

# The Northwestern Lutheran

The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not leave us, nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8:57.

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## THE THIRTY-NINTH PSALM

Verses 9-13

### The Christian's Life — A Life of Calm Submission and Penitential Prayer

I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it. Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.

When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

As yet the elegy of our Psalm is not ended. It still has sentiments in store, which are far from being alien to a sacred elegy. One such sentiment is that of a life of calm submission. "I was dumb," says the Psalmist, "I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it." The state of mind expressed here by David is not that which is described in verse 2, "I was dumb with silence, I held my peace." There he represents himself as restraining himself from uttering anything that was in his mind regarding the dealings of God with men, because he felt that it would do harm, either by encouraging the wicked in their views of God and His government or by giving offence to the children of God, if he would open his mouth with murmurings against God's doings. Here he says that he was dumb, not by putting a restraint on himself, but because he was in no wise disposed to say anything against the government of God. In other words, his mind was now calm, silent, uncomplaining, acquiescing in the dealings of Divine Providence, and submitting to God's will.

This is made clear by the clause, "because thou didst it." David means to say, Thou, O God, hast done that which was so mysterious to me, which I could not understand by my reasoning, and about which I was so much disposed to complain; that which has filled my heart and mind with conflicting thoughts, all my murmurings, since I know, it has been done by Thee. That fact proves to me conclusively that all the trials I have suffered are right, and wise, and wholesome; the fact Thou hast done it, makes my mind truly calm.

## A Characteristic Feature of a Christian's Life

Here, then, we have a characteristic feature of a Christian's life. It is a life of calm submission to the sovereign will of God. The Christian, when suffering under trials, does not rely on his own reasonings; he does not attempt to comprehend and explain the mystery of his trials, but directs his thoughts simply to the fact that God has done it. No matter how trying his sufferings may be, even though they be a reproof or punishment for his sins, a pious Christian will humbly admit that it is God who has laid the rod of chastisement upon him, even as Eli of old did, when the Lord had passed judgment on him and his house because of the iniquities he and his sons had committed, saying as he did to Samuel: "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good."

This is true, even when we see no connection between God's dealings and our sufferings. At times we undergo trials and misfortunes in our lives, when we are at a loss to find any clue of satisfactory explanation. It is a problem which is often insolvable to our mind. Yet in such case it is always safe to calmly submit to the Divine will and say, the Lord has done it. All that God does is well done.

Whate'er God will, let that be done;  
His will is ever wisest;  
His grace will all thy hope outrun  
Who to that faith arisest.  
The gracious Lord will help afford,  
He chastens with forbearing;  
Who God believes, and to Him cleaves,  
Shall not be left despairing.

To submit calmly to God's will is the secret of happiness and peace. It calms down the feelings of distress when nothing else would do it, and disposes the mind, even under the deepest trials, to acquiescence and composure. Only believe that God knows and that in all things, even what seem to us the sorest ills, He does what is best for you, and you have the sweetness of that peace which passeth all understanding.

True, such calm submission does not take away the **desire** that the hand of God which lies heavily upon us may be removed, and that our sufferings may cease. In the midst of his willing submission David asks of God: "Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand." Doubtless the stroke he here speaks of refers to the trial he was

enduring, and which had given occasion to express his feelings of sorrow in this elegy. It was a severe chastisement he had experienced at the hand of God. "I am consumed by the blow of thine hand," he cries. I am wasting away; my spirits are failing. I cannot long bear up under it. I must sink down to the grave, if this affliction is not removed. Hence the imploring entreaty of David for such removal.

The prayer for removal of affliction is not inconsistent with perfect submission to God's will. We must indeed close all such prayers with the sentence: "Thy will be done." Still we may beseech the Lord thrice, seven times, very often and very earnestly; to relieve us of the troubles which have well-nigh become unbearable, even as Paul did, to whom was given a thorn in the flesh, and for which he besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from him. And do we not hear Christ the Lord himself in the deepest of his agonies pray: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me?" If by so praying the cup of suffering be not taken away, we shall at least have grace to bear it, and that is better than freedom from sorrow. The blessed experience Paul made will not fail us. "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. 12:9.)

#### A Life of Constant Penitential Intercourse with God

The Christian's life would be incomplete, however, were it not a life of constant penitential intercourse with God. In the verse preceding those under discussion the Psalmist pleads: "Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the foolish." And here he penitently converses with God, "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah." Plainly a penitential intercourse with God. Knowing that he is but a sinner before God, and feeling that his sin is ever before him (Ps. 51:5), David pleads ever and anon that God would pardon his sins, that He would deliver him from his offences, from the guilt that he had contracted and the punishment he has deserved, and that God would not suffer him to become an object of reproach to wicked and foolish men, that is, that God would withdraw the hand of affliction, so that even the wicked might see that He was not angry with him, but that he was an object of Divine favor.

In such penitential prayer the Psalmist furthermore converses with God on His corrective hand. "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity," etc., that is, when Thou dost punish man for sin by any calamity, by evil conscience, and inner accusations, by sickness and bodily sufferings, his beauty, his strength, health, power — all that he has, is marred and destroyed, and fades away, like the texture of cloth wasted by moths.

The Christian's life is not different from that of David's in this respect. It is a constant pleading with God to pardon his manifold sins, to deliver him from guilt, and the punishment he has deserved, for Christ's his Savior's sake; to cleanse him from evil desires, to purify his heart and enable him to lead a holy life by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Christian often reflects, furthermore, on God's rebukes for sin, how by His correction or punishment man's beauty, strength, power, wealth and possessions, are laid waste and destroyed, all of which he by no means regards as a trifling matter, but a matter which induces him earnestly to refrain from sin and to continually seek God's grace and preservation.

Finally, the Christian's life is a life of fervent prayer for

#### A Blessed End

"Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more." A worthy finale of this expressive elegy of Hebrew poetry. In view of the shadowy fleetness of life; in view of his afflictions and his sins; in view, also, of the perplexing questions which have agitated his bosom, David asks for nothing less than a blessed end.

He compares himself to a stranger and foreigner in this world. The phrase is taken from history. In the great prayer of thanksgiving at the end of his life and at the coronation of Solomon, his son, to the King of Israel, David expressed these remarkable words: "For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." 1 Chron. 29:15. But even long before David another man of note used the same phrase. We are told in that pathetic narrative of Sarah's burial that when "Abraham stood up from before his dead," he spoke unto the sons of Heth, "I am a stranger and a sojourner with you."

Yet in both cases this was not a mere phrase on the lips of these two men. Like all their fathers they were strangers and foreigners in this world living as men who had no permanent home here — who were but visitors for a brief time in an alien land — and whose life, therefore, was an illustration of the past that they were on a journey — a journey to another world. And thus David prays here that God would be merciful to him as to a man who has no home — no permanent abiding place — on earth.

Is not this the very nature of a Christian's life? "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come," Heb. 13:14, is the language of all true Christians. As strangers and pilgrims on earth, they hope for a better and more enduring habitation in heaven, where their heart and their treasure are already.

Though they experience weariness and ill-treatment by the way, yet their stay here will not be long; and, walking with God by faith, they go forward on their journey, undiverted in their course, until they reach their heavenly home.

This is the blessed hope which brightens the Christian's life midst all the troubles and perplexities he meets on his journey. Without such hope it would not be an easy matter for the Christian to depart from this world. It is with much anxiety, David concludes his prayer for a blessed end, saying, "O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more." He desired that his closing days might not be under a cloud, that he might not go down to the grave in a gloom, but that he might be strengthened and invigorated with a cheerful hope for the great beyond before he should pass away.

It is the desire of every believer in Christ not to leave the world in gloom, or with gloomy and depressing views, but with joyful confidence in the gracious and good will of God who welcomes him home, and hence with bright anticipations of the coming world. For his own comfort and peace, for the honor of the religion he professed during life, for the glory of God, as well as for the benefit of those round about him, the Christian believer desires to express his cheerful hope in the life to come.

Happy is the thought expressed here. In the light of such blessed hope the transiency of this life changes its whole aspect, loses the last trace of sadness, and becomes a solemn joy. Why, then, should we be sorrowful when we think how near our end is? Why should we not rejoice at the thought that we strangers and foreigners here shall soon depart to the true home of our souls?

Such is the elegy of our Psalm — an elegy of note indeed. May we ponder its sentiments throughout our life.

J. J.

### COMMENTS

**The Need of God** In Acts 17: 27-28 we are told how St. Paul tried to tell the Athenians that the real purpose of life for men is to seek God: That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being.

That this need is realized, however dimly, by many leading men of our country, some of them outspoken agnostics, recently published utterances on the subject of religion in a number of our modern magazines, seems to prove.

The Living Church in a recent issue quotes some of these. There is the wail of Charles W. Eliot, former president of Harvard, written to Gamaliel Bradford in 1923:

"I have long been convinced that the greatest need of American civilization today is the need of God. And the kernel of the matter lies precisely in what you allude to, the utter lack of religious education. Strange that we do not stop to think that never before, in the history of civilized man, has there been a people that did not make God the first principle and basic stay of all its elementary education, or, if not God in the more abstract sense, those moral habits and methods with which God is chiefly identified."

To this Mr. Bradford, a distinguished agnostic, added: "Personally I am in no position to make any effort in the matter, because, while I feel that the whole universe crumbles without God, I am myself utterly unable to find Him. I am only deploring what I am sure is an imperative need, without being able to suggest any means of meeting it. I trust someone, with a more positive faith, will be able to do better." The April Atlantic, 1934.

In the April Harpers a young journalist, Frank Snowden Hopkins, an avowed skeptic, has this to say: "I have a wide acquaintance among honest intelligent young people, mostly from 25 to 30 years old, in many parts of the United States, and I believe I speak for a large group when I say we ourselves are more weary of the moral confusion of the 1920's than our elders could possibly be. The old spirit of rebellion has given way to the need for a positive philosophy; we are striving today to achieve a new order and meaning in our lives." The problem is "not how to make Christianity palatable, but what to put in the place of the Christianity we have rejected."

If any proof were needed to the age-old truth that finding God is the real purpose of life, that having found the true God means peace and happiness for man, and that missing or rejecting God entails nothing but misery and pain, these quoted sentiments of doubt and despair should supply it. Sitting at tables groaning, so to speak, under their load of spiritual food, well fed by the sustaining bread of life in God's Word, it is not so easy for us to realize the poverty and rage, the famished souls of those miserable men outside of the church. Did we realize this to its fullest extent, would we then, as so often now, sit idly by while precious souls, seeking after God, and yet not knowing how or where to seek, are lost because we are too niggard to supply the means for bringing the Gospel to these unfortunate men? It must be answered some day. God grant that we may be able to answer then, that we have done all that is in our power to enlighten these.

Z.

**Dickens' Life of Christ** The much heralded, widely advertised, and handsomely paid for posthumous Life of Our Lord by the famous novelist Charles Dickens has now appeared as syndi-

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cated matter in more than 300 newspapers. These newspapers report an increase in circulation of 1,000,000 readers, indicating the tremendous interest of the public in the story, or the huge success of blatant advertising methods.

"Intrinsically," remarks the editor of the Living Church, "The Life of Our Lord is disappointing. The author has taken unwarranted liberty with the Bible, and has presented our Lord merely as a good man, not as the divine Son of God. Jesus is presented as the son of Mary and Joseph, and in general He is pictured in His human aspect alone."

We are sorry to confess to an ignorance in the matter. It may be an astounding statement, but the truth is we have not read it. The reason for this seeming neglect lies deeper than mere laziness, lack of time or interest. Frankly then, we have read a number of modern and modernistic lives of Christ, and they have, as a rule, left us with a bad taste in our mouth. We are a little tired of watching the contortions of an author in trying to level down the Christ to the common level of mere man. We know Him to be that Jesus of Nazareth, miraculously born of the virgin, the promised Christ, the very son of God, as He had to be to save fallen mankind. We are not merely shocked but disgusted by any other portrayal of Him. As far as we are concerned, the picture of Christ drawn from the Gospels as the true Word of God satisfies us completely. Z.

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**The Lutheran Men's Alliance** of Southern California met some little time ago for their annual dinner. One of the 300 representative laymen present offered some lengthy resolutions looking towards church union between all Lutheran bodies in America. The Alliance embraces members from the following synodical groups, as the Lutheran Herald reports: Norwegian Lutheran Church, Au-

gustana Synod, United Lutheran Church, Danish Lutheran Church, American Lutheran Church, and United Danish Church.

The resolutions offered and enthusiastically adopted need not be quoted here. They are unique in this that they make practical suggestions for the proposed union's attainment.

In commenting on these resolutions the Lutheran Herald tells us that, "During the last two decades we have made great progress to unite Lutheran Churches. Nine different bodies have formed three organizations. In the East we have the United Lutheran Church in America, the Norwegian Churches formed the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. The American Lutheran Church is another consolidation. Again five bodies, the Augustana, the Norwegian, the American Lutheran Church, the Free Church, and the Danish United formed a federation known as the American Lutheran Conference, so we now have the great majority of the Lutherans gathered into three general bodies with over a million members in each, namely: The Synodical Conference, The United Lutheran Church, and the American Lutheran Conference."

In the way of the union and amalgamation of all the Lutheran bodies in America are many things. There are, first of all, rather important differences in doctrine. Efforts to wipe some of these out by inter-synodical conferences have proved unavailing. Then there are flagrant breaches of practice, tolerated by some bodies, even where the doctrines seem to agree. Unionistic trends among some Lutheran church bodies with the Reformed sects are not unheard of.

In view of this the Declaration of Principles of the United Church in America states: "That until a more complete unity of confession is attained than now exists, The United Lutheran Church in America is bound in duty and in conscience to maintain its separate identity as a witness to the truth which it knows, and its members, its ministers, its pulpits, its fonts and its altars must testify only to that truth." We of the Synodical Conference may well make a declaration like unto this on our own part.

We agree with the Herald that this isolation has served and can well serve in the future the good purpose of conserving the Lutheran faith. We must learn to look at the Church as a **spiritual** organization, and not as a commercial corporation. Z.

#### THAT THEY MAY ALL BE ONE

The above words incorporated in the high priestly prayer of our Savior (John 17) are a very popular slogan with those who are working for an organic union of all churches or at least for a working agreement between the various denominations. They are chiseled in the cornerstones of certain so-called Christian or Campbellite churches, which denomination was

originally organized in part with the avowed purpose of uniting the various Protestant denominations in one body. In fact, this unionistic spirit is characteristic of most modern Protestants. The establishment of one big church in place of many sects and denominations is regarded as an ideal worthy of the best efforts. When two or more church bodies take steps to form one body, as at the present time the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America, it is hailed as a great step forward. In small towns and rural communities the community church, in which the representatives of the various denominations pool their interests and worship together, is regarded as the ideal institution. We are told: What is the sense of having so many different churches and denominations? Let us forget our differences. The distinctions in doctrine are not important. Let each one sacrifice a bit of his peculiar doctrine and join in one big church. The many different sects are the scandal of Christianity. And those who refuse to join in such unionistic movements are denounced as narrow-minded and as back numbers.

Many a Lutheran has no doubt squirmed under that charge and wished that his church were more up-to-date in this respect. But the question can never be what religious views are popular in the world but only what the Lord teaches on the subject. If we approach the matter from that angle, we find that the Lord is not interested in mere outward union. In fact, outward union without inward unity rooted and grounded on the teachings of God's Word is an abomination in His sight. In the high priestly prayer of Jesus there is absolutely no vindication of the unionistic spirit. On the contrary, in it the Savior prays that His disciples may be kept and sanctified in the truth in spite of the pressure of the world: "I have given them thy word; and the world hateth them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. — Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." On another occasion Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." If the world hate us because we will not join in unionistic movements but prefer to abide by the teachings of God's Word, then we are merely experiencing what Jesus in His High priestly prayer said of His disciples. Sacrifice of the truth is too high a price to pay for the good will of the world and the alleged advantages of religious unionism. I. P. F.

Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord!  
 Be all Thy graces now outpoured  
 On each believer's mind and heart;  
 Thy fervent love to them impart.  
 Lord, by the brightness of Thy light,  
 Thou in the faith dost men unite,  
 Of ev'ry land and ev'ry tongue;  
 This to Thy praise, O Lord be sung. Hallelujah!

## WHO IS WORTHY TO APPROACH THE LORD'S TABLE, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MATTHEW 5:23, 24?

Published by Request of the Nebraska District  
 Pastoral Conference

(Note: Some of our readers but recently voiced their disapproval of articles continued from one number of the paper to another. In deference to such we print the following in its entirety. G.)

The above theme was suggested by a practical case. The question arose whether a member could prevent his pastor or a fellow-member from partaking of the Lord's Supper by simply protesting against it, even if there were no ground for the protest. It was felt that a study of this question would be of profit and value. Hence this paper. The theme assigned is: "Who Is Worthy to Approach the Lord's Table, with Special Reference to Matthew 5:23, 24?" I take it that the intention was not that the question of the worthiness or unworthiness of the communicant should be thoroughly treated from every angle, but primarily, if not exclusively, from the angle of the passage in Matthew. The Schwan Catechism states that the Lord's Supper should be denied to those who have given offence and have not yet made amends, and lists our passage as proof text.

In my opinion the danger of partaking unworthily of the Lord's Supper has often been overemphasized at the cost of the great spiritual blessings which await the communicant. There seems to be among some members a great terror of the Lord's Supper and a dread of partaking of it, which may account in part for the low number of those who regularly commune. Many seem to see only lightnings of God's wrath flashing over the Lord's Table instead of seeing the merciful Savior standing behind it with outstretched arms and saying: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Many think so much of the judgment or damnation which there befalls the unworthy communicant that they do not appreciate, as they should, the precious gifts of grace: the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation which the Savior with His body and blood wants to bestow upon the sinner. In its essence the Lord's Supper is nothing but Gospel, the sweetest and most comforting Gospel at the disposal of the sinner. There the communicant receives Christ's own body and blood, the same body which Christ gave into death and the same blood which He shed for sinners, as the pledge, token, and guarantee to each communicant personally and individually that Christ died and shed His blood for **him**, that **his** sins are canceled, and that **his** status as a dearly beloved child of God is assured. In short, the Lord's Supper is Gospel pure and simple, the Gospel in such gracious form that it is the delight of the most alarmed and troubled sinners. And since the

Lord's Supper is pure Gospel, the question of the worthiness of the communicant does not deserve the primary attention. The attention should be fixed on the gifts of grace which it offers. It is true that even the preaching of the Gospel is to some a savor of life, to others a savor of death. To some it spells salvation, to others damnation. To the unbeliever the Gospel, which offers nothing but grace and salvation, becomes a curse, but still we do not consider it necessary to add to every Gospel message the threat, "He that believeth not shall be damned." That, it seems to me, has its application also to the Lord's Supper. We must be careful not to make Law of that which is Gospel.

That is something against which Luther warns. To him the Lord's Supper was sweet Gospel, and he took a great deal of pains to draw attention away from speculations about the sinner's worthiness or unworthiness to the precious gifts of grace in the Lord's Supper. A few quotations from Luther (Large Catechism): "But if you say: How if I feel that I am not prepared? Answer: That is also my scruple, especially from the old way under the Pope, in which a person tortured himself to be so perfectly pure that God could not find the least blemish in us. On this account we became so timid that every one was instantly thrown into consternation and said to himself: Alas! you are unworthy! For then nature and reason begin to reckon our unworthiness in comparison with the great and gracious good; and then it appears like a dark lantern in contrast with the bright sun, or as filth in comparison with precious stones. Because nature and reason see this, they refuse to approach and tarry until they are prepared, so long that one week trails another, and one half year the other. But if you are to regard how good and pure you are, and labor to have no compunction, you must never approach." — "Therefore such people must learn that it is the highest art to know that our Sacrament does not depend on our worthiness. For we are not baptized because we are worthy and holy, nor do we go to confession because we are pure and without sin, but the contrary, because we are unworthy." — "We must never regard the Sacrament as something injurious from which we had better flee, but as a pure, wholesome, comforting remedy imparting salvation and comfort, which will cure you and give you life both in soul and body. — Why, then, is it that we act as if it were a poison, the eating of which would bring death?" In the foregoing quotation Luther tells us that if we want to wait until we are worthy before partaking of the Lord's Supper, then we shall have to wait forever and never partake of it. He urges us to stop thinking about our own worthiness and unworthiness and to think about the gifts of grace therein offered. We are not to shrink back from the Lord's

Supper as from a deadly poison, but are to look upon it as a precious, wholesome medicine which will heal us in body and soul. In short, the Lord's Supper is Gospel, sweet, comforting Gospel, nothing else.

And because the Lord's Supper is nothing but Gospel, therefore nothing but unbelief can deprive us of its blessings, just as the hearer through unbelief deprives himself of the blessings of the preached Gospel. There is such a thing as an unworthy hearer as well as an unworthy communicant. The apostle once said to the Jews who rejected his Gospel message, "Seeing ye put the Word of God from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life." He pronounced them unworthy hearers because of unbelief, and their damnation was just as great as that of the unworthy communicant. None has ever given a better definition of the worthy and unworthy communicant than Luther, with his gift of getting down to bedrock, does in the words of the Small Catechism: "He is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words, Given and shed for you for the remission of sins. But he that does not believe these words or doubts is unworthy and unprepared, for the words, For you, require all hearts to believe." The Formula of Concord expresses the same thought as follows: "We believe, teach, and confess also that there is **only one kind of unworthy guests, namely, those who do not believe**, concerning whom it is written John 3:18: He that believeth not is condemned already. And this judgment becomes greater and more grievous, being aggravated by the unworthy use of the Holy Supper, 1 Cor. 11:29. We believe, teach, and confess that no true believer, as long as he retains living faith, however weak he may be, receives the Holy Supper to his judgment, which was instituted especially for Christians weak in faith, yet penitent, for the consolation and strengthening of their weak faith (Matt. 9:12; 11:5, 28). We believe, teach, and confess that **all the worthiness of the guests of this heavenly feast is and consists in the most holy obedience and perfect merit of Christ alone**, which we appropriate to ourselves by true faith, and whereof (of the application of this merit) we are assured by the Sacrament, and not at all in our own virtues or inward and outward preparations." Faith makes the worthy communicant, not because it is a meritorious work in itself but because it lays hold on and appropriates the precious fruits of Christ's work of redemption. Similarly unbelief makes the unworthy communicant because it spurns and rejects the blessings of Christ offered in the Lord's Supper. Therefore we must not seek unworthiness of the communicant in some particular sin, for particular sins have a bearing on the matter only as symptoms of the root disease of unbelief. To quote Luther once more: "As St. Hilary also has said: **If any one have not committed sin for which he can rightly be**

put out of the congregation and esteemed as no Christian, he ought not stay away from the Sacrament, lest he deprive himself of life. For no one will make such progress that he will not retain many daily infirmities in flesh and blood."

If we analyze the passage (Matthew 5: 23, 24), we find that, though it has its application to partaking of the Lord's Supper, this application is only incidental. In the words themselves there is no direct reference whatever to the Lord's Supper. The passage can be applied with equal force and propriety to church-going, to the hearing of God's Word, to prayer, whether public or private, to mission work, giving, or any other religious performance. Jesus says, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar; and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." The picture is that of a Jew who has come to the temple to offer a sacrifice. He has entered the confines of the temple with the sacrificial animal or some other offering, and is about to turn it over to the priest that it may be offered for him to God. Such an offering is pleasing to God. In fact, God has commanded it and required it of him as a part of his religious worship. And still God spurns this particular gift or offering. He does not want it. He will not accept it. Why? Because this particular Jew as a more important duty to perform. Something makes him unfit to perform his religious duty in the temple. And what is that? His brother has ought against him. That thought just flashes into his mind as he is about to offer his sacrifice. What should he do? Go ahead with the offering? Jesus says not. It is far more important that he first go to his brother and be reconciled to him. That is so important that he should let his gift lie there unoffered until he has first attended to the matter between him and his brother. The words of Jesus leave no doubt that the offering is unacceptable to God as long as he has not gone to the brother who hath ought against him.

As already indicated, this has its application today to all our religious performances: church-going, prayer, or what it may be. But we are in this paper concerned with its application to the Lord's Supper. God does not want us to come to the Lord's Table as long as a brother hath ought against us and as long as we have not gone to that brother. The Lord says, as it were, to such a one: You stay away from my Table. You have no business here now. You have something more important to do, something that I desire far more. Go to thy brother who hath ought against thee and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come to my Table. Then I will welcome you, and then you will derive a blessing from it.

In this connection it is well to take note of the fact

that very often this admonition is heeded only in part. Its negative side is observed, but its positive side is disregarded. It frequently happens that a church-member says: I am living in enmity with a fellow-member. There is something between us that has not yet been settled. Therefore I can not partake of the Lord's Supper. And yet he makes no move to go and be reconciled to his brother. It may even happen that a pastor says to one desiring to register for communion, of whom he knows that he is living in enmity with a fellow-member: You had better not take the Lord's Supper for the present. And the result is that such a member does not commune for months and even years. That advice is all right as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. The advice not to commune or even the refusal to admit such a one to communion ought to be accompanied by the admonition, given in no uncertain terms: Don't delay. Get the matter straightened out. Go to him at once. One who takes only this much out of the words of Jesus that he stays away from the Lord's Table but continues unreconciled with his brother is cutting the most vital part out of the admonition of Jesus. The Lord does not say, Leave thy gift before the altar, and I will be satisfied. No, the emphasis is on, Go thy way, be reconciled to thy brother. It is the importance of this that is often overlooked.

The question naturally arises: When is that necessary? When is the situation such that I must leave my gift before the altar, or, to paraphrase it for our present purpose, when must I pass up the Lord's Supper, in order to go first to my brother and be reconciled to him? Jesus answers, If thy brother hath ought against thee. Ought means as much as something. If thy brother hath something against thee. What that ought or something might be is indicated in the words which immediately precede. Jesus says there, "I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment, and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council, but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Immediately upon this follows the passage which is engaging our attention. If a brother has a Raca or a Thou Fool or any other slurring or insulting remark against us, then it behooves us to ask his pardon before approaching the Lord's Table. Similarly — if our brother has any insult or injury against us, if we have slandered or defamed him, if we have cheated or taken unfair advantage of him, if we have lied to him or about him, if we have cursed him or sworn at him, in short, if we have wronged him in any way, God will not look with favor upon any of our religious performances, including the coming to communion, until we have gone to the brother whom we have wronged, confessed our sin to him, and begged his

pardon and forgiveness. And again let us bear in mind that we are not meeting the wishes of God and gaining his favor by simply staying away from communion, but that the chief emphasis is on the **positive** side: Go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. The obstacle should be cleared away immediately, without delay, so that the regular religious functions may be resumed at the earliest possible moment. It is not so much the leaving of the gift before the altar as the importance of a speedy reconciliation that Jesus stresses and desires to drive home to his hearers.

It remains to correlate what just has been said with the fundamental truth, stated earlier in this paper, that only unbelief makes the communicant unworthy to partake of the Lord's Supper. It is not sin that makes the communicant unworthy, but unbelief. Impenitence or irreconcilability does not harmonize with faith. It is a symptom of unbelief. There are people who think that they can be good church-members, good Christians and believers even though they feel no desire to ask forgiveness of a brother for the wrong which they have done him, yes, stubbornly refuse when they are admonished to do so. That is not true faith, but an imitation, a sham faith. Faith if it have no works is dead. By way of illustration let us take the 15th verse of the next chapter of Matthew, where Jesus says, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." We know from other statements of Jesus and the Bible that our sins are forgiven if only we believe: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. By grace ye are saved through faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Faith and faith alone saves. God for Jesus' sake forgives the sins of all who truly believe. When, therefore, Jesus says that God will not forgive those who do not forgive their fellow-man who has sinned against them, the only possible explanation is that unwillingness to forgive others shows a lack of true faith. It is an act of impenitence, and that is always unbelief. Just so refusal to go to a brother who hath ought against us to be reconciled with him is impenitence or unbelief. It shows that there is no true, living faith in the heart. That is why such a person is an unworthy communicant.

One more question arises. Jesus says, If thy brother hath OUGHT, SOMETHING against thee, leave there thy gift, etc. Suppose he has nothing properly against me, only thinks he has, or says he has. Suppose it is only a trumped-up charge, or that his charge is based on incomplete evidence or misinformation. What then? Must I leave my gift before the altar and first go to him? In answer I shall quote a writer in the Theological Quarterly (April 1905): "Persons who are entangled in a quarrel must

be exhorted to comply with Matt. 5:23,24. Very frequently such persons claim that they are the party which has been sinned against and therefore this word of the Lord would not apply to them, but even when this is a fact they are, nevertheless, under obligation to **seek** reconciliation before communing. The innocent party becomes guilty if no attempt at reconciliation is made. The party that has done all in its power to bring about a reconciliation and has failed must be admitted to the Sacrament lest a penitent Christian be permanently deprived of the communion by the malice of an enemy."

I subscribe wholeheartedly to the above words. Even the innocent party in a quarrel must seek reconciliation and leave nothing undone toward that end. That is something which the Lord expects of every Christian. Immediately following our passage Jesus says, "Agree with thine adversary quickly while thou art in the way with him." The apostle writes, "As much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." The Christian has no more important religious duty to perform than to labor earnestly for a reconciliation with his enemy, regardless of whether he be the innocent or guilty party.

On the other hand, no member of the congregation should be allowed to get away with a so-called dog-in-the-manger policy in that he tries to keep a fellow-member from communion by rejecting all efforts on the part of the other to effect a reconciliation. If a Christian has exhausted all efforts in that direction, if all his attempts to bring about a reconciliation have met with rebuffs and failure, then let him come and offer his gift, then let him come in God's name and partake of the body and blood of his Savior as the pledge and token of the forgiveness of his sins.

The Lord's Supper is pure, sweet Gospel, and we should beware of making it Law. It is not to frighten the sinner but to attract and comfort him. Only unbelief makes one unworthy to approach the Lord's Table, but irreconcilability is in fact a symptom of unbelief. God places being reconciled to a brother ahead of all religious performances, routine or otherwise. May God give us all the spirit of love, mercy, and long-suffering so that our fellowship may not be marred by quarrel, squabbles, and enmities but that we may all walk together hand in hand to our common eternal goal in heaven.

I. P. F.

## THE IDEAL CONGREGATION IN THE LIGHT OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

(Continued)

### VIII. The Ideal Congregation Properly Provides for the Education and Training of Its Children

Here is a subject that demands and deserves more than a little consideration, because it concerns the eternal destiny of our children's immortal souls. The



subject of education is causing widespread concern and discussion at the present time. Prominent educators have weighed our national system of public education and found it wanting. They have come to the conclusion that a vital element is lacking in this system: Religion. But they are at loss to supply this want. They know that the religious element dare not be injected into our educational system because of the numerous faiths and creeds, and lack of them, existing in our population. They are aware that to inject this element into public education would be a violation of a fundamental article of our Constitution. As a result, they are confronted by an insurmountable obstacle to true education. They have experienced, and frankly admitted, that public education in our country is a sorry failure, a pathetic fiasco. And they should know whereof they speak. What a blessing, then, that God has appointed to us the only true education, the Christian! How deep seated our appreciation of, and gratitude for, this inestimably gracious gift ought to be!

Christian education is not education in the sense that the world understands it. The world has very distorted notions and hazy conceptions of education. The people of this world imagine that they have educated and trained their children, if they have provided them with food, clothing, and shelter, and have had them instructed in the things that enable them to make a living. And that is all. But what are the results of such an education? Look about you for the answer: Godlessness, lawlessness, juvenile crime. This is the inevitable result of an education that makes people worldly-wise, but not wise unto salvation. Of such mis-education our land is a glaring example.

Ours is a land that boasts of exceptional enlightenment. Wisdom is King and rules with his consort, the Goddess of Reason. But while men have progressed by leaps and bounds in their mental life, they have sunk to a woful and alarming degeneracy in their spiritual life. We are rearing a generation of mental giants, but spiritual idiots. It is a generation that scornfully asks with Pilate: "What is truth?" It is a generation that has drunk deep at the leaky cisterns of worldly wisdom, but neglects and rejects the water of life in the wells of salvation. The children have their heads crammed full of an enormous amount of worldly wisdom. The most of them already know more than their parents. But how many of them know and heed the Ten Commandments? We have Father's Day and Mother's Day; we have Mother-Daughter and Father-Son weeks; but how many children pay any attention to the Fourth Commandment? Was youth ever so frivolous and disobedient? Was there ever so little respect for parents and superiors? Is it not true, that father and mother have become little more than biological terms?

Most of the children can tell you all the names of the movie stars, but how many know the names of the prophets and apostles, or anything about them? They are familiar with all sorts of scandal, but terribly ignorant of the Savior. They know all about the eternal triangle, but woefully little about the eternal Trinity. They are well-versed in sex, but pathetically ignorant of salvation. They are smart; but, you know, that word "smart" never did have a good meaning. Their minds are overfed, their souls starved. Too much attention is devoted to their heads, too little to their hearts. They are trained to make a living, but not a life. Their mental proficiency is prodigious, their spiritual deficiency tremendous. As a result, the sins against the Fifth and Sixth Commandments are fearful to behold. Parents, educators, judges, are overwhelmed by an appalling catalog of juvenile vice and crime. Our national system of education has failed, failed miserably. It has developed a generation that snaps its fingers at divine and civil laws, thus hindering and undermining the welfare of the family, the Church, and the state.

Why is this so? It is so because they forget, or are ignorant of the declaration of God in the Scriptures: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." They forget that the will is the controlling and directive power of all their faculties. And this will is sinful. Now, they have developed the body and the mind, but neglected the will. The result is, that the child has a highly developed body and mind which, however, is controlled by a sinful will. The only thing that can bend, change, and develop the will is God's Word; but this is missing in public education. For that reason public education appeals to self, to pride, to ambition to a desire for applause and reward. That's why we have so much selfishness, greed, and disregard for the rights of others, and so little respect for all constituted authority.

Worldly education has not the right end in view. It has concern only for the temporal welfare of the child. Its aim is to train children to use their heads and hands to make a living, to acquire great knowledge, high honors, exalted positions, abundant wealth. Further than this its concerns do not go. This is not the aim of Christian parents in the education of their children. Their children have been made children of God through Holy Baptism, and they want them to remain such unto the end. But they know that Baptism alone will not accomplish this in them. Jesus says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Faith is necessary to salvation. "He that believeth not shall be damned." FAITH — SALVATION — this is the only correct aim in the education of children.

Children are sinners, no less than others. Can worldly wisdom, science, or civilization regenerate

sinner, create faith, and grant a blessed end? Has science or philosophy any remedy for human ills? Have progress and civilization, discovery and invention, helped men's consciences? Is it easier to die because we are more civilized? Is youth more inclined to morality because of today's high "culture"? Is there anything human that can change children's hearts and lives? No; God's Word alone can accomplish this. But if children are not placed under the cleansing, saving influence of this Word, how can we expect them to be saved? If the child is afflicted with a serious bodily ailment from birth, will parents delay securing medical advice and aid until it is too late? The child's soul is afflicted with a dreadful and deadly disease: SIN! And there is only one remedy that can effect a cure: GOD'S WORD! Can parents deny their children this priceless heaven-born remedy? Is not the soul more than the body?

Mindful of these facts a Christian congregation sees to it that its children are educated and trained according to, in, and with, the Word of God. Christian parents know that the true aim in the education of their children is to preserve them in true Christianity; to combat evil and nourish a life of faith; to tear down the wrong and build up the right; to save eternally. They are more concerned about their children's eternal welfare than their temporal well-being. They educate not only for this life, but for that vast eternity. Therefore, they see to it, above all else, that their children are made wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

And they know that the duty of educating and training children is primarily that of the parents. They know that children are an heritage of the Lord, and their first concern is for their children. They know that they are not only to provide food, clothing, and shelter for their children, but first and chiefly, to be concerned about the eternal welfare of their undying souls. They know that children are a trust from God, that responsibility for their temporal and eternal well-being rests with the parents, that upon them devolves the sacred duty of instructing them in the Word of God, directing them to the Savior, and teaching them to lead God-fearing lives. Mindful of the admonition of Moses, the Word of God will be in their own hearts, and they will teach it diligently to their children, and talk of it to them and with them, when they are in the house, or out of doors, when they go to bed and when they rise in the morning. And their children will call them blessed!

And when the time comes for the children to attend school, it will not have to be just any school, for there will have been provided for them with a Christian school, supported by a congregation's prayers and offerings. Christians know that the only way in which they can educate their children in true Chris-

tianity is to govern their entire secular education by religious instruction. They know that the Sunday school is not enough with its half-hour of religious instruction once a week. When Jesus said: "Feed My lambs," He did not mean, "Underfeed them by giving them a Bible lesson once a week"; but He meant what He said, "Feed them, i. e., let the Word of God be their daily food and nourishment." A shepherd feeds his flock every day. Christian congregations will not do less for the souls of their children. They know that improper cooking and irregular eating ruin the body, and that by the same token, an improperly and irregularly nourished soul cannot thrive and grow. Therefore, they see to it that their children receive daily and competent instruction in the Word of God in their own Christian day-school, where their whole education and training is permeated with and governed by the Holy Word of God and His Spirit.

It do not claim that the Christian day-school is the only possible medium for the education and training of children in true godliness; but I do believe and maintain that, so far, it has been the best and most satisfactory, and that is the best argument for its existence and the highest reason for our prayers for its preservation among us.

"O blest the parents who give heed  
Unto their children's foremost need,  
And weary not of care or cost:  
To them and heaven shall none be lost!"

K. F. K.

(To be continued)

#### OTHER SCHOOLS — ARE THEY BETTER THAN OURS?

To build and to maintain Christian schools requires persistent effort. It makes almost unlimited demands on our patience and our faith. We meet opposition from within and from without our own circles. Although these schools have some staunch supporters, they are but few in comparison with the number of those who are indifferent or absolutely antagonistic. If we wish to preserve these schools which we by the grace of God have succeeded in establishing, we must wage a never-ending campaign in their behalf. To remain silent and to let the movement for such schools ride along only on the momentum that it has already attained, will mean that eventually we shall find ourselves without them entirely. Eternal vigilance and activity are imperative and indispensable for a continuance of that educational plan and system which have been reared among us at the price of so much love and sacrifice.

The most essential and necessary, the most salutary and certain way of going about this is, of course, that we continue to preach and teach the fundamental

truths of Scripture — sin and grace; that we help to make people ever more conscious of this that they must first of all seek the kingdom of God, that the soul is more precious than the flesh, that this soul which has been redeemed by God through the death and resurrection of His son, Jesus Christ, is constantly in need of nourishment from on high if it is not to be lost again, and that this holds good for the soul of the child as well as for the soul of the adult. Without ceasing, we must continue to remind people that they as fathers and mothers are by God held responsible for the spiritual food of their children, and that this responsibility can best be exercised by their children's being continuously under the influence of the Word of God. We must never let up in testifying that there is no way in which one can become god-like and pleasing to God except by the Holy Spirit, who exerts His power through the Scriptures, and that every effort to train and educate the child without this power of the Holy Spirit is most decidedly dangerous and, sometimes, even fatal. In short, the future of our schools depends upon our conscientious and faithful administration of the Word which our Heavenly Father has placed at our disposal, because Christian schools are a product of the Holy Spirit. Without His divine inspiration they can not come into being; neither can they endure without it.

Only after this foundation has been laid and maintained is it fair to advance other arguments and inducements for our kind of schools. Only then are people able to judge and evaluate them properly. It is with some of these other arguments that we shall concern ourselves now.

When we speak of other schools, the charge is frequently brought that we are unfair in our criticism, that we do not know whereof we speak. Very often, too, we must admit that such charges are not made without at least some foundation. Many of us have heard statements regarding other schools, and immediately certain doubts entered our minds. When some one says, for instance, that people ought not to send their children to such schools because they do not learn anything there, he is laying himself open to a well-earned rebuke. They do learn something there. Whether or not that which they learn is right or wrong, entirely wholesome and desirable, that is a different story. In order, therefore, to avoid all possibility of being charged with prejudice or undue ignorance, let us draw this comparison between other schools and our schools by letting the leaders and promoters of those other schools speak for themselves. Let us consider their exact words about the aims of their schools, and how they hope to attain them. Let us also weigh their own opinion as to how well they have succeeded, and how they propose to go on in the future. Thus we shall be able to judge them im-

partially and realize at the same time that they are practically condemning themselves, that they are still striving for that goal and ideal which we, in our schools, at least have a possibility of attaining.

#### Is Knowledge the Chief Aim of Education?

People quite often tell us that they are sending their children to other schools because they learn more there; they have teachers with a better education; their methods are more advanced, and the like. This in itself, even if true, is not a very serious charge against our schools, provided we are not inexcusably far in arrears. So long as a child does not intend to pursue a profession in which mathematics are an important factor, what harm is there done by his knowing a little more or a little less arithmetic? The sooner we get away from the idea of a little more or a little less knowledge of this or that, the better it will be. Knowledge is not the primary aim of education, and any school that has only knowledge to offer is not offering education. We have maintained that for years, but our word has been doubted. Let us hear what the others say. Do they differ with us in this essential principle? Perhaps their opinion will carry more weight. Let us hear Charles Wm. Eliot, president of Harvard, 1869-1906. In his "The Function of Education in Democratic Society" we read: "Too many of us think of education for the people as if it meant only learning to read, write, and cipher. Now, reading, writing, and simple ciphering are merely the tools by the diligent use of which a rational education is to be obtained through years of well-directed labor. They are not ends in themselves, but means to the great end of enjoying a rational existence." After enlarging on this, he concludes his paragraph: "Reading, writing, and arithmetic, then, are not the goal of popular education."

Abbot Lawrence Lowell, speaking to the chamber of commerce of the State of New York, said, "The real thing we want is not more knowledge, but more resourcefulness." This man was Eliot's successor at Harvard.

So as not to give the impression that these men at Harvard stand alone with their opinion, let us turn to another university president, Arthur T. Hadley, president of Yale, 1899-1920. In his "What Ought We to Expect of Our Higher Schools," Hadley has this to say: "We assume that pupils are sent to schools to get knowledge, and that therefore the course which undertakes to give them the most knowledge, of kinds that they can enjoy and remember, is the one that serves its purpose best. This is an error. . . . The mind is not primarily a storehouse of knowledge; it is a means of getting and using knowledge. The best educated man is not the one who knows most, but the one who knows how to acquire the in-

formation he needs, to present the results of that information to others, to set the proper value upon them, and to forget the information after he has done with it. The storehouses of learning are found in encyclopedias, not in the human mind." A little later he adds, "The man who makes learning the object of education is a bookworm. It can not be repeated too often that it is more important to know how to study than to have studied any specific set of facts or principles. The acquiring of habits and powers is far more important than the storing up of information. In developing these habits and powers the boy or girl incidentally acquires a great deal of information and stores up some of it. . . . But the value of the information so obtained is relatively slight in comparison with the importance of developing minds as instruments which can be trusted to study things hard and state them clearly and let them drop out of sight when they are no longer needed."

In "Better Schools," a book published in 1928 by the John Day Company, New York, edited by Washburne and Stearns, Stanford University men, one of whom later became a superintendent of public schools in Illinois, we read remarks like these: "Wherever you look, you find that to most people the teaching of reading, writing, and arithmetic, with some of the facts of history and geography, is still the main job of the school." "Everywhere the emphasis is on the acquisition of facts — facts and still more facts. . . . Hardly any effort to correlate knowledge and life. . . . The accumulation of a carefully selected cargo of facts: Alexander the Great conquered the world; Albany is the capital of New York; m-a-n-e-u-v-e-r spells maneuver, etc."

We could quote statements like these for hours. The men in other schools are unanimous on this point. We too have taken that stand. A certain amount of facts must be acquired, of course, and it will be acquired in any school that is conducted even with only moderate efficiency. If one can read and write and has mastered the fundamental operations of arithmetic, and Charles Eliot says that the average child will have arrived at this stage at the age of nine, he will have the necessary tools to gather whatever facts he may be in need of, and certainly from that time on, if not already before, schools must direct their chief efforts to something besides this idea of still more knowledge.

From what has been said it is evident that people who send their children to other schools simply because they feel that their children will learn more there must needs be enlightened. Those other schools denounce and deplore that attitude just as much and just as emphatically as we do. They have something entirely different in view. They consider their work a failure if they succeed in graduating only walking

encyclopedias, and so do we. At the same time these statements from educators prominent in other schools ought to serve as serious warning, as a danger signal, since they already imply that their interest and aims go away beyond this. They want to take that child and make him subject to influences that do not conform to the idea with which that child is sent there. That fact we must stress, and if we do, certainly, Christian parents will be persuaded at least to be careful. Then those fine buildings, those highly efficient teachers will lose some of their attractiveness. Perhaps, when people realize that there is more to this business of education than merely being filled up with facts, they will be more willing to hear our story to the end.

(To be continued)

### THE VENTURE OF FATHER SMILEY

By Wouter van Garrett in "The Lutheran Standard"

It was in the last quarter of the eighteenth century that Joseph Smith ventured across the Allegheny Mountains, as the first missionary. He settled in Washington County in western Pennsylvania; and served the early settlers along Cross Creek and Upper Buffalo, until his death. His work was a service of devotion, but his career as a Pastor would probably have been short had it not been for one of his deacons, a man commonly known as "Father Smiley."

The people whom Rev. Smith came to serve had long wanted a pastor. Pioneer life, however, was full of hardship; and it was a question whether or not the people could contribute enough to support a pastor.

With a great deal of faith the people among whom he had come decided to attempt it. It was arranged that the pastor should buy a small farm on credit. Whatever salary the parishioners could afford to pay should be applied on the cost of the farm. Rev. Smith was to cultivate the soil to secure a living for himself and his family. The arrangements were agreeable to all concerned and the pastor entered into his work with high hopes.

In the course of a few years, however, the people were faced with crop failures. As a result they were able to pay little or nothing to the support of their pastor. And because the pastor received no money from his parishioners, there could be no payments on the farm. In fact, there was very little money in circulation among the settlers. There was plenty of wheat, but no market for it. Salt had to be brought across the mountains on pack horses, and it sold for eight dollars a bushel.

The creditor from whom the farm had been bought became impatient; he was in great need of his money. Finally he insisted that Rev. Smith either pay for the farm or else turn it back. The people loved Rev.

Smith and they were anxious to do something to remedy the situation; but what could they do? They simply had no money and they could borrow none.

One plan after another was suggested, but all seemed hopeless. Finally, it was suggested that the members subscribe wheat. The suggestion was received with enthusiasm; everybody had wheat. Hundreds of bushels were donated, and brought to the church. And as fast as it was brought to the church, it was taken to grist mills to be ground into flour. Some was taken as far as thirty miles to a mill.

And then the flour began to come back. It was stacked in the little church until it filled almost half of the building. Then a congregational meeting was called. After the opening prayer, the question on everybody's lips was, "Who will run the flour to New Orleans for sale?"

There was a painful pause when the question was asked. There were men in that audience who had made the trip, and they shuddered at the mere thought of the hardships and dangers involved. It was a perilous undertaking and the bravest men hesitated at the thought. More than one boat had gone on that journey, never to return. So there was silence when the question was put.

The question was asked again and again. Something had to be done with the flour, or else all the effort was in vain. But no volunteers responded.

There seemed nothing to do but adjourn the meeting, and go home. The plan had been a failure!

The pastor and his family would lose their home, and they would have to go elsewhere to eke out a living. No one liked to think of the prospect of a community without a church or a pastor. Once more the question was asked:

"Who will run the flour to New Orleans?"

"Here am I, send me!"

It was old Father Smiley, the friendly elder whom everyone loved. He was gray-haired and stoop-shouldered with age; but his eyes blazed with enthusiasm as he shouted again:

"Here am I, send me!"

His enthusiastic response to the need of the hour put new life into that congregation. A middle-aged man, Luke Latimer, rose to his feet and volunteered to go with Father Smiley. Then a young man near the rear of the room offered his services. The people took new courage, and decided to begin preparations at once. A large flat-bottomed boat had to be built to carry the flour.

Men and boys started for the woods to cut the lumber. In several days actual construction was under way; in several weeks the boat was finished. The flour was hauled down to the river and loaded on the boat. Father Smiley and his two companions were ready for the journey.

It was fifteen miles from the little church to the river. The entire congregation gathered in the church to hold a prayer service. After which young and old accompanied the trio down to the river, to bid them farewell.

As the boat was shoved away from the shore, the people who stood on the shore raised their voices and sang that old familiar Psalm, in the old Scotch version:

"The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want  
He makes me down to lie  
In pastures green; He leadeth me  
The quiet waters by.  
Yea, though I walk in Death's dark vale,  
Yet will I fear no ill,  
For Thou art with me, and Thy rod  
And staff me comfort still."

"Good bye! God bless you!" they shouted as the boat floated away on the waters of the Monongahela. The people stood on the shore, as if transfixed, until the boat was lost behind a bend in the river. Few of them ever expected to see Father Smiley and his companions again.

Month after month passed, and no word from Father Smiley. Four months! Six months! Nine months, and no word! Even the most hopeful had given up hope by now; the men would never return.

It was on a Sunday morning, almost ten months since the men had left on their perilous journey. The people were gathered in the church, and the service had begun. The pastor had just announced the old familiar Psalm, "The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want," when Father Smiley walked into the church, and with him came his two companions. Father Smiley walked up in front and took his regular seat, just in front of the pulpit, where the elders always sat.

Tears crept into the worshippers' eyes, hearts leaped for joy, and grateful spirits went to God in gratitude for His watchful care. Never did that congregation sing the old Psalm as it did that morning. Now it had a deeper meaning for them than ever before.

At the close of the service Father Smiley made his report. He had brought back with him enough money, in gold coin, to pay the three years' back salary that was due the Rev. Smith, and one year in advance. There was enough money left over to reward Father Smiley with three hundred dollars, and to pay the two men who had gone with him.

The pastor's little farm was paid, thanks to Father Smiley and his companions. And he lived there and ministered to those people until he died. Today Rev. Smith lies buried in the old churchyard at Upper Buffalo, and nearby lie the remains of Father Smiley.

That first missionary into Washington County did

a great work. His life was filled with hardships, and with devoted effort. His parish was large and his people scattered, but he began a work that has been bearing fruit through the years. But his work could have meant little had it not been for Father Smiley, and men and women like him, who gave themselves in an effort to plant the church.

### COVERING THE COST

After receiving shameful treatment at Philippi Paul and Silas did not quit mission work but became more bold going to Thessalonica.

It is the will of God that Christians are active in mission work.

But mission work is expensive.

Who paid the expenses of Paul and his assistants?

2 Thess. 3:8 Paul writes: Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you.

At Thessalonica Paul paid room rent for himself and Silas to Jason with whom they lodged, paid all the bills promptly (not to be chargeable to anyone). And high prices prevailed at the time.

At other places, Paul also dealt not according to the principle I O U.

Who paid the expenses? Partly Paul by his own labors, being an expert at tent weaving.

But the income was not sufficient to cover all disbursements.

Who came to the rescue?

The Christians at Philippi. Phil. 4:15: Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

There is no doubt, the faithful Lydia, the lady with the open eyes, the open ears, the open heart, the open hands, the open house, ever thought of the missionaries and persuaded others to be thoughtful of them.

Let us follow the example of Lydia, and the Philippians.

W. K. in Nain Messenger.

### † PASTOR RALPH GAMM †

On April 11 Rev. Ralph Gamm died quite suddenly on the train while en route to visit his father, who is seriously ill. Rev. Gamm was born in Watertown March 22, 1904, the son of Fred W. Gamm and his wife Hedwig nee Schimpf. At home and in St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran school he received a Christian training. Early in his youth he had resolved to serve his Lord in his vineyard. After his confirmation he attended Northwestern College, from which he graduated with honors in 1924, whereupon he entered our Seminary at Wauwatosa. After completing his theological

studies at our Seminary, he received a call from our congregation in Faulkton, S. D. Before leaving Watertown he was ordained by the undersigned. In August, 1927, he was installed in Faulkton, S. D., from where he also served Ipswich. For some time he also preached at Loylton, and whilst Tolstoy was vacant he took over the charge of Onaka for a year. He preached every Sunday at each station even when he was serving four charges. For the last two years he served Faulkton and Ipswich only. April 30, 1933, he married Miss Edna Wehler.

Though of delicate health, he showed great zeal in his missionary work and shunned no hardships in preaching the gospel of Christ. His great love for his Master was constantly urging him on. He was of modest and humble disposition, but nevertheless, whenever necessary, he bore testimony to the truth of God's Word. His zeal in his missionary labor exceeded his strength. Last December signs of lung-trouble became evident, and soon after that an attack of pleurisy supervened. When according to the doctor recovery was impossible, his heart yearned to visit his sick father at Watertown once more. On this journey the Lord called him from his successful missionary labor to his heavenly home. The funeral obsequies took place in Watertown April 15, very many friends and relatives attending. The undersigned, who baptized, confirmed and ordained the deceased brother, preached the funeral sermon on 1 Cor. 15:10: "His grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain." He had reached the age of thirty years and nineteen days. He is survived by his widow, his parents in Watertown, four brothers, Theodore and Frederick in Watertown, Eldor in Ft. Worth, Texas, Edgar, pastor at Moberge, S. D., three sisters, Mrs. Martha Brataas, in Minneapolis, Mrs. Walda Winter at Lebanon, Wisconsin, and Severa in Watertown. His body is now resting in the beautiful Oak Hill cemetery, awaiting the day of a joyful resurrection. May the good Lord, whom the departed brother served so zealously and faithfully, strengthen and console the bereaved family.

J. Klingmann.

### TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF INSTALLATION

On April 18 the congregations of Green Garden and Marquette, Michigan, celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of their pastor, the Rev. Wm. Roepke, in their midst. The undersigned preached at this occasion, basing his remarks on Psalm 89:1: "I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever." It is grace, that the congregations twenty-five years ago called a gospel-minister; it is grace, that he through all these years remained such. Pastor Th. Nickel, son-in-law of the celebrator, had charge of the litur-

gical services. Both congregations and their respective societies remembered their pastor with an appropriate gift.  
Theophil Hoffmann.

## FROM OUR CHURCH CIRCLES

### GENERAL SYNODICAL COMMITTEE

The General Synodical Committee will meet in St. John's School in Milwaukee, Wis., Tuesday, May 22, at 2:00 P. M., and continue in session until it has finished its work. The Committee on Assignment of Calls will meet at the Seminary in Thiensville on Friday, May 25, at 9:15 A. M.

#### Preliminary Meetings

1. The General Board of Missions, Republican House, Monday, May 21, until noon, Tuesday. First session, Monday, 10:00 A. M.
2. The Representatives of our Educational Institutions, assembly room of Grace Church, Tuesday, 9:00 A. M.
3. The Board of Trustees, St. John's School, Monday, 7:00 P. M.
4. The Conference of Presidents, St. John's School, Tuesday, 9:00 A. M.

#### Tentative Order of Business

Tuesday afternoon, Report on Educational Institutions.

Wednesday forenoon, Report on Missions.

Wednesday afternoon, Report of Board of Trustees, Michigan Plan, Ruedebusch Plan, Report on Rossin Plan, Rev. W. Meier, chairman.

#### Committee Reports

Status of English Secretary, Rev. W. Roepke, chairman, Tuesday evening.

Memorial — Advisory, Architectural and Financing Board, Pres. C. Buenger, chairman, Tuesday evening.

Representative of Missions and Institutions, Rev. A. Ackermann, chairman, Tuesday evening.

The boards of our institutions and the Board of Missions are requested to file their reports with the undersigned by May 14, in order to make it possible to print the syllabus in time for the first District meeting to be held in June.

John Brenner, President.

### NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT

The same will convene, God willing, from June 25 to 29, a. c., at Mount Olive Congregation at Appleton, Wis. (Pastor: Rev. R. Ziesemer).

Opening services will take place Monday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

The credentials of the delegates must have the signature of the chairman and secretary of their congregation, and should be handed to the District Secretary immediately after the opening service.

All Memorials to Synod should be sent to the President of the District, the Rev. E. Benj. Schlueter, by June 10.

G. E. Boettcher, Sec'y.

### SOUTHEAST WISCONSIN DISTRICT

The Southeast Wisconsin District convenes, D. v., June 25 to 29, 1934, at St. John's Church, West Bend, Wis., Rev. H. C. Klingbiel, pastor.

Opening service: Monday, 10 A. M.

Credentials of delegates to be submitted to the secretary after service.

Papers: Der wesentliche Unterschied zwischen Lutherum und Calvinismus, Prof. Aug. Zich; substitute, Prof. M. Lehninger; Christ in Genesis, Pastor A. Halboth.

Closing service with observance of Holy Communion, Thursday evening.

Kindly write early to the local pastor concerning lodging.

Reports and overtures, in both English and German, are to be in the hands of Rev. C. Buenger before June 15.

W. Keibel, Sec'y.

### NEBRASKA DISTRICT

The Nebraska District will meet in Zion Church, Mission, South Dakota, June 20 to 25 (Pastor H. Hackbarth).

Opening service at 10:30 A. M. The lay delegates are requested to hand their credentials to the secretary immediately following the opening service.

Essays: "Des Propheten Jesaias Vorstellung von dem Heil in dem verheissenen Messias," Prof. A. Schaller; "The Divine Call in Its Various Aspects," Pastor W. Holzhausen; "How May Christian Day Schools Be Fostered in our Circles?," Teacher A. Rauschke.

Attention is herewith called to the District resolution that teachers with temporary calls are also expected to attend the synodical sessions. Those coming by train will be met at Winner, provided the local pastor is notified in advance. The congregation offers free meals and lodging to all regular delegates, but requests early registration. Kindly bring both hymnals.  
Im. P. Frey, Sec'y.

### MICHIGAN DISTRICT

The Michigan District will convene, God willing, June 25 to 29, 1934, in Emanuel Church, Lansing, Mich. (F. M. Krauss and K. F. Krauss, pastors).

The opening service will be held Monday, June 25, at 7 P. M., followed by the opening session.

Lodging and breakfast will be furnished free; dinner and supper will be served at the church for 50c per day. Lunch will be served on the opening afternoon from 5 to 6 o'clock. Requests for quarters should be sent to the local pastors before June 10. Later requests cannot be considered.

The credentials of the lay delegates must be signed by the chairman and the secretary of their congregations, and should be handed to the District Secretary immediately after the opening service.

All memorials should be in the hands of the District President by June 10.  
Karl F. Krauss, Sec'y.

### WISCONSIN-CHIPPEWA RIVER VALLEY PASTORAL CONFERENCE

The Wisconsin-Chippewa River Valley Pastoral Conference will meet at Plum City, Pastor R. Hillemann, May 22 and 23. Sessions begin at 10 o'clock.

Papers will be read by the following: G. Neumann, Wm. Baumann, O. Hoffmann, R. Hillemann, E. E. Prenzlow, J. Henning, Jr., F. Senger, I. J. Habeck.

Confessional by J. Henning, Sr., J. Henning, Jr.

Sermon by F. Senger, E. Walther.

Timely announcements will be appreciated.

G. C. Marquardt, Sec'y.

### EASTERN PASTORAL CONFERENCE

The Eastern Pastoral Conference meets at Lannon, Wis. (Pastor Kneiske), on May 22 and 23, 1934. Both sessions begin at 9:30 A. M.

Sermon: G. Hoenecke — W. Keibel.

Rische and Hoenecke, Exegesis. All old papers will be read and discussed.

Announce intended absence.

H. Shiley, Sec'y.

### SOUTHERN WISCONSIN PASTORAL CONFERENCE

It has become necessary to postpone our conference from May 22 and 23, as previously announced, to Monday and Tuesday, May 28 and 29. It will be held at Morton Grove, Ill., with Pastor O. Heidtke, 8637 Fernald Ave.

Sermon: Rev. E. W. Hillmer (Matt. 18:1-14); Rev. E. Jaster (Matt. 21:33-46).

Confession address: Rev. J. Toepel (Rev. G. Thiele).

New essays: A. C. Bartz, "Duty and Responsibility of the Church to Provide for the General Recreation and Physical Needs of its Members and the Proper Supervision thereof"; M. F. Plass, "Exegetical Homiletical Treatise of Psalm 118:14-29."

Old essays: Diehl, Lehmann, Jaster, and Hillmer.

Remarks: Please announce to the local pastor whether you will be present or absent, stating also whether you need quarters.  
Edmund Sponholz, Sec'y.

### NEW ULM DELEGATE CONFERENCE

The New Ulm Delegate Conference meets at Lake Benton, Minn., P. W. Spaude, M. S. T. M. A., pastor, on Tuesday, June 12. Sessions are to begin at 9:15 A. M. sharp.

H. A. Scherf, Sec'y.

### SOUTHWEST PASTORAL CONFERENCE

The Southwest Pastoral Conference meets with Rev. Alb. Winter, at New Lisbon, Wis., Wednesday, May 23, at 9 A. M.

Papers: Reading of Sermon, G. Gerth, M. Glaeser; Augustant, Article 20, H. Reimer; Augustana, Article 21, A. Winter; Exegesis, 1 Cor. 12:4-11, M. Glaeser; Exegesis, 1 Cor. 12:12-31, A. Looock; Catechesis, Phil Lehman; Isagogic, Gospel of Mark, H. Pankow; Gospel of Luke, Art. Berg; Verlobung, C. W. Siegler; Pastoral Work, C. E. Berg; Round Table Discussion.

Sermons: Herman Pankow, H. Paustian.

G. Vater, Sec'y.

### CROW RIVER DELEGATE CONFERENCE

The Crow River Delegate Conference meets at Pelican Lake, Minn. (Pastor W. C. Nickels), June 5 to 6, the first session opening at 10 A. M.

Papers: The 400th Anniversary of the German Translation of the Bible, K. J. Plocher; Das Verhaeltnis zwischen Pastor und Lehrer, Erwin F. Bartsch; Die Logenfrage, E. Hempeck; When, How and Where to Practise Public Confession after Repentance, W. Haar; The Offices in the Church During the Various Periods of Church History, W. Sauer; Un-Lutheran Trends in Connection with Ministerial Acts, W. Voigt.

Preacher: M. Wehausen — W. Haar.

Confessional Address: W. Voigt — A. Leersen.

Please register early.

K. J. Plocher, Sec'y.

### DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE JUBILEE

June 16 to 18

Conditions compel us to ask our prospective guests to submit to a nominal charge for board and lodging.

Former students whose address does not appear in the Synod annual are asked to get in touch with us for further information. The Committee, per Edwin H. Sauer.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Rev. W. A. Wojahn, R. R. 1, Van Dyne, Wis.

Rev. H. Monhardt, Station D, R. 2, Box 1210, Milwaukee, Wis.

### MEMORIAL WREATHS

In memory of Mrs. Reuben Kluess, who died April 10, 1934, at the age of 29 years, the sum of \$5.00 was donated by the Ladies' Aid of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Greenville, Wis., for the Ev. Luth. Kinderfreund Society.

L. Kaspar.

In memory of Andrew A. Kragh of Hendricks, Minn., who died April 19, 1934, at the age of 74 years, the sum of \$4.10 was donated for Home Missions by his widow and a group of friends.

A. H. Birner.

For Rev. R. Gamm, Faulkton, So. Dak., died April 11, 1934, for Missions, from Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Toepel, Bangor, Wis.

Rev. E. R. Gamm.

### ITEMS OF INTEREST

#### "UNIVERSAL BIBLE SUNDAY"

It is interesting to note that the American Bible Society's plan for its "Universal Bible Sunday" of 1934 is to center upon Luther's Bible. The date is December 9. In calling attention to this date and its observance, a recent announcement of the Society says:

"Among the many noteworthy achievements of the celebrated German reformer, it is difficult to determine what was his greatest contribution to the development of Protestant

Christianity. Certainly, his scholarly translation of the Bible stands out as one of his great works. It is still largely used by all German-speaking people of whatever faith throughout the world as the popular translation and interpretation of the original, and it will probably continue to be used throughout the future. Because of its significance, it has seemed appropriate to the Society to commemorate it by issuing, for Bible Sunday, suitable material bearing directly upon the four hundredth anniversary of its publication."

The announcement tells of material to be issued and furnished free to pastors: an artistic poster, a sizeable brochure by an eminent Lutheran, "The Significance and Influence of Luther's Bible," a responsive reading for use by congregations. This material will be ready for distribution about November 1. It will be circulated in many languages.

This recognition of Luther's Bible is in line with the Bible Society's stressing of the Tyndale English Translation anniversary in its 1925 program.

—News Bulletin.

### WORLD'S LARGEST HYMNOLOGICAL COLLECTION

Dr. Carl Doving's hymnological collection, reputed to be the largest and most comprehensive in the world, has been moved from Chicago to the Luther College library at Decorah, Iowa, where it will be accessible to the public and available to hymnological scholars, especially. The collection consists of approximately 3,000 volumes, written in 320 different tongues, including all the European languages, and many of the African, Oriental, and South Sea Island dialects. It is a compilation of hymn books, separate hymns, and books about hymns.

Dr. Doving is one of the world's greatest living hymnologists; probably the best informed man in the world today on the subject of hymns and hymn books in foreign languages. He is a graduate of Luther College and until recently has served as Norwegian Lutheran city missionary of Chicago. He has retired from that position and will devote most of his time to further collecting and to studies and lectures on Hymnology.

### HASTY REPORTS DENIED

In early April many papers in the United States and Canada, as well as in other portions of the world, printed a dispatch from Germany to the effect that 600 pastors of the Lutheran portion of the Protestant Church in that land had taken steps toward joining the Roman Catholic Church as a means of freeing themselves from the restrictions of the Nazi Christian Church regulations. In our own land even the Federal Council Bulletin of April 13 carried an article with the headline, "SIX HUNDRED LUTHERAN PASTORS SEEK CATHOLIC FAITH."

Now there comes to this country the latest issue of the News Bulletin of the Evangelical Press Association of Germany, which carries the following "Correction":

"Part of the press in various countries has recently published reports of the imminent secession on a large scale of German Evangelical pastors and church members from the Evangelical to the Roman Catholic Church. The number of clergymen who wish to secede was generally given as 600 at first, but this figure was subsequently reduced to 400, and even to 12. In the meantime a number of daily papers (notably of the Scandinavian press) have dissociated themselves expressly from this sensational report. 'Le Temps' informed its readers on April 10 that 'nothing was known in Vatican circles about the staying of a considerable number of German Protestant clergymen in Rome in order to prepare for their own secession and for that of their parishioners.' The comments from the point of view of general and Church politics, of which there is no lack, are entirely devoid of foundation.

"Individual cases of secession to the Evangelical or the Catholic Church have always occurred and will continue to occur. It is, however, a completely mistaken idea to attach any great importance to the individual secession of persons, who were already more or less inclined to Catholicism at an earlier date and who now take the final step, or to connect these individual cases in any way with the course of events in the churches in Germany." —News Bulletin Special.