

**For the Sake of the Gospel:  
The Words of Immanuel Paul Frey as Associate  
Editor of The Northwestern Lutheran.**

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December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

# Introduction

In 1933 John W.O. Brenner became the president of our Synod. But Brenner was also one of the founders of The Northwestern Lutheran. This was our synod's English periodical, in which the English speaking members of our synod were edified by God's word and informed about the happenings of our synod. John Brenner served as the editor of the Northwestern Lutheran from its founding in 1914 until he resigned from the post when he became president of the synod. Because of his new and time consuming responsibilities as president, he was not able to continue as the editor of The Northwestern Lutheran. And so in November of 1933 President John Brenner wrote this announcement:

At a meeting held for the purpose of filling the vacancy created by the resignation of Pastor John Brenner, the editorial staff of the Northwestern Lutheran decided to try a new plan for the next two years, namely, not to fill the position with one man, but to appoint three, preferably not living in the same District, assistant editors. The purpose of this change is to draw more widely on the talent the Lord has given our Synod that the Northwestern Lutheran may from year to year render better service to our church. Pursuant to this resolution and upon recommendations received, I have appointed the following assistant editors of the Northwestern Lutheran for a term on October first, 1933:  
Rev. Im P.. Frey, Hoskins, Nebraska.  
Rev. Karl F Krauss, Lansing, Michigan, and  
Prof. K Schweppe, New Ulm, Minnesota.  
John Brenner, President.<sup>1</sup>

The experiment of several assistant editors proved fruitful. But the first man on the list, Immanuel Paul Frey, served as an editor of The Northwestern Lutheran for far more than two years. He was an assistant editor for our synod's English publication for 31 years, and worked up until the time of his death in 1964. During these years Frey

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<sup>1</sup> Brenner, John W.O. "Announcement," The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 20, 1933, p. 347.

spread the word of God and defended the truth of the gospel to all who read this church periodical. Many of the articles that Frey wrote were meant to inform the members of the Wisconsin Synod as to what was going on not only in our synod, but in other religions as well. All who read his articles were certainly informed and edified by his clear, precise writing. One only desires that more people read his articles. In 1934 John Brenner mentions that there were only 4422 subscribers to The Northwestern Lutheran—this is a number that Brenner was ashamed of.<sup>2</sup> This number would grow however, as more and more English speakers joined or were brought up in our synod.

Over his 31 years as associate editor of The Northwestern Lutheran, Frey wrote over 650 articles. In these articles he wrote on many subjects, far too many to mention them all. Since Frey wrote so many articles it is far beyond the scope of this paper to fully examine every one of his words in The Northwestern Lutheran. This paper will, however, examine Immanuel Paul Frey's favorite subjects to write on as well as some of the more important topics he dealt with in his 31 years as associate editor.

## Missions

Immanuel Paul Frey served the Lord as a missionary in many different capacities. When Frey graduated from the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary in 1913 he was assigned to serve at Zion Lutheran Church in Phoenix, Arizona. This was an established congregation of three years. During his stay in Arizona, Frey faithfully served the Lord at Zion but he also conducted services in Mesa and Chandler Arizona. During this time he also served a few families in Glendale. While he never officially served as a missionary in Arizona, it is clear from conducting services elsewhere that he

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<sup>2</sup> Brenner, John. W.O. "Our Church Papers" The Northwestern Lutheran. Vol. 21, 1934, p. 379.

had a missionary's zeal. In 1924 Frey moved away from Arizona due to the health of his wife, Elizabeth. She suffered from "aggravated hay fever bringing on asthma."<sup>3</sup>

In 1939, after serving in parishes in Minnesota and Nebraska, I.P. Frey was called by the synod to be a general missionary in Colorado. In 1942 Frey ended his term as General Missionary to accept a call from the District Mission Board of Colorado. For the district he served as its resident missionary. From 1938 to 1942 he served as the chairman of the Nebraska District Mission Board.<sup>4</sup> Because he served as a missionary in many varying ways, it serves as no surprise that one of his areas of focus as he wrote for The Northwestern Lutheran was missions.

In 1937 when the Joint Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Other States met in convention they had to decide on two memorials related to missions, one from the Arizona Conference of the Southeast Wisconsin District and the other from the Colorado Conference of the Nebraska District. Both conferences wanted to be their own districts. Their main reasoning was that they were many miles away from the center of their districts. The Synod in Convention was not quite ready to grant these two requests, but they decided to have the synod's president, John W.O. Brenner, choose two men "who shall thoroughly explore both fields aforementioned."<sup>5</sup> Brenner chose pastors J. Gauss of Ohio and I.P. Frey of Nebraska to explore these two states. These two men became known as the Exploration Committee. After traveling over 3000 miles in less than three weeks in Arizona and 1200 miles in 10 days in Colorado, the Exploration Committee gave their report. Immanuel Paul wrote a series of six articles in 1938 in The

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<sup>3</sup> Sitz, Arnold E. "Immanuel Paul Frey." The Northwestern Lutheran, Vol. 51, 1964, p. 189

<sup>4</sup> Frey, Matthew P. "Imitating the Apostle: the Lord's Work Through Immanuel Paul Frey." Various pages.

<sup>5</sup> Synodical Report, pages 59 and 60 as quoted by I.P. Frey in "From the Journal of the Exploration Committee" Our Synod" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 25, 1938, p. 232.

Northwestern Lutheran which summarized the Exploration Committee's findings, but only in Arizona. He had spent too many articles on Arizona and did not have enough time or room to talk about their findings in Colorado.<sup>6</sup>

It is important to remember that Frey and Gauss went on this trip in the middle of the Great Depression, in a state that was scarcely populated. Often Frey mentions how a certain location did not even have irrigation or plumbing. Yet Frey was also amazed at the advancement in settlements the state had made in 14 years, since he had lived there. He was also glad to see much of Arizona he had never visited before.<sup>7</sup>

When the exploration committee arrived in Arizona, they were driven through the northern side of the state by a local pastor from Flagstaff. Together the three of them went through a stretch of land almost 400 miles long with no Lutheran church whatsoever. It was the local pastor's opinion that this stretch of land should be canvassed. Frey agreed,

The Exploration Committee, after viewing these towns and cities and making inquiries in them, also reached the conclusion that this vast field should be thoroughly canvassed and explored. The present population, the industries represented and prospects for future growth and development are such that our Synod should give this field serious consideration, and with the promised general missionary this can eventually be done.<sup>8</sup>

The Exploration Committee realized that although this section of land seemed promising for future congregations, those congregations would probably be small because of the size of the towns. But there were bigger cities, such as Tucson and Phoenix that the committee also visited.

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<sup>6</sup> These articles were a summary of the report Gauss and Frey gave to the General Synodical Committee of the Joint. Ev. Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, assembled in Milwaukee, May 17-20, 1958.

<sup>7</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "From the Journal of the Exploration Committee" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 25, 1938, p. 232

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.* p. 233

During their travels Gauss and Frey made it a point not only to visit the mission congregations but also some established congregations of Arizona and Colorado. As they did this they met with the members of each congregation. They wanted to know their views on the mission situation in Arizona. The members of the congregation in Prescott did not let I.P. down, "Various members of the church stated in reply that the Synod should send more men to Arizona, since it was impossible for the present staff of workers to take advantage of the mission opportunities. They also promised to do their part in spreading the Gospel."<sup>9</sup> Later Immanuel again states his pleasure with the laymen of Glendale and Phoenix

A lively interest in the welfare of our Lutheran Church and for the spreading of the Gospel was revealed. It was very gratifying to the committee to note how freely the lay members expressed their views as to the localities in the state where mission work might be done. The pastors and certain members of both congregations went to a great deal of trouble to show us the various parts of the Salt River Valley and regions beyond.<sup>10</sup>

Frey also mentioned that if the synod would give Pastor Zimmermann, the current pastor in Prescott, the proper funds, he would be able to start work in the Verde Valley District, which was about 35 miles away. This was a very promising area according to Frey. It seems that Frey was correct. Currently there are 4 different WELS churches within 30 miles of the Prescott area.

One of the best areas for potential mission start-ups in Arizona was the Salt River Valley, which is known today as the Phoenix Metropolitan Area. At this time the city of Phoenix was growing at an amazing rate. In 1920 Phoenix had about 20,000 inhabitants. Less than 20 years later it was estimated that 75,000 people lived in Phoenix.<sup>11</sup> About

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<sup>9</sup> *ibid.* p. 248

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.* p. 265

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.* p. 264

this area Frey said “It is to be regretted that the shortage of workers in the state has made it impossible to work or even canvass this valley thoroughly. Otherwise we should, humanly speaking, have several more congregations in this productive and growing Salt River Valley.”<sup>12</sup>

Frey also talked about the need of missionaries in Tucson. Even though there was an established congregation with many members in Tucson, he said more work could be done. Even though the synod had been in Tucson many years there was only one Lutheran congregation in the whole city. He expressed his disappointment that this was the case, “Why should we, who have had the field to ourselves so long, continue to neglect mission opportunities?”<sup>13</sup>

Even though Arizona and Colorado presented so many great opportunities for mission work, humanly speaking, they also offered their fare share of difficulties. Besides the fact that many of the cities lacked irrigation and plumbing, most of the cities were few and far between. It was also hard to travel in the area and the lines of communication were not very trustworthy. Yet, I.P. would not accept this as an excuse. He asks rhetorically “Should they be denied the Bread of Life because they have the misfortune to reside in a sparsely settled and isolated community? Should we pass them by because the per capita cost would be too great?”<sup>14</sup>

Frey was deeply concerned that the gospel reach all nations, regardless of race or social standing. In a few of the articles he mentions the Mexican population living in Arizona. It was his desire that a Spanish speaking missionary be sent Arizona to do

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<sup>12</sup> *ibid.* p. 265

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p. 281

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.* p. 282

mission work among the Mexicans who had left the Catholic Church.<sup>15</sup> In his last article on the Exploration Committee's trip to Arizona Frey also talked about the Apache Indian Mission. He mentioned that this was not part of the assignment, but they wanted to see the reservation since Gauss had been the chairman of the Indian Mission Board about 20 years prior to this visit. Plus they wanted to give the members of the synod a report on how this mission was doing on account of the many mission dollars that had been spent over the past two decades.

Upon leaving his report on their trip to Arizona, I.P. had this to say

“To work in this field for long years, as many of our missionaries have done, requires a spirit of deep consecration, especially on the part of those who live in the more isolated regions. These men have their temptations and difficulties, their hours of discouragement. They are on the outposts, in the front trenches. It is no more than proper that we, who are far from the battle front and who sent them out, should provide them with the sinews of war and strengthen them in their battles with our earnest prayers.”<sup>16</sup>

The purpose in spending so much time on Frey's report on the Exploration Committee's visit to Arizona is not to give a report on the history of the WELS in Arizona. Rather these reports give us a good summary of his views on mission work in general.

As mentioned above I.P. Frey was pleased that the lay members expressed their desire for mission work. This is something that Frey often stressed as he wrote in The Northwestern Lutheran. In 1936, before he was ever chosen to be on the Exploration Committee, Frey stressed the fact that lay members as well as called workers should be involved in mission work because they too are missionaries.

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<sup>15</sup> *ibid.* p. 249

<sup>16</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “A Visit to our Apache Indian Mission in Arizona” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 25, 1938, p. 333



“Where you find a church that is successful in winning the unchurched for Christ and His kingdom, there you usually find a church of consecrated laymen, who realize that without Christ all men are eternally lost, and therefore are in earnest about bringing their fellow-men under the influence of the saving Gospel. Without the help and operation of the members even the best mission-minded pastor find doors closed to him which might otherwise open to the knocking of the Savior.”<sup>17</sup>

This same thought Frey expressed in 1935:

That mission work or soul-winning is not the monopoly of ordained pastors and missionaries but the duty and the privilege of all believers in Christ is so plainly taught in the Bible that there can be no question about it. All believers in Christ are kings and priests unto God, and one manner in which their royal priesthood manifests itself is their presenting before God other souls which the Son of God purchased with His own Blood.<sup>18</sup>

This may make an individual Christian a little bit weary. “I’m not cut out for that. I get nervous in front of people. What if they start to argue with me about my faith? I don’t think I will know what to say in return. What if I say something wrong?” In response to these excuses Frey reminded us that our duty is simply “to testify, to bear witness of the faith that is in him.”<sup>19</sup> When this is done the Holy Spirit will do his work and bring people to faith through the gospel.

Throughout his articles on the Exploration Committee’s trip to Arizona, Immanuel Paul stressed the importance of mission work. He saw it as the main purpose of the synod. “Our Synod exists primarily for the purpose of carrying on mission work. It sends out and supports, in part or in whole, a great number of missionaries, especially in the home mission field.”<sup>20</sup> But where should the synod start mission work? Many say in the areas with the most promise—perhaps in areas where a congregation can be self-supporting in 10-15 years. This is a good idea—but Frey reminds us that we should not

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<sup>17</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Lay Missionaries” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 23, 1936, p. 87-88

<sup>18</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Come and See” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 22, 1935, p. 262

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.* p. 262

<sup>20</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Objective of Mission Work” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 25, 1938, p. 149

forget about the other places. After all Christ did not tell us to only enter the fields that are promising. But he told us to go into all the world and preach the good news to every creature. Immanuel made it perfectly clear that the synod's purpose is to win souls—not merely to have large congregations, “If our aim is only to organize good-sized congregations then we are intent only upon building an outward institution instead of winning souls.”<sup>21</sup> Therefore even if a congregation is small and it is not self-supporting it is still worthwhile, for it is spreading the gospel and winning souls for Christ.

Perhaps the main reason why Frey wrote so often about missions was simply to inform the members of the synod about the mission churches they had been supporting. Not only did Frey inform the lay members of the mission churches in Arizona, he also informed them about the missions in the Nebraska District. This does not come as a surprise when one remembers that Frey served as a missionary, in various capacities, in Colorado for many years.<sup>22</sup>

In 1941 I.P. talked about the history of the mission work in Colorado. It was started by Pastor A. C. Bauman. He had moved to Colorado because of the health of a family member. He served at a congregation in Sugar City as well as a number of preaching stations. Although Colorado seemed a promising place to do mission work the synod was held back because of the depression. It was not until 1934 that another missionary was placed in Colorado. Many congregations were started in the eastern half

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<sup>21</sup> *ibid.* p. 149

<sup>22</sup> When Frey became the general missionary in Colorado in 1939 he began to do work specifically in Denver. This is the result of his and Gauss' observations from their trip to Denver just a year prior. They considered Denver to be the best place to do mission work in Colorado.

of Colorado in the five years after 1934, when the first congregations were founded on the Western Slope of Colorado.<sup>23</sup>

Immanuel Paul also wrote about himself and the congregation he started in Denver. He wrote not to brag about himself, ~~or~~ but to show the people of the synod what their mission dollars were accomplishing because of the Holy Spirit. In less than three years—from the time Frey stepped foot in Denver to the time he wrote this article in 1942, a new chapel had been dedicated in Denver. This was the second congregation established in Denver. He added that Denver was a large city and with only two congregations there was still much work to be done, “Our work in Denver is still in its infancy and offers a fine opportunity to those of our Christians who not only wish to feed their own souls but who would like take an active part in building our Lutheran Zion a new <sup>field</sup> filed. We have a responsibility toward the unchurched and the unsaved.”<sup>24</sup>

In 1949 I.P. Frey reported on the Colorado Mission District meeting. He informed the synod of a mission that was started less than 10 years prior to the writing of this article, in Golden, Colorado. Although this mission was young, it was thriving, and had the only Wisconsin Synod School in Colorado. At the time he wrote this article he notes that “four mission congregations in Colorado were in the process of building: Golden, Littleton, Park Hill, Denver, and Las Animas. There are 15 missionaries working in the field and there are 22 mission stations.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Our Mission Work in Colorado,” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 28, 1941, p. 282

<sup>24</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Your Church’s Mission Program,” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 29, 1942, p. 218.

<sup>25</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Colorado Mission District Meeting” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 36, 1949, p. 106. I.P. lists the number at four, but names five congregations by name. We simply leave his words as he wrote them. The point is that there were congregations that were growing and building.

As we saw in Frey's reports of the Exploration Committee, he considered mission work to be of utmost importance. Therefore he stressed the need to support the synod's mission work through money and by supporting our synodical schools that train missionaries. In an article in 1959 I.P. talked about the need for more missionaries and more funds. He pointed out that many Lutherans had lived in the same places in the past, the Midwest. But that was changing and many of them were moving away from the places where they grew up. That meant that many Lutherans were left without a church home. Immanuel proclaimed "Our District Mission Boards and our General Mission Board are well aware of that and are concentrating upon the problem which arises from that...In coping with that problem they are faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles. They are chiefly two: lack of funds and shortage of manpower."<sup>26</sup>

Immanuel Paul went on to stress the need of money to fund more missions and to send out missionaries.

It takes money to carry on mission work on the scale on which our Synod carries it on. It takes money to train the workers, to send them out into their assigned fields, to provide the chapels and schools, and to supply the bodily needs of the missionaries and their dependants...If we fail to provide it, we are guilty of what Scripture calls robbing God. We often withhold the necessary contributions because the devil whispers into our ears that we shall run short ourselves, that we shall lose by it.<sup>27</sup> He also pointed out that God will not punish us and make us suffer if we give toward missions. We will not run out of money for God will provide for us.

But more money would not solve all the problems, "If new fields are opened, more workers are needed. There is a great shortage of pastors already now, and the opening of new fields increases the vacancies. Increasing the Church Extension Fund

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<sup>26</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "New Church Frontiers" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 42, 1955, p. 84

<sup>27</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Our Mission Moneys" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 43, 1956, p. 355

alone will not solve the problem. Hand in hand with it goes the need of providing more workers.”<sup>28</sup>

This is not the only time that I.P. talked about the shortage of pastors. It was something that he stressed many times. In 1946 Frey wrote<sup>29</sup> “Not only new missions but also older congregations remain vacant. Some congregations have called half a dozen or more times in vain. And when they finally obtain a pastor, a new vacancy is created elsewhere. The situation is serious enough the way it is but it threatens to get worse before it gets better.”<sup>30</sup> So what was the solution? The short term solution would be to use the available manpower as <sup>wisely</sup> wise as possible—many congregations would have to be made into dual parishes. The long term solution?

We are experiencing the truth of the statement of our Savior that the harvest truly is great but the laborers are few, and we should earnestly pray the Lord of the harvest that He would send laborers into His harvest. We ought to get busy recruiting boys who have the talents to prepare for the ministry, which under our set-up means a course of eleven years.<sup>31</sup>

Earlier Frey had this to say concerning the shortage of teachers in our synod.

Several of our Christian day schools were forced to close their doors this fall because it was impossible to obtain a teacher. A number of recently founded congregations which planned to found a school in order to give their children the thorough Christian training which only the Christian day school can provide, have had to abandon their plans. It is a good sign that there is such a widespread desire to open Christian day schools...If this problem of the teacher shortage is not to plague us in the future, steps should be taken now to recruit from among the confirmation classes such students for our normal school whom the Lord has given the proper gifts.

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<sup>28</sup> *ibid.* p. 355

<sup>29</sup> It is interesting to note that there is a pastor shortage in 1946, but in 1940 when Frey is talking about the synod as we will see in the next section, there were many called workers without calls. This shows us that these things go full circle.

<sup>30</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Pastor Shortage” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 33, 1946, p. 163

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.* p. 167

From these quotes it is clear how important worker training was to Immanuel. He considered a lack of called workers a waste of an opportunity to do mission work. There were plenty of places to do mission work—but we needed more of two things—money and people.

Yet having young Christians willing to enter the public ministry was not going to solve the whole problem either. At the time Frey wrote these articles in the 1946, there was not enough room in the synodical schools to accommodate everyone willing to study for the public ministry. He insisted that the dorm facilities must be expanded. This would happen in the not too distant future as many of our synodical schools started building programs.

But, not only do we support the synod's missions and missionaries by giving money and supporting our synodical school, but we also support them through our prayers. This is something I.P. encouraged as well, both for those missionaries in Arizona as well as those throughout the world. This is something he encouraged because of the struggle missionaries face day after day,

We do not begin to realize how much we can contribute to church work and mission work with our prayers...Is it right for us to let our missionaries and our pastors fight the battle alone when we can support them and back them up with our prayer? Every church worker and every mission worker is calling out to us: "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course."<sup>32</sup>

Frey's views on missions can be summed up with his words from an article entitled "A Solemn Debt."

We as individual members and congregations in our Synod have an obligation to see to it that its program to bring the saving Gospel to others is carried out. All must do their part to raise the necessary funds. Each congregation and each member must do their fair share if the goal is to be reached. Those who

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<sup>32</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Prayer and Mission Work" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 43, 1956, p. 355

do so are only paying an honest debt, while those who without cogent reasons fail to do so are welshing<sup>33</sup> on a solemn compact which they have made with God...Jesus has said to each and everyone of us: "ye shall be witnesses unto me." It is up to us to lead lost sinners into the full and free salvation in Christ. After he has so graciously saved and redeemed us, how can we refuse to share this blessing with others? The compulsion of love and gratitude must move us to do it. What would you think of a physician who had discovered a sure cure for cancer but refused to give cancer-sufferers the benefit of it? How much more indefensible to withhold the saving Gospel from those who are perishing in their sins?<sup>34</sup>

## The Synod

Besides working as an associate editor of the *Northwestern Lutheran* for 31 years, being a parish pastor, a general missionary for the synod, a resident missionary for the Nebraska district, and serving on the Explorations Committee, Immanuel Paul Frey served the synod in many other ways.

He served as secretary of the Nebraska District of our synod for four years, also as chairman of the Nebraska Mission Board. He was elected first vice-president of that District, from which in 1943 he succeeded to its presidency, serving the District in that capacity 15 years. He was appointed member and secretary to the historic Peace Committee 30 years ago. For a number of years he served on the Synod's Union committee. When the Synod's new constitution inaugurated the Commission on Doctrinal Matters, he was appointed a member of that group.<sup>35</sup>

Because Frey was very much involved with various synodical committees it comes as no surprise that he was deeply concerned with what was going on in the synod and wrote about it often in The Northwestern Lutheran. He also wanted the members of the synod to know and understand what was happening as well. As was often the case with Frey's articles, much of what he wrote concerning the synod was to inform the members of the synod what was happening in our synod and how it was set up.

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<sup>33</sup> According to Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary this word means to avoid payment, or to break one's word.

<sup>34</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "A Solemn Debt" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 47, 1960, p. 211

<sup>35</sup> Sitz, Arnold, E. "Immanuel Paul Frey" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 51, 1964, p. 189.

In 1940 Immanuel Paul wrote a series of five articles about the structure of our synod. These articles were written to inform the members of the synod why the synod's structure was the way it was. These articles were entitled "The Relation of the Congregation—Conference—District—Synod." Frey started out with this disclaimer, "We are not dealing with organizations which are superimposed upon one another by divine command until a sort of super church is reached in the body known as the Synod. Nor are we to look upon them as differing from one another in regard to the means with which they operate, for all four of them, if they serve their proper purpose, operate with the Gospel."<sup>36</sup> He made it clear that there is no divine form of how a synod should run or how it should be set up. Therefore not one of these distinct organizations is better or superior to the other, yet, since they are all part of the church they all work together for the gospel. There are many different ways our synod could be structured, but this is the way we have determined works the best for our situation.

"There is not a specific prescription in the Bible that we have congregations, conferences, districts and synods just as we have them today. Nor is there any divine prohibition which would outlaw them. We are no longer under law but under grace... Our lord instituted the general proclamation of the Gospel for all time to come but the form is not always the same."<sup>37</sup>

In this series of articles, I.P. started out with the smallest of the organizations, the congregation. A Christian congregation comes into being through the preaching of the Word. When Peter preached his sermon on Pentecost and healed the lame man the Holy Spirit worked faith into people's hearts to lead them to believe in Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. That day those new Christians came together and formed the first Christian church in Jerusalem. After Pentecost the apostles went throughout the world

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<sup>36</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The Relation of the Congregation—Conference—District—Synod," The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 27, 1940, p. 204

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.* p. 311



and preached the gospel. They spread God's word and started congregations. About these early congregations he stated, "They gathered around the Word as a matter of course. And so it has been ever since. Christian congregations come into being through the preaching of God's Word." While a congregation <sup>which</sup> ~~who~~ gathers around the sacraments is a true congregation, we will see later that a church that does not preach the gospel in its pure form is not truly a church.

Each congregation has an outward membership. By profession of faith a congregation will accept an individual into their family. But membership in a local congregation does not automatically make someone a believer. Strictly speaking there is only one church—the communion of saints.

Hypocrites, people who pretend to be believers but actually aren't, are not a part of *the* Church, though their names be inscribed upon the rolls of the congregation, though they hold high offices in the congregation organization, and though at their death they be buried by the pastor with full honors as Christians. The Church in the Bible sense is absolutely pure. Absolutely no unbeliever is in it.<sup>38</sup>

Because of sin there will always be hypocrites in the Church—something we will never fully be able to rid ourselves of. And many will use these hypocrites as an excuse to stay away from the church. Yet as the writer to the Hebrews<sup>39</sup> said, "Let us not stop meeting together." Christians meet together at their congregation. The writer to the Hebrews said this because he knows the many benefits a local congregation offers. Frey elaborated,

The benefits which flow from a truly Christian local congregation are great. It has the means of grace, that which can supply the sinner's need and save his soul... The truly Christian congregation has nothing to offer but what the Word of God has to offer. But what is more precious than that? If you want to enjoy the benefits of your congregation, then do not look to it for amusement or entertainment, the opportunity to meet a lot of interesting

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<sup>38</sup> *ibid.* p. 204. Italics original.

people and to engage in great outward activities. No, rather follow the example of Mary who, contrary to her sister Martha, sat quietly at the feet of Jesus and drank in the word of life which fell from her lips.<sup>39</sup>

A true congregation gathers around the word of God. It is clear by these words that Frey had no use for the social gospel that is so widely found in many “churches.” This is a topic we will take up in awhile.

Immanuel certainly had a correct view of what the Church truly is. He dispelled the notion that being a member of so-and-so congregation makes someone a true believer and automatically means that he is saved. Yet, he was also quick to point out that there are many believers who belong to different church bodies other than the WELS or who do not belong to a church at all. Yet one last point about Frey’s view on the congregation needs to be made. He talked about how we call our gatherings worship “services.” Let us not be confused as the Reformed are. They are not services because we are doing a service to God; rather he is doing a service to us, by giving us his grace through his gospel, which the true Church centers around.<sup>40</sup>

In his next article Frey wrote about the value of conferences. The purpose of conferences, in his mind was to promote fellowship. “When a number of pastors and congregations come together in conferences, they thereby express their unity in the faith and by their very association also promote this fellowship of faith.”<sup>41</sup> When the congregation in Jerusalem experienced some problems because of a famine, other congregations, such as the congregations in Corinth and Macedonia were eager to help out. At one point early in the Christian church when there was a question about following certain ceremonial laws, many Christians got together at the congregation in

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<sup>39</sup> *ibid.* p. 204, 205

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.* p. 205

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.* p. 221

Jerusalem to work this problem out. When one reads the book of Acts it is clear that many congregations actively worked together and communicated with each other for the common good of the Church. This is what the conferences are all about. When problems happen in a certain congregation the other congregations of the conference are eager to help out in any way possible.

Immanuel Paul went into more specifics about the benefits of conferences, “The most frequent conferences in our circles are those of pastors. The purpose of these conferences is to study the Word of God together, to discuss important phases of church life and to equip the ministry to carry on its work more efficiently.”<sup>42</sup> This is important for the continuing education of the pastor. Even though the pastor has spent many years in formal education, studying God’s word—by no means is he fully equipped to serve God’s people; his education is never complete. There are always more things he could learn to better equip his people. That is why these conferences are so important. Frey strongly supported the notion of brining lay leaders of the local congregations to these conference meetings. This way they can grow in their knowledge of Scripture and in their bond with like-minded believers.<sup>43</sup>

But what is the purpose of having districts? “Since our Synod is too large to have all pastors, teachers, professors and congregations officially represented at its conventions, divisions of the Synod known as Districts have been formed, where such personal participation is still possible.”<sup>44</sup> At this time there were 32 conferences in eight

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<sup>42</sup> *ibid.* p. 221

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.* p. 221

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.* p. 265

districts: North Wisconsin, West Wisconsin, South East Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Nebraska, Dakota-Montana, and Pacific-Northwest.<sup>45</sup>

I.P. informed the members of the Wisconsin<sup>5</sup> synod that our synod's districts do not have special treasuries; they pool their money together in one large synodical treasury. He mentioned a sister synod (Missouri) which is not set up this way. Their districts are set up in such a way that they can use their treasuries as they please. He was quick to point out that there is nothing wrong with this. None of our Syndical structure is demanded by God. It does not matter what system we use—the important thing is that we spread the Word of truth.<sup>46</sup>

Immanuel Paul noted that major reason our Synod has districts is so we can watch over doctrinal matters. “One of the chief functions of the District and its officers is to watch over doctrine and practice. Outward union without inward unity is only a sham.”<sup>47</sup>

I.P. Frey realized that the districts in themselves have very little power, but they are still extremely important. “Though under our setup the Districts have very little independent power, such as setting up the budget and determining the scope of the synodical work, these District conventions are of great importance and do much to promote the welfare of the Kingdom of God.”<sup>48</sup>

Typically every other year the members of each district come together in the summer for a district convention. Since I.P. Frey served as the secretary, vice-president, and president of the Nebraska<sup>D</sup> district for many years, he knew district conventions well. One of the main purposes for districts is the same as it is for conferences—to come

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<sup>45</sup> *ibid.* p. 221

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.* p. 266

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.* p. 266

<sup>48</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “District Meetings” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 33, 1946, p. 212

together to be edified by God's word and to grow in the knowledge of his word. "The Christians assembled in a District convention are sincerely interested in the Lord's work. They study and discuss the reports of the various departments of the Synod and carry these reports with them into their home congregations."<sup>49</sup> In a later article Frey said, "The matters considered may be grouped into two classes: doctrinal discussion and discussion of the work which is being carried on jointly. The many hours which are spent at these conventions listening to and discussing doctrinal matters do much to keep our membership grounded in the sound truth."<sup>50</sup> Elsewhere he reiterated "Our conventions are not all business. A great portion of the time is devoted to doctrinal essays. We are brethren. We are in fellowship, and the only fellowship which God wants in the Church is that which is based on unity of faith and common acceptance of the Word."<sup>51</sup>

Another purpose of district conventions is to inform the people of what is going on in the district and in the synod. In many cases Immanuel Paul Frey specifically mentioned mission work. "In effect the various officers, boards and committees will do what Paul and Barnabus did when they returned to the congregation at Antioch, which had sent them out on their first missionary tour: 'When they were come and had gathered the church together, the rehearsed all that God had done with them.'"<sup>52</sup>

He said elsewhere,

The other matters considered at these conventions concern the practical affairs of the Kingdom: mission work, the training of pastors, missionaries, teachers and the like... On every hand there is a shortage of manpower, resulting in many vacancies, which are plaguing our congregations and mission boards.

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<sup>49</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The Relation of the Congregation—Conference—District—Synod," The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 27, 1940, p. 266

<sup>50</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "District Meetings" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 33, 1946, p. 212

<sup>51</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "District Conventions" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 35, 1948, p. 195

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.* p. 195

In spite of the shortage of manpower, some of our educational institutions are forced to turn away applicants, who are ready to enter the work of the Church, for lack of room.<sup>53</sup>

Because of Frey's concern for mission work we would be remiss if we did not mention his stress on the importance of districts for mission work. "The work in which the District is particularly interested is the Home Mission work in its own District. No one can know the missionary needs and opportunities in a District as well as those who live in that District. Therefore each District has its own Mission Board which reports to and receives instructions from its own District."<sup>54</sup>

Lastly, Frey explained the many benefits of the synod. A local congregation by itself cannot train pastors and teachers to enter the public ministry. A local congregation by itself cannot support missionaries to go throughout the world and preach the good news to all creation. But together they can. In 1940, the time this article was written, the local congregations had teamed up to support schools in Thiensville, Watertown, New Ulm, Saginaw, and Mobridge. Their mission monies had gone to spread the gospel to "the Indians in Arizona, the people in Poland or the Negroes of the South and in Africa."<sup>55</sup> As we can see, for Frey, the primary purpose for the synod was mission work—to spread the gospel. Yet he saw two main reasons for the synod. "The Synod exists for the twofold purpose of expressing and strengthening the unity of faith and carrying on joint work in the Kingdom of God."<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "District Meetings" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 33, 1946, p. 212

<sup>54</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The Relation of the Congregation—Conference—District—Synod," The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 27, 1940, p. 266

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.* p. 280

<sup>56</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The Weight of Synodical Resolutions" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 34, 1947, p. 248

Frey gave a warning to those who have problems with the synod. Some might wonder “why should we support the Synod when we have many things to give to in our local congregations?” We must remember that we are not only members of our local congregations, but also of the Synod. We are represented by delegates in conventions, which are held every year. There are many boards throughout the synod that look over our spiritual welfare. The Synod certainly does much good and it needs our support.

Yet on the other hand, I.P. also gave a warning to those on the opposite extreme. “We are not to preach the Synod but the Gospel. Loyalty to the institution called the Synod is not substitute for loyalty to the divine truth.”<sup>57</sup> Although the synod offers many blessings to its members and those who are in the world, he realized that our ultimate loyalty is to God’s word. If the synod were to ever fall way from the truth in any way, we must side with Scripture. This distinction of priorities will be tested for many people later in Frey’s ministry as the problem with the Missouri Synod comes to a head.

Immanuel Paul also had many things to say about synod conventions. Many lay members might not know what happens at synod conventions. So Frey informed them

At the convention we have a cross section of our Synod, all the various sections being proportionately represented by duly elected delegates. They are coming together in the fear of God. Those represented have various gifts and talents, which are the common property of the Church. These in charge of the various enterprises will give their reports, and those who serve as delegates will carry out their responsibility according to the ability that God giveth.<sup>58</sup>

It is agreed upon by all who attend synod conventions that the most important matters are those which center around God’s word.

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<sup>57</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Relation of the Congregation—Conference—District—Synod,” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 27, 1940, p. 279

<sup>58</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Weight of Synodical Resolutions” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 34, 1947, p. 248

Doctrine is still very prominent in spite of the great amount of time required to obtain information on the various enterprises of the Synod and deciding future policies. Not only are doctrinal essays read at our conventions, but there are also doctrinal matters on the program, which are burning issues in the Church of our day and which must be investigated in the light of God's Word. When the Synod takes a stand on such matters in accordance with God's Word, then we have no choice but to fall in line, not because the Synod says so but because God's Word says so.<sup>59</sup>

Once again we see that I.P. Frey was always quick to trump Scripture over the synod. But matters of adiaphora are different. <sup>In</sup> ~~When~~ matters of adiaphora where no Scriptural principle is at stake there will always be many opinions and each should be considered. What are we to do when these matters come up? Immanuel explained "in such matters which do not involve conscience or Christian principles the individual should bow to the judgment of the majority."<sup>60</sup> We will never let the synod trump Scripture, but in matters that do not involve Scripture we let the synod trump our opinion.

There are certainly many blessings we get from our synodical structure. But does this mean there is no room for improvement? By no means. This synod is run by sinful human beings. There will always be room for improvement. We will always be making changes here and there to best suit our needs at the present time. It does not matter what structure we take as long as the gospel is preached. This however, has not always been done to its greatest potential.

There are still many fields white unto the harvest into which laborers could be sent if we had the funds. All the candidates now standing idle could be gainfully employed in the Lord's work if we had the funds. We can not honestly say that within the membership of our synod we have not the means to provide the necessary funds to do this. Of course, the assets which come into consideration here are not merely reckoned in terms of dollars and cents but in terms of Gospel spirit.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> *ibid.* p. 248

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.* p. 248

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.* p. 312.



Although Frey talked much about the synod he was quick to point out that it all doesn't matter if the individual does not do anything. After all, faith is a personal thing. Membership in a congregation or a synod will not get us anywhere. The synod, district, conferences, or a congregation cannot accomplish the Great Commission if the individual members are not spreading the Word. "If the missionary work of our Synod is to prosper, there must be Christian congregations and individuals imbued with that same spirit. It is the faithful pastor who warms the hearts of his people with the sweet Gospel of Jesus Christ who is doing the real work."<sup>62</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, Frey strongly preached the Biblical teaching, that every Christians is a missionary and thus he spreads the gospel to all he sees.

It can be clearly seen that one of Frey's goals was to inform the members of the synod how it was set up, why it was set up, and what happened at conventions and meetings. He felt that it was very important to keep the members informed about their synod. As was often the case in The Northwestern Lutheran, many of the district conventions were reported on so the rest of the synod could learn what was going on in each district. I.P., of course wrote many reports on the Nebraska district to keep the synod informed.

As a district president, Immanuel Paul also served on the Synodical Committee.

What was the Synodical Committee?

The synodical Committee has not (sic) legislative powers except in isolated instance expressly referred to it by the previous synodical convention for final action. It is rather an imparting of information for transmission to the various Districts as occasion may require and a consulting together to arrive at the best solution of the problems confronting various departments.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> *ibid.* p. 311.

<sup>63</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Synodical Committee Meeting" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 35, 1948, p. 378

Frey reported on the synodical committee meeting that took place in 1948. At this meeting many different boards met over a period of two days to discuss various topics. Some of the boards that met were: the General Mission Board, The Board of the Representatives of Institutions, the Spiritual Welfare Committee, and the Board of Education. Many financial reports were given as well. Again, his purpose in writing on this meeting was to inform the members of the WELS what was happening in their synod.

Immanuel Paul certainly realized that God had given us many blessings through our synod. This is something that he praised God for on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our synod.

God has been good to us. Some of the founders of our Synod came from unionistic circles and outwardly were not as sound and pure in doctrine as we are now. But God was with our fathers and gradually led them into the pure truth, unadulterated with false doctrine. Outwardly, at least, we as a Synod are today scripturally sound in doctrine and practice. That we are so today is not our own achievement but the undeserved gift of our gracious Lord.<sup>64</sup>

Frey realized that God has given our synod a unique blessing. The Wisconsin Synod is one of only a handful of church bodies that have the pure Word of God. Yet, he gives this warning:

The history of the Church has shown that a church body usually does not keep the pure doctrine very long or that it soon degenerates into a dead, lifeless formalism...Let us, then, this anniversary pray God with fervent and repentant heart to preserve unto us the sound truth and to fill it with the content of a conscience and living faith of the heart, constrained by the love of Christ to live unto Him who died for us.<sup>65</sup>

Frey also kept the people informed about the finances of the synod. In 1951, a few weeks after the new synodical budget came out with large increase, he had this to say: "It

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<sup>64</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Our Synodical Centennial" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 37, 1950, p. 3

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.* p. 3

is a large sum of money which we are called upon to raise compared to former years, but it certainly is not beyond the financial resources of the constituents of our Synod. If we do not provide the funds, it is not because we are too poor financially, but too poor spiritually, because our hearts are not aglow with Christian love and zeal.”<sup>66</sup>

I.P. not only wanted to inform the masses about the budget increase, he also took it upon himself to urge the members of the synod to give back to Christ out of love for him. There are not too many people who would be willing to speak this boldly about giving money to support the work of the synod, but this is something that he did on many occasions.

We do not send the individual congregation a bill and employ a collection agency if it fails to pay...No business would operate that way, but ours is a different kind of business which rests on different principles. We trust that God for Jesus' sake will make the hearts willing to support the work decided upon in the fear of God. No truly Christian congregation will hide behind that as an excuse for not contributing its fair share to the work. Each congregation will realize that it has made a solemn covenant with God and its sister congregations. There can be no real working together if that is not kept in mind...God wants not reluctant givers but cheerful givers who respond to the reminder of St. Paul “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich yet for you sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”<sup>67</sup>

In 1958 our synod had a problem. It had many people willing to be called workers, but not enough places for them. If more money came in, the synod would be able to send these men out into the suburbs and begin churches—but they would not have enough money to build chapels to worship in. Because of this problem Frey encouraged the individual congregations to give money to the synod to support mission work:

If all contribute their fair share for the current needs of our Synod, such as missions, the necessary funds will become available for needed new buildings. Knowing that should provide a powerful impetus for regular giving. We can't

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<sup>66</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Our Increased Synodical budget” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 38, 1951, p. 340

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.* p. 340

offer the excuse that we are unable to do it. We spend many times for luxuries and non-essentials. If we not provide the funds for our current budget expenses, it can only be that we do not want to badly enough. The needs are evident, and the money is in our pockets. Are we sufficiently constrained by the love of Christ to let go of it?<sup>68</sup>

Frey certainly loved his synod. He realized the many blessings that the Lord has given us through it. Yet at the same time he was quick to point out that the individual members of the synod must be active in spreading the gospel and supporting the synod through monetary gifts—for without these things the synod cannot function.

## Break with Missouri

Closely connected to the subject of our synod, is the break with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LC-MS). Immanuel Paul Frey not only served as a District President, but he was also on the Union committee (which was later reformed and named the Commission on Doctrinal Matters), and was on numerous other boards in the synod, *therefore* this was on his mind quite often. In 1958 the Pastors, Teachers, and Laymen of the Nebraska District voted Frey out of office as the president of their district.<sup>69</sup> They were upset that the synod had taken so long to break with Missouri. Since Frey was on the Union Committee and was their district president he received the bulk of their wrath. This of course did not speed anything up; it was simply a by-product of the unrest in our synod at the time.<sup>70</sup> Of course, Frey was not the reason why the WELS hesitated to discontinue fellowship with the LCMS. It was not up to Immanuel to decide whether or not to break with Missouri. Plus when one reads Frey's articles in The Northwestern

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<sup>68</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Removing Our Synodical Bottleneck" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 45, 1958, p. 211

<sup>69</sup> The members of I.P. Frey's congregation in Denver never strongly supported his work as the District President. They believed it took up too much of his time and took away from his ministry in Denver. They never quite understood the importance of Frey's work for the benefit of the Church at large.

<sup>70</sup> Frey, Matthew P. "Imitating the Apostle: the Lord's Work Through Immanuel Paul Frey." Various pages.

Lutheran it becomes clear that he did not at all support what the LCMS was doing to the gospel.

It is true that in his articles I.P. did not mention the Missouri synod very often; nor did he specifically mention the split very often. This was left up to other contributing writers of the Northwestern Lutheran. For example, Professor Reim's articles about the problems with Missouri entitled "Where Do We Stand" show up in many issues of the periodical. Most of Frey's articles on the subject simply dealt with the issues at hand, without mentioning synods one way or another; at the same time it was clear that he was talking about the LCMS. Although in some of his later articles Frey does mention the synod by name.

In 1947 Immanuel Paul wrote his first article some what related to the LC-MS. This article concerned the Boy Scouts, since this was an underlying problem in the break with Missouri. At their <sup>1944</sup> 1955 convention in Saginaw, Michigan, the Missouri Synod voted to let the individual congregations decide what to do as far as the Scouts were concerned. This was essentially what they had been practicing for many years anyway. The WELS had problems with this because it contradicted Scripture and Frey wrote about it in 1947. In that article Immanuel showed his disgust for the "god" of the <sup>B</sup> boy scouts,

According to this prominent leader (Lord Rowalin, the chief Scout of the British Empire) of the Scout movement this organization has "refused to narrow the interpretation to a Christian God." It does demand of its members a reverence for God. That is an essential part of the movement, but it need not be the Christian God, the God revealed in the Bible, almost any kind of god will do.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The God of the Boy Scouts" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 34, 1947, p. 67

Like any good Lutheran, Frey was quick to point out the problems with this. “No one has a right to strip God of the essentials which the Christian religion teaches. That is not harmless. That is downright wicked. The Christian God, the God of the Bible, is the only true God and all others are idols no less than the images of wood and stone which the ancient heathen worshiped.”<sup>72</sup>

I.P. later says “Some Lutherans, who want to be a part of this popular movement, try to say that the Scouts do not stand for religion but only for natural civic righteousness. But the Scout leaders, who ought to know, call it religious brotherhood.”<sup>73</sup>

Although, Frey never mentions the Missouri Synod by name in his two articles about Scouts, it is obvious that he was thinking of them as he wrote. While he did not mention that the Missouri <sup>S</sup>ynod was wrong to allow participation in the scouts, he did show that being part of them was wrong—which everyone knew the Missouri Synod had been allowing for some time.

In connection with the break from the Missouri Synod, the subject Frey wrote the most about was military Chaplaincy. In 1948 he talked about an article written in a very liberal publication called Christian Century that actually talked against Military Chaplaincy. Charles C. Morrison, realized that it was a dangerous mixing of Church and State. Immanuel Paul remarked,

We of the Wisconsin Synod are often thought to be standing alone in our opposition to the chaplaincy. We are often pictured as being too conservative and as leaning over backwards. Here we have the example of the editor of a very liberal church paper who takes the position that in maintaining chaplaincies the church is compromising its own church functions.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> *ibid.* p. 67

<sup>73</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “A Religious Brotherhood” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 47, 1960, p. 323

<sup>74</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Application of the Principle of the Separation of Church and State to the Chaplaincy” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 35, 1948, p. 35.

If the reader of this article was from the Missouri <sup>S</sup>synod, he certainly would have been cut to the heart. The Missouri <sup>S</sup>synod looks upon <sup>itself</sup> themselves as a confessional church body; yet <sup>ci</sup>liberal church periodical has a more “conservative” view on military chaplaincy.

Nine years later Frey would again write an article on Military Chaplaincy based on articles he read in other church periodicals. This time he talks about an article written by a Methodist, who was an ex-Chaplain, also found in the Christian Century.

The writer admits that the chaplaincy “is laden with temptations for the minister and confusion for the churches.” He recognizes that some chaplains “lose effective touch with their churches and so exchange a distinctive Christian heritage for a rootless religion-in-general.” He notes that the uniform: being under military command and the salary paid by the government—“all these may reinforce the tendency of the spokesmen for God to become merely a spokesmen for the value of a particular culture.”<sup>75</sup>

A similar article was written in Christianity Today which states “U.S. military chaplains are in danger of developing an ‘armed forces’ religion which bears little resemblance to the doctrines of the churches from which they come”<sup>76</sup> Although I.P. never said anything about the Missouri Synod in this article, the reader must be wondering: with all the problems with Military Chaplaincy why would the Missouri Synod be a part of it? This is the same thing that he and countless others in the Wisconsin Synod also wondered.

Frey wrote two articles about Military Chaplaincy before the break with Missouri, as well as two articles after the break. In one article he talks about Robert Webb who said in an article in the Rocky Mountain News that the chaplains of the Air Force “are forced to use a unified Sunday-school curriculum. He charged that this has been drawn

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<sup>75</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Admitted Danger of the Military Chaplaincy” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 44, 1957, p. 83

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.* p. 83

up by a representative committee of major denominations “who have a predominately liberal theological viewpoint.”<sup>77</sup> Frey, of course, had problems with this. He asks us “How does this agree with the insistence of the supporters of the chaplaincy that nothing is demanded of the chaplain that would offend against the beliefs of the church?”<sup>78</sup> The answer of course, is that it does not agree. The fact of the matter is that many chaplains did not have the freedom that they said they did. Notice also the veiled reference to the Missouri <sup>S</sup>synod. He mentions the “supporters of the chaplaincy.” Now it is true that the Missouri <sup>S</sup>synod was not the only church body to back military chaplains. But a WELS reader in 1963 would have certainly thought first and foremost of the Missouri Synod when they read these lines.

In another article on Military Chaplains written after the break with Missouri, Frey remarked

Our own Synod has proposed that chaplains serve in the same status as war correspondents, paid, not by the government, but by the church itself... That most people, even most churches, do not see that the military chaplaincy is in fact a mixture of Church and State and reaches back to the influence of Calvin, who looked upon the State largely as a hand-maiden of the church to carry out its religious program. Most of the churches of our country are under the Calvinistic influence, and some, who once were not, are fast falling under it.<sup>79</sup>

We note here that Immanuel Paul talked against those who wanted the church to be involved with the church's <sup>state's</sup> business and the church to meddle in the affairs of the church. <sup>state</sup> He often backed the separation of church and state. This is not surprising; those who get

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<sup>77</sup>Frey, Immanuel P. “Concerning the Freedom of Chaplains” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 49, 1962, p. 163

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.* p. 163

<sup>79</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Two Views of the Military Chaplaincy” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 50, 1963, p. 211



involved in Military chaplaincy often have a hard time separation Church and State. This is a subject we will take up later.

Not once in these articles on Military Chaplaincy did Frey mention the Missouri Synod, except for the veiled reference quoted above. But this does not mean that he did not have the Missouri Synod in mind as he wrote these articles. As said before, Military Chaplaincy was a problem, not in the Wisconsin Synod, but in the Missouri Synod.

Those who read these articles would have completely understood who Frey was referring to.

One of the underlying problems with scouting and military chaplaincy is that it breaks fellowship principles. The biggest reason why the Wisconsin Synod broke fellowship with the Missouri Synod was over the doctrine of fellowship, specifically their false teaching on the levels of fellowship. The LC-MS was in talks with the American Lutheran Church (ALC) to join in fellowship together, even though they had their differences in the past. In the same <sup>1944</sup>1955 convention in Saginaw mentioned above, the Missouri Synod also backed the false doctrine of different “levels” of fellowship. They said that it is possible to have fellowship with someone in certain areas, even if you do not completely agree in all Scriptural doctrines. Therefore they could pray with those who they were not in complete agreement with. They also participated in what became known as “cooperation in externals.” The Missouri Synod claimed that they could do work together with others not in fellowship with them as long as it was not church work.

Because this was such a major issue, one would assume Frey talked about it quite often. This, however, was not the case. Many other writers, like Professor Reim, took up

this problem in The Northwestern Lutheran. I.P. only wrote one article on the subject. We make mention of it here because of its importance.<sup>80</sup>

Frey served on the Church Union Committee (CUC), which was the standing committee in matters of church union of our synod. It was while on this committee that he wrote this article. This time he specifically mentioned the Missouri Synod. In fact this whole article is about the Missouri Synod. The Missouri Synod was in talks with the American Lutheran Church (ALC) about fellowship. The Iowa Synod, one of the three synods that made up the ALC said that it was not necessary to agree with one another in every doctrinal point in order to pray together, it was only necessary to agree in the essential doctrines. About this I.P. said,

In former year the Synodical Conference took sharp issue with that on the basis of Scripture. The Missouri and Wisconsin synods stood shoulder to shoulder in this. In recent years, however, the Missouri Synod departed from its former position and has taken a stand very similar to that which the Iowa Synod held and which the American Lutheran Church still holds to the effect that joint prayers are not as far-reaching as pulpit and altar fellowship.<sup>81</sup>

So the Missouri Synod began to distinguish between prayer, pulpit, and altar fellowship. This is something that is not backed by Scripture. The “avoid them” found in Romans 16:17 does not make a distinction between any kind of fellowship—it simply tells us to avoid them altogether. To prove that the Missouri Synod had gone away from its previous position Frey quoted many older Missouri Synod theologians; we quote two of them here. The first is from Dr. Engelder: “The passages which prohibit pulpit and

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<sup>80</sup> Frey did write more on this subject, just not in the Northwestern Lutheran. In 1954 Frey delivered a paper on Joint Prayer to the Missouri-Wisconsin Synod Presidents Conference. In this paper he made it clear that prayer was an act of worship and thus should not be done together with those one is not of the same faith with. This was the position of the Missouri synod in the past and Frey urged them to take it up again and stop joining in church unionism. This paper, entitled “Prayer Fellowship” can be found on the Seminary’s essay website.

<sup>81</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Voice of the C.U.C. (The standing Committee in Matters of Church Union) Joint Prayer and Church Fellowship” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 43, 1956, p. 56

alter fellowship apply with equal force to prayer fellowship. – If we could fellowship [with] the representatives of false teaching in uniting with them in prayer, we consistently exchange pulpits with them and meet with them at a communion alter.<sup>82</sup> He also quoted the Lutheran Witness: “Leaders of the A.L.C. believe that prayer is under some circumstances permissible with those agreeing with us in the essentials of Christianity though not throughout in confessional harmony. From this view we dissent.”<sup>83</sup> Frey then asks the question: “Does Missouri still dissent?”<sup>84</sup>

I.P. spoke harshly against the Missouri Synod on their stand on prayer fellowship. He realized that their new position was not based on Scripture. “We take our stand with the old Missouri fathers on this point. We stand where they stood, not because it is the old position but because it is the Scriptural position.”<sup>85</sup>

Today, besides the things mentioned above, one of the issues that separates the WELS and the LC-MS is <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>latter's</sup> false view on the office of the public ministry. This was something that Frey felt he needed to address. In fact this article entitled “Is there only one Divine Office in the Church?” was his last article to be published in the Northwestern Lutheran. It was published in the June 28<sup>th</sup> issue of 1964; Frey died on May 21<sup>st</sup>.

Frey informed the readers of the difference in this doctrine between the WELS and the LC-MS.<sup>86</sup>

The Missouri Synod has taken the position that only the parish ministry is by divine appointment and that all other offices in the Church have their power delegated to them by the parish ministry. Our Synod has taken the position

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<sup>82</sup> *ibid.* p. 57 Brackets Added.

<sup>83</sup> *ibid.* p. 57

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.* p. 57

<sup>85</sup> *ibid.* p. 57

<sup>86</sup> There are many practical problems that show up with Missouri's false doctrine. For them, teachers, professors, and district/synod presidents are not called workers. They do not serve at a parish so they are not called by God. So they can be fired and hired just like everyone else. We saw this come to the forefront when the professors at their Seminary in St. Louis were questioned for breaching their contracts.

that God did not just appoint the parish ministry but rather the general Gospel ministry and that all who carry out its Gospel functions hold a divinely appointed office.<sup>87</sup>

I.P. also made sure to mention Dr. A. C. Mueller, who served as the editor of the Missouri Synod's Sunday School materials. He wrote a paper in which he agreed with the Wisconsin Synod on this matter. Once again the WELS was backed not only by the former Missouri Synod theologians, but also by Scripture.

Even at the end of his life Immanuel Paul continued to fight for the truth found in God's <sup>w</sup>word. In the final paragraph of his last article he writes,

The idea that the parish ministry is the only divinely appointed office in the Church and that all others derive their church powers from it is not the teaching of Scripture. When Jesus gave his final instructions to the disciples, He did not say: Establish the parish ministry everywhere. No, He said: "Preach the Gospel." All workers in the Church have the same divine call. There is a difference only in the scope of the call.<sup>88</sup>

Frey was willing to do anything in order to preserve the truths of Scripture. He staunchly defended the truth and the Wisconsin Synod as he wrote on the doctrinal matters between the two synods. Yet in some of his articles on this matter Frey did not give his opinion one way or another. In many of his articles Frey simply served as an informant to the members of the synod as to what was happening in the break with Missouri.

The District conventions also take on a special significance this year because our Lutheran Church is facing critical issues in the field of doctrine and practice. A division is threatened among those who for the greater part of the past one hundred years have been as of one mind and have fought shoulder to shoulder for sound, scriptural practice as a compact group in the Lutheran Church of America.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Is there Only One Divine Office in the Church?" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 51, 1964, p. 195

<sup>88</sup> *ibid.* p. 195

<sup>89</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "District Convention" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 37, 1950, p. 187-188

In December of 1956 the Synodical <sup>C</sup>onference met. Immanuel Paul pictured this convention as a somber one because of the recent turmoil.

It was generally recognized that this would be a very critical convention because of the controversy which has arisen within the Synodical Conference in recent years. The seriousness of the situation was seemingly felt by all present and hangs as a Damocles' sword over the proceedings. It was realized that the steps taken at this convention would have a great bearing on whether the wounds would be healed or the breach would become final and complete...A sober spirit pervaded the entire assembly, and the proceedings were carried on in a quiet matter.<sup>90</sup>

As mentioned above, Frey wrote many articles about the doctrinal problems facing the Missouri <sup>S</sup>ynod after the break. In these articles, not only did he back the Wisconsin Synod's (and Scripture's) teachings, but he also defended the actual break itself.

Nowadays liberal churchmen openly call schism or the divisions in the Church an outright sin. In a sense that is true, not just outward division but the deviation from Bible truth which lies behind it. The important thing in the eyes of liberals is for all churches to get together no matter what the price. Nothing is worse, they say, than for churches to refuse to fellowship with one another.<sup>91</sup>

But he pointed out: "The only union worthy of the name is inward unity, which reflects the inward unity which existed between Jesus and his Heavenly Father, a unity in the truth...Any union or fellowship apart from the Word of God is a sham. It is a downright lie. The Word of God is not expendable even for the sake of presenting a united front."<sup>92</sup>

He also talked about those who complain that the WELS is too negative. They say our breaking with Missouri was focusing too much on the problems, instead of rejoicing with what we have in common. But Paul said that the <sup>w</sup>ord of God is useful to

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<sup>90</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Synodical Conference Convention" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 44, 1957, p. 10-11.

<sup>91</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Schism" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 48, 1961, p. 259

<sup>92</sup> *ibid.* p. 259

reprove and rebuke. This has to be the case sometimes. When someone is in error, it is our duty to make it known to them. Frey said:

According to the popular standards in the Church today, Luther was a negativist. He not only positively taught salvation by faith but denounced the doctrine of salvation by works. His theology was full of antitheses. A religion which is altogether negative will save no souls. But sometimes it is necessary to tear down the structure of error to build the edifice of divine Truth.<sup>93</sup>

I.P. understood full well that the WELS was being negative with our break with Missouri. But this had to be done. It had to be done to preserve the word of truth. He was more than willing to cut ties with a brother of many years—a brother who at one time had influenced us to become confessional~~s~~ for the sake of the gospel.

It is clear that Immanuel Paul backed the break with Missouri. Not only did he talk against the Missouri Synod specifically, he also showed from Scripture how their doctrinal stances are wrong. He was also concerned with keeping the members of the WELS informed about what was going on during the tumultuous time. Even after the break with Missouri Frey felt it was necessary to back the Wisconsin Synod's stance. When the members of the Nebraska District voted him out of office because of the lack of a break, they certainly lost a talented, confessional, God-given leader.

## Unionism

As we saw in Immanuel Paul Frey's articles on the Missouri Synod and the doctrines that caused the break, it is clear that he was very much against unionism, often referred to as the ecumenical movement. Those churches which back the ecumenical movement join together simply for the sake of being together. Depending on how one

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<sup>93</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Negative Theology" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 49, 1962, p. 291

categorizes his articles, the ecumenical movement was the topic I.P. wrote about the most. He made it very clear throughout his 31 years as an associate editor for The Northwestern Lutheran that he considered unionism a crime against the true <sup>W</sup>word of God. Often when he talked about the ecumenical movement, it was in relation to giving reports on the various organizations that push for unionism, such as the National Council of Churches.

The ecumenical movement of which the National Council of Churches (NCC) are the most notable products in our day, is given the top spot in modern church circles. The thought behind it is that it is not necessary to agree in doctrine, even in such a basic doctrine as the blood-atonement of Christ, in order to practice church fellowship and to join hands in one and the same church organization. The slogan is: Let us forget our differences and get together. That is the only thing that counts.<sup>94</sup>

When one reads Immanuel's quotes on unionism such as this, it becomes clear why he spoke against this movement so often so often.

Frey also made the distinction between church union and church unity. Unity is something inward, union is something outward. This is a distinction others do not make. When you read something by the NCC and they talk about unity, they really are talking about unionism. But it is not possible to have inward unity without being one in doctrine. The NCC's union is an agreement to disagree, which is really not union at all. Rather, true unity "is not something which men can manufacture with their artificial schemes and machinations, but which only God the Holy Spirit can create."<sup>95</sup>

Much of what I.P. wrote concerning the ecumenical movement was simply to disseminate information. He mentioned a unionistic event and explained why our synod does not participate in them. In 1954 Frey talked about the World Council of Churches

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<sup>94</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Southern Baptists and the National Council of Churches" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 43, 1956, p. 227

<sup>95</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Unity or Union?" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 43, 1956, p. 371

(WCC) meeting in Evanston, Indiana. The WCC was, and still is, a unionistic organization wishing to join all Christian groups together. Before this meeting in Evanston the WCC made it sound that every Christian Church was going to be represented at this meeting. This however was not the case. Many confessional Lutherans did not show up, the Roman Catholics and many others also did not attend. The WCC was

Bitter about those who refuse to take part and call them “deliberate disrupters who are guided neither by principles nor by ideals, but simply by an intense desire to injure the cause of interdenominationalism.” It is not hard to understand why the proponents of the World Council lash out at its critics with such heartless and cruel judgments. People who are sure of the rightness of their cause can afford to be charitable and gracious toward those who disagree; but name-calling is a weapon quickly wielded by men who stand on a shaky foundation.<sup>96</sup>

Immanuel Paul did not have kind words to say about the WCC. I.P simply says they resorted to name calling because they knew they did not have an argument. This will be the case when you as a church organization do not stand for anything doctrinally. I.P. also said that “the many people meeting at Evanston have only one real basis of agreement. They agree that they are disagreed in their beliefs.”<sup>97</sup> This is not a real union. It is an outward union—one that is not based on God’s word but one based on secular things. This is exactly why Frey spoke against unionism over and over again.

Those who support the ecumenical movement often strive to answer this question: “How can a united church be achieved which welcomes and embraces our differences?” They are not concerned with the gospel and sound doctrine; they are only concerned about simply being together. Those who back church unions will often use the argument

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<sup>96</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The WCC and Evanston” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 41, 1954, p. 260

<sup>97</sup> *ibid.* p. 260



that when two groups are together it is easier to work out our differences than if they are apart.<sup>98</sup>

But what is behind so many wanting to join together? Frey offered this answer “It is largely due to the desire on the one hand, to escape the charge of intolerance and narrow-mindedness, under which our Old Adam cringes, and, on the other hand, to present a united front to achieve desirable religious and moral goals by sheer weight of numbers.”<sup>99</sup> Although this is Frey’s answer to what he perceives and not the answer of those who actually support the ecumenical movement, he never mentions doctrine. Once again, those who push for unionism are not concerned about sound doctrine—their concern is that all Christians join together to provide a unified front. He said in this respect, “Let us stop this nonsense of being so concerned about numbers, and let us rather be concerned about following the instruction of our God and remaining loyal to the teaching of His Word, for with God on our side, no matter how few in number we may be, we always constitute, what amounts to, a majority.”<sup>100</sup>

There was an article in The Christian Century in which they wondered why Lutherans are so skeptical in manners of joining together. They assume that “Lutheran skepticism concerning union arises naturally out of Lutheranism’s heritage of sectarianism and out of a leadership which has reflected <sup>and</sup> exaggerated sectarian, cultural, and sociological differences.”<sup>101</sup> Obviously a confessional Lutheran would not be able to agree with this statement. Confessional Lutherans do not join together with others if they do not believe the same things as they do—they do not refuse unity simply

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<sup>98</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “What Unites the Church?” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 41, 1954, p. 52

<sup>99</sup> *ibid.* p. 52

<sup>100</sup> *ibid.* p. 52

<sup>101</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Outward Union versus Inward unity” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 35, 1948, p. 388

because of their historical background or for other trivial reasons as The Christian Century presumes. Yet there is a tendency, among non-confessional Lutheran churches to want to join together for the sake of unity and numbers. This is something Frey warned against. “If the Lutheran Church follows that policy, it will eventually dig its own grave. The only real appeal which it has is its ability to say with Paul ‘We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.’”<sup>102</sup>

Refusing to join together with others for doctrinal reasons is foreign thinking to much of the Reformed.

It is not surprising that most Protestants of our day fail to see the point. They would not think of letting mere doctrine keep them apart. It is refreshing, then, to find at least one non-Lutheran which considers outward union without inward unity a deception and a fraud, as set forth in the *Signs of the Times*... ‘Real Christian unity is of God, not of man. It is ‘the unity of the Spirit,’ not unity of organization. Christian unity, as we have seen, is only the divine unity as that unity is *in* the Deity and *of* the Deity Himself.’<sup>103</sup> Frey was correct; it is truly refreshing to see other church bodies refusing to join together, simply for the sake of being together.

In a later article I.P. again expressed his pleasure in the fact that there were non-Lutheran churches fighting unionism. The National Council of Churches (NCC) was, and still is, and organization similar to the World Council of Churches—in fact they are closely related. He recounted how the NCC was angry that some church bodies refused to join it.<sup>104</sup> One large church body was the Southern Baptists. What was their reason? Frey let a Southern Baptist explain, “A Southern Baptist seeks unity on a maximum and not a minimum basis. He sees no gain in draining half of a soldier’s blood out of his

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<sup>102</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Southern Baptists and the National Council of Churches” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 43, 1956, p. 227

<sup>103</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Outward Union versus Inward unity” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 35, 1948, p. 388 *Italics Original*

<sup>104</sup> This situation seems similar to the one mentioned above about the WCC being upset that some church bodies refused to come to Indiana. Those involved in the ecumenical movement preach tolerance, but they are intolerant of those who make doctrinal stands.

body before he joins ranks for the strenuous encounter with the enemy.”<sup>105</sup> This Southern Baptist correctly understood that a Church body cannot preach the true word of God to the outside world when they are joined together with other church bodies that abuse God’s Holy Word and could not care less about doctrine. Our synod may ask a similar question: “how can we defend the teaching of Scripture if we are yoked together with those who defy it?”

Even though some non-Lutherans, such as the Southern Baptists, agree with our stance on the ecumenical movement, Frey was quick to acknowledge that many others have a problem with our stance on unionism. “The position which our synod has taken on some of the present-day movements in the Lutheran Church, calculated to being about a united front, is an unpopular one and has been subjected us to much criticism.”<sup>106</sup>

The Wisconsin synod is often labeled as being “narrow-minded” or as “separatists.” No one likes to be called these things, and it may lead some to reconsider their doctrinal positions. But these terms did not bother Immanuel. “Anyone who investigates the matter cannot escape the conclusion that the Bible urges Christians to be separatists. We find in the Bible such separatists statements as: ‘Avoid them,’ ‘Come out from among them and be ye separate saith the lord, and touch not the unclean thing.’”<sup>107</sup> It was clear to Frey that even though the world hates our synod when we take a stand on the true doctrine of God, it is something which God expects of us. It is true that we may be considered intolerant, narrow-minded, and old fashioned, but if these things come as a result of correctly defending the gospel, then we accept these names with joy.

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<sup>105</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Southern Baptists and the National Council of Churches” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 43, 1956, p. 227

<sup>106</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Wisconsin Synod and Progress” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 31, 1944, p. 74

<sup>107</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Separatists” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 31, 1944, p. 186

When a Wisconsin Synod Lutheran thinks of Unionism, he often thinks of the LC-MS and the ALC. As mentioned above, they wanted to join together without being in full doctrinal agreement. Yet, I.P. gave credit where credit is due. He talked approvingly about an ALC man who talked against the ecumenical movement. In reference to the Roman Catholics this ALC man said:

Let's test their desire for the truth before we woo them into marriage. If they aren't willing to take God at his Word, let's treat them as infidels and mission fields. If there can't be a meeting of minds doctrinally, then it is far more profitable to spend our time and money on people who desire to hear God's good news... How can we justify throwing good money after good money to send a multitude of delegates, spend thousand of hours for such a waste of time as the WCC and the LWF—with nothing to show for it! And all the while we must curtail our mission commitments for lack of funds.

It is safe to say that Frey felt the same way as far as joining with other church bodies is concerned. However, it is unfortunate that this ALC Pastor may have felt this way about the Catholic Church but not with other Lutheran churches they did not agree with.

So what was the proper basis for being united with someone else? "The Bible can not conceive of a church fellowship which treats doctrine as unimportant."<sup>108</sup> The only basis for being united with another church body is on God's <sup>w</sup>word. Only when two are in complete agreement doctrinally are they truly united. When they are joined together they are focused on Christ and his Word. They are concerned about the gospel and strive to always teach, spread, and defend it at all costs.

## Social Gospel

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<sup>108</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The Basis of Church Fellowship" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 34, 1947, p. 259

Most of the people who love the ecumenical movement do not care much about sound doctrine. Their sermons have a tendency to become void of all doctrine and lose the gospel. In its place a new “gospel” appears, one we call the “social gospel,” which is really no gospel at all. Since the ecumenical movement and the social gospel are closely connected, the social gospel was another one of Frey’s favorite topics to write about. In fact, other than the ecumenical movement he wrote on the social gospel more than any other subject. As one could imagine I.P. did not have kind things to say about it: “For us the term ‘social gospel’ is a term of condemnation. It leaves a bad taste in our mouths, and we want to keep our church free from it.”<sup>109</sup>

Frey mentions that there had been a lot of talk about and many papers have been written on the social gospel. There is good reason for this—many churches have gone towards it. They are no longer concerned about preaching the pure word. He gave this summary of the social gospel: “The idea is becoming more and more prevalent that the church exists chiefly to improve social and economic conditions. And to that end must be a factor in the governmental affairs of the nation. The aim is to make this world a better place to live in, no matter what means must be employed to achieve that.”<sup>110</sup> One does not have to look hard to notice what is missing here—Jesus Christ. Many churches today are enamored with being nice to others but at the expense of Christ and his cross. In their minds, talking about Christ and his word will only hamper the church’s ability to help others out and show love to others; there are many quicker ways to help others by simply preaching Christ and letting the Holy Spirit do his work. This is something that Immanuel noticed was happening as well, “The old Bible way of preaching Jesus Christ

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<sup>109</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Objectives of the Social Gospel” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 39, 1952, p. 196

<sup>110</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Social Gospel” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 27, 1940, p. 71

and Him crucified, of dealing with the individual soul and regenerating it by means of God's Word is considered too slow and tedious. Quicker and more tangible results are wanted."<sup>111</sup>

In 1952 I.P. wrote a three-article series on the social gospel. He talked about its objectives, methods, and how it relates to the individual. The people who preach the social gospel claim that their desires are the same as the Bible's yet they take the Bible out of the equation. Instead of preaching about Christ who brings true peace to the World they do not talk about Christ at all; and yet they still try to bring peace to the world <sup>by</sup> feeding the poor and clothe the homeless and other things of the like.

The main objective of the social gospel is clear and simple: it is to improve the lives of others. "The social gospel wants to improve the social order, to remove social and economic inequalities, in short, they want to make this world a better place to live in."<sup>112</sup> There is nothing wrong with this in and of itself.<sup>113</sup> The major problem with the social gospel is that it tries to lead others to live lives of sanctification without preaching about justification through Christ. Yet at the same time they will try to use Christ to back up their teachings.

They invent social teachings of their own and try to bolster them with the fraud that they originated with Jesus. Jesus never tried to make over the ungodly and unbelieving community outwardly but stood for a new birth within and pointed the eyes of individuals forward to heaven as the real goal of their lives. That is the one of the fundamental differences between the social gospel and the real Gospel of Christ.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> *ibid.* p. 71

<sup>112</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The Objectives of the Social Gospel" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 39, 1952, p. 196

<sup>113</sup> Perhaps we may say that this cannot be done without getting involved in politics, which is proven to be true, but that subject will be covered later.

<sup>114</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The Objectives of the Social Gospel" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 39, 1952, p. 196

But is not the true gospel also concerned with right living, with showing love to the poor and needy? Sure it is. Christ, Paul, and others constantly talk about producing good works. Christ's words in Matthew 25 come to mind. But the problem with the social gospel is that they go about it the wrong way.

The natural and inevitable fruit of a living faith is in the Savior Jesus Christ. There is no such thing as right living in the sight of God which by-passes the atonement of Jesus Christ. The exponents of the social gospel think that that is too confining and places too many restrictions upon it, that a faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior and Redeemer is not essential, that the same result can be achieved by other routes.<sup>115</sup>

The more one reads about the social gospel and what Frey said about it, it becomes clear why he despised it so much.

In these series of articles Immanuel Paul Frey also talked about the objectives and methods of both the social gospel and the true gospel. He started out with the objectives of the two. The objective of the true church: "The aim of the Church, as set for it by God, is to lead sinners to the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that they may obtain eternal life through faith in Him and so to furnish them with an incentive for a godly life for the brief period that they live here on earth before entering their real home in heaven."<sup>116</sup>

This same sentiment Frey expressed many years later.

The Lord has not left the Christian church in doubt as to what it is to occupy itself with and not to occupy itself with. Jesus said: "My kingdom is not of this world." "Who made me a judge and divider of you?" "To this end was I born that I should bear witness unto the truth." Paul wrote: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified."<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> *ibid.* p. 196

<sup>116</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The Methods of the Social Gospel" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 39, 1952, p. 211

<sup>117</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "What is the Concern of the Church?" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 41, 1954, p. 244

Next I.P. dealt talked about the methods of the real church: “The weapons which Christ has given to His Church for this (leading the sinner to Christ) are summed up in this: Preach the Word, teach and baptize. There are no other means which can do the casting aside all human props for the upbuilding of the Church.”<sup>118</sup>

What are the objectives of the social gospel? “Their chief interest is the redemption of society and the establishment of a righteous social order.”<sup>119</sup> Notice that it is not concerned about bringing the lost sinner to his only Savior.

What methods does the social gospel use to accomplish its objectives? Frey explained that they certainly do not use the gospel. “It was inevitable that the churches should become entangled in politics. It is felt that the churches would not be living up to their Christians responsibilities if they did not exert their influence to bring about moral legislation.”<sup>120</sup> He later said: “The aims have been shifted from those set up in the Bible, and the methods have been changed from preaching the Gospel to the individual to coercion, from regeneration to the providing of the right environment.”<sup>121</sup>

The social gospel tries to establish a kingdom of God here on earth. This is something that Christ never said was going to happen. Rather the kingdom of God is Christ ruling in our hearts through the gospel—and this can only happen if the gospel is preached. “It is the old fallacy that the Kingdom of God can be visibly established here on earth.”<sup>122</sup>

God expects his followers to do the right thing out of love for him. Because we have been justified by Christ we want to show our love to him by showing love to our

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<sup>118</sup> *ibid.* p. 211 Parenthesis Added.

<sup>119</sup> *ibid.* p. 211

<sup>120</sup> *ibid.* p. 211

<sup>121</sup> *ibid.* p. 211

<sup>122</sup> *ibid.* p. 211



neighbor and by obeying all of his commands. The social gospel also expects people to do the right things. But instead of using the gospel to motivate people to do the right things, they use the law. They push for certain legislation to force people to act a certain way. They assume they are doing the world a great service—but in reality they are doing a great disservice to the world by not spreading the true gospel.

The true gospel works in the individual. Sometimes this may take awhile. But Christ works through the Word to bring a person to faith and then afterwards to bring about good works. “True Biblical Christianity stresses the responsibility of the individual soul. It shows the individual how to get right with his God. Christianity is a personal matter between the Christian and his God.”<sup>123</sup> The social gospel does not work with the individual. “The social gospel goes in for mass production. It operates on the community level and is interested in the individuals only in large groups. Its main concern is the general environment, which, it is felt, will take care of the individual.”<sup>124</sup> While the gospel may be preached to large groups, the individual is not lost in the shuffle—faith is a personal thing.

Frey summed up his view of the true church in relation to the social gospel in this way: “It is not the goal of the Christian church just to improve the social, economic or political status of men, but to save souls from sin and perdition. It does not strive to engender in the hearts of Christians dissatisfaction with their earthly lot. A man’s position in society is not at all affected by his conversion to Christ.”<sup>125</sup> Immanuel Paul

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<sup>123</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Social Gospel and the Individual” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 39, 1952, p. 227

<sup>124</sup> *ibid.* p. 227

<sup>125</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Not a Social Gospel” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 47, 1960, p. 291

rightly understood that when we focus on our lot in life we are not focused on Christ, who saves us.

## The Separation of Church and State

Those who focus on the social gospel often get into politics. When one tries to use the church to make social changes it will be hard to avoid mixing the objectives and means of the two separate kingdoms. When a church body's main focus is not to bring sinners to Christ but to improve social order, they end up forcing people to be nice to others. Often they do this by pushing legislation in order to improve social statuses. When this happens a dangerous mixing of church and state occurs. Because this is so prevalent in our world today, the separation of church and state was another one of Immanuel Paul Frey's favorite subjects to write on.

In a personal letter, Immanuel correctly explained the Scriptural view on the separation of Church and state: "The political government has not at all been charged by God to build the kingdom of God. Its sole business is to protect and promote the bodily welfare of its citizens. The church and state, but God's arrangement, occupy two different spheres and operate with different weapons. This is a fundamental truth of the Bible."<sup>126</sup>

In an article written in 1946, I.P. showed why Lutherans insist that the church focus solely on the gospel rather than politics: "Let us bear in mind that the church has nothing to do with politics but that its business is to preach the Word in season and out of season.

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<sup>126</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. Personal letter to William Siegel. December 16, 2009.

Political methods may seem to promise quicker and more glamorous results but only the Word produces results which will endure.”<sup>127</sup>

Since it is the state’s duty is to protect its citizens and to promote good citizenship and the church’s job to spread the gospel, the gospel gets lost when the two kingdoms start to meddle in the affairs of the other. If the state tries to run the church it often happens that people are forced to follow certain religions. Then these people who are forced to be Christians are simply going through the motions and a “dead” Christianity occurs. On the other hand, if the church starts to meddle in the affairs of the state the church will begin to be more focused on social issues instead of spreading the gospel. Christ has set up the state to deal with social issues and the church to deal with the issue of sin. The Church has no right to deal with social issues. “The church has no assignment from the Lord but: ‘Preach the Word.’ It is through that, nothing else, that God wants the church to do its work.”<sup>128</sup>

Because the social gospel is all the rage, so is making comments on political matters from the pulpit. So Frey mentioned why political matters are not talked about in Lutheran pulpits. Some may think that a pastor should talk about politics from the pulpit in order to spice things up a little bit and be more current. And they wonder why he does not do it. “In the first place he (the pastor) has received no such commission from the Lord, and in the second place his views on such a matter would rest only on his own reasoning or political prejudices; there is no divine guarantee that his views are

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<sup>127</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Church and Political Partisanship” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 33, 1946, p. 387

<sup>128</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Churches and Political Action” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 32, 1945, p. 288

correct...Your pastor in his preaching wants to come to you with a “Thus saith the Lord” or not at all.”<sup>129</sup>

Some may incorporate a certain church with a certain political party. Some say it’s the church’s duty to spread democracy. But the church is here to spread the gospel—not to meddle in political affairs. It is not the church’s duty to fight wars or political battles. It fights with the Word of God. “The Church is spiritual and dare never fight with carnal weapons. Her only weapon is the Word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit. When the Church speaks, she should always be able to say thus saith the Lord. We personally as individuals have our decided preferences, but God has not commissioned the church to insist upon a definite form of government.”<sup>130</sup>

This does not mean that the Church can not make mention of politics at all. In one of the first articles that he wrote Immanuel Paul Frey talked about the separation of church and state in relation to the end of Prohibition. He admitted that The Northwestern Lutheran did mention prohibition from time to time for two reasons. 1. The people who supported prohibition said that all religious groups were in favor of prohibition—this is something The Northwestern Lutheran denied of course. 2. Our Synod’s English periodical also spoke against those who insisted that all drinking is a sin. But The Northwestern Lutheran did not say anything about the legislation one way or another, and for good reason, “This church paper did not join in the former hue and cry that the prohibition amendment be adopted, nor did it join in the later demand for its abolition. Speaking for the church, it could concern itself only with things that really concerned the

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<sup>129</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Sermon topics” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 24, 1937, p. 102. Parenthesis added.

<sup>130</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Political Neutrality of the Church” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 25, 1938, p. 310

church, and politics, even under the fine-sounding name of political or social reform, does not fall under that head.”<sup>131</sup>

Not only should the Church stay away from making judgments on political matters, but the state also needs to stay away from the church in matters of the gospel. It is just as much of a problem when the state meddles with the church’s duties <sup>as</sup> or when the church meddles in the state’s duties. In an article published just four days before his death I.P. talked about how chapel services are mandatory at the service academies for all underclassmen. This makes it hard for WELS members who wish to join the armed forces. He admitted that at times the state occasionally does a good job of separating itself from the Church, at other times it does not: “We have heard how the Supreme Court has outlawed prayer and Bible reading in public schools as a mingling of Church and State, and rightly so. But this mandatory chapel attendance is far more flagrant. It is a crass violation of Christian liberty.”<sup>132</sup>

Immanuel Paul and other confessional Lutherans are not the only ones who understood that the separation of church and state is important. The Christian Century, which as we said earlier is a liberal publication, also saw the problems when the church meddles in the affairs of the state. Frey quoted an article from this publication: ‘Too many churchmen are engaged in the public condemnation of political organizations which they are unwilling to join.’<sup>133</sup> Of course, this is not the only problem. We can also say that too many churchmen will publically use the church to support political organizations. This, Immanuel lamented, is even happening in the Lutheran Church. “Our

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<sup>131</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Exit Prohibition” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 21, 1934, p. 3

<sup>132</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Mandatory Chapel at the Service Academies” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 51, 1964, p. 147

<sup>133</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Church and Political Partisanship” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 33, 1946, p. 387

Lutheran Church has emphasized the importance of keeping the church out of politics, but signs are not lacking that some are beginning to weaken.”<sup>134</sup>

In this same article Frey said “Some think that our church should see to it that more Lutherans are elected to prominent state and federal offices. As though that could contribute anything to the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God, which is accomplished only by the Word and the Sacraments.”<sup>135</sup> When he wrote this he meant that if a Lutheran were to hold a high political office it would not advance God’s kingdom even though it may gain some publicity. It may help to put confessional Lutheranism “on the map,” but it does nothing to spread the actual gospel.<sup>136</sup>

When anyone writes in a public periodical, he is going to hear his share of criticisms. The quote found above led at least one WELS laymen to respond negatively in a letter to Frey. This layman, William R. Siegel, concludes that we as Lutherans should want to see any Lutheran be elected to a high position over a Catholic or over a Jew. His stated his reason for this: “If we would have more Lutherans in government positions, it would tend toward the upbuilding of God’s Kingdom insofar as it would reduce the hindrances and conflictions tremendously towards allowing the Gospel to spread among the people. It would ensure a better situation as far as the separation of Church and state are concerned.”<sup>137</sup> He continued “There must be certain, physical, material, and temporal measures that are absolutely necessary to carry out such work effectively: There must be some contributing factors!”<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> *ibid.* p. 387

<sup>135</sup> *ibid.* p. 387

<sup>136</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. Personal letter to William Siegel. December 16, 2009.

<sup>137</sup> Siegel, William R. Personal letter to I.P. Frey. December, 9, 1946.

<sup>138</sup> *ibid.* Emphasis original.

The main misunderstanding that Siegel had is that he believes when a Lutheran takes a position in a state government he can make reforms that will better enable the Lutheran church to do its work. He believed God's Kingdom will benefit because there are less hindrances. He argued that this would be the case because <sup>the</sup> outside world would have some contact with God through this Lutheran official so they would not be so set against it when they hear the gospel. But this view makes the gospel depend on outside matters in order to be effective. Frey explained in a personal letter to Siegel:

The welfare of the Kingdom of God is not dependent on any form of government, nor is the Church to espouse a particular form of government. I as a citizen may believe that our democratic form of government is the best in the world, based on common sense and experience, but as minister of the Church I have no right to preach that from the pulpit because I have no Word of God for it. The Christian religion as such is not concerned about form of government. It is to make people conscious of the fact that they are strangers and pilgrims here on earth and that the things of this earth are only incidental.<sup>139</sup>

In the same letter I.P. further showed how he has the correct view on the separation of church and state.

If we Lutherans should gain political control of our country, or any subdivision of it, that certainly would not give us the right to further our church and to suppress those who do not share our religious views. If we did that, then we would be doing the same thing of which we are always accusing the Catholic Church<sup>140</sup>

Even though the church and the state should be separate, Christian citizens still have duties. They are to support those God has placed over us for our benefit. We have no right, either as a church body or as individual Christians, to disrespect and dishonor a politician, party, or form of government (although we do have the right to disagree with

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<sup>139</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. Personal letter to William Siegel. December 16, 2009.

<sup>140</sup> *ibid.*

them). As Paul told Timothy, we also are instructed to pray for those who hold offices above us.

Frey did not believe that a Christian is not to be involved in politics at all. As individual citizens we are to care for our country. As citizens it is our duty support our country and our government. This is why many Christians join the armed forces and vote on Election Day. But this is not the church's business. ~~But~~ It is not the church's business to endorse, push, or even encourage anyone into public office. Frey also was not saying that a Christian cannot hold a public office. For when a Christian holds a public office, he holds it as an individual citizen and not as part of the Church.<sup>141</sup> I.P. answered the question whether a Lutheran must perform in accordance to his beliefs if he holds a public office in this way:

If that means that (the question) the official should use his political position and power to enforce the religious teachings and moral views of the Lutheran Church and to subject his constituents to them by force, we say, No. That would offend against the American conception of the separation of church and state and would involve methods and means by which the spiritual work of the Church cannot be promoted... This does not mean that his Lutheran beliefs should have no influence at all upon this administration of his office. His religious belief will prompt him to be faithful and conscientious in the performance of his duties.<sup>142</sup>

It is clear when one reads Immanuel's articles that he cared deeply about politics. Yet at the same time he realized that the church did not have any right to get involved in politics just as the state had no business getting involved in the church. Rather the state should stick to providing for the people, and the church should stick to preaching the gospel in order to save the lost.

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<sup>141</sup> According to the Bible of Pastor Jacob Frey, Immanuel Paul's Father, he served as the mayor of Börtlingen, Germany before he brought his family over to America. If I.P. would have condemned those Christians who held a public office, he would have said his own father sinned by his occupation.

<sup>142</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "A Lutheran as a Government Official" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 35, 1948, p. 19. Parenthesis added.



## Science and Religion

Immanuel Frey's article on the separation of church and state entitled "The Church and Political Partisanship" was not his only article that drew criticism. In 1950 I.P. wrote an article about the story of Joshua and the Israelites fighting the Amorites. He asked the question if it was the sun that stood still, or if the earth stopped rotating. In our minds today with everything we have been told by scientists, it seems that the earth stopped spinning because the sun never moves. In this article Frey never leaned one way or another; he simply explained the two points of view. He also stated that Joshua was not making a scientific point, but was simply saying how God stopped the normal progress of time so the Israelites could defeat the Amorites. "Even men of science today in their ordinary speech refer to the sun as rising and setting though they are convinced that it is the rotation of the earth that causes day and night. It is simply the ordinary way of speaking, and none would think of accusing them of scientific inaccuracies."<sup>143</sup>

Once again we see how writing publicly opens one up to scrutiny. This point of view did not sit well with at least one WELS member. This member, R.V. Grunze, mistakenly believed that when Joshua said the sun stood still, the sun stood still. Therefore all the scientists were wrong when they said the sun always stands still and the earth revolves around the sun. But as we said before, Frey never gave his opinion in the article one way or another; he was simply explaining two point of thought. He said that Joshua's wording does not make it impossible for the earth to move around the sun. In no way was Frey saying that this miracle by God never happened, or that it could be explained through natural phenomenon:

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<sup>143</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Did the Sun Stand Still?" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 37, 1950, p. 100

The intention was not to give a lesson in science but to record a natural phenomenon in the ordinary language of men. There is no indication at all that there was a dispute about the two theories, as there is in our day, and the miracle was actually great either way. We are simply told that it happened without the how of it or the scientific theories involved. It is stated that the sun stood still, but there is no indication that God here wanted to promulgate a scientific theory rather than employing man's ordinary way of speaking.<sup>144</sup>

Frey's article was really about Biblical interpretation. He is saying that we must decide what Joshua meant when he said the sun stood still. We must ask ourselves if Joshua was making a scientific observation, or if he was using common language to report a miracle by God. We must side with Frey that Joshua's purpose was not to make a scientific point.

The article talked about above is the only article in which Frey mentioned science in a positive light. When talking about how many scientists believe in evolution over creation, Frey wrote, "We believe that all Scripture was given by inspiration of God, also the account of the creation. In its place evolutionists offer us hypotheses, which is only a scholarly term for "guesses." There is no scientific basis for their guesses."<sup>145</sup> Of course the problem with many scientists is that they promote the use of reason over the use of Scripture. So if something does not make sense or if it is scientifically impossible it must not be true. This is a teaching that the public (and private) universities are teaching young men and women. Therefore it is necessary for us to teach them the truth of God's word while they are young. This is one of the many reasons Frey spoke in favor of our churches <sup>having</sup> schools.

## Education

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<sup>144</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. Personal Letter to R.V. Grunze. April 10, 1950.

<sup>145</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Creation or Evolution" Vol. 48, 1961, p. 83

Immanuel Paul Frey pointed out that those who attend Lutheran Elementary Schools quite often have a greater knowledge of God's Word than those who do not attend our Lutheran Schools. He quoted another Lutheran pastor who said, "When I get one who was instructed in a parochial school into my confirmation of <sup>or B</sup> bible class, I can tell it right away."<sup>146</sup> Frey added:

In our own circles pastors frequently have two confirmation classes, the one made up of children attending the parochial school and the other of children whose religious instruction has at best only been a side issue. The spiritual knowledge of the latter is usually far below the standard of the other that the pastor who has experience with classes of both sorts wonders how earnest Christian parents can fail to avail themselves of the Christian day school for their children when it is at their disposal.<sup>147</sup>

I.P. stressed the importance of Lutheran <sup>e</sup>Elementary schools, "It is too bad that so many of our congregations must get along with just a Sunday School; what is needed are more parochial schools. We know of many young congregations which are eager to have them but can not have them. May God speed the day when there are again enough teachers to go around." The congregations who do not have a school can rest assured that their children are at least getting some training through sound confirmation classes, Sunday school classes, and perhaps a Vacation Bible School.

Even though Immanuel Paul pushed for Lutheran <sup>s</sup>Schools he was quick to remind the reader that having a Lutheran <sup>e</sup>Elementary <sup>s</sup>School is a matter of adiaphora, as is sending your child to your church's school if it has one. Yet, at the same time: "There is no agency at the disposal of Christians parents outside of the home which can impart to their children such a wide and deep scriptural knowledge and exert such a powerful

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<sup>146</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Parochial School Education" Vol. 26, 1939, p. 152

<sup>147</sup> *ibid.* p. 152

Christian influence on the child as the Christian day school.”<sup>148</sup> It was Frey’s opinion, and a valid one, that a Lutheran grade school is one of the best ways a congregation can educate its children in the true Word of God.

## Parenting

When reading these quotes about Lutheran schools by Frey, one quickly notices how he included parents in the spiritual upbringing of little children. He talked about the jailor at Philippi who asked what he must do to be saved. Paul and Silas replied “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” Frey explained this verse, “The meaning is not that the father can believe for the whole family, but the meaning is rather that the faith of the father will prompt him to lead also those in his house to Christ.”<sup>149</sup>

How is this best done today in our world? By sending our children to Lutheran  
Elementary schools. I.P. elaborated,

The Apostle says, “Bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” That is the primary study of parents: to ground them firmly in the Christian faith. To that end they should avail themselves of the gifts and agencies which God has placed at their disposal through the church, and the most efficient of those in our day is the Christian day school, where the Word of God reigns supreme, where the children are not only instructed in the Bible stories and the fundamental truths of God, but where even the so-called secular subjects are taught from a positive Christian point of view.<sup>150</sup>

In a later article Immanuel talked about parents who refuse to baptize their children because they want to wait to let their children decide on their own. This logic is purely from the world and is found no place in Scripture.

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<sup>148</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Parochial School Education” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 26, 1939, p. 152

<sup>149</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “And Thy House” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 22, 1935, p. 308

<sup>150</sup> *ibid.* p. 308

God wants parents to give their children the benefit of the washing of regeneration, to see to it that the blood-bought redemption of Christ is conveyed to their children by bringing them to Holy Baptism. We read that when the jailor at Philippi had learned to know Jesus as his Savior he and all his household were baptized straightway. There was no delay, no hemming and hawing. He was baptized and all his *straightway*. There was no fear of invading their rights. He believed it to be his duty to bring them to the same Savior that he had embraced.<sup>151</sup>

It is clear that Frey considered parents essential to the matter of instructing their children in the Lord. Since parents are commanded to bring up their children in the Lord, the parents should not hesitate to do so. They should also make use of the resources available to them. Another thing parents should do is pray for their child's spiritual well-being. Frey mentioned Job praying for his children in the first chapter of the book. Frey encourages all parents to follow Job's example. Children are entitled to have their pastimes; however they may sin when they are enjoying themselves. What are parents to do? Immanuel answered:

What is the best solution? Is it to forbid all social pleasures? Job did not think so. He permitted them. His solution was to commit them to God. He prayed for them and offered up burnt offerings for them, for, as he said 'It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.' He relied on prayers and intercessions with God to keep the situation under control.<sup>152</sup>

## Marriage

Since parenting is essential to the upbringing of the child, it is important for parents to stay together. To this end, Immanuel Paul Frey wrote many articles about marriage. He deplores the view of marriage that the country has because of Hollywood. He defined marriage in the eyes of the world:

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<sup>151</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Shall the Children Decide?" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 30, 1943, p. 323. Italics original.

<sup>152</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Parents Safeguarding their Children by Means of Prayer" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 42, 1955, p. 148

Marriage is simply a partnership which can be dissolved just as readily as a business partnership. Why, it is more noble for two people to separate and be divorced when they no longer feel toward one another as they did when they were first married than to continue in such a union. People who look upon marriage as a life-long union are allowing morbid inhibitions to ruin their lives. That that is the prevailing view on marriage and divorce in Hollywood has been amply demonstrated by past performances and is gradually being admitted with ever greater frankness.<sup>153</sup>

We know full well that Christ hates all divorce and there is no such thing as a noble separation of this holy union. Therefore we are not to follow the example of the world, but we are to testify to the truth.

Not surprisingly, Frey pointed out that the center of the marriage should be Christ.

The couples who are rooted in Christ will be blessed and will have a God-pleasing marriage.

The young couple in Cana started their married life with Jesus. Blessed is every home where that is so and Jesus abides as a permanent guest! That requires a Christian atmosphere, or Jesus will not dwell there. The Word of God must rule there and the sweet incense of prayer rise to the throne of God from the family altar. Where no prayers are heard and the Word of God is missing Jesus finds the atmosphere unsuited to His presence.<sup>154</sup>

In this day and age, with many couples getting married who are not of the same religion, I.P. encouraged the confessional Lutherans to stand up for their faith. If they have children they ought to care for their children's spiritual well-being and bring that child to church.

Why should the Lutheran husband step aside and let his non-Lutheran wife bring up the children in her church? Isn't his Lutheran faith worth as much as his wife's faith, and is it not worth passing on to his children? Nor will the excuse of having peace in the family hold water here. The Lord does not want peace-at-any-price Christians. He wants no peace at the expense of the truth and at the expense of the souls of the children.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Hollywood or the Bible?" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 23, 1936, p. 327

<sup>154</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Marriage and Married Life" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 26, 1939, p. 34-36

<sup>155</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "Children of Mixed Marriages" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 29, 1942, p. 228

# The Gospel of Jesus Christ

When one takes a look at this paper or reads many of Immanuel Paul Frey's articles found in The Northwestern Lutheran, he may come to the conclusion that Frey was too negative. He may believe that Frey focuses on the sins of this world, instead of simply talking about Christ. This is simply the nature of Frey's subjects; when one talks about the social gospel, unionism, or the separation of church and states he must point out where God's law is being broken. However, there are many instances in which I.P. also talked about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is clear that Frey's favorite season of the Church year was the season of Lent, for he talked about it more than any other. He explained the importance of the Lenten season:

During these weeks of Lent our Lutherans will have heard again the reading of the story of the suffering and death of Jesus, and they will have heard the purpose of this suffering and death of Jesus expounded from the pulpit. They will have been reminded again that all this happened to Jesus not as a result of wicked forces over which he had no control but that in accordance with the gracious plan of His heavenly Father and in His unfathomable love for sinners He voluntarily ascended the cross to atone for the sins of the world. That is the message which you hear in our Lutheran churches, and that is the way the Bible interprets the passion story.<sup>156</sup>

It is clear why Frey loved the Lenten season as much as he did: it preaches Christ crucified the most important thing of all. He pointed out that Paul also focused his preaching on the crucified Savior:

Paul in his preaching kept the crucified Jesus in the foreground and himself in the background. He wanted them to forget the man who was preaching and to think only of the Savior who was being preached. When he got through preaching, he did not want the people to say: Isn't Paul an interesting and

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<sup>156</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The Message of Lent" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 43, 1956, p. 83

eloquent speaker? But rather: Isn't Jesus a wonderful Savior? He preached not himself but Christ Jesus as Lord, who alone could save sinners.<sup>157</sup>

Not only did Paul talk about Christ Jesus as Lord in his sermons, but Immanuel Paul Frey often wrote about the world's Savior in his articles. The reason why all Christians love to talk about Christ is because of the many great things he has done for us. Jesus Christ, who is God, came down to this earth in the form of a man. He became lowly, and willingly took beatings, sorrow, and mockery for our sake. He died on the cross and suffered the pains of hell so we would not have to. I.P. explained what Christ did for us as he talks about Christ being the rod of Jesse in Isaiah 11:

This rod out of the stem of Jesse was Jesus of Nazareth, and in the eyes of the word He was as unpretentious and unattractive as a little branch shooting up out of a stump. He was born in a stable, bedded in a manger, and wrapped in swaddling clothes. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. He was mocked, persecuted, beaten, spit upon. The chief priests and elders were determined to crush the life out of the rod which was growing up out of the stem of Jesse. But in spite of this it continued to grow and attained a greater height and splendor than the trunk and branches growing out of Jesse had attained in the glorious days of David and Solomon.<sup>158</sup>

He continued: "Thanks be to God that he brough[t] forth that tender shoot out of the roots of Jesse and let it grow into such a tree! Thanks be to God that through His Son Jesus Christ He restored and reestablished the throne and kingdom of David on such solid foundations that even the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!"<sup>159</sup>

To Frey, Christ was to be the center of the Christian and the Christian church, for he gives us the one thing necessary. "Jesus offers us the only one attraction to draw and hold the people, and that is the mighty magnet of the cross, which offers sinners a Savior

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<sup>157</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "We Preach Not Ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 29, 1942, p. 55.

<sup>158</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. "The Rod of Jesse: Isaiah 11:1" The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 21, 1934, p. 6-7

<sup>159</sup> *ibid.* p. 7 Brackets added.



who has redeemed them from their sins with His own precious blood, canceled their guilt and reopened to them the portal of heaven.”<sup>160</sup>

One way Christ gives the gospel to his Church is through the sacraments. I.P. often talked about the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. He loved the Lord’s Supper because it was founded in Christ’s forgiveness. He lamented the fact that some refuse to receive the sacrament because they think they are too sinful. Frey realized that the Lord’s Supper is “One of the most gracious institutions which He has called into being for us...For it (the false belief that Communion is only for those who are sinless) is altogether unfounded and robs Christians of perhaps the sweetest assurance that the Lord has for them.”<sup>161</sup>

Immanuel Paul pointed out that the forgiveness we receive through Jesus Christ is all the motivation we need to show our love to him and lead lives of sanctification. “Jesus is the light of the world. He came to save all. By His great sacrifice he has prepared salvation for all. And in order that this great blessing may reach all, He has called us Christians to serve under Him as the lights of the world. God grant that we may appreciate this honor and in a greater measure live up this responsibility.”<sup>162</sup>

Frey was also quick to point out that Christians are motivated through the love of Christ to spread his word, defend it, and to not be ashamed of its teachings.

Because the gospel is what preaches Christ crucified we should not be ashamed of it. Openly confess your belief in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, openly confess your faith in Jesus as the all-sufficient Redeemer of sinners who on the cross wiped out all your sins, and you will draw pitying glances...If you confess the old Gospel, you will be made to fall out of place. If you belong to and uphold the church which teaches the old Gospel truths,

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<sup>160</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Church’s Sole Attraction” The Northwestern Lutheran p. 134

<sup>161</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Lord’s Supper: One of the Burning Questions of the Reformation” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 29, 1942, p. 344. Parenthesis added.

<sup>162</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “The Light of the Gentiles” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 21, 1934, p. 22

people will look askance at you. Are we in the present-day environment, under the prevailing adverse circumstance, willing to do so? If we are ashamed to, there apply to us the sobering words of Jesus “Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father.”<sup>163</sup>

The most important thing in this world to Frey was the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the gospel that Frey spread throughout Arizona, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Colorado. It is the gospel that the congregations, conferences, districts, and synod worked together on and spread through mission work. It was the gospel they grew in at conventions and by supporting the synodical institutions. It was the gospel that Frey and many others defended in the break with Missouri. It was the gospel that Frey strived to preserve in his articles on unionism. It was the true gospel that was under attack by those who preached the social gospel. It is the gospel that is pushed to the back burner when the church and the state get involved in each other’s business. When one reads Immanuel Paul Frey’s articles in The Northwestern Lutheran it is clear that he deeply cared for the truth of the gospel and fought for that truth. And it is also clear that Frey correctly understood what the true gospel is:

In his 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians St. Paul defines it in a way which can not be misunderstood, in such simple language that a little child can grasp it. He there sums it up as the message “that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” There you have the Christian Gospel in a nutshell. Only by adherence to that Gospel can we be saved.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “Ashamed of the Gospel?” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 47, 1960, p. 131,139

<sup>164</sup> Frey, Immanuel P. “What is the Gospel?” The Northwestern Lutheran Vol. 43, 1956, p. 323

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