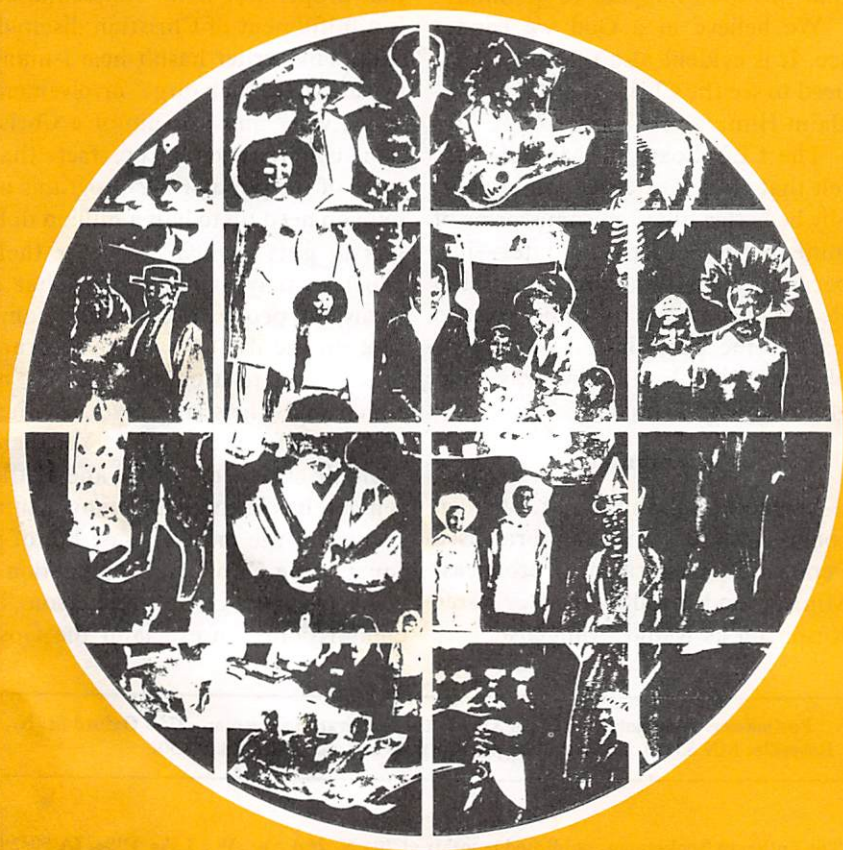


**Lutheran**

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# **SPOKESMAN**



**GO THEREFORE AND MAKE  
DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS**

**CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION**

# AGAIN, A VOICE GOES OUT

In June of 1979 Immanuel Seminary presented to the church a man as apt to teach, and equipped for the public ministry of the Gospel. That is not unusual. Except for the fact that this man happens to be blind.

We believe in a God we cannot see. It is evident also that we do not need to see the Christ in order to proclaim Him.

The CLC Board of Missions has felt that Greg Kesterson might actually be better suited to some forms of ministry than other candidates—just because of his blindness. Chairman Redlin encouraged us in the West to explore the possibilities. Some type of institutional ministry was suggested as an example.

## On the Air

Beginning in January, St. Stephen congregation of the San Francisco Peninsula inaugurated a Broadcast Ministry and installed the Rev. Greg Kesterson as Radio Evangelist.

*Evangelist* rather than *Pastor*. The congregation wants it clearly understood that they are not creating yet another "electric church." Some religious broadcasts seem to suggest that proper frequency frequentation is a fulfillment of Christian discipleship. This writer hasn't heard many broadcasts which urge involvement in the work and worship of a Christian congregation. The fact that some of the popular TV programs of religion need up to half a million dollars in gifts *per day* to cover their expenses may explain why. That a thousand people tune to the same spot on the dial, however, does not mean they are a church, a body in which one Christian serves another with the gifts of the Spirit. Yet there is ample evidence that TV and Radio religion has become for many a substitute for the more prosaic life of a functioning Christian congregation.

As an evangelist, Kesterson is commissioned to proclaim the Gos-

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**Radio Evangelist Kesterson at Work**

pel. His special concern will be those who have no one to announce the Kingdom to them, those who have no one to feed them as a pastor should as he tends a flock over which the Holy Spirit has made him an overseer. As an evangelist he will not be offering a substitute for congregational life. His aim will be to proclaim a gospel through which the Spirit will call and gather people,—first to their Lord and then to brothers and sisters in the Lord. So his work is designed to be supportive of congregational life, and in no sense competitive. It is significant that this ministry should be a part of a *congregation's* ministry to the world.

### **The Program**

At present the congregation purchases fifteen minutes of air time, at 8:45 p.m. Sundays. KRVE, an FM station in the San Jose suburb of Los Gatos, carries the program. Additional broadcast coverage is planned as soon as financial strength allows. A generous grant from a sister congregation has given real strength to the fund which was established for

the sole purpose of expediting the Broadcast Ministry.

It is hoped that Evangelist Kesterson will soon become a specialist in the techniques of this form of gospel ministry, able to help others who wish to employ this way of witness. Since he is accustomed to speaking to others without seeing them, he has an advantage not enjoyed by those who must learn to speak over a mike to an unseen audience. His voice and speaking style are naturally very well suited to the medium. He is comfortable and confident in the work.

The Broadcast Ministry plans to make broadcast transcriptions available, either on cassette or reel-to-reel tape, for those who might wish to use them in regional broadcasts. Time is allowed for local announcements referring listeners to a sponsoring church.

Requests for more information may be addressed to the Rev. Greg Kesterson in care of St. Stephen Lutheran Ministries Office, 690 W Fremont, Room 2-A, Sunnyvale, CA 94087.

—Rollin A. Reim

# DOCTRINAL THEMES in the

# Book of Concord

## Relics, Sacramentals, Purgatory, and Other Superstitions

Martin Chemnitz, the second Martin of the Reformation period, wrote:

“This one article (justification) above all distinguishes the Church from all other people and superstitions. . . . Indeed, this article is, as it were, the fortress which most excellently safeguards the entire Christian doctrine and religion. If this article is obscured or vitiated or destroyed, it is impossible to retain the pure doctrine in other articles. But when it is kept sound, all idolatrous notions, superstitions, and the corruptions in nearly all other articles will fall by themselves.” (Quoted in F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, II, p. 515)

How precious the troubled Christian has found this article of justification to be! God the Father has in Christ—by virtue of His atonement—declared the whole world righteous, not guilty. In Christ we are reconciled to God. We have Luther to thank for again uncovering the truth concerning this article of faith, and the faithful confessors after him, for continuing to set it forth in its clarity as they do, and for alerting us to the evil that lurks if we should surrender it.

### Superstition at Work

Rome had sacrificed the doctrine of justification to the idea of salvation by personal merit. With the teaching of salvation by personal merit came also the superstition related to relics. Relics are things venerated (adored), such as the remains of a sacred object, event, or person.

Relics still play a great role in Catholic life. Witness the “Shroud of Turin.” Much effort is being made to authenticate the shroud as the shroud in which Jesus was wrapped for burial. It is supposed to bear the imprint of the dead Christ.

After the pope’s recent visit to Chicago, it was reported that the “faithful” scratched slivers, with their fingernails, from the platform on which he offered mass. What has really changed since the period of the Reformation when the Roman Church claimed to have a piece of Christ’s cross, a thorn from His crown, a nail that held Him to the cross, and even a piece of bread from the last supper?

The Roman Church did not take kindly to an attack on its superstition. According to the Council of Trent, Session XXV, all who refuse to accept veneration of relics "are wholly to be condemned." The Council of Trent still stands today as a public statement of Catholic doctrine.

### The Lutheran Attitude

Concerning relics Luther says in the *Large Catechism* under the Third Commandment:

**"For though we had the bones of all the saints or all holy and consecrated garments upon a heap, still that would help us nothing. . . . God's Word is the treasure which sanctifies everything."**

And again we read in the *Smalcald Articles*; Part II, Article II:

**"The relics, in which there are found so many falsehoods and tomfooleries concerning the bones of dogs and horses, that even the devil has laughed at such rascalities, ought long ago to have been condemned, even though there were some good in them; and so much the more because they are without the Word of God."**

Why should they be condemned? Because the setting forth of relics in the manner of Rome, and according to its purpose, which is to release the venerator of these relics from years in purgatory, vitiates the cardinal Bible doctrine of justification.

### Still More

The teaching of sacramentals falls under the title of superstition also, because it too obscures the doctrine of justification. In the terminology of Rome, sacramentals are rites insti-

tuted by the church, having some outward resemblance to the Sacraments. Sacramentals—prayer, confession, the blessing of bishops, holy water, blessed candles, medals, etc.—when piously performed, "may move God to give special graces" and also remit venial sins. Rome qualifies the worth of sacramentals by saying that they "depend for their efficacy upon the personal devotion of the faithful using them, and the intention of the Church, manifested by her official prayers." (*Question Box*, p. 342)

And what shall we say about purgatory, Rome's "in-between place" to which souls are said to go after death? There souls "detained are helped by the suffrages (prayers) of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar." (*Question Box*, p. 394)

But what does Scripture say? "By grace are ye saved." (Eph. 2:8) "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. 9:27) The *Smalcald Articles* declare:

**"Therefore purgatory, and every solemnity, rite, and commerce connected with it, is to be regarded as nothing but a specter of the devil. For it conflicts with the chief article that only Christ, and not the works of men, are to help souls. Not to mention the fact that nothing has been divinely commanded or enjoined upon us concerning the dead." (Part II, Article II)**

### Not Limited to Rome

Our catechism defines superstition thus: "Every form of 'religion' not founded on the Word of God." Have you ever heard an invitation on the radio to purchase a so-called "prayer-cloth"? According to those who sell them, this prayer-cloth will bring

blessing to you if you lay it on the radio while you are listening to, and praying with, the radio speaker. Superstition!

Most of us are acquainted with the astrological horoscopes that appear in the daily paper. They appear in more than a thousand newspapers across the land. Astrologers tell you that your life is determined by the star under which you were born. Astrology has no need for the true God.

Witchcraft is alive and well in the land. A high priest of witchcraft says that witchcraft is a "religion of freedom, joy in the sensual appetites and in nature." (*Those Curious New Cults*, p. 67) Bookstores across the country are filled with books on witchcraft and the occult, and even Satanism. These forms of superstition, and countless others similar to them, are poison to the soul. They are the meanderings of human minds devoid of the Truth, offering only to gratify the greed and lust of the flesh, without Christ, and having no hope in the world, or for that which is to come.

Of these practices it is to be said, as Luther said of the papal "bag of impostures":

"Such deceptions there are without number, which we commend for adoration to their god and to themselves, until they weary of it. We will have nothing to do with it." (*Smalcald Articles*, Part III, Article XV)

### Lutheranism Not Immune

To the extent that Protestantism has surrendered the article of justification, it has adopted superstition. Lutheranism has not been left un-

touched. It could be expected that Lutheran clergymen would agree with Scripture that Jesus is the only Savior, for does Scripture not say: "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior" (Is. 43:11)? Yet in recent years some Lutheran clergymen have openly denied this fundamental truth of our Christian faith: Jesus is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. (John 14:6)

In the context of denying the invocation of saints the *Augsburg Confession* says: "**Scripture teaches not the invocation of saints, since it sets before us the one Christ, as the Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest, and Intercessor.**" (Art. XXI) Denial of Christ as the one and only Savior from sin, and the only way to life, is a return to the superstition of work-righteousness practiced by the sects and Rome.

### It Seems Impossible, But . . .

On Reformation Day, 1979, the archbishop of the St. Paul diocese addressed a joint Reformation service of Lutherans in the Twin Cities. He addressed the ecumenical gathering by invitation of pastors from the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church, the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, and the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He spoke to them according to his own words "as a representative of the Roman Catholic Church." He rejoiced at the "agreement" that has been reached thus far in the Catholic-Lutheran dialogues.

The fact is that Rome has never

retracted any doctrine set forth in the Council of Trent, not the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope, or the doctrine of the Mass, or the invocation of saints. If progress is being made, who is changing? It becomes apparent that some of Lutheranism is sinking back into the mire of superstition propagated by Rome and rejected by our Lutheran fathers on the basis of Scripture.

### **Beware of "Lutheran" Superstitions**

The veneration of relics and saints, together with the Roman doctrine of purgatory and the sacramentals, is to be rejected as "contrary to the doctrine which we have learned." (Rom. 16:17) It is deceptively destructive to our faith and finally to our eternal life. (Rom. 16:18)

At the same time the Lutheran confessions recognize that rejecting such superstitions and idolatrous practices and customs does not mean that we are free to substitute similar rites and customs of Lutheran origin. So long as certain rites, customs, and traditions within the Lutheran Church do not supplant the Word

and deny Christ, they have their place. If, however, long-held Lutheran customs, rites, or traditions become an end in themselves, they become merely Lutheran superstitions.

**"Therefore we reject and condemn as wrong when the ordinances of men in themselves are regarded as a service or part of the service of God. We reject and condemn as wrong when these ordinances are by coercion forced upon the congregation of God as necessary." (Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Art. X)**

### **The Truth Our Fortress**

**"Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight. Rom. 3 & 4." (Augsburg Confession, Art. IV)**

When the article of justification is kept sound, the troubled sinner finds true peace and rest, and "all idolatrous notions, superstitions, and the corruptions in nearly all other articles will fall by themselves."

—Daniel Fleischer

## **Who Is Your Favorite Pastor?**

**"For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (First Corinthians 3:21-23)**

A chapel address given at Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

I'm going to ask a question that should be avoided, and I do not want you to answer it. Too much trouble has come to Christian congregations because of it. It just about wrecked

the church at Corinth centuries ago, when that congregation was an outpost of Christianity in a hostile world.

The question does not sound dan-

gerous: "Who is your favorite pastor?" Perhaps it has been asked by someone on campus today because the pastors of our Wisconsin-Michigan Conference are meeting here on campus for a two-day conference. If it does get asked by one of you, don't answer it the way the Corinthians did. For once you get to thinking of your pastor as a man with flaws and failings, shortcomings and disagreeable personal traits, you are on a collision course with the Holy Spirit, who sends you your pastor as God's spokesman. Humans they are, and therefore probably as easy to find fault with as anybody. But *not by you or me!* We are not going to let our sinful flesh pull that trick on us, and rob us of the spiritual pleasure God intends to channel to us through our pastor. Once a Christian or a whole congregation goes that route—you better know it—Satan is having *his way*.

### **The Three Nominees in Corinth**

To illustrate: you have the names of three pastors before you already, pastors who were in the middle of a mess created by that kind of favoritism. One pastor who had served—and served well—was played off against another who had also served well. Even a third got added as the congregation split into cliques. "I am of Paul; he's the best preacher we ever had." "Well, I'm going to support Apollos; he's better educated than the others." "Cephas (Peter) is my favorite; he's a real man!" (Compare 1 Cor. 3:4-6)

A popularity poll in some other

setting might be acceptable: for civic officials or personalities in some social role in the state. But in the setting of the assembly of saints it is positively detrimental, for where there is a favorite, there are non-favorites. For each winner, there must be losers. Whether in Corinth or any other Christian church, there is no need for going into this foolish exercise of insisting that one pastor surpasses another. The Corinthian Christians had been given each of these godly servants in turn as pastors, and each had been used by the Spirit to do blessed service for the *whole* congregation. ALL THINGS ARE YOURS; WHETHER PAUL, OR APOLLOS, OR CEPHAS. . . . ALL ARE YOURS.

There is no percentage, Paul tells them, in selecting one of the three for special honoring. All three were theirs as gifts from above; all three together brought them so much more than any one by himself. So *use all three!* Rejoice that a triple portion of pastoral leadership has been yours. It's rather like being offered three treasures, and you foolishly pick only one, discarding two that were meant for you.

### **Different Abilities**

For God gives different abilities to each pastor, and different pastors have differing strong points. Paul, for example, had been a Pharisee—and not just one of the ordinary sort. He had been a super Pharisee, dedicated and sincere and devoted to making God pay attention to him for being letter-perfect. God stopped him, and made him pay attention to



Jesus for being divinely perfect. From then on there was nobody like Paul for knowing the flaw in the heart of the Pharisee; and God used that man for special work because of his background.

Apollos, on the other hand, was a university man, educated in the niceties of all that society holds dear. He could talk literature and ethics, sociology and morals, science and relativity. And so he as God's servant could show the world's wisdom for the tinsel that it is.

But Peter was a man's man, blunt and brawny; a big fisherman, caloused and crusty, with a heart as big as all outdoors. People liked him for his manliness, I suppose; and God used him for some heavy plowing in the field of this world.

### Use All of God's Gifts

The folks at Corinth should look at these great men of God with reverent, humble, and thankful hearts, because they had been given such a rich variety of pastors. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as

... kings. . . ." (First Cor. 4:1, 6-8a)

This problem created by looking at the pastor in his person rather than in his office as God's servant has unnecessarily plagued many a Christian. The Spirit laid out the blessings at another time for the Ephesian brethren: "It is he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining the full measure of perfection found in Christ." (Eph. 4: 11-13—NIV)

That is why Jesus gave to His Church His Paul, His Apollos, His Cephas. Who are yours? The CLC Directory lists them all. Each of them is Christ's gift to His Church. **ALL ARE YOURS; AND YE ARE CHRIST'S; AND CHRIST IS GOD'S.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We praise You, our Lord and God, for doing all You have done for us through our pastors and teachers. We do treasure them as gifts from You to us. Forgive us when we have not loved them or honored them as we ought; we are sorry for that. We ask You to bless our shepherds with a large outpouring of Your Spirit . . . for their sakes first, and then for ours. Thank You for loving them and us; and for listening to our requests. In Jesus, as always. Amen.

—Paul R. Koch

# The Missouri Synod and Church Fellowship

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LC-MS) spoke clearly on church fellowship when it adopted the *Brief Statement* in 1932.

“Since God ordained that His Word *only*, without the admixture of human doctrine, be taught and believed in the Christian Church, all Christians are required by God to discriminate between orthodox and heterodox church bodies, to have church fellowship only with orthodox church bodies, and, in case they have strayed into heterodox church bodies, to leave them. We repudiate *unionism*, that is, church fellowship with the adherents of false doctrine, as disobedience to God’s command, as causing divisions in the Church, and as involving the constant danger of losing the Word of God entirely.”

The Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) considered this statement on church fellowship so Scripturally sound and pertinent that it quoted it word for word in its 1961 confession *Concerning Church Fellowship*. We have been making an earnest attempt ever since that time to put it into practice in all of our synodical dealings as well as in every congregation. For we agree with the *Brief Statement* that the orthodox character of a church is established “by the doctrine which is *actually* taught in its pulpits, in its theological seminaries, and in its publications.”<sup>1</sup>

## The Missouri Synod Today

Sad to say, in the synod where this confession originated and once held sway, the Biblical principles of church fellowship are now being more dishonored than honored. The alleged return to orthodoxy under the leadership of President J. A. O. Preus from 1969 to the present has certainly not included a return to the orthodox confession of the *Brief Statement* on church fellowship.

The LC-MS Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) has admitted that a problem exists, and this is the first step to a solution of the problem. In its report to the 1979 LC-MS Convention the CTCR said: “Considerable confusion exists within the Synod on the question of fellowship. This may be due in part to the fact that in recent years serious attention has not been given to a thorough study of the Biblical and confessional principles of fellowship. . . . There is some confusion regarding the Biblical basis for the Synod’s traditional repudiation of the sin of unionism.”<sup>2</sup>

This confusion comes as no surprise to us. For many years it has been common practice for some LC-MS pastors to join with other Lutherans and Protestants in ecumenical services. There have been numerous instances of ecumenical wedding services in which Roman Catholic priests and LC-MS pastors officiated together. In the Twin Cities area an LC-MS clergyman joined with other Lutherans in inviting the Roman Catholic archbishop, John Roach, to be the guest speaker at their 1979 Reformation service. Since this

kind of practice is common among the Missouri Synod clergy, we are not at all surprised to hear that there is confusion among the members. Perhaps the most surprising thing about the CTCR report is that *unionism* is mentioned and that it is called a *sin*.

There are several factors, however, that stand in the way of an LC-MS return to orthodoxy on the doctrine of church fellowship. One is the position and practice of President J. A. O. Preus himself. He once knew and defended the Bible teaching on church fellowship when he was a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), but he has repeatedly rejected the Bible's teaching on this subject since that time. In recent statements on this doctrine President Preus indicates that he is in favor of *selective fellowship*, namely, that each congregation should decide for itself with whom it wants to practice fellowship.<sup>3</sup> In effect this is what is happening right now, for little or no synodical discipline is being exercised over against those who openly practice "the sin of unionism."

### Fellowship in Protest

Another factor that stands in the way of an LC-MS return to the *Brief Statement* is its membership in the Lutheran Council of the United States of America (LCUSA) and its fellowship with the American Lutheran Church (ALC).

To be sure, there were some LC-MS leaders who urged the synod at its July 1979 convention to sever fellowship with the ALC. But the convention voted by a margin of 861 to 147 to continue the fellowship "in protest" for two more years.

This compromising policy of protesting fellowship is one subject that surely needs to be restudied on the basis of God's Word. We remember that many of us, as members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), were also led astray on this point in the years before 1961. For it was then that the WELS practiced a "vigorously protesting fellowship" with the LC-MS.

The Bible indicates that a decision must be made either to "salute . . . with a holy kiss" or to "avoid." (Romans 16) One can hardly do both at the same time. The *Brief Statement* likewise speaks of only two categories: orthodox and heterodox. Have fellowship with the orthodox. Do not have fellowship with the adherents of false doctrine.

We concede, in *Concerning Church Fellowship* (p. 39), that "sometimes . . . the issue is in doubt, for it is not clear whether the error has taken such a firm hold that it has become the public doctrine of the groups, or whether it is being combated successfully and eradicated."

But we hasten to add:

"When, however, such a state of protesting fellowship is proclaimed, but business is carried on as usual, with the individual continuing to treat the errorists as though they were still faithful teachers and hearers of the Word—exchanging pulpits, transferring members, intercommun-

ing, and the like—then that use of the expression is to be condemned as a cloak for unionistic activity. Without the appropriate action it becomes mere lip-service. Once again, the simple are deceived into thinking that these matters are not serious, not clearly taught in Scripture, not divisive.”

The LC-MS needs to determine whether the ALC is orthodox or heterodox. If the evidence indicates that the ALC is heterodox, God has given a definite command that must be obeyed. Postponement is disobedience to God’s Word. “Fellowship in protest” would seem to be a political solution intended to satisfy both so-called conservatives and moderates. But it should not satisfy anyone who wants to follow God’s Word.

Of course, God’s Word requires the avoidance not only of the ALC and LCUSA but also of those elements within the LC-MS that support wrong teaching. There simply is no easy way, no politically safe way, to do what God’s Word requires.

—D. Lau

## Some Footnotes

The following footnotes are intended to clarify some of the points made in the above article:

1. Dr. Franz Pieper, the chief author of the *Brief Statement*, went so far as to say in *Lehre und Wehre* (Vol. 36, p. 261f.):

“We Missourians only then consider a church body, as a body, as orthodox when the pure doctrine is proclaimed from all pulpits and professors’ chairs and in all writings that become public within the communion, and when on the other hand every erroneous teaching is *stopped* in the manner directed by God as soon as it makes its appearance. . . . If it were shown us that even only *one* pastor were preaching false doctrine, or that even only *one* periodical were in the service of false doctrine, and we would not put a stop to this false doctrine, then we would thereby have ceased being an orthodox synod, and we would have become a unionistic fellowship.”

2. In a recently published “Bible Study on Fellowship” (available from Concordia Publishing House) the CTCR of the LC-MS says very little about “the sin of unionism.” After warning about the dangers of false teaching, the study says: “The Scriptures teach that under certain conditions Christians are to withhold certain outward expressions of fellowship. When must separation take place (Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-11; 2 John 2, 7-11; Gal. 1: 6-9)?”

The comprehensive study on fellowship to be presented by the CTCR in the fall of 1980 will have to spell out how the LC-MS understands these four Bible passages on termination of church fellowship, and also what the “certain” conditions are for withholding “certain” expressions of fellowship. We await this comprehensive study with interest.

3. Various public statements made by Pres. J. A. O. Preus do indeed indicate that he favors some form of selective fellowship. The December 17 issue of *Christian News* (page 7) presents some of this evidence. Nevertheless the December *Lutheran Witness*, the official paper of the LC-MS, quotes Preus as saying: "Some have construed my recent comments on this subject to indicate that I am suggesting selective fellowship. The LCMS has consistently, and, I'm sure, will continue to reject this concept. Our discussions will not be aided by use of this term or accusing persons of supporting this approach." In view of such apparent contradictions it is not surprising that Pres. Preus admits: "I don't have the answers." (*The Lutheran Standard* of November 20, 1979)

—D. Lau

## The Charismatic Movement and the Full Gospel

Some years ago when I separated myself from my former church body (The Lutheran Church in America—LCA), I was confronted by a man of Pentecostal persuasion who said: "Well, you've taken a big step. Now, why don't you come all the way to the Full Gospel?" To this man water baptism was not enough. He believed that I should receive something in addition, namely, the "baptism of the Holy Ghost," which, he was convinced, would give me added spiritual gifts.

The central teaching of Christianity is justification by grace through faith. The central teaching of the charismatic movement is the baptism or infilling of the Holy Spirit. We can quite readily see that if one adds something to the Gospel, he at once has another gospel. Concerning this St. Paul writes: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let

him be accursed. As we said before, so say I again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:8-9) The charismatics stand under God's curse because they bring another gospel, thereby perverting the true Gospel, justification by grace through faith.

### A Second Baptism

Their perversion of the Gospel lies in their insistence on a second baptism (following conversion), not of water, but of the Holy Ghost. This clearly implies that God's justification of the sinner through the life and death of Jesus Christ is still not enough to bring the Holy Spirit to that sinner. But Holy Scripture teaches just the opposite—that the Holy Spirit comes fully to the individual sinner when he is brought to faith by the Gospel.

If the life, death, and resurrection of the Son of God (the message of the

Gospel) is not enough to make us recipients of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, then what else do we need? The charismatics would tell us that we still need certain works and experiences, healings, tongues, yielding of self to the Spirit, etc. Anyone who truly knows and loves the Gospel can see that this is absolutely false! It is the objective Gospel alone that makes us temples of the Holy Spirit and causes Him to dwell in us. This is the true Gospel, the Full Gospel, and woe be to that man who adds to or subtracts anything from it. (Rev. 22:18-19)

The charismatics insist that their experiences are more spiritual than faith itself. In the Bible we read of a salvation that is outside of ourselves, an objective salvation that is real because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ for all men. Then we read also in God's Word that this general salvation is made our very own personal salvation by the work of the Holy Spirit as He brings us to faith by the power of the Gospel. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2:2) The New Testament knows nothing of a salvation based on human merit or experience. Rather, salvation is something that takes place outside of us in the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his preaching St. Paul placed the emphasis on Christ, not on himself and his experience. Likewise did Luther preach and teach the Gospel of the Lord Christ instead of himself and his experiences, even though he had a multitude of spiri-

tual experiences, as we all know.

But the charismatics speak mainly of their experiences (speaking in tongues, faith healing, yielding, etc.) and make the objective Gospel purely incidental. This emphasis on self and experiences instead of on Christ tends to puff one up until he trusts in himself and his religious experiences for salvation instead of the Savior. Therein lies the tremendous danger of Pentecostalism.

### Receiving the Spirit

The charismatics also speak much of the "spirit." When the Zwickau prophets came to Luther and cried "the spirit, the spirit," he replied: "I'll have none of your spirit; I'll smack him on the snout." Luther knew that such a spirit was not the Spirit of God because the Holy Spirit of God speaks not of Himself, but of the Lord Jesus. In John 16:13ff. we read the words of Jesus: "When the Spirit of Truth is come, . . . He shall speak not of Himself. . . . He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and show it unto you."

When people constantly speak of "the spirit" you can be certain they do not have Him. But when they speak of Christ and His precious Gospel and when they gladly continue in His Word, then you can rest assured that they do.

Pentecostalism, that is, the charismatic movement, presents the Lord Jesus Christ as an incomplete gift from God by separating the receiving of Christ from the receiving of the Holy Spirit. A few years ago another man of charismatic convictions

called me on the telephone and invited me to talk in his motel room. The summary of his message to me was the same as that of the man mentioned before: "You've received Christ. That is evident from your stand on the Scriptures. Now receive the Fulness of the Gospel; receive the Holy Ghost."

This is a pitiful attempt to pit the Second Person of the Godhead against the Third Person, as one might pit two opposing football teams against each other, implying that the latter team has more to offer than the former. To imply that the Holy Spirit gives a greater blessing than Christ gives or that our Lord is

incomplete in and of Himself is blasphemy, because such an implication is a denial of the truth and power of the Gospel of salvation itself. Let us be careful! When we come to faith through Holy Baptism and the Gospel, we have Christ, all of Him, and *He is all-sufficient!* St. Paul writes: "In Him (Christ) dwelleth *all the fulness* of the Godhead bodily. And *ye are complete* in Him." (Colossians 2: 9-10)

The Gospel of Christ is the Full Gospel and anyone or anything that offers Christ *plus something else* is false and should be avoided like the plague.

—F. Archer

## Daily Devotions

### THE ACTS OF THE ASCENDED KING and OF HIS KINGDOM-RULE

(See last month's introductory comments)

#### March Acts

- |    |          |  |
|----|----------|--|
| 1  | 10:1-23  | The King calls a conference with His messengers.   |
| 2  | 10:24-48 | The King's messenger got the message.  |
| 3  | 11:1-18  | Praise God! The King's people are called from every nation.                                  |
| 4  | 11:19-30 | All of the King's subjects tell abroad the good news of the Kingdom.                         |
| 5  | 12:1-19  | The King sends a secret agent to free His messenger.   |
| 6  | 12:20-25 | Woe to those who seek to claim honor belonging to our King alone.                            |
| 7  | 13:1-12  | Those who oppose the message of the King choose darkness.                                    |
| 8  | 13:13-43 | King David's royal Heir defeated man's most relentless foe.                                  |
| 9  | 13:44-52 | King of the Jews AND King of the Gentiles.   |
| 10 | 14:1-7   | The King confirms the message of His men.  |
| 11 | 14:8-20  | Our King controls crops and weather and preserves His own.                                   |
| 12 | 14:21-28 | We pass through many hardships on our way to the world in which our King will rule in glory. |
| 13 | 15:1-21  | The King's rule is a rule of GRACE.  |
| 14 | 15:22-41 | The King's people care about each other.   |
| 15 | 16:1-10  | The King directs His messengers in more than one way.  |
| 16 | 16:11-15 | She who perhaps sold purple goods to kings, now knows THE KING.                              |
| 17 | 16:16-40 | "The family was filled with joy", for Christ now ruled in their hearts and home.             |

### Pacific Coast Pastoral Conference

The Time: February 12-14, 1980

The Place: Gethsemane Lutheran Church,  
Spokane, Washington

Host Pastor: J. L. Schierenbeck

The Agenda:

Appreciating the Unity of the Spirit We

Enjoy in the CLC—M. J. Witt

Exegesis of First Peter 4:17ff.—N. Reim

Exegesis of Psalm 2—B. J. Naumann

Life Support Systems—L. G. Bernthal

Evaluation of "Verdict"—J. Schierenbeck

Evangelism in the 80's—P. Schaller

Speaking of the Dead—Rollin Reim

Isagogical Study of Amos—H. E. Rutz

Chaplain: H. E. Rutz (N. Reim, alternate)

Preacher: G. Kesterson

—Paul Schaller, secretary

### Ordination-Installation

On December 9, 1979, at Sunnyvale, California, Gregory Brian Kesterson was ordained to the public ministry and installed as Radio Evangelist for the Broadcast Ministry by St. Stephen Lutheran Church with the authorization of CLC President E. Albrecht.

—Rollin A. Reim

### Change of Address

Pastor Glenn A. Oster  
402 31st St. NE #230  
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|----|-------------|---|
| 18 | 17:1-9      | Not "another king", but rather THE KING.  |
| 19 | 17:10-15    | The King's subjects are people of the Book.                                     |
| 20 | 17:16-32    | The LORD of heaven and earth sends out His men so that He might not be unknown. |
| 21 | 18:1-17     | The King keeps in contact with those in His service.                            |
| 22 | 18:18-28    | The Scriptures are clear: Jesus is the Christ the King.                         |
| 23 | 19:1-22     | The King's Way is oft maligned, but it is the only Way.                         |
| 24 | 19:23-41    | Our King doesn't need mobs to press His claims.                                 |
| 25 | 20:1-12     | Our King is the Lord of Life.   |
| 26 | 20:13-38    | The King's servants serve each other.   |
| 27 | 21:1-16     | The King's will be done.  |
| 28 | 21:17-26    | The King's men confer.  |
| 29 | 21:27-36    | Nobody said life in the King's service would be easy—or uneventful.             |
| 30 | 21:27-22:21 | Paul relates how he was called into the King's service.                         |
| 31 | 22:22-29    | The King's people have a dual citizenship.                                      |

—W. V. Schaller

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