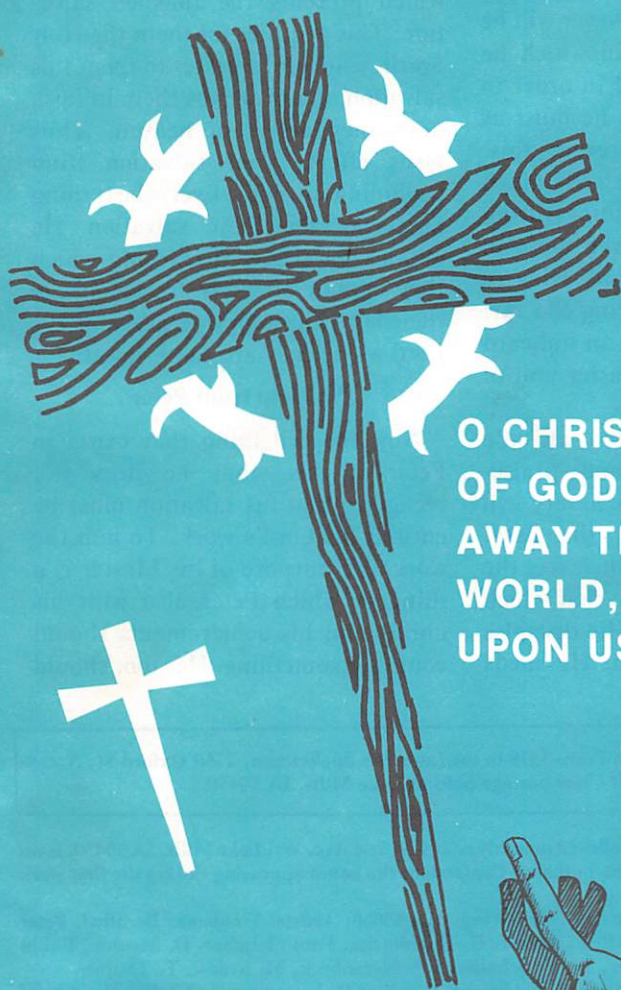


# LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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O CHRIST, THOU LAMB  
OF GOD, THAT TAKEST  
AWAY THE SIN OF THE  
WORLD, HAVE MERCY  
UPON US!



CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

# BY GRACE ALONE

**“Then cometh Jesus to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto Him, ‘Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?’” (Jn. 13:6)**

Peter should permit his feet to be washed by his Lord and Master whom he knows as the Christ, the Son of the Living God? Never will he permit it! The esteem in which he holds his Lord forbids it! In order to preserve his self-respect, he must as disciple and servant prevent this. Peter has already received much grace, benefit, and friendliness from his Lord, and expects even more in the future, but to permit Him to wash his feet, that is going too far! This, it seems to him, is an unheard of degradation of his Master and of himself.

At first glance Peter's attitude appears to be good and praise-worthy, but in fact it is a very evil thing, as is so often the case. Through the washing of their feet the Lord wishes to symbolize that which He will accomplish for His disciples in His work of salvation. He sheds

His divine blood which washes away their sins. He establishes the Gospel, which presents the finished salvation. This acquires for them the Holy Spirit, who appropriates to them this salvation and preserves them in faith until they arrive in heaven. Thus Jesus effects their salvation from beginning to end. Every last thing necessary for their salvation He obtains for them. Everything which they cannot effect is freely laid in their lap. Through free grace of the Lord alone they are to be saved.

## **No Help from Peter**

Now the evil thing that exists in Peter is this, that he does not recognize that his salvation must be entirely his Lord's work. To him the work and purpose of his Master is a thing in which Peter also with his ability and his achievements should count for something. He, too, should

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have some credit. To permit the Lord to wash his feet seems inappropriate to him; however, he will apply the sword in behalf of his Master, if need be. He is ready to go with Him into prison and death. To do something like this is really *worth* something, as far as Peter is concerned. This effort on his part, he deems, is, above all, incumbent on him.

This attitude of Peter is something which impresses people. They refer to him as an honorable or precious and noble character, an energetic and heroic person. But what does the Lord Jesus say? He rejects Peter and his drawn sword. He says: "Put up thy sword into the sheath." (Jn. 18:11) When Peter vows that, though all others would be offended in Him, he would never be offended, and that he is willing to go to prison and death with Him, Jesus informs Peter that he will deny Him three times before the cock crows twice.

And here, as He is washing his feet, He tells him: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." (Jn. 13:8) Very decisively the Lord says to Peter: All depends on this that you despair of yourself and receive My grace, which alone saves. I alone, *not I together with you*, but I alone effect your salvation, and if you reject this grace, you must go on without Me and be lost.

But Peter does not permit himself to be counselled, and so he will have to experience how far he will get with his confidence in *self*. On this very night his cocksure faith in his Lord turns to base unfaithfulness. Puzzled and confused because everything is

going so differently from what he had expected, alarmed by chattering women and common soldiers, amid cursing and swearing the miserable denial passes over his lips: "I know not the man." (Mt. 26:74) Now he sees in its true worth his own merit which he had esteemed so highly. He goes out and weeps bitterly.

### **The Lesson Is Learned**

And now? Now that he is fully down and out, now that he is completely ashamed in his own eyes, now he grasps at the grace of his Lord. That grace of which the look of the Lord assured him is the saving rope for which the drowning man grasps. Now he sees that grace, only grace, can help him. His heart cries for grace, only grace. This grace alone is his comfort. To this grace alone he clings. Now he does that which he later advises others to do when he writes: "Fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you." (1 Pet. 1:13 - NASB) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9)

And behold, this grace appropriated by Peter through faith makes him truly great. Now he is truly humble and desires no more to say that he loves Jesus more than the other disciples. Now he is deeply grieved when Jesus addresses him for the third time, asking if he loves Him. Now he can say, calling on the omniscience of the Lord: "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou

knowest that I love Thee.” (Jn. 21:17) Now stepping before powerful enemies who have crucified Jesus, he as a true and faithful witness declares: “Ye killed the Prince of life,” (Acts 3:15) and: “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12) Now he is ready to face the strict prohibition to further witness of Jesus. We are told that when he was beaten because of his witness to Jesus Christ, he left the court rejoicing that he was permitted to suffer shame for the sake of his Lord’s name. (Acts 5:41) Now he remains a faithful witness of his Savior even until his witness to his Lord is sealed in death.

Oh, that we would avail ourselves

in this present Lenten season of the opportunity to learn and realize more fully how totally lost and helpless we are, but also how our Savior has completely and fully provided for our salvation, so that we are even now saved alone by grace! Oh, that we would completely despair of all self-help in the area of salvation and confidently grasp the grace won by our Savior as our only rescue, comfort, and hope! Oh, that we in no way would belittle this free grace! Then we will truly rejoice in our Savior, be certain of our salvation, and be new creatures.

Note: The above sermonette by Herman Gieschen appeared in German in the *Ev. Luth. Gemeindeblatt* of Feb. 21, 1932. The English translation was prepared by Herbert Witt.

## IT IS FINISHED

John 19:30

Many the sacrifices that had been made  
 As God’s people waited for Jesus,  
 But never was said by a prophet or priest:  
 “This is the last. They are finished.”  
 And so with the man who would earn  
 for himself  
 The favor of God by his workings:  
 No matter how good or how great are  
 his works,  
 He never can say: “It is finished.”  
 For all man may do, though he try as  
 he will,  
 To earn for himself his salvation,  
 His works cannot buy what God has  
 to give,

What has been prepared. “It is finished!”  
 The sin of mankind which dogs our  
 whole life  
 Was nailed to the tree with our  
 Savior,  
 And now sin and hell with death has  
 been quelled,  
 And Satan the liar is finished.  
 Salvation is given, no more can be  
 added,  
 It stands and cannot be diminished.  
 And all through our lives as we walk  
 here with God,  
 We know in our hearts that it’s  
 finished.

—L. D. Redlin

# the Brief Statement 50 years

## Of Redemption

Note: For best results read the following article together with the *Brief Statement* and the Bible passages listed there. The *Brief Statement* can be ordered from the CLC Book House, Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, WI 54701.

"Fellow Redeemed!"

When asked why he prefaced his sermons with that greeting, Dean Madson (1886-1962) explained, "Because that includes everyone of my audience. I am proclaiming the Gospel to everyone there, believer and unbeliever alike. All may not be saved, but all are redeemed."

In this way the venerable Madson made a point about redemption that is often neglected, and (especially in Reformed circles) actually denied. It is an aspect of the work of Jesus which fills the mouth with praise for His great glory. It is *full* gospel, bringing solid comfort to troubled sinners. "He died for *all*. . . . God was reconciling the *world* to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them" (2 Cor. 5). There is no person on earth to whom we may not say with complete assurance, "Christ has redeemed you."

"God has reconciled the whole sinful world unto Himself."

As we would expect, the 1932 *Brief Statement* brought a clear testimony to this. "God has reconciled the whole sinful world unto Himself."

### Just What Do You Mean?

Is everyone agreed that careful doctrinal statements are necessary? Why must we belabor something as simple and as glorious as the Gospel of Redemption with our definitions and formulations?

We know a Lutheran pastor in Iowa who met another Protestant clergyman in the small town post office. After exchanging some pleasantries, the second man asked, rather impatiently, "I don't see why we can't be working together,

exchanging pulpits and so on. We certainly witness to the same Gospel. We both believe that we are redeemed by Jesus Christ."

"Just what do you mean by that?" asked the Lutheran.

"Well, it's very simple. Jesus led a perfect life, giving me the ideal example. I'm redeemed by doing as He did."

Nothing could be farther from the Scriptural view, of course. "In *Him* we have redemption *through His blood*, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace" (Ephesians 1:7 - NIV). And our confession of this vital truth

"The purpose of this miraculous incarnation of the Son of God was that He might become the *Mediator* between God and men, both fulfilling the divine Law and suffering and dying in the place of mankind."

must be perfectly clear if *Redemption* is to be a word of hope to anybody. The *Brief Statement* does not disappoint. It declares that it is solely the doing and dying of *Christ* which effected our redemption. As Mediator between God and Man, Jesus was "both fulfilling the divine Law and suffering and dying in the place of mankind."

#### **Paying the Ransom**

Jesus once declared that the whole reason for His coming was to "give His life, a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). The Lutheran

tradition of a Passion Pilgrimage during the season of Lent bears witness to the conviction that all that happened during Christ's life "under law" (Galatians 4:4) was the price of our redemption. The climax of His redemptive living was obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. We want the world to know that this was accomplishing what no measure of gold and silver, or personal piety, or sacrifice could ever do: buy us free. It is done. The world is reconciled to God by His blood.

In the atmosphere of religious humanism, so smoggy in our time, we need the clear vision of truth, and the ability to articulate it. It is shattering to human pride to have the initiative for recovery taken away and given to another, even if it is to God. Yet it is essential that people be delivered of their delusions if their faith and hope is to be in God our Savior.

#### **Focus on the Redeemer**

In the article *Of Redemption* a surprising amount of space is given to the nature of Jesus as "true God . . . and also true man." It's like hearing a Christmas sermon in the middle of Lent. That would seem to fit more naturally in the article on the nature of God. Here again, however, the *Brief Statement* is a fine teacher for Gospel witnesses. For someone to be confident in Christ's redemption of the world, he must be made sure of the Redeemer's qualifications for this gracious service. No one from the ranks of the ordinary human race could possibly

do it. "No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him—the ransom for a life is *costly*" (Psalm 49:7 - NIV). So we must, in speaking of redemption, give careful testimony to the way in which God Himself designed and created the only human being who could be the "*Mediator* between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all men" (I Timothy 2:6 - NIV).

### **That Gracious Word**

Those who are led by the Spirit to recognize their redemption for what it truly is, and in faith lay claim to their privileges—to such there can be no sweeter sound than "the word of

"Jesus Christ is . . . true God and true man in *one* undivided and indivisible person."

reconciliation." The deeper their understanding, the clearer their perception, the more exalted they will be. When we know the kindness of God, and the things He has prepared for them that love Him, we find it quite wonderful to declare, "We are not our own. We are bought with a price."

"Fellow Redeemed . . ."

Let's keep the music in that gracious greeting.

—Rollin A. Reim

## Preparing Our Children To Cope With Drugs

I'm almost embarrassed to come out here regarded as some kind of expert in the field of preparing kids to cope with drugs. The simple truth of the matter is that no one can prepare them to cope with drugs once they're on them. The secret of the matter—and it is not a very well-kept secret—is to provide a family life which is secure and stable enough that your children will not feel the need to do more than experiment with them.

Having said this, I should sit down and say that's it, that's all there is to say. But for the sake of discussion let's talk a bit about just what kind of family life we have in mind. Here's

another reason I feel almost embarrassed about coming all the way out here at your expense. The kind of family life we're talking about is almost second nature or taken for granted among Christians. We have God's Word as our chart and compass, our map and lode star to guide us. But the people I work with do not have this, and most of what we take for granted is like Greek or ancient history to them. It is completely foreign matter.

### **Living and Teaching**

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 sets the tone (especially vv. 6-7): "THESE WORDS WHICH I COMMAND

YOU THIS DAY SHALL BE IN YOUR HEART AND YOU SHALL TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY TO YOUR CHILDREN; YOU SHALL TALK OF THEM WHEN YOU SIT IN YOUR HOUSE, AND WHEN YOU WALK BY THE WAY, AND WHEN YOU LIE DOWN AND WHEN YOU RISE UP."

This implies a 100% commitment to teaching and living (I prefer to say living and teaching) the will and ways of the Lord. Another way of putting this would be: Raising children is not nearly so much a job or responsibility or obligation as it is a way of looking at life, an attitude toward things, an active faith-life. If we love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind, then we will also love our neighbor (and this certainly includes the closest neighbors we have, our children) as we love ourselves. Even as there is no middle ground on loving the Lord with 100% devotion and being, so there is no middle ground as far as raising our children is concerned.

This obviously implies that you have to be deeply involved with your children and spend lots of time with them. But here I would like to make the point that more important than the *quantity* is the *quality* of time you spend with them. If you're not really serious about it, if you don't really and wholly believe in what you're doing, if you're merely putting in your time out of a sense of duty, responsibility, or obligation, believe me, the children will see right through it. And though they will probably never tell you, they will see

you as merely "doing your job," "putting in your time," or playing at being a parent. This makes a mockery out of the whole thing.

### Practicing What We Preach

Another application of this is that you must practice what you preach! Don't ever tell or ask your children to do anything you don't really believe in or that you wouldn't do yourself. A classic example comes to mind, namely, the parents who *send* their children to church and/or Sunday School but don't *take* them. What does this imply and teach but this, that while religion may be good and necessary for you, it is neither for me. Children understand when their parents send them to school but don't go themselves: they understand that it is because they need education while their parents either do not need any more education or at least think they don't. Sending, while not taking, your children to church/Sunday School implies the very same thing.

It would probably be better if parents who feel this way did not send their children at all. At least that way the children see that the most important people in their lives, their parents, simply do not believe it is important or necessary. One day they may be converted to see their great need for this. But it would seem almost impossible to convert or reconvert someone in later life whose parents have acted hypocritically by making them do something which they obviously did not believe in themselves. This is so because that



old adage is true: "The best way to produce a Christian child/man is for him to have the opportunity to watch a Christian parent in action." To do otherwise runs dangerously close to "provoking your children to anger." They see it for what it is and resent and despise the mockery (of God) it implies.

### Loving Discipline

Another watchword for the kind of family life we're talking about is discipline. *Loving, consistent, firm, and purposeful* discipline. All four of these adjectives are equally important. (And perhaps there are others of almost equal importance, but they do not come readily to mind.) Discipline which springs from anything but love—such as frustration, getting your "evens," venting one's anger or fulfilling one's own need to be in control, or a host of other reasons—can be more detrimental than helpful. Loving discipline must spring from the love of God in Christ Jesus, who wants us to disciple (discipline) our children. Though it need not always be *said* (though often it should be), it should always be *administered* something like this: God, our loving Father, who brought you and me into this world and gave up His only Son for us, has given you to me and me to you so that I should "bring you up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" and so keep you safe unto His heavenly kingdom. In order for me to fulfill my responsibility to Him and to you He expects me to insist that "children obey their parents, for this is right in the

Lord," even as we obey Him.

Consistent is probably next in importance to loving. What is wrong one time must be wrong always. We must not give in to fatigue and frustration and simply take the easy way out. To do this effectively again means that we have to have our whole heart and being in it because it is so important. It is not a part-time job. One slip due to lack of energy or concentration can sometimes undo many hours of previous good work.

And the discipline must be firm. Proverbs 13:24 and 23:13-14 put it very strongly: To spare the rod is actually to "hate" your child! Now wouldn't the world recoil at that! In connection with this I would like to say that it is only possible to *underdiscipline* a child; it is impossible to *overdiscipline* a child if you truly love him and always have and keep not only his physical but spiritual welfare in mind.

Finally, it must be discipline with a purpose. It must never be petty or mean or vindictive. As Gilbert and Sullivan would put it: The punishment should fit the crime. If you spank your child for a tiny infraction, what have you left to impress the bigger lessons of life? Or reversely put: If you stand by and do nothing or merely *talk* when your child is endangering his physical or spiritual welfare, why bother to punish anything?

### Selfless Love

Selflessness (as opposed to selfishness) is also terribly important. So many parents (many, though not all

of them, divorced or separated) are so concerned about getting their fair share or being right or fighting each other that they lose sight of the kids and create a void into which the child promptly steps. Others use their children like some kind of ping-pong ball, batting them back and forth to fill their own needs or empty lives or character defects. Still others "dump" on their children the fault or blame for their own unhappiness and unfulfilled needs and thereby produce damaged goods.

Still another important aspect of the kind of family life we're talking about is togetherness. The parents who truly enjoy their children ('s company) also treat them with respect and dignity, as individuals with a personality all their own, not merely as an extension of themselves. This is the opposite of the woman we have seen in the television commercial for a certain dishwashing product whose guests exclaim at her sparkling dishes: "Now isn't *that* a nice reflection on *you!*" In other words, don't be very worried or concerned about how your children's acts or lives affect or reflect on your family reputation. Be much more concerned about whether it is conducive to spiritual, physical or emotional growth or decay or decline.

### **Family Time**

There should be a time each day, and another time each week, which is set aside solely for the family and is considered so sacred that you would let almost nothing interfere with it. This time is most apt to be the even-

ing meal. This is, or should be, an enjoyable, unhurried, educational experience, not a hurry-up, necessary exercise to be gotten over with. Here each member of the family should be encouraged not only to talk about the highs and lows, the triumphs and defeats, the agonies and the ecstasies of his/her own day, but to be equally concerned with how the day was for every other member of the family. Not only should children be encouraged to talk about how their (school) day went, but parents also should not be afraid to speak of their day at home or at work. This writer knows many families who have not eaten a meal together in years, where each one hits and runs and hurries off to "do his own thing," and where children do not even know what their parents do for a living.

It should go without saying that family devotions are a very important part of this "family hour." But they too must be far more than an obligation or responsibility to be fulfilled and gotten over with so that the parents can get on with "the more important" things. It must be obvious to the children that this is really important to the parents and just another extension of their everyday Christian walk through life. Do the children ever see you studying or praying on your own simply because it is important to you?

### **Weltanschauung**

Now we have come back full circle to the 100% devotion of heart and mind and body and soul to God,

which we mentioned at the outset as being the key to effective Christian parenting and family life. Bringing up children is not nearly so much an obligation or job or responsibility or activity as it is a way of looking at life. (The Germans have this beautiful word *Weltanschauung* to describe what we're talking about.)

So how do you prepare your children to cope with drugs? The answer is: You don't! Instead, you create an atmosphere within the family life that is so secure and stable that your children will never feel the need to do more than experiment with drugs. (There are very few teen-age children alive in this country, if the truth is known, who have not at least experimented with drugs/alcohol once or twice.) This should not alarm anyone (be he a parent or not) who knows that the "old evil foe" still "walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." And children

are prime targets of his, and therefore need all the love, protection, help, support, and discipline any (Christian) parent can provide.

The attentive reader will notice that in the preceding sentence I have put the word "Christian" in parentheses. I did so intentionally and with a purpose. I mean to suggest by this that while it is not impossible for a non-Christian parent to establish and have the kind of family life which is conducive to children's not feeling the need to do drugs, it is infinitely more easy for the Christian parent to do this. That is, if they will simply be who they are: children of their heavenly Father, who listen attentively to their Creator-Redeemer-Sanctifier God and "order every footstep by His Word."

—Norm Harms

Note: The above was presented at the CLC Teachers' Conference, Valentine, Nebraska, on October 18, 1981, and is printed here by request of some who heard it.

## The Creationist Movement

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." (Ex. 20:11) Thus says the Lord God Himself. Today the contempt for God's word is so open and so intense that a science writer recently boasted that "no university in the country, except for sectarian colleges run by fundamentalist churches, would hire a biologist who admitted that he believed that the stars, the earth, and all living creatures were created

by God in six days." If this writer is correct in his assumption, no university today would hire men like Isaac Newton, Lewis Pasteur, Gregor Mendel, Joseph Lister, Lord Kelvin, Carolus Linnaeus, Rudolf Virchow, and a host of other true giants of science who believed that God supernaturally created all things.

In the last several months many popular science magazines as well as newspapers have published articles highly critical of creation and

creationists and vigorously supportive of the theory of evolution. Many evolutionists are urging that this battle be taken to the schools where it is hoped that the courts will allow the creative work of God to be openly denied without fear of contradiction from "fundamentalists." Evolution is "science," they argue, whereas creation is only religion and thus has no place in the public schools. Naturally the evolutionists deny that there is any physical evidence in nature for fiat creation. In fact it is impossible for consistent evolutionists to concede that there is any evidence for design in nature, because there is no room in their theory for a sovereign God. Blind chance and time is put in place of the Creator.

### **Evidence for Creation in Nature**

So clear is the evidence for creation in nature that the Scriptures tell us that God Himself has made His eternal power and Godhead evident to everyone through the things He has created so that all will be left without excuse. (Rom. 1:18-26) There are many, however, who would deceive us by holding back this truth. It is against such as these that Paul warns us when he says: "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ." (Col. 2:8 - NASB)

All of us, especially students in the secular schools, are confronted

almost daily with the insidious doctrine of evolution. We know that we must cling to the word of God in faith and let His word be true though every man be made a liar. (Rom. 3:4) Nevertheless, our faith would be severely challenged if there really were scientific facts that disproved anything in the Bible. Evolution is clearly incompatible with the whole testimony of Scripture regarding our creation and yet this theory of evolution is being taught as a "fact" in many classrooms and textbooks. The high school textbook *Biology for You* (Harcourt, Brace & World 1963, p. 531), for example, says that "all reputable biologists have agreed that evolution of life on earth is an established fact."

It is of some importance then that Christians be at least aware of the overwhelming scientific evidence against the theory of evolution. Far from being a "fact," the doctrine of evolution does not even measure up as a proper scientific theory. On the other hand, there is a considerable amount of scientific evidence that is consistent with fiat creation and the Noachian flood. This sort of evidence for creation and against evolution is what is meant by the term "scientific creationism," though, of course, there can be no scientific explanation of *how* God created.

### **Creationist Organizations**

Over the last 40 years numerous organizations have been formed by Christian scientists and laymen for the purpose of critically examining the scientific evidence as it relates to

origins. For years creationists were simply ignored, but the considerable success these scientists and laymen have enjoyed in demonstrating the scientific bankruptcy of evolution has been responsible for the current raging battle between creationists and evolutionists in the courts and the news media.

These creationist organizations can serve as a valuable source of information for anyone interested in learning more about the scientific case for creation and the inadequacy of evolution as an explanation for origins. In future articles we shall examine some of the larger and more influential creationist organizations in America in an effort to help interested Christians determine which ones might merit their attention and support.

Creationists and creationist organizations vary in what they believe they can accomplish with their scientific evidence for creation. All groups certainly expect to offer encouragement for Christians who are troubled by some of the "scientific" speculations of evolutionists. Most creationists would like somehow to stem the tide of evolutionary indoctrination in the schools which they see as an impediment to the Christian faith of children.

Some creationists, however, seem to assume that unbelievers can be converted by proving the existence of God and His creative work through purely scientific arguments. It is tempting for Christians to think that because God's creative work is so obvious to them, even the sin-

darkened mind of the unbeliever will be responsive to reason alone. If this were the case, we might expect to see a higher proportion of Christians among intellectuals than among common people. The Scriptures tell us otherwise. "For consider your call, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble." (1 Cor. 1:26 - NASB)

Napoleon once said that man will believe almost anything as long as it does not appear in the Bible. Clearly a man left to his own reason cannot believe in Jesus Christ as Lord or come to Him. The Scriptures tell us that "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised." (1 Cor. 2:14 - NASB) Jesus reproached the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida whose citizens witnessed the physical evidence of His miracles in their midst and yet did not believe in Him as the Messiah. "I praise thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and intelligent and didst reveal them to babes." (Mt. 11:25 - NASB) If man has so much trouble seeing even the obvious evidence of God's power in nature, it is not at all surprising that he does not understand the deeper things of God's saving work.

Christians do not require signs and scientific evidence for their faith, which is, after all, "the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen"

(Heb. 11:1), but still the Lord urges us to look at nature to appreciate His omnipotence and sovereignty. Read God's "creation lesson" to Job (chapters 38 and 39) and you too will

respond with Job: "I know that Thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of Thine can be thwarted." (Job 42:2 - NASB)

—*D. Menton*

## Correcting an Incorrect Report

A news release from the News Bureau of the Lutheran Council in the USA, dated January 22, 1982, reported the average per capita contributions of the members of the Church of the Lutheran Confession as \$208.88, which is well below the average contributions of the members of other Lutheran church bodies. This figure did not seem right to us, and so we contacted CLC Statistician Harvey Callies, who confirmed that the News Bureau figure is indeed incorrect.

The actual average per capita contributions of CLC members for all purposes was \$244.37 in 1978, \$274.95 in 1979, and \$285.93 in 1980. The Lord alone knows whether these figures are bad or good, but at least they compare favorably with the following figures reported for other Lutheran church bodies: Lutheran Church in America—\$211.04; American Lutheran Church—\$214.30; Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod—\$231.71; Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod—\$248.41; Evangelical Lutheran Synod—\$267.64.

—*D. Lau*

## NOT IN AGREEMENT WITH THE MORAL MAJORITY

Jerry Falwell, the television preacher from Lynchburg, Virginia, and his Moral Majority have been in the headlines for some time now. There is much in his position with which a Christian citizen can identify. We also believe that our country has gone too far in its toleration of immoral behavior: abortion, pornography, homosexuality.

But there are at least two items in his program that call for our opposition rather than our support. One is his stand on public school prayers. The other is his support of the nation of Israel, based as it is on his misreading of Biblical prophecy.

Jerry Falwell claims to believe in the principle of the separation of church and state, but he does not seem to understand that anything other than

private, individual praying in the public school program is already contrary to this principle. Instead of trying to change the meaning of the First Amendment of the Constitution, we ought to be doing all we can as Christian citizens to uphold this amendment and request our leaders to uphold it also. Religious freedom has proved to be such a blessing in our nation since its founding that we wonder why anyone would want to tamper with it.

On the question of Israel Jerry Falwell bluntly says in a letter sent to potential supporters: "God has blessed America because America has blessed the Jew—His chosen people. Israel also has a legal and historical right to the land of Palestine." These viewpoints are based supposedly on God's promises to Abraham in Genesis 12. We see in such viewpoints the evidence of dispensationalist Bible interpretation that claims the prophetic sections of the Old Testament have application only to the Jewish nation. We, however, must follow the lead of the New Testament in interpreting the Old. We Christians are "the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16), "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29) The present nation of Israel has no special claim to be the people of the true God: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

—D. Lau

## BIBLE READINGS FOR APRIL

### "A Matter of Life and Death"

April	Scripture	Theme	Hymn
1	Romans 5:12-14	Death Universal	369
		<b>The Death of the Righteous</b>	
2	Numbers 23:7-10	Greatly Desired	589
3	Psalms 23	Not Alone	436
4	Luke 16:19-22	Triumphant	371
5	Psalms 116	Precious	600
6	Proverbs 14:32-34	Hopeful	585
7	Romans 14:5-9	For the Lord	591
8	Philippians 1:19-26	Great Gain	597
9	Hebrews 11:13-16	Faith Illuminates	586
10	Revelation 14:12-13	Blessed!	587
		<b>Christ, the Life</b>	
11	John 11:23-27	Life for the Dead	196
12	John 1:1-5	Radiant Life	203
13	John 10:7-11	Abundant Life	51
14	John 14:1-6	The Way, The Truth, The Life	355
15	Romans 5:18-21	Life Everlasting	195
16	2 Timothy 1:7-10	Death Abolished	209
17	1 John 5:9-13	The Only Source of Life	210

### Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council of the Church of the Lutheran Confession will meet at Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, on Wednesday and Thursday, April 21 and 22. The first session will begin at 8:00 a.m.

The Call Committee on Graduates will meet at the close of the Coordinating Council sessions to assign calls to graduates of Immanuel Lutheran College and Seminary. All requests for candidates should be directed to the president of the CLC in writing together with information regarding the needs of the calling congregation, and should be in his hands by April 17.

*Egbert Albrecht*, President

### THIS IS YOUR CHURCH

*This Is Your Church*, the 29-page history of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, produced under the direction of the CLC Board of Education, is now available at 35¢ a copy from the CLC Book House, Immanuel Lutheran College, Grover Rd., Eau Claire, WI 54701.

—*Gerhardt Mueller*

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### Life in the Spirit

18	Deuteronomy 8:1-3	Sustained by the Word of God	296
19	John 5:19-24	Received through Faith	394
20	1 John 3:14-18	Demonstrated by Love	441
21	Ezekiel 36:25-28	Given Within	227
22	John 1:9-13	Of Divine Origin	129
23	2 Corinthians 5:17-21	A New Creation	411
24	Titus 3:4-7	Not by Works	382
25	1 Peter 1:23-25	By the Word of God	294

### Resurrection

26	Psalms 49:14-15	Promised	201
27	John 5:25-29	At His Voice	206:8-10
28	John 6:37-40	At the Last Day	603
29	1 Corinthians 15:19-26	Christ the Firstfruits	200
30	2 Corinthians 4:13-16	Renewing Hope	204

—*P. Schaller*