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## **THE PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO GLORIFY GOD\***

*John Lau*

\* The "President's Address," at the Graduation Service of Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, WI, May 24, 1997.

TEXT: John 17:4,6,14-18 -

I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy Word. I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through Thy Word; Thy Word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

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To a student of humanity it would appear that most people live a rather purposeless life. They drift through life without realizing any definite objective for which life has been given them. Every such life is a calamity, for it should be evident to any thinking person, that we are not here by accident, nor as creatures of chance. Rather, we are here for a very definite purpose. And that purpose has been divinely appointed. Our great task in life is to find that divinely appointed purpose and to fulfill it. For unless we live our lives in accordance with the purpose for which life has been given us, our life is bound to be mislived, and its outcome is bound to be tragic. Our temporal life leads to eternity, and, as a matter of fact, our temporal life is given us as a preparation for eternity.

God's Word plainly indicates the purpose of life, and in the words of our text we have a clear indication of life's purpose from the lips of our Savior Himself. Here He clearly tells us why we are living. Let us, on this day of parting from one another, learn again from His words that THE PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO GLORIFY GOD.

I. It was the purpose of the Savior's own life.

The whole world, created and preserved by the power of God, exists for no other purpose than to proclaim His glory. We are living in a world which in all its phases is absolutely dependent on God. All life on earth is a constant demonstration of the power and might of God. No one can look into the works of nature - the flowers, the birds, all things in the natural world - without realizing that there must be a purposeful God.

But all the glories of God in nature are but the background for the act of glory planned in the eternal counsel of God, the redemption of the human race. The fallen children of men lived lives to the glory of Satan. The great plan of salvation, carried out in the fulness of time, is of such glory that it could never have originated in the mind of man. It is stupendous in its comprehensiveness and significance. God would send forth His Son and establish amidst the wreckage of mankind His glorious and eternal kingdom. The plan was so glorious that it warranted permitting the sin-cursed world to remain. Prophets were inspired to foretell the coming of God's great work of glory.

Finally the time came for the glorification of God. The Son of God appeared in the flesh. At His birth there was no manifestation of glory. He was born poor and lowly amid the humblest circumstances. Yet, when the glorious event had happened, the heavenly hosts could not contain themselves but sang, "Glory to God in the highest!"

The Savior also lived to the glory of God. He placed Himself completely under the law and lived a life of unbroken perfection. He said that no one could convince Him of sin. He was holy, pure, and undefiled. His life was one of steadfast purpose, as He said, "I must do the work of Him that sent Me. Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" Thus His whole life was one of perfect obedience and righteousness.

In our text we find the Savior at the end of His earthly life. As He looked back, He was satisfied with the life He had lived. He had no regrets, no correction to make, no additions to write in. His life was not simply finished, but it had been perfect. He had lived the one completely flawless life that the world has ever seen. Even His foes are still compelled to render the verdict of Pilate, "I find no fault in Him at all." So Jesus could truthfully say, "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do."

Ahead of Him now lay only the tragedy of Calvary. But even there His omniscience already saw the final victory gloriously achieved and won. "I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do." There was nothing but shame and disgrace in prospect for Him. Surely on Calvary there was no visible sign of glory. And yet, standing within the shadow of the cross, with His foot on the threshold of death, Jesus prayed, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may also glorify Thee." There is no incongruity between the statements, "Father, save Me from this hour," and "Father, glorify Thy Son." Through the hour of shame His glorification was to be accomplished.

The Savior recognized this. The great and glorious purpose which lay behind His impending suffering was clearly before His eyes. His degradation was the very door to His glory. The victorious conflict with death was the beginning of His glory. In taking upon Himself all the burdens of human sorrow He would glorify God. On Calvary He was carrying out the saving purpose of God. The darkness of Calvary was the night which presaged the coming of the dawn of glory. There was revealed the glory of God's infinite love, which prompted God to spare not His own Son, but to give Him up as a ransom for us all. All this happened that God's glory might be enhanced and His glorious kingdom established.

The Savior foresaw the glorious end of the struggle. He said, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." He clearly saw the victorious outcome of the struggle. He saw the coming glory of the resurrection, and of His ascent into heaven, and of the glory of His reign at the right hand of the Father. He saw hell overcome and

heaven victorious. His kingdom shall have no end. He had come to glorify the Father by offering Himself as a sacrifice for mankind, in order that sinners might be saved and glorify God eternally. "I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do."

## II. It is also to be the purpose of our lives.

Not only did the Savior live, labor, die, and rise again to the glory of God, but the creatures He has won are now to be witnesses to God's glory. In view of God's glorious work of redemption, the life of mankind can have no other reason or purpose than to glorify God. We are the ones for whom the Son of God came and wrought God's plan of salvation. We glorify God only then when we are fitted into God's wondrous, saving plan, when we glorify Him through faith in His Son.

Jesus brings this out most clearly: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent. I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy Word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of Thee. For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me." Here we have the purpose of life. Life is mislived unless it unites us to Christ, unless we believe that He came forth from God for our salvation. The life of most people, judged by this standard, is a dismal failure.

Every believer glorifies God, for the very act of faith is a miracle and has been brought about only by God. Only God can bring about the change of heart which we call conversion. When a person has come to faith in Christ, a work of God's mercy has been performed. There is in man no favorable disposition toward God and His grace; nor can man ever boast of his Christian condition. For it is not his doing, but solely due to God's grace; that is why God is glorified by every conversion. This act of changing the hearts of men is so glorious that there is joy in heaven before the angels of God over every single sinner that repents.

The Savior had about Himself a group of souls that in their faith glorified God. But why now, as He was about to depart this life, did He not take them with Him? That would seem to be the safest course, especially in view of the trials and temptations facing them. But He left them behind. He said, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world." Later on He said, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world." He was not going to take them out of the world. And the reason for that is that they were to glorify God in their temporal lives. There was work for them to do. The Father had given them to Jesus for a special work, namely to be witnesses of Him, that is, of His death and resurrection. Later on they were to publish the story of His redemptive work to all the world. That is why they were to be left in the world: the gospel was to be proclaimed to all people.

We see from this that life has a definite purpose, namely that in and through life God may be glorified. Life is not to be a drifting, aimless existence. Each believer has been given a definite purpose in life, and that is to glorify God. From our baptism we are called upon to witness Christ and His gospel. Our testimony and example are to win others for Christ, for we are to let our light so shine before men, that they may see our works and glorify God, and also that they may be attracted by that light. We are to be a living testimony to the glory of God's redemptive grace.

Many do not live thus. It is tragic when a human soul does not glorify God in life. A human soul is precious because the Son of God bled and died for its redemption. It is doubly tragic when one who has found the Savior, and for a time has followed Him, wilfully nullifies the Savior's redeeming mercy for him and leaves Him again. Here Jesus yearns and pleads for the souls of men, the souls He has redeemed.

The souls of men are in peril while they remain in this world. In our text the Savior anticipates the time when His visible presence will be withdrawn from His disciples. "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name." The Savior knows the desperate attempts that will be made to pluck these souls out of His hand. The world hates the Christians, and because of the constant danger threatening the Christians, Jesus very solicitously and earnestly prays for His own. And His prayer is efficacious because of His redemptive work. If any follower remains steadfast, this fact redounds not

to his but to God's glory, for it is God alone Who gives power to subordinate all temporal interests to the one great object of life, to glorify God. Whenever any believer walks steadfastly in faith, it is God Who enables him to do so, and thus God is glorified. God's care for these disciples is individual. Not one of them is lost. Each life is a separate entity in the planning of God. Thus everyone has his individual mission and purpose in life. And the safeguard the Lord has given all of His followers is: "I have given them Thy Word." The Word is God's great instrument for calling, gathering, and enlightening, His means of grace. It has something to say to every walk and condition of life, and it has an infallible answer to every question.

We are to glorify God not only here but also in the hereafter. The great objective God has in mind for us all is a blessed eternity. And He has given us the promise that through faith in Christ we may glorify Him here and we shall have eternal life. In that life beyond the grave we shall find the final consummation of all our hopes. There we become instruments of God's eternal glorification.

Dear graduates, God has planned for us; He has yearned over us. He offers to guide and lead us so that we may have eternal joy with Him in heaven. May God grant that we yield ourselves to His guidance, so that the real objective of our lives may be achieved far beyond this day of commencement. May the highest ambition for each of us be that we may so live that we carry out God's gracious purpose regarding us. May He continue to bless us, so that at the end we too may say, with the Savior, "I have glorified Thee on earth; I have finished the work Thou gavest me." Amen.

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## ILC CHAPEL TALK

*Paul Schaller*

Text: Luke 10:41,42 -

*"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."*

In Jesus' name, fellow students of Christ,

William Shakespeare

John Dryden

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Charles Dickens

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

What a tremendous amount of great literature these authors and poets produced! The seniors have gotten just a smattering of it this year. Not only did these authors produce plays and poems and novels, but they also wrote in other areas, too. The writings of **Goethe** on science alone would fill some fourteen volumes! **Elizabeth Barrett**, both before and after her marriage to Robert Browning, was always writing. And it is said that more than one playwright switched to comedies rather than compete with **Shakespeare's** great tragic plays.

What did these people have that enabled them to contribute such great things? The **Barretts** of Wimpole Street did not have the luxury of enameled bathtubs, let alone fiberglass; **Charles Dickens** never turned the knob of a radio, not to mention television; **Goethe** never clicked the shutter of a camera (black & white, color, or video); **John Dryden's** room was neither steam-heated nor cooled by refrigeration; **William Shakespeare** never read a newspaper, nor did he ever attend a movie.

It's good to remember, every once in a while, that, although all such things (and many more that we enjoy every day) *are* blessings from God,

things to be thankful for,

to take care of,

and to use to His glory if we have them,

yet it is possible to live without them if they are taken away from us. These words of Jesus, recorded in Luke 10, bring us just such a reminder: **One thing is needed.**

In the little village of Bethany, without electricity or running water, Mary had chosen that one

thing needed: Jesus' words. His words were gracious (people marveled at the gracious words that came from His mouth), mighty (He spoke with authority), filled with the Spirit ("The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are truth."). His words brought Mary peace, understanding, and comfort. They brought her the assurance that comes from confidence in Him who holds the universe in His hands. Jesus' words made it a blessed occasion when sister Martha invited Jesus to stay with them. His words made the experience of another mouth at the table something to look forward to.

**One thing is needed.**

Every other thing on this earth may be a blessing, but also has the power to enslave. The car has to be repaired, the dryer must be fixed, the campus needs to be raked, the books beg to be read. The cat demands to be fed, the garden could use some weeding, the room pleads to be cleaned... and on and on.

The word of Jesus is the *one thing* that says, "It has all been done! The price has been paid. The life has been lived. The death has been died. The resurrection is yours. It is finished! Come unto me..."

The life that we now live to the glory of God is not one of constantly building our relationship with God, as we have to build friendships in this life, but one of acting like the dear children He has assured us we are through His blood.

**One thing is needed.**

*Things* are not wrong in themselves, of course, but when *things* are depended on we can become anxious, distracted, irritable, or depressed over them. We might even end up dissatisfied with Jesus, and try to boss Him. "Don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me?"

*"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."*

The reason things should not be depended on is that they can be taken away. [There is a day for all of us in which all these are taken away.] But Jesus said that even though heaven and earth will pass away, His Word will not pass away. So then, our relationship to God -- that of children to their dear Father -- is also firm and secure, for it is His word which declares it to be so.

**One thing is needed.**

In our own century - sixty years ago last December - the king of England, Edward VIII, chose to do without his crown in order to marry the woman he loved. His country did not appreciate it. Some thought it romantic. But whether you admire it or not, it did show what he considered important and needed in his life. May our use of God's gracious Word and Gift show the same thing in our lives here at Immanuel, and anywhere else in the future. Amen.

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## IM BERUF BLEIBEN\*

*F. F. G. Harders*

\* Published in 1904 in *Quartalschrift*. Translation by Robert Dommer.

In 1 Corinthians 7,20 the Apostle Paul writes: "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called!" The emphasis in this passage is on the word, "remain." Through the apostle, God admonishes every man to remain in the calling into which He himself has called him. Indeed, how unique is every individual's calling. Therefore remain! What does this mean?

**To remain in one's calling means not to give it up or forsake it, not to change one's position or office, but rather to pursue it until God says: This far and no further!**

When St. Paul refers to "every man," he is speaking specifically of preachers and teachers who should be examples to the congregation. The specific call that a person possesses is one that God Himself has effected through his activity and governance. God gives each individual definite leanings and desires that direct him to the calling into which he is called: training, direction, guidance,

individual circumstances all play a part. Teachers and preachers, moreover, possess a special divine call by the congregation to assume the office of teaching in a particular place. Whatever position or calling we possess, we have been placed there by the gracious will and fatherly provident care of our God.

What God said to Adam about the accursed soil after his fall from Paradise, applies to every calling: *In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread!* Fulfilling one's calling is not always easy--there are many problems and difficulties. Every teacher and pastor knows this so well so that we need say no more here. There are moments when we become exhausted and don't want to go on. We see others who have it better and easier than we do, or at least it seems that way. We might wish to be in their place, but--let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

Do all abide? Does everyone follow and obey the exhortation of the apostle? Frequently we hear of pastors and teachers who have given up their office to pursue another calling. Some have proven unworthy of the office; others have had to give it up because of sickness. The change in these cases is directed and effected by God. But is that the case with everyone?

Our Lord and Master says: *covetousness is the root of all evil and those that would be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts.* A called servant of the Lord in His church cannot and should not become rich. "He who preaches the gospel should live of the gospel." The problems of "eking out an existence" are something that the servant of Christ must learn and endure. We will treat the matter later about the obligation of congregations who allow their pastors and teachers go hungry and eat their bread in tears. But should it happen that a pastor go hungry, he must learn to go hungry. That is what Sirach meant (11:23), "Trust God and remain in your calling!"

Public school teachers earn far more than Christian day school teachers; a conscientious, well-trained pastor possesses an education that would enable him to make considerably more money in many earthly callings than in the calling to which he is called. Such considerations, however, dare not lead the greatest or the least to abandon his divine calling. These are tricks of Satan. Such covetousness is characterized by St. Paul as "foolish and hurtful lusts." Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Listen to the Apostle Paul when he speaks of his endurance (2 Cor. 11:27,28): he remained in his calling "*in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*"

*For all the churches,* writes St. Paul. A true servant of Christ will remain in his calling not only for the sake of God's honor with which he struggles, (and Whose wisdom those seem to surpass who do not remain in the calling in which God placed them), but also for the sake of the congregation, whose welfare and salvation is his concern. There is probably nothing that disturbs a simple Christian more than to see servants of Christ abandon their calling only because in another calling they can make more money with less effort. Indeed, let each whom God grants the great measure of grace to be his servant remain in his calling "*in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst.*" May each bear in mind that there is nothing higher nor more precious than to call sinners to repentance, to call poor, lost, damned humanity to everlasting salvation.

**To remain in one's calling also means to perform one's office in every area in a God-pleasing manner and fashion.**

This is what St. Paul refers to when he writes (Col. 4:17): "*And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.*" St. Paul writes much the same thing in the letter to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:5): "*Do the work of an evangelist (evangelical preacher), make full proof of thy ministry.*" Just before these words St. Paul wrote: "*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions.*" The Apostle Paul foresaw evil times, in which people would make Timothy's ministry very difficult; times, in which Timothy would need to

perform all the duties and responsibilities of his office in truth and honor. The day would come when Timothy's hearers would not approve of the attitudes and behavior that Timothy's call as a teacher and evangelical pastor would require of them. They would not hear those words of instruction that pertained to them. Timothy, however, was to endure, not as one who would yield to them, but as one who would make full proof of his ministry. Timothy was to remain in his calling!

Things are no different today; this exhortation pertains to us all. Permit a few examples.

There are people in our congregations who are not at all serious about the Christian education of their children. This attitude toward the training and instruction of their children is not God-pleasing! Without the slightest qualms of conscience, they send their children to the public school which cannot teach religion, and feel that their children can get, with a bit of Sunday school, what is offered with Christian day school education. Such parents make the work of a Christian day school teacher difficult. Such a situation requires pertinent preaching, endurance, exhortation, and applying the warnings of the word with all patience and doctrine. We need to fight the battle for Christian day school education and for that which it offers, that which a Christian owes his children. It is a battle in which parents need to face the alternatives--either, or. The pastor or teacher who will in no way take up the fight, who gives up, who simply permits the parents to go their own way, is not remaining in his calling as a spiritual leader.

This is also the case with lodge membership. Secret societies and Christianity do not mix. Lodgery is anti-Christian. Lodgery with its Deism, with its striving for moral improvement [without the gospel], with its senseless ideas of brotherhood, is as diametrically opposed to Christianity as anything can be. Lodge members do not belong in the congregation; lodge members do not belong at the Lord's table, which bespeaks grace and great forgiveness through our Lord Jesus Christ. The lodge serves the devil's table, which bespeaks salvation by our own power and will, without our Lord Jesus Christ! Here applies what St. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 10:21, "*Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils.*"

What judgment must be spoken against a pastor who tolerates lodge members in his congregation, or accepts them, or permits them to go to Lord's supper uncontested and grants them a Christian burial? He is not remaining true to his call. He is not in the least performing what he should be doing according to his call. It is written: "Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine!"

The "lodge battle" is not easy. It requires courage, firmness, patience, good sense and love to win and maintain the victory. But many forget what makes the battle easy, and either do not handle the matter or yield altogether.

What makes the battle easy? The divine call that our spiritual leaders possess. To take a stand lies in the area of their call. They are not fulfilling their call if they do not take a position. Indeed we want to "*make full proof of our ministry.*" We do not want to see our office fall to pieces, but want to do everything that is required of us. *Therefore stand firm and immovable in the Lord, since you know that your work in the Lord is not in vain.* My call is of God; it is His command. That was Luther's support and defense. It was his calling that enabled him to perform his ministry honorably in all of its ramifications and in every situation.

### **Remain in your calling means, finally, not to overstep the limits or boundaries of our call.**

What we mean is this: Every specific call has its assigned obligations and parameters. Some share many calls in common; others have a call specific to them. To overstep one's call is to pursue things that do not lie in the sphere of one's respective call. Sirach warned against being involved with things for which one is not called (3:24): "*Do not meddle in things that are not your concern.*"

The whole world really is mixed up. They are pleased and powerfully impressed by the things that are displeasing to the Lord God. When someone exceeds the bounds of his call, when he pursues matters for which he has absolutely no call, the world accords him double honor and holds up his deed as an heroic effort. Even the person who does some outstanding thing in connection with his call may find recognition; yet recognition is often denied the faithful servant of the Word who quietly goes about the work for which he was called! God is aware of this inconsistency and is pleased with faithful performance in the ministry.

Why? The pastor or teacher who is not faithful to his call and does not confine his work to his specific call, might have outward success to show for it; but that which he is specifically called to do will suffer. For when we operate outside our calling, we, and all who are involved, stand to lose the enduring blessing that God means us to have. We learn this from history, which, next to the Word of God, is the best instruction book to provide a clear insight into what is God pleasing.

Did Caesar have a call to cross the Rubicon? Did that stranger from Corsica, Napoleon, have a call to make himself the French emperor and put half the world under his rule? Did the North have a call to treat the South as rebels, to insist that the Negro have equal citizenship with the white population? Do we have a call to favor the people of the Philippines with our governance? What is going to come of such dealings for which we are not called? What will we reap?

Does the wife, who is called to be mother and a keeper of the house and hearth, have a call for all those things that she today thrusts upon herself with burning desire and raging might?

Do pastors and teachers have a call to embark upon all kinds of business speculations and transactions along with their call? Are they not running the risk of losing what their call is all about? Are they not serving themselves and not the church? Are they not inclined to parade their undertakings to the world like a "Christian ... Association", or "Lutheran...Fellowship," as working for the good of the church or church people? We have all kinds of examples of such phenomena. These spiritual leaders might be quite innocent and well-meaning, but it is a beginning of "*not remaining in the calling,*" or at least it is heading in this direction, and can bear evil fruit.

Are congregations and fellowships faithful to their calling, when they create all kinds of public organizations and entertainments, arrange sales in order to bring in money for the support of their church and then urge and invite the whole world to come and give and buy? Who has the call to sustain and support the church, the congregation alone or the congregation with the help of the world? To whom should the called members of the congregation turn when they need money or donated labor and material to help sustain the congregation, to their members or also other people?

*Let each one remain in the calling into which he is called!* We would do well to contemplate the three points that we have made on the basis of the Scripture. The apostolic encouragement is as pertinent today as it was at the time of St. Paul and the Corinthians. There are many questions in our ministry about which we need to make a decision: should I or should I not? May I or may I not? Must I or must I not? In these cases we might very quickly arrive at clarity and a God-pleasing solution if we would examine these issues in the light of our divine call.

Taken by themselves, many things seem perfectly allowable or at least passable. However, they may become no longer permissible but even respectively wrong once examined in the light of the call. Remember what is written in Scripture: "*Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.*"

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## PSALM 51 SERMON SERIES

*Paul Fleischer*

### VII. Psalm 51:13-15

*"Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise."*

We come now to the third main part of this psalm. The first six verses were concerned with confession of sin. The next six verses contained David's prayer for forgiveness of sins and a renewed, clean heart. Now in the last seven verses we have what must always be the fruit of our redemption, namely, praising the Lord and making His saving grace known to others. In this section we see how David as a redeemed, justified, sanctified child of God gave himself to the great work of teaching transgressors God's ways.

The last few years we have designated our Lenten offerings for the cause of missions, for we realize what has been said, namely, that we who have been recipients of God's grace in Christ Jesus --



manifested so powerfully in the message of Christ's passion and death -- are inwardly compelled to make this precious gospel known to others as well. Speaking for the Lord, Isaiah writes: "This people have I formed of myself; they shall show forth my praise" (43:21). The Lord God expects honor for His work, and this honor is given Him when redeemed sinners make known the great things He has done for them.

Everything that we have had up to this point in our studies of Psalm 51 have served to this end. It just cannot and will not be otherwise. Acknowledging ourselves, with David, as forgiven failures whom God has newly-created solely by His grace and mercy in Christ Jesus, we, with David, find it our greatest joy to tell others how God has rescued them even as He has rescued us. We believe and therefore we speak. So let us look at

### **DAVID'S SACRIFICE OF THANKSGIVING**

I. "Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You."

David says he WILL do this. It cannot be otherwise! When God has washed and cleansed him from his sin, purged him from his iniquity and restored to him the joy of salvation through the working of the Holy Spirit, then he gladly, willingly, eagerly will witness to others of God's marvelous ways of grace and mercy. You see, David does not look upon it as a chore, as something he must do, or as a mere fulfillment of a duty. No, rather, he sees it as a joy: "Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You." So with us. When we think of the dreadful pit out of which we have been rescued, and the glorious salvation that is ours; when we think of the deep misery in which others may still lie and how God's precious grace is also for them; then our hearts WILL be filled with compassion for sinners. We will count it a blessing to speak of Jesus to others.

Notice that David says he will TEACH transgressors God's ways, and sinners will be converted. It is not enough for us to mourn over the fact that so many people in this world remain unbelievers. It is not even enough for us to pray for the conversion of sinners. They must be taught! Do we say, "Well, that's your job, pastor"? Remember that this is the joyful response of every forgiven sinner to the redemption he or she enjoys in Christ Jesus. There is more to mission work than supporting the salaries of pastors and missionaries; there is more to mission work than praying for success in our efforts or purchasing an ad in the newspaper. It is up to each believer, within his own circle of friends, relatives, and acquaintances, to follow suit with David in this verse. What a marvelous change would take place in the Christian church if -- with all wisdom and perseverance, unanimously and continuously -- every believer were such an outspoken witness for the Lord God!

Notice that David says he will teach transgressors "Your ways" -- God's ways. There is no question as to what is to be the subject of our witnessing -- God's marvelous ways with us unworthy sinners. That is what it is up to pastors to teach publicly, and both pastor and lay people privately. And what are God's ways? If you know Psalm 51 you have the basis for effective Christian witnessing. Tell of the need for the sinner to acknowledge his or her sin and sinfulness; tell of the desperate need of each sinner for God's mercy; tell of the need for confession of sin and repentance for sin; tell how God looks for truth in the inward parts, the heart, not just in outward deeds; tell how God justifies sinners solely and alone through His grace in Christ Jesus; tell how God alone through His Holy Spirit can sanctify our hearts, enabling us to serve God through faith and its fruits. This much every believer can tell. Where we give this witness, when and to whom, the Lord Himself will make known. One thing is sure: the world is full of "transgressors" who need to know the love of Jesus of which we have tasted. Only let us be ready in the power of the Holy Spirit to confess His name and gospel to all who are ready to hear. God's promise is that, if this is done, then "sinners shall be converted to You."

II. "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness."

Notice the spirit in which David here speaks. He never loses sight of how deeply sinful he is by nature. He had acknowledged his transgression to the Lord, and yet his sin was ever before him. So again he prays for deliverance from bloodguiltiness, knowing that he had shed the innocent blood of Uriah, the army captain. David knows that God -- only God -- could deliver him. He also knows that God HAS blotted out his sin. He therefore addresses God as "the God of my salvation." Dear

Christian friends, the starting point in all our witnessing to others of our Savior-God must be “Deliver me . . . have mercy upon me, O God . . .” In such a spirit of humility our tongues can and will sing aloud of God’s righteousness.

Doesn’t St. Paul, often called “the greatest missionary who ever lived,” come to mind? What was it that enabled the Lord to use him so effectively as God’s spokesman? It was the Spirit-created attitude of genuine humility in the apostle. This is brought out again and again as one reads the epistles of Paul. “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life” (1 Tim. 1:15f.). “For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” (1 Cor. 15:9f.).

Of what did Paul “sing aloud,” as did David? “. . . Of Your (God’s) righteousness,” not his own! What was it that made Dr. Martin Luther such a powerful witness for the truth of the Bible against all heresy? It was God’s Holy Spirit bringing the Reformer to see that the righteousness which avails before God is not man’s own doings or strivings, but rather the righteousness of Christ which God imputes to the sinner through faith and faith alone!

You recall how Luther said it was like the door of Paradise swung open before him when he understood this, so that his tongue just had to sing aloud of that glorious news. So too, in our personal lives, let us extol God’s righteousness, which is counted as ours through faith in His Son.

This doctrine of the righteousness of God, Luther wrote one time, “never escapes without great upheavals, because neither the devil or the world can bear it.” On our part we may imagine that our sins are too great for God to use our tongues as His instrument in teaching others that they might be converted to Him. But think of it. If ever there was one who might feel ashamed of his sin, and feel that his sin disqualified him from being God’s witness, it was David, who committed adultery and then murder. But no! Having been delivered from bloodguiltiness, he sang aloud of God’s righteousness. And how about Paul’s past life? He had been Saul, the ringleader of the first century anti-Christian movement, imprisoning and stoning to death the followers of Christ. But no! God delivered Paul from bloodguiltiness through repentance on Damascus road, so that he bore witness before kings and princes and finally gave his life as a martyr for his Savior. Let such examples convince us that God intends to use terrible sinners such as we to proclaim His righteousness to others.

### III. “O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.”

“O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.” We are accustomed to hearing these words in our liturgy (Order of Vespers). Yes, the Lord through His Holy Spirit must “open our lips” if we are to worship and praise our God aright. But let us not limit the application of these words to the worship service. The words are also a prayer that the Lord would be with us as we witness to others.

The words remind us of the natural reluctance and inborn inability we all have to speak of God and witness to His grace. Doesn’t our experience bear this out? How much there is that keeps us silent when we should speak. Perhaps there is the fear of man that makes us hesitate because we might face ridicule, scorn, and mockery; or there is unbelief so that we think this or that person won’t listen to us anyhow, forgetting that the success of witnessing is not dependent upon us but upon the Holy Spirit, who speaks through us. Perhaps there is some hidden self-interest that causes us to keep quiet; or a false sense of humility so that we convince ourselves that more can be done by silence than by speaking up. How many of us can think of a time when we were ready and eager to speak for the Lord, but all sorts of excuses came along? There is a time to be silent, but there is also a time to speak. May each of us, then, make the prayer a very personal one: “O Lord open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.”

The Lord can and will do this! Think of some examples in the Bible. There was the case of Moses. He said: “O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue. So the Lord said to him, Who has made man’s

mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say” (Exod. 4:10ff.). Jeremiah the prophet had the same reluctance, but received a similar promise that God would give him what to say. And Isaiah said: “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (6:5). Then the Lord sent an angel who touched and purged his lips, after which, Isaiah says, “I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: Whom shall I send, and who will for Us? Then I said, Here am I! Send me” (v. 8).

If anything is clear it is that being a witness for Jesus does not depend upon the natural gift of speech, nor upon the beauty of language, nor even upon a good education. The disciples of the Lord were common folk who, after Pentecost, were transformed by the Holy Ghost into the Lord’s faithful and courageous witnesses. As the Lord opened their lips, they sang forth His praises far and wide. The same Spirit of God is with us, yes, dwelling within our renewed hearts. He purges our tongues, opens our lips, and unseals our mouths to show forth the praises of our Savior-God. Let it become a holy habit for us that, whenever we pray: “Have mercy upon me, O God . . .” we add the prayer: “O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.” Amen.

Prayer of Dr. Luther for “firmness in believing and living the Word”:

O Father of all mercy, you have begun your work in us. Continue to fill us with all dimensions of wisdom and knowledge. May we be fully certain in our hearts and fully aware how the Spirit, who has raised up our Lord, also enlivens the faith within us with the same power and strength. Through him we have also risen from the dead by his mighty power, which works in us through your holy word. Help us to grow in the knowledge of your dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and to remain firm in confessing his blessed word. Give us the love to be agreed in mind and to serve one another in Christ. May we not be afraid of that which is disagreeable, nor of the rage of the flame-thrower whose weapon is almost extinguished. Dear Father, guard us so that his craftiness may not take the place of our pure faith. Grant that our cross and sufferings may direct us to a blessed and sure hope of the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ, for whom we wait each day. Amen.

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#### VIII. Psalm 51:16-19

*“For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart -- these, O God, You will not despise. Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem. Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering; then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.”*

I. “For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering.

We have called the last seven verses of our psalm DAVID’S SACRIFICE OF THANKSGIVING. His heart is so filled with joy over the forgiveness of his sin that he cannot do otherwise than sing aloud of God’s ways, God’s righteousness, and show forth the praises of the Lord. What do we find when we arrive now at the 16th verse? “For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering.” David’s mind turns to sacrificing as perhaps something which God would desire and receive from him and all penitent sinners. But as soon as the thought enters his mind, he catches himself, remembering that God neither delights in nor takes pleasure in mere sacrifices. Dear Christian friends, there is nothing more crucial than for us to understand this fact. This is one of the deep spiritual lessons of the psalm. It has been said that our psalm sets forth the essence of Christianity, separating Christianity from all other religions, all man-made religions, all work-righteous religions. David has taught us earlier how it is “in the inward part” -- the heart -- where God looks. It is with the heart that God is ever first and foremost concerned.

But there have always been those who seek to impress God with their own good works or “sacrifices.” Think of Cain, whose sacrifice on the outside looked no different from Abel’s, yet Cain’s was unacceptable to God for it was void of faith and a cleansed heart. David’s predecessor, King Saul, in disobedience to the Word of the Lord, kept alive the best of the cattle when God had told him to destroy them all utterly. When Saul subsequently tried to excuse his conduct by claiming he kept them for sacrificing to God, Samuel said: “Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams” (1 Sam. 15:22). For his disobedience Saul was rejected from being king, and David was chosen in his place.

The Lord Jesus teaches us of the New Testament day that God desires something far more than mere outward works. When the Pharisees saw that Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners, and accused Him, the Lord answered: “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (Matt. 9:12f.). On another occasion the Pharisees found fault with Jesus’ disciples for plucking the corn and eating it on the Sabbath Day. What did Jesus do? He reminded them of the time when David himself once broke the outward letter of the law on the Sabbath Day. The Savior then said: “But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath” (Matt. 12:7f.). The point is that Pharisees then and now do not understand what it means that God desires mercy and not sacrifice. Pharisees then and now will not see that a life of true thankfulness to the gracious and merciful heavenly Father is a SPIRITUAL thing. This is what David is giving expression to in our psalm verse. We could even say that the words of this verse are a prophecy of the grace under which we New Testament believers live. “You do not desire sacrifice . . .” sums up, in a nutshell, the contrast between the Old and the New Testament, between the old and the new covenants, between the law and the gospel!

Under the old covenant, the law, man must always give God something for taking away sin; in the Old Testament there were sin offerings and guilt offerings for atonement for sin; there were thank offerings and burnt offerings to represent dedication to God. By contrast, in the new covenant, under the gospel, God gives to man. God comes to man with a sacrifice, namely that of His Son, the Lamb of God, who offered Himself on the altar of the cross on Calvary. God gives this sacrifice to man, the sinner, and expects only that the sinner receive it through faith.

Ah, but the spirit of law- and work-righteousness lurks like bone-marrow cancer throughout our natural selves. We too, by nature, imagine that God delights in our sacrifices or good works. This is why we need to go back again and again for divine chemo-therapy, treated regularly to the penetrating X-rays of God’s holy law which exposes all our own sacrifices and deeds as filthy rags. We need to learn and relearn that “You do not desire sacrifice . . . You do not delight in burnt offering.” And what is being said is true not only in the area of our justification, but also in the area of our sanctification. Holiness is not something that we must accomplish. True holiness is only in God, and we become holy only as He makes us share in the righteousness and holiness of His Son. As St. Paul writes: “. . . That no flesh shall glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God--and righteousness and sanctification and redemption--that, as it is written, ‘He who glories, let him glory in the Lord’” (1 Cor. 1:29ff.). Oh, dear Christian believer, one who understands these things sees the riches of God’s grace in Christ as the true secret for a life of service to God. May we allow the Holy Spirit to impress it indelibly upon our heart, mind, and life: “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.”

II. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart--these, O God, You will not despise.”

Once again we will recognize these words of the psalm as part of one of our worship services. In these words David speaks of the type of “sacrifice” with which God is well-pleased.

As we have gone through this psalm, we have noticed how David began with expressions of true sorrow over sin, and then proceeded to pray for a new and clean heart. We might suppose then that as he “progressed” in his spiritual life, David no longer needed to pray for a broken and contrite heart. But no! This psalm makes clear that no child of God, regardless of his or her “advanced” spiritual

state, can arrive at a point where sin no longer needs to be confessed and mourned. From beginning to end, from morning to night, from our birth until our death, the attitude with which God is pleased in our life of grace is “a broken and a contrite heart”!

This is something which, again, is on the INSIDE, in the “hidden person.” That is where God looks and seeks His delight, not on the outward performance. Listen how God gives expression to this through Isaiah: “For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: ‘I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones’” (57:15). And again: “Thus says the Lord: ‘Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things My hand has made, and all those things exist,’ says the Lord. ‘But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word’” (66:1f.).

This is why the Lord Jesus denounced the Pharisees as hypocrites. They liked to boast of their good works and omitted the weightier matters of the law--judgment, mercy, and faith (cf. Matt. 23:23). This is why Dr. Luther preached against all the “special works” which the monks and nuns in the Roman Catholic Church performed seeking thereby to gain God’s pleasure. But “the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit” holds true for all -- for David, for Peter who denied his Lord, for Paul who knew himself as a “wretched man” whose only hope for deliverance was in the victory of Christ Jesus. These words likewise denounce your good works and mine as so much rubbish before God -- as far as our justification is concerned.

Pity those poor deluded souls, also in the midst of the visible Christian church, who at the end of the day point to some good works they have done as though these will merit and gain God’s favor. God despises all righteousness that is of the law; that which He does not despise is “a broken and a contrite heart” -- a heart which trembles before Him and His holy law. This is why the Lord Jesus always felt more -- at home among the tax collectors and sinners than among the “righteous” Pharisees. “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick” (Matt. 9:12).

### III. “Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem.”

“Zion” and “Jerusalem” are terms referring to the Church--to believing sinners who constitute that Church. David has prayed fervently for himself, but he cannot stop there. Before closing his prayer he must intercede also in behalf of others. So with us. If we have learned to plead for God’s mercy and forgiveness for ourselves, we shall also pray the same for others. We know our own many and grievous sins, each of which has contributed to the mass of sins offending God. Are we conscious of the consequences if God dealt with us, with the church, with our nation “after our sins,” or if He “rewarded us according to our iniquities”? But no! In His great mercy He blots them out!

Let us not take this mercy and grace of God for granted. Let us rather be pleading with the Lord not to do evil, but to “do good in Your good pleasure to Zion.” Remember the examples of leaders of God’s Old Testament people--such as Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel. They often interceded for the people, such as we read in Daniel 9: “O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him . . . Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications . . . For we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name” (9:8ff.).

“Build the walls of Jerusalem.” David recognizes that it is up to the Lord to build His Church -- to build it UP where the walls had not yet been completed; to REBUILD it where the walls had been broken down by hostile attacks; for BUILDING OUT where the walls had become too narrow for the growing number of inhabitants. And how fitting is such a prayer as this also for the New Testament Church. We need to pray that the people of the Church might permit themselves to grow up into God and Christ through faithful use of the means of grace; that those who have fallen victim to the attacks of the devil, world, and flesh might recover from the prodigal ways they have chosen; that, finally, God would extend the borders of His kingdom here on earth by bringing many others to know and confess Christ Jesus as their one and only Savior from sin.

Oh, Christian friends, in view of the declining spirituality of so many, in view of the ever-increasing attacks of unbelief and worldliness upon the Church, in view of the needs of countless souls still sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, who know not the Lord, let the gospel grace we have been shown rouse us to pray regularly: "Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem."

IV. "Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering; then they shall offer bulls on Your altar."

As we have previously learned, God did not take delight in the sacrifices of the people which had so much self-righteousness coupled with them. God must have something far better, and this He provided for Himself in the obedience and all-sufficient sacrifice of His Son. The writer to the Hebrews explains: "Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: 'Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come--in the volume of the book it is written of Me--to do Your will, O God. Previously saying, 'Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them' (which are offered according to the law), then He said, 'Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.' He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (10:5-10).

Thus in Christ Jesus there has been opened to believers "a new and living way" (Heb. 10:20) whereby they might serve God "with sacrifices of righteousness." All depends upon one's relationship to Jesus Christ. If one is not yet reconciled unto God then one's best works cannot be pleasing to God. If, on the other hand, one has become a child of God by faith, then God can and does take delight in good works. The fruits of faith are indeed acceptable to Him: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

"Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar." "Then" refers to when God is pleased with the good works or "sacrifices" offered in Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit. St. Paul writes: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:1f.).

How much God the Holy Spirit has endeavored to teach us through our study of Psalm 51. May this psalm be on our lips and in our hearts day after day, for it teaches us the essence of Christianity--how God is gracious and merciful to poor sinful beings. Bless His holy Name. Amen. Prayer of Dr. Luther "For Greater Spirituality":

Look, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled. My Lord, fill it. I am weak in the faith; strengthen me. I am cold in love; warm me and make me fervent, that my love may go out to my neighbor. I do not have a strong and firm faith. At times I doubt and am unable to trust you completely. O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in you. I have insured all my treasure in your name. I am poor; you are rich and you did come to be merciful to the poor. I am a sinner; you are upright. With me there is an abundance of sin; with you a fullness of righteousness. Therefore I will remain with you, from whom I can receive but to whom I may not give. Amen.

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## PANORAMA

**AN INDEX OF ARTICLES IN THE *LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN* AND THE *JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY* ON WHAT SEPARATES THE CLC FROM OTHERS.**

*Arthur Schulz*

1958:     *Lutheran Spokesman*

- June, p. 4-5. A report on the Cheyenne convention, May 6-8, which followed meetings at Lyons, NE, and Mankato. Prof. E. Reim read essay: "Things to Guard against in our Approach toward Realignment." Discussion of document on Church Fellowship. Launching of *Lutheran Spokesman*.
- p. 14-15. Response to article in *NWL* titled: "Has the Wisconsin synod become disobedient to God's Word." (NRC)
- Oct., p. 2-4. Response to *NWL* article giving progress report of Union Committees of the Synodical Conference. Incomplete facts were told.
- p. 5-9. Essay on Realignment. (ER)
- p. 13-14. Summary of confession on Christian Fellowship being developed.
- Dec., p. 2-3. Remarks at 1957 WELS New Ulm convention. (WS)
- p. 4-5. Continuation of Prof. Reim's essay.
- p. 14-15. Comments on Pacific NW District resolution of WELS re continued fellowship with LCMS. Also comments on Lawrenz *Report to the Protest Committee* regarding "reaching the conviction . . ."

1959:     *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Feb., p. 10-12. Brief report on Mankato Conference, Jan. 13-15. (WS)
- p. 14. Conclusion of Prof. Reim's essay on Realignment.
- June, p. 2-4. Comments on WELS flyer: "A Congregation's Nightmare – If There were no Synod." The leaven of organizationalism. (WS)
- Oct., p. 4-5. Report on Red Wing Conference, Aug. 18-21. Report of interim seminar on Church & Ministry. Reaction to WELS and ELS conventions.
- p. 6-9. Comments on 1959 WELS Saginaw convention. (ER)

1960:     *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Feb., p. 2-3. Updates move to organize church body. Summarizes proposed constitution & documents on Church & Ministry and on Church Fellowship. The position of WELS and ELS is rejected. (WS)
- p. 12-13. Report on Jan. 19-21 Mankato Conference.
- June, p. 6-7. Comments on WELS – LCMS re *Common Confession*, & meetings of Synodical Conference doctrine committees.
- July, p. 2-3. Comments on "impasse" between WELS and LCMS, and the unscriptural course being followed by WELS. (WS)
- p. 9-10. WELS will follow same path as LCMS because they don't "avoid." (GS)
- Sep., p. 6-8. Why it was necessary for CLC to organize last month. The issue of "human judgment" in WELS and ELS. (WS)
- p. 13-14. Dilemma theology of WELS. ELS delays to Nov.
- Nov., p. 10-11. Confusing fellowship in Synodical Conf. WELS impasse with LCMS.

1961:     A.     *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 10. Announce recessed convention in Sleepy Eye, Jan. 24-26. Applications for membership in CLC should be sent in.
- Feb., p. 2-3. CLC organized for what? Let CLC decrease and Christ increase.
- p. 11. WELS NE District found wanting re fellowship with LCMS.
- Mar., p. 12-13. Comments re upcoming ELS and Syn. Conf. conventions.
- p. 16. Quote from *J. of Th.* article on "Fellowship Then and Now," in WELS.
- May, p. 6-7. Comments re article in *Christianity Today* about organization of CLC as a "splinter group."
- July, p. 11-12. Report on Overseas Theologians' presentation to Syn. Conf. convention on fellowship, with WELS reaction that impasse continues. The *Badger Lutheran* predicts tough fight at WELS convention if termination of fellowship with LCMS is contemplated.
- Aug., p. 10-11. Orthodoxy vs mission growth; Paul's example. (NR)
- Sep., p. 7-8. Re WELS suspension of fellowship with LCMS by majority vote. Meaning of a divided vote. No repentance in WELS for past disobedience to God's Word.
- Oct., p. 8-10. CLC position on Church Fellowship and Church & Ministry. CLC charge of false doctrine. ELS and WELS seek dissolution of Syn. Conf.

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Feb., p. 3-8. Background of CLC and new *Journal of Theology*. (ER)  
June, p. 40-41. "Bypassing the Impasse." Re upcoming ELS and WELS conventions. (CMG)  
p. 42-44. "To Set the Record Straight" re memorial "A Call for Decision" to 1959 WELS Saginaw convention. (ES)  
p. 44-48. "Fellowship Then and Now." Re LCMS unionism. No leadership evident in WELS re Syn. Conf. proposals.  
Oct., p. 31-36. Re ELS resolutions on Syn. Conf. fellowship. (CMG)  
p. 36-39. Re ELS and the doctrine of the Call. (CMG)  
p. 39-44. Re WELS action toward Syn. Conf. The battle's not over for WELS. Let's watch our own hearts. (ER)  
Dec., p. 35-38. Spokane resolutions of CLC re WELS action re LCMS. Lists issues existing between CLC and WELS.

1962: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 8-12. "What Separates the CLC from Wisconsin?" Unresolved issues include: deviations from the Scriptural doctrine of Church Fellowship; the Clarity and Authority of the Scriptures; and instances of violation of the sanctity of the call. (PA)  
p. 17. Division within WELS re suspension with LCMS comes because it was based on human judgment evaluating reaction to admonition. (GS)  
Feb., p. 9. "Whither Lutheranism in America?" re LCMS – NLC cooperation.  
Mar., p. 13. WELS won't meet with LCMS until after June LCMS convention. WELS invites overseas theologians to discuss Church and Church Fellowship.  
Apr., p. 2-6. "Whither Lutheranism in America?"  
p. 13. Re *NWL* article on Rev. H. Koch of WELS not agreeing with WELS action toward LCMS. Unionism by default.  
May, p. 2-3. Reprint *Dialog* article "Autopsy," re break between WELS and LCMS.  
June, p. 2-4. Re upcoming conventions of LCMS, LCA merger, CLC, and new ALC.  
July, p. 2. Good courage needed at upcoming CLC convention.  
p. 10-11. CLC convention welcome to Marquette-Manchester parish.  
Aug., p. 12-13. CLC position re the call, in view of WELS and ELS violations.  
Sep., p. 4-5. Report on Manchester convention. Correspondence between CLC and WELS presidents noted. Two essays adopted as part of CLC public doctrine.  
p. 15. Overseas theologians urge WELS and ELS to work toward restoration of former fellowship in Syn. Conf.  
Oct., p. 8-9. "Where do Things Stand Now?" Review reasons for severing fellowship with WELS and ELS, & areas that need to be agreed on. (CMG)  
Nov., p. 19. Report on meeting of CLC and WELS representatives on Nov. 10 in Mankato. (PA)  
Dec., p. 13-14. Report on Nov. Syn. Conf. convention in Chicago. WELS and ELS voted for dissolution. Review part of human judgment & admonition.

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Feb., p. 1-12. "Things to Guard Against in our Approach to Realignment." (ER)  
Oct., p. 40-42. The ELS and the call. Their policy on resignations discussed. (ER)  
Dec., p. 1-11. "Admonition and Romans 16." (ER) Printed in pamphlet form.  
p. 28-30. In Memoriam: Norman A. Madson.  
p. 30-34. Report on Syn. Conf. convention in Chicago.  
p. 34-35. "Missouri's New Image." (ER)

1963: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Apr., p. 15. Comment on *NWL* article that WELS and LCMS disagree on doctrines of the Church and of Fellowship.  
Aug., p. 13. Refers to Apr. *J. of Th.* re inconsistencies in WELS.  
Sep., p. 8. Report on 4th convention in Marquette, MI, Aug. 8-13. Efforts for further discussions with WELS have reached a stalemate.



p. 14. WELS at Aug. convention approved withdrawing from Syn. Conf.

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Feb., p. 8-22. "The Place of Compromise in the Church." (PFN)  
Apr., p. 21-23. WELS fine reply to invitation to participate in meetings leading to new association of Lutherans in USA. But WELS inconsistency with Lutheran Radio Conference with LCMS in Milwaukee. (ER)  
Oct., p. 33-38. Comments on *Time* magazine's reference to WELS as "The Isolated Synod." Unionism among conservatives. Issues that still lie between us. How our little CLC can be big. (ER)

1964: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 5-6. Review of 1963 religious news. Various discussions.  
p. 13-14. The Syn. Conf. no rallying point. Subtle difference between WELS and CLC. Report on meeting of WELS and CLC Bds. of Doct. in Sleepy Eye, Jan. 2-3.  
Feb., p. 5-7. Report of Bd. of Doct. on meeting with WELS in Jan.  
Mar., p. 5-6. "The Problem of Free Conferences." (ER)  
Apr., p. 11-13. "The Problem of Free Conferences" (cont.). (ER)  
Sep., p. 17-18. The twilight zone of fellowship in ELS and WELS. (GS)  
p. 18. Free conferences should define state of controversy.  
Nov., p. 11. Statement by Bd. of Doct. re notice in *NWL* concerning Dakota-Montana District, where it was stated that the actions of the CLC had caused "outsiders to blaspheme the gospel."  
p. 17-18. Comments on Titus 3:10. Fellowship with a heretic can't continue until we decide there's been sufficient admonition. (GS)  
Dec., p. 14-16. Report of Bd. of Doct. re *NWL* notice from Dakota-Montana. WELS has erected a wall between us by publishing the charge that the CLC has caused outsiders to blaspheme the gospel.

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Feb., p. 33-40. "The Problem of Free Conferences." (ER)  
Apr., p. 26-29. Report re commission chosen by 1962 LCMS convention to study questions re revelation, inspiration, & inerrancy. (ER)  
p. 29-31. Report of Bd. of Doct. in Jan. *Spokesman* re meeting with WELS commission is presented in more detail. (Reprint of Feb. *Spokesman*)  
p. 31-34. "What Still Remains – and Why?" in our discussions with WELS. (ER)  
June, p. 33.35. New church body, "Lutheran Churches of the Reformation," formed. (CMG)  
p. 36.43. Reaction to LCMS report on revelation, inspiration, & inerrancy. (CMG)  
Oct., p. 40-41. Re correction in *NWL* re Dakota-Montana District charge of blasphemy. (ER)  
Dec., p. 37-39. "A Matter of Blasphemy." Comments & answer. (ER)  
p. 39-40. WELS charge of "blasphemy" against CLC was poorly timed. (ER)  
p. 40-41. WELS is responsible for what appears in its publications. (ER)  
p. 42-43. Death of J.P. Meyer. Sadness of parting at 1957 New Ulm convention. (ER)  
p. 47-48. Report of CLC Bd. of Doct. (Reprint from Dec. *Spokesman*)

1965: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Feb., p. 5. A concerned layman comments about WELS/CLC discussions.  
Mar., p. 15-16. Comments on confused fellowship practices & Titus 3:10. (GS)  
Apr., p. 4-6. Doctrinal issues separate CLC and WELS. (WS)  
p. 11-13. Report of Bd. of Doct. giving background of WELS/CLC differences, and update progress in discussions. (ES)  
Aug., p. 17. CLC convention report. WELS proposal for future meetings.  
Oct., p. 13-14. LCR misunderstands WELS position on "Church."  
Nov., p. 8-13. Our heritage from WELS. (WS)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 4-14. The Problem of the Isolated Believer. (PFN)  
p. 32-34. Ripening fruit of unionism in LCMS. (ES)  
May, p. 36-37. WELS overrules Dakota-Montana demand & seeks resumption of discussions with CLC.

- Aug., p. 39-42. Report on 2nd Lutheran Free Conference in Waterloo. (ER)  
 Oct., p. 42-43. WELS convention encourages new approach in discussions with CLC.  
 p. 43-50. Where WELS and CLC do and do not agree. Reasons why a review of history from 1955-1961 is necessary. (ER)  
 Dec., p. 3-9. Reflections on first 5 years of *Journal of Theology*.  
 p. 33-39. Why a review of years 1955-1961 is important in WELS/CLC discussions. (ER)

1966: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 7-13. Review WELS history from 1920-1955. ELS history in 1918. This is our heritage. (WS)  
 Mar., p. 15-16. Confusing concepts of fellowship in TALC and LCMS. (GS)  
 May, p. 8. Report on 3rd Lutheran Free Conference. (WS)  
 Aug., p. 14. Upcoming 4th Lutheran Free Conference. (WS)  
 Sep., p. 6-7. CLC convention report. WELS invitation accepted.  
 p. 17. Meeting of Syn. Conf. remnant in July.

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 36-38. Comments re upcoming 3rd Lutheran Free Conference in Columbus.

1967: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Feb., p. 6-9. "Change!" Change in LCMS, WELS & ELS brought CLC into being.  
 Mar., p. 9-11. Evaluation of first 3 Lutheran Free Conferences. (ER)  
 Apr., p. 6-9. Conclusion of evaluation of Free Conferences. (ER)  
 May, p. 11-13. Comments on Free Conference re Doctrine of Church. (ER)  
 June, p. 2-4. Fundamentalism and LCMS. (WS)  
 Sep., p. 9-12. Comments on 1967 LCMS convention in New York. Everybody happy!  
 Oct., p. 13-14. Report on 4th Lutheran Free Conference in Chicago, July 18-20. (ER)  
 Nov., p. 6-7. WELS and ELS form new Ev. Lutheran Confessional Forum, Oct. 16-17.  
 Dec., p. 10-11. J.P. Koehler on Galatians 2:4 on sincerity in times of controversy. (ER)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 36-40. Comments on *CTM* article by M. Franzmann re change & decay in LCMS. (ER)  
 Dec., p. 40-44. J.P. Koehler on Galatians 2:4 on sincerity in times of controversy. (ER)

1968: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Mar., p. 5-7. LCMS fellowship in LCUSA without unity.  
 p. 8-10. Revived charges re CLC's *Concerning Church Fellowship*. (ER)  
 Aug., p. 5-6. Concerns re upcoming 5th Lutheran Free Conference in Minneapolis.  
 Nov., p. 11-12. "The Minority Syndrome." (JL)  
 Dec., p. 6-8. ALC declares fellowship with LCMS, LCA, and SELC.

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 33-34. WELS and LCMS both in fellowship with free churches in Europe, but not with each other. (CMG)  
 p. 36. In Memoriam: John W. Behnken. (ER)  
 May, p. 12-21. Reprint from 1958: "Things to Guard Against in our Approach to Re-alignment." (ER)  
 Dec., p. 29-37. Book review of *A City Set on a Hill*, a history of the ELS, by Rev. Theo. Aaberg. Corrections made in discussions of controversies. (CMG)

1969: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 8-10. A purpose of CLC: to guard against error & unionism. (DL)  
 June, p. 5-7. Upcoming 6th Lutheran Free Conference & Romans 16:17-18. (ER)  
 p. 8. Bd. of Doct. updates correspondence with WELS.  
 Aug., p. 8-9. LCMS declares fellowship with ALC; JAO Preus elected Pres. of LCMS.  
 Sep., p. 5. Announcement of death of Prof. E. Reim on Aug. 22.  
 Oct., p. 2-5. In Memoriam: Prof. E. Reim.  
 p. 8-9. Report on 6th Lutheran Free Conference in Davenport, IA. (OJE)

Nov., p. 9-12. "Message for Concerned Missourians." LCMS rejected admonitions of WELS and ELS at 12 conventions.

B. *Journal of Theology*

Mar., p. 29-33. "Conservatism and Romans 16:17." A look at *Christian News* editor Herman Otten. (ES)

May, p. 30-44. New "Statement of Faith and Purpose of CLC."

Oct., p. 1-7. In Memoriam: Prof. E. Reim. (CMG)

p. 34-36. Sad aftermath to LCMS Denver convention. (ES)

Dec., p. 28-30. LCMS: No substitute for God's Word. (CMG)

p. 31-34. Bethany Reformation Lectures. Speaker, Dr. Wm. Oesch, didn't give decisive answer to apply Romans 16:17 to LCMS.

1970: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

Mar., p. 11. Upcoming 7th Lutheran Free Conference in Rockford. (OJE)

May, p. 11. Program for 7th Lutheran Free Conference. (OJE)

Aug., p. 7-8. CLC convention report. Update on correspondence with WELS.

Sep., p. 12-13. Report on 7th Lutheran Free Conference. (OJE)

Dec., p. 3-5. "What Means this CLC?" Announcement of new document in print: *Mark ... Avoid – Origin of the CLC*, by PFN. (GS)

B. *Journal of Theology*

Mar., p. 26-32. Comments on *Proceedings* of WELS 1969 New Ulm convention. There is need to include 1955-1961 in discussion. (ES)

July, p. 17-24. Finnish Confessional Church severs fellowship with LCMS.

1971: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

July, p. 12-14. Unwarranted dilemma: The "admonition-persistence approach" in fellowship. Human judgment. The CLC has the answer. (GS)

Sep., p. 2-3. In Memoriam: Prof. E. Schaller. (CMG)

p. 9-11. The CLC and the AFLC. No complete agreement. (DL)

Oct., p. 7-10. The CLC and the Lutheran Brethren. (DL)

p. 11-13. A new Synodical Conference? (From *Journal of Theology*)

Nov., p. 3-4. WELS Watertown convention resolution on CLC. Will resume stalled talks with CLC. (GS)

p. 10.12. LCMS, WELS, & Traditionalism in interpreting Romans 16.17. (DL)

B. *Journal of Theology*

Mar., p. 26-30. ELS testimony to LCMS before & after 1938 Union Resolution. (CMG)

p. 30-38. 25th anniversary of *A Statement* in LCMS. (CMG)

p. 38.40. A new Synodical Conference? (ES)

Oct., p. 1-9. In Memoriam: Prof. E. Schaller

p. 30-32. Ecumenicity & Realignment among Lutherans. (CMG)

p. 32. NWL reports on WELS/CLC discussions. (CMG)

p. 33-34. Ambiguities at LCMS Milwaukee convention. (CMG)

1972: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

Jan., p. 6. AAL guilty of religious unionism. (JS)

July, p. 11. LCMS regrets TALC's approval of ordination of women. (GS)

p. 13-14. LCMS theses defining unionism & separatism present dilemma theology as though Scripture gives no directive. (GS)

Aug., p. 8-11. Public Offense and its Removal. (EH)

Sep., p. 4. CLC convention approves meeting with WELS.

Dec., p. 11-13. WELS/CLC discussions pinpoint areas of agreement & differences in church fellowship. Same principle applies to individuals & groups. (GS)

B. *Journal of Theology*

Mar., p. 30-33. New church body: FAL. WELS and ELS express their unity. Questions will need to be answered. (CMG)

- p. 34-38. PFN's pamphlet, *Mark ... Avoid – Origin of the CLC*, was criticized by ELS Prof. G. Reichwald. This is response to those criticisms. (JL)
- Sep., p. 1-18. Sola Scriptura principle & LCMS veneration of leaders. (JL)
- Dec., p. 36-39. "WELS and CLC – Is There Still a Difference?" Report on meeting held July 18-19 in Milwaukee. (CMG)

1973: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 11-14. Update on CLC-WELS meeting last July. (GS)
- Feb., p. 9-11. "The State of Confession" as used by WELS & FAL. Group exceptions. (GS)
- Mar., p. 4-5. Gospel Reductionism in LCMS. We need to be alert. (GS)
- Apr., p. 10-12. Historical-critical method of Bible interpretation. (DS)
- June, p. 2-4. Another LCMS crisis convention coming. *Christian News* misleading fellowship stance. FAL's scriptural answer in fellowship. WELS Prof. Joel Gerlach differs from WELS Commission re "vigorously protesting fellowship." (GS)
- July, p. 2-3. Conservative district sought in LCMS, to avoid separation. (GS)
- p. 7-9. LCMS convention: another battle of New Orleans. (OJE)
- Aug., p. 5-8. Lutherans involved in Key 73 evangelistic efforts. (DL)
- Sep., p. 3-5. Conservatives win at LCMS convention. LCR and FAL comments on LCMS New Orleans convention. (GS)
- p. 8. Little progress in WELS-CLC discussions.
- p. 10-12. "Liberal" and "conservative" labels. (GS)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 1-15. Verbal inspiration & inerrancy attacked by some in LCMS. (CK)
- June, p. 38-48. Review: *A Study of Generations*. What Lutherans believe. (JL)
- Sep., p. 32-36. Review: *A Christian Handbook on Vital Issues*. Edited by Herman Otten. Includes WELS 1955 conclusion re LCMS. (JL)
- p. 37-41. Unionistic leaven still working in LCMS. (CMG)

1974: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 5-6. Unionistic activity of AAL can't be ignored. (GS)
- Mar., p. 6-8. Lutherans in turmoil. Unscriptural fellowship. (ME)
- May, p. 3-6. Eruption at LCMS St. Louis seminary. Erosion of fellowship principle also in WELS at their 1973 convention. LCMS and WELS both have fellowship with SELK. (GS)
- Aug., p. 4. CLC convention report. No meetings with WELS planned.
- Oct., p. 4-5. WELS convention vs Dakota-Montana district re fellowship with SELK (GS)
- p. 10-11. Battle plan for LCMS conservatives. (ME)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 39-40. WELS and SELK fellowship practice. (CMG)
- p. 40-42. Turmoil in LCMS. Took wrong turn in 1938. (CMG)
- p. 42-44. WELS and CLC. WELS convention recognized doctrinal difference. (CMG)
- June, p. 11-15. "The Love in Romans 16:17-18." (CK)
- Dec., p. 39-40. Lack of true leadership by JAO Preus of LCMS. Loyalty to outward organization considered more important than loyalty to God's Word. (CMG)

1975: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Mar., p. 2-4. Swedish Confessional Church in fellowship with WELS. WELS position in July 1972 meeting with CLC re terminating fellowship. (GS)
- May, p. 3-5. WELS and CLC re Equal Rights Amendment. Running afoul of federal law. (GS)
- p. 6-8. ALC talks a different language. (PF)
- June, p. 12-13. LCMS Pres. Preus accused of speaking with forked tongue. (PF)
- July, p. 3-4. LCMS St. Louis Seminary & academic freedom. Accreditation. (GS)
- Aug., p. 2-3. Re LCMS Anaheim Convention. Faulty fellowship principles. (GS)
- Sep., p. 2-3. CLC & Equal Rights Amendment. (GS)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- June, p. 26-38. "On Rewriting History." Re WELS 1973 New Ulm convention resolution on "state of confession" toward LCMS on basis of Romans 16. WELS cannot rewrite its history. (JL)  
Sep., p. 37-39. The LCMS still a divided body. (CMG)

1976: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Apr., p. 2-3. In LCMS outward peace vs doctrinal discipline. (ME)  
May, p. 2-3. In Memoriam: Paul G. Albrecht.  
June, p. 11-12. Rev. Paul Albrecht remembered. (RAR)  
Aug., p. 6. CLC convention report on Doctrine: fraternal insurance to be studied; 3rd use of law statements adopted; polygamy to be studied.  
Nov., p. 4-5. Pro-rating funds from fraternal insurance won't solve problem. (GS)  
Dec., p. 3-4. Liberals leave LCMS and form AELC. The AELC is in fellowship with ALC, which is also in fellowship with LCMS. (GS)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- June, p. 2-11. In Memoriam: Paul G. Albrecht.  
p. 11-14. Recalls P.G. Albrecht's significant article: "What Separates the CLC from Wisconsin?" in Jan. 1962 *Spokesman*. Was basis for following discussions. (JL)  
Dec., p. 39-41. A new church body emerges – AELC. (CMG)  
p. 41-44. LCMS "conservatism" no cause to rejoice. (CMG)

1977: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Aug., p. 12-13. LCMS entered "fellowship in protest" with ALC at Dallas convention. (GS)  
Sep., p. 11-12. CLC confession on Church Fellowship. (DL)  
Nov., p. 6-10. Review: *Preus of Missouri*. Politics in church. (DL)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 2-31. Danger of Gospel Reductionism. Misery in Missouri. (MS)  
June, p. 18-29. Review of lectures in *ELS: The Quest for True Lutheran Identity in America* by WELS Prof. E.C. Fredrich, & reactions by LCMS Dr. E. Klug. Reviews fellowship principles of WELS, ELS, & finds them wanting. (JL)  
Dec., p. 32-41. How the WELS sees us. Comments on WELS Prof. Fredrich's lectures on "Wisconsin's Interchurch Relations." WELS acknowledges that a difference in doctrine exists between us. (JL)

1978: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 3-4. WELS 1977 New Ulm convention authorized study re receiving funds from fraternal insurance. (GS)  
Apr., p. 2-4. WELS, ELS, and CLC respond differently to invitations from LCMS to discuss fellowship. CLC reply. (GS)  
p. 7-11. Few hold Scripture doctrine on unionism. Fraternal insurance. (ME)  
June, p. 8-10. Are WELS and CLC schismatic? Stubbornness of WELS toward SELK re length of creation days. WELS distinction between fellowship with person & with group. WELS and CLC both admit difference exists in doctrine. (DL)  
p. 13-14. Beginnings of OLC, Concordia Luth. Conf., CLC, LCR, and FAL. (DL)  
July, p. 10-12. What is this Thing called Schism? (DL)  
Aug., p. 5-9. CLC convention action on: AELC invitation declined; LCMS invitation declined; 3rd use of law; marriage & polygamy.  
Sep., p. 6-7. Gospel Reductionism in LCMS. (MS)  
Nov., p. 2-3. 20th anniversary of *Lutheran Spokesman*. (GS)  
Dec., p. 7. WELS report on meeting with LCMS. (GS)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 23-26. Review of *Anatomy of an Explosion*, by K. Marquardt. Analysis of LCMS controversy starting with 1938 Union Resolutions. (CMG)

Dec., p. 40. Comments re Trans-Lutheran Convocation at Ft. Wayne. (CMG)

1979: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

Mar., p. 6-9. CLC position on fraternal insurance since 1965 at ILC. Reaction of 10 WELS districts to fraternal insurance study. Money can have detrimental effect on confessional integrity. (DL and GS)

June, p. 4-6. Synoditis of Lutherans Alert-National. (ME)

July, p. 8-10. Lutheran charismatics. Good LCMS guidelines. (DL)

p. 10-11. How others explain the CLC: A.C. Piepkorn, WELS, E.C. Kiessling, and M.H. Scharlemann. (DL)

Aug., p. 12. Death of WELS Pres. O.J. Naumann. (GS)

Oct., p. 11. CLC and LCR decline grant from AAL. (DL)

B. *Journal of Theology*

Sep., p. 2-16. The *Book of Concord* and Gospel Reductionism. It became apparent in LCMS after breakup of Syn. Conf. (JL)

p. 43-44. Oscar Naumann – Remembrances. (CMG)

Dec., p. 43-44. On Honorary Degrees from Heterodox Institutions. Comments on ELS Prof. B.W. Teigen receiving degree from LCMS Ft. Wayne seminary. (JL)

1980: *Lutheran Spokesman*

Feb., p. 10-13. LCMS and church fellowship in 1932 and today. Selective fellowship. Fellowship with ALC. WELS “vigorously protesting fellowship” with LCMS. Political solutions vs God’s Word. (DL)

Aug., p. 2-6. 20th anniversary of CLC, a confessional church body. (DL)

p. 11. CLC convention report on doctrinal matters.

Oct., p. 5-7. The Other CLC: Concordia Luth. Conf. They hold that false doctrine on Church & Ministry is taught by WELS & CLC, and in ELS. (DL)

Dec., p. 7-12. CLC’s confessional stand against fraternal benefit societies. WELS concludes Christian liberty is involved. Unionism involved. (GS)

p. 12-13. LCMS not doctrinally pure. (DL)

1981: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

Jan., p. 6-7. The CLC after 20 years. Recalls early beginnings. (DL)

Mar., p. 9-13. The Apostolic Lutheran Church in America. A study. (PGF)

Apr., p. 5-7. CLC on Objective Justification. We are not universalists, as charged by chairman of LCMS committee. (DL)

p. 12. The ELS on the doctrine of the Church. Seemingly in agreement. (DL)

June, p. 3-5. CLC exists as separate church body because of its confession on Biblical truth concerning fellowship.

p. 5-8. Fellowship – A Blessing from God. (MG)

p. 9-11. Separation from Error. (E. Rutz)

p. 11-12. Fellowship principles in wedding service.

p. 12-13. Why I withdrew from the AAL. (LDR)

July, p. 9-13. Lutherans & the Role of Women. Divisions in LCMS and WELS. (DL)

Aug., p. 10-11. LCMS St. Louis convention terminated fellowship with ALC. The struggle for doctrinal unity isn’t easy. (DL)

Sep., p. 3-8. Conference paper: “Keeping the Unity.” (CMG)

p. 9-11. CLC pastors are agreed on fraternal insurance unionism. (RAR)

Oct., p. 7-10. 50th anniversary of *Brief Statement*. 50 years of falling away in LCMS. (DL)

Nov., p. 7-9. Proposed merger of LCA, ALC, and AELC. (DL)

B. *Journal of Theology*

Mar., p. 36-43. Review: *Church Fellowship – What Does the Bible Say?* by Seth Erlandson. Summaries of ELS, Walther, & WELS positions. Doesn’t enter into differences between WELS and CLC. Altar and prayer fellowship. (JL)

- June, p. 30-36. Response to Concordia Luth. Conf. by CLC Bd. of Doct. re charge of false doctrine in Church & Ministry.  
Sep., p. 38-40. Confusion within LCMS after terminating fellowship with ALC. (JL)

1982: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- June, p. 11-13. Costly confessions. Beginnings of CLC. Fraternal insurance. (PS)  
Aug., p. 11. Albert Sippert comments on fraternal insurance. (DL)  
Sep., p. 4-5. CLC convention action re: fraternal insurance; Concordia Luth. Conf.; and discussions with WELS and ELS.  
Oct., p. 13-14. Lutheran merger. Why call it Lutheran? (DL)  
Dec., p. 10-12. Report on Decatur, IN, free conference in Sep. No agreement on Church & Ministry, nor on Church Fellowship. (DL)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- June, p. 28-38. Open Letter to Students & Alumni of Northwestern College. Response to presentation by Prof. Fredrich re WELS history. CLC left for reasons of doctrine, as acknowledged by 1973 WELS convention. (JL)  
p. 38-43. Review of new LCMS hymnal: *Lutheran Worship*. (CMG)  
Dec., p. 25. Tract: *There is Still a Difference* is reprint of June article.  
p. 26-28. A new Lutheran merger – Union or Unity? (CMG)  
p. 28-33. The new Lutheran merger – Its Roots. (CMG)

1983: *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Apr., p. 6-9. *Brief Statement* on the Church. Unionism. Correct 1955 WELS response to ecumenical invitation. (DL)  
p. 12-14. Death of Winfred B. Schaller. (RAR)  
June, p. 2-6. Quotes from 25 years of *Spokesman*.  
Oct., p. 10-12. LCMS conventions sends mixed message re fellowship. (DL)  
Nov., p. 5-7. Our Place among the Lutherans – I. (DL)

1984: *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Feb., p. 7-12. Our Place among the Lutherans – II. (DL)  
Apr., p. 13-14. The 3rd stage in progress of error. New merger planned. (DL)  
Aug., p. 13-14. Conservative D. Barnhart leaves LCA. (DL)  
Oct., p. 15-16. Organization of Fellowship of Ev. Lutheran Laity & Pastors. (DL)

1985: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 9. 25th anniversary of CLC.  
p. 18-19. CLC position on fellowship. No monopoly on light. (PF)  
Feb., p. 2. Quotes from Vol. 1 of *Spokesman*.  
May, p. 14-16. Remembering the 25th anniversary of CLC. (PF)  
July, p. 9-10. Orthodoxy vs Mission Growth. (NR)  
Sep., p. 2-3. 25th anniversary issue. Agonizing for the faith. (PF)  
p. 4-5. Quotes from Vol. 3 of *Spokesman*.  
p. 5-6. God's Word our Lamp and Light. (CMG)  
p. 9-14. Doctrinal Differences between CLC & ALC, LCA, LCMS, & WELS. (RG)  
p. 14-17. Living the Fellowship Principle. (TT)  
p. 17-20. 25 Years – A Look Back. (PF)  
Oct., p. 7-9. CLC fellowship principle re lodges, scouts, & United Way. (DL)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 5-18. 25th anniversary of CLC. Review of some highlights of Vol. 1-24 of *Journal of Theology*, and early history of the CLC. (JL)

1986: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Feb., p. 3-4. Conclusion of CLC's anniversary year. (PF)

- Apr., p. 10-11. Galesburg Revisited: Close Communion. ELCA & others. (DL)
- Sep., p. 6-7. CLC convention report. Fellowship matters with LCCF and WELS. WELS and CLC pastors in Pacific Northwest had met.  
B. *Journal of Theology*
- Dec., p. 2-4. Reprint *Panorama* article from Vol. 1, No. 1 of *Journal of Theology*. Appreciation to C.M. Gullerud for many articles. (JL)
- p. 5-16. Proper & Improper Distinguishing among Fundamental & Non-Fundamental Doctrines, & Open Questions, as they relate to Church Fellowship. (EH)

1987: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Feb., p. 6-7. The name of our church body. (PF)
- Mar., p. 4-6. AELC Rev. Richard Neuhaus responds to Pieper quote in *Spokesman* re orthodoxy and splinter groups. (PF)
- p. 7-8. 10 reasons not to join ELCA. Update on Barnhart and AFLC. (DL)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Dec., p. 38-44. A Study of the Doctrinal Platform of the ELCA. (AS)

1988: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 4. Listing of articles re origin of CLC.  
p. 9-11. Old & New Initials of Lutheran church bodies. (DL)
- June, p. 4-6. Recall premier issue of *Spokesman*: “daughter of Reformation.” (PF)
- July, p. 12-13. Significance of *Spokesman*’s 30th anniversary. (PF)
- Aug., p. 6-8. CLC convention report. Update with WELS and ELS.
- Oct., p. 2-3. Reformation Past and Present. (BJN)
- Nov., p. 7-8. American Lutherans continue to drift from God’s Word: CLB, AALC, LCMS, & ELCA. (DL)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 2-3. Report on free conference of WELS and CLC pastors in Washington in April 1985. Report on WELS and CLC meeting at ILC in January 1988.  
p. 3-11. Study of 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14,15, presented at WELS–CLC meeting. (CMK)
- June, p. 7-18. Review: *How are the Mighty Fallen?* by G. Winter. A history of the ELCR in Australia. Adiaphora and head coverings discussed. (AS)
- Sep., p. 2-3. In Memoriam: Gilbert A. Sydow. (JL)

1989: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 7. Update on position of AALC. (PF)
- Mar., p. 8. Lutheran students (ELCA, LCMS & WELS) affirm rights of gays & lesbians. (DL)
- May, p. 11-13. Walther: Why God allows false teachers to plague His Church.
- July, p. 7-11. The ELCA and Bankrupt Lutheranism. (PF)
- Oct., p. 4-6. Error of Judaizers threatens today. (DL)  
p. 8-12. Civil war in LCMS at Wichita convention. (PF)
- Nov., p. 14. Update on LCMS civil war. (PF)
- Dec., p. 14-16. Recall early days of CLC. The role of admonition in avoiding errorists. Precious partnership. (PF)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 28 Report on WELS/ELS/CLC meeting on Feb. 1-2, 1989. No agreement reached, but another meeting will be held. (JL)  
p. 29-37. A CLC Presentation concerning Fellowship, Admonition, Separation. (GPR)  
p. 38-40. Another Attempt to Clarify. CLC separated from WELS because of a doctrinal difference, as recognized by WELS in 1973. (JL)  
p. 40-43. First convention of AALC. (DL)
- Dec., p. 33-37. Interim report on WELS 1989 convention & ELS 1989 convention. Differences between WELS and ELS noted. (JL)



1990: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 4-5. Marking 30 years of CLC. (DF)  
Mar., p. 9. Misuse of gospel. ELCA ordains homosexuals. (DL)  
Apr., p. 5. Report on WELS/ELS and CLC meeting in Milwaukee, Jan. 31 - Feb. 1. Theses and antitheses from both sides were discussed. A sub-committee will meet soon. (RR)  
p. 6-8. "Dead" orthodoxy vs "live" heterodoxy in ELCA. (PF)  
p. 12-15. Christian's response to public immorality. (DL)  
Aug., p. 9-10. CLC convention report. Re discussion with WELS/ELS, a difference of judgment as to appropriateness of a preamble was not resolved. Meaningful discussions may continue.  
Sep., p. 8-9. Quotes from September 1960 *Spokesman*.  
p. 10-11. Looking back at 30 years. Church Militant. (PF)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 26-28. Another update on WELS/ELS and CLC meeting on Jan. 31 - Feb. 1 in Milwaukee. Theses and antitheses from both sides discussed. (DF)

1991: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Feb., p. 10-12. Dr. N.A. Madson on the Bible, always Reliable & Relevant. A true Lutheran world view. (PF)  
Apr., p. 8-11. CLC looks back and ahead. (PF)  
May, p. 16. In Memoriam: Rev. Robert A. Reim.  
Oct., p. 7-8. WELS and CLC differ in accepting grants from fraternal insurance. (PF)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- June, p. 2-6. In Memoriam: Robert A. Reim.  
Dec., p. 1-3. In Memoriam: Vernon E. Greve.  
p. 38-40. What is Going On? Re news release of "Lutheran Leadership Consultation" involving leaders from ELCA, LCMS, and WELS. Second news release re "Joy" radio program, an inter-Lutheran project of ELCA, LCMS, and WELS, & funded by AAL. Unionism in guise of "cooperation in externals." (JL)

1992: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 8-9. Walther on Confessional Loyalty.  
p. 10-12. 30th anniversary of *Concerning Church Fellowship*. Still timely. (PF)  
Mar., p. 8-10. Re *CCF*. False fellowship practice in LCMS by Robert Preus and *Christian News*. (PF)  
Apr., p. 11-13. Trivializing God's Word of truth in sports, etc. (PF)  
Aug., p. 8-9. CLC convention report. Since WELS/ELS now sees no doctrinal difference between us, convention urged Bd. of Doct. to terminate discussions unless the doctrinal issue is addressed.  
Sep., p. 7-8. To preserve and protect, "avoid." (RAR)  
Oct., p. 14-18. LCMS Pres. Barry's use of adjectives re synod.

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 31-42. Transcript of voices from the past. Prof. Lawrenz & Pres. O. Naumann discuss: Cooperation in externals, prayer fellowship & joint prayer; theology of fellowship; Lawrenz' interpretation of 1955 WELS resolution; and why he changed his position in 1955. What keeps WELS and CLC apart. Prospects for the future. (JL)  
p. 43-45. What is Going On? Revisited. Follow-up to December 1991 article. (JL)  
Sep., p. 2-3. In Memoriam: M.J. Witt.  
p. 22-30. Commentary on CLC convention resolutions re meetings with WELS/ELS. Historical review leading to doctrinal difference. CLC theses and antitheses on the role of admonition in the termination of fellowship with church bodies. Questions re fraternal insurance, church growth, etc., remain. (DL)

1993: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Mar., p. 2. Announcement: Official end to discussions with WELS/ELS. (DF)

- p. 10-12. Review: *What's Going on Among the Lutherans?*  
Aug., p. 8-10. AAL and ELS/WELS. Reprint from *Journal of Theology*. (JL)  
p. 9. AAL is doing church work. (PF)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 34-35. AAL and ELS/WELS. Sinful unionism. (JL)  
p. 36-37. What is Going On? #3. "Church Membership Initiative" sponsored by Lutheran Brotherhood. Participants from ELCA, LCMS, and WELS. (JL)  
p. 38-39. The Comfort Factor. LCMS Pres. Barry more comfortable in LCMS. (JL)  
June, p. 37-39. *Logia* – new journal of Lutheran theology. (JL)  
Sep., p. 39-42. Review: *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans*, by E.C. Fredrich. Again says that timing was difference between WELS and CLC.  
p. 42-45. Review: *Michigan Memories*, of Mich. district of WELS. Here CLC is referred to as "reactionary." (DL)  
Dec., p. 2-13. Encouraging the Positive Aspects of Church Fellowship. (JA)  
p. 49-51. Herman Otten listed 30 attributes of LCMS. However, he omits any reference to God-pleasing practice re fellowship & unionism. (JL)

1994: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Aug., p. 10. CLC convention report. Recognize doctrinal difference between CLC and WELS/ELS. No plans for further discussions.

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 2-18. New WELS hymnal: *Christian Worship, a Lutheran Hymnal*. (JR)  
June, p. 2-12. Review: *Christian Worship*, new WELS hymnal. (JR)  
Sep., p. 6-18. Review of liturgies in new WELS hymnal. (PS)  
Dec., p. 2-5. A Call to Recommitment after 35 years. (DF)  
p. 6-22. We recommit ourselves to remembering our past. (EH)  
p. 23-35. We recommit ourselves to hold fast to sound doctrine. (JL)  
p. 36-45. We recommit ourselves to the mission of the Church. (BrJN)

1995: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Mar., p. 13-14. Church Growth Movement in Lutheran churches. (DF)  
Apr., p. 14. Church Growth Movement & the Means of Grace. (DF)  
p. 17-18. In Memoriam: C.M. Gullerud.  
July, p. 7-9. AAL and LB grants to ecumenical endeavors, to ELCA, WELS, and ELS. AAL is not pro-life. (PF)  
Aug., p. 12-14. Editorial groan (re cover) and doctrinal discipline. (PF)  
Oct., p. 9-10. ELCA convention. Adrift on the Sea of Theology. (DS)  
p. 10-13. ELCA: "That they all may be one." (PF)  
Nov., p. 9-12. Remembering Dr. N.A. Madson. (PF)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 2-11. In Memoriam: C.M. Gullerud.  
June, p. 24-37. Critical Survey of ELCA dogmatics book. (TS)  
Sep., p. 51-52. Review: *WELS and Other Lutherans*, by Armin W. Schuetze. Some parts are inadequately treated. (JL)  
Dec., p. 2-26. Relation of the Public Ministry & Priesthood of all Believers in regard to current Lutheran Debates. (DL)  
p. 50-52. Remembering Dr. Robert D. Preus. (JL)

1996: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Apr., p. 15-17. Lutheran Pietism and Promise Keepers. (GJ)  
May, p. 12-13. Methods of Pietism. WELS & Promise Keepers. (GJ)  
June, p. 11. Promise Keepers: Doubting the Means of Grace. (GJ)  
Aug., p. 7-8. Promise Keepers: The Promises and Antidotes. (GJ)

- p. 11-13. CLC convention report. Self-esteem. Veterans organizations. Resolutions of past controversy on 3rd use of law.
- Sep., p. 15. Announcement: Agreement on 3rd use of the law. (DF)
- Oct., p. 8-10. Historical background for *Concerning Church Fellowship*. (PF)
- Nov., p. 9-10. Lessons from *Formula of Concord* era. Most errors then and now stemmed from unionism & doctrinal indifference. (GJ)

B. *Journal of Theology*

- Mar., p. 44-53. To What Extent must there be Agreement in Practice before Fellowship can be Established? Background of terms. Early WELS & LCMS days. Religious doublespeak. Our practice. (DS)
- Sep., p. 49-54. WELS/ELS and CLC discussions: 1987-1990 Revisited. (JL)
- Dec., p. 32-38. Once More Unto the Breach: WELS and Romans 16:17-18. The present-day application of Romans 16 by WELS is much different from in the past. A doctrinal difference exists between us & WELS. (JL)

1997: A. *Lutheran Spokesman*

- Jan., p. 7-9. Synods can err, but Scripture gives us the right answers in matters of faith. Be like the Bereans. (DF)
- Mar., p. 13-14. The direction of Lutheranism. AAL fosters unionism involving ELCA, LCMS, WELS, and ELS. Church Growth Movement doesn't use Means of Grace. (DF)

### HOMOSEXUALITY IN GERMANY\*

\* A free translation by Robert Dommer of an article in SELK, 1996.

In Laatzen, Germany (Hannover), a congregation had unanimously declared itself in favor of granting the church's blessing on living together outside of the institution of marriage and on homosexual partners. This aroused a lively discussion between church leaders, particularly *Landessuperintendent* Hans Schmidt and Elisabeth Lingner, *Praesidentin der Nordelbischen Synode*. Schmidt declared that he considered pronouncing a blessing in a divine service theologically irresponsible. He felt that God could in no way agree with such an action.

Those in favor of blessing homosexual unions pursued the intent of giving particular "partnerships" a political significance. In a time in which many people no longer enter the married estate, or their marriages frequently come to ruin, they felt it gave a false signal to question this way of living. Schmidt warned the group, "Homosexuals and the Church" (HuK) that they would become a "homosexual sect" if they, as a part of the church, would not abide by synodical decisions. Earlier it had become clear in discussions that the HuK had been giving marital blessing to homosexuals since 1990. When a homosexual asked Schmidt whether he could count on the blessing of his partnership by the *Landeskirche*, he replied: "If you want the church to bless your marriage, you won't live long enough to see it."

This, of course, aroused boo's by the protestants. In anger, Elisabeth Linger exclaimed: "This is a hardness of heart that Jesus would not have approved."

She was shocked how leading members of the church used their power and exclaimed that a "'Streitkultur' (a favorable attitude toward conflict) would never be achieved through force and prohibitions." She leaned away from giving a blessing to a homosexual only in soul care by saying, "That strikes me exactly as a private mass. The matter of blessing rests with the congregation and the community and not in a modest intimacy." She called for an acknowledgment of guilt on the part of the church against homosexuals.

The Rheinisch pastor Hans-Georg Wiedmann expressed himself confidently that in the Rheinland homosexual unions are now possible, after a two year discussion phase. He advised the church members of Hannover who are not satisfied with the prevailing practice to join the Rheinisch or Westphalisch churches. However, a leader of a group in Hannover advised against separation of

individual congregations over the partnership issue.

The leader of the city mission of Hannover, Reinhard Fiola, said he could not condone the church's blessing on homosexual pairs, since the Bible for him was the single rule of conduct that unequivocally evaluated homosexuality in a negative way. However, he was in favor of the state granting homosexual pairs a legal marital status. His comment: "Those afflicted with homosexuality dare not be punished because they happen to be that way."

It is to this article that Dr. Poetsch raises a few questions about the situation in Laatzen. He says, "Land Superintendent Hans Schmidt has taken a theologically clear position when he stated that it was impossible to grant homosexual partners the blessing of a church marriage. The basis for his position is significant, namely, that this kind of union does not have God's consent."

Consequently, the critique of Elisabeth Lingner, the President of the Synod of the "Nordelbischen Landeskirche" is quite incomprehensible! How does she know that Jesus would not uphold this biblically-founded position? According to the announcement, Mrs. Lingner favors "eine gute Streitkultur," i.e. a favorable attitude toward conflict. First, however, we must question her obedience to the clear statements of God's Word. Nowhere in God's Word is "eine gute Streitkultur" called for. And when a Land Superintendent sets forth what we know from Scriptures and the confessions of the church, then his actions do not have to do with "force" but with a responsibility to the consciousness of the church and to spiritual authority.

When Mrs. Lingner finally demands a confession of guilt on the part of the church for its attitude toward homosexuality, she ought to make clear in which respect such a confession should be made. It ought not be forgotten that such people are not helped if they are confirmed in their sin. The Lord God has clearly expressed how He judges homosexuality. If this Word of God is not taken seriously, or if we gloss over what is sin, we, through misinformation, **mercilessly surrender these poor souls to judgment.** The Lord will not conform to our thinking, but would far rather call us to account if we are deceived over the true facts and twist His will.

Today it is a common practice to change God's Word and will to match currently prevailing opinion. It is a long standing practice for people to evaluate current judgments of society more highly than the divine revelation. One wonders how this can take place with good conscience. It is certainly clear that our position before the Almighty and our eternal destiny cannot be founded on prevailing opinion.

It is encouraging when leading theologians from the "Landeskirchen" take an unequivocal position as did *Landessuperintendent* Hans Schmidt at *Laatzen*. His position may indeed arouse anger and reproach from modernistic theologians and church leaders. It shows above all that a church may once more act consistent with faith, and that true believers urgently long for this to happen more frequently in public. Hans Schmidt's position might have greater missionary affect among people than the corresponding call to evangelism through Mrs. Lingner, whose message, if we are to judge by her previous pronouncements, has little to do with the Gospel of the Bible.

## ANNOTATION

(Quotes from a article by Dr. Robert Pollnitz, in the same issue of SELK, translated into German from *The Lutheran* (Australia).

While listening to a group of Lutheran young people express themselves, a number of them expressed similar views. "Today we are more tolerant. We recognize all homosexuals in the church. It is simply another way of life. Christians can be homosexuals without having to repent of it." They were familiar with the report of the Lesbian groups which say: "It is politically correct to consider homosexuality as a valid form of an alternative life style." Who dares to say otherwise is marked as a hater of mankind and a caveman of the extreme right.

The excellent new little booklet, "The Teachings of the Lutheran Church," closes with this quotation: "Lutherans believe what the Bible says. The Bible is the Word of God. Therefore Lutherans recognize the Bible as the authority which decides what they believe and how they should live. Lutherans believe that the good news of Jesus Christ is the key to the whole Bible."

The Bible begins with Genesis and the account of the creation. God created the light . . . , and created man in His image, the image of God. Everything He created was good. We read what God said in Genesis 2:18, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper to be with him." So God created us as man and wife. Six verses later we read (2:24,) "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh."

God is no Victorian Puritan when it comes to sex! He created it. He has made us aware of our sexual being, He has created us as two sexes, and He wants us to live our sexuality in marriage. At the same time, the Bible also makes it clear that we live in a fallen world in which all humanity (and sexuality) is influenced by sin. In this context, the homosexual condition appears as one of the many sad results of our broken relationship to our Creator.

If we lay aside the question of sin, God's plan for us is obvious: one man united to one woman, who receive children and raise them to know their God. So simple are the pillars of a moral relationship. It is sad that divorce breaks the union, abortion destroys the children, and homosexual acts ridicule the loving purposes of God.

It is important to differentiate between homosexuality as the sexual desire (or orientation) of the homosexual, and his behavior. There has been much discussion about the cause of homosexual orientation--genes versus environment--indeed many specific factors may contribute to this, through which the connection to the real cause can become confused.

Many Bible passages describe homosexual behavior as a sin (Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:26ff.; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:8-10). Indeed, for this as for all our other sins we plead God for the gift of forgiveness and a new life in Christ. A Christian with homosexual tendencies must fight against this temptation and keep himself from the homosexual act. This is no singular burden. Many Christians may feel compelled to deny themselves the practice of sex for many different reasons.

The homosexual who seeks help can receive it through pastoral counsel and through Christian support groups. The latter report that with the help of time and prayer many homosexuals achieve a normal sexual relationship. It is difficult, however, to help the proud homosexuals, who seek the recognition of their condition and condemn the position of the church toward homosexuals. Yet often, under the outer appearance of pride, is hidden a feeling of guilt or despondency and even a desire for help that is suppressed, but in the course of time comes to the fore.

The classic phrase still remains: We love the sinner, while at the same time we hate the sin. Lutherans believe that God loves every person, although none of us merits His love. Too often church members avoid homosexuals and send the signal of rejection. The homosexual needs love (*Agape*) and acceptance to participate in the divine worship, to hear the Word of God and (*for the penitent - Ed.*) to receive the sacrament. These are the means through which God forgives, strengthens faith and heals.

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## **BOOK REVIEW**

***Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*, by Michael J. Behe (New York: Free Press, c1996). xii, 307 pages. Cloth, \$25.00.**

This book, which was recently purchased by the ILC college library, presents a message similar to that of Michael Denton's *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*. Behe is not a Bible-believing Christian, and he does not accept the creation account of Genesis in literal fashion. Yet he affirms that neo-Darwinian gradualism cannot account for many of the living systems which have been studied by biochemists in recent years.

Surely it is proper for a person, whether believer or unbeliever, to consider the wisdom and power of God that are evident in His creation. The Psalmist David, for example, contemplated the remarkable way in which a child is formed in the womb of his mother, and he sang forth in praise to his Lord: “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth” (Ps. 139:13-15). The Apostle Paul, moreover, affirms that the divine nature, power, and eternity of God have been apparent throughout history, being recognized through the things which He has created: “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20). Those people who deny the existence of a Creator have only themselves to blame for their unbelief; they are, in the words of Scripture, “fools,” for they have failed to exercise their God-given reason in a sensible and logical fashion!

The evolutionist Charles Darwin likewise recognized the complexity and intricate workings of living organisms. When he considered the human eye and its functioning, he was led almost to doubt the validity of his theory—for how could such an organ develop by random chance without the intervention of a higher intelligence? Yet Darwin did not know even a fraction of the problems which would eventually plague evolutionism. Scientists of his day rather naively assumed that protoplasm, the stuff of which living plants and animals are made, is a rather simple substance. And what about cells, the basic units of living tissues? Under their crude microscopes, a cell seemed to be a rather uncomplicated entity—something that the forces of nature would surely be able to produce if given enough time. Until relatively recent decades, the cell remained for Darwin and his followers a “black box”—an object with certain known outward characteristics, but whose inner constituents and means of operation were almost entirely unknown.

That black box has since been opened. Particularly since the time of World War II, discoveries have been made which have shown that the term “a simple cell,” involves a profound contradiction. Through the use of powerful electron microscopes, X-ray crystallography, and other investigative tools, biochemists now know that the cell contains a remarkable variety of complex structures—all of which function together in an exquisitely intricate fashion. Beyond that, they have found that proteins, which are the basic molecular constituents of cells, are highly specialized, three-dimensional units which operate somewhat as tools and machines do in a shop or factory. With these advances in biochemical knowledge, it can now be said that you and I have in the tip of our little finger greater complexity in structure and function than the largest chemical plant in the world!

It is on the foundation of such discoveries in the area of biochemistry that Michael Behe has written this volume on *Darwin’s Black Box*. It is his conviction that gradual, neo-Darwinian evolution, operating on the basis of mutation and natural selection, cannot explain the origin of many of the complex biological systems which scientists have now studied and described. As he takes the reader on a tour of some parts of a living cell, he discovers structures which in his words are “irreducibly complex,” with no possible Darwinian precursors which could have led up to them in a step-by-step fashion from simple to complex.

Behe defines an irreducibly complex system as follows: “That is, it is a single system composed of several interacting parts that contribute to the basic function, and where the removal of any one of the parts causes the system effectively to cease functioning” (86). Behe offers a common mousetrap as an example of a mechanical system which is irreducibly complex. There is no way in which a mousetrap could evolve from simple to complex; for if even one part of the system is missing, it will not be able to function in the catching of mice. For the trap to work, all of the parts (platform, spring, hammer, catch, and holding bar) have to be present—each in an appropriate size and shape, and all of them properly configured with respect to each other.

Among the many biochemical systems which are irreducibly complex, Behe discusses the following at length: the cilium and flagellum, blood-clotting, cellular transport, and disease fighting. Such systems could not have developed gradually from simpler to more complex, and they are therefore “mammoth barriers to gradual evolution” (141).

The author’s concluding words in the chapter on blood clotting express well his ongoing amazement at the remarkable workings of living organisms on the molecular and cellular levels:

Blood coagulation is a paradigm of the staggering complexity that underlies even apparently simple bodily processes. Faced with such complexity beneath even simple phenomena, Darwinian theory falls silent.

Like some ultimate Rube Goldberg machine, the clotting cascade is a breathtaking balancing act in which a menagerie of biochemicals—sporting various decorations and rearrangements conferred by modifying enzymes—bounce off one another at precise angles in a meticulously ordered sequence . . . (97)

Behe discusses also biochemical systems which are not irreducibly complex, but whose origins similarly offer huge problems for the evolutionary hypothesis. One such system, which he describes in detail, is the AMP molecule. Of such systems he says: “They do not necessarily require several parts to function, and there seem to be (at least at first blush) ways to assemble them step-by-step. Nonetheless, upon closer examination, nasty problems pop up. Supposedly smooth transitions turn out to be ephemeral when checked in the light of day. So even though some systems are not irreducibly complex, it does not necessarily mean that they have been put together in a Darwinistic manner. Like a groundhog trying to cross a thousand-lane highway, there is no absolute barrier to putting together some biochemical systems gradually. But the opportunities to go wrong are overwhelming” (142). Later he adds: “The formation of biological molecules does not happen in some fuzzy-minded Calvin and Hobbes way; it requires specific, highly sophisticated molecular robots to get the job done. . . . If there is a detailed Darwinian explanation for the production of AMP out there, no one knows what it is. . . . AMP is not the only metabolic dilemma for Darwin. The biosynthesis of the larger amino acids, lipids, vitamins, heme, and more run into the same problems, and there are difficulties beyond metabolism” (143, 161).

The author combed the scientific literature to see if scientists have come up with plausible explanations for how complex biochemical systems could have come into existence through successive, slight modifications. What he found in books and technical journals was nothing more than story telling, without a proper scientific explanation being offered for how the alleged evolutionary development could have taken place. The writers have simply glossed over the utter implausibility of the Darwinian scenario. He affirms that “the root question remains unanswered: What has caused complex systems to form? No one has ever explained in detailed, scientific fashion how mutation and natural selection could build the complex, intricate structures discussed in this book” (176). Later he says: “To understand both the success of Darwinism as orthodoxy and its failure as science at the molecular level, we have to examine the textbooks that are used to teach aspiring scientists” (180); after such examination of these textbooks, he is bold to state: “Many students learn from their textbooks how to view the world through an evolutionary lens. However, they do not learn how Darwinian evolution might have produced any of the remarkably intricate biochemical systems that those texts describe” (183). The assertion of Darwinian molecular evolution in these books, he affirms, “is merely bluster” (186).

The author thus finds compelling evidence in biochemical systems for *intelligent design*, and he concludes that Darwinian gradualism cannot account for the existence of these systems. While he is not a Biblical creationist, he argues that biochemical machines must have been designed by God or some other high intelligence. “The conclusion of intelligent design flows naturally from the data itself—not from sacred books or sectarian beliefs. Inferring that

biochemical systems were designed by an intelligent agent is a humdrum process that requires no new principles of logic or science. It comes simply from the hard work that biochemistry has done over the past forty years, combined with consideration of the way in which we reach conclusions of design every day” (193).

In the chapter on “Science, Philosophy, Religion,” Behe says: “The result of these cumulative efforts to investigate the cell—to investigate life at the molecular level—is a loud, clear, piercing cry of ‘*design!*’ The result is so unambiguous and so significant that it must be ranked as one of the greatest achievements in the history of science” (232f.). He concludes the book with the prediction: “Now it’s the turn of the fundamental science of life, modern biochemistry, to disturb. The simplicity that was once expected to be the foundation of life has proven to be a phantom; instead, systems of horrendous, irreducible complexity inhabit the cell. The resulting realization that life was designed by an intelligence is a shock to us in the twentieth century who have gotten used to thinking of life as the result of simple natural laws. But other centuries have had their shocks, and there is no reason to suppose that we should escape them. . . . We will endure the opening of Darwin’s black box” (252f.).

Behe makes the reading a lot more enjoyable and understandable by using apt, and often humorous, illustrations and analogies from everyday life to illustrate what he is saying in the area of biochemistry. Moreover, the highly technical portions are indented and enclosed between little boxes. The non-scientific reader can gloss over these portions without seriously losing the train of thought.

Michael Behe is an associate professor of biochemistry at Lehigh University. Although he identifies himself as Roman Catholic (239), he does not show any inclination to begin with the Bible in the search for truth on the question of origins. For example, in discussing the question on how life originated, he offers the suggestion that “perhaps the original life is totally unlike ourselves, consisting of fluctuating electrical fields or gases” (249). While the author offers compelling evidence for intelligent design in living organisms, it remains true that only the *gospel* can create the faith to believe that the worlds were framed by the word of the eternal, almighty, and personal Triune God. Evidence for design in this world and universe cannot in itself make someone a Bible-believing Christian—for “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

Is it a waste of time, then, to peruse a book such as *Darwin’s Black Box*? I do not think so. For one thing, exploring creation on the molecular/cellular level cannot but lead a Christian reader to sound forth in glad adoration to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation. No longer will he regard the everyday functions of his body in a ho-hum way. For example, when he cuts his finger and does not bleed to death, or when he recovers from a bacterial or viral infection, he will be reminded to thank his heavenly Father for designing the human body in so remarkable a fashion. When he digests and assimilates food, he will be more apt to think of the myriad of biological structures and processes that are involved in God’s preservation of his body. When he confesses with Luther that “God has made me with all creatures, giving me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my faculties,” he may well be filled with a greater sense of wonderment from having taken the journey into the black box.

Lutheran teachers have spoken also about the role of rational arguments in the area of Christian apologetics, such as the demonstration of intelligent design in the world and universe. While such arguments are unable to bring a person to faith, they can help to stop the mouths of those who contradict the divine Word and to keep our own sinful flesh from rebelling as strenuously against the truths of God. In the words of Francis Pieper: “Such rational arguments serve to show how frivolous are the judgments of unbelief against the divinity of Scripture. These arguments may be used to good advantage also in the case of Christians who are afflicted with doubts as to the divine character of Scripture. These doubts arise from the unbelieving flesh of the Christians, and through these rational arguments the flesh of the Christians is outwardly checked and subdued” (*Christian Dogmatics*, I:311).



And one can wish for another happy result from the publication of Behe's book and others like it. In Lystra and Athens, the Apostle Paul testified to the goodness and glory of God in His works of creation and preservation, and he then affirmed that such considerations should lead people to "seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him" (Acts 17:27). May the Lord Jesus Christ graciously bring His gospel to all such gropers, including the author Behe himself, that they may thereby come to a believing knowledge of the Triune God of their salvation! Surely it is our prayer:

From all that dwell below the skies  
Let the Creator's praise arise;  
Let the Redeemer's name be sung  
Through every land, by every tongue.  
Alleluia!

In closing, I might mention that an enthusiastic review of Behe's book by a creationist scientist, Robert T. Mitchell, can be found in the March-May 1997 issue of *Creation ex nihilo*, pages 29-30.

– Clifford M. Kuehne