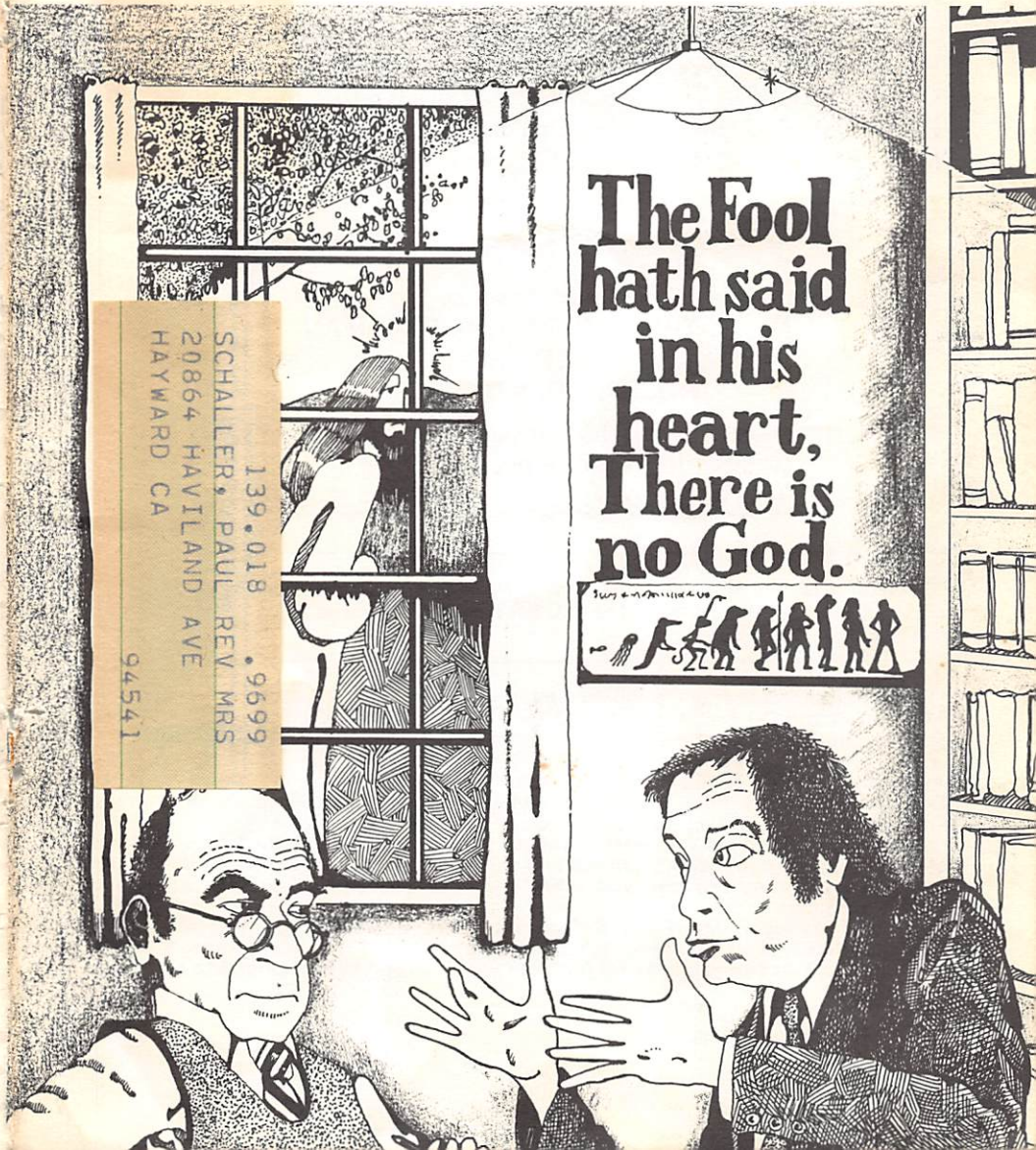


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The Fool
hath said
in his
heart,
There is
no God.



Blessing The Lord

VI.

Psalms 103:9,10 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger forever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

In our devotion for this morning we see our LORD in a different light, in a light that is not very pleasant to us. We hear that He chides, that He accuses, that He scolds, that He becomes angry, a truth that was hinted at in our last devotion, where we learned that our LORD is not only merciful and gracious, but that He is slow to anger. Yes, our LORD can become angry.

How often in the Old Testament do we not hear that familiar phrase, AND THE ANGER OF THE LORD WAS KINDLED, kindled against men like the Pharaoh who in their pride would not obey the Word of the LORD; kindled against heathen nations and tribes that oppressed His people and despised His Word; yes, even kindled against the Children of Israel when they time and again

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Editor: Pastor Gilbert Sydow, 22 North State Street, New Ulm, MN 56073; Church News Editor, Pastor Rollin Reim, 994 Emerald Hill Road, Redwood City, CA 94061; Staff: W. Bernthal, M. Eibs, D. Lau, E. Hallauer, H. Duehlmeier, R. Roehl, M. Galstad, W. V. Schaller, D. Schierenbeck, M. Sydow, H. Hasse, P. Schaller.

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put aside their allegiance to the LORD in favor of false idols and worship of Baal and Ashtoroth, when they put away the holy Law of God and decided for themselves how they were going to live and act. The prophet Isaiah gives us a fine summary of this situation when he writes: **THEREFORE IS THE ANGER OF THE LORD KINDLED AGAINST HIS PEOPLE BECAUSE THEY HAVE CAST AWAY THE LAW OF THE LORD OF HOSTS, AND DESPISED THE WORD OF THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL.** The holy LORD JEHOVAH becomes angry because He so hates sin and the corruption it causes in the lives of men and nations. Moreover, He has a right to become angry, not only because He is the holy God who knows no sin, but also because men have spurned His every attempt to redeem them from it.

However, it is not only Israel that despised the will of the LORD. This has been true of people of every age, and it is especially true of our 20th Century society. We see an idolatry about us that is as odious to the LORD as the idolatry of Baal and Ashtoroth. The idol of our age is an idol named god, spelled with a small "g," a sort of frail and benevolent old grandfather, without the ability or wisdom either to create or govern the world, who, with a constant smile on his face, seems to be saying, "It doesn't matter what you believe or whether you worship as long as you are sincere and try to do good" or "it doesn't matter what you do, as long as you think it is right. If you do not want a child, it is alright to kill it through abortion; if you find that your marriage is not what you think it ought to be, it is alright to be unfaithful," and we could go on and on and on. Truly the LORD has every right to be angry with a generation that claims to worship "god" and yet casts aside the will of God. The idolatry of our age is appalling!

But what about ourselves? Become very personal. A look into your own heart ought to convince you that the LORD has every reason to accuse you; yes, the LORD has every reason to be angry with you and me for all the rotten things we think and do, as we confess to Him every Sunday morning that we sin against Him daily by thought, word and deed. Dr. Luther explains this very well in his explanation to the Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer: we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. Examine your life, if you will, not on the basis of our social order that would put aside God's will, but on the basis of commandments that were once written in man's heart and that will never lose their validity, and you will see your very best deeds crumble as dust. Indeed, you and I do deserve the wrath and anger of God and have no personal merit to hold up to Him.

What a delight, what a breath of fresh air it is, then, to read those beautiful words following in our text: **HE HATH NOT DEALT WITH US AFTER OUR SINS NOR REWARDED US ACCORDING TO OUR INIQUITIES.** While our Lord has every right to be angry with us, He deals with us in love. Now that does not mean that He in any way overlooks or excuses our sinfulness. In righteous wrath our LORD hates sin, and consistent with His holiness can in no way close one eye to the wrong we do or to our basic sinfulness. The reason God

does not deal with us on the basis of our sin is because of Jesus Christ. That is the difference. That is what redemption is all about. To satisfy the holiness of God and to remove His wrath you and I had to be redeemed, literally "paid for," at the price of the holy, innocent life and death of the Son of God. As a result we do have a merit that we can hold up to God, not our own, but the merit of the Son of God, a merit that completely covers us like a beautiful garment and no longer makes us look hateful but beautiful in the eyes of our heavenly Father.

Our sin is removed, forgiven, gone, and our Father sees us not with anger, but with love and kindness. O what blessed comfort and reassurance the Psalmist brings to our hearts and the hearts of all believers when he assures us in this text, **THE LORD HATH NOT DEALT WITH US AFTER OUR SINS, NOR REWARDED US ACCORDING TO OUR INIQUITIES.**

—*R. Dommer*

I Believe In The Forgiveness of Sins

This is the third point to which we confess ourselves in the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed. Though we speak these well-known words every Sunday, are we always fully aware of what we are saying in them? As we are in frequent need of being reminded of what we are asking for in the various petitions of the oft-repeated Lord's Prayer, so our memory needs refreshing also concerning this and the other points confessed in our Creed.

A Confession of Our Personal Sinfulness

By confessing to believe in the forgiveness of our sins we are, from the outset, acknowledging and admitting our personal sinfulness and dire need of God's forgiveness. In our day sin is regarded as an archaic and outmoded word. Modern man does not like to be called a sinner. To failings and shortcomings and indiscretions

and mistakes he is ready to admit but not to sins. He regards it as a grievous insult to be characterized as a sinner. To us, who believe God's Word, sin is not a so-called "dirty" word. We acknowledge with sorrow and regrets that we still sin daily and much, that we do not conform as God requires it to His holy will, as that is expressed in His Commandments; that we, in spite of our best intentions, only too often become guilty of doing what He has forbidden and of failing to do what He has commanded, not only in deeds and actions, but in thoughts and desires and words as well. Thus we do not refuse to confess every day, as we do on Communion Sunday: "O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor miserable sinner, confess unto Thee all my sins and iniquities." To refuse to do this would be to fall into the delusion of the ostrich, which is said to bury its head in the sand

when pursued, thinking that, if it cannot see its pursurer, its pursuer cannot see it either.

The Basis on Which We Believe This

But do we have any grounds on which to hope and to believe that there is forgiveness for our sins and sinning? To forgive means to give up resentment against and the desire to punish the offender; to overlook an offense; to cancel a debt. Hasn't God very definitely threatened to punish every infraction of His holy will with dire punishments? Does not His holiness and justice and His faithfulness in carrying out His threats preclude any possibility of forgiving our sins? Is it not self-deception on our part then to hope for and to believe in the forgiveness of our sins? Thank God, it is not; for God Himself furnishes us the basis for this hope and faith in His Word. In a thousand and one places in the same He assures us of the reality of His forgiveness. In His surpassing wisdom and mercy He has found a way to punish our sins to the satisfaction of His justice and holiness and at the same time to forgive and acquit us sinners of our sins. This was made possible when He charged the sins of all men of all times, including our own, against Jesus, the Substitute for us sinners, and punished Him for them more than nineteen hundred years ago. When our Substitute declared on Calvary: "It is finished," He has suffered everything we sinners should have suffered in time and in eternity to satisfy the inexorable demands of God's justice. When God then raised our Substitute from death on Easter morn-

ing, that was His public declaration to the whole world of sinners: Since your Substitute has paid sin's wages for you, I herewith have given up my resentment against and my desire to punish you: I have pardoned and acquitted all of you; I now overlook your offenses against me. That is the blessed meaning of St. Paul's words found in Romans 4:25: "Christ was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification." It is now a Scripture-based fact that God has in His heart forgiven every sinner every one of his sins and no longer holds them against him.

This Forgiveness Offered in the Gospel

It is this best news ever heard on earth, that God in His heart has forgiven every sinner his sins and acquitted him of all guilt and punishment, which Jesus commanded to be proclaimed when before His ascension He gave His disciples the great commission: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel (the Good News of God's forgiveness) to every creature." (Mark 16:15) It is this same blessed truth that St. Paul expresses when he writes: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing (charging) their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Corinthians 5:19,20) God Himself, the offended party, through Jesus has done everything necessary to atone for our sins and to effect reconciliation. He now

extends to every one of us sinners the hand of reconciliation and forgiveness and pleads with us to accept it.

God's Forgiveness Appropriated by Faith

This forgiveness offered by God as a gift of His grace is received by us sinners through simple faith and trust in His gracious offer. Whoever believes God's assurances of forgiveness in the Gospel has His forgiveness. While every comparison has its shortcomings, we might perhaps compare God to a wealthy man, who has deposited in a local bank a large sum of money to the credit of every person in that community and who has made an announcement to that effect by means of the news media, inviting every person to come and to claim his gift. Those who believe the announcement and act upon it receive and have the benefit of it. Those, however, who doubt the same and refuse to act on it for reasons of their own get no benefit from the rich man's largesse. So it is also with the forgiveness of sins. Many impenitently refuse to acknowledge their sins and their needs of God's forgiveness. Others mistakenly insist on earning God's forgiveness by means of self-inflicted penances and supposed good works of their own and so disdain the Gospel-offer and deprive themselves of what has been secured also for them. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted for righteousness." (Romans 4:5) All who trustingly take God at His Word and find their hope and comfort in His gracious offer, they have God's forgiveness.

Forgiveness Daily and Richly

Dear fellow-sinner, rejoice therefore in God's forgiveness of your sins as your most precious treasure. At the close of each day go to God with the burden of sin which you have again accumulated, confessing them to Him in sorrow and with regrets over the fact that you have so grieved and offended Him. At the same time, however, draw your comfort from the assurances of His forgiveness proclaimed to you on every page of the Gospel and sealed to you at your Baptism and with Jesus' own body and blood in the Holy Supper. In your joy over your forgiveness resolve then gratefully with God's help to take up anew on the morrow the battle against your besetting sins, as befits a forgiven child of God. Thus live each day in contrition over the sins into which your flesh still leads you but in childlike trust in God's forgiveness secured for you by Jesus and say with full conviction of heart: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins."

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse,
relieve;

Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

(L.H. 388)

—H. C. Duehlmeier

Four Hundred Years of Concord (1577-1977)

God's Gift to Confessional
Lutherans

All congregations affiliated with the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) have declared in their constitutions their acceptance of a document known as the *Formula of Concord*. Very likely few of our members are intimately acquainted with this particular confession. Surely it is not as well-known as the *Apostles Creed*, Luther's *Small Catechism*, or the *Augsburg Confession*. Yet the *Formula of Concord* should not be forgotten. It has served a very useful purpose from 1577, the year of its completion, until the present time.

After Martin Luther died in 1546, many serious controversies broke out among his co-workers and students. They disagreed on what the Bible teaches and on what Martin Luther had taught. These doctrinal controversies continued for over thirty years, and we can well imagine the result: confusion among the members and ridicule from the world. The taunts that were heard then are still heard today: If the Bible is so clear, why is it that you Lutherans cannot agree on what it teaches? The divisions among the Lutherans were indeed a public disgrace.

The Healing of Divisions in 1577

By God's grace there were Christian men in those days whom God used to heal these divisions. They

went about this healing in the only proper way: not by insisting that there were no divisions, not by maintaining that the divisions were unimportant, but by carefully studying God's holy Word and letting God Himself decide the issues. The result of their study of the disputed doctrines was the *Formula of Concord*.

By God's grace most Lutherans in those days declared their agreement with the truths confessed in the *Formula of Concord*, and peace and unity prevailed among the Lutherans for many years thereafter. In God's name they continued to wage confessional war against Roman Catholics, Calvinists, and Anabaptists, but among themselves they were at peace, at least for the most part.

The names of the six chief authors of the *Formula of Concord* are not well-known to us today. Martin Chemnitz was the most careful and precise theologian in the group. Two of his most influential writings, *The Two Natures in Christ* and *Examination of the Council of Trent—Part I*, have recently been made available in English translation.

Nikolaus Selnecker, another of the authors, is known to us through his hymns: *Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide* (LH 292), *O Faithful God, Thanks Be to Thee* (LH 321), *Let Me*

Be Thine Forever (LH 334), and *O Lord, My God, I Cry to Thee* (LH 600). His emphasis on the means of grace, Word and Sacraments, is apparent from these hymns.

David Chytraeus was famous in his own time as an exegete, that is, a student of the Bible in its original languages. His treatise *On Sacrifice* is available in English, but his many other writings are not.

Of the other three authors, Andrew Musculus, Christopher Corderus, and Jacob Andreae, the last-named was perhaps the man most responsible for organizing and arranging the many meetings and conventions during which the *Formula of Concord* gradually evolved into its present form.

Much more important than the names of these men are the doctrines they confessed, doctrines which we still confess today without reservation because they are the teachings of God's Word.

God Wants No Divisions

We must always remember that God does not want divisions in His Church. As there is only *one* true God, and only *one* Savior from sin, our Lord Jesus who died and rose for us, and only *one* Holy Spirit and *one* Holy Christian Church, so God wants all those who are His children by faith in Christ Jesus to teach *one and the same* teaching without any divisions. The apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that

ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10)

All members of Christ's Church are to speak the same thing in all matters of faith. What they are to speak is God's true Word which He has given us through His prophets and apostles. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Peter 4:11)

The apostle Paul was horrified to learn from Chloe's family that some of the Christians in Corinth were forming a political party, as it were, around his name and verbally skirmishing against other parties formed around the names of Apollos, Peter, and even Christ Himself. "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:12-13)

We are accustomed to denominations and divisions in the Church. But let us not think for one moment that such divisions are God-pleasing. "I beseech you . . . that there be no divisions." It is a disgrace that those calling themselves Christians do not agree with each other and do not all speak the same thing. It is a disgrace that not even those calling themselves Lutheran Christians, and conservative Lutherans at that, do not agree in all matters of doctrine.

God's Solution to Divisions

But what is the solution to these divisions? Some people say: Since we all call ourselves Christians, let us accept one another as Christians. Let

us not judge one another's teaching or confession. Let us not dare to call anyone's teaching false. Let us simply call ourselves brothers and sisters and let everyone teach and believe as he pleases. This is the method of the ecumenical movement. But this method is sinfully unionistic because an external union is formed without internal unity.

The same method has been attempted and is being attempted today to unite all calling themselves Lutherans. They say: Since we call ourselves Lutherans, let us accept one another as Lutherans and worship and work together as partners. What difference does it make if we are not agreed on all the articles of faith? We can agree to disagree without any hard feelings.

But this way is not God's way, nor is it the way of Martin Luther and our Lutheran fathers who drew up the *Formula of Concord* 400 years ago. We are not permitted to teach as we please. We are all to speak the same thing, and that thing is God's Word.

Listen to this beautiful statement from the *Formula of Concord*: **"We have no intention of yielding any part of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity. Nor would such peace and unity have any permanency, since it is devised against the truth. Still less are we inclined to conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine. We on our part are sincerely inclined to advance that unity according to our utmost power, by which God's glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is sur-**

rendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true repentance, raised up in faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ."

Unity in confessing the truths of God's Word—this is what our forefathers were concerned about 400 years ago. They were not interested in forming a large Lutheran church body that would like an umbrella protect every kind of heresy. No, they simply wanted to confess the pure teachings of God's Word over against all the false teachings that had been introduced by teachers who called themselves Lutherans. They wanted to put the truth down plainly in writing for all the world to see. This is what God says. This teaching is true. On the other hand, that teaching is false, because that is not what God says.

The source of the truths they confessed was God's own Word, which they equated with the Bible. The *Formula of Concord* begins with these words: **"We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all teachings together with all teachers should be judged are the prophetic and apostolic scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone, as it is written: 'Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.'"** They regarded the Bible as God's Word, and they expected the Bible to settle every doctrinal controversy.

What were the controversies that had raged among the Lutherans for

thirty years? The titles of the twelve articles of the *Formula of Concord* give a general idea of the problems. Article I—Original Sin. Article II—Free Will. Article III—The Righteousness of Faith. Article IV—Good Works. Article V—The Law and the Gospel. Article VI—The Third Use of the Law. Article VII—The Holy Supper. Article VIII—The Person of Christ. Article IX—Christ's Descent to Hell. Article X—Church Rites (neither commanded nor forbidden). Article XI—God's Eternal Election. Article XII—Other Factions and Sects.

The Danger of Trusting Human Leaders

In all of these controversies they did not want to follow men, not even Luther. They wanted to follow God alone, and therefore they studied very carefully what God had to say on the subject. As they thus went about their work, they realized in deep sadness that many prominent Lutherans, even some of Luther's closest friends and associates, had departed here and there from true doctrine. These leaders had been trusted because they were Luther's friends, but they had failed in their leadership because they had not taken all their teaching from the Bible.

In fact, the chief author of the *Augsburg Confession* and its *Apolo-
logy*, Philip Melancthon, was exposed as a false teacher in several areas of doctrine. Martin Luther had praised Philip's gifts highly, too highly in fact, at one time even claiming that Melancthon's book on Christian doctrine was worthy of

being included in the Bible. But after Luther's death, Melancthon was willing to compromise God's truth for the sake of outward peace, and he fell into grievous error which the *Formula of Concord* had to condemn. Oh, how dangerous it is to put the reputation of any man above God's Word!

The *Formula of Concord* was completed in May of 1577. In the next few years it was signed by many pastors, teachers, and rulers in Germany. Some refused to sign, of course, for God's truth is never accepted by all. The King of Denmark threw his copy of the confession into the fireplace.

But the majority of Lutherans in Germany and even in other countries eventually signed the *Formula of Concord*. As long as subscription to this confession was taken seriously, the Lutheran Church enjoyed an unprecedented period of doctrinal unity. The century from 1577 to 1677 was truly the age of orthodoxy, and not even the horrible Thirty Years' War from 1618-1648 could rob God's people of the spiritual blessings of the pure Word. Paul Gerhardt's many hymns in our Lutheran Hymnal testify to the rich doctrinal heritage enjoyed by the Lutherans of that era. See the *Lutheran Hymnal*, numbers 58, 77, 142, 171, 192, 520, and 528.

The time came, however, when pietism replaced confessionalism, and rationalism replaced pietism. The eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth century witnessed a remarkable deterioration of true Lutheranism, noticeable not

only in Europe but also in the United States. Most of the early Lutherans who settled in our country were not confessional Lutherans, but unionistic Lutherans who were faithful neither to the *Formula of Concord* nor to the Bible.

But in the middle of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century there was a revival of confessional Lutheranism. The Lutheran Synodical Conference organized in 1872 was a church body that subscribed wholeheartedly to the *Formula of Concord*. Again there was a large group of Lutherans that spoke God's truth in unity for almost 100 years. What a blessing that was!

Our Unionistic Age

Today, however, the situation in Lutheranism is worse than in the thirty years after Luther's death. Lutheranism and Christianity are disgraced by the absence of confessional unity among Lutherans. Most of those calling themselves Lutherans today cannot even agree that all of the Bible is God's inerrant Word. Lacking an authoritative source for their teaching, they get lost in the maze of human opinions.

Even among those who are known as confessional Lutherans there are few who want to follow in the footsteps of Martin Chemnitz and Jacob Andreae by giving no room to the least error. Parts of the truth are being compromised for the sake of temporal peace, particularly those parts of the truth that deal with church fellowship. The spirit of our age is unionistic, not confessional.

We are convinced that our God

has given us in the Church of the Lutheran Confession the privilege of being confessional Lutherans in a unionistic age. We do subscribe with all our hearts to the *Formula of Concord*. We are convinced that its teachings are God's truth. When a controversy arose among us concerning the use of the Law, the *Formula of Concord* proved to be of great benefit to us. What we confess in this document is no dead letter to us.

In our contemporary confession *Concerning Church Fellowship* the *Formula of Concord* was our model. What God had to say on this matter was carefully studied. The true doctrine was laid out and the false doctrines exposed as false.

If the present divisions in Lutheranism are to be healed in the proper manner of the *Formula of Concord*, some such confession on church fellowship will have to be adopted by Lutherans and put into practice. Only in this way will we be speaking the same thing without divisions in accordance with our Lord's will.

Here then is a brief summary of our confession on church fellowship. Test it according to God's Word. We believe it can stand the test.

"1. We believe, teach and confess that complete doctrinal agreement is the Scriptural basis for church fellowship. 1 Cor. 1:10.

"2. We further believe that the doctrine which the Church should teach and hold is restricted to the doctrine of the Bible. 1 Peter 4:11.

"3. We further believe that the Word of God (The Old and New Testaments) is inerrant, inviolable and clear. 2 Tim. 3:16. John 10:35. Ps. 119:105.

"4. We believe that all aberrations from the doctrines of Scripture are condemned by God. Jer. 23:31. Gal. 1:9.

"5. We believe and teach that church fellowship is forbidden with all who deviate from the Word of God in their teachings. Rom. 16:17.

"6. We further believe that all manifestations of fellowship are forbidden with those who deviate from the Word of God in their teachings. Rom. 16:17.

"7. We further believe and teach that suspension of an established fellowship is to take place when it has been ascertained that a person or group is causing divisions and offenses through a false position in doctrine or practice. Rom. 16:17-18."

As the Foreword to "Concerning Church Fellowship" states, the *Formula of Concord* "was eminently successful in bringing order out of a welter of controversy and confusion. By the grace of God it served as an instrument of unity on a large scale, far larger than seemed possible when the strife was at its height."

Our own confession on church fellowship has the same aim today, not to divide, but to unite, in the unity that gives glory to our Savior-God. May we always continue to pray for a God-pleasing Christian concord and peace.

—David Lau

Instant Items

• It is time for school again, a fitting time to think about schools and the work of teaching. It also is a matter about which we should "be instant in season, out of season," even as diligence of the mind is urged upon Timothy by Paul in preaching the Word, in our passage (2 Tim. 4:2). Literally, "stand upon it or up to it," "carry on," "stick to it." *Insta* says it in Latin: "stand in there!" The matter is urgent. Show yourself courageous for action.

• This is encouragement for our teachers. "Keep at it at the right time and the wrong time" (Beck), when it is easy to do so, and when it is difficult. Do not think about it

only at inspirational times (as at conference), but all year. There should be a forum that brings you thoughts on the matter every month. Leaders should be encouragers and enablers, with consistent communication you-ward, steadily.

• The parents should always be standing back of you, but not so far back as is customary. They should not let you feel isolated, loaded with the responsibility that is originally and finally *theirs*. They have the charge to begin with. They cannot escape the method of doing education that was prescribed for learning the reality of faith-life, in Deuteronomy 6: "when thou sittest in

thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up," and in Ephesians 6, "You parents (*fathers* is often used for both parents), too, must stop exasperating your children, but continue to bring them up with the sort of education and counsel the Lord approves" (Williams).

• The *family style* of much of the earlier child upbringing throughout history has been exchanged in our culture for the "exasperating" form of the schoolroom. How would we adults like to be put in a place like that for many hours a day to learn something new?! Small wonder reformers have worked for years to change the situation! A Chinese proverb says, "I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand." Part one of that proverb needs no belaboring; part two was satisfied by much provision for it in Israel (let someone write it up for conference); and part three is too obvious to need any elaboration.

• So it has been seriously proposed that our society should be deschooled. The failure of the present form, at least the glaring weakness of it, continues to be set before us in the better educational writings. But, alas, we must cooperate with the inevitable as best we can, for our culture almost totally forbids the child to walk with his father "by the way" of his daily occupation. Ask most children precisely what do their parents do, and they do not know but can only answer that "they work." So they are not learning the processes of life from *them*. Worse

still, then, they do not have the example during daytime hours of seeing distinctly Christian living in operation. And most of what those young ones see on the tube is not a true representation of life.

• Therefore Lawrence O. Richards struggled with the problem in *A Theology of Christian Education* (Zondervan): "While all Christian education is not to take place in the home, a 'family relationship' or 'family feeling' is to be of concern in every teaching/learning setting. Rather than abandoning the home as the nurture center for children in favor of an imitation of school, we are to reaffirm the centrality of the home, and take seriously our task of devising educational systems which will support parents in that task.

"It is clear from the passage (Deuteronomy 6) that God's words are to be taught and talked about. The written word is a necessary element in Christian education. What is significant here is not that affirmation, which conservatives have always accepted, but insight into the critical context in which the Word is to be introduced. We do not have here a classroom portrait of teaching! Instead we have a foreshadowing of Jesus' disciplining method. Teacher and learner share life's experiences together. Here, in life itself, the Word is taught and talked about!

". . . And it is with these dimensions of teaching and learning (the prerequisite model, the transactional relationship, and the life context) that we must be ready to approach the reconstruction of Christian ed-

ucation in the Church.” (p. 36)

• Parents are often “thus and such,” so to speak, but our teachers must be “just so.” They must strain to humanize the schoolroom and make it a sanctuary for souls. “God’s truth must be revealed as reality.” Truth and example are always to go together. Parents and teachers, “Make it your habit to pay close attention to yourself and your

teaching. Persevere in these things, for if you do you will save both yourself and those who listen to you” (1 Tim. 4:16, Williams). Stand back of your Christian teachers, really close back, and together you can help close the gap between school and life. There is Jesus’ promise: “Everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40, NIV). It is an *instant* matter, urgent.

—M. Galstad

DAILY DEVOTIONS

October

2 John 1:6-13	To them that believe on His Name.
3 Romans 8:12-17	He giveth power to become the sons of God.
4 Acts 2:37-42	and hath promised them His Holy Spirit.
5 Mark 16:1-16	He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.
6 John 20:26-31	Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

The Liturgy of Prayer and Praise

Introit—Gloria Patri—Kyrie—Gloria in Excelsis—Salutation—Collect

The Lutheran Hymnal, Pages 6-9

Having prepared to meet our Lord, we now welcome Him, humbly seeking His gifts and praising Him for His greatness and His grace. In the Introit we use verses from the Psalms to do this. The Kyrie is a cry for help in all the needs of earthly life. In the Gloria in Excelsis we rejoice in our Lord who came to earth to redeem us. Pastor and people pray for each other in the Salutation and with each other in the Collect.

7 Psalms 119:1-8	Read last Sunday’s Introit (17th A. Trinity, Hymnal p. 79)
8 Psalms 122	Read tomorrow’s Introit (18th A. Trinity, Hymnal p. 80)
9 Psalm 33:1-9	Glory be to the Father,
10 Acts 10:36-43	and to the Son,
11 Acts 10:44-48	and to the Holy Ghost:
12 Daniel 6:25-28	as it was . . . is . . . and ever shall be,
13 Matthew 3:13-17	All praise and honor to the Holy Trinity.
14 Luke 18:35-43	Lord, have mercy upon us.
15 Matthew 15:21-28	Christ, have mercy upon us.
16 Luke 17:11-19	Lord, have mercy upon us.
17 Luke 2:1-14	Glory be to God on high!
18 Ephesians 2:13-18	And on earth peace, good will toward men.
19 Psalm 145	We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee,
20 Psalm 96	we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.
21 John 10:22-30	O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty,
22 Galatians 4:4-7	O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;
23 John 1:29;	Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world,
1 Peter 1:18-21	
24 Ephesians 1:20-23	Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,
25 Acts 4:23-30	For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord.
26 Acts 4:31-35	With the Holy Ghost, art most high.

- 27 Luke 1:26-31 Heaven's Messenger teaches us a prayer-greeting.
 28 Romans 8:16-17, 26-30 The Spirit of God helps us to pray.
 29 Matthew 18:19; John 14:12-14; 15-16 Jesus urges those united in Him to unite in prayer.
 30 Ephesians 2:19-22 Also pray today's Collect (Hymnal p. 81, 21st A. Trinity)
 (The Oct. 31 reading will appear in the next Spokesman)

—W. V. Schaller

Announcements

West Central Pastoral Conference

The West-Central Pastoral Conference will meet Sept. 27-29 at Zion Lutheran Church, near Estelline, South Dakota.

Agenda: Homiletical Study of Matt. 11:12-25, P. Fleischer; Isagogical Study of Joel, W. Mielke; Exegesis, Haggai 2:1-9, N. Greve; Exegesis, I John 3:1-10, D. Baker; The Devil and His Powers, R. Schaller; The Problem of Spiritual Drop-outs Among our Youth and Young Adults, H. Witt; Evaluation of the WELS Enchiridion, M. Gullerud; Open Forum: CLC Students in Other Church Schools, a Fellowship Problem, D. Koenig leader.

—Wayne Mielke, secretary

Eastern Area Pastoral Conference

The Eastern Area Pastoral Conference will meet Oct. 18-20 at Living Word Lutheran Church, Hendersonville, North Carolina.

Agenda: Isagogics of Joel, Exegesis of Joel 2:28-32, Paul Gurgel; An Evaluation of Watchman Nee, Fred Archer; The Use of Telos in the Book of Hebrews, Dale Redlin; A Christian's Attitude Toward Birth Control, Mike Sydow; What is the Nature of Faith? Paul Nolting; Book Review, Dan Fleischer.

On Tuesday evening various pastors will participate in a forum on "The Doctrines of the Reformation."

—M. Sydow, secretary

Wisconsin Pastoral Conference

The Wisconsin Pastoral Conference will meet Oct. 4-5 at Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, opening with a 8:30 A.M. communion service, Prof. R. Gurgel, speaker (J. Schaller, alternate).

Agenda: An Isagogical Study of Daniel, M. Bernthal; Exegesis of Psalm 119, G. Radtke; Exegesis of Hebrews 9:15 ff, L. Schierenbeck; A History of the CLC for Use with Confirmands or Persons New to the CLC, M. Buck; Doctrinal Differences between the CLC and the Missouri Synod, J. Klatt; Steps in Writing a Sermon, W. Schaller; Should the Qualifications for a Bishop Be Considered a Continuing Necessity for Pastors? (I. Tim and Titus) J. Schaller; A Study of the Terms Used in Scriptures for Adultery and Fornication, P. Tiefel; Book Review, "Competent To Counsel," J. Adams, J. Pfeiffer.

Announce or excuse to the host pastor, L. Schierenbeck, as soon as possible.

—J. Johannes

July 1, 1977—August 1, 1977

RECEIPTS:	JULY	TO DATE
Offerings	\$10,916.21	
Memorials	5.00	
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TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$10,921.21	
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Retirement Benefits	1,581.00	
Capital Investments	2,204.27	
General Administration	353.49	
Missions and Administration	6,113.65	
Immanuel Lutheran College	7,756.75	
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TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$18,009.16	
CASH DEFICIT FOR JULY	(— 7,087.95)	
CASH BALANCE, JULY 1, 1977	14,783.61	
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CASH BALANCE, AUGUST 1, 1977	\$ 7,695.66	\$7,695.66
OTHER OFFERINGS RECEIVED:		
I.L.C. Expansion Fund	\$ 218.00	\$6,066.61
CEF-Mission Investment Fund	134.00	
Nigerian Fund	140.00	
Udo Educational Fund	36.00	

Respectfully Submitted,
 Lowell R. Moen, Trustee's Treasurer
 B. J. Naumann, Chairman