

LUTHERAN
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CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

Our Heritage



Of Music

Editorial

SPLINTER GROUPS

It so happens that at this Reformation time, when we are thinking of ourselves as Lutherans, a statistical report of Lutheran denominations in America was received from the News Bureau of the Lutheran Council in the USA. Along with other comments on the report was a section entitled: "Lutheran Splinter Groups Shun Moves Toward Unity."

The Half Million Chips

The article begins this way: "While the major (Lutheran) churches around the world belong to the Lutheran World Federation, almost every continent has its share of splinter groups, chips off the Lutheran block, all emphasizing their own kind of piety, organization and confessional concerns. In the United States, most of these smaller Lutheran church bodies came into being as groups of Lutheran churches—usually staunchly conservative—broken away from the major denominations. The Lutheran Church in America, American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod account for 8,200,000 of the nation's nearly nine million Lutherans. But there are others who claim the name and heritage of Luther—nearly one-half million Lutherans—who are not only separated from the major denominations, but frequently oppose the policies and practices of the three largest Lutheran churches in North America."

Then follows a listing of these smaller Lutheran groups according to their size in baptized membership, with a brief history of each. This could be of some interest:

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Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod	400,000
Evangelical Lutheran Synod	18,000
Association of Free Lutheran Congregations	13,000
Church of the Lutheran Confession	9,500
Apostolic Lutheran Churches	9,000
Church of the Lutheran Brethren	8,600
Lutheran Churches of the Reformation	6,000
Protestant Conference	1,500
Concordia Lutheran Conference	350
Eielsen Synod	200

The article concludes with these words: "Lutheran unity has long been a concern for the larger Lutheran denominations, which have until recently been steadily moving towards the establishment of one large Lutheran church in North America. But full Lutheran unity is a long way off, since about half a million Christians, subscribing to the Scriptures and the heritage of the Lutheran Reformation, are in Lutheran church bodies not currently involved in any meaningful dialogue with their fellow Lutherans."

An Embarrassment

To understand this splinter group matter one has to look further into these "confessional concerns," and the opposing of "policies and practices." To make it more pointed the word "doctrine" should be added. For the most part it is there that we will find the answer to why this splintered situation is as it is.

When we read the expression "who claim the name and heritage of Luther," we get the impression that it is used with some doubt that it is justified. That can work both ways. Some years ago in a rather animated discussion on a point of Scripture the one opposed said: "Well, I am a Lutheran, too." That was answered this way: "The name isn't copyrighted." The implication was: "You don't deserve the name." We consider the name Lutheran honorable and wear it without shame, but we have to concede that in the broad picture, doctrinally speaking, it has no set definition. The answer to the question: "What is Lutheran?" is a study in itself. We have our definition and can defend it historically quite well. Others have theirs, and there is a difference. We can't help this, but we don't have to like it. Rather, it is an embarrassment. And no doubt till the end of time true Lutherans will have to live with it.

The Pesky Splinters

Although the term "splinter" can be used merely to picture the chip-off-the-block idea, it often is used with a scornful connotation. Years ago it

was applied in just that way to the various congregational elements that eventually became the CLC. At that time, this writer made comment in the *Spokesman* (May, 1961). A few words might bear repeating:

"But this is true. Scripture speaks of believers of any given age as being a 'few' among many, the 'remnant' among the people. The term 'splinter' with its connotation of smallness fits quite nicely. What is more, the truth of God was not only found among them, but was carried on by them . . .

"Consider such notable splinter groups as the family of Noah over against the entire world; Joshua and Caleb over against the nation of Israel; and quite all alone, Elijah at Mount Carmel. If we choose to speak of splinter groups we will have to admit that Christianity had its beginning as a splinter off of Judaism; likewise Lutheranism a splinter from Roman Catholicism. Throughout all ages the truth has been preserved among men by splinter groups, and there is no reason to suppose it will be different in the time to come. This is in keeping with the ways of God who chooses 'the things which are despised, yea, the things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are.' "

G. Sydow

HE DESCENDED INTO HELL

This we confess with all Christendom concerning Jesus whenever we use the Apostles' Creed in our services of worship, or otherwise, to state what we as Christians believe. Experience teaches us, however, that, though we repeat these words so frequently, there is gross misunderstanding of them, even among Lutheran Christians.

Some Misconceptions

We have found that, when asked what this sentence in our Creed means, many reply that it refers to the punishments of the damned in hell, which our Savior endured for us. While we are everlastingly grateful for the fact that Jesus did also endure this punishment for us, who should have suffered it throughout eternity for our transgressions of

God's holy will, it is not to this part of His passion that these words have reference. The torments of body and soul in the abode of the damned, which are a part of sin's wages, our Savior suffered for us during those three hours of unearthly darkness on Good Friday, at the height of which He cried out: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Mt. 27:46) For what is damnation in hell but that dreadful condition, in which sinners are completely forsaken by God and excluded from every trace of His mercy and grace? Exactly that our Savior was enduring for us during those awful hours. When He then at their close declared: "It is finished," (John 19:30) everything required by God's justice to atone for the sins of us sinners had been rendered, including the endurance of

the pangs of hell. These words concerning Jesus' descent into hell therefore, by their very position in the Creed, placed after his death and burial, show that they do not refer to a part of His suffering, but to something else.

Another misconception regarding the meaning of these words is that He at the occasion of His descent into hell preached the Gospel to the souls of the damned found there, giving them another opportunity to repent and to believe in Him and to be saved. That such cannot have been the case is evident from all those passages of Scripture which state so plainly and unequivocally that this life here on earth is the only time of grace and salvation for sinners with no second opportunity being given after death. Call to mind the words spoken by Abraham to the rich man in hell: "Beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." (Luke 16:26) Recall also the statement found in Hebrews 9:27: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

The Correct Conception

These words: "He descended into hell," refer to something quite different, to something that occurred, not as a part of His passion, but following that at His restoration to life. They are based on what is found in 1 Peter 2:18:9, where we read: "(Christ) was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit; by

which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison." According to these words, our Savior, as soon as He returned to life on Easter morning, entered the abode of the damned in His glorified state, not to suffer, but for an altogether different purpose—to preach or to proclaim a fact, namely His glorious victory and triumph over Satan, through which all men had been redeemed and liberated from his clutches and power, that Satan's dominion had been destroyed.

A Startling Scene

Can you not imagine how, after Jesus' death on Good Friday, Satan and all his legions of evil angels rejoiced over and celebrated what they considered their great victory over the Redeemer sent by God, believing that they had succeeded in bringing to naught God's great plan for the redemption of mankind. The Savior was dead! Suddenly and unexpectedly then on Easter morning the supposedly dead Savior appears in the confines of hell alive, no longer in His humble servant's form, but in all His glory, majesty and power to dispel the illusion under which they have been laboring. Can you not imagine how Satan and His hosts cringed before Him and sought to flee from His piercing eyes?

A Comparison

History tells us of the triumphs celebrated by victorious generals returning to Rome after great victories in ancient times. Heading the procession in a gilded chariot

rode the victorious general who had vanquished the enemy. Chained to and dragged behind his chariot were the defeated kings and his underlings whom he had defeated. Then there followed the hosts of captives taken and wagon loads of booty that had been captured. The rear was brought up by the victorious legions—all to the acclaim of the cheering multitudes lining the route of the parade. It was such a scene that St. Paul very likely had in mind when he wrote concerning this episode in our Savior's redeeming mission here on earth: "Having spoiled (made plunder of) principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Col. 2:15)

Its Blessed Significance For Us

Jesus' descent into hell has been revealed in the Scriptures for your comfort and mine. So often today, when we observe Satan's activity in this world and in our own personal lives, we are inclined to quake and tremble before what appears to be his power. When we note the wickedness into which he is frantically plunging the children of this world, the confusion and havoc which he appears to be creating in what calls itself the church through the errors

he introduces through misguided men, and the temptations into which he succeeds in leading us believing children of God, we are apt to think that we are facing an invincible foe. Especially at such times let us call to mind our Savior's descent into hell and what that means for us. We are in Satan dealing with a vanquished foe, whose power has been broken utterly by our Champion Jesus. What we are experiencing is his dying kicks. It is only when we drift away from our Savior in heart and soul and begin to depend on our own powers that we fall prey to his seductive wiles. As long as we remain close to our Savior, rely on Him for His divine help, and make use of His Word as our weapon of defense and offense: "He can harm us none, He's judged; the deed is done; One little word can fell him." Let us then not be so foolish as to quake before and to yield to a defeated tyrant, who no longer has power over us, but by faith in our Savior's victory and in His might withstand him, exulting with the hymnwriter:

Now hell, its prince, the devil,
Of all their power are shorn.
Now I am safe from evil,
And sin I laugh to scorn."
(L.H. 192, St.4a)

H. C. Duehlmeier

CHANGE OF ADDRESS notices should be sent to the Business Manager. For uninterrupted mailing, if at all possible, address changes should be sent in at least four weeks in advance.

Games Christians Play

Church

It's interesting to imagine the reaction of foreigners when they see all the churches in our country. Perhaps it's similar to the apostle Paul wandering through the streets of Athens and later telling a Mars Hill audience, "I see you're very religious in all respects."

Church buildings have been the source of all kinds of news, some bad, some good. On the other hand illegal trials have been held in them. Some have been used as bases of operation for anything from false doctrine to social revolution. In some cases the "richness" of church buildings contrasts disproportionately with the poverty of parish members.

Through the centuries, however, churches have been properly used for the worship of our Three-in-One God of salvation. Within their walls many have been brought to faith in Jesus. Countless have received instruction that gives the wisdom which leads to salvation through believing. The distressed and anxious have received proper comfort and strength. The mourning have heard of the "resurrection and the life."

The Game

Everyone can understand quite readily how "Church" is a game played by unbelievers. People attach themselves to organized Christianity for a variety of impure reasons: greed,

status, influence, catharsis, throwing crumbs at conscience, and such like.

Our concern here is the game "Church" as played by Christians. In this connection we emphasize aspects of worship, or being in the place, rather than identification with the holy Christian Church. Playing Church is a product of weakness, a shorter or longer period when the flesh is in control. A person playing Church elevates a reason other than worship and praise as a cause for it, and at the same time believes his motives are godly.

When playing Church a person seeks the notice of others in his presence at worship. A father might play Church when he goes to worship only as an example to his family when he would rather have stayed in bed. A woman might play the game when her attendance at worship is an opportunity for a fashion revue. Children play Church when they never progress beyond an indifferent attitude toward worship, or when reluctant attendance avoids a reprimand, or when their reactions to what's going on is less interesting than some toy brought along or a conversation with a friend.

It has been observed that whole congregations appear to fall into the corporate game of playing Church. They worship as if every minute were an imposition on their time. Hymns are sung as if all were at a funeral and there were no resurrection.

Some have even remarked that many appear to attend worship because the value is simply being there. They have a "form of godliness."

Genuine worship has immeasurable value—value determined and controlled by Almighty God. Worship is a privilege of grace. In worship we hear God's estimation of us as announced in the Gospel: pardoned for our sins because of the sacrifice of Jesus. Worship allows hearts to react in joy, spontaneously, with hymn, prayer, or whatever, saying a great big, "Thank you."

A person attending worship to be noticed, to receive his pay-off from someone who acknowledged his being there, is missing one of the greatest opportunities for spiritual insight and genuine, loving response that there is. It takes the grace of God to be able to say, "I'm really glad to be here, because here God comes to me in blessing." Pity those whose "Christianity" can only produce, "Why didn't what's-her-name greet me?" or "I wonder whether others noticed my presence?"

—*M. Sydow*

Washing Today

Baptism is certainly for *today*—for the Christian's calm confidence in the midst of a confused world and Christendom. How can it help him, you might ask, to steady the ship of his faith on the weltering seas of doubt and misbelief, cultism and charismatic confusion? There are shifting winds of doctrine; many we once trusted have failed us; and sometimes we wonder just what can be right. No wonder that many retire from their confused affiliations and seek shelter in the truth that "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). Hiding in the grace of our baptism, we are at least members of the one body of Christ, the communion of saints. And we should take shelter there.

But the body of Christ is not one member, but many. Those who feel like the foot dare not complain about the hand, nor the ear about the eye. It is our very baptism into this body that makes us carriers of grace to other members of the body. Baptism does not empower us to seclusion, but to manifestation of the grace with which we have been washed. The more we are what we are, the washed of the Lord, the better we serve God's elect. The grace of baptism does not tend to Corinthian schism, but toward bringing the erring into the true unity of faith. The virtues of the washed contribute to peace. We like to think that our oneness here today is primarily a oneness that is ours by virtue of our regeneration, our being members of the body of Christ by baptism.

"There is one body, and one Spirit . . . one Lord, one faith, one

baptism," we read in Ephesians 4:4-5. We borrow this comment in summary of this:

"Christians should not depart from the one Lord and the one faith, but keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace because they have been regenerated and implanted into the one body of the One Holy Church by Holy Baptism. Baptism admonishes (enables) them to be true to the one Lord and one faith, but (and) it exhorts them also to be eager to preserve the oneness which the Holy Ghost has established through the washing of regeneration. Holy Baptism thus has a far-reaching significance. It is of sublime importance; for as Christians have been made one in Christ by holy Baptism, so also they should remain one in him by always applying the power of their Baptism. If they do this, then all false doctrine, all wrangling, all envy and strife must cease. There will be peace and love. May God grant that we today may so use our Baptism to His glory and the good of His Church."

The grace of our baptism, if we abide in it, will keep us from error in both doctrine and life, because the washed, mindful of being washed, will want to submit to the Word and Spirit, and the washed will be taught by the Spirit to esteem others greater than themselves.

Apostolic Usage

To such uses did God's special messenger, St. Paul (who received his message from God by revelation) put the sacrament of baptism. He told his Galatians that they were clothed with Christ (Ga. 3:27) so they should not be foolish. The Corinthians should not be divisive, for they were washed (1 Cor. 6:11; 12:13). The Romans, if they only realized it, were free from the

horrible sins of Romans 1 because they were dead with Christ and risen with him to newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4).

So practical is the grace of our baptism that St. Paul makes the love of Christ for his Church, in sanctifying it and cleansing it by the washing of water by the Word, the very model for the love of husbands for their wives, loving them as their own bodies as Christ loves his body, the Church! What if, in every contact and confrontation in the home, there were a voice behind us saying, "Do the Christian thing, for you are washed; this is the way, walk ye in it!" (Cf. Is. 30:21.) What motivation toward domestic tranquillity!

Summing Up

"Those three handfuls of water with which I was once sprinkled are more precious than the royal crown I now wear upon my head" is a suitable summary remark, attributed to Saint Louis of France.

"Therefore every Christian has enough in Baptism to learn and to practice all his life; for he has always enough to do to believe firmly what it promises and brings: victory over death and the devil, forgiveness of sin, the grace of God, the entire Christ, and the Holy Ghost with His gifts. In short, it is so transcendent that if timid nature could realize it, it might well doubt whether it could be true. For consider, if there were somewhere a physician who understood the art of saving men from dying, or, even though they died, of restoring them speedily to life, so that they would thereafter live forever, how the world would pour in money like snow and rain, so that because of the throng of the rich no one could find access! But here in Baptism there is brought free to every one's door such a treasure and

medicine as utterly destroys death and preserves all men alive.

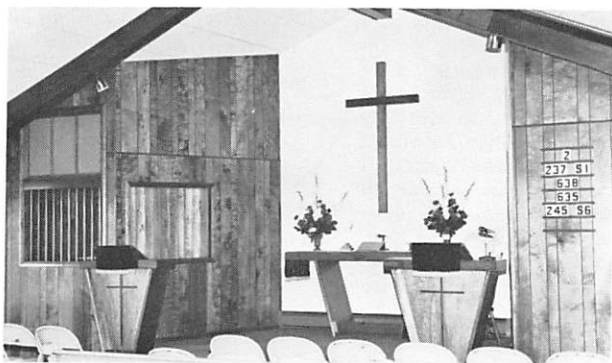
"Thus we must regard Baptism and make it profitable to ourselves that when our sins and conscience oppress us, we strengthen ourselves and take comfort and say: Nevertheless I am baptized; but if I am baptized, it is promised me that I shall be saved and

have eternal life, both in soul and body. For that is the reason why these two things are done in Baptism, namely, that the body, which can apprehend nothing but the water, is sprinkled, and, in addition, the Word is spoken for the soul to apprehend."—Luther, "The Large Catechism."

M. Galstad

Church News

DURABLE AND DEVOTED



New Chancel

Bethel congregation of Morris, Minnesota, and their pastor, the Rev. Elton Hallauer, have a good story to tell. A story of the Lord's steadfast mercy and His people's steadfast purpose in response. Durable and devoted are words that come to mind, and they apply equally well to both parties in this living out of covenant.

The Forward of Bethel's Constitution begins this way:

"Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church was created by the Spirit of God on the night of June 5, 1960, as a result of strife . . . over the doctrines of Church Fellowship and the Divine Call."

Many *Spokesman* readers know what lies behind this terse statement, for the same thing was taking place at that time in numerous other churches. A portion of the congregation, usually with the pastor, could not in good conscience continue in fellowship with their synodical affiliation, being of the conviction that the synod was sustaining a fellowship tie with the Missouri Synod long after doctrinal unity had been lost. As in other cases, the tension in Hancock was resolved by a majority action terminating the pastor's call. Those who were confident that their pastor was faithful to the Spirit in his counsel became the nucleus of a new congregation.



Pastor E. Hallauer

House of God

In this case there were four dissenting voters involved. Yet 34 worshippers were on hand for the first service in a garage, with planks on concrete blocks for "pews" and a fern stand for a pulpit.

This summer the congregation celebrated its fifteenth anniversary by dedicating a new house of worship in Morris, a nearby community. It is simple and functional, but a considerable achievement for the present group of thirty eight communicants and fifty six souls. The 70' x 36' frame building will accommodate more than 200 worshippers when the overflow area is utilized, so you know that they expect to enlarge their fellowship.

Parker's Prairie

There is another congregation, somewhat younger, in a prairie community some 75 miles distant from Morris. They form a joint parish with Bethel and share the services of Pastor Hallauer. Weather permitting, they schedule worship

services every Sunday. This kind of arrangement has made parish life possible in the sparsely populated areas of mid-Minnesota, where many churches have simply given up.

The USDA

There is another reason why the work of Bethel and Peace churches has proceeded with blessing and promise over these years. Their pastor has had the talent, energy, and will to put in a forty-hour week of highly technical computer work with the Department of Agriculture. With a good sized family to house and educate, this is obviously not a matter of "druthers," but one of necessity.

The two churches chose the day of dedication to celebrate also the twenty five years of their pastor's durable and devoted ministry of the Word. All but five of those years were spent in serving the Hancock-Morris area and Parker's Prairie. The first assignment for Pastor Hallauer was a dual parish in Courtland and Brighton Township, Minnesota.

SALEM OF EAGLE LAKE

In the tradition of Lutheran congregational life, the residence of the pastor is more than mere home—it is parsonage, an extension of the ministry. There the working of faith should create a text-book illustration of what Christian family life should be: a place of warm hospitality, obedient children, devoted spouses. The pastoral epistles make much of this when listing those things which qualify shepherds as God's stewards. Today, when impious worldlings gloat over the supposed disintegration of the nuclear family, the need for a demonstration of family-life blessings is especially acute. Perhaps this need lies behind the extensive effort put forth by many congregations in the construction of parsonages. "Show us how beautiful it can be in Christ, this family life which God ordained for His people!" That prayer could well go with the key to the front door on dedication day.

In Eagle Lake, Minnesota, Salem

congregation had been encouraged by their sister church in Nicollet and their pastor, the Rev. Keith Olmanson, to proceed with their wish to establish a resident ministry in this growing suburb of Mankato. In 1974 they bought a four year old house on a large lot just one block south of the church. Then they began calling a pastor, spending the "waiting time" remodelling the kitchen and adapting the basement as a large meeting room for the young people.

When the Rev. Robert Mackensen arrived from Red Wing, MN, to assume the pastoral duties of Salem, a gracious home was ready to receive his family. On June 22 it was dedicated to the service of God and became a parsonage.

The history of Salem Lutheran dates back to the fall of 1942, when it was established as a mission under the auspices of Bethany Lutheran Church, now known as Mt. Olive of Mankato. A year later the congrega-



Dedication Day

tion organized and called Pastor C. M. Gullerud to serve them. In 1959 Salem detached itself for confessional reasons from the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The church sought new associations in those days of turmoil and became, in 1961, a charter member of the newly formed Church of the Lutheran Confession. Pastor Gullerud had meanwhile been called to serve as a professor of the seminary of Immanuel Lutheran College in Mankato. While he

performed this new work he continued to serve Salem. When the campus was moved to Eau Claire in summer of 1963, their pastor moved with the school and the congregation entered into a partnership arrangement with Faith of Nicollet. This continued, with Pastor Olmanson serving both parishes from Nicollet, until January of 1975, when R. Mackensen was installed.

Rollin A. Reim

Treasurer's Report

July 1, 1975—October 1, 1975

RECEIPTS:	SEPTEMBER	TO DATE
Offerings	\$14,632.91	\$ 41,249.68
Corpus Christi Refund, Expl. Funds	286.00	286.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	14,918.91	41,535.68
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Retirement Benefits	1,200.00	2,850.00
Capital Investments	1,390.00	4,701.48
General Administration	578.29	1,441.65
Missions and Administration	7,185.22	20,618.46
Immanuel Lutheran College	5,582.00	17,235.00
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	15,935.51	46,846.59
CASH DEFICIT FOR PERIOD	(—\$ 1,016.60)	(—\$ 5,310.91)
CASH BALANCE, JULY 1, 1975		27,242.49
CASH BALANCE, OCTOBER 1, 1975		\$ 21,931.58
I.L.C. EXPANSION FUND RECEIPTS	\$ 3,193.00	\$140,392.97

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

BUDGET OFFERINGS NEEDED	\$19,652.00	\$ 58,956.00
BUDGET OFFERINGS RECEIVED	14,918.91	41,535.68
DEFICIT FOR PERIOD	(—\$ 4,733.09)	(—\$ 17,420.32)
BUDGET OFFERINGS, 1974-1975	10,725.98	\$ 33,055.21
INCREASE, 1975-1976	\$ 4,192.93	\$ 8,480.47

Announcements

Ordination-Installation

On September 14, 1974 I ordained Norman Greve to the Holy Ministry and installed him as pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Hecla, South Dakota and also as pastor of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, Aberdeen, South Dakota. Pastors Paul Fleischer and Wayne Mielke assisted. Authorization by President E. Albrecht.

Vernon Greve

Publications Available

A reprint of the CLC pamphlet, *Concerning Church and Ministry*, has been made and is now available

at the CLC Book House, 22 N. State St., New Ulm, MN 56073 for \$.25 a copy plus postage.

The Book House has ordered a supply of the Beck translation of the entire Bible entitled *An American Translation*. It is scheduled for publication early in December.

An announcement has appeared that the *Advanced Bible History*, used quite extensively in our CLC Sunday Schools, is being reprinted by a press in St. Charles, Missouri under special permission from Concordia Publishing House. The Book House has ordered a supply of these also, but no publication date has been announced.



Daily Devotions

- Dec. 1 I Kings 5
2 II Chronicles 3
3 II Chronicles 5
4 I Kings 8:12-30
5 II Chronicles 6:22-7:3
6 I Kings 8:54-9:9

When God commands, God provides.
No getting by with factory rejects here.
"God is in His Temple—all within keep silence."
"Hallowed be Thy Name."
Not "Look what we have built," but "Lord, have mercy."
God-wrought consecration first, then offerings.

Song of Solomon

This most excellent of Solomon's songs, his "Song of Songs," must have been written during the king's younger days, when he still walked in the way of the Lord. This poem is a spiritual bridal hymn picturing the loving relationship between the Lord and His believers. Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, loves His bride, the Church, and in turn is dearly loved by her. This is a thought-picture the Scriptures use often; (Matt. 9:15, Eph. 5:25ff) and is also found in a number of our hymns (LH 473, 609). Keep this in mind as you read the following selections.

- Dec. 7 Song of Solomon 2:8-17 Take note of who is speaking in each group of verses.
8 II Chronicles 8 Israel's Golden Age. Too much prosperity?
9 I Kings 10 Stand in awe before the "One greater than Solomon."
10 I Kings 11:1-25 "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

Ecclesiastes

The Bible has the words, "There is no God." Yes it does, but it is not teaching this. Rather, it is pointing out the thoughts of the fool (Ps. 14:1). There are also statements in the book of Ecclesiastes which are not true, because they do not reflect God's point of view, but man's (eg. 2:24; 8:15). God records these thoughts of man to show the conclusions people come to when they seek to find peace of soul and meaning of life apart from God. Solomon is the inspired writer, and he speaks from personal experience. Having forsaken the true God, he sought to find happiness and satisfaction in the philosophies of men. He tried everything from science to materialism, to hedonism, to fatalism. All proved equally fruitless, leaving the king old, broken, weary and disappointed. In order that we don't think we have to travel these same roads to discover they are dead ends, God moved the repentant Solomon to write his "confessions." Read them in Ecclesiastes. Learn that while many things in life can offer us limited enjoyment (they are gifts of God), without God, ultimately all is emptiness, "all is vanity."

Dec. 11 Eccl. 1	All is vanity, for everything passes away.
12 Eccl. 2	Pleasure, wealth and work are empty without God.
13 Eccl. 3	All is vanity, for death comes no matter what.
14 Eccl. 4	All is vanity, for life is full of inequalities.
15 Eccl. 5	Thoughtlessness in worship and misuse of wealth are vain.
16 Eccl. 6	Money is not the supreme goal in life.
17 Eccl. 7	The world's remedies for despair are themselves empty.
18 Eccl. 8:1-15	Life's inequalities say, "All is vanity."
19 Eccl. 8:16-9:18	Worldly wisdom's answers are vanity.
20 Eccl. 10	Life's disorders say, "All is vanity."
21 11:1-12:8	From youth to old age, all is vanity.
22 Eccl. 12:9-14	Conclusion: in all things, don't forget the Lord.
23 I Kings 11:26-43	Solomon neither lived nor died as did his father David.
24 I Kings 12	Wise Solomon's son was a fool.
25 I Kings 13	The "man of God" should know the price of disobedience.
26 I Kings 14:1-18	Fierce judgment for Jereboam's sin.
27 II Chronicles 12	The God-forsaking become the God forsaken.
28 II Chronicles 13	Abijah of Judah. He told it like it was.
29 II Chronicles 14	Spiritual rebuilding first. God smote, others pursued.
30 II Chronicles 15	Reformation and re-consecration must be whole-hearted.
31 II Chronicles 16	A wise move? No—a worldly one.

W. V. Schaller

(The suggestion of using *The Living Bible*, which appeared in the September *Spokesman*, in connection with the study of the book of Proverbs has been questioned. Although in connection with the book of Proverbs the writer of the Devotions thought it was an acceptable help, both the editor and the writer agree that since *The Living Bible* is paraphrase, in many instances inaccurate, misleading and erroneous, it should not be suggested for use in the pages of the *Spokesman*. G. Sydow, editor)

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