook to defend itself against the attacks of the Jews and of the Roman state. It had to prove its right to exist on the one hand on the basis of its claim that in the work of Christ that which the prophets had spoken but came to a divinely-ordained consummation, and on the other hand on the basis that it, the church, was not a revolutionary society nor a new sect, but a religion as old as the oldest and therefore entitled to the tolerance and protection of Roman law. Naturally its claims against both Jew and Roman state would be based upon the words of New Testament scripture, about which body of writings obviously certain statements would now have to be made.

Secondly, on the periphery of the church there now arose the sects (Gnostics, Montanists, Marcionites) which denied the truths taught by historical Christianity and appealed each to its own allegedly genuine body of "scripture" for proof that it was right and that the church was wrong. Naturally the protagonists of the church would fight the vagaries of the sectarians by appeals to genuine apostolic tradition. Hence arose the need of declaring what was and what was not that genuine apostolic tradition, especially since the heretics produced works of their own and claimed divine authority for these.

Justin called "the Martyr" (†165) had been a philosopher at Rome. He had travelled widely (born at Shechem — scene of *Dialogue* laid at Ephesus — major activity at Rome) and was one of the most learned men of his day. He knows the "memoirs of the apostles which are called gospels" and means our canonical Four. To be sure he supplements these with vivid data out of the still living oral tradition, as when he has Jesus born in a cave (*Dialogue* 78:5) and mentions the "yokes and plows" the Lord made while a carpenter at Nazareth (*Dialogue* 88:8). He once speaks of "the memoirs of Peter" but as we read on we perceive that he means our canonical Mark (3:17: *Dialogue* 106:3). He knows the story of Pentecost from Acts (*Apology* 50:12). In language and in thought he reflects every one of Paul's letters except Philemon (*e. g.* *Apology* 10:4, cf. *Phil.* 2:13). He reflects Hebrews nineteen times. He nowhere mentions Paul by name,

perhaps intentionally, so as to avoid even the suspicion that he leans toward the heresy of Marcion who had tried to remake Christianity by excluding everything from the church and its New Testament that was not Paul's or Pauline (Marcion's canon: Paul's epistles and a truncated Luke). First Peter Justin knows well, but I can find no reference to II Peter or to Jude. But James is in his canon (Jas. 1:15: Dialogue 100:5), and the Revelation (Dialogue 81:5) is to him a work of "John, one of the apostles of Christ", and Justin quotes it as an authority on a level with the saying of the Lord Luke 20:35f. This is the canon too of the other apologists. Tatian, the pupil of Justin who became the founder of the heretical Encratite sect, wrote an apology in which he frequently quotes the Gospel of John verbatim. He was also responsible for a gospel harmony (the Diatessaron) which became the standard Gospel text of the church in Syria, supplanting the separate gospels. But the fact that Tatian was able to make his harmony of these Four and have it accepted by the church proves that the Four canonical Gospels were authoritative to the church.

During this period then the church is speaking of its apostolic books in increasingly explicit terms. As yet it has drawn up *no canon*. But a heretic, Marcion, was the first to do just that for his sect. He boldly created a "gospel" and "apostle" of his own, and excluded all others. So we shall find that in the next age to be considered the church too took steps to make clear just what its canon contained. This became increasingly necessary because of the rapid spread of the Montanist movement with its Pentecostal-like excrescences.

III. *The Age of Explicit Statement of the Canon*

By the above caption for a discussion of the years just preceding the year 200, we do not mean to imply that by now all the church accepted the same books in its New Testament. Far from it. That did not come till two hundred years later. There were still many local differences which we can but sample, not describe. In the previous discussion we have looked about for evidence that the several books were accepted as scripture *somewhere* and we have seen that they all were. But that is not the same as saying that *all* were accepted *everywhere*. This they most certainly were not. Rome steadily refused to accept Hebrews, and the East

continued to show uneasiness about the Revelation of John. But now in various parts of the church men did begin to come out boldly and say: "such and such is the canon — nothing else!" Thus Irenaeus of Lyons in Gaul, the pupil of Polycarp, the pupil of John, undertakes to prove that there could have been only four Gospels, no more, no less, for are there not four quarters of the heavens, and did not God make exactly four covenants with men (those of Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Christ)? Irenaeus is likewise explicit on the Letters of Paul, the Acts, and on the Revelation.

Contemporary with Irenaeus some unknown writer, perhaps from Rome, drew up in Greek a list of the books which he or his church accepted as genuine. His work has disappeared. What we have of him is a fragmentary copy of an atrociously spelled manuscript of an abominable Latin translation of the Greek original. It was first published by the librarian Muratori at Milan not as an item of interest to Biblical scholars but to show students of the classics how bad Medieval Latin could be. For the *Canon Muratori* has been the despair of everyone who has tried to read and expound it from end to end. But for our purposes it is extremely important not so much for what it contains as for evidence that the church is now finally establishing a set canon of New Testament scripture. The Canon Muratori names all New Testament books except James and possibly Hebrews.

IV. *The Age of Criticism*

With the advent of the Christian *scholars* Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Eusebius, the practical criticism that must have been exercised before the Canon Muratori could be written or before Irenaeus could utter his famous pronunciamento on the Gospels now entered the literary field, and the right to inclusion in the canon was discussed from every possible angle for all the New Testament books. The one criterion of this criticism was: *is the book apostolic?* Apostolicity was considered proved if the following conditions were met:

1. the recipient (individual or congregation) had to be able to vouch for its genuineness;
2. the chief congregations founded by the apostles or nearly associated with them had to accept the book;
3. the book had to receive general assent;

4. the doctrine of the book in question had to agree with that of the undisputed genuine books of Scripture.

As a result of this criticism Hebrews, Second Peter, Second and Third John, James, Jude, and the Revelation came to be classed among the "doubtful" books, both as opposed to the "accepted" books and as opposed to the "rejected" (those whose non-apostolicity was beyond question). Let us note carefully that a "doubtful" book was not necessarily rejected by the writer who uses this term of it. More often than not the writer himself accepts the book in question, but by classifying it as "doubtful" he is merely being honest enough to say that, although he accepts it, there are others who do not.

Clement of Alexandria does not leave us with a very clear canonical picture. He has a number of definite notions: he thinks Hebrews is a Hebrew writing by Paul translated into Greek by Luke. But Clement is a typical Alexandrian in admitting just as much as possible into his canon (cf. the Alexandrian liberality with regard to the LXX canon). His list would include the Apostolic Fathers Barnabas and Clement of Rome as well as three apocalypses: those of Hermas (the Shepherd) and Peter in addition to the canonical Johannine Revelation. (Clement I and II are in the Alexandrian manuscript of the Bible: Codex A.)

With Origen we know precisely what we are about: he investigated and analyzed and then made two lists of books:

List I: books all accepted (*ὁμολογούμενα*).

List II: books some rejected but he accepted (*ἀντιλεγόμενα*.) Origen's own canon is therefore his List I plus List II. Into List I (*homologoumena*) went: Four Gospels, Acts, Fourteen Letters of Paul (Origen included Hebrews as Paul's and put it into this list despite the fact that he must have known that the letter was not fully acknowledged in the West. No doubt he felt justified in placing it on the undisputed list since so far as he could see there ought to be no question about it), First Peter, First John, The Revelation of John — twenty-two books in all. His List II (*antilegomena*) read: James (Origen is the first writer to mention the book by name though we have seen that it was known and used early in the second century), II Peter, II and III John, Jude, Barnabas, and the Shepherd of Hermas — seven books in all. Accordingly Origen's canon has twenty-nine books

(those *he* accepted) : 4 Gospels, Acts, 14 letters of Paul, 8 Catholic epistles, and 2 apocalypses: Barnabas as Catholic epistle and the Shepherd as apocalypse are added to our 27 book canon, and this is precisely the canon of the Codex Sinaiticus. But Origen is an Alexandrian. His contemporary, Hippolytus, the last Greek Father in Rome (c. 235) rejects Barnabas and all but *one* apocalypse (John's) but also the Epistle to the Hebrews. Hippolytus, we note, is characteristic of the Roman tendency.

Somewhere near the middle of the third century Dionysius the Great of Alexandria published a work on the Revelation of John. In opposition to Origen, he denied the book to the Apostle John. The next great figure in canon history, Eusebius the Church Historian, was a great admirer both of Origen and of Dionysius. In his canon he included the twenty-two acknowledged books of Origen but admitted the Revelation only on the proviso: "if it seem proper." This he did out of respect for Origen who had included the book in his "undisputed" list. To these 22 books Eusebius added as accepted by himself: James, Jude, II Peter, and II and III John. This is precisely our canon if we overlook Eusebius' very personal feeling about the Apocalypse. Eusebius also made a list of books he rejected: the Acts of Paul, Hermas, Barnabas, the Apocalypse of Peter, Didache, and the Revelation of John "if it seem proper." Eusebius' respect for Dionysius certainly is responsible for the inclusion of the last-named here just as his respect for Origen was responsible for its inclusion in his first list.

V. *The Settled Canon*

Athanasius became bishop of Alexandria in 326. His episcopate of nearly fifty years was broken by intervals of banishment and expulsion. He traveled to Constantinople and to Rome; he was banished to Gaul, visited Belgium, and took refuge in Upper Egypt. In one way or another he saw the world, and saw it as one of its leading figures (Council of Nicaea). As a result he knew the Christian world, East, West, North, and South, as few men did.

In the year 367 he devoted his annual Easter letter to the churches of his diocese to the books of scripture. In this letter then he is reflecting the general opinion of all Christendom (of course not of the heretical sects). He lists the books of the New

Testament. They are those of the Eusebian list minus the disability afflicted upon the Revelation by Eusebius (the 27 books of our canon). For by that day honest, well-informed, and devout Christians everywhere were officially acknowledging those books as apostolic Scripture which the Apostolic Fathers early in the second century knew and used as such. The East that had followed Eusebius had withdrawn its opposition to the Apocalypse; Rome now fully accepted Hebrews. Certainly there had been honest differences of opinion among those who dealt with the New Testament canon as such; and this for reasons we can all respect: differences of temperament, training, background; honest convictions arising from scholarly research; devotion to an admired teacher or to a beloved church.

But if this essay has any value at all it should impress this one thought: **Before the fourth century was out Christians everywhere accepted precisely those books as infallible apostolic word which the church's first leaders of whom we have any knowledge were already accepting when the second century was just getting under way.** Both groups were bound in their consciences to believe that of these the Lord Jesus Christ was saying again with pointed emphasis:

"He that heareth these heareth Me."

Blume.

Second Sunday in Advent

TEXT: LUKE 12, 35-48

In the Lord Jesus Christ dearly Beloved!

Joy and earnestness are two entirely different moods. Can they possibly exist side by side in the same person, and is the one compatible with the other? And do they actually exist side by side? In very many people they do not. These are the children of the world, the unconverted. Their joy is of such a nature that sincere earnestness cannot exist in their heart at the same time. When the unconverted man is once deeply enmeshed in worldly joy, he is giddy and foolish and devoid of all earnestness. The Christian presents a different case. The first Advent Sunday summons him to joy and ushers him into a sweet season of joy: the Advent Season lasting till Christmas. And today this second Advent Sunday comes to him with a **summons** to a thorough-going earnestness. But a Christian can follow both summons, the one to joy as well as the one to earnestness, at one and the same time, nor is his Advent joy dampened in any way because of this earnestness. This leads us to the subject we shall consider on the basis of our text:

ADVENT SPELLS EARNESTNESS

Let us consider:

1. The evidence of this earnestness in a Christian;
2. The source of his earnestness;
3. Things that conflict with such earnestness.

I

The evidence of this earnestness.

How does the earnestness of Advent evidence itself? In this, first, that a Christian makes it his concern to be the kind of man that the Lord Jesus would find him at His final advent on the Last Day, i. e. **watching**. That is a figurative expression taken from the parable which the Lord Jesus here employs. He compares Himself with a lord who comes from the wedding as the bridegroom, and the Christians He compares with the servants of the lord who watch and wait for the lord, in order to open unto him immediately upon his arrival. Then we are told in greater detail — still in the language of the parable — what goes to make up such watching and waiting. Two features are given: “Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning.” We gain an understanding of these words from a study of Jewish customs, particularly those regarding weddings, upon which the Savior bases His parable. If a servant did not gather in his garment with his loin-girdle, the garment would hinder him in walking and at his work; he could not, for instance, get up quickly and perform his tasks. He was not ready and prepared to be on his way. Then “Let your loins be girded about” means: be ready and prepared to set out, so that nothing may detain or hinder you. — Now what is this about lights? They are to be burning? Again the reference is to wedding customs. The servants would go out to meet the returning lord and bridegroom with torches or lights, and in this festive way they conducted him into his own house. These are the two things that make up the watching and waiting of the servants.

What is the spiritual meaning of this? That is not hard to answer. We Christians are to watch and wait for the heavenly Bridegroom, Christ, Who on the Last Day will come from the wedding, i. e. from the wedding arranged in heaven and prepared for all eternity, the wedding which spells nothing but eternal glory for the Church of God and Christ. But just **how** are we to watch and wait for Him? First, by having our loins girded about in a spiritual sense. That means: Spiritually nothing is to hinder or detain us; we are to be ready and prepared to set out to meet the Lord. This earth with its treasures, its affairs, and its pleasures is not to have such a firm grip upon us, that it takes us a long time to pull ourselves together, tear ourselves away from it, leave all and go out to meet the Lord — and that we by such delay miss the right time for opening unto Him and receiving Him. It is quite clear, to put it briefly, that this being

girded about the loins means the same as that which Scriptures call being spiritually-minded, setting your affections on things above, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. — Now it is hardly necessary to add the spiritual meaning of "Let your lights be burning." It means: Let the light of **faith** be burning. But this light must be burning, so to speak, in the right lamp, that is, the reborn heart, and with the right kind of oil, that is, the Holy Spirit with His Gospel. For the man in whom the light of faith is not burning does not know the heavenly Bridegroom, and the Bridegroom would not even permit such an one to accompany Him, supposing that he really came out to meet Him. But this kind does not go out to meet the heavenly Bridegroom, yes, cannot do it. They are not in that condition in which Jesus would find them — watching. Those without faith are befuddled, blind, asleep, not watching. Now we know what it means to **watch**. A true Christian wants to do that, and in order to do it, he makes it his very earnest concern. In that way the earnestness of Advent evidences itself in him.

It **furthermore** evidences itself in this that he very clearly realizes and honestly faces the fact: this spiritual watching is not at all an easy matter that is achieved without much effort, but a very difficult one that is achieved only with a high degree of fidelity to the Lord and His all-effecting grace. A Christian is one whom God has given a sense for spiritual things and a sincere striving for heavenly things. If, then, he is wide-awake and observant, it will be his experience that in his progress through life he too is like a man in long, flowing garments who travels narrow paths set with thorny hedges. Here a thorn catches hold of his coat, there another of his cloak. He finds himself entangled first in one place and then in another. Truly, a Christian knows from experience that all along his paths are big and little hooks that are designed to catch and hold him. Now it may be a small profit that would ensnare him at once in the love for the things of the earth. Again it may be a loss of money or goods that would gain an even firmer hold on him, binding him to earthly possessions more closely than before. Now his earthly possessions light his eyes with pleasure, and that at once becomes a hook which pulls his soul down deeper into earthly things; again a look at his property and goods saddens him, because everything ought to be and could be much better — and that too becomes a dangerous hook to hold him to earthly things. It is impossible to describe how everything in this world: profit, labor, business, every penny, we might say, has a hook to it, that can shackle him to earthly things. God have mercy on us! It is a difficult requirement: Let your loins be girded about, set not your hearts upon the world, be ready and prepared to set out and meet the Lord.

But why is it very difficult to gird your loins spiritually? Simply because the other injunction: "Let your lights be burning", all by itself, is very difficult. To restate it: Because it is very difficult to

retain a truly **firm** and **living** faith. A Christian observes his fortune in the world: he does not count for anything and trouble piles up on him; the godless get along so well — they enjoy prosperity and strut with it —, and he is sorely afflicted. Then it surely is hard for him to **believe**: I have forgiveness, redemption, and fulness of grace through Christ, and I am God's dear child who rests in God's bosom as does a child in the bosom of its mother. When we see how hard-pressed the Church is: the world and the sects rise up against it, and even in our congregations there are many who refuse to submit to God's teachings and commandments, — in view of this it is very hard to **believe** that the Church is God's realm and the Lord Jesus' kingdom in which He reigns and governs through the Holy Spirit. Truly, practically everything that we see with bodily eyes runs counter to our faith and contradicts that which we should and would believe, as though these things were not eternally and most certainly true. You have to close your eyes to everything and be like one who sees nothing with his eyes, if you would believe. Not seeing and yet believing, that is what's needed. That is difficult; as no one knows better than he who exercises his faith, the true Christian. Because a Christian realizes how difficult it is to be girded about spiritually and to be prepared and, above all, to retain a firm and living faith, — to keep a brightly burning light, — for that very reason he is not easy-going, but in **earnest** about it. Thus in the midst of the **joyous** Advent Season the earnestness in his heart evidences itself.

Now let us see why it is that a sincere Christian devotes himself with real earnestness to this task of being watchful, i. e., being spiritually girded about and ready with a burning light, in order to go out and meet the Lord at His coming. Hence we consider:

II.

The source of such earnestness.

We are told, first of all: Its source is the certainty that the Lord and Savior will return and that at an hour when you least expect it. With his whole heart and in supreme assurance the sincere Christian believes: There will be an end to this visible world, and at the end the Lord Jesus will return. In fact, the return of the Lord is one of the chief doctrines of faith, which we therefore learn even as young children in the Second Article: "From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead." Because the return of the Lord at the last day is vitally important, this article is singled out for attack by the world and its scoffing hosts. What foolish things you Christians believe, with nothing to base them on! — that's their mocking cry. You can see that everything is now and ever remains as it was, and you keep thinking of an end of the world. Where do you find any omens pointing to the end of the world, the last day, and the return of Christ? —

To that the sincere Christian, well-founded on Scriptures, can answer: Never fear, I have such omens, omens which the beloved Savior has given us through the mouth of His apostles. You scoffers, for instance, are such an omen. For we Christians are told that as a mark of the approaching end of the world scoffers will appear and say: Oh, all things continue as they were from the beginning; matter is eternal; the world will never pass away; any talk about an end of the world and its annihilation is foolishness. Now here you are filling the role of those very scoffers! As the swallows are the harbingers of summer, so you scoffers are the harbingers of the coming end. And a Christian well-founded in Scriptures says: "You children of the world who are drowned in the affairs, treasures, and pleasures of the world, — you all are a sign that the last day and the end of the world really are at hand. For the Lord, our Savior, in Whose mouth there was found no guile, has told us Christians: When He returns, this will be the condition of men: They shall buy and sell, they shall marry and be given in marriage, they shall build, eat, and drink; and few shall there be that believe. There we have it from the lips of our dear Lord: At the end, before His return, men shall be belly-slaves pure and simple, earthly-minded through and through — concerning themselves only with temporal things, occupying themselves only with earthly things. The earthly things shall be their all, and for God and the things of God they shall have no understanding and shall pay no attention to them. Nearly all men shall be like that. Only a very, very few shall be different, i. e. seeking God and believing.

That is the way matters stand. Surely, in the face of that a true Christian must have a firm faith, a faith not to be shaken on this point: the end of the world is coming and along with it the Lord Jesus Christ. It is true, the sincere Christian is certain of this in his heart's faith **solely** because of the Savior's Word with which He foretells His return **here** in our text and in many other passages. Still it will strengthen him in his confidence and assurance to see that many different signs which Jesus has revealed, either by His own mouth or through His apostles, as omens of His day and His return, have been fulfilled with marvelous exactness. You certainly cannot imagine the Christian who has such a firm faith taking a frivolous attitude and thinking and saying by any chance: Who knows whether everything will actually be fulfilled! Or can you conceive him regarding the return of Christ as unimportant after all or being left indifferent toward it? No, you can well understand that the firm faith with which a Christian looks forward to the return of Christ fills His heart with true earnestness.

This will hold true even more because he knows and believes this also: The Lord will come at an hour when you do not think it, as He here says to the disciples and therewith to all Christians: "And this know that if the goodman of the house had known what hour

the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." A Christian is certain indeed **that** the Lord is coming, and also that He is coming **soon**, because all signs of the last day have been fulfilled, yet he does not know the year, month, day, and hour of Christ's return. The time which foolish men calculate and think to be the **right** time for Christ's return is the **very time** at which He will not come. He will come at an entirely unexpected time and hour.

What influence, what effect should this have on us Christians? Certainly, none other than this: our hearts should be filled with a still greater earnestness. Our hearts can entertain only thoughts such as these: Who knows, it may perhaps be only a few days until my Lord's return; perhaps I have but little time left. Therefore I must turn every day and every hour of grace to still better account. In short, because of this he becomes all the more earnest. — The result for him is a still greater measure of that earnestness which governs heart and life and which manifests itself in this very thing that a Christian is concerned about having the Savior find him watching at the last day. Well he knows how much depends on that. We mention just that as the final consideration which fills him with the most sacred earnestness, and which is the source of such Advent earnestness:

The certainty that the Lord will exalt the watching, faithful servants, but terribly confound the frivolous, secure, and unfaithful servants. Our beloved Savior has foretold how He will exalt the servants whom He finds watching. He proclaims: "Blessed are those servants!" And: "Who then is that faithful and wise steward whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, he will make him ruler over all that he hath." What inexpressibly glorious things are here expressed! For through this parable of the lord who makes the servant ruler over all that he has he tells us: He, Christ, the Savior of the world and the Lord of glory, finally will enthrone every loyal Christian as a lord to reign with Him, the Savior. We are to be possessors of all the treasures and glories of heaven! Dear friends, let us first look at ourselves, miserable, worthless mortals that we are, and then let us look at this glory. Why it is incomparably great! But that is not all of it. Jesus promises something still greater when He assures the faithful servants: The Lord shall gird himself, and make them sit down at meat, and will come forth and serve them. In that way He will honor them, and thus He will be concerned about refreshing them, making them happy, and filling them with delight. — Now we say: Incomparably great! with even better reason. It is so great that a Christian can hardly grasp it, if he is really conscious of his utter sinfulness. But all of it is certain.

The Lord is the Bridegroom, the Christians are the bride. With them He shares all of His treasures and all His glory. And He will serve them — will honor them, and so too will the Father. All that is certain, and the sincere Christian is certain of it by the faith that he carries about in his heart during his sojourn on earth.

It is equally certain that the Lord will indeed debase the frivolous, unfaithful servant in dire fashion, as He has foretold: "But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink and be drunken; the lord of that servant will come in a day when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." Mark the meaning of the words: "Cut in sunder": To smash, so that no part remains sound and intact. Thereby the Lord would have us understand that He will punish the secure servants and Christians with such suffering, misery, and torments, that no part of their soul and no part of their body shall escape crushing punishment and be without pain and torture. All the faculties of the soul and all the members of the body shall know and experience but **one** thing: Torture and pain, indescribable misery. That is the lot of unfaithful Christians who, though not openly in the camp of the unbelievers but still professing the Church and the Word, nevertheless were secure. That is the fate of such people. Their dead Christianity does not help them. They receive their portion with those that are without, with the unbelievers.

Both of these facts are a certainty to the sincere Christian: the indescribable misery of the unfaithful in eternity and the inexpressibly great glory of the faithful Christian in eternity. Shall I then, he thinks, plunge into such eternal misery through indifference? Shall I fail to share in that indescribable glory and bliss? How great that bliss will be I cannot grasp, but God help me that I may be faithful, and that I stand not with the unbelievers, but with the believers! Thus, dear fellow-Christians, true Christians are led by all this to the true Advent earnestness which manifests itself in this that they watch and wait for the Lord with their loins girded about and their lamps burning. This is enough for us to determine who it is that has the desirable, salutary earnestness of Advent. But this purpose will be served still better, if we now consider:

III

Things that conflict with the earnestness of Advent.

This is a contradiction: A Christian **not being prepared**, though he **knows** the Lord's will. Alas! There are such people. They know that the Lord may come at any time, and that it is so written. Yet they say: It is clear that the Lord delays His coming, there is nothing urgent about it, there is no hurry at all. They postpone all necessary preparations to the distant future. They know that they are to give to the Lord's household their due portion. That means: As

Christians they are to give their fellow-Christians their due portion, and that, as they well know, is a twofold one: First the portion of faith. They are to provoke their dear fellow-Christian to faith and to encourage him to let his faith be strengthened; they are also to strengthen him in faith with many a comforting word and to help him by a good example in making use of the Word. Alas! They **know** well enough that it ought to be so, but they do not give their fellow-Christians their due portion, yea, do not even give it to themselves, since, with a wanton contempt for the Word, they deprive themselves of its preaching practically every Sunday, year-in and year-out. They are furthermore, to give their fellow-Christians their due portion of love and good works. They know that they are to love one another and to do good to one another, but they practice neither love nor good works. They also know the Lord's will: they are to be sober and vigilant, and drunkenness is an abomination and a fatal evil. And yet many Christians, alas, defile themselves with it. It is a regular pestilence in our day. Even though some do not defile themselves with shameful drunkenness, so that they present a disgraceful spectacle on the streets, still they do the same thing by intemperance in eating and drinking and in general by a life consecrated to the belly. Conducting yourself thus, denying the will of Jesus and living contrary to it in that way surely is entirely contrary to the earnestness of Advent, which leads a Christian to prepare himself for the return of Christ in the hope of glory. Such a man also prepares himself for the return of Christ, it is true, but he prepares himself for this treatment: the Lord beats him with many stripes as one who made a mockery of the Christian name and thereby earned a special measure of disgrace.

There are still others who know nothing of the earnestness of Advent. They are the men who make no effort to know the will of Jesus, though they are well able to. There are still only too many in our Lutheran Church who are sadly lacking in knowledge and understanding. It is hardly believable that there are even such who do not understand that all belly-service, especially intoxication, over-drinking, is an abomination. If they only were making an effort to come to a correct understanding! But there is no evidence of that. These weak Christians are the very ones who continue in their sloth, are lazy in their attendance on preaching, and at home read neither the Bible nor the catechism. Certainly that is the direct opposite of the Advent earnestness which ought to be found in a Christian and which leads him to strive for preparedness against the day of the Lord. You blind and lazy people are digging a pit for yourselves. You will perish! Let no one think that his ignorance will excuse him. No, here we are told: "But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." And that's strictly in accord with justice, for "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have

committed much, of him they will ask the more." Have not the Scriptures, the church, and preaching been given to all? Can anyone say: I could not make full use of those things? Can anyone say: It was asking too much of me to let someone give me the necessary instruction and preparation? — Then let him who has been indifferent till now repent, and let him be in earnest in his preparation for the day of the Lord!

But let us who are engaged in earnest living continue in it, and let us fortify our hearts with the glorious promise which the Lord will fulfill upon us, if He finds us watching — the promise: It shall be His pleasure to gird Himself and set us down to meat, and to come forth and serve us. Amen.

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

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

Ft. Wayne Resolutions on the Union Matter. — The Delegate Convention of the Missouri Synod assembled in Ft. Wayne in June adopted the following resolutions concerning the negotiations between their church body and the A. L. C. The final adoption as a whole was preceded by lengthy discussions in four consecutive morning sessions.

"1. That we express our deep gratitude to God for whatever progress by the testimony of His truth has been accomplished in the direction of doctrinal unity for the welfare of His Church and to the glory of His name.

"2. That we express our deep regret that the Lutheran Church of our country is not united, especially in these days of spiritual indifferentism, apostasy, and unbelief, which have increased its responsibility to hold aloft the banner of purity of doctrine.

"3. That we express our willingness to continue our efforts toward bringing about true unity in the Lutheran Church of this country, both in doctrine and practice, but that we are determined to do so only on the basis of the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions, lest we be unthankful to the Lord for our Lutheran heritage, unfaithful to the trust which the Lord has committed to us, and unworthy of the Lord's continued blessings.

"4. That we acknowledge with joy and gratitude to God that, according to reports which we have received, many individuals and groups within the American Lutheran Church have made efforts to establish doctrinal unity with us; but we regret that the American Lutheran Church as a body has not taken as firm an attitude in reference to establishing

doctrinal unity as under the circumstances we had reason to hope for.¹⁾

"5. That we continue our negotiations with the American Lutheran Church in an effort to establish doctrinal unity, because — a) they have requested us to strive together with them for doctrinal unity, for which the need exists, and it is in accordance with the Lord's will that Christians should strive for doctrinal unity (1 Pet. 3, 15²; 1 Cor. 1, 10); — b) the efforts made between our Synod and the American Lutheran Church have not been barren of good results, and we have the Lord's promise that the testimony of His truth will not be in vain (Is. 55, 10. 11).

"6. That to this end a committee, henceforth to be known as *The Committee on Doctrinal Unity in the Lutheran Church of America*, be again appointed, in accordance with the resolutions of the Cleveland Convention of 1935.

¹⁾ This resolution, according to the *Lutheran Witness* for July 8, 1941, was first passed in a different form, then recommitted, and finally adopted in the form given above. Here is the original form: "4. That we regret that the A. L. C. has made, and is making, it difficult for the Missouri Synod and its sister synods in the Synodical Conference to continue negotiations, by not taking as firm an attitude in reference to doctrine as under the circumstances we had reason to hope for, especially — a) that the A. L. C. found the Pittsburgh Agreement on inspiration of the Scriptures to be satisfactory; — b) that according to our information the A. L. C. did not at the Minneapolis convention of the A. L. C. officially approach the sister synods on the matter of Lutheran unity between our Synod and the A. L. C.; — c) that the leaders of the A. L. C. in its official publications made statements which are at variance with the Lutheran Confessions and Lutheran practice."

²⁾ The Wisconsin Synod, assembled in Saginaw in August, re-affirmed its position taken in Watertown two years ago, on the basis of a report by its standing committee on Church Union matters. The report contains the following pertinent paragraph:

"B. Nor do our Watertown resolutions violate any Scripture principle. — 1) The Ft. Wayne resolutions again refer to 1 Pet. 3, 15, as demanding a continuation of negotiations with the A. L. C.: *Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.* — 2) If this passage is pertinent, then not only our Watertown, but also our New Ulm resolutions (declining an invitation of the U. L. C. A.) must be rescinded. — 3) The passage does not refer to doctrinal discussions. It speaks of the proper attitude of the Christians in times of persecutions; cf. vv. 8-14; then vv. 16ff. — 4) That the obligation to discuss doctrine with others does not apply in every case is made evident by passages like Tit. 3, 10: A man that is an heretick *after the first and second admonition reject*; and Rom. 16, 17: Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, *and avoid them*; — passages which call for cessation of verbal testimony under certain conditions. That there is reason to think of these passages in this connection seems to be indicated by the Ft. Wayne resolutions which describe the situation as follows: "The A. L. C. as a body *has not taken as firm an attitude* in reference to establishing doctrinal unity as under the circumstances *we had reason to hope for.*"

"7. That our sister synods in the Synodical Conference be asked to send their representatives to the joint meetings of this committee.

"8. That further procedure be governed by the following instructions: that

a) The immediate object be not organic union but doctrinal unity;

b) Since the Synodical Conference has asked us, 'earnestly to consider the advisability of bringing about the framing of one document of agreement', and since it has become quite evident that it is not only desirable but necessary to have one document, our committee be instructed to make every possible effort that such one document be prepared;

c) In preparing this one document our committee prayerfully and carefully consider all the misgivings and objections that have been expressed in memorials presented to this convention, or otherwise; and that this one document be so clearly written that there can be no misunderstanding in reference to the meaning which the words are to convey;

d) In calling for one document we do not mean to dispense with any doctrinal statement made in our *Brief Statement*, for we believe that it correctly expresses the doctrinal position of our Synod, but we concede that, for the sake of clarification under the present circumstances, some statements may need to be more sharply defined or amplified;

e) It be understood that the term Non-fundamental Doctrines, which has been used, should not be made to convey the idea that anything clearly revealed in Scripture, although not absolutely necessary for salvation, may be denied;

f) In addition to any controversial doctrines that may need further study and clarification, (also) the teachings concerning Anti-Christ, the conversion of the Jews, the physical resurrection of the martyrs, and the fulfilment of the thousand years, be given careful study by the committee and pastoral conferences on the basis of Scripture and our Confessions, and that also in reference to these teachings we endeavor to establish full agreement;

g) The pastors of both church bodies be encouraged to continue to meet in smaller circles, wherever and as often as possible, in order to discuss both the doctrinal basis of unity and the questions of church practice;

h) The pastoral conferences receive information from our committee and report the results of their joint meetings to the secretary of Synod's committee;

i) After one doctrinal document has been agreed on, such document be submitted to the various pastoral conferences, and any suggestions in reference thereto be sent to the secretary of the synodical committee;

j) Beyond this procedure, as it has been outlined in the previous paragraphs, no further official action be taken until our Synod and the American Lutheran Church have officially ratified the doctrinal agreement prepared by the joint official committee.

"9. That after favorable action has been taken by our Synod and the American Lutheran Church in reference to the one doctrinal agreement presented, our Synod take no further action with the American Lutheran Church until our Synod has submitted the entire matter to our sister synods in the Synodical Conference, and the American Lutheran Church has submitted the entire matter to its sister synods in the American Lutheran Conference, and all this has resulted in favorable action; in the meantime discussions by joint pastoral conferences may continue.

"10. That we reaffirm our declaration made at the St. Louis convention in reference to 'agreement in practice', to wit, 'That since for true unity we need not only this doctrinal agreement but also agreement in practice, we state with our synodical fathers that according to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessional writings Christian practice must harmonize with Christian doctrine, and that, where there is a divergence from Biblical, confessional practice, strenuous efforts must be made to correct such deviations. We refer particularly to the attitude toward the anti-Christian Lodge, anti-Scriptural pulpit- and altar-fellowship, and all other forms of unionism.' (1938, p. 232.)

"11. That in the meantime, it be understood that no pulpit-, altar-, or prayer-fellowship has been established between us and the American Lutheran Church; and until such fellowship has been officially declared by the synods concerned, no action is to be taken by any of our pastors or congregations which ignores the fact that we are not yet united.

"12. That Synod recognize the difficulties and obstacles which confronted the Committee on Lutheran Union in its efforts to achieve doctrinal unity between our Synod and the American Lutheran Church; and

"13. That Synod, by a rising vote, express its thanks to our committee for having faithfully and well served in a matter of utmost and far-reaching importance for the Lutheran Church."

This document deserves careful study and comparison with the St. Louis union resolutions of 1938. M.

Co-ordination. — In recent weeks one could frequently find the word *co-ordination* in reports on church work, in cases where *cooperation*, or joint work, was deemed improper. As a case in point we quote the agreement reached between the Army and Navy Commission of the Missouri Synod and the Administrative Committee of the Service Men's Division of the National Lutheran Council. This agreement was reached in compliance with a resolution adopted by the Columbus Conference on January 20, 1941. Here is the text, as it appears in the *Lutheran Companion* for April 24, 1941, which hails the agreement as "the first fruits of the historical Columbus Conference . . . becoming apparent."

"A. That it be the general policy that only one Lutheran Center be built wherever necessary.

"B. That the Administrative Committee of the Service Men's Division of the National Lutheran Council, and the Army and Navy Com-

mission of the Missouri Synod determine in consultation with each other, in the vicinity of which camp the one or the other church group will build and maintain a Lutheran center, in order to avoid duplication.

"C. That in all cases where the one group establishes a Center, the other group will contribute an agreed sum toward the maintenance of the Center.

"D. That the Army and Navy Commission of the Missouri Synod and the Service Men's Division of the National Lutheran Council instruct directors and staff members in charge of Lutheran Centers to respect the confessional position of the Missouri Synod and of the National Lutheran Council bodies.

"E. That the spiritual welfare work in the interest of members of the Missouri Synod be done by pastors of the Missouri Synod, and that the spiritual welfare work in the interest of the members of the National Lutheran Council be done by pastors of the National Lutheran Council."

To this the *Lutheran Companion* editorially adds the following comment. (Emphasis throughout is mine, except in one case. M.)

"It may be noted here that this is the *first* (Italics by *Luth. Comp.* — M.) working agreement ever reached between the Missouri Synod and an organization which represents practically all other Lutherans in America. In fact, it affects all of the Lutheran groups who were represented at the Columbus Conference, totaling approximately 4,600,000 members. *Truly this achievement marks a notable milestone in the history of American Lutheranism!*

"In the joint statement issued on behalf of their respective groups by Dr. N. M. Ylvisaker, Director of the Service Men's Division of the National Lutheran Council, and Dr. Edmund W. Weber, Executive Secretary of the Army and Navy Commission of the Missouri Synod, it was emphasized that the motivation behind the agreement was *'the desire to avoid duplication of effort, waste of funds, and such conflicts as may so easily arise where both are anxious to do their full duty to their country in a time of great emergency, to their Church in a time of severe testing, and to those members of their respective church organizations who in these perilous times more than ever need the consolation, guidance, and assistance of the Church of their faith and of the Savior of their souls.'*

"This is a most excellent statement. But *why should these considerations be emphasized only in respect to spiritual work among service men?* We are thinking now of the shameful 'duplication of effort,' 'waste of funds,' and 'conflicts' which have been occurring for years in other realms of Lutheran activity. *Perhaps the competition on home mission fields is the most notorious example of how Lutheran bodies have been working at odds with each other instead of trying to co-ordinate their efforts and to agree on a division of territory in a spirit of Christian friendship and understanding. The result? We have witnessed a dissipation of strength*

and resources which could have been used far more wisely to the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and we have seen the erection of innumerable opposition churches, many of which are doomed to lead a precarious existence and probably will finally die.

"This same situation has also obtained in the field of inner mission work or human welfare, as well as in Christian education. *In fact, there is no realm of the Church's work where such unnecessary duplication of labor has not existed* to some extent. *Has not the time come when a sincere effort should be made by all Lutheran groups to adopt a 'working agreement' all along the line?* Must God always make use of great emergencies to arouse us to a realization of our selfishness and stupidity?"

Will anyone challenge the logic of these deductions?

What are the limits of *co-ordination*? When does co-ordination cease to be a virtue? At what point does commendable co-ordination verge into illegitimate cooperation?

And if co-ordination is feasible with errorists bearing the Lutheran name, why not with others? Could we adopt a similar "working agreement", say, with some Roman Catholic agency?

Caveant consules.

M.

Lutheran Intersynodical Conferences. — The *News Bulletin* for August 1, 1941, carries an announcement of conferences to be held during October in Des Moines, Ia., Minneapolis, Minn., Omaha, Nebr., Rockford, Ill., Fargo, N. D., and Toledo, Ohio. The nature of these conferences is set forth in the following:

"A series of conferences designed to improve relationships among Lutheran groups of America is being planned by a special committee of the American Lutheran Conference. Representatives of the three major divisions of American Lutheranism — the United Lutheran Church, the Missouri Synod, and the American Lutheran Conference — will participate. They will emphasize the growing need of Lutheran unity in this day of crisis. The pastoral conferences are a part of a program adopted by the A. L. Cf. . . . the object this time to reach the present leaders of the Church.

"The general theme on the first day of the conferences will be 'The Lutheran Pastor in American Life.' The subject to be discussed will center around the spiritual life of the pastor himself and will emphasize the need of zeal and faithfulness in his holy calling. On the second day of the conferences the general theme will be 'The Church and Modern Society.' The addresses will deal with the Church in its relation to labor, economic problems, and the international crisis. — In addition to having speakers from the three major Lutheran groups on the program, pastors of all Lutheran bodies will be invited to cooperate in the pastoral conferences."

M.

Religious Liberty. — We are prone to accept it as a matter of course in our country, yet indications are increasing that this very basic liberty of our nation is in danger of being abrogated. Religious liberty,

though guaranteed by the Constitution, will evanesce if it is not a living concept in the mind of the nation. Religious liberty is a gracious gift of God, and if we fail to receive and use it gratefully in the interest of God's Gospel work, He may easily withdraw it. The following incidents reported, the one in *The Lutheran* for May 28, 1941, the other in *The Presbyterian Guardian* for July 10, 1941, may serve to illustrate the warning.

The first mentioned item deals with so-called week day religious instruction: "When New York's law allowing 'released time' each Wednesday for instruction in religion went into effect early last February, it was greeted enthusiastically, and started off successfully with 3,000 pupils (5,600 now) distributed among their respective houses of faith. Some who opposed it at first began to accept its results as a practical answer to a bothersome problem, and at the same time a successful experiment in religious tolerance. But the first bright skies have since been clouded by various events. First, the enthusiasm of its advocates was viewed with suspicion as containing ulterior designs on the religious freedom of the public. Then the issuance of buttons to be worn by those attending religious instruction, which carried a big (?) were objected to by the 'shush-shush' elements as tending to controversy and over-emphasis of denominational lines, though they were merely intended to arouse interest in the movement in general. Finally (May 1) it has led to a forum conducted by the Teachers' Guild Association, which seems to have offered a special chance to all disgruntled, especially the various 'liberties' organizations which recognize no freedom but their own particular brand. These are pointing out as grave dangers that the law accentuates 'religious differences because Protestant, Jewish and Roman Catholic children would go to different centres,' and again, that it introduces a dangerous combination of church and state. It is hard to see the evil of the first charge or the logic of the last; but the whole controversy should stress anew the fact that the place of first and lasting importance in the teaching of religion is the home, and that the church should give more time and intelligence to the development of that interest and duty."

The observation of the last sentence is very true, yet is that enough? Christian parents should see to it that the home training they give their children is properly supplemented by a training in a Christian school.

The second item deals with the status of Jehovah's Witnesses. *The Presbyterian Guardian* hails the court decision as a "triumph for religious liberty." "The New Hampshire Supreme Court ruled, in a sharply-worded decision, that school officials have no right to require salutes to the American flag by pupils. The decision reversed a verdict by the Nashua Municipal Court which sent three Nashua children to the state industrial school at Manchester for failure to salute the flag. Specifically, the court decided that the statute under which the children were sent to the reform institution was not applicable in the present case. — Speaking of Jehovah's Witnesses, Judge Elwin Page of Concord, who wrote the opinion, said, 'It is conceded that the belief, however, strange, is one of religious con-

science and is held in good faith.' Later, after commenting on the conditions which surrounded the expulsion of the children from school and their sentence by a Nashua police court judge, the opinion declared: 'In view of the sacredness in which the state has always held freedom of religious conscience, it is impossible for us to attribute to the legislature an intent to authorize the breaking up of family life for no other reason than because some of its members have conscientious scruples not shared by the majority of the community; at least, provided these scruples are exercised in good faith, and their exercise is not tinged with immorality or marked by damage to the rights of others.'

Religious liberty is not a matter of course, but must be received and cherished as an unmerited gift of our heavenly Father. M.

The Protestant Novena Condemned by the Augustana Synod. —

We have mentioned the *Novena* in these columns before and have voiced our disapproval (see July, 1940, p. 202f.). A year ago the Swedish Augustana Synod appointed a committee to investigate the practice of Novenas; and at the recent convention of the synod in Minneapolis (June 10-16) the report of this committee was adopted as the synod's "own pronouncement on the Novena question." However, three votes fell against it. Here is the text of the concluding summary as reported in the *Lutheran Companion* for June 26, 1941.

"From the foregoing study it is evident that the so-called *Protestant Novena* in its present form is not in harmony with Lutheran doctrine and practice. It has elements that are entirely inconsistent with the evangelical spirit and the teachings of Scripture. It is of typical Roman Catholic origin and in practice it harbors tendencies which are foreign to the true spirit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. At the same time we are cognizant of the fact that this service has within it some good, and offers some worship elements, such as the singing of the hymns, the preaching of God's Word, and liturgical prayers recited by the pastor and the congregation. It gives due regard to prayer as a corporate act of the Church and emphasizes the personalizing of prayer. If the whole set-up of the so-called Protestant Novena could be purged of its present unevangelical and objectionable elements it could be accepted by the Lutheran Church. *But it would not then be a Novena*, and the service should never bear that name."

In the discussion preceding the adoption "the movement was characterized as one fraught with peril, since it had its historical roots in Roman Catholic superstition. It was described as a practice bordering on *work righteousness* by which the intercessor sought by his faithful prayers to merit the answer he desired from God. Some speakers also pointed out the danger of leaving the impression that there was some magical efficacy in the number nine, and that 'making a Novena' was not unlike the Catholic practice of counting prayers on a rosary."

After adopting the committee report "the Synod by a unanimous vote instructed its Commission on Liturgy to prepare a form of liturgical prayer service for use in churches that desire such a service." M.

Lutheran Church Union at Saginaw. — Although very much time was devoted to the question of church union at the recent convention in Saginaw, the resolution which was finally adopted was very brief; after a preamble of an historical nature not more than this: "That the Synod's standing committee on Union matters continue its work on the basis of the Watertown resolutions (1939) as indicated in its report." Thus the Watertown resolutions were reaffirmed, the committee's action was endorsed, and its commission extended.

The passage regularly adduced as demanding committee negotiations with church bodies who, though they openly continue to differ from us in points of doctrine, yet ask for such negotiations — 1 Pet. 3, 15 — was examined in its context and not found pertinent. A study of a second passage, 1 Cor. 1, 10, moved the Synod to initiate steps for preserving, safeguarding and strengthening the unity of spirit within the ranks of our own Synodical Conference.

The Synod also found that the situation has not materially changed since our convention in Watertown, although indeed it has become very much clarified. On this the report of the standing committee contains the following paragraph:

"A. Subsequent events have fully vindicated our diagnosis of the situation on which our Watertown resolutions were based. — 1) The A. L. C. convention at Detroit (October, 1940) did not rescind any of the objectionable Sandusky resolutions, but did officially endorse the (unsatisfactory) Pittsburgh Agreement on Inspiration. — Although Pres. Poppen (A. L. C.) admitted many shortcomings of the A. L. Cf. yet no more than the *hope* was voiced that the sister synods might come to occupy the same ground with the A. L. C. This in spite of Pres. Bersell's (Augustana Synod) emphatic refusal to 'endorse the note' of the A. L. C. to Missouri (see QS 1941, p. 142) and Dr. Long's unchallenged: "We are not willing to give up a relationship of ten years for one that does not yet exist" (QS 1941, p. 63). — 2) At the convention of the A. L. Cf. in Minneapolis (November, 1940) Pres. Poppen pleaded with the sister synods, not to misunderstand him as though the A. L. C. had any intention of leaving the A. L. Cf. (QS 1941, p. 140.141). — 3) The famous expression about the A. L. Cf.'s '*strategic position*' for drawing together both the extreme left wing of American Lutheranism (U. L. C. A.) and the extreme right (Missouri) was never renounced, but rather reiterated in various ways by spokesmen of the A. L. C. (QS 1941, p. 76)."

It was thus by no means stubbornness, nor interest in some pet doctrine, nor indifference over against the great blessing of unity which moved the convention in Saginaw, but the deep conviction that true unity of the spirit is not a man-made thing but a free gift of God's grace bestowed

on us through His Truth, and that the cause of true unity can at present be served best by suspending official negotiations for the time being, which, when persevered in unduly *after testimony to the Truth has been sufficiently rendered*, may easily becloud the issue and create the impression as though unity, after all, were to a great extent the product of our own efforts, a matter of give and take, a compromise. M.

Büchertisch.

Report of the twenty-fourth regular convention of **The Norwegian Synod** of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, held at Mankato, Minn., June 12-18, 1941. 72 pages. Price, 35c. — The Lutheran Synod Book Co., Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minn.

The convention at Mankato heard two doctrinal essays. The first is a scholarly treatise on the Question *Which Wisdom?* by the Rev. Martin Galstad, chairman of the Norwegian Synod's Christian Day School Committee. The essayist, pointing out that the world is *world* even at its best, when it becomes "religious", arrives at the conclusion: "That we must set up schools for the propagation of such (*i. e.*, eternal) wisdom among our children and youth is not said by God in so many words; *but the training given by Christian schools is demanded of us*" (Emphasis is the author's. — p. 27). Under the sub-head "True Integration" he remarks: "The idea of nine months of world's school and one month of Bible school plus Sunday- and confirmation-school begins to look ridiculous" (p. 24) because "if Christianity means anything, it means that Christians are to take with them the wisdom of God in Christ, the Redeemer, and their new life in that Christ, into every nook and corner of their lives" (p. 20). The following paragraph, on p. 21, is a sparkling gem: "When we say that the world's schools are not good enough for our children, we must make clear that it is their *worldly wisdom* we are talking about, not their ability to teach the lesson materials. When we say that our schools are the better, it must be clear that they are better because of the *eternal wisdom* instilled by them. The competition between the world's schools and ours in the ability to impart knowledge is a secondary matter. Superiority there may go to the one, then to the other. *But it is in the category of wisdom that we are making comparisons*" (Italics mine. — M.).

The second essay was by the veteran champion of sound Lutheranism, the Rev. J. E. Thoen, on the question *What does Scripture teach concerning a right attitude toward erring churches?* The timeliness of this essay is evident. We quote: "One of the most deceiving tactics of unionism is that it seems to stress Christian love, tolerance and peace. . . . The differences are made to seem so small and unimportant and our former opponents are said to be such fine and earnest people, that it is a pity that we cannot work together for the building of God's kingdom. They say we must learn to be a little more charitable in judging the doctrines of

other churches. They speak and practice a little differently from us but they are sincere and earnest, and we must not condemn them but rather work together with them and strengthen them" (p. 29f.).

But: "Whether the false doctrine adulterates the gospel or the law, or it springs from ignorance or wilful intent to deceive, the fruit and effect of it will be the destruction of true faith in life" (p. 31). Hence: "whoever is tired of fighting for the truth of the gospel of Christ is tired of being a Christian" (p. 30). "Those who want to be charitable toward errorists and tolerant of error and practice unionism are not moved by any real love for others; they are moved by a selfish desire for applause for themselves as liberals who are high-minded and lovers of liberty of thought and opinion in matters of doctrine and faith" (p. 35). This is what St. Paul calls "serving their own belly" (Rom. 16, 18).

In one instance we would caution against a false generalization. In the case of unionists we are confronted with doctrinal indifference, and the author's words apply: "The slogan of the unionist is: Not doctrine, but life. They say: Christianity is not doctrine, but life. It should be easy to understand that this is the same as to say: A sinner is justified before God by his character and good works" (p. 35). But aside of this false antithesis there is also possible a true antithesis, which *e. g.*, St. Paul voices in 1 Cor. 4, 20: The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. Our aim must ever be, as Pastor Galstad pointed out in his essay, to "integrate" knowledge and life. M.

Why Was I Not Told? By E. W. Marquardt, M. D. 107 pages, 5×7½. Green cloth covers. Price, 75c. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

In this book a Christian physician on the basis of many (37) years of experience tries to counsel young people regarding hygiene, particularly the problems of sex hygiene, for their physical and social well-being. In his own words: "I have attempted to bring a few things to your attention which will help to open the eyes of those, particularly young people, who are ignorant regarding some of the most important things in life" (p. 107). He does so in a frank and sober way in six lectures: "1. Whence so much sorrow and grief in men's lives? — 2. Bids for success. — 3. Taking the right steps. — 4. Healthy manhood. — 5. Healthy, happy womanhood. — 6. Three great dangers." Among the factors mentioned and analysed are "heredity, environment, self-control, health, sleep, worry, temper, clothing, education, eating habits, selection of a mate in marriage, personality development, and proper sex knowledge." M.

Every-Day Science for Christians. By Theodore L. Handrich. 154 pages, 5×7½. Paper covers. Price, 60c. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The purpose of this book is avowedly "apologetic." It deals with "the falacies of antireligious modern science," aiming to uncover "the in-

consistencies found" in all God-less theories. This the book does admirably well in its following nine chapters: "I. Present day opinions. — II. God or chance? — III. Matter and reality. — IV. The age of the world. — V. Evolution. — VI. The flood theory. — VII. Why accept the Bible? — VIII. The 'six days' and man's fall. — IX. A brief Biblical philosophy of life." — The book may serve to fortify a wavering heart, disturbed by the "assured results" of a science falsely so called. It thoroughly reduces high-sounding theories to their proper level of guesses, and it does so in a language easily understood.

May these brief remarks suffice to commend it most heartily.

Yet even here a caution should be added. In apologetics it is easy to overshoot the mark. The author does not seem to have guarded against this danger sufficiently in his chapter on "Matter and reality" (p. 29-57). On p. 40 we read the claim: "It is even possible to demonstrate mathematically that matter can have been made from nothing." From the argument we present the following: "Suppose we start with a cubic yard of air or any other substance. Let the same quantity of air be placed in a container which is much larger, and let it expand until it again completely fills the container. This means, of course, that there will be much larger empty spaces among the molecules of air. Let the air now be placed in larger and larger receptacles. . . . When the ultimate division is finally accomplished, absolutely no perceivable particles of the original air could remain. Thus, if matter is diluted to fill infinity, nothing of it remains; or vice versa, if it is reduced to nothing, it becomes infinite." . . . This "shows how it was possible for infinity to contain all things that God made." (p. 48f.)

This argument would seem to reduce the *absolute* nothing of creation to a *relative* nothing, substituting a *nihil privativum* (*materia informis*) for the *nihil negativum* as proclaimed by the Scriptures. According to this argument matter and energy, at least in an "infinitely diluted" form, are coeternal with God. That would be the old dualistic view in a new garb. M.

The Social Teachings of Moses and of Representative Prophets. A dissertation submitted by Hartwig Dierks and accepted for the Th. D. degree. Paper covers. Stapled. 159 pages, 5×7½. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The Old Testament, both Moses and the Prophets, was not given to us by God to be a textbook on sociology. The chief interest of Moses and the Prophets was Christ, the promised Savior. Moses wrote of Me, Christ tells the Jews; yes, the entire Scriptures testify of Him (Jh. 5, 39. 46). All the prophets give witness to Him, says Peter (Acts 10, 43), that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins. Viewed in this light, all the stressing of sociological principles throughout the Old Testament was merely incidental, even in the "so-called social prophets", and altogether subservient to the main theme.

In presenting the social teachings, then, of the Old Testament this basic truth must not only be presupposed, but the connection of the individual social precepts with and their bearing on the main theme must, as far as possible, be elucidated by the student in this field. Only then can the social laws in their application to the changing times be correctly evaluated.

Another fact that must not be overlooked is this that, insofar as social legislation deals with matters of civic righteousness, God has given to man his reason (*Vernunft, ratio*) to evolve the proper principles, and by his reason man is also to a limited extent able to translate the correct principles into appropriate practice. To illustrate we quote at random. Speaking about Amos the author says: "The truths set forth by Amos are eternal truths, emanating from the eternal wisdom of God. The principles of good government, of brotherhood, of justice to all, of honest and square dealing, are basic principles and as such are valid, sound, and necessary today" (p. 84). No special divine revelation is required to recognize the correctness of these principles, nor may it be denied that man by his natural reason can appreciate, approve, delight in them; yes, can to a certain extent outwardly practice them and induce others to do so likewise. However, it remains true, as the author says: "Man is still as selfish as he ever was and just as prone to take advantage of the weakness of his fellow-man as the men of old. Science has made wonderful progress in relieving hardships and burdens and in making life easier; but there is one thing that no science can do, and that is to reform man and make him a better creature, more conscious of his duties to his God and to his fellow-man. . . . Only and solely the redemption of Jesus Christ saves man from sin and its evil consequences, only and solely the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, through the Gospel, is able to convert and make better men and women" (p. 155 and 157).

For a Christian the entire social problem with its wide ramifications is a matter of sanctification. For that reason the church cannot be interested in social reforms as such, but it will teach its members to practice sanctification in whatever social position God may have placed them, and in accordance with and through the proper functions of the social institution with which they are connected. State and family are ordinances of God "that *charity be practiced in such ordinances.*" Read Art. XVI both in the Augsburg Confession and in the Apology.

One might wish that the author had not only presupposed these truths, but would keep the reader more constantly aware of them throughout his lucid and thorough presentation of the wealth of material he has assembled.

The clearly arranged table of contents covers two pages. The prophets whose writings and activities are discussed are Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. A bibliography enumerating 31 titles concludes the book.

M.