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lutheran spokesman



CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

—In the Spokesman 25 Years Ago—

June 1958 (Vol. 1, No. 1): THE CHEYENNE CONVENTION. Much time was spent on working out a confession concerning the entire issue of Church Fellowship, the very issue on which so much confusion has been created in recent times. A working draft had been submitted to the participants in advance of the sessions. . . . The motion prevailed that the first part of the confession (though still subject to formal changes) be made available to others as our doctrinal confession concerning Church Fellowship.

August 1958 (Vol. 1, No. 2): SPOKANE HIGHLIGHTS. In the warm hospitality of our Spokane congregations, 11 sessions were held from July 30 to August 4th. . . . Time was spent on painstaking study of two doctrines in which there has been so much confusion and perversion. . . . In the matter of Church Fellowship the Negative of a draft prepared by the undersigned (Rev. W. Schaller, Jr.) was carefully scrutinized and discussed. There was perfect agreement on each antithesis. The doctrine of the Church and Ministry was clearly presented in an essay by Pastor L. Bernthal of Clarkston, WA. Unanimity being revealed also in this doctrine, the essayist was instructed to add a section on the Office of the Keys.

February 1959 (Vol. 1, No. 5): THE MANKATO CONFERENCE. From January 13-15th our conference met as guests of Immanuel Lutheran Church. . . . About 60 persons were in attendance at most sessions, including many observers and guests. The work could best be described as deliberate. The confusion so rampant in the past decades among Synodical Conference Lutherans was recognized by the patient deliberation on all doctrines affected in the recent controversies.

March 1959 (Vol. 1, No. 6): THAT EVERY MAN MAY KNOW. *Concerning Church Fellowship* has been mimeographed in its present revised form. This is the form as it was substantially adopted by three conventions at Cheyenne, Spokane, and Mankato.

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OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY THEME:

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 5:14-16.

How Did We Become Children Of Light?

Anniversary Series—No. 2

By nature no one is able to claim that he is among God's "own special people" (I Peter 2:9). The problem is sin. Whoever is a sinner cannot be one of God's people. Being born of sinful flesh, all people are sinful (Jn. 3:6). Therefore, as the apostle Paul informs us, all people are "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3). The apostle describes them with these words: "Having their understanding darkened, being excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart" (Eph. 4:18).

"Having their understanding darkened" is the condition of darkness which is natural to all people. It is the darkness of ignorance of God and the lack of understanding in spiritual matters. In their ignorance they fight against God. The only possible end of such rebellion against

God is eternal damnation. They can do nothing themselves to avoid that dismal fate. On one occasion Jesus asked the question: "What will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mk. 8:37) The answer is implied: Nothing! There is nothing that a person can do to save himself from eternal damnation.

Chosen "From The Beginning"

But not all people suffer that fate. There are those people who are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, His own special people" (I Pet. 2:9). Their situation is entirely different. God has chosen them. This is a selection of long standing. The apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonian Christians: "God *from the beginning* chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,

to which He called you by our gospel for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 2:13-14). The beginning—when the choosing was done—is explained by Paul's words to the Ephesians: "before the foundation of the world" (1:4).

Why God chose these individuals we do not know. He has not revealed that to us. What we do know is this: no person deserves any special treatment from God. All have sinned. Therefore, all deserve eternal damnation—from the person whose sins seem minor and few in human eyes to the most vicious mass murderer. Why aren't they all condemned then? Because of God's love. "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Jn. 3:16).

Through Baptism And Teaching

This love of God was the reason He called His special people "out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9). The Savior Himself reveals to us the means by which people in darkness become children of light: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Mt. 28:19-20). Through baptism and teaching what Jesus has commanded—that is how the chosen are called out of the darkness of ignorance and unbelief and led "into His marvelous light."



This marvelous light which radiates from Jesus, the Light, is the Good News of what He has done for mankind. Paul refers to it as "the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:4). He also says: "For it is God who commanded light to shine out of darkness who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (v. 6). The same God Who created light at the beginning of the world is responsible also for the gospel light shining into the hearts of men. And the knowledge which He gives is not just a head-knowledge. It is a heart-knowledge. It is faith—faith in the glorious work of God through Jesus, namely, the forgiveness of all sins, and thereby, eternal salvation.

Through Jesus' Work For Us

We have entered another Lenten season during which our attention focuses upon what Jesus did to make forgiveness possible for us. He kept the law perfectly for us. He then offered Himself as the great Sacrifice for the sins of all people. He died on the cross to pay for our sins. He rose again from the dead as proof that He had completed the work of our

redemption. All who are led by the Holy Spirit by means of the gospel to believe this have forgiveness. All who are chosen by God before the foundation of the world are by God's grace led to believe this.

All of us who are so chosen, so called out of darkness into His marvelous light, and so made people of God through the gift of faith—we

make up a holy nation. We are "His own special people." Jesus is our Light. He has shined upon us through the gospel. Through God's mercy we have been made children of light. Gratitude to God will lead us to "proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light" (I Pet. 2:9).

—Keith Olmanson

Response To A Letter To The Editor—

ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE TO OUR CELEBRATION

"HOW OFTEN DO WE THINK ABOUT HOW OUR LORD HAS PROMOTED HIS WORK THROUGH THE LAY-PEOPLE?"... THE ROLE WHICH FAITHFUL LAY-MEMBERS HAVE PLAYED IN CLC HISTORY IS INDEED A PERSPECTIVE WE DO NOT WANT TO LOSE SIGHT OF.

In a previous issue the editor invited articles from our CLC lay-people, "especially from those (but not only those) who have been members of the CLC from its inception." By way of explanation it was suggested that "such articles could include some reflections on how you (and your congregation) have experienced God's grace in Christ Jesus through your fellowship in the CLC in this first quarter-century of its existence."

A letter from a reader followed. The letter expressed hearty approval of the idea "for surely the CLC is blessed with a number of lay-people who have the gifts to write worthwhile pieces . . ." It continued: ". . . your invitation does bring many memories of those early years . . . (and of) the blessings which the Lord has brought through the years to the CLC, and to me and my family."

The writer added: "How often do we think about how our Lord has promoted His work through the lay-people? There are, I am sure, many ILC graduates who are now active CLC congregational members. There are also many charter CLC lay-people who are not ILC graduates who are 'pillars' in their home churches. This would apply to both men and women. Brief life stories of some of these people over the past 25 years or so might add another perspective to our celebration."

The role which faithful lay-members (whether men or women, ILC gradu-

ates or not, charter members or more recent ones) have played in CLC history is indeed a perspective we do not want to lose sight of. Of this the editor has assured the letter-writer and would remind the rest of our readers.

An editorial decision is involved here. As part of the *Spokesman's* role in our 25th anniversary celebration, it was decided to have feature articles on congregations "born with the CLC—borne by God." In reviewing the history of these congregations, a decision had to be made as to just what information to include. Should lay-members be mentioned or not? If so, which? It was finally decided not to single out individuals for fear of unintentionally omitting some or overlooking others. Generally-speaking, it was decided to confine ourselves to the mentioning of pastors and teachers who have served. For that there is this scriptural admonition: "Remember them . . . who have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose faith follow . . ." (Hebr. 13:7)

In no way is this intended to belittle the contributions of the almost countless men and women who have actively and faithfully served "behind the scenes" in our congregations, or even those laymen "on the scene" of synodical boards and committees, past or present! All of us can think of many such lay-members who sacrificed much of earthly time, talent, and treasure for the sake of their local congregation and/or their synod—yes, for the sake of their Lord and the purity of His Word and Gospel! Not the least of these, by the way, would be the pastors' wives and the teachers' spouses who, though often "ignored" in published church histories, often endure great trial and difficult circumstances as faithful companions of God's publicly-called servants.

It is to be granted that there is scriptural precedent for "naming names" of God's faithful people. See, for example, the Spirit's own "Who's Who?" in the local congregation in Rome (Romans chapter 16), or in the Old Testament Church of God (Hebrews chapter 11). In the editor's opinion, however, the *Spokesman* has not the room, nor finally is it the place, for rehearsing the contributions of the lay-members, even those which might be considered the "pillars," of our congregations and synod. In our opinion such a rehearsal has been and is properly given in local anniversary or congregational pictorials, historical summaries, yearbooks etc. We have seen such rehearsals done in fine Christian taste in articles which feature the grace of God upon a people gathered here and there around His Word and Sacrament.

(Nevertheless, let us repeat our invitation to our lay-people to submit articles of a more general nature on the blessings we have all shared together in these first 25 years!)

In the final analysis, of course, it is the Lord God Who reserves to Himself the passing out of "rewards of grace" to His faithful servants, whether clergy or laity. "Their works do follow them" not only in this life but through eternity (see Rev. 14:13). Such a perspective each of us will want to remember as we commemorate 25 years of God's grace in Christ Jesus.

Immoral Influences—PRIDE

"From within, out of the heart of man, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man." (Mark 7:21-23, NKJV)

When Jesus listed the sins of the flesh that come from men's evil hearts, He included PRIDE in His list. The world does not generally think of pride as an immoral influence. In fact, many educators and youth organizations seek to instill pride into their students and members in an attempt to lead them away from the sins of the flesh: "I am a good person. I feel good about myself. Therefore I shall not harm my body by using drugs, etc." This method of instilling pride may very well succeed in getting people to refrain from certain external sins and bad habits.

The Pharisees of Jesus' time were outwardly upright and moral people. The Pharisee in Jesus' parable was no doubt speaking sincerely when he said: "I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector" (Lk. 18:11). The Pharisees had a reputation for being holy and moral people, and this reputation was no doubt deserved, as far as outward works are concerned.

The Immorality of Pride

As far as God is concerned, PRIDE is the very worst of all evils, because it makes man self-sufficient

and self-righteous, not needing God to attain eternal life or to avoid evil in this world. Therefore the influence that comes to us Christians today from the instillers of pride is just as dangerous as the influence that comes to us from the purveyors of pornography. Perhaps such an immoral influence as pride is even more dangerous, because it is less easily detected as an evil influence, and it is almost impossible to notice in ourselves.

The Greek word for pride in Mark 7:21-23 is used only this one time in the New Testament. But the related adjective is used five times in the New Testament, always in a bad sense. It means showing oneself above others.

Luke 1:51—"He has scattered the PROUD in the imagination of their hearts."

Romans 1:30—"Being filled with all unrighteousness, . . . backbiters, haters of God, violent, PROUD, boasters, inventors of evil things, etc.

2 Timothy 3:2—"in the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters PROUD, blasphemous, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy," etc.

James 4:6 and I Peter 5:5 (quoting

Proverbs 3:34)—“God resists the PROUD, but gives grace to the humble.”

Another Greek word with similar meaning is used twice.

James 4:16—“But now you boast in your ARROGANCE. All such boasting is evil.”

I John 2:16—“All that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the PRIDE of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.” By pride of life is meant “an arrogance or vainglory relating to one’s external circumstances, whether wealth or rank or dress” (John Stott); “the braggadocia which exaggerates what it possesses in order to impress other people” (I. H. Marshall). As an example of such pride in possessions consider the rich farmer of Luke 12:16-21 or the rich man of James 5:1.

Pride Among The Pharisees

As we now examine in the Gospels Jesus’ reaction to pride, particularly among the Pharisees, we should



Jesus Talks to a Rich Young Man

realize what a dangerous and immoral influence pride is, and we should ask God to keep us always on the alert with regard to this evil.

THE TAX COLLECTORS AND SINNERS KNEW THEY WERE SICK, AND SO THEY APPRECIATED THE DOCTOR’S CONCERN AND LISTENED TO HIS ADVICE.

One of the first Pharisees to be confronted by Jesus was Nicodemus (Jn. 3). Notice how Jesus pointed out to Nicodemus the absolute necessity of a second birth for entering the kingdom of God: “Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” The danger of pride is that one believes himself capable of doing good, satisfying God’s requirements, and meriting an eternal reward. Any kind of influence that fosters such pride is truly immoral for it kills men’s souls.

When Jesus was accused of associating with tax collectors and sinners, whom the Pharisees regarded as the truly immoral influences of their day, He responded by saying: “Those who are well do not need a physician, but those who are sick” (Lk. 5:31). The tax collectors and sinners knew they were sick, and so they appreciated the Doctor’s concern and listened to His advice. Thus there was hope for their improvement. But the Pharisees thought they were well. Such people cannot be helped. Jesus said to the Pharisees: “If you were blind, you would have

no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains" (Jn. 9:41). True God-pleasing morality begins with an acknowledgement of sin and the need for a Savior. Any group that ignores sin and bypasses confession of sin in an effort to improve morals is doomed to failure and is in fact itself an immoral influence of the worst kind. That is why Jesus told His disciples: "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees" (Mk. 8:15). He was referring to their "doctrine" (Mt. 16:12).

God Demands Perfection

The scribes and Pharisees were widely admired for their observance of God's laws and their public morality. But what they did not realize is that God demands perfection and they were still far from being perfect. Jesus told His disciples: "Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:20).

With all their external observance of God's rules and their devising of human works even holier in their estimation than the works demanded by God, the Pharisees were still children of hell, and their influence was immoral because they were leading others to hell also: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. . . . You travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is

won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves" (Mt. 23:13, 15). Because they were spiritually blind themselves and did not know the way to heaven, their influence was bound to be immoral: "If the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch" (Mt. 15:14).

Find Self-esteem in Christ

Pride is immoral because it exalts self rather than Christ. The Pharisees condemned themselves when they said: "Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him?" (Jn. 7:48) Why should they believe in Jesus when they were the religious experts and He did not cater to them? The mere fact that He did not approve of them was enough in their opinion to prove that He could not be the Messiah of God. They derided His teachings, but Jesus said to them: "You are those which justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God" (Lk. 16:15).

The kind of self-esteem promoted by the Pharisees was respected by the people, but still it was immoral because it was not in agreement with God. We should not declare ourselves righteous, but we should receive God's declaration of ourselves as righteous because of what Christ did. Our self-esteem and self-worth, if we want to use these terms, are based not on our own goodness but on the fact that God considered us objects of His love and determined to save us, and we are now His

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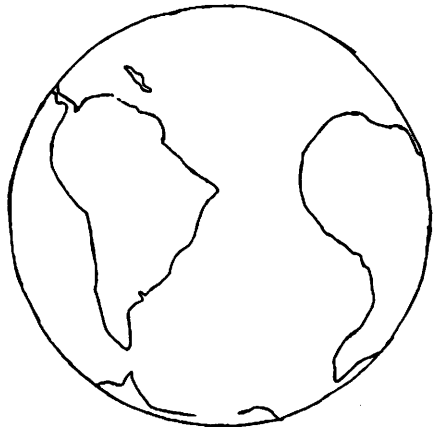
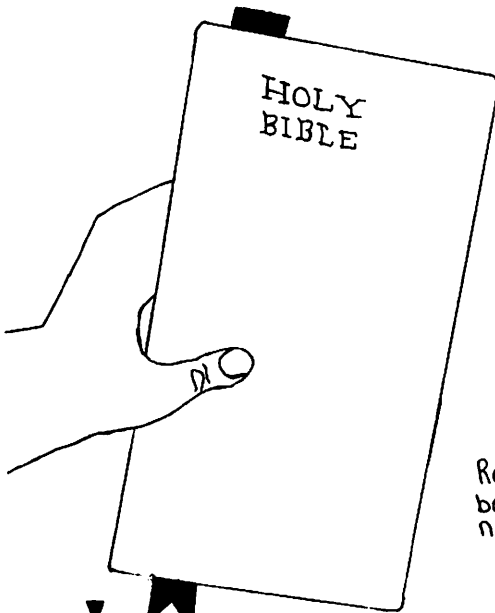
children by faith in Christ Jesus.

Said C. S. Lewis: "There is one vice of which no man in the world is free; which everyone in the world loathes when he sees it in someone else; and of which hardly any people, except Christians, ever imagine that they are guilty themselves. . . . The vice I am talking of is Pride. . . . Whenever we find that our religious life is making us feel that we are

good—above all, that we are better than someone else—I think we may be sure that we are being acted on, not by God, but by the devil. . . . Pride can often be used to beat down the simpler vices. Teachers, in fact, often appeal to a boy's Pride, or, as they call it, his self-respect, to make him behave decently; many a man has overcome cowardice, or lust, or ill-temper by learning to think that they are beneath his dignity—that is, by Pride. The devil laughs. He is perfectly content to see you becoming chaste and brave and self-controlled provided, all the time, he is setting up in you the Dictatorship of Pride" (from Chapter 8 of *Christian Behavior* by C. S. Lewis).

—D. Lau

Mission Poster—



Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations. . . .

Luke 24:47



CHURCH of the LUTHERAN CONFESSION

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

What Is Confession?

Confession embraces two parts: the one is, that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, from the minister as from God Himself, in no wise doubting, but firmly believing that our sins are thus forgiven before God in heaven.

What Sins Should We Confess?

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. But before the minister we should confess those sins only which we know and feel in our hearts.

Which Are These?

Here consider your station according to the Ten Commandments, whether you are a father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, or servant; whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful; whether you have grieved any one by word or deed; whether you have stolen, neglected, or slighted aught, or done injury.

What Shall The Minister Say After The Confession of Sins?

Then he shall say: Be it unto thee as thou believest. And I, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive thee thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

—Luther's *Small Catechism*

According to Scripture, to confess one's sins is to acknowledge, admit, plead guilty of them. Without the admission of one's guilt no forgiveness will be sought, nor can it be offered, nor will it be accepted. God Himself declares: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I Jn. 1:8-9) Again we hear Him say: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." (Prov. 28:13)

To Whom We Should Confess

Since sin is a transgression of the holy will of God, God is the One to whom our confession must be made in the first instance. David teaches us this by his example when he confesses to God: "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight." (Ps 51:4)

However, with some sins we have grieved not only God but also our fellowman. To him also we then owe our admission of guilt and desire for pardon. James reminds us of this when he writes: "Confess your faults one to another." (Jas. 5:16) Though

the Christian's proud, sinful flesh may rebel against this, the new man in one who believes in the Savior will prompt and enable him to do this.

Another option lies open to us. If we have committed some sin that lies heavily upon our conscience and for which we feel the desire for a special and personal assurance of forgiveness, we may confess our sin privately to our pastor. Then we will receive from him the personal and individual assurance of forgiveness for which we long. It is to be regretted that not more Christians

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today avail themselves of this especially comforting assurance of God's pardon.

Someone may ask: Must I not fear in such a case that the pastor will reveal the secret sin, of which I am ashamed, to others? No, dear troubled soul, that is something so sacred in the relation between a pastor and the souls under his care that not even the courts of the land can require anything revealed to a pastor under the seal of confession.

Opportunities For Confession

One opportunity for confession is afforded us in our common order of worship which we follow on Sunday

morning (see *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 6). We admit to God not only the multitude of sins in thoughts, desires, words, and deeds, but also the corruption of our hearts by nature. Our sinful heart, inherited from Adam, is the root from which all these other sins spring. Therefore we plead with God for Jesus' sake to forgive our sins, to create in us a clean heart, and to enable us by His grace to amend our ways in accordance with His Word and will.

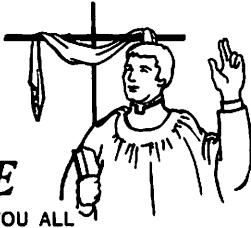
When the Lord's Supper is celebrated we make our confession of sins in somewhat different words (*TLH*, p. 16). We include the admission, which is implied in the confession made on other Sundays, that for all sins we deserve God's dire wrath here in time and hereafter in eternity. But we also confess that we are heartily sorry for having grievously offended our gracious God and Savior.

Confessing our sins and sinfulness need not and should not be confined to occasions of public worship. On account of the weakness of our flesh, we become guilty of sinning each day. Therefore, confession should become a part of our daily communication with God. Jesus has taught us to do this in the fifth petition: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." Upon such confession absolution is to follow.

What Absolution Is

Absolution is the assurance of God's forgiveness pronounced upon us by our pastor. This follows after we have confessed our sins and our

THE **GOD**
OF
PEACE
BE WITH YOU ALL



sorrow over them, after we have expressed our faith in Jesus as our only Savior from sin and our desire to amend our sinful ways with the help of God. This absolution is spoken by the pastor after our confession of sins in our public worship services. It also may be spoken by a fellow-believer after we have confessed to him the sin with which we have offended God and him.

But is not absolution spoken by the pastor or a fellow-believer a usurping of the authority that belongs to God alone? That is an accusation raised against us by some. Such is by no means the case. Jesus Himself, the Author of the forgiveness of sins, has given this authority to His believers to pronounce forgiveness upon penitent sinners in His name and stead. He has done this in His well-known

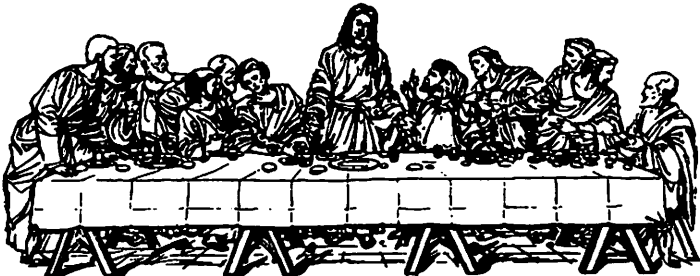
words: "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." (Jn. 20:23) This makes the absolution spoken by a pastor or a fellow-believer "as valid and certain in heaven also as if Christ, our dear Lord, dealt with us Himself."

Finally, what if those making confession are insincere, only mechanically speaking the words but not meaning them from the heart? Such receive no benefit from the absolution. To them apply the words found in Hebrews 4:2: "The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Insincere, impenitent confessors deprive themselves of God's forgiveness which Jesus has secured and offers to them no less than to others.

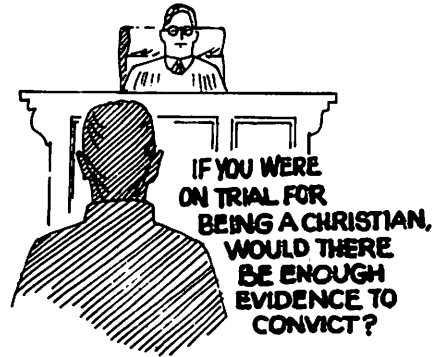
From such hypocrisy may God always preserve us. Instead, may our attitude toward the absolution spoken to us always be:

While Thy ministers proclaim
Peace and pardon in Thy name,
Through their voice by faith may I
Hear Thee speaking from the sky. (TLH #2:6)

—H. C. Duehlmeier



DOCTRINE AND LIFE



Among the many Gallup Polls which regularly favor us with statistics about life in these United States, there are also religious ones. The pollsters rightfully recognize that religion has an important role to play in the life of a nation and its people.

The 1984 edition of *Religion In America* published by the Gallup organization reported that 70 percent of Americans are church members. The majority of these stated that they are more interested in religious and spiritual matters now than they were five years ago. As heartening as this is, something else is said which can only be disheartening. Gallup refers to the "giant paradox" that "religion is growing in importance among Americans, but morality is losing ground." This incisive assessment then follows: "If religion does not produce a more ethical, loving society, something is fundamentally wrong with the way that religion is being practiced." Truer words were never spoken.

The Two Belong Together

America is a pluralistic society, that is, it is composed of people from many different backgrounds, races, and religions. Some of these religions are Christian, others are not. No doubt the opinions of some non-Christians are represented in the poll, although it is safe to assume that most are "Christian" opinions since Christianity is the predominant religion in the land.

Therein lies our concern. Though not necessarily true of non-Christian religions, the Christian perspective has always been that true religion and morality, doctrine and life if you will, are inseparable. Though they don't always *go* together (as the poll's findings suggest), they do *belong* together.

The holy Bible makes this abundantly clear. "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone," writes James (2:17). Again: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (1:27) As far as biblical Christianity is concerned, when it comes to religion and morality, doctrine and life, faith and works, it is not either-or but both-and.

As a disciple of Jesus Christ, the Christian will be concerned for pure doctrine. He will be concerned about continuing in Jesus' Word (Jn. 8:31).

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DOCTRINE AND LIFE, FAITH AND WORKS, IT IS NOT
EITHER-OR BUT BOTH-AND.”**

He will be concerned about observing all things whatsoever Jesus has commanded (Mt. 28:20). At the same time the Christian, regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, knows that the doctrine he believes must have a practical effect upon his life. He knows that his life, through the enabling Spirit, must be consistent with the doctrine he professes.

The inseparable connection between what one believes and how one lives comes out most basically in the Savior's teaching: "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." (Mt. 7:17-18) The apostle Paul has much to say in his epistles on the subject. James' entire epistle expands on it. St. John says: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." (I Jn. 4:20) "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." (3:18)

As The Doctrine, So the Life

On the basis of Jesus' words, Luther liked to stress how the tree must be good before the fruit will be. From this it follows that in order for the tree to be good, the doctrine must be true: "It is true, where the doctrine is not right, it is impossible for the life to be right and good; for life is fathered and fashioned by doctrine." (*What Luther Says*, Vol. I, p. 417) To this he added: "There is a great difference between doctrine and life. For even if the life is bad, one can nonetheless improve if the doctrine is pure, because the guiding light is still at hand. But if the light has been extinguished, everything is lost. Then one is moving about in the dark." (*WLS*, I, p. 416)

When St. Paul teaches us what Holy Scripture is profitable for, it is significant that he places "doctrine" before "reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness." (II Tim. 3:16) With this in mind, the revelation of the pollsters of a "religion increasing-morality decreasing" syndrome in America suggests where the fault lies. It lies with false doctrine ("for without me ye can do nothing," says Jesus in Jn. 15:5). It lies with the false teaching non-Christian churches, and with those purportedly Christian churches and their teachers which have sold out, or are selling out, to liberalism in the area of Bible doctrine.

To be sure, God's grace in Christ Jesus is still being preached in liberal Christian churches. In this we do and shall rejoice (Phil. 1:18). Nevertheless, the evidence is mounting that this very grace of God is more and more being used as a cloak for ungodly, immoral living. Consider how discipline against heretical teachers is almost non-existent in Christian churches. It follows that Christian discipline will no longer be practiced against those

“. . . IT CAN AND DOES HAPPEN THAT, THOUGH THE DOCTRINE IS RIGHT, THE LIVING ISN'T. THE FAULT IN SUCH CASES IS NOT WITH THE DOCTRINE.”

impenitently enmeshed in immoral living. As right doctrine and Christian living belong together, so do wrong doctrine and immoral living go together.

No Cheap Grace

On the other hand, it can and does happen that, though the doctrine is right, the living isn't. The fault in such cases is not with the doctrine.

Grace is the essence of the Christian religion: “By grace are ye saved . . .” (Eph. 2:8) Grace refers to God's unmerited love in Christ Jesus in Whom “grace and truth” are united (Jn. 1:17). Grace and truth together teach that sinners have been redeemed, justified, in no way by the law, but purely by the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. In other words, God's grace is not cheap, but costs. It cost God the supreme sacrifice of His Son.

As for the sinner, grace costs nothing—nothing but to bask in the accomplished fact of his full and free forgiveness. But basking in this grace will exclude a person's cheapening or frustrating it. “Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (Rom. 6:2) “Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.” (6:15) The antidote to “cheap grace” comes in this way: “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (6:11)

Keeping the Balance

This 25th anniversary year we of the CLC are celebrating God's lavish grace. Due to that grace the pure doctrine has remained in our midst. At the same time, that grace has—we pray!—kept us sensitive to the fact that doctrine and life not only *belong* together, but *go* together.

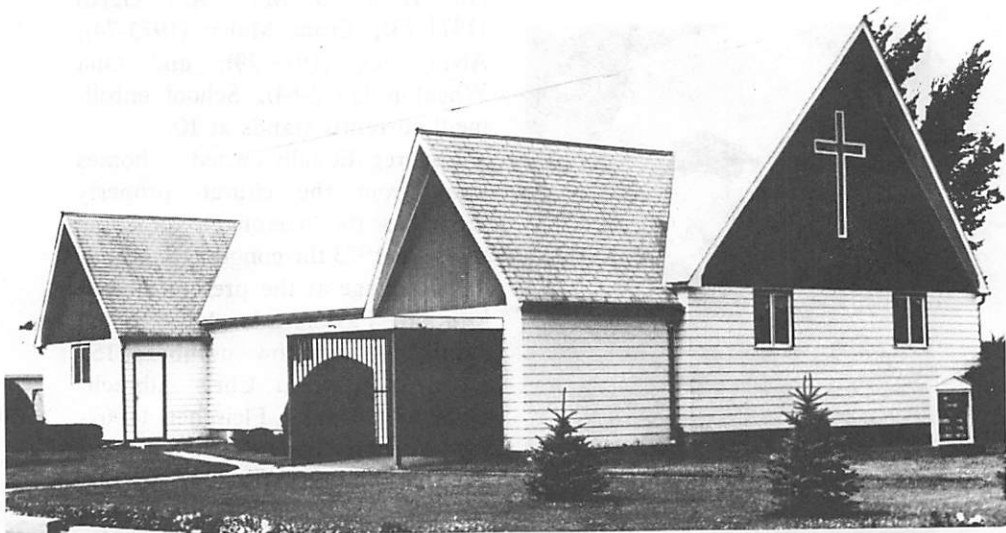
In our on-going concern for purity of doctrine, let us beware of the national plague of “cheap grace.” While still on earth the Savior denounced the scribes and Pharisees for hiding an immoral, hypocritical life behind a mask of right teaching (See Matt. 23). After ascending into heaven, the same Savior had this word for the church in Sardis: “I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” (Rev. 3:1)

In this anniversary year and beyond, may the God of grace spare our synod the “giant paradox” of a decreasing morality behind an increasing religiosity. We have been made “free from sin” in order that we might become “the servants of righteousness.” (Rom. 6:18) “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:10)

—Paul Fleischer

Born With The CLC—Borne By God. . .

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church Watertown, South Dakota



A special celebration of thanks and praise to God took place at Trinity, Watertown, on August 12, 1984. The occasion was the marking of 25 years since the Lord had given the congregation birth.

Trinity's history began in the early months of 1959. A number of families (the anniversary booklet lists the names of 30 male charter members) of Immanuel Lutheran of Grover, SD and of St. John's, Mazeppa Township, left their former churches with whom they were no longer in doctrinal agreement. To foster their oneness of mind and

heart in the confession of God's Word and to unite in common service to their Lord, they banded together to form Trinity congregation. Pastor Chris Albrecht was the congregation's shepherd at the time.

The anniversary booklet supplies details which bear out the fact that the Lord God has supported the congregation throughout its brief history as on eagles' wings: "Without property, without established credit . . . land was purchased, a building committee was chosen, plans were drawn up, and the building program (for a new church) began. Zealous

THE NAME BY WHICH OUR CHURCH BODY IS KNOWN —“CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION”—WAS CHOSEN AT THIS 1960 CONFERENCE IN WATERTOWN.

members gave untiringly of their time, talents, and money to make the new church home a reality. Dedication services were held on July 31, 1960.”



Pastor Chris Albrecht

Hardly a week later—August 9-12th—the congregation hosted the constitutional convention for the still nameless synodical church body which had been calling itself the “Interim Conference.” The name by which our church body is known—“Church of the Lutheran Confession”—was chosen at this 1960 conference in Watertown.

In 1968 Trinity realized its goal of establishing a Christian Day School. The school was conducted in the church basement until 1981 when a school building was annexed to the teacherage which had, in turn, been

purchased near the property in 1979. Teaching in the school since 1984 is Mrs. Marlys Gerth; other teachers who have served are Shirley Wendland (1968-72); Mary Ann Gerth (1971-73); Erma Maier (1973-74); Alvin Sieg (1974-79); and Ona Wheaton (1972-84). School enrollment currently stands at 10.

Congregationally-owned homes away from the church property served as the parsonage for some years. In 1973 the congregation built its parsonage at the present church location. Pastors who have served Trinity, which now numbers 150 souls, have been: Chris Albrecht (1959-67); Daniel Fleischer (1967-70); Vernon Greve (1970-84); and Paul Gurgel presently.



Pastor Paul Gurgel family

Our prayer to the Lord for Trinity congregation is: “Save Your people, and bless Your inheritance; shepherd them also, and bear them up forever.” (Ps. 28:9)

—Paul Fleischer

Behold, Your King!

Daily Devotions For April 1985

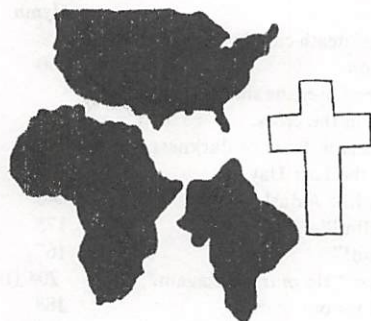
We begin and end our devotions this month by looking up at Jesus' cross. Truly He was crucified for you and me. But He did not stay dead. He rose from the dead as He said He would, with forgiveness and joy and peace for all. He sent the Spirit as He said He would, to convict us of sin and then to glorify Jesus as our Savior from sin. Those who trust in Him will never be put to shame.

Date	Scripture	Theme	Hymn
1	Jn. 12:20-26	Only through Jesus' death can there be Christians from every nation.	360
2	Jn. 12:27-36	The Light triumphed over the shades of night by being lifted up on the cross.	359
3	Jn. 12:37-50	He who rejects Jesus in favor of darkness will be condemned on the Last Day.	148
4	Jn. 13:1-30	Beware of friends like Judas!	446
5	Jn. 19:17-30	"They crucified Him!"	175
6	Jn. 19:31-42	"God's Son is dead!"	167
7	Jn. 20:1-10	The Scripture says: "He <i>must</i> rise again."	208 (1-3)
8	Jn. 20:11-18	The risen Jesus dries our tears.	188
9	Jn. 20:19-31	The risen Jesus is our Lord and God.	208 (4-10)
10	Jn. 13:31-38	"I have loved you." "Love one another."	178
11	Jn. 14:1-11	Jesus is the only Way to the Father.	355
12	Jn. 14:12-20	Jesus said: "The Spirit will be in you."	226 (1, 5-7)
13	Jn. 14:21-26	Jesus said: "The Holy Spirit will teach you all things."	233
14	Jn. 14:27-31	Jesus said: "My peace I give to you."	215
15	Jn. 15:1-8	"I am His, and He is mine."	342
16	Jn. 15:9-14	The Father loved, the Son loved, and we love.	349
17	Jn. 15:15-21	The Lord chose us, but the world hates us.	37
18	Jn. 15:22-27	The Spirit proceeds from the Father and testifies of the Son.	252
19	Jn. 16:1-15	The Spirit convicts us of sins and glorifies Christ.	225
20	Jn. 16:16-24	Jesus changes our sorrow into joy.	520 (9-11)
21	Jn. 16:25-33	Jesus came into the world to give us peace.	523 (5-8)
22	Jn. 17:1-5	The Father has glorified the Son, and the Son glorifies the Father.	219 (1-3)
23	Jn. 17:6-13	Jesus prayed and prays for His people.	220 (3-4)
24	Jn. 17:14-23	Jesus gives His glory to His disciples.	214 (3-5)
25	Jn. 17:24-26	By grace we are destined to behold Jesus' face.	221 (3-5)
26	Jn. 18:1-11	He had to drink the cup His Father gave Him.	363
27	Jn. 18:12-24	Once despised, He now reigns in glory.	367
28	Jn. 18:25-32	Jesus was accused of having committed all our sins.	375
29	Jn. 18:33-40	Jesus is a King most wonderful!	361
30	Jn. 19:1-16	He was led away to be crucified.	360

—D. Lau

Mission Poster—

SPREAD THE MIGHTY WORD: FAR AND NEAR!



CLC Youth and Family Camp

Date: July 7-13 (Sunday noon through Saturday noon)

Site: Campus of Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

What: Activities will include Bible study and devotions for all who attend, hiking and nature study, swimming, softball, tennis, canoeing, handicrafts, instruction in basketball and volleyball fundamentals, movies, and a lot of fun.

Cost: \$35 per youth camper ages 9-14; reduced rate for additional youth campers of the same family. Rates include lodging and meals for 7 days and regular camp activities. Registration will be limited to 120 youth campers housed in the dormitories. Families will be able to camp on the campus grounds. Cost to families will vary depending on meals and needs provided. Registration must be made by June 21, 1985.

For a brochure with complete details, contact your pastor or write:

Prof. Michael Buck
Immanuel Lutheran College
501 Grover Road
Eau Claire, WI 54701

GETHESEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH
E. 11315 BROADWAY
SPOKANE, WA. 99206

Mission Posters

The poster on p. 10 was done by Joanna Fleischer, Grace Lutheran School, Fridley, MN.

The poster on p. 20 is by Rachel Tappen, Gethsemane Lutheran School, Saginaw, MI.

Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council of the Church of the Lutheran Confession will meet at Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire on April 10-11, 1985. The first session will be at 8:30 a.m.

—Daniel Fleischer, Pres.

Call Committee On Graduates

The Call Committee on Graduates will meet on Wednesday evening, April 10, 1985. Congregations desiring to place a call for a pastor or teacher through the Call Committee should have the call and all pertinent information in the hands of the President by April 6, 1985. The Call Committee will meet at Immanuel Lutheran College at a time to be determined by committee members at the Coordinating Council.

—Daniel Fleischer, Pres.