

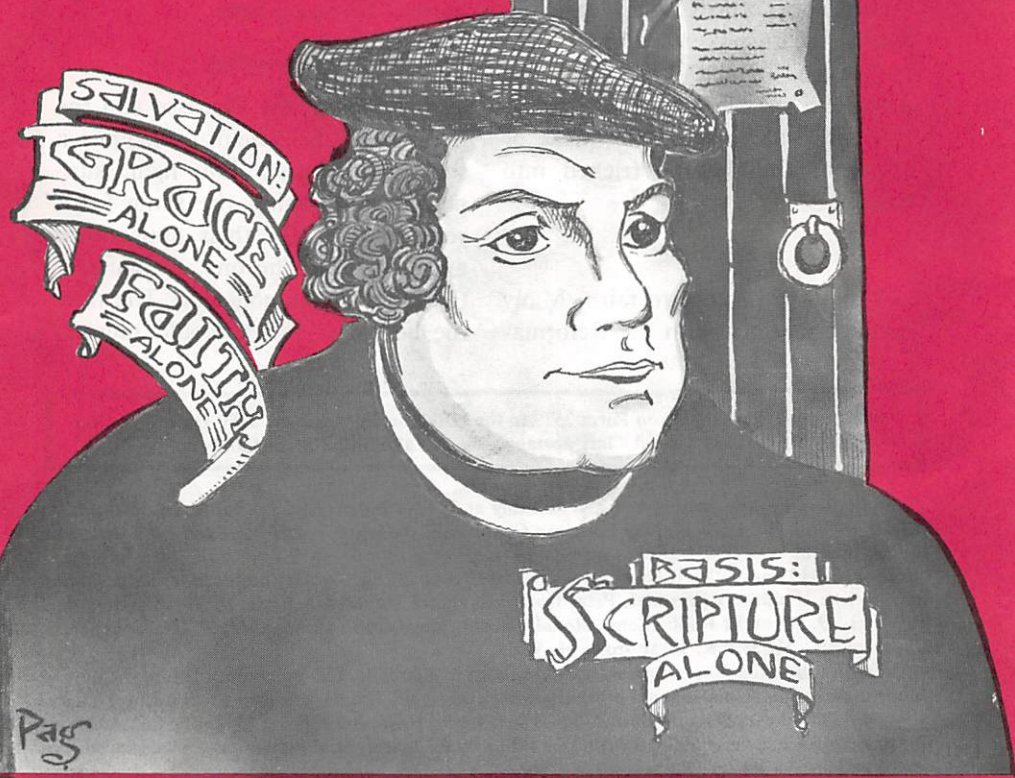
Lutheran

Spokesman

CHURCH OF THE
LUTHERAN CONFESSION

October 1983
Vol. 26, No. 4
(ISSN 0024-7537)

Luther



500TH ANNIVERSARY

THE POSTURE OF FAITH

A Meditation on Luke 18:9-14

Halloween is an appropriate time to discuss appearances. Appearance is important to us. Consider the fussing and fuming over portraits. Outlandish posing. Each hair meticulously groomed. Takes and retakes. The perfect smile. Finally the photographer is instructed to select the best of 36 possibles, conceal a few blemishes, add color to complexion, at which point the satisfied customer cries out: "Now that's really me!" Everyone is concerned with appearance—except God.

In theory, at least, we've always known appearances to be deceiving. Such is the unspoken premise behind Halloween. Beneath the mask and disguise is the face of the little child. But can God be fooled by mask or costume? Can He be tricked into treating?

Standing

There is a posture to faith. Many events connected with the Reforma-

tion suggest the posture of "standing." One thinks of Luther standing before Church and State, commanded to recant from that "damnable heresy" that God has forgiven the whole world for the sake of Christ. The reply: "Here I stand. I cannot be moved. God help me. Amen."

At the great debate with Zwingli, who attempted to discredit Luther's understanding of the Lord's Supper, Luther wrote on the table the clear words of Christ: "This is My body." From these words he refused to be moved. He stood firm.

Cowering

Now look at the Pharisee and the publican. It is difficult to imagine a stronger contrast. Two men, supposedly addressing the same God, yet how different their appearance and postures! The one, a Pharisee; the other, a tax collector. The one, the best that society could muster;

Postmaster: Send notice on Form 3579 to the Lutheran Spokesman, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113. Second Class postage paid at Lake Mills, IA 50450.

The Lutheran Spokesman, published monthly at 204 N. 2nd Ave., Lake Mills, IA 50450, is an official organ of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, the issues appearing during the first week of each month.

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Material submitted for publication should be sent to Editor D. Lau one month before the date of publication. Announcements and other short notices should also be sent directly to Editor D. Lau.

Business Manager: Benno Sydow, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113. Individual subscriptions: \$5.00 for one year; \$9.00 for two years; \$13.00 for three years. Subscriptions sent in bulk to congregations: \$4.00.

the other, an individual society spurned. The one, boasting; the other, cowering. The one, basking in the limelight of personal righteousness; the other, incapable of raising sore eyes toward heaven. The one, striking a bargain with God; the other, striking himself on the chest. The one, an individual who sought salvation by works and never found it; the other, who threw himself on God's mercy and did find salvation. Which is the posture of faith?

The irony of the parable is that every syllable the Pharisee spoke of himself may have been true. He did fast twice per week. He did give a tenth of all he got. His ears never once heard the sound of a breaking commandment. With this impressive trumpet blast he insisted that God Almighty sit up and take notice.

You understand, then, why an acceptable translation of verse eleven in the text—perhaps a preferable one in view of the facts—is that the Pharisee was not only praying by himself or about himself but ultimately to himself: pretending to thank God while stealing the credit himself. His was a man-made god who never demanded more than man could mass produce. A man-made god who turned pale at the prospect of accountability, a god as heartless as he was. Such a god gives a pat on the back and says, "Keep up the good work," or: "Run along now, and not another thought about sin."

Was it enough? Egotism dies before this declaration of Jesus: "Unless your righteousness *surpasses* that of the Pharisees and teachers

of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:20).

Bragging?

This parable is not really about Pharisees and publicans. It is rather a warning against deceiving ourselves through appearances. If we make the mistake of equating this type of self-reliance only with individuals who wore long prayer shawls, broad phylacteries, or stood on street corners tooting their own horns—even a John Tetzl, who played "Let's Make a Deal" with papal indulgences—we will have missed the impact of what the Spirit is here saying. It is imperceptibly easy to sound like the Pharisee while denouncing him. "God, I thank You that I am confessionally sound, superior to all other church bodies." "God, I thank You that my congregation is free from the ignorance and malpractice evident everywhere else."

The validity of such statements aside, if they are boasts, not expressions of gratitude for grace received, then many of our treasured Reformation hymns will have to be sung to a different tune: "Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word!" Grace alone, faith alone, the Word alone! The publican was able to return home in good standing before God—and knowing it. The problem of his sin was resolved. He was reconciled. His debt was paid, the sufficiency Christ's. But the Pharisee? He is left praying in the Temple, having been deceived by his own mask and costume.

Looking Up

This, then, is the posture of faith: an attitude of prostration and utter unworthiness, a heart stripped of false pretense, bare of vain excuses. The believer is smitten, as Luther said time and again, by the cost a Savior willingly paid in order to release me from my sin, my self, and my adversaries. How can my eyes lift themselves toward heaven, knowing that it is God's majesty I have questioned, His goodness I have spurned, His holiness I have challenged?

And yet simultaneously the posture of faith is that which stands upright and dares to look heavenward. The believer has eyes which long only for Jesus. Faith walks boldly before the mercy seat and demands: "God, You have promised! You have done! You have won! You have forgiven! I am Yours. You are mine!"

Jesus said of the tax collector: "This man went home to his house justified." Jesus is saying the same to you. Go home in peace.

—M. Weis

500th Anniversary of Martin Luther's Birth



Luther and the Papacy

The history professor taught, "Until the Reformation there was only one church in western Europe." And that church was The Holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church, better known as the Roman Catholic Church.

To tell about Luther and the papacy is to first of all speak of a child growing up in his parents' and everyone else's home church. There

were no other examples of church organizations than the Roman Catholic. The doctrine he learned from his youth had the imprint of the papacy. The monastery he joined was run by the Augustinian order of monks, a dependent off-shoot from "Mother Church." After his law studies at the University of Erfurt, Luther was trained as a priest in the Roman Catholic tradition. He was

hired as a professor for the new University of Wittenberg, where he taught Biblical theology, again as an agent of the Roman Catholic Church. The year before his death Luther wrote how he had been a "rabid papist." "So intoxicated, nay, so immersed in the doctrines of the pope was I, that I would have been quite ready to kill all, if possible, or to help those and to hold with those who killed the people who with a single syllable refused to render obedience to the pope. So great a Saul was I (Acts 9:1) . . ." (*What Luther Says*, II, p. 1006).

It was while Luther was at Erfurt that he discovered a Bible in the library. He might have passed it by had he opened to a portion which was commonly read in the worship services. But it fell open to the account of Hannah's prayer. He was fascinated with this new reading material and wished that this book were his own. The Bible became for Luther the one and only foundation of all his thoughts and actions during the years to come. It was a comfort during his tribulations and a bulwark against the enemies of the truth. It was the Word of God that changed his life. God used this "changed" man to alter the course of history.

Light for the Dark Ages

There were three events which had a tremendous impact on Luther. The first was during a thunderstorm at Stotternheim (near Erfurt). Fear for his life prompted a vow that he would become a monk. Luther also

recalls the terror of his first Mass, when as a priest he was to celebrate Holy Communion. He shuddered because he believed his sinfulness rendered him unfit to approach God in His divine majesty and glory.

Meanwhile Luther had a very disillusioning experience. In 1510 his order sent him to Rome. What he believed to be the center for the vicar of Christ turned out to be a city of impiety and sacrilege. He later commented that Rome was built on hell itself. He found that the Italian priests could say six or seven Masses before he finished one. Once when he was at the part of the service for the Gospel lesson, a priest told him, "Get a move on." His memories of Pope Julius II contributed to the disappointment.

The third event affecting Luther was not an earth-shattering incident but an opportunity given him to teach Biblical theology at Wittenberg. Beginning in 1513 he began courses which took him and his students through some of the Psalms and Paul's epistles to the Romans and Galatians. There in the Word he learned the truth about Christ, redemption, and justification—all from the Bible, not from the church and its official interpretations and tradition.

When Luther posted his 95 Theses on the church door in Wittenberg, he had no idea the reaction they would bring. After all, he had written deeper, more controversial theses previous to October 31, 1517. But when Luther attacked indulgences, he was striking at the very heart of

the church's control of its people, namely the Sacrament of Penance—the Confessional. The Roman church not only claimed the right of the priests alone to absolve, but also through various satisfactions (the third part of "Confession" in the papal system) it was able to make large sums of money.

The challenge offered by Luther in the 95 Theses had to be met. (And to think all along Luther thought he was representing papal doctrine.) So in 1518 the papal legate in Germany, Cardinal Cajetan, met with Luther. The papal representative had arrogance in his heart and destruction on his mind. He wished to deal with the disruptive "shabby little friar" by taking him in chains to Rome to be dealt with as Huss and Wycliffe had been (both were executed by the church). In 1520 Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther.

The Issues

Luther asserted throughout his life that he and his followers fight with the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God—rather than with temporal weapons for political or social objectives. The debate centered around the very simple question, "How is a person saved?" The papacy had robbed people of Christ and His Word with a tradition that asserted work-righteousness (good works) as the solution to human spiritual problems. They said that God adjudged righteous only those who by their lives demonstrated that they were.

Luther believed that part of the

papacy's problem lay with their attitude toward the Scriptures. He noted, "They know exactly as much about the Scripture as a goose does about the Psalter." "You, of course, know, my dear Romanist, that you are as adept in handling Scripture as a jackass is in handling a harp" (*What Luther Says*, II, pp. 1007f).

The contrast between the Lutherans and the papacy was expressed by one of the Catholic representatives at the Diet of Augsburg (1530), "Then the Lutherans, I understand, sit on the Scriptures and we of the Pope's Church beside the Scriptures!" The Bishop of Augsburg even commented, "What has been read to us is the truth, the pure truth, and we cannot deny it." (Both from Bente, "Historical Introduction," *Concordia Triglotta*, p. 19)

An attack on the Scriptures undermines the truth of salvation. The authority of the Bible had been replaced by the dictates of the Pope and councils (tradition). Christ had been dethroned, and the possibility of human behavior meriting something before God was put in its place. People were being told that God would regard them as righteous if they did good works. It's no small wonder then that Luther relished those passages which told of Christ's perfect, all-sufficient, world-pardoning, justifying, atoning work. "The just shall live by faith . . ." ("alone" Luther would remind) (Romans 1:17). "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law" (Romans 3:28). At this place the Catholic Confr-

ternity New Testament notes have, "It does not follow from St. Paul's statement that no man is justified by the works of the Law, that good works are not necessary for salvation . . ." (p. 419). The papacy has not changed one bit from its position. Luther shared the apostle Paul's conviction, ". . . knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified" (Galatians 2:16).

An attack on the Bible is an attack on Christ. Since the papacy attacked both, he concluded that the papacy was the Antichrist. A teaching which stole the grace of God in Christ from

the people was a theft of salvation itself. This situation was (and is) unacceptable. So it was a life and death issue when Luther was asked to recant his teaching and retract his writings when he was called to answer at the Diet of Worms (1521). "Unless I am convinced by the Holy Scriptures or evident reason, for I do not accept the authority of popes or councils, since they have often erred and contradicted themselves, I am bound by the Scriptures adduced by me and my conscience is taken captive by the Word of God, for it is neither safe nor right to act against conscience. Therefore, I cannot, and I will not, recant. Here I stand. God help me. Amen."

(Scriptures quoted from the NKJV)

—M. Sydow

Thou Shalt Not Covet

The requirement of the last two commandments of God's Law, the Ninth and the Tenth Commandments, is that we do not covet. The only difference between these two commandments is that the Ninth has reference to the real estate belonging to our fellowman and the Tenth to his personal belongings. Thus they cover everything which God has entrusted to his stewardship, nothing being excluded.

Both these commandments are aimed at the thoughts and desires and longings of our sin-corrupted hearts, rather than at our words and actions. God wants to bring home to

us the fact, which is overlooked by so many, that the thoughts and desires and longings of our hearts can be no less sinful and wicked than our actual deeds and actions. He looks for hearts in us which are utterly unselfish and in which there are only holy desires and no sinful longings whatsoever.

This is something quite foreign to our natural human way of thinking. Even the apostle Paul confesses regarding himself in his unconverted state: "I had not known lust, except the Law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet' (Rom. 7:7)." That our hearts do not have those pure desires which

the Law requires Jesus impresses on us in the words: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Mt. 15:19). All these evil thoughts in one way or another have their source in the sin of coveting.

Coveting

The best definition for coveting which we have so far discovered was once given to us by a student in a catechism class, who replied to our question in the words: "Coveting is wanting something God doesn't want us to have." This, we believe, is more expressive than the customary definition found in most catechisms, which explain it as "having a sinful desire for anything that belongs to our neighbor."

It must be remembered that not every wish and desire for something belonging to our fellowman is automatically sinful. The automobile dealer may have an auto which strikes my fancy and which I would very much like to have. That desire in itself is not sinful. But if I discover that the price of it is beyond my financial means or some other factor enters the picture that makes it wrong for me to secure it in a God-pleasing manner, and I then keep on hankering after it and become disgruntled over that and still wish it could be mine, then coveting has taken root in my heart. Then I am transgressing this commandment.

The Progress of Sin

James writes: "Every man is

tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust (the desire for something which God doesn't want him to have) and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived (has taken root in his heart), it bringeth forth sin (in deeds and actions)" (Js. 1:14-15).

We see that progression in numerous cases in Scripture. King Ahab desired Naboth's vineyard to add it to his garden plot. At this point no sin was as yet involved. But he soon learned that it was not for trade or for sale by the owner. That should have settled the matter for him, for he now knew that the Lord did not want him to have that vineyard. But Ahab let his desire for the vineyard continue to grow in his heart. This moved him then to go along with his wife's plot to seek to acquire the vineyard through trickery and with a show of right. In this way the original sin of coveting led him into the sin of false witness against Naboth and eventually to the sin of judicial murder—all to make it appear that he had a right to what his heart desired. See 1 Kings 21:1-16.

In a similar way King David was overtaken by a desire for the beautiful Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. It soon became apparent to him that she was a person whom God did not want him to have. At that point he, with the help of God, should have crushed this wicked, sinful desire. Instead he cherished and nourished this sinful craving to the point at which it drove him to arrange matters in such a way that her husband would be killed and he could marry the widow with a show

of right. See 2 Samuel 11.

In much the same way Satan frequently implants desires and cravings in our own hearts for persons or things which we know are forbidden to us by God. This no doubt is the underlying cause of much of the fraud and deceit that goes on in business dealings and of the infidelity in marriages today. If such sinful desires and longings for that which God does not want us to have are not suppressed at once at their inception by diligent recourse to the Word of God and the prayer that God would create a clean heart and renew a right spirit within us, they will grow and lead to additional sinful deeds and actions. Here the proverb: "Guard against the beginnings!" has its full application.

What God Calls For

God calls for the very opposite kind of heart. What God looks for in us human beings is a heart so filled with love for our Savior and for our fellowman that it is free of all envy, jealousy, and lust for that which He has given to others. Such a heart is just as much concerned about the other person's keeping what God has given to them, as we are about keeping what He has given to us. The apostle Paul expresses it very well in the words: "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2:4).

Scripture also furnishes us with excellent examples how such a heart will respond to the temptation of coveting. Joseph by resisting in the fear and love of God the seductive

wiles of Potiphar's wife urged her to remain faithful to her husband and her marriage vows. When Philemon's runaway slave offered his services to Paul, the apostle in the fear and love of God overcame the temptation to avail himself of a useful houseboy by urging him to return to his master. That was the God-pleasing course of action for both the slave Onesimus and himself. See Philemon 12.

God would have us have hearts like this, holy hearts like His own heart, so that lust and desire for anything belonging to our neighbor is completely foreign to us, so that no feelings of envy or jealousy arise in our hearts over the more abundant blessings with which others may have been favored by God. God wants us to be always perfectly content with what He has seen fit to bestow on us.

Lord, Have Mercy!

When we examine our own hearts in the light of these two last commandments, must we not say: "Lord, have mercy!" Did we not even as children often become envious and jealous when our brothers or sisters received new articles of apparel and we did not? How readily do we not become envious when greater honors are bestowed on others than on ourselves, or others receive promotions and we do not, or when others enjoy greater prosperity than we do! Underlying all such feelings is covetousness, wanting something which God has not seen fit for us to have. How far we all fall short of being

content with the lot which God in His superior love and wisdom has seen fit to bestow on us in life. Must we not all penitently confess with Jeremiah: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9)?

Thank God that Jesus has come as our Savior and as our Substitute has fulfilled also these two commandments for us in His sinless life, in which He never sought His own selfish personal interests but only ours and those of others. Thank God that He has atoned for all our sinful longings, lustings, and desires in His bitter passion and death. To Him we flee for grace and mercy and find it in the robe of righteousness which He bestowed on us at our Baptism

and continues to impart anew again and again through His Word and Sacrament.

Our Grateful Response

What can we for such grace divine to Thee, Lord Jesus, render? Let our response be that of Dr. Luther, who teaches us: "We should fear and love God that we do not craftily seek to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, nor obtain it by a show of right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it," and "that we do not alienate, beg, or take away from our neighbor his wife, servants, or cattle, but urge them to stay and do their duty."

—H. C. Duehlmeier

A "MIXED MESSAGE" FROM MISSOURI

Wisconsin Synod observers at the July 1983 Missouri Synod convention have reported that "the Missouri Synod is sending a 'mixed message' regarding its position on fellowship." News reports on the convention itself and subsequent events indicate that this observation is accurate.

For example, the Missouri Synod officially is not in pulpit and altar fellowship with the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church, or the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. Yet the Missouri Synod at its convention "soundly defeated a substitute motion to withdraw from the Lu-

theran Council" (LCUSA), whose membership includes those same three church bodies with which the Missouri Synod is supposedly not in fellowship. How can it be possible to cooperate in church work with the LCUSA and at the same time refuse fellowship with the member churches of the LCUSA? Does not the Lord's command to "avoid" adherents of false doctrine (Rom. 16:17) apply to both kinds of cooperation?

The Wisconsin Synod observers pointed out that "the Missouri Synod does not count prayer as an official expression of fellowship." In other words, the Missouri Synod

believes its members can and should approach the Lord's throne in prayer together with persons with whom they cannot exchange pulpits or receive the Lord's Supper. Yet the same Bible passages that forbid altar and pulpit fellowship also forbid prayer fellowship. Consider 2 John 10-11: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." "If we are to deny a brotherly reception to a man because he is an adherent of false doctrine, what about arranging a joint prayer?" (*Concerning Church Fellowship*, p. 36)

Pulpit and Altar Fellowship

We wonder whether it really should be said that the Missouri Synod is not in pulpit and altar fellowship with the three church bodies of the LCUSA. The presidents of all three church bodies were permitted to address the Missouri Synod convention. If the Missouri Synod really believes that these church bodies are adherents of errors, how can their leaders be allowed to address the church? Is it not pulpit fellowship when a pastor from another church body is permitted to teach the church? Can one imagine the apostle Paul permitting Hymenaeus and Philetus, whose "teaching will spread like gangrene" (2 Tim. 2:17—NIV), to address the Christians in his care? False teachers "must be silenced" (Titus 1:11), says the apostle, not given a platform to

present their errors.

Bishop Crumley, leader of the Lutheran Church in America, surely used the time allotted to him to foster error. "Crumley told the Missouri Synod convention that the LCA cannot wait for agreement on every 'jot and tittle' of faith before agreeing to come to the altar together." This same Bishop Crumley has visited Pope John Paul II, the patriarch of Constantinople, and the archbishop of Canterbury, and told the Missouri Synod that he was "impressed with the deep spirituality of those leaders who shared a common faith." How can one who is impressed with the deep spirituality of the Antichrist be allowed to address Christians? It is like inviting the wolf to a gathering of sheep.

It is a distinct possibility that many Missouri Synod pastors and members also practice altar fellowship with members of the LCUSA churches. News reports tell us that there is cooperation in campus ministry programs between Missouri Synod personnel and the National Lutheran Campus Ministry. "The need to work cooperatively," says one spokesman, "makes it difficult to follow synodical guidelines on the sharing of communion, inter-Lutheran worship, and ecumenical cooperation." Some estimate that "more than 50% of Missouri Synod campus pastors participate in joint worship services with Lutherans with whom they are not in fellowship." A mixed message indeed!

Likewise it is reported that at the Lutheran Student Movement meet-

ing in August at Bozeman, Montana, "Missouri Synod students, which made up about one-third of the students here, were not distinguishable from other students: they took communion at joint worship services, some of which were presided over by women pastors."

The mention of women pastors leads to consideration of another mixed message. The Missouri Synod rightly refuses to ordain women as pastors. But at its recent convention there were "slightly more than 40 women voting and advisory delegates out of a total of 1,600," and a woman was "elected to the synod's 14-member board of directors, the chief decision-making body of the synod between conventions." Since God's Word forbids the exercise of authority by women over men in the church (1 Tim. 2:12), electing a woman director and permitting women to serve as convention delegates are just as much contrary to God's Word as ordaining women as pastors.

Still the Saving Gospel

In spite of these negative obser-

vations we also acknowledge gratefully that our Lord knows how to preserve and present His Gospel truth also in church bodies that tolerate all kinds of errors. His truth even in the midst of error is saving truth, and people are brought to faith in Jesus Christ through the truth no matter who the teachers of that truth are. We are therefore thankful in one sense that the Missouri Synod message is a "mixed message" and not totally godless or antichristian. That is, we are thankful that enough truth is still mixed with the errors to bring many to faith in Christ and keep them in that faith. Error is always dangerous. That is why God wants us to avoid errorists. Yet by God's grace error is not always absolutely fatal to all those exposed to it. May God bless His 7,000 within the Missouri Synod and use their testimony to expand His Church.

—D. Lau

Note: Quotations are from news reports supplied by the News Bureau of the Lutheran Council in the USA (LCUSA).

A TRIP TO A DIFFERENT WORLD — VI

Note: This is the sixth and last in a series of articles by Pastor Koenig, taken from his diary of the trip to India in January of this year.

Friday, January 28th. Our last day here. We went to a 10:00 service in Nidubrolu. It was in an outlying area of town. The people were poor. Fifty of them filled the hut. There were no Bibles among these people except the pastor's. They meet in a political hut of Gandhi's party. Just like our mis-

sions meeting in rented quarters. This church was started five years ago.

At this place, as at many, they gave us pop. That is expensive for them. They are very kind to us. As we went to different meetings and were served different food, it was always under the watchful eye of Benjamin. The danger of our getting sick was always his concern. God has truly watched over us through Benjamin.

In the afternoon we went to a constable's house near the Salvation Army Hospital. He is a church member. They hope to start a church in his home. Benjamin says that the next time we come, there will be a church here.

Later in the afternoon a group of pastors and people gathered to bid us farewell. They sing superbly. I will never forget the night meetings, some right out under the India night sky. There would be a kerosene lantern illuminating the congregation seated on the ground. Those beautiful dark eyes intent on the speaker, their dark skins taking on a special luster in the man-made light. Their melodic hymns filled the darkness round about their gathering.

This afternoon the farewell gathering was a joyful occasion. There was a beautiful wreath for each of us. They anointed us with oil. Five pastors spoke and we spoke, and they sang.

There was a meeting scheduled for tonight, but we skipped it because of our need to rest and get ready to leave.

In the meetings we always sat on chairs in positions of honor, as the congregation sat on the ground. We were treated in the most courteous and loving manner. What we said was received readily. Their faith, their love, their zeal rivals any among our people in America.

Of course there were things that they were incorrect about. And it is a beautiful thing to bring the testimony of the Word and have people agree wholeheartedly with that Word. There should be no illusion about a fellowship relationship between the CLC and the CLCI. They have some things to teach us, as well as we them. It will be a partnership in a mission field and not the white man knowing all and teaching ignorant savages. Shoulder to shoulder we will work with the India Christians in a brother-to-brother relationship and not in a father-child relationship.

Tonight we had a very relaxing and enjoyable evening with the family and various people stopping in.

—David Koenig

Devotional Helps For November 1983

The hymns and Scripture readings for November are chosen to be used separately or together with the indicated Bible Stories in the *Concordia Bible Story Book*, Arthur Gross, ed. This is the last installment in this series.

The quotations are by Dr. Martin Luther, born five hundred years ago this month (November 10, 1483.)

“God help us as He has helped our ancestors and will also help our descendants to the praise and honor of His divine name throughout eternity! For we are, after all, not the sort of people who could sustain the church. Nor were our forefathers; nor will our descendants be such. But the Lord has done it, is doing it now, and will do it. He says: I am with you until the end of the world, as is written Heb. 13: ‘Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever,’ and Rev. 1: He was, He is, He will be. Yes, that is His name; and it is the name of no other Man; nor should it be.”

Day	Story (page)	Lesson	Scripture	Hymn
1	132(262)	Jeremiah and the Captives in Babylon Jeremiah 29:1-14	Psalms 137	462
2	133(263)	Daniel and His Friends Daniel 1	Psalms 36	340
3	134(265)	Daniel and the King's Dream Daniel 2	Isaiah 42:21-29	425:1-2
4	135(267)	Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Idol Daniel 3	Psalms 91:9-16	256
5	136(269)	Mad King Nebuchadnezzar Daniel 4	Matthew 23:8-12	75:3
6	137(271)	Belshazzar's Feast Daniel 5	Galatians 6:6,7	611:1,4
7	138(273)	Daniel in the Lion's Den Daniel 6	Matthew 10:28-32	518:7
8	139(275)	Return of the Captives Ezra 1:1—3:7	Psalms 126	30
9	140(276)	Rebuilding the Temple Ezra 3:6—6:22	Haggai 2:1-9	467
10	141(278)	Esther, Queen of Persia Esther 1-2	Romans 8:28	529
11	142(280)	Haman's Plot Esther 3:1—4:3	Psalms 7	526
12	143(281)	Mordecai's Plan/Esther's Decision Esther 4:4—5:14	Psalms 121:7	556
13	144(283)	Brave Esther Saves Her People Esther 6-9	Psalms 37:1-20	265

“The worship supreme and the one supremely necessary is to cling to the promise and the providence of God, who has pledged Himself to be our Father, and to look for and expect help from Him.”

14	145(285)	The Return of Ezra to Jerusalem Ezra 7-10	Matthew 3:5-12	318
15	146(287)	Nehemiah, the King's Cupbearer Nehemiah 1:1—2:18	Isaiah 49:14-18	268
16	147(288)	Rebuilding Jerusalem's Wall Nehemiah 2:19—6:19	Jeremiah 15:19-21	632
17	148(290)	Ezra Teaches the Law of God Nehemiah 8-13	Psalms 119:33-40	261
18	(295)	Between the Testaments	Matthew 13:16-17	416

19	66(393)	The Rich Young Ruler Matthew 19:16-26	2 Corinthians 8:9	96:2-3
20	67(394)	Jesus & the Sons of Zebedee Matthew 20:17-28	Philippians 2:1-8	104:1-2
21	68(395)	Blind Bartimaeus Matthew 20:29-34	Isaiah 29:17-19	388:4
22	69(397)	Zaccheus, Tax Collector Luke 19:1-10	1 Timothy 1:15	324
23	70(398)	The Parable of the Pounds Luke 19:11-27	1 Corinthians 4:1-5	493

—THANKSGIVING—

"This truth should certainly be worthy to be sung, preached, and spoken about constantly; and we certainly ought to love and praise God in recognition of such a blessing as this. . . . For what is it? The Son of God becomes my Servant and humbles Himself so deeply that He actually takes my misery and sin, nay, the sin and death of all the world, upon His shoulders, takes them away, and says to me:

You are no longer a sinner. But I am. I step into your place. You did not sin. But I did. All the world is in sin. But you are not in sin. I am.

All your sins are to lie on Me and not on you. No one can comprehend this.

We shall be eternally blessed in yonder life by contemplating this love of God. . . . Indeed, who is able to be sufficiently thankful to our Lord God for this grace?"

24	71(400)	Jesus Rides to Jerusalem Matthew 21:1-11	Zechariah 9:8-10	570
25	72(402)	The Second Cleansing of the Temple Matthew 21:12-23	Ecclesiastes 5:1	58:1-2
26	73(403)	The Parable of the Two Sons Matthew 21:28-32	Ephesians 2:4-9	231
27	74(404)	The Parable of the Wicked Farmers Matthew 21:33-46	Luke 19:41-44	419
28	75(405)	The King's Wedding Feast Matthew 22:1-14	Revelation 7:13-17	656
29	76(406)	The Widow's Mites Mark 12:41-44	Ephesians 2:10	441:1-2
30	77(407)	The Wise and Foolish Young Women Matthew 25:1-13	2 Peter 3:19-23	609

—P. Schaller

Installation

As authorized by President D. Fleischer, I installed Quinn T. Sprengler as principal and teacher of St. Paul's Lutheran School, Austin, Minnesota, on August 14, 1983.

—Carl M. Thurow

Installation

As authorized by President Daniel Fleischer, I installed the Rev. Mark Bernthal as pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran Church of Saginaw, Michigan, on Sunday, August 7, 1983.

—Karl Brandle

Minnesota Pastoral Conference

Time: November 7-8, 1983, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Place: Salem Lutheran Church, Eagle Lake, Minnesota

Agenda:

An Exegesis of Second Peter 2: 10b ff.—

G. Oster;

A Review of the New ELS and WELS

Catechisms—M. Thom;

Short Topics—C. Thurow;

Isagogical Study of Amos—G. Barthels;

Luther: God's Man for the Time

—H. Duehlmeier

Please announce or excuse to the vacancy pastor, Keith Olmanson.

—*M. Thom*, Secretary

Southeast Pastoral Conference

Time: October 4-6, 1983

Place: Hendersonville, North Carolina

Agenda:

New Testament Isagogical/Exegetical Study of 1 Thess. 1:2ff.—P. Larsen;

The Father As Priest in the Home—S. Kurtzahn;

The Relation of 2 Thess. 3:10-15 to the Other Separation Passages of the New Testament—P. F. Nolting;

Book Review: *Quest for Holiness*—G. Rutz;

Old Testament Isagogical/Exegetical Study of Zechariah—J. Schierenbeck.

Conference Preacher and Chaplain—Vance Fossum

—*Vance Fossum*, Secretary

Wisconsin Pastoral Conference

Time: October 13-14, 1983, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Place: Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Agenda:

Homiletical Text Study on a Reformation Text—J. Sandeen;

Luther's 500th Birthday Observance—J. Ude;

A Study of Titus 3:10 and Its Relationship to Rom. 16:17—J. Lau;

Exegesis of Ps. 119:81ff.—G. Radtke;

A Study of Passages Bearing on the Will of God Pertaining to the Marriage of the Divorced—C. Kuehne;

To What Degree Is the Law Necessary as a Preparation for Conversion?—R. Gurgel;

Exegesis of Hebrews 11:21ff.—P. Koch.

—*Mark Bernthal*, Secretary

Reformation Observance

Immanuel Lutheran Church of Mankato, Minnesota, is hosting a Reformation fellowship gathering at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 30, 1983. Pastors David Schierenbeck, Robert List, and Daniel Fleischer have been asked to speak on THE SPIRIT OF THE REFORMATION FOR TODAY. The service will be followed by a pot-luck meal at 5:30 p.m. Each family attending is asked to bring a covered main-dish or a salad or a dessert. Coffee, punch, and eating utensils will be provided by the host congregation. Immanuel Lutheran Grade School will be presenting a Reformation play at 6:30 p.m. All are invited.

—*Daniel L. Ohlmann*