

The Lutheran SPOKESMAN



**"THE SCRIPTURE
CANNOT
BE BROKEN."**

John 10, 35

**March
1962**

Vol. IV

A LAMB GOES UNCOMPLAINING FORTH

No. 10

Whither Lutheranism in America? - 2

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CONFSSIONAL SUBSCRIPTION

* * * *

If you are a confirmed Lutheran, you have made a confessional subscription. You were once asked at God's altar: "Do you also, as a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, intend to continue steadfast in the confession of this Church, and suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?" To this you answered: "I do so intend, with the help of God."

Your congregation has a confessional subscription in its constitution. It subscribes to Scripture and the Confessions and adds a sentence like this: "hence no doctrine shall be taught or tolerated in this congregation which is in anyway at variance with these *confessions*."

Our pastors and professors make a confessional subscription. At their ordination they are asked if they accept the Scriptures as inspired; the three ecumenical creeds as faithful testimonies to the truth of Scripture; and the Lutheran *confessions* as correct exhibitions of the doctrine of the Lutheran Church. Thereupon

In December 1961 we published the "Report to the Churches" issued by the representatives of the National Lutheran Council (NLC) and The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, with its proposal for a new all-Lutheran association in America. This plan was based on three sets of essays on issues relevant to such cooperation. The first set of essays, on Church Unity, was discussed in the February 1962 SPOKESMAN. In this article we take up the second set of essays.

they solemnly promise that all their teaching will be in conformity with the Holy Scriptures and with the Confessions.

The Confessional Principle

The Lord asks us to confess Him before men and to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks us a reason for the hope within us. The truth that fills the heart compels the mouth to speak. When any teaching of the Bible is denied, the Church must reject the lie in plain language, must put forth a confession or creed. Only a creedal church meets the demand of truthfulness and answers Jesus' question: "But who do you say that I am?" Of all confessions, only the Lutheran confessions meet all the demands of truthfulness. "The Lutheran Church differs from all other churches in being essentially the Church of the pure Word and unadulterated Sacraments." (Triglotta, p. IV).

Accordingly the Lutheran Church demands of all her children unqualified acceptance of and unswerving adherence to the Confessions. They are the standard by which Lutheran teachers and churches are to be judged. That is the strength of the Lutheran Church. She insists that these scriptural teachings and only the scriptural teachings be taught in her schools and churches. Of all her teachings she insists: God has

spoken. Unqualified subscription is required that no room be given to error. Lutherans believe that divine truth is absolute, has not changed since the time of the Apostles, will

not change in the future, for Jesus' words shall never pass away.

God's Word and Luther's Doctrine
pure shall to eternity endure.

The NLC - Missouri Agreement

The NLC and Missouri theologians met to discuss the significance of confessional subscription. They recognized that this question is relevant to the problem of cooperation. When Lutherans meet Lutherans, they ask, in what sense do you accept the confessions of the Lutheran Church? For these confessions state the truth of God over against all heresies from apostolic times through the sixteenth century, and for that matter through every period of the Church's history. The essayists were Professor T. Tappert of the U.L.C. and Professor H. Bouman of the Missouri Synod. At the end of a two day meeting they issued a statement, which the entire group voted to accept as an expression of their consensus. It reads:

"Substantial agreement was reached with reference to (1) designation of the confessions which are involved in subscription, (2) assertion of historical limitations in the Confessions, (3) allowance of distinction between the primary norm of the Scriptures and the secondary norm of the Confessions, (4) recognition that the heart of the Confessions is their witness to the Gospel, (5) acknowledgment that this understanding of the Gospel requires rejection of contradicting understandings, (6) affirmation of the importance of confessional subscription for the proclamation of the church.

"Since there was substantial agreement on the significance and nature of confessional subscription further talks between the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the National Lutheran Council are being planned."

Second Class Postage paid at
Cheyenne, Wyoming

Published monthly at Cheyenne, Wyoming as an official organ of the Church of the Lutheran Confession. The issues appear on or near the 15th of each month.

Editor W. Schaller, Jr.
1906 Garrett Ave. Cheyenne, Wyo.

Church News Editor D. C. DeRose
2868 Elm St. Denver 7, Colo.

Associate Editor G. Sydow

Contributors L. Bernthal, O. J. Eckert,
B. Naumann, R. A. Reim,
E. Schaller, C. Thurow

POSTMASTER: Send notice on Form 3579 to The Lutheran Spokesman, 1906 Garrett Ave., Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Material submitted for publication should be sent to the editor three weeks before the date of publication. Church and School News Items should be sent to Pastor DeRose. Subscriptions and address changes and requests for sample copies must be sent to the Business Office, 1906 Garrett Ave., Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Subscriptions are \$2.00 per year, paid in advance. Blanket Subscriptions are \$1.75 to congregations.

Now the conventions of the various churches represented are to vote on the newly proposed all-Lutheran association. The Missouri Synod meets this June at Cleveland. The above agreement is meant to remove many misgivings on both sides, for in the matter of confessional subscription the U.L.C. and the Missouri Synod have been so far apart for 100 years that their difference makes the difference between the U.L.C. and Reformed churches look microscopic. Since Missouri always condemned the U.L.C. and its predecessor synods for confessional laxness and the toleration of errorists of many stripes, and since the U.L.C. dreaded nothing more than the prospect of Dr. Walther's confessionalism and its implied discipline of the doctrinal life of the Church, this substantial agreement is amazing.

Substantial Agreement?

"Substantial agreement was reached with reference to (2) assertion of historical limitations in the Confessions."

Professor Bouman adheres to the Lutheran position that the historical limitations apply to matters of "history, terminology, logic," but these should "not be allowed to obscure the glories of the eternal realities." He points out that the confessors of the sixteenth century claimed their teachings to be apostolic and ecumenical, and then asks: "Is it [the claim] still valid? If not, where

What happened? Has Missouri moved from the North Pole of confessionalism to the South Pole of confessional laxity? Or did the U.L.C. contingent in two days time change the universal attitude of its 3,000,000 members? Or did they meet at the Equator, or Tropic of Compromise? We turn now to the essays themselves for the answer. This is even more amazing, for in the essays we can find agreement on only the first of the six points mentioned in the statement of consensus. They do agree on (1) which confessions are involved — the Book of Concord. But on points (2), (3), (4), (5), and (6) the agreement is most *unsubstantial*. And if the rank and file of the Missouri Synod does not realize this, it will mean that the confessional principle is all but eliminated from the American scene.

are the symbols unapostolic, unecumenical, schismatic or sectarian? If the Lutheran position is truly ecumenical, must not our subscription signify a whole-hearted acceptance?" But Professor Tappert does not restrict the limitations of the confessions to external matters, but includes their doctrinal content. After claiming that we do not agree with some teachings in the Confessions, including the teaching of the Augsburg Confession on Baptism, he says: "These concrete examples will serve to illustrate the historical limitations of the confessors and the

changes which have taken place in our knowledge and understanding of some things since the sixteenth century." In other words: I subscribe to the standard except where I find the standard to be wrong. Pope John can subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions with that reservation.

"Substantial agreement was reached with reference to (3) allowance of distinction between the primary norm of the Scriptures and the secondary norm of the Confessions."

Professor Bouman upholds a correct relation of Scripture to the Confessions. Lutherans have one source of doctrine, the Scriptures. They believe that their Confessions are derived from and are in conformity with Scripture, and in that sense are a *derived* rule and standard. Lutherans investigate and compare the Confessions with Scripture and subscribe to them only when they have found them to have scriptural doctrine. Each generation must re-examine this claim for itself and be willing to have its confessions challenged at any time. Professor Tappert, on the other hand, not only has a different view of the confessions, but also of Scripture, and therefore a different view of the relationship between the two. He ends up with three sources of doctrine. "God always addresses men mediately [through someone] and at the same time immediately. . . . The Confessions are themselves a literary deposit of the living en-

counter which men in the sixteenth century had with God when they heard His Word. They affirm that God will speak to later generations in similar fashion. . . . A two-fold obedience is therefore required of us: we must listen to God as he speaks to us in the witness of the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures and we must listen to God as He spoke to and through the Reformers — indeed as He spoke to and through Christians throughout the entire history of the church." Thus he places Scripture, tradition, and experience on the same plane, all sources of doctrine. In the witness of the apostles and prophets to their encounter with God we must find the voice of God; in the Reformation witness to their encounter we must find the voice of God; and in our encounters we will find more truth about God. He downgrades Scripture to a human response to a divine encounter, and elevates the confessions and our experiences to the same level. Theology is finding the Word of God in the Bible, the confession in the confessions, and the truth in our encounters with God. This shows the folly of dialogue with people who do not accept verbal inspiration.

"Substantial agreement was reached with reference to (4) recognition that the heart of the Confessions is their witness to the Gospel."

The two essayists approached this question from different points of

view. Professor Bouman correctly praises our confessions for treating all doctrines in their relationship to Christ and the forgiveness of sins. Professor Tappert refers to our agreement to this day on the fundamental truths expressed in the Confessions. There is no indication that the N.L.C. theologians have given up their insistence for latitude in the so-called "expendable doctrines."

"Substantial agreement was reached with reference to (5) acknowledgment that this understanding of the Gospel requires rejection of contradicting understandings."

For Professor Bouman this means: "The love that will not spare itself to embrace fellow-man and fellow-Christian can but be unsparring in its refusal to coddle any subversion of the total Gospel." This repeats what Dr. Engelder wrote in *Popular Symbolics*: "The Lutheran Church will not tolerate any teaching that does not conform to the Confessions." Does this "substantial" agreement imply that the NLC men agree to such doctrinal discipline? Not at all. In his concluding paragraph Professor Tappert makes it crystal clear that discipline should not squelch aberrations in doctrine and brings a long quotation from the *Apology* on the subject of love covering up minor mistakes. This he applies to false doctrine in the Church. The NLC still insists upon latitude in doctrine and

academic freedom in preaching and teaching. "All the freedom that is compatible with responsible theological conversation must be allowed."

"Substantial agreement was reached with reference to (6) affirmation of the importance of confessional subscription for the proclamation of the church."

Here lies the real issue and the real tragedy. Professor Bouman appears to insist upon an unqualified subscription to the confessions. Professor Tappert is very frank and honest in rejecting such subscription. He says: "Certainly nobody today can honestly accept as true every jot and tittle in the Book of Concord — 'not depart even a finger's breadth from content or formulation,' the Preface of the Book of Concord expressed it. The form of subscription needed revision rather than the Confessions if men were to subscribe without scruples of conscience." Professor Tappert is also explicit in telling us the nature of that revision: "When subscribing the Confessions today, Lutherans assert that, in view of the issues which were then at stake and the alternatives which were then offered, the confessors were right." This is even worse than the old subscription "in so far as they agree with Scripture," instead of "because they agree with Scripture." It states that we have advanced so far up the ladder of knowledge that these sixteenth cen-

tury confessions are pre-scientific. They are only landmarks along the way of man's theological development. Subscription as Professor Tappert describes it is known as "hypothetical subscription." I accept the confessions in so far as they agree with Scripture and in so far as they apply to our enlightened times. Each preacher and teacher may feel free to decide the "in so far as" to his own liking. These men may have substantial agreement on the "importance" of subscription, but they have no agreement on the meaning of subscription.

The Crisis of Confessionalism

Most Lutherans have found the path to participation in the ecumenical movement in a total rejection of the 'unqualified subscription' to the Confessions. They are willing to keep the confessions, study them, and listen to them as excellent voices from the past. But they are on a plane with the confessions of the other denominations. Each makes a contribution to the family of churches. The Synodical Conference could not join the many phases of the ecumenical movement because it considered the confessions of the Lutheran Church to be exhibitions of the apostolic, ecumenical, unchanging teachings of Jesus Christ. Professor Tappert has given an essay which expresses the typical viewpoint of modern Lutherans: the Confessions have no *binding* quality on the subscribers. And lo, on the basis of

"substantial agreement" with the enemies of the confessional principle of Lutheranism, Missouri's leaders are ready to form an all-Lutheran agency.

There is still a handful in this country which wants the confessional principle of Lutheranism maintained. May they not be deceived! Missouri teachers and pastors will assure us that they stand for that principle as did their fathers. They may even point with pride to Professor Bouman's essay as evidence. But ask them one question: If you retain this historic position of subscription to the confessions without reservation, how come you are in substantial agreement on this question with churches which reject that position as intolerable and endorse a revised attitude to the confessions? You cannot agree with Francis Pieper and Bente on the one hand, and be in substantial agreement with Professor Tappert on the other hand.

How would you like to belong to a church where your pastor's subscription to the creeds means that "born of the Virgin Mary" was a good confession in that day, but it is no longer relevant to the modern situation? There is no need to deceive ourselves: the confessional principle of Lutheranism was all but eliminated in Europe 100 years ago; it is breathing its last in America today.

SHIELDS and WEAPONS

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Romans 3:28).

No Man

Psalm 143:2 says that in God's sight *no man living shall be justified*. Our text says that *a man is justified*. But there is no contradiction. *On his own merits* no man can be declared free of blame (that is justified) in the sight of God. For no man is able to meet the far reaching and exacting demands of God's law. That means not only unbelievers but also us Christians. Even our best efforts are tainted with sin. So they can contribute nothing whatsoever to that righteousness we need to enter heaven and stand before God. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall *no flesh be justified* in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). All men must be declared guilty on the basis of their efforts.

All Men

Yet on the other hand *all men* are justified (declared innocent) in the sight of God by the life and deeds of the Son of God who partook of our flesh and blood (Hebrews 2:14). As a man, for us men, in our stead, and in our place and as our representative, He paid the debt of all men's disobedience by His perfect obedience to the law and removed the punishment of *all men's* sin by suffering Himself for them.

"The Lord laid on Him the iniquity *of us all*" (Isaiah 53:6). "God was in Christ reconciling *the world* unto Himself not imputing their trespasses unto them" (Corinthians 5:19). The sins of all men have been charged to and paid for by Christ. "Therefore, as by the offense of one (Adam) judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one (Christ) the free gift came upon *all men* unto justification of life" (Romans 5:1).

By Faith

This "justification of life" becomes our own *by faith*. "Therefore we conclude", says Paul, "that a man is justified by faith." Faith accepts Christ for all He is and for all that He has done and stakes all eternity on His life and His death for sinners. Faith knows it is useless to look to one's self, looks to Jesus alone, wholly leans on His Name and says, "On Christ the solid rock I stand. All other ground is sinking sand." It sees in His cross the ground for divine pardon, and in His sacrifice the assurance that He has carried all sins away. Such faith has salvation. Without it there is none; for Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me" (John 14:6).

Without The Deeds of The Law

When our verse says "Without the deeds of the law" it means to tell us that it is by faith alone that man is justified before God. *It rules out any and all merits* man may wish to claim before God, and places the cause of man's salvation entirely outside of himself solely in Christ. Nor is faith itself a merit which has anything to do with earning salvation. It rather takes what Christ has earned for us and is itself a gift of God; for no one can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 12:3). "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

We Must Warn and Continue to Warn

It is not enough for us to point to various decrees of the Roman Catholic Church in the Council of Trent, which reject the clear words of Scripture and speak the *anathema* over all who teach with Paul that *faith alone without works justifies*. We pray that in spite of the teaching of work-righteousness many souls in this church will see the light of grace as did Luther. But consider also the religious thinking in many other churches and the whole spiritual atmosphere in the world about us. It is salted and peppered through and through with work-righteousness. We must warn and fight against this deadly poison for our own sake and the sake of others.

Have we not occasionally heard some of our people say in the case of an unbeliever's death that he must have gotten to heaven because he did so much good? More often we have heard our people say in the case of a church member: "We needn't worry about him getting to heaven, because he always went to church and did so much for the church and led a good life." All this has *absolutely nothing* to do with *justifying* a man before God. It may be a fruit and evidence of a saving faith in Christ, but it is Christ alone and faith in Him alone that saves. Where this is not clearly seen and understood and taught many errors will creep into the church and many compromises will be made with the world round about us. So let us warn again and again against the spirit of self-righteousness and also fight it in ourselves, for it is in our hearts too as Luther says:

"Ever clinging to the heart is the thought that we do not want to be nothing at all, nor admit that Christ had to do it all. Rather we would like to do so much in serving God that God will have to take note of it and because of it forgive our sins and be gracious to us. This should never be and can never be, since with it faith and all of Christ must go to pieces. For if it is to be Christ alone, and if I am to acknowledge and confess it, I must scrape my tongue clean and plainly state: If Christ does it, then I must not do

it. Those two things cannot get along together in my heart if I put my trust in both of them. One has to get out, either Christ or my own deeds. That is clear and easily understood.”*

* Translated from Walch XII, 1326.

Salvation unto us has come
By God's free grace and favor;
Good works cannot avert our doom,
They help and save us never.
Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone.
Who did for all the world atone;
He is our one Redeemer.

OTTO J. ECKERT

PSALM 40:6-8

Who wants to be helped by an unwilling person? Who wants his misery burdened by a complaining helper? We would rather receive no help than unwilling help. If Christ did not willingly sacrifice Himself for us, we will not want His help either. We must know the heart of Jesus. In this Psalm, the letter to the Hebrews tells us, we have prophetic words of our High Priest which reveal His heart to us. **Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.**

God did not plan our salvation through the slaughter of beasts, which could never take away sins, but through the willing obedience of His Son to sacrifice Himself for us. All the sacrifices of animals typified the sacrifice of God's Lamb. Christ our High Priest came to offer up

that sacrifice for sin which would last forever and would end once for all the sacrifice of animals. This the Father willed. Christ says He delights to offer this sacrifice.

But what did it mean for our High Priest? A sacrifice meant an innocent victim shedding its blood for the guilty who deserve to die. Thus our High Priest would at the same time be the innocent Lamb of God, the Victim to die for the guilty sinners. Upon Him would be laid the world's sin and guilt. Just the thought of this sacrifice in Gethsemane brought His soul to the point of death, it forced blood to ooze from His pores. It meant being spiked to a shameful altar — there to die an agonizing death. It meant hell's agony of being God-forsaken.

Can we possibly hear Jesus say He wants to fulfill all this? Can He say He even delights and has pleasure in it? We must know — it is so important for our salvation. Would we hear Jesus say, “I suppose I have to do it”, He could

never be our Savior even had He died. God had more than enough sacrifices offered under the compulsion of the law. Sacrifices were meant to draw people to Him by preaching the mercy of the Lord who graciously forgives sin through the death of His Son. God wanted people's hearts, not their animals; open ears to willingly obey His voice, not dull robots following a given command. Had our High Priest done no more than merely give in to what God wanted, He would not have fulfilled God's will. God could not accept an unwilling sacrifice. The sinner would first hate and curse such an unwilling "savior" rather than be drawn to him in trust and confidence. An unwilling savior would be a savior bitter in heart because of the agony our sins caused him. A savior who would be willing to die only if we appreciated him, would be no comfort. We just will not have a savior who only has the *strength* to save us. We need a savior who will also love us ungodly creatures. Only the compassionate love of Him who is able to save us will lift us up from our sin and death through trust in Him. There is nothing more glorious than the willing obedience of God's Son, our High Priest, **I delight to do thy will, O my God.** He did not merely sacrifice Himself for us, but found great pleasure in it. Why? Only because of His compassionate love for us.

Be altogether convinced of His

love for you. His willing obedience in His death will leave you without doubt. He wanted to drink the cup His Father gave Him. He did not avoid the Garden, try to sacrifice one of His disciples to the soldiers, use His power to escape, permit the use of the sword from disciples who would not believe He wanted to die, ask for legions of angels. No, rather:

A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth,
The guilt of all men bearing;
And laden with the sins of earth,
None else the burden sharing!
Goes patient on, grows weak and faint,
To slaughter led without complaint,
That spotless life to offer;
Bears shame, and stripes, and wounds and death,
Anguish and mockery, and saith,
"Willing all this I suffer."

Don't ever doubt that Jesus had the heart to die for you. We condemn any teaching and every teacher who dares blaspheme our Savior's love demanding some act or even thought of appreciation before we have the forgiveness He won for us. This preaches a cursed savior, one who has a bitter heart toward you the sinner. God did not accept such a sacrifice. His was the sacrifice of a willing Lamb delighting to do His Father's will. "Yea, Father, yea, most willingly I'll bear what Thou commandest." O wondrous Love!

L. G. BERNTHAL

The Things That Come To Pass

Luther, We're Sorry! Years ago, during World War II, in a chance conversation with a worker of another Lutheran Synod canvassing in a trailer camp, this was said: "We must present a united front to fight Roman Catholicism." A recent *Time* (January 26, 1962) tells us that the Board of Parish Education of the United Lutheran Church has decided to give up the production of a new textbook for adult instruction entitled '*The Difference*,' which dealt with the question, "How Lutherans differ from Roman Catholics." In explanation it was said, ". . . recently the emphasis has been upon conversations between the two faiths, and stress is being laid upon understanding each other." This is another item in a growing list of instances in both Europe and America that reveal Lutherans reaching out toward Rome.

One need not be surprised. In the days of the apostles, John already wrote, "there are many antichrists" (1 John 2:18), and said of those who taught falsely concerning Jesus Christ, "this is that spirit of antichrist" (1 John 4:3). Paul also speaks of this (2 Thessalonians 2:7) as the "mystery of iniquity" already at work. He prophesies that the many antichristian spirits, evident in the false teaching of the early centuries, would finally culminate and be personified in the one Antichrist, to be revealed as "that man of sin,

the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4). This is the Roman papacy, identified as such in the Reformation. God permitted it to arise as a judgment on those who "received not the love of the truth." It will stand until the end of time as a warning to us who believe.

Unionism involves untruth and false doctrine. In this it is also antichrist, and leads only in one direction, to the Antichrist. That the false ecumenicity of our day would eventually embrace the pope is the course that Scripture portrays. In unionism, too, all roads lead to Rome.

Not too long ago, we had to bear this remark: "Why don't you quit fighting Lutherans and fight the Roman Catholics. There was only one answer, "We are, with the only weapon that will work against Rome, God's holy, everlasting Word; loving it, trusting it, teaching it, abiding in it." The desired and vaunted united front against Rome never really got off the ground. Lutherans could and should learn from their namesake when they sing,

*"With might of ours can naught
be done,*

Soon were our loss effected."

Unequally Yoked! Interesting reading was found in recent issues of the *Post* (February 10 and 17). Two articles in the new column, '*Speaking Out*,' were set against each other, "Our Right Not To Believe," and "Our Right To Require Belief." The latter was written by the evangelist Billy Graham. It may sound strange to say it, but in historical accuracy and in understanding our political freedom and rights, Mr. Graham came out second best. We wonder why the alternate title wasn't the parallel, "Our Right To Believe." With our religious liberty in mind the word "require" makes us shudder. There Calvinism shows itself, ever seeking to identify the Kingdom of God with some nation and to legislate religion and morals wherever it can. Graham, as is so common in the present day Protestant world, wants to make a holy war out of fighting communism and its atheism. In so doing he enlists the support of a few well-known figures in American History, all, at best, deists, and confuses their natural religion and morality with Christianity, completely nullifying what little he has to say of Christ. Will Christians never learn that the issue is not religion against irreligion, deism against atheism, but salvation in Jesus Christ overagainst, atheism, deism, and any and all human religion.

Of Interest. *The Northwestern Lutheran* (February 11) announces that the Commission on Doctrinal Matters of the Wisconsin Synod has declined a recent invitation to meet with the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. In a letter to the committee of the Missouri Synod, the Commission stated that it is "presently of the opinion that any attempt at a joint meeting should be postponed until your Synod has met in convention next June and expressed itself on the issues between our two bodies."

It was also announced that the Wisconsin Synod's Commission on Doctrinal matters will be observers at the convention of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, meeting in Cleveland, June 20-30. They will "be sitting silently by," and not participate in the convention proceedings.

The Commission on Doctrinal Matters has invited representatives of the five overseas Lutheran churches, with whom they have met before, to a meeting to be held in July at the Wisconsin Synod's seminary at Thiensville, Wisconsin, for "discussions on the doctrine of the church and church fellowship." The overseas theologians have been critical of the Wisconsin Synod on these matters.

G. S.

Hi Fidelity Preaching

The blessed passion season is here again. Each year we await those weeks more eagerly. We yearn to hear the very true story of our Savior's suffering, or passion. God has shown us our sin and our Savior from sin. That is why this story is our most glorious comfort. We feed our souls by reading the passion story, hearing sermons based on it, and singing our passion chorales.

At the very mention of lenten chorales, the tunes begin flowing through our believing hearts: *Jesus, I will ponder now; O dearest Jesus, what law hast Thou broken; Lord Jesus, Thou art going forth, for me Thy life to offer.* Blessed soul-food! Not only do they state the Scripture truths of sin and grace in clear and simple manner, but the tunes also impress the truths deeply on our hearts and minds.

For those desiring special choral and musical pondering of the passion story, nothing surpasses the *St. Matthew Passion*, by Johann Sebastian Bach.

This music *can* be enjoyed while doing light chores about the house. But Bach's motto was: *The object of all church music should be the glory of God.* His congregations understood that. They listened intently to the pastor's sermon. But just as intently did they listen to Bach's music, following every word on the printed page. They digested the music. Break it into several

short sessions for your family. Take time to absorb and digest. The rewards: gold for your souls.

The introduction bears this out. If you are "just listening", you will catch a few lines of *Lamb of God, pure and holy*. But a little effort brings you much more. While the main chorus tells what Bach will preach about, distinctly and above it a boys' choir sings the first stanza of *Lamb of God*. You hear a line at a time, each placed just right to bear out the thought. Like this (with the words of Hymn No. 146 in italics): "Come ye daughters, share my mourning; See Him! How? A spotless Lamb. *Lamb of God, pure and holy, Who on the cross didst suffer.* See it! What? His patient love. *Ever patient and lowly, Thyself to scorn didst offer.* Look! Look where? On our offence. *All sins Thou borest for us, Else had despair reigned o'er us.* Look on Him. For love of us He Himself His cross is bearing. *Have mercy on us, O Jesus!*"

When your pastor explains the passion story, he uses many words to bring out the full meaning. Bach follows the exact words of the Passion story, from Matthew, chapters 26 and 27. But he adds many explanatory songs and words. He makes striking use of six of our chorales, placing each stanza into the setting of the story with flawless choice.

A fine example of preaching skill comes after Pilate asks: "Why, what evil hath He done?" This heathen judge gives Bach a theme for a little sermon: He has done *all* things *well*, healed the sick, preached the Father's Word, received sinners — beyond that He has done *nothing*. Then the Song: "For *love* my Savior now is *dying*, of sin and guilt He knoweth nought," with strong musical emphasis on *love* and *dying*.

You will rejoice to find the great Bach sharing your taste. His favorite hymn is *O Sacred Head, now wounded*, and he uses five stanzas. After the trial the soldiers spit at Jesus, mocking: "Hail, King of the Jews!" Nothing more fitting here than the first two stanzas of *O Sacred Head* (L. H. No. 172)! Never again will you sing these two stanzas without hearing the devilish glee of the bloodthirsty mob: "Give us Barabbas! Crucify Him, Crucify Him! His blood be upon us and our children!" You will remember what all He bore *for* you, in your stead! You will be forever richer.

Right after the Savior's death, Bach uses the ninth stanza of this same hymn. He died *for* us. Now we can stand beside His cross and pray: "My Savior, be Thou near me, When death is at my door." This stanza is the climax of the oratorio. It's truth is the rock upon which our faith rests!

But now we must leave heavenly

things to make earthly decisions. Shall you choose an English or German album? German, even if you understand only a little. English is printed alongside. Bach wrote in German, and German performances are better than those by English choruses. However: if you are lost in German, or have children, or wish to use it with church members, buy the English. Our aim: not to lose the preaching.

German offers many albums. Three stereo, \$24 to \$28. Seven monaural, from *Vox* at \$8 to *Archive* at \$24. Any record shop will help you. We have the *Vox*, which is well done and complete, except for omitting one stanza of Hymn No. 172. There is only one in English, by *Richmond*, about \$6.

Both albums now on sale: *Radio Shack*, 730 Commonwealth Ave., Boston 17, Mass. German *Vox*: order No. W-14M-0569, for \$5.99. English *Richmond*: order No. W-14M-1932, for \$4.79. Add \$1 for handling. Surplus refunded. A very excellent rendition by Vanguard is at present being offered at a special price. Their 4-record album would ordinarily be \$20 (monaural) and \$24 (stereo). Now these can be purchased for \$11.90 and \$17.85 respectively. Order: *Vanguard, Bach Guild*, No. BG-594/7 specifying monaural or stereo from your local dealer; if he cannot obtain it, order from Vanguard Recording Society, Inc., 154 W. 14th Steet, New York II, New York. C. THURLOW

Lights and Shadows

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

And Abraham said unto his young men (servants), Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." Genesis 22:1-5

When we think of our life and of God's dealing with us, there seem to be contradictions aplenty. It appears that He says one thing and does another, so that often we are sorely troubled. One then recalls a Gospel lesson heard by us during this season of the year, wherein a Caananite woman comes for help to a Savior who has pledged His love for all men and finds Him seemingly unwilling even to listen to her. After being told that He was the Savior of the world, she hears him say: "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." We know how the woman found the key to this riddle and resolved the apparent contradiction. It is a wonderful story. Yet we have before us here another, even more outstanding record from the history of Abraham. What are we to do when God seems to contradict Himself?

There was peace in Abraham's household at last, after unsettled years. Because of weakness of faith, Abraham had taken to himself a

second wife and begotten a son by her whose name was Ishmael. This lad and his mother caused the household much grief and worry, especially after Sarah had by God's wonder-working also borne a son in her old age, namely Isaac, the true heir of Abraham. At last, upon God's command, Hagar and Ishmael had been sent away, and now the skies of hope were clear. Abraham and Sarah rejoiced in their son Isaac and in the fulfillment of the divine promises. They stood in the covenant of God which said: I will give thee this land, make of thee a great nation, and in thee and in thy seed shall the nations of the earth be blest. Isaac was the earnest of this promise; and God's word was sure.

Then came the thunderbolt from the sky: "Abraham, . . . take now thy son . . . and offer him for a burnt offering!" This absolute and complete "contradiction" wiped out at one stroke everything that God had before said. If Isaac was slain, there would be no seed, no nation, no future.

When God after His fashion tempts His people, he does so not by setting aside His promises given them in Scripture, as Satan always seeks to do in his temptations, but by *seeming* to change His mind about His promises. When we think of them, when they quiver and dance in our hearts like bright motes in the beams of the sun, all is light and peace within. But then it happens! We rest upon His assurance: "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling;" and presently we go through a series of terrible trials, illness and grief follow hard upon one another's heels until there seems to be no end. God's promise appears to be a dead letter. He has spoken: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." With such guarantees of support he charges us to do our duty, carry out our assignments, discharge our service to Him. But then He permits us to suffer weakness, so that our tasks seem more than we can master. And no doubt such things are from His hands.

Let us not sorrow for ourselves in such temptations. Satan whispers: Give up! God is unfaithful; His promises are a vain show. But what folly it would be to listen to such blasphemy. There is no contradiction in God, as we shall swiftly discover when we use the means given us and meet our temptations with a look at Abraham who teaches us what to do with them.

"And Abraham rose up early in

the morning." That simple phrase tells a very great story. Was it easy, after this night of heart-breaking words, to get up early and march away? Abraham consulted not with flesh and blood; it seems that he took no one into his confidence, not even Sarah his wife. It was the only way to meet this trial, or any trial of God. Absolute obedience to the clear Word of God, whatsoever it may say, wherever it may lead — that is the first rule.

But where, you ask, did Abraham find the strength to put one foot ahead of the other for this melancholy journey? When heart and instinct, mind and senses cried out against the command of the Lord, how did he so resolutely walk toward Moriah? Ah, when a man like Abraham goes forward through his tears to follow the clear Word, it is because he believes utterly in God's promises and will not be shaken from them. He does not allow a contradiction! God had assured him that in Isaac, his seed would be; and that was God's Word also, as sacred and as sure as His more recent command. Abraham accepts the will of the Lord even though he does not understand it; but he believes and never gives up his hold on the promises. His is the faith of Job: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

This faith of Abraham is beautifully revealed in the story. Coming to the place where the servants must be left behind, Abraham says to the

hired hands: "WE will come again unto you." Note it. Abraham was not arguing with God. God had said: Sacrifice thy son. Very well; he will do it. But that will not change God's promise. The Epistle to the Hebrews says that Abraham in faith accounted God able to raise Isaac from the dead. His pledge to the servants shows that. God, said Abraham, will do anything necessary; but He will not let His promises fail. Such was the strength of Abraham's faith.

But say not: Abraham could trust so firmly; I cannot. Certainly you can, and do. For faith ever clings, as ivy to a wall. God tests His

people for that reason, that their faith may be encouraged to reach out quickly and take hold of His promises. When we follow every clear command of our Lord, follow where He points in His Word, we may come to many a Moriah and seem to be taken farther and farther away from what we had hoped to attain. Yet only they who follow the Will of the Lord shall in the end reach the fulfillment of their Christian hope. Abraham found on Moriah what his faith sought. He had his son given him; and this time he really had him, for he had been willing and ready to give him up.

E. SCHALLER

Church News

A First Quarter Report From The Mission Board

CHAIRMAN RUTZ REPORTING

During the first quarter of this year the Mission Board supported eight missions: Berea, St. Paul, Minnesota; Holy Cross, Phoenix, Arizona; Immanuel, Winter Haven, Florida; Messiah, Eau Claire, Wisconsin; Redemption, Seattle, Washington; Redeemer, Cheyenne, Wyoming; St. Peter's, Denver, Colorado; and the new mission in Missoula, Montana. At three places (Phoenix, Winter Haven, and Cheyenne) support is granted for the Christian day school.

These missions have been supported only in part by the Mission Board. If the workers do not re-

ceive enough from the congregation and from employment, subsidy is granted to bring them up to the minimum code adopted at the last convention. It is our hope and prayer that the mission contributions of individuals and congregations may soon make it possible to give full support, so that all our workers may devote full time to their called ministry. Out of love for the Lord who redeemed us and for His truth let us all support our CLC missions cheerfully and liberally. The average monthly support given to the above missions was \$1034.00. This is about one-half of what is needed for full support. Then there are about the same number of missions which are not receiving support from

the mission treasury at this time. To complete the picture we must also mention that there are and will be new areas where we have opportunities to begin missions. Therefore, let us daily pray the Lord of harvest to make us all workers together in His vineyard.

* * *

A Congregation Becomes Self-Supporting

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN—

Pastor Rutz also reports that Messiah Lutheran, has decided to give its pastor full salary support, and thus relieve him of the need for other employment. The members also resolved to continue their support of CLC missions. This congregation numbers 35 communicant members and is served by Pastor David Lau.

* * *

CHEYENNE, WYOMING—

Pastor W. Schaller, Editor of *The Lutheran Spokesman*, was recently given a peaceful release by Redeemer Lutheran Church. The congregation reluctantly recognized that a choice between his duties as pastor and as editor had to be made, since it is also necessary that he be secularly employed, and since detailed plans, subject to final convention approval, are being formulated to allow *The Lutheran Spokesman* to appear bi-weekly rather than monthly.

The release is effective May 1.

* * *

ILC Adds Third Year

MANKATO, MINNESOTA—

The February issue of *The Lutheran Spokesman* carried the announcement that the Board of Regents authorized a third year of instruction at ILC.

This means that Immanuel Lutheran College is offering a full curriculum on its own campus, with its own faculty, for each of the first three college years. No pre-theological student will need to attend Mankato State College. It must be remembered, however, that the students will be receiving less instruction in classical Greek, Latin, and German than they would if ILC could offer a regular four year pre-theological course. To enable this plan to work, the seminary faculty has offered to let the three year pre-theological graduates enter the seminary. Students desiring a BA degree, if they wish, may postpone their entrance into the seminary and attend another college for their fourth college year.

Junior and Senior education students are now spending about two-thirds of their student hours at Mankato State College, and only one-third of their time at ILC. During the 1962-1963 school year this ratio will be reversed. Furthermore, the subjects which the education students will take at Mankato State College will be those of mechanical or technical importance, such as art courses, instruction in the use of visual aids, and science laboratory

The Bread of Life

Date	Text	Hymn	
Mar. 18	— Matt. 26:47-56	143,1-3	
Mar. 19	— Psalm 41	143,4-6	
Mar. 20	— Psalm 88	143,7-9	
Mar. 21	— Phil. 2:5-8	143,10-12	
Mar. 22	— Matt. 26:57-68	143,13-15	
Mar. 23	— Psalm 109:1-19	150,1-2	
Mar. 24	— Psalm 109:20-31	150,3-5	
Mar. 25	— Matt. 26:69-75	152,1	
Mar. 26	— 1 Peter 1:3-12	152,2	
Mar. 27	— 1 Peter 4:12-19	152,3	
Mar. 28	— 1 Peter 5:6-11	152,4	
Mar. 29	— Matt. 27:1-10	171,1-2	
Mar. 30	— Zech. 11:7-14	171,3-4	
Mar. 31	— Acts 1:15-20	171,5-6	
Apr. 1	— Matt. 27:11-23	171,7-8	
Apr. 2	— Matt. 27:24-31	171,9-10	
Apr. 3	— Psalm 22:1-15	171,11-12	
Apr. 4	— Psalm 22:16-31	172,1-2	
Apr. 5	— 1 Tim. 6:11-16	172,3-4	
Apr. 6	— Psalm 69:1-18	172,5-6	
Apr. 7	— Psalm 69:19-36	172,7-8	
Apr. 8	— Matt. 27:32-44	172,9-10	
Apr. 9	— Is. 52:13-53:3	142,1	
Apr. 10	— Is. 53:4-12	142,2	
Apr. 11	— Matt. 27:45-50	142,3	
Apr. 12	— Romans 5:12-21	142,4	
Apr. 13	— Romans 6:1-11	142,5	
Apr. 14	— Romans 6:12-23	142,6	
Apr. 15	— Matt. 27:51-56	169,1-2	
Apr. 16	— Hebrews 9:11-28	169,3-4	
Apr. 17	— Hebrews 10:1-14	169,5	
Apr. 18	— Matt. 27:57-66	167,1-2	
Apr. 19	— Exodus 12:1-14	167,3-4	
Apr. 20	— 2 Cor. 5:12-21	167,5-6	
Apr. 21	— 1 Peter 3:17-22	167,7	

Pastor
 Gethsemane Lutheran Church
 E. 11315 Broadway Avenue
 Spokane 62, Wash.

work. The professional education courses such as children's Literature and the teaching of science, language, and history, will be taught by the ILC faculty.

The problem of tuition adjustment for students necessarily attending Mankato State College is recognized and will probably be presented to the August convention at Manchester, Wisconsin.

Both the Board of Regents and

the ILC faculty feel this is a workable solution to the curriculum problem for next fall's returning juniors. But it is a temporary, not a permanent solution.

Students, parents of students, and pastors desiring additional information about the curriculum, tuition, or housing, should direct their questions to Paul R. Koch, Dean, or to E. Reim, Acting President.

D.