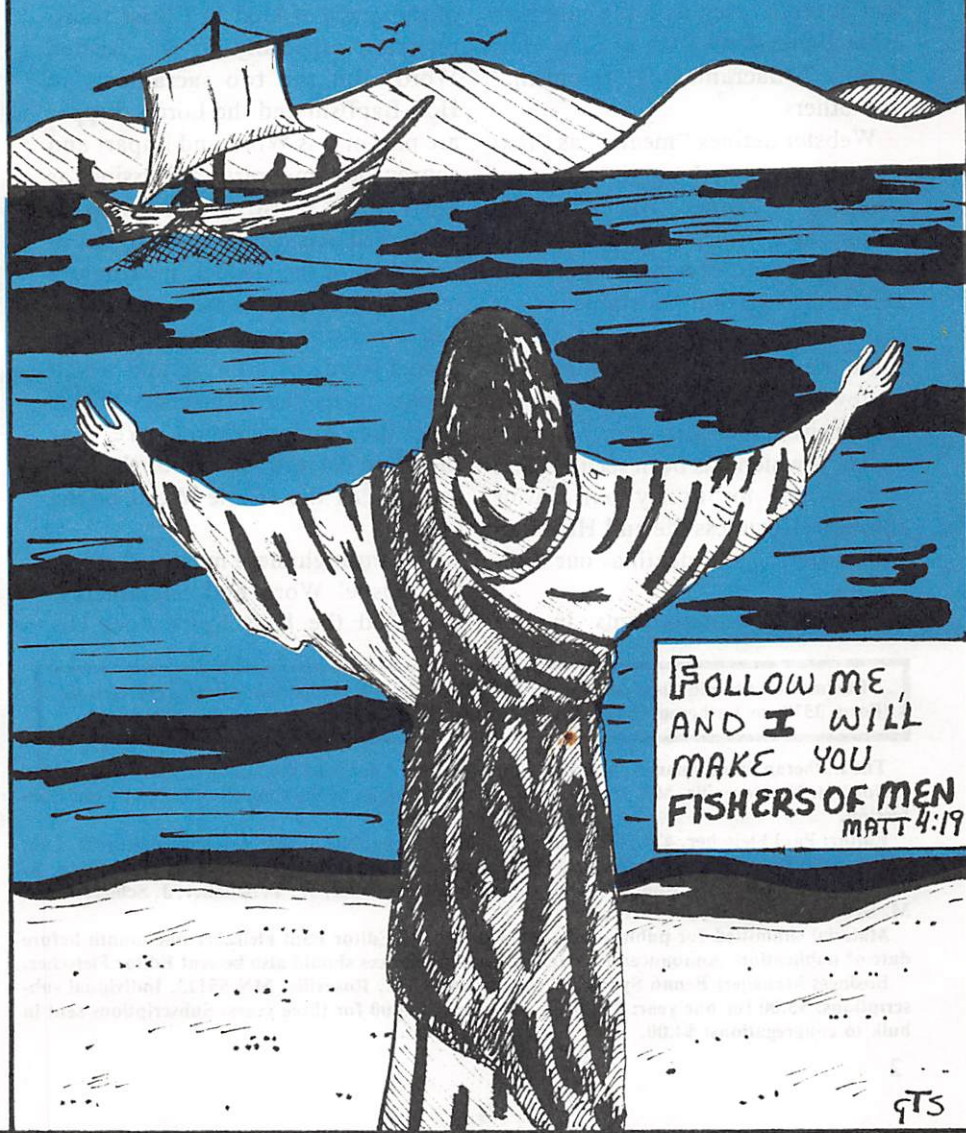


lutheran spokesman

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CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION



THE MEANS OF GRACE

"Means of Grace" is an expression found in our catechisms and frequently heard in our sermons. To our knowledge it is not found anywhere in Holy Scripture itself but is a term that has been coined by our Lutheran teachers to express a certain Biblical fact or truth, even as is the case with other expressions, such as "The Holy Trinity," "Sacrament," "unionism," and others.

Webster defines "means" as "that by which something is done or obtained." "Grace" is the undeserved love which moves God to forgive us undeserving sinners our sins and to account us righteous for Jesus' sake. The Means of Grace therefore is that through which God bestows on and imparts to us sinners the forgiveness of sins and the righteousness which has been secured and worked out for us by our Savior through His sinless life and His innocent suffering and death as our Substitute.

One of the catechisms in use

among us defines "Means of Grace" as "the Gospel of Christ in Word and Sacraments." Another catechism defines "Means of Grace" as "the Gospel and the Sacraments." In reality both definitions say the same things. The Gospel is the glad tidings of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, referring especially to the written Word. But the two sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper are part of this Word and impart and convey the same spiritual blessings as the written Word. The sacraments are sacred acts instituted by Christ in the Word of the Gospel, making use of earthly means (water and bread and wine) with which Jesus has connected words of promise and which impart to us the forgiveness of our sins, life, and salvation. We may therefore correctly speak of the sacraments as the visible Word of the Gospel.

It is through these means of grace, the Gospel Word and Sacraments, that God the Holy Spirit does His

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saving work in the hearts of men: calling, enlightening, sanctifying, and keeping them in the true faith in their Savior to their blessed end. Concerning the Word of the Gospel the apostle Paul writes: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Again: "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21b).

Concerning Holy Baptism as a means through which the Holy Spirit does His saving work in men the same apostle says: "According to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior" (Titus 3:5-6). Because it is the means through which the Holy Spirit brings many (little children) to their first faith in their Savior, it is sometimes called the sacrament of initiation (entering) into the Church.

In the Lord's Supper Jesus Himself tells us that He therein gives us in, with, and under the bread and wine His own very body and blood "for the remission of sins," to strengthen and confirm us in our faith that our sins are forgiven, in the faith wrought previously by the Holy Spirit through Holy Baptism and the Word. For that reason the Holy Supper is sometimes called the sacrament of confirmation—the confirming of our faith.

False Conceptions

Where the Bible doctrine of the justification of the sinner by grace through faith alone in the merits of Jesus is not correctly understood and

taught, there the Bible doctrine of the Means of Grace will also not be found. While the Roman Papacy also speaks of the Means of Grace in a certain sense, its definition of grace is quite different from that of Scripture. It speaks of grace as a certain gift or ability which Jesus has secured for sinners, which, when it is infused into them through the seven sacraments, enables the sinner to work out his justification before God by means of his own works and efforts. These so-called seven sacraments are, besides Baptism and the Lord's Supper, Confirmation, Penance, Marriage, Holy Orders, and Extreme Unction. But these last five have been invented or perverted by Rome.

While the Reformed churches in some instances still preach the Gospel of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus, they attach little spiritual value to the sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper, regarding them only as symbols of what the sinner already possesses by faith. Some (the Quakers, for example) contend that the Holy Spirit comes to the hearts of men and does His work in them *immediately*, that is, without means, out of the clear blue sky.

May God graciously preserve us from falling prey to these erroneous teachings and beliefs.

Not To Be Neglected

The grace of God (His favor and good will, His forgiveness and eternal life) secured for us by Jesus is like a huge reservoir of water. The Means of Grace may be compared to the pipes which bring the water from the reser-

voir into the individual homes. It is through the Means of Grace that the Holy Spirit imparts and brings to us the spiritual blessings secured for us by Jesus and creates the faith which lays hold on these blessings, making them our own.

If, however, the water mains leading from the reservoir to the homes are cut off or become obstructed in any way, the persons living there will receive no benefit from the water that is there for them. Similarly the person who cuts himself off from the Means of Grace or makes only negligent use of them makes it impossible for the Holy Spirit to impart and bring to him the grace of God.

One might compare the Means of Grace to the fuel line in a motor. If that becomes clogged and does not permit the fuel to reach the motor, the motor cannot function. If the Means of Grace are not used at all, it is impossible for the Holy Spirit to work and to sustain the faith in Jesus that saves. If the means are used only

negligently, that person's faith-life will of necessity be weak and sickly.

It is therefore for a good reason that our pastors and others admonish us frequently to call to mind daily our Baptism and what God through it has done and daily wants to continue to do for us, to read and meditate daily on God's Word, to be regular and faithful in hearing and taking to heart the Word preached in our services of worship, and to come often to the Lord's Table to receive the Holy Supper. For it is through these Means of Grace alone, and through nothing else, that the Holy Spirit can create and nourish and sustain our faith-life as Christians.

O Lord, let this Thy little flock,
Thy name alone confessing,
Continue in Thy loving care,
True unity possessing.
Thy Sacraments, O Lord,
And Thy saving Word
To us e'er pure retain.
Grant that they may remain
Our only strength and comfort. (LH #477:2)

—H. C. Duehlmeier

PRAYER IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

From its first issue in June 1958 until the present time the *Lutheran Spokesman* has consistently declared itself in favor of the separation of church and state in the United States and has consistently opposed the sponsorship of prayer and other religious exercises by the public schools. Since there is no unity of faith and confession in a public school situation, school-sponsored

prayer is altogether out of place. We believe that the constitution of our country wisely commits our nation to a policy of separation of church and state that has stood the test of time and that has proved to be a blessing for the preaching of the true Gospel of Jesus.

We are saddened that so many conservative evangelical leaders do not understand the Biblical principle of

unity of faith and confession before joint prayer, and do not understand the constitutional principle of separation of church and state. Above all, we are saddened that the president of our nation has committed himself to the support of prayer in the public schools. The following letter, written by one of our members to President Reagan on this very matter, was submitted to us for possible printing in the *Lutheran Spokesman*. We hasten to say that the printing of this letter should not be interpreted by our readers as indicating that we prefer the election of President Reagan's opponent in the coming national

election. We simply wish to reiterate our opposition to public school prayer, which is only one of the many issues to be considered by Christian voters in making a decision in the upcoming election. The author of the letter is Edgar D. Hahm, a member of Messiah Lutheran Church in Hales Corners, Wisconsin.

For a more thorough statement of our position on the separation of church and state consult the *Journal of Theology*, June 1984. Subscriptions are \$5.00 per year, payable to *Journal of Theology*, 2750 Oxford Street North, Roseville, MN 55113.

Dear President Reagan:

I am sorry that you are making a political issue of prayer to God in public schools because in doing so you are evidencing a sad lack of understanding of God's will concerning prayer to Him and a correct understanding of what prayer actually is.

To begin with, a prayer is NOT simply a composition of pious words recited by a clergyman, a layman, or a group of people. Rather, it is a conversation with God from the heart, often verbalized but more often without a single word being spoken. In His holy Word God sometimes refers to prayers as sighs or groanings. Our omniscient God, who knows every single one of our thoughts, desires, and emotions, does not need to hear anything from our lips to know what we need or whether we are sincerely sorry for our sinfulness, or sincerely thankful to Him for His many blessings. For example, a mere thought of awe at the sight of the Grand Canyon or an erupting volcano can be a prayer of praise to God, if the beholder recognizes God's hand in the phenomenon. An emotion of gratitude for surviving a serious accident can be a prayer of thanks if it is seen as an act of God. Therefore it is inappropriate for you to make such public statements as, "God has been expelled from our classrooms," or, "The children are prevented from saying a simple prayer in public schools." Such statements are nothing but irresponsible political verbiage bordering on sacrilege.

Jesus has something to say about insincere, wordy prayers in His sermon on the mount. Matthew 6:5-8: "But when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. When

you pray, go to your room, close the door and pray to the Father who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like the pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.”

You have used the argument that if it is permissible for the legislature to begin its sessions with a chaplain leading them in prayer, there is no reason why public school children should not do the same. This practice by the legislature is not God-pleasing either and perhaps should never have been started. God has much to say about joint worship with persons who are not in confessional agreement with one another and with any who worship other gods. Here are just a few references. In Philippians 2:2 He says, “Make my joy complete by being likeminded,” and in Rom. 15:5-6 He says, “May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The unity He asks for is true spiritual, confessional unity, not just outward organizational union. Regarding the worship of other gods, He says in His very first commandment in Exodus 20:3: “I am the Lord your God. . . . You shall have no other gods before Me.” Joint worship in public assemblies of people with divergent creeds or different gods, whether it’s Senate, public school, business meeting or whatever, is not according to God’s will and ought not to be encouraged, much less legislated.

All civil governments are set in place by God Himself. You are sitting in the oval office now because God wants you there. He has given civil governments certain limited functions. They are to concern themselves with our physical well-being, but the job of preaching His Gospel and the care of our souls He has placed in the hands of His divinely called preachers and teachers. In Mark 16:15, just before He ascended into heaven, He gave His disciples, NOT the Roman government, this commission, “Go ye into all the world and preach the good news to all creation,” etc. He also gives His divinely called servants many instructions about the care of the souls He entrusts to them.

God instructs us to submit ourselves to the government He has placed over us, but only in those matters with which civil governments should concern themselves. In Matthew 12:17 He says, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” That refers not only to financial support but also to our personal service and allegiance. Therefore when you, as the head of our civil government, propose to take care of the spiritual needs of our children, you are acting contrary to God’s will. I believe the wise founding fathers of our country had also this sort of meddling by government in spiritual matters in mind when they passed the first amendment.

Every true Christian knows that God provided the perfect plan for man’s salvation by sending His own Son, Jesus Christ, to take on the form of man and as man He obeyed His Father’s will perfectly. In addition, He took upon

Himself the sins of the entire world and suffered our righteous God's terrible punishment for them as our substitute, thereby making all of us children of God, unless we reject Jesus' amazing substitutionary atonement through unbelief. As children of God the lines of communication to Him are open to us all the time, wherever we may be.

There is therefore no need to legislate a certain time of day or certain form of prayer or even moments of silence. To do so would be to mislead people into thinking that mechanical joint prayer or show of prayer in itself is something pleasing to God and perhaps a means to helping a little toward their salvation when, in fact, that has already been accomplished when Jesus declared from the cross, "IT IS FINISHED."

I ask you to please desist from supporting joint prayer in public schools or other public assemblies of people with divergent creeds and confessions. Don't worry about the effect a reversal on this controversial issue might have on your re-election. Remember that God, who created this universe, is constantly busy preserving and managing it. Nothing will happen that He does not permit or want to happen.

Much more could be said and many more pertinent references to God's Word could be offered but time and space does not permit. I am praying that the Holy Spirit give you the will and the courage to do God's will in this matter, and to resist the pressures of well-intentioned but nevertheless misguided clergymen or advisors, so that you can confidently counter their requests with Peter's words in Acts 5:29, "We must obey God rather than men."

Sincerely,

Edgar D. Hahm

THE CHOICE OF A MARRIAGE PARTNER—III

So far we have noted that God's Word suggests two rules for choosing a marriage partner. Rule #1: *Do not let your choice be made only on the basis of physical attractiveness or the desire for earthly riches.* Rule #2: *Pray for God's guidance in your choice of a marriage partner.*

Parental Advice

One way God answers such prayers for guidance is through the advice given us by our parents.

Abraham was involved in the choice of a wife for Isaac. Abraham said to his servant: "You will not get my son a wife from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I'm living, but will go to my country and my relatives and there get a wife for my son Isaac" (Gen. 24:3).

If the girl who watered the camels had not been Abraham's relative, the servant would not have believed she was God's choice. For Abraham's desire in this matter was certainly of

highest importance. Likewise this servant would not have done the right thing if he had taken Rebekah home without contacting her family. Only after her father and her brother said, "This is the Lord's doing. . . . Take Rebekah and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son," was Abraham's servant justified in bringing Rebekah home to Isaac to become his wife.

Father and mother are the persons whom God has placed over all those people who are faced with choices concerning marriage. If God has placed these persons over us, then it is obvious that they are the ones to whom we should turn for advice and counsel in the choice of a marriage partner. They probably know us better than we know ourselves, and surely as our parents they should have our best interests at heart.

The Fourth Commandment requires that we pay attention to the advice and suggestions of our parents. "Honor your father and mother; it will be well with you, and you will live long on the earth" (Eph. 6:2-3). It is unfortunate that in our culture just at the time that young people are apt to choose their spouses there is what is known as "the generation gap" between young people and their parents, so that they have difficulty understanding one another. Parents can become either too permissive or too protective, and young people often do something that is unwise simply because their parents advised them against it. Young people have entered into marriages they themselves were

unsure of, just to spite their parents and assert their independence.

But Christian young people should recognize that rebellion against their parents is a form of rebellion against God, who has given them these particular parents for their own good.

Proverbs in particular emphasizes the importance of listening to the advice of parents. "A fool scorns his father's correction, but if you accept criticism you show good sense" (Prov. 15:5). "If you answer before you listen, you are stupid and insulting" (Prov. 18:13). "Listen to advice and take criticism if you want to be wise the rest of your life" (Prov. 19:20). "Listen to your father—you are his son, and don't despise your mother when she's old" (Prov. 23:22). "An eye that mocks a father and scorns a mother will be picked out by crows in the valley and eaten by vultures" (Prov. 30:17).

We therefore can state it as Rule #3: *Seek the advice and consent of the parents on both sides when you are making a marriage choice.*

If any of the parents refuses to give consent, this may well be a definite indication from the Lord that the person in question is not the one for you, at least not at the present time. Of course, when parents present no real reason for withholding their consent, it is possible that a Christian young person may still go ahead with his marriage plans, especially if other older friends and relatives have indicated their approval of the person in question.

There are times when parents can be so blinded by their own selfish

interests that they do not readily understand the best interests of their children. But when the young people wanting to get married are still very young, it can hardly be God's will under any circumstances for them to be married without their parents' approval or permission.

Intermarriage with the Heathen

We have already indicated in the foregoing that God's rule for His Old Testament people was this: "Don't intermarry with them (the seven heathen nations that inhabited Canaan): don't let your daughter marry his son or your son marry his daughter, because they will turn your sons away from Me to serve other gods" (Dt. 7:3-4). The purpose of this prohibition was to prevent a spiritual falling away, as had happened before the flood when the believing men married unbelieving women and the world increased in wickedness. See Genesis 6.

The Old Testament contains many examples of disobedience to God's restriction and invariably the consequences of this disobedience were tragic. We should recall how disturbed the godly teacher Ezra became when this report was given to him concerning the Israelites who had returned to their homeland from their captivity in Babylon: "The people of Israel . . . have mixed our holy race with the people of those countries (foreign countries given to idolatry), and the leaders and officials have led them in such disloyalty" (Ezra 9:2). All day long he "sat down dazed" and in the evening

he prayed: "After all that has happened to us for the wicked things we did and for our great guilt— . . . if we should again break Your commandments and intermarry with these idolatrous people, won't You be even more angry with us till You have consumed us and there are no survivors left?" (Ezra 9:13-14)

The only solution the Israelites of that time could find to their problem was to divorce all their heathen wives and banish the children born from them. Certainly this was an extreme measure, but the repentant people were in earnest about correcting the evil of which they had been guilty. They now fully recognized that God had strictly forbidden such marriages with the heathen.

Their own history provided countless examples of spiritual apostasy and depravity directly related to intermarriage with the heathen. Besides the cases of Esau and Solomon cited in an earlier installment of this series we have the example of Moses himself, who married Zipporah, the daughter of a Midianite priest. When Moses and his wife and family were on their way to Egypt so that Moses could begin the God-assigned task of delivering the Israelites from Pharaoh, "the Lord met him and tried to kill him. Then Zipporah took a flint-stone knife, cut off her son's foreskin, and laid it at his feet. 'You are a bridegroom by blood to me!' she said."

This strange account in Ex. 4:24-25 certainly implies that Moses and his wife did not agree in spiritual things, particularly on the meaning

and value of circumcision, the sign of God's covenant with His people. Apparently Moses had neglected the circumcision of his second son because of his wife's objections, and this failure was not corrected until the Lord God Himself threatened to kill Moses because of this neglect.

When a person attempts to please a spouse rather than God, he is in serious spiritual trouble. If even Moses was misled by his wife to neglect circumcision, how much more easily can we be led to neglect our Christian duties because of a spouse who does not share our Christian convictions!

Interracial Marriages

Yet we should understand that the law which prohibited marriages with the heathen was based primarily on the differences in religion, not on racial differences. The harlot Rahab had been a heathen Canaanite, but it is clear from Judges 2:8-13 that she became a believer in the Lord God of Israel, and the wife of a man in the tribe of Judah, Salmon by name, through whom she became an ancestress in the line of our Savior (Mt. 1:5).

Another heathen girl in our Savior's line was Ruth, the Moabitess (Mt. 1:5). But she too came to faith in the God of Israel, as she confessed in her famous words to her mother-in-law Naomi: "Your people

will be my people and your God my God" (Ruth 1:16). The Biblical account does not at all hint that Boaz was doing anything wrong or forbidden when he married Ruth, for, as Boaz said, she had "come for shelter under the wings of the Lord God of Israel" (Ruth 2:12).

Today there are many who are still opposed to interracial dating and interracial marriages as a matter of principle. But there does not seem to be anything in Scripture that forbids an Englishman from marrying a German, a Japanese from marrying a Chinese, or a Yankee from marrying a Negro. Such a marriage may be unwise under most circumstances but not strictly forbidden. After all, the Lord God Himself defended His servant Moses when Miriam and Aaron spoke against him "on account of the Cushite (Ethiopian?) woman he had married" (Numbers 12:1). It would seem that the marriage of two practicing Christians, one white and one black, who were in agreement with each other on the confession of their faith, would be preferable to the marriage of two Germans or two Swedes, one of whom was Christian and the other an atheist.

—D. Lau

Note: This material was first presented at a Minnesota Delegate Conference in 1982, which requested that it be printed for a wider audience.

DEAR SENIOR CLASS

I'm writing to you because as your secretary and then as your chaperone I feel that each one of you has added something very special to my life. I see in

your class six very uniquely created individuals whom God loves each the same. He has given you gifts and abilities. How will you use them from now on? You have many choices to make. How will you choose?

I'd like to tell you a story about six or seven years of my life which you can think back on as you make your choices.

When you were just beginning your grade school education, I was walking the halls of Immanuel High School on "the prairie" at 3rd Avenue and Harper. This was before the High School moved down to Second Street. There was a new and old building out there. Since they weren't connected we got fresh air between classes, or snow . . . or rain . . . depending on the season.

I came to Immanuel as a sophomore—thus the new girl. The toughest part about being the new girl was that everyone else had known everyone else all their lives—or else they were related. One big plus was that there was a new boy in the sophomore class that year, too. We became good buddies.

The activities were about the same as now—annual, paper, sweeping, Boys' Basketball (no girls' team back then though we did have Girls' Club), and of course banquet work. Our junior banquet was Spanish—the last in the old church basement—the best of course! That seems to be the motto of every junior class: Ours was the Best! After all that work, why not?

Our senior banquet had to be held at the Holiday Inn North by the pool since a fire had destroyed the church during the summer of 1971. The juniors that year appropriately chose an Indian theme. The best part of the skit was when someone got pushed into the pool!

Then came graduation in the open air with cement floor and folding chairs. Our class of 14 was determined to graduate in the new church which was being built where the old one had stood—thus we prayed hard for sunshine. It WAS a glorious day. The birds flew overhead and joined the choir in song.

Those three years at Immanuel were good. Oh, there were days. You know how that goes, but that's High School. NOW I came to a point in my life where I had a choice to make—as you do now.

With graduation comes a feeling of freedom. NOW I can do MY own thing! I'm grown up—an adult! I know where it's ALL at! I'm gonna be me and no one get in my way—I'm free!

When I look back at the three years after I graduated—it's like a dream. That couldn't have really been me doing all those things. How could I have blown it so royally? It's like I forgot what life's really all about—forgot plans to go to college in Eau Claire—forgot chapel talks—brushed my parents' counsel aside—listened to my peers—couldn't be called square or different by the "in" crowd. It was the hippie era back then where everyone did their OWN thing—a lot of "peace" and "love" floating around. Parties and excessive drinking were fun—being the world's friend and feeling free. Better show up on Sunday though, didn't want the people who thought I was such a good Christian to find out what was really going on. Didn't want to hear or believe the passage that

says that what you do in the darkness **WILL BE** shouted on the housetops.

My morals got pretty low. The soap operas I was watching gave me a **REAL** education. The words of the music I was listening to became true to life.

The choice I made after graduation felt so . . . good—seemed like so much fun—and I had freedom!

OR DID I?

Parties don't last forever, hangovers get old.

HELP, LORD! I REALLY BLEW IT THIS TIME! FORGIVE ME—SAVE ME—PLEASE!

After the choice I'd made, why should God be gracious to me? Why should He save me?

He spared my life so many times. He loved me in the middle of all that mess. I might have forgotten Him for a time, but He didn't forget about me. He had His eye on me because I was special to Him just as each of you is special to Him.

Why so special?

He lovingly made you and me. Before He created the world He knew what we'd be like. He'd have us choose life but doesn't force us.

Things got pretty tough! I could have despaired—but the foundation I'd received as I grew up—at home, at a Christian grade school, and at Immanuel High School—was now waiting to be built upon.

When I confessed my sin to God, to my parents, and others I'd wronged—when I truly repented and knew I was forgiven, I **THEN** felt freedom. What I'd **THOUGHT** was freedom before was really bondage that brought with it fears, a feeling of inferiority, and self-rejection.

Now, after many tears and much pain and heartache, it was time to choose to take the road I should have taken earlier in my life. I realized that Jesus wanted to be, not only my Savior, but Lord of my life. In other words, He wanted me to let Him run my life instead of me trying to do it.

My Heavenly Father forgave and cleansed me. Like a shepherd He led and guided me, waiting patiently at times. It was often that He carried me. He very gently picked up the pieces of my life and put them back together.

I began realizing so many truths I'd heard but had not experienced:

- that God loved me right where I was. He hated my sin, but loved me.
- that the things I wanted to hide from those who cared for me could only be hidden for a time.
- that honesty **IS** the best policy.
- that practicing moderation **IS** sensible and doesn't make life dull.
- that no matter what the problem, God knows all about it already anyway, and He alone can give a lasting answer—so why not talk to Him about it.
- that the things He asks of me are for my good so I may enjoy life with a clear conscience in truth and honesty.
- that reading His Word each day and talking with Him not only

strengthens me as I see responses to my conversations with Him, but cleanses and renews my mind and life bringing more and more freedom.

There is still much to learn. There are many things to overcome. I need God's wisdom each day because, though He has forgiven me and remembers my past no more, the CONSEQUENCES of my sin will remain with me. They remind me of His love and grace that has carried me thus far.

My desire now and for the rest of my life is to be a rebuildier. To share how real God can be to us if we'll only let Him.

I'm not proud of a part of this story, though it is only an excerpt of the whole story. But I hope that you will remember it when you make some important choices in the near future.

The foundation you have received in the Word is so important. Build upon it for the rest of your lives and you will be blessed beyond measure.

CHOOSE LIFE NOW! YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID!

—Annette Rode

Rt. 1, Box 142 A

Lake Crystal, MN 56055

Note: The above words were spoken by Mrs. Rode to the senior class at Immanuel Lutheran High School in Mankato, Minnesota, at the 1984 spring banquet. They are reprinted here by request of some who heard them.

A Lutheran Leader Leaves the LCA

We are happy to report that the conservative Lutheran leader, the Rev. David Barnhart of Minneapolis, Minnesota, has publicly announced his withdrawal from the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), effective September 1, 1984. Some of Pastor Barnhart's testimony concerning the apostasy in the LCA was printed in the February and April issues of the *Lutheran Spokesman*.

In a sermon to his congregation on June 17 Pastor Barnhart stated: "Unless otherwise convinced by Holy Scripture, I cannot and I will not continue to abide in a denomination which has so consistently, defiantly, and flagrantly diminished the authority of God's most holy Word. I

cannot and I will not continue to abide in a denominational household where the heresy of universalism is both taught and tolerated, enslaving untold multitudes in their sins without hope of God's redeeming grace through Jesus Christ alone. I cannot and I will not continue to abide in a denominational household where ethics and values are determined by popular secularist views, rather than upon the infallibility of God's most Holy Word. And in a sin which so ignobly typifies the great fall from Truth, I cannot and I will not abide in a denominational household where leaders have sanctioned immorality through the presentation of sex films for our youth and families,

especially as they are so bold as to present these in Jesus' name. . . . Therefore, with heartfelt pain and agony of soul, I announce to you this morning that I am withdrawing from the Lutheran Church in America."

We are convinced that it was the Lord working through the Scriptures that led Pastor Barnhart to "come out from them and be separate" (2 Cor. 6:14ff.). Many are satisfied to protest and protest and protest. But Pastor Barnhart says: "I know the time has

come to cease the rhetoric and act decisively upon the Word. God looks today for Christians who will stand in the gap for Him as a bold witness to all, that His sovereign absolute Truth is not for sale among us. Compromise and accommodation with heresy, apostasy, and immorality are not possible in His holy church."

We pray that Pastor Barnhart's action will stir up many others to follow his example.

—D. Lau

Daily Devotions for September

The writer to the Jewish Christians of the first century rebukes his readers by saying, "At a time when you should be teachers you need someone to teach you the ABC of God's Word again. It has come to this that you need milk again instead of solid food" (Heb. 5:12—AAT).

As children of God we should grow up in the faith. The mark of the mature believer is a firm grasp and an active use of the basic truths of Christian faith and life. Then, through His Word and His servants' use of the Word, the Lord can lead us beyond the foundations without our stumbling over them. For God has prepared solid food (strong meat) for His people that they may always continue to grow up in Christ.

It is clear, then, that if we are to be in a position to go beyond the simplest and most basic teachings of Scripture, we must not pass them by. This month, as grade school children return to classes for the purpose of obtaining a basic education, let us return to, review, and grow even stronger in

THE ABC'S OF OUR FAITH

Day Reading

- 1 Luke 10:38-42
- 2 John 13:1-17
- 3 Romans 5:1-11
- 4 Galatians 3:26-4:7
- 5 Acts 10:34-43
- 6 Ephesians 6:10-16
- 7 1 John 5:1-5, 10-13, 20
- 8 Romans 3:20-28
- 9 1 Corinthians 1:18-25
- 10 Romans 8:5-17

Theme

- Serving the Lord is important, but learning from Him is even more important.
- Jesus teaches us both by His words and by His actions.
- Atonement—salvation through the substitutionary, sacrificial death of Christ.
- Baptism makes us children of God through faith in the only begotten Son.
- Christ is the Messiah in whose name we have forgiveness.
- Devil—to stand against his tricky ways we need the full armament of God.
- Eternal life is a gift of God to us for Jesus' sake.
- Faith in the redeeming blood of Christ is the sinner's only hope.
- Gospel—the Good News of Christ-crucified, the power of God unto salvation.
- Holy Spirit—the Giver of life by whom we are born into the family of God.

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| 11 | 2 Timothy 3:14-17 | Inspiration makes the Bible God's own book, full of saving truth and sure guidelines. |
| 12 | 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 | Justification—God credits the righteousness of Christ to the believing sinner. |
| 13 | Psalms 2 | Kingdom of God—King Jesus rules to the end of the time and beyond. |
| 14 | 1 Corinthians 11:23-29 | Lord's Supper—the heavenly feast prepared by Christ for His children here on earth. |
| 15 | Acts 8:26-39 | Means of Grace—through Word and Sacrament God makes and keeps His own. |
| 16 | Luke 10:25-37 | Neighbor—God's love has reached down. Ours reaches up and out. |
| 17 | Romans 7:14-25 | Original sin clings to us throughout our lives. |
| 18 | Matthew 6:5-13 | Prayer is the believing child speaking to his heavenly Father. |
| 19 | Ephesians 2:4-10 | Quickening—raised by God from spiritual death to spiritual life. |
| 20 | Psalms 130 | Repentance is sincere sorrow for sins and faith in forgiveness for Jesus' sake. |
| 21 | 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 | Sanctification—the Holy Spirit leads us in Christ-like living. |
| 22 | Matthew 3:13-17 | Trinity—go to Jordan and there see the Trinity. |
| 23 | Romans 15:1-7 | Unity—a warm and wonderful gift God gives to fellow believers. |
| 24 | Matthew 1:18-25 | Virgin birth—by this miracle we have a sinless Savior. |
| 25 | John 15:1-8 | Works—the believing life, a fruit of faith and a thank-offering to God. |
| 26 | Matthew 18:21-35 | 70 X 7—filled with an unlimited willingness to forgive, even as God. |
| 27 | Matthew 11:25-30 | Yoke—come unto Christ. Through His Word He gives His followers heart-rest. |
| 28 | 1 Thessalonians 1:1-8 | Zeal—let us truly live to Christ, believing, laboring, hoping, spreading the Good News. |
| 29 | Revelations 1:1-8 | From A to Z, from first to last, Jesus Christ is God's revelation to man. |
| 30 | 1 Peter 5:10-11 | A closing prayer and benediction. |

—W. V. Schaller

Change of Address

Arvid G. W. Gullerud
N. 1224 Felts Rd.
Spokane, Washington 99206
(509) 927-8913

Ordination

As authorized by President Daniel Fleischer, I ordained Thomas Schuetze and installed him as assistant pastor of Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mankato, Minnesota, for the summer months, on June 10, 1984.

—L. D. Redlin

Installation

Under the authorization of President Fleischer, Prof. L. W. Schierenbeck installed Pastor Michael Sydow as pastor of Faith Lutheran Church of Markesan, Wisconsin, on June 10, 1984.

—John K. Pfeiffer

Change of Address

C. M. Gullerud
218 Grover Rd.
Eau Claire, WI 54701

Donna Darrah
1332 10th St.
Clarkston, WA 99403

**For Immanuel High School Graduates of
1977, 1976, 1975**

We are hoping to hold a combined 10-year class reunion during the summer of 1986. WE NEED YOU TO MAKE IT A SUCCESS! Please mail your current address and any ideas, suggestions, or helpful hints to: Leslie (Ludvigson) Horrillo, 394 Sara Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086. AND PASS THE WORD ALONG!

Change in Time of Service

If you are visiting or passing through the La Crosse, Wisconsin, area, you are cordially invited to worship at St. Luke's Church, Stoddard, at 8:30 a.m., or St. Mark's Church, Onalaska, at 10:30 a.m.

—Egbert Albrecht, Pastor

Notice from Business Manager

If a congregation does not receive its bulk shipment of the *Lutheran Spokesman* by the 20th of the month, please notify the Business Manager immediately.

—Benno Sydow
2750 Oxford St. N.
Roseville, MN 55113

A New Editor

A new editor of the *Lutheran Spokesman* was appointed at the sixteenth convention of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, July 9-13, 1984. He is Pastor Paul Fleischer of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Jamestown, North Dakota. Please send all material for publication to Editor Fleischer by the tenth of the month preceding publication. A summary of convention business will be printed in the September issue.

I wish to use this opportunity to thank our readers for their comments and correspondence during the time that I have served as editor. I count it a special privilege to have been enabled to serve the Lord in this position. May the Lord grant His richest blessings on the new editor in the years to come.

—D. Lau