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

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Jahrgang 40

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Nummer 1

Über den Krieg als Heimsuchung Gottes.

Jeremia 5, 3: Herr, deine Augen sehen nach dem Glauben. Du schlägst sie, aber sie fühlen es nicht, usw.

Klagelieder: Wer darf denn sagen, daß solches geschehe ohne des Herrn Befehl, und daß weder Böses noch Gutes komme ohne des Herrn Befehl? — Kap. 3, 37. 38.

5. Mose 32, 3-6: Ich will den Namen des Herrn preisen. Gebt unserm Gott allein die Ehre; . . . dankest du also dem Herrn, deinem Gott, du toll und töricht Volk?

Die Predigt von den Heimsuchungen Gottes ist zu allen Zeiten der ungläubigen Welt ein Ärgernis gewesen; heute erscheint sie ihr dumm und lächerlich. Sie glaubt nicht an ein besonderes Eingreifen Gottes in die Welt. Es geht alles ganz natürlich zu. Es gibt kein Wunder; laßt die Dummen schwagen!

Aber auch innerhalb der heutigen christlichen Welt ist, wie unsere Brüder in California bei dem letzten Erdbeben in San Francisco wieder reichlich erfahren mußten, der Glaube an Gottes Heimsuchung stark verspottet worden. Auch Sektenprediger schämten sich der klaren Schrift und hielten es mit der „gebildeten“ spottenden Welt, als die dortigen Lutheraner zur Buße riefen. Letzteres hatten sie von Prof. Walther her festgehalten. Walther predigte Gottes Wort treu und ohne Scheu. Er hat seiner Epistelpostille noch eine während unseres Bürgerkrieges (1861-1865) öffentlich gehaltene erschütternde Bußtagspredigt über 1. Chronika 22 (21), 11-14 anhängen lassen, obwohl er als Demokrat in täglicher Gefahr stand, von etlichen seiner eigenen Glieder als Landesfeind denunziert und von der Regierung gefangen-gesetzt zu werden. Die Predigt hat auch viel zum Frieden unter seinen

damaligen Studenten beigetragen und wirkt noch heute bei vielen nach. Unsere amerikanische studierende, so ungestüm ins Englische drängende Jugend verbaut sich dadurch auch die volle Empfindung der seelischen Wucht des echt deutschen Ausdrucks „heimsuchen, Heimsuchung, Heimsuchung Gottes.“ Die englische Mißsprache hat in ihrer Bibel keinen angelsächsischen oder aus dem Deutschen überetzten Ausdruck — etwa „homeseeking“ — dafür, sondern greift statt dessen zu dem lateinischen „visit, visitation,“ ohne klar zu machen, daß sie überall, wo Luther den Ausdruck „heimsuchen“ gebraucht, eigentlich auf das e n e r g i c h lateinische visere, das energicum von videre zurückgreift. Das Wort „heimsuchen“ findet sich in Luthers Übersetzung der Bibel weit über 150mal. In dem frühesten heidnischen Griechentum kommt das Wort nicht vor, weil dies die Sache nicht kannte. Das griechische N. T. schließt sich am häufigsten mit dem Verbum episkeptein im Aktiv, Medium und Passiv und in dem Substantiv episkopeh dem N. T. an, wo es als in dem Volk der Offenbarung eigentlich zuhause ist. Dort heißt es als Zeitwort pagad = besichtigen, als Hauptwort p'quddah, Aufsichtsbehörde (der päpstliche Bischof). Im N. T. ist es ein Ausdruck von s o i n t e n s i v e r Kraft in der Welt- und Kirchenregierung Gottes, daß wir als von Gott gesetzte Diener der Kirche die gründliche Erkenntnis desselben, zum Beispiel für die Privatseelsorge, gar nicht entbehren können, ohne diese geistlich zu schädigen oder je länger je mehr verkommen zu lassen.

Um zunächst bei dem Ausdruck Luthers „heimsuchen“ zu bleiben, so ist derselbe ja ein Kompositum — eine Zusammensetzung des Verbums „suchen“ mit dem vorangesezten Adverb „heim“. Das „suchen“ ist an sich schon ein recht energischer Begriff, gewinnt aber durch das „heim“ eine besondere Energie, wird ein Suchen im Heim, d. i. im eigenen Zuhause des Gesuchten, also etwas ganz Besonderes. Es hat einen bestimmten Zweck. Der Pastor kommt als Seelsorger nicht so absichtslos oder gelegentlich in das Heim eines Gemeindegliedes. Er hat dort etwas sehr Wichtiges zu verrichten, hat dort etwas Besonderes zu lehren, zu ermahnen, zu strafen oder zu trösten. Wenn Gott uns heimsucht, so braucht er ja nicht erst anzuspannen, um uns zu besuchen. Er ist ja schon bei uns kraft seiner Allgegenwart. Aber er hat dir etwas besonders zu sagen, was kein anderer zu wissen braucht, wenn es nicht zugleich die Angehörigen im Hause angeht. Was er dir aber zu sagen hat, betrifft sich e r l i c h

dein geistliches Wohl, schließlich deiner Seelen Seligkeit, weil er dein guter, treuer Hirte ist, Joh. 10. — Das ist Gottes Heimführung in ihrer idealen Form. Sie ist wesentlich Predigt des geoffenbarten Worts, an dem oder den Einzelnen in der Gemeinde *a m t l i c h* auszurichten, die geistlich zurückgeblieben sind oder in besonderer geistlicher Gefahr stehen — Privatseelsorge. Er will dir ans Herz, dein geistiges Heim, an Herz und Gewissen.

Aber der barmherzige und allmächtige Gott hat noch tausend andere Mittel und Wege, den Menschen, Gläubigen und Ungläubigen, ans Herz zu kommen, sich von ihnen *f ü h l e n* und *e m p f i n d e n* zu lassen.

Um Grund zu legen: Gott hat uns Menschen seinen großen allgemeinen Rat über seinen Weltplan geoffenbart. Der hat drei große unerschütterliche Säulen: 1, Die *E r s c h a f f u n g* des Menschen zu seinem Ebenbilde mit der Freiheit zur Sünde; 2, Er hat zur Errettung seines Ebenbildes von den Folgen der Sünde seinen Sohn *J e s u m C h r i s t u m* in unser Fleisch gesandt, damit wir durch den Glauben an ihn ewig selig werden; 3, Er hat ein *J ü n g s t e s* Gericht verordnet, an welchem er die Frucht der Sendung seines Sohnes an den Tag bringen will. — Dieser große Plan hat manche Einzelheiten. Die praktische *S a u p t s a c h e* ist aber der *G l a u b e a n C h r i s t u m*; dazu kann aber der *g e f a l l e n e* Mensch nichts tun; so tut der Gott der Liebe *s e l b s t a l l e s a l l e i n* und gebraucht dazu die mit dem Heiligen Geist erfüllten *M i t t e l* des Worts und der Sakramente und stellt seine gesamte väterliche Weltregierung in den Dienst der Erreichung dieses einen großen Zwecks.

Dazu gehören auch die sogenannten Heimführungen Gottes an den Menschen. Geschehen diese an Christen um ihres Glaubens willen, so nennt die Schrift sie *d a s K r e u z* und erklärt es als etwas *N o t w e n d i g e s*, dessen sich kein Christ weigern darf, vgl. Stellen in Matth. 10, Mark. 8 und Luk. 9; 1. Petri 4, 16. Ist es aber ein unerwartetes Ereignis des natürlichen Lebens, sei es *e r f r e u l i c h e r* oder *b e t r ü b e n d e r* Art, so redet die Schrift von einer *H e i m f ü h r u n g* Gottes in öfteren geringen, aber auch in wichtigeren und in ganz großen Taten Gottes. So kommt das Wort „heimführen“ zuerst in Gen. 21, 1 vor, wo es von der unerwarteten Befruchtung der bis dahin verschlossenen Sarah redet. „Und der Herr *s u c h t e h e i m* Sarah.“ Die Verschlossenheit ist, so oft sie

vorkommt, ursprünglich ein Fluch der Ursünde des Weibes, das der Herr ja zur Vermehrung des menschlichen Geschlechts geschaffen und gesegnet hatte, Kap. 1, 27. 28. Daher nannte Adam sie *Sevach* (Eva) „darum, daß sie eine Mutter ist aller Lebendigen“, Kap. 3, 20. Nachdem sie aber die Übertretung eingeführt hatte (1. Tim. 2, 14), mußte sie zunächst mit großen Schmerzen Kinder (und die zum frühen oder späteren Tode) gebären und dem Manne unterworfen sein. Daher wird die *Verforschloffenheit* einer Ehefrau, am meisten von ihr selbst, heute noch als ein wesentlicher *Mangel* am irdischen Glück, als eine *Schmach* empfunden, die Gott in seinem Heilsrat auf etliche besondere Fälle beschränkt hat.

Sarah war, solange sie der Verheißung nicht glaubte, eine unzufriedene und von Neid geplagte Frau. Als der Herr sie mit Fruchtbarkeit noch über ihr Alter hinaus segnete, wurde sie eine *glückliche* und herrliche Kindermutter — nach der Verheißung in Ps. 68, 7. *Lea* war so glücklich unter ihrer großen Kinderschar, die schöne *Rahel* wurde aus Neid wütend gegen *Jakob*, weil sie nicht gebären konnte, Gen. 30, 1. Als aber der Herr sie fruchtbar machte, Vers 22, so daß sie den einen *Josef* gebar, pries sie Gott, daß er ihre Schmach von ihr genommen hatte. Ähnliche Beispiele von Heimsuchung verschlossener Weiber sind die Mutter *Samuels*, das Weib *Elkanas*, neben dessen jüngerem Weibe, der *Peninna*, die Söhne und Töchter hatte. Ihre Trauer war so tief, daß sie auch ihren Mann ansteckte. Auf ihr Herzensgebet und -gelübde „suchte Gott sie heim“ mit Fruchtbarkeit, und sie gebar den ersten frommen, gewaltigen Richter in *Israel*, 1. Sam. 1, 2ff. Im N. T. haben wir den gleichen Fall an *Elisabeth*, der frommen Ehefrau des Priesters *Zacharias*, die, ursprünglich unfruchtbar, durch eine besondere *Heimsuchung* fruchtbar gemacht, Mutter *Johannis des Täufers* wurde. Andererseits wird die größte Heilstat Gottes, die Sendung Christi ins Fleisch, durch den besonders vom Heiligen Geist erfaßten *Zacharias* (Luk. 1, 67ff.) als Gottes „*Besuch und Erlösung*“ seines Volks gepriesen, und in Kap. 7, 16 erklärt das ganze gläubige Volk bei Christi Auferweckung des Jünglings von *Nain* von Christo: „Es ist ein großer Prophet unter uns aufgestanden und Gott hat sein Volk *heimgesucht*.“

Das sind nun lauter Heimsuchungen Gottes, in denen Gott in geringen und großen Dingen aus dem Bösen Gutes, aus dem Leid Freude schafft. Die sollen wir als solche erkennen, in unserm natür-

lichen Dummstolz nicht vergessen, sondern ihm dafür täglich dan-
ken, ihn dafür lieben, loben und preisen, — aber auch
mit der Tat! — Davon ist ja die Schrift ganz voll, besonders der
Psalter; lies nur zum Beispiel Ps. 103, „und vergiß nicht, was er
usw.“ — Wehe den Unglücklichen, die alle Gaben Gottes nur zu
fleischlicher Selbstbefriedigung, Selbstverherrlichung und zur Leug-
nung und Lästerung Gottes mißbrauchen!

Nun ist aber jedem fleißigen Schriftstudenten gegenwärtig, daß
der Begriff der Heimjuchung viel öfter Unfall und Unglück,
Zorn und Strafe, Gericht und das Drohen der Verwerfung
enthält. Und zwar geht das über einzelne Personen, Geschlechter,
Städte, Länder, Völker, auch schließlich über die verderbte Erde selbst.
Dies z. B. in Jeremias die Kapitel 46–50, und darauf die neu-
testamentlichen Stellen Matth. 24; Mark. 14; Luk. 19. 41–44;
Kap. 21, 7–11; B. 11–24.

Die Erkenntnis der Lehre von den Heimjuchungen Gottes setzt
aber voraus die Erkenntnis und den Glauben an den ewigen persön-
lichen, allwirkenden, heiligen, barmherzigen, gerechten und wahr-
haftigen Gott, an „Vater, Sohn, Heiligen Geist, der uns hilft in
aller Not, den die Schar der Engel preist, der durch seine große Kraft
alles wirkt, tut und schafft“ (Gesgb. 37). An den glauben die
Ungläubigen nicht, sondern sie glauben an die menschliche
Vernunft, die alles Sein und Geschehen einer starren, toten,
unbekannten „Natur“ zuschreibt. Aber was ist das für eine Ver-
nunft? — Die Männer der schärfsten und stärksten Denkkraft waren
die Erfinder des sogenannten Copernikanischen Sonnensystems:
Kepler, Tycho de Brahe, Galiläi und Copernicus.
Was haben sie denn zur Entstehung dieses Systems getan?
Nichts, nicht einen Hauch! Sie haben nur einen Teil desselben
unserm gewöhnlichen Menschenverstand zu erklären verstanden. Da-
nach ist das vorhandene Sonnensystem etwas so über alle Maßen
Künstliches und übermenschlich ineinander Verwobenes, daß unsere
noch einigermaßen vernünftige Vernunft sagen muß: Das ist das
Werk eines persönlich allmächtigen, weisen und guten Gottes. Wenn
aber die Ungläubigen mit ihrer unpersönlichen Natur wirklich etwas
schaffen, d. h. aus nichts durch ein bloßes Wort etwas in die
Existenz werden rufen können, z. B. einen Floh oder eine Mücke oder
eine Blume, ja, nur einen einzigen Grassalm, dann will ich mich
zu ihrem Narrenunglauben bekehren; unser persönlich er,

ewiger, allmächtiger, und treuer Gott aber *spricht*, so geschieht's; wenn er gebeut, so steht es da, Pf. 33, 9. Der Herr ist es, der Böses und Gutes, Glück und Unglück im einzelnen und geringen und über viel Volks in großen Unglückschlägen kommen läßt. „Ist auch ein Unglück in der Stadt, das der Herr nicht tue?“ Amos 3, 6; Micha 1, 12. Wer darf denn sagen, daß solches geschehe ohne des Herrn Befehl! Wo sind denn heute die größten Städte der Alten Welt mit ihren Massenbevölkerungen, ihren Wissenschaften und Künsten? Vergessen wir nicht das wahrhaft entsetzliche Gottesgericht über Jerusalem: „Darum, daß du nicht erkannt hast die Zeit, darinnen du heimgesucht bist“, Luk. 19, 44. Das erinnert an so manche alte und neuere Beispiele von Gottes Großtaten, die den Eindruck direkter Heimfuchungen Gottes zu machen nicht verfehlen. In die erste erinnert uns der heutige Kampf um die alte ägyptische Stadt Alexandria. Um das Jahr 333 vor Christi Geburt vermühtete Alexander der Große, der Sohn Philipps von Mazedonien, einen großen Teil der damaligen Völkermwelt durch unausgesetzten Krieg, bis Gott ihn in seinen eigenen Sünden zerbrach. Er soll 14 Millionen Menschen ums Leben gebracht haben. Als der zweite wird von etlichen Geschichtlern Julius Cäsar angesehen, der, um hundert Jahre vor Christo geboren, in 56 Jahren (bis 44 vor Christo) viele europäische Völker zerbrach, Millionen Menschen dabei umbrachte und dann von den eigenen Freunden ermordet wurde. Der dritte war um 450 nach Christo der Hunne Attila, der Großmeister der mongolischen Völker Asiens, der, bis er in den kataunischen Feldern besiegt worden war, in dieser letzten Schlacht noch über 250.000 Mann geopfert und 5 Millionen Menschen vernichtet hatte. Der fünfte war Genghis Khan, welcher im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert nach Christo viele Millionen Menschen dahinschlachtete. — Alle Welt schaudert heute noch über diese Geschichten und sucht nach deren Begründung. Bei diesen großen „Selden“ war es immer das Gleiche: wahnsinniger Ehrgeiz, die unwiderstehliche Begierde, die ganze Völkermwelt der Erde zu beherrschen. Der englische Literat Pope charakterisiert den Alexander mit dem einen Satz: „The youth who all things but himself subdued.“ Alexander hörte auf keinen Menschen; seinen innig geliebten Freund und Pflegebruder, Nito, der ihn so oft und treu gewarnt hatte, schlug er im letzten Zank mit ihm tot. Julius Cäsar hielt sich für den größten Feldherrn, den die Welt je gehabt habe,

zankte sich selbst mit seinem treuesten Freunde Brutus und mußte, innerlich verzagt, an 24 Dolchstößen sterben. "Et tu, Brute?" — Genghis Khan wurde, weil er jedem besiegten Volk seinen eigenen Glauben ließ, von den Christen seiner Zeit „die Gottesgeißel der Welt“ genannt. — Das waren sie aber, erkannt oder unerkannt, alle, und das sind alle ihresgleichen. Gott hat die Welt ihrer Zeit heimgeſucht.

Zu diesen Heimfuchungen der Alten Welt sind auch etliche große Ereignisse der neueren Zeit zu rechnen, die durchaus den Charakter von Heimfuchungen Gottes tragen: 1, Das Erdbeben, der Brand und die Überflutung von Lissabon, der Hauptstadt von Portugal, die damals nahe an 250,000 Menschen zählte. Am 1. November 1755 erfuhr die Stadt ein Erdbeben, das in einem einzigen momentanen Ruck den größten und schönsten Teil der Stadt in einen Trümmerhaufen verwandelte und 30,000 Menschen tötete; zugleich brach ein vom Winde gepeitschtes Feuer aus, das noch mehreren Tausenden das Leben kostete; dann stürzten die Fluten des gewaltigen Flusses Tago, der durch die Stadt ins Meer fließt, über die Trümmer und machten alle Rettungsarbeit unmöglich, während eine Meute von Dieben und Räubern sich wie Nasgeier über die Ruinen warf und alles ausplünderte. Ganz Europa war wie vom Donner gerührt. — Was war das? Heimfuchung Gottes! sagte alles, was noch Christ war; die ungläubige Welt sagte: Aberglaube! — Naturereignis!

2, Am 8. Oktober 1871 brannten das große Chicago und das kleine Peshtigo, Wis., zugleich ab. In Chicago suchte man nach der Ursache und fand schließlich eine Kuh, die beim Abendmelken hinten ausge schlagen und ein Licht umgestoßen habe, das die Melkerin neben sich gestellt gehabt habe. — Es war aber „ein Glück für Chicago“! Reiche Leute bauten anstatt der großen Masse von verbrannten Holzschuppen die Stadt mit Palästen von Stahl, Stein und Marmor wieder auf. Peshtigo hat unverzagt auch wieder aufgebaut, schöner als das erstemal, hat aber das Suchen nach der Ursache des Feuers aufgegeben, und die dortigen Christen haben die neue Stadt Gott befohlen.

3, Im Herbst 1892 brannte auch die dritte "ward" unsers eigenen Milwauee in einem großen erschreckenden Feuer nieder. Der Schade lief in die Millionen und kostete mehreren Menschen das Leben. Die Ursache ist bis auf den heutigen Tag noch nicht fest-

gestellt, und die "ward" ist heute noch nicht ganz wieder aufgebaut, sondern wird teilweise jetzt noch von einem ausländischen armen Mischvolk bewohnt. — War es ein pures Menschenwerk, oder hatte auch der Herr seine Hand dabei im Spiele?

4. Schließlich nennen wir unter dieser Rubrik das wechselvolle Schicksal San Francisco's. Diese Stadt ist ganz eigenartig sowohl nach ihrer geographischen Lage am Stillen Meer wie nach der nationalen Mischung ihrer Bevölkerung. Sie wurde schon 1542 von einem in der spanischen Flotte dienenden Portugiesen entdeckt. Später wurde sie von dem von Indien zurückkehrenden Sir Francis Drake (Elisabeths Helden) für England in Beschlag genommen und New Albion genannt, kam aber zunächst in spanische, dann in mexikanische Hände. Dann flutete neben einer Menge von Chinesen allerlei Gold suchendes fremdländisches Gefindel in die Stadt und machte sie zum Schauplatz von Blutbergießen. Von 1845–1848 wurden Staat und Stadt von unserer Regierung besetzt und einigermaßen in Ordnung gebracht. Von den 49ern bog ein Zug nach California und San Francisco ab. Das kürzlich gefundene Gold zog sie an. Aber auch seitdem sind schwere Heimführungen, in Aufruhren, Erdbeben, Bränden und Fluten über die Stadt gegangen, die sich bis in die letzten Jahre wiederholt haben. Die ernstern Missourier sorgten mit großem Eifer für die Gründung der lutherischen Kirche im Staat und in der Stadt. Ein paar erquickende Beispiele von lutherischem Bekennermut bieten der private Kampf des lutherischen Pastors Bühler gegen den noch bekannten reichen Zuckerkönig Claus Spreckels und die 1906 gehaltene Synode des Californiadistrikts, die gegen die spottende Welt das kurz vorhergegangene Erdbeben als Gottes Heimführung bekannte.

Dreierlei ist es nun, was wir besonders betonen müssen, ehe wir die Lehre der Schrift von den Heimführungen Gottes auf unsere gegenwärtigen Kriegsverhältnisse richtig und heilbringend anwenden können.

1. Wenn wir alle Heimführungen Gottes schriftgemäß ihm selbst zuschreiben, so ist damit nicht gesagt, daß er sie, ohne irdische Mittel dabei zu gebrauchen, ins Werk setze. Im Gegenteil, er stellt dabei irgendwelche Creaturen, Menschen oder Tiere, irdische Elemente oder Kräfte, Feuer, Luft und Wasser, Engel und Menschen nach seinem Wohlgefallen in seinen Dienst, Klagenl. 3, 37; Ps. 103, 20 usw. — Ein Vogel oder ein elektrischer Funke, ein Vulkan-

ausbruch oder ein brennender Zigarrenstumpf kann des großen Allherrn besonderen Willen ausdrücken. „Er mach't's, wie er will“, Daniel 4. „Weg' hat er allemwegen, an Mitteln fehlt's ihm nicht.“ Das ist eins.

2, Das andere ist die Mahnung des Herrn: „Richtet nicht!“ Matth. 7, 1-6 und Luf. 6, 37; dazu die Beispiele in Kap. 13, 1-5, wozu auch die nächsten Verse (6-9) gehören; die sind uns allen, mir und dir, vom Herrn selbst eingeschärft. Auch wir stehen nur noch durch Gottes Geduld im Amt, Geschäft und Leben. — Die Worte der Schrift aber von den Heimjuchungen Gottes werden als Gottes Rat ewig wahr bleiben und im Sinne des 41. Psalms auch über die gegenwärtige Kriegsnot triumphieren.

3, Jetzt gilt es wirklich beten und von ganzem Herzen zum Herrn schreien. Lies jetzt selbst und höre direkt aus des Herrn Mund: Ps. 50, 15; 2. Mose 14, 15; Ps. 40, 2 und Luf. 18, 7 und 8. Auch die ganze Gemeinde soll für die Erhaltung unserer Jungen, um Frieden, um Trost für die Eltern beten. Gedenkt auch der New Londoner Mutter!

Aug. Pieper.

(Fortsetzung folgt.)

Historical Survey of the Present Union Movement.

(Part of a Conference Paper)

Over sixty years ago the Ohio Synod cut the bonds of church fellowship and doctrinal unity, and separated itself from the Synodical Conference, accusing the other synods of the Synodical Conference of being false teachers in the doctrine of election or predestination, and slandered them as not being Lutherans anymore but Calvinists. And ever since then a bitter controversy has been raging between the Ohio Synod on the one side and the Synodical Conference on the other. The Iowa and the Buffalo Synods also took part in the controversy joining the side of Ohio. Indeed, the Iowa Synod had accused the Missouri Synod in 1872, even before the Ohio Synod had done so, of teaching Calvinistic error. The Synodical Conference held fast to the doctrine of election as the Lutheran Confessions teach it in Article 11 in the

Book of Concord, § 8: "Die ewige Wahl Gottes aber sieht und weiss nicht allein zuvor der Auserwählten Seligkeit, sondern ist auch aus gnädigem Willen und Wohlgefallen Gottes in Christo Jesu eine Ursache, so da unsere Seligkeit und was zu derselben gehört, schafft, wirkt, hilft und befördert, darauf auch unsere Seligkeit also gegründet ist, dass die Pforten der Hölle nichts darwider vermögen sollen, Matth. 16, 18, wie geschrieben stehet Joh. 10, 28: Meine Schafe wird mir niemand aus meiner Hand reissen, und abermal Apostg. 13, 48: Und es wurden ihrer gläubig, soviel ihrer zum ewigen Leben verordnet waren." Mueller, p. 705, Triglotta, p. 1065. The Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo Synods taught that God elected *intuitu fidei*. And this unscriptural teaching led Ohio into another serious error, *i. e.*, false, unbiblical teaching in the doctrine of conversion. Here Ohio taught that the conversion and salvation of a sinner were conditioned on man's conduct (Verhalten) over against the work of the Holy Ghost through the means of grace. Ohio further taught that there is a twofold resistance in natural man over against the work of the Holy Ghost, natural resistance, which the Holy Ghost is able to overcome, and wilful resistance, which the Holy Ghost can not overcome. Ohio thereby denied the *sola gratia*. And again these errors led Ohio to the denial of the doctrine of Objective Justification. So the Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo Synods infringed upon and attacked the heart of the Christian faith and doctrine.

For nearly ninety years the Iowa and the Missouri Synods (Synodical Conference) have been in controversy on the doctrine of the Church, the Ministry, the Office of the Keys, the Antichrist, Sunday, the Last Things and Open Questions, and since 1872 on the above mentioned doctrines of Election, Conversion, Natural and Wilful Resistance, and Objective Justification.

Also for about ninety years the Missouri Synod (Synodical Conference) and the Buffalo Synod have been in a bitter fight on the doctrines of the Church (Buffalo romanizing): the Office of the Keys (Buffalo teaching that the Keys belong to the pastors only, not to the congregation); of the ministry (Buffalo denying the "Übertragungslehre" or the conveyance of the ministerial office by the congregation); of ordination (Buffalo teaching that it is divinely ordained, — göttliche Ordnung).

In 1907 the Ohio and the Iowa Synods came to an agreement

on the basis of the Toledo Theses and church fellowship was established between them. But their hostile relationship over against the synods of the Synodical Conference remained the same. — In 1930 the synods of Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo merged and formed the American Lutheran Church. In the same year this church body united with the merged United Norwegian Synod, the Augustana Synod, the Norwegian Free Church and the United Danish Church, thereby establishing church fellowship with those synods. Thereby the American Lutheran Church also established church fellowship with those Norwegian Lutherans who in 1915 had left the Synodical Conference and merged with the anti-Missourian Norwegian Synod, insisting upon the Opgjoer, which teaches election *intuitu fidei*. — This union with these people proves to me that, in spite of the Chicago Theses, which the three constituent synods of the American Lutheran Church had accepted, we were not then and are not now in unity of faith with the American Lutheran Church. If the Chicago Theses, as they stand and read, would in reality be the confession of the American Lutheran Church, it could not have itself united with these other synods, in whose midst heterodoxy, denial of the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures, altar- and pulpit fellowship with the Reformed sects are notorious. — See Dr. Th. Graebner's book "The Problem of Lutheran Union," p. 44-80. — I can not help but think of the old German adage, "Sage mir, mit wem du umgehst, und ich sage dir, wer du bist."

At different times since the beginning of this century attempts have been made to bring these doctrinal controversies between the synods now merged in the American Lutheran Church and the synods of the Synodical Conference to an end, to come to confessional unity, and to establish peace and church fellowship. At first Free Conferences were tried. Such conferences met at Watertown, Wisconsin, in 1903; Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1903; Detroit, Michigan, in 1904, and Ft. Wayne, Indiana, in 1905. Many pastors and professors from all the synods involved attended. The doctrinal differences were threshed out by the leading theologians of the various synods, as Fr. Pieper, Bente, Hoenecke, Stelling, G. Fritschel, Schmidt and others. But they all more or less spoke with one eye to the galleries. It soon became evident that in this manner nothing would be accomplished. These

conferences came to a speedy and inglorious end when the members of the Synodical Conference, tired of the abuse heaped upon them and convinced that nothing could or would be accomplished because of their opponents' stubborn clinging to error, withdrew in a body at Ft. Wayne, Ind., in 1905.

About 1916 free conferences on a smaller scale were started in Minnesota — between pastors of the synods at variance. As these conferences grew and were, as it seemed, successful, the different synods were asked, officially to continue this work by appointing representatives or colloquists who would meet and try to come to a God-pleasing agreement on the doctrines in controversy. The various synods complied. In 1917 such representatives of the Missouri, Wisconsin, Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo synods met for the first time. For ten years these men, known as the Intersynodical Committee, met three or four times every year. Their sole object was to come to an agreement based on Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. No galleries were allowed; no writing by this or that man could be brought in. The only question was: What do Scriptures and our Confessions say with regard to this or that controversial point. At the end it seemed to the members of the committee as if a real agreement had been reached, and the genuine and true teaching of the Scripture and our Confessions were set up in the so-called "Chicago Theses." We, the members of the Intersynodical Committee from the Synodical Conference were convinced, that in these theses the true and genuine doctrine was clearly and unambiguously presented and that all false doctrine was excluded. Every member of the Committee from the five synods represented agreed to these theses and subscribed to them. Now they were to be laid before the various synods for action. Two, Wisconsin and Ohio, took no action; two, Iowa and Buffalo, accepted them; one, Missouri, rejected them. How is this action of Missouri to be explained?

From the start the work of the Intersynodical Committee was keenly and very critically watched, and every move severely criticized in some circles of the Missouri Synod. After the "Chicago Theses" had been published, these same circles voiced as their conviction that the old "Sauerteig" of the old Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo errors was still hidden in them. They therefore fought against the acceptance of the theses by the Missouri Synod. And their

fears and misgivings were not wholly without foundation as subsequent events proved — for instance, the union of Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo with the Norwegians and Swedes. But somebody of the Iowa Synod had also given them reason for misgiving and fear by publishing the theses on Conversion (of the Chicago Theses) with certain words and phrases underscored. By doing this the meaning and interpretation of the theses was changed. Hence the suspicions of these circles in the Missouri Synod seemed to be justified.

The report and resolutions on the Chicago Theses in the Synodical Report of the meetings of the Missouri Synod in 1929 make very interesting reading. And not only with regard to what Synod did with the Chicago Theses and the reasons for so doing, but also with regard to the present union movement. The report and the resolutions on the Chicago Theses are to be found on pages 110-113 of the printed Synodical Report. There we find 1. an extract from the report of the Intersynodical Committee, which does not concern us here; 2. an extract from the Examining Committee for the Intersynodical Theses, which concerns us very much; 3. a protest against the Intersynodical Theses, which again does not concern us here, and 4. the report of Committee No. 19 on this matter and the resolutions of Synod, which again concern us very much.

The Examining Committee reports: "After careful examination of the revised theses of August, 1928, your committee finds itself compelled to advise Synod to reject the theses as a possible basis for union with the synods of Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo, since all chapters and a number of paragraphs are inadequate. At times they do not touch upon the point of controversy; at times they are so phrased that both parties can find in them their own opinion; at times they incline more to the position of our opponents than to our own." — Then the committee touches upon particulars. "The chief criticisms of your committee are that . . . the Scriptural doctrine of the universal will of grace is not clearly separated from the doctrine of election by grace." "Everywhere one misses the clear statement that in Christ Jesus God elected unto faith, unto sonship, unto perseverance, and unto salvation certain persons who are known to Him alone." "We must furthermore criticize the fact, that . . . the distinction between natural and mali-

cious resistance was not ruled out." . . . "Most of the paragraphs under 'D' are inadequate. They do not remove, but keep silence about the old differences. We nowhere find a clear statement of the fact that the doctrines of the Church, the ministry, Sunday, Chiliasm, and Antichrist are not open questions, but clear and well defined doctrines of the Scriptures and our Confessions." — In the article on the Church a clear confession that the church, in the true sense of the term, is invisible, was not made. The language enables the opponents to retain their old doctrine of a visible side of the church. — In the statement regarding the spiritual priesthood and the doctrine of the ministry nothing is said of the doctrine of conveyance (Uebertragungslehre). The paragraphs concerning Antichrist do not touch the old position of the opponents. The doctrine of Sunday is not presented, nor is there a statement to the effect that the false doctrine cannot be tolerated beside the true doctrine. The same thing is true of Chiliasm.

"Your Committee considers it a hopeless undertaking to make these theses unobjectionable from the view of pure doctrine. It would be better to discard them as a failure."

The Committee on Intersynodical matters (No. 19), after a preamble in which it tried to soften the harsh attitude of the Examining Committee, brings the recommendation: "We recommend, however, that Synod do not accept the theses in their present form, for the following reasons: a) Because many serious objections have been raised by members of Synod, which, in our opinion, should be carefully considered and eventually be taken into account in any further work concerning the theses; b) Because the omission of all historical data in working out the theses was evidently not conducive to a full understanding on the part of the colloquents. We must begin with the *status controversiae*." And what did Synod do? "The report of the Committee was adopted."

But here I ask myself: How could a synod which in 1929 rejected the Chicago Theses, which the Examining Committee declared to be "a failure," which could not be made "unobjectionable from the view of pure doctrine," and in which this same committee found so much to criticize, make the "Declaration of the American Lutheran Church," in which about everything that the Examining Committee criticized is clearly and openly taught, a

part of the "doctrinal basis" for future fellowship with the American Lutheran Church? And how can Dr. Th. Graebner time and again refer to the Chicago Theses to prove that agreement in the main issues was reached there, after his synod had rejected them "as inadequate" and "hopeless to be made unobjectionable from the view of pure doctrine"?

But there is something else in the recommendations of the Examining Committee, Committee No. 19, and the resolutions of Synod in 1929 that deserves our attention. The Examining Committee reports: "It now seems to your committee a matter of wisdom to desist from intersynodical conferences. By entering into a closer relationship with the adherents of the Norwegian Opgjoer, the opponents have given evidence that they do not hold our position in the doctrine of conversion and election. In view of this fact further conferences would be useless." Committee No. 19 recommends: "That Synod declare its readiness to deal also in the future with the synods concerned, provided the latest historical development, namely, the move toward a closer union between the Ohio and Iowa Synods, on the one hand, and the party of the Norwegian Opgjoer, on the other, be taken up first and adjusted according to the Word of God." And Synod resolves: "It was emphasized that discussion be contingent on the following two conditions: a) that the move toward fellowship between the Ohio and Iowa synods, on the one hand, and the Norwegian Lutheran Church, on the other, be first adjusted according to the Word of God; b) that future deliberations proceed from the exact point of controversy and do take into account the pertinent history." — Here the question is pertinent: Has this move, which then was in the making, but since 1930 is an accomplished fact, been taken up first and adjusted according to the Word of God before the present Union Movement was started? We at least have never heard or read that this was done. Or, have the resolutions of 1929 been "rescinded"?

Committee No. 19 recommended to Synod also the following resolution: "4. Auf jeden Fall empfehlen wir der Synode, ein Komitee zu erwählen, das, vom Status controversiae ausgehend, nach Befund Thesen ausarbeiten soll, die in möglichst kurzer, einfacher und übersichtlicher Form die Lehre von Schrift und Bekenntnis darbieten. Dies Komitee sollte möglichst bald Bericht

ablegen, wenn nicht schon bei den verschiedenen Distriktssynoden während der kommenden Jahre, so doch bei der nächsten Delegatensynode."

And Synod adopted this recommendation and resolved that the Committee should be appointed by the president. The president did so. The Committee was headed by Dr. Fr. Pieper. The result of the work of this Committee is the "Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States." The Brief Statement was adopted by the Missouri Synod at its meeting in 1932.

After the merger of the Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo synods into the American Lutheran Church in 1930, and the uniting of this body with the Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Swedish Augustana Synod, the Norwegian Lutheran Free Church and the Danish United Church into the American Lutheran Conference in the same year, the American Lutheran Church in 1935 asked the Missouri Synod to appoint a committee which should together with a committee from the American Lutheran Church try to come to a God-pleasing agreement on the doctrines in controversy between the two bodies to the end that church fellowship could be established. The Missouri Synod accepted this invitation and appointed such a committee, calling it "Committee on Lutheran Union." Dr. W. Arndt is chairman of it. Whether the conditions laid down by the Delegate Synod in 1929 (see above) had been carried out before, we do not know. —

According to Dr. M. Reu the American Lutheran Church had good reason why it did not invite the other synods of the Synodical Conference, especially the Wisconsin Synod, to take part in these union proceedings. He writes in the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, October, 1941, page 596: "Weiter übersieht man zu fragen, ob denn unsere Kirche vielleicht nicht gute Gründe gehabt hat, in den früheren (1935) Verhandlungen von einer Einladung an Missouris Schwestersynoden abzuzehen. Auch fragte man nicht, ob zurzeit (1941 — when the Missouri Synod resolved that the sister synods should be invited to take part in the union proceedings) nicht vielleicht noch viel stärkere Gründe als damals vorliegen, die uns eine solche Einladung erschweren." Dr. Reu does not state what reasons the American Lutheran Church had in 1935 not to invite the other synods of the Synodical Conference. So we do

not know them. Neither do we know whether such reasons were made known to the Committee on Lutheran Union of the Missouri Synod. All we know is that the Committee on Lutheran Union in one of its letters to the clergy of the Missouri Synod deploras the fact that the other synods of the Synodical Conference, especially the Wisconsin Synod, were not also invited, and states that it first had in mind to invite them but did not do so, because not the Missouri Synod but the American Lutheran Church was doing the inviting.

After three years, in 1938, the Union Committee of the Missouri Synod and the committee of the American Lutheran Church reported to their respective synods and laid the results of their deliberations before them. And ever since then the terms "Fundamentals, Non-Fundamentals and Open Questions" (the theme of the Conference paper) are in the limelight. True, not so much the first and the last, but especially the second. It seems to me that the fundamental doctrines which had been in controversy between these church bodies and which in the last analysis were at the bottom of all the controversies, were neither extensively nor intensively discussed by the two union committees, else the Declaration of the American Lutheran Church Union Commission (which stresses the human factor of the Bible very much and carefully avoids the word inerrancy; which has nothing to say about objective justification; which insists on a visible side of the church — that is of the communion of saints; which leaves the door wide open for disagreement in the non-fundamental doctrines, etc.) could not have been accepted by the Committee of the Missouri Synod. Very likely the Committee on (Lutheran) Union found an extensive and intensive study and discussion of these doctrines not so pressing, because of the fact that the Commissioners of the American Lutheran Church agreed to accept the Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod. This was hailed as a great step forward in the union movement, but as later developments proved, it did not mean what it seemed to mean — yes in fact it was hardly more than an empty gesture. The fact is that the American Lutheran Commission did not accept the *Brief Statement* unconditionally. Dr. Reu writes (*Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, October, 1941, page 597): "Unser Komitee war überzeugt, dasselbe (*Brief Statement*) nicht ohne Einschränkung annehmen zu können."

But coming back to the discussion on the fundamental doctrines, we find that according to a statement by Dr. Th. Graebner in the *Lutheran Witness* of June 25, 1940, page 213, an extensive and intensive discussion of these doctrines was not even necessary. Dr. Graebner writes: "We said in our second installment that the union resolutions of 1938 are not to be viewed as the achievement of doctrinal agreement through committee deliberations during the three years 1935-1938. We said that, while this agreement was *reported* in 1938 it "had been coming gradually for a long period of time." "In the following we intend to show that on some points there had been agreement as long ago as 1868, on others 25, 40 and 50 years ago." — "Surely, if certain *main issues* between our synod and the former Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo synods (now American Lutheran Church) have been settled one, two and three generations ago, then . . ." Yes, *if*. Well, Dr. Graebner ought to know it. Yes, *IF* "certain *main issues*" have been settled that long ago, then Dr. Graebner's statement may stand. But going into the matter a little more thoroughly and studying the history of the involved synods during the last ninety years, I doubt very much that Dr. Graebner's statement is correct.

For why, if Dr. Graebner's statement is correct, the continued fighting all these years? Dr. Graebner first takes up "Open Questions" and writes about this point: "This question was the issue chiefly between the Iowa and Missouri synods in the fifties and the sixties of the last century. We can distinguish sharply two periods in the discussion of this subject, corresponding to the years before and after 1867." So I take it he refers to this point in his statement, that "on some points there had been agreement as long ago as 1868." But if that is a fact, how could the Missouri Synod then publish Grosse's "Unterscheidungslehren," where in the 4th edition, printed 1905, I read of the Iowa Synod, page 15, "Falsche Lehren der Iowa Synode" and page 19, "Falsche Lehren von den offenen Fragen"? And here Grosse writes: "Zu den offenen Fragen zählt (Note: nicht "zählte", sondern "zählt") die Iowasynode gewisse in der Heiligen Schrift geoffenbarte Fragen, die in der Kirche noch unentschieden seien; über solche Lehren seine eigene Meinung zu haben, stehe jedem frei; darüber könne ein Pastor lehren, wie er es für recht hält, und niemand dürfe ihm deshalb die kirchliche Gemeinschaft versagen oder

ihn ausschliessen." To the Constitution of the Iowa Synod, adopted 1905, were added as an appendix the theses which Iowa had adopted in 1875. In thesis 6 we read, "Offene Fragen anlangend, erklären wir, dass . . . uns der Ausdruck *offene Fragen* gleichbedeutend ist mit *nicht kirchentrennende Fragen*." This is the change that took place in 1867. Iowa was ready to drop the phrase "offene Fragen" and substitute "nicht kirchentrennende Fragen." And that means again that any pastor could teach on this or that question according to his conviction and nobody could tell him, You are a false teacher, and his church body could not start church discipline against him. But let us ask once more: Did Missouri and Iowa come to an agreement on open questions in 1867? We get the answer from another Missouri publication, the Concordia Encyclopedia, published 1927. On page 365, column 1, we read: "At the same convention (1867) Iowa resolved to ask Missouri for a colloquium. The Missouri Synod gladly assented, and the colloquy was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, November 13-18, 1867. At this conference the attitude of both synods to the Confessions and to 'Open Questions' and some points of Eschatology were discussed. Time did not permit discussion of the doctrine of The Church and the Ministerial Office, on which the two synods had originally separated. No agreement was reached except in minor points."

In the same book, page 150, column 2, I find the following: "A 'colloquy' on these questions was held at Milwaukee in 1867. . . . The attitude toward the Symbols, the subject of 'Open Questions,' and eschatological matters were discussed. Harmony was not attained. The controversy went on." Does this sound as if an agreement on "Open Questions" had been reached in 1867? And whom are we to believe, Graebner or his three colleagues who edited the Concordia Encyclopedia?

Iowa up to this day has held to thesis 6 of the theses adopted in 1875. In the union agreement the Missouri Synod has adopted the Iowa position by agreeing that these questions "need not be divisive."

I believe it is pertinent to insert here the Schlusserklärung der Kolloquenten der Missourisynode at the colloquy at Milwaukee in 1867. It reads: "Solange die Iowasynode nicht bestimmt und rund widerruft, was sie in ihrem Bericht von 1858 öffentlich und

feierlich bekannt hat: 'Dass das Papsttum antichristlich ist, oder dass man viele Päpste Antichristen nennen könne, *in eben dem Sinne, in welchem* 1 Joh. 2, 18 von *vielen* Antichristen die Rede ist. Aber der 2 Thess. 2 erwähnte Mensch der Sünde ist eine bestimmte *menschliche Persönlichkeit*, ebendeshalb aber *auch zukünftig*. . . . Diesen Abfall im Antichristentum müssen wir auch erst *noch als zukünftig* erwarten, weil wir unter dem Menschen der Sünde nicht ein Papsttum, sondern nur eine bestimmte individuelle menschliche Persönlichkeit verstehen,' solange können wir ihr nicht zugehen, dass sie in diesem Punkte bekenntnistreu ist. Dies allein ist jedoch keineswegs, wie unsere Herren Opponenten nach ihrer Schlusserklärung angeben, der Grund, warum wir nicht mit ihr zusammenstehen, bekennen, arbeiten und kämpfen können, sondern andere in unseren Vorlagen namhaft gemachte Differenzen, die teils weder durch einen runden Widerruf, noch durch ein rundes Bekenntnis ausgeglichen worden sind, teils aus Mangel an Zeit nicht haben diskutiert werden können." To the first also belongs "Offene Fragen" — open questions, — which was not settled — either by a plain recantation or by a plain confession.

But let us go on. Dr. Graebner furthermore makes the statement that "certain *main issues* have been settled one, two and three generations ago." If that is true, why then the inglorious breaking up of the Free Conferences in 1905? Why the rejection of the Chicago Theses by the Missouri Synod in 1929? Why the statement in the report of the Missouri Synod of 1929, "The opponents have given evidence that they do not hold our position in the doctrines of conversion and election?" Why the necessity of the *Brief Statement*? To my mind all this clearly proves, that the statements of Dr. Graebner are not based on facts.

But there still is other proof that no such agreement existed for one, two and three generations, and does not exist today. For even though the commissioners of the American Lutheran Church seemingly accepted the Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod, such acceptance meant little or nothing. I. The American Lutheran Church commissioners could not accept the Brief Statement "ohne Einschränkungen." (The first rent in the acceptance.) II. The commissioners of the American Lutheran Church found it necessary to supplement the *Brief Statement* by writing another doctrinal document, called "The Declaration of the American Lu-

theran Church." Why? At the end of the Declaration we read, "With the other points of doctrine presented in the *Brief Statement* of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod we are conscious of being in agreement. We also believe that in regard to points touched upon in Sections 1-4" (I. Scriptures and Inspiration. II. Universal Plan of Salvation, Predestination and Conversion. III. The Church. IV. The Office of the Public Administration of the Means of Grace), "the doctrines stated in the *Brief Statement* are correct." But they add, "However, we were of the opinion that it would be well in part to supplement them in the manner stated above" (In I. they stress the human side in the Scriptures very much, and in II. I miss Acts 13, 48; and with regard to conversion I have something to say in part 3 of my essay. In III. the visible side of the church is brought in. In IV. I miss the doctrine of conveyance — Übertragungslehre), "in part also to emphasize those points, which seemed essential to us." (For instance, the human element of the Bible, the visible side of the church. Then they continue: "With reference to section III., IV. and VIIb (visible side of the church, Antichrist, Conversion of Israel, Physical Resurrection of the Martyrs, The 1000 years of Revelation 20) we expect no more than this, that the honorable Synod of Missouri will declare that the points mentioned there are not disruptive of church fellowship." There is rent 2, 3, and 4 in the acceptance of the *Brief Statement*. So the *Brief Statement* is not an unbreakable whole any more, but a rag torn in shreds.

Dr. P. E. Kretzmann says, "The *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod was, in its general tenor, accepted by the representatives of the American Lutheran Church, but the modification contained in the "Declaration" of the latter party has practically nullified parts of the *Brief Statement*."

In Section VI of the *Declaration* the so-called Non-Fundamental doctrines are brought into the limelight. How so? Because the commissioners of the American Lutheran Church here first say in general: "When considering the question concerning the Antichrist, the future conversion of Israel, the resurrection of the martyrs and the millennial reign of Christ, the fact must not be overlooked that we are dealing here with the correct understanding of prophecy and fulfilment, that this understanding is not al-

ways easy and that even in the days of Christ the believers had an entirely different conception of the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy in many points than actually occurred." — Do you see the purpose? These doctrines are at best conclusions which are arrived at by the exegesis of prophecy, and in such exegesis we may very easily err. So we of the Synodical Conference cannot insist upon the doctrines which we hold regarding the last things, as being the only correct ones. So these points cannot be disruptive of church fellowship because nobody may make the claim that he has the only right exegesis. — Then in VIb they say, "In regard to the Antichrist we accept the *historical judgment* of Luther in the Smalcald Articles (Part II, Art. IV, 10) that the Pope is the very Antichrist because among all the antichristian manifestations in the history of the world and the church that lies behind us in the past there is none that fits the description given in II Thess. 2 better than the papacy." But they add, "The answer to the question whether in the future that is still before us, prior to the return of Christ, a special unfolding and personal concentration of the antichristian power already present now, and thus a still more comprehensive fulfilment of II. Thess. 2, may occur, we leave to the Lord and Ruler of church and world history." Note well here, — What Luther says in the Smalcald Articles about the pope is only a *historical judgment* of Luther, not a doctrine of our confession! —

In point VIb2 concerning the conversion of Israel they simply quote Walther, who said, "It must not be regarded as a cause for division." (Milwaukee Colloquy, page 156.) We might ask: In what connection did Walther say this? He said it of Schieferdecker, and his words are, "Hätte er nur in der Lehre von der Judenbekehrung nicht mit uns übereinstimmen können, das hätten wir nicht als einen Grund zur Trennung angesehen." But we would not need this. I can very well understand Walther. He would not deny churchfellowship to anybody just because he is in error on this point, provided he is soundly Lutheran in all other doctrines and would not preach or teach his error and would be open to conviction. But just this last Dr. Reu very emphatically refuses. He writes, "Wir sind auf gleicher Stufe stehende Partner und kommen auch nicht als die Bittenden. . . . So viel ist gewiss, Unsere Kirche wird keiner Fixierung der Lehre zustimmen,

die über die von uns abgegebene und von unserer Synode gutgeheissene *Declaration* hinausgeht. . . . Wenn Missouri meinen sollte, dass bei der Herstellung eines neuen einheitlichen Dokuments in diesem und ähnlichen Punkten ein Nachgeben unsererseits und eine Anerkennung seiner Auslegung als der einzig möglichen und darum mit Ausschliessung aller anderen allein berechtigten herbeigeführt werden könnte, dann täuscht es sich. Oder wenn es meinen sollte, dass Nichtübereinstimmung in diesen Punkten der Auslegung zwar etliche Jahre getragen werden könne, dann aber Anerkennung seiner herkömmlichen Auslegung eintreten müsse, dann irrt es ebenso. Gewiss, unsere Kirche hat ihre Bereitwilligkeit erklärt, besonders die von jenen bekannten vier oder fünf Punkten handelnden Schriftaussagen gemeinsam mit dem Missourischen Komitee zu studieren, aber die niemals verschwiegene Voraussetzung war dabei, dass diese Punkte nicht zu den kirchentrennenden gehören. Wenn man jetzt meinen sollte, dass Anerkennung der Missourischen Auslegung dieser Schriftaussagen als der allein richtigen das Ziel dieses gemeinsamen Studiums sein müsse und dass nur bei Erreichung dieses Ziels Kirchengemeinschaft aufgerichtet werden könnte, dann treten wir besser in dieses gemeinsame Studium und damit in die Fortführung unserer Verhandlungen gar nicht ein." *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, October, 1941, pages 596. 597. 598.

When I read this I could not help but ask myself: Can Missouri go on under these circumstances? And I could not help but think of the arguments Dr. Arndt used at Saginaw. —

In point VI, B, 3, concerning "the assumption of a physical resurrection of the martyrs", they say: "We are not ready to deny church fellowship to any one who holds this view." And in point VI, B, 4, concerning the 1000 years of Revelation 20, they again quote Walther.

In the second last paragraph of the Declaration the commissioners of the American Lutheran Church say: "If the honorable Synod of Missouri will acknowledge Section I, II, IV, V, and VI A, together with the statements following after VI B, concerning our attitude toward the *Brief Statement*, as correct, and declare that the points mentioned in Section III and VI B are not disruptive of church fellowship, the American Lutheran Church stands ready officially to declare itself in doctrinal agree-

ment with the honorable Synod of Missouri and to enter into pulpit and altar fellowship with it." The more I study this demand, the less I can understand how committee No. 16 could recommend acceptance of it, and how the Missouri Synod could pass the union resolution in 1938. Did they not perceive what is implied in this demand, and did they not see the consequences? Were they not aware of the fact that by accepting the Declaration, including this paragraph, they were changing the doctrinal position of their Synod? If they did not see it, Dr. Reu saw it and was not slow in stating it publicly. Did they not see, that by accepting the *Declaration*, they disavowed their *Brief Statement*, Pieper's *Dogmatics*, and Walther's writings? Were they not aware of the fact that they could not expect their sister synods in the Synodical Conference to acquiesce and follow suit in changing their doctrinal position?

For what would the acceptance of the *Declaration* by the Missouri Synod really amount to? Just to this that the American Lutheran Church was ready and willing to declare itself in doctrinal agreement with the Missouri Synod on the condition that the American Lutheran Church was free and at liberty not to agree with the doctrinal position of the Synodical Conference, as it is put forth in the *Brief Statement*, in the doctrines of the Last Things, the Antichrist, the Visible Side of the Church. For 90 years Iowa had fought just for this that these doctrines should not be regarded as disruptive of church fellowship, and now they made it a condition of entering into doctrinal agreement with Missouri! And they got it. For what did the Missouri Synod do? At its meeting in St. Louis in 1938 a special committee (Com. No. 16) had the report of the Union Committee of the Missouri Synod, the *Declaration* of the American Lutheran Church and all the different documents concerning the union movement to work over and then to make recommendations to the Synod. Of the recommendations I quote two: I. "That we raise grateful hearts and voices to the triune God, thanking His mercy for the guidance of the Holy Spirit by which the points of agreement have been reached," and II. "That Synod declare that the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod together with the *Declaration* of the representatives of the American Lutheran Church and the provisions of this entire report of Committee No. 16 now being read

and with synod's actions thereupon be *regarded as the doctrinal basis for future church fellowship* between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church." — Note well that the Missouri Synod accepts the two doctrinal documents as a doctrinal basis for future church fellowship. — With regard to the doctrine concerning the last things the committee reports to synod: "In some non-fundamental points concerning the doctrine of the last things the *Declaration* of the representatives of the American Lutheran Church asks tolerance for certain teachings and interpretations which have been rejected in our circles." Note here the word "rejected." And did the American Lutheran Church ask for tolerance? Read Reu's statement above once more and you will see that he does not want "tolerance." No, they asked for, or rather demanded, yea, they made it a condition of the agreement, that the old Iowa position be recognized and adopted, that the non-fundamental doctrines are not to be regarded as "kirchen-trennend," as "disruptive of church fellowship." All one needs to prove this point is resolution No. 3 of the American Lutheran Church, where they say, "We are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines."

But in its recommendation also to adopt this point in the *Declaration* Committee No. 16 refers to the "Synodical Fathers," who held that these points "need not be divisive of church fellowship." The words "need not be divisive" are very weak. How long not? When not? They simply force one from question to question. — And what did Synod do with this report? The Report and the recommendations of Committee No. 16 "on this momentous matter was unanimously adopted by the convention through a rising vote."

Now, how was this action received throughout the Missouri Synod? Not all of the members of Synod were ready and willing to abide by these resolutions. Indeed, a large number of the clergy of the Missouri Synod began to criticize them sharply, claiming that they are unionistic and demanded that they be rescinded. They even began to edit and publish a monthly paper, the *Confessional Lutheran*, as to be able to voice their objections, criticisms and demands publicly. This the *Confessional Lutheran* does in clear and unmistakable language. This fight within the Missouri Synod is going on without abating.

What was the reaction in the sister synods of the Missouri Synod in the Synodical Conference? Here the action of the Missouri Synod did not find a sympathetic ear, reception or response. On the contrary. They were amazed and shocked by the action of the Missouri Synod. The Norwegian Synod and the Wisconsin Synod voiced their disapproval, objection, and criticism in real brotherly, but also very clear language. They pointed out the weakness of the platform, showed up the dangers involved and pleaded with their sister synod to go slowly and work for an agreement which would be satisfactory. Although these warnings and pleas were not very graciously received by many within the Missouri Synod, yet before very long it became evident that these warnings and objections were well founded.

We now come to the meeting of the American Lutheran Church. This meeting took place in October, 1938, at Sandusky, Ohio. Resolutions on the union movement were passed. I will quote some. Resolution 2 reads: "That we declare the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod together with the *Declaration* of our Commission, a sufficient doctrinal basis for church fellowship between, etc." — They do not speak of a "future church fellowship," and they call it a "sufficient basis." Resolution 3 reads: "That, according to our conviction and the resolution of the Missouri Synod, passed at its convention in St. Louis, the afore-mentioned doctrinal agreement is *the* sufficient doctrinal basis for church-fellowship, and that we are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines." Here they say, "The sufficient doctrinal basis." But they condescend to add, "Nevertheless, we are willing to continue the negotiations concerning the points termed in our *Declaration* as "not divisive of church-fellowship," and "recognized as such by the Missouri Synod resolutions." They certainly were not slow in making the most of Missouri's resolution No. 5 and to publish the fact that Missouri had changed its doctrinal position. But the most amazing and far-reaching of the Sandusky resolutions is No. 5: "That we believe that the *Brief Statement viewed in the light of our Declaration* is not in contradiction to the Minneapolis Theses which are the basis of our membership in the American Lutheran Conference. We are not willing to give up this membership. However, we are ready to submit the aforementioned doctrinal agreement to

the other members of the American Lutheran Conference for their official approval and acceptance." This is a truly amazing resolution. Yes, the American Lutheran Church accepted the *Brief Statement*, but with a string attached, namely the "*Brief Statement* viewed in the light of our *Declaration*." By this resolution the American Lutheran Church openly and clearly declared that it did not accept the *Brief Statement* unconditionally but conditionally, namely only insofar as it agrees with the *Declaration* of the American Lutheran Church. They do not put the *Brief Statement* on a par with their *Declaration*, but under it. Furthermore, the *Brief Statement* so viewed is not in contradiction with the Minneapolis Theses. — *Brief Statement, Declaration, Minneapolis Theses* in harmony! Surely, after the *Brief Statement* is practically annulled by the *Declaration*. — And then their declaration about their membership in the American Lutheran Conference! And the last sentence of resolution No. 5 that they would submit the agreement to the other synods of the American Lutheran Conference for their official approval and acceptance! The commissioners of the American Lutheran Church in the last paragraph of the *Declaration* say, "At the same time we recognize it as our duty to do what we can to bring about the acceptance of these doctrinal statements by the bodies with which we are now in church fellowship."

But so far the American Lutheran Church has done nothing to win its sister synods in the American Lutheran Conference to accept and adopt the agreement reached. Did the Missouri Synod after the meeting of the American Lutheran Church at Sandusky, Ohio, wake up and take notice into what a mess it had gotten itself? Some of them did, but not the whole synod and especially not the majority of its Union Committee. They just went on, asked a few questions about the resolutions of the American Lutheran Church and were satisfied with the answers received. But other things followed. In the beginning of the year 1939 the so-called Pittsburgh Agreement was reached between the American Lutheran Church and the U. L. C. It consists of three parts. The first two parts are recommendations with regard to 1. lodge affiliations, 2. altar and pulpit fellowship. The second one reads: "The pastors and congregations shall not practice indiscriminate pulpit and altar fellowship with pastors and churches of

other denominations, whereby doctrinal differences are ignored or virtually made matters of indifference. Especially shall no religious fellowship whatsoever be practiced with such individuals and groups as are not basically evangelical." Did responsible leaders of the Missouri Synod wake up now? — The third part is a "Doctrinal statement on inspiration and the Scriptures." It consists of three paragraphs, stresses the human element in the Bible, avoids the word "inerrancy," speaks of it as "a complete, errorless, unbreakable whole of which Christ is the center" and speaks of the "unique cooperation of the Holy Spirit and the human writers." The Missouri Synod did not find this satisfactory. Whether anything has been done about it, I do not know.

In August, 1939, our Synod met at Watertown, Wisconsin. Much time in committee meetings and on the floor of Synod was spent on the union movement. We passed resolutions on it, taking the agreement between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod, resolutions No. 5 of the American Lutheran Church and the Pittsburgh Agreement into consideration. These resolutions together with the reasons for writing and so wording them are printed in the report pages 59-61. I am quoting resolution No. 2 b: "That under existing conditions further negotiations for establishing church fellowship would involve a denial of the truth and would cause confusion and disturbance in the church and ought therefore be suspended for the time being." We also adopted the recommendation of our Union Committee: "Not two statements should be issued as a basis for agreement; a single joint statement, covering the contested doctrines thetically and antithetically and accepted by both parties to the controversy, is imperative; and, furthermore, such doctrinal statement must be made in clear and unequivocal terms, which do not require laborious additional explanation." Synod also directed its president to appoint a committee which should deal with the Union Committee of the Missouri Synod in regard to our resolution. This was done and this committee met with the Missouri Committee at different times, but so far without success.

Our Watertown Resolutions were received in a very ungracious manner within the Missouri Synod. Dr. Graebner was shocked by the "hostile spirit" he found in them, averred that we had sinned against the 8th commandment by adopting them, criticized and

denounced them bitterly in the "unofficial" Missouri publication *The American Lutheran* of December, 1939, and January, 1940.

In August, 1940, the Synodical Conference met at Chicago, Ill. Here again the union movement was up for discussion and much time was spent on it. The Synodical Conference also passed resolutions and recommendations. — In the findings part three (3) is especially important: "It is generally conceded that obstacles exist, some of which are believed by many members of the Synodical Conference to be not only of a practical but also of a doctrinal nature." And in the accepted recommendations we find in No. 2 this: "That we ask the Missouri Synod not to enter into fellowship (prayer-, altar-, pulpit-) with the American Lutheran Church until matters now objected to by members of the Synodical Conference have been clarified, etc." And No. 4: "That we ask the Missouri Committee earnestly to consider the advisability of bringing about the framing of one document of agreement."

Very important seems to me the exhortation: "All members of the Synodical Conference should feel in duty bound as brethren to watch and pray with these who must bear the responsibility that no steps be taken that might in future lead us away from the Scriptural paths which the Synodical Conference has followed from the days of our fathers."

Since then the American Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Conference, the Missouri Synod and our Synod have met again. The American Lutheran Church met first in October, 1940. What did it do with regard to the union movement? It accepted the Pittsburgh Agreement with the U. L. C., but did nothing about the promise given, that it would lay the agreement between it and the Missouri Synod before the other synods of the American Lutheran Conference for their approval and acceptance. A few weeks later the American Lutheran Conference met at Minneapolis and again nothing was done with regard to this promise. But President Poppen of the American Lutheran Church spoke there and gave the Conference the assurance that the American Lutheran Church has no intention of leaving the Conference to join with Missouri. According to the *Lutheran Standard* of December 7, 1940, quoted in the *Confessional Lutheran*, Dr. Poppen said: "We want you to quit talking as though the American Lutheran Church has any intention of leaving the American Lutheran Con-

ference. None of us have advocated that. Won't you please quit saying that." And the *Lutheran Standard* further says, "Over and over the assurance was given that we value our associations in this Conference too highly to give them up for any other." When I think of the picture Dr. Graebner draws of some of the synods in the Conference, for instance the Augustana Synod, the Norwegian Free Church (denying publicly the inspiration of the Scriptures, giving leeway to all kinds of false doctrines, fellowshiping with almost all the sects, etc) I wonder what real interest the American Lutheran Church has in a union with Missouri. And still more do I wonder why Missouri after all that has happened since 1938 has not become disillusioned and is ready to give up the *Techtelmechtel* with the American Lutheran Church.

In June, 1941, the Missouri Synod met at Ft. Wayne, Ind. — With regard to the union movement the following facts of this meeting are of interest to us. The Missouri Synod did not rescind the action and the resolution of 1938. Committee No. 3 worked over the material, viz. the report of the Committee on Lutheran Union, and the memorials sent in, and made recommendations to Synod. Recommendation No. 3 reads: "That we express our willingness to continue our efforts toward bringing about true unity in the Lutheran church of this country, both in doctrine and practice, but that we are determined to do so only on the basis of the will of God and the Lutheran Confessions, lest we be unthankful to the Lord for our Lutheran heritage, unfaithful to the trust which the Lord has committed to us, and unworthy of the Lord's continued blessings." This recommendation was adopted. — Recommendation No. 4 read:

"That we regret that the American Lutheran Church has made, and is making, it difficult for the Missouri Synod and its sister synods in the Synodical Conference, to continue negotiations by not taking as firm an attitude in reference to doctrine as under the circumstances we have reason to hope for, especially

- a) that the American Lutheran Church found the Pittsburgh Agreement on inspiration of the Scriptures to be satisfactory.
- b) that according to our information the American Lutheran Church did not at the Minneapolis Convention of the

American Lutheran Conference officially approach its sister synods on the matter of Lutheran Unity between our Synod and the American Lutheran Church.

- c) that the leaders of the American Lutheran Church in its official publications made statements which are at variance with the Lutheran Confessions and Lutheran practice."

These points certainly state facts. And after Sandusky, Detroit and Minneapolis they surely were in place. What did the convention at Ft. Wayne do with regard to this recommendation? It rejected it and adopted in its place the following resolution:

"That we acknowledge with joy and gratitude to God that, according to reports which we have received, many individuals and groups within the American Lutheran Church have made efforts to establish doctrinal unity with us; but we regret that the American Lutheran Church as a body has not taken as firm an attitude in reference to establishing doctrinal unity as under the circumstances we had reason to hope for."

By adopting this resolution instead of the one originally proposed the Missouri Synod weakened its position to a great extent. There it had undisputable facts. Here nice words. — Let us ask here: What has the American Lutheran Church done about the facts cited in the rejected resolution No. 4 at its recent meeting at Mendota, Ill.? As far as I can see, nothing, — neither with regard to the Pittsburgh Agreement, nor with regard to its sister synods in the American Lutheran Conference, nor with regard to the articles in its official paper "The Lutheran Standard."

Oh yes, it did something. It declared readiness to establish church fellowship with the Missouri Synod, or the United Lutheran Church, or with both. One wonders how the Missouri Synod will react to this resolution. The American Lutheran Church, which can be in church fellowship with the other synods of the American Lutheran Conference, where heterodoxy, pulpit-fellowship with the reformed, rabid millennialism and un-Lutheran church practise is in vogue and where the doctrine of the verbal inspiration and the inerrancy of the Bible is openly assailed and is doing nothing about it, can also declare its willingness to establish church fellowship with the U. L. C., where the same conditions obtain as in the

American Lutheran Conference, which U. L. C. "gulped down" the Pittsburgh Agreement only by a majority, the delegations of whole synods voting solidly against it.

Dr. Poppen, the President of the American Lutheran Church, at the meeting of the U. L. C. in October in Louisville, Kentucky, „expressed," according to a report in the *Lutheran Witness* of November 10, 1942, "the hope that also the Synodical Conference would be willing to establish fellowship on the same basis, that is on the acceptance of the Pittsburgh Agreement and of Missouri Synod's "Brief Statement" as accepted by the American Lutheran Church with the Declaration of its Commissioners in 1938." — Remember how the *Brief Statement* was adopted by the American Lutheran Church! Remember also that beautiful and so far-reaching phrase: "Viewed in the light of the *Declaration*"!

The Missouri Synod in 1941 changed the name of its committee on Lutheran Union to: "The Committee on Doctrinal Union in the Lutheran Church of America." — And one more resolution passed at Ft. Wayne:

7. "That our sister synods in the Synodical Conference be asked to send their representatives to the joint meetings of this committee on doctrinal union."

According to this last voted resolution our synod was invited to join and take part in the union proceedings. At the meeting of our Joint Synod at Saginaw, Mich., in August, 1941, this invitation was laid before the body. But we could not accept this invitation without first rescinding our resolutions adopted at Watertown, Wis., in 1939. We reviewed these resolutions in great detail. And we found that we could not rescind the Watertown Resolutions with a good conscience. So we reiterated them, and as a result let the brethren know that we could not accept the invitation. — What Dr. Reu has to say to this invitation the reader may glean from a foregoing quotation.

In connection with this whole union business it is to be noted that of late the church papers of some of the synods of the American Lutheran Conference come out very outspoken and boldly against a union with Missouri. I would especially like to draw attention to an article in the Norwegian Free Church official organ

“Folkebladet” of July, 1941, under the heading, “Union with Missouri.”

The article is quoted in the *Confessional Lutheran* of November, 1941, partly also in the *Quartalschrift* of January, 1942. There you also find excerpts from other church papers published by synods belonging to the American Lutheran Conference, which speak in the same way.

Especially interesting and illuminating with regard to Dr. Arndt's arguments at Saginaw is the above cited article by Dr. Reu of the American Lutheran Church, in *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, October, 1941, under the heading: “Müssen die Verhandlungen mit Missouri nun aufhören?” You will find parts of it quoted in the *Quartalschrift* of January, 1942. In this article Dr. Reu as spokesman of the American Lutheran Church's Union Committee flatly rejects and refutes the assumption that the American Lutheran Church would be instructed by Missouri, and then just as flatly declares that the American Lutheran Church had gone the limit and would go no further. After reading this article I was quite sure that the movement would now surely end, and Missouri would break off negotiations.

This is the status of the union movement to date. We, as members of the Wisconsin Synod and of the Synodical Conference, and thus a sister synod of the Missouri Synod, are vitally interested in this movement, the proceedings, the results and final outcome. The Missouri Synod, by the resolutions passed in 1938, declared the results attained thus far “a doctrinal basis for *future* church fellowship.” The American Lutheran Church also declared in 1938 that there is “a sufficient doctrinal basis for church fellowship.” If these resolutions by the two church bodies mean anything, they certainly mean this, that full doctrinal agreement exists between them. But our Wisconsin Synod cannot agree to this agreement. It asks the Missouri Synod “to stop proceedings at least for the time being.” And the reason for this? “Under existing conditions further negotiations for establishing church fellowship would involve a denial of the truth.” Why? “The Sandusky resolutions and the Pittsburgh Agreement made it evident that there was *no real doctrinal basis* for church fellowship.” — The Norwegian Synod voiced the same convictions. And the Synodical Conference says, “that obstacles exist, some of which

are believed by many members of the Synodical Conference to be of a doctrinal nature." There are good reasons for our stand, to wit:

I. The American Lutheran Church has not given proof since 1938 that it is determined to live up to the agreement reached and the promises made.

II. The Pittsburgh Agreement with the U. L. C. was ratified by the American Lutheran Church.

III. The doctrinal implications created by the *Declaration* of the American Lutheran Church.

VI. The writings of Dr. Reu, the leading member of the Union Commission of the American Lutheran Church — as for instance, "Unionism," "What is Scripture?", and especially his article in the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* of October, 1941, titled, "Müssen die Verhandlungen mit Missouri nun aufhören?"

W. Bodamer.

Worship in the New Testament Church

An Essay read before the Convention of the
Western Wisconsin District,
Waterloo, Wisconsin, June 15-18, 1942,
by Frederic Edward Blume.

The publication of the new Lutheran Hymnal and its introduction into our congregations together with the renewed interest in the external forms of worship that has been evidenced for some time in our church and has received added impetus among us by the reception of *The Lutheran Hymnal* have suggested the topic of this discussion: "Worship in the New Testament Church." It is proposed herein to study not the liturgy of the church, either apostolic or modern, *as such*, but to set forth rather that which is fundamental to both liturgies and hymnology, namely, the underlying ideas as to just what the Church of the New Testament does when it worships its God and what it aims to accomplish by such worship. An attempt will be made to study passages in the New Testament that speak of worship in order to arrive at a clear conception

of what the various elements of worship in the New Testament Church are.

Accordingly our discussion falls into three parts:

- I. A Definition of Worship in the New Testament Church;
- II. A Study of the Elements that Constitute this Worship;
- III. A Statement of the Aims and Purpose of such Worship.

I. A Definition of Worship in the New Testament Church

Worship is, in its broadest sense, that activity of man, based upon the proper attitude of heart and mind, whereby he proclaims his reverence for God, exercises his fellowship with God, and performs the holy will of God. Only the angels of God in heaven can, of course, strictly speaking, worship God perfectly. Matthew 18:10 our Lord speaks of them as those who "do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven." In his vision of the Ancient of Days (Daniel 7:10) the prophet saw their "thousand thousands ministering unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him." And in Psalm 103:20 the holy singer exclaims: "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word."

But man, by his fall into sin, lost that true and clear knowledge of God and that actual fellowship with God that was his before the fall into sin and while he was still in possession of the image of God, the "image" that we can define as the perfect conformity of man's mind to the mind of God. Fallen man's attitude toward God is not conformity to God's mind and will, but rebellion against God, and so long as he depends upon himself for guidance, sinful man cannot, properly speaking, worship God at all. His abject fear of the forces of nature, his deification of them in pagan polytheism, his worship of the idols of his own creation, his attempt by sacrifice, cultus, and self-imposed penance to placate the wrath of his self-made idols — in short, all the belief and practice of anything called "religion" which is not based upon divine revelation but finds its origin in the hopelessly perverted heart and mind of sinful man — is worse than no worship of God at all. It is a vain groping of the blind led by others equally blind.

And St. Paul adds (I Corinthians 10:20) that such worship is the worship of devils and not the worship of God.

With the vain gropings of those who thus go their own way to destruction we contrast the worship of God's believers, whose hope rests in Jehovah, their Savior-God, who will surely keep His Promise recorded Genesis 3:15 that the Seed of the Woman will crush Satan's head. Eve's utterance at the birth of Cain (Genesis 4:1) is clear evidence that she believes that the Lord against whom she so shamefully sinned will keep his gracious promise. Abel (Genesis 4:4) brings a sacrifice of the firstlings of his flock. His is an act of worship, proclaiming his reverence for the God who made the promise contained in the Protevangelion and typifying, because it is a bloody sacrifice, the death of the promised Redeemer, which will reestablish the fellowship (the at-one-ment) of God and man that was disrupted by sin. The sacrifice of Abel, the first clearly defined and God-pleasing act of worship recorded for us, therefore contains the two elements that characterize all true worship: it is both *sacrificial* and *sacramental*. It is sacrificial in the sense that it contains an expression of the sentiments of the worshiper's heart directed to God; the worshiper gives, God receives. It is "*sacramental*" (the term is misleading but is regularly used in this connection) in the sense that it conveys something to the worshiper, here, the repeated assurance of the coming of the Redeemer, expressed in the type of the slaughtered and offered sacrificial victim. Insofar as this act of worship is "*sacramental*," then, the worshiper receives, and God gives.

As soon, in the record of Genesis, as the number of believers has grown sufficiently large, religious services are instituted: "Men began to call upon the name of the Lord" (Genesis 4:26). We notice that the object of their worship is not *God*, the Mighty One, the wise, inscrutable, holy, and just Architect of the Universe, but *the Lord, Jehovah*, He who revealed Himself to men in His loving-kindness, who has promised His Redeemer, and who in the fulness of time will surely send him. Again, the sacrificial and sacramental elements in such a worship would be intimately blended. And what of Cain and his descendants at this time when the first

public preaching was done? They must have *heard!* But like Jerusalem at the time of Christ, they would not worship the God of their salvation. But despite the defection of many, the church in that primeval world was kept alive; men continued to worship the true God in a way pleasing to Him because He revealed Himself to them; so Enoch walked with God (Genesis 5:22), and Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:8); they expressed their reverence for the Lord, they exercised their fellowship with him, they performed His will, for Jehovah had revealed Himself to them.

To keep such worship of Himself alive and to establish it in an elaborate ceremonial that would typify the divine plan of redemption, God chose Israel to be a peculiar nation to Himself; in His Law He revealed His holy will to this people, and by means thereof He separated Israel from the idolatrous nations of the neighborhood. In an elaborately prescribed service of worship He indicated how Israel was to worship Him. However, that ceremonial was but a series of types, symbols and figures intended, by picture and image, to keep alive the preaching of the Seed of the Woman begun in Paradise, the preaching that was one day to be stated, now directly and without a figure, by John the Baptist thus: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). By accomplishing this, and by holding ever before the Israelite the divine demand for perfect holiness which his conscience told him he could not fulfill (thus causing him to despair of his own righteousness and prompting him to rely upon the righteousness of another — the Christ) the Law was to serve as the means of bringing Israel to Christ (Galatians 3:24).

However, many an Israelite soon came to feel that the mere external performance of the ritualistic demands was an end in itself and a God-pleasing form of worship. He neglected the real purpose of that prescribed worship, which was to keep alive the knowledge of the divinely revealed plan of salvation through Christ, to praise God for His mercy shown by revealing that such was His plan, to petition the Almighty that the worshiper himself might also share in the blessings wrought by His Chosen One, to enable the worshiper to

enjoy these blessings which were then still in the future but which, since they were promised by the All-Faithful God, were as good as actually given already, to aid in making very real to the Old Testament worshiper the thought that to him who believed God was a Father, a Friend, and that therefore it was in the very nature of things that his (the worshiper's) life should be in conformity with God his Father's will — all this was sadly neglected, and the PROPHETS were sent to call Israel back to the real purpose of its worship. One example of such prophetic preaching must suffice: Isaiah 29: 13. 14. 22-24:

Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

So the Old Testament ceremonial was intended to be a "shadow of things to come", but it was only a "shadow" (Colossians 2:17), to be superseded by the "body", Christ, when He would appear. Yet, despite all that the prophets had said, the view that external performance of a ritual was a God-pleasing form of worship became, and remained the characteristic Jewish point of view, the view that was to find its most vigorous exponents in the Pharisaism that our Lord so often attacked. The Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (John 4) too feels that the main point of worship is the *place* at which it is performed; and Jesus has to remind her that "true worshippers worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (v. 23).

St. Paul too describes the Christians as those who "worship God in the spirit" (Philippians 3:3) to contrast them with the Jews who pride themselves in their circumcision of the flesh and therefore resist the spirit of God and the Truth

as it has been revealed in Christ. At the same time, however, while demanding a "worship in the spirit", Paul demands of Christians the utter surrender of their beings, of their very bodies, to God as a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice to God. Such, he says, will be their "reasonable service" (Romans 12:1), a worship of God very different from the mere external performance of a ritual, which was all that paganism ever demanded and which came to be also the Pharisaic ideal of Judaism.

So, then, worship in the New Testament Church, while basing upon faith in Christ and receiving meaning from that faith, is more than the expression and cultivation of that faith and the exercise and cultivation of the resulting fellowship with God in the worship service only. The Christian's worship of his God carries over to his external behavior. If this practical consequence of his worship of God is lacking, James (1:26) reminds him that his religion is *vain* (*μάταιος*), a worship as fruitless as is the hypocritical piety of the Pharisees, of whom Jesus says: "In *vain* (*μάτην*) they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9).

If such then is worship in the New Testament church, what are the various elements of which it is composed? — how did the early church go about worshipping its God in spirit and in truth? These and similar questions we shall try to answer as we now turn, *secondly*, to

II. A Study of the Elements that Constitute Worship in the New Testament Church

1. **Fellowship.** It lies in the very nature of the faith that expresses itself in worship that this faith proceed from the heart. So too is it in the very nature of faith that it prompt those who have it to seek fellowship with one another. For faith naturally *seeks* fellowship and *creates* fellowship. Our Lord indicates by the very words He uses for the Christian community and for its acts of worship that such is His intention. The Christians are the "sheep of his fold" (John 10:16); they are the "branches" on Him, the true vine, (John 15:5); "drink *ye all* of it", He says of the cup in the institu-

tion of the Sacrament of the altar (Matthew 26:27); "tell it to the church" (*ἐκκλησία*, assembly), He says Matthew 18:17 when describing the treatment of the brother who has sinned.

How well this fellowship was exercised in the days of Christianity's founding the whole New Testament bears witness. "They continued in fellowship" is said of the early Jerusalem Church (Acts 2:42). In fact, the books of the New Testament were written (gospels, epistles, the apocalypse) for the express purpose of providing instruction, admonition, encouragement to believers who are now in fellowship with one another. Ephesians 4:11, 12 Paul dwells on the thought of how well the ascended Christ cares for his church, giving "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the edifying of the body of Christ." It would be difficult to conceive of at least three kinds (prophets, evangelists, pastors) of these divinely sent servants of the church as active in anything but a group, a fellowship. John declares what the motive behind such a fellowship should be (I John 4:11): "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

Upon what now is based this religious fellowship (*κοινωνία*, communion, participation) that the believers have with Christ and in all the blessings that Christ brings? Whereupon rests the fellowship they have with one another? Paul answers that plainly I Corinthians 1:9: "Ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." Christians have been elevated to the position of *fellow*s with Christ. They enter into a mystical union with their exalted Lord. In time they *suffer with* Him (*συνπάσχειν*); to all eternity they shall be *glorified together* with Him (*συνδοξασθῆναι*) (Romans 8:17).

The Christians' fellowship with Christ results necessarily in their fellowship with one another, being all members of Christ, with this difference that so far as the individual Christian is concerned his fellowship with his fellow believers now consists not only in *having* part in them, but also in *giving* them part in himself (*teilhaben* — *teilgeben*). A close fellowship, having obligations all its own, exists, says Paul Romans 15:27, between Jewish-Christians and those of pagan origin:

the latter have received a share in the spiritual gifts of the Jerusalem church, and thereby are obligated to share with it their own material goods (Romans 15:26). Especially under the pressure of persecution and suffering are the bonds of Christian fellowship and communion strengthened and valued. Paul thanks the Philippians (4:14) for their gift to him in his hour of trial and assures them that since they are partakers both in his bonds and in the "defense and confirmation of the Gospel", so shall they too all be partakers (*συγκοινωνοί*) of his grace (1:7).

John in his First Epistle delights in the word "fellowship" (*κοινωνία*) as his expression for the religious sphere in which the Christian has his being. John uses the word with the connotation of "sincerest, most deeply-felt communion." To be a Christian means to have fellowship with God (1:3.6) and finds its expression in the fellowship that believing brothers have with one another (1:3.7). This Christ-fellowship of believers is a fellowship that begins here in time and reaches over into eternity where it shall come to utter perfection ("we shall be like him", 3:2).

It is this feeling of fellowship that prompts Christians to worship their God together, in fellowship with one another. Shall we say then that private worship is not a God-pleasing thing? Certainly not! Our Lord commands it Matthew 6:6: "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." We know that Daniel, Peter, and many others, heroes of faith all, yes, Jesus Himself, retired to worship in private. For what we call *private worship* and the exercise of *fellowship in worship* are essentially one and the same. In both the God of Mercy and Grace in the person of Jesus Christ is very close to us; worship in fellowship with others is carried on in the physical nearness of those with whom we have fellowship in Christ; private worship is carried on in the physical absence but very keenly felt spiritual presence and fellowship of those with whom we share all spiritual blessings.

2. **The Reading of Scripture.** So do the Christians of the New Testament church express and exercise their fellowship with God and with one another. Let it be noted that

only to Christians is such fellowship possible, for only in Christianity is there a real fellowship between God and men, the fellowship that was restored by the redemptive work of Christ ("purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil . . . that I might be His own") and that becomes the individual's own when the Holy Spirit has done His work in his, the believer's heart. But great as is the Christian's debt of gratitude for God's gifts of *Redemption* and *Sanctification*, his worship of God is not only directed at giving Him thanks and praise for these mercies, but also at the edification (Erbauung, *οικοδομή*) of the individual. For while fellowship with God is indeed present, the Christian who enjoys that fellowship still lives in his sinful flesh; as one of the communion of the saints he is indeed a member of the true, the invisible Church, but since he is a human being, his Christianity is still a developing, a growing, a to-be-perfected thing to his dying day. (Ephesians 4:13: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.") God has given the means whereby his growth in Christ may progress: word and sacrament. By the Gospel he became a Christian; by the Gospel his inward life is to be nourished and built up as God wills that it be. Therefore was the reading of Scripture an important element in worship in the New Testament Church from the beginning on.

The Church of the Apostles had of course no New Testament. It produced that New Testament. Its Bible was the Old Testament, the Word of Moses and the Prophets. But Christ had given His disciples the general command to preach His word and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19); He had promised to send them the power of the Holy Ghost, who should support them in their witnessing ("unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8); at Pentecost that Holy Spirit was given them in a very special degree; and this Spirit then prompted them (*impulsus*), when the occasion was given, not only to oral preaching (Peter at Pentecost, Paul to the Athenians) but also to written composition (Peter to the Churches of Asia Minor — I Peter; Paul to the church at

Rome — Romans). Essentially therefore the apostles' written word is identical in authority with their spoken utterance; in both writing and speaking the Holy Ghost "taught them all things" and "brought all things to their remembrance whatsoever Jesus had said unto them" (John 14:26); when they wrote as well as when they spoke it was the divinely given Spirit of Truth who guided them in all truth (John 16:13) (*Illuminatio*); they spoke *and wrote* "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (I Corinthians 2:13), so that of their written words as well as of their oral preaching that applies which Jesus said of His disciples in His prayer to His Father in Heaven (John 17:8): "I have given unto them the words (τὰ ῥήματα) which thou gavest me." These writings are then but the written statement of the content of their oral preaching and must till the end of time remain the immovable foundation of Christ's Church of the New Testament (Ephesians 2:20. 21: "Ye . . . are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord"), and together with the revelation granted through the prophets of the Old Testament the one *canon* of faith and conduct for Christ's church here upon earth; so that what was, for example, preaching to Paul's congregation as contained in his epistles has become Scripture reading to us.

3. **Preaching.** From the days of the earliest New Testament church, preaching too stands out as a prominent constitutive element in worship. For not only did Jesus live, die, and rise again. These facts of our salvation must be preached so that they may be believed by men. Therefore we hear not only of the *cross*, but of *the word of the cross* (I Corinthians 1:18), not only of *reconciliation*, but of *the word of reconciliation* (II Corinthians 5:19). To sinful men has been assigned the duty of bringing this message to others. They are not miracle men, nor philosophers. They are not erudite scholars who convince all by the very stupendousness of their learning, nor are they skilled rhetoricians who by felicitous choice of word and measured cadence of diction know how to cast their binding spell upon all hearers. They are messengers, heralds, pro-

claimers, nothing more (I Corinthians 1:23: "We preach [κηρύσσομεν, proclaim as heralds do] Christ crucified." Being such messengers they strive not to win adherents for their own persons or interest, but rather to bind men to Christ. The preacher proclaims Jesus Christ the Lord, not himself [II Corinthians 4:5]).

The content of preaching in the New Testament Church is also fixed: its focal point is the "kingship of God". Acts 20:25 Paul says: "I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." But preaching is not a dissertation on the nature of this kingdom of God; it is a proclamation, the announcing of an event. So it is said of John the Baptist, and so Paul says of himself — they came preaching the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God. As any king's herald runs before his master's chariot announcing the king's coming, so the preacher is to announce: "The Kingdom of God." He will proclaim: "The God of Salvation has completed your salvation and would establish his kingly rule in your hearts too." With this proclamation is combined the preaching of "repentance and remission of sins" (Luke 24:47). For in the βασιλεία there is forgiveness of sins; the proclaimed word is a divine word and therefore an effective word, a word that brings to pass what it proclaims. Therefore preaching is not a mere declaration of facts; but that which is proclaimed takes place in the believing hearer. Yet in the believer only. For judgment and grace alike follow the preaching of the word. To the one it brings salvation; to the other damnation. To one, the preaching of Christ is σκάνδαλον and μωρία, to the other δύναμις θεοῦ and σοφία θεοῦ (I Corinthians 1:23f.).

The preaching of the **kingdom** demands that the **king** also be preached. So Jesus is preached as Messiah (Acts 8:5), the Savior promised to Eve in Paradise, the fulfillment of all proclamations by Israelitish prophets; and as the Son of God (Acts 9:20). But whether in New Testament preaching it is the crucified Jesus (I Corinthians 1:23) or the risen Christ (I Corinthians 15:12) upon whom the stress is laid, it is the whole Christ who is the theme of preaching, the Christ who by His death and resurrection has now become the exalted,

glorified Lord (II Corinthians 4:5). The reality of the resurrection of Christ is the dynamic force behind the preaching of the apostolic church. For this is a fact that is not merely to be recognized like any other historical fact. It is a fact that must be preached again and again. And the preaching of the facts of the history of salvation conveys that salvation itself to the hearer, not in this way to be sure that the subject matter itself brings salvation, but in this way that God works through the Word that is preached. The message does not lose its divine appeal by repetition, but must be proclaimed again and again, not only to the world (Matthew 28:19,20) but also to the church (II Timothy 4:2); nor will the message tolerate any admixture to its purity (Galatians 1:6,7, "another gospel which is not another"). But those who preach the Word in its truth and purity may be certain of being contradicted and of arousing more violent opposition still, yes, even of being persecuted and of suffering every other type of hardship. They have the example of the Master Himself and of His Ambassadors before them.

What the further content of preaching in the New Testament Church ought to be, the content of all epistles can teach us. For every epistle is in effect a sermon to the recipient congregation by the apostle now absent in body, but very present in spirit. His letter was intended to be read before the assembled church (I Thessalonians 5:27; II Thessalonians 2:15; 3:14; Colossians 4:16), and follows the general pattern set by Paul (Acts 20:17-35) in his sermon to the Ephesian elders: it speaks of repentance of sins and of faith in the redemption wrought by Christ; it makes application of eternal truths to the present situation; it exhorts to Christian duty. The preacher will not hesitate to reprove sin (I Corinthians 5), nor to dwell upon difficult problems (I Corinthians 7 and 8 marriage, meats offered to idols); he will be careful to show what sanctification, the Christian life, means, coming down to concrete facts and not dwelling on vague generalities only about which each hearer might go home and feel the preacher meant "somebody else, not me." Cf. Paul's Corinthian correspondence. Nor ought the preacher to neglect Paul's example of showing how Christian giving is a part of Christian living

(I Corinthians 16; II Corinthians 9:7). At all times the preacher's attitude will be that of Paul to his Thessalonians: "Ye were dear to us" (I Thessalonians 2:8); "ye are our glory and joy" (I Thessalonians 2:20); their attitude to him will be that of the Thessalonians to their Paul, of whom the latter says: "When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God" (I Thessalonians 2:13). The preacher must prepare his congregation for the trials of the Christian life "Knowing that we are appointed thereto" (I Thessalonians 3:3); he must warn that those who reject the truth of God are deluded into accepting as truth the devil's lies (II Thessalonians 2:11.12); he will not hesitate to call errorists by name should the need to do so arise, as the Nicolaitans are named Revelation 2:6.

4. **Prayer.** Even when we turn to prayer, which is in itself predominantly a **sacrificial** act, does our characterization of worship as being both sacrificial and sacramental hold true. For in prayer the praying one now directs his gaze entirely upon God, thanking his Heavenly Father for all the gifts that are his as a child of God and as a member of God's Kingdom; but then again in prayer the worshipper, still addressing God, prays that the use of the means of Grace be continued to himself and to the whole Church, and that his growth in grace, his strengthening in faith, his patience in suffering continue and become ever more nearly perfect, directing his attention now to himself and to his own place in the Kingdom of God, and praying that the means of grace be and remain effective for him also.

The outstanding characteristic of prayer in the Apostolic Church is the prayerer's certainty of being heard. For hadn't Jesus said: "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24)? *That promise still stands.* The believing Christian who prays to his God prays from a will that is no longer his own but is identified with the will of God ("Not as I will, but as thou wilt," Matthew 26:39). Such a prayer will be heard, for it asks what the Almighty wills also. If the Christian prays from such a heart, how could he still contemplate ven-

geance on his neighbor while asking God for forgiveness of his own sins? Selfish petitions will not be heard, for selfish desires separate the petitioner from his God, and only when he maintains his fellowship of heart and will with his God has the worshipper the assurance that his prayers will be heard (James 4:2-6).

Praying by all worshippers present seems to have been common practice at Corinth from an early date (I Corinthians 14:13-15), for we must remind ourselves that Jesus' injunction to retire into private to pray is directed against ostentatious praying, not against praying in unison. The very form of the Lord's Supper as instituted by Jesus would presuppose common prayer; our Lord indeed gave His special promise to hear the petitions of the praying congregation, "where two or three are gathered in his name" (Matthew 18:19, 20).

Therefore we read that the church prays for Peter in prison (Acts 12:5); that the elders in Paul's Asia Minor church are ordained midst prayer and fasting (Acts 14:23); that Paul prays for the faith of the Roman Christians (Romans 1:8); and even though the Christian's citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20), he is exhorted to pray for "all men, for kings and for all that are in authority" (I Timothy 2:1-3), praying thus for those temporal blessings which Luther includes under the blessings of *Daily Bread*, not indeed as an end in themselves, but "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

5. **The Singing of Hymns.** The Church early gave evidence of a "wholly unparalleled genius for liturgy." The earliest hymns were of course Old Testament psalms, like those sung at the Last Supper. Extempore religious singing too seems to have been among the practices of the Corinthian church (I Corinthians 14:26). Paul makes the appeal to the Colossians to sing hymns and sacred songs together (Colossians 3:16). Acts 16:25 we are told that Paul and Silas sang "hymns of praise to God" while in the Philippian jail. Ephesians 5:19 the exhortations of Colossians 3:16 are repeated, and in Ephesians 5:14 a fragment of an early Christian hymn is quoted:

Awake thou that sleepest,
And arise from the dead,
And Christ shall give thee light.

The Church Father Clement of Alexandria (*Protrepticus* IX, 84:2 — ed. Staehlin, p. 63) seems to quote the genuine continuation, which may be translated:

(Christ) the Sun of Resurrection,
Begotten ere the rise of dawn,
Good Giver of His gift of living
To all His rays now shine upon.

The Latin writer Pliny reports to the Emperor from his official post in Bithynia that the Christians of his province come together and sing hymns to "Christ as to a god", and that they sing these antiphonally.

The essence of hymn singing is defined for us Acts 16:25: Paul and Silas *praying* sang hymns. The exaltation of feeling, arising from the worshipper's sense of fellowship with his God regained for him by the mediation of Christ, is most readily expressed in poetic form. Students of literature point out that any emotional pitch will spontaneously find expression in the poetic form. How true that is of the emotional pitch created by the worshipper's sense of union with his God is proved by the very bulk of material the hymnologist has to deal with. — May accordingly our hymn singing be what it ought to be, *a form of praying*; may we always know what we have prayed, and may our hymns never degenerate into a mere "singing along."

6. **The Celebration of Holy Communion.** If in worship the nearness of God is felt to be very real, then the Lord's Supper is indeed a climax in Christian worship. For earliest Christendom realized that *the presence of Jesus* with all He meant was *given* by the sacrament. This is shown by the expression מְרַנָּא תָא (Maranatha: "Come, Our Lord", I Corinthians 16:22; Didache 10:6), in itself a cry of longing for the Lord who is to return to earth in glory at the last day; but in the connections quoted obviously a portion of the early communion liturgy. In the sacrament the Lord was felt to be really and effectively present. The presence thus granted

was to serve as a guarantee of fellowship with Christ the Lord despite the fact that so long as the worshipper yet lived he was separate from his Lord. And the fellowship with his Lord granted to the worshipper in the sacrament was to be but a foretaste of the joy of everlasting union with Him in glory.

This is not the place for a discussion of the doctrine of the Sacrament, since we are describing *worship*, not doctrine, but I should like here to quote at length the earliest description of a full Christian service. It came from the pen of Justin Martyr, a second century apologist. Addressed to the Roman Emperors in behalf of the Christians it reads thus (*Apology* 61-67. The translation is of the Greek text published by E. J. Goodspeed, *Die ältesten Apologeten* [Göttingen, 1914], pp. 70-76):

61 "1 We shall set forth also how we, being made new creatures, have offered ourselves a sacrifice to God, lest we should seem guilty of some wrong if we omitted this from our exposition.

2 Those who are convinced and who believe that all we teach and say is true and who promise to be able to live accordingly, are taught how to utter prayers of petition to God for forgiveness of past sins, fasting the while; and we pray and fast with them.

3 Then they are brought to a place where there is water and undergo a new birth such as we too have undergone. For in the name of God the Father and Lord of all and of our Savior Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit they then wash in the water.

4 For Christ has also said: "Unless you are born again, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of the Heavens."

5 Now it is evident that persons once born cannot possibly enter their mother's womb again.

6 And the prophet Isaiah, as we have already said, has shown how those who have sinned and are penitent shall escape from their sins.

7 He spoke thus: "Wash; become clean; remove all iniquity from your souls; learn to do the good; rescue

the orphan and help the widow; and come here and we will reason together," says the Lord: "Even if your sins are dark red, I will make them white, like wool; and if they are scarlet, I will make them white, like snow."

8 "If you will not hearken to me, a sword will devour you; for the Lord's mouth has spoken thus."

9 The meaning of this we have learned from the apostles:

10 Since our first birth came about without our knowledge and without our consent, springing as we did from the moist seed of our parents joined in marital union, and since we were born midst foul and corrupt surroundings, the name of God the Father and Master of all is spoken over him in the water who wishes to be born anew and has repented of his past sins; this term is the only one used by the person who brings the one to be washed to the washing.

11 For no one can utter a name suitable to the unnameable God; if anyone thinks he can, he is hopelessly mad.

12 We call this washing "enlightenment", since those who learn these lessons are enlightened in understanding.

13 And in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified at the time of Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who by the prophets proclaimed everything about Jesus before it happened, the one who is being "enlightened" is washed.

62 "1 And when the demons had heard this washing proclaimed by the prophet, they brought it about that those too sprinkle themselves who intend to enter within the demons' sanctuaries and approach their images for the purpose of bringing libations and sacrifices; yes, they even have those who come to their shrines undergo a complete washing before they enter them.

2 The demons even imitate what happened to the aforementioned Moses when their priests order all those who enter the sanctuaries and those who serve there to remove their shoes.

3 For at that time when Moses was ordered to go down into Egypt and bring out from there the people of the

Israelites, while he was herding his *maternal uncle's* [*sic!*] sheep in Arabia, our Christ spoke to him in the form of fire from out of a thorn-bush and said: "Take off your sandals and come here and listen."

4 He did so and was told to go down into Egypt and bring up from there the people of the Israelites, and received great power from the Christ who spoke with him in the form of fire. So he went down and brought the people out after he had done the mighty wonders about which, if you wish, you can learn the exact truth from his own writings.

63 "1 All the Jews even now teach that the God whose name cannot be uttered spoke to Moses.

2 Therefore the Prophetic Spirit rebuked them through Isaiah, the aforementioned prophet, as we have already written, and said: "An ox knows his master and an ass the manger of his master, but Israel does not know me and my people does not understand me."

3 And Jesus Christ similarly rebuked the Jews for knowing neither what the Father was nor what the Son was and said himself: "No one knows the Father except the Son, and no one knows the Son except the Father and those to whom the Son reveals himself."

4 The Logos of God is his Son, as we said before.

5 He is also called messenger (*angelos*) and ambassador (*apostolos*), he proclaims what must be known, and is sent to reveal what is proclaimed, as our Lord himself told us: "He who hears me hears him who has sent me."

6 Out of the writings of Moses this will become clear.

7 In them we read: "And the angel of God spoke in a flame of fire with Moses out of the thorny bush and said: 'I am He Who Is, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, the God of your fathers.

8 Go down into Egypt and lead my people out.'"

9 The rest you can read for yourselves if you wish. It is impossible to quote the documents here in full.

10 But these considerations are sufficient to prove that Jesus the Christ is God's son and ambassador (*apostolos*),

being first LOGOS, and having appeared, now in the form of fire, and now in an incorporeal form (or — in the form of angels). But in our time He endured to become man for the sake of the human race and to suffer what the demons brought upon Him at the hands of the unreasoning Jews.

11 They admit that He is the Father and Creator of all who spoke the words literally contained in Moses' writings: "And the angel of God spoke to Moses in the fire of flame at the bush and said: 'I am He Who Is, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.'" "

12 Therefore the prophetic spirit rebuked them and said: "Israel does not know me, and my people does not understand me."

13 And again Jesus, while he was among them, said, as we have shown: "No one knows the Father except the Son, nor the Son except the Father and those to whom the Son will reveal him."

14 Now the Jews have always thought that it was the Father of all who spoke to Moses. So since it was the Son of God who spoke to him, and who was called both *angel* and *apostle*, they (the Jews) are rightly rebuked by both the prophetic Spirit and by Christ Himself, as knowing neither the Father nor the Son.

15 For those who say that the Son is the Father are re-proved for not understanding the Father and for not knowing that the Father of all has a son. He, being God's first-born, is both LOGOS and God.

16 In times past He appeared to Moses and the other prophets in the form of fire; but now, in the time of your rule, as we said before, He became man through a virgin according to the will of His Father for the salvation of those who believe Him; and He endured shame and pain in order that by His death and resurrection He might overcome death.

17 That which was said to Moses out of the thorny bush: "I am He Who Is, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and the God of your

fathers," proves that they continue to be even though they have died and that they are Christ's own people. For they were the first of all men to make search for God, Abraham being the father of Isaac, and Isaac of Jacob, as Moses also has recorded.

64 "1 You will also see by the foregoing that it was the demons who in imitation of what was said by Moses, brought about the erection of an image of her who is called KORE beside springs of water, claiming that she was the daughter of Zeus.

2 For Moses said as we have already recorded: "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth.

3 The earth was unsightly and unformed, and God's Spirit hovered over the waters."

4 So in imitation of this hovering of God's Spirit over the water, they put forth that KORE was the daughter of Zeus.

5 Similarly, they falsely call Athena the daughter of Zeus, not by the natural process of procreation, but, since they knew that God, after thought, by the LOGOS made the world, so did they call Athena his first thought: a very foolish procedure, we say, to represent thought by a female figure!

6 And similarly do their own actions speak for the other alleged sons of Zeus in no complimentary terms.

65 "1 After we have thus washed him whom we have convinced (of the truth of our teachings) and who has given assent to them, we conduct him to the aforementioned brothers, where they are assembled, so as to pray together for ourselves and for the newly baptized and for all others everywhere, that having learned the truth they might be found to be really good citizens and faithful guardians of the truths entrusted to them, so that they might be eternally saved.

2 At the close of the prayers we greet one another with a kiss.

3 Then bread and a cup of water and wine are brought to the president of the brothers. He takes these, and pro-

nounces a prayer of praise and glory to the Father of all in the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and says a long prayer of thanksgiving for being accounted worthy of all this by God. At the close of the prayers and the thanksgiving all the people respond: "Amen."

4 *Amen* means "May it be so" in Hebrew.

5 After the thanksgiving by the president and the response of the entire people, those called "deacons" among us give to each one present to partake of the thanked-for bread and wine and water, and take of it to those who are not present.

66 "1 This meal is called "Eucharist" by us; only he may take part who believes our teachings to be true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the forgiveness of sins and that makes for rebirth, and who lives as Christ has said.

2 For we do not hold this to be ordinary bread and drink, but just as our Savior Jesus Christ was made flesh by the Logos of God and took both flesh and blood for our salvation, so we have been taught that the food for which thanksgiving has been made in the prayer for the Logos that comes from him and by which our blood and flesh are nourished by the process of digestion, is the body and blood of that Jesus who became flesh.

3 For the apostles in their memoirs, which are called "gospels", thus handed down what was commanded to them: "that Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and said: 'This do for my remembrance; this is my body'; and that he in the same way took the cup, gave thanks, and said: 'This is my blood'; and that he gave it to them alone."

4 In imitation of this the devils also introduced the same thing in the mysteries of Mithra. For you either already know or can find out that bread and a cup of water have their place in the initiation of one joining the cult and that certain words are spoken over them.

67 "1 Thereafter we always keep on reminding one another of these things. The wealthy come to the aid of all who are in want, and we are always together with one another.

2 For all our food we praise the Maker of all through His Son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

3 And on the day called the Sun's day all, whether they live in town or in the country, come together, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as there is time.

4 Then, when the reader has finished, the president delivers an admonition and an exhortation to imitate these good things.

5 Then we all stand up and pray; and, as we said before, at the close of the prayer, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president similarly speaks prayers and thanksgivings, so much as he is able, and the people respond with "Amen"; the giving and the receiving of the things "Thanked for" (consecrated ?) comes next, and to those who are absent some is sent by the deacons.

6 Those who are prosperous and who wish to do so give whatever each one pleases, and the collection is turned over to the president and he takes care of the orphans and widows, of those in want by reason of sickness, of those in prison, of the strangers residing among us — he becomes simply the caretaker of all who are in need.

7 We all come together on the Sun's day, because it is the first day, the day on which God changed darkness and matter and made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead on that day. For on the day before Saturn's day they crucified Him, and on the day after Saturn's day, He appeared to His apostles and taught His disciples these things, which we have now submitted for your consideration."

(Even an introductory discussion of Justin Martyr with all his strength and weaknesses would lead one too far afield in such an essay as this. Therefore a translation of a portion of Justin's *Apology* is here submitted without further comment. The reader is, however, reminded of Justin's very early date: his *floruit* falls about A. D. 150.)

7. **Baptism.** Baptism appears plainly as an element in Christian worship in Acts 16: Lydia "attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul" and was baptized, she and her

household. The jailer heard the preaching of the Lord Jesus Christ and was baptized. We have seen how baptism by the middle of the second century constituted an important element of worship. Baptism too is an instrument for bringing about the worshipper's union with his God. Through it the value of the atoning death of Christ is brought to the worshipper. It takes the worshipper out of the realm of death and plants him in Christ, the second Adam, conferring upon him the blessings that belong to all children of God. So again, in baptism, as in all worship so far as it is "sacramental", the blessings of the redemptive work of Christ are brought to the individual.

8. The God-Pleasing Life as an Element in Worship.

The Christian who fully realizes that his life in Christ here in time and hereafter in eternity is *one single life*, that "heaven is his home," that he lives "body here, yet soul above", that

"We'll taste e'en now the hallowed bliss
Of an eternal home" (Hymn 396),

must also feel that his daily living is an act of worship to his God. He will love his fellow Christians, not for what they are to him in the first place, but because "God so loved us" (I John 4:11). And over against the world he will realize that his conduct is a very emphatic preaching, that he in his conduct, in fact, represents the unseen God to the world. For John says (I John 4:12): "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." Consequently, in all that he says and does, the Christian will ever walk in the presence of Christ his Savior, and even his most commonplace acts, done in the fear and love of God, will be an expression of his consciousness of the nearness of God to himself, and will be, therefore, an act of worship.

III. A Statement of the Aims and Purpose of Christian Worship

The worship of the Church of the New Testament and therefore of our Lutheran Church differs radically from the worship as conducted by the Roman Catholic Church on the

one hand, and from that of the Methodistic, Pietistic, Reformed Sects on the other.

To the Roman Catholic, worship is all sacrificial; the worshipper gives, God receives. Worship can accordingly be carried on without any congregation being present as is in effect done when the service is in a foreign language. The Roman Catholic is satisfied that God can understand Latin; it doesn't concern him that he, the worshipper, cannot, since the entire worship is directed at God, or rather — should we say? — at the Roman Church itself, which is itself the object of worship in such a service and is adored in the adoration of her saints, especially of the "Blessed Virgin Mary."

The antithesis of this notion is the doctrine of the sects, to whom worship is directed at man alone. They deny the efficacy of the means of grace, and yet they continue to belabor their congregations with lectures, exhortations, admonitions in an effort to make them what they ought to be. Hence the cold, bald nature of the sectarian "service." The worshipper is to be excited by his own deficiencies; he does not find his peace in and fellowship with God. In fact, if the sectarian service is worth its salt, it ought (in the sectarian's own view of it) in the course of time make itself superfluous, since the attendant ought eventually reach the state of perfection sought and claimed possible by these sectarians, and therefore the sectarian worship ought eventually too to have exhausted its excuses for being.

How different the worship in our, the true apostolic church. It is not only the means to an end: it is also an end in itself, namely in this way that *in* and *by* it the worshipper comes the more fully to realize and to give expression to his union and fellowship with God. Naturally, the Lutheran Christian knows that he has done nothing to establish that fellowship, that he can do nothing, but that Word and Sacrament are the proper God-given means for establishing that fellowship. Therefore, the active and the receptive, the "sacramental" and the "sacrificial" elements are both present in the Evangelical Lutheran as well as in the early Christian service, so intimately interlocked that they cannot be separated.

In choosing the external form in which the various elements of worship shall come into their own, the Lutheran Church in general accepts the development of history insofar as that development serves the purpose intended.

As leaders of the Lutheran Church of our day (pastors, teachers, elders of the various congregations or other representatives of the churches), it becomes our duty to preserve this true spirit of Christian worship in our day. We need to avoid *two pitfalls*: we must beware, on the one hand, lest our worship become too congregation-centered and we fall into the error of the sects. **THERE IS DANGER HERE**: for how often doesn't it occur that Lutherans too go to "hear the preacher." If he happens to appeal to them, they may go again; if he doesn't happen to catch their fancy, they stay away. They take the sectarian view that the worship is directed at man alone. They neglect the important element of Christian worship which is directed toward God. We leaders in the worship of our church have a duty that is a corollary to this criticism; **WE MUST PROVIDE A SERVICE OF WORSHIP IN WHICH THE WORSHIPPER CAN TAKE A REAL PART** and receive the benefits of the purpose of worship: to realize and express therein the sense of union, fellowship, reconciliation with his God. In other words, *our worship must be adequate to its purpose*.

The other danger of which we need to beware is that of overstressing the sacrificial aspect of worship, thereby falling perilously close to the Roman error. Let us be sure that the service of worship we employ really expresses the devotion of our worshippers, that its various parts really mean something to them. Otherwise we too may fall into the error of ancient Jewry and modern Popery, which sees in the mere external form a thing of merit. In other words, *our people who worship with us must feel that OUR WORSHIP HAS A PURPOSE*.

If we approach the problem of worship in our own congregations from that point of view, then the particular form we choose will be *correct*, for it will then accomplish its purpose. It will then be correct, for it will be God-pleasing.

Gesetz und Evangelium

angewandt auf die Zeitfrage nach dem Verhältnis zwischen Christentum und Kultur.

Vorbemerkung der Redaktion: Unter dieser Überschrift ist uns noch kurz nach Ausbruch des Krieges zwischen Deutschland und Amerika eine Arbeit aus der Feder von Pastor W. Esch, Hamburg, zugegangen. Die beachtenswerten Gedankengänge des Verfassers über dieses Thema, dem sich unsere Brüder in Europa wegen des Umbruchs nationaler und kirchlicher Verhältnisse seit dem ersten Weltkriege viel mehr als wir widmen mußten, sind uns leider nur in Leitfäden mit Belegen aus der Heiligen Schrift übermittelt worden. In dieser Verfassung sollten sie „zunächst eine Hilfe zur Erleichterung brüderlicher Beratung darstellen“. Zwei kürzere Ausarbeitungen lagen jedoch der Arbeit bei. Diese möchten wir unsern Lesern nicht vorenthalten und lassen hiermit beide Exkurse folgen.

- 1. Exkurs:** Über den „Einbruch in die sichtbare Welt, auch Kulturwelt, der mit der Existenz der Kirche in Raum und Zeit notwendig gegeben ist“:

Alles, was die Christen, als Christen tun, tun sie in Raum und Zeit, sogar das Beten, erst recht das Zeugen, Bekennen usw. Alles, was die Kirche hier auf Erden tut, tut sie in Raum und Zeit. Sie benützt ohn' Unterlaß die Dinge und die Personen, die im Reich Gottes zur Linken* erhalten werden, ja, d a m i t sie zu solcher Benutzung zur Verfügung stehen, erhält sie Gott alle in und mit dem ganzen Weltreich. Woimmer Kirche und Christen sind, liegt eine Fortsetzung des ungeheuren Einbruchs der Ewigkeit in diese untergehende, zeitliche Welt vor, die im Alten Bund geweissagt und vorgekündigt und im Kommen Christi ins Fleisch und in der Errichtung seiner neutestamentlichen Kirche erfüllt ist. Niemand hat gewaltiger von dem notwendigen Einbruch des Jenseits in das Diesseits geredet als Luther in seiner gewichtigen, sorgfältigen Schrift: Von den Conciliis und Kirche“, 1539, wenn er gegen Ende darlegt, „bei welchen Zeichen die christliche Kirche zu erkennen sei“, Walsh, 2274–2303. Dort hebt er hervor nach den **G n a d e n m i t t e l n u n d**

* Auf das Reich Gottes zur Linken kommt der Verfasser im 2. Exkurs öfter zu sprechen, wo er es als „das äußerliche, sichtbare, gesetzliche Reich Gottes zur linken Hand, in dem sich alles Kulturmühen vollzieht“, näher beschreibt.

Schlüssel auch die Kirchendiener oder berufenen und von den Gemeinden unterhaltenen Prediger des Evangeliums, ferner „Gebet, Gott zu loben und danken öffentlich“, ferner „das heilige Kreuz, Unglück und Verfolgung“, wobei man so recht merkt, daß die Kirche da ist, und betont ferner, „daß der Heilige Geist auch nach der anderen Tafel heiligt“. Und zum Abschluß fügt er hinzu: „Über solche äußerliche Zeichen und Heiligtum hat die Kirche andere mehr äußerliche Weisen, davon und dadurch sie nicht geheiligt wird, weder an Leib noch an Seele, auch von Gott nicht eingesetzt noch geboten, sondern, wie droben auch viel davon gesagt ist, daß es von auswendig not oder nützlich ist, wohl und fein ansethet; als, daß man zur Predigt oder Gebet etliche Feiertage hält, etliche Stunden, als Vormittage oder Nachmittage, daß man Kirchenbau oder „Haus, Altar, Predigtstuhl, Taufstein, Leuchter, Kerzen, Glocken, Priesterkleider und dergleichen braucht.“ „Um der Kinder und einfältigen Volks willen ist's fein und gibt eine feine Ordnung.“ „Solche äußerliche freie Stücke wollen wir achten wie ein Westerhemd oder Windel, darin man das Kindlein fasset zur Taufe.“ Luther kommt dann auch auf den christlichen Unterricht, sonderlich zukünftiger Diener am Wort und auf die christliche Zucht in den Häusern der Gläubigen. „Summa, die Schule muß das Nächste sein bei der Kirche, als darin man junge Prediger und Pfarrherren zeugt.“ Weiter lesen wir: „Das erste ist, haushalten, daraus kommen Leute. Das andere ist, Stadt regieren, das ist Land, Leute, Fürsten, Herren (das wir die weltliche Obrigkeit heißen). Das ist alles gegeben, Kind, Gut, Geld, Tier usw. Das Haus muß bauen, die Stadt muß solches hüten, schützen und verteidigen. Darnach kommt das dritte, Gottes eigen Haus und Stadt, das ist die Kirche, die muß aus dem Hause Personen, aus der Stadt Schutz und Schirm haben. Das sind die drei Hierarchien, von Gott geordnet.“ (Sperrungen von mir. W. M. D.) Auch die de facto erfolgenden Einwirkungen auf die Kultur (9 c, 10 c und d; 12 c, 13 A und B*) sind Einbrüche. Sagt aber eine Kirche irdischen Zielen nach, so wird sie selbst irdisch, gibt also die Ewigkeit preis. — Der Gott dieser Welt gönnt den Christen keinen Raum auf Erden. Und sie nehmen doch so viel Raum ein im Namen des zur Rechten sitzenden Sohnes Gottes und Mariä. Und sie setzen dabei, sofern sie

* Diese Zahlen beziehen sich auf die oben erwähnten Leitfäden.

Christo treu bleiben, nicht einmal die Ordnung des Reiches Gottes zur Linken beiseite, sondern unterstützen sie noch! Wie das Satan Tag und Nacht verdrießt! Man kann es wohl verstehen, daß sein Unmut immer wieder zu dem ihm nichts nützenden Mittel greift, die Christen leiblich zu verfolgen. Er muß ja auch seinem Namen als Lügner und Mörder Ehre machen. Aber, Trotz, Satan! Die Christen bleiben doch, sowohl unter dem Himmel als im Himmel. Und das Reich bleibt auch denen, denen du den Leib nimmst, und sie werden jetzt schon in und mit Christo herrschen und regieren, und erst recht den neuen Himmel und die neue Erde besitzen, wenn du ewig im Pfuhl liegst. Gott läßt seinen Christen seine Schöpfung nicht nehmen, trotz all des Lobens Satans und der Welt. Denn gerade für die Christen hat er alles bestimmt; Ps. 8 und 1. Kor. 3, 21–23.

2. **Gefurs.** Über die „Teufelsherrschaft in jeder Kultur.“

Da durch Adams Fall ganz verderbt ist menschlich Natur und Wesen, so kann sich die kulturelle Betätigung der Menschen nach dem Fall nie und nirgends in einem leeren Raum, in einem Niemandsland zwischen dem Teufelsreich und Christi Reich vollziehen. Aller Ungläubigen kulturelle Tätigkeit geht vonstatten im Machtreich Gottes unter herrschender Anwesenheit Satans im Herzen. Prüft man sie im ewigen Lichte nach dem Glanzlicht auf ihre moralische Beschaffenheit, so ist sie Sünde. Alle Kultur-tätigkeit gläubiger Gotteskinder im selben Machtreiche Gottes geschieht unter der wirksamen Herrschaft des Heiligen Geistes im Herzen, sofern nicht auf das Fleisch gesät wird, was leider zum großen Teil auch bei den Gläubigen noch der Fall ist. Soweit der neue Mensch sie wirkt, ist sie, auf die moralische innere Beschaffenheit gesehen, Nächstenliebe, Gottesdienst, Liebe, die aus dem Glauben fließt. Zweierlei unsichtbare Herzensreiche ragen also hinein in das äußerliche, sichtbare, zeitliche, gefühlliche Reich Gottes zur linken Hand, in dem sich alles Kultur-mühen vollzieht. Wer nicht für Christus ist, ist wider ihn. Die zwei Herzensreiche kämpfen auf Tod und Leben um die Personen, um jeden Menschen. Nur einer von den zwei Herrschern kann jeweils einen Menschen sein eigen nennen, entweder der Teufel oder Christus. Aber obschon dieser unversöhnliche Gegensatz in der Herzenszugehörigkeit der zur linken Hand regierten Personen zu erschütternden Spannungen führen muß (denn wes das Herz voll ist, des geht Mund und Hand über merkt man auch in der weltlichen

Tätigkeit der Menschen in ihrem Gottesdienst bzw. Götzendienst, besonders in den höchsten kulturellen Tätigkeiten wie Kunst und Literatur), so reißt doch der Herzensgegensatz die Ordnung des äußerlichen Gottesreiches nicht auseinander. Der Gott, der die Welt erhalten will, ihr auch Kultur und Kulturkreise erhalten will, bleibt König. Er bleibt in dem Machtbereich, in das er beide, Ungläubige und Gläubige, getan hat, Herr auch über den Satan. Er erhält dort nicht nur das Leben selbst, sondern in seiner Weise auch die großen geschichtlich-geographischen Kreisen zugehörigen Gemeinschaftsgüter, die das höhere Gemeinschaftsleben zunächst ermöglichen und dann krönen. Die Feindschaft zwischen Welt und Kirche hebt weder die Gültigkeit der Ehe noch der Obrigkeit Recht und Macht über alle, die im Lande sind, auf noch sprengt sie sonst, was Gott zur Linken zusammengefügt hat. Es gehört gerade zum Wesen der linksseitigen Gottesherrschaft, daß sie mit gesetzlicher Klammer das Auseinanderstrebende zusammenhält.

Der Umstand, daß die meisten Kulturträger Satan dienen, etliche Christo, macht weder Kultur, wo sie von Gottlosen vertreten wird, ihrem inneren Wesen nach notwendig gottlos, noch da, wo sie von Christen getragen wird, an sich christlich. Wie nach dem Fall zwischen Natur und Sünde und demgemäß auch zwischen Natur und Gnade immer grundsätzlich geschieden werden muß (F. C., Art. I), so darf auch die aus der Natur quellende Kultur nie bei ungläubigen Trägern schlankweg mit der Sünde, bei gläubigen Trägern einfach mit der Gnade ineingesetzt werden. Es gibt kein Heidenvolk auf der Welt, dessen Ideenwelt und völkische Einrichtungen wir als Kirche *en bloc* verdammen dürften, nicht einmal das Kastenwesen Indiens, viel weniger eine unserer großen modernen Kulturen, einerlei, welche Tendenzen sie zu unserm Schmerz zeigen mögen. Dies muß trotz der anderen Tatsache festgehalten werden, daß alle Kulturen den tiefsten Antrieb gerade von der Religion her gewinnen, das heißt von den letzten inneren Kräften, dem letzten auf die Ewigkeit gerichteten Streben der Menschen her, daß sie, wie selbst die gotischen Dome, gleichsam aus der Abgötterei der Menschen und ihrer Selbstrechtfertigung herauswachsen.

Da die ganze Welt, also auch alle Kultur, unter dem Fluch der Eitelkeit liegt, vor allem aber, weil die meisten Menschen Ungläubige sind, Satan der Gott dieser Welt ist, so gibt es nie und nirgends eine Kultur, die der Christ restlos bejagen könnte. Jede Kultur ist

überladen mit Zusätzen, die aus der Gottlosigkeit der Menschen, speziell ihrer Abgötterei stammen. Ja, jede Kultur ist eine besondere Wirkungssphäre des Bösen, der doch im Geistigen lebt und webt, nicht im bloßen Körperlichen. Nie und nirgends präsidiert über die Kultur wirklich die christliche Kirche, sondern immer der Gott dieser Welt, der sein Werk hat in den Kindern des Unglaubens. Es muß als Regel ohne Ausnahme behauptet werden, daß der Christ in jedem Kulturkreis als Fremdling lebt, der den herrschenden Geist verurteilen muß, vieles nicht mitmachen kann, deshalb angefeindet und gehaßt wird und nur eine wahre Heimat kennt, die ewige. Es war ein verhängnisvoller Irrtum der späteren landeskirchlich-lutherischen Orthodoxy, daß sie sich im großen und ganzen zu harmlos mit der äußerlich kirchlich überschatteten Gesellschaft identifizierte, und der ungeheure Protest der Aufklärung offenbarte bloß, daß unter dem kirchlichen Deckmantel die Welt Welt geblieben war. Sehnsucht nach einer Wiederkehr eines lutherischen Kirchenregiments über ein gesamtes Volk wäre Wahnsinn. Vielmehr gilt es die gebliebenen unwahren Reste abzubauen.

Gerade auf kulturellem Gebiet herrscht zum Guten und zum Bösen geschichtliche Kontinuität. Welche Not hat es dem deutschen Volke schon gemacht, daß seine höchst literarische Blüte in eine Zeit fiel, in der ein vom Westen gekommener Vernunftsglaube herrschte! Welche Not macht heute der längst tote Nietzsche, der doch selbst nur den Idealismus weiterführte, d. h. ad absurdum, ad nihil führte! Welche Not geht noch heute von Darwin und Häckel aus, von Vogt und Büchner, erst recht von Engel und Marx und Lenin! Dies nur ein paar Namen unter tausenden, die genannt werden könnten. Die Satansherrschaft über die ideellen Gemeinschaftsgüter der Welt, die Dämonie, die sich aller Einrichtungen bemächtigt, so daß der Teufel sie immer am meisten gebraucht — Buchdruckerkunst, Radio, Motorisierung ebenso wie Kunst, Literatur, Wissenschaft — tritt zuzeiten so massiv zutage, daß es scheint, als ging bald diese, bald jene Kulturentwicklung geschlossen zum Angriff auf das Christentum über. Es mehren sich in solchen Zeiten auch die gottlosen Einzelzutaten. Der außer Rand und Band geratene Gemeingeist mutet den Christen Dinge zu, die sie nicht tun können, ohne Christum zu verleugnen. Es läßt sich nicht verkennen, daß solche christentumsfeindliche Einstellung der Umwelt die Arbeit der Kirche furchtbar erschwert, das Herankommen an andere und an die Jugend, ja schließlich die ordent-

liche Versammlung der Christen unmöglich machen kann. Dieser militante Haß der Offenbarung kann begleitet sein von einem Streben nach Zucht und Ordnung, wie bei den edlen römischen Kaisern, die das Christentum verfolgten. Noch häufiger aber wendet sich der kühn gewordene öffentliche Haß des geoffenbarten wahren Gottes auch gegen die Ordnungen im Weltreich, gegen Ehe, Gehorsam und des Gewissens willen, Eigentum, usw. und sagt zugleich mit den äußeren sichtbaren Voraussetzungen für geordnete kirchliche Tätigkeit den Akt ab, auf dem alle gehobeneren Kultur sitzt. Aber auch wenn der Gemeingeist sich fromm gebärdet, ist er gottlos, geradezu satanisch gottlos. Er übernimmt allerlei christliche Symbole, aber in einem entgegengesetzten Sinn, zur abgöttischen Verherrlichung des Menschen. Er kämpft dann für seine selbstfüchtigen irdischen Belange unter lästerlichem Mißbrauch des Namens Christi und der Kirche, wie man an der römisch-katholischen und an der angelsächsischen Welt besonders deutlich sehen kann, und täuscht leicht selbst die wahren Christen über ihre Lage in dieser Welt und legt alles darauf an, sie innerlich auszuempornen und aufzusaugen und zu abgöttischen Anbetern des betreffenden christlich maskierten Mythos zu machen.

Dies, daß der regierende Geist in jeder Kultur gottlos ist, gottlos entweder mit kirchlichen, christlichen Vorzeichen oder mit säkulären, ja christentumsfeindlichen Vorbemerkungen hebt nicht auf, daß der Christ weiter Kultur *per se* bejaht, ja auch die ihm natürlicherweise zukommende völkische, örtliche Kultur so weit als möglich teilt. Er kann ja den Ungläubigen doch keine spezifische christliche Kultur geben, selbst für sich und die Gläubigen keine herstellen, ja nicht einmal für sich und seine Mitchristen eine wirklich stubenreine Ausgabe der betreffenden Volkskultur zustandebringen. Dies Purgieren, dem sich alle christlichen Erzieher widmen müssen um der christlichen Jugend willen, hat auch seine Grenzen. Die Liebe fordert, daß auch die Christen sich der Volksgemeinschaft einfügen, deren Gemeinschaftswerte ehren, wo immer es angeht, ja sie so weit auch ins eigne Bewußtsein aufnehmen, als es ohne Sünde geschehen kann. Dies alles muß fort und fort gegen den klerikalen Geist gesagt werden, der in Rom, Genf, Canterbury und allen äußerlich großen Kirchentümern lebendig ist und auch uns leicht ansieht. Der Protest der Christen richtet sich freilich gegen den gottlosen Geist, der jede Kultur durchwaltet, nicht aber gegen das unter seiner Herrschaft vor sich gehende Kulturschaffen noch gegen den Gemeingeist als solchen.

Er macht eine Unterscheidung im *S e i l i g e n* Geist, die der Weltmensch gar nicht versteht und ihm auch nicht dankt. Der Protest des Christen richtet sich ferner gegen die unnötigen, unsachlichen, gottlosen Zutaten der ihm von Gott zugewiesenen Kultur. Er protestiert aber nicht in der Hoffnung, die Welt werde aufhören, Welt zu sein, sondern nur, um sich selbst nicht fremder Sünde teilhaftig zu machen, also da, wo es um die Reinhaltung der eigenen Lippen, der eignen Hände geht, und da, wo er anderen nützen kann, ihnen entweder Gesetz und Evangelium predigen oder sie vor Sumpf bewahren. Er protestiert nicht als Vertreter einer „ganz anderen“ Kultur, macht es nicht so, wie es die angelsächsischen Missionen den indischen und chinesischen Christen heizubringen suchten: Tretet für die christliche abendländische Kultur ein gegen eure morgenländische! Wichtig war es, daß die griechischen und römischen Christen die Kultur des damaligen Kaiserreiches bejahten, aber den Götzen und den Kaisern nicht opferten, falsch, daß die römisch-katholischen Missionen in Deutschland unter Bonifaz und nach ihm die nordischen Ideale so oft durch südliche zu verdrängen suchten. Selbstverständlich verschwinden da, wo viele Christen sind, die unmoralischen und die abgöttischen „Zusätze“ zusehends, wenn auch nicht völlig und mehr dem Schein nach als in Wahrheit. Wenn die Christen selten werden, nehmen sie zusehends zu. Aber dieses Auf und Ab drängt Christen nicht aus dem heimischen in fremde Kulturkreise, es sei denn, daß sie vor Verfolgung fliehen müssen, die Rücksicht auf die christliche Erziehung ihrer Kinder sie zu einer ihnen erlaubten Auswanderung *z w i n g t* usw.

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

Pulpit and Altar Fellowship Soon to be Declared between the A. L. C. and the U. L. C. A. — The A. L. C., recently (October 9-15, 1942) assembled in Mendota, Ill., adopted a set of resolutions concerning church fellowship with the U. L. C. A. and with the Missouri Synod. The U. L. C. A., which held its convention a little later (October 14-21) in Louisville, Ky., replied in the affirmative and took the necessary preparatory steps for proclaiming the agreement and setting the ratified fellowship in practice. We here submit the two sets of resolutions.

Offer of the A. L. C.

Inter-synodical fellowship is a matter of deep concern to us. Faithful efforts have been put forth and considerable progress has been made.

We thank God for His blessings and we express our appreciation to our brethren who have served on these committees. We offer the following resolution for adoption: WHEREAS, the Committees on Fellowship of the A. L. C. have negotiated with both the U. L. C. A. and the Missouri Synod to the end of establishing pulpit and altar fellowship with these honorable bodies; and WHEREAS, the A. L. C. has adopted the *Pittsburgh Agreement* and accepted the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod in the light of the *Declaration* of the Commissioners of the A. L. C. as a basis for pulpit and altar fellowship; and WHEREAS, though these documents — the *Pittsburgh Agreement* on the one hand, and the *Brief Statement* and *Declaration* on the other — differ in wording, yet both express the true position of the A. L. C.; and WHEREAS, the U. L. C. A. has adopted the *Pittsburgh Agreement*; and the *Declaration* of our Commissioners in connection with the *Brief Statement* has found acceptance within the Missouri Synod as an integral part of the doctrinal basis for future church fellowship; and WHEREAS, to our regret fellowship has not resulted since apparently in both bodies there are large and influential groups in disagreement therewith: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the A. L. C. declare its readiness to establish pulpit and altar fellowship with either or both of these honorable church bodies on the basis of their full and whole-hearted acceptance of and adherence to either of these documents, in the hope that the existing obstacles may be removed and that such pulpit and altar fellowship may be declared at an early date; and therefore that the Commission on Lutheran unity be continued.

Reply of the U. L. C. A.

RESOLVED, That (1) We receive with appreciation and deep gratitude to God the resolution of the A. L. C. in convention assembled at Mendota, Ill., which recognizes our fundamental agreement and proclaims their readiness to establish full pulpit and altar fellowship with the U. L. C. A. (2) We instruct the president of our Church, in conjunction with the president of the A. L. C., to consummate and declare at the earliest possible date the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship.

This the text of the two resolutions, as far as it was available to us at this writing. M.

Dr. Arndt on the Second Columbus Conference. — In the September (1942) issue of the *Concordia Theological Monthly* Dr. Arndt reports comprehensively on the Columbus Conference of May 15, 1942, and on comments that appeared in the church press since. In closing he submits some suggestions of his own.

“Manifestly, it is impossible to consider here all the issues raised by the resolutions which were adopted and the comments which have been quoted above. The Missouri Synod delegates, so it would seem to one on the outside, were at a disadvantage because they were not present when the resolutions for which their approval was sought were framed. Their

decisions on the questions which confronted them had to be reached quickly. With respect to the Wisconsin Synod we believe that the brethren whom we love and honor for their intense desire to be faithful to the revealed truth could without showing disloyalty to the sacred Scriptures have joined in the deliberations at Columbus and expressed themselves willing to co-operate *in externis*. When the question is asked why the Missouri Synod representatives were unwilling to go a step beyond a declaration of willingness to co-operate in purely external matters, it must not be forgotten that one of the bodies asking our Synod to join it and other bodies in a Lutheran conference, the Norwegian Free Church, has openly ridiculed and flouted the doctrine of verbal inspiration, and that another inviting body, the large U. L. C. A., tolerates in its midst the open denial of this doctrine. Would it be proper for Missouri to establish fraternal fellowship with people who tread under foot what it holds sacred? If at Columbus this distressing state of affairs had been recognized and some plan had been adopted through which, prior to the forming of a larger conference, the evil condition might have been remedied, the case would have been different. But the premise on which the resolutions were based was that there exists a sufficient unity for the inauguration of the comprehensive program that was envisaged. It was not the presidential hand of Dr. Behnken that closed the door, but the course taken by the National Lutheran Council representatives who, unwittingly to be sure, neglected to give to faithful adherence to Scripture doctrine that priority and eminence which rightly belong to it."

It is our opinion that the Doctor answered his own question concerning the absence of any delegates from our Wisconsin Synod with the reasons he adduces for Missouri's unwillingness "to go a step beyond" the point they did. The things called *externals* may be externals when considered in themselves; but the Columbus Conference was interested in them, not as such, but in so far as they pertained to *church work*. How can one begin to think of discussing matters pertaining to Gospel preaching with men who have "openly ridiculed and flouted the doctrine of verbal inspiration"? What common ground is there when they deride what is basic and most sacred to us? Or was their attitude perhaps not known before Columbus?

M.

Dr. Reu on Missouri's Attitude toward an All-American Lutheran Federation. — In the July (1942) number of our *Quartalschrift* we reported on the Second Columbus Conference (p. 210ff.), and in the October number (p. 283) we reprinted President Behnken's address in full as delivered to that conference in the name of the Missouri delegates. Dr. Reu commented on the stand taken by our sister synod in the July number of the *Kirchl. Zeitschrift*. He had this to say:

"What are we to say about the position taken by Missouri and about the whole federation plan? We cannot say that we are much surprised by Missouri's action. A body that has a severe struggle in its own midst

because it declared at its convention at St. Louis in 1938 that our *Declaration* is sufficient for future establishment of church fellowship with us, and that for the same reason is attacked by the Wisconsin Synod, its partner in the Synodical Conference since 1872, cannot be expected to be very willing to enter a new federation, a federation with bodies with whom it has no doctrinal agreement. The fact that these other bodies recognize the Lutheran Confessions as their standard does not ease the situation since it is well known that some of them do not live up to this standard. But does the planned federation not limit the cooperation of the individual federated bodies to the sphere of externals? Do all those activities mentioned in the 'program for future expansion' really belong to this sphere? They may, they may not. Here a clarification seems to be absolutely necessary. As Missouri understands the term *res externae* — and did not the former Iowa Synod in its struggle concerning the nature and the object of the National Lutheran Council understand this term in the same sense and again join the N. L. C. only after, through the influence of Dr. Hein, by a change of constitution this clarification had been brought about? — the necessary cooperation can really take place without the formation of a new federation. As long as Missouri — in contradiction to the resolutions passed in St. Louis in 1938 — is convinced that church fellowship presupposes absolute unity in doctrine and practice, even in the so-called non-fundamentals, and considers its own interpretation of the pertinent Scripture passages as the only correct one, so long it cannot act otherwise, so long even its lamentable and irritating refusal to pray with members of other Lutheran bodies can be understood. Here is the point where the change must take place. Before this is accomplished all attempts at inducing it to join a Lutheran federation such as that which is planned are premature and without success. The conviction mentioned will permit cooperation in things strictly external, not more. There are forces in the Missouri Synod that are working in the direction of such a change. God may bless their efforts."

Read Dr. Reu's words carefully, and note their implications.

At that time Dr. Reu did not yet know the "exact wording of Dr. Behnken's statement." After publishing the complete text in the September issue of the *Kirchl. Zeitschrift* he declares that it "does not occasion a change in our view." However, he adds a thought to his former comment.

"We are wondering only about one sentence; it is this: 'We must all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among us, but that we be properly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.' We certainly are not wondering about this statement in itself, because it is only repetition of a Biblical statement. But in the connection in which it was made it seems it was made in the former Missourian sense, that we all must be one even in every non-fundamental and in its theological formulation. If this is the case, then there will be also in the future no unified Lutheran Church in our country and further negotiations will be likewise

of no use, as it was stated last year in the October issue of this magazine."

Dr. Reu deeply deplors that Missouri did not change its position as the A. L. C. had assumed after the St. Louis convention of 1938. He sees prospects for the realization of such a change in the activities of a certain group within the Missouri Synod, on whom he therefore invokes God's blessing.

M.

Dr. Graebner at the Louisville, Ky., Convention. — The *Lutheran*, under the head *Distinguished Visitors*, reports the following: "In the course of the biennial deliberations of the U. L. C. A., both time and importance are given to the presence and addresses of visitors. . . . The convention sensed the spread of cordiality among Lutheran organizations in the United States when the presence of a fraternal delegate from the Norwegian Lutheran Church was announced. . . . It was a very pleasant surprise when President Knubel announced the presence of Dr. Theodore Graebner of the Missouri Synod, member of the theological faculty of Concordia Seminary and one of the editors of the *Lutheran Witness*, official organ in English of the Missouri Synod. By 'unanimous consent' of the convention, Dr. Knubel invited Dr. Graebner from his seat at the press table to speak to the convention, and himself responded to the visitor's address."

Another article in the same issue of the *Lutheran* hails this as indicating a **New Day in Lutheranism**. "Perhaps no one knew in advance what a remarkable demonstration of progress toward the unity of all Lutherans in America this convention would produce. Men of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, Augustana Synod, Missouri Synod, and the A. L. C. appeared on the program. Never before have spokesmen of all these Lutheran church bodies addressed a convention of the U. L. C. A."

The address of Dr. Graebner is reported as follows:

"SAID DR. GRAEBNER: A cheerless attitude (regarding possibilities of relations of fellowship between the Missouri Synod and the U. L. C. A.) is not warranted if we take the long view of the situation. I mean the long view looking backwards. Christian fellowship is more than a dream of optimists or unionists when, covering a span of seventy years, there is the clear ring of testimony to a faith which is in every point our own. — We have found it possible to join our efforts with yours for serving the armed forces of our country through chaplaincies and through the service center ministry. . . . Where co-operation is possible we owe it to world Lutheranism that we practice it. . . . In their relations to the community, the state, the national government, Lutheran bodies must act together if they will make their contribution to the solution of population problems arising from the war, and if they are to be in a position for a global program of missions and evangelism when peace returns. — There is the pressure of a common danger upon us today. It will require Christian statesmanship to prevent a yielding of the church in the direction of com-

promise. On the other hand, the dangers as well as the opportunities which inhere in the present situation should cause Lutherans everywhere to extend their hands in co-operation for the rebuilding of what is now being torn down and for the preservation, against secular pressure, of our common heritage."

For a check we append Dr. Graebner's own report of his address as published in the *Lutheran Witness*. "On invitation of Dr. Knubel I was given the floor and addressed the convention. I spoke on the conditions of fellowship relations between the Missouri Synod and the U. L. C. A. Recognizing that 'there is still a division line', I took note of the acceptance of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and subscription to all Lutheran symbols by the U. L. C. Merger of 1918 as 'the most significant step towards Lutheran union in the history of the past hundred years.' I paid tribute to the men whose work in the field of dogma have received unstinted praise in our periodicals — Krauth, Schmauck, Klotsche, Little, and others, men who have 'absorbed the doctrine and spirit of the Lutheran Confessions' and 'sounded a note clear as a bell in every article of dogma.' I quoted an expression of Dr. Neve warning against indifference in doctrine, and a more recent one by Rev. Reinartz: 'Our confessional loyalties should keep us from unions which compromise these loyalties.' I pointed out the danger as well as the opportunities which inhere in the present world situation. At the close of my address Dr. Knubel expressed gratitude to the *Lutheran Witness* for its representation and asked the delegates to receive 'with great earnestness the words of necessary caution and counsel' which I had spoken." M.

The U. L. C. A. and the Federal Council of Churches. — The *News Bulletin* of the National Lutheran Council calls the new regulation adopted by the U. L. C. A. concerning its relation to the Federal Council of Churches "one of the most important matters to be considered by the Louisville convention." An invitation "to accept constituent membership in it (Federal Council), without compromise of cherished convictions, for the sake of the common front so greatly needed in this day of crisis," had been delivered in person to Dr. Knubel by the Council's president, Dr. Luther A. Weigle. The report of the Executive Board of the U. L. C. A., which studied the invitation, contained the following eight recommendations:

"1. That the U. L. C. A., in the unity of the one Holy Catholic Church, to which all true believers in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior belong, reaffirm its sincere desire to make its maximum contribution to the cause of Christianity in the world, through the best and most consistent relationships among recognized Christian churches. — 2. That the U. L. C. A. reaffirm our strong conviction that according to the nature and constitution of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, all memberships in it should be of a consultative character, and that the Council is and should be a confederal body. — 3. That the U. L. C. A. continue its consultative membership in the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. —

4. That the Executive Board of the U. L. C. A. be instructed to increase its appropriation for the support of the Federal Council from \$2,000 to \$4,000 per annum for the next biennium. — 5. That our quota of representatives as provided by the constitution of the Federal Council (14 on the basis of the present membership) be filled by appointment of the Executive Board, for a single term of six years each (at first appointment, approximately one-third to serve two years, and approximately one-third to serve four years), — these representatives to the Council to have voice but not vote. — 6. That from these representatives, the Executive Board make appointments to the Council's Executive Committee, to departments already approved, and to any additional departments in which it regards representation as desirable. — 7. That these representatives be constituted an official commission of the U. L. C. A. to the Federal Council, to be responsible, in all matters pertaining to our relationship with the Council, and to make biennial reports to the U. L. C. A. convention. — 8. That any previous actions of the U. L. C. A., not in harmony with these recommendations, be rescinded."

While some hail the increased participation by the U. L. C. A., both in the number of delegates and in the amount of support, as a gradual shedding of the attitude of "Lutheran aloofness", it is nevertheless gratifying that the final step leading to full membership was not taken. The motion embodying it was lost by a large majority. That was a brave act of confession and a testimony against the doctrinal indifference of our time. M.

Unity of the Church. — "The unity of the church is real, though mystical and undefinable. No manifestation of this real unity is ever complete or wholly reliable. *The truest manifestation is in the confession of acceptance of the truth as it is in Jesus. Organizational union is no true manifestation of unity, except in so far as it expresses agreement in confession of faith.* If effected merely as a matter of policy, expediency or sentiment, *organizational union may be more of a manifestation of a compromise with the world than a manifestation of the true unity of the church.* Likewise, the mission of the church, as defined by Christ, requires that programs of service must be consistent with His purpose to have His full and pure Gospel preached and taught, and federations for co-operative programs of mere social service are no true manifestation of the unity of the church. *Any organizational union which is not based on confessional agreement in faith may be more of a manifestation of disunity than of unity.* What is held in common in faith is a good and legitimate ground for cordial and sincere conferences for fuller agreements and confessions, and the developments of unity, but no ground for the assumption of unity which does not exist.

"A 'solid front' composed of a single line in uniform, on dress parade, has neither the power of resistance nor of crusade, and is a deception doomed to disaster.

"Church unity is a product of divine grace, not a human creation. It may be a human discovery only. Its manifestation is not a thing for display in parade, but a thing for demonstration in loyalty to Christ, and the truth as it is in Him. Organization is chiefly a matter of human arrangement. It can be no more, legitimately, than a means to service. Unity is the beginning, the essence and the end in the life of the church. Unity has first to be an experience." (The *Lutheran*, September 9, 1942.)

Italics in the foregoing are ours.

The first italicized section expresses a basic truth. What we are accustomed to call the visible church is merely a manifestation on earth of the church *proprie sic dicta*. While the unity of the church as the spiritual body of Christ is brought about by the common faith of the individual believers, which joins them to Christ as the Head and to one another as His members, the unity of the visible church is based on and expressed by the community of confession. Where there is no agreement in the confession, where divergent, even conflicting doctrines are proclaimed as divine truth, it would appear as an affront to God and a violation of His truth to enter into organizational union, be it of full cooperation or only of partial coordination. When church bodies enter into such union without being in harmony of confession, they by that very act expose themselves to the suspicion of indifference over against the truth, and their act will by its nature lead to increased confessional indifference. This remains true even in case such organizational union involves no more than a coordination in externals "as a matter of policy, expediency or sentiment." For, being a part of the church's "program of service", and a matter of the true "mission of the church", namely, to preach and teach the "full and pure Gospel" of Christ, such coordination, though not pretending a unity which does not exist, yet in fact will tend to minimize the existing differences as being irrelevant for the church's work, and as permitting us to compromise with error to a certain extent *in majorem Dei gloriam*.

Organizational union not based on confessional unity is poison for the spiritual unity of the church. M.

Attempts at Re-Romanizing a Church Frustrated. — "A long fight to prevent the Cornwall (England) Church of St. Hilary from being Romanized has been closed with victory for the Reformation upholders. The high altar has been removed, together with various of the side altars and much of Romanish decoration. This will be a great encouragement to those in other parishes who are fighting to keep lawless clericalism from re-Romanizing the Church of England."

Thus reports the *Sunday School Times* (October 10, 1942).

Much as we rejoice that this attempt was frustrated, our joy is not quite unalloyed. The item speaks of the presence of a "lawless clericalism." Removing "Romish decorations" is a minor matter when compared with the toleration of "lawless clericalism" in a church. Nor does their lawlessness seem to be their worst offence. From their action it appears that they

are not attracted chiefly by "Romish decorations" as such, but are thoroughly steeped in Romish *ideas*, that is, in the Antichristian error. What is being done about that? M.

As Others See Us. — The summer edition of the *National Lutheran*, an organ of the National Lutheran Council, contains an article by Dr. O. H. Pannkoke: "I believe in Lutheran Unity," in which he passes judgment on the Missouri, the Norwegian and the Wisconsin synods with regard to the union movement. He writes: (page 30) "Theologically in the last two decades the right and left extremes of our Church have steadily moved toward the Evangelical center. Neither the United Lutheran Church nor Missouri are the same as they were in 1918. In 1918, while there were strong conservative elements in the United Lutheran Church, there were also important sections which knew little and cared less for Lutheran essentials and felt no loyalty to the Lutheran confessions. To the largest extent these elements have disappeared. The United Lutheran Church today is not only committed to the Lutheran confessions, but it understands and is loyal to the great Lutheran fundamentals: the Word, Salvation by Grace, the freedom of the Christian Man.

The Missouri Synod too has undergone a radical change. The extreme and often hard dogmatism of a former day has been softened and corrected by an emphasis on the personal nature of faith and by a passion for soul winning. And — strange to say — some of Luther's deep ontological mysticism has been reborn. The men representing this new Missouri Synod are just as appealing as some of the intellectual extremists of the past were trying at times.

"These have been revolutionary changes both in the United Lutheran Church and in the Missouri Synod. They were brought about not by accident, but by courageous pioneer souls.

"The great sin in both camps today is that men are not aware of these changes and keep alive a picture of the other side which is hardly more than a caricature. They are sinning against the truth at a time when at all costs we need to see and keep our eyes fixed on the essential truth. The momentous fact in American Lutheran history is that at the grave turning point the United Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod are approaching each other at the dynamic evangelical center of our faith."

Then Dr. Pannkoke gives the other side of the picture: "Two decades ago the powerful stream of our church's life flowed away from unity toward isolation. *Today, I believe, a popular vote would ratify unity in every Lutheran body except the Wisconsin and the Norwegian Synods.*" (Italics are ours.)

May this frank appraisal open our eyes and serve as a warning to all of us! A union with us is only deemed possible and desirable, if we weaken and give up our present doctrinal standpoint. There can be no real union without the fundamental Scriptural unity in doctrine and practice.

H. A. Koch.

Publica Doctrina. — Was heißt das, wenn eine Lehre für *publica doctrina* erklärt wird? Gewöhnlich versteht man unter dem Ausdruck von einer Kirchenkörperschaft offiziell geführte Lehre über eine bestimmte Frage mit Ausschluß aller Sondermeinungen, die jemand vielleicht privatim haben mag. Nun hat die Amerikanisch-Lutherische Kirche in ihrer Deklaration von 1938 folgenden Satz über die Sonntagslehre:

“That which is contained on this point in the Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States is *publica doctrina* among us.”

Im Briefkasten des „Kirchenblattes“ vom 19. September 1942 findet sich eine längere Ausführung über den Sonntag, aus der wir einige Sätze zusammenstellen.

Der Einsender der Frage hatte bemerkt: „Ich sage, Gott arbeitete bei der Schöpfung sechs Tage und ruhte am siebten Tage, und so sollen wir es auch machen.“ Darauf wurde ihm erwidert, daß er recht habe.

„Wie Gott der Herr die Sechstagesarbeit befohlen und uns an seinem Tun gezeigt hat, wie wir es auch machen sollen, so hat er uns ebenso einen Ruhe-, Stärkungs- und Erquickungstag verordnet für Leib und Seele. . . . Im Alten Testament feierte man den Samstag, den siebten Tag der Woche als Sabbat, weil man da im Andenken an die Schöpfungsgnade Gottes lebte; im Neuen Testament wird der Sonntag, der erste Tag der Woche, gefeiert, weil wir da im Andenken an die Erlösungs- und Heiligungsgnade Gottes leben. — Warum feiert man in der Kirche Jesu Christi nicht mehr den Sabbat, den siebten Tag der Woche, sondern den Sonntag, den ersten Tag der Woche? Weil wir nicht mehr im Alten Bunde leben und weil durch das Kommen Christi ins Fleisch eine neue Zeit für die Menschheit gekommen ist. . . . Obwohl der Sonntag nicht ausdrücklich von Gott als Feiertag befohlen wurde, so ist die Kirche Jesu Christi durch Leitung und Führung des Heiligen Geistes dahin geführt worden, den Sonntag als den Tag des Herrn zu nehmen, und zwar aus mehrfachen Gründen. . . . So haben wir uns den Sonntag nicht selbst ausgesucht, sondern haben ihn von der Apostelzeit übernommen und haben kein Recht und Ursache, uns dagegen aufzulehnen, sondern wir stimmen voll und ganz mit dem überein, was wir überkommen haben und wollen auch dabei bleiben. . . . Die Juden feiern heute noch den Sabbat, das ist den Samstag, weil sie wie den Herrn Jesum so auch das Neue Testament verwerfen. . . . Wenn es nun heute Christen gibt, die wieder den Sabbat, das ist Samstag, feiern, so ist das ein Schritt zurück ins Judentum. . . . Zu beachten ist hierbei, daß das, was bei der alttestamentlichen Sabbatfeier ein streng äußerlich Werk des Gesetzes und ein Teil des vorbildlichen und deshalb zeitweiligen Gottesdienstes war, seine Endgültigkeit in Christo erreichte und für den Christen nicht mehr verpflichtend ist. Was aber das Gebot Gottes und göttlichen Inhalts vom Feiertag als einem Ruhe-, Erquickungs- und Segenstag angeht und einem religiösen Bedürfnis des Menschen entspricht, dauert die Heilsamkeit und Gültigkeit

auch im Neuen Testament noch fort. So ist wohl der Tag der Feier im Neuen Bund geändert, aber die Feier an einem Tag der Woche ist geblieben und von einem Feiertag zum andern sind auch immer sechs Tage dazwischen.“ Und das alles, wie der Anfang zeigt, nach Gottes Befehl und Ordnung.

Publica doctrina scheint demnach nicht mehr zu besagen als, daß die lutherische Sonntagslehre öffentlich — neben andern — geduldet wird.

M.

Büchertisch.

Radio Sermon, "Rest for Burden Bearers." The Rev. Adolf F. Meyer, M. A. Price 10c. The Lutheran Press, New York, N. Y.

The title page of this sermon which has been sent us for review identifies the author as "Pastor, Saint Mark's Ev. Luth. Church of Yonkers, N. Y., Managing Editor of American Lutheran Magazine," and the occasion as a Lutheran Broadcast on July 26, 1942, over a coast-to-coast network in Columbia's "Church of the Air." All of which should, of course, have brought forth a typical, representative Lutheran sermon. Unfortunately that is not the case.

Text and theme are promising. On the basis of the Great Invitation, Mt. 11, 28, the preacher speaks of "Burden Bearers." But when he addresses himself to "the weary business man" and the "care-worn society celebrity," assuring them that in the service of the Christ they will find peace and "a sense of permanent reality," — and does so without first explicitly stating that their true burden is their unforgiven sin — it is disquieting, to say the least. Why should the true nature of the burden be veiled, even for a little while?

Equally disturbing is the preacher's way of offering these blessings guardedly, of withholding even as he presents, in short, of preaching a conditioned Gospel. He calls himself "frank enough to state that there can be no blessing to any individual in the hearing of these words unless there is on his part a thirsty seeking for righteousness — a thirsty seeking for utter reality and stark naked truth." In spite of Amos 8, 12 and Ro. 10, 2 he declares: "I know of no individual in the Bible or in our present generation who earnestly sought to find the truth of Heaven and failed." To this he adds an appeal to unconverted man to do his part: "God demands something . . . the person who would receive a Heavenly blessing **must seek** . . . where an individual so seeks there can be no doubt as to the result." He speaks of "coming close enough to the gracious Christ so that He can give rest." (In this last instance the emphasis is the author's. All others by the reviewer.)

Coming finally to the problem of sin, we read: "But before the Christ will dwell in our hearts with His blessing He lays down a **condition**. Man must lay aside the rags of boastful righteousness and put on the spotless robe made white in the blood of the Lamb." Peter's confession is quoted ("Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord"), but followed by the statement that "out of such meekness and lowliness it was possible for Christ to make of Peter a fisher of men, — something real for the eternities. And **in that all-out service for his Master Peter found rest!**" Another beautiful statement of grace is vitiated by a similar implication that the real unburdening does not come until the condition of service has been fulfilled: "When we busy folks with all of our apparent successes in life can not only complain of our weariness and heavy burdens, but can confess to Christ our utter unworthiness, — our whole hearted dependence upon His atonement of the cross for our forgiveness of sin; when we can give our day by day surrender to the Savior's daily and hourly guidance, when we take His yoke upon us and serve Him, **only then will we begin to find** in the midst of our busy life evidence of those things real and abiding. And suddenly we find a burden lifted . . . feel our great freedom." We would like to assume that the author here is merely referring to the many blessings with which our Lord graciously rewards faithful service, and the special sensing of His mercy which sometimes follows, but in view of his "only then" in such immediate connection with the thought of service we find it difficult to place this construction upon his plain words. While it surely was not his intention to exclude the lifting of the burden and the sense of freedom that comes with the assurance of forgiveness, he fails entirely to state this basic thought.

The sermon also teems with sectarian pulpit parlance (even: "ships that pass in the night"). But that could be forgiven were it not for the other faults. We regret to express our considered judgment that our Lutheran Church was not well represented on the air on July 26, 1942. E. R.

The Book of Jonah. A Message for our Day. By H. Speckhard. Translated by R. Herrmann. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 75 pages. Price, 25 cents.

A translation of this essay, as rendered by the Rev. R. Herrmann, is a welcome addition to our English Lutheran church literature. The translator has also performed a real service to our present generation by translating an essay which "treats a Biblical book in a practical, instructive and interesting manner." Luther had attached great importance to the Book of Jonah, and therefore not only lectured on this book to his students, but also edited an exposition in the German language with very many practical applications dwelling on certain topics at length, as for instance, the natural religion of the

heathen and the message of Jonah (St. Louis. Ausgabe XIV, 836-971). These two subjects, not to mention the many others, the essayist has very ably treated in two separate paragraphs (pp. 36-37 and 57) in full agreement with Luther's line of argument, whose statements are often cited. The clear and simple language of the translation lets the reader forget that he is foregoing the reading of the original. We recommend the reading and study of this essay to theologians and laymen alike.

P. Peters.

The Order of the Service, as presented in the **Lutheran Hymnal**. Paper, 15 cents.

The Handbook to the Lutheran Hymnal. Cloth, \$4.00.
Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri.

To this reviewer the publishing of the Order of the Service in pamphlet form or as a separate volume seems a happy thought. With an appropriate binding it could serve as a convenient Altar copy for the pastor. Under certain conditions it would enable congregations that still desire to retain their older hymnals to introduce the revised Order of the Service nevertheless. Finally, it opens up the possibility of incorporating in future reprints some of the suggestions that will undoubtedly be made from time to time. It is with this thought in mind that the following comments are offered.

On pages 12 and 22 it should not be difficult to reword the Rubric or to rewrite the emphasized line in such a manner that the term "Offertory" will be made to apply to the entire portion of the service that follows the sermon, up to and including the hymn after the Common Prayer. Then it would be clear that the congregation which has been blessed by the Word in the sermon now returns its offering of thanksgiving in various ways: by the tender of a broken spirit and a contrite heart (Ps. 51, 17), hence the Offertory Sentence, "Create in Me"; then the Offering of Gifts (the Collection, with the thought of thanksgiving foremost, not that of merit); then the Offering of Intercessory Prayer (good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 1 Tim. 2, 3) together with the Lord's Prayer; finally the Offering of Song (of praise, thanks, adoration, trust, willingness to serve the Lord, or whatever else may be the proper response of the congregation to the leading thoughts of the sermon). According to Kliefoth this would be in line with the original practice of the Church, before the Offering of Gifts had acquired the thought of merit which finally led to the conversion of the Sacrament into a propitiatory sacrifice, completely overshadowing the significance of a thankoffering in these other, adjacent parts of the service. Such an arrangement would go far to remove the impression that the sentence, "Create in Me," is called an Offertory simply because it happens to precede the Offering of Coins.

Since this subject of the General Prayer has been mentioned, it

might be well to pass along the suggestion which was recently made to this reviewer, namely that the sentence, "we commend to Thy care all our schools," might be improved by making it read, "our Christian schools," since it is these for which we are praying.

Another suggestion, which would, however, be less easy to follow, and which should not be followed unless the subject has first been given careful study, deals with the question whether the Introits, Collects, and Graduals always fit the Lessons to which they are attached, especially those of the Trinity Season. It is a well-known fact that Luther revised the Roman lectionary of his day, providing, among other things, new lessons for Trinity Sunday. This and another insertion caused him to advance the subsequent Epistles and Gospels, creating a difference between the Roman and Lutheran systems that runs through the entire Trinity Season, even today. Thereby he was incidentally correcting a dislocation that had been caused in the 14th century when Rome had quietly departed from the calendar of the homiliary of Charlemagne, and which is usually traced back to Jerome. But the question which interests us now is whether the lesser propers, especially the Introits and Graduals, have been changed to correspond with this shift that occurred.

We submit a few examples. The Introit for the Third Sunday after Trinity seems less appropriate to our Lutheran Epistle for the day (1 Pt. 5, 6-11) than to the Catholic lesson (Ro. 8, 18-23, which we read on the following Sunday). The Gradual for the Seventh Sunday seems to fit our Epistle (Ro. 6, 19-23) or Gospel (Mc. 8, 1-9) only moderately well, but it is very appropriate when it follows the Roman Epistle (Ro. 8, 12-17, our Epistle for the Eighth Sunday). The Introit, Collect, and Gradual for this Eighth Sunday seem to have little support in our accustomed lessons, but come to life when one reads them in connection with the story of the Savior's Tears over Jerusalem — Rome's lesson for the day. In our Lutheran revision this occurs two Sundays later.

These observations offer at least food for thought, and are presented in the hope that they may receive further study by persons better qualified to judge whether or not there is room for improvement in our Lutheran arrangement.

* * * *

The Handbook to the Hymnal gives every promise of becoming an indispensable aid to the pastor who desires to give the selection of hymns for his services the careful attention it should receive. In its first section it presents a brief descriptive article on each of the 660 hymns in the new Hymnal, both as to the words and the accompanying musical setting. In some cases that leads to quite an extensive treatment, as in the article on Luther's "A Mighty Fortress." Frequently these accounts deal with the occasion that led to the writing of a hymn, sometimes substantiating, sometimes discrediting the stories

current about its origin, as in the case of Rinckart's "Now Thank We All Our God."

The biographical material on authors, composers, and translators follows as a separate, second division of the book, thus avoiding much duplication and making it possible in the first set of articles to deal exclusively with the hymn under discussion. Intelligently used, these two sections will contribute much to a better understanding of the selections, both old and new, which are contained in the new Hymnal. Much of this biographical and descriptive material is available in standard hymnological works, but not a little is entirely new. For use in connection with the new Hymnal no other available work will match or even approach this monumental compilation of Professor Polack.

The last seventy pages of the book are given over to an elaborate set of indexes, which again are a veritable mine of information. The Index of Biblical References, and also the Topical Index will appeal to the pastor who is seeking a hymn to fit closely to his sermon. In spite of its formidable title, the Index of First Lines of Original Hymns is highly interesting to any one seeking to discover, for instance, which hymns have come down to us from the Ancient Greek or the Medieval Latin Church. Another index gives the first lines of all stanzas except the first. This will help to find many a hymn of which one can recall a few snatches, but not the title line. Concerning this Index Section we have just one suggestion: a thumb-index would add much to the handiness of the volume.

It is our sincere hope that the rather steep price of the Handbook will not prove too much of an obstacle to its general introduction and use by our pastors. We are sure that both they and their congregations will profit from it. Perhaps some societies or the congregation itself can help to take care of this matter.

E. R.

The Annotated Pocket New Testament. Authorized Version. With Notes by Theodore Graebner. Printed by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Prices: Single copies, 25 cents each; 25 or more copies of same issue to same address, 20 cents.

The Gospel of Saint Mark and The Gospel of Saint Luke. These two booklets and their cheery green jackets, published by the Committee on Bible Study of the Walther League, are presenting themselves at our desk for a review. We can but wish them Godspeed on their way into the pockets, homes and hearts of many who may be induced to carry one or the other of these handy volumes in their pocket for perusal at some odd moments. Anything that tends to make our Christians better and more diligent Bible students finds hearty approval and approbation with us. As for the rest, we refer the reader to our review of the first in this series of booklets, containing the annotated text of the Gospel of Saint Matthew, in the July 1942, number of this magazine.

L.

Kurze Anzeigen.

Northwestern Lutheran Annual for the year 1943 after Christ. Issued by request of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and other States. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wis. Price, 15 cents.

Gemeindeblatt-Kalender auf das Jahr 1943 nach Christi Geburt. Herausgegeben im Auftrage der Allgemeinen Ev. Luth. Synode von Wisconsin u. a. St. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wis. Preis: 15 Cents.

Lutheran Annual 1943. Literary Editor: Dr. J. T. Mueller. Statistical Editor: Rev. S. Michael. Published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Price, 15 cents.

Amerikanischer Kalender für deutsche Lutheraner auf das Jahr 1943. Literarischer Redakteur: D. J. T. Müller. Statistischer Redakteur: P. S. Michael. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Preis: 15 Cents.

Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Regular Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States. Assembled at Fort Wayne, Ind., as the Twenty-Third Delegate Synod June 18-27, 1941. St. Louis, Mo. Concordia Publishing House, 1941. Price, 85 cents.

Statistical Yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the year 1941. St. Louis, Mo. Concordia Publishing House 1942. Price, \$1.00.

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

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Der allgemeine Heilsrat Gottes über alle Sünder.

Joh. 3, 16: „Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt, daß er seinen eingeborenen Sohn gab, auf daß alle, die an ihn glauben, nicht verloren werden, sondern das ewige Leben haben.“

Nachdem der Herr darum die Sündenschuld aller Welt am Kreuz abgeblüht hatte, sorgte er dafür, daß sie zum Glauben an ihn kämen, und sandte seine Jünger mit dem Befehl aus: „Mir ist gegeben alle Gewalt im Himmel und auf Erden. Darum gehet hin und lehret alle Völker und taufet sie im Namen des Vaters und des Sohnes und des Heiligen Geistes und lehret sie halten alles, was ich euch befohlen habe. Und siehe, ich bin bei euch alle Tage bis an der Welt Ende.“ — Nicht nur uns besonders Beamtete in der Kirche geht dieser Befehl an, sondern uns Christen alle, die während der Weltzeit und bis an das Ende der Welt leben werden. Vgl. Röm. 1, 16: Das Evangelium von Christo ist eine Kraft Gottes, die da selig macht alle, die daran glauben, die Juden vornehmlich, und auch die Griechen. Das Evangelium predigt und wirkt in den Christen nicht nur den Glauben, sondern auch alle zur Seligkeit dienende Gotteserkenntnis, herzliche Bruderliebe und Heiligung durch den Glauben in jedem einzelnen Christen.

Aber die Schrift redet auch von einem Heilsrat über die Völker der Erde als solche. Wir gingen von dem Gedanken aus, daß Gott alles, das Kleine wie das Große, das Gute und Böse geschehen oder werden läßt, wie er will. Er selbst ist der ewige Gott, der Vater des Lichts, bei welchem ist keine Veränderung noch Wechsel des Lichts und der Finsternis, Jacobi 1, 16. Die Zeit, das Vor- und Nacheinander alles Geschehens, hat er für uns, seine Kreaturen dieser Welt geschaffen. So hat er „zuborversehen“, wann ich geboren werden und wann ich sterben soll, alles, was mir passieren soll.

Alles, was uns begegnet, hat seine eigene Zeit und alles Vornehmen unter dem Himmel hat seine Stunde, jagt der Prediger Sal. Kap. 3. So redet der Herr zu seinen Mördern: „Dies ist eure Stunde und die Macht der Finsternis.“ So heißt es auch in seinem Munde: Kinder, es ist die letzte Stunde, d. h. die letzte Zeit der Welt vor dem Jüngsten Tage. So hat Gott in seinem Heilsrat auch bestimmt, zu welcher Weltzeit er jedem Volk auf Erden das Evangelium gepredigt haben will, ehe es in das Gericht Christi kommen soll. -- Vgl. 2. Kor. 5, 10.

Eine besonders lehrreiche und wichtige Stelle über den Völkerheilsrat Gottes ist Apg. 17, 26–31: „Und Gott hat gemacht, daß von einem Blut aller Menschen Geschlechter auf dem ganzen Erdboden wohnen, und hat Zeit gesetzt, zu vorhersehen, wie lange und weit sie wohnen sollen, daß sie den Herrn suchen sollten, ob sie doch ihn fühlen und finden möchten.“

Sind alle Völker von Einem Blut (von Adams), so sind sie alle auch in ihren Einzelpersonen noch Ebenbilder Gottes, von ihm ebenso herzlich geliebt, durch den Herrn Jesum ebenso teuer erlöst von aller Sündenschuld, wie wir selbst. So ist auch für sie Christi Wort mit dem Heiligen Geist befruchtet, zur Befeuerung, Heiligung und himmlischen Verherrlichung ihrer Seelen und ihrer Leiber ebenso kräftig wie bei uns, vgl. 2. Korinther 5.

So hat Gott der Herr in der ersten Weltzeit nicht aller abgelesenen Völker sich zugleich mit seinem Gnadenevangelium angenommen, sondern immer eines Volkes nach dem andern; zuerst, nach Adam und Eva (der Mutter aller Lebendigen), des Geschlechts des frommen Seth bis auf Noah; dann erwählte er das Geschlecht Sem's. Dann das Geschlecht Abraham's und Sarah's mit ihren Söhnen Isaak und Jakob, die an dem besonderen neutestamentlichen Segen ihres Vaters teilhaben sollten. Für die übrige Zeit des Alten Testaments erwählte sich der Herr das Geschlecht Jakobs oder Israels (Gen. 32, 28; Kap. 35, 10). Seit der Zeit heißen die 12 Stämme Israel des Herrn „Erbe“, d. h. Gottes vor allen anderen Völkern der Erde zur Erlangung des Heils bestimmtes Volk, aus dem auch der Heiland aller Völker der Welt in der Fülle der Zeit kommen sollte. Die besondere Gnadenzeit Israels endete mit Johannes dem Täufer. Der wies alle Welt, Juden noch einmal und alle Heiden auf Christum hin: „Siehe, das ist Gottes Lamm, welches der Welt Sünde trägt.“ Er war der größte unter allen

natürlich geborenen Menschen, der größte an Geist und Kraft und der größte im Leid und Kreuz um Christi willen. Vgl. Matth. 3, 13ff; 11, 2; 14, 3; Mark. 1; 6, 17ff; Joh. 3, 27f, und andere. Nachdem er Jesum getauft hatte, lief alles Volk, auch Pharisäer und Sadduzäer zu ihm, aber glaubten ihm nicht; darum verkündigte er ihnen das Gericht Gottes. Da erfüllte sich das Wort des Herrn in Matth. 11, 12: „Aber von den Tagen Johannes des Täuflers bis hieher leidet das Himmelreich Gewalt, und die Gewalttun, die reißen es zu sich.“

Diese Stelle hat sehr verschiedene Auslegung gefunden. Das „Himmelreich“ ist sehr klar. Es ist das ganz unsichtbare geistliche Gebiet der Gnade und Seligmachung der Sünder und deren Gericht durch Jesum Christum im Gegensatz zu den sichtbaren irdischen Reichen dieser Welt, die es nur mit der Ordnung des irdischen Lebens zu tun haben. Der Herr sagt dem irdischen Machthaber Pilatus: „Mein Reich ist nicht von dieser Welt, . . . aber nun ist mein Reich nicht von dannen.“ Insonderheit ist das Reich Gottes die Gesamtzahl der auf Erden an Christum Glaubenden und ewig selig werdenden, die Kirche Gottes. Diese wird hier auf Erden durch das Wort Gottes und den Heiligen Geist gesammelt und erhalten. — Nun wird das „Gewalt erleiden“ hier aber vom Herrn auf eine bestimmte Zeit beschränkt — auf die Zeit von Johannes dem Täufler an bis auf Christum selbst. Das ist die Zeit, in welcher die irdischen Machthaber Johannem und Christum selbst mit äußerer Gewalt umbringen, wie es Daniel in Kap. 2, besonders aber in Kap. 9, 26 Weissagt: „Und nach den 62 Wochen wird Christus (Messias) a u s g e r o t t e t werden und nichts mehr sein. Und ein Volk des Fürsten wird kommen und die Stadt und das Heiligtum zerstören, daß es ein Ende nehmen wird wie durch eine Flut, und bis zum Ende des Streits wird's wüste bleiben,“ — und so weiter. In Matth. 24, 15ff braucht der Herr diese Weissagung von den Vorgängen vor dem Weltende, von welchen die Zerstörung Jerusalems ein Vorpiel ist. — So fassen diese Stelle vom Gewaltleiden des Himmelreichs viele Ausleger. Wir unsererseits verzichten hier auf eine besondere Auslegung. Aber so viel ist klar, daß mit der Zerstörung Jerusalems durch die Römer (Titus) das Reich Gottes unter die Heidenvölker ging. Zu dem Zweck hatte der Herr schon, wie durch einen Gewalttatt, einen Mann besonders zur Befehrung der Heidenvölker zubereitet — Paulus von Tarjen, von dessen Wunder-

befehrerung und Sonderaufgabe als Heidenapostel von Apg. 9 an das Neue Testament voll ist. Er predigte auch den Juden, sich dem alttestamentlichen Gottesvolk als Heidenapostel legitimierend; dann zog er sich, von den Juden verworfen, von diesem Volk zurück und ging mit seiner Predigt „rein“ zu den Heiden, Apg. 13, 46. 47 und 18, 6ff.

Und auch in der Befehrerung der Heiden befolgte Gott nun den in Apg. 17, 26–31 beschriebenen Völkerheilsrat: allen Völkern, die als aus einem Blut kommend Gottes Bild tragen, hat er Ort und Zeit ihres Wohnens auf dem Erdboden von Ewigkeit her bestimmt, daß sie ihn suchen sollen, ob sie ihn doch f i n d e n und so finden möchten, weil er nicht ferne von uns ist, und wir in ihm leben und weben, wie auch etliche Weltweise d e n M e n s c h e n als göttlichen Geschlechts seiend erkannt haben. Das war freilich noch große Unwissenheit; die hat Gott in großer Geduld bis auf die Offenbarung Christi „übersehen“; n u n aber, weil er Christum auch zum Richter aller Welt gesetzt hat, gebeut er allen Menschen an allen Enden, Buße zu tun zu ihrer Seligkeit.

Dieser Völkerheilsrat Gottes erfüllt sich auch in der Zeit des Neuen Testaments, der Zeit der Heidenvölker. Gott hat sie bisher in großer Geduld in ihrer heidnischen Unwissenheit getragen. Nun aber, da das Evangelium ihnen gepredigt wird, gebeut er ihnen Buße und Glauben an ihren Heiland. Und auch darin erfüllt sich der Völkerheilsrat Gottes, daß er nicht allen Heidenvölkern das seligmachende Evangelium zugleich, sondern einem Volk nach dem andern, zunächst dem griechischen, dann dem romanischen, dann dem germanischen (besonders dem deutschen Volk durch Luther) hat predigen lassen. So allen europäischen, dann d e m a m e r i k a n i s c h e n V o l k. Wie vielen von den a s i a t i s c h e n Völkern der Herr das Evangelium bisher hat predigen lassen, wissen wir nicht genau, außer daß in einem Teil von China eine christliche Heidenmission besteht, die gewiß nicht ohne Frucht geblieben ist. Sind aber auf dem Festlande oder auf den vielen Inseln Asiens noch Völker vorhanden, die das Evangelium nicht gehört haben, so ist es allen Christen heilige Pflicht, es ihnen zu predigen, ehe sie durch Gottes Gericht hinweggerafft werden. Denn uns allen gilt der in Matth. 28, 18–20 und in Mark. 16, 15. 16 stehende Missionsbefehl: „Gehet hin in alle Welt und predigt das Evangelium aller Kreatur!“

Haben wir den an unserm Teil — ich rede jetzt von der Lutherischen Kirche — treu erfüllt? Das Evangelium wurde von den

Aposteln und deren Schülern bis in das dritte Jahrhundert nach Christo in seiner Reinheit gepredigt. Aber schon im zweiten und besonders im dritten Jahrhundert nach Christo kamen im griechisch-römischen Ostreich macherlei schwerwiegende Irrlehren auf, und im vierten war das Reich derselben voll. Die bekannteste wurde der nach seinem Gründer Arius sogenannte Arianismus, der mit aller Wucht die Gottheit Christi leugnete und ihn für einen bloßen Menschen ausgab. Gegen diese alles Christentum vernichtende Irrlehre hielt die rechtgläubig gebliebene Kirche zu Nicäa bei Nicomedien das bekannte Konzil, welches das Nicänische Symbolum oder Glaubensbekenntnis annahm, das erste nach dem apostolischen, im Jahre 325 verfaßte, welches beide auch unsere Lutherische Kirche annimmt. Der damalige Kaiser des oströmischen Reichs war Konstantin der Große, der lediglich in der Vermischung von Staat und Kirche, im öfteren Wechsel seiner Religion und in der falschen und selbstfüchtigen Erziehung seiner Söhne groß genannt werden kann. Er ist als solcher der eigentliche Gründer des römischen Papsttums, das er besonders nach seiner Übersiedelung nach Konstantinopel kräftig stärkte. Seit seiner Regierung hat es bis auf Luther keinen weltlichen Regenten gegeben, der auf das rechte Bekenntnis der christlichen Kirche einen Einfluß ausgeübt hätte. Der größte Befenner des reinen Evangeliums seit dem Apostel Paulus ist Luther, dessen Erkenntnis des Heilsrats Gottes, dessen unerschütterlicher Befennermut seit den Aposteln Christi einzig da steht und schwerlich in der Zukunft übertroffen werden wird. In ihm hat Gott der Welt und besonders uns Deutschen den letzten großen Propheten vor dem jüngsten Tag gegeben. Den müssen wir, gerade wir deutscher Abkunft, nächst der Heiligen Schrift am besten kennen lernen und seine Bekenntnisfreudigkeit uns von Gott erbitten. Luther hat sehr viele Bücher geschrieben. Die alle gründlich zu studieren, reicht die Lebenszeit der meisten heutigen Lehrer des Wortes Gottes nicht aus; aber seine wichtigsten Schriften dürfen wir nicht unstudiert lassen, wenn wir etwas von seinem freudigen und zugleich demütigen Geist, besonders von seinem Gebetsgeist*) uns aneignen wollen.

*) Als Luther im Jahre 1521 auf der Wartburg das Neue Testament übersezte, war Veit Dietrich sein persönlicher Famulus. Der erzählt, daß Luther während der besten zum Studium geeigneten Stunden des Vormittags oft sein Studium zu dreistündigem Gebet unterbrochen und mit Gott wie mit einem Freunde geredet habe.

Wie tief Luthers Geist in das Evangelium von Christo eingetaucht war, ersehen wir vor allen andern seiner Schriften aus den zwei: „Predigt, daß man die Kinder zur Schule halten soll“ und „An die Rats herrn aller Städte Deutchlands“ (St. Louijer Ausgabe X, Seite 423 bis 458 und X, 459 bis 485).

Ich kann mich nicht enthalten, aus jeder dieser kostbaren Schriften ein paar Stellen hier zu zitieren. In der ersteren sagt Luther S. 456: „Denn daß wir das Evangelium und Predigtamt haben, was ist es anders denn Blut und Schweiß unsers Herrn? Er hat's ja durch seinen ängstlichen blutigen Schweiß erworben, durch sein Blut und Kreuz verdient und uns geschenkt, haben's gar umsonst und nichts darum getan noch gegeben. Ach, Herr Gott, wie herzlich bitter und sauer ist's ihm geworden! Wie freundlich und gern hat er's dennoch getan! Wie viel haben die lieben Apostel und alle Heiligen darüber gelitten, auf daß es bis auf uns kommen möchte! Wie viele sind ihrer zu unserer Zeit darüber getödet! Und daß ich mich auch rühme, wie manchmal habe ich den Tod darüber müssen leiden, und ist mir auch so herzlich sauer geworden, und noch wird, auf daß ich meinen Deutschen hierin diene. Aber alles nichts gegen das, was Christus, Gottes Sohn, unser liebes Herz, daran gelegt hat; und soll nun nichts anderes damit verdient haben bei uns, denn daß etliche solch sein teuer erworben Amt verfolgen, verdammen, lästern, unter alle Teufel hinunterstoßen, . . . auf daß solch Amt ja bald zu Boden gehe und Christi Blut und Marter umsonst sei, und dennoch sicher dahingehen, kein Gewissen, keine Reue noch Leid für solche höllische Undankbarkeit und viel unaussprechliche Sünden und Laster haben, keine Furcht noch Scheu vor Gottes Zorn, keine Lust noch Liebe zu dem lieben Heilande für seine saure, schwere Marter erzeigen, sondern wollen mit solchen schrecklichen Gräueln dazu noch evangelisch und Christen sein. Wenn es so soll in deutschen Landen gehen, so ist mir's leid, daß ich ein Deutscher geboren bin oder je deutsch geredet oder geschrieben habe; und wo ich's vor meinem Gewissen tun könnte, wollte ich wieder dazu raten und helfen, daß der Papst mit allen seinen Gräueln wieder über uns kommen müßte. . . . Ich bitte Gott um ein gnädiges Stündlein, daß er mich von himmen nehme und nicht sehen lasse den Jammer, so über Deutschland gehen muß. (Man denke an den Dreißigjährigen Krieg!) Denn ich halte, wenn zehn Moje ständen und für uns bäten, so würden sie nichts aus-

richten: so fühle ich's auch, wenn ich für mein liebes Deutschland beten will, daß mir das Gebet zurückprallt und will nicht hinaufdringen, wie es sonst tut, wenn ich für andere Sachen bitte. Denn es will werden, daß Gott wird Lot erlösen und Sodoma versenken. Gott gebe, daß ich lügen müsse und in diesem Stück ein falscher Prophet sei; welches geschehen würde, so wir uns besserten und unsers Herrn Wort und sein teures Blut und Sterben anders ehrten, denn bisher geschehen, und dem jungen Volk zu den göttlichen Ämtern, wie gesagt ist, hülfsen und erzögen."

Und nun noch eine Stelle aus „Den Ratsherren“, S. 464: „Liebe Deutjchen, kaufet, weil (so lange) der Markt vor der Thür ist, sammelt ein, weil es scheint und gut Wetter ist, brauchet Gottes Gnade und Wort, dieweil es da ist. Denn das sollt ihr wissen: Gottes Wort und Gnade ist ein fahrender Platzregen, der nicht wiederkommt, wo er einmal gewesen ist. Er ist bei den Juden gewesen, aber hin ist hin, sie haben nun nichts. Paulus brachte ihn in Griechenland; hin ist auch hin, nun haben sie den Türken; Rom und Lateinisch Land hat ihn auch gehabt; hin ist hin, sie haben nun den Papsi. Und ihr Deutjche dürft nicht denken, daß ihr ihn ewig haben werdet; denn der Undank und Verachtung wird ihn nicht lassen bleiben. Darum greift zu und haltet zu, wer greifen und halten kann; faule Sände müssen ein böses Jahr haben.“

M. Pieper.

Papam Esse Ipsum Verum Antichristum

The question concerning the Antichrist is being discussed very much in our day. You, Brethren of the Milwaukee City Conference, have asked me to interrupt the regular course of our study of eschatology, in order to devote a session to this burning question concerning the Antichrist.

The renewed interest in this matter is due to the fact that the doctrine concerning the Antichrist was in controversy between the Synodical Conference, on the one side, and the former Iowa Synod, on the other. Since 1930 the American Lutheran Church is sponsoring the position of the old Iowa Synod. When in 1935 nego-

tiations between the Missouri Synod and the A. L. C. were begun with a view to reaching an agreement on the doctrines formerly contested, Antichrist became one of the subjects for discussion.

The so-called Chicago Theses, adopted by an intersynodical committee in 1928, contain two paragraphs on the Antichrist, the first one stating that "we confess with the Smalcald Articles that the Pope is 'the very Antichrist'." — the second one speaking of a possible "special development of the antichristian power". Thus the question concerning the Antichrist was approached from two different angles. First it was treated as a matter of *confession*, and then as a question for *historical judgment*. This division of the question was clearly present in the minds of the colloquists, and found expression in the two paragraphs that were adopted; although, it may be granted, it was not expressed and formulated as concisely as might be desired.

The A. L. C. *Declaration* of 1938 dropped this distinction and treated the whole matter as one of *historical judgment* only. For the sake of easier reference I copy the complete text of section VI, B, 1 of that document.

"In regard to the Antichrist we accept the *historical judgment* of Luther in the Smalcald Articles (Part II, Art. IV, 10) that the Pope is the very Antichrist (German: der rechte Endechrist oder Widerchrist), because among all the antichristian manifestations in the history of the world and the church that lie *behind us in the past* there is none that fits the description given in 2 Thess. 2 better than the Papacy, particularly since the denial of the fundamental article of the Scripture on the part of the Papacy, viz., the justification of the sinner by grace alone, for Christ's sake alone, by faith alone, constitutes the worst perversion imaginable of the very essence of Christianity and inevitably carries with it the dissolution of every God-pleasing world-order. — The answer to the question whether in the *future that is still before us*, prior to the return of Christ, a special unfolding and personal concentration of the antichristian power already present now, and thus a still more comprehensive fulfilment of 2 Thess. 2 may occur, we leave to the Lord and Ruler of the Church and world history."

The delegate convention of the Missouri Synod, held in St. St. Louis in 1938, put an extremely charitable construction on this paragraph of the A. L. C. *Declaration*, ignoring the fact entirely

that the A. L. C. had shifted the point of controversy and had reduced the *doctrine* of the Antichrist to a matter of *historical judgment*.

We repeat the complete text of section (b), 1, of the report of the floor committee: "In some non-fundamental points concerning the doctrine of the Last Things, the Declaration of the Representatives of the A. L. C. asks tolerance for certain teachings and interpretations which have been rejected in our circles. — This concerns particularly the doctrine of Antichrist. With the Missouri Synod the *Declaration* of the A. L. C., on the basis of Scriptures and the Smalcald Articles, teaches that the Pope is the Antichrist; but the question as to whether the future will bring a specific unfolding and personal concentration of the present antichristian power is left to God. — While the Missouri Synod teaches, on the basis of 2 Thess. 2, 3-12, and in accord with the Smalcald Articles (Part II, Art. IV, 10) that the Pope is the very Antichrist for the past *and* the future, your Committee finds that the synodical fathers have declared that a deviation in this doctrine need not be divisive of church-fellowship."

Thus the recent union negotiations and their unsatisfactory outcome have served to focus once more the attention of the church on the doctrine concerning the Antichrist. It has been discussed quite recently in an article of our own *Theol. Quartalschrift* (1941, p. 7), Prof. Lehninger being the author. Even before the union negotiations began, your present essayist twice treated the doctrine publicly, in 1934 as essayist of the Synodical Conference (Das Königtum Christi, part 4: Der grosse Rivale Christi, der Antichrist. *Q. S.* 1934, p. 239; 1935, pp. 16. 97. 178) and in 1925 (*Q. S.*, p. 201) under the head, "Ye know what withholdeth." In this connection permit me to call your attention to another article on this doctrine, now in preparation by Pastor Walter Hoenecke, who will treat the matter exegetically and historically.

Taking all of these various factors into consideration, I decided to limit my present investigation to a single question: Is the Lutheran tenet that the Pope is the very Antichrist an *article of faith*, or in other words, a *doctrine* of Scripture?

This has been challenged again recently. It has been urged that the doctrine *concerning the Antichrist* is indeed a *doctrine* and is as such "clearly defined in Scripture", but that "when we

add the words *the Pope* to what the Scriptures prophesy regarding the Antichrist, we are *augmenting* the Christian doctrine". The fact is deplored that this augmentation of Scripture doctrine found its way into our Confessions — "we would rather it had not been done" — because thereby the sentence declaring *the Pope* to be the Antichrist apparently is granted the "status of a Scriptural doctrine". Therefore the complaint is voiced that giving it this status "has caused confusion among ourselves, and has complicated our efforts to reach doctrinal unity with other synods."

The sentence with *the Pope* as the subject is contained in our Symbolical Books: *Papam esse ipsum verum Antichristum*. Does not, then, a pastor's unqualified subscription to the Confessions at his ordination obligate him to "accept" it and "to teach accordingly?" The conclusion would seem inevitable, unless a way can be found for reducing it to a mere historical judgment. In that case the old rule would apply that our subscription to the Symbolical Books is restricted to the Scriptural *doctrines* contained in them, and that all things pertaining to the manner of presentation, *e. g.*, figures of speech, method of deduction, scientific remarks, historical or archeological statements, and the like, are excepted. Dr. Walther formulated this truth as follows: "Holding fast to the fact that the Symbols are confessions of faith or of *doctrine*, the Church must necessarily *exclude everything that does not concern doctrine* from the sphere of that to which the subscription to the Symbols pertains."

If it, then, can be shown that the insertion of *the Pope* into the Scripture doctrine of the Antichrist is a mere *historical judgment*, the sentence, "*The Pope* is the very Antichrist", would at one stroke be eliminated from the doctrinal content of our Confessional Writings, as one to which our unqualified subscription by no means applies. To claim for it the status of a *doctrine* would be *augmenting* the truth which God has revealed to us, in flagrant violation of Dt. 4, 2, and similar injunctions. Then § 43 of the *Brief Statement* (Of the Antichrist) stands in urgent need of revision; "As to the *Antichrist* we *teach* that the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures concerning the Antichrist have been *fulfilled* in the *Pope* of Rome and his dominion. . . . We subscribe to the statement of our Confessions that the *Pope* is the very Antichrist."

We have considered enough material so far to show the great importance of the question. Is the statement that the Pope is the very Antichrist an article of faith or a doctrine of the Scriptures? More material will turn up in the course of our discussion, but the little presented so far is sufficient to warrant a thorough investigation and prayerful study of the question.

First of all let us hear the respective paragraphs of the Smalcald Articles.

“This teaching shows forcefully that *the Pope is the very Antichrist*, who has exalted himself against Christ, because he will not permit Christians to be saved without his power, which, nevertheless, is nothing, and is neither ordained nor commanded by God. This is, properly speaking, to exalt himself above all that is called God, as Paul says, 2 Thess. 2, 4. Even the Turks and the Tartars, great enemies of Christians as they are, do not do this, but they allow whoever wishes to believe in Christ, and take bodily tribute and obedience from Christians.

“The Pope, however, *prohibits this faith*, saying that to be saved a person must obey him. This we are unwilling to do, even *though on this account we must die in God's name*. This all proceeds from the fact that the Pope has wished to be called the supreme head of the Christian Church by divine right. Accordingly he had to make himself equal and superior to Christ, and had to cause himself to be proclaimed the head and then the lord of the Church and finally of the whole world, and simply God on earth, until he has dared to issue commands even to the angels in heaven. And when we distinguish the Pope's teaching from, or measure and hold it against, Holy Scripture, it is found that the Pope's teaching, where it is best, has been taken from the imperial and heathen law, and treats of political matters and decisions or rights, as the Decretals show. Furthermore, it teaches of ceremonies concerning churches, garments, food, persons, and puerile, theatrical and comical things without measure, but in all these things nothing at all of Christ, faith, and the commandments of God. Lastly, *it is nothing else than the devil himself*, because above and against God he *urges his falsehoods* concerning masses, purgatory, the monastic life, *our own works* and *divine worship* (*for this is the very Papacy*) and condemns, murders, and tortures all Christians who do not exalt and honor these abominations above all

things. Therefore, *just as little as we can worship the devil himself as Lord and God, we can endure his apostle, the Pope, or Antichrist, in his rule as head or lord*" (Trgl. 475, 1-14).

Do these words read like *historical judgments*? They are the expression of a deep rooted faith that knows the Savior and is ready to die for Him, knowing that to do otherwise would mean to forfeit eternal life.

The subscription that this section of our Confession demands is not that of the A. L. C. *Declaration*: "We accept the *historical judgment*." That the Pope is the very Antichrist is presented as an article of faith, as a doctrine of Scripture. Any one who does not subscribe to this article, does not merely show poor historical judgment, he is guilty of denying the faith. He is turning his back on God, and is paving the way for a worshiping of God's arch enemy, the devil, in the person of his prime apostle, the Pope.

What stand did Luther take over against the Pope? Luther was the author of the Smalcald Articles. Since he therein expressed his readiness to lay down his life, if need be, for his conviction that the Pope is the very Antichrist, he clearly indicates his personal stand in the matter. He is solemnly formulating for the church an article of faith.

This will become even more apparent if we look just a little into the history behind this article.

In the memorandum in which Luther was instructed to draft articles of faith for a general church council, possibly to be called soon by the Pope, the Elector of Saxony (John Frederick) used the following words: "Although, in the first place, it may easily be perceived that whatsoever our party may propose in such a council as has been announced will have no weight with the opposition, miserable, blinded, and mad men that they are, no matter how well it is founded in Holy Scripture, moreover, everything will have to be Lutheran heresy, and their verdict, which probably has already been decided and agreed upon, must be adopted and immediately followed by their proposed ban and interdict, it will, nevertheless, be very necessary for Doctor Martin to prepare his foundation and opinion *from the Holy Scriptures*, namely the articles as hitherto taught, preached, and written by him, and *which he is determined to adhere to and abide by* at the council, as well as *upon his departure from this world and before the judgment of*

Almighty God, and in which we cannot yield without becoming guilty of treason against God, even though property and life, peace or war, are at stake."

Upon drafting such articles, Luther was to submit them to his colleagues, "Wittenberg theologians" and "prominent preachers whose presence he should require." He was to ask them "whether they agreed with him in these articles which he had drawn up, or not, and thereupon, *as they hoped for their souls' salvation*, their sentiments and opinions be learned" etc.

These were the instructions which Luther received. He was not called to formulate some *historical judgment*, but articles of faith on which he was ready to die and hoped to stand before the judgment of the Almighty. Those who were to review these articles before their publication were to do so "as they hoped for their souls' salvation". In this spirit Luther accepted the assignment. Chancellor Brueck reported to the Duke that Luther was at work on the articles "to open his heart to your Electoral Grace on religion, which is to be, as it were, *his testament*". Luther himself inserted these words in the conclusion of the articles: "These are the articles on which I must stand, and, God willing *shall stand even to my death*; and I do not know how to change or to yield anything in them. If anyone wishes to yield anything, let him do it *at the peril of his conscience*" (Trgl. 501, 3).

There can be no doubt that it was a part and parcel of Luther's faith in the Scriptures that he considered the Pope in Rome as the very Antichrist. Of the many pronouncements scattered throughout his writings may I quote two. The first is taken from his book *Vom Missbrauch der Messe, 1522*: "Darum sollst du auch wissen, dass der Papst der rechte, wahrhaftige *letzte* Antichrist ist, davon die ganze Schrift sagt; welchen der Herr Jesus jetzund mit dem Geist seines Mundes zu töten angefangen, und wird ihn gar bald mit der Erleuchtung seiner Zukunft, der wir warten, zerstören und erwürgen" (St. L. XIX, 1164, 232).

The second is from the book *Wider das Papsttum zu Rom, vom Teufel gestiftet, 1545*: "Wiewohl des Papsttums teuflischer Grund an sich selbst ein unendlich unaussprechlicher Wust ist, so habe ich doch, hoffe ich, wer ihm will sagen lassen (für mich selbst bin ich gewiss) das erste Stück, so ich droben vorgenommen: ob's wahr sei, dass der Papst über die Christenheit das Haupt, über

Kaiser, Könige, alle Welt Herr sei, so klärlich und gewaltiglich ausgeführt, dass Gott Lob *kein gut christlich Gewissen anders glauben kann*, denn dass *der Papst* nicht sei noch sein kann das Haupt der christlichen Kirchen noch Statthalter Gottes oder Christi; sondern *sei das Haupt der verfluchten Kirchen allerärgster Buben auf Erden, ein Statthalter des Teufels*, ein Feind Gottes, ein Widersacher Christi und Verstörer der Kirchen Christi, ein Lehrer aller Lügen, Gotteslästerung und Abgötterei, ein Erzkirchendieb und Kirchenräuber, der Schlüssel, aller Güter, beide der Kirchen und der weltlichen Herrn; ein Mörder der Könige und Hetzer zu allerlei Blutvergiessen, ein Hurenwirt über alle Hurenwirte, und aller Unzucht, auch die nicht zu nennen ist, *ein Widerchrist, ein Mensch der Sünden und Kind des Verderbens*; ein rechter Bärwolf. *Wer das nicht will glauben, der fahre immer hin mit seinem Gott, dem Papst. Ich als ein berufener Prediger und Lehrer in der Kirchen Christi, und die Wahrheit zu sagen schuldig bin, habe hiermit das Meine getan. Wer stinken will, der stinke, wer verloren sein will, der sei verloren; sein Blut sei auf seinem Kopf*" (St. L. XVII, 1114, 181).

Luther considered it as a matter of conscience to guard against the Pope as the very Antichrist; he considered it as his pastoral duty, as a part of the Gospel ministry to which he had been called, to expose and denounce the Pope as the very Antichrist, and to warn Christians against him.

It is evident, moreover, from Luther's mode of argumentation, that he held these views concerning the Pope not merely because he thought that the end of the world was at hand. Rather, his faith in his Savior rejected the Pope as the very Antichrist because of the inherent characteristics of the papacy, its teachings and its claims to supremacy both over the secular powers and over the very church of Christ. His expectation of an early return of Christ for judgment may have helped to confirm him in this faith, but it certainly was not its source.

That is also the position taken anew by the Missouri Synod in the adoption and promulgation of the *Brief Statement*. This document, born out of dissatisfaction with the *Chicago Theses*, was formally declared to be the basis for all future union negotiations to which the Missouri Synod would be a party, and was

expressly reaffirmed as such by the convention of 1938 at St. Louis.

This was not an innovation. The fathers, headed by Dr. Walther, ever took the same stand and voiced it perhaps even more vigorously.

Deliberately I chose quotations from Luther as Walther used them 75 years ago, on November 18, 1867, in the Milwaukee Colloquy held with representatives of the Iowa Synod (November 13-19). Walther selected these passages from Luther not only because they plainly show "was Luther davon gelehrt hat", but particularly, "von welcher Bedeutung ihm diese Lehre war". Then Walther, the spokesman of the Missouri Synod, firmly supported by his colleagues, added: "Das ist Luthers Urteil über den Papst, das wir Missourier *von ganzem Herzen* unterschreiben, weil wir, wenn wir die Geschichte durchgehen, sehen, dass *jedes Wort der Schrift* seine *volle* Erfüllung im Papsttum findet."

Walther was not satisfied with the declaration of the Iowa representatives: "Wir sagen auch von ganzem Herzen, dass der Papst der Antichrist sei" as long as they insisted that the true fulfillment of 2 Th. 2 is to be expected in the future; when they rejected the position, "dass man nicht nur glauben muss, dass das Papsttum recht antichristisch, sondern dass der Papst der rechte Antichrist selber sei". He asked them: "Die Frage ist, ob der Papst der rechte Antichrist sei, oder *ob noch erst was dazu kommen müsse*, dass er es werde; . . . ob er schon da ist, oder ob es wahr ist, was die Iowa-Synode sagt, *dass er noch zu erwarten ist.*" He insisted: "Gott hat geredet, *durch Taten geredet*, und wir wollten schweigen?"

As far as Walther was concerned, the tenet that the Pope is the very Antichrist is a Biblical doctrine, an article of faith.

Moreover, he was far from granting that this assumption concerning the Pope belongs to those elements in our Symbolical Books which we do not include when we subscribe to them without reservation. He was very emphatic in denouncing the attitude of his Iowa opponents as unfaithfulness to our Symbols. "*Es ist mir unerkklärlich, wie jemand sagen kann, er wolle die symbolischen Bücher annehmen, und doch den Papst als rechten Antichrist nicht darin finden kann, wie er vom Apostel 2 Thess. 2 geweihsagt ist.*"

These words are found in Walther's opening address for the evening session. He continued: "Wir wissen, *die Reformation steht darauf*. Dies leugnen heisst darum, sich die Reformation als ein Werk vorstellen, welches das grösste Unrecht ist. Unsere Kirche hätte dann auf eine ganze Reihe von Menschen eine Beschuldigung gehäuft, die grösser und schrecklicher nicht sein kann. Denn wenn ich jemand den Antichrist nenne, so ist das nicht anders, als ob ich ihn den eingefleischten Teufel nenne. Unsere Kirche hätte einen *ganz lästerlichen Missbrauch mit dem göttlichen Wort* der Apostel und Propheten getrieben. Im A. und N. T. werden die Christen ernstlich vor dem Antichrist gewarnt, die Seligkeit wird ihnen abgesprochen, und mit den schrecklichsten Strafen, mit der Verdammnis in Ewigkeit selbst werden sie bedroht, wenn sie nicht fliehen vor dem Antichrist und aus seinem Reich. *Daher wenn wir hier nicht einig sind, keine grössere Differenz bestehen kann als diese.*"

And shortly before the close of the evening session he told his opponents: "*Sie glauben eben nicht, was in den Symbolen steht.*"

Our Confessions declare the Pope to be the very Antichrist. With Luther this was an outstanding part of his faith, and Walther emphatically confessed his agreement.

Is it a Scriptural doctrine? Is it an article of faith? Or is the A. L. C. right when it reduces this assumption to the status of an historical judgment? Must we disavow Walther and Luther, and brand their heartaches as due to self-delusion? Must we renounce the Reformation with its intense spiritual struggles, based on the conviction that the Pope is the very Antichrist, and with its resultant disruption of the unity of the church, as proceeding from an error of judgment?

A preliminary question may have to be considered first: What constitutes Scripture proof? On what basis may any statement be considered as a Scriptural doctrine, or as a genuine article of faith? It is important that we come to some understanding on this point, else we might find ourselves arguing in circles: some will maintain with our Confession and with our fathers that the statement, *Papam esse verum ipsum Antichristum*, is a genuine article of faith, while others just as tenaciously will continue to insist that it is nothing but an historical judgment.

To begin, take an analogy. In the files of a police court are

preserved the fingerprints of some outstanding criminal. A crime is committed, and on the scene are found fingerprints which exactly match those on file in the police court. Can any one legitimately question the validity of the identification of the owner of one set of prints with that of the other? If the identity of the fingerprints is established, does the identity of the person remain a mere assumption until, let us say, the court has formally spoken?

In the Scriptures is deposited for our warning a very clear set of fingerprints of Antichrist. In Rome we find a glaring crime committed against the church of Christ. The fingerprints of the villain agree perfectly with those on file in the Scriptures. Will any one say, I cannot accept the statement that the Pope is the very Antichrist — in spite of the complete agreement — as a Scripture doctrine until God in a special revelation confirms it?

Or is it permissible — nay, necessary — to call such statement a mere historical judgment by the following mode of reasoning: We are here dealing with a syllogism, a conclusion in Barbara according to the old logical terminology, in which both premises as well as the conclusion are universal affirmative propositions. The major premise, the doctrine concerning Antichrist, is taken from the Scriptures, while the minor, our knowledge of the Pope, is taken from history. How can we dare to call the conclusion, *Papam esse verum Antichristum*, a Scripture doctrine, seeing that one of the premises is taken from history?

This mode of reasoning is a fallacy. The statement, *Papam esse ipsum verum Antichristum*, is not a conclusion at all arrived at by logical reasoning. It is a judgment of identification and classification. It is applying a Scripture truth to a given case, measuring an historical phenomenon by a standard revealed to us for that very purpose in the Scriptures. A refusal to do this would constitute a deliberate neglect of a loving warning given us by God as a safe-guard for our faith; it would be a denial of a divine truth. The warning against Antichrist is given to us that we may recognize him when we meet him. Our faith then is not a conclusion drawn from mixed premises.

This method of identification is the very one which Jesus and His apostles applied with reference to His Messiahship, and on the strength of which they demanded — not an historical judg-

ment that He showed Messianic traits in His character, but — faith, a wholehearted acceptance of Him as the Savior.

When John sent to Jesus for an answer to the question, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus said neither Yes nor No, but He referred John to the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning the coming Messiah. The question whether John was personally troubled by doubt, or whether he asked in the interest of other people, need not be considered now; the point is that Jesus emphatically indicated that the fulfilment of the prophecies in Him removed every legitimate reason for doubt, for being offended in Him.

The unbelief of the Jews and their hostility to Jesus is traced by Him, not to some faulty historical judgment, but to the fact that they do not believe Moses: for he wrote of me (Jh. 5, 46). Their rejection of Jesus amounts to a denial of a doctrine of faith proposed in the Old Testament. In other words, on the strength of Moses' prophecy Jesus demands not only a human recognition, but faith in Him that He is the Christ.

Concerning the method of procedure employed by the apostles and their assistants it will suffice to point to one case, in which the speaker did not possess the special gift of inspiration, nor was he at the time even an assistant of any apostle. It was Apollos, who had testified in Ephesus and was by the brethren in that city recommended to the Christians in Achaia. He helped them much which had believed through grace, for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, *showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ* (Acts 18, 27. 28).

This brief summary of Apollos' activity is conclusive. The manner in which he proceeded may have been very much like that employed by Peter on the first Pentecost day (Acts 2, 14ff.) or by Paul in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13, 16ff.); but the decisive factor was that *by the Scriptures* he identified Jesus as the Christ. In the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth the Scripture prophecies of the O. T. found their fulfilment, and every one who nourished his faith in the redemption of God by these prophecies was by them compelled to accept Jesus as the Christ. Refusing to believe in Jesus would have been tantamount to a rejection of the Scripture.

Jesus was identified by the O. T. Scriptures as the Christ —

and the Pope is identified by the N. T. Scriptures as the Antichrist.

Moreover, it is not an identification which our intellect performs primarily, rather, it is an identification by our faith, which instinctively recoils at the sight of the Pope.

Now, what does Scripture teach about Antichrist? We shall for the present omit from our discussion all symbolical references, such as are found in Daniel and the book of Revelation, and shall limit our investigation to some direct statements. These are found in 1 Jh. 2, 18: Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 1 Jh. 4, 3: Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is in the world. 2 Th. 2, 3. 4: Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come except there come a falling away (*hē apostasia*) first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped: so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

In the John passages the coming of Antichrist is mentioned as a sign of the last times. However, the last times were at hand in that day already, as is indicated by the presence of many antichrists. John, then, distinguishes between a specific Antichrist, to whom this name applies in an especially appropriate way, and antichrists so called in a looser way.

When the Smalcald Articles declare the Pope to be the very Antichrist, they thereby indicate unmistakably that they do not wish to say merely that the institution of the Papacy is antichristian in character, perhaps extremely so, but they proclaim that the Pope is to be held as the specific manifestation of the antichristian principle.

Of course, when it is said that the Pope is the very Antichrist, this statement implies and includes the other, that he is very antichristian in character, that he is a part of the antichristian forces in the world. And there may be occasions when statements to that effect will be very appropriate. Thus, in leading up to an express denunciation of the Pope as the very Antichrist a link in

the argument may be to point out the antichristian character of the Papacy in general. Or, when discussing some flagrant error of the papal theology, it may be well to point out that such error is characteristic of Antichrist. This is the mode of procedure followed by the Apology.

In Art. XV (VIII), Of Human Traditions in the Church, we read the following statement: "What need is there of words on a subject so manifest? If the adversaries defend these human services *as meriting justification*, grace and the remission of sins, they simply *establish the kingdom of Antichrist*. For the Kingdom of Antichrist is a new service of God, devised by human authority rejecting Christ, just as the kingdom of Mahomet has services and works through which it wishes to be justified before God; nor does it hold that men are gratuitously (*gratis*) justified before God by faith, for Christ's sake. *Thus the Papacy also will be a part of the kingdom of Antichrist if it thus defends human services as justifying*. For the honor is taken away from Christ when they teach that we are not justified gratuitously by faith, for Christ's sake, but by such services."

Here the aim was to point out the heinousness of a doctrine of justification by works. Such doctrine will place any one who holds it in a class with the Mohammedans who also reject Christ as the Savior and brazenly teach salvation by man's own efforts. Such doctrine is plainly antichristian, and if the Pope is unwilling to renounce it, this fact will establish his antichristian character beyond a question. He stands convicted by this error of having disemboweled the Gospel, yes, dethroned Christ himself.

The Smalcald Articles then bring a ringing confession that the Pope is the very Antichrist, Antichrist in the specific application of the word, Antichrist *kat' exochen*.

St. Paul speaks of this great Antichrist in 2 Th. 2.

Luther in the Smalcald Articles singled out one particular statement of Paul as establishing incontrovertibly the fact that the Pope is the very Antichrist: he "raised his head above all", he "exalted himself above, and opposed himself against Christ, because he will not permit Christians to be saved without his power."

No salvation except by way of unconditional surrender and submission to the Pope — can a Christian heart remain insensible to such an outrageous claim? Can it with complacency weigh

the pro and con when it is confronted with such claims, and arrive at the "historical judgment" that it is facing something which looks very antichristian, but which it still dare not denounce as the very Antichrist for fear of augmenting the doctrine of Scriptures? What Christian conscience can remain calm when He to whom its faith confidently clings, in whom all its hopes and joys are anchored, He without whom there is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved — when He is crowded out of His rightful place by a brazen usurper? There must be something radically wrong with a faith — and with a theology — that does not at once protest in unmistakable terms when Christ's work is declared to be insufficient and all in vain unless a man submits to the Pope. What more direct attack on Christ's office can be made? A Christian believes that there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, and the Pope insists (in the bull *Unam sanctam*) that to submit to the Roman Pontif (*subesse Romano pontifici*) is a matter of absolute necessity for salvation (*omnino esse de necessitate salutis*).

What more direct attack on Christ, our only Mediator, is conceivable? Here is the man who exalts himself above God, who erects his seat in the very shrine of God. Here is the Antichrist.

Setting aside for the moment Paul's remarks about the *man of sin* and the *son of perdition*, some one may ask, What about the great *falling away*? Does not Paul say that the Antichrist will arise in connection with a great falling away? The Pope has not left the church, nor has he led people out of the church. Rather, many Christians have fallen away from the Pope. How can any one maintain, then, that my faith, founded on this prophetic Word of God, must reject the Pope as the Antichrist?

But what is a falling away? Is it this that Christians in great number leave the external organization of the church? The very word which Paul here uses, *apostasia*, would seem to militate against this interpretation. In the only other passage of the New Testament where it occurs, Acts 21, 21, it denotes a defection from a doctrine. Paul was reported to the Christians in Jerusalem as teaching the Jews in the diaspora to *forsake* (*apostasian*) Moses. Will not then a falling away from Christ, similarly, be a forsaking of His Gospel, a rebellion of the heart against the truth of His Gospel? Especially since Christ says, My kingdom is not of this

world, an external sedition may hardly be assumed to fulfill the falling away which Paul anticipates.

However, in reality, the greatest rejection of the Gospel truth is at the very heart of the papal system. Jesus invites all those that labor and are heavy laden to come to Him, and He promises to give them rest. Paul formulates this truth in the words, Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law.

What does the Pope say? He builds his entire system of doctrine and ceremony on a rejection of this central truth of the Gospel. He does not ignore it, he does not merely mutilate it, alter it by additions or subtractions. He condemns it and pronounces a solemn, a gruesome curse on every one who may hold it.

Here just three of the canons of Trent, Sixth Session.

Can. IX: If any one saith, that by faith alone the impious is justified; in such wise as to mean, that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to the obtaining the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary, that he be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will: let him be anathema.

Can. XI: *If any one saith, that men are justified either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ, or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and is inherent in them; or even that the grace whereby we are justified is only the favor of God: let him be anathema.*

Can. XII: If any one saith, that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake; or that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified: let him be anathema.

Must not a normal faith recoil from such blasphemous anathematizing of the very heart of the Gospel truth!

The Pope is the very Antichrist — a mere historical judgment! As justification by grace is an article of faith, so it is an article of faith that the Pope who condemns justification by grace is the very Antichrist. What greater falling away from Christ is conceivable than when the Pope condemns what Christ proclaims? — Nor is this a mere exalting of a proud spirit over God, it is the most direct opposition of a usurper, who brazenly deposes God and His Christ and himself occupies the throne. What more

is needed than this basic fact to identify the Pope as the very Antichrist? He does not question some minor point of the Christian doctrine; he does not attack some more or less vital article; he curses and condemns the one article of faith which is *omnium fundamentalissimus*. Here is on the one hand, Christ; and on the other, the Pope as the Antichrist. You cannot choose the one, you must reject the other; you cannot love the one, you must hate the other; you cannot praise the one, you must curse and condemn the other.

Papam esse ipsum verum Antichristum, indeed an article of faith.

Some particular questions occur which at first blush might seem to conflict with the thought of denouncing the Pope as the very Antichrist, but which upon closer inspection rather corroborate the chief evidence as presented above.

Some will say, the name Pope never occurs in connection with any prophecy concerning the Antichrist. Hence we are adding to the Scripture if we supply it. — It is true, the name Pope of Rome was not known to the readers of John's epistles nor to the Thessalonians; and it may well be doubted whether it ever was revealed by the Holy Ghost to John or Paul themselves. The name is not the important thing. The rose will retain its sweet odor no matter by what name you call it. The Antichrist will retain his pernicious character irrespective of what name he may assume in history. The name is not necessary for identification. It is the attitude which the man of sin takes over against Christ, which brands him as the Antichrist. — And if the name, Pope of Rome, had been mentioned in the prophecies, would not then the Antichrist have been very careful to avoid it, in order to evade detection?

One may also well ask the question, If the mentioning of the name is considered as essential for establishing an article of faith, what then is the value of the warning prophecy of Paul and John? Even if the fulfilment occurs in the most striking way, how could any one be certain in his faith of the correctness of his identification? If the lack of the name in the prophecy is sufficient to bar the identification of the Pope of Rome as the Antichrist, then it will just as effectively bar the identification of any one else; and the earnest warning would be wasted. This objection would seem

to introduce a serious, a very dangerous and faith destroying factor into our study of prophecy. By mentioning the name of the traitor against which the prophecy warns it would defeat its own purpose; omitting the name would reduce the identification to a mere historical judgment without the standing of an article of faith. — But as pointed out, faith will instinctively identify the Antichrist when it meets him, not by his name, but by his opposition to Christ's Gospel truth. That is the use to which faith will put the prophecy.

Some will say, Does not John charge the Antichrist with denying that Jesus Christ is come into the flesh (1 Jh. 4, 3)? But the Pope denies neither the divinity nor the humanity of Christ. How, then, can he be the Antichrist?

Is John interested in the incarnation as an isolated fact? Read his gospel. The incarnation taken by itself, wonderful and incomprehensible thought it is, has no independent value, it is of importance to us only in so far as it inaugurates the work of our redemption. One may jealously guard and extol the doctrine of the incarnation by a virgin birth, yet if he does not accept the purpose for which the incarnation was enacted, if he curses justification by faith in the redemption achieved by the God-Man, he stands convicted as the Antichrist. And John can say of him that, in the last analysis, he is denying that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, because he curses the purpose for which Jesus Christ came in the flesh.

This readily answers also another question. How can the Pope be the Antichrist, seeing he retains not only the doctrine of the person and natures of Christ, and other important Scripture doctrines, *e. g.*, concerning the Trinity, but also uses the sacraments? He may have mutilated the Lord's Supper, but he certainly has preserved Baptism intact, and administers it. And when he applies Baptism to a person, it is truly a washing of regeneration in which children of God are born as dew from the womb of the morning. — In reality, this only confirms our faith in the rejection of the Pope as the Antichrist because it fits perfectly into the picture which Paul paints of him. Antichrist will seat himself in the shrine of God, and will show himself that he is God. He will not attack the church of God from without. He will oppose it while at the same time handling its most sacred

treasures, and while pretending to build and defend it. Would not Antichrist destroy his own habitat if he utterly ruined the church and her treasures?

Even more. Antichrist will seat himself in the very shrine of God. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (1 Cor. 3, 16; compare also v. 17 and 2 Cor. 6, 16). Our hearts belong to God, our consciences have been purged from dead works to serve the living God (Heb. 9, 14). But this very sanctuary of God will be rudely occupied by Antichrist, and Christian consciences, set free by Christ, will ruthlessly be tyrannized by him. He will not destroy this sanctuary. That would leave him out "in the cold". If Antichrist will amount to anything in the world it will be only in so far as he uses the church for his tool. Take away the church, and his power would fall of itself. Thus he seats himself in the shrine of God. This shrine will remain what it was before through faith in the Savior, a dwelling place of the Holy Ghost, in which He carries on His work of sanctification; and yet it will be held by Antichrist. The history of the church furnishes a wealth of material illustrating how this incongruity became a fact. To the present day there are many people whom upon closer contact we find to be devout Christians, veritable temples of God, who yet feel conscience-bound to accept the Pope for all that he claims to be. Truly, the Lord rules in the midst of His enemies, retaining possession of the hearts of men even when the very Antichrist intrudes himself and tyrannizes them.

Far from shaking our faith in the tenet that the Pope is the very Antichrist, the fact that he operates within the church and pretends to be doing the work of God, taken together with the other fact that he curses the work of Christ, will greatly confirm us in our conviction. It is in agreement with the prophecy of Paul.

Especially during the discussions leading to the Chicago Theses your present essayist was repeatedly asked the question, When did the doctrine that the Pope is the very Antichrist become an article of faith? It could certainly not have been one before the Pope appeared on the stage. So then there must have been a time when this was not an article of faith; and, as a result, in our time the articles of faith have been increased by one. —

This is really nothing but the reverse (in time) of the same argument sometimes presented in this form. Question: If the end of the world should come today, who was the Antichrist? Answer: The Pope. — Question: If Judgment Day shall come a hundred years hence, who then was the Antichrist? Answer: I do not know. — This argument tacitly assumes that the whole problem of Antichrist is nothing but an historical question.

Give the question, Was there a time when the doctrine that the Pope is the Antichrist, another form, namely, Was there a time when the Antichrist could not yet be identified? and the matter will become clearer. That very point is part and parcel of the doctrine concerning the Antichrist, as Paul presents it in 2 Th. 2. In Paul's own day the Antichrist could not yet be identified. He, or as John says, the spirit of Antichrist, was present in the world, he was already doing his nefarious work, but still as an intangible mystery. But in due time he should be revealed, come out into the open. We seriously doubt whether Paul himself had the slightest idea of where the Antichrist might appear. He certainly could not without a special revelation. He knew that the mystery of iniquity was already at work; he preached about Antichrist, he wrote about him, and warned the Christians against him; but he could not yet point a finger at him, Behold, the Antichrist. Paul knew who held up Antichrist, and he knew what held him up. Paul knew whose God-given duty it was to check the coming of Antichrist, and he knew what means were effective in blocking his revelation. He knew it, and he preached and wrote to the Thessalonians about it.

Here many assume a double mystery. There is the mystery of iniquity, on the one hand, and the mystery of the one checking the course of iniquity with a very mysterious instrument, on the other. The second mystery is only apparent. Paul does not call it a mystery at all, and he very unmistakably explains his own words, which to many seem to have an air of mystery. In vv. 10-12 he tells us that Antichrist will flourish as a judgment of God, because men received not the love of the truth. If men had received the love of the truth, if they had embraced the truth with all their heart, if they had constantly nourished their hearts with the truth and upheld the truth in their lives and conduct: Antichrist might have continued in the stage of a mystery of iniquity,

but he never could have dared out into the open, he never would have had a revelation as a counterpart to the glorious revelation of Christ begun in the Gospel and to be consummated on the Last Day. Who was holding up Antichrist, and what was holding him up? The answer is in vv. 10-12: The Christians, who receive the love of the truth. When the Christians' love of the truth begins to cool off, when they leave the first love (Rev. 2, 4), when they relax in their fervor, cease to watch and pray, when they direct their interests to other things than the plain, simple truth: then the way will be clear for Antichrist to stage his revelation, to come boldly out into the open. There will be no one to withhold him.

In this connection it will be well to give some attention to the word *reveal*. It is used three times concerning Antichrist, once, v. 4, merely announcing the coming of the event, twice placing it in a striking connection. Verse 6: Ye know what *withholdeth that he might be revealed* in his time; vv. 7 and 8: He who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And *then shall that wicked be revealed*. Note the close connection between the restraints and the revelation of Antichrist. Immediately after the checks have been removed the revelation of Antichrist will take place. Thus it would seem that the checks hold back, not so much Antichrist himself and his destructive work, as his revelation. Only, till the checks are removed, he will be forced to work under cover; after that he will be revealed, or, reveal himself.

Some understand the revelation to mean that he will then be *unmasked*. Yet neither the word itself, nor the immediate context seem to support this idea. The context, as has been pointed out, seems to suggest that Antichrist will for some time be obliged, much against his wish, to remain in hiding. He would much rather prefer to come out into the open with all his pomp and show of power and signs and lying wonders; but he cannot as long as the restraining one is on his job. But as soon as he is taken out of the way, nothing can keep down Antichrist any longer, he will boldly reveal himself, until the Lord Himself intervenes. — The word *reveal* is used in connection with the very *parousia* of our Lord. At the end of the world our Lord will be *revealed* from heaven with His mighty angels. This revealing of our Lord certainly does not denote an unmasking, but rather an appearance in

glory. So will also the Antichrist stage a revealing of his own as soon as he sees an opportunity for doing it.

Again we see that the objection mentioned above does not detract from the doctrinal character of the tenet that the Pope is the very Antichrist. Paul himself announces that the identification of the Antichrist will become possible only at some time in the future. When this would be, he does not pretend to say.

Just in passing we note as something very interesting and instructive, but which has no particular bearing on our question, that Paul mentions three stages of development in the history of the Antichrist. At the time of writing he was still in the stage of a mystery; this is to be followed by the revelation; then the Lord will intervene to consume the Antichrist with the spirit of His mouth. After that there will be no fourth stage, but the final destruction of the Antichrist by the brightness of the Lord's parusia. — The beginning of the third stage is customarily associated with Luther's Reformation. To your essayist it would seem that the beginning of the second stage can be closely linked to the transition of the church to the Germanic tribes; who naively transferred their relation of faithfulness toward their military and political leaders, the *truhtin* or *fultrui*, to their newly entered relation toward Christ and His vicegerent Peter. Consider the words of King Oswy with which he concluded the meeting at Streane-shalch (664): "I also say unto you, that he (Peter) is the door-keeper, whom I will not contradict, but will, as far as I know and am able, in all things obey his decrees, lest, when I come to the gates of the kingdom of heaven, there should be none to open them, he being my adversary who is proved to have the keys" (Bede, *The Eccles. Hist. of the Engl. Nation*. Bk. III, chap. XXV). From that time on the papal letters sounded a note unheard before. The claim of supremacy was not the new thing, but taking advantage of the peculiar disposition of the Germanic mind, Antichrist dared to come out into the open. The Middle Ages were soon to be ushered in with the all-overshadowing problem of who shall rule in Europe, the Emperor or the Pope.

We add one more touch to the picture of the Pope as the Antichrist. He is called the man of sin, the son of perdition, the one who opposeth and exalteth himself. These names cannot but create the impression that we are here dealing with a person hard-

ened in his heart and confirmed in iniquity. — The Pope is under God's judgment of obduracy. He had his opportunity to repent and mend his ways when Luther appeared on the scene. At Augsburg the Lutherans, under the leadership of irenic and conciliatory Melancthon, submitted a confession of the Gospel truth. Where was the response of "the love of the truth"? The Augsburg Confession was rejected. The Pope called a council of his own, the notorious Council of Trent, by which the basic points of the Gospel were solemnly condemned, whereby the way to repentance was effectively cut off. By his own action, under the judgment of God, the Pope now stands convicted as the hardened man of sin.

We just register the objection raised by some against our identification of the Pope as the Antichrist, that the Antichrist is spoken of as an individual. Yes, Paul calls him the man of sin, the son of perdition, the one that opposeth, that exalteth, that sitteth, etc. But in like manner he speaks of him who now letteth. If Antichrist must be considered as an individual, so then must also the restraining one, immediately after whose being taken out of the way Antichrist would reveal himself. If Antichrist is to be expected in the future, who then may this restraining one be, who was at work already in Paul's day and would still be doing his blessed work to this day? The simplest and most natural assumption is to understand both singulars as representing an institution.

Some people fear that, if we stress the Antichristian character of the Pope too much, we might become indifferent, even callous, to other errors. Rather, this doctrine must impel us to cultivate with painstaking care the love of the truth, knowing that all roads of error ultimately lead to Rome.

For this very purpose Paul treats this article extensively. It is an article of faith, and as such it must stimulate acts of faith and produce fruits of faith. To enumerate briefly, Paul uses this article of faith to cultivate soberness concerning eschatological questions; to arouse praise and thanksgiving for the unmerited grace which God conferred on us in our election and our call; to establish our hearts immovable in every good word and work.

M.

Our Christian Liberty And Its Proper Use

(A Paper Submitted at the 1942 Convention
of the Dakota-Montana District)

One of the plainest lessons of all history is that the civil liberties of a nation, at no time secure, are never in greater danger than when its people as a whole or in their largest part have begun to show signs of failing to understand and properly to appreciate the privilege that is theirs. When men begin to forget the suffering that was endured and the blood that was shed as the price of their liberties, when men become willing to trade this hard-won freedom for the mess of pottage of more immediate and material gains, when men begin to exploit these privileges in their own selfish interest, unmindful of the manner in which they are treading the rights and liberties of their fellow-citizens underfoot, when men no longer are willing to substitute self-control and self-discipline for the tyranny from which they have been freed and refuse ready obedience to the common authority whose direction is needed to make their joint effort purposeful and effective, unwilling perhaps to make the necessary sacrifices of personal convenience and fortune, — then they not only fall easy prey to attack from without, but are undermining the very foundations of their liberties to a point where they will be ruthlessly swept aside by some new tyrant, one perhaps out of their own midst. The eternal vigilance that is the price of liberty needs to be exercised not only against the foreign foe, but over ourselves as well.

If these things are true of our civil freedom, how much more will they not apply to our Christian liberty? There we have a greater treasure, subject to fiercer attacks, yet more liable to indifference and neglect on our part because its blessings are not such as to appeal to the eye, to the natural mind, to promise some immediate benefit. How necessary therefore the apostolic admonition to stand fast in this liberty, even at this late day! Here above all we are in need of eternal vigilance, lest indifference, neglect, or abuse become the reason why this precious blessing be taken from us.

May this serve to justify our choice of a topic which has been a favorite in our circles since Luther in 1520 wrote his famous

treatise "On the Liberty of a Christian." It shall be our endeavor to approach the subject from an angle sufficiently different that new points of interest and value may appear in the wealth of material that lies at hand.

I

Because of its source our Christian liberty is a perfect thing: it covers every phase of our previous enslavement, it is an accomplished fact, is subject to no qualification or condition, is secure and inviolable, and brings the Christian into complete harmony with everything that God has called good and into active opposition to all that He has branded as evil.

The life of a Christian is full of apparent contradictions. The Apostle Paul lists quite a number of these and, among others, mentions that we are "as having nothing, yet possessing all things." Not the least of these possessions which escape the eye of the unbeliever, and of which even the believer is not always as conscious as he should be is what the Apostle calls "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Ro. 8, 21). It is ours, to have and to hold, to enjoy in richest measure. It is ours to use to the fullest extent, tolerating not the slightest abridgment of its blessings. It is for us to live this freedom. But all that will not be unless we most thoroughly know this liberty.

At the risk of saying too much about the obvious, we shall begin with an inquiry about the *source*. Scripture does not leave us in doubt for a moment as to Who may be the Author of our liberty: it speaks of "our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 2, 4). It calls upon us to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (5, 1). After carefully outlining the steps (if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free — Jn. 8, 31 f), the Savior proclaims this liberty to captives: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." The same truth is implied when Scripture calls this Son the Redeemer, the Captain of our Salvation, the Ransom, etc. The participation of the other members of the Trinity is likewise indicated when, for instance, we are told of the Father Who, in the fulness of the time, sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law,

that we might receive the adoption of sons (Gal. 4, 4f). Concerning the Spirit Who shall guide us into all truth (the liberating truth, Jn. 8, 32) we are told that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Cor. 3, 17). Thus the motive for the work of our redemption, the eternal love of God, operating even in the distant counsels of the Godhead, becomes the ultimate source of our freedom, just as the carrying out of this plan in time, even down to our coming into personal possession of this liberty, is due throughout to the gracious operation of this same blessed Trinity.

That is why this freedom in such a *perfect thing*. Coming from the God of perfection it cannot be less. Our purpose shall be to observe this perfection of our glorious liberty in at least some of its most important phases. We shall find that it meets every test of design, completeness, availability, effectiveness, and results.

In order to weigh the first of these points it will be necessary to be clear as to the nature of the enslavement from which man was to be freed. There we meet with a number of apparently confusing statements. Paul is obviously speaking of the Law when he calls upon his Christians not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. The Savior mentions serving sin (Jn. 8, 34). Peter calls it the bond of iniquity (Acts 8, 23). Paul speaks of the snares of the devil, of them who are taken captive by him at his will (II Tim. 2, 26). In Hebrews (2, 15) we read of the destruction of him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and of the deliverance of them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. But in spite of this variety of terms there is no conflict. Paul shows how closely interwoven they really are when he points out that the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law (I Cor. 15, 56). The breaking of all these chains of bondage was accomplished by the defeat of the one Evil Foe at the hands of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is, in fact, a very definite advantage in the naming of these various forms of our enslavement. The old teachers of our church list four steps of Christian liberty: 1) conscious freedom from all guilt and condemnation; 2) deliverance from the yoke of the Law; 3) freedom from all ceremonial restrictions; and 4) freedom from all human ordinances. We would perhaps prefer to call them four phases of this one glorious fact of our

redemption. But regardless of what our choice of terms may be, these "four freedoms" emphasize the fact that nothing was overlooked in the designing of our deliverance. *Every phase of our previous enslavement* that may arise to trouble us has been foreseen in the wisdom of God and adequately provided for by His mercy. Our freedom is a perfect work of God.

Not even the unity of our liberty is endangered by the observation we have just made. A single statement of Paul will bring that out. I Tm. 1, 9 he writes, "The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane," etc. This sets forth, in all simplicity, a general principle that is true of all law, divine as well as human. Law has no bearing upon a righteous man. It simply does not exist for him. That is, of course, taking law as LAW, with all its force and compulsion, with all its dread penalties. That does not apply to the righteous. As far as he is concerned, it simply does not get at him. In the case of God's Law that would be true of any man who is without sin — if there were such a one among us. It is true, gloriously true, of the child of God, who is made righteous by the perfect atonement of his Savior. Let the Law show its evidence of sin and guilt and pronounce its just verdict of condemnation, let Satan wield this weapon that is the strength of sin: — the righteous shall not be moved. He is free, consciously so, from all guilt and condemnation. He can challenge every foe: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who maketh intercession for us" (Ro. 8, 33f). He also enjoys his deliverance from the yoke of the Law, knowing that by the obedience of One the many are made righteous. He is naturally free from all ceremonial restrictions, knowing them for what they are, shadows of Christ that have served their use. He will willingly submit to many a man-made regulation for the sake of love and order, but retains his perfect freedom from all human ordinances, inasmuch as he knows that they are not laid upon him by divine authority, particularly that they are not and cannot be part of the price of his salvation, since that has been paid in full.

This last suggests another mark — call it a test, if you will — of the perfection of this freedom. It is, as our thesis states, *an accomplished fact*. Nothing has been left undone. If some certain things still remained for our doing, whether that margin be great or small, that would constitute a mark of imperfection. But Scripture speaks differently. “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (Jn. 8). Your freedom shall be a real thing, rather than something which will become so only by the supplying of some other additional factors. So spoke the Savior while He stood in the midst of the work of our redemption. Shall something of the glory of His dying words, “It is finished,” be taken away by limiting them only to His suffering and not including the work He had come to do? As if in answer to such a question the rending of the veil in the temple proclaims the removal of every barrier, our complete reconciliation with God, as does also His resurrection, concerning which we read that even as He was delivered for our offenses, so “He was raised again for our justification” (Ro. 4, 25). Yes, “when we were enemies, we were reconciled with God by the death of His Son” (Ro. 5, 10). Let not a particle of this blessed truth be lost. That is the precious Gospel that our Lord commanded His disciples to preach to all the world. Only by holding fast to all of this truth will we be preaching salvation “*sola gratia*.” To say less would be to throw the entire question of the reality of our freedom into doubt and confusion. — The same results appear when men limit the extent of this liberating work of our Lord to a select part of mankind, excluding the great majority of men as such who were destined beforehand to condemnation and for whom the grace of God therefore was never seriously intended. Against this error we hold the clearly attested fact of *universal grace*: “God was in Christ, reconciling the *world* unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them” (II Cor. 5, 19). That is the word of reconciliation which has been committed unto us. Let it be preached as an accomplished fact, no part of which has been left incomplete. Our Lord has made it abundantly clear that it is our privilege to do just that. This, even as all of His gifts, is a perfect thing.

By the same right we hold that this liberty of ours is *subject to no qualification or condition*. There the question of faith

immediately comes to mind. Now we are well aware that without faith there can be no salvation. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mc. 16, 16). We know that Scripture ascribes a very definite function to faith, even in the matter of our justification, when it speaks of this as being "by" or "through" faith, "out of" faith, "unto" faith. But we also note that all of this deals with the question of the receiving or non-receiving, the rejection of this justification. But the reality and validity of this verdict of acquittal that God pronounced over all men when His Son had rendered His perfect satisfaction stands unimpaired, even as also the freedom which is proclaimed by this verdict. Even if all men would reject it, that still would detract nothing from its complete perfection. But in order that men may not reject but believe, God in His mercy has caused this blessed freedom to be proclaimed upon the most liberal of terms: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come and buy wine and milk, without money and without price" (Is. 55, 1). It is the royal way of our great King to spread these blessings of salvation before us and say "all things are now ready: come unto the marriage" (Mt. 22, 4). Even the wedding garment of the imputed righteousness of Christ is His kingly gift, as we note when we observe His "viewing" of the guests that had presented themselves at His feast.

Because this freedom is thus the work of God from beginning to end, with no injection of an imperfect human factor at any point along the line, therefore it is also *secure* and *inviolable*. No power on earth can deprive us of it. It is completely beyond the reach of the changing fortunes of this life. For we are speaking, of course, of a spiritual freedom. In all the Roman Empire there was no man more truly and gloriously free than the Apostle Paul, even when bound and imprisoned. When he stood before the governor at Caesarea and reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, until Felix trembled and answered, "Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Act 24, 25), then certainly it was the proud Roman who was the abject slave, and the despised Jewish missionary the real freeman. From prison in Rome this same apostle could write his joyous letter to the Philippians,

calmly weighing against each other the respective advantages of living and dying in the manner of one who is free from the usual ties that bind men in such matters, and utterly free from any fear of guilt and condemnation that could make him dread to stand in the presence of his Lord, rather "having a desire to depart and to be with Christ" (Ph. 1, 23). But nothing serves more clearly to show his inner freedom than to hear this apostle, who had experienced so much injustice from human law, who himself had sought so zealously to satisfy the requirements of Divine Law, who later had been engaged in such an intense struggle to keep false teachers from adulterating the blessed Gospel of justification by grace with their man-made law, make his calm, dispassionate statement that law has no bearing upon the righteous man. This is a signal example of an undisturbed and secure possession of the glorious liberty of the children of God.

One of the most interesting demonstrations of the perfection of this gift of God comes when we enter upon the question of whether it does not create a clash with God's own holiness. At first thought this might seem to be the case, since liberty so often is identified with lawlessness, and the granting of freedom taken to mean that all bars are down. If it were really so that this liberty serves no better purpose than to promote self-indulgence and sin, then indeed God's wisdom would have proved faulty, and the gift of freedom would bear a painfully obvious flaw upon its face. To think thus, however, would be to ignore completely the miracle that is involved in the conversion of a sinner whereby the *harmony* to which our thesis refers is created. It overlooks that the possessors of this glorious liberty are "the children of God." Compared with their former state this involves a change so radical that the Savior calls it "being born again." The New Creature resulting from this process is a very different one from the Old Man, although we shall presently see that the latter is not out of the picture by any means, and will not be so long as this life endures. But in his new state the Christian sees God as he has never seen Him before, and as natural man cannot see Him: no longer as a God of judgment and terror, but of grace and mercy, even as He revealed Himself to His servant Moses when He passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness

and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Ex. 34, 6f). When this Lord grants to the re-born Child of God the boon of liberty from the Law and all that it implies, this has a twofold effect. On the one hand he will glory in this gift, holding fast, lest anyone deprive him of its blessing. On the other hand, wherever he meets with a revelation of God's holy will, as he does in Scripture on every hand, then this is to him the will of that God Who has redeemed him. His thoughts find expression in the words of David (Ps. 40, 8): "I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart." That is the spirit for which the same Psalmist penitently prayed (Ps. 51, 12) when to his plea for comfort ("Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation") he added, "and uphold me with Thy free spirit" (lit. "spirit of willingness"). The promise of Jer. 31, 33 comes to the same thing: "I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts" (instead of its being suspended over them as an outward measure of force and compulsion); "and will be their God, and they shall be my people." The climax of this line of thought is reached in I Jn. 3, 9: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." It would lead to hopeless confusion, of course, if we were to forget that these words refer exclusively to the New Man, that they describe the perfection of what God has wrought in the hearts of His Christians. The warnings of this same apostle (I Jn. 1, 8: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"), should be enough to preserve us from the error of Perfectionism, to remind us of the unwelcome but unavoidable persistence of the flesh. Paul in Romans 7 is another witness to this sad truth.

But it is under these very conditions that the New Man justifies the liberty that has been conferred upon him. He is entirely upon the side of God. He needs no lash to move him to serve his Lord, no threat to make him submit to His will. He, namely the New Man, finds himself in complete harmony with this will. He is vigorously and actively engaged in combatting the constant rebellion of his own flesh. Often that will involve a severe struggle, but it also shows plainly where his loyalty lies. He is exercising his freedom, not in the interest of his self-willed

flesh, but in a manner befitting one who is truly free, who holds his liberty by the grace of God, upon whom the honorary titles that are bestowed when we are told that Christ "has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father" (Rev. 1, 6) rest with fitness and dignity, of whom Luther could truly say in the essay already referred to: "A Christian is a free Lord over all things, and subject to no one." His is truly a "New Obedience."

II

Because of conditions obtaining in the life of every Christian his possession, exercise, and enjoyment of this liberty needs

- A. To be constantly guarded and defended, against attack by others as well as against our own neglect and abuse; and
- B. To be constantly studied, cultivated, and applied to the various situations of his life and work, individually and also collectively.

The conditions referred to above are apparent from what we have already heard. The believer finds himself in possession of a very precious, rare, and perfect gift, "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." So precious is this freedom that it could be purchased only at the cost of the life and blood of God's Son. It would have been forever beyond our reach. So rare it is that there is nothing like it in all the world. Twenty centuries of progress have produced nothing that can even remotely approach it. It is so perfect that every facet of this jewel reveals in its flawlessness the divine mastery of its Creator. This we hold with our frail hands, knowing ourselves at the same time beset with dangers on every hand, with foes on every side. Satan will not cease in his efforts to wrest this treasure from us; the World will render loyal service to its Prince; our Flesh will ever prove a foe within the gates, a treacherous fifth-columnist, constantly awaiting an occasion and conspiring to bring about an opportunity to betray us. Small wonder that Paul urges us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Ph. 2, 12 — adding, however, the oft forgotten word of encouragement and comfort that we venture to render in free translation in order to preserve something of its

original vigor: "For God is the One working (literally: 'energizing,' bringing to pass) within you both the willing and the working, in His good pleasure." — Furthermore, this precious gift we are to use. We are not to let it lie idle and neglected, like the pound laid up in a napkin. It can not be possessed without exercising and enjoying it. Failure to do so would be a swift and sure way of losing it. On the other hand it cannot be denied that the "handling" of this gift involves responsibility. A thorough understanding of its nature and extreme care in applying this understanding are essential to its proper use. — These are the thoughts that have suggested the two subdivisions of our second thesis.

A

Since we know that our precious liberty is in danger, it behooves us to be on constant guard against every form of *attack*, not only that which comes open and boldly, but also one which is masked with cunning deception; not only that which precipitates an outright battle, an all-out struggle where the very life of a Christian or his church may be at stake, but also the slow campaign of attrition, where the hold of a believer upon his liberties is gradually worn down, or of insidious infiltration which robs him of his treasure by treachery and stealth.

The early church experienced the first type of attack in the successive waves of persecution that marked the first three centuries of its history. There the issue was clearly drawn. The choice was between confessing or denying the Lord Who had bought them, remaining in His realm of freedom or returning to the old bondage of spiritual darkness. Clear was the call of the Lord to His martyr church: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2, 10). Unmistakable was the answer of thousands of confessors, many of whom sealed their testimony with their blood. May every demand upon Christians to surrender their faith meet with a like determined reply.

That there are other avenues of attack was also demonstrated very soon in the life of this young church. The field upon which the Apostle Paul had sown the Word and which was showing such rich promise suffered an invasion of errorists. Their demands did not seem serious, merely that the Galatians who had accepted Paul's preaching of salvation by faith in Christ make their assur-

ance doubly sure by also submitting to the Jewish rite of Circumcision. But the flaming reaction of the apostle shows that there was more to the matter than appeared on the surface. A Gospel that proclaimed salvation as a free gift of grace, based upon the liberating work of Christ, was no longer the same when the factor of a legal ordinance was injected. A principle was at stake. Salvation was either by grace, free, or it was not. Admitting the necessity of even a single work would mean that it was not free. Hence "if ye be circumcised" (namely in compliance with this a demand of these false teachers), "Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5, 2-4).

This drastic procedure of Paul has time and again served to steady and sustain the defenders of the truth against the many forms of error which have endangered this central doctrine of Christian faith, our being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It justified the unrelenting crusade of the Reformers against the necessity of good works to salvation, even though it exposed them to the charge of denying good works their proper place in the Christian life. It justified the steadfast searching out of Synergism, gross or refined, even when the trail lead to the doorway of Melanchthon himself. For if there is room for a greater or lesser degree of cooperation on the part of man, then his enslavement has not been so complete as had been assumed, and his liberation is not entirely the work of God, not entirely by grace. The issue was the same in the controversy on Election and Conversion. As soon as the eternal election of the sinner was made contingent upon the future faith of man, as soon as the successful outcome of God's call to conversion was said to result from a certain difference in man's conduct toward the grace of God, the sinner is no longer being justified freely by His grace. God's gift has lost something of its complete perfection. After all, then, Christ has not made us quite perfectly free. Something has been left for man to supply.

In our days of proposed union we are going over this same ground once more. This time it is the doctrine of objective justification which is being given the greatest measure of attention: the

doctrinē that our justification is an accomplished fact, that it has been such ever since the Savior finished His work upon the Cross, and that this is true whether men believe it or not. For scrupulous care in this matter (it has been branded suspicion) we have no apologies to offer. For all of this touches upon the vital article of the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Paul was very sensitive on that point, it is true. But we can thank God that he was. Humanly speaking, that produced Galatians 5. It is well if we retain something of that same sensitiveness, lest error creep in, diluting and adulterating this precious freedom purchased for us by our Lord Jesus Christ.

But as we thus rouse ourselves to renewed vigilance against possible attacks upon our freedom from without, let us not forget the dangers that threaten from within, from *our own neglect or abuse* of this precious liberty. Without such searching self-examination our watchfulness in matters of doctrine may indeed become what our critics often claim it to be: bigoted and uncharitable heresy-hunting proceeding out of a pharisaical spirit of smug self-satisfaction and dead orthodoxy. Without this lively awareness of the dangers from within any protest against persecution will stand revealed as mere concern for one's personal safety rather than devotion to the precious Gospel of our salvation. The attacks and persecutions of pagan foes did not harm the ancient church nearly as much as its own failure to recognize its true liberty. But when the substance of apostolic preaching was forgotten, when the ordinances of men occupied an increasingly large role in the thinking of the church, then it soon became apparent how thoroughly its glorious freedom had been perverted into barren legalism. Then the way was opened for the entry of one error after another: the doctrine of free justification by grace supplanted by that of works, the gracious leading of Christ through His Word displaced by the harsh and often corrupt rule of man. The Reformation restored these lost liberties in fullest measure, and by the grace of God they are with us still. But in the meantime neglect has taken its tragic toll, as witness the staggering number of individuals who have forsaken their Lutheran birthright for the diluted Gospel of Sectarianism, apparently not even noticing how their liberties are once more beclouded by human error, or who have submitted themselves again to the tyranny of Rome, or

who have perhaps cast all faith to the winds. It has been almost the same with entire sections of the Lutheran Church. Even while the name and outward form of the doctrine of the Reformation is being retained and perhaps even proclaimed with great insistence, it happens only too often that the sound foundation of Scripture has been forsaken for the sake of making concessions to reason and the spirit of modern theology. These disquieting signs point plainly to the dangers of neglecting or taking for granted our glorious freedom. Let us with renewed devotion and intensive study concentrate upon what should be the most absorbing topic in the world, things that even the angels desire to look into, which are now reported unto us (I Pt. 1, 12).

A final danger to our Christian freedom is exposed when Paul appeals once more to his Galatians (5, 13): "Brethren, ye have been called to liberty; only, use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh." Without going into the many different ways in which this can be done, let us consider how great the temptation really is. The flesh even of a Christian is constantly straining against the restrictions of the Law, ever casting about for ways of evading its plain decrees, seeking only the gratification of its own sweet will. Then comes the Gospel with the magic word "liberty," which it extols in the most glowing of terms. What could be more natural than that the flesh would eagerly seize upon this word in order to justify any given course of action that it may wish to follow. The fact that this procedure involves the substitution of an entirely different definition of liberty from the Christian one has never restrained a substantial number of weak brethren from following this false and specious line of reasoning. We find Luther complaining rather acridly about those who have developed a surpassing skill in misusing the freedom of the Gospel ("die die Freiheit des Evangeliums fein meisterlich zu missbrauchen wissen"). — The warning is plain. Such abuse of the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free must eventually lead to the loss of this blessing. In fact, when man is able to argue in the manner stated above, when he is capable of profaning this glorious gift by such base use, this clearly indicates that as far as he is concerned he has already lost his fine understanding of what this freedom implies and is fast slipping back into the bondage from which he previously had been

delivered. — Let us mark this danger clearly, look closely to ourselves, and earnestly seek His help Who alone can keep us free.

B

It has been stated above that our Christian liberty has been given that it be used. Employing the widest sense of the term, this will mean that we not only insist on freedom of action in some specific matter, but that in the various situations which may arise we first of all know what is becoming to those who no longer are servants and slaves, but free children of God, and that then we conduct ourselves accordingly. These situations might be described in endless detail and classified under many different heads, but finally they fall into two great groups: matters on which God has spoken and which therefore are definitely decided, and others where by the absence of any positive statement on His part He has given us a choice of action and therewith opportunity to exercise our Christian tact and judgment.

It may seem strange to speak of freedom in connection with such things that God has definitely decided. But it should be remembered that the freedom of a Christian consists not in setting aside the will of God, nor in willful contradiction of rebellious opposition to it, but rather in a joyous, voluntary, and complete conforming to what he recognizes not merely as the sovereign and holy, but as the gracious and good will of God. It is entirely a matter of the New Man who needs not to be driven, but seeks only to be taught. "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

Obviously that applies to the field of doctrine, the entire field, provided we confine ourselves to the doctrine of Scripture and eliminate the additions of men. As far as the latter are concerned, they constitute an intolerable limitation of our God-given freedom. It matters little whether they are presented in the name of Papal infallibility or that of modern philosophy and science. They all deserve our energetic rejection. But when we deal with matters where God has spoken conclusively, then we know that no part, whether it be called a fundamental or non-fundamental doctrine, dare be surrendered, bartered away, or even only subjected to modification or compromise. A true child of God does not presume to sit in judgment over the teachings of its heavenly Father. Rather, it will eagerly seek to know what they are, and

then humbly accept all of them. At the same time only such *intensive study* of God's Word will enable us to discriminate between His teachings and the false additions and adulterations of men.

A further fruit of such study will be that we acquire certainty as to just what His will is for those who have been redeemed from under the Law (Gal. 4, 5), the righteous for whom the Law is not made. We shall begin to understand the temporary or limited nature of many of the ordinances of the Old Testament. We shall begin to recognize the eternal principles which rest in the very nature of God, recognizing them as His holy will, even though He now no longer presents them to us in the form of law, but now as "teaching" us to do His will (Ps. 143, 10). There is a wide field for such study. The writings of the apostles are full of such directives to the New Man, both such as warn against the temptations and dangers that confront him, and others which call upon the New Man to assert and prove himself, to let his conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ (Ph. 1, 27). In all these things our God has spoken. The believer accepts them, unquestioningly. And in doing so he is not suffering a loss of his liberty, either as a whole or in part, but rather proving the true freedom of his New Man who is here asserting himself over his flesh and thus rendering royal honors to the God Who has made him free.

One more field remains, the large one where God has made no positive statement, either for or against the doing of a given thing. In these "matters of indifference" (adiaphora, *Mitteldinge*), it is particularly necessary that the basic principles of our Christian freedom be studied, cultivated, and applied with the greatest of care. This field constitutes the proving ground, where our grasp of these principles will be subjected to exhaustive tests. If any one should assume that here at last we have arrived at a point where the flesh can come into its own, where it will not continually be running up against some commandment or prohibition of the Law, he would be wrong from the very outset. Any choice inspired by the desires of the flesh would already be a sinful one because of that very fact. "The carnal mind is enmity against God" (Ro. 8, 7). Unless we learn to approach these questions and make our decisions as free children of God, asking not how much is permitted us, but rather how we can best serve,

honor, and give glory to our gracious Lord, we shall be hopelessly at sea in these matters. We shall not be able to lay a safe course for ourselves. We shall not even be able to follow and understand a perfectly proper line of acting when it is followed by someone else.

Take the seemingly contradictory procedure of Paul, who circumcised Timothy, the son of a mixed marriage, when he took him into his company as a missionary assistant, but did not do so with Titus, although the circumstances seemed to be the same. Yet in each case the apostle's actions were the result of careful deliberation, showing his thorough understanding, both of the existing situation and the principles applying to it. In the first case it was a matter of avoiding the creating of unnecessary antagonism among the Jews. If that had been merely for the sake of securing his personal safety, the motive would have been a base one. But knowing his countrymen as he did, and seeking only to win them for Christ, Paul was employing some of the caution commended by the Savior (Mt. 10, 16: "Be ye therefore wise as serpents"). He had been free to choose, and his decision had been governed by his concern for the salvation of his fellowmen, as well as by the interests of the work which his Lord had entrusted to him. But by the time of his journey to Jerusalem (Acts 15) the question of circumcision had become a most controversial issue. False teachers were demanding it as necessary to salvation. Under such conditions Paul's refusal to do with Titus as he had in the former case not only becomes understandable; it was the logical and effective way of testifying against a dangerous and vicious error. In fact, when this stage was reached, the matter ceased to be an adiaphoron. To repeat the policy followed in the case of Timothy would now have been in effect a denial of the truth, a yielding to error, a failure to confess when confession was called for. And on that question our Lord had declared Himself very definitely, Mt. 10, 32.

This principle became the one on which the Formula of Concord decided a grave controversy that troubled the church after Luther's death, when the military defeat of the Smalcaldic League had been followed by a peace treaty under the terms of which Lutherans were to be forced to restore many of the abolished Roman sacraments and ceremonies. While many suffered exile

rather than submit to such terms, another party with Melanchthon as its spokesman favored acceptance on the ground that these ceremonies were adiaphora, not expressly forbidden in Scripture. This position was rejected some thirty years later by Article X, 4 of the Epitome: “. . . in time of persecution, when a plain confession is required of us, we should not yield to the enemies in regard to such adiaphora, . . . For in such a case it is no longer a question concerning adiaphora, but concerning the truth of the Gospel, concerning Christian liberty, and concerning sanctioning open idolatry, as also concerning the prevention of offense to the weak in the faith; in which we have nothing to concede, but should plainly confess and suffer on that account what God sends, and what He allows the enemies of His Word to inflict upon us.”

This should make it clear once and for all in our Lutheran Church that in order to justify a given course of action it is not enough to show that the thing itself is an adiaphoron. That is rather the point at which our Christian judgment should go into action and prove itself sensitive and alert to the great issue of our Christian freedom, as well as deeply concerned over the possibility of causing spiritual offense even to a single soul. Here I Cor. 10, 23 is in order: “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.” For the readiness to endure suffering, sacrifice, and self-denial which is ever the mark of free-men rising to the defense of their liberties will, in the case of Christian freedom, always be coupled with deep and self-less love, toward the Author of the freedom as well as to those for whom it was intended by Him.

The lengths of self-denial to which this will lead are clearly shown in Romans (ch. 14) and Corinthians (I, ch. 8 and 10). It is striking to observe Paul, the champion of Christian liberty against those who would curtail it, become the defender of the weak, of those who were not yet able to grasp and understand the full range of their freedom, who were in danger of stumbling in their faith upon seeing others use their liberty to its fullest extent, and to behold him advocating stern measures of self-restraint in order not to give such offense. So he urges (Ro. 14, 13) “that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way.” The matter in question was a true adiaphoron: “I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of

itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean." Because of this last fact there could be no doubt as to what the course of true Christian love would be: "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." In the closing verse of this chapter Paul points out just where the danger, the stumbling block in this case lay hidden, in this namely that the weaker brother might be moved to follow the example of the stronger without first having become perfectly clear in his conscience that it was right to do so: He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith" (that is, with assurance and confidence): "for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Cf. also I Cor. 8, 9-13.

Hand in hand with this readiness to deny himself goes the notable absence on the part of Paul of any attempt to insist on the full exercise of his personal rights. Many instances could be mentioned, but one will be of particular value. Paul's custom of working for his own living while preaching the Gospel is well known. He did not have to do that. "Have we not power to forbear working? Who goeth to warfare at any time at his own charges?" (I Cor. 9, 6f). "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? . . . Nevertheless, we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ" (v. 11f). Paul did his great work in the Kingdom almost singlehanded. We do much of it jointly, as a synod. But is not this joint work often hampered sorely by the fact that one or the other of us raises the question of his personal rights and liberty, refusing to submit himself to some joint resolution or to cooperate in some joint task? There let us think twice, very soberly considering the example of the great apostle whose course so obviously was governed by love toward his Redeemer and his co-redeemed brethren. Let us search our motives and curb our actions, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ.

A final question or two: Is this "standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free?" We have heard so much about denying ourselves one thing after another, of restraining ourselves in the exercise of this freedom. Is this *using* our freedom?

To both questions we answer with an emphatic "Yes." These are the words and actions of one who, through his Lord Jesus Christ, has become master of himself, who is no longer governed by his flesh, but moved by the Spirit, one who is "free indeed." And his *conscious* refraining from the exercise of his rights and privileges when that is necessary, resulting from motives that arise out of enjoyment of this freedom and his sincere desire that many may join him in this blessing, — that is a truly royal use of the liberty that is his as a child of God. E. Reim.

Die Lehre der Schrift von dem Amt des Wortes in der Kirche, der Ortsgemeinde und in der Synode.*)

II.

2. Kor. 6, 1–10.

Den vorhergehenden Abschnitt schloß Paulus mit der Bemerkung, daß jeder, der ein Christ ist, eine vollständig neue Schöpfung sei, an dem von den alten Charakteristiken nicht das geringste mehr zu finden, an dem vielmehr alles ganz neu sei. Diesen Gedanken nimmt er in dem nun beginnenden Abschnitt wieder auf mit der einfachen Bemerkung: *Aber das alles*, um ihn dann weiter zu entwickeln und zu begründen.

Er sagt: *Aber das alles von Gott*. Das ist absoluter Monergismus. Von Gott, durch Gott, zu Gott, sagt Paulus im Römerbrief und spricht damit dieselbe Wahrheit aus.

Damit schließt Paulus nicht nur jegliche aktive Mitwirkung seitens der Christen an ihrer eignen Umwandlung aus, sondern auch jede selbständige produzierende Wirkung der Amtsträger. Mögen die Korinther durch den Dienst Pauli oder Petri oder des Apollós zum Glauben gekommen oder im Glauben gestärkt sein, der Dank gebührt allein Gott, von dem alles kommt.

Zwei Dinge hat Gott getan: Er hat uns mit ihm selbst versöhnt, und er hat den Dienst gestiftet, durch den die Versöhnung verwickelt wird.

* Der erste Teil dieses Referats erschien in der Januarnummer 1942.
— Die Redaktion.

Die V e r s ö h n u n g. Wen betrifft die Versöhnung? Man könnte an dem „u n s“ herumdeuteln, man könnte es auf den Apostel und seine Mitarbeiter beschränken. Man könnte vielleicht die korinthischen Empfänger des Briefes mit einschließen. Man könnte an die ganze Christenheit denken. Aber wen Paulus auch immer im 18. Vers unmittelbar im Sinn haben mag, er spricht diesen „u n s“ nicht etwas zu, was ihnen als einer besonderen Gruppe allein, ausschließlich, und sonst keinem zukäme; denn in der weiteren Erklärung des folgenden Verses nennt er als Empfänger dieser Wohlthat einfach die Welt.

Was heißt Versöhnung? Bei der Darlegung dieses paulinischen Begriffs dürfen wir uns nicht zu sehr durch unsern deutschen Sprachgebrauch bestimmen lassen, auch nicht durch den englischen, der unserm deutschen ziemlich gleichkommt. Wenn wir das Wort Versöhnung hören, denken wir unwillkürlich an eine Änderung in der Gesinnung, eine Änderung in der inneren Herzensstellung. Einen Menschen versöhnen heißt für uns: aus einem bisherigen Feind einen Freund machen, ihm seine feindliche Gesinnung, seinen Zorn befänstigen, ihm seinen Widerwillen nehmen und ihm dafür eine freundliche Gesinnung einflößen, so daß er dann auch eine freundlichere Haltung einnimmt.

Das sind Gedanken, die uns das deutsche Wort an die Hand gibt. Das ist aber nicht, was Paulus ausdrücken will, wenn er sagt: Gott versöhnte die Welt mit ihm selber. Ein solcher Vorgang, wie oben kurz skizziert, kommt ja wirklich vor, und die Schrift bezeichnet ihn als Bekehrung, Erleuchtung, Wiedergeburt. Da werden aus Unwilligen Willige, aus Widerspenstigen Gehorsame gemacht — aber Versöhnung heißt das in der Schrift nicht.

Paulus gibt das Wie der Versöhnung in Vers 18 ganz kurz an mit dem Wort: d u r c h J e s u m C h r i s t. Dieser prägnante Ausdruck ist jedem klar, der da weiß, welche Rolle Jesus Christus in dem Heilsplan Gottes spielt. Paulus legt aber die Sache im folgenden Verse, zwar kurz, doch ganz unmißverständlich dar. Gott vollbrachte das Werk der Weltversöhnung, indem er ihnen ihre Übertretungen nicht zurechnete.

Es macht für das Verständnis der Erklärung Pauli wenig aus, wie man das Verbum im Hauptsatz faßt. Die Lutherische Übersetzung hat zwei Sätze daraus gemacht: Gott war in Christo und versöhnte die Welt. Manche Ausleger wollen lieber ein peri-

phrastisches Imperfekt annehmen. Sie verbinden *en* mit *katallassōn*: Er war verführend. Nach Luthers Übersetzung hätten wir zunächst eine Aussage über die Person Christi, sodann eine über sein Werk der Veröhnung, während bei der zweiten Auffassung die Aussage über die Person Christi dahinfiel und wir nur die Erklärung übrig hätten, die Paulus schon im vorhergehenden Verse gegeben hatte, daß nämlich Gott das Werk der Veröhnung der Welt in Christo ausführte. Der einzige Unterschied zwischen den beiden Versen bestände dann darin, daß Vers 18 mit dem Aorist (*katallaxantos*) die Tatsächlichkeit betonte, während Vers 19 mit dem Imperfekt, dazu noch mit einem periphrastischen, eine Beschreibung des Vorganges andeutete. Aber wie schon gesagt, für das richtige Verständnis des Inhalts der Veröhnung ist dieser Unterschied in der Konstruierung von keinem Belang. In beiden Fällen würde der Veröhnungsakt durch das Partizip *mē logizomenos*, nicht zurechnend, definiert. Darin besteht die Veröhnung, nicht daß Gott der Welt eine andere Gejinnung einflößt wie in der Befehrung, ihr ein anderes Herz gibt, sondern daß er sie in eine andere Stellung rückt, sie anders ansieht.

Die Welt stand vor Gott schuldbeladen infolge ihrer mannigfaltigen Ausschreitungen und Verfehlungen. Die Welt mag sich ihrer Übertretungen nicht bewußt sein, aber Gott sind sie bewußt. Gott übersieht diese Übertretungen nicht, er verkleinert sie auch nicht. Er erkennt sie in ihrer ganzen Strafwürdigkeit an. Was er aber tut, ist dieses: er rechnet die Sünden da, wo sie begangen waren, nicht an.

Daß Paulus damit nicht eine rein theoretische Transaktion, eine Nicht-Buchung lediglich auf dem Papier, bezeichnen will, sondern eine sehr tatsächliche Nicht-Zurechnung, daß er vor allen Dingen das liebesglühende Herz Gottes nicht ausschalten und das Ganze nicht zu einer kühlen Berechnung machen will, braucht doch nicht erst erwähnt zu werden. Das versteht sich bei Paulus von selbst. Er hat dieses Moment oft genug in seinen Briefen hervorgehoben. Hier kam es ihm darauf an, die Natur der von Gott bewirkten Veröhnung kurz und prägnant anzugeben. Und da bot sich ihm als der entsprechendste Ausdruck dar: *N i c h t - z u r e c h n e n*. Es war aber dieses Nicht-Zurechnen etwas, das Gott innerlich erregte, durch und durch erschütterte, sein ganzes Herz in Wallung versetzte, dazu in seinem äußeren Handeln die gewaltigsten Kraftanstrengungen hervorrief.

Worauf es hier ankommt, ist dieses, daß die Welt infolge der Versöhnungstat Gottes nun in einem ganz anderen Verhältnis, in einer ganz anderen Lage erscheint. Stand sie vorher schuldbeladen da, so nun völlig schuldblos. War sie vorher dem Tode und Gericht verfallen, so ist nun nichts Verdammliches mehr an ihr. War sie vorher nicht aufnahmefähig für den Himmel, so steht ihrer Aufnahme jetzt nicht das geringste mehr im Wege. Gott müßte ungerecht handeln und sich selbst verleugnen, wenn er ihr jetzt den Zutritt zu seinem Gnadenthron verweigern wollte.

Wie dies geschehen konnte, sagt Paulus sowohl im 19. wie im 18. Verse in das eine Wort „C h r i s t u s“ zusammen. Durch Christus ist die Versöhnung zustande gekommen, durch Christus die Nichtzurechnung der Sünden. Gott schaut eben die schuldbeladene Welt nicht mehr direkt an, sondern zwischen ihn und die Welt schiebt sich Christus ein. Wenn Paulus Christus sagt, so meint er Christus den Gekreuzigten. Dieses gewaltige, Himmel, Erde und Hölle erschütternde Ereignis der Kreuzigung Christi tritt vor Gottes Augen. Er mag sich drehen und wenden, wie er will, immer steht ihm Christi Tod vor Augen. Er kann die Welt nicht anders sehen, er muß sie durch Christi Kreuzestod hindurch anblicken. Und so gesehen, erscheint sie in einem ganz anderen Licht. Das Blut Jesu Christi blendet alle Sünden völlig aus. Rein und fleckenlos bietet sich die Welt den prüfenden Blicken Gottes dar, wenn er sie durch Christus hindurch ansieht.

Das ist kurz die Versöhnung der Welt. In wichtigen Worten sagt Paulus dieses in Vers 21 also zusammen: Gott hat den, der von keiner Sünde wußte, für uns zur Sünde gemacht, auf daß wir würden in ihm die Gerechtigkeit, die vor Gott gilt. Diese Worte bedürfen keiner Erklärung. Jeder Versuch, den Sinn auseinanderzulegen, kann nur abschwächend wirken.

Was Paulus hier von der Versöhnung sagt, deckt sich völlig mit dem, was er an die Römer schreibt, Kap. 5, 8–11, nur daß er dort von dem Erweis einer unergründlichen Liebe ausgeht, während er hier die Art der Versöhnung darlegt. Und während er hier den Begriff der Rechtfertigung (Nicht-Zurechnung) zur Definition der Versöhnung verwendet, schlägt er dort den umgekehrten Weg ein und veranschaulicht den Begriff der Rechtfertigung durch den der Versöhnung. Noch ein Unterschied ist zu beachten.

Während er hier die Verjöhnung einfach zur Bezeichnung der Änderung im Status eines Sünders gebraucht, wählt er in der Römerstelle das Wort Rechtfertigung, wenn er von uns als *schuld beladenen* Sündern spricht, während er Verjöhnung sagt, wenn er uns als *Feinde* und als Objekte des Zorns bezeichnet.

Da die Stelle augenblicklich nicht zur eingehenden Betrachtung vorliegt, muß es genügen, sie im Wortlaut herzusetzen: „Darum preiset Gott seine Liebe gegen uns, daß Christus für uns gestorben ist, da wir noch *Sünder* waren. So werden wir je viel mehr durch ihn behalten werden vor dem Zorn, nachdem wir durch sein Blut *gerecht* worden sind. Denn so wir Gott *verjöhnet* sind durch den Tod seines Sohnes, da wir noch *Feinde* waren, viel mehr werden wir selig werden durch sein Leben, so wir nun *verjöhnet* sind. Nicht allein aber das, sondern wir rühmen uns auch Gottes durch unsern Herrn Jesum Christum, durch welchen wir nun die Verjöhnung empfangen haben.“

Eine vollständige Neuschöpfung hat Paulus jeden Christen genannt. Das erste, was Gott getan hat, um solche Neuschöpfung zu vollziehen, war das objektive Werk der Verjöhnung, das Werk der objektiven Rechtfertigung. Wenn aber nun im Einzelfall die Neuschöpfung zustande kommen soll, ist es erforderlich, daß der Sünder sich die Verjöhnung zunutze macht, daß er sich die objektive Rechtfertigung im Glauben aneignet. Auch dieser Teil ist ausschließlich das Werk Gottes. Nicht umsonst hat Paulus von der Neuschöpfung emphatisch erklärt: *Aber das alles von Gott, ta de panta*, das ganze Werk in allen seinen einzelnen Phasen.

Als zweites, was Gott in Verbindung mit der Verjöhnung und auf Grund derselben getan hat, legt Paulus dieses vor: Gott hat uns das Amt gegeben, das die Verjöhnung *pre-digt*; er hat uns den Dienst, die Verwaltung der durch Christum geschehenen Verjöhnung verliehen.

Es dürfte als das Nächstliegende anzunehmen sein, daß Paulus mit dem „*uns*“ (*hēmin*), denen Gott diesen Dienst als Gnadengabe beigelegt hat, sich selbst und seine Mitarbeiter meint. Auf die Art und Weise, wie ihnen Gott dieses Amt zugewiesen hat, geht er nicht näher ein; aber doch ist sehr bezeichnend, daß er es als eine Gabe hinstellt: Gott hat uns das Amt *gegeben* (*didontos*). Daß doch jeder unter uns das Amt, das er zu verwalten hat, immer als eine Gabe und Geschenk Gottes recht würdigte!

Auf welche Weise Paulus diese Gabe bekommen hat, wissen wir ja genau. Es wird uns in der Apostelgeschichte ausführlich erzählt, und Paulus selbst erinnert in seinen Briefen wiederholt an diesen oder jenen Punkt. Gott hat den, der ein grimmiger Verfolger der Kirche war, mitten in seinem rasenden Lauf aufgehalten, hat ihn zur Umkehr genötigt und hat ihm direkt den Dienst aufgetragen, den er hernach so treulich mit Aufopferung seines Lebens verrichtet hat. Von den Mitarbeitern Pauli wissen wir weniger, nur daß Paulus sich den Timotheus selbst erwählte — nicht gegen den Willen der Gemeinden, bei denen Timotheus in gutem Ruf stand. Jedoch auf die Weise der Amtsübertragung kommt es Paulo jetzt nicht an — davon gilt ihm, was er allgemein im ersten Korintherbrief schreibt, daß es bei allen kirchlichen Angelegenheiten der Liebe gemäß, zweckentsprechend, ehrlich und ordentlich zugehen soll.

Für Paulus ist jetzt viel wichtiger, daß er klar zeigt, worin dieses Amt besteht. Er gebraucht den Ausdruck *diakonia*. Es hat wenig Zweck, daß wir uns weitläufig auf eine Untersuchung der Entwicklung einlassen, die dieser Begriff durchgemacht hat. Es ist ja ganz interessant, fördert uns aber wenig im rechten Verständnis, zu wissen, daß dieses Wort vom Aufwarten bei Tisch und auch von der Zubereitung der Speise gebraucht wird. Paulus läßt uns nicht im Zweifel, was er unter seiner *diakonia*, seinem Amt versteht. Er nennt konkrete Dinge, die zur Verrichtung desselben gehören oder die Verrichtung veranschaulichen. Um das Resultat vorwegzunehmen, *diakonia* bedeutet ihm praktisch etwa so viel wie Verwaltung, englisch: *administration*. Gott schafft neue Kreaturen, indem er uns mit der Verwaltung, der Vermittlung der durch Christum geschehenen Versöhnung betraut hat.

Diese Verwaltung geschieht durchs Wort. Den Gedanken, daß Gott uns das Amt der Versöhnung gegeben hat, wiederholt Paulus in seiner Erklärung des Vorgangs im 19. Vers so: Er hat unter uns aufgerichtet das Wort von der Versöhnung.

Das Amt und das Wort hängen unzertrennlich zusammen. Eins kann ohne das andere nicht sein. Wo das Amt ist, da wird das Wort getrieben, und wo das Wort getrieben wird, da ist das Amt. Wiederum, wo das Wort nicht ist, da mag man von dem Amt noch so viel Wesens machen, noch so viel Gepränge damit trei-

ben, noch so viel auf seine Autorität pochen, es ist einfach nicht vorhanden, sondern nur eine verdammliche Nachäffung.

Wenn wir diese beiden parallelen, synonymischen Aussagen Pauli miteinander vergleichen: Gott hat uns das Amt der Versöhnung gegeben, indem er unter uns das Wort von der Versöhnung aufrichtete, können wir nicht anders schließen als, daß mit der Aufrichtung des Wortes das Amt fertig gestiftet vorliegt.

Das ist für alle Amtsträger von weittragendster Bedeutung. Einerseits limitiert es unsere Aufgabe. Wir haben es lediglich mit dem Wort zu tun. Was über das Wort, nämlich das Wort der Versöhnung, hinausliegt, ist nicht unseres Amtes. Das Wort der Versöhnung schaut immer in zwei Richtungen. Es schaut rückwärts auf das, was eine Versöhnung nötig machte. Das ist das Wort von unserer Sünde und Schuld, von dem Zorn und Gericht Gottes, von Tod und Verdammnis. Das ist mit einem Wort das Gesetz Gottes. Dieses Wort muß von jedem Amtsinhaber ohne Zusatz und ohne Abstrich in voller Anwendung auf den Sünder gepredigt werden. Andererseits gehört vor allen Dingen die Botschaft dazu, wie die Versöhnung zustande gekommen ist, an welche Bedingungen ihr Genuß geknüpft ist, was sie in dem Sünder wirkt. Das heißt, sie ist ohne menschliches Zutun allein von Gott durch das Opfer seines Sohnes gewirkt worden. Ihr Genuß ist an gar keine Bedingungen geknüpft. Sie wird uns zur freien Annahme im Glauben ganz frei angeboten. Ja, Gott wirkt durch dieses Anbieten selbst den Glauben in uns, durch den die Annahme geschieht. Dadurch wirkt die Botschaft in uns Friede, Freude, Trost, Hoffnung, Dankbarkeit, so daß ein ganz neues Leben entsteht — eine neue Kreatur hat Paulus Vers 17 gesagt, an der das Alte ganz vergangen, alles ganz neu geworden ist. Das ist lauter Gnade. Das ist mit einem Wort Evangelium. Dieses letztere ist recht eigentlich das Wort der Versöhnung; das Gesetz hat nur, allerdings ganz nötige, Vorarbeit zu tun.

Dieses Wort hat unser Amt zu treiben. Damit ist ihm seine Aufgabe abgegrenzt. Was über dieses Wort hinausliegt, ist nicht Sache unsers Amtes.

Wir wissen, daß uns diese Beschränkung oft durchaus nicht behagt. Die Welt möchte unserm Amt viele andere Aufgaben zuschieben, und unsre Vernunft ist nur zu geneigt sie anzunehmen. Wenn irgendwo in der Welt Hungersnot herrscht, während anderwärts Nahrungsmittel im Überfluß vorhanden sind, vielleicht den Besitzern

zur Last werden und verderben; wenn Arbeitgeber und Arbeitnehmer nicht miteinander auskommen, wenn Reibereien zu Zerstörung von Eigentum und zu Gewalttätigkeiten führen, wenn die Völker untereinander nicht Frieden halten, wenn Krieg und Blutvergießen die Welt heimsuchen: gleich heißt es, die Kirche habe versagt, sie habe ihr Amt nicht erfolgreich verwaltet.

Und wir sind nur zu leicht geneigt, hierin nachzugeben. Wir halten es für wichtiger, daß wir an den Verhältnissen in der Welt herum bessern, als daß wir das Wort der Versöhnung treiben. Kommt es nicht vor? Wir beteiligen uns — von Amtes wegen — an der Schaffung besserer Lebensbedingungen, besserer Sanierung, eines höheren moralischen Niveaus. Mit andern Worten, wir treiben Dinge der weltlichen Polizei statt uns auf die Aufgabe unsers Amtes zu beschränken, die Verkündigung des Wortes.

So eng begrenzt unser Amt in einer Beziehung ist, so überwältigend mächtig und majestätisch ist es, wenn man es von einem andern Gesichtspunkt aus betrachtet. Gott hat ein Wort unter uns gesittet. Es ist sein Wort. Wer darf das anrühren? Wer darf das Wort des großen heiligen Gottes in seinen Mund nehmen? Wer kann das Wort Gottes fassen? Wer kann die Gedanken Gottes ausdenken? wer auch nur einigermaßen in sie eindringen, sie verstehen? Mit dem Wort sollen die Hochburgen des Feindes niedergelegt, mit dem Wort sollen Tote auferweckt, mit dem Wort neue Kreaturen geschaffen werden. Da unser Amt es mit dem Wort zu tun hat, so ist uns damit eine Aufgabe gestellt, die uns unser Lebenlang vollauf beschäftigt, so daß uns keine Zeit zu Nebenbeschäftigungen bleiben wird. Wer das Amt des Wortes empfangen hat und sich doch auf Nebenbeschäftigungen einläßt, mögen sie noch so wichtig erscheinen, muß die Zeit dazu dem Wort abstehlen. Er treibt Mollitia.

Paulus gebraucht noch weitere konkrete Ausdrücke, um uns das Wesen unsers Amtes einzuprägen. Er sagt zunächst: So sind wir nun Botschafter an Christus Statt. Mit besonderer Betonung stellt Paulus Christum voran. Christus ist es, der das Versöhnungswerk durch Leiden, Tod und Auferstehung vollbracht hat, der hat eine Botschaft an die Welt. An dieses Christus Stelle treten die Amtsträger, die Verwalter des Wortes, an seiner Statt, in seinem Namen richten sie ihre Botschaft aus. Wer sollte da nicht vor allen Dingen den Sinn Christi in seinem eigenen Herzen pflegen! Wie kann ich für irgend jemanden eine Botschaft ausrich-

ten, wenn ich selbst eine ganz andere Auffassung von der Sache habe? Ich kann vielleicht über meine Ansicht referieren, aber sie richtig vertreten kann ich nicht, wenn ich sie nicht zuvor zu der meinigen machen kann. An Christi Statt sollen wir unser Amt ausrichten, als seine persönlichen Vertreter. Darum wird unsere erste Aufgabe als Amtsträger darin bestehen, daß wir die Versöhnung, die Jesu so sehr am Herzen lag, daß er sein Leben willig dafür opferte, mehr und mehr den höchsten Schatz unsers Herzens werden lassen. Was das Herz voll ist, des geht der Mund über. Wenn unser Herz von der Versöhnung ergriffen ist, dann werden wir auch die Versöhnung im Sinne Christi verwalten können.

Das sollte uns immer vor Augen stehen: An Christi Statt stehen wir in unserm Amte da. Was das in sich schließt, hebt Paulus noch durch einen Zusatz besonders hervor: *Denn Gott vermahnet durch uns*. Es ist Gottes Wort, das wir führen, darum ist es eigentlich Gott, der durch uns seinen Zuruß an die Welt ergehen läßt. Gott war in Christo, darum ist es wiederum Gott, der auch durch die Botschafter Christi redet.

Das Wort, das Luther mit „*vermahnen*“ wiedergegeben hat, hat im Griechischen nicht den engen Umfang wie dieses deutsche Wort, auch nicht den etwas unangenehmen Beigeschmack. Es ist das Wurzelwort zu dem Namen des Heiligen Geistes, den Luther mit „*Tröster*“ übersetzt, 3. B. Joh. 14, 26, oder auf den erhöhten Christus bezogen, mit „*Fürsprecher*“, 1 Joh. 2, 1. Menge übersetzt mit dem Simplex „*mahnt*“: *Gott mahnt durch uns*. Es bezeichnet einen auffordernden, ermunternden Zuruß. — Es genügt zur gottgefälligen, sachgemäßen Verrichtung unsers Amtes nicht, daß wir die Wahrheiten Gottes abstrakt, logisch korrekt vortragen. Theorien kann man kühl entwickeln und kühl vortragen. Sie können völlig fehlerfrei und ganz korrekt aus einem kalten Herzen kommen und können dann den Hörer ebenso kalt lassen. — Es ist hier selbstverständlich nicht die Meinung, als ob wir durch unsere innere Beteiligung dem Ruf Christi irgendwelche Kraft hinzufügen müßten, oder auch nur könnten. Christi Ruf hat seine lebenspendende Kraft völlig in sich selbst. Hier kommt es darauf an, daß wir Christi Werk in Christi Sinn mit einem nach Christo gebildeten Herzen verrichten, und es nicht etwa durch innere Teilnahmslosigkeit, inneres Unbeteiligtsein an dem Werk, hindern und lähmen.

Noch ein Wort gebraucht Paulus, um uns die Art unsers Amtes zu veranschaulichen: So bitten wir an Christus Statt. Wir bitten, sagt Paulus. Dieser Begriff steht hier an betonter Stelle. Wir bitten, an Christi Statt bitten wir, Christus bittet durch uns, seine Gesandten. Unser Amt, das Amt der Veröhnung, wird durch Bitten verwaltet. Das Wort der Veröhnung ist im letzten Grund eine Bitte Gottes an die Sünder. — Hier gilt es nicht drohen und fordern. Hier gilt es nicht gebieten und von oben herab kommandieren. Hier gilt es nicht schelten und poltern. Hier gilt es nicht eine wichtige Amtsmiene aufsetzen und seine Autorität als Amtsperson herauskehren. Hier gilt es bitten. Das ist Christi Weise. Das erwartet Christus von seinen Stellvertretern. Wer sich nicht zum Bitten verstehen will, taugt nicht als Christi Bote.

Was gibt es denn hier zu bitten? Welchen Dienst, welche Gefälligkeit wünscht Gott von den Sündern? Welchen Dienst können sie ihm leisten? Bei der Veröhnung handelt es sich doch um einen Dienst, den Gott den Sündern geleistet hat, es handelt sich um einen kostbaren Schatz, den Christus erworben, es handelt sich um eine Gabe, die Gott den Sündern anbietet. Was gibt es da auf Gottes Seite viel zu bitten? Sollte man nicht eher erwarten, daß alle Sünder eifrig, vielleicht allzu eifrig und hastig zufahren werden, und also wohl ein Steuern und Zurückhalten am Plage wäre? Ja, so sollte es wohl sein; doch besteht die Art unsers Amtes in einem Bitten.

Um es nun kurz zusammenzufassen, was Paulus in den Versen 18–21 über das Amt gesagt hat, so lernen wir, daß Gott zu dem Zweck neue Kreaturen zu schaffen zwei Stücke getan hat.

1. Er war in Christo und stellte durch die auf Golgatha vollbrachte objektive Rechtfertigung die Welt in ein neues Verhältnis zu sich selbst.

2. Er setzte das Wort von der Veröhnung und gab uns damit die Verwaltung der Veröhnung in die Hand.

3. Nun gilt es, an Christi Statt der Welt bittend und ermunternd zuzurufen: Lasset euch verö hnen mit Gott. Nehmet die Veröhnung an und erfreut euch derselben im Glauben.

III.

2 Kor. 6, 1–10.

Ein herrliches, ein verantwortungsreiches Amt hat Paulus bisher geschildert. Nun redet er zu den Korinthern davon, in welchem Geist und in welcher Weise er und seine Mitarbeiter dieses Amt verrichten. In seinen Worten haben wir heutigen Amtsträger einen hellen Spiegel vor uns, in dem wir unsere Amtsverwaltung prüfen können.

Als Botschafterdienst hat Paulus sein und seiner Gehilfen Amt, und damit auch unser aller Amt, bezeichnet (Kap. 5, 20). Diesen Gedanken stellt er nun womöglich noch kräftiger heraus, indem er uns *Mithelfer*, Gottes Mithelfer, nennt. Unsere Arbeit besteht in einem ermunternden Zureden (*parakaloumen*. Luthers „*er-mahnen*“ trifft nicht voll den Sinn dieses Wortes.) Dieses Zureden zielt darauf ab, daß niemand die Gnade Gottes vergeblich empfangen. Die Gnade Gottes ist ja in solch überschwenglichem Maße vorhanden, wird so reichlich und ganz frei angeboten. Gott hat es sich so viel kosten lassen, seine Gnade für die Sünder festzumachen, wie sollte nun das Herz eines Botschafters Gottes, eines Mithelfers Gottes, irgend etwas kennen als eben diese Gnade Gottes! Wenn ihm irgend etwas neben der Gnade auch nur im geringsten als wertvoll erschiene, wie könnte er dann noch auf den Titel Botschafter oder Mithelfer Anspruch erheben? Die Botschaft der Gnade muß ihm das Große, das Eine sein. Wird er versuchen, durch andere Mittel die Leute anzulocken, um ihnen sodann die Gnade zu verkündigen? Er mag, er muß das Gesetz predigen, um die harten Sünderherzen zur Erkenntnis ihrer Gnadebedürftigkeit zu bringen; aber niemals wird er der Gnade die Schande antun, daß er sucht, sie durch allerlei Zutaten den Leuten verlockender und angenehmer zu machen. Etwas Größeres, etwas Süßeres als die Gnade gibt es für ihn ja gar nicht. Wie sollte er da der Gnade nicht vertrauen, daß sie sich selbst die Sünderherzen erobert! Darum wird er als Botschafter und Mithelfer Gottes sich nicht schämen und nicht müde werden, immer wieder in ermunternden Worten von der Gnade zu reden.

Als Botschafter und Mithelfer Gottes wird er in seiner ganzen Lebensweise und Amtsführung die Gnade Gottes zur Darstellung bringen. Wird er sich damit brüsten, daß er ein Amt hat, und um

des Amtes willen besondere Autorität beanspruchen? Wird er als Amtsträger allerlei Anforderungen stellen? Wie kann er als ein Botschafter der Gnade? Es gibt doch kaum etwas Widerlicheres, etwas Abstoßenderes, als wenn jemand durch die Botschaft der Gnade für sich persönliche Vorteile herauszuschlagen sucht. Nein, bei einem rechten Mitthelfer Gottes wird seine ganze Lebensführung eine warme Darstellung der Gnade sein. Diesen Gedanken führt Paulus besonders in dem Abschnitt Kap. 6, 1–10, aus. Das Thema liegt in Vers 3: *Lasset uns aber niemand irgendetwas Argernis geben, auf daß unser Amt nicht verlästert werde.*

Ehe Paulus an die großartige Entfaltung dieses Gedankens geht, weist er auf ein Prophetenwort hin, um die Wichtigkeit der Sache ins Licht zu stellen und damit seine erhabene Rede zu motivieren.

Im Propheten Jesaias steht das Wort: *Ich habe dich in der angenehmen Zeit erhört und habe dir am Tage des Heils geholfen.* Paulus zitiert nur den einen Vers, aber nicht nach der Art von Beweisstellen, sondern als prägnanten Ausdruck des dem ganzen Abschnitt zugrunde liegenden Gedankens. Wer darum Paulus hier verstehen will, muß wenigstens Jes. 49, 1–13, lesen. Es steht in dem Abschnitt die Verheißung an den Heiland: *Es ist ein Geringes, daß du mein Knecht bist, die Stämme Jakobs aufzurichten und das Verwahrloste in Israel wiederzubringen, sondern ich habe dich auch zum Licht der Heiden gemacht, daß du seiest mein Heil bis an der Welt Ende (V. 6).* Mit Bezug darauf sagt nun Paulus: *Sehet, jetzt ist die angenehme Zeit, jetzt ist der Tag des Heils.* Ihm zittert das Herz, daß vielleicht durch ein Versehen seinerseits die Gnade Gottes verschüttet oder vergeblich empfangen werde. Darum führt er sein Amt in einer solchen Weise, daß seine ganze Lebenshaltung die Gnade Gottes veranschaulicht, und hütet sich, irgend jemandem den geringsten Anstoß zu geben, daß ein Makel auf seine Amtstätigkeit falle, daß unser Amt nicht verlästert werde.

Grammatisch ist Vers 2 als eine Zwischenbemerkung zu fassen, und das Partizip *didontes* in Vers 3 schließt sich unmittelbar an das Subjekt von Vers 1 an, *parakaloumen*: *Wir ermuntern, indem wir uns dabei sorgfältig hüten, kein Argernis zu geben.*

Und nun führt Paulus in geradezu großartiger Weise aus, wie

er seine Amtsführung anstellt. Nach Schluß des Abschnitts jagt er selbst davon in Vers 11: *D i h r K o r i n t h e r, u n s e r M u n d h a t s i c h z u e u c h a u f g e t a n; u n s e r H e r z i s t g e t r o i t (w e i t).*

Das Thema, das Paulus zunächst in Vers 3 negativ angegeben hatte, wiederholt er positiv in Vers 4: *s o n d e r n i n a l l e n D i n g e n l a s s e t u n s b e w e i s e n a l s d i e D i e n e r G o t t e s.* — Was Luther hier als eine Selbstaufforderung übersezt hat, ist in Wirklichkeit ein Partizip, *synistanontes*, das sich genau wie *didontes* im vorigen Vers an das Subjekt von Vers 1 anschließt: *W i r e r m u n t e r n, i n d e m . . . w i r u n s d a b e i m i t a l l e r S o r g f a l t a l s D i e n e r G o t t e s b e w ä h r e n.* In jedem Stück, jagt Paulus, *e n p a n t i.* Dann bleibt gar nichts übrig für eigene Wünsche, eigene Ehre, eigenen Komfort? Gar nichts. Der Dienst Gottes nimmt uns ganz in Anspruch.

Zur leichteren Übersicht zerlegen wir uns die nun folgenden Modalbestimmungen in verschiedene Gruppen.

Zunächst eine breite Gruppe von zehn Ausdrücken.

Dann eine Gruppe von vier.

Nochmal eine Gruppe von vier.

Dann eine Gruppe von drei Paaren.

Zum Schluß eine Gruppe von sieben Paaren.

Die erste Gruppe von zehn Ausdrücken gliedert sich in eigentümlicher Weise, nicht etwa in zweimal fünf oder fünfmal zwei, sondern in eins plus dreimal drei.

Der erste Ausdruck, durch ein beigefügtes Adjektiv von den folgenden abgehoben und für sich gesetzt, gibt den Grundgedanken der ganzen Gruppe an: *i n g r o ß e r G e d u l d.* Hierauf folgen zunächst drei mehr allgemeiner Art, abstrakte Bezeichnungen für die Schwierigkeiten des Amtes, die so große Geduld nötig machen: *i n T r ü b s a l e n, i n N ö t e n, i n A n g s t e n.* Darauf drei sehr konkrete Erscheinungsformen dieser Nöte: *i n S c h l ä g e n, i n G e f ä n g n i s s e n, i n A u f r u h r e n.* Zum Schluß drei, die die persönliche Übung der Geduld zum Ausdruck bringen: *i n A r b e i t, i n W a c h e n, i n F a s t e n.*

Diese Ausdrücke bedürfen keiner weiteren Erklärung, aber sie regen zu ernster Selbstprüfung an. Die zweiten Drei: Schläge, Gefängnisse, Aufruhre, stehen ja nicht in unserer Hand; sie sind ein Stück der Weltregierung Gottes. Danken wir Gott von Herzen dafür, daß er unser bisher so gnädig verschont hat? Danken wir

ihm zumal auf die Weise, daß wir uns um so mehr in den dritten Drei üben, in Arbeit, in Wachen, in Fasten?

Es folgen zwei Gruppen, aus je vier Gliedern bestehend, die sich beide in je zwei und zwei auflösen: in Keuschheit, in Erkenntnis; in Langmut, in Freundlichkeit. Das sind die ersten vier. „Keuschheit“ übersetzt Luther das Wort *hagnotēs* etwas zu eng. Es ist eigentlich die Lauterkeit (vgl. Phil. 1, 16). Paulus redet hier nicht davon, daß der Zweck unsers Amtes durch Unkeuschheit gegen das Sechste Gebot vereitelt wird; er redet davon, daß ein Diener des Wortes bei der Verwaltung seines Amtes nicht allerlei Nebenzwecke verfolgen darf, etwa populäre Anerkennung seiner Leistungen und dergleichen. Es mag einer noch so eifrig, noch so pünktlich, mit viel Arbeit, Wachen und Fasten seinen Dienst verrichten, tut er es nicht rein aus Interesse des Amtes: Gottes Mitthelfer zu sein (*synergountes*, Vers 1) und Seelen zum Glauben zu führen (*peithomen*, Kap. 5, 11), sondern verbindet er damit Zwecke persönlicher Art, so läßt er es an der *hagnotēs* fehlen; und sein Dienst wird dadurch befleckt.

Wirkliche Lauterkeit der Absicht ist nicht möglich ohne richtiges, sachgemäßes Verständnis. Darum verbindet Paulus mit der *hagnotēs* unmittelbar die Erkenntnis, *gnōsis*. Blindler Eifer schadet nur. Und ein Blinder ist trotz der besten Absichten nicht in der Lage, einen sachmännischen Vortrag über die Farbenlehre zu halten. Erfahrungsmäßige Erkenntnis ist unerläßlich.

Lauterkeit verbunden mit Erkenntnis sollte zur Übung der folgenden zwei Tugenden der ersten Tetras führen: Langmut und Freundlichkeit. Jeder, der auch nur einige Erfahrung im Amt hat, weiß, wie unerläßlich diese zwei Tugenden sind und wie unzertrennlich sie zusammen gehören.

Wieder erhebt sich für uns, denen das Amt anvertraut ist, die Gewissensfrage: Wie steht es bei uns mit der Übung verständnisinniger Lauterkeit und langmütiger Freundlichkeit?

Die zweite Gruppe von Vieren zeichnet sich äußerlich durch Beifügung von näheren Bestimmungen zum Hauptbegriff aus und gliedert sich durch die Art der Beifügungen in zwei Gruppen von je zwei.

In dem Heiligen Geist, in ungefärbter Liebe, so lautet das erste Paar, in dem die Beifügung ein Eigenschaftswort ist.

Große Schwierigkeit für das richtige Verständnis bereitet hier die Frage, wie der Apostel dazu komme, mitten in einer Aufzählung

von erforderlichen Herzenstugenden eines kirchlichen Amtsträgers plötzlich den Heiligen Geist, die dritte Person der Gottheit, zu nennen und ihn mit ungefärbter Liebe zu paaren. — Nun ist es wohl nicht unmöglich, eine einigermaßen annehmbare Lösung zu finden, aber völlig befriedigend wird wohl keine sein. Es bleibt doch zu sonderbar, den Heiligen Geist in einer solchen Reihe von Eigenschaften und Tätigkeiten eingegliedert zu finden. Wenn sich eine andere Erklärung bietet, sollte sie wenigstens nicht ohne weiteres von der Hand gewiesen werden.

Nun gebraucht Paulus das Wort *pneuma* vielfach zur Bezeichnung des neuen Menschen in uns; so in den bekannten Gegenüberstellungen von Geist und Fleisch. Er tut das nach dem Vorgang unseres Heilandes selbst, der auch das vom Geist Geborene Geist nennt. Nehmen wir das Wort hier in diesem Sinn, so würde Paulus sagen, daß in einem Diener des Wortes der neue Geist sich ganz besonders in der Heiligung üben muß. Sein Geist muß heilig sein, und seine Liebe, worin sich ja die Heiligung beweist, dementsprechend ungefärbt, ohne irgendwelche Aufmacherei.

Mit dieser inneren Stellung, daß der Geist heilig und die Liebe echt ist, ist sodann unzertrennlich verbunden, was das nächste Paar dieser Tetras sagt: in dem Wort der Wahrheit, in der Kraft Gottes.

Die Beifügungen sind hier Hauptwörter im Genitiv, die in Wahrheit den eigentlichen Hauptgedanken enthalten. Allein durch das Wahrheitswort des Evangeliums und seine Gotteskraft ist der Geist des Dieners geheiligt und seine Liebe geläutert. Allein darum mit dem Wahrheitswort des Evangeliums und seiner ihm innewohnenden Gotteskraft wird er sein Amt verrichten.

Welch eine gewaltig ernste und furchtbar anklagende Mahnung für uns, die wir oft versucht werden, das Evangelium durch allerlei Zutaten interessanter und zugkräftiger zu machen! Die wir, um dem Ärgeris des Evangeliums zu entgehen, Abstriche und überbrückende Erklärungen machen möchten! An die das Anfsinnen gestellt wird, die Anerkennung der Wahrheit auf die sogenannten Hauptartikel zu beschränken! Die wir der Lieblosigkeit und des Mangels an gesundem Verstand verdächtigt werden, wenn wir fest bei der Wahrheit des Evangeliums bestehen! Und auf der andern Seite, welch eine Warnung, als ob wir durch unsere Person, durch straffe Organisation, durch imponierende Zahlen der Kraft Gottes im Evangelium auch nur ein Quentlein hinzufügen könnten!

Wenn wir unser Amt nicht in dem Wort der Wahrheit und in der Kraft Gottes führen, setzen wir unsern Dienst der Schmach aus, mögen Weltmenschen und oberflächliche Kirchenglieder uns auch noch so hohe Anerkennung zollen.

Wir tun gut, uns hier wieder kräftig daran zu erinnern, daß Paulus für sich in Anspruch nimmt, und damit jedem Amtsinhaber die Aufgabe stellt, sein Amt so zu führen, daß er sich in jedem Stück als Diener Gottes erweise. Es ist Gottes Werk, darin wir Handlangerarbeit tun; aber Gottes Werk ist in seinem innersten Kern nichts anderes, als daß er Gerechtigkeit schafft. Durch Christum hat er sie bereitet, durch das Wort des Evangeliums verwaltet er sie. Dazu hat er uns als Mithelfer berufen, daß wir Rechtfertigung verkündigen. Wenn wir darum unser Amt so führen wollen, daß uns kein berechtigter Tadel treffen kann, so muß all unsere Arbeit sich um diese Achse drehen, daß wir Gottes Gerechtigkeit an den Mann bringen. Das betont besonders scharf die folgende Gruppe von drei Paaren einander entgegengesetzter, zum Teil gegensätzlicher Begriffe: durch Waffender Gerechtigkeit zur Rechten und zur Linken, durch Ehre und Schande, durch böse Gerüchte und gute Gerüchte.

Waffen (*hopla*) sind nicht nur Mittel zum Kampf, sei es zum Angriff, sei es zur Verteidigung, sondern bezeichnen Werkzeuge jeglicher Art. Unsere ganze Ausrüstung zur Rechten und zur Linken muß ausschließlich Arbeitszeug der Gerechtigkeit sein, d. h. mit einem Wort: Verkündigung des Gesetzes, die sicheren Gewissen zu schrecken, und Verkündigung des Evangeliums, die erschrockenen Gewissen zu trösten. Wer das Gesetz so handhabt, als ob die Bildung unsers Charakters uns bei Gott angenehm machen könne; oder wer das Evangelium so anwendet, als ob sein Trost von der Erfüllung gewisser Bedingungen unsrerseits abhängig sei, der benutzt ein Werkzeug, das die Gerechtigkeit Gottes schändet und schädigt.

Wie groß ist nicht die Versuchung, daß wir uns hierin der Welt akkommodieren! Wer hierin treu ist, der wird von der Welt und leichtfertigen Christen geschmäht und verleumdet, während die wahren Christen ihn dafür ehren und empfehlen. Es geht durch Ehre und Schande, durch böse Gerüchte und gute Gerüchte.

In einem Satz von gewaltigem Schwung schließt Paulus die Beschreibung der Art, wie er sein Amt führt und wie jeder Amtsträger es ihm nach führen muß, wenn er ein rechter Mithelfer Gottes sein will. Es sind sieben Paare von sich scheinbar gegenseitig

ausschließenden Gegenätzen, die sich aber bei einem rechten Diener Gottes in schönster Harmonie zusammen finden. Durch einen Wechsel im Ausdruck teilt Paulus auch äußerlich die ganze Gruppe in zwei Teile von drei, resp. vier Paaren. Das letzte Paar der zweiten Gruppe reiht sich zwar ganz natürlich in diese Gruppe ein, und bildet doch zugleich eine gewaltige Klimax der ganzen Aufzählung.

Mit einem „als“ (*hōs*) leitet Paulus jedes einzelne Paar ein und zeigt uns damit, in welchem Licht wir uns selber betrachten, in welchem Sinn wir als Diener Gottes auftreten müssen. Fünfmal verbindet Paulus die Paare, die doch Gegenätze bezeichnen, mit *kai*. Richtig verstanden vertragen sich die Gegenätze gut miteinander. Zweimal, beim fünften und sechsten Paar, sagt er *de*, und zeigt damit, daß das erste Glied in keinem Verstand richtig ist, sondern nur von der unverständigen Welt uns fälschlich angedichtet wird.

Unser Amt fordert von uns, daß wir auftreten: als die Verführer und doch wahrhaftig; als die Unbekannten und doch (wohl-) bekannt; als die Sterbenden und siehe, wir leben; — als die Gezüchtigten und doch nicht ertötet; als die Traurigen, aber allezeit fröhlich; als die (bettel-) armen, aber die doch viele reich machen; als die nichts innehaben, und doch alles haben (über alles verfügen).

So will Gott uns, denen er das Amt in seiner Kirche anvertraut hat, haben. Herrlich! Demütigend!

M.

„Tachtelmechtel“.

The Editor of the *Lutheran Witness* has taken offense at the word Tachtelmechtel as used on page 30 of the January issue of the *Quartalschrift*, finding a shady meaning in it which at times it has in German newspaper language, but which the editorial staff of the *Quartalschrift* did not find intended. Nevertheless we regret that this word has passed our censorship and request our readers to understand the term in Rev. W. Bodamer's article as it is defined by Brockhaus according to the Italian *teco meco*, „unter vier Augen“, *i. e.*, an attempted rapprochement.

THE EDITORIAL STAFF.

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

Das geistliche Evangelium, nicht das „soziale“. — Uns Christen hat Gott den hochwichtigen Befehl gegeben: „Predigt das Evangelium aller Kreatur“ Mark. 16, 15. Insbesondere sagte Jesus seinen Jüngern: „Also ist's geschrieben und also mußte Christus leiden und auferstehen von den Toten am dritten Tage und predigen lassen in seinem Namen Buße und Vergebung der Sünden unter allen Völkern“ Luk. 24, 47. Buße und Vergebung der Sünden predigen heißt nichts anderes als Gesetz und Evangelium predigen, und zwar mit klarer Unterscheidung beider nach ihrem Wesen. Beide sind nötig, soll der Mensch selig werden: das Gesetz, um das harte Herz zu zerfnirschen, das Evangelium als das Mittel, wodurch der Heilige Geist den Glauben in uns entzündet und uns so zu Kindern Gottes macht.

Man will aber die ungläubige Welt das Evangelium von Christo, dem Gefreuzigten, nicht. Es ist „den Juden ein Ärgernis und den Griechen eine Torheit“ 1 Kor. 1, 23, obwohl es „denen, die berufen sind, beide Juden und Griechen, göttliche Kraft und göttliche Weisheit“ ist, V. 24. Weil aber das Evangelium der Welt ein Ärgernis und eine Torheit ist, so verschweigen es untreue Prediger und geben der Welt für das geistliche ein sogenanntes „soziales Evangelium“. Mit dem „sozialen Evangelium“ ist gemeint eine Art „Weltverbesserungsplan“, oder sagen wir, ein Versuch, der Welt irdisch zu helfen. Lassen wir uns vor jedem solchen „sozialen Evangelium“ warnen!

Kirchliche Zeitschriften sind jetzt voll davon. Von New York ging uns dieser Tage ein langes Schreiben zu, worin „amerikanische Leiter dem indischen Führer Gandhi zum Jahrestag der indischen Unabhängigkeitserklärung“ gratulierten. Das lange Schriftstück haben unterzeichnet unter andern solche Männer wie H. E. Fosdick, E. Stanley Jones, Rabbi Cronbach, Dr. Paul Scherer von der Vereinigten Lutherischen Kirche, Norman Thomas, der bekannte amerikanische Sozialistenführer, nebst vielen freisinnigen Frauen, wie Pearl Buck. Wir fragen uns: Was haben diese Leute, die zum großen Teil Leiter von Kirchen sind, mit der politischen Lage in Indien zu tun? Wie können sie überhaupt entscheiden, ob Gandhi im Recht ist oder nicht? Was über diesem politischen Treiben zu kurz kommt, ist eben das seelenrettende Evangelium, das Indien, ja die ganze Welt so nötig hat.

Ferner: das baptistische Blatt „The Watchman-Examiner“ zitiert den „erstaunenerregenden Kirchenleiter William Temple, Erzbischof von Canterbury“ in England, der solche Dinge als Grundlage eines sicheren und bleibenden Friedens bringt wie: „Jede Familie soll ein anständiges Haus haben, jedes Kind eine anständige Schulausbildung, jeder Bürger ein genügendes Einkommen, jeder Arbeiter genügend freie Zeit“ und anderes mehr. Wir fragen: Wie kann je eine Kirche oder selbst ein Staat solche Träume verwirklichen? Wo haben je solche ideale Zustände auf Erden geherrscht? Die Ver-

treter des sozialen Evangeliums sind betörte Schwärmer, die sich und andere täuschen und irreführen.

Aber auch die Vereinigte Lutherische Kirche befaßt sich mit dergleichen Dingen, dem Evangelium zum Schaden. So hat z. B. ihre Behörde für Soziale Mission als Aufgabe der Kirche zur Beratung in Vorschlag gebracht solche Dinge wie die zunehmende Prostitution, das Problem der Trunksucht, Krieg und Frieden und anderes mehr. Es ließe sich wohl die Behandlung dieser Fragen seitens der Kirche recht erklären, nämlich vom Standpunkt der Heiligung aus. Pastoren haben eben ihre Gemeindeglieder gegen alle Übel zu warnen. So aber hat das "Board of Social Missions" offenbar die Sache nicht gemeint. Als Kirche will sie sich mit sozialen Fragen befassen.

Wir wollen fürwahr dem Christenvolk nicht wehren, „Gutes zu tun an jedermann“ Gal. 6, 10. Geht aber eine Kirche über ihre von Gott gezogenen Berufsgrenzen hinaus, so wird darunter eins leiden, nämlich die Evangeliumspredigt mit allen, was dazu gehört und was Sünder wissen müssen, um gerecht und selig zu werden. Wir fürchten, der Teufel will uns mit diesem sozialen „Ersatzevangelium“ narren und uns und anderen Christum rauben. Deswegen unsere ernste Warnung.

Vorstehendes ist ein Leitartikel im „Lutheraner“ vom 23. Februar. Er stammt aus der Feder von Prof. J. T. Mueller, Th. D., Ph. D.

M.

„Zur Sache der lutherischen Kirchenvereinigung“. — Unter dieser Ueberschrift bringt Herr Prof. J. T. Mueller, Th. D., Ph. D., vom Concordia-Seminar im „Lutheraner“ eine kurze, aber gediegene Besprechung einiger Grundsätze, die im Eifer für eine gute Sache allzu leicht aus dem Auge verloren werden. Er lehnt sich in seinen Ausführungen an eine Nummer des Organs der Norwegischen Luth. Kirche in Amerika, des „Lutheran Herald“, an, welche der Vereinigungssache bedeutenden Raum gewidmet hatte. Es war die Nummer vom 26. Januar. Mit Recht sagt Prof. Mueller: „Ist gegenwärtig ein Gegenstand von hoher Bedeutung, so ist es die Sache der Kirchenvereinigung, die unser aller Gebete und Bemühungen wert ist.“

Es gereicht uns zu besonderer Freude, diesen auf gesunder, schriftgemäßer Grundlage ruhenden Artikel ungekürzt unsern Lesern zur Kenntnis zu bringen. Wir lassen nur den zur Orientierung dienenden einleitenden Paragraphen weg.

So schreibt Prof. Mueller:

Wir wollen nicht darauf eingehen, was der „Lutheran Herald“ alles über die Sache bringt. Manchem davon können wir nicht beistimmen, auch nicht dem, was er zitiert. Man will z. B., wie es scheint, keine neuen Bekenntnisse mehr. Aber werden von Zeit zu Zeit neue Bekenntnisse gegen falsche Lehren oder auch gegen falsche Praxis nötig, so sind diese ebensosehr von allen Kirchengemeinschaften, die sich zusammenschließen wollen, zu berücksichtigen, wie unsere älteren Bekenntnisse, die vor etwa vierhundert Jahren angenommen wurden. Das erfordert die Ehrlichkeit wie auch die rechte Einigkeit.

Auch erkennen wir in dem Vereinigungsstürmen eines Rev. Gjermund Hoyne, dessen Lebensbeschreibung in der Nummer kurz gebracht wird, eine große Gefahr für die Kirche. In dem dargebotenen Zitat aus einer seiner Vereinigungsreden steckt offenbare Schwärmerei. Er redete vor Jahren vielfach so, als sei alles verloren; wenn sich die lutherischen Kirchen nicht vereinigten. Dagegen müssen wir im Auge behalten: **nicht auf die äußere Vereinigung kommt es an, sondern vielmehr auf die Treue in der Wortverkündigung.** Dahin sind die verschiedenen kirchlichen Körperschaften darum auch zu bringen, wenn Gott dazu Gnade gibt, daß sie mit einem Mund das unverfälschte Wort Gottes predigen. Das ist das große Wichtige.

Auch müssen wir uns vor solchen Reden hüten, als ob Menschen die Kirchen zusammenbringen müßten. Die wahre Kirchenvereinigung herbeizuführen, ist Gottes Sache. „Dies alles wirket derselbige einige Geist und teilet einem jeglichen Seines zu, nach dem er will“ 1 Kor. 12, 11. Menschen können zwar äußerliche Vereinigungen zustande bringen, aber die wahre Einigkeit im Geist wirkt allein Gott in seiner Gnade.

Endlich ist es auch unrecht, wenn man entweder direkt oder indirekt solche, die auf wahre Einigkeit in Lehre und Praxis bestehen, fälschlicherweise anflagt, als wollten sie gar keine Kirchenvereinigung. Sicherlich wollen sie diese, aber nur auf Grund des festgehaltenen Wortes Gottes, oder sagen wir, auf Grund der wahren Einigkeit.

Cesrent aber hat es uns trotz alledem, daß der „Lutheran Herald“ seine Artikel über die Sache so nüchtern beendet. In dem letzten Leitartikel, betitelt: „Und was nun?“ wendet er sich gegen alle, die da meinen, die ganze Sache gehe nicht schnell genug vorwärts oder, in den Worten eines Pastors zu reden: „Hier stehen wir — still.“ Er betont besonders zwei Punkte. Der erste ist, daß es nicht Selbstsucht seitens konservativer Synodalleiter ist, worin ihre konservative Haltung ihren Grund hat. Vergessen darf eben nicht werden die Wichtigkeit der Fragen, um die es sich handelt, wie auch die hohe Verantwortung, welche die verschiedenen Kirchenleiter gegen Gott und Menschen haben. Der andere Punkt ist dieser, daß sich Entwicklungen in den letzten Jahren zugetragen haben, und zwar solche, die durch Gebet, Studium des Wortes Gottes und die Bemühung, einander recht zu verstehen, zustande gekommen sind. „Ein solches Programm“, schließt der Schreiber, „liegt uns allen vor; und wir wissen keinen besseren Weg, die Sache der Einigung zu fördern, als den, daß man bei diesem Programm bleibt.“

Das sind nötige und zeitgemäße Worte. Die wahre kirchliche Einigkeit will Gott gewiß allen aufrichtigen Christen bescheren, die eifrig darum beten, fleißig die Differenzen im Licht des Wortes Gottes besehen und sich redlich bemühen, einander zu verstehen. Wir

haben nicht alle denselben geschichtlichen Hintergrund. Wir sind nicht alle unter denselben Umständen aufgewachsen und unterrichtet worden. So wird die christliche Liebe auch gerne tragen, was noch mangelt, solange wirklich der Beweis dafür vorliegt, daß man es ehrlich meint und es mit Gottes Wort ernst nimmt. Darum ist hier vor allem auch viel christliche Belehrung und Geduld nötig.

Soweit der Artikel.

Wir haben uns bei der Wiedergabe erlaubt, einige der markantesten Stellen durch den Druck hervorzuhoben. — Darin besteht die wahre Rückertlichkeit und Liebe, die in dieser Sache nötig ist, nicht daß man alles, was etwa in guter Meinung verabredet wird, unbesehen gutheißt, solange sich ihm ein einigermaßen annehmbarer Sinn abgewinnen läßt, sondern daß man etwaige vorgelegte Vereinigungssätze im Licht der Schrift sorgfältig prüft, ob darin die früheren Irrtümer beseitigt und die betreffenden Wahrheiten des Wortes Gottes klar und unzweideutig bekannt werden. M.

Peace Aims. — It is but natural that the leading statesmen of the world consider in advance the problems of peace which will confront them when the present carnage will come to an end. Also the church will then have to face special peace problems; and it is not out of the way if church leaders try to visualize even now what dangers may develop and what opportunities God may offer us when peace is again established. — The church has one task: to preach the Gospel to every creature. And it will be all she can do, even more than she can do, if she devotes herself faithfully to this task, and even now makes all the preparations possible to meet it after the war. It grieves us to see churchmen dissipate the strength of the church by devoting their attention to the problems of secular peace, as though fascinated by them, and as though considering them as of greater importance. Recently the World Council of Churches, from its headquarters in Geneva, issued a significant statement on the subject of peace aims.

Here is the text as the *Lutheran Companion* for March 3 printed it.

"1. The Church has a specific task in relation to peace-making and the creation of an international order. A division on this point, however, arises over the question whether this task consists exclusively in reminding the nations of the Divine Commandments, or should include the interpretation of those Commandments in terms of concrete policy.

"2. The Church can perform its task in this realm by itself, constituting a world-wide fellowship under one Lord in which national differences are eliminated.

"3. The Church must proclaim to the nations that Jesus Christ is Lord over all men and all powers.

"4. The Church must proclaim the Divine Commandments concerning the order that is to reign in the world.

"5. The Church will call the nations to repentance for their common guilt and to work for reconciliation.

"6. The Church is to proclaim that international relations must be subordinated to divine law.

"7. The Church is to proclaim that the State is neither an aim in itself nor a law unto itself, and that its God-given function is to maintain an order based on law that guarantees fundamental human rights.

"8. The Church will proclaim that political power must be exercised with a sense of responsibility toward all those who are affected by that power.

"9. The Church is to proclaim that society must provide all its members with the opportunity to fulfill a meaningful vocation, and that it should provide conditions of social security for all.

"10. The Church is to proclaim that the nations are interdependent, and that they must all have equal access to the resources of the earth.

"11. The Church will proclaim that no people can claim the right to rule over another people, and that the dominating purpose of colonial administration must be to prepare colonial peoples for self-government."

In lieu of a comment, we refer to an editorial by Dr. J. T. Mueller in the *Lutheraner* for February 23, which we reprint in another item.

M.

Commission on American Missions. — The National Lutheran Council, assembled in Minneapolis, January 27–28, as the *Lutheran Standard* reports, "voted to create a Commission on American Missions, which will have the responsibility of ministering to wartime workers who have left their homes to take jobs in industrial centers. This emergency ministry was actually started three or four months ago because the executive committee of the Council, at a meeting last September, did not feel all preliminary planning should be postponed until after the annual meeting; so it authorized essential surveys and the creation of a tentative organization at that time, but establishment of an official department and full scale development had to be postponed pending official approval of the Council commissioners during the annual meeting."

M.

All-American Lutheran Convention. — The *Lutheran Standard*, for February 27, reports: "Commissioners to the National Lutheran Council who assembled for their twenty-fifth annual meeting at the Curtis Hotel in Minneapolis, January 27–29, gave particular attention to the need for creating an agency to serve the needs of all Lutherans in the western hemisphere. They took action providing for the creation of a special committee of 16 members, to be appointed by the eight groups participating in the Council, charged with the responsibility of planning a conference of representatives of all Lutheran groups in the western hemisphere. — Dr. Poppen suggested that the projected organization have a fivefold purpose:

"1. To provide and strengthen joint testimony for the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ and for the true Christian faith as confessed by the Ev. Luth.

Church. — 2. To foster Lutheran unity and solidarity in the Americas. — 3. To promote cooperative efforts in foreign missions, in missionary work among various racial groups, in Christian higher education, in charity and welfare work, in the publication and dissemination of Christian literature, etc. — 4. To aid Lutherans in distress, wherever they may be, particularly in the Americas. — 5. To aid one another by all proper means in the defense against encroachments upon the religious and civil liberties, rights, and privileges of our churches, their pastors, and their members." M.

"*Folkebladet*" on Pending Issues. — *Folkebladet*, official organ of the Norwegian "Lutheran Free Church", in its issue for December 2, 1942, reported on the convention of the A. L. Cf. held at Rock Island November 11-13, 1942. In this connection, as Pastor Norman Madson summarizes in the *Lutheran Sentinel* for February 12, 1943, the editor of *Folkebladet* had the following to say:

1. He hopes that the Conference will never agree to the Missourian position on *unionism*. (The editor is evidently fed up on the constant reference to what he calls — I'm quoting him verbatim — "der anderer Geist," which he informs us was said four hundred years ago under circumstances far different from ours, and perhaps even then not fully justified.)

2. He hopes that the Missourian doctrine of *inspiration* will never be adopted. For, he tells us: "It is an out-lived conception, if it ever lived; it is unscriptural; it is making a fetish out of the Bible. The Bible is the document of revelation, not revelation itself."

3. He hopes that the Missourian doctrine of *predestination* will not be the prevailing one in American Lutheranism. He has a suspicion that they do not believe in it themselves. And then he adds: "Indeed, it does sound as though Dr. Maier forgot the doctrine in his radio preaching."

4. He hopes that the Missourian concept of *separation of Church and State* will be shunned as impossible in a world of social change, and in a time when the church very largely is becoming conscious of its responsibility for the kind of civilization we have.

5. And finally he hopes that the Missourian attitude to *democracy* in the church will never be a generally established position. It would kill lay activity in the congregation.

So far the report of Pastor Madson.

The "Lutheran Free Church" is a member of the American Lutheran Conference, of which the American Lutheran Church also is a member. Pastor Madson adds the comment: "If the A. L. C. can harbor within its own constituency, and can work in harmony with, a church body so inimical to the truth as held forth by the faithful fathers of old Missouri, we shall want no rapprochement with it, for we stand where Missouri has stood on all of the five points enumerated." M.

The Lutheran Church of the Synodical Conference and the Lodge.

— In the February, 1943, number of the *Christian Cynosure* is published an exchange of letters between Professor P. Bretscher, a member of the Missouri Synod's Bureau of Information on Secret Orders, and the Rev. B. Essenburg, president of the National Christian Association, the text of which is herewith submitted to our readers *in toto*.

In reply to an article by Rev. B. Essenburg, published in the November issue of the *Christian Cynosure* (p. 110), the undersigned wish to say the following:

The Missouri Synod, as its literature reveals, has consistently condemned the antiscritptural character of lodges. It has repeatedly voiced its objections to their religious principles and ethical standards, warned against affiliation with lodges, and disciplined those in its constituency who were members of such organizations. But the Missouri Synod has also taken the view that it may be possible to make officials of some lodges recognize objectionable religious features in their ritual and to prevail on them to have their organizations eliminate them or at least *tone them down*.*) In this position the Missouri Synod was not mistaken. Its Bureau of Information on Secret Orders has in a number of instances, after protracted correspondence and in sessions with officials of some lodges, met with gratifying success. As a result of the efforts of this Bureau, some lodges have eliminated from their ritual and meetings everything of a religious character and have transformed themselves into Mutual Insurance Societies. Others have considerably toned down their ritual and eliminated much that was objectionable. Signed communications from headquarters of a number of lodges to this effect are on file in the office of this Bureau and such information is available to those of the Missouri Synod clergy who desire to have it.

The Missouri Synod's Bureau of Information on Secret Orders takes particular exception to the following statement in Rev. Essenburg's article, "No sincere Christian will want such kind of insurance because he should know that he is supporting an institution which stands condemned and has merely disguised itself to entice him." With respect to this statement this Board declares:

1. An individual who carries insurance in a secret order which does not pledge him on the ritual, demands no oath, no initiation, and which does not require attendance at meetings, must not be said to support that order. His case is that of a Christian laboring man who pays his dues to the union which, unfortunately indeed, engages in practices opposed to Scripture. He is paying for his insurance, and that payment includes office space, secretarial work, etc. Naturally, some of the money will go to make up the salary of lodge officials but that is purely incidental. He is not supporting the lodge but paying for his insurance policy.

2. This Bureau gives the following advice to pastors dealing with individuals who have purchased an insurance policy from a lodge. It tells

*) Italics are ours.

these pastors to make sure that the person in question understands the Missouri Synod's objections to lodges, to pledge such persons not to attend any lodge meeting or to permit their business relationships to degenerate into a fraternal relationship and to impress upon such individuals that they will be subject to church discipline the moment they attend lodge meetings and participate in the lodge ritual. In cases such as these, individuals carrying insurance with the lodge send in their insurance premiums by mail to the home office. They have no personal contact with lodge members.

The Bureau dissents also from the statement, "The main reason why men have turned to lodges is their religious inclination." To be sure, religious considerations are one reason why many join a lodge but we do not believe that they are the main reason or ever have been. What people seek in a lodge is, among a variety of other objectives, fellowship, opportunity to establish contacts, insurance, and some join for no other reason than to become acquainted with the secrets of a given order.

We repeat: It is not we who have changed our position but certain fraternal orders have changed their position. Whatever the reason may have been which caused them to change their position we are happy to know that they did, and, as Christians, we have no right to impugn their motives or question their purposes unless their practices clearly belie their written commitments.

The Missouri Synod's Bureau of Information on Secret Orders

Per

PAUL BRETSCHER,
Member of Bureau.

Reply to Rev. Paul Bretscher.

The above communication reached us just as a copy for this issue of the *Cynosure* was ready to be mailed.

We are grateful for this "reply" and appreciate the spirit in which it was written. We are grateful, too, for the stand the Missouri Synod takes in the Lodge membership.

For the present, will Prof. Bretscher grant us a few questions?

1. When certain lodges have "eliminated from their ritual and meetings everything of a religious character and have transformed themselves into Mutual Insurance Societies" should they still be classified as Secret Societies, or Lodges, which according to Webster's dictionary are "a secret organization"? If not, is there still room for any worth-while argument?

2. Certain lodges "have considerably toned down their ritual and eliminated much that was objectionable." May we know which lodges these are and just what objectionable features have been eliminated? Or is this information available only for the clergy of the Missouri Synod?

3. Is it not rather strange procedure, quite inconsistent, if not confusing, to tell Church members: it is perfectly allright to buy lodge insurance, but beware not to attend any of their meetings? Why not avoid dealings with the lodges altogether?

Sincerely yours

Rev. B. ESSENBERG.

So far the *Cynosure*.

Frankly, the perusal of this correspondence is somewhat disturbing to us. It leaves in us a feeling of disappointment as though we were in danger of losing that uncompromising spirit of witness-ship against the lodge evil which was our strength in the past, and has kept our congregations relatively clean.

True, some of our Christians have joined the lodge for the sake of the insurance it offers. At least this has been the explanation in some cases which have come under this writer's personal observation; and there was no reason to doubt the sincerity of these people. This much is readily granted.

The question for us, however, is whether we should be content with the promise "not to attend any lodge meetings or to permit their business relationship to degenerate into a fraternal relationship?" Is such a brother not guilty of denying his Master when he keeps silent when he should testify against the religious principles avowed by the lodge which he helps to support by his dues, principles which we must condemn as antisciptural?

Has the Church, besides the duty and privilege of proclaiming the Word of God, a business, the God-given right, to bargain with the lodge to induce it to eliminate objectionable religious features or at least to "*tone them down*"?*)

Is it really gratifying to us and pleasing to the Lord of the Church when as a result of our efforts some lodges "have considerably toned down their ritual and eliminated much that was objectionable?" Dare we be satisfied with anything less than the removal of all objectionable features?

These are grave questions we should ponder in all humility, lest by yielding and temporizing we lose that blessed freedom which Christ has earned for us with his blood, the free spirit which is the precious possession of all who submit themselves unreservedly to every Word of God, although it may mean vituperation for them and separation from many that are near and dear to them. L.

"**Lutheran Consciousness**" — In the *Lutheran Companion* for February 24 there appeared an article from the pen of Frank R. Carlson, Pastor of Tabor Lutheran Church, Chicago, on the subject of *Lutheran Consciousness*. The article is preparatory for the coming Centennial of the Augustana Synod, and the author takes his approach from the question, "*Is There Virtue in Tolerance?*" We can not reproduce the article in its entirety, but some of the thoughts expressed arrested our attention and certainly are worth pondering by all God-appointed church leaders today. Italics in the following excerpt are ours. M.

"*A supreme need among us is for Lutheran consciousness. To it belong vision and zeal, and without these we must perish. 'The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.'* When the prophet spoke these words he was

*) Italics are ours.

stating a spiritual law which may not be ignored even in our sophisticated age. When Paul accounted for his life and ministry, he said, 'I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.' *The zeal that comes from such vision must express itself in obedient action.* Undisciplined zeal often destroys the very things it set out to save and defend. The Judaizers of Paul's days were not lacking in zeal, but their zeal lacked wisdom.

"Lutheran consciousness — what is it? Can there be any meaning today in crying out for any particular brand of consciousness? 'All religion is good', we hear men say, 'and it does not matter which I embrace, if only I am sincere.' How innocent that sounds! But we know that was not the stand our fathers and mothers took in the days when our Synod was founded and established. . . . They may have erred at times, but they did have convictions, and for these they were willing to fight. But today we must be tolerant and careful not to offend any one.

"But when has the Church militant ever prospered through easy tolerance?" We do not advocate strife between our Church and other religious bodies. But we plead for Lutheran consciousness. The Church of Christ is best served by Christian groups that are loyal to their convictions of truth as revealed to them by God. . . . It will take all the wisdom we possess properly to proclaim in this generation what we stand for. If we have no sense of a unique call and commission, there will be a corresponding lack in the sense of responsibility and urgency. We must see clearly that our Church is worth preserving, and that it has an indispensable role to perform. This conviction must not rest alone in our thinking, for then it would not carry us beyond the bounds of partisanship. . . .

"The Lutheran consciousness we want must be given to us by God. . . ." Let us bear in mind that the Church is not left to flow unguided on the waves of fate, but that God in His heaven rules His Church throughout its entire course. We, too, should become more aware of this fact. Then will there be a real foundation for a Lutheran consciousness that will be appreciated both within and outside our Church. . . .

"How about Lutheran consciousness in respect to the priesthood of believers? . . ." We owe it to God, to the Church, and to the world, to be witnesses of the faith. . . . What about prayer in our congregations? The atmosphere that gives birth to zeal and keeps vision alive? Prayer is an utterance of existent life. . . . Try as we may, we cannot produce such a state of affairs. It is God that gives the increase in everything pertaining to life. Prayer is one of these things. To try to create a revival is futile. It is like trying to create a summer day in the midst of winter. . . . Prayer is born of need. . . . Any honest view of church life and activity should make us conscious of need. Vacant places in the pews and at the altar testify to lack of appetite. Petty things fill our hearts and crowd the great things out. Beautiful church edifices are sometimes deemed more important than the winning of souls. Worldliness in individual lives weakens the influence of the Church's message. — Yes, it is a sense of need that must lead us to prayer. That realization is in our confession:

'I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ or come to Him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me by His gifts, and preserved me in the true faith.' . . . This ministry of the Church has brought me everything I possess and all that I am. I am therefore bound to thank and praise God.

"It is out of these sources we seek strength. . . . Out of them will come a new consciousness, a spiritual consciousness, the faith that overcomes the world."

M.

A New Archaeological Discovery. — *The Biblical Archaeologist* (December, 1942) informs us of a very important discovery which "was announced by Dr. Ernst F. Weidner of Berlin in a French work which has only recently reached this country." The find represents some 300 cuneiform tablets excavated a third of a century ago by German excavators of Babylon and translated in recent years by Dr. Weidner. They prove to be of extraordinary interest and value because of their contents. The 300 tablets list payments of rations to captives and skilled workmen from many nations between the years 595 and 570 B. C. Among these captives are also named exiles of Judah, especially "Yaukin, king of Judah and five royal princes." Yaukin is apparently none other but Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, one of the last kings of Judah, who spent 37 years of his life in Babylonian captivity (2 Kgs. 25, 27).

"The first archaeological light on king Jehoiachin," we are informed by W. F. Albright in *The Biblical Archaeologist*, "appeared fourteen years ago, when . . . a broken jar-handle, stamped with a beautifully carved seal inscribed 'Belonging to Eliakim, steward of Yaukin.' In 1930 two more examples of the same stamp were found on jar-handles." Since these stamps were made from the same original seal archaeologists concluded that Yaukin was a person of very high importance, probably king. The new archaeological discovery does not only substantiate this conclusion in that the title "king of Judah" is added to the name "Yaukin," but in that it also refers to five of his sons, although their names, if we understand *The Biblical Archaeologist* correctly, are not recorded. "These five princes," Prof. Albright assumes, "doubtless included several who lived long enough to be included in the list of Joiachin's seven sons given by the Chronicler (1 Chron. 3:17-18). Among them was certainly Shealtiel, the Salathiel of the New Testament (Matt. 1:12; Luke 3:27), better known as the father of Zerubbabel, who was prince of Judah when the second Temple was under construction."

This find throws archaeological light on several Biblical facts, which have been questioned by some Old Testament scholars. Thus Ezekiel's system of dating his prophecies by years of Jehoiachin's captivity (ch. 1, 2) has been regarded as an invention of later centuries. According to the new archaeological discovery however, Jehoiachin was not only regarded as the legitimate king of Judah by the Jewish exiles, but by the Babylonians as well. "This system of dating is thus one," *The Biblical Archaeologist*

emphasizes, "which could scarcely have been invented centuries afterwards; it is a striking confirmation of the genuineness of Ezekiel's prophecies."

Again the reference, which Ezekiel makes to the Persians (27, 10; 38, 5), before that people had made its appearance on the stage of history, were questioned. But one of the tablets, written at the time of Ezekiel, contains the names of several Persians, who are said to come from the land of Parsuwa, "the regular form of the name of Persia in older documents." Persia, in other words, was not such an obscure nation at Ezekiel's time as even Pfeiffer in his Introduction to the Old Testament (p. 533) would have us believe. And Zunz in his "Gottesdienstliche Vorträge des Judentums," as cited by the International Critical Commentary, is not at all justified in relegating Ezekiel to the realm of fables and his work to the Persian period (440-400).

Ezekiel was finally accused of painting "the material position of the exiles in impossibly bright colors." It was also claimed that the "craftsmen and smiths a thousand" mentioned in 2 Kings 24, 15 could have found no means of support in captivity. *The Biblical Archaeologist* however is able to inform us that "at least one of the Jews listed in Dr. Weidner's tablets is expressly termed a 'gardener,' and that skilled craftsmen were in great demand, since rations for many hundreds of them from all parts of the Near East are recorded on these same tablets."

These tablets also throw much archaeological light on the historicalness and date of Chronicles. Pfeiffer tells us in his Introduction that "it is an error to consider the Chronicler as a writer of history (p. 806) and "nothing precludes our dating of the Chronicler about 250 B. C. or a few years before" (p. 812). I Chronicles 3, 17-24, containing the list of Jehoiachin's descendants, is regarded by the critics as an historical evidence of a late date in these books. However "the discovery that several of Jehoiachin's seven sons were already born before 592 B. C. makes it necessary to push the birth of the eldest, Shealtiel, back to around 598 at the latest. . . . Moreover, it now becomes even clearer than it was hitherto that the list of Joiachin's descendants down to the seven sons of Elioenai (in I Chron. 3:17-24) cannot come down later than the very beginning of the fourth century, that is, the period immediately after 400 B. C. Every pertinent recent find has increased the evidence both for the early date of the Book of Chronicles (about 400 B. C. or a little later) and for the care with which the Chronicler excerpted and compiled from older books, documents and oral traditions which were at his disposal."

The distribution of rations, as mentioned on the cuneiform tablets, has led archaeologists to the conclusion that Jehoiachin at first "was free to move about Babylon and was not in prison" and that "some later event was therefore responsible for his incarceration." The Bible mentions both Jehoiachin's captivity and his imprisonment (2 Kgs. 25, 27; Jer. 52, 31). The immediate conclusion drawn by commentators is that "Jehoiachin had been prisoner thirty-seven years." This conclusion can well be questioned.

The Bible tells us that Jehoiachin's captivity lasted 37 years, and that he was in prison at the end of those 37 years, but it does not tell us how long Jehoiachin actually was in prison. The word for captivity does not necessarily include imprisonment. After his release from prison however Jehoiachin according to 2 Kings 25, 30 received a regular allowance. "His allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day all the days of his life." In other words the king of Babylon *again* distributed rations to the king of Judah as he had done prior to his imprisonment. Commentators argue whether this allowance was a daily ration of food or whether it was a money payment. There is no need to doubt any longer that it was the former.

Finally these 300 tablets throw a clear archaeological light on the "international relations of Babylonia in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar." Captives and skilled workmen from many nations, from Philistia and Phoenicia, from Media and Persia, from Egypt and Asia Minor were gathered together in Babylon and in their midst the exiles of Judah. To them Jeremiah, well acquainted with the circumstances and conditions, under which they were living, wrote his letter of advice: "Build ye houses and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them. . . . And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace" (29, 5. 7.).

P. Peters.

Büchertisch.

The Introits for the Church Year. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri. Price, 60 cents; dozen \$5.76.

At the request of the Intersynodical Committee on Hymnology and Liturgics Prof. Walter E. Buszin of Concordia College, Fort Wayne, Indiana, has edited these settings for the Introits of the Christian year according to the eight Gregorian Tones (plainsong, *cantus planus*). He gives the following reasons for using these traditional settings of the Ancient Church rather than the modern harmonic anthem settings: "a. they are truly liturgical in character; b. they are simple and may be sung by any type of church choir; they may well be transposed to other keys; c. they are churchly, giving prominence to the text and relegating the music to the background; d. they are undramatic and objective and yet possess great beauty; e. they have stood the test of time and have become a part of the Lutheran heritage." — This last point may be misunderstood. Since these chants are admittedly not Lutheran in origin they "become a part of the Lutheran heritage" only in so far as they can be, and have been, received in accordance with Luther's conservative principles on matters liturgical ("ich habe nie gedacht, allen äusserlichen Gottesdienst abzutun"): to retain

whatever served to give adequate expression to the Gospel, rejecting only that which hindered and obscured, or was in direct conflict with the Word.

Prof. Buszin has done much to enable choirs and directors to whom this type of chanting may be a new and untried thing to understand the method. Yet it will perhaps be of advantage if choir-masters will form study groups in which they can not only familiarize themselves with the theory, but also put it in practice. Several voices (as well as heads) will be better than one. We like Prof. Buszin's forethought in putting all the tones into keys from which one can easily lead over into the key of D Major, in which the Lutheran Hymnal's setting of the Gloria Patri is written. His purpose is to enable the entire congregation to sing this fixed part of the Introit. It is soundly Lutheran to encourage this participation of all the worshippers in the service, and in this we wish him success. We hope that abrupt transitions from the chant to the Gloria will not create too great a clash between these two somewhat different types of liturgical music. Organists will need to study these transitions with great care. In the meantime we shall look forward to the opportunity of making personal observations where and when these chants will be introduced. E. R.

The Annotated Pocket New Testament. With Notes by Theodore Graebner. Part Five, The Book of Acts. Printed by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri.

The Book of Acts in a gray jacket. We have repeatedly brought this edition of the New Testament, published by the Committee on Bible Study of the Walther League, to the attention of our readers. May also this present booklet find its way into the pockets of many of our Christians. We can heartily recommend it. L.

The Concordia New Testament. With Notes. Edited and Revised by John Theodore Mueller, Th. D., Professor of Doctrinal and Exegetical Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri. Price, \$2.00, \$3.50, \$4.75.

This pocket-size New Testament is a revision of the New Testament with Notes, published by the American Tract Society, New York. It is, of course, extremely difficult in a book of this kind to satisfy every reader. In some places this reviewer would have liked to see a fuller explanation, while in others he would have wished nothing had been said since the remarks are not an interpretation but an opinion unsupported by the text. All in all, Dr. Mueller has done a good job. He says in the Introduction — we quote his words — that "he greeted this opportunity of service with great joy, for its explanatory notes and convenient size make it excellently suited for private devotional study of God's Word. It has been in use among Christians of many denominations for many years. As the Notes

were prepared by non-Lutheran divines, some of them are not in agreement with Lutheran doctrine. Nevertheless, the book contains so much that is helpful to students of Scripture that it deserves to be republished in a special, revised edition for Lutheran readers." L.

Our Bible. A Guide to the Study of the Holy Scriptures. By G. M. Weidenschilling, M. A., S. T. D. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri. Price, Single copy, 35 cents, postpaid; dozen copies, \$3.36, and postage.

This booklet comprises 95 pages, measures 5×7½ inches, and is bound in paper covers. The chapter headings are as follows: Why the Bible is the Best Book — The Bible a Library of Sacred Literature — Ancient Historical Records — Books of Religious Poetry — The Great Prophets of God — A Fourfold Picture of our Savior — The Story of the Christian Church — The Letters of a Great Apostle — Letters of Other Apostles — How the Sacred Book Became Our Bible — How the Bible Came Down to Us — Making the Bible Our Own — Review — Prayers — Interesting Facts about the Bible — Testimonials of Famous Men — Helps for Bible-reading.

From the Preface we quote: "It was felt that such a book would be of practical value in the home, in the day-school, Sunday-school, confirmation and Bible classes. People, as a rule, know very little about the history of the Bible, the ancient versions, the Greek and the Hebrew manuscripts, the origin of modern versions. They are astonished when some one introduces them to the history of the Bible or when they hear the story of its remarkable preservation through the ages." The wish expressed in the following words is also ours: "It is hoped that this little book will prove of arousing interest in the Book of books and will be an incentive to more general and more fruitful Bible-study." L.

The Christian's Attitude Towards His Government — and on War.
By L. J. Roehm. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri.

A reprint of an article that appeared in the *Concordia Theological Monthly* some time ago. Timely and thorough. A pamphlet of 24 pages. L.

"On Paths of Destiny," "On Sandals of Peace," and "On Wings of Faith," three stiff-cover books of 127, 133 and 152 pages respectively. Published by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States. Department of Missionary Education. St. Louis, Mo. Concordia Publishing House 1942. Price 25 cents each.

These mission publications are three in a series of four books which have been projected by the Church's Department of Missionary Education. The names of the authors of these precious publications are not given. "On Paths of Destiny" contains much valuable reading matter for both young and old, learned and unlearned, laymen and theologians, which will be read with ever growing appreciation and gratification. The author or authors have compiled many interesting data and much valuable material pertaining to the heathen world and the mission work of the Church. "The Language Confusion," "The Heathen in their Darkness" and "The Book of a Thousand Tongues" are some of the outstanding chapters of this book. Lack of space forbids us to list the titles of the remaining nine chapters.

"On Sandals of Peace" views the Bible from Genesis to Revelations in the light of missionary enterprise and endeavor on the part of God's people directed and guided by Him, Who will have all men to be saved. It therefore lends itself exceptionally well for use by Bible and Mission Classes teaching us, often in a surprising and unexpected manner, to view old and well-known portions of the Bible in a new light.

"On Wings of Faith" introduces Lutheran missionaries to us, whose lives and work are a constant inspiration to Lutherans in all lands. The names of Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, Hans Egede, Louis Harms, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, Frederick Wyneken and others warrant a reading of this publication with ever growing interest by individuals and classes not to be laid aside, until it has been read from cover to cover. We are hoping that the fourth book of this series "On Runways of Love" will soon be published. P. Peters.

"Duties of Elders." Written by request of Synod's Literature Board. St. Louis, Mo. Concordia Publishing House 1942. Price 5 cents.

The twelve pages of this little pamphlet are replete with sound advice to experienced and inexperienced Church Elders. Pastors will gratefully avail themselves of the opportunity, if they have not already done so, to supply the members of their Church Council with copies. P. Peters.

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Das Evangelium als fahrender Platzregen.

Martha, Martha, du hast viel Sorge und Mühe, eins aber ist not! usw. Luf. 10, 41.

Wir schlossen unsern letzten Aufsatz über den Heilsrat Gottes (Quartalschr. 1943, No. 2) mit der so herzlich bittenden und zugleich so schrecklich drohenden Ermahnung Luthers an „seine lieben Deutschen“, daß sie des ihnen durch ihn gepredigten Evangeliums als ihrer einzigen und letzten Gelegenheit, das ewige Heil Gottes zu erlangen, mit allem Ernst wahrnehmen möchten.

Wir setzen dies Lutherwort, um es in seinem Zusammenhang bequem übersehen und gründlich prüfen zu können, noch einmal in seinem vollen Wortlaut hierher: „Liebe Deutschen, kaufet weil der Markt vor der Tür ist, sammelt ein, weil es scheineth und gut Wetter ist, brauchet Gottes Gnade und Wort, diemeil es da ist! Denn das sollt ihr wissen: Gottes Wort und Gnade ist ein fahrender Platzregen, der nicht wiederkommt, wo er einmal gewesen ist. Er ist bei den Juden gewesen; aber hin ist hin, sie haben nun nichts. Paulus brachte ihn in Griechenland; hin ist auch hin, sie haben nun den Türken; Rom und lateinisch Land hat ihn auch gehabt; hin ist hin, sie haben nun den Papst. Und ihr Deutsche dürft nicht denken, daß ihr ihn ewig haben werdet; denn der Undank und Verachtung wird ihn nicht lassen bleiben. Darum greifet zu und haltet zu, wer greifen und halten kann; faule Hände müssen ein böses Jahr haben.“ (An die Ratsherren, Band X, 464.)

Hat Luther recht? — Was meint er eigentlich? Er geht von der Annahme aus, daß alle seine Schüler und Lehrer nicht nur den allgemeinen Heilsrat Gottes in seinen wesentlichen Stücken (1. Tim. 2, 4ff, Joh. 3, 1–18) kennen, daß sie nicht nur die Einsetzung des heiligen Predigtamts nach Matth. 28,

18–20, sondern auch das, was der Herr selbst über die völkerweise zeitliche Aufeinanderfolge der evangelischen Predigt in Luk. 24, 46–49, sagt: „und a n h e b e n zu Jerusalem,“ kennen. Und diese Reihenfolge ist von Anfang an durch die Geschichte bestätigt worden und wird bis an den jüngsten Tag inne gehalten werden. — Das ist Luthers Meinung.

Nun ist Luther anerkanntermaßen ein Geistesgroßer in der Geschichte der christlichen Kirche. Er tritt hier im Bewußtsein eines Propheten auf, obwohl er sich nie unmittelbarer Offenbarungen gerühmt hat. Aber er ist auch hier seiner Sache persönlich gewiß geworden durch das Studium der gottgegebenen Schrift, welcher er kindlich glaubt. Und es ist wahr: was die umfangreichste Geschichtskennntnis und die gründlichste Sprachfertigkeit in der Schrift vor lauter Vernunft oft nicht gesehen hat, das eröffnete der Heilige Geist dem kindlich-glaubenden Herzen Luthers durch sein fleißiges Schriftstudium. Bei ihm erfüllte sich verhältnismäßig früh: „Sie werden alle von Gott gelehret,“ Joh. 6, 45, so daß er mit Paulo (2 Tim. 1, 12) sagen konnte: „I c h w e i ß, an welchen ich glaube, und b i n g e w i ß, daß er kann mir meine Beilage bewahren bis an jenen Tag,“ und daß er ohne eitelen Selbstruhm mit Ps. 119, 99 sagen konnte: „I c h b i n gelehrter denn alle meine Lehrer.“

Trotz alledem war Luther kein Inspirierter und konnte irren. So müssen wir gerade auch diesen Ausspruch vom Evangelium als einem fahrenden Platzregen an der Schrift selbst prüfen. Das Alte Testament unterscheidet zweierlei Regen: F r u c h t r e g e n und P l a t z r e g e n. Der erstere, welcher, wenn der Herr nicht besondere Züchtigungen vorhatte, als F r ü h r e g e n im Herbst und als S p ä t r e g e n im Frühling sehr regelmäßig fiel, dazu unregelmäßig auch wohl zu andern Zeiten kam, hieß g e s c h e m (Gießregen) oder auch s e r e m (Streu- oder Träufelregen). Manchmal war er auch wohl mit noch etwas ungeschmolzenem Schnee vermischt, diente aber in jeder Form zur E r n ä h r u n g des Volks für dies Jahr und zum Saatkorn für das nächste. Mit solchem F r u c h t r e g e n vergleicht der Herr Jesai 55, 10ff. s e i n j e l i g m a c h e n d e s Wort. Dagegen bezeichnet das Alte Testament das, was Luther P l a t z r e g e n nennt, mit dem einfachen Substantiv s c h e t e p h (Hiob 38, 25), oder umschreibend mit g e s c h e m s c h o t e p h oder auch mit s e r e m s c h o t e p h (Hesek. 13, 11), = plötzlich fallender G e w a l t r e g e n.

Der Platzregen kennzeichnet sich dadurch, daß er unerwartet kommt, mit großen Wasserfluten im Sturm von der Seite brausend daher und dahin fährt, den leichteren Boden, außer an seinen Rändern, wegreißt, den festen hartschlägt und alles Steinnichte bloßlegt. — Mit einem solchen Platzregen vergleicht Luther das Kommen und Bleiben des Evangeliums zu und bei den Völkern der Erde.

Hier sind aber die Begriffe Evangelium und Volk gerade so genau zu fassen wie der Begriff Platzregen oben. Luther redet vom reinen („lauteren“) und vollen, vom echten Evangelium, wie es aus Gottes Herzen gekommen ist, nicht von einem mit dem Geßetz verletzten Mißmach-Evangelium, mit dem das gesamte Sektentum sich täuscht — zum Schaden auch der ungläubigen Welt. Unter Volk versteht Luther das, was wir sonst wohl auch Nation nennen, eine größere Menschenmasse, die ihre Einheit durch geschlechterweise Vermehrung aus einem oder mehreren bestimmten Urpaaren gewonnen und mehr oder minder von deren körperlichen und seelischen, auch religiösen Einzelheiten sich bewahrt und zum Schutz derselben sich etwa mit einem starken weltlichen Regiment versieht. Das Wort „Volk“ schließt aber hier nicht notwendig jede Person oder Familie oder Privatgesellschaft solchen Volkes ein.

Nun sagt Luther: „Das Evangelium ist bei den Juden gewesen; hin ist hin, sie haben nun nichts.“

Wann, wie und wo ist das Evangelium bei den Juden gewesen?

Nicht von Anfang des Menschengeschlechts an. Adam und Eva kannten kein „Evangelium“ und hatten keins nötig; sie hatten das Paradies, denn sie waren im Ebenbild Gottes geschaffen, gerecht und heilig, von Gott herzlich geliebt und reich gesegnet. Juden in dem völkischen Sinn gab es erst 2,000 Jahre später. Ein Evangelium konnte es erst geben nach dem Sündenfall. Da ging die Welt verloren in Sündenschuld und Sündenlust zu lebenslänglichem Elend und angstvollem Sterben und in Tod und Verwesung behalten zum endlichen Gericht für alle Ewigkeit; vgl. Luthers Lied „Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein“ durch alle Verse, Nr. 96; und erinnere dich an den letzten Grund seines Heilsrats in Joh. 3, 16 „Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt,“ usw. Dann wird es dir klar werden, warum Gott das verlorene Menschengeschlecht nicht einfach durch ein zorniges Machtwort vernichtete und ein ganz anderes ins Leben rief, sondern das gefallene zu erlösen und doch für die

ewige Seligkeit zu retten beschloß. Und die Predigt von diesem Rat-schluß — das ist das Evangelium von Christo — schickte er sofort nach Adams Fall in die Völker hinein, so wie sie nacheinander ent-standen. Darum lesen wir schon in Gen. 4, 26: „Und Seth zeu-gete auch einen Sohn und hieß ihn Enos; zu derselbigen Zeit fing man an zu predigen von des Herrn Namen.“ Und diese Predigt ging zunächst durch zehn langlebige Geschlechter, so daß diese viel Gelegenheit hatten, das ihnen geoffenbarte Evangelium miteinander zu vergleichen und ihren Glauben daran zu stärken. Sie lebten bis auf Noah ein Leben von 700 bis über 900 Jahren. Doch wie dies Evangelium gemeint war, zeigte sich gerade zu des frommen Noahs Zeiten. Als die Erde sich mit Menschen füllte und die Nachkommen Noahs in der Religion gleichgültig geworden waren, nahmen sie zu Weibern, „welche sie wollten,“ besonders ganz gottlose kainitische. Da kam Gott der Herr mit dem furchtbaren Gericht der Sündflut über die Völker und ersäufte alles, was von Menschen lebte, bis auf acht Seelen, nämlich bis auf Noah, sein Weib und seine drei Söhne und deren Weiber. Noah war über 500 Jahre alt, als seine Söhne Sem, Ham und Japhet geboren wurden.

So hat der Herr das Evangelium von dem zukünftigen Heiland der alttestamentlichen Kirche predigen lassen, bis es in dem Platz-regen der Sündflut vorläufig zu Ende ging. Denn auch Noahs Söhne verlieren es bald. Was wir von Noahs Söhnen in der folgen-den Völkergeschichte hören, ist wenig Evangelisches. Von Ham (Kusch) erfahren wir, daß er der in dem assyrisch-babylonischen Völkergemisch sich bildenden ersten Großmacht den grausamen Tyran-nen Nimrod liefert; von Japhet, daß er die spätesten kau-kasische Völker unter seinem Szepter vereinigen werde, und von dem stolzen Sem, daß er das Semitentum vorübergehend in der Welt zur Anerkennung bringen, aber seinen wertvollsten Mann ver-lieren muß, um ein neues Volk zu bauen, welches der wahre Gott zu seinem alttestamentlichen Messiasreich ausersehen hat. Das war Abram (Abraham) aus Ur Chasdim, ein Semit von Herkunft. Dies Volk — wohl auch von semitischer Abkunft, bekommt im Lauf der Zeit zwei charakteristische Namen, den geistlichen I s r a e l und den weltlichen J u d e n. So kommt das Evangelium zu den Juden; aber es ist nur das ganz unscheinbare Vorspiel dazu. Das Lutherische „wie ein Platzregen“ wird auch nicht lange außen bleiben. Setzt drängen uns die geschichtlichen Verhältnisse zur Betrachtung der

hervorragendsten Gottesmänner des Alten Testaments, des Dreigelechts Abraham, Isaak und Jakob, auf deren Evangelium alles neutestamentliche Glauben und Leben steht. Diese Geschichte geht in der Schrift von Gen. 12 an durch das ganze Buch Exodus hindurch. Wir können hier aber nur die engere Geschichte der Gründung des alttestamentlichen Gottesreichs in den wichtigsten Hauptpunkten berühren.

1. Abrahams Berufung.

In Gen. 11 finden wir die früheste Völkertafel, — die mit Abrahams engeren Familie schließt. Mit Kap. 12 beginnt die Schrift mit der *persönlichen* Geschichte Abrahams, der engeren Geschichte des alttestamentlichen Gottesreichs. Die muß uns in ihren Hauptphasen klar werden, wenn das, was wir als die reine Lehre oder das lautere Evangelium Luthers so entschieden betonen, erkannt werden soll.

Gen. 12: — Und der Herr sprach zu Abram (noch nicht: Abraham. Abram heißt *h o h e r* Vater, erhabener, von Gott erhoben zu einem von jedermann zu verehrenden Vater): „Geh aus deinem Vaterlande,“ in welchem du geboren bist, aus Ur Chasdim, dem stolzen Semitenlande, das sich besser dünkt als alle dies assyrisch-babylonische Völkergemisch und sich dünken läßt, sie seien gut und mächtig genug, die Welt zu erobern und zu beherrschen. Verlaß dies Volk und nicht nur dies Volk, sondern auch deine Freundschaft, d. h. Verwandtschaft. Nur einer, Lot, Sarans unerwachsener Sohn, und Abrams unfruchtbares Weib Sarai, durften mit. — Es war nicht bloß eine Auswanderung sondern eine Familientrennung. — Aber das Merkwürdigste dabei war, daß Gott ihm nicht offenbarte, *w o h i n*, in welches Land, Abram auswandern solle. „Und ich will dich zum großen (zahlreichen) Volk machen und *w i l l* dich *s e g n e n* und dir einen großen Namen (will dich auf Erden *b e r ü h m t*) machen und *s o l l*st ein *S e g e n* sein. Ich will segnen, *d i e* dich segnen und *v e r f l u c h e n*, *d i e* dich verfluchen, und in dir sollen gesegnet werden *a l l e* Geschlechter auf Erden.“

Das ist viel gefordert; aber unendlich mehr versprochen, bezw. gedroht.

Aug. Pieper.

(Fortsetzung folgt.)

Vom Antichristen.

2 Thessal. 2, 1–12.

Nach längerem Prüfen ist der Schreiber der folgenden exegetischen Arbeit über 2 Thess. 2, 1–12 davon überzeugt worden, daß der von Paulus an dieser Stelle geweissagte „Mensch der Sünde“ als solcher nicht allein der ist, der selbst sündigt und viele andere zur Sünde verführt, sondern eigentlich der, in dem die Sünde im Menschen, die nach Alleinherrschaft über Gott und Menschen strebt, das Selbst-Gott-Seinwollen, zu ihrem ungezügelter Ausbruch kommt. So definiert Paulus selbst den „Menschen der Sünde“: „Der allem widerstrebt (Gegner), sich über alles setzt, das göttlich ist und Gegenstand der Gottesfurcht, so daß er im Tempel Gottes sitzt als ein Gott.“ Das ist die ins Werk gesetzte, zur Tat gemachte Sünde im Menschen ihrem eigentlichen Wesen nach. Keine Bezeichnung paßt da besser als „Mensch der Sünde“.

Wer immer diese Arbeit liest, wird selbstverständlich an Hand des griechischen Neuen Testaments wie einst die Beröenser sorgfältig prüfen, ob es sich also verhält. Nur so kann man sich davon überzeugen, ob eine Ausführung richtig ist oder nicht.

Es werden diesem Aufsatz noch andere folgen, die folgendes behandeln werden: 1. Die voneinander abweichenden Urteile darüber, ob die Erfüllung von 2 Thess. 2, 1–12 im Papsttum vorliegt. 2. Die dies bezahen, haben recht, denn jedes Stück dieser Weissagung paßt voll, ganz und ausschließlich auf das Papsttum, wie die Geschichte des Papsttums von ihrem Anfang nach der apostolischen Zeit bis auf diesen Tag es so klar bezeugt.

1. Die Weissagung 2 Thessal. 2, 1–12.

Die Veranlassung zu dieser Weissagung. Diese nennt Paulus selbst in den Versen 1 und 2. Aus diesen Versen geht hervor, daß etliche, wie das auch in andern Gemeinden geschehen war, zu den Thessalonichern gekommen, vielleicht auch aus ihrer Mitte aufgestanden waren, die diese Gemeinde beunruhigten und zwar damit, daß sie sagten, die Wiederkunft des Herrn stehe unmittelbar bevor. Das geht klar hervor aus den Worten Pauli in Vers 2: „Als stände nahe bevor (enestéken) der Tag des Herrn. Demnach ist es gewiß,

daß jene in der eben gezeigten Weise zu den Thessalonichern geredet hatten. Als Beweis für ihre Behauptung hatten jene dreierlei vorgelegt: Geist (pneuma), nämlich Offenbarungen als vom Heiligen Geist stammend; dann Wort, wohl Schriftbeweis, und zuletzt einen Brief als von Paulo stammend. Das alles war freilich nur Betrug, eine List, die der Satan durch alle falschen Propheten anwendet.

Paulus, stets wohlunterrichtet über das, was in seinen Gemeinden vor sich ging, denn er war ein treuer Wächter über seine Gemeinden, hörte auch von dem, was sich in Thessalonika ereignet hatte. Sogleich befürchtet er, jene falschen Propheten möchten mit ihrer starken und listigen Ausrüstung die Thessalonicher dahin beeinflussen, daß sie jenen Glauben schenken und erschrecken. Die letztere Befürchtung klingt etwas befremdend. Warum sollte sich ein Christ, durch den Glauben an Jesum Christum gerecht, fürchten vor der Wiederkunft Christi, da er doch nicht gerichtet wird? Dennoch hat diese Befürchtung einen guten Grund. Wenn die Thessalonicher jenen falschen Propheten Glauben schenken, dann geht das nicht, ohne daß sie dem Wort, das sie gelernt haben, nicht mehr glauben. Gottes Wort durch Pauli Mund ist ihnen nicht mehr glaubwürdig. Das muß zur Folge haben, daß j e d e s Wort, das sie gelernt haben, ihnen zweifelhaft wird. Das erklärt diese Befürchtung Pauli; die Folge muß ein Erschrecken vor der Wiederkunft Christi sein.

Aus dieser Befürchtung heraus bittet nun Paulus die Thessalonicher, sie möchten sich doch nicht so schnell von ihrem Nous fortbewegen lassen; sie möchten sich auf keine Weise betrügen lassen, als stände der Tag des Herrn nahe bevor. Paulus bittet sie, erötömen. Sehr wichtig. Paulus war sich dessen stets bewußt, daß alle Christen einer überaus hohen Ehre teilhaftig geworden sind: Glieder am Leibe Christi, Miterben Christi, Christi teuer erkaufte Eigentum, ein auserwähltes Geschlecht. Als solche haben sie nur einen Herrn, Christum. Da gebietet die Ehrfurcht, daß man sie mit Achtung behandelt und nicht über sie herrschen will mit Befehlen und harten Drohungen. Unserer Zeit tut die Erinnerung not, denn ein Ueber-schätzen der Amtswürde und ein Unterschätzen der Gemeindegewürde reizt offenbar unter uns ein.

Paulus bittet die Thessalonicher, sie möchten sich doch nicht so bald von ihrem Nous fortbewegen lassen, sich fürchten und also betrügen lassen. Nous ist die durch die Schrift erzeugte Erkenntnis mit entsprechendem Urteilsvermögen in bezug auf das, was wahr, und

das, was falsch ist. Es ist dies genau das, was Paulus an Timotheus schrieb: „Bleibe in dem, das du gelernt hast.“

An diese Erkenntnis, die die Thessalonicher empfangen haben, an der sie festhalten sollen, damit sie niemand auf irgendeine Weise betrüge, knüpft nun Paulus mit seiner Weissagung vom kommenden Abfall und dem kommenden „Menschen der Sünde“ an. Denn diese, was die Thessalonicher betrifft, ist nichts Neues, vielmehr ihnen bekannt und als solche ein Stück ihres Nous. Das zeigt Vers 5: „Erinnert ihr euch nicht, daß ich euch dies gesagt habe (nämlich das in Vers 4), als ich noch bei euch war?“

Die Veranlassung zu der vorliegenden Weissagung ist also Pauli Befürchtung, jene falschen Propheten möchten mit ihrer scheinbar stark begründeten Ankündigung der unmittelbar bevorstehenden Wiederkunft Christi die Thessalonicher betrügen, so daß diese ihnen glauben und damit vom gelernten Wort abfallen, zuletzt in jeder Beziehung, was sie aller Zuversicht berauben und an ihrer Stelle Furcht erzeugen müsse. Mit dieser Weissagung, da sie den Thessalonichern bekannt ist, will Paulus ihren Nous auffrischen, stärken, so daß sie nicht betrogen werden, sondern den Betrug abweisen und in der Wahrheit beharren, daß die Wiederkunft des Herrn erst dann komme, wenn zuerst der Abfall eingetreten und der „Mensch der Sünde“ offenbar worden sei.

Die Weissagung.

Wie schon bemerkt worden ist, war diese Weissagung den Thessalonichern nichts Neues, denn Paulus hatte ihnen, da er noch bei ihnen war, des öfteren gesagt, daß die Wiederkunft des Herrn nicht so unmittelbar bevorstehe, sondern erst dann eintreffen werde, nachdem der Abfall zuerst eingetreten und der „Mensch der Sünde“ offenbar geworden sei.

Auf seiner zweiten Missionsreise war Paulus mehrere Monate, wahrscheinlich vom Dezember des Jahres 50 bis zum Mai des Jahres 51, in Thessalonika gewesen und hatte die Gemeinde dort gesammelt. Damals hatte er unter anderem den Christen dort offenbart, was die vorliegende Weissagung enthüllt. Etwa zwei oder drei Jahre später schrieb Paulus die beiden Episteln an die Thessalonicher. Demnach waren wenigstens zwei bis drei Jahre seit jenem mündlichen Offenbaren dieser Weissagung verflossen. Daß sie noch nicht in Erfüllung gegangen war, mochte die Thessalonicher etwas schwankend in bezug

auf ihre Erfüllung machen, besonders angesichts der Behauptung jener falschen Propheten in bezug auf die unmittelbar bevorstehende Wiederkunft Jesu Christi, trotzdem ihnen Paulus gesagt hatte, seine Weissagung werde sich nicht in der allernächsten Zukunft erfüllen.

Befürchtend, der Druck jener falschen Propheten möchte auf die Thessalonicher die Wirkung haben, daß sie anfangen würden, an der Erfüllung seiner Weissagung zu zweifeln, was sie der Gefahr ausgesetzt hätte, zuletzt alles zu bezweifeln, was er sie gelehrt habe, erinnert Paulus sie nicht nur daran, daß der Tag des Herrn nicht komme, es sei denn der Abfall eingetreten und der „Mensch der Sünde“ offenbar worden, sondern er erinnert sie auch daran, daß sie wissen, weil er es ihnen gesagt habe, warum eine augenblickliche Erfüllung dieser seiner Weissagung nicht zu erwarten sei. Er tut das in den Versen sechs und sieben.

Einmal: Diese Weissagung bereitet sich bereits heimlich vor: „Denn das Geheimnis der Bosheit ist schon tätig“, V. 7. Mystē- rion ist das, was geheim, noch nicht offenbar ist. Im geheimen ist es schon da, hat irgendwo, jedenfalls in den apostolischen Gemeinden, nämlich der „Abfall“ und der „Mensch der Sünde“, dem ganzen Wesen nach bereits angefangen. Paulus ist dessen gewiß; ihm selber liegt da kein Geheimnis vor, nur den Thessalonichern. Seinen geschärften Augen, seinem tiefen Urteilsvermögen konnte nicht verborgen bleiben, was hinter dem stecke, das sich da und dort regte.

Daß der „Mensch der Sünde“ bereits heimlich da ist, bezeugt auch das apokalyptein V. 6 und 8. Dieses Wortes Bedeutung ist: aus dem Verborgenen in die Öffentlichkeit bringen. Es kann aber nichts in die Öffentlichkeit treten, das nicht zuvor schon heimlich da ist. Dieses Wort übrigens besagt nichts darüber, wie die Öffentlichkeit sich zu dem „Menschen der Sünde“ stellt, ob sie ihn durchschaut oder nicht, sondern nur dies, daß wie seine Bosheit sich im Verborgenen geregt hat, so regt sie sich jetzt vor allem mit ihren Ansprüchen und Zielen.

Zum andern: Das Offenbarwerden der Bosheit werde durch ein gewisses Hindernis zeitweilig aufgehalten. Paulus sagt uns hier nicht, was dieses Hindernis sei; die Thessalonicher freilich wissen es. Was ist es? Das ist klar, daß es eine Macht ist, aber eine geistliche, durch den Heiligen Geist im Worte gewirkte Macht, ein aus festem Glauben kommendes Zeugnis, denn nur ein solches hat hindernde Kraft wider die Bosheit. Paulus

redet von diesem Hindernden einmal im Neutrum, Vers 6, to katechon, sodann im Maskulinum, Vers 7, ho katechôn. Nach Vers 7 ist das Hindernde eine Person, nach Vers 6 eine Sache. Das läßt sich leicht miteinander verbinden. Da das Hindernde ohne eine Person, die es übt, nicht denkbar sein kann, ist es eine Person, die das die Bosheit Aufhaltende besitzt und mit aller Kraft anwendet. Gott selber ist es nicht, denn auf ihn können doch die Worte Vers 7 keine Anwendung finden: „Mein der Aufhaltende bis jetzt wird aus der Mitte weg sein und dann wird offenbar werden“ usw.

Ist es etwa Paulus selber? Er kennt und weiß von der sich heimlich schon regenden Bosheit, wo sie ist. Er ist der Mann, der wie kein anderer das Schwert des Geistes zu schwingen versteht, der auch den unerschrockenen Mut und die reichlich erprobte Treue zu seinem Herrn und seiner Gemeinde besitzt, das Schwert des Geistes zu führen, wo und wann es nötig ist.

Nahe legt diesen Gedanken Apostelgesch. 20, 29. Paulus, auf dem Wege nach Jerusalem, ist bis nach Miletus gekommen. Dorthin läßt er die Ältesten von Ephesus kommen und sagt ihnen unter anderem: „Denn ich weiß, daß n a c h m e i n e m A b f a l l e d werden unter euch kommen greuliche Wölfe, die die Herde nicht verschonen werden. Aus euch selbst werden aufstehen Männer, die da verkehrte Lehren reden, die Jünger an sich zu ziehen.“ Die Geschichte der Kirche zeigt, daß nicht lange nach dem Abscheiden Pauli der „Mensch der Sünde“ offenbar wurde, seinem Wesen nach, wenn auch nicht in der später sich entwickelnden Schwere. Man beachte nur die bald eintretende Trennung des Episkopos vom Presbyter und die Setzung des ersteren über den letzteren. Da trat der bisher verborgene „Mensch der Sünde“ in die Öffentlichkeit. Doch davon später.

Der Inhalt der Weisagung.

Allgemeines. Vor der Wiederkunft Christi kommt der Weisagung Pauli gemäß (pröton) der „A b f a l l“ zuerst, dann der „Mensch der Sünde“. Dies geht schon klar hervor aus Vers 4: Außer daß z u e r s t komme der Abfall und der „Mensch der Sünde“ offenbar werde. Noch klarer geht dies hervor aus den Versen 10–12, in denen der Abfall genau beschrieben und gezeigt wird, daß der „Mensch der Sünde“ von Gott selber geschickt wird, „damit gerichtet werden alle, die nicht der Wahrheit glauben, sondern Wohlgefallen haben an der Nachlosigkeit.“ Der „Mensch der Sünde“ ist demnach

nicht der Urheber des Abfalls, sondern er folgt diesem als ein furchtbares Gottesgericht über die von der Wahrheit abgefallene Kirche. Das ist zu beachten. Es zeigt, wie Gott die Kirche zu allen Zeiten gestraft hat und noch straft, wenn sie von seiner Wahrheit abfällt.

Ueber den Abfall, sein Wesen und seine Ursache, wird später gehandelt werden unter den Versen 10–12, wo die Art dieses Abfalls genau beschrieben ist.

**„Der Mensch der Sünde, das Kind des Verderbens“,
wie Paulus ihn beschreibt.**

Furchtbare Namen. Der „Mensch der Sünde“. Diese Bezeichnung dessen, den Gott in seinem Zorn über die abgefallene Kirche schickt, zeigt einmal, daß es sich hier nicht um einen Zustand, um eine vorherrschende Meinung usw. handelt, sondern um eine Person, um ein menschliches Wesen, sonst in keiner Weise von irgendeinem andern Menschen verschieden: geboren, wachsend, sterblich, mit Leib und Seele, körperlich und seelisch begabt wie jeder andere Mensch.

„Mensch der Sünde“ ist aber hier, was nach dem Zusammenhang schlechthin klar ist, ein *nomen collectivum*, eine ganze Gruppe von Menschen unter einer Benennung zusammengefaßt, von denen einer dem andern folgt, eine lange Kette von Menschen, einer dem andern völlig gleich als „Mensch der Sünde“ und „Kind des Verderbens“. Nur dies ist zu erwarten, wie es ja die Erfahrung zeigt: Das Wesen des „Menschen der Sünde“, seine grenzenlose Bosheit, kommt in allen späteren mehr zum Ausbruch als in dem ersten. Denn da nach Pauli Worten der „Mensch der Sünde“ schon heimlich da ist, da Christus ihn entkräftet durch den Geist seines Mundes und sein ein Ende macht am Tage seiner Erscheinung, da demnach die Lebensdauer des „Menschen der Sünde“ sich über viele Jahrhunderte erstreckt, kann dieser unmöglich eine Einzelperson, eine Einzelercheinung sein, nicht eine plötzlich eintretende und dann wieder verschwindende Erscheinung, sondern eine Gruppe von Menschen, die nacheinander auftreten, einander folgen. „Mensch der Sünde“ ist demnach ein *nomen collectivum*.

„Mensch der Sünde“ muß man wohl als ein *Superlativum* fassen. Als der Teufel im Paradies die ersten Menschen verführte, sagte er ihnen: „Ihr werdet sein wie Gott“. Er verhieß ihnen damit das Selbst-Gott-Sein neben dem einen Gott, das absolute, unbegrenzte

Herrsein mit völliger Selbstbestimmung des Willens, mit allen göttlichen Eigenschaften bekleidet und mit aller göttlichen Macht. Durch den Unglauben faßte diese Sünde in den ersten Menschen Fuß und nach ihnen in allen Menschen, dieweil sie in Adam alle gesündigt haben.

Diese Sünde, die die Mutter aller anderen Sünden ist und all des Jammers in der Welt, kann von keiner anderen Sünde übertroffen werden. Was könnte noch grauenhafter sein als dies, daß der Mensch, Gottes Geschöpf, seinen Gott und Schöpfer auf die Seite schiebt, sich an seine Statt setzt und vorgibt, er sei Gott? Das ist das Wesen des Menschen als Sünder.

Nichts Neues, nichts anderes an Sünde, als das, was seit Adam in allen Menschen ist, kann in dem „Menschen der Sünde“ sein; er ist darin allen anderen Menschen völlig gleich. Während aber Menschen sich durch die Furcht, sei sie durch das Gesetz Gottes im Gewissen gewirkt oder durch Gesetze seitens der Eltern, des Lehrers, des Herren, der Obrigkeit, in Schranken halten lassen, so daß sie der Sünde in ihnen nicht völlig freien Lauf gestatten, ist es bei dem „Menschen der Sünde“ anders. Bei ihm kommt die in allen Menschen gleiche Bosheit zum uneingeschränkten Ausbruch. Kein Gebot, göttlich oder menschlich, keine Furcht, keine Rücksicht hindert ihn; in schrankenloser Weise ergibt er sich der Sünde in ihm, ihren Willen zu tun. Im Einklang mit der Sünde in ihm kennt er keine Autorität; er beugt sich unter niemanden.

Dem muß aber, wie Luther mit Recht sagt, hinzugefügt werden, daß der „Mensch der Sünde“ auch darum „Mensch der Sünde“ ist, weil er durch Aufhebung der Gebote Gottes und Einführung unzähliger Menschengebote eine Flut von neuen Sünden macht, ungezählter Mengen in Sünden stürzt und so die Welt mit Sünde füllt.

„Das Kind des Verderbens.“

Bei dieser Bezeichnung muß der Nachdruck auf *K i n d*, hyios gelegt werden. Es liegt darin der Gedanke der Abstammung, nämlich durch Erziehung. Denselben Ausdruck wendet unser Herr in seinem Gebet Joh. 17 im 12. Vers auf Judas, der ihn verriet, an. Wir werden durch diese Stelle hingewiesen auf eine Weissagung im 109. Psalm, auf die Petrus bei der Wahl des Matthias hinweist als auf Judas, den Verräter, sich beziehend. In dieser Weissagung, Verse 6–8, heißt es: „Setze Gottlose über ihn und der Satan müsse stehen zu seiner Rechten. Wer sich denselben *L e h r e n* läßt, des

Leben müsse gottlos sein und sein Gebet müsse Sünde sein. Seiner Tage müssen wenig werden und sein Amt müsse ein anderer empfangen.“ In diesen Worten wird uns gesagt, wer des Judas Erzieher gewesen sind, die sein geistig verderbtes Wesen gebildet haben: Gottlose über ihm und der Satan zu seiner Rechten. Diese sind die Erzieher, deren Unterricht schlechtthin verderbend ist. „Wer sich denselben lehren läßt, des Leben müsse gottlos sein.“ In dem Unterricht dieser Lehrer lauert das Verderben; darum sind diese Lehrer mit ihrem Unterricht *d a s V e r d e r b e n*.“ — Wie verdarb dieses Verderben den Judas? Dieser hatte als Jünger Jesu die Reden seines Meisters gehört und dessen Wunder geschaut. Das hatte ohne Frage auf ihn anfangs eine befehlende Wirkung ausgeübt, so daß er seinen Meister liebte und an ihn glaubte. Als Judas nach seinem Verrat voller Reue war, bekannte er: „Ich habe übel getan, daß ich unschuldig Blut verraten habe.“ Diese Worte bezeugen, daß Judas' Gesinnung dem Herrn gegenüber anfangs eine ganz andere gewesen war. Die Worte „unschuldig Blut“ sagen viel: der, an dem keine Sünde. Dann aber geriet Judas in die Gewalt jenes Verderbens und wurde dermaßen von demselben verdorben, daß ein Geiz sich in ihm entwickelte, der ihn bereit machte, um Geldes willen die schrecklichste Tat zu begehen.

So war Judas „Kind des Verderbens“. Nicht beim Herrn war er das geworden. Nicht Gott hatte ihn zu dem gemacht, das er wurde. Nicht ein ewiges Dekret Gottes erfüllte sich an ihm, sondern ihn zeugte das Verderben in seinen Lehrern und ihrem Unterricht.

Dieses Verderben, indem es den Judas erzog, verdarb ihn nicht nur, sondern erzog ihn auch zu dem Lohn seiner Bosheit, der Verdammnis. „Er ging hin an seinen Ort.“ Unaufhaltsam war dies Ende für ihn. Für ihn, der in der Gemeinschaft mit seinem Herrn die Kräfte der zukünftigen Welt geschmeckt und dann unter dem Einfluß des Verderbens böswillig unterdrückt hatte, so daß er alle Warnungen seines Herrn mißachtend diesen mutwillig verriet, gab es keine Umkehr zur Buße mehr. Bereuen konnte er, aber nicht mehr glauben, sondern nur verzweifeln. Unaufhaltsam ging er in die ewige Verdammnis. So war Judas „Kind des Verderbens“.

Indem Paulus den „Menschen der Sünde“ das „Kind des Verderbens“ nennt, ist es wohl berechtigt, dies in dem Sinne, wie an Judas gezeigt wurde, zu deuten.

Die Bosheit im „Menschen der Sünde“ ist in ihrer Tiefe schon

gezeigt worden, als diese Benennung gedeutet wurde. Woher stammt sie in ihm? Nicht von Gott, sondern von denen, die auch des Judas Erzieher waren von dem Verderben in der Erziehung der Gottlosen und des Satans, den Paulus Vers 9 ausdrücklich nennt: „Dessen Ankunft ist gemäß der Wirksamkeit des Satans.“ So ist der „Mensch der Sünde“, was seine Bosheit betrifft, das „Kind des Verderbens“. Genau wie bei Judas ist auch ihm der Lohn seiner Bosheit unaufhaltsam gewiß, die Verdammnis. Dazu ist er erzogen. Unaufhaltsam gewiß ist auch für ihn dies Ende. Er hat einmal die himmlischen Kräfte geschmeckt, seine Nachfolger auch, in der Taufe. Was aber der Heilige Geist durch das Bad der Wiedergeburt in ihm schuf, zertritt er hernach böswillig unter der Herrschaft seiner Bosheit, von der er sich beharrlich beherrschen läßt. So ist für ihn kein Raum mehr zur Buße, sondern nur ein schreckliches Warten des Gerichts. So ist der „Mensch der Sünde“ auch das „Kind des Verderbens“, indem das Verderben, im Unterricht seiner Lehrer, der Gottlosen und des Satans, ihn zu der ihm innewohnenden Bosheit und deren ewigen Lohn erzieht. Nicht Gott, nicht die Kirche, in der er sitzt, machen ihn zu dem, das er ist.

Was nun folgt im 4. Vers, beschreibt die unmittelbare Folge des inneren Zustandes des „Menschen der Sünde“, wie dessen Bosheit als „Mensch der Sünde“ sich nun äußert, betätigt, auswirkt in seinem Auftreten unter den Menschen. So, wie Paulus dies uns im 4. Vers beschreibt, muß der „Mensch der Sünde“ sich betätigen, denn durch das Innere wird das äußere Erscheinen bedingt. „Ein arger Baum kann nur arge Früchte bringen.“ Und wie wir an den Früchten den Baum erkennen sollen, so wird auch der „Mensch der Sünde“ als solcher offenbar, erkannt an dem sichtbaren Ausbruch seines inneren Wesens, das sich nun in der folgenden Weise betätigt:

Als der Gegner, Widerstreber,
ho antikeimenos.

Um dieses Wort in seiner Tiefe wiederzugeben, denken wir an einen Menschen, der sich mit aller ihm zu Gebote stehenden Kraft gegen eine verschlossene Tür wirft. So stemmt sich der „Mensch der Sünde“ gegen etwas mit aller seiner Willenskraft, Haß und Verstandesgaben, dieses Etwas auszurotten, zu vernichten.

Er ist der wütende Widerstreber, der, wiewohl von Natur alle Menschen nur widerstreben können, aber durch Furcht im Zaume ge-

halten werden, sie alle weit übertrifft, indem seine Bosheit ungehindert im Widerstreben sich äußert.

Wogegen? Gegen Gott und alles, das von Gott ist, oder, wie Paulus Vers 4 sagt: Ueber alles, das als göttlich verehrt und Gegenstand heiliger Verehrung ist.“ Das e zwischen *panta legomenon theon und sebasma* zeigt uns, daß letzteres zu ersterem in Apposition steht und dieses folglich näher erklärt. Das veranlaßte zu der eben gegebenen Uebersetzung. Allem diesem widerstrebt der „Mensch der Sünde“ mit aller Bosheit, die in ihm ist; er sucht es beharrlich mit Gewalt, mit List auszurotten, die Ehrfurcht davor, die heilige Furcht, die Anhänglichkeit daran, seinen Einfluß, sein Ansehen als ewig bindend, seine absolute Autorität zu töten. Er ist der ausgesprochene Gegner desselben. Ja, mehr:

Der sich überhebende, *hyperairomenos*.

„Er überhebt sich über alles, das als göttlich verehrt und Gegenstand heiliger Verehrung ist.“ Er überhebt sich darüber, das heißt: er stellt sich darüber, er macht sich zum Richter darüber, zum absoluten Herrn, der über alles Göttliche meint verfügen zu können mit unbegrenzter Autorität, dem es zukommt, stehen zu lassen und abzutun, zu ändern, zu ergänzen, auszumergen, wie es ihm beliebt.

Hier ist eine Steigerung gegeben, verglichen mit dem Widerstreber. Während in diesem Haß und Feindschaft sich äußern, tritt als wesentliches Moment im Überheber die Selbsterhöhung, die unbegrenzte Autoritätsanmaßung hervor.

Er überhebt sich über a l l e s, das von Gott gestiftet und als solches erkannt und verehrt wird.

Was ist das? Es ist und muß da sein, wo dieser „Mensch der Sünde“ offenbar wird, in der Kirche.

Das ist zuerst Gottes O f f e n b a r u n g in seinem Wort. Er setzt Gottes Offenbarung ab und stellt dafür eine neue. Welche? Das liegt nahe; er macht sich selbst zum Quell aller Offenbarung aller Wahrheit und behauptet, daß alles, was er in bezug auf Glauben und Leben sagt, unfehlbar wahr sei. Das folgt aus seiner Bosheit.

In bezug auf Gesetz und Evangelium, wie sie in Gottes Offenbarung liegen, handelt er so: In einer doppelten Weise verfügt er als Herr über Gottes Gesetz, indem er einmal neue Gebote erjümt

und diese für bindender, größere Heiligkeit schaffend erklärt als Gottes Gebot. Damit setzt er Gottes Gebote herab und macht ihre Befolgung unwesentlich. Zum andern preist er die Uebertretung der Gebote Gottes und macht diese zu einem guten Werk, wenn gewisse Umstände vorhanden sind: die Lüge, den Meineid, Mord, Ehebruch, Unzucht. Ohne Gewissensbisse wälzt er sich in allerlei Sünden und Lastern und beschönigt das.

Wie er Gottes Gebote außer Aktion setzt, so auch das Evangelium. Er erinnert und verkündigt ein a n d e r Evangelium. Alle Lehren, in Gottes Evangelium offenbart, verändert er und setzt dafür etwas anderes: Christi Tod und seine erlösende Kraft, Rechtfertigung, Heiligung, Glauben, Liebe, Hoffnung, Zustand nach dem Tode usw. Das ganze teuerwerte Evangelium verkümmert er, verdeckt es, schließt den Weg zum Himmel und setzt dafür das von ihm erfundene, das den Weg zur Hölle aufstut.

Ebenso verfährt er mit den von Gott gestifteten S t ä n d e n: Obrigkeit und Ehe. Er macht sich zum Herrn über alle Obrigkeiten der Welt, daß sie ihm gehorchen müssen. Er setzt sie ein und ab. Er entbindet ihre Untertanen des Treueids, rechtfertigt den Aufruhr. Die er ehren und denen er untertan sein sollte, macht er zu seinen Knechten. Mit der Ehe geht er so um, daß er diesen Stand, von Gott gestiftet und heilig zu halten, für eine Befleckung erklärt, indem er die Eheslosigkeit gebietet, verherrlicht und für heiliger erklärt als die von Gott gestiftete Ehe.

So setzt er sich zum Herrn über alles, das als göttlich zu verehren ist und Gegenstand heiliger Verehrung sein muß.

Die Spitze der Bosheit.

Diese erreicht er damit, „daß er sich in den Tempel Gottes setzt, beweisend (durch Argumente), daß er Gott ist.“ Hiermit kommt die auch ihm wie allen andern Menschen angeborene Sünde zu ihrer vollen Entfaltung. Denn das ist das in allen Menschen seit Adam wohnende und sich regende Verderben, Gott gleich, selbst auch Gott sein. Während aber die durch mancherlei Dinge erzeugte Furcht und die ebenso durch mancherlei Erfahrungen erregten Zweifel den Menschen hindern, dieser Selbstüberhebung Raum zu geben, kommt sie bei dem „Menschen der Sünde“ zum vollen Ausbruch, so daß er mit wirklicher Überzeugung glaubt, er sei Gott, sich als Gott gebärdet, der zweifelnden Menge dies zu beweisen sucht, damit sie ihm als Gott

göttliche Ehre und Anbetung darbringe. Damit hat er den Gipfel seiner höllischen Bosheit erreicht; mehr kann er nicht, weil seine innere Bosheit nicht mehr anstrebt und es über Gott hinaus nichts Anzustrebendes gibt.

Daß der „Mensch der Sünde“ hiermit die Spitze seiner Bosheit erreicht, zeigt auch Paulus an in dem mit hōste eingeleiteten Folgesatz Vers 4: Er überhebt sich bis zu dem Grade, so daß er beweist, daß er Gott ist; so weit geht seine Selbstüberhebung.

Wo entfaltet der „Mensch der Sünde“ seine Bosheit bis zu diesem Grade? Im Tempel Gottes, in dem er sitzt; eis ton naon tou theou, inmitten des Tempels Gottes sitzt er.

Es fragt sich nun: Was meint Paulus mit dem Tempel Gottes? Gewiß ist dies, daß naon tou theou so gedeutet werden muß, wie Paulus diesen Ausdruck sonst immer gebraucht und selbst deutet.

1 Kor. 3, 16. 17 sagt Paulus den Korinthern: „Wisset ihr nicht, daß ihr Gottes Tempel seid und der Geist Gottes in euch wohnet?“ 1 Kor. 6, 19: „Wisset ihr nicht, daß euer Leib der Tempel des Heiligen Geistes in euch ist?“ 2 Kor. 6, 16: „Welche Gemeinschaft nun dem Tempel Gottes mit den Götzen? Ihr seid der Tempel des Lebendigen Gottes.“ Eph. 2, 19: „Ihr seid nun nicht mehr Gäste und Fremdlinge, sondern Mitbürger mit den Heiligen und Hausgenossen Gottes, erbauet auf dem Grund der Apostel und Propheten, dessen Eckstein Christus Jesus ist, auf welchem der ganze Bau, eng zusammengefügt, wächst zu einem heiligen Tempel im Herrn“; Vers 22 steht dazu „Wohnung Gottes im Geiste“.

Aus diesen Versen läßt sich folgendes schließen:

1. Tempel Gottes heißt: Wohnung des Heiligen Geistes, in der derselbe wohnt, tatsächlich gegenwärtig ist.
2. Als solchen bezeichnet Paulus in den angegebenen Sprüchen mit dem „ihr“ die Gemeinden zu Korinth und Ephesus mit allen ihren Gliedern ohne Unterschied nach Leib und Seele.
3. Was er hier von diesen beiden Gemeinden aussagt, gilt selbstverständlich auch von allen übrigen apostolischen Gemeinden: Galatien, Philippi, Thessalonika usw.
4. Demnach ist es die damalige apostolische Gesamtkirche, die Paulus den Tempel Gottes nennt. Diese ist sichtbar, Glieder und Leiber.

5. Da aber dieser Menge als sichtbarer etwas Innerliches, vor Menschengenossen Verborgenes vom Apostel zugeschrieben wird, kann dieses nur so erklärt werden, daß Paulus mit seiner Bezeichnung als Tempel Gottes der Liebe gemäß handelt und seiner Ueberzeugung, auf Gottes Gnade, sein Wort und Verheißung und auf offenbare Früchte gegründet, Ausdruck gibt.
6. Der Tempel Gottes ist also die sichtbare Gesamtgemeinde, von der Paulus, wie ja auch wir tun, der Liebe gemäß glaubt, daß sie Gottes Tempel ist.

Hier hinein setzt sich und sitzt der Mensch der Sünde, inmitten der apostolischen Kirche. Zu Anfang heimlich, schon in den Tagen des Apostels, der durch den Heiligen Geist weiß, daß er da ist. In dieser Heimlichkeit regt sich seine Bosheit schon; sie, die in ihm ist, schläft nicht, sondern will sich bezeugen, macht sich wohl schon bemerkbar da und dort in ganz kleinen Kreisen, kann aber nicht offenbar werden vor der ganzen Kirche, weil einer sie hindert. Erst nach dessen Abgang wird sie offenbar.

1. Der „Mensch der Sünde“ ist demnach nicht, wie manche Ausleger wollen, eine Weltmacht, ein weltlicher Fürst voll Zorns und Macht, der sich wie die römischen Kaiser wider die Kirche erhebt, um sie auszurotten. Die Idee, die nicht selten geäußert worden ist, als handele es sich in Pauli Thessalonicher-Weissagung um eine weltliche Macht, um einen alles zerstörenden Eroberer nach Art der römischen Kaiser, wird durch diese Weissagung entschieden widerlegt.

- a) Selbst zugegeben, ein solch weltlicher Machthaber hätte ihm gleiche Nachfolger, müßte er doch so viele haben, daß ihre Reihe in den Tagen Pauli anfing und fort dauerte bis zum Weltende.
- b) Ein weltlicher Machthaber, wie das oft geschehen ist, mag wohl vorgeben, er sei Gott, und versuchen, sich Anerkennung und göttliche Anbetung zu verschaffen, aber er wird das hauptsächlich zu erreichen suchen mit Waffengewalt, aber nicht mit „Lügen und angeblichen Zeichen und Wundern“.
- c) Einen weltlichen Machthaber würde Christus, der Herr Himmels und der Erde, nicht niederdrücken mit dem „Geist seines Mundes“, seinem geoffenbarten Worte, sondern mit Waffengewalt, Gleiches durch Gleiches, wie der Herr

das immer getan hat, indem er wider einen starken Fürsten einen stärkeren erweckte.

Nein, der „Mensch der Sünde“ sitzt in der Kirche, sucht in derselben seinen Einfluß geltend zu machen und zwar in erster Linie nicht mit Waffengewalt, sondern mit der Kraft betrügerischer Reden, Zeichen und Wunder. Ein Kirchenfürst.

2. Aber welch ein Greuel! In dem, das der Tempel des Heiligen Geistes ist, in dem der Heilige Geist sein Wirken hat zur Erbauung zum ewigen Leben, da setzt sich hinein und sitzt der Mensch der Bosheit, um des Heiligen Geistes Werk zu hindern, diesen zu verjagen, damit er allein herrsche, verführe zur Hölle.

3. Der Aorist *kathisai* zeigt an, daß es sich hier um ein Faktum handelt. Bleibt es so permanent bis ans Ende, da der Herr sein ein Ende machen wird? Gewiß! Von der Zeit an, da sich der „Mensch der Sünde“ nur heimlich regte, bis zu dem Tage, da sein ein Ende gemacht wird, sitzt er auch im Tempel Gottes.

Freilich ist es wahr, daß die abgefallene und dem Betrug des „Menschen der Sünde“ gläubig zufallende Kirche nicht mehr der Tempel Gottes genannt werden kann. Erst recht ist es nicht die Menge der Gottlosen. Hier, in ihrer Mitte, sitzt der „Mensch der Sünde“, beherrscht und sucht zu beherrschen, wie er ja als „Gott“ meint, daß alles ihm zu Füßen liege. B. 11. Aber der Tempel Gottes geht nie unter. Der Herr hat selbst in dem Haufen der Abgefallenen und durch Betrug Verführten sich ein Häuflein bewahrt; und dieses ist Tempel Gottes. Dazu kommt die Zahl derer, unter denen Gottes Wort rein und lauter verkündigt wird, die es hören, glauben und heilig danach leben. Das ist, wie wir der Liebe nach glauben, der Tempel Gottes. Darin sitzt der „Mensch der Sünde“ wahrhaftig; unter denen, die in der von ihm verführten Menge noch Tempel Gottes sind, die er allezeit mit seinen Lügen und Betrug plagt, die aber der Herr sich zu bewahren weiß. Er sitzt auch im Tempel Gottes, der da ist, wo Gottes Wort lauter und rein verkündigt wird. Nicht so feibhaftig wie unter den von ihm Verführten, doch tatsächlich, indem er mündlich wie auch schriftlich sie lockt, zu sich ruft und zu überzeugen sucht, daß sie bei ihm allein Heil und Frieden finden können.

Dem Apostel Paulus, wie ja diese Thessalonicherstelle klar zeigt, ist es darum zu tun, den „Menschen der Sünde“ in der Tiefe seiner höllischen Bosheit zu malen. Darum erwähnt er nicht, daß derselbe

auch in den Haufen der Abgefallenen und Gottlosen sitzt, sondern nur dies, daß er im Tempel Gottes sitzt, wo der Heilige Geist sein Werk hat und gegenwärtig ist, wo er gnädiglich wohnt.

Hier im Tempel des Heiligen Geistes sitzt nun der „Mensch der Sünde“ und beweist, daß er Gott ist; Vers 4. Das vom Apostel Paulus gebrauchte Wort ist apodeiknūta. Dieses Wort enthält die folgenden Gedanken: Er selbst hält sich für Gott; er erklärt sich für Gott; er tritt wie Gott auf, indem er sich das annahmt und ausübt, das allein Gottes ist; er beweist, daß er Gott ist und ihm alles zukommt, das Gottes ist, durch Gründe, die freilich nichts als bodenlose Lüge sind, damit ihm geglaubt und göttliche Ehre ihm zuteil werde.

Greuliche Bosheit! Was könnte greulicher sein? Er beraubt, verdrängt, setzt Gott ab und schmückt sich mit der Majestät, Herrlichkeit und mit den einzigartigen Rechten Gottes. Hier sehen wir im „Menschen der Sünde“ den schrankenlosen Ausbruch der Sünde im Menschen.

Es muß hier festgehalten werden, daß das Wesentliche im „Menschen der Sünde“, wie ja die Sünde in ihm nicht anders sich äußern kann, das Gelüste, der unbändige Drang, die unaufhaltsame Jagd nach Gewalt und Herrschaft über alles im Himmel und auf Erden ist. Er will alles zu seinen Füßen sehen. Damit steht und fällt der „Mensch der Sünde“. Das ist sein Wesen. Während Christus eintritt zu seinen Jüngern, den späteren Aposteln, sagte: „So jemand unter euch will gewaltig sein, der sei euer Diener“, will der „Mensch der Sünde“ über alles herrschen.

Dieses teuflische Herrschen, wiewohl bis zur letzten Instanz das Ziel, das er mit unerfülllicher Gier begehrt, wird nicht im Augenblicke seines öffentlichen Auftretens zur Wirklichkeit, auch nicht von ihm sogleich beansprucht und geübt. Hier findet eine langsame Entwicklung statt, ein sozusagen stufenweises Vorangehen, das wir so darstellen können: zuerst eine Gemeinde, dann eine Provinz, dann die Gesamtkirche, dann die ganze Welt und zuletzt Gott. Hier spielen vor allen Dingen zwei Tatsachen eine große Rolle: 1. der durch Herrscheransprüche erregte, oft große Widerstand, ein Sturm, dessen Abflauen abzuwarten die Klugheit gebietet; 2. günstige Zeitverhältnisse und Zustände, die das, was man erreichen will, erleichtern und mit kluger Berechnung ausgenützt werden müssen.

Wie der „Mensch der Sünde“ diese seine angemäße und gotteslästerliche Selbsterhöhung zu beweisen sucht.

Wir übergehen vorläufig die Worte in Vers 8: „Welchen der Herr Jesus“ usw. und schließen dem Vorhergehenden Vers 9, den Anfang ausgenommen, an, weil uns da gesagt wird, wie der „Mensch der Sünde“ zu beweisen sucht, er sei Gott; denn Vers 4 ist uns gesagt, daß er sich als Gott beweist.

Er muß sich ja als solchen beweisen. Die Behauptung, er sei Gott, die Autorität und göttliche Verehrung, nach der er strebt, werden keine Verwirklichung finden, wenn nicht die Menge, unter der er auftritt, ihn für Gott ansieht und mit Überzeugung glaubt. Daß aber diese solch ungeheuerliche Ansprüche vorerst skeptisch ablehnt, läßt sich erwarten. So muß er sie davon überzeugen, bis sie ihm zustimmt.

Wie und womit tut er das? 1. „Durch allerlei Kraft, sowohl Zeichen als auch Wunder, der Lüge.“ Also durch allerlei, das in sich die Kraft hat, das zu beweisen, was bewiesen werden soll. Das haben freilich Zeichen und Wunder. Man kann zwischen Zeichen und Wundern unterscheiden, nämlich so: Zeichen, *sēmeia*, von Gott ausgesagt, sind solche Akte, durch die Gott sich als Gott bezeugt, wie: Pracht und Glanzentfaltung, Vorschriften für Glauben und Leben, Sünden vergeben, seligsprechen usw. Wunder, *terata*, sind solche Akte, durch die sich Gott auch als Gott bezeugt, durch die Gott etwas tut, das dem Lauf der Natur zuwider ist. Erstere wären demnach Akte der göttlichen Autorität, letztere der göttlichen Allmacht.

Indem der „Mensch der Sünde“ sich als Gott zu beweisen sucht, greift er eben zu dem, das in sich diese Beweisskraft hat, zu Zeichen und Wundern gemäß der eben gegebenen Unterscheidung, um sich als Gott zu beweisen.

Aber seine Zeichen und Wunder sind Zeichen und Wunder der Lüge. Die Lüge in ihm, die Unwahrhaftigkeit, die Lust in ihm zum Betrug, zur Fälschung, das ganze lügenvolle Wesen in ihm haben sie gezeugt. An seinen Zeichen und Wundern ist nicht ein Faden echt. Seine Autoritätsakte mangeln jeder Autorität; sie sind angemäßt, gestohlen und schaffen nicht, was sie vorgeben. Sein Sündenvergeben vergibt nicht, sein Seligsprechen spricht nicht selig. Seine Machtakte sind nur scheinbar solche. Durch allerlei List, Betrug und

Kunst, heimlich geliebt, bekleidet er sie mit dem Schein des Übernatürlichen; unter dieser äußeren Decke ist alles natürlich.

Das ist das eine, womit er sich als Gott zu erweisen sucht. Damit eignet er sich die Weise an, die Christus beständig anwandte, um zu bezeugen, daß er Gott ist. Der Unterschied ist aber ein großer. Bei Christo war alles aus der Wahrheit: „Dieser ist der wahre Gott.“ So kamen bei Christo alle Beweise für sein Gottsein, Autoritäts- und Machtsakte, aus seinem Gottsein und Gottesbewußtsein, aus der Wahrheit und wahren Wahrheit. Bei dem „Menschen der Sünde“ sind sie aus der Lüge, aus seinem lügebollen Gottseinwollen, aus seiner lügebollen Anmaßung göttlicher Autorität und Macht, und sind voller Lüge, Fälschungen.

2. Das andere, wodurch sich der „Mensch der Sünde“ als Gott zu beweisen sucht, ist der **B e t r u g d e r U n w a h r h e i t**. Das Wort *adikia* steht oft in der Schrift im Gegensatz zu *alêtheia*; so auch in unserer Stelle aus dem zweiten Thessalonicherbrief. So 3. B. Röm. 1, 18; 2, 8; 1 Kor. 13, 6: „Sie freut sich nicht der Ungerechtigkeit, sie freut sich aber der Wahrheit.“ Das berechtigt dazu, *adikia* auch hier im Sinne von Unwahrheit zu nehmen, womit ja der eigentliche Sinn von *adikia*, Ungerechtigkeit, dem allein legitimen Gebrauch zuwider, zu seinem Rechte kommt. Der einzige legitime Gebrauch der Wahrheit ist der, daß sie restlos geglaubt, ihr recht gegeben wird. Die Unwahrheit hebt diesen Gebrauch auf und tut das Gegenteil, widerspricht ihr und macht sie zur Lüge. Das ist in eminenter Weise Ungerechtigkeit.

Der „Mensch der Sünde“ macht auch von der Unwahrheit ausgiebigen Gebrauch. Paulus nennt diesen Gebrauch Betrug. Darin liegt nicht nur dies, daß die Unwahrheit in sich Betrug ist, indem sie ein Falsches vorstellt und zu ihrer Annahme verführt, sondern daß sie bei dem „Menschen der Sünde“ erfunden ist mit bewußter Absicht, um andere in Irrtum zu verführen. Der eigentliche Zweck, den der „Mensch der Sünde“ dabei verfolgt, ist der, daß er damit beweisen, die Überzeugung einpflanzen will, er sei der, der allein alles vorlegt, was zu glauben ist, auf den man allein hören und von dem man allein lernen muß — also Gott. So ist auch die Unwahrheit ihm ein Mittel, seine angemessene Majestät als Gott zu begründen. Dazu geht er, wie Paulus sagt, mit *j e d e m*, *pasê*, Betrug der Unwahrheit um. Er bleibt nicht bei einem oder wenigen, sondern erfindet immer neue, um seinen Zweck, er sei Gott, zu erreichen.

3. Der „Mensch der Sünde“ hat Erfolg. So unvernünftig, lächerlich, unglaublich auch seine Ansprüche sein mögen, er hat Erfolg. Nicht in allen, nicht in denen, die durch Gottes Kraft bewahret werden durch den Glauben zum ewigen Leben und darum in der Wahrheit bleiben; die Pforten der Hölle können diese nicht übermächtigen. Dagegen aber in denen, die, wie Paulus sagt, sich verderben, indem sie die Wahrheit verlassen haben. Der Erfolg besteht darin, daß sie diese lügenhaften Wunder und Unwahrheiten glauben, für wahr halten und sich durch ihre innere Anerkennung des weiteren dazu verführen lassen, daß sie in dem „Menschen der Sünde“ den wahrhaftigen Gott ansehen, ihm als solchem göttliche Ehre zukommen lassen und von ihm halten, ihr Wohl für Zeit und Ewigkeit komme von ihm allein.

Der „Mensch der Sünde“ eine Wirksamkeit Satans.

Ja, von Anfang an, wie Paulus sagt Vers 9: „Dessen Ankunft ist nach der Wirksamkeit Satans.“ Diese lästerliche Erscheinung ist Satans Werk. Es muß aber beachtet werden, daß Satan nicht nur im Anfang den „Menschen der Sünde“ zubereitet, sondern beständig in ihm ist, ihn reizt zu unermüdlicher Verfolgung seiner Herrschaftsgelüste und ihn zu ihrer Verwirklichung ausrüstet. So sehr ist er vom Teufel besessen, daß keine Wahrheit, keine Widerwärtigkeiten, keine Kritik, keine Nackenschläge seinen starren Willen brechen können.

Im „Menschen der Sünde“ hat sich der Teufel sein Ebenbild geschaffen. Er ist der, der seinen ursprünglichen Stand als Engel, Gott dienstbarer Geist, nicht behielt, sich darüber erhob, anstatt Knecht Gottes absoluter Herr sein wollte. Er ist der Urheber des sich Überhebens über alles. Der „Mensch der Sünde“ ist sein getreues Abbild.

Der „Mensch der Sünde“ ist darum nicht Gottes Werk, wiewohl er das von sich behauptet und Vers 11 Paulus sagt, daß Gott ihn schickt.

Der absolute Gegenbeweis.

Dazu greifen wir zurück auf Vers 8: „Welchen der Herr Jesus beseitigen wird durch den Geist seines Mundes und vertilgen wird in der Erscheinung seiner Zukunft.“ Vom Herrn Jesus heißt es: „Dieser ist der wahre Gott.“ Und siehe, mit dem Geist seines Mundes beseitigt er den „Menschen der Sünde“ und macht

ebenso mit seinem Wort ihm am Jüngsten Tag ein Ende. Ein besserer Beweis kann gar nicht vorgelegt werden dafür, daß die ganze Herrlichkeit des „Menschen der Sünde“ weiter nichts als Dunst ist.

Paulus gebraucht Vers 8 das Wort anelei, das Futurum von anaireō. Wiewohl nun dieses Wort die Bedeutung von beseitigen, töten hat, zwingt doch dies, daß der Herr sein ein Ende macht am Tage des Gerichts und demnach bis dahin der „Mensch der Sünde“ auf Erden bleiben wird, dazu, in dem anelei des Herrn eine Wirksamkeit zu sehn, die sich über einen langen Zeitraum erstreckt und die langsam, aber sicher den „Menschen der Sünde“ abbaut, so daß er von Jahr zu Jahr an seinem Ansehen, Autorität, betrügerischen Macht und Herrschaft einbüßt, bis er nur noch ein Schatten einstiger Größe ist.

Das bewirkt der Herr Jesus durch den „Geist seines Mundes“. Was ist damit gemeint? Offenbar hat Paulus diesen Ausdruck Jesaja 11, 4 entnommen, wo es heißt: „Und wird . . . mit dem Odem seiner Lippen den Gottlosen töten.“ Das Wort in dieser Stelle, das Luther mit Odem übersetzt hat, hat auch die Bedeutung von Geist. Was ist unter dem Geist seines Mundes zu verstehen?

1. Es ist zu beachten, daß dies etwas überaus Kräftiges und Wirkames ist, das den „Menschen der Sünde“ zermürbt.

2. Es ist ferner zu beachten, daß dieses Wirkame aus dem Munde des Herrn auf der Erde, wo der „Mensch der Sünde“ sich so gotteslästerlich erhöht hat, eine lange Zeit bis ans Ende wirksam sein muß.

3. Der „Mensch der Sünde“ bleibt, was er von Anfang war bis an das Ende der Tage; sonst könnte ja der Herr ihn nicht mehr umbringen in der Erscheinung seiner Zukunft. Er bleibt also derselbe mit seinen greulichen Herrscheransprüchen. Was er verliert, ist das seinen Ansprüchen entsprechende Ansehen unter den Menschen, seine Autorität, seine Macht, seinen Einfluß. Viele fallen von ihm ab und hören nicht mehr auf ihn. Ihr Glaube, ihre Erkenntnis ist eine andere geworden durch etwas, das ihnen die Augen öffnete und ihnen eine andere Erkenntnis, einen anderen Glauben einpflanzte.

4. Somit ist unter „dem Geist seines Mundes“ etwas zu verstehen, das diese Sinnesänderung schaffen kann und wirklich schafft. Das Wort Jesu, aber im weiteren Sinne, nämlich nicht nur das Evangelium, sondern auch das Gesetz, das Sündenerkenntnis wirkt.

5. Dies sein Wort, das zwar immer da war, das aber der „Mensch der Sünde“ mit seinem Betrug der Unwahrheit wie mit einer Finsternis bedeckt hatte, bringt der Herr wieder ans Licht, läßt es kräftig und weithin leuchten und bricht so die Macht des „Menschen der Sünde“.

6. Wie immer tut er das mittelbar durch Menschen.

Daß Paulus wie auch vor ihm Jesaja das Wort des Herrn „Geist des Mundes“ nennt, ist Ausdruck der göttlichen Kraft des Wortes des Herrn. „Seines Mundes“ weist auf das Wort, „Geist“ auf dessen große Kraft, wie sehr oft in der Schrift, besonders im Alten Testament, Geist vorgestellt ist als das, das Leben erzeugt und gibt.

Der „Mensch der Sünde“ ist Gottes Gericht über den Abfall.

Das zeigen klar die Verse 10–12. Denen, die sich verderben, zur Hölle durch ihren Abfall, Unglauben, deren Abfall Vers 10 beschildert, daß sie die Liebe der Wahrheit nicht annehmen, aufnehmen zu ihrem Gerettetwerden, d a r u m, d e s w e g e n, anth' hön, dia touto, „i ch i c k t G o t t i h n e n die Wirksamkeit des Betrugs, damit sie der Lüge glauben, damit gerichtet werden alle, die nicht glauben der Wahrheit, sondern Wohlgefallen haben an der Unwahrheit.“

Den „Menschen der Sünde“, der vom Satan ist, läßt Gott nicht etwa stillschweigend erscheinen, sondern Gott will mit seiner gerechten Absicht, daß er komme. Gott i c k t, pempei, ihn, um die bereits Abgefallenen zu strafen, zu verstocken durch Betrug der Unwahrheit zu ihrem ewigen Verderben. Das Gericht der Verstockung. Der „Mensch der Sünde“ bringt nicht den Abfall, sondern er kommt infolge des Abfalls als Gericht Gottes wegen des Abfalls.

Der Abfall, apostasia, Vers 3.

Die apostasia ist der Abfall von der Wahrheit. Da aber nur der abfallen kann, der zuvor in der Wahrheit stand, so ist gewiß, daß jene Abgefallenen zuerst in der Wahrheit standen, daß sie dieselbe unter sich hatten, fest daran hielten, die Wahrheit liebten, hochschätzten um ihres Inhaltes und ihrer Kraft willen, vermöge welcher sie ihre Seelen retten aus dem Verderben der Sünde zum ewigen Leben. So hingen sie an der Wahrheit im Bewußtsein ihrer seligmachenden Kraft und um dieser willen. Darum suchten sie sie, waren glücklich

in ihrem Besitz und dankten Gott dafür. So schmeckten sie die Kräfte der zukünftigen Welt.

Ihren Abfall beschreibt Paulus Vers 10 so: „Sie nahmen die Liebe der Wahrheit nicht mehr an zu ihrer Rettung.“

Das Objekt dieses Satzes ist „die Liebe der Wahrheit“, die in der Wahrheit, Evangelium, geoffenbarte, vorgelegte, angebotene Liebe Gottes in Christo, die dem Sünder Christi Tod und Gesetzeserfüllung zurechnet, ihn für gerecht erklärt und sagt, daß er durch den Glauben diese Rechtfertigung voll und ganz habe und so vor Gott gerecht sei, daß er keines eigenen Gesetzeswerkes mehr bedürfe.

Das ist der Abfall, daß sie zwar diese Liebe der Wahrheit noch unter sich hatten in Predigt und Unterricht, aber sie nahmen sie nicht mehr an zu ihrer Rettung. Das edexanto Vers 10 weist auf eine innere Veränderung in ihrem Herzen hin, auf ein Erkalten. Das Evangelium war ihnen nicht mehr lieb, teuerwert um seiner rettenden Kraft willen, sie suchten und begehrten es nicht mehr, damit es sie rette. Sie waren nicht mehr glücklich, noch achteten sie sich für reich in seinem Besitz, weil es rettet, Wenn ich nur dich habe. Sie waren dem Evangelium gegenüber kalt und gleichgültig geworden, insofern es rettet. Das schließt nicht aus, daß sie es noch hatten, behalten wollten, ja, darüber disputierten und es verteidigten; aber ihre Lust daran, ihre Freude darüber, ihre Glückseligkeit im Besitz desselben, ihre Dankbarkeit gegen Gott für eine solche Gabe war verschwunden. Mit dem Verstande waren sie wohl noch bei dem Evangelium, aber nicht mehr mit dem Herzen. Das war der Abfall.

Die Sendschreiben an die sieben Gemeinden in Kleinasien bezeugen dies. An die Gemeinde zu Ephesus: „Aber ich habe wider dich, daß du die erste Liebe verlässest.“ Der Gemeinde zu Sardes: „Ich weiß deine Werke; denn du hast den Namen, daß du lebest, und bist tot.“ Der Gemeinde zu Philadelphia: „Du hast behalten mein Wort und hast meinen Namen nicht verleugnet. Siehe, ich komme bald! Halte, was du hast, daß niemand deine Krone nehme!“ Der Gemeinde zu Laodicea: „Ich weiß deine Werke, daß du weder kalt noch warm bist. Ach, daß du kalt oder warm wärest! Aber du bist lau.“

Die Ursache dieses Abfalls.

Paulus nennt sie Vers 12: „Sondern Wohlgefallen haben an der Unwahrheit. Hier ist nicht die Unwahrheit des „Menschen der

Sünde“ gemeint. Denn Vers 11 hören wir, daß Gott ihnen die Wirksamkeit des Betrugs des „Menschen der Sünde“ schickt, weil sie bereits solche sind, die an der Unwahrheit Wohlgefallen haben, so daß sie der Wahrheit nicht mehr glauben.

Welcher Art diese Unwahrheiten gewesen sind, wird uns nahegelegt durch Vers 10, daß sie die Liebe der Wahrheit, die Gnade Gottes, nicht mehr schätzten in bezug auf ihre Rettung. Dies legt es nahe, daß sie zwar noch wollten gerettet werden, aber etwas anderes nun als zu ihrer Rettung dienlich schätzten, und daß jene Unwahrheiten dieses andere priesen. Was? Entweder Gott oder der Mensch, — die Verdienstlichkeit der eigenen Werke.

Wir wissen, daß gerade diese Unwahrheit bereits in den Tagen Pauli in Galatien eingedrungen war, nicht ohne Einfluß, wie Pauli Brief an die Galater zeigt. Bald nach dem Tode der Apostel — als letzter starb Johannes — setzte auch der Niedergang in den apostolischen Gemeinden ein. Davon legen Zeugnis ab die Sendschreiben an die sieben Gemeinden in Kleinasien. Wir erfahren aus denselben, daß in einigen dieser Gemeinden: Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardes, Laodicea, die sogenannten Nikolaiten, die ein lazes Leben führten, Fuß gefaßt hatten. In die Gemeinden war der Wohlstand eingekehrt, von dem aus es oft nur ein Schritt zur Laxheit ist. Woimmer das eintrat, war es ein klares Zeichen des Abflauens des Glaubens. Dieses leichtfertige Leben erzeugte wieder einen Gegensatz, wie das oft geht, bei den Ernstern, so daß diese in das gegenseitige Extrem fielen, nämlich in die Askese, in Fasten, Enthaltbarkeit von Fleisch, Wein und Ehe. Dazu gesellte sich bald die Weltflucht in der Gestalt des Mönchs- und Nonnenwesens. Es dauerte nicht lange, da sah man dieses Leben der Entsagung an als einen besonderen Grad von Heiligkeit, dem natürlich bald der Gedanke der Verdienstlichkeit folgte. So gestaltete sich der Abfall in den Gemeinden.

Um Pauli Weisagung richtig zu fassen, muß festgehalten werden, daß diese Gemeinden das Evangelium hatten und die Kräfte der zukünftigen Welt geschmeckt hatten.

Das Gericht über diese Gemeinden ist darum Gericht der Verstockung.

Darauf weisen klar Pauli Worte Verse 11 und 12.

1. Den Betrug des „Menschen der Sünde“ schickt Gott den

Abgefallenen, die nicht der Wahrheit, sondern der Unwahrheit glaubten.

2. Er schickt ihnen die Wirksamkeit des Betrugs dazu, eis to, daß sie der Lüge glauben; Vers 11.
3. Damit werden diese von Gott gerichtet; V. 12.

Also verstrickt Gott die Abgefallenen tiefer und tiefer in die Lüge, dadurch die Umkehr zur Buße abgeschnitten wird zu ihrem Verderben.

Der „Mensch der Sünde“ ist Gottesgericht, auch heute noch und darum uns allen eine warnende Erinnerung an unsern Gott, der sich nicht spotten läßt.

Nebenbei gesagt, daß der „Mensch der Sünde“ von Gott geschickt wird, um den Abfall zu rächen, ist ein weiterer Beweis dafür, daß der „Mensch der Sünde“ doch seinen Sitz in der Kirche haben muß; denn, um den Abfall zu rächen, wird Gott ihn doch dahin schicken, wo der Abfall sich vollzog, in die Kirche.

Kurze Zusammenfassung.

1. Die Sünde, von Natur seit Adams Fall in allen Menschen, herrscht in dem „Menschen der Sünde“ mit schrankenloser Gewalt, nämlich Herr sein wollen über alles.
2. Dieser Sünde gemäß entfaltet sich der „Mensch der Sünde“, bis er sich sogar über Gott gesetzt hat.
3. Das tut er durchweg in der Kirche, aber nicht nur da, wiewohl er beständig in der Kirche sitzt.
4. Da die Befriedigung des Begehrens allein im Besitz des Begehrten liegt, sucht der „Mensch der Sünde“ die von ihm begehrte Herrschaft, Anerkennung seiner Ansprüche und Unterwerfung unter dieselben.
5. Das tut er durch lügenhafte Wunder und ebensolche Unwahrheiten.
6. Wiewohl darin eine Wirkung Satans, benutzt Gott ihn, den Abfall von der Wahrheit in der Kirche zu richten.
7. Es ist das Gericht der Verstockung.
8. Den „Menschen der Sünde“ schwächt der Herr durch sein Wort, indem jener, der derselbe bleibt bis zum Ende der Tage, da der Herr sein ein Ende macht, sein Ansehen, Autorität verliert und damit eben große Einbuße an seiner Herrschaft erleidet.

W. S o e n e c k e.

John 17, 3: The Sum and Substance of Our Theological Study

(Address Delivered at the Opening of the School Year of 1942-43.)

"This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."

Dear Friends in Christ, the Lord of the Church:

Surely, only a matter of supreme importance can justify our coming together here for another year of quiet seclusion and study at a time when the world is seething with the turmoil of its greatest war, when manpower is becoming scarcer day by day in every field, when our military authorities find themselves compelled sternly to separate men from their wives and families in order to satisfy the growing demands of this struggle. At a time when few men can order their lives as they will, you are free, by the express approval and consent of our government, to prepare yourselves for your chosen calling. This fact in itself should be enough to make us mindful of the true greatness of our work.

Still more, however, will this be the case if we observe the function in the Kingdom that is assigned to such work as ours when our High Priest in His Great Intercession prays not for His immediate disciples only, "but for them also which shall believe . . . through their word." But the best measure of the importance of this work is that in the end it is the same task to which the Savior dedicated His life, and that its goal is the very one which He pointed out when He stated that He had been sent to give *life eternal* to as many as had been given Him by His heavenly Father.

Our text tells us that this goal is attained by knowledge. "This is life eternal, that they might *know* Thee." It shall presently appear what manner of knowledge this is. But for the moment it will suffice to remember that while every school, of course, exists for the pursuit of learning in some form or other, our Theological Seminary finds its distinctive function and its sole reason for existence in the effort to impart that wisdom of which our Savior here speaks. Since this is what you, members of the student body, are seeking here; since this is what you, their friends

and members of their families, wish them to find ; since this is also the one thing about which we teachers should be concerned, — it will surely be in order if in this hour we consider that **Knowledge Concerning Life Eternal** which is the **Sum and Substance of Our Theological Study**. Our text will serve to show *its utter simplicity* as well as *its wondrous depth*.

I.

The *utter simplicity* of the way of salvation outlined in these words of the Savior stands forth with greatest clearness when we consider by way of contrast the ideas that men have formed for themselves on the question of how eternal life might be attained. The many religions of paganism show to what lengths of sacrifice and self-denial men have gone in the desperate effort to make up their deficiencies by works of merit. Their philosophers have revealed how complex and unfathomable they found the problem. And when finally a large part of mankind simply gives up the entire question and takes refuge in flatly denying that the problem exists, is this not also something which speaks volumes of their inability to cope with the issue?

But what about our Christian views? Does not the Divine Plan go even farther in revealing difficulties in the attaining of this goal? Here certainly God moved mountains, yes heaven and earth, in order to bring about the salvation of man. To this end He gave His own Son — a sacrifice that goes infinitely beyond any that the mind of man has ever imagined. Toward this goal He shaped the course of the nations of the Ancient World, until finally in the fulness of the time He sent forth His Son. From this point until the end of time He so governs the course of this world — even in these turbulent times — that the fulness of His elect shall enter His Kingdom. In the face of the breath-taking sweep of this Divine Plan and before the greatness of the sacrifice it entailed it seems absurdly simple that the attaining of eternal life should be a matter of merely *knowing* the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

Yet this truth stands unshaken. This had been beautifully demonstrated to the same disciples but a little while before. Their Lord had been comforting them against the hour of His impending departure, speaking of the many mansions in His Father's

house and of His coming again to receive them unto Himself, "that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." To this last statement Thomas, to whom the whole matter still seemed very complicated, had answered: "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?" This question had drawn forth that unforgettable reply by which the doubting disciple was assured that he did know the way: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me." And that it was really simply a matter of knowing the Father and Jesus Christ whom He had sent is made clear by the very next words: "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him," — of course not without, but rather by truly knowing the Son.

It becomes clear at this point that there is more to this "knowing" of Father and Son than appears at first thought, that it implies far more than mere superficial acquaintance. One also begins to understand why the eyes of the disciples were still holden at the moment, although they were so soon to see what so far had escaped them. It all lies in the expression with which the Savior refers to Himself as the Messiah whom God had sent. Until it became clear that this sending not only involved His coming into the world, but also included His going forth to the Altar of the Cross to become the great sacrifice for the sins of the world, and that it further involved His triumphant resurrection and glorious return to the Right Hand of His Father, — until then it could not be completely clear how profound was the love of the Father which moved Him to so great a sacrifice. But now the full implication of His mercy and loving kindness stood revealed, showing how glorious is this salvation that His mercy has placed before man. Only after these things had transpired could the disciples who had been enjoying the warmth of the love of Jesus begin to understand how great the love really was that their Savior bore them. Only now did they begin to *know* the Father and also the Son whom He had sent, as they never had known them before.

What the results were, we know: how these disciples came to be ever more closely bound to their Lord and Savior, as well as to the Father whom He had so wondrously made known to them,

by ties of love and gratitude, of faith and trust; how these weak vessels became faithful witnesses unto their Lord; how even persecution and a martyr's death could not deprive them of the blessed lot that had become theirs. Yet all this spiritual development and growth called for nothing that went beyond those simple words of our text: ". . . that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." One may raise the point that the gift of the Holy Spirit is certainly an indispensable necessity to this new life. But even this does not materially alter the picture. For according to the Savior the work of this Spirit will be that "He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you."

Accordingly, the sum and substance of our theological study is and must always be a most simple thing, even as your future preaching and teaching should be of that same simple kind. It has no purpose other than that we and those whom we teach may know Father and Son; to know the Son as He becomes known to us in the work of our Redemption, where we see Him as He gave Himself for us; to know the Father as His heart is revealed to us in all its grace by this same glorious act of mercy. That is enough for our salvation. That is the only thing deserving of our attention.

To know this will keep us from following false objectives, during the time of your preparation here as well as in your later ministry. Take for instance the modern discovery of the Social Gospel with its shifting of emphasis to the bettering of conditions here on earth, rather than to lead to eternal life. It has received a temporary setback now, but will surely be back with us in full force as soon as the immediate and pressing problems of this war have passed. It makes a strong case for itself when it claims to be the practical way of putting into operation the principles of Jesus in the relations of men toward each other. But its misplaced emphasis is exposed and firmly corrected as soon as we recall the quiet stress the Savior in our text places upon "life eternal." For this He was sent; for this He gave His life; this is what we shall find in "knowing" Him.

In the same way these simple words will keep us from advocating or employing false methods in pursuing the goal of eternal life. If to "know" the Father and Jesus Christ whom He sent is life eternal, then the addition of any contributing factor on

the part of man is an adulteration of this pure truth. It matters little whether this involves something so crude as the additional works of merit which Rome holds to be so necessary, or whether it be the most minute point of Synergism, perhaps the last resort of the rationalizing mind of man to find an explanation for the eternal problem why some are saved rather than others. In any case it adds something foreign to that simple statement of our Lord. It does not leave His Gospel in its original simplicity, but adds man-made conditions. It constitutes a grave departure from the Scriptural "*sola gratia, sola fide.*"

Let us glory in the utter simplicity of the Gospel. For after all, it is this quality which puts its blessed gift within reach of even the least wise among men, yes, of the simplest child. For this Jesus thanked His Heavenly Father, that while hiding these things from the wise and prudent, He had revealed them unto babes (Lc. 10, 21). What a hopeless task our ministry would otherwise be! To the wise we would have nothing to offer, since to them the Gospel is foolishness. The poor, the meek, the lowly we would have to send empty away — if the Gospel were a matter beyond their comprehension. But being what it is, namely a matter of utter simplicity, this Gospel has glorious power. Again and again we see how even a mere child learns to know God as its loving Father, and trustingly turns to Him in its need. Even the feeble-minded learn to know what a friend they have in Jesus. The happy condition has come about which Isaiah describes when he pictures the Kingdom of Messiah as having a highway called "the Way of Holiness," of which he says that "the wayfaring men, *though fools*, shall not err therein" (35, 8). Such is the grace of God for the lowly, which places the blessings of His Kingdom before even the least of men in a manner that is adapted to their limitations, and yet is doubly wonderful because by His Holy Spirit the great and wise not only can, but often do, become truly lowly, so that they humbly accept from the hands of their Savior the salvation which he holds forth with equal graciousness to all.

We who must concern ourselves with the study of these truths in a particular degree have another, very special reason to be grateful for the simplicity of this knowledge we seek. It may seem to you that our course of theological study involves many different subjects, and covers a very wide field which is most

difficult to survey. Here again these words of our text will serve to give direction to our efforts, to bring these various topics into their proper relation to the great central figure around which they group themselves. As we progress in our study of Scriptures, it begins to appear that this relationship is such a close one that in our Savior the entire field, in so far as it is genuine theology, becomes unified into one closely organized whole. Therefore the words of Luther, spoken in this connection (St. L. Ed., VIII, 768), may well serve as a motto for every theological student: "An dem Christo fahe deine Kunst und Studieren an, da laß sie auch bleiben und haften: und wo dich deine eigenen Gedanken und Vernunft, oder sonst jemand anders führt und weist, so tue nur die Augen zu und sprich: Ich soll und will von keinem andern Gott wissen, denn in meinem Herrn Jesu Christo."

II.

But it may seem that with all this we have overreached ourselves. If the knowledge we seek in our theological study is such a simple thing, if even its several departments are simplified and unified by the central figure of Christ, is it not then a study that can be taken lightly, since it demands so little from those who engage in it? — If this were the case, our text and topic would be a sorry choice indeed, especially for this occasion. But nothing could be more unwarranted than such a hasty conclusion. For this knowledge we seek is not only gloriously simple. It is also — and not merely by chance, but rather because of its very simplicity — a knowledge most *wondrously deep*, so much so that the most brilliant scholarship of all the ages has never succeeded in fathoming it. It is therefore certainly a subject worthy of the finest of your talents. It calls for the best possible preparation on your part even before you enter this Seminary. It requires most faithful and intensive application during the three short years which will be granted you here. It will demand your loyal devotion as long as you live. For since we shall never reach the end of this matter, since there are always new phases of this knowledge of God beckoning just ahead, then to turn back or even only to cease from further seeking would be the equivalent of losing interest in, and turning away from, God and our Savior Himself. In all this I say "we" advisedly, for in this searching your teachers must

always remain your fellow-students. We can never be more than that.

That this is indeed a lifetime task will appear when we consider the medium by which this knowledge of God comes: not by the speculative power of the mind of man, not by what is related to us upon human authority, but alone by the revealed Word of God. In this He speaks. Here our Savior appears. Here He declares His Father, even as He makes Himself known to us. This is not merely the only reliable medium, but the sole source of true knowledge of God. And thereby we mean the entire Word which God in His wisdom has seen fit to make known to us. All of it is there to contribute to the true picture of our Lord, which He is unvailng before your eyes.

As we progress in our study of this Word we not only become more familiar with the basic facts of the Biblical story, but certain observations begin to impress themselves indelibly upon our hearts. We not only take note of the fact that God is gracious and forgives sin, checking it off upon our mental fingertips, as it were, in order to pass on to some other item on the list of the attributes of God, but we come back to it again and again, noting with growing wonder the many phases of this truth: the men to whom God forgives sin, as for instance David, Peter, Paul; the cost at which God forgives, as indicated by the sending of His Son and that Son's death upon the cross; the patience with which God has forgiven so many times, as instanced in the history of Israel; the manner in which He has dwelt upon this work of redemption from eternity even to the extent of foreseeing and foreordaining the very individual to eternal life. As we observe these and many other things, and as thereby our hearts are stirred mightily to an earnest endeavor to show our gratitude to Him who has so loved us, — then we begin to understand what it means to "know" God. Surely, to follow this thought through all the pages of Scripture, here and there to find passages that deepen this understanding and give promise of permitting us to penetrate even farther into this glorious mystery, this can seem toilsome drudgery only to the flesh. The spirit of the Christian, which after all is his true self, will find it the most absorbing study in which he can engage. May the gracious Spirit of our Lord strengthen and keep this mind in you.

For the flesh will make its presence felt. It would be folly to ignore this stubborn fact. Your flesh will find little that is entertaining in our theological courses. It will very definitely react against your sustained attention during lectures in the classroom. It will protest loudly against any long hours of study. It will take advantage of your legitimate requirements for rest and recreation, and your natural interest in other matters which you not only may but should pursue for the sake of keeping yourselves physically and mentally fit for your work, and will overemphasize them to a point where such indulgence will become a matter of indolence and sinful neglect. It knows other tricks, e. g. how out of the very Word which you are studying to forge new arguments for following its own evil inclinations. How many times has not the precious truth of the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, which is clearly His gift to the New Man, to the new-born spirit, been used — or rather misused — to justify a course of conduct which is obviously, though perhaps not grossly, an indulgence of the flesh!

Your defense? "To know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." For there you will become aware (and this is also a progressing in your study of the Word) of the holiness of God as it is shown in His awful sternness in dealing with the question of sin. Then it will become clear that this liberty purchased at such tremendous cost dare not be made to serve as a "cloke of maliciousness." You will learn to know God as One whose mercy is far from being a mark of weakness, before whom there is no greater offense than such willful abuse of His grace. You will observe that His sternest judgments came in just such cases. Paul's warning will acquire a new meaning: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked." You will then not take lightly the words of Jeremiah: "Cursed be he that doeth the Lord's work deceitfully." (48, 10.) For though you will find them to refer to those who were indifferent in the carrying out of God's judgments upon the ancient foes of His People, yet you will remember that you also are engaged in a spiritual Holy War, in which the flesh upon which you are warring with these weapons is one of your most treacherous foes, to whom you may give no quarter.

These may seem severe measures. Yet the Christian who has tasted and seen that the Lord is good employs them gladly, for to

do so is the mature fruit of his knowledge of God and of His grace, is his willing service to Him who has loved him. Nor does the Christian feel it a contradiction to find that the Lord who is so wondrously gracious can at the same time be utterly stern in dealing with any abuse of this grace. His very understanding of the one moves him to assent to the other. He is a child of God that has come just so much nearer to its Heavenly Father.

These are mere instances of what awaits us in the way of saving knowledge that is to be gained from a faithful study of God's Word. May these examples, together with the urgent invitation that lies in the Savior's voice and words, move us to enter upon this new year of study with the fervent prayer that it may prove profitable, that we may indeed grow in knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent, and therein find eternal life.

E. Reim.

Closing Address on Matthew 10, 24-31,
delivered in the chapel of the Theological Seminary
at Thiensville on May 28, 1943

Dear Friends of the Seminary, Particularly, Dear Members of the Graduating Class.

You, members of the graduating class, are today being presented to the church as *Candidates for the Holy Ministry*. Christ, our Savior himself, is thus presenting you. He shed His blood to redeem His church. By the same shedding of blood He also received gifts for His church, men qualified to administer the means of grace, to proclaim His Gospel message and to dispense His sacraments. The purpose of these gifts — in other words, your purpose in life — is the edification of the body of Christ, which is His church, and of each one of its members.

Are you competent for this? In other words, are you gifts of which the donor does not have to feel ashamed? Christ died that He might give you to His church: are you worth the price He paid for you? Always keep this fact in mind that Christ, the Son of God, shed His own blood to acquire you as gifts for His

church, that you should feed His church, His church which He purchased with His own blood. This thought must ever be a powerful incentive to cultivate in you the same mind which was in Christ Jesus, and to walk in His footsteps. For if you do not become followers of Christ, so that you minister faithfully to the church in His spirit, He will judge that you have denied Him, and He will in turn deny you before His heavenly Father.

What, then, Does Christ Expect of You?

In our text He is speaking to His twelve apostles when He sent them on their first mission. They were His gift to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, just as you now are His gift to His church. The words of Christ to His apostles apply directly to you.

I

Note then in the first place that Christ wants His ministers always to be

His humble disciples.

He says, *The disciple is not above his master nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord.*

This is a truism which every one is ready to accept — in theory. Yet when we come to a consistent application of this principle in the conduct of our office we may observe countless violations; we must even plead guilty ourselves of following the lead of our Master only imperfectly.

Let us consider a few instances.

Our Savior says, Preach the Gospel. And He himself never preached anything else. His message was, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. In accordance with this He invited all those that labor and are heavy laden to come unto Him, and He promised to give them rest. Never was anyone disappointed who came to Him for rest. Be of good cheer, He would say, thy sins be forgiven thee. Even to the woman who was a notorious sinner, when she came weeping, He said, Thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace. And to the malefactor on the cross He announced: Today thou shalt be with me in paradise.

In similar cases we sometimes hesitate to proclaim the Gospel of forgiveness. Should not the sinner first be made more conscious of the heinousness of his sins? Should not the assurance of forgiveness be guarded a little better? Should it not at least be made contingent on future good behavior?

If we thus substitute a conditional Gospel for the simple Gospel of forgiveness as Jesus proclaimed it, we are actually trying to improve on our Master's method: we are ceasing to be His humble disciples. — The temptation will come to you to safeguard the precious Gospel against abuse by surrounding it with demands of the Law. Then remember that you are a disciple, you are a servant. Aspire to be like your Master and Lord, but never be deceived into assuming that you can improve His message of the Gospel.

But, you will say, are we then not to preach the Law at all?

Yes, indeed, in its proper place and time, as our Master did.

He never preached the Law to people who were troubled over their sins, in order to produce a deeper contrition. Nor did He ever preach the Law as though people by its observance might prepare themselves and make themselves worthy of His forgiveness in whole or in part.

Rather, He preached the Law to people when they tried to misapply it in the manner indicated. When Simon expected Jesus to lay down the Law to the sinner-woman at His feet, He, instead, preached the Law to Simon. "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee." And He told him about his woeful lack of love, because he had not even given Him water to wash His feet. — When a lawyer approached Him, Master, what good thing must I do in order to inherit eternal life, He asked him, What is written in the Law? how readest thou? adding, This do, and thou shalt live; and driving home the point by telling the parable of the Good Samaritan: Go, and do thou likewise. — Thus He would reduce the haughty sinner. — Even to the pious Nicodemus, who greeted Him with the words, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, He said, You must be born again. Try as you may, you will only work yourself deeper into perdition by your own efforts. For that which is born of the flesh is flesh.

In cases like these Jesus preached the Law, where we might be tempted, on account of the outward piety of the men and out of other considerations, to omit it.

How difficult to divide the Word properly! Remain a humble disciple of your Lord.

Consider another instance.

Jesus said, The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. Paul applied this truth in his second epistle to Timothy: Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season.

Jesus performed miracles. He fed the multitudes. He healed the sick. Yet He was ever careful to avoid the impression as though these miracles in themselves were a part of His mission. They were merely His divine credentials. He forbade people to speak much about them, and He withdrew when the people would come to make Him their king because He had wonderfully fed them, He was interested in one thing, and one thing only: preaching the Word. The Word, as the seed, carries its own power in itself, and requires no reinforcement of any kind.

How great are the temptations today to improve on the methods of the Master in this respect! We are told that we must make the Word more attractive by offering the people inducements besides the Word. We are told that we cannot expect the Word to do its work if we do not first change conditions in the world. We must improve the social and economic environment before people will be interested in the Word, and the Gospel can win their hearts.

Ever remain humble disciples of your Lord. His Word is a power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. The effectiveness of the Word is not in any way limited by social or economic conditions. The way into the hearts of the comfortably situated is no easier than the way into the hearts of those overwhelmed by abject misery.

Take another instance.

Jesus says, Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. He says, Whoever is not with me is against me. He knew of only two classes of people: believers who accept all His teachings, and unbelievers. He admitted no neutral stand. He refused to compromise.

In His great address at Capernaum He proclaimed himself as the Bread of Life. He claimed that if any one did not eat His flesh or drink His blood, there was no life in such an one. This offended the people. They wished to have their own achievements recognized — at least a little — also. Did Jesus then tone down? No, He remained firm. If anything, He made His words more pointed: Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? And He charged them with unbelief as growing out of their flesh.

Today in a thousand ways the suggestion comes to us that we ought not too rigidly insist on the Word of Jesus. We ought to admit "open questions," and dare not demand complete agreement in all "open questions."

Not only is this demand made on us — and it will be made on you — but people call us ugly names and will insinuate ugly motives, if we refuse to compromise the truth. Jesus foretold, *If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?*

Learn to remain humble disciples of your Lord, patient and loving toward the weak, but unyielding to all error.

II

Note in the second place that Jesus wants His ministers to be
His faithful heralds.

Here are His words: *Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness that speak ye in the light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.*

One thing is clear: Jesus wants you to proclaim His full message, unabridged, holding nothing back. His Gospel is one, and universal. There are not certain doctrines that are intended for all, while others are reserved for the initiate. He wants His complete message proclaimed publicly to all.

He himself followed this rule. Though He frequently withdrew with His disciples into some seclusion and explained to them things which he had taught the people in parables, yet He never revealed to them anything which was not intended for all. When at His last trial the high priest asked Him about His doctrine,

He could reply that He had always taught publicly in the temple and in the synagogs, that in secret He had taught nothing. He assured the high priest that he could get full information from them that heard Him.

This was also the practice of Jesus' apostles. Think of Paul. He deliberately concentrated on Christ crucified. To the Corinthians he wrote: I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. The Galatians he reminded that Christ had been evidently set forth among them as crucified. Yet when he took leave of the elders of Ephesus he emphatically maintained: I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Read Paul's epistles, and you cannot help but admire how fully in all details he set forth the counsel of God concerning our salvation.

This is what Jesus wants all His ministers to do. He wants you not only to preach the Gospel in a general way, to preach, say, the fundamental articles of faith, particularly the most fundamental of all, the article of free justification by grace through faith for Christ's sake, while you neglect, or only slightly touch, the less fundamental. He wants you to be faithful heralds, who deliver His complete message. Every part of His Gospel is bread of life. The whole Gospel is a well-balanced spiritual diet for the flock, prepared by Jesus himself. He appoints you to feed His flock, not to half-starve them by withholding anything of the food which He himself so carefully prepared. All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is able to make wise unto salvation, seeing it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. You are not to make the Christians committed to your care half-wise, and keep them half-ignorant, by preaching only what some call the fundamentals. They are to grow in knowledge, and for that very purpose Jesus is giving you to His church that you help them to grow by proclaiming as faithful heralds His whole message.

You may think that there are certain words in His promise that do not apply in your case. Jesus speaks to His disciples about things that He told them "in darkness" and that they heard "in the ear". You may say, Jesus does not speak to us "in darkness" any longer, and we do not get to hear anything "in the ear."

Are you so sure? There are records in the Gospels of certain

occasions when Jesus did speak to His disciples privately, telling them things that He had not so proclaimed to the multitudes. But take a closer look at these occasions. Jesus had spoken to the people in parables. Then the disciples came to Him and asked Him about the meaning of a particular parable. On other occasions the disciples, after discussing problems among themselves, were on the point of asking Him, but He, anticipating their question, gave them the answer before they could express it.

Note that Jesus spoke to His disciples "in darkness" and let them hear things "in the ear" *when they asked Him* about these things. Jesus wants to be asked. He is very ready to answer, often giving the answer even before we can formulate our petition, yet if we expect Him to speak to us "in darkness," we must approach Him in prayer.

Remember what Luther said. Among the things that go into the making of a theologian he prominently mentioned prayer. He himself spent many hours in prayer. And see how many things he got to hear "in the ear." If we neglect prayer, we need not expect any deeper insight into the mysteries of God's kingdom. Our own sluggishness in prayer is to blame if Jesus does not tell us more things "in the ear." But in answer to prayer He today is as ready as ever to enlighten us.

Here we recall a second rule that Luther mentioned. He said *meditate*. Jesus speaks to us through the Word.

Jesus did not answer every question the disciples asked. When He was about to ascend into heaven, they asked Him, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? But He emphatically rebuked them: It is not for you to know. Jesus did not tell them things in the ear to satisfy their curiosity, but to enrich their understanding of the mystery of salvation.

That mystery is contained in the Word of Jesus. When Jesus answered a question of His disciples they had always been pondering some word that He had spoken. They had heard the word; they understood the literal sense; but they could not see at once what truth Jesus wanted to convey. They began to study the word. They asked themselves questions about it. They discussed it with others. Although they did not always succeed in getting a clear understanding by themselves, yet they certainly were enriched very much by this mere activity of meditation.

Jesus says, Search the Scriptures. He had in mind just such activities as the disciples performed whenever they could not at once grasp the meaning of a word. Search the Scriptures, Jesus says also to you. Be careful to avoid a mistake that is too commonly made. When we do not at once grasp the meaning of a passage, we reach for a commentary. That should not be the first thing we do. No, search the Scriptures, means that we first of all wrestle with the text itself, turn it over and over in our mind, look at it from all angles. And even if we do not succeed in getting the full meaning such labor of meditation will not be wasted. Then, after we have thoroughly worked over a text for ourselves, we may also with benefit consult what others have found in it.

There is a third way in which Jesus even today speaks to us in darkness and tells us things in the ear. Luther called it *tentatio*, which we may freely translate with "experience." Give the Word of God a trial, and let Jesus show you the truth of His promises.

Jesus himself referred the apostles to their experience. When He sent them forth He ordered them not to take with them any provisions. When the bitter hour of Gethsemane was about to put their faith to the supreme test Jesus referred them to their past experience: When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes: lacked ye anything? Yes, their experience should have fortified their faith.

Paul frequently refers to his own experience. He says to the Philippians that he is thoroughly initiated, he knows both how to be abased and how to abound. And to the Corinthians he says that they will benefit by his experience. God comforted him in his tribulations so that he might be better able to comfort others, having learned in his tribulations not to trust in himself, but in God who raises the dead.

Tribulation is not a pleasant experience, but it is a very effective way in which Jesus will tell us things in the ear.

Whatever things Jesus tells you, in answer to your prayer, through meditation and experience, He wants you as His faithful heralds to use in your ministry and to proclaim for the edification of your hearers.

III

Note a third point. Jesus wants His ministers to be
His fearless witnesses.

These are His words: *And fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* In further elaboration and in support of this encouragement Jesus points to the care which God has for sparrows, assuring us that His concern for us will be much greater, seeing we are of more value than many sparrows. He assures us that even the very hairs of our head are all numbered.

Why does Jesus want you to be fearless witnesses? And why does He make such efforts to eradicate fear from your hearts?

Think of what you are to witness to the church. In general, an intimidated witness is not regarded as very reliable. Rightly so. Fear may induce him to render an unbalanced testimony. He may exaggerate, or at least overstress, certain points, while he may suppress others, or minimize them. His unbalanced testimony will give his hearers a distorted picture of the case. This is true in a far greater degree concerning the witness you are called to bear before the church.

Your very message may be summed up in the one word: *Fear not.* When the Savior came into the world at Bethlehem, the angel opened his announcement to the shepherds with this word, "Fear not." And when the Savior had victoriously completed His work, the angel at the empty tomb again said, "Fear not." The risen Savior himself expressed the same thought in the positive term, "Peace be unto you." This is the message you are to convey to the church.

Consider this message in the light of some thoughts mentioned in our text. Jesus speaks about God as able to destroy both body and soul in hell. There is a hell. We may not like the idea, but that does not change the fact: There is a hell. Hell may originally not have been prepared for us — it was prepared for the devil and his angels — that does not prevent God from destroying in hell all those that ally themselves with the devil.

Thus hell was the threatening lot of all men, for all have sinned. Hell was inescapable. No man is able to quench its flames, no man is able to lock its gates. Nor is any man able to

appease the wrath of God and thus to work his way out of the danger of hell. As long as these conditions obtained there was cause for fear. In fact, there could be nothing but fear, extreme fear and despair.

Yet the way Jesus in our text mentions hell and the danger of being cast into hell suggests that destroying any one in hell is no longer the expected thing for God to do; that a way of escape has been opened, and that henceforth only in cases of new offence God will resort to this measure.

Yes, redemption has been procured. Jesus, who is sending you as His witnesses into the world, redeemed us from death and hell. He himself completely suffered the agony of hell, so that death and hell no longer have any just claim on any one. Instead, heaven was regained by Him for all sinners.

This is the message you are to proclaim in the Lord's name wherever He may send you.

And now answer the question for yourself, Why does the Lord want fearless witnesses? If your hearts are troubled by fear, the result will be worse than in ordinary cases of intimidation. Your testimony will not only become unbalanced, distorted: your conduct tinged with fear will belie the very heart of your message, which is *Fear not*. The purpose of your message will be frustrated. How can you expect your message to carry conviction, to quiet fear, to create a confident faith, if while delivering it you yourself are shaking with fear? It is true, the message carries the power to create faith in itself, you cannot add one ounce to it, but by your own fear you would be placing a great obstacle in its way. People would say, Physician, heal thyself.

When Jesus says, Fear not, He does not, however, want you to be loud and boisterous. It is easy for shallow minds to confuse fearlessness with cocky defiance. Some people, in order to appear fearless, become provocative in their attitude. Jesus does not want a show of boldness; He wants the quiet, firm fortitude of the heart, which does not provoke hostilities, but which, when they arise, meets them with unflinching faith.

Jesus speaks about dangers threatening from them that kill the body. Such dangers may seem remote today, at least in our country. The church is not being persecuted. There is no one in prison, no one sentenced to the gallows because of his testimony

concerning Christ. Yet there is personal danger connected with the witness of Christ. Paul, in enumerating what he faced, mentions perils of various description, and we may well doubt whether he considered death as the greatest (Read 2 Cor. 12, 23-29; add also chap. 6, 8-10). Similar dangers are threatening us today, attacking us, if not in life and limb, then certainly in our personal character and robbing us of our good name; and worse, undermining our work and placing our very testimony under suspicion. — Yet Jesus says, Fear not.

What shall we do to become and ever to remain fearless witnesses of Christ?

In our text Jesus points out one way by directing our attention to the comparative smallness of the danger. When the enemies do their worst they cannot achieve more than to kill the body. They can harm us outwardly, but they cannot reach our spiritual life. What is outward harm when compared with the eternal loss of our whole person in hell? If we bear this in mind that the greatest harm our enemies can inflict is insignificant, not worth to be mentioned, yes, really less than nothing, when compared to the eternal loss from which we have escaped through our Savior, and over against the eternal and weighty glory which He has procured for us: should this not be a very powerful cause materially to reduce our fear, to replace it with confident faith and courage?

There is another way of looking at dangers to our person besides considering their comparative insignificance. Jesus points us to God who can destroy both body and soul in hell, who controls the falling of every sparrow, and has even numbered all our hairs. Our enemies can do no more than God permits them to do. They cannot touch a single hair of ours without God's knowledge. Why then fear if we know that nothing can happen to us unless God in His wisdom and love has determined to let it happen?

This leads to still another consideration. God controls the dangers that befall us, their time and measure. He controls also their effect. He is a God who can produce life out of death. Joseph said to his brethren, Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good. And history abundantly shows that the blood of the martyrs has ever been the seed of the church. Christians, when driven from one city, carried the Gospel message to other cities and countries. And when the mouth of one witness was

closed in death, the silent, but very eloquent testimony of his death urged others to take up where he left off. Do not fear them that kill the body: they cannot silence your testimony for Christ. Under God's overruling providence they will only contribute to make it more effective.

This is what Christ expects of you when He presents you as gifts to His church. In order, then, that you may prove worthy of this high calling, strive to be fearless witnesses, who faithfully proclaim the entire counsel of God unto salvation, ever remaining humble disciples of our Savior. M.

Jubiläumsansprache

gehalten bei der Schlußfeier unseres Prediger-Seminars anläßlich
des 50jährigen Amtsjubiläums Professor M. Lehningers
von Präses G. C. Bergemann.

Lieber Bruder, werter Professor!

Es ist mir der angenehme Auftrag geworden, im Namen des Verwaltungsrats unseres Seminars dahier bei dieser Gelegenheit einige Worte an Dich zu richten. Veranlassung und Zweck dürften sofort klar sein, wenn ich zwei Jahreszahlen nenne: 1893 und 1943 — ein Zeitraum von 50 Jahren. Auf diesen Zeitraum blickst Du zurück und läßt die Jahre reden. Und wovon reden sie denn? Sie reden von dem, was Gott an Dir und durch Dich getan. Und groß sind die Werke des Herrn, wer ihrer achtet, der hat eitel Lust daran. Und wenn Du beim Rückblick auf das Walten Gottes schaust, dann wirfst Du Deine Lust sehen und ausbreiten, Dein Herz wird sich wundern und ausbrechen und Deinen Mund fröhlich machen, daß er ein Herzenslied singt, ein Lied im höheren Chor nach der Weise: „Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele, und was in mir ist, seinen heiligen Namen, Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele, und vergiß nicht, was er dir Gutes getan hat.“

Und was ist nun das Gute, das er an Dir und durch Dich getan? Im Jahre 1893 bist Du unter Gottes Walten zum heiligen Predigtamt ordiniert und in dasselbe eingeführt worden. Seitdem sind 50 Jahre verflossen. Gott hat Deinem Leben ein halbes Jahrhundert hinzugefügt. Das hat er Dir bei Deinem Amtsantritt nicht in Aus-

sicht gestellt. Er hat Dir mit seiner dahinlautenden Verheißung 50 Jahre zugesichert. Unsere Lebenszeit ist eine so kostbare Gabe Gottes, daß er sie uns nicht mit einem Mal in den Schoß schüttet. Er gibt sie uns *sekundenweise, augenblicksweise*. Und nun hat Gott die 50 Jahre hindurch jeden Augenblick sein Auge auf Dich gerichtet, jeden Augenblick hat sein Aufsehen Deinen Odem bewahrt, so daß Du nun auf diesen Zeitraum zurückblicken, Deine Lust sehen und singen kannst: „Ach wär' ein jeder Puls ein Dank und jeder Odem ein Gesang.“

Ist nun unsere Zeit schon an sich kostbar, so ganz besonders Deine Zeit. Es ist Amtszeit. Auf 50 Jahre Deiner Amtstätigkeit blickst Du zurück. Dies Amt ist ein köstlich Werk. Köstlich um des Stifters willen. Es hat seinen Ursprung in dem Herzen Gottes. Hier hat es Gott erdacht, ausgedacht, geschaffen. In dies Amt hat er sein Herz gelegt. In und mit diesem Amte gibt er uns sein Herz und läßt uns hineinschauen. Er läßt uns sehen die Gesinnung, die er gegen uns hegt, er läßt uns lesen die Gedanken, die er über uns hat. Und das sind nicht Gedanken des Leidens, sondern Gedanken des Friedens. In diesem Amte haben wir sein verjöhntes Herz. Köstlich! — Köstlich aber auch um der Kosten willen, die Gott daran gewendet hat. Es hat ihn viel gekostet. Es hat den Vater seinen Sohn und diesen sein Blut und Leben gekostet. Gott war in Christo und verjöhnte die Welt mit ihm selber. Das Amt ist teuer erkauft. Köstlich! — Köstlich endlich um der Predigt willen, die dieses Amt führt. Es ist das Amt, das die Verjöhnung predigt — Friedenspredigt. Das ist nicht der Friede, den die Menschen in dem Völkerringen zu erkämpfen vergeblich sich bemühen. Die bringen es im besten Falle zu einem Scheinfrieden — einer Stille zwischen den Stürmen. Das Amt predigt den Frieden, der unter allen Stürmen das Herz ganz stille und sein lustig bleiben läßt. Es ist der Friede Gottes, der höher ist denn alle Vernunft, und unsere Herzen und Sinne bewahrt zum ewigen Leben. Köstliche Predigt — und köstliches Amt, das diese Predigt führt! Und weil dies Amt so köstlich ist, darum hast Du es begehrt, und Gott hat Dir Dein Begehren gegeben. Er hat Dich zur Führung dieses Amtes tüchtig gemacht, und läßt Dich nun auf eine fünfzigjährige Amtstätigkeit zurückblicken. Ja, Großes hat der Herr an Dir getan, des bist Du fröhlich. — Und Du hast nicht vergeblich gearbeitet. In Deiner Amtsführung sind Ströme des lebendigen Wassers von Dir geflossen und sind ge-

worden zu Brunnen des Wassers, das ins ewige Leben quillt. Gott hat seine Verheißung wahr gemacht: „Ich will dich segnen, und sollst ein Segen werden?“ Es ist das freilich ein geistlicher Segen in himmlischen Gütern durch Christum. Den sehen wir nicht mit leiblichen Augen. Aber Früchte dieses Segens hast Du in Deinen Gemeinden schauen und Deine Lust sehen dürfen. Und heute hast Du eine besondere Frucht vor Augen: Diese Zahl von jungen Männern, die nun fertig und bereit sind, das Evangelium des Friedens zu treiben. Wie lieblich sind auf den Bergen die Füße der Boten, die den Frieden verkündigen. Auch Du hast zu ihrer Ausrüstung beitragen dürfen. Das schaust Du und siehst Deine Lust: Der Herr hat Großes an mir und durch mich getan, des bin ich fröhlich.

Und nun gratuliere ich Dir im Namen des Verwaltungsrats aufs herzlichste zu Deinem Amtsjubiläum und entbiete Dir unsere Segenswünsche. Möge es Gott gefallen, Dich noch manches Jahr in dem Amte tätig sein zu lassen. Der Segen bleibt nicht aus. Gottes Verheißungen sind, wie er, ewig.

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

Cooperation in War Efforts. — The following note is taken from the *Watchman-Examiner*.

“The meeting of all sorts of churches in war efforts is to be commended. Churches, however, should not forget nor abandon the principles for which they have long stood and the doctrines which they have long advocated. It is our hope and expectation that our Baptist churches, for example, will come out of the war as faithful to the doctrines of the New Testament as they have ever been. In these days of stress and trial, it would be neither fraternal nor helpful for our churches continuously to preach their differentiating principles, but let us see to it that our churches are not shot to pieces by ignorance and unbelief when the war shall have ended.”

It is gratifying to note that the dangers of indiscriminate coordination of war efforts are clearly discerned by the writer, and emphatically pointed out. Yet one may wonder what kind of war efforts he has in mind when commending cooperation. If he is referring to strictly spiritual work, is any cooperation with other church bodies possible at all without denying the truth? If he is referring to social or medical work, what divine call has the church as church to do other than Gospel work? — Another thought. It is never edifying to be constantly harping on “differentiating

principles"; yet if the specific doctrines of a church body really are — as they are certainly held to be by that body — valuable divine truths, why should they be neglected during "days of stress and trial"? Divine truths are given to us as food for our faith, as comfort for our souls in times of trouble. Days of "stress and trial" should prove their value. Or is any divine truth — great or small — subject to expediency? Concerning all the counsel of God Paul says, Preach the word: *be instant in season, out of season.* M.

Duplicity. — This is an ugly word, and to charge duplicity against anyone is to put a serious blemish on his character. The following paragraph is found in an article on patriotism contained in *The Lutheran Companion*.

"Much of the nationalism displayed in our country today is mere lip-service. I always feel that those who shout the loudest are making the most noise in an effort to cover up a deficiency somewhere else. A few weeks ago I went to visit at the home of a friend whom I had not seen for some time. She showed me over her beautiful home, dwelling on this feature and that. After dinner we sat down in the living room and listened to a concert on the radio. At the close of the concert the *Star Spangled Banner* was played, and she sprang to her feet. I continued to sit and knit as I had been doing during the concert, and she asked me why I didn't stand. I replied that I had never done so except in public in peace time, and I did not consider it necessary to do so now. She expressed surprise and regret that I did not set a better example in patriotism for my children, but what she said to me was only empty words. An hour before, she had taken me into her well-stocked fruit cellar and proudly shown me the rows and rows of canned goods which she had bought the day before, the Monday after the rationing of canned goods had been announced, and she had asked me if I did not think she was clever to be able to get such a good supply before the stores were sold out. To her credit I will say that I believe she did not think she was being inconsistent in her attitude or unpatriotic in her action. She only thought she was out-smarting someone somewhere."

It goes without saying that a country where this type of patriotism becomes the rule cannot prosper nor long endure. But what about a Christian character that does lip-service to the *Star Spangled Banner* and gloats over out-smarting fellow-citizens? The fact that a person may not be aware of inconsistency does not diminish the detrimental effects of such an attitude, rather, it might be taken as an indication to what extent the damage of character has already progressed.

The situation depicted in *The Lutheran Companion* points one of the dangers to which Christians are exposed today, and the duty of all faithful pastors to raise a warning voice and to fortify the Christians against it. Such work cannot begin too soon, nor too early. More than ever do we need Christian schools for our children. More than ever must we devote

our time to the care of adolescent youth. And more than ever must we be on our guard that we do not permit duplicity in any form to enter into any of our church dealings. M.

Increase of Profanity — All serious leaders of the church must feel deep concern over an ever increasing use of profanity by the people. Even persons who lay claim to some social standing apparently do not hesitate to indulge in it. Pastors who attended our Northwestern College a generation or more ago will remember how student referees at football games would censure players and officials of visiting teams for using curse words, by pointing to the presence of ladies among the spectators. Today even prominent women spice their speech with profanities. Our Christian people, hearing and reading such language, are exposed to temptation endangering their souls. It, then, behooves all God-appointed leaders of the church to instruct and warn, particularly the young, against the soul destroying habit. God's warning is not an empty threat when He says: The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain (Dt. 5, 11). Much might be said on this score, but we shall limit our remarks to one aspect which an editorial in *The Lutheran Companion* pointed out. To curse is in direct violation of God's command that we love our neighbor. By cursing we effectively stifle what traces of love there may be, and fan the flaming hatred.

The Lutheran Companion reproduces the following paragraph from a write-up by a woman author on the exploits of the flying fortress Susy-Q, as it appeared in one of the much read magazines. "Susy-Q is the fightingest Flying Fortress in the world. There's just one thing she wants to do and that's to kill Japs. She knows her big job is to lay a string of bombs on an enemy ship or airdrome and knock equipment and men to hell in a thunderous boom. But she also likes to snuggle in low over a target and, with machine guns blazing, pick off every damn Jap in sight. Then she sticks her blunt nose up toward the sky once more and hightails for home hundreds of miles away."

Commenting on the literary value of such epithets *The Lutheran Companion* has this to say: "Incidentally the . . . article is a sad commentary on the low level to which the journalistic profession has sunk in America. Illiterates and 'low-brows' have always been known to resort to profanity as a method of trying to make utterances more impressive. Profanity is a tacit acknowledgment of poverty of thought. But has it come to pass that even some of our women writers now find it necessary to descend to such unholy expedients in order to make their literary production spicy and interesting?"

Evaluating the destructive influence of profanity on the spiritual life of the people *The Lutheran Companion* remarks correctly: "Reading the above words and then listening to some of the flaming invectives that come over the radio from the lips of some commentators and news analysts, is it any wonder that the seeds of hatred are being sown, not only in the minds of mature men and women but also in the hearts of little children?"

The political implications are bad enough, as *The Lutheran Companion* points out: "What shall we say of the bitter fruits which must eventually be reaped from the propagation of such implacable hatreds? Earnest men who sense most clearly the deep tragedy of the awful judgment which has now come upon mankind and who are searching their very souls for an answer to the problem of how to bring about a just and lasting peace to this sadly disordered world of ours are unanimous in their conviction that there is nothing that will make that problem more difficult of solution than the world-wide animosities that are now being stirred up among the peoples of all nations."

As servants of the church we have been commissioned by God to watch over the spiritual well-being of our people. How can the virtue of Christian love thrive when hatred is deliberately cultivated? How can people remain truly God-fearing when their senses are dulled by a frivolous use of His most holy name? How can their faith in the redemptive work of their Savior, who gave His life as a ransom for His enemies, survive if they constantly call on God for vengeance against our earthly enemies?

Profanity is a sign of the times, and a danger of our times. Let us recognize and counteract it according to the ability which God supplies.
M.

"Scouting Must Go On." — Under this caption the Milwaukee Journal of March 13, 1943, published an editorial endorsing the current drive for Boy and Girl Scout leaders. Among other things we read:

"A scout, boy or girl, is not easily misled. Hitler found it expedient to dissolve the scouts of Germany because they held to a true German ideal in opposition to his warped political doctrines. Mussolini dissolved the scouts of Italy. When Laval, the traitor, took over France he found it necessary to dissolve French scouting.

"When the Nazi propagandists were intent on misleading German-Americans, they found it important to tell those citizens who would listen to them that they must take their children out of scout organizations and put them into the Nazi youth movement. The agents knew that they could not debauch these young Americans if they were left under the wholesome influence of scouting."

This will not make the work of our church any easier in these troubled times. While it is certainly not our business to weigh the political pro-and-con of the Scout Movement, yet under these circumstances it will take little to provoke an outcry of "pro-Nazi" against a faithful pastor who, in keeping with religious principles to which he may have long adhered, tells his catechumens that membership in such an organization is inconsistent with the faith they are preparing to confess. It will be difficult to show that we take this position not because of loyalty to some foreign system of government but out of faithfulness to the Lord Who redeemed us with His blood.

These developments do not, of course, constitute a valid reason for changing our stand on this issue. If our position was sound before, it is no less so now. But these present conditions are a reason for our stating our position with the greatest of care. We take exception to Scoutism, not because "our church has a rule against it," not because of the Scout-program of training in woodcraft, endurance, skills, discipline (much of which is very fine and wholesome), but solely because its program of moral training (the "good deed a day") is based upon the premise that real betterment of heart and character is possible without penitent recognition of our inborn sinfulness, without God's grace and merciful forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Since our faith is founded on the very opposite basis, namely the *utter inability of natural man* to achieve anything good in spiritual matters by his own reason or strength and the blessed truth that the new life is, even as it can be, *only by the unaided grace of God*, let us steadfastly confess that the aforesaid premise of natural religion is utterly inconsistent with the revealed Gospel of Christ. E. R.

From the Pennsylvania Ministerium. — This oldest Lutheran synod in America, the largest synodical body in the U. L. C. A., sustained the loss of its president in the death of Dr. Ernst Philipp Pfatteicher. He died suddenly of a heart attack on January 9, at the age of 68 years. He had held the office of president since 1926, for a larger period of time than any of his predecessors.

Dr. Pfatteicher was born in a parsonage at Easton, Pa., in 1874. On his mother's side he was a grandson of Dr. A. Spaeth, for many years professor in Mount Airy Lutheran Seminary at Philadelphia, and a prominent member of the former General Council. The deceased served as pastor of several congregations until 1926 when he was elected to the presidency of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania.

As his successor the executive board of the Ministerium chose Dr. Emil E. Fischer, a member of the faculty of the Philadelphia Seminary. Synod will elect a president for a full term at its session in May.

The Pennsylvania Ministerium consists of 507 ministers, 599 congregations, and 320,000 members. L.

From the Augustana Synod. — Dr. Adolph Hult, professor in the Theological Seminary at Rock Island, Ill., died March 6, at the Lutheran Hospital at Moline, Ill. He had reached the age of 73 years, 2 months, and 12 days.

After a pastorate of 16 years, during which he served two parishes, he assumed his duties as professor of Church History in January 1916. He was perhaps better known and more appreciated in our circles than any other theologian of his synod. His name stood for conservative Lutheranism of which he was an outstanding exponent in his synod.

The appended quotations from Lutheran church periodicals will show the esteem in which he was generally held.

Says "*The Lutheran Companion*" of his own synod: He has helped mold the mind and heart of the pastors of our Synod. His influence has been not only Synod-wide but in a sense ecumenical.

This was attained not only by his teaching, but by his writings as well. . . . By this Dr. Hult attained a position of leadership in the Church greater than we realize.

"*Kirchliche Zeitschrift*" (A. L. C.): Dr. Hult was a nobleman of fine culture and devoted Christian spirit, especially at home in secular and in religious music, well acquainted with the hymnological treasures of our church, in the German language as well as in the Scandinavian. He was a thorough theologian. He was better versed in the great German theological works than many theologians whose mother tongue is German. . . .

He was a sound Lutheran theologian. They sometimes called him "the confessional watchdog" of his synod. . . . His was no cold dogmatism. Biblical truth and Lutheran confession permeated with life were his highest treasures. Here he stood firm as a rock.

"*The Lutheran Witness*" (Missouri Synod): He died at the age of seventy-three, having contributed both as a minister and as a teacher of theology to the scholarship as well as to the conservative strength of the Augustana Synod. Because of his outspoken stand for the historic Lutheran position in doctrine and practice, he had many friends in the Missouri Synod. . . . Also in his contributions to the theological and popular magazines of his Church he represented a theology which was soundly Lutheran. By his death the Augustana Synod has lost one of its finest theologians.

L.

A Plea for Parochial Schools. — Readers of our *Theologische Quartalschrift* know where we stand on the question of the Christian training of our children, what we, on the basis of the Scriptures, urge both concerning the duties of parents and those of the church toward the children and young people in the formative years, which God has placed into our care.

What is the experience of other Lutherans? Of Lutherans in other lands? We are grateful to Dr. J. T. Mueller for quoting, in the *Concordia Theol. Monthly*, from an article which originally appeared in *The Australian Lutheran*. We here reproduce the quotation.

"Unless we wish to train and develop a race of atheists, that is, people into whose lives the thought of God does not enter, we must instill the fear of God into the hearts of children. Those who are desirous of having their children learn something about religion are in most cases quite satisfied with the half hour a week that is devoted to this subject in our schools. But many are becoming aware that this half hour a week is altogether inadequate. In an article contributed to the *Australian Christian World*, the Rev. R. G. Arthur, M. A., rightly says: 'We must face the fact that our state educational systems are producing minds that are pagan rather than Christian. Generally speaking, religious instruction in state schools

counts for little in the thinking and living of Australian children. Even where it can be said to be effective in itself, our state education system is such that the Christian story, the Christian faith, the Christian way of life, hardly bears a meaningful relationship to the rest of what our children are learning at school.' The writer is evidently speaking from an experience gained in conducting such classes and then examining them as to the results. When in answer to the question: 'Write what you know about God,' he got answers like these: 'God is very religious,' 'God is a man who can do anything at all,' 'God was crucified by the angels,' he must surely have thought that he had been spending his time for naught. Not less discouraging were many of the answers given to a question concerning Jesus: 'Jesus was a Christian, and He made the animals,' 'Jesus was an Arabian,' 'Jesus helped the people to get across the Red Sea, but when the soldiers tried to cross the river, they were all swept away.' That appears to be as much as many children remembered about Jesus. Similarly hazy were the ideas about what it means to be a Christian. 'A Christian is a person who is civilized and believes in God,' 'A Christian belongs to the Church of England,' 'A Christian does not go into a Catholic church.' That was some of the information given. And yet, when some Christians establish schools for their children in which instruction in the one thing needful is the chief concern, many look at them askance and hold them up to ridicule. The establishment of church schools has its difficulties. Where it is not possible, the home must supply the religious instruction."

Yes, "the establishment of church schools has its difficulties." But what part of the work our Savior assigned to His church has not? When He said, Go ye into all the world, this was not an invitation to a pleasure or sight-seeing trip. I send you forth, He said, as sheep in the midst of wolves. The difficulties that seem to block the way are not placed there to test our ingenuity of by-passing, but are invitations to test our Lord's ability in helping us to surmount them. He promised us, Lo, I am with you all way even unto the end of the world. And He taught Paul to say, on the basis of a life rich in experience, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

If we are in faith convinced that parochial schools are important, we can trust our exalted Savior that He will strengthen us to overcome the difficulties, and to help us establish and maintain Christian schools as a part of our Gospel ministry.

M.

Cherish the Lutheran Hymn Treasures. — Our "transition into the English," a hackneyed phrase that has been much over-used and made to bear the blame for evils that really had their root in our own indolence or indifference, must be invoked again, not as an excuse, not as a scape goat, but as a challenge to more intense devotion and application. Due to this transition, together with a comparatively easy knowledge of the German hymns, also an appreciation of their spiritual value is being lost, and, on the other hand, acquaintance with English songs is facilitated. Add

to this the invasion of our homes by songs of every description through the radio. If special efforts are not made to meet the situation the blessed influence of the old Lutheran choral will soon be a thing of the past. Not only will the coming generation become increasingly unfamiliar with it, they will lose their understanding and appreciation of it, seeing they are becoming accustomed to songs of a different background and a different conception.

Our own Synod has created a new position in our Northwestern College and our Theological Seminary to keep alive, to a great extent rather to revive, an appreciation of the Lutheran choral. Our readers will by this time have seen in our church papers, and we hope heeded, the call to nominate candidates for a professorship of music for the two institutions mentioned.

While the two boards are making preparations to carry out the Synod's resolution the *Lutheran School Journal* came to hand with an interesting, but alarming census report. A teacher of a sixth and seven grade, together totaling 48 pupils, handed his children two questionnaires, the first asking them to "list *five* songs, tunes, hymns, melodies, or musical selections which are your favorites above all others"; the second, handed out immediately after the first had been completed, called for "the *one* song which is your favorite above all others."

Naturally, one may not expect a mature judgment from sixth and seventh graders, yet the answers that these children gave to the above questions are revealing, showing what an influence unseen factors have on the shaping of character and the development of taste. For these children are enrolled in a parochial school under the leadership of Lutheran teachers, in a congregation served by a very conscientious and devout pastor.

In reply to the first question, among a total of 240 song preferences, were listed 96 different songs and tunes. A great number occurred only once or twice, among the latter "America." *Three* each chose: "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," "The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll not Want," "Onward, Christian Soldiers," "How Precious Is the Book Divine." *Four* each chose: "Lift Up Your Heads," and "Come, Thou Almighty King." *Six* each: "Nearer, My God, to Thee," "Holy, Holy, Holy," "Take My Life and Let It Be," "Rock of Ages." *Seven*: "Stand Up! Stand Up for Jesus." *Nine* each: "Abide With Me," and "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty." *Ten*: "A Mighty Fortress." *Twelve*: "God Bless Our Native Land." *Twenty-three*: "I'm but a Stranger Here." *Twenty-five*: "Beautiful Savior."

The second list contained 31 different titles; *seven* times: "I'm but a Stranger Here"; *five* times: "Beautiful Savior"; *twice* each: "The Star Spangled Banner," "Rock of Ages", "The Church's One Foundation," "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded," "Asleep in Jesus," "Stand Up! Stand Up for Jesus," and "A Mighty Fortress"; *once* each: "America," "Kalamazoo," "The Prisoner's Song," "The Boogie-Woogie Cowboy," "Just As I Am," "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," "Savior, Thy Dying Love,"

"The Notre Dame Victory Song," "I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus," "Onward, Christian Soldiers," "The Lord's My Shepherd," "Silent Night," "Abide With Me," "All Depends on Our Possessing," "Nearer My God, to Thee," "From the Halls of Montezuma," "God Bless Our Native Land," "Vacation Time," "Come May, in All Thy Beauty," "Early to Bed," "The Lord My Shepherd Is"; and one was censored.

Though the influence of the Christian school is plainly evident in the children's choice; yet also, how many warning signals appear, not only in the songs selected, but even more so in those omitted.

Let us cherish our heritage.

M.

Dr. Fuerbringer Honored. — With the closing exercises of Concordia Theological Seminary on June 3rd its venerable President, Dr. Ludwig Ernst Fuerbringer, rounded out his fiftieth year of uninterrupted service at this theological school. The occasion was duly recognized by the presentation of a special Citation of Honor by his colleagues of the theological faculty and by an address by the Rev. Henry Grueber, D. D., as Chairman of the Committee for Higher Education and Second Vice-President of the Missouri Synod. Representatives of many other institutions had also appeared to honor the jubilarian.

Dr. Fuerbringer was graduated from Concordia Seminary in 1885. For eight years he served in the pastorate of the congregation at Frankenmuth, Michigan, first as assistant, then as the successor of his father. His call to Concordia Seminary followed in 1893. Almost from the beginning of his professorship at St. Louis he was also associated with the *Lutheraner*, of which he still is the editor-in-chief. Since 1927 he has served as President of the Synodical Conference, a position which he still holds. The literary work of Dr. Fuerbringer includes an edition of the Letters of Dr. Walther, a revision of Guenther's "Populaere Symbolik," outlines of his class-room lectures in Hermeneutics, Liturgics, and Introduction to the Old and New Testaments (printed as manuscripts). His intensive work in the Old Testament field is revealed by his exposition of the Book of Job, the Song of Songs, and his writings on the Minor Prophets, the latter appearing in the *Concordia Theological Monthly*. We venture the hope that these as well as e. g. the Introduction will also be published in book form. They would form a valuable addition to our English Lutheran literature.

The editors of the *Quartalschrift* wish their venerable colleague the Lord's richest blessings for his remaining years.

E. R.

Büchertisch.

Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Harper & Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1941. \$4.00.

This Introduction written by a scholar of the Radical School of Biblical Criticism, Robert Pfeiffer of Harvard, can be regarded as the most comprehensive and the most informative work of its kind in America. Every one who studies this Introduction will be impressed with the large amount of material which the author has been able to compile and to condense in this summary of XIII plus 1,917 pages. And yet the author is right in stating: "The present volume — in spite of its forbidding bulk — is merely a brief summary of a vast field of research" (p. XI). This summary consists of five parts, Part I, The Old Testament as a Whole, containing the following chapters: I. Religious Interest in the Old Testament; II. Literary Interest in the Old Testament; III. Historical and Critical Interest in the Old Testament; IV. History of the Canon; V. Text and Versions of the Old Testament. Part II consists of the following chapters: I. General Considerations; II–VI: The J, S, E Documents, The Book of Deuteronomy, and The Priestly Code (P); VII. The Codes of Law in the Pentateuch; VIII. The Poems in the Pentateuch; IX. The Redactors in the Pentateuch. Part III on the Former Prophets naturally contains four chapters, while the same number of chapters is to be found in Part IV on the Latter Prophets. Part V on The Writings of Hagiographa with its eleven chapters concludes the summary proper. The Selected Bibliography (pp. 849–884), The Index of Authors, The Index of Passages, and The Index of Subjects represent valuable additions to the whole volume. Especially the comprehensive historical material on the text, manuscripts and versions of the Old Testament together with the history of the Canon, which cannot be found in such detail in most other Introductions, will be welcomed by all students of the Old Testament. The same can be said of the summaries of the contents of each Biblical book. And those of our readers, who wish to acquaint themselves more fully with the "results" and "findings" of Liberal Biblical Criticism will find all the necessary information contained in this book.

It is not a matter of indifference whether we are acquainted with the "findings" and "results" of Radical Criticism or not. The first article in our *Quartalschrift* on modern Old Testament Criticism by Professor A. Pieper in 1908 reads thus: "Es ist Zeit, daß auch unsere rechtgläubige amerikanisch-lutherische Kirche sich mit der modernen Bibelkritik auseinandersetzt" (p. 37). And again: "So können wir uns einer gründlichen Auseinandersetzung mit der negativen Bibelkritik, diesem Fluch der modernen Theologie, die den Grund umreißt, nicht mehr entziehen" (p. 40). After 35 years we have more reason

than ever to do so, because of the great inroads which Modern Biblical Criticism has made since then. Even if W. A. Irwin is exaggerating, nevertheless his claim made in an article of *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* (April 1941) is worthy of note: "Indeed it is one of the most significant tributes to the achievement of Wellhausen that the methods which he so brilliantly demonstrated are now triumphant throughout the entire area of biblical study. Conservative scholars of today no longer appeal to some sort of *deus ex machina* that will vindicate all the inconsistencies and errors in the inspired records; they have all become themselves critics employing the critical recourse to evidence and induction" (pp. 115-116). If all the conservative scholars have themselves become critics taught and coached by Wellhausen and his School, then the question is justified, whether they have also accepted and taken over the "findings" and "results" of Radical Criticism as a part of their creed. The liberal German Old Testament scholar, Johannes Hempel, in his work: "Die Althebräische Literatur" 1930 gives us the following answer to our question: "Wenn aber Julius Wellhausen seinen 'Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels' 1883 bei ihrem zweiten Erscheinen die Weissagung mit auf den Weg gab, die kirchliche Wissenschaft werde seine Ergebnisse zwar 50 Jahre lang 'widerlegen', dann aber 'einen mehr oder minder geistreichen Gesichtspunkt auffinden, unter welchem dieselbe ins Credo aufgenommen werden kann', so zeigt ein Blick auf jüngste Kämpfe in Deutschland und England, daß die Aufnahme der höheren Kritik und ihres Ertrages ins Credo noch gute Weile hat" (pp. 1-2). With the "jüngste Kämpfe in Deutschland und England" Dr. Hempel is referring to writings on the Old Testament by various theologians including W. Moeller, "Um die Inspiration der Bibel," who is not a stranger in our midst because of his gallant defense of Biblical tradition and the verbal inspiration of the Bible. The issue, which we have to face, is not only one concerning the methods of Biblical Criticism, but also concerning the religious contents of the Scriptures and their interpretation. The Introduction by Robert Pfeiffer never leaves us in doubt as to this issue, because the author tells us clearly what the Old Testament is "for us moderns" (p. 10). He speaks to us on "the concept of inspired Scriptures" and on "the inconsistencies of Judaism" as to "what was to be regarded as inspired Scripture" (p. 3). He does not mince matters in evaluating "the numerous stories about ancient heroes (from Adam to Samuel)" as "pious legends" (p. 50). He is not reticent as to why "the deepest religious truths can be detected in the most secular words of the Scriptures" (p. 3), and finally we are not left in the dark as to the various religions of salvation, of which Christianity is but one (p. 580). We would have to confess our ignorance of the "results" and "findings" of Liberal Criticism, had we expected any other evaluation of the Bible and its contents on the part of the author, an out-

standing representative of the school of Radical Criticism of the Bible. His Introduction however should be studied by us not only because of the valuable historical material which it contains, but also because of the insight which it imparts into the theories and arguments of Modern Radical Criticism of the Bible. P. Peters.

Samuel A. Cartledge, A Conservative Introduction to the Old Testament. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich., 238 pages. \$1.75.

This "Conservative Introduction" does not belong to that class of Old Testament Introductions, which like those of Green, Moeller, and others attacks the findings of Liberal Criticism and defends those of Conservative Criticism at every turn. The author does not deny that "Radical Criticism has at times been unnecessarily destructive," but also adds: "Conservative criticism has sought to defend entirely too much of what was based on mere tradition rather than on fact" (p. 18). Consequently the author seeks to avoid extremes and to find a happy mean between Radical and Conservative Criticism of the Bible, without however defining this golden mean clearly enough to the reader. As regarding the "Mosaic authorship theory" and the "documentary hypothesis" for instance, the author finally says: "Each side has evidence for it and against it. Each scholar should weigh the evidence for himself and follow it wherever it may lead" (p. 62). In other words we are to take two sets of theories for granted in the field of Biblical Criticism, the theories of the Radical and those of the Conservative schools. They are to be studied in connection with every book of the Bible, their evidence is to be weighed and the reader, not the author of an Introduction to the Old Testament, is to pass the verdict. Such an Introduction therefore has the character of an unfinished work in as far as Biblical Criticism plays a part in it. But is this the fault of the author? Is this indecision and indefiniteness not to be ascribed to Biblical Criticism as such, especially, as the author points out, to Old Testament Criticism?

We are not at variance with Professor Cartledge, because he is practising Biblical Criticism. We would be at variance with the tradition of our Lutheran Church and of our Synod, if this were the case. In the article by Professor Pieper, mentioned in another review, we read on page 41: "An sich ist die Kritik nichts Böses, ja die Kirche kann ihrer nicht entraten" (Quartalschr. Januar, 1908). This therefore must be said in favor of this "Conservative Introduction": It forces the reader to give an account of his own critical views on the authorship, date, place, purpose and so on of the individual books of the Bible. The question however arises whether Biblical tradition permits us to speak of a "Mosaic authorship theory," whether the inerrant Bible does not definitely decide many questions

for us concerning authorship, purpose, and so on of the Biblical books?

The author does not ignore Biblical tradition. Here he also weighs the evidence. But the conclusions which he draws from the books of the Old Testament, for instance in regard to the Mosaic authorship, is this: "It must be admitted, however, that in no one of these passages can it be proved conclusively that the reference was to the whole of the Pentateuch" (p. 46). And in regard to the testimony of the New Testament the author's final decision is: "Even though it could be proved that Jesus did speak of the whole of the Pentateuch as of Mosaic authorship, it is possible for a Conservative to believe either that He was adapting his speech to the belief current in His day or that He may have seen fit to limit His omniscience in regard to minor historical matters, as we know He did in regard to the time of His second coming" (p. 47).

We disagree with the author in his evaluation of Biblical tradition. Biblical tradition is the tradition of "God's own divine, infallible Word." The author however does not hold to the inerrancy of the Bible. Since "the Bible may have erred from time to time," we are told, "Conservatives should recognize clearly that errors in matters of historical detail do not imply errors in matters of faith and practise or invalidate a firm belief in plenary inspiration of Scripture" (p. 60). This departure from the inerrancy of the Bible throws the door of Biblical Criticism wide open to Radical Critics with their evaluation or rather disparagement of Biblical tradition and of the words of Jesus. We can sum up the attitude of Radical Criticism in the words of Baumgärtel cited by Moeller in "Die Einheit und Echtheit der 5 Bücher Mosis": "Die Wissenschaft tut völlig recht daran, wenn sie sich hinsichtlich der Beurteilung der geschichtlichen Verhältnisse und der Entstehung des Alten Testaments über das Urteil Jesu hinwegsetzt" (p. 445). This is the gulf which separates the Biblical Criticism of orthodox theologians from the Radical Criticism of Liberal theologians.

We also must differ with the author in the evaluation of theories in the field of Biblical Criticism. It is self-evident that even the soundest Biblical Criticism does not operate without certain theories. Statements concerning the possibility of sources, which Moses and other Old Testament writers used or concerning the authorship of those books of the Old Testament, whose authors are not known to us, these and many others, must be classified as theories. It is therefore indeed our duty, as the author points out, to differentiate in the field of Biblical Criticism between facts and theories. But we must also differentiate between theories and theories. Theories in conformity with Biblical tradition are essentially different from theories which contradict Biblical tradition. Again it is not a matter of indifference to find "the Conservative holding to that theory which is con-

sistent with his fundamental beliefs and the Radical holding to that theory which is consistent with his" (p. 18). These "fundamental beliefs" create a gulf between Radical and Conservative Criticism, which cannot be bridged over.

We are fully aware of the fact that this "Conservative Introduction," to repeat the words of W. A. Irwin cited in another review, is a significant tribute to the achievements of Wellhausen, and that the methods which he so brilliantly demonstrated are to a certain degree triumphant in this work of our author. How far they are triumphant in the Lutheran Churches of America is a question worth pondering.

P. Peters.

Why Do I Believe the Bible is God's Word. By William Dallmann. Fifth Printing. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 1943. Paper edition. Price, 60 cents.

"Why I Believe the Bible is the Word of God" was read by the author at the meeting of the English Synod of Missouri and Other States in Buffalo, N. Y., in 1901. The fifth printing proves that it appeals to a large class of readers in our Synodical circles. The large variety of subjects, including Judaism, Heathenism, Barbarism, Islam, Papacy, Higher Criticism, Literature, Art, Government, War, and many others, discussed in this essay of 138 pages to illustrate the power of God's Word on the hearts and minds of men, make for very edifying and profitable reading.

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On Runways of Love, edited by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Department of Missionary Education. St. Louis, Mo. Concordia Publishing House, 1943. Stiff cover; 128 pages. Price, 25 cents.

This is the fourth book of the series of mission publications projected by the Church's Department of Missionary Education. The other three books were reviewed and recommended in the foregoing issue of the *Quartalschrift* (pp. 159-160). No less do we recommend number four of this series consisting of two parts: Part One, The Giving of Joy; Part Two, The Joy of Giving. In Part One Bible stories are discussed to emphasize the giving of joy, while in Part Two Bible verses are placed at the head of each chapter and explained in order to prove the joy of giving. Drawings appropriately illustrate the lessons.

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The Story of the Reformation. Prepared by J. M. Weidenschilling. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Price, 5 cents, doz., 50 cents, hundred, \$3.50.

In the Prefatory Note we are informed that "this pamphlet aims to provide material for a fairly comprehensive study of the story of the Reformation" in services commemorating the Reformation. "The material has been so arranged that, if a shorter service is desired, the

questions marked with an asterisk (*) may be omitted, thus reducing the program by about one half. Or, to shorten the service still more if necessary, all the questions may be omitted," the answers having been so worded "that they form a continuous narrative without the questions." The questions are arranged for Primary, Intermediate and Upper Grades. The suggestion is also made "that a copy of this program be given to all persons attending the service." P. Peters.

Elementary Citizenship for Lutheran Schools (Wisconsin Edition).

By Herbert A. Sitz. 111 pages. Illustrated. Paper covers with cloth back. Price, 60 cents. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee 3, Wis.

This excellent new textbook fills a longfelt need in our Christian day schools. Here for the first time the important study of citizenship is presented from the Biblical viewpoint of a Christian citizen. Moreover, the material is set forth in a style which compares most favorably with any similar text on the market. Not only is its author a teacher of many years' experience, but he has also acquired for himself an enviable reputation as a facile and most enjoyable writer in the field of education. His book has grown out of a personal search for the proper approach to instruction in Christian citizenship and was at first published privately upon request for teachers in Minnesota who had examined it and thereupon urged the author to put it into print.

When this edition was exhausted, the School Board of the Joint Synod unanimously decided that such a valuable contribution to our own published school texts must not be lost to the church. At their request the author revived the contents and adapted them especially to our day schools in Wisconsin. If, as we confidently expect, this textbook receives enthusiastic welcome on the part of Lutheran teachers in the larger circle of our Synodical Conference, it is planned to publish special editions for other states also. In the meantime teachers in other states will find that they can use this Wisconsin edition quite satisfactorily in their schools by supplying the material on individual state administrations from wellknown state publications and yearbooks.

We suggest that our pastors and teachers provide themselves with a copy of *Elementary Citizenship* at once. If they are as pleased as we are with the delightful presentation of the subject matter, with the study helps at the end of most chapters, with the clear readable print, and with the low price of the book, they will arrange to have an adequate supply of copies on hand at the opening of school next fall.

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Alle hier angegebenen Sachen können durch unser Northwestern Publishing House, 935-937 North Fourth Street, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin, bezogen werden.

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Opening Address

Delivered at the Lutheran Theological Seminary
in Thiensville, Wisconsin, September 21, 1943

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (II Cor. 5, 20. 21).

Dear Fellow Lutherans, Members of the Student Body:

We are living in a turbulent time. The whole world is trembling in the throes of a devastating war. Empires are crumbling before our eyes. The old stability in social conditions, in financial and political matters is gone. Changes are taking place all around us. And with fear and apprehension the question is asked: What may the future hold in store for us? Men in all stations of life are groping — in vain, we are convinced — for a new social order which is to insure a lasting peace here on earth after this war. There are many who look to the Christian Church, as so often is the case in days of stress, for leadership to save this world from impending chaos. And leaders in various denominations are voicing their opinions on the peace terms to be imposed upon the warring, especially the defeated nations. The demand is made that this time the Church also be invited to a seat at the peace table together with the secular powers at the victorious conclusion of the war.

What position must we as Lutheran Christians take in this matter? Should we as a Church also clamor for a hearing when the peace terms are stipulated? Should we agitate for a new world-order in which Christ shall reign supreme and His Kingdom

be established by force? It goes without saying that individually each church member as a citizen is held to do his part to further the welfare of our country, and that we are doing cheerfully for the Lord's sake. But this is not our concern now. Rather this, whether it is the duty of our Lutheran Church, *e. g.* of our Synod, to interfere in the affairs of our government and to influence its policies. Since there seems to be a great deal of confusion in the minds of many otherwise well-meaning Christians, and the proper attitude of our Church evidently depends on a correct answer, the importance of an accurate perception on the part of Christians in general and the present and future leaders of the Church in particular is readily understood. As Lutherans we look for enlightenment not to any human authority but to the Lord of the Church Himself, to God as He has revealed Himself to us in the Bible, His inerrant and infallible Word.

We are gathered here today for the opening of a new school year of our Theological Seminary. And since the aim of this theological school, as stated in the catalog, is "to offer a satisfactory preparation for those who desire to enter the ministry of the Lutheran Church" this is not merely an opportune time but it is peculiarly fitting and appropriate to the occasion when we ascertain anew what the task of the Church is in this world, hence also the mission of the men whom she calls into the public ministry. We hold that

The ministry has no other mandate but to bring the free grace of God to a sin-laden world.

To convince ourselves of it we consider

1. *The office of the ministry itself,*
- and 2. *The service the ministry renders.*

I.

Minister means servant, and ministry service. Paul says of himself and other public ministers on the one hand: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. 4, 1), and on the other: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (II Cor. 4, 5). How do these two statements agree with each other? Jesus gives the explanation saying

of Himself: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matth. 20, 28), and of the rule in His Kingdom: "Whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (ibid. v. 27). If a Christian, especially a minister or pastor, is not willing to be a servant to his fellow-men, regardless of their station in life, their worthiness or unworthiness, then he is not minded like his Master who took upon Himself the form of a servant and humbled Himself (Phil. 2, 5-8). Should we not rather exult over the fact that we are deemed worthy to be co-servants with our Lord and His great apostle?

In our text the apostle calls himself and his co-workers "ambassadors for Christ." What does that imply?

It is customary for secular rulers to send their personal representatives to the seat of government of other nations. They are called either ministers or ambassadors. It is a mark of high regard of confidence when a man is chosen to represent his ruler in foreign countries. Such a man speaks with authority and his words are listened to with great respect. Not for any merit or accomplishment of his own, but because by him his country is represented, his voice is the voice of his government, his words are not his own, but convey the thoughts and the will of the government of his nation. An ambassador, to do justice to his exalted station, must be so devoted a servant of his nation as to be willing to efface himself, must be satisfied to be merely a tool, a channel if you will, which transmits the message of his government. His position is fraught with tremendous responsibility. Should he forget himself and speak out of turn serious mischief is done. He may jeopardize the friendly relations of the countries involved. And often the harm cannot entirely be undone by his recall and a public disavowal by his government.

We, the ministers, are ambassadors for Christ, the apostle says. There is no more exalted position conceivable. The minister is the mouthpiece of the King of kings and the Lord of lords, of Christ who has the keys of heaven and hell. With joy, yes, that he is privileged to be an ambassador for Christ, but also with fear and trembling must such a man take up the duties of his office. For here, after all, it is not the temporal weal and woe of nations which is at stake; but the fate of sinful mankind, not merely for the few short years of this earthly life but for all

eternity, depends on the faithful administration of the office of the ministry. In the pulpit, at the altar, at the bedside of the sick and dying, in his calls at the homes of his parishioners, and in his missionary endeavors he must be ever conscious of his stewardship as an ambassador for Christ. In the discharge of the duties of his office no word must come from his lips which does not bear the stamp of divine approval. Where his Master has not spoken it behooves him to remain silent. But where his Lord has spoken he must lend his voice to His service with utter disregard to the consequences. — Such is the office of the ministry.

II.

What is the service the ministry renders? When Jesus said to His disciples, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Luke 10, 16), He linked their ministry indissolubly to His own. And what was His mission here on earth? He states it very tersely thus: "The son of man is come to save that which was lost" (Matth. 18, 11). That, then, was the purpose of all the preaching and teaching He did during His earthly sojourn. When the people, after He had performed many miracles in their midst, tried to detain Him He told them: "I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also; for therefore am I sent" (Luke 4, 43). Then, after His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His assembled disciples and charged them, "Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20, 21). And before He withdrew His visible presence from them for all time He gave them the great commission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16, 15). He once summed it up for us in words as simple as they are beautiful: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3, 16). This Gospel, Paul assures us, "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1, 16).

That the disciples as ambassadors for Christ are to announce the free grace of God in Christ Jesus to the world is altogether contrary to any reasonable human expectation. Is it not the holy and just God that sends them, the Christ whom this same world

nailed to the cross? Indeed, those for whom the message is intended are God's enemies, men who have willfully turned their backs to Him, who are constantly flouting Him. What we would reasonably expect is a message proclaiming the righteous wrath of God and the sinners' rejection, a message sealing their eternal doom. But wonder of wonders! It is a message of peace and salvation, that He has in Christ reconciled the world to Himself, that He does not impute their trespasses unto them, does not charge them to their account. We may well ask, how is that possible? But there is no answer human reason can supply. The eternal Son of God who is in the bosom of the Father has bared the Father's heart to us, when He says, "For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son." Oh, unfathomable love which pours out mercy instead of wrath, which sheds the blood of the only begotten Son as a ransom for the fallen race of men! For that purpose God's Son was made a man. Paul through the Holy Ghost expresses the same blessed truth in our text thus: "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." No earth-born man can ever fully grasp what these words imply. Mark! The apostle does not say, the Holy One of God was made a sinner; no, He was made sin for us. God took all the sins of all sinners, of the whole world, and put them upon His beloved Son. Yes, He was made sin for us. God poured out the vials of His wrath not upon us who have deserved it, but upon Him Who knew no sin, Who never has committed any wrong while He walked on this earth as a true man.

In this manner God satisfied His righteousness through the shedding of the blood of Jesus. Through His atoning death He reconciled the world unto Himself. And we, the sinners, were made the righteousness of God in Him, in Christ. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4, 25). God, above Whom there is no other judge, from whose verdict there is no appeal, pronounced the innocent Christ guilty and the sin-ridden world righteous. "If God be for us who can be against us?" (Rom. 8, 31.) "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh

intercession for us" (ibid. 33. 34). "God commandeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5, 8). "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (ibid. v. 10).

This is the message the ambassadors for Christ are bringing to the world: the full and unconditioned Gospel of the free grace of God in Christ Jesus. This is the service the ministry renders.

Our text, however, has also a word on the manner or spirit in which the announcement of complete pardon is to be made. The apostle says: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." This points to a danger against which an ambassador for Christ must guard. In our Lord's service we are making the experience that the world scorns our message of divine love. We are rebuffed for our efforts, even hated. The sinners reject the Lord who has bought them, and us, his servants. Then we become weary and reluctant to continue with our pleadings to bring the world in contrition and repentance to the feet of the Savior. We are loath to beg a stiff-necked generation: Be ye reconciled to God. There may come the time when we feel that forgiving love with its offer of pardon ceases to be a virtue, that the Almighty should strike the sinner down in His wrath. Then let us remember the misplaced zeal of James and John for the honor of their beloved Master. They asked permission to have the Samaritans who refused to receive Jesus into their village consumed by fire from heaven. What did Jesus say? He rebuked them saying: "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9, 52-56).

In conclusion I wish to address myself especially to you, the students of our seminary. The Lord is asking: "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" And you are answering with Isaiah: "Here am I; send me," and are offering yourselves to the service in His Church. The apostle Paul tells us: "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (I Tim. 3, 1). In our meditation today you have been given an exposition of the holy ministry and its scope. Perhaps you are trembling in the conviction of your inability and unworthiness when you consider the exalted office to which you are aspiring, its high dignity and its great responsibility. But be of

good cheer! You are devoting yourselves to the study of theology. Theology is not merely a science, the science of God, His essence and His will, as the dictionary defines it. It is much more than a science. We prefer the definition of the old teachers of our Church, the much-maligned dogmaticians. They describe theology as a "habitus practicus," a quality or aptness (hikanötēs, Tuechtigkeit), wrought by the Holy Ghost through the Gospel. This makes a man, on the basis of the saving knowledge of Christ (faith), a witness of Christ in an unbelieving world. A theologian must first of all be a Christian, a "man of God thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3, 17). He must be (thēōdidaktōs) "taught of God" (I Thess. 4, 9). Only then will he pursue his studies with the fixed purpose of translating his knowledge acquired in his study of theology into the practice of saving souls as an ambassador for Christ. Only then will he humbly and confidently confess with Paul: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament" (II Cor. 3, 5. 6). He to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth is always ready to strengthen and sustain us according to His promise: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matth. 28, 20). Therefore be of good cheer, for "this is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."

M. LEHNINGER.

"My Kingdom is not of this World"

John 18:36.

Essay delivered by Rev. Dr. Hr. Koch at the 27th Convention of the Ev. Luth. Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States in Watertown, Wis., August 4-11, 1943

When Christ, the Son of God and man, stood before Pilate, the representative of Tiberius, and was asked by this mighty governor whether He was the King of the Jews and answered, "My Kingdom is not of this world," it was one of the most decisive moments of history. The words spoken by Christ still reverberate through the ages and cannot be silenced even by the most powerful worldly governments or distorted by worldly-minded church bodies seeking to establish an earthly kingdom and falsely naming it after Christ. When and wherever kingdoms of the world strove for

world supremacy and churches also wanted to have their say and way in the affairs of this world, the words of Christ seemed like a discordant note in the symphony of earthly kingdoms and worldly churches. In vain have the mighty of this world tried to silence the voice and claim of Christ through the centuries or ridicule it as the mere opinion of a political dilettante or harmless idealist. Time and again have powerful visible churches attempted to change Christ's words as meaning a kingdom of this world. The Church of Rome has done it and still does it. The Reformed Church with its host of sectarian denominations has also done this and still does it, seemingly not as pronounced but ultimately just as pronounced, as in the Church of Rome. By the grace of God the Lutheran Church was the only church which clearly taught that Christ's kingdom is a spiritual one and not a kingdom to be confounded with any worldly government or visible churches. Sad to say, a wrong trend seems to be increasingly noticeable in various Lutheran church bodies. It is, therefore, doubly important that we of the true Lutheran Church be on our guard, lest this priceless doctrine and article of faith be taken away from us.

Pilate tries to brush aside Christ's claim of Kingship with his words, "What is truth?" Nietzsche, one of the many opponents of Christ and Christianity, a vicious Christ-hater, has sensed the importance of Christ's words and claim and has made a counter-claim in his *Antichrist* (Sect. 46), where he refers to our passage in John 18:36. He asserts that in the whole New Testament there is only one figure of honor, Pilate, the Roman viceroy, before whom Christ is accused shamelessly to have mishandled the truth. Pilate must admit the perfect innocence of Christ, and feels very uneasy in the presence of the King of Kings. Nietzsche and his co-warriors against Christ and Christianity are filled with venom and would like to destroy the Christian Church. Let them try to eradicate this claim and Kingdom of Christ, to ridicule it, to render it harmless, to neutralize it, it will nevertheless remain as the only truth. True Christians will neither pin their hopes on Utopian visible kingdoms of Christ nor on the powerful arm of the kingdoms of this world, but will cling to the spiritual kingdom

of the King of Kings and rest secure in the firm belief that Christ rules in their hearts, knowing that their citizenship is in heaven and that they are heirs of the kingdom of glory.

Christ's kingdom is the very opposite of all real and imaginary kingdoms of this earth. Today the words and claim of Christ are again in the crucible. Some would like to cast them out as dross. Such is the opinion of those earth-bound governments who feel no obligation to God. Others within the visible churches would like to stretch and weaken Christ's words by adding baser metals and confusing Christ's invisible church with the visible churches. Heaven and earth shall once be removed, but Christ's words, once spoken before a mighty Roman governor, will still be regarded as the truth. Shall we of the true Lutheran Church retain their true meaning in our trying days and defend them as Luther did, or will we permit them to be intermingled with the opinions and wisdom of this world? That is the question. How will we answer it, thereby retaining or forfeiting our singular claim and the truth? Will we prove worthy of the Scriptural claim or will we lose this priceless treasure and doctrine by default?

It would seem to us that a re-study of the words of Christ would be of vital importance to us. Since this task has been assigned to us, we should like to choose as our theme the momentous words of Christ: "My Kingdom is not of this world," glean from Scriptures the true meaning and spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and observe the rule of the King of Kings in His three-fold kingdom of power, grace, and glory, at the same time refuting the most characteristic misinterpretations and applications in the history of the Church.

Before entering upon a discussion of the kingdom of power we shall deal with details of the scene of Christ before Pilate only in so far as they lend light to the interpretation of Christ's memorable words: "My Kingdom is not of this world." It is still a matter of controversy whether the trial of Jesus before Pilate took place in the palace of Herod or in Fort Antonia. The German Ludwig Schneller, who was born and reared in Jerusalem and who had firsthand opportunity to examine the facts, and Farrar in his *Life of Christ* are of the opinion that it was in the palace of Herod the Great that

Christ spoke the words never to be forgotten: "My Kingdom is not of this world." Others, among them Lenski, hold the opposite view, arguing that Herod of Galilee was in Jerusalem at the time. He, however, could have taken residence in the older Hasmonaean palace. The lesser Herod had to give way to the greater Pilate, for whom the grandest palace was just good enough. It is irrelevant as far as the meaning of the words is concerned, although all arguments held forth against the palace do not seem to be conclusive. If it was Herod's palace, which we are inclined to believe, then these words take on double importance in themselves and as to the place where they were spoken. Once Wise Men came from the East to seek the newborn King of the Jews in the palace of Herod. They had to go to Bethlehem to find Him, the Scribes pointing the way out of the prophecies of the Old Testament. At that time Herod sought the life of this King. God rendered His divine verdict: "They are dead, which sought the young child's life." (Matth. 2:20.) Now this King has grown up into manhood and is personally present in the very palace of Herod, making known His claims of Kingship. The palace is still there, Herod is no more. Other Scribes this time point to the cross; there He should hang, because He made Himself the King of the Jews. What an irony of fate! What a contrast!

It is John who gives us this scene before Pilate in detail. Luke 23 gives us a briefer account. John has one outstanding thought and aim in his gospel. He wants to prove the divinity of Jesus. Christ's majestic pronouncement surely brings out this divinity very emphatically.

The accusers, the members of the Sanhedrin, the Scribes and the Pharisees, have arrived before Pilate with their victim and seek His death. Discovering that Pilate will not merely act as executioner for them, and knowing that he will not condemn Christ on the accusation of blasphemy, they frame a political accusation, claiming that Jesus was perverting the nation, had forbidden to give tribute to Caesar and had called Himself Christ, a King. It is the last accusation that especially interests Pilate and which he must investigate. It is the most incriminating one, and might cost Pilate his posi-

tion and life if found true and not acted upon. The Jews will not be able to stone Jesus as they had attempted once before (John 10:31). Pilate will render the verdict and sentence Jesus to die on the cross in order that Jew and Gentile become guilty alike before God for the death of the Son of God. It is John who gives us the true reason (12:20), in order that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spoke signifying what kind of death He should die. He who can foretell the exact kind of death he will die must surely be God.

Christ affirms before Pilate in that memorable trial that He is King but that His Kingdom is not of this world. The kingdoms of this world can be seen, Christ's Kingdom is invisible, is an article of faith. This we must always bear in mind if we want to understand the true nature and purpose of Christ's kingdom. Because Pilate could not with his own eyes see this kingdom of Christ and thought that it merely existed in the imagination of a harmless dreamer and enthusiast, a kingdom of truth most likely as meaningless and harmless as the idealistic state of Plato, he did not believe that Christ was a king. The malefactor on the cross, however, only saw a man with a crown of thorns on His head and had seen an inscription reading: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." Nevertheless with the eyes of faith he saw in this man the King of Kings and begged Him, "Remember me, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom."

When did Christ become King? As Son of God He was King from all eternity, equal in essence and power with the Father and the Holy Ghost. As Son of man He assumed the Kingship according to His human nature at His incarnation. Here on earth Christ did not always let His royal glory shine forth. He did ride into the City of Jerusalem as King and accepted the acclamations as Son of David, thereby fulfilling the prophecy: "Behold, Thy King cometh unto thee." (Zech. 9:9.) He did make His majestic and royal claim known before Pilate but was not recognized as such. His own disciples wanted Him to take over the role of a mighty King, rule over His enemies and establish His kingdom here on earth, but only after Christ's ascension, at the time of His coronation as King sitting at the right hand of God the Father, did they gradually

begin to see more clearly and recognize Christ as the King of Kings. With the eyes of faith they beheld His royal glory.

The Scriptures speak of the Kingdom of God and also of the Kingdom of Christ. The two are identical in every respect. It is especially called the kingdom of Christ, because it was given to the Son by the Father. As our Mediator Christ received it according to His human nature from the Father. He was exalted according to His human nature and is now also King of Kings according to His human nature and is omnipotent in His Kingship and Kingdom.

When the Scriptures speak of the Kingdom of God or Christ they really mean the rule or government of Christ and not any group of persons or things ruled. The Bible does not call the universe or the Church the kingdom of God or Christ. Only by metonymy is the Church called the kingdom of God. It is not the primary meaning, however. Primarily the Kingdom of God or Christ denotes the rule or governmental activity of God or Christ in His Kingdom.

- It has become customary to distinguish a threefold kingdom of Christ. We find all three kingdoms in Scriptures, even though the term is a dogmatical one. When we speak of this threefold kingdom of Christ we must bear in mind that the boundaries of these kingdoms are not exclusive. The kingdom of grace lies within the kingdom of power, but not all in the kingdom of power belong to the kingdom of grace. Not all men are members of the Church invisible. When we speak of the three kingdoms, we mean three distinct spheres of action, different persons or things, which come under the influence of Christ in each case. Only in this way can we say that the kingdom of power is the universe, the kingdom of grace His Church, and the kingdom of glory is in heaven.

It has been maintained, not only by Schleiermacher but also by theologians of our days, that the kingdom of Christ only extends over the Church and that when Christ said, "My Kingdom is not of this world," He merely meant the kingdom of grace, the Church and not the kingdoms of power and glory. It is Reformed theology to restrict the kingdom of Christ to the elect and leave all the rest to the Father. It is, furthermore, Reformed theology to stress a visible kingdom of Christ

here on earth and have this visible kingdom work like a leaven which is to pervade the whole world gradually. It is Scriptural and Lutheran theology to extend the rule of Christ over all three kingdoms, not only over the kingdom of grace. Let us be on our guard lest the leaven of Reformed theology found in much of the sectarian literature of our days pervade and adulterate our own Lutheran theology. The Reformed Church stresses a visible kingdom of Christ here on earth and believes in its final possible realization. The Lutheran Church emphasizes the spiritual nature of Christ's rule or kingdom and bases it on Christ's own words: "My Kingdom is not of this world." For this reason we shall now endeavor to see and to show Christ's absolute rule in all three kingdoms, furthermore, the nature and purpose of each kingdom, and come to the conclusion that the whole of Christ's rule in His kingdom of power and grace is to serve but one purpose, the furtherance and progress of His invisible Church in the kingdom of grace and the final triumph of the same and its consummation in the kingdom of glory in heaven.

That the kingdom of Christ is all-inclusive we can readily see from the words of Jesus spoken shortly before His ascension (Math. 28:18): "To Me is given *all* power in heaven and on earth" (Vollmacht). Here Christ does not restrict His authority to the rule over the Church alone, but He does tell His disciples what the most important duty in this world is: "Go and preach the Gospel." The rule of Christ over the Church is the cardinal or pivotal rule, on which everything else here on earth hinges. In Matth. 11:27 Jesus tells us, "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father." This passage also refers primarily to His kingdom of grace, but not exclusively. In this connection Jesus also speaks of the judgment over the unbelievers, an exclusion from the kingdom of grace and demonstration of His divine power. Paul writes (Philippians 2:9ff.): "God hath highly exalted Him (Christ), and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." If this bowing of the knee would only

mean bowing in true belief in Christ, then this passage would teach universalism, the final salvation of the whole human race. This would be unscriptural interpretation. Christ Himself as King will say to them on the left hand on the day of judgment, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into *everlasting fire*, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matth. 25:41.) The Words of Christ "everlasting fire," rule out every thought and hope that the whole family of mankind will ultimately be saved.

Already in the Old Testament this all-inclusive kingdom of Christ is prophesied and portrayed. In Dan. 7:14 we read: "There was given Him (the Son of Man) dominion and glory and a kingdom, that *all peoples and nations and languages should serve Him*. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Furthermore (Psalm 110:1f.) "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit Thou at my right hand *until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool*. The Lord shall send the *rod of Thy strength* out of Zion, *rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies*." In Jeremiah 23:5f. we read: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch and a King shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth (power). In His days shall Judah be saved and Israel shall dwell safely (grace)." All these passages definitely prove the all-inclusive rule and power of Jesus, not only over the kingdom of grace. Only they who are interested in a visible establishment of a kingdom of Christ here on earth desire the restriction to the kingdom of grace. Already in the Old Testament we hear that all nations are to serve the Lord. To serve does not necessarily mean to believe. The enemies are to be Christ's footstool. He rules in their midst, even though they always try to foil His efforts. In the New Testament Christ is called the Head over all things, under whose feet all things are put, including the powers of darkness. (Ephes. 1:21f.) Here we see the direct fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy in Christ.

I

Christ rules in His Kingdom of Power

We shall at first discuss Christ's rule in His kingdom of power. The rule of Christ in this kingdom extends over the

whole universe, heaven, earth and hell, all persons and things. It is the reign of justice or righteousness and power. This rule will continue to the end of days. Then this world is destined for final destruction. This world is being held together by the almighty Word and power of Jesus and will collapse when the last elect is saved and Christ comes to judge the quick and the dead. All happenings and events in this world only serve that one purpose of Christ's rule, the building of the kingdom of grace and its final triumph. Nations and rulers, angels and men, believers and unbelievers all serve the Lord in fulfilling this one purpose, some knowingly and willingly, others unknowingly and unwillingly. Yet all persons and things are there to serve the Lord and glorify His name.

In the beginning everything was created for the benefit of man and the glory of God. The whole creation served man and revealed the glory of God. Man, however, was tempted by the same sin that hurled Satan in hell, and was driven out of paradise. Henceforth most animals no longer obeyed man, the soil was cursed for his sake. Sin lies like mildew on all the works of man. Death and destruction lie in his wake. Man's greed, his lust for power and wealth cause the greatest havoc and destruction. Man is to man a wolf, the ancient Romans said. The evolutionists call it a grim battle for the survival of the fittest. Man left to himself would soon have destroyed everything, and chaos would have resulted. God, however, Who had created this world for the benefit of man, wants it to continue to exist again for the benefit of man. God is a God of love and seeks man's salvation from the terrible bond of sin and its wages of death. He sent His Son, who atoned for the sins of man. He has this Gospel of salvation preached to man. In order that this Gospel can be preached in a world doomed to destruction because of the sin of man, God still preserves and sustains it through ordinances established at the time of the creation of this world and after the flood in the new Noachic World-Order. These ordinances are to counteract the disastrous result of sin, are to help preserve mankind. If it were not for these ordinances this world of sin and death could and would no longer exist.

God's plan of salvation, His love for sin-ridden mankind, cause Him to preserve this world till the last elect are saved. As salt preserves food and prevents its rapid decay, God through His ordinances preserves this world of sin and death for the carrying out of the plan of salvation. The evolutionist sees nothing but a grim struggle for the survival of the fittest and vainly hopes for a paradise here on earth. The Christian knows that this world is a vale of tears because of the sin of man and will never be changed into a paradise, but rather destroyed when the Gospel of the kingdom has been preached and the last elect is saved. This we must bear in mind, if we want to understand Christ's rule in His kingdom of power.

Furthermore, the kingdoms of this world cannot do as they please. They are responsible to Christ, must serve Him and His interest. Christ rules in the midst of His enemies, they are His footstool. For a time it may seem as though not Christ but Satan were ruling, but only for a time. When nations and men have run their course, fulfilled their task assigned to them by Christ, they disappear from the stage of this world and others take their place. Christ does not only rule over the universe, the sun, moon and stars in the heavens do not only obey Him, but also nations and individuals must finally carry out Christ's plans, must serve that one cause, the building of Christ's kingdom and its final triumph. These two factors, Christ's rule over and maintenance of this physical world through the ordinances of creation, and His rule over nations and individuals, we must take into consideration if we want to understand Christ's rule in the kingdom of power, its nature and its purpose.

To evaluate these factors properly we shall at first have to deal with the ordinances of creation. Government, marriage and family, labor and property, are such ordinances, by means of which the order of this world is preserved even after the fall of man. They are safeguarded by the natural law written into the heart of every man, the moral law. Man's conscience, the voice of God within man, warns him when he wants to transgress them and accuses him whenever and wherever he has transgressed them. Paul tells us (Romans 13) that the powers that be are ordained of God. Marriage

was instituted in paradise. Man was not idle in paradise. He worked, but the soil, which was not as yet cursed, brought forth abundantly. There was no work performed in the sweat of the brow. Man was master and owner of what he surveyed. Even after the fall the ordinances of God are being preserved. We are to obey our governments as ordained of God. Marriage is instituted for the propagation of the human race. If men were not born, they could not be saved. Man is to work and not live by stealing away God's time and the neighbor's property. Property is safeguarded by the seventh commandment. If we look into history we find that wherever governments are not obeyed, anarchy will be the result, and that is the beginning of the end of such government. Where marriage is not kept sacred and divorces prevail, a country cannot exist for any length of time. Rome and France may serve as a warning to us too, who are heading the list of nations in divorces and crimes. This present war brings this to light very clearly. Nothing can be achieved without hard labor. Labor keeps man away from vices. During the period of unemployment we could observe the disastrous effects of unemployment on the morale and the morality of our country. Where property rights are respected, a nation is blessed with wealth and progress. As soon as property rights are ignored and ruthless exploitation of men and material sets in, revolution and chaos will finally be the result. Some seem to think that we are in the pangs of the birth of a new world order with a resulting freedom for all, a paradise here on earth. We Christians know from Scriptures that this is wishful thinking, but we also know that this world is being preserved through God's ordinances for the building of the invisible kingdom of Christ. In spite of all the greed and lust of man, Christ nevertheless sees to it that these divine ordinances are observed. Nations rise and fall as a result of the violation of these ordinances. "Righteousness exalteth a nation and sin is a reproach to any people." (Proverbs 14:34.) This world continues to exist, whereas nations come and go. Only the Jewish race is an exception, but it also serves a purpose in Christ's plan; it serves as a warning to all who would reject Christ, the only way to salvation. The countries change

rulers and forms of government, are victorious and are defeated, rise and fall, but the building of the kingdom of Christ goes on and Christ rules over all, preserves this physical world and nations through the ordinances of His creation, and at the same time the invisible Church is being built and preserved by the means of grace. The little island of Sicily, the bloody scene of battle again in these crucial days, shows us clearly how the physical world is maintained, how nations come and go due to their observance or violation of these ordinances of creation. The outer aspect of the island has changed very little except for the spoliation of selfish man. The Gospel has been preached and adulterated, and Christ surely also has His subjects of His kingdom there as well as in other lands, but take a glance at the long list of nations who held sway over the island. Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Arabs, Goths, Byzantines, Normans, Spaniards, French, and Italians have succeeded one another on this little island, and all had to serve Christ's rule. Nations and rulers come and go, governments are preserved by ordinances and fall in case of violation, but the building of Christ's kingdom goes on. The cross of Christ towers o'er the wrecks of time and nations. The very gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

The ordinances of creation serve but one purpose, to preserve this world in order that the Gospel of the kingdom may be preached in it for the salvation of man. A Christian does not enter the kingdom of Christ by observing these ordinances. In the kingdom of Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, for all are one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28), but in civil life there are Jews and Greeks, man and wife, bond and free. All these ordinances are not only suffered by Christ, but ordained and desired. The Christian is not to denounce these institutions as being ungodly or as not being binding in our times.

Not only do nations sin against these ordinances, but also worldly visible churches. The Pope has proclaimed that priests, monks, and nuns are in a higher order of Christianity and are not to marry. He demands a higher allegiance to himself than to the governments in which the members of the Ro-

man Church happen to live. It is sinful for monks and nuns to have personal property. Thus the church of Rome, the Church of the Antichrist, breaks the ordinances of God.

However, not only Rome is guilty but also the liberal Protestant Churches. Modern, liberal leaders of churches have advocated the abolition of capital punishment. They want to take the sword out of the hands of the government, want to bring about a time when there will be no more wars. Pacifism is a pet child of liberal churches. After the first world war they all, with Fosdick at their head, proclaimed the slogan: "Never again war." Now they are in favor of a war to the finish and the Archbishop of Canterbury is one of their foremost leaders. At the World Conference for Christianity in Prague the Swedish Archbishop Soederblom maintained that wars must be abolished, and Smith, the chairman of the American Section of that same conference, said that every organization of armies, also in times of peace, is a sin against the eternal God. The Lutheran Church has always maintained with Scriptures and Luther that the hand of the government must be strengthened in all things not contrary to God's Word, that defensive wars are no sin, that a Christian should be willing to defend his country in any just war. Liberal churches have favored the complete emancipation of woman. Before God man and wife are alike as sinners and as recipients of His grace. In natural life man remains the head of the family. "He shall rule over thee," is a thorn in the flesh to many, and yet such is the ordinance of God for the family after the fall of man. Liberal churches also break down the strict laws of God's Word regarding marriage and divorce, defend birth control, and thus break into the sacred precincts of the family.

Thus we observe that although nations and individuals, the Pope and the liberal Protestant Churches, try to break down the clear ordinances and institutions of God and undermine the absolute rule of Christ in the kingdom of power, Christ nevertheless sees to it that they are maintained and punishes both nations and individuals as well as churches for their violation. Nations are exalted and blessed as long as they observe these institutions and divine ordinances. Visible

churches finally dissolve when God's Word, divine law and order are set aside. Only the Church of Rome continues, not because it is the perfect church, but because it is the Church of the Antichrist, which is to remain to the end of days, and then the man of sin will be destroyed. During the Middle Ages many a reform of the head and its members was sought within that church because of the flagrant sins against the government, marriage and family, labor and property. The Reformation struck a deadly blow from which the Papal Church has not recovered and will never completely recover. It is still a powerful agency of Satan for the deception of thousands upon thousands of Christians, but its decisive striking power over rulers and the masses is broken as is clearly evinced in these crucial days of Rome. Be not deceived, God will not be mocked. Christ will see to it that in His kingdom of power His ordinances of creation are upheld for the physical preservation of this world till the end of days, for the spreading of the spiritual kingdom, the invisible church.

In His rule of the kingdom of power Christ makes use of the ordinances of creation. Through them He upholds and preserves this material world and the earthly governments, so that they do not collapse completely and make the spreading of the spiritual kingdom impossible. That Christ rules in the kingdom of power can also be seen from the fact that all earthly rulers must finally obey and carry out the commands of Jesus and must all serve that one great purpose, the progress and final triumph of Christ's kingdom.

The rule of Christ is foreshadowed in the Old Testament theocracy. The patriarchs, judges and kings were God's representatives. The Word of God views all earthly governments and rulers as God's representatives under the fourth commandment. Only rarely do earthly rulers admit that they are not absolute in their authority and only rule by the grace of God. Whether they see it or not, whether they are ready to admit it or not, it is nevertheless a fact that all earthly rulers are subject to Christ, to whom all power is given. Jesus tells Pilate very plainly, "You would have no power over me, if it had not been given you from above." Already in the Old Testament the rule of God over the rulers of this world

is brought out by His Word to Israel (Jerem. 27:6): "I have made the earth, the man and the beast by My great power and by My outstretched arm and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto Me, and now *I have given all these lands into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and all nations shall serve him . . . until the very time of his land shall come, and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.*" Who is not reminded of the proud boast of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:30f.): "Is this not the great Babylon that *I have built by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?* While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven saying: O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee is it spoken, *The kingdom is departed from thee and they shall drive thee from men and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, they shall make thee eat grass as oxen and seven times shall pass over thee until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will.* The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar and he was driven from men and did eat grass as oxen and his body was wet with the dew of the heavens till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws. And at the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven and mine understanding returned unto me and I blessed the Most High and I praised and honored Him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion and *His kingdom is from generation to generation and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand or say to Him: What doest Thou?* At the same time my reason returned unto me, and for the glory of my kingdom mine honor and brightness returned unto me . . . *I was established in my kingdom . . . and excellent majesty was added unto me.* Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth and His ways judgment and *those that walk in pride He is able to abase.*"

Here we have a classical example of the rule of God on High over the powerful rulers of this world. It is God who gives them the rule for a time; it is He, who takes it away

from them and others serve themselves of the once proud and mighty ruler. In their greatest pride the mighty of this world boast like Nebuchadnezzar. It does not often happen that a vain boaster is humiliated like Nebuchadnezzar who had to eat grass like a beast of the field until he came to his senses and recognized that God in the heavens is the ruler over all the kingdoms of this world. We have only this one instance, but it is recorded in Holy Writ as a warning. History, however, tells us of those who lost their senses or were punished otherwise after their terrible misdeeds, through which millions of innocent people were hurled into untold misery, and were afflicted with terrible sicknesses like cruel Herod.

The vain vauntings of the mighty of this world are brought out very clearly in the second Psalm, where we have a prophesy of the kingdom of Christ. There we read: "Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of this earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying: Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh . . . Then He shall speak unto them in His wrath . . . Yet I have set My King upon My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto Me: Thou art My son: This day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear . . . Kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are they that put their trust in Him."

This prophecy has been fulfilled in Christ. Born into this world as a King, Christ took upon Himself the three-fold office of Prophet, High Priest, and King at His baptism, when a voice from heaven was heard saying, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Christ did not often reveal His royal glory while here on earth. He rejected the crown offered to Him by the miracle-seeking populace. He did

accept the acclamations of the people when He entered into Jerusalem. At that time the prophecy of the prophet Zechariah (9:9) was fulfilled: "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee." Shortly before His ascension into heaven, at His coronation, Christ said to His disciples, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth." "All things have been delivered to the Son by the Father."

Paul offers us another classical passage for the rule of God and Christ over the nations and rulers of this world in his sermon on the Areopagus in Athens, where he says (Acts 17): "God that hath made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is *Lord of heaven and earth*, dwelleth not in temples made with hands . . . He giveth life and breath to all things and hath made of one blood all nations for to dwell on the face of the earth and *hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitations*; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being."

The time, the length of rule of every nation and the exact boundaries of the lands, are predetermined by the Lord Himself, and the purpose of it all is that they might seek and find Him, the Lord. Christ, to whom all power is given, rules the universe and the individual nations and rulers. That all might find Him, is the glorious purpose of His rule. Through the ordinances of creation Christ upholds the nations for the time of their rule and prescribes their influence and sets their boundaries. By the means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments, He builds and maintains His spiritual kingdom. He is the King of Kings, whom all must obey, who rules spiritually in the hearts of His subjects. That this kingdom of grace be extended and finally culminate in the kingdom of glory is the essence and sole purpose of Christ's rule.

Examples taken from Bible History and also from the history of mankind and the Church prove to all whose eyes have been opened to the mysteries and the glories of the kingdom of Christ by the Word of God, that the Lord moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. He has all the reins of government in His hands.

God had given His chosen people, the Jews, into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. Under Nebuchadnezzar Jerusalem was destroyed. He was to lead the Jews into the Babylonian captivity, because they had forsaken God. Cyrus the Great, the founder of the Persian Empire, a powerful ruler over a country much larger than either the Assyrian or Chaldaean Empire, comprising also Egypt, Palestine, and Asia Minor, was moved by the Lord to have compassion on the Jews and bring them back again into the promised land in order that the promises given by the Lord might be fulfilled and the Christchild could be born in Bethlehem in the land of Judah. (II Cor. 1:20: "For all the promises of God in Him are yea and in Him Amen unto the glory of God.") Cyrus is moved by the Spirit of the Lord to make a proclamation recorded by Ezra (1:1-2): "*The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth and hath charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.*" Thus the mighty Cyrus becomes an instrument in the hand of God to fulfill His promises given to the patriarchs and His people to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Little did Cyrus know that with the return of the Jews to Judah he was paving the way for the coming of a King far greater than himself, a King who could not only boast of a kingdom over the whole earth, but over heaven and earth, the spiritual kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world.

Alexander the Great set out to conquer the world, to spread Greek culture and civilization, establish the Greek tongue as the universal language spoken in His realm. He was not aware of the fact that with the spreading of the Greek language he was instrumental in preparing the language in which the Holy Spirit would later on have the New Testament written and also enable the rapid spreading of the Gospel, not by generals with the sword, but by messengers with the sandals of peace and the Sword of the Spirit. Alexander conquered a great empire but could not conquer himself. He died a victim of his passions. His kingdom was divided. Christ's kingdom is one without end, extending over the whole earth. Alexander the Great with His world-wide aims unknowingly paved the way for the coming King of Kings in His kingdom.

One example we should like to cite from the history of the Church. The Moslems had been inspired by Mohammed to conquer the world by fire and the sword. With blood in their veins hotter than the sand of the Sahara they set out, destroying everything before them, serving as a scourge of God to the dead churches of Egypt and Northern Africa that had once boasted of a Cyprian and an Augustine as their bishops. They trampled everything under their feet. Gone were the dead churches and congregations. They crossed over to Spain, set across the Pyrenees and wanted to convert and conquer the whole of Northern Europe and bring it under the sway of the Crescent, the sword of Mohammed. Charles Martel with his courageous but small army of Christianized Franks opposed them at Tours and Poitiers in France along the banks of the Loire. Here it was for the Franks either to stand or to die, and with them the cause of Christianity in Europe. For several days the Moslems charged, but the ranks of the Franks would not give way, and finally the Moslems were routed. This was in the year of our Lord 732. The Moslems had performed the task assigned to them by God. They had served as a scourge for the countries bordering the Mediterranean that once had witnessed the rapid growth of Christianity, that once had seen many flourishing Christian congregations and communities. They had the name, that they were living, but in reality they were dead. Now the time had come for them to have their names blotted out of the history of the Church as living centers of Christendom. The Germanic countries, on the other hand, were to have more of an opportunity to hear the Gospel. The Reformation was still 800 years away. The Moslems had to retreat after a bitter defeat. The Lord had spoken.

Eight hundred years later the Mohammedans again struck with their swords at the portals of Europe before Vienna. This time they tried to force their way into Europe from the East. Charles the Fifth was forced to fight them. He would much rather have forced the Pope and the Church into submission and also would rather have ruled over his vast empire, including the realm of Spain, and at the same time eradicate the pestilence of Wittenberg, the Reformation of Luther.

But the Turk was threatening with an invasion of Europe and the past bloody war path of the Turks foreboded no good for Europe and the empire of Charles V should they be victorious. It was Luther who urged and induced his followers to support Charles in his war against the Turks. Charles V should find no time to crush the Reformation as he had planned. The Turk was halted, the Pope would not submit, and Luther conquered with the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. At the end of his life we see Charles with frustrated hopes pining away in a cloister trying to make two clocks tick together. It can't be done. He cannot bring the Pope and the world under his sway. Christ alone, the King of Kings, can do it. He forces Charles to do His bidding, frustrates his ambitious plans, and sees to it that through His servant, Martin Luther, the glorious work of the Reformation is carried out. We need but to open our eyes, and wherever we look we shall see the mysterious and wondrous ways of the Lord. Luther could rightly sing:

"Though devils all the world should fill,
All eager to devour us,
We tremble not, we fear no ill,
They shall not overpower us."

He could close his great battle hymn of the Reformation with the triumphant claim: "The kingdom ours remaineth." That it was Luther who prayed against the invasion of the Turks and also induced his followers to fight for Charles in the defense of the threatened boundaries can be seen from one of his marked hymns:

"Lord, keep us in Thy Word and Work,
Restrain the murd'rous Pope and Turk
Who fain would tear from off Thy Throne
Christ Jesus, Thy beloved Son."*)

* This wording is taken from the old hymnal. Unfortunately this forceful hymn of Luther has been softened in our new Lutheran Hymnal. The much weaker translation of Catherine Winkworth has been adopted:

"Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word,
Curb those, who fain by craft and sword
Would wrest the Kingdom from Thy Son
And set at naught all He has done."

In the halting of the Moslems and the Turks, in the frustration of the ambitious plans of both the Pope and Charles V we witness a striking example of the truth of the great Reformer's prophecy regarding the Gospel as passing from country to country and not returning to the place where it once has been. Ingratitude and contempt have taken the Gospel away from the countries once overshadowed by its blessings. Looking at the present turmoil we anxiously ask ourselves whether or not the time has come for the taking away of the Gospel from the once so blessed countries of Europe and from our own country, which owes its greatest treasures to the Reformation. Let us as true Lutherans do our share in fervent prayer and incessant toil in the vineyard of our Lord, that this blessing be not taken from us too! We have no guarantee that this Gospel will ever remain with us. Let us acquire again and again for ourselves what we have inherited from our fathers in order that we may also inwardly possess and retain it!

It is our consolation in trying times, especially also in these dreadful days of war, of suffering and bloodshed, of misery and heartache, of lies and hatred, that the Lord is still in the heavens and that His will is still being done here on earth, that His kingdom is being built, wars or no wars. The Lord's will prevails in the midst of His enemies in the present turmoil. It still holds good, what the Psalmist once wrote (33:6ff.): "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as a heap: He layeth

In this new version "the murd'rous Pope and Turk" have fallen by the wayside. The strong language of Luther seems to shock our modern ears and weak hearts. Has the Pope really given up his murderous intentions on Christendom and the world? Is there no pagan fanaticism of the "Turk," the modern worldly powers, to be seen in our twentieth century of progress in culture and civilization? Both the Pope and the "Turk" are stayed by the mighty hand of the King of Kings for the time being, but will at the end of time unite to eradicate, if possible, the true visible Church. With a sad heart we record this change in our hymnal.

up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord . . . The Lord looketh from heaven, He beholdeth all the sons of men . . . He fashioneth their hearts alike, He considereth all their works. There is no king saved by the multitude of an host, a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy. Our soul waiteth for the Lord: He is our help and our shield . . . Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us according as we hope in Thee."

These are the truths about the rule of Christ as King of Kings, that we are to uphold and proclaim. Oh that we all, pastors, teachers, and laymen alike, would study our Bible, especially the prophets of old in these days. Christ's words, "My Kingdom is not of this world," give us the key to the real understanding of the history of the world, of our present history which is in the making, and especially of the kingdom of Christ. Christ rules with might in His kingdom of power over the whole universe. It is and will remain an article of faith for us as long as we sojourn here on earth as citizens of two worlds and kingdoms. It is our only consolation, that He to whom is given all power in heaven and on earth and who has given us the royal command to preach His Gospel to every creature, has also given us the blessed promise, "Lo, I am with you always even unto the ends of the world." We put our trust solely in the Lord with Paul Gerhardt, when he confidently sings:

Thy hand is never shortened, all things must serve Thy might;
Thy work no man can hinder, Thy purpose none can stay,
Since Thou to bless Thy children wilt always find a way.

Though all the powers of evil the will of God oppose,
His purpose will not falter, His pleasure onward goes.
Whate'er God's will resolveth, whatever He intends,
Will always be accomplished true to His aims and ends.

Arise my soul and banish thy anguish and thy care.
 Away with thoughts that sadden and heart and mind ensnare!
 Thou art not lord and master of thine own destiny;
 Enthroned in highest heaven God rules in equity.

Give, Lord, this consummation to all our heart's distress;
 Our hands, our feet, e'er strengthen, in death our spirits bless.
 Thy truth and Thy protection grant evermore we pray,
 And in celestial glory shall end our destined way.

And with William Cooper we sing:

"God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.
 Blind unbelief is sure to err and scan His work in vain;
 God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

Everything is to serve the greater glory of God through
 the progress and the final triumph of the Church.

(To be continued)

Der Antichrist.

Die Erfüllung der Weissagung in 2 Theß. 2, 1–12.

Des „Menschen der Sünde“ schrankenlose Herrschaftsgelüste und Herrschaftsjucht, denen zufolge er sich im Tempel Gottes sogar für Gott ausgibt, sind ein überaus großer Greuel.

Es ist not, daß dies in seiner Tiefe erkannt wird. Es schien angebracht, den zweiten Teil dieser Arbeit damit zu beginnen; denn der erste Teil, der rein exegetischer Natur war, gab dazu keinen direkten Anlaß.

Warum ist diese unbändige Sucht des „Menschen der Sünde“, sich zu erheben über Alles im Himmel und auf Erden, zumeist über den Tempel Gottes, solch ein Greuel?

Würde sich der „Mensch der Sünde“ mit seinen Herrschaftsgelüsten und ihrer Verwirklichung ausschließlich auf weltliche, sichtbare Reiche beschränken, würde er mit Waffengewalt versuchen, möglichst viele bisher von ihm unabhängige Reiche unter die Macht seines Zepters zu zwingen, dabei aber keinerlei Einfluß ausüben wollen auf das Gebiet der Kirche, dann könnte man ihn eine Zuchttrute

nennen, wie sie Gott im Laufe der Zeiten des öfteren erweckt hat, um die Völker zu züchtigen. Dann müßte man sogar die unterjochten Völker ermahnen: „Seid untertan der Obrigkeit, die Gewalt über euch hat.“

Aber der „Mensch der Sünde“ setzt sich in den Tempel Gottes, der nie aufgehört hat zu existieren; denn „die Pforten der Hölle sollen sie nicht überwältigen“. Er setzt sich in den Tempel Gottes, der selbst noch nach dem Abfall der apostolischen Kirche da war, in den Tempel Gottes, der infolge des Wiederauflebens des Evangeliums von Christo entstanden ist. Hier herrscht er aus seines Herzens Bosheit, indem er Zweck und Ziel des Tempels Gottes an seine Person zu binden sucht, der Seelen Seligkeit. Von hier aus streckt er seine gierigen Hände aus nach den Reichen dieser Welt und nach den Heidenvölkern mit dem einen Bestreben, die ganze Welt an seine Person zu fesseln und in widerspruchslose Abhängigkeit von seinem Willen zu bringen.

Indem er als Herr in der Kirche, als ein Kirchenfürst, seine Hände nach den Königen, Fürsten und Obrigkeiten ausstreckt, um diesen seinen Willen aufzuzwingen und sie zu seinen Knechten zu machen, greift der „Mensch der Sünde“, der doch die Kirche für sein Reich erklärt, in ein Gebiet, in dem er weder Recht noch Beruf hat, weil nach Gottes Wort eine feste Scheidung zwischen Staat und Kirche bestehen soll, so daß keiner von dem einen in das andere greift.

Indem aber der „Mensch der Sünde“ sich zum Herrn im Tempel Gottes macht und eine solche Herrschaft in demselben ausübt, daß er mit rücksichtsloser, selbstherrlicher Vermessenheit allem widerspricht und über alles sich erhebt, das Gott gestiftet hat, und dafür ein anderes setzt, um sich als absoluter Herr zu erweisen und alle Seelen an sein Urteil und Willen zu binden, macht er sich der greulichsten Gotteslästerung schuldig.

a) Er setzt Jesum Christum ab und sich selber an dessen Statt. Doch ist und bleibt Jesus das einzige Haupt der Kirche, die er „meine Gemeinde“ nennt, und das mit Recht, denn er ist ihr Baumeister. Den, der wahrer Gott ist von Ewigkeit, der in unendlichem Erbarmen sich für seine Gemeinde am Kreuze geopfert und sein göttliches Blut für sie vergossen hat, den stößt diese greuliche Ausgeburt der Hölle von seinem Thron und setzt sich darauf.

b) Indem er in seiner Herrschmut sich über alles Göttliche erhebt, widerstrebt er dem Heiligen Geist, der gesandt ist von dem

Sohne, daß er im Tempel Gottes in alle Wahrheit leite. Er zerstört Amt und Werk des Heiligen Geistes und richtet anstatt dessen sein eigen Amt und Werk auf.

c) Indem er dem Heiligen Geist in seinem Amt und Werke widerstrebt und es zerstört, verhindert er das Seligwerden aller, die der Heilige Geist retten wollte; und indem er an deren Stelle sein Amt und Werk, das im Gegensatz zu dem des Heiligen Geistes nur Lüge und Betrug sein kann, aufrichtet, führt er alle, die auf ihn hören, in die Hölle.

d) Indem er sich zum Herrn in der Kirche macht, handelt er wider das ausdrückliche Wesen der vom Herrn gestifteten Kirche. Dieser hat ausdrücklich verordnet, daß in seinem Reich niemand, wie es in einem Weltreich zugeht, herrschen soll. In seinem Reich soll nichts walten als der Glaube und aus dem Glauben die Liebe, deren Art es ist, jedermann zu dienen. Denn so hat es der Herr verordnet: „Ihr wisset, daß die weltlichen Fürsten herrschen und die Mächtigen unter ihnen haben Gewalt. Aber also soll es unter euch nicht sein, sondern welcher will groß werden unter euch, der soll euer Diener sein. Und welcher unter euch will der Vornehmste werden, der soll aller Knecht sein.“ So will es der Herr, weil er selbst „nicht kommen ist, daß er ihm dienen lasse, sondern daß er diene und gebe sein Leben zur Bezahlung für viele“; Mark. 10, 42–45. Im Reiche Christi soll keiner seiner Bürger sich auf den Thron setzen, in Purpur gekleidet, mit einer Krone auf dem Haupt und mit Strafandrohung diktieren und so die Gewalt üben, sondern nur die aus dem Glauben geborene Liebe, die des anderen Wohl sucht, leiblich und geistlich, soll walten, geben und darreichen nach Bedarf als Abbild und Abglanz ihres einigen Herrn, Christus. Diesem Reich nimmt der „Mensch der Sünde“ seine Art und verkehrt es in ein weltliches Reich.

Aus diesem allem wird zur Genüge offenbar, welch ein Greuel der „Mensch der Sünde“ mit seiner Herrschsucht im Tempel Gottes ist.

Die Erfüllung der Weissagung in 2 Theß. 2, 1–12 ist da und nur da, wo eben die Verwirklichung derselben in jedem Stück zu finden ist.

Daraus ergibt sich, daß diese Weissagung Pauli der Maßstab ist, der an irgendeine Erscheinung in der Geschichte der Menschheit, insbesondere der Kirche, angelegt werden muß, um festzustellen, ob diese Erscheinung die Erfüllung jener paulinischen Weissagung ist.

Das ist eine einfache und unwiderlegbare Wahrheit. Wie kann man anders die Erfüllung irgendeiner Weissagung finden als dadurch, daß man an Hand der Weissagung prüft, ob eine gewisse Erscheinung sich in jeder Beziehung mit der Weissagung deckt?

Wenn bei einem solchen Messen einer Erscheinung an der Weissagung sich ergibt, daß sie zwar in manchen, selbst wesentlichen, Punkten der Weissagung entspricht, **aber nicht in allen Einzelheiten**, dann ist diese Erscheinung nicht als die Erfüllung anzusehn.

So hat man sich unter den Gewaltigen der Welt, etwa den römischen Kaisern, umgesehen, ob nicht unter ihnen einer sei, durch den Pauli Weissagung ihre Erfüllung gefunden habe. Man hat da freilich manches gefunden, das an Pauli Weissagung erinnert: Herrschsucht; vorgeben, er sei Gott; allem widersprechen und sich über alles setzen, das Gottes ist. Aber eine genaue Prüfung zeigt, daß nicht alles in Pauli Weissagung Enthaltene an den römischen Kaisern sich erfüllt hat: Sitzen im Tempel Gottes, eine ununterbrochene Reihe gleichartiger Personen von den Tagen der Apostel an bis zum jüngsten Tag. Daraus muß sich ergeben, daß Pauli Weissagung in den römischen Kaisern ihre Erfüllung nicht gefunden hat.

Es haben auch manche behauptet, die Erfüllung dieser Weissagung sei überhaupt noch nicht eingetreten, sondern erst in der Zukunft zu erwarten. Zu diesen gehört unter anderen Rohnert, Dogmatik, S. 584: „An der Spitze der abgefallenen Welt stehend, **wird er** eine solche Machtstellung einnehmen, daß er alles, was sich ihm widersetzt, niederwerfen und vernichten wird. So **wird er** denn die Völker zu einer antichristlichen Weltmacht versammeln, zu streiten wider das Lamm und die Kirche des Herrn. Daß wir unter dem großen Antichrist **eine für die Endzeit noch zu erwartende Erscheinung** zu verstehen haben, und diese nur eine **Einzelperson** sein kann. . . . dazu nötigen uns folgende Gründe.“ Rohnert sagt ferner S. 188: „Am Ende der Zeit wird er (Satan) das Reich der Sünde aufrichten, und es wird dann seine Feindschaft wider das Reich Gottes im **Antichrist** seine Spitze erlangen; 2 Thess. 2; Dan. 11, 36; Off. 13, 5ff.“ Auch Rohnert übersieht, daß nach Pauli Weissagung klärlieh eine **Kette** von gleichgesinnten Personen zu erwarten ist, die im Tempel Gottes sitzt, in den Tagen der Apostel schon heimlich beginnt und bis zum Ende der Tage reicht. Sollte wirklich vor dem Ende der Welt eine Erscheinung eintreffen, wie Rohnert sie erwartet, die Erfüllung

der Weissagung Pauli wird sie nicht sein, weil sie eben nicht das Maß dieser Weissagung hat.

Wenn nun aber diese Weissagung, als Maßstab genommen, in allen ihren Einzelheiten auf eine bestimmte geschichtliche Erscheinung paßt, dann ist diese Erscheinung ohne Frage die Erfüllung jener Weissagung Pauli. Paulus hat das Kommen dieses „Menschen der Sünde“ durch den Heiligen Geist vorausgesehen. Was er gesehen, hat er in seiner Weissagung zusammengefaßt, auf daß, wenn er kommt, er von denen nach ihm möge erkannt werden. Das aber können diese nur und tun es auch nur, indem sie an Hand der Weissagung Pauli diese Erscheinung prüfen.

Als Paulus nach der Erscheinung des Herrn auf dem Wege gen Damaskus von seinen Begleitern nach Damaskus in das Haus Judas war geführt worden, wo er blind dalag, erschien der Herr dem Jünger Ananias im Traum und befahl ihm folgendes: Gehe die Straße, „die gerade“ genannt, entlang, bis du an das Haus Judas kommst; gehe hinein und frage nach Saul von Tarsus! Er betet und ist durch ein Gesicht auf dein Kommen vorbereitet worden. Da hatte Ananias die Merkmale, Paulum zu finden. Indem er diesen folgte, fand er jenen und war gewiß: Dieser ist es. Wie denn? Alles, das ihm der Herr gesagt hatte, paßte.

Als Johannes der Täufer im Zweifel war, ob Jesus, der Kommene, der sei, der da kommen sollte — wahrscheinlich hatte der Bericht der Jünger Johannes über die Wunderwerke des Herrn, unter anderen über die Heilung des Knechtes jenes heidnischen Hauptmanns zu Kapernaum, in Johannes eine gewisse, ihn aber quälende Unsicherheit erregt — und zweien seiner Jünger zu Jesu sandte mit der Frage: „Bist du, der da kommen soll, oder sollen wir eines andern warten?“, wie überzeugte Jesus Johannes den Täufer, daß er der sei, der kommen sollte? Er griff zurück in die alttestamentliche Weissagung, Jes. 35, 5; 61, 1, und argumentierte folgendermaßen: So ist geweissagt worden über den, der kommen soll; so seht ihr es bei mir; folglich bin ich der, der da kommen soll. Also legte der Herr die alttestamentliche Weissagung als Maßstab an sich, zeigte, wie dieser in jeder Beziehung auf ihn passe und er darum die Erfüllung aller Weissagungen vom kommenden Messias sei.

Wie überzeugte der Herr am Tage seiner Auferstehung jene beiden Jünger auf dem Wege nach Emmaus? „Er fing an von

Mose und allen Propheten und legte ihnen alle Schriften aus, die von ihm gesagt waren“; Luf. 24, 27.

Genau so haben später die Apostel Juden und Heiden davon überzeugt: Dieser ist der Christ. In seiner Predigt im Hause des Kornelius wandte Petrus dieselbe Weise an, um seine Zuhörer davon zu überzeugen, daß der Bekommene der sei, der da kommen sollte; Apostelg. 10, 38.

Somit ist der hier vorgelegte Grundsatz, daß die Erfüllung einer Weissagung nur so erkannt werden kann, indem man die Weissagung als Maßstab anlegt, und daß, wenn dieser Maßstab in allen Einzelheiten paßt, die Erfüllung über alle Zweifel erhaben vorliegt, bezeugt. Daß Jesus wie auch seine Jünger gerade diese Weise angewandt haben, gibt ihr eine Berechtigung, wie sie nicht besser kann gefunden werden.

Es ist ja so einfach und selbstverständlich, daß man darüber weiter keine Worte verlieren sollte. Und doch ist gerade in jüngster Zeit dieses Vorgehen bestritten worden. Wer kann das fassen?

Haben wir die Erfüllung der paulinischen Weissagung 2 Thess. 2, 1–12 im Papsttum vor uns?

Es ist freilich wahr, daß es nicht wenige gegeben hat und auch heute noch gibt, die nicht im Papsttum die Erfüllung dieser paulinischen Weissagung sehen, sondern erst in der Zukunft, dicht vor dem Weltende ihre Erfüllung erwarten.

Daß Rohnert zu diesen gehört, ist bereits gesagt worden. Rohnert gibt fünf Gründe an, weshalb er annimmt, der Antichrist sei eine noch in der Zukunft zu erwartende Einzelperson.

Zu seiner Rechtfertigung führt er einmal Luther an, der zu Zeiten geschwankt habe, ob das Papsttum wirklich der geweissagte Antichrist sei. Er zitiert unter anderen einen Ausspruch Luthers aus seiner Schrift: „Verlegung des Mcoran Bruder Richardi verdeutscht durch D. Mart. Luther, mit einer Vorrede und treuen Warnung D. Luthers,“ 1542; Erl. Ausg., B. 65, S. 189. Aus dieser Schrift zitiert Rohnert folgendes, S. 202: „Und ich halt den Mahmet nicht für den Endechrist: er machts zu grob und hat einen kenntlichen schwarzen Teufel, der weder Glauben noch Vernunft betrügen kann und ist wie ein Heide, der von außen die Christenheit verfolget, wie die Römer und andere Heiden getan haben. . . . Aber der Papst bei uns ist der rechte Antichrist.“ Dagegen zitiert Rohnert einen

Brief Luthers an Spalatin vom Jahre 1519, in dem Luther schreibt: „Es sei dir ins Ohr gesagt, ich weiß nicht, ob der Papst selbst der Antichrist oder sein Apostel ist, so elend wird von demselben Christus, d. h. die Wahrheit, in seinen Dekreten verfälscht und gekreuzigt.“ Weiter führt Kohnert einen Brief Luthers an Papst Leo X., 1520, an, in dem Luther schreibt, die Bosheit in Rom sei so groß, daß nicht wohl zu denken ist, was mehr Bosheit hie möge zunehmen, wenn gleich der Endechrist selbst käme.“

Dagegen: Es ist allbekannt, daß Luther nicht sogleich den Papst durchschaute. In dem angeführten Brief an Leo X. redet er diesen noch so an: „Indessen sitzest du, heiliger Vater Leo, wie ein Schaf unter den Wölfen und gleichwie Daniel unter den Leuen.“ Wie kann man aber mit Luther so argumentieren, daß man Aussprüche von ihm aus einer Zeit, da Luther noch nicht klar sah, solchen gleichstellt aus einer Zeit, da Luther über den Papst die Augen völlig aufgegangen waren?

Wenn Kohnert Luther weiter zitiert aus seiner Auslegung zu Psalm 10, Erl., B. 38, S. 99, als habe Luther, als er im Jahre 1530 diese Auslegung verfaßte, in bezug auf den Papst als den rechten Antichrist geschwanzt, dann sollte man doch auf den Anfang dieser Auslegung achten: „Es haben diesen Psalm die alten Lehrer fast verstanden von dem Antichrist; wie er denn eigentlich wider das Papsttum geschrieben ist.“

Ueberdies ist es gewiß berechtigt zu sagen, daß auch Luther zuweisen da und dort in seinen Urteilen anders geredet hat als sonst. Das tut jeder Mensch. Nur der vom Heiligen Geist Inspirierte ist und bleibt in seiner Rede konsequent. Da darf man auch bei Luther nicht jedes seiner Worte auf die Goldwaage legen und Schlüsse auf seine Stellung, etwa zum Papst, machen wollen, sondern man muß sich an seine vielen klaren und entschiedenen, reifen und schlagenden Aussagen halten und von denen aus seine Stellung beurteilen.

Auch mit den Bekenntnisschriften will Kohnert seine Stellung rechtfertigen. Indem er einige Stellen aus der Apologie und den Schmalkaldischen Artikeln anführt, macht Kohnert folgenden Schluß: „Diese Aussprüche zusammengenommen können wir nur so verstehen, daß die Bekenntnisschriften der festen Ueberzeugung sind: das die Reformation bekämpfende Papsttum mit seinen vielen Irrlehren und Mißbräuchen ist nicht mehr Christentum, sondern Antichristentum, ist ein Stück vom Reich Antichristi. Offenbar gebrauchen sie das

Wort Antichrist im weiteren Sinne und schließen auch den Islam mit ein; aber sie sagen nicht, daß der vollendete Antichrist schon im Papsttum vorhanden sei, sie lassen mithin die Möglichkeit offen, daß sich das Antichristentum schließlich in einer einzelnen Persönlichkeit zuspitzen werde und es diesem Hauptantichrist vorbehalten sei, die letzten Reste der noch nicht erfüllten Weissagungen vom Antichrist zu erfüllen. Wir unsererseits halten es für wahrscheinlich, daß sich das Papsttum in der Endzeit mit einer christfeindlichen Weltmacht vereinigen wird und im Bunde mit dieser unter einem mächtigen Oberhaupte, dem wahren Antichrist, seine letzten Siege feiern wird.“

Das heißt doch wahrlich auf den Sand gebaut. Die Bekenntnisschriften reden keineswegs vom Papsttum als von einem Stück des Antichristentums, sondern sie reden klar und bezeichnen das Papsttum als den Antichrist. Zwar steht in der Apologie, S. 209, 18: „Also wird auch das Papsttum ein Stück vom Reich Antichristi,“ *ita et papatus erit pars regni antichristi*, nämlich durch seine Werklehre. Aber bestimmt und unmißverständlich heißt es in der Apologie, S. 270: „Also hat der Antichrist in den Kirchen auch ein falschen Gottesdienst aus dem Nachtmahl Christi gemacht.“ . . . Wiewohl nun der Antichrist mit seinem falschen Gottesdienst zum Teil bleiben wird, bis daß Christus, der Herr, öffentlich kommen und richten wird.“ Werden denn solche klaren Stellen null und nichtig durch eine weniger klare, die man ohnehin gut so deuten kann, daß nämlich auch die Werklehre der Papstkirche ein Stück des Reiches des Antichristen, das kommen soll, ist und somit auch beweist, daß das Papsttum der Antichrist ist? Diese Erklärung ist darum berechtigt, weil die Apologie in dem ganzen vorliegenden Abschnitt beweisen will, daß der Papst der rechte Antichrist sei, weil alles über den Antichrist Geweissagte sich bei ihm vorfände. Die Schmalkaldischen Artikel, die im Anschluß an 2 Thess., 2, gerade die unbändigen Herrschgellüste der Päpste als gewisses Merkmal hervorheben, daß da der rechte Antichrist sei, sagen S. 308, 10: „Dies Stück zeigt gewaltiglich, daß er der rechte Endchrist oder Widerchrist sei, der sich über und wider Christum gesetzt und erhöhet hat, weil er will die Christen nicht lassen selig sein ohne seine Gewalt.“

In einem Aufsatz „der Antichrist“ in der Realencyklopädie von D. Alb. Hauck, B. 1, von Sieffert, heißt es S. 581: „So tritt dem zum Himmel erhöhten und vom Himmel kommenden göttlichen Herrn,

der um den Seinen das Leben zu vermitteln aus Liebe den Tod übernimmt und dessen Evangelium zur Bruderliebe befähigt, der mit dämonischen Kräften ausgestattete Vertreter der Selbstvergötterung, dieser Zuspitzung sündlicher Selbstsucht, entgegen.“ Ohne Frage ist der Schluß dieses Zitats ein Urteil, von 2 Thess., 2 ausgehend, über die in dieser Weissagung vorausgesagte Erscheinung, dazu sehr zutreffend.

In diesem hier angeführten Aufsatz gibt nun Sieffert eine Darstellung seiner Auffassung von 2 Thess., 2, in bezug auf den Antichrist. Nachdem er kurz den Inhalt von 2 Thess., 2 angegeben hat, fährt er fort und sagt: „Gewiß hat hier Paulus wie Jesus zunächst an einen falschen Messias, also an eine wesentlich innerjüdische Erscheinung gedacht. Und dazu mußte ihn seine persönliche Erfahrung führen, nach welcher bis zu der Zeit, da er jenes schrieb, von dem mit politisch-messianischen Gedanken erfüllten Judentum aus der erbitterteste Widerstand gegen das Evangelium ausgegangen war. Eben diese Feindschaft gegen das allein zu voller Heiligung und Erfüllung des göttlichen Willens anleitende Evangelium ist offenbar das Geheimnis der Gesetzlosigkeit, von welcher der Apostel sagt, daß es schon gegenwärtig in Wirksamkeit sei und dann in offenem Abfall sowie in dem hieraus hervorgehenden „Menschen der Sünde“ offenkundig werden solle. Und wenn er hinzufügt, noch stehe dem eine Erscheinung und eine Person hemmend entgegen, so meint er aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach die durch das römische Kaisertum und seinen gegenwärtigen Vertreter, den gutmütigen Claudius, geschützte staatliche Rechtsordnung, von welcher Paulus selbst öfters Schutz gegen den Fanatismus der jüdischen Feinde seiner Verkündigung erfahren hatte.“

Nachdem Sieffert so seine Gedanken über Pauli Thessalonicher-Weissagung vorgelegt hat, trägt er eine Anzahl Antichrist-Ideen, mit der nachapostolischen Zeit beginnend, vor.

„Ganz im Gegensatz gegen diese religiöse und lehrhafte Auffassung des Antichristen im Neuen Testament erscheint im nachchristlichen Judentum die vorchristliche nationale Ausprägung dieses Gedankens fortgesetzt und weiter verschärft. Ueberall wird hier der Antichrist als ein Urheber äußerer Gewalttaten gegen das jüdische Volk gedacht.“

Weiter: „Unmittelbar an die letzte biblische Ausgestaltung des Gedankens in den Johannisbriefen schließt sich die häufige Beziehung

des Antichrist auf Trilehre an. Am flüchtigsten wird diese Anschauung bei Origenes, der jene Idee ganz allgemein und abstrakt in den Begriff der falschen Lehre aufgehen läßt und bei dem sich hierin ihm ungefähr anschließenden Kappadozier, Gregor von Nyssa. Sonst werden oft zeitgenössische Vertreter häretischer, namentlich heterodoxer christologischer Lehre als Antichrist bezeichnet und zwar meistens, ohne daß dadurch die Erwartung eines Antichristen als einer zukünftigen Einzelperson ausgeschlossen wäre. Bestimmt wird eine solche wohl in Aussicht genommen in der Didache (16), wo das dem Ende der Welt vorangehende Auftreten eines Weltverführers geschildert wird, der „wie Gottes Sohn“ erscheint, trügerische Wunder vollführend. Diese Anschauung wird sonst in der alten und mittelalterlichen christlichen Kirche in außerordentlich weiter Verbreitung fortgesetzt. Hieronymus bezeichnet sie als die allgemein kirchliche. Der Antichrist wird daher auch als beschnitten und zur Beschneidung nötigend gedacht. Spezieller erwartete man, daß er aus dem Stamme Dan hervorgehen werde. Damit wurde dann die vielleicht schon ältere Meinung, daß der Antichrist von Osten kommen werde, verbunden.“

„Daneben wird auch die Idee an Nero, die schon früher vorhanden war, dahin weiter fortgebildet, daß der Antichrist geradezu als der wiedererweckte Nero gedacht wird. Diese Vorstellung ist als noch im vierten Jahrhundert weitverbreitet bezeugt. Man glaubte damals, der wiedererweckte Nero werde von den Juden empfangen werden und die Menschen zur Beschneidung zwingen.“

„Auch die Vorstellung eines doppelten Antichristen war vorhanden, die einigermaßen durch die Nebeneinanderstellung der beiden die Weltmacht und die falsche Prophetie darstellenden antichristlichen Tiere in der Johannis-Apokalypse vorbereitet war. So wird ein westlicher Antichrist als römischer Kaiser und ein östlicher in Jerusalem auftretender unterschieden.“

„Ein erhebliches Schwanken zeigen die Vorstellungen in betreff des Verhältnisses zwischen dem Antichrist und Satan. Meist wird er wohl im Anschluß an die biblischen Ausdrücke als ein im Geiste Satans wirkender Mensch gedacht, öfters auch als dessen Sohn, ja als seine eigene Inkorporation.“

„Als nach dem Aufhören der Verfolgungen der Kirche die eschatologische Stimmung der ältesten Kirche sich etwas abkühlte, trat auch die Erwartung des Antichristen verhältnismäßig zurück. Erst gegen das Jahr 1000 wurde die Spannung auf das nahende Ende wieder

in weiten Kreisen der Kirche äußerst kräftig, und auch, nachdem die Erwartung desselben sowohl im Jahr 1000 als 1033 sich nicht verwirklicht hatte, blieb die eschatologische Bewegung zurück. Sie wurde seitdem nur mehr zur Gegenwart umbogen, indem man durch das Vordringen des Islam, die zunehmende Ketzerei und die tiefe Verderbnis der Kirche, besonders auch des Papsttums, veranlaßt wurde, in solchen Uebeln der Zeit die Anzeichen des nahen Antichristen zu erblicken. Und jede Richtung glaubte, ihn in den ihr am meisten entgegengesetzten Erscheinungen des kirchlichen und sozialen Lebens zu erblicken.“

„Nachdem so besonders häufig von Ketzern und reformatorisch gesinnten Parteien der Antichrist auf das Papsttum gedeutet war, wurde diese Erklärung von Luther und anderen Reformatoren und dann auch in die symbolischen Bücher der lutherischen Kirche aufgenommen.“ Mit diesem Schlußsatz bestätigt Sieffert Luthers und der symbolischen Bücher der Lutherischen Kirche Stellung zum Antichristen. Sie haben ihn alle als im Papsttum verwirklicht erkannt, was Rohmert und andere mit ihm nicht zugeben wollen.

Dies alles erschöpft allerdings nicht die die Jahrhunderte hindurch aufgetretenen Vorstellungen in bezug auf den Antichristen. Diese aber können hier nicht alle vorgelegt werden. Eins ist dabei gewiß: Es hätte an Einheit in dieser Frage nicht gefehlt, wenn man sich streng an den Vorgang gehalten hätte, Erscheinungen an der Weissagung zu messen.

Dr. H. Goenecke in seiner Dogmatik, B. IV, § 71: „Der größte Feind der Kirche, oder der Widerchrist“, bemerkt, daß viele Chiliasten nicht in dem Papsttum den Antichristen erblicken. Dazu nennt er auch Kink und Luthardt als solche, die den Papst nicht für den Antichristen halten. Letzterer sagt in seiner „Lehre von den letzten Dingen“: „Mit der Anerkennung des unleugbaren antichristlichen Wesens des Papsttums verträgt sich wohl, daß nach der Schrift das Antichristentum eine höchste Steigerung und Machtentfaltung in einer persönlichen Konzentration finden wird.“

Selbstverständlich leugnen die Papisten, daß der Papst der Antichrist sei. Kardinal Bellarmin, von Dr. Goenecke zitiert, sagt: „Mit großer Unverschämtheit machen die Häretiker den römischen Papst zum Antichristen; magna impudentia haeretici pontificem romanum faciunt antichristum.“

Aber in dem Streite zwischen Gerbert, später Papst Silvester II.,

und Erzbischof Arnulf von Reims gegen Ende des 10. Jahrhunderts, da auf einer Synode bei Reims Arnulf abgesetzt und Gerbert an seine Stelle gewählt worden war, fällte nach einem Bericht Gerberts über diese Synode Arnulf von Orleans, Führer dieser Synode, folgendes Urteil über die letzten römischen Päpste: „Diese monstra von Menschen sind voll alles Schmählischen und ohne eine Spur von Kenntnis göttlicher und menschlicher Dinge.“ Ferner: „Wofür habe man einen solchen, auf erhabenem Thron sitzenden, in purpurnem und goldenem Gewande strahlenden Menschen zu halten? Mangelt ihm die Liebe und ist er aufgeblasen bloß durch das Wissen, so ist er **der Antichrist**, der im Tempel Gottes sitzt und sich zeigt, als wäre er Gott. Ist er aber weder in der Liebe gegründet noch durch Erkenntnis erhoben, dann ist er im Tempel Gottes gleichsam eine Statue, ein Gözenbild, von dem Antwort begehren einen Marmorblock fragen heißt“; Gauck. Realency. Artikel zu Sylvester II.

Eine gewisse Gruppe lutherischer Synoden in unserem Lande muß auch in gewisser Beziehung zu denen gerechnet werden, die nicht in dem Papsttum die Erfüllung von 2 Theß. 2, 1–12 sieht, sondern die Vollendung dieser Weissagung in der Zukunft erwartet in einer Einzelperson von beispielloser Bosheit.

Diese Gruppe erklärt die Frage, den Antichristen betreffend, für eine **offene Frage**. Was ist damit gemeint? Zur Erklärung, was darunter zu verstehen sei, sagt diese Gruppe: Woimmer die Schrift wie auch die Bekenntnisschriften unserer lutherischen Kirche klar und unmißverständlich über irgendeinen Lehrgegenstand reden, da sind alle Lutheraner gebunden, einig, so daß sie mit einem Munde dasselbe glauben, lehren und bekennen. Wenn aber die Schrift und ihr folgend die Bekenntnisschriften nicht in einer zwingenden, entscheidenden Weise über irgendeinen Lehrpunkt reden, da entsteht eine offene Frage, nämlich so, daß ein Theologe so, ein anderer anders deuten kann, wobei beider Meinungen berechtigt sind, aber keine von der andern verworfen werden darf, sondern als gleichberechtigt nebeneinander zu dulden sind.

So rede die Schrift freilich in ganz unmißverständlicher Weise von dem Kommen **eines** Antichristen, ebenso die Bekenntnisschriften. Darum sei auch in den lutherischen Kreisen hierzulande darüber keine Meinungsverschiedenheit vorhanden, sondern alle seien sich einig in bezug auf das Kommen eines Antichristen. Dagegen aber seien weder die Schrift noch die Bekenntnisschriften in derselben Weise klar

und zwingend in bezug darauf, **wer** der Antichrist sei, **wann**, **wie** und **wo** er erscheinen werde, ob er schon gekommen oder noch zu erwarten sei, ob er ein Kirchenfürst oder ein weltlicher Herrscher sein werde, ob eine Gruppe oder eine Einzelperson. Das ließen Schrift und Bekenntnis offen. Hier dürfe der Theologe sich so oder so entscheiden, je nachdem seine Erkenntnis ihn anleite. Er dürfe sich für das Papsttum entscheiden, auch für etwas anderes. Nur dürfe er nicht seine Ansicht für die allein gültige erklären neben anderen, sondern für gleichberechtigt mit anderen; denn hier geben weder Schrift noch Bekenntnis zwingenden Aufschluß. Woimmer also Schrift und Bekenntnis etwas offen lassen, da dürfe man sich ein Urteil bilden, nur mit dem Vorbehalt, daß man das eigene Urteil nicht für das allein richtige erklärt.

Was ist dagegen zu sagen? Dies: Wir wollen einmal den Fall setzen, daß Schrift wie auch Bekenntnis zwar in betreff des Kommens eines Antichristen klar und bindend reden, aber in betreff dessen, wer der zu erwartende Antichrist sein werde usw., dies unentschieden und darum offen lassen. Was sollte und müßte da ein rechter Theologe tun? **Schweigen** und sagen: Das weiß und kann niemand wissen. Woimmer keine Offenbarung ist, da ist schlechtthinniges Schweigen geboten. Wer dann dennoch ein Urteil fällen will, geht über das Recht des Theologen, über seine Aufgabe hinaus und setzt der Schrift etwas hinzu. Dazu kommt dies, daß er für seine Person etwas glaubt, wofür er keinen Grund hat, und andere zu einer unbegründeten Meinung verleitet, wo doch der Glaube auf einem festen Grund stehen soll.

In Mark. 13, 31, 32 sagt unser Herr zu seinen Jüngern: „Himmel und Erde werden vergehen. Von dem Tage aber und der Stunde weiß niemand, auch die Engel nicht im Himmel, auch der Sohn nicht, sondern allein der Vater.“ In diesen Worten finden wir eine bestimmte Aussage darüber, daß Tag und Stunde kommen werde, nämlich das Vergehen des Himmels und der Erde, aber allein definitiv dem Vater benützt und nicht von ihm geoffenbart. Spekulierten nun die Engel darüber, in welchem Jahr, Monat, Tag und Stunde diese Verheißung sich erfüllen werde? Nein. Spekulierte der Sohn in seiner Niedrigkeit, wie Endpropheten, Voliva, Burnell, Russell und andere in unserer Zeit es getan haben, welches wohl die Stunde sei? Nein, er bekannte unummwunden: Ich weiß es nicht; was der Vater mir nicht geoffenbart hat, da schweige ich und mache

mir kein Urteil. Ebenso handelten des Herrn Jünger. Hier gibt uns unser Herr ein Vorbild, wie in seiner Nachfolge jeder Christ, jeder Theologe handeln soll, woimmer die Schrift etwas nicht entscheidet: **Schweigen**. Die Offene-Fragen-Theorie ist damit gerichtet.

Auch in den Kreisen unserer Synodalkonferenz, die rückhaltslos lehrt und bekennt, daß der Papst der in der Schrift geweissagte Antichrist ist und so zu Luther und den Bekenntnisschriften steht, befinden sich solche, die schon bedenklich zur anderen Seite hinüberneigen, daß es nämlich fraglich ist, ob der Papst der geweissagte Antichrist sei. Sie stärken sich in ihrer Stellung damit, daß sie sagen: Nirgends in der Schrift steht, daß **der Papst** der Antichrist sei. Darum ist das nicht Lehre; denn nur das ist Lehre, was ausdrücklich mit klaren Worten in der Schrift geoffenbart ist. Ist es aber nicht Lehre, ist niemand gezwungen, es anzunehmen. Eine Konferenz in Illinois hat so geurteilt: „Da uns die Schrift nicht sagt, wer dieser Antichrist ist, können wir den Satz: „Der Papst ist der Antichrist“, nicht als eine göttlich geoffenbarte Lehre der Schrift ansehen.“ „Menschen sind zu dem Schluß gelangt, daß der Papst der Antichrist sei, indem sie, was die Bibel in bezug auf den Antichrist sagt, mit der Lehre und der Praxis der römischen Kirche verglichen.“ „Angenommen, daß dieser Schluß richtig ist, haben wir dennoch kein Recht, demselben göttliche Autorität zuzuerkennen; er ist einfach Ausdruck unserer Uebersetzung.“

Es handelt sich hier offenbar um die Berechtigung und die Verbindlichkeit der sogenannten **theologischen Schlüsse**; denn der Satz: Der Papst ist der geweissagte Antichrist, ist ein theologischer Schluß.

Dr. Hoenecke sagt in seiner Dogmatik, B. I, S. 333, über theologische Schlüsse folgendes: „Wenn wir sagen, daß die Heilige Schrift das alleinige Prinzip der theologischen Erkenntnis sei, so ist zu bemerken, daß nicht nur dasjenige als eine theologische Wahrheit angesehen wird, was mit Silben und Worten unmittelbar in der Heiligen Schrift steht, sondern auch das, was durch **rechtmäßige und notwendige Schlüsse** aus der Heiligen Schrift abgeleitet werden muß. . . . Was ist aber ein **legitimer Schluß**? Derjenige erstens, der nicht wider die Gesetze der Logik verstößt; zweitens, der nicht im geringsten den Aussagen der Schrift zuwider ist; drittens, der seine Vorderglieder aus der Schrift selbst nimmt; viertens, der nichts setzt, was nicht in der Schrift implicite (ohne ausdrückliche Nennung mit einbegriffen) liegt.“

Zur Erklärung: Das wäre **nicht** ein legitimer Schluß, der erstens, wider die Gesetze der Logik verstößt, z. B. der Schluß von einem auf alle: Der Mensch A. ist ein Sünder; folglich sind alle Menschen Sünder.

2. Der klare Aussagen der Schrift umstößt. Zum Beispiel: Gott hat etliche zum Leben erwählt; folglich hat er alle anderen zur ewigen Verdammnis bestimmt.

3. Der seine Vorderglieder nicht aus der Schrift selbst nimmt wie der folgende tut: Gott hat alle Obrigkeiten eingesetzt, Römer 13; David war eine Obrigkeit, 1 Könige, 1; also hat Gott auch David eingesetzt.

4. Der etwas setzt, das nicht in der Schrift **implicite** liegt, wie folgendes tut: Sind **alle** Menschen Sünder, darin liegt, daß **jeder einzelne Mensch** Sünder ist. Das liegt in dem Worte „alle“.

Die **Berechtigung** solcher legitimer Schlüsse mag durch folgendes erwiesen werden:

A) Unser Herr Christus hat selbst solche gemacht. Aus den Worten: „Ich bin der Gott Abrahams, Isaaks und Jakobs“; ferner: „Gott ist nicht ein Gott der Toten, sondern der Lebendigen,“ beweist Christus die Auferstehung der Toten. Aus seiner ausschließlichen Berufung zum Seligmacher schließt Jesus, daß Dinge, die die Obrigkeit ordnen soll, nicht seines Amtes sind: „Wer hat mich zum Erbschlichter über euch gesetzt?“

B) Christus hat selbst seine Jünger angeleitet, auf Grund seiner Worte solche Schlüsse zu machen. Kurz vor seinem Einzug in Jerusalem sandte der Herr zwei seiner Jünger in einen vor ihnen liegenden Ort, ihm ein Tier zu besorgen, das ihn bei seinem Einzug tragen sollte. Damit sie das von ihm gewählte Tier auch fänden, gab er ihnen folgende Anweisung: erstens, eine Eselin; zweitens, angebunden; drittens, ein Füllen bei ihr. Die Jünger gingen hin, durchsuchten die Straßen des Ortes, bis sie unter vielen anderen eine Eselin fanden, auf die genau die Anweisung des Herrn paßte. Hierbei machten sie, wie es gar nicht anders sein konnte, den folgenden Schluß:

1. Das Tier, das unser Herr begehrt, hat er uns so beschrieben: eine Eselin, angebunden, ein Füllen bei ihr.
2. Hier vor uns sehn wir ein Tier, auf das die Anweisung des Herrn genau paßt.
3. Dies ist das Tier, das wir dem Herrn bringen sollen.

C) Auch die Apostel, vom Heiligen Geist erfüllt, haben solche Schlüsse gemacht. In seiner Pfingstpredigt, Apostelgesch. 2, 25f, beweist Petrus durch einen Schluß, daß die Worte Davids, Ps. 16, 10: „Du wirst meine Seele nicht in der Hölle lassen, auch nicht zugeben, daß dein Heiliger die Verwesung sehe“, sich keineswegs auf David bezogen:

1. David hat diese Worte Psalm 16, 10 geredet.

2. Nun ist David gestorben und begraben und sein Grab ist bei uns bis auf diesen Tag; Apostelgesch. 2, 29.

3. Folglich kann dies Wort sich nicht auf David beziehen.

Theologische Schlüsse sind auch **unbedingt notwendig**. Die Schrift, zur Lehre, Trost, Ermahnung und Warnung für alle geschrieben, will, daß jeder zur Erkenntnis der Wahrheit komme. Da aber die Schrift immer mehr sich an das Ganze richtet: „Also hat Gott die Welt geliebet, daß er seinen eingeborenen Sohn gab“, kann der einzelne, ihm zur Lehre und zum Trost, nur durch einen Schluß von der allgemeinen Aussage aus auf sich zu einem trostreichen Besitz der offenbarten Wahrheit gelangen:

Gott hat aus Liebe der Welt seinen Sohn gegeben.

Ich gehöre zur Welt.

Folglich hat Gott auch aus Liebe mir seinen Sohn gegeben.

Der Glaube, die Liebe und Hoffnung des einzelnen fordern einen Schluß von der allgemeinen Christausgabe aus. Wer solche Schlüsse abweist und darauf besteht, nur das sei geoffenbarte Wahrheit, das explicite in der Schrift gesagt sei, der muß verzagen.

Diese Notwendigkeit gilt auch in bezug auf Weissagungen in der Schrift. In bezug auf Christum, daß er der sei, der da kommen sollte, sind die Apostel und Evangelisten doch nie ohne einen Schluß fertig geworden:

Dies alles sagt die Schrift A. T. von dem aus, der da kommen soll.

Dies alles sehn wir erfüllt an dem, der gekommen ist.

Dieser ist folglich der, der da kommen soll.

In bezug auf das bevorstehende Weltende hat unser Herr uns bestimmte, dem Weltende vorangehende Zeichen genannt. Wozu? Daß wir aufmerken, achten, prüfen, um zu erkennen, daß das Weltende nahe sei. Das kann ohne einen Schluß nicht geschehen:

Der Herr hat uns bestimmte Zeichen des kommenden Weltendes genannt.

Diese Zeichen geschehen jetzt in großer Zahl.

Folglich ist das Weltende nahe.

Gehen wir nun zu der Weissagung in 2 Theff. 2, 1–12 vom kommenden Antichristen. Die Absicht auch bei dieser Weissagung ist die, daß ihre Erfüllung erkannt wird. Wieder kann dies nur durch einen Schluß geschehn:

2 Theff. 2, 1–12 weis sagt Paulus von dem kommenden „Menschen der Sünde“, dem Antichrist.

Der, auf den diese Weissagung in jedem Stück paßt, ist der von Paulus geweissagte „Mensch der Sünde“.

Da auf den, den sie Papst nennen, jedes Stück der Weissagung paßt, ist er der von Paulus geweissagte „Mensch der Sünde“, der Antichrist.

Die eben gegebenen Ausführungen sollten klar und deutlich zeigen, daß theologische Schlüsse ihre volle Berechtigung haben, da sowohl Christus als auch seine Apostel sie gebraucht haben und da sie so notwendig sind, daß ohne sie die allertröstlichsten Wahrheiten nicht zur persönlichen Erbauung erkannt werden können.

Rein Schluß, wenn er legitim ist, trägt etwas Neues in die Schrift, sondern nimmt nur das heraus, das der Heilige Geist in die Fülle allgemeiner Wahrheiten und auch Weissagungen gelegt hat. Wie aber alles, das in einer Schriftwahrheit liegt, vom Heiligen Geist eingegeben ist, so ist nicht nur das Wort, das explicite vor uns steht, eingegeben, sondern auch das, das implicite in ihm liegt und durch Schlüsse an das Licht gebracht wird, eingegeben. Das Schließen, wenn legitim, ist das Schöpfen göttlicher Wahrheiten aus dem unererschöpflichen Brunnen der göttlichen Wahrheit, darum Lehre, die jeder annehmen und bekennen muß.

Daß die, die den Namen Papst tragen — der Name Papst ist von Menschen und hat keine Bedeutung hier — implicite in der Weissagung 2 Theff. 2, 1–12 enthalten sind, ist offenbar; denn es wird niemand leugnen können, daß in dieser Weissagung implicite der Gedanke liegt: Der, auf den dies alles paßt, der ist es. Damit wird der Satz: Der Papst ist der geweissagte „Mensch der Sünde“, der Antichrist, zur vom Heiligen Geist eingegebenen Wahrheit, zur Glaubenslehre, die jeder wie jede andere Schriftwahrheit annehmen soll und muß.

Es ist aber auch ebenso wahr, daß Luther, unsere Bekenntnisse und die Theologen unserer bekennnistreuen lutherischen Kirche in

unmißverständlicher Weise im Papsttum die Erfüllung von 2 Theß. 2, 1–12 erkennen.

Luther:

„An den christlichen Adel Deutscher Nation“, Erl. Ausg., B. 21, S. 338: „Wenn kein ander böser Luch wäre, der da bewähret, daß der Papst der **recht Gudechrist** sei, so wäre eben dieses Stück genugsam, das zu bewähren.“ S. 339: „Ich hoff, der jungst Tag sei für der Tür. Es kann und mag je nit ärger werden, denn es der römische Stuhl treibt. Gottes Gebot druckt er unter; sein Gebot erhebt er druber. **Ist das nit der Gudechrist**, so sag ein andrer, wer er sein muge. Doch davon ein andermal mehr und besser.“

Aus Luthers Schrift: „Wider das Papsttum zu Rom, vom Teufel gestiftet“, 1545; Erl. Ausg., B. 26, S. 120: „Kein Mensch kann's gläuben, welch ein Greuel das Papsttum ist. Ein Christ, der muß auch nicht geringes Geistes sein, der es soll erkennen. Gott selbs muß ihn spotten in dem höllischen Feuer, und unser Herr Christus, wie Sanct Paulus 2 Theß., 2, 8 sagt, muß ihn töten mit dem Odem seines Mundes, und durch seine herrliche Zukunft zerstören. Ich spotte allein darum mit meinem schwachen Spotten, **daß die, so jetzt leben und nach uns kommen, wissen sollen, was ich vom Papst, dem Antichrist, gehalten habe**, und, wer ein Christ sein will, sich für solchen Greuel lasse vermahnen.“ So Luther im Jahre 1545, ein Jahr vor seinem Tode.

Aus derselben Schrift, Schluß: „Aber hie muß ich's lassen, wills Gott, im andern Büchlein will ichs bessern. Sterbe ich indeß, so gebe Gott, daß ein ander tausendmal ärger mache. Denn die teuflische Päpsterie ist **das lezt Unglück auf Erden**, und das Nächsteste, so alle Teufel tun können mit all ihrer Macht. Gott helfe uns! Amen.“

Diesen wenigen Aussprüchen Luthers über den Papst könnten viele andere hinzugefügt werden; denn Luthers Schriften sind voller Zeugnisse darüber, daß er aus vollem Herzen den Papst für den Antichristen gehalten hat. Besonders kräftig ist das vorlezte eben gegebene Zitat aus Luther. Man lese nur die Schrift: „Papsttreue Hadrians IV. und Alexanders III. gegen Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossa geübt, 1545,“ und andere Schriften Luthers!

Und dennoch versuchen manche, wie unter anderen Kohnert, Luther hinzustellen als einen, der in bezug auf die Erscheinung des Antichristen geschwankt habe. Das tun sie nur, um sich zu rechtfertigen.

tigen, Luther als Zeugen wider sie auszusprechen, oder ihn gar als Zeugen für sich zu gewinnen.

1. Lutherausprüche aus einer Zeit, da er den Papst noch nicht durchschaut hatte, sollte doch niemand als ein Schwanken Luthers deuten wollen. Kann man von dieser Erstlingszeit des großen Reformators etwas anderes erwarten? Dies ist kein Schwanken, sondern Luther bis 1520 und Luther nach 1520 zeigen uns nur das wachsende und sich zur Vollendung ausbildende Urteil Luthers in bezug auf den Papst als Antichrist.

2. Was Luthers „Tischreden“ betrifft, in denen er bekanntlich mancherlei gesagt hat wie: „Des Antichrists Kopf ist zugleich der Papst und Tür“, B. 60, S. 177, von diesen gilt, was die Vorrede zu den „Tischreden“, B. 57, sagt: „Von diesen Männern — es werden 17 genannt, die bei Luther zu Tische waren oder auf Reisen ihn begleiteten — haben die meisten, was sie Merkwürdiges aus Luthers Munde vernommen, für sich, **ohne Luthers Wissen und Willen**, aufgezeichnet. Diese Aufzeichnungen sammelte später Joh. Kurfaber und gab das Ganze 1566 zu Eisleben heraus. . . . Und nun wurde sogar, was er in vertrautem Kreise an seinem Tische gesprochen, wie es der Augenblick, die Umstände, die Gemütsstimmung eingegeben, der Öffentlichkeit preisgegeben. Es versteht sich daher von selbst, daß aus diesen Äußerungen Luthers sich **weder für noch gegen seine Person oder Lehre etwas Entscheidendes beweisen läßt**, zumal da nicht ermittelt werden kann, was davon etwa von subjektiver schiefer Auffassung oder von fehlerhaften Abschriften herrührt. Am wenigsten aber kann ihnen da eine Beweisraft eingeräumt werden, wo sie mit den von Luther selbst zum Druck beförderten Schriften im Widerspruche stehn.“

3. Und sollte Luther irgendwann und wo etwas geschrieben haben, das nicht in Einklang steht mit seinen vielen Zeugnissen über den Papst als Antichrist, und solche Aussprüche, wenn überhaupt vorhanden, werden in seinen Schriften überaus selten zu finden sein, sollten diese paar der Menge von Zeugnissen gegenüber, die den Papst als den Endchristen bezeichnen, überhaupt ins Gewicht fallen? Sollte sich auf Grund von zwei oder drei Aussagen hin ein berechtigtes Schwanken konstatieren lassen in bezug auf den Papst bei Luther, der kurz vor seinem Tode im Jahre 1545 sagte: „Die, so jetzt leben und nach uns kommen, sollen wissen, was ich vom Papst, dem Antichrist, gehalten habe“?

Unsere Bekenntnisschriften.

a) **Die Schmalkaldischen Artikel**, der deutsche Text von Luther selbst geschrieben, im Februar 1537 zu Schmalkalden von den dort versammelten Theologen unterschrieben. Nachdem Luther im 2. Teil, Art IV, verworfen hat, daß der Papst jure divino behauptet, das Oberhaupt der Kirche zu sein, sagt er dazu: „Dies Stück zeiget gewaltiglich, daß er (der Papst) der rechte Endechrist oder Widerchrist sei, der sich über und wider Christum gesetzt und erhöhet hat, weil er will die Christen nicht lassen selig sein ohne seine Gewalt, welche doch nichts ist, von Gott nicht geordnet noch geboten. Das heißt eigentlich über Gott und wider Gott sich setzen, wie St. Paulus sagt 2 Thess. 2, 4. Solches tut dennoch der Türk noch Tatter nicht, wie große Feinde sie der Christen sind, sondern lassen glauben an Christum, wer da will, und nehmen leiblichen Zins und Gehorsam von den Christen.“

b) **Die Apologie der Augsburgerischen Konfession**. Von dieser wurde der lateinische Text ganz von Melanchthon bearbeitet, während der deutsche Text von Justus Jonas unter Mitwirkung Melanchthons stammt. Dieser deutsche Text ist nicht eine einfache Uebersetzung des lateinischen Textes; er hält sich zwar an den Gedankengang des lateinischen, enthält aber Zusätze und Erweiterungen, die nicht im lateinischen Text stehn.

Wiewohl ja bekannt ist, daß Melanchthon nicht so furchtlos und ungeschminkt in seinen Reden war wie Luther und man deshalb bei Melanchthon nicht das entschiedene Bekenntnis in bezug auf den Papst als Antichristen wie bei Luther erwartet, spricht sich Melanchthon doch, Seite 270, 98, recht deutlich aus. Er sagt (lat. Text): „Dieser baalitische Kultus, eins mit dem papistischen Reich, wird fort dauern, bis Christus kommt zum Gericht und durch die Herrlichkeit seiner Wiederkunft das Reich des Antichrists zugrunde richtet.“ Der deutsche Text: „Wiewohl nun der Antichrist mit seinem falschen Gottesdienst zum Teil bleiben wird, bis daß Christus, der Herr, öffentlich kommen und richten wird.“

Eine Stelle in der Apologie, auf die hin solche, die im Papst nicht den Antichristen sehn wollen, die Apologie im besonderen und die Bekenntnisschriften im allgemeinen so hinstellen wollen, als sei ihre Stellung zum Papst als Antichrist eine schwankende gewesen, als hätten sie im Papst nicht den einen und letzten Antichrist erkannt,

steht Müller, S. 209, 18. Sie lautet, gleich im Lateinischen und deutschen Text: „Also wird das Papsttum **auch** ein Stücke vom Reich Antichristi.“ Man hat versucht, diese Worte so zu deuten, als habe das Papsttum allerdings Antichristliches an sich, sei aber nicht der ganze Antichrist. Klar ist nach dem ganzen Zusammenhang, daß die Verfasser der Apologie mit diesen Worten nur sagen wollen: Hierin, in seiner Werklehre, wird das Papsttum **auch** ein Stück des Reiches des Antichristen. Es ist ja die Absicht der Apologie, dies zu zeigen, daß **alle** vom Reich des Antichristen geweissagten Stücke im Papsttum zu finden sind und daß dies darum der Antichrist ist.

C. **Die Konkordienformel.** Die Konkordienformel zitiert nur die Schmalkaldischen Artikel (Müller, S. 702, 20–22), aber sie führt sonderlich die Stelle an, in der es heißt: „Weil nun dem also ist, sollen alle Christen auf das fleißigste sich hüten, daß sie solcher gottlohen Lehre, Gotteslästerung und unbilliger Täuberei (Wüterei) sich nicht teilhaftig machen, sondern sollen vom Papst und seinen Gliedern oder Anhang **als von des Antichrists Reich** weichen.“

In bezug auf dieses Zitat ist folgendes besonders zu beachten: Der deutsche Text der Schmalkaldischen Artikel war von Luther und in seiner kühnen, unmißverständlichen Weise verfaßt. Die lateinische Uebersetzung erschien erst später; von wem sie stammt, ist nicht endgültig ermittelt worden. Eine Uebersetzung des Magisters Petrus Genneranus im Jahre 1541, eines Dänen, der acht Jahre lang in Wittenberg Theologie studiert hatte, später zur katholischen Kirche übertrat, Professor in Jngolstadt wurde, wo er im Jahre 1584 starb, wurde nicht aufgenommen.

Die Worte Luthers nun: „Als von des Antichrists Reich“, sind im lateinischen Text so übersetzt: *Tamquam regnum antichristi*. Offenbar gefiel den Verfassern der Konkordienformel diese Uebersetzung nicht, denn wiewohl sie Luther wörtlich zitieren, tun sie es nicht mit dem lateinischen Text. Da übersetzen sie: *Pontificem autem ut regnum ipsissimi antichristi*. Jedenfalls stießen sich die Verfasser der Konkordienformel an dem *tamquam*; sie empfanden, daß dieses Wort ungenau, mißverständlich sei und nicht so bestimmt wie Luthers deutsches „als“. Darum gaben sie den Worten Luthers einen bestimmten, klaren Ausdruck im lateinischen Text.

Umso mehr gibt das zu erkennen, wie die Verfasser der Konkordienformel zum Papst als Antichristen standen.

Die Theologen des 17. Jahrhunderts.

Quenstedt: „Daß der Antichrist eine gewisse und einzigartige Person sein wird, sagt die Schrift nirgends. In Daniel wird ein König genannt, nicht ein König an Zahl. Selbst Franc. Ribera (ein Jesuit, um 1549 Missionar im Kongoland) gibt zu, es sei nicht ungebrauchlich in der Schrift, daß unter einem König viele ähnliche verstanden werden.“

„Bei Matthäus höre ich von falschen Christi und falschen Propheten, dieselben also viele. Daß der Antichrist eine einzige Person sei, höre ich nicht. Die Schrift setzt oft den Singular für den Plural; so Joh. 4, 37: Einer ist, der da säet, ein anderer, der erntet, nicht einer, sondern viele sind verstanden.“

Hollaz: „Das Wort Antichrist wird von den Dogmatikern im zweifachen Sinn genommen. Im weiteren Sinne von allen Häretikern, die falsche und der Lehre Christi widerstrebende Lehren austreuen und hartnäckig verteidigen. Von welchen die Rede ist 1 Joh. 2, 18, welche allgemein kleine Antichristen genannt werden. Im besondern und kat exochen für jenen einzigartigen Feind Christi, 2 Theff. 2 beschrieben, welchen wir des Unterscheidens halber den großen Antichrist nennen.“

Dr. Heinr. Schmid, der in seiner Dogmatik der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche die eben vorgelegten Zitate bringt, sagt weiter: „Als Antichrist wurde sodann der Papst erklärt.“ Dazu führt er folgendes Beispiel aus Quenstedt an: „Diese Personalbeschreibungen (2 Theff. 2, 1–12) sind nicht abgefondert und geteilt, sondern verbunden und einander in sich schließend hier zu fassen. So gefaßt, treffen sie vollkommen auf den römischen Pontifex zu. Woraus sich der Schluß erhebt: **Der römische Papst ist jener große vom Heiligen Geist vorausgesagte Antichrist.**“

Hollaz: „In Antithese hierzu stehn die Papisten, die es leugnen, daß der Papst der Antichrist sei. Ihr hauptsächliches Argument ist: Der Antichrist ist einer, 2 Theff. 2; der Papst ist nicht einer, weil viele Päpste eingesetzt worden sind; daher ist der Papst nicht der Antichrist. Ich antworte: Der Papst ist einer, nicht der Zahl nach, nicht in der Weise, wie die Sonne eine ist, sondern sukzessive, in der Weise, wie einer König Galliens ist, welcher seine Nachfolger hat.“

Joh. Fr. Roenig, Compendium, De Antichristo Magno, S. 280: „Der gemeinsame Feind der ganzen Kirche und aller kirch-

lichen Stände ist der große Antichrist. Der Terminus Antichrist wird in der Heiligen Schrift im weiteren und engeren Sinne gefaßt; im weiteren für einen jeden, der die Art der Person und Lehre Christi durch Irrlehre erschütterte, im engeren Sinne für jenen hervorragenden und außerordentlichen Verführer oder großen Antichristen. Von dem ist hier die Rede.“

„Seine Entstehung ist nicht aus den Juden, sondern aus der Gemeinschaft der Christen. Sein Sitz im allgemeinen Sinne ist die Kirche, der Tempel Gottes, im engen **die Stadt Rom.**“ Rönig führt sodann neun Charakteristika des Antichristen auf und schließt: „Die gänzliche Vernichtung des Reiches des Antichristen ist verbunden mit der Wiederkunft unseres Herrn Jesu Christi zum Gericht.“

Balthasar Menzer, *Disputationes de Praecipuis Quibusdam Controversiis Christianae Doctrinae*; XIV, De Antichristo. Gegen Pistorius (Pistorius' Vater war lutherischer Pastor. Pistorius, der Sohn, war zuerst lutherisch, wurde dann Calvinist, zuletzt Katholik. Als solcher bekämpfte er die lutherische Lehre aufs heftigste. Vater und Sohn vergleichend, schrieb einer: „Wie der Vater ein großer Verteidiger der evangelischen Religion war, so war der Sohn der bitterste Bekämpfer derselben.“) Menzer: „Er, der Antichrist, offenbart sich, als sei er Gott, nämlich Christi Stellvertreter, Gott auf Erden, nach Balduin als eine gewisse sichtbare Gottheit, und nach Gomez: Was er tut, tut er als Gott, nicht als Mensch. Derselbe hat zugleich mit Gott einen geheimen Rat und himmlische freie Gewalt. Seine Gewalt ist die höchste, ja vielmehr absolute; sie erstreckt sich in den Himmel, über die Erde und in das Infernum. Er hat alle Gewalt im Himmel und auf Erden. Summa: Er maßt sich göttliche Namen, Ehre und Gewalt an, was durch das kanonische Recht und dessen Ausleger, ebenso durch die Geschichte, Erfahrung und tägliches Handeln bezeugt wird.“

Argumentum 3 (des Pistorius): „Der Papst erweise sich nicht als Gott.“ Ich antworte: „Das Gegenteile siehe Thesis 20, 31. Befrage auch das Buch des Protestes gegen das Concilium Tridentinum, im Jahre 1564 herausgegeben, mit Namen: Principum et Ordinum Protestantium. In diesem Buch wird vor Augen demonstriert, daß sich der Papst als Gott auführt, weil er sich von den Seinen Gott nennen läßt, sich freut, daß göttliche Ehren ihm widerfahren, sich Göttlichkeit in seinen Dekreten anmaßt und dieselben der Heiligen Schrift gleichstellt, göttliche Werke für sich behauptet, die

Religion nach seinem Willen gestaltet und sich einbildet, daß die Reiche der Welt in seiner Gewalt sein.“

Spener, der freilich nicht zu den Dogmatikern des 17. Jahrhunderts gehört, sagt in einer Reformationspredigt vom Jahre 1687: „Wer das päpstliche Reich nicht für das antichristliche erkennt, der steht noch nicht so feste, daß er nicht durch diese oder jene Verleitung möchte dazu verführt werden“; Hoenecke, Dogmatik.

Philippi, „Kirchliche Glaubenslehre“, B. VI, S. 170: „Oder ist es nicht Blasphemie, wenn der Papst sich Gott gleichsetzt, indem er sich für den unfehlbaren Statthalter Christi, des Sohnes Gottes, auf Erden erklärt, der Gewalt habe, nicht nur über alle irdischen, gott-gesetzten Gewalten, sondern auch über Himmel und Hölle, wenn einzelne Päpste sich geradezu Gott und Leo, den Löwen aus dem Stamm Juda, haben nennen lassen, wie auch jetzt noch das italienische Volk den Papst *il dio in terra* nennt?“

Ferner: „Daß das Papsttum Antichristentum ist, kann und darf keinem Lutheraner zweifelhaft sein, auch wenn er dasselbe nicht für die letzte und vollendetste Form desselben halten wollte. Es wäre doch nun aber wunderbar, wenn die Apokalypse diese eklatante Form des Antichristentums innerhalb der christlichen Kirche unberücksichtigt gelassen haben sollte.“

„Es dürfte nicht überflüssig sein, der lutherischen Kirche unserer Tage durch Anführung einiger *S y m b o l* stellen ins Gedächtnis zurückzurufen, mit welchem heiligen Ernste und mit wie sicherer Begründung unsere Glaubensväter den Satz vertreten haben, daß der Papst der Antichrist sei.“

Dr. Hoenecke: „Das nun, worauf alle diese Anzeichen trefflich, ja allein passen (nämlich 2 Thess. 2 usw.), ist das Papsttum, und dieses daher der Widerchrist.“ „Wer kann noch im Zweifel sein, ob der Papst der Antichrist ist?“

Dr. C. F. Walther, „Goldkörner“, S. 123f. In einer Reformationspredigt aus dem Jahre 1861 über 2 Thess. 2, 1–12 sagt Dr. Walther, nachdem er einen kurzen Ueberblick über die Geschichte der Päpste gegeben: „Kann nun hiernach wohl ein Zweifel sein, wer der in der Heiligen Schrift geweissagte Antichrist gewesen sei und noch sei? Es ist kein anderer Mensch als der Papst zu Rom. Alle Kennzeichen, welche die Heilige Schrift an verschiedenen Stellen von dem Antichrist gibt, treffen wir an den römischen Päpsten zusammen an.“

Dr. F. Pieper, Dogmatik III, S. 529. In dem Kapitel über den Antichrist beschreibt Dr. F. Pieper in seiner Dogmatik auf Grund von 2 Thess. 2, 1-12 zunächst die Merkmale des Antichrists und fragt dann: „Wer ist nun dieser Antichrist? Nehmen wir die angeführten Merkmale zusammen — und in ihrer Gesamtheit sind sie gemeint — so passen sie weder auf einen politischen Machthaber wie Nero, Napoleon, Boulanger usw. (die haben sich nicht als kirchliche Größen aufgespielt) noch auf die offenbar Ungläubigen und Spötter, die mit dem Tempel Gottes nichts zu tun haben wollen, sondern nur auf eine historische Erscheinung in der Welt, nämlich auf das römische Papsttum.“

Die hier vorgelegten Zitate für und wider, ob nämlich der Papst der geweissagte Antichrist sei, oder ob derselbe erst kurz vor dem Ende in einer Person zu erwarten sei, wurden ihrer Erreichbarkeit gemäß genommen wie auch selbstverständlich wegen ihres Wertes in dieser Arbeit. Es leitete keineswegs die Intention, Ungünstiges auszuschalten, dagegen Günstiges einzuschalten.

Nachdem nun beide Seiten so ausführlich, wie es möglich war, vorgelegt worden sind, erhebt sich die Frage: **Wer hat recht?** Haben die, die die Erfüllung der Weissagungen vom Antichrist im Papsttum sehen, recht; oder die, die das leugnen? Diese wichtige Frage wird im nächsten Abschnitt behandelt werden.

W. Soenede.

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

LUKE 9:57-62

Dearly Beloved in Christ Jesus!

The church-year is drawing to a close. A review of the year is surely in place. Was the year the kind it could and ought to be? Throughout the year the Lord came with His grace in His Word and scattered the good seed into our hearts. We were to bring fruit. Did we? The Lord, throughout the year, had the message brought to us that He died for us; that was to effect this in us that henceforth we were to live not to ourselves, but to Him who died for us and rose again. Living to Him we were also to follow Him. Did we? Was our life really a life of following Jesus? If that was not so, what prevented it? Examine yourselves! Our text will guide you in that. It shows us

THREE OBSTACLES TO FOLLOWING JESUS

1. That we live to ourselves;
2. That we live first for our loved ones;
3. That we live to the world.

I

That we live to ourselves.

How do you do that, live to yourself? We see that in the first man in our Gospel who came to the Savior and volunteered to follow the Lord. He was a scribe (Matt. 8:19). He was, we may assume, serious in his resolve to follow the Lord. He evidently expected, by this course, to gain great, important advantages for himself. That this was his attitude is plainly shown by the answer the Lord gave him. The Lord said to him: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests: but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." The meaning of these words is clear. The Lord declared that He did not possess a house and property which would make a quiet and comfortable life and a pleasant enjoyment of it possible, and since He did not have it, neither could He give it to His followers.

But there is something more in them, namely, that men certainly should give to Him, the promised Son of man, at least all kinds of good things and should bring them to Him as offerings and sacrifices. However, He enjoyed no respect and honor among them with His Word and His preaching, and therefore He could not give or promise honor and acclaim to any follower. There is still another truth contained in His words. The Lord pointed to this meaning. The birds have nests. They are industrious in building them and gathering things for them; they have nests and want to possess something. So too the foxes strive to possess a secure dwelling-place. Thus the Lord reveals this as His mind: I do not seek house and home, or property and comfort; I am not concerned about that at all, nor do I complain about it that I do not possess them. Now this mind of mine must be in my followers likewise. I demand that.

Since the Lord found it necessary to speak in this vein to the man before Him, He shed light enough on the spirit and thoughts of the man. Either he really sought only an outwardly easy life, or he sought honor and authority as a learned proponent of the new teaching which already was making such a stir. Or, perhaps, he only wanted to satisfy the craving of his heart with a quiet, comfortable life in the constant company of Christ, the excellent teacher, and with the daily speculation and reflection which he found very enjoyable. Perhaps he sought all of these things together. So he sought a pleasant life according to his own notions. True, he wanted to be a follower, but only in order to live to himself according to his own ideas.

Now this is certainly the case with many who, since they call themselves Christians, must be considered men who have vowed to the Lord: I will follow Thee. They are people who live only to themselves. Some do this in a very *crude* way, a way that speaks plainly of earthly-mindedness. They seek a temporal comfort and ease which satisfies their sensual nature. The whole purpose of their lives ever is to make things pleasant for themselves, to satisfy their sensual heart, and to provide the things it craves, be it home or property, be it respect and honor, be it pleasure and enjoyment, be it vain display and ostentation or perishable silver and gold. There are others who live to themselves in a more *refined* way. They want to keep their heart for themselves. It is not to be the temple in which Christ is served. In their hearts at least they want to live to themselves. Although they control themselves in their outward actions, yet in their hearts they want to feast on all kinds of lusts, they want to gloat over earthly things with *inward* delight at least. In their hearts at least they want to go their own way. In this way men like to live to themselves. That is the course many will take.

In that case following Jesus is impossible. If any man would follow Christ, he must deny himself. The Lord Himself says that (Mark 8:34). The words are clear: There can be no following after Jesus without a denial of self. Now, dear fellow-Christians, what is really your "self"? Why, that is nothing else than your heart. It is your heart that you must deny. It is your heart with its native, natural lusts, its aims and ambitions, its thoughts, opinions, and desires that you must disown. You cannot live and act as your heart in its natural condition teaches, advises, and insistently demands that you do. In short, you dare not live to yourself. For thereby the following after Jesus is made impossible. This following, you know, is not done by means of your legs, but above all with your heart. If you pull a ship with a cable, it will not go in the direction you would like to pull it, if the rudder is not set in that same direction. Likewise no one follows Jesus whose heart is not set toward Jesus and does not live to Jesus, but lives to himself.

That was the case with the man in our text; and we can take nothing else out of our text but that he gave up his intention of following Jesus. For we read that Jesus said to another man: "Follow me." The only impression you get from that is that Jesus wanted to say: This scribe went his way and left Me; now you take a better course and follow Me. We know what kept this scribe from following Jesus, namely, his self-love, the desire to live to himself according to the notions of his own heart.

You, dear fellow-Christian, now know and have again heard what it means to live to yourself. On the basis of this knowledge examine your life in the church-year now drawing to a close. If you find that you have lived to yourself, then pronounce the verdict on yourself:

In this church-year I have not been following Jesus. And nothing hindered me in that but my wicked, sinful spirit and conduct, my living to myself.

But the Lord addresses the exhortation: Follow me! to you in another way, as He did to the second man in our text. Did the following of Jesus become a reality in his case? You may well doubt it, for in his case we see another dangerous obstacle to following Jesus. It is:

II

That you live primarily for your loved ones.

The second man in our text shows us what it means to live first for your loved ones. The Lord addressed the call to him: "Follow me!" Just at the time when the Lord made this demand on him, this man's father had died. He saw in that a demand which must take precedence over the demand of the Savior. He therefore said to Christ: "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." This man, you see, did not bluntly refuse to follow Jesus, but the service to be performed for his loved ones was to come before his following Jesus. **First** he wanted to live for his loved ones, and **then** he would be ready to follow Jesus wherever He bade him go.

The number of Christians who are like this man is certainly very great. Very many say: Lord, permit me first, and that means first at all times, to live for my loved ones; **then** I will also follow Thee, as Thy Word directs me. They do not want to be non-Christians, to be sure, who bluntly refuse to follow Jesus, but their true sanctuary and their real purpose in life is their family. Whatever course its welfare dictates, that course must be followed first. They really know only **one** holy obligation, that toward their own, the duty of love toward the family. Before this duty the obligation to the Lord must always yield. Thus they would live **first** for their loved ones and **then** to the Lord. Most of them do not even say: **Lord, suffer me** first of all to dedicate myself to my loved ones and live for them; they **give themselves permission** to do it. They, in fact, consider it their sacred **right** to do that.

These are the thoughts of all the dead. I mean the spiritually dead who are without divine knowledge, of whom the Lord speaks in our text. Among present-day nominal Christians it is considered the essence of Christianity, that a man live first and foremost for his loved ones, that his family be the very first object of his love, thoughts, and cares, and its welfare the supreme law for him. Accordingly, we see them practice this principle in a thousand different ways. Suppose, for instance, that Christians of this type are tempted to do something that would demand the setting aside of Christ's Word and direction, and consequently the following of Him, but would bring an advantage to the family — the thing is done, provided it will not entail punishment by the authorities. And then they say:

A father has to think of his family first of all. — Many a man scrapes and hoards and has practically nothing left for Christ's church and school; he has something only for his loved ones. But that, in his opinion, is entirely right: You have to think of your loved ones first at all times. — Only too often sons and daughters of Lutheran Christians want to join themselves to false believers, in order to find their happiness, as the phrase goes. They want to do this, say, through marriage with false believers, Catholics, or other sectarians, and with unbelievers, or in some other way. And no earnest effort is made to prevent it. Oh, they say, the main thing after all, is that the children find their happiness, and that must remain their prime concern. — How often too do Lutheran Christians permit things in their families that do not harmonize at all with Christ's Word; they permit what He forbids; and the things He demands they leave undone. Then this is always given as an excuse: The main thing is, after all, to have peace and harmony in the family. — Often enough children of Lutheran Christians are in danger of being numbered with the dead, of dying spiritually and falling away from the faith. Often enough they choose this evil way even in their schooldays with their spitefulness and disobedience. Here, according to Christ's Word, a stern rebuke is in place, but the parents will neither permit others to do it, nor do they do it themselves. Not Christ's Word is to guide them, but their fleshly love. This retains supreme authority. Thus many live for their loved ones. Who can recount all the different ways in which it is done!

That such people cannot follow Jesus is shown by the words of the Savior to the man in our text: "**Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the Gospel of the kingdom.**" Understand these words well, dear fellow-Christians. The people to whom this man was to entrust the interring of his father are naturally not physically dead, but spiritually dead. They are dead spiritually, because above all, they have no knowledge of God. They do not see that all the duties toward our loved ones, which we really have according to God's command, must be subordinated to the commandment which concerns God and the Savior. That was so in this case: To accord his father the last honors would generally be right for this man; but when Christ said: Follow me! — he was to let that other thing go and do this. But the spiritually dead have other ideas.

Now Christ said very plainly to the man: If you want to put yourself on a plane with the spiritually dead who consider it the greatest piety **first** to show regard for their loved ones and serve them, and to let the service of following Me come after that, then you cannot be My follower. In this present situation in which you desire to perform the last honors for your father, and I at the same time command you to proclaim my name, you can only do one thing or the other. If you do the first and are present at the funeral, then you

cannot at the same time do the second, to follow My command. Your doing the first thing will necessarily keep you from doing the second, following Me.

Now that holds true in general: Aiming **first** to live for your loved ones necessarily keeps you from following Christ. I want to show you that, dear fellow-Christians, by means of two remarks with which those who want to live first for their loved ones seek to justify themselves. They say: Are we not commanded to do everything good for our own? That is right. But who commanded it? The Triune God! But now if you want to provide something good for your own through some kind of work and want to serve them thus, and **Christ**, the true God, **forbids it to you with a clear, express word of Scripture**, dare you still say: I must do everything good for my own, I am bound to that? But that is actually the attitude taken by only too many, as already shown. What are they doing? They evidently are lording it over Jesus. Not He is to be Lord, but they. **They** determine what their course is to be. They do not even acknowledge that they should let themselves be guided implicitly by the Lord's direction, word, and teaching. Then certainly they cannot be engaged in following Jesus. Thus those who seek to live first for their loved ones do not follow Him. — A further remark they make in justification of themselves: Are we not to love our own? Right! The Savior Himself wants that. But dare you be guided by this principle: **First** I will love my own and **after that** the Lord? The Lord does not **allow** that to any Christian. Upon those who assume permission to do that the Lord long ago pronounced the sentence: He that loveth **father** or **mother** more than **Me** is **not worthy of Me**. And he that loveth **son** or **daughter** more than **Me** is **not worthy of Me** (Matthew 10:37). What a devastatingly sharp and cutting word this is! This one thing is certain: such a man is not worthy of what Christ is and has, not even of His name; he does not possess Christ nor the fellowship with Him; in short, he is not among Christ's followers. This, then, is the condition of those who love father and mother, son and daughter more than Christ, seeing they seek to live for them first. This, their living first for their own, of necessity keeps them from following Christ according to His Word. Let everyone examine himself in this light. Whosoever realizes that this was his course in the past church-year, let him turn from his way.

At this someone may be in doubt and sigh anxiously, because in doing that he might no longer be able to do for his own what their needs demanded and his love would gladly do. Dear fellow-Christians, I say to such a man — and I beg you to mark this comfort: If you will live first to the Lord as His follower, then you will surely not be forced to neglect your loved ones in any way; that is most certainly true (Matt. 6:33). But it is equally certain and must remain certain, that if you continue thus in living first for your loved

ones, then you must neglect the Lord and cannot be found His follower. — Therefore may no one permit his little world, his family, to become an obstacle to him. Much less the big evil world. For this is the most general obstacle to following Jesus:

III

That men live to the world.

The third man in today's Gospel shows how this is done. He had volunteered to follow the Lord, but he said: "Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house." How, we wonder, did he want to bid them farewell? Perhaps he wanted to gather with them and be merry with them once more, as he likely had done often before. Perhaps he merely did not want to leave them without any last word from him, so that they might not think bitterly of him and feel they had been despised. He wanted, rather, to take leave of them in the spirit of friendship, kindness, and love.

There we have a picture of many so-called Christians. They want to be Christians. That means, if they want to be in earnest about it, to forsake the world. It means to bid the non-Christians, the unbelievers, farewell, be it that we simply separate ourselves from them without any word of explanation, leaving them to think and say what they please; or be it that we tell them decisively and bluntly: From this point on you and I part company; for I want to be a follower of Christ. But such a firm stand does not suit many. It seems unfriendly and inconsiderate to them. They want to bid farewell to the world. The separation is to take place in a very friendly way, in a mild and gentle way. Why, we can have our faith all by ourselves, they say, and there does not, therefore, have to be enmity between others and us. We do not want that. We do not want to conduct ourselves as Christians in such a way that others are filled with bitterness against us, as though we despised and condemned them and their life. We do not like to see unfriendliness existing between them and us. They also want to inform the people of the world to that effect and try to explain to them that the world should not hold it against them and be angry with them because they for their part want to be Christians. Thus they bid farewell.

But this leavetaking turns out as leavetaking often does. They cannot be done with their leavetaking. If you did not finally separate them by force, there never would be a separation. But in the case of the leave that men want to take of the world as Christians there is no external force to separate them. Therefore this leavetaking goes on and on. The friendship and keeping company with the world goes on and on. They continue associating with the world on a friendly and peaceful footing. In church they sing:

Come, follow Me, the Savior spake,
 All in My way abiding:
 Deny yourselves, **the world forsake,**
 Obey My call and guiding, —

and in their daily life they sing the world's praises: it is not nearly as bad, as it is often made out, and enough worldly people are much better than many Christians. They also are of the opinion that the so-called worldly ways and the worldly life are not such a great abomination as often pictured in sermons. You do not have to condemn everything, they say, you can partake of many things with a fine clear conscience. And not a few Christians actually bid farewell to the children of the world in this way, that they whole-heartedly enjoy their worldly pleasures with them. Thus these people never come to a real leavetaking of their worldly associates. They remain entangled in ties of friendship with the world. They do not get away from the world's way of thinking and judging. They are still filled with delight in the things that are of the world. Thus they in very fact still live to the world.

That you cannot speak of following Christ in the case of such people is stated by the Lord, when he speaks thus to the man who wanted to bid farewell to those who were at his home: "**No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.**" There, dear fellow-Christian, you hear the Savior saying very bluntly that such a man simply cannot be among His followers. The Lord declares it to be impossible. He terms it putting your hand to the plow, when you are converted out of the world and become a Christian. Then the world is to be crucified unto you, that is, in your eyes it is to be evil and accursed, so that you no longer desire any part of it. Now a man is to say: This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before (Phil. 3:13). On the other hand, the man who still finds his delight in the world, is looking back. He also is looking back who wants to maintain the friendship between the world and himself, still wants to exercise forbearance toward it, and does not want to make a clean break with it.

And this is the verdict: He is not fit for the kingdom of God. He cannot think and do anything which pertains to the kingdom of God, nor can he be a follower of Christ, nor a Christian at all. Do not deceive yourself, you pitiable friend-of-the-world. Do not think for a moment that Christ will accept at full value your cheap and empty assurance: I think a great deal of faith and of Christianity, with which you too want to say something like this: I will follow Thee! He judges you according to what you are: a friend of the world. Let it fill you with alarm! The friendship of the world is enmity with God (James 4:4).

Now leave the former things behind you along with the old year

and plow a better furrow. Do not live to the world, that you may not be condemned with the world. Do not live first for your loved ones, for he that loveth father or mother more than Jesus is not worthy of Him. And do not live to yourself, for he that would save his life shall lose it. Live to the Lord. Then you live for your highest good. Then you will die to the Lord. Then you may say in joyous blessedness: Whether I live, or whether I die, I am the Lord's. Amen.

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

Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen.

National Association of Evangelicals. — *The Presbyterian Guardian* for June 10, 1943, carries an Editorial on the National Association of Evangelicals, which reads as follows: Five hundred evangelical leaders throughout the nation assembled in convention at Chicago last month and organized the National Association of Evangelicals with the Rev. Harold J. Ockenga, pastor of the Park Street Congregational Church of Boston, as president. The purpose of the Association is to represent evangelical Protestants who are unwilling to be represented by the modernist Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, to negotiate with the federal government as the representative of evangelical Protestantism in such matters as free radio time and chaplaincy quotas, to carry out a united program of evangelism and publication of Sunday school material and, in general, to make through united action a strong impact upon the public mind for true Bible-believing Protestantism.

We confess considerable sympathy with many of the objectives of the Association. It is high time the American public and the federal government were informed that the Federal Council is not the spokesman of all Protestants in the United States. We resent the Federal Council's pontifical claims and sweeping pronouncements. It represents many large denominations and may even represent a majority of Protestants en masse. Also we have become alarmed at the privileged position given by both government and radio chains to the Federal Council. Why should it have sole control of all free time, while evangelical broadcasters must pay? Why should it exercise such a controlling voice in the appointment of chaplains for the army and navy? Furthermore, Protestantism suffers from the want of a united voice on public and ecclesiastical matters. When Rome speaks, she speaks with one voice and the world gives heed. We Protestants are so divided that our influence is greatly weakened. Thus we see the desirability of an association of evangelicals.

However, we are convinced the National Association will never, on its present basis, become a worthy spokesman for the Bible-believing Christians of America. In the first place, it has not taken a consistent stand against the Federal Council. Of talk and public criticism there has been plenty, but the National Association has not, in convention assembled, repudiated the Council nor has it forbidden membership in the Association to those represented denominationally by the Council. So we have the spectacle of its president, Dr. Ockenga, heading an organization that is logically a deadly enemy of the Federal Council while he himself is actually represented by the Federal Council by virtue of his membership in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. If the Federal Council is a modernist, unscriptural, unprotestant octopus — and we think it is — then let every evangelical shake off its tentacles completely and at once. “If Jehovah be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.” Evangelical Protestantism will never amount to a hill of beans as long as it consists of scattered groups of believers remaining in modernist denominations. The National Association of Evangelicals will never have a reason for existence until it declares unremitting, uncompromising total war on the Federal Council.

In the second place, if the Association undertakes any ecclesiastical functions such as evangelistic campaigns or publication of Sunday school literature, its broad basis will become a source of confusion and weakness. Suppose the evangelicals of Chicago unite in an evangelistic campaign and the evangelist preaches on the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. What is he going to say? That God hardened Pharaoh's heart or that Pharaoh hardened his own heart? We suspect he will say only the latter. Shall Calvinists support this Arminianism? Or, if by any chance, a Calvinistic evangelist were employed by the Association, should Arminians be expected to support him? Let no one say the problem need not arise, for no evangelist can preach for one week without speaking either Calvinism or Arminianism. Or suppose the Association published a Sunday school lesson on the Ten Commandments. If that lesson declares that the law is still binding, what will Donald Grey Barnhouse and Lewis Sperry Chafer and kindred dispensational evangelicals say? If it says that it is not binding in this dispensation, what will non-dispensationalists say? And so it goes. This is the dilemma in which all general evangelical organizations and institutions find themselves. They try not to adopt any specific interpretation of God's Word, but they cannot help doing so. Wheaton College cannot tolerate Dr. Gordon Clark's Calvinism, but it will tolerate the Arminianism of Dr. Clark's successor. The National Association is trying to be “inclusive” but it will eventually follow some “line”, and it is our guess that the line followed will turn out to be the Arminian baptistic, anti-intellectual line of the greater part of American Fundamentalism. Such a position will bar all historic Presbyterians and Lutherans, to say nothing of others.

For these reasons we do not believe the Association can effectively fight Modernism or unite evangelicals. We still believe there is need for

co-operative action among evangelicals in certain limited non-ecclesiastical spheres, but we remain convinced that the National Association of Evangelicals does not meet this need.

— J. P. C.

A comment on this Editorial will appear in one of our following issues. M.

The Purposes of Almighty God in History. — The *Watchman-Examiner* is running a series of articles on postwar problems. From one of these we quote the following noteworthy paragraph,

“Battleships, airplanes, tanks, guns, military forces are no guarantee of peace. They may be, and are, in such cases as the present emergency, the means of victory in which we may establish the kind of world order and peace we want. But we cannot build a peace with these forces. After the guns have ceased firing, the conflict in ideologies will begin again. We remember well the ideological chaos which followed the last World War. Recall the *new world* we were to have in which there was to be no government without the consent of the governed. We were to have a *disarmed world*. Munitions manufacturers were called *merchants of death*. Military uniforms were a scourge. Chaplains in the nation's defense forces were dubbed *betrayers of Christianity*. Students signed a *no-war pledge* by the million. There was to be no more capitalism. Then came *technocracy*, followed by a new order of Western communism. With it all, there was such a theological muddle in Christian circles that Christianity became a cause with confused aims and schismatic impotence. Soldiers win wars, but it is clear, deep and reliable ideologists — we sometimes call them *thinkers* — will model the communal life of the world's people in the peace. We lost the peace following the last World War because our *great men* followed lopsided ideals, whims, impulses, and intuitions rather than the revelation of the sovereign purposes of Almighty God in history. Western nations turned to humanistic self-sufficiencies.”

Statesmen may not be able as such to discern the “sovereign purposes of Almighty God in history.” They are appointed to dispense civic equity and righteousness in the country which they serve, and to see to it, as much as they are able, that their own nation receives a fair treatment by the others and itself practices fairness toward others.

A Christian knows from the Word of God that the whole world with all its institutions, including nationalities and their governments, is under the curse because of sin and is doomed to final destruction. Meanwhile God is over-ruling the destinies of nations, having “determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation” (Acts 17, 26). He is using the nations for the purposes of His Kingdom, for He has given Christ “to be the head over all things *to the church*” (Eph. 1, 22). A Christian understands as little as does a statesman what God's plans are in detail concerning the political destinies of the nations and, for that matter, of the visible church on earth — he remembers the sharp rebuke of the ascending

Lord to His disciples: "It is not for you to know" (*ouch hymōn estin*, Acts 1, 7) — and quietly occupies himself with the commission received from His Lord, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mc. 16, 15).

This must be the gist of our postwar planning, in fact, of all our planning as individual Christians, as local congregations, as larger church bodies, that we make full and faithful use of every opportunity which the Lord presents to us, and enter into every door that He opens to us, at the same time also avoiding carefully that we do not try to force a door which the Ruler of the universe and the Head of the Church has not opened.

M.

* * * *

"Lutheran Theologians In Hopeful Meeting." — "It was an encouraging three-day session of Lutheran theologians which was sponsored by Augustana Seminary at Rock Island, Illinois, June 9 to 11." Thus begins an editorial appraisal in *The Lutheran Companion* for June 30, 1943. The editorial goes on to say that "the attendance was surprising. Out of twenty-one Lutheran theological seminaries in the United States and Canada, seventeen were represented." Among the four not represented was our own at Thiensville.

Besides the various departmental sessions (in Church History, Practical Theology, Biblical Theology, and Systematic Theology) four general sessions were held. Three lectures, followed by a general discussion, were delivered on *The Curriculum of Theological Education* (prepared by Dr. A. R. Wentz, Gettysburg), *Academic Freedom and Scientific Approach to Theology* (by Dr. Bernhard Christensen, Minneapolis), and *The Seminary and the Church* (by Dr. W. Arndt, St. Louis).

Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, extended an invitation to the conference for next year.

Why was Thiensville not represented?

Our Seminary received an invitation in January, and in the following letter expressed its willingness to participate.

"Dear President Bergendoff:—

"I have received your letter of January 6th with your kind invitation to a proposed conference of theological professors, and with your Seminary's generous offer of its hospitality. Please, accept my sincerest thanks.

"I note that the purpose of this gathering is to discuss the 'common tasks and problems' of theological professors in all parts of America. In my estimation the basic problem that we all have in common lies in the serious doctrinal differences that now separate the various Lutheran groups, and the resultant deplorable lack of unity, without which any such gatherings on other matters would only compromise the truth by creating the impression that existing differences are being ignored.

"If there shall be a frank recognition of these differences, and if the first purpose of the proposed conference shall be to discuss these divisive doctrinal questions on the basis of Scripture with the intention of bringing about real agreement in the teaching of our several seminaries, I shall, in keeping with the declared policy of our Synod, be glad to accept your invitation on behalf of our faculty.

"However, since our Synod has a standing committee on church union, propriety would demand that I submit the matter of your invitation to them before taking final action. The said committee will meet in May.

"With sincerest greetings,

Yours respectfully,
(signed) Joh. P. Meyer."

We never received a reply, although literature pertaining to the proposed convention continued to come to our desk.

We now append the appraisal of the conference as contained in the first and last paragraph of the editorial mentioned above.

"The first meeting of its kind in the history of American Lutheranism, it far surpassed the most optimistic hopes of those who had arranged the program and indicated *once more that a new day of good will and understanding is dawning* for the Lutheran Church on this side of the Atlantic. . . . Although the conference developed a variety of views and shades of thought, it was remarkable not only for its large attendance but *for the spirit of tolerance* that was revealed. While *fundamental agreement was evident in the essentials of Lutheran teaching, wide latitude was given for the expression of individual opinions*. A sharp distinction was drawn between the facts of Scriptural truth and human theories concerning specific doctrines."

Italics in the quotation are ours.

M.

"**Regiment's Finest.**" — Who? What? This is the title given by the *News Bulletin* of the National Lutheran Council to an item on a certain Lutheran chaplain. What is it that in the eyes of the editor of the *Bulletin* entitles the respective chaplain to be called the Regiment's Finest? Here is the answer: "The sight of a Lutheran chaplain accompanying a group of Jewish soldiers to a city 150 miles away so that they might celebrate Pass-over in their own synagogue impressed the editor of an Army newspaper . . . and led him to the following editorial expression on one of the things that makes America great: 'Brotherhood, the companionship of all men, has and always will be the backbone of our Army. It is our most powerful weapon. The Axis powers, on numerous occasions, have attempted in vain to break this unified barrier. The men largely responsible for this good relationship within our ranks are the Army chaplains.' The chaplain inspiring these remarks" etc. The Army newspaper sums up its praise of the

respective chaplain, and the *Bulletin* approves, in the remark that he is "minister, father and rabbi to all the men in this area."

We may not wish to criticize the editor of the Army newspaper too severely, but the editor of a Lutheran *News Bulletin* certainly should have known better than to endorse those remarks and thereby discredit the confessional faithfulness of Lutheran chaplains.

But is such an attitude of confessional indifference perhaps inherent in the office of Army Chaplains as such? Read the following description of a Chaplain's duties as listed in *The Lutheran* for July 14, 1943. "The chaplain is a clergyman, priest, minister, pastor, or rabbi who, having been given the ecclesiastical endorsement of his own religious group, and having met the requirements of the War Department, is appointed to supply the religious needs of his assignment. He is the spiritual leader of the command, being placed on his Commanding Officer's staff as adviser in his own particular field. The chaplain is, therefore, the Commanding Officer's assistant, to lead the spiritual life of the Command. He conducts services and administers the sacred rites of his Church. His conferences, held with individuals and groups, are far-reaching in their effect on both soldier and home front morale. — *The functions of his civilian pastorate are, in the Army, extended to include his responsibility of providing religious ministrations to men of faiths other than his own.*"

What is this? It certainly does not mean proselyting; rather, it demands of the chaplain a personal accommodation to a religious confession which in civilian life he rejects.

M.

Religious Instruction in Public Schools. — The inadequacy of a school education and character building without a religious foundation, as is attempted in the public schools of our land, has been recognized by educators for some time. We need not go into details now. What has not been generally recognized, and does not seem to be understood to this day, is that a religion, in order to provide a real basis for character building, must itself be definite and virile. A character built on a religious foundation that falls short of this requirement will of necessity share the vagueness of the foundation on which it rests. From the educator's viewpoint a firm confessional stand alone will suffice to carry a desirable superstructure of training and discipline. This fact is being generally overlooked and an indiscriminate clamor is heard for introducing religious instruction into our public school system in order to offset the evident lack.

Yet, is a definite confessional stand possible in a school system which is to supply instruction to children of various denominations, all having an equal status before the law? Religious instruction there must be; but our school system dare not show preference to one confession over against others of equal rights, nor slight even the most insignificant minority over against an overwhelming majority. What is to be done? A denominationally "colorless" religion is suggested.

The state is, and can be, interested in civic righteousness only, just as in time of danger and distress it is interested in keeping up the morale of its citizenry. Any means that promise to help attain this end must be welcome to the state, and will be employed. If religion serves the purpose of the state, the state will use it in any available form. The state simply operates by force and will press into service any implement within its reach. We may, therefore, reasonably expect that in order to make public schooling more effective in raising the standard of civic righteousness in our land, religious instruction of some sort will increasingly be introduced in our schools.

What attitude are we to take as confessional Lutherans?

We certainly place a high value on civic righteousness. We agree with Aristotle, whom Melancthon quotes in the Apology as saying: "Neither the evening star nor the morning star is more beautiful than righteousness" (Trgl. p. 127, 24). We are subject to our government, we pray for the men in office responsible for its conduct, we support them in their endeavor to stimulate righteousness. What then must be our attitude when the authorities, in order to reinforce the character of our youth against temptation and to promote honesty and orderliness, introduce religious instruction — confessionally "colorless" — in our public schools?

We are not now interested in any political, social, or economic implications. Our question is, How will the introduction of religious instruction in our public schools affect our attitude as a church over against that school system? Will it help to solve our own educational difficulties? Will it make the system of public school training less objectionable than it was without any religious instruction? Will it ease our church work and relieve our educational program? In other words, can we as a church use the foundation laid in the religious instruction of the public school, and on this basis simply continue and complete the superstructure for our specific Christian and Lutheran training?

No. Emphatically, no. The more religious instruction — confessionally colorless — is introduced in our public schools, the less satisfactory, the more positively dangerous they become for the spiritual life of the children. They may succeed in advancing the civic righteousness of the country's youth, yet not in the sense of Christian sanctification, but on the basis of a man's own ability, as an achievement of his own efforts. The greater, accordingly, the need of stressing our own educational work.

In the paragraph quoted above from the Apology, Melancthon continues: "Yet it (civic righteousness) ought not to be praised with reproach to Christ." He adds: "False also is this, that men are accounted righteous before God because of the righteousness of reason" (§ 26). But a "reproach to Christ" is precisely the thing to which religious instruction in public schools will inevitably lead.

We recently read a report on the program of Bible teaching as it is in vogue in the schools of Chattanooga, Tenn., this arrangement having been begun there "more than twenty years ago." Space will not permit to

reproduce here the programs in full as followed in the various departments; suffice it that we select a few of the guiding principles, which indeed are praiseworthy in themselves. Consider, *e. g.*, the following general and specific objectives: "To teach the Bible as one continuous story of God's dealings with man." — "To lead the student to the Lord Jesus Christ." — "Christ is the center of the Word." — Naturally the direction is given to the teachers "to do this teaching from a non-sectarian viewpoint."—In what spirit all of this teaching is to be done is apparent from the last objective listed for the course on "The Life of Christ." It is: "To lead the pupils to know . . . that we are His, if we do whatsoever He commands us; that we should do unto others as we would like to have them to do unto us; that we love one another; that we forgive one another, and that we go into all the world telling the glorious news of the Lord Jesus."

This spells, indeed, a splendid civic righteousness, but also a toughening of the inborn aversion to salvation by faith alone in the vicarious redemption of Christ crucified. Christ is used merely as a teacher of morality, and as an example for us to follow. This is not preparatory, but antagonistic to true Biblical teaching. We, as church, cannot make use of it. — On the other hand, let us not forget that the Word of God under all circumstances remains the vehicle by means of which the Holy Spirit enters the hearts of those who hear, and that He works faith *ubi et quando visum est Deo*. The Word of God shall not return void. This fact, however, in which we find consolation and joy, is not a justification of the Chattanooga program, nor an excuse for our own neglect of doing our utmost toward the Christian training of the children entrusted to us.

M.

Should the Church Revise Its Educational Program? — Our Synod at its recent convention created a committee which is to conduct a survey of the whole educational program of our school system, particularly that governing the work in the institutions of higher learning. Wisely, our Synod does not contemplate any radical changes, rather, all educational work in the future is to be carried on along old tried conservative lines. We are not the only ones to fear untried innovations. The *Watchman-Examiner* for September 2, 1943, carried the following item: "Educators are a bit troubled lest the practical and technical education now offered by most of our colleges to our young men and young women shall persist beyond the war to the hurt of cultural education and emphasis on literature, art, history, and philosophy. As we have suggested before, our private colleges should not allow themselves to become dependent on the government, and our State institutions will make a great blunder if they allow themselves to become mere utilitarian agencies."

M.

The Urge for Unity. — The urge for church unity, which seems to be very wide-spread today, finds vivid expression in a letter to the *Watchman-Examiner* (quoted in the issue for September 2, 1943, p. 838).

The *Watchman-Examiner* analyses some of the thoughts contained in the letter and correctly shows how shallow this well-meant urge at times may be. We reprint the letter and parts of the answer, in order to confirm ourselves in the conviction that the very desire for unity of the spirit impels us to avoid the lures of an unsound union.

The *letter*. "In a day when the man in the street is interpreting our Christ in terms of our ability to work together, when the real demonstration of our love is the degree of our co-operation and love: that there should be Christians, and, above all, Baptists, thinking in divisive terms, seems to me the saddest commentary on the quality of modern religion. Millions of disillusioned men and women look to the church for some word of assurance and salvation, and they are offered the spectacle of Christians expending their energy and earnestness in debate about the Virgin Birth or Christ's Second Coming."

From the *reply*. I. "The fact is that *the man in the street* does not know much, if anything at all, about Christ. . . . Test him . . . as to his interpretation of our Christ, and the answers will be as confused and as hopelessly diverse as Babel where there is some apparent knowledge, and as miserably dark as pagan Africa where there is ignorance. . . . We fear that most *men in the street* hardly give the church a thought at all, except in the darkness of a few morbid moments. — II. "The corporate church has a testimony which is a jangle of discord. . . . With regard to salvation, there are more views on how to be saved than there are opinions in our confused political world, in spite of the fact that God has given us so simple a Gospel that the darkest pagan may be won by it. In the presence of these diverse and conflicting views, how can the Christian church give to the multitude *some word of assurance and salvation*? It cannot, and it is not so doing. Only as there clearly emerges out of the confusion the revelation God has given of His Son and the work of redemption He was sent to perform for a sinful race will there be any *word of assurance and salvation*." — III. "There is no salvation in sentiment. Human co-operation is a method, not a doctrine. The highest demonstration of Christian love has never been to surrender Christian truth to the destroyers. Jesus himself did not do so. Toward those who perverted His truth He employed denunciations of such force as we would never have the audacity to use. While He was engaged in the supernatural work of redeeming a lost world, He took time and strength to denounce those who would unfaith or pervert the people. . . . True, in war we need unity as never before. But men of divergent economic viewpoints are not now failing to seek the right policy. Neither are politicians practicing a political moratorium. And it is not an adequate philosophy that expects Christians, because a war is on, to tolerate all forms of spiritual confusion and doctrinal heresy, forbidding that they shall in any way be corrective toward the right. . . . Is it unity and harmony when underneath the pretendedly placid surface there is seething unrest? As long as that is the situation, there is always the danger of irruption."

Another possibility, we might add, and one hardly less serious than the one mentioned, is the danger of becoming callous over against the unsettled differences and the truth which they concern. M.

Christianity and Buddhism in Harmony? — The *Sunday School Times* for August 28, 1943, quotes briefly from a report of T. Fukuyama, printed in *Missions*. Mr. Fukuyama is pastor of a federated church serving Japanese in a relocation center. He writes: "We are enjoying the creative challenge of working across denominational line. We have gotten rid of the old antagonism between Christians and Buddhists. I have a hope that the faiths represented on the project — Catholic, Protestant, and Buddhist — can come together to draw up a statement of faith to which all can subscribe."

The *Sunday School Times* pertinently asks: "Does *Missions* approve?" M.

Büchertisch.

H. C. Leupold, D. D., Exposition of Genesis. The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio, 1942. 1,220 pages. \$4.50 net.

The mere study of the author's Introduction to his Exposition of Genesis will convince our readers that this commentary contains "the old conservative interpretation" of the Bible and that negative literary criticism has not been able to undermine it as far as this Exposition is concerned. Whether Dr. Leupold is discussing the authorship or the text of Genesis (pp. 5-11), whether he is facing the issue: "History or legend in Genesis" (pp. 11-13) or whether he is dealing in a lengthier paragraph with Modern Criticism as such (pp. 13-20), his standpoint is that of one who is firmly founded in the Scriptures and who will not be misled by vain speculations of Modern Critics. Whenever Dr. Leupold does give an account of his own critical views regarding sources, authorship or text of Genesis, his critical views are of a constructive nature and in full accord with Biblical tradition. Only the author's statement that "in *our Hebrew Bibles* (italics ours) we have a very good Hebrew text," should have been more specific and should not have failed to include the third edition of R. Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* 1937, which contains "the official standard text of the Scriptures" in its purest form. Such modern critical editions of the Hebrew text are a gift to the Church and should be used as such.

The Bibliography, which is listed as paragraph 10 in this Introduction, also contains the names of modern critical commentators, as for instance those of Gunkel, Proksch, Skinner, and Koenig, the writings of the latter being regarded by the author "as the most constructive work among modern writers" (p. 32). We regret that we do not find the commentaries of Vischer and Kraemer listed in the Bibliography, not only because they

are commentaries of more recent date, but because they represent a promising change on the part of German commentaries in interpreting the Bible.

Dr. Leupold's repeated references in the course of his exposition to modern critical commentaries are significant of two facts worth mentioning. The one is that no modern commentator can well ignore those contributions of critical commentaries, which lend themselves to a better understanding of anyone of the Old Testament books. The other fact is that issue must be taken with much which is being taken for granted by these commentaries and which leads to interpretations of the Bible that indeed "*press Old Testament Scriptures down to the level of the sacred writings of the heathen*" (p. 24). Dr. Leupold does justice to both of these demands placed on a modern commentator, especially counteracting by his arguments the "alluring power" of many a critical theory.

According to our opinion the author could have applied the findings of Biblical Archaeology more often to certain chapters of Genesis. Chapter 16 is a case in point. The question, whether Sarah is using cruelty or injustice in humbling her maid Hagar is answered to a certain extent by paragraph 146 of the Hammurapi Codex, which deals with such a slave-girl who would rank with her mistress (Barton, *Archaeology and the Bible*, p. 391 ff), and should at least be taken into consideration by a commentator. The threefold use of the root word 'anah, to be low, afflicted (verses 6, 9 and 11 of chapter 16), must also be pointed out to the reader as an important link in the chain of argument running through the whole chapter and giving us the final answer to the question concerning Sarah's "cruelty" and "injustice." The same can be said of chapter 15, 2-4, where Eliezer is designated as the prospective heir of Abram's house. Dr. Leupold simply states: "After the master's children the children of the headservant were counted as heirs" (p. 475). A reference to the laws of the Nuzu Tablets, (compare *Biblical Archaeologist*, February 1940), which make the relationship between the master and his headservant quite clear, even in case that the "*adopter should beget a son after the adoption,*" would have been in place. Dr. Leupold does refer to the "monuments" in connection with the list of titles which Joseph in Egypt ascribes to himself (p. 1,094). Nevertheless this and other references to Egyptian customs and habits on the part of our author could be more specific, if the author had had at his disposal not only Jahuda, "The Accuracy of the Bible," to which Dr. Reu has already referred in his review of this commentary (*Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, January, 1943, p. 54), but also "*Die Sprache des Pentateuch*" by the same author, both of which are not listed in the aforementioned Bibliography.

But of course all this is of secondary importance in a commentary of a Biblical book, which deals with eternal verities. The "old conservative interpretation" of Genesis holding its own in this commentary ever against the pernicious influence of modernistic interpretations of Holy Writ is of paramount importance. Dr. Leupold's manner and method of presenting

his interpretation of the text to the reader in a concise form is very commendable and finds special favor with students, who are beginners in the art of interpreting the Old Testament text. The author knows the problems with which every student of the Bible has to cope, the difficulties which he sooner or later must encounter and therefore most of his statements and arguments are precise and to the point, aiding the student to gain an adequate knowledge of the depth of thought contained in the text. Especially the Messianic passages in Genesis are clearly interpreted as such by the author. Most modern commentators fail to find Messianic prophecies in Genesis and for that matter in the whole of the Old Testament, Ed. König being one of many merely classifying the Protevangelium as "ein direkter Hinweis auf die messianische Epoche" (*"Die Genesis"* p. 277). Vischer, although a theologian of the Barthian school or because he is a theologian belonging to that school, finds in the words of the Protevangelium the promise concerning "einen Sohn des Menschen, einen vom Weibe Geborenen, den Sieg über den Bösen herbeizuführen" (pp. 80 and 85). Dr. Leupold's line of argument to prove that the term *zera'*, "seed of the woman," embodies "perfectly natural concentric circles of meaning" and at last narrows down to the innermost circle representing an individual, the Messiah, lacks a reference to the so-called genealogical and total way of thinking (genealogisches and ganzheitliches Denken) pre-supposed by Genesis 3, 15 and perfectly illustrated by Revelations 22, 16 representing Christ as "the root and the offspring of David," "die Wurzel and das Geschlecht Davids," den "Geschlechtsabkömmling" (compare Strack-Zöckler, *Kurzgefasster Kommentar*, p. 508). In other words "seed of the woman," which is rightly designated by the author as a collective concept, can and must be understood at the same time "in the sense of an individual" as the root of the family or Geschlecht. Vischer aptly defines this way of thinking as "ein ursprüngliches Denken, dem heute manche Menschen, vor allem die wissenschaftlich Denkenden, entfremdet sind, weil sie meinen, in der Wissenschaft sei nur das atomisierende Denken zulässig, ein Ding könne nur dadurch wissenschaftlich erfaßt werden, daß man es aus seinem Zusammenhang löse und in die einzelnen Stücke, aus denen es zusammengesetzt sei, zerlege" (p. 146).

Yet the main question in regard to the interpretation of Genesis 3, 15, which we would still like to touch on here, has reference to the "divine character of the seed of the woman." Dr. Leupold does not find the divine character of the seed implied in Genesis 3, 15 and therefore translates Genesis 4, 1: "I have gotten a man-child with Jahweh." The arguments which Dr. Leupold advances in favor of his translation have not convinced us. The argument advanced by Möller in his "Biblische Theologie" has a greater appeal and does greater justice to the whole context: "Der Satz (namely 4, 1,) wird nur verständlich aus der Hoffnung einer Menschwerdung Jahwes, die aus 3, 15 herausgelesen ist, sich in der Zeit der Erfüllung irrt, aber doch ganz richtig ahnt, daß nur durch eine derartige göttliche Veranstaltung 3, 15 zur völligen Wahrheit werden

wird" (p. 83). Another passage in this very chapter, namely 4, 26, justifies Moellers argument and interpretation of both 4, 1 and 3, 15. All that Dr. Leupold seems to find in verse 26 is a "record of regular public worship" (p. 228). But it apparently contains much more, namely the calling upon the name of Jehovah as the promised One, the Messiah, calling upon Him to fulfill the promise of the Protevangelium by means of His incarnation. Subsequent revelation (Is. 7, 14; 9, 5 and others) only sets forth the incarnation more clearly.

We do not hesitate to designate this Exposition of Genesis as the first of its kind in the English language which the Lutheran Church of America can lay claim to, and which to a great extent fulfills the demands, which have to be placed by the Church on modern commentaries in its own midst, in order to provide its theologians and non-theologians with adequate means to ward off modernistic interpretations and to deepen and further their knowledge of Biblical truth.

P. Peters.

Proceedings of the Twenty-third Convention of the Central Illinois District of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States. Assembled at Danville, Illinois, October 4 to 9, 1942. Price, 15 cents prepaid.

These Proceedings contain important reports on "Support and Pensions", on "Christian Education," on "Young People's Work," and on other important phases of church work. Special mention however must be made of the Doctrinal Essay: Lutheranism in Its Fundamental Opposition to Romanism, Calvinism, and Modernism, by Professor J. T. Mueller. This timely essay deserves careful reading and study.

P. Peters.

The Preacher's Manual; a Study in Homiletics, by John H. C. Fritz, D. D. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1941. Blue buckram. \$3.00.

The belated appearance of this review is under no circumstances to be regarded as evidence of a lack of appreciation on our part regarding the book listed above. Our high regard for the venerable author as well as our personal knowledge of his exceptional talents in the field of homiletics make such a type of criticism unthinkable. While we frankly admit that an addition as valuable as this to the long list of homiletical publications deserved earlier recognition in the *Quartalschrift*, we do entertain the hope that our remarks at this late date have this in their favor that they are in part based on the use of the book in the classroom during the past school year.

Most amazing to the reader who browses through the book is the abundance of material pertaining to every phase of a preacher's activities. The first part of the book, and the most important, is entitled Study in Homiletics. Appended to this is a Brief History of Preaching.

Dr. Fritz tells us in the foreword that he has set himself one great goal in particular, namely to present clearly "what has been the crux of homileticians, — the sermon methods." Before this method is presented, the author discusses preaching in general. Here and in later chapters he has performed a great service to his readers and especially to the seminary student by quoting extensively from other books on sermonizing, thereby making his book a rich treasure-trove of counsel, exhortation, and encouragement. We have in mind such statements as this from Ray, *Expository Preaching*: "Most of the men in the ministry today are good men, but most of them are not first-rate preachers. The tragedy of it is that most of them do not seem to realize that preparing and delivering sermons is the main business of the preacher. The result is they spend more time and give more nervous energy and hard work to secondary things than they do to the major task."

Dr. Fritz restricts himself to three homiletical requisites: a thorough study and understanding of the text, a good outline, and a good delivery. "These," he states emphatically, "are fundamental, essential, indispensable, for good sermonizing." No preacher of experience will quarrel with him on this statement. It does occur to us, however, that a beginner might gather the notion from the requisites listed here that it will do no great harm if he allows himself a certain degree of negligence in the *writing* of the sermon. This mistaken judgment is of course thoroughly squelched in a later chapter on *Writing the Sermon*, but it might have been touched upon with good effect in this section also.

There follows next a chapter with the heading, *The Process of Sermonizing*. Though this chapter covers only a little more than a page, it is in our opinion the very heart of the entire first part. Here the student finds stated in terse form the step-by-step procedure in the work of sermon-making. Twenty-two brief statements constitute the entire chapter. Not one of them is dispensable. Particularly two details regarding the order of these notes appeal to us as being of greatest importance to the student and for that matter to the preacher as well. Item 6) Study original text, is *preceded* by these rules: 3) Read text in vernacular; 4) Read context. (immediate and remote); 5) Brief meditation on text. Men who delight in reading and poring over the original texts — far be it from us to dissuade them! — are in danger of overlooking the value that lies in the procedure just indicated. Yet, after all, our English and our German texts will be the basis for our preaching. In this version of the *Word* the preacher will wish to submerge himself, familiarize himself with the ring of its phrases, and seek to relish fully the savor of its heavenly truths. With this aim in mind he will recognize the wisdom of the author's arrangement of rules as it is pointed out above, being assured that

the beginning and end of his sermon study will have to rest on that language of the text in which he will speak to his people.

The other item in this Process of Sermonizing which attracted us is the one which indicates the proper moment in which to turn one's attention to auxiliary material on the text. Dr. Fritz wants none of it to be touched before the text has been thoroughly studied, the meditation completed, and the theme together with its divisions and subdivisions fully determined, — in other words, before the outline has been constructed in its every detail. Only then is he ready to offer rule 15: Read commentaries, sermons, homiletical material. Make notes. In rule 16 he proceeds to explain how this reading is then put to use, saying: Re-study your text and outline and make necessary corrections, improvements, and additions in outline.

We doubt whether this part in the procedure of sermon-making is to be found in any other book of homiletics; surely it is nowhere so clearly expressed as here. If exegetical and homiletical material of any kind is to be used at all, this is without doubt the only safe and profitable time at which to employ it. This procedure eliminates successfully the ever-present temptation of finding a short cut to material for a sermon through appropriating other men's thoughts without any serious effort on the part of the preacher at burrowing into the text and mining the gold of Ophir himself.

This Process of Sermonizing is then amply enlarged upon in the following chapters. The contents of these chapters are matters of utmost importance and are written in delightfully clear and fascinating style. We confess to finding it a bit disturbing that the author did not bring each point of the Process in the order in which we expected it to come. Thus while discussing the text in the next chapter, he already also discusses the writing and co-ordinating of the thoughts in the text and even follows this up with lengthy examples. But later on, when he analyzes sermon methods of his own and of others, he again has something to say about the theme and the co-ordination of thoughts. There is a similar looseness of arrangement in the following chapters, all of which could perhaps be improved upon in a later edition.

In spite of these minor irregularities the fact remains that we have every reason to be deeply grateful to the author for thus passing on to the church at large his expert views on the process of sermonizing. Among other things he has greatly simplified the distinction between several types of outlines. He points out that "one can do only two things with a text: say what the text says in so many words or say what is implied in the text." This in turns gives us the only two possible sermon methods, the direct or analytic, and the indirect or synthetic method. What a relief it is for an instructor to be rid once and for all of the intricate task of explaining the complicated and often contradictory methods presented by other homileticians!

We would like to point out many other excellent features in this section and enlarge upon them if space permitted, but must content ourselves with a mere mention of such headings as Law and Gospel in the Sermon, Parable and Miracle Texts, and Occasional Sermons and Addresses.

Part II contains a series of sermon studies, sermon outlines, and complete sermons and addresses, all of which both students and preachers will find profitable reading. This reading should of course be done in accordance with the rules on sermonizing which the writer has so forcefully presented in the chapter on the Process of Sermonizing.

Part III brings some very helpful compilations found in no other book of this class. First the author lists texts for various occasions for which every young pastor will be grateful. Then there is a listing equally as valuable of the most important pericopic systems, including the system of the Synodical Conference, and the Eisenach, Thomasius, Wuerttemberg and Rhenish systems.

The author concludes with a bibliography of 57 modern authors of books on homiletics, and with an index of the text enlarged upon in his own sermon studies, outlines, etc. No doubt he has in the meantime also found a few printer's mistakes. Under the heading, Outlines, page 383, the first page number should be 157 instead of 166, the second 165, and the fourth 19-20. While speaking of corrections for the next edition, we would suggest that the construction of the last sentence in paragraph four on page 9 beginning with, Like unto Lydia, be given some further thought.

May we, in closing, wish a "bon voyage" to *The Preacher's Manual* and thereby join the host of those who have already expressed their heartfelt appreciation to the author for his most valuable contribution to the long list of books on homiletics. S.

Grace for Grace. A Brief History of the Norwegian Synod. Lutheran Synod Book Company, Mankato, Minnesota. \$1.25.

In little over two hundred pages a committee consisting of Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker, chief editor, and Pastors Chr. Anderson and G. O. Lillegard, co-editors, presents a sketch of the turbulent history of the Norwegian Synod, Old and New, together with a study of the doctrinal controversies by which it was rent, and an analysis of the entire era. The occasion for the writing of this book is the ninetieth anniversary of the founding of the Old, and the twenty-fifth of the reorganization of the New Synod, which became a member of the Synodical Conference after the greater part of the former body had entered the United Norwegian Lutheran Church in the Merger of 1917.

It would hardly be fair to say that the book is written principally to demonstrate that the present Norwegian Synod is "the spiritual successor of the former," the Old Synod. It is true that the statement

occurs in so many words on page one, and that the entire argument turns around this point. Yet one cannot read these pages without gaining the impression that "Grace for Grace" is not just the title, but rather the major thesis of a work that was written to show the wondrous ways of God's grace as they can be seen even in the midst of such trying events as make up the history of this struggling group. It must have been a difficult task to write calmly and objectively concerning events which touch one as deeply as the Merger did the Norwegian Minority. If the editor of the *Lutheran Herald* (official organ of the "Merger") gives it as his opinion that the committee has been successful in this, then this surely is evidence that natural resentment and rancor have in their case been noticeably conquered by gratitude for grace received.

But after this has been said, it remains true that the book seeks to prove that the continuation of the doctrines and principles for which the Old Synod stood is found not with the larger group, the Merger, but with the present Norwegian Synod. If it is granted that the authors have argued their case objectively, the question still remains whether they have proved their point. In the judgment of the present reviewer they have. Not only does the record of the past show the fathers striving for the very same things for which their sons were contending in the days of the Merger, and are contending now; but the terms of the Merger as well as the present affiliation of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church of America with the American Lutheran Conference constitute a confession which stands for all the world to see and which plainly shows that they, the Norwegians of the Merger, have left the ways of their fathers. To us Dr. Ylvisaker's indictment of this confession is conclusive and unanswerable: "It is a confession which finds room for a public denial of the precious teaching of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, thereby making 'truth' as well as 'grace' an uncertain thing. It harbors publicly those very synergistic errors in the doctrines of Conversion and Election against which the Norwegian Synod has testified so consistently; it tolerates and encourages the same pietistic lay activity against which the Norwegian Synod was obliged to wage such serious battles. Within this group, lodgery with its open denial of Christ raises its head with ever greater boldness. And because the Word of God has become uncertain, doctrinal indifference is increasing markedly, accompanied inevitably by flagrant unionism, not only with the more liberal Lutheran churches but with the Reformed denominations as well" (page 208).

We recommend this book most heartily to our pastors and students. Not only will it give one a better understanding of our sister synod, of its position in past controversies as well as in the present union movement, but it will also serve to familiarize the student of today with the finer points in the controversy on Conversion and Election.

E. R.

Lutheran Statistics, Denominational History, Doctrines, and Organizations. — **Census of Religious Bodies 1936.** Published by the Bureau of the Census. United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. Price, 15 cents.

“This census is taken once in ten years in accordance with the provisions of the Permanent Census Act approved March 6, 1902, and is confined to churches located in continental United States. . . . The statistics relate either to the calendar year 1936 or to the church record year which corresponds closely to that period.” (From the General Introduction). Separate statistics are given for each of the twenty-two Lutheran Bodies. For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. L.

What is the Lutheran School?

Why Christian Parents Prefer the Lutheran Elementary School for Their Children.

Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri. Price, 5 cents each.

Two small folders, giving the answers to the questions from the Bible, with pictures and graphs. Suitable for mass distribution.

L.

The Annotated Pocket New Testament — With Notes by Theodore Graebner. Part Six. The Epistle to the Romans — The First Epistle to the Corinthians. Published by the Walther League. Printed by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri. Price, 25 cents.

With this booklet the series is continued in which all the books of the New Testament will be published in a handy pocket size. We again, as formerly, express our hope that this undertaking will achieve what it was intended for, viz., that it will stimulate a more frequent perusal of the Book of books, the Holy Bible.

The notes are an undoubted help to a quicker understanding of the text of the Authorized Version. Although in a number of cases the reader would wish for greater lucidity they are, upon the whole, remarkably complete and satisfactory in spite of their brevity.

L.

The Witness of His Enemies. By George R. Pettigrew, L.L.B., Th. G., Pastor, Saluda Baptist Church, Chappells, South Carolina. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Price, \$1.00, in cloth.

“Modern rationalism in its shifty exponents differs from the enemies that have sought in past times to empty Christianity of its divine

authority and power, chiefly in the fact that it unblushingly claims to be merely interpreting the faith which it seeks to extirpate. The Voltaires, Bradlaughs, Ingersolls and Paines of another day hired their own halls to stage their assaults upon Holy Writ and frankly proclaimed their enmity to the God therein revealed. In contrast, the champions of present-day rationalism are enthroned in the faculties of universities and theological seminaries, professing to be authoritative opponents of the faith whose foundations they undermine." (From the introduction by Victor I. Masters, Editor, *Western Recorder*, Louisville, Kentucky).

"The author carefully, logically and skillfully meets the attacks upon the holy faith once revealed, especially as found in the realm of modern rationalism and from the 'Higher Critics.' Through 'The Witness of His Enemies,' Rev. Pettigrew causes the reader to have a new appreciation of, and love for, the Christ of God. Words and thoughts flow from the writer's pen with a depth and profundity of meaning, yet an unusual clarity of expression." (From the publisher's recommendation on the jacket of the book.)

The author, being a Baptist, adheres to the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The discerning reader will enjoy reading this interesting book, and will not lay it aside without having been profited by it. L.

Questions Jesus Answered. By William Ward Ayer, D. D. Pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, New York City. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Price, \$1.00, in cloth.

The author is a fundamentalist, also a millennialist. He believes in the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures. This fact alone is enough to elicit the friendly interest of an orthodox Lutheran in this day when the plenary inspiration of the Bible is rejected by so many outstanding men in the Christian Churches of our country. Still this reviewer does not recommend the purchase of the book to our readers. L.

Statistical Yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1942. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri. Price, \$1.00.

This *Yearbook* is dedicated to the memory of the Rev. Samuel Michael, statistician of the Missouri Synod from 1938 until his death on April 8, 1943. It has been prepared by his office assistants under the leadership of Miss Emma Linhorst, the *Foreword* having been written by John Theodore Mueller, who together with the Rev. S. Michael has worked on the *Annual* and *Kalender* the past five years.

P. Peters.

Report of the Twenty-Sixth Convention of the Norwegian Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, May 29 to June 3, 1943.

In addition to the usual convention matters, this report brings in their full text three essays: *Sola Scriptura*, by Justin A. Petersen; *Sola Gratia*, by J. B. Unseth; and *Sola Fide*, by Chr. Anderson.

E. R.

Is This The Church Of Jesus Christ? By F. E. Schumann. St. Louis, Missouri. Concordia Publishing House, 1943. Price 10 cents.

This pamphlet of 29 pages with its challenging title: *Is this the Church of Jesus Christ?* contains answers to this and many other pertinent questions concerning "the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints," commonly known as the Mormon Church. In answering these questions the author followed the following plan: "We must establish the source from which Mormonism draws its doctrines. Having done this, we shall inquire what these doctrines are. We propose to let their 'sacred' books and their recognized spokesmen give us the answers in their own words. These statements will then be examined in the light of God's Word." The author carries out this plan faithfully by citing under every question a few statements from Mormon sources and by showing up the contradiction with the Word of God. The reader will welcome the "References" listed on pages 26-28, which will ensure him that the author has actually drawn his statements from the "sacred" books of the Latter-Day Saints and enable him to follow up some of these statements and to convince himself, that the teachings of Mormonism are in glaring contradiction to God's infallible Word.

P. Peters.

Proceedings of the Twenty-seventh Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, held at Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin, August 4th to August 11th, 1943. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin. Price, 15 cents a copy.

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