

The Lutheran
SPOKESMAN



"THE SCRIPTURE
CANNOT
BE BROKEN."

John 10,35

AUGUST 1958

IN THE MORN'G G.M. FISCHER

"REMEMBER THEM WHICH HAVE THE RULE OVER YOU, WHO HAVE SPOKEN UNTO YOU THE WORD OF GOD: WHOSE FAITH FOLLOW, CONSIDERING THE END OF THEIR CONVERSATION." Hebrews 13:7.

We want to remember Pastor Fischer. We hope our readers will remember Pastor Fischer. For this reason we are devoting a large portion of this issue to the remembrance of him. Consider especially the end of his conversation, the outcome of his life on earth.

He died in Christ. He died confessing his sins to Christ. He died confessing Christ as his forgiveness and righteousness. He died confessing Christ's Word. Pastor Fischer had lost most of his friends and the fellowship of thousands in the Synodical Conference. He preferred the fellowship of Christ, and was concerned not that men would confess him as their friend and brother, but that Christ would not be ashamed to confess him before His Father in heaven. When his former brethren strayed from Christ's path and became disobedient to the Word of Christ, Pastor Fischer, by the grace of God

the Holy Ghost, fearlessly disavowed their fellowship that he might be found loyal to his Savior, who died for him. Consider his end: an eternity of blessed fellowship with Jesus Christ, for he that lives and believes in Christ never dies. Considering his end, imitate his faith and trust in this Savior God. Suddenly all our earthly ties and associations, all human organizations become dingy and shabby as we glimpse through that door and behold our brother united with the Head of the Church together with all the believers. Eia, waeren wir da! Oh, that we were there!

That our brother looked forward to this great day of deliverance is best to be seen in the funeral service which he specified to be held for himself. It is the finest testimony we can present to his faith in Jesus. Joyously it opened with the strains of Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring." This is not the superficial joy trying to cover up the ugliness of death, for the service continues with a song of confession of sins sung by the school children, testifying that no one enters heaven on the basis

of his own life, but can only plead mercy on the basis of Jesus' suffering and death. That Jesus removed death for the Christian was announced in the powerful words of the lesson from John 11:20-27.

That note of quiet and joyful confidence in Christ's redemption continues into the sermon on Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." Speaking of the blessed peace in Christ, Pastor Radtke, the co-pastor of the deceased, showed that it is a reality, though when ministers bring the message of the Prince of Peace, they are involved in bitter warfare with all the enemies of Christ. Yes, they find themselves branded as warmongers and trouble makers. Yet they find true peace in Him who wrested victory from the enemies in hell and ended the tyranny of Satan. This peace was Pastor Fischer's; this peace he proclaimed to his flock and to us.

In three other hymns, choir and congregation rejoiced in the assurance that in Jesus' Blood and Righteousness, the sinner may confidently stand before the throne of God; that this is the only and the sure foundation for the Christian; and that in Jesus' resurrection we have the positive assurance that we too shall rise again and be with Him forever.

The following brief address was delivered by Dr. Norman A. Madson:

Fellow redeemed, and especially you, bereaved family:

"He who dies before he dies
Will not die when he dies."

What does the sainted Christian Scriver mean with that paradox? For a paradox it is. And our Christian religion is a religion of paradoxes. You've got to become poor if you would gain eternal riches. You've got to be humbled if you want to attain everlasting honours. You've got to die if you are to live.

Scriver is simply emphasizing the truth spoken by Paul in his epistle to the Galatians: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. 2:20-21.)

Paul was flesh and blood even as you and I. It was but natural that he should want to be freed from that thorn in the flesh, that messenger of Satan which buffeted him, and he besought the Lord again and again and again that it might depart from him. But what was God's reply? "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my

strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. 12:9.) With that the apostle was satisfied. He could now confess: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2 Cor. 12:9b.) He then came to the conclusion that when he was weak he was strong.

We were taught in Luther's Small Catechism, were we not, when we came to the covenant of Baptism: "We are buried with Him by Baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4.) But it is the daily drowning of the Old Adam which is so unpleasant for flesh and blood. There is, alas, in all of us a bit of the wretched Per Gynt. Whenever this good-for-nothing worldling met up with his accusing conscience at the cross roads, and was told that he would have to go into the melting pot and be re-fashioned (be born again), his ever-ready retort was: "But it hurts!" Of course it hurts! You simply can't be crucified with Christ without pain. And it is right here where so many a man's religion breaks down: He wants to live in full accord with the world, wants to prosper as others, wants to make an impression on the world. It has been well expressed by an unknown poet in these telling lines:

"A man must live!" We justify
Low shift and trick, to treason high;
A little vote for a little gold,
Or a whole senate bought and sold,
With this self-evident reply:
"A man must live!"

But is it so? Pray tell me why
Life at such cost you have to buy:
In what religion were you told
A man must live?

There are times when a man must die.
There are times when a man will die.
Imagine for a battle cry,
From soldiers with a sword to hold,
From soldiers with a flag unfurled,
This coward's whine, this liar's
lie: "A man must live."

The Saviour did not live, He died!
But in His death was life,
Life for Himself and all mankind.
He found His life by losing it.
And we, being crucified
Afresh with Him, may find life
In the cup of death,
And drinking it,
Win life for evermore.

Our departed brother's religion was not one of sweet accommodation. It was the religion of the cross. He had learned to take seriously the apostolic admonition: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." (Rom. 12:2.) And he ministered to fellow sinners on that basis. As a result, many turned their backs on him with the age-old complaint: "This

is an hard saying; who can hear it?" (John 6:60.) His confession has well been summarized in Lyte's precious hymn:

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee;
Destitute, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my All shalt be,
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought or hoped or known;
Yet how rich is my condition!
God and heaven are still mine own."

The world had not changed in its attitude toward the cross since the trying days three centuries ago, when the sorely-tried theologian and beloved hymn writer, Paul Gerhardt, composed that precious hymn:

"Befiehl du deine Wege,
Und was dein Herze kränkt."

"Thy way and all thy sorrows,
Give thou into His hand,
His gracious care unfailing,
Who doth the heavens command;
Their course and path He giveth
To clouds and air and wind:
A way thy feet may follow
He, too, for thee will find."

Gerhardt was a most beloved pastor of the large St. Nicholas Church of Berlin. But when he as a conscientious pastor took a definite stand against the unionistic elector of Brandenburg, Frederick William, he was deposed and driven into exile. The closing years of his life he spent as a faithful pastor of a little con-

gregation in Lübben. In the sacristy of that Lübben church you will find a life-sized painting of the faithful confessor, bearing this inscription in Latin:

"THEOLOGUS IN CRIBRO SATANAE
VERSATUS."

"A theologian who has been sifted in the sieve of Satan."

We like to think of our departed brother as one who had also been sifted. But he remained faithful to the end, faithful to the religion of the cross, than which there is none other by which you may be saved. Let Kingo's inimitable Easter hymn be spoken at his casket by way of a final farewell:

"Thanks to Thee, O Christ victorious!

Thanks to Thee, O Lord of life!
Death hath now no power o'er us,
Thou hast conquered in the strife;
Thanks because Thou didst arise,
And hast opened Paradise!
None can fully sing the glory
Of the resurrection story.

"Thou hast died for my transgression,

All my sins on Thee were laid;
Thou hast won for me salvation,
On the cross my debt was paid;
From the grave I shall arise,
And shall meet Thee in the skies;
Death itself is transitory,
I shall lift my head in glory."

Hallelujah! Amen.

N. A. Madson, Sr.

THE OBITUARY--GERVASIUS W. FISCHER

PARENTS - The Reverend Gervasius N. Fischer and Johanna nee Ritter.

BORN AND BAPTIZED - December 4, 1895, Renville, Minnesota.

EDUCATED FOR HOLY MINISTRY -

Dr. Martin Luther College,
New Ulm, Minnesota;
Concordia College,
St. Paul, Minnesota;
Northwestern College,
Watertown, Wisconsin;
Theological Seminary,
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

SERVED THE LORD - Ordained August 24, 1919, Hutchinson, Minnesota;
1919-1925 St. Peters Lutheran Church, Savannah, Illinois;
1925-1934 Eastside English Lutheran Church, Madison, Wisconsin;
1934-1941 St. Johns Lutheran Church, Grover, Wisconsin;
1941-1949 St. Jacobi Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin;
1949-1958 Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota.

MARRIED - Margaret Schmeling,
June 11, 1934.

CHILDREN - The Rev. Wm. Fischer,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin;
Mrs. Frank (Doris) Kellert,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma;
Mrs. James (Mary) Harper,
Minneapolis, Minnesota;
Barbara and Margaret,
Mankato, Minnesota.

DIED - June 10, 1958.

Prayer by Pastor Fischer written March 24, 1945, at the close of his will regarding his funeral service:

"May the Lord pardon me for all my trespasses and may He take my family into His fatherly care, keep them faithful in His Word unto the end. May He preserve my dear congregation loyal and faithful to His Name that from generation to generation the Word of God be taught in truth and purity and we as the children of God lead a holy life according to it . . ." Amen.

Pastor Fischer had outstanding gifts. He was an excellent Gospel preacher; a student of Liturgics and the Lutheran Chorale; an efficient administrator and teacher; outstanding as a comforter of the sick and troubled. But above all, he was a sinner who dearly loved Him who saved him from his sins. To Him and for Him he used his gifts. For our Lord Jesus he patiently and faithfully served and suffered during his years in the Church Militant.

"WHEREFORE SEEING WE ALSO ARE COMPASSED ABOUT WITH SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES, . . . LET US RUN WITH PATIENCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US." Hebrews 12:1.

W.S.

CHURCH NEWS

PROFESSOR RICHARD HAWLEY of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has received a Divine Call to serve the mission group in Monroe, Michigan. This is the second call extended by this little group. Our report of the first call in the previous issue of the SPOKESMAN seems to have been based in part on misinformation.

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TEACHER ROBERT REHM has accepted the call as Principal of Immanuel Lutheran Congregation, Mankato, Minnesota, beginning with the fall term. Last year he taught grades 1 and 2 in this school. His address: Teacher Robert Rehm, 407 North Second Street, Mankato, Minnesota. We wish him and the lambs under his care the Lord's richest blessings.

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The following is a copy of a notice sent to the proper officials of the Wisconsin Synod, dated June 29, 1958:

It has become painfully evident that the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States has set itself in a chosen, heretical course in that it defends and advocates fellowship which is forbidden of God in Holy Writ and in that it is partaking both passively and now actively of the sins it once decried.

Wherefore also by good words and fair speeches it propagandizes and defends such errors and thereby it is causing divisions and

offences contrary to the doctrine we have learned (Rom. 16:17-18).

Therefore out of obedience to this Word of God I can no longer be a member of the Wisconsin Synod.

(Signed) Pastor O.W. Eckert
Winner, South Dakota

At special meetings of the two congregations at Winner and Witten, South Dakota, held on June 30th and July 1st, the congregations voted by a majority to remain members of the Wisconsin Synod, necessitating their pastor's resignation.

The remnant who wish to remain with the Word of God and their God-given pastor asked Pastor Eckert to remain, and have formed St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Winner, South Dakota, meeting each Sunday in rented quarters. May God the Holy Spirit, who has led these His children to this action, ever establish and strengthen them in His eternal Word of Truth.

Address: Rev. O. W. Eckert,
622 West First Avenue,
Winner, South Dakota.
Phone: 703.

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Please make the following change of address in your directory from the previous issue:

Pastor R. C. Kuehne,
1449 34th Street, N.W.,
Winter Haven, Florida.

THE BREAD OF LIFE

We are gratified that a few have informed us of the joy they have found in these simple devotions from the Bible and the Catechism. It takes a little more effort to use several books in the devotion, but it appears that there is much benefit in the family participation in the worship, as well as in the underscoring of a truth in the reading from Scripture by the related Catechism study.

It goes without saying that if only the Scripture is read, the devotion will often be too brief. When a question and answer are read from the Catechism, it will again be meager unless the Scripture passages listed with the question are also read.

For September and October we have the beautiful stories from the lives of the patriarchs. Where it was not possible to have a Catechism part closely related to the text, some parts of the Catechism were taken in order, which might not otherwise be treated in connection with any Bible History story. In other places a section of the Catechism was treated in order in connection with several readings which embrace one story, such as carrying out the 6th Commandment step by step with the various sections of the story of obtaining a wife for Isaac. The reader is not to search for a specific connection with each reading.

Sept. 1 Bible: Genesis 21:8-14
Catechism: p. 32, Questions 19-22
 Sept. 2 Bible: Genesis 21:15-21
Catechism: p. 178, Questions 298-300
 Sept. 3 Bible: Genesis 22:1-8
Catechism: p. 36, 1C. and Q. 29-30
 Sept. 4 Bible: Genesis 22:9-14
Catechism: p. 37, Question 31
 Sept. 5 Bible: Genesis 22:15-19
Catechism: p. 37, Questions 32-33
 Sept. 6 Bible: Genesis 23:1-4
Catechism: p. 188, Ques. 317-318

Sept. 7 Bible: Gen. 24:1-9. Cat.: p. 65, 6th Com. and Hymn verse
 Sept. 8 Bible: Gen. 24:10-14. Cat.: p. 65, Questions 80-81 and *
 Sept. 9 Bible: Genesis 24:15-21
Catechism: p. 66, Questions 82-84
 Sept. 10 Bible: Genesis 24:22-27
Catechism: p. 66, Question 85
 Sept. 11 Bible: Genesis 24:28-33
Catechism: p. 67, Question 86
 Sept. 12 Bible: Genesis 24:34-41
Catechism: p. 67, Questions 87-88
 Sept. 13 Bible: Genesis 24:42-49
Catechism: p. 68, Question 89

Sept. 14 Bible: Genesis 24:50-61
Catechism: p. 69, Question 90
 Sept. 15 Bible: Genesis 24:62-67
Catechism: p. 69, Questions 91-92
 Sept. 16 Bible: Genesis 25:7-11
Catechism: p. 121, Question 194
 Sept. 17 Bible: Genesis 25:19-26
Catechism: p. 45, Questions 47A & B
 Sept. 18 Bible: Genesis 25:27-34
Catechism: p. 50, Questions 57-58
 Sept. 19 Bible: Genesis 27:1-17
Catechism: p. 173, 3rd Petition
 Sept. 20 Bible: Genesis 27:18-29
Catechism: p. 173, Question 292

- Sept. 21 Bible: Genesis 27:30-40
Catechism: p. 174, Question 293
 Sept. 22 Bible: Genesis 27:41 to 28:5
Catechism: p. 175, Ques. 294
 Sept. 23 Bible: Genesis 28:10-17
Catechism: p. 112, Question 178
 Sept. 24 Bible: Genesis 28:18-22
Catechism: p. 105, Ques. 162-163
 Sept. 25 Bible: Genesis 29:1-12
Catechism: p. 70, 7th Commandment
 Sept. 26 Bible: Genesis 29:13-20
Catechism: p. 71, Questions 93-94
 Sept. 27 Bible: Genesis 29:21-30
Catechism: p. 71, Question 95
- Sept. 28 Bible: Genesis 30:25-36
Catechism: p. 72, Question 96
 Sept. 29 Bible: Genesis 31:17-24
Catechism: p. 72, Question 97
 Sept. 30 Bible: Genesis 31:25-35
Catechism: p. 73, Question 98
- Oct. 1 Bible: Genesis 31:36-42
Catechism: p. 74, Questions 99-100
 Oct. 2 Bible: Genesis 31:43-55
Catechism: p. 75, Question 101
 Oct. 3 Bible: Genesis 32:1-8
Catechism: p. 183, 6th Pet. and Hymn
 Oct. 4 Bible: Genesis 32:9-12
Catechism: p. 183, Question 308
- Oct. 5 Bible: Genesis 32:13-21
Catechism: p. 185, Ques. 309-310
 Oct. 6 Bible: Genesis 32:22-32
Catechism: p. 185, Ques. 311-312
 Oct. 7 Bible: Genesis 33:1-3
Catechism: p. 186, 7th Pet. & Hymn
 Oct. 8 Bible: Genesis 33:4-11
Catechism: p. 187, Ques. 313-314
 Oct. 9 Bible: Genesis 33:12-17
Catechism: p. 187, Question 315
 Oct. 10 Bible: Genesis 33:18-20
Catechism: p. 187, Question 316
 Oct. 11 Bible: Genesis 35:9-21
Catechism: p. 188, Ques. 317-318
- Oct. 12 Bible: Genesis 37:1-4
Catechism: p. 60, 5th Com. and Hymn
 Oct. 13 Bible: Genesis 37:5-11
Catechism: p. 60, Questions 72-74
 Oct. 14 Bible: Genesis 37:12-24
Catechism: p. 61, Question 75
 Oct. 15 Bible: Genesis 37:25-28
Catechism: p. 62, Question 76
 Oct. 16 Bible: Genesis 37:29-36
Catechism: p. 63, Question 77
 Oct. 17 Bible: Genesis 39:1-6a
Cat.: p. 75, 8th Com. and Hymn
 Oct. 18 Bible: Genesis 39:6b-18
Catechism: p. 76, Questions 102-103
- Oct. 19 Bible: Genesis 39:19-23
Catechism: p. 77, Questions 104-105
 Oct. 20 Bible: Genesis 40:1-8
Catechism: Page 25
 Oct. 21 Bible: Genesis 40:9-15
Catechism: Page 26
 Oct. 22 Bible: Genesis 40:16-23
Catechism: p. 29, Questions 9-13
 Oct. 23 Bible: Genesis 41:1-8
Catechism: p. 30, Question 14
 Oct. 24 Bible: Genesis 41:9-13
Catechism: p. 30, Questions 15-16
 Oct. 25 Bible: Genesis 41:14-24
Catechism: p. 32, Questions 17-18
- Oct. 26 Bible: Genesis 41:25-36
Catechism: p. 32, Questions 19-20
 Oct. 27 Bible: Genesis 41:37-45
Catechism: p. 33, Questions 21-22
 Oct. 28 Bible: Genesis 41:46-52
Catechism: p. 33, Question 23
 Oct. 29 Bible: Genesis 41:53-57
Catechism: p. 34, Questions 24-25
 Oct. 30 Bible: Genesis 42:1-5
Catechism: p. 35, Questions 26-27
 Oct. 31 Bible: Genesis 42:6-17
Catechism: p. 35, Question 28

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE IN THE UNITED STATES

In the June issue of the LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN, we were introduced to SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE IN THE UNITED STATES, authored by Alvin W. Johnson and Frank H. Yost. It was recommended as a book "filled with well-documented information pertinent to the principal controversial questions most frequently raised" in regard to the separation of church and state, particularly in the field of public school education.

We want to take a closer look at some of those controversial questions, which the authors bring to our attention. For, questions related to the separation of church and state directly concern something we cherish greatly, namely our American heritage of religious liberty.

As American citizens we belong to that minority of the earth's population which enjoys religious liberty in the true sense of the word. For our freedom to worship God where, when and how we choose is not something which is ours only by permission of a friendly government, but by right. To quote the authors, "The First Amendment insures not merely toleration but religious equality and liberty as a political right. . . Schaff, in his CHURCH AND STATE IN THE UNITED STATES, points out an important distinction between 'liberty of

religion' and 'toleration' when he says that 'toleration is a concession, which may be withdrawn. . . In our country we ask no toleration for religion and its free exercise, but we claim it as an inalienable right'. . . Thus in our country the individual has the full right to entertain any religious belief that he may choose and to teach any doctrine, so long as he does not violate the laws of property or infringe upon the personal rights conceded to all."

Nothing less than a complete separation of church and state places all Christian denominations, and members of all other religions on an equal footing. "Any alliance or bond joining the church and the state in their separate functions, in their separate and distinct spheres of operation, is not only injurious to both but forbodes evil to all concerned." The principle of complete separation of church and state is essential to the other principle of religious liberty. Religious liberty rests foursquare on the separation principle. Or to use another figure, separation of church and state is the keystone in the arch of religious freedom.

Jeremiah S. Black, noted American lawyer and judge of the nineteenth century put it in these words: "The manifest object of the men who framed the institutions of this country, was to have a State without religion and a Church without politics -- that is

to say, they meant that one should never be used as an engine for any purpose of the other . . . Our fathers seem to have been perfectly sincere in their belief that the members of the Church would be more patriotic, and the citizens of the State more religious, by keeping their respective functions entirely separate. For that reason they built up a wall of complete partition between the two."

Absolute separation of church and state is guaranteed by the Constitution. Judicial interpretations reaffirm the principle. For instance, the United States Supreme Court, in a verdict handed down in April, 1952, embodies this paragraph: "There cannot be the slightest doubt that the First Amendment reflects the philosophy that church and state should be separated. And so far as interference with the 'free exercise' of religions and an 'establishment' of religion are concerned, the separation must be complete and unequivocal. The First Amendment within the scope of its coverage permits no exception; the prohibition is absolute."

Our American heritage of religious liberty is an inalienable right, inalienable, since the Constitution establishes it by complete separation of church and state.

Yet that guarantee is not so ironclad as it may seem, nor as absolute as we might wish to sup-

pose. There are areas of unclarity and areas of conflict. The line separating church and state is not always immediately discernible. However, much of the unclarity is of man's own making. Paul N. Elbin, writing in the Christian Century, quotes the First Amendment and then asks: "We have no desire to violate the Constitution, but what does it mean?" Some question the meaning of the First Amendment, others want it reinterpreted; still others are willing to compromise the principle of separation for an immediate advantage. In 1952 Justice Reed of the Supreme Court stated that the "inflexible doctrine of separation of church and state went far beyond the traditional American understanding of the separation of church and state."

Besides these, there are other dangers which would threaten our religious liberty. Some are inherent in the climate of the times; others are important factors in the religious make-up of the nation. Many of the dangers to religious liberty are not merely of a potential character; many are active, and vigorously active. The encroachments on the principle of separation of church and state are symptoms of a continuing trend, which may well destroy one of our most beloved freedoms, the freedom to worship when, where and how we choose. We intend to speak more directly of one of the dangers in the next issue.

SUBMITTED



REDEEMER LUTHERAN CONGREGATION

Cheyenne, Wyoming

W. Schaller, Jr., Pastor

The city of Cheyenne is perhaps, as few other places, a city of contrasts. Here, side by side, one finds the Cheyenne Frontier Days, symbol of the Old West, and the nation's first intercontinental ballistic missile base, symbol of the space age in which we live.

Amid all the change so typified by these two facets of Cheyenne, we find another force which "changeth not": the unchanging Gospel of our Lord, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever."

It is this unchanging, eternal truth which God has preserved to Redeemer Congregation that makes their brief history strengthening to us all. As early as 1942, mission work was begun in a rapidly-growing Cheyenne, but was destined to last for only four years. Two factors, humanly speaking, contri-

buted to the apparent or outward lack of success: lack of a permanent house of worship, and the extreme antipathy of this largely transplanted populace toward establishing roots toward "organized religion." This latter seems brought about when people moving to the West leave the old ties, including the old church ties, behind. In any event, the work ceased in 1946.

In 1949 Pastor W. Schaller, Jr., was called to resume the work in Cheyenne. In May, 1950, a \$15,000 loan from the Church Extension Fund was granted for a building. The little group of three families, by providing much labor, thus was able to construct a church-school-parsonage combination, ample in all respects, for this low figure. By 1952 this rather unique building finally was dedicated to the glory of the Triune God and to the work of His Kingdom.

During all this time the Word of our Savior was leading precious souls to faith in God's promises, though the outward success did not become so apparent until 1954 when the congregation was finally given permission to open the Christian Day School for which they had longed. This blessed agency of the church proved to be the unqualified blessing which it always is. The school was opened with 20 children, the pastor teaching kindergarten and grades 1 to 7. It is rather striking that only two

of these children were from the families of members. All the rest were new to the church. This brought a splendid growth to the congregation as the parents of these school children were instructed and confirmed. Mrs. Sylvia Sprengeler was installed as the first regular teacher in time for the 1955-56 school year. In 1957 the present teacher and principal, Mr. LeRoy Greening, was installed.

It was also in 1957 that Redeemer Congregation, its pastor, and its teacher, after long study of the Word of God, and after repeated protests, resolved to sever connections with the Wisconsin Synod. Thus, in obedience to our Lord's command, they were conscience-bound to leave the former association and the conveniences of belonging to such a group, and to proceed, trusting alone in God's promises, as an independent congregation.

Today this congregation of 65 communicant members stands, by the grace of God, as one of those few which has given up every external advantage for the sake of remaining faithful to the Word of God, leaning only on His promises and singing with grace in their hearts, "Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide, For round us falls the eventide. Nor let thy Word, that heavenly light,
For us be ever veiled in night."

N.R.C.

POINT OF NO RETURN?

A saddening note reaches us from the recent convention of the Norwegian Synod (henceforth to be known as the Evangelical Lutheran Synod), concerning union matters.

The body resolved to continue as members of the Synodical Conference and to continue participating in the current committee meetings. The basic reason given -- "our Synod's Union Committee reports some progress in the present meetings with other Doctrinal Committees of the Synodical Conference."

Several asked that their "No" votes be recorded in the minutes as protests.

A substitute motion, brought in by two laymen, that the E.L.S. withdraw from the Synodical Conference, was referred to the Synod President with instructions that it be given to a committee for a report at the next convention.

N.R.C.

B O O K R E V I E W
Concordia Triglotta -- The Mott Press, Minneapolis, Minn. \$18.50.

We include this volume, not for the sake of reviewing it, but to pass along a reminder that less than one hundred copies of this fine reprint remain. If you have no copy, may we suggest that you order one? We are not aware of any plans for another reprint in the immediate future.

S P O K A N E H I G H L I G H T SWHAT IS AT STAKE?

In the warm hospitality of our Spokane congregations, 11 sessions were held from July 30 to August 4th . . . Pastor R. Dommer of East Spokane presented a rich study of 1 Pet. 2:11-20, the Epistle for Jubilate Sunday . . . Almost all of the remaining time was spent on painstaking study of two doctrines in which there has been so much confusion and perversion in recent times. For a truly confessional Church to emerge in this day, the delegates realized that perfect agreement in these issues was an absolute prerequisite.

In the matter of Church Fellowship the Negative of a draft prepared by the undersigned was carefully scrutinized and discussed. There was perfect agreement on each anti-thesis. The entire document is now to be revised with the help of all suggestions submitted.

The doctrine of the Church and Ministry was clearly presented in an essay by Pastor L. Bernthal of Clarkston, Washington. Unanimity being revealed, also in this doctrine, the essayist was instructed to add a section on the Office of the Keys and to distribute copies of the entire essay to all attending our next conference. Since this conference will be held in the Midwest (latter part of January), it is hoped a larger group will be on hand . . . More details will be brought in the October issue.

W.S.

In every period of controversy throughout Church History, there have always been voices raised to cry, "It doesn't matter because nothing much is at stake." It may not always take the blatant form of the Emperor Constantine who, in the Trinitarian Controversy of the Fourth Century, tried to make peace between Arius and Athanasius with the plea that it really didn't matter whether or not God is Triune . . . whether or not Jesus is "true God begotten of His Father from Eternity."

No, the voices of those who cry, "Peace," where there is no peace, may not always be so blatant but they are raised no less persistently, even though more subtly.

Now in answer to our question, we must first of all look at one all-important fact. Whenever any doctrine of God's Holy Word is discussed or questioned, that is a most important matter, whether our minds see it or not. The fact alone that our heavenly Father has revealed it to us in His Word makes any doctrine of prime importance. Even when a doctrine is not fully appreciated, it remains true that, "Thy Word is Truth."

However, is it true that even in a secondary, personal way these matters are unimportant, so that anyone may say nothing much is at stake? By no means, for in every one of them our spiritual welfare

and eternal salvation are concerned.

Even in a so-called non-fundamental doctrine the matter may not be taken lightly since our attitude toward one teaching of Scripture reveals very much about our attitude toward Scripture as a whole. Once Satan has convinced us that one doctrine doesn't matter, the next step and the next rejection of a part of Holy Writ is very easy for him and his diabolical host.

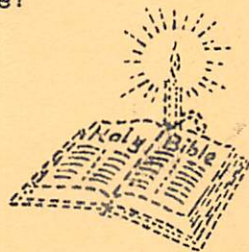
But is it ever true that controversies revolve solely around non-fundamentals? Indeed, it is most often apparent that, in any controversy, really basic, fundamental doctrines are at stake, and that any departure strikes at the very heart of what the Bible tells us concerning our souls' salvation. A good example of this in the present period of Church History is the doctrine of Objective Justification.

The fact that little has been said and written of late on this subject may be the best possible indication of a condition wherein we give occasional lip-service to this precious truth while the heart is slipping quietly away. But do we wish to give up this doctrine or leaven it to satisfy the dreams of men? If we do, we will have robbed ourselves of much of the comfort our Lord and Savior wishes to give us.

If we lose sight of this, that God the Father has, in the redemptive work of His only-begotten Son, fully and completely forgiven the sins of everyone — of every person who ever lived or ever will live, we have lost all our assurance of a forgiveness apart from anything we can or need do to secure it. In other words, if there is one exception, one person who has not been forgiven, how can you know that you are not that person?

We believe and teach that nothing may be held as absolute truth unless it is clearly stated in the Bible. Yet Scripture does not say, "The sins of John Smith have been forgiven." How then can John Smith know unshakeably that his sins have been forgiven and that he has been declared just before the Lord? Because "by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life," and again, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." On that basis God calls to you, "Return unto me for I have redeemed thee." Is that a small matter? Is there so little at stake?

N.R.C.



THE LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

1906 Garrett Ave.
Cheyenne, Wyoming



GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH
E. 11315 BROADWAY
SPOKANE, WA. 99206

Published bi-monthly at Cheyenne, Wyoming. The issues appear at the beginning of February, April, June, August, October, and December.

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All material submitted for publication should be sent to both editors five weeks before the date of publication.

All business correspondence and subscriptions are to be sent to 1906 Garrett Avenue, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Subscription Rates:

1. By voluntary contributions.
 2. Individual subscriptions are \$1.00 per year.
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