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Church Attendance

It is almost time for the dreaded "summer slump." This is the time of the year when church and Sunday School attendance dips way down. There are many reasons for this.

A Dangerous Pattern

It is sometimes difficult to talk about church attendance without getting legalistic. A pastor wants his people to come to church for the right reasons. A pastor is not worried so much about the absences of people from church and Sunday School as he is worried about the reasons why people feel comfortable staying away from the regular hearing and learning of God's Word, including during the summer months.

We are not talking about people that do not come at all, but about people who come every few weeks, then every few months and then seldom, if at all. Once this pattern sets in, it is hard to break. The devil and our own sinful flesh will find one hundred and one good reasons why it

is not necessary to come every Sunday to church and Sunday School and to conduct regular family devotions at home.

Settling into such a "comfortable" routine worries the Lord of the Church. Jesus said of the church in Laodicea: "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16). A casual attitude toward the Word of the Lord will reveal an increasing danger of pride and self-satisfaction in our midst.

Examining Priorities

This is a good time to examine our own priorities. For when everything is said and done, church attendance and the study of the Bible are a matter of priorities. Jesus established our priorities as His children when He said: "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well" (Mt. 6:33).

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But we can get so wrapped in ourselves—in our dreams, in our needs, in the things of this world—that Jesus and His Word slide into the background. Then a dangerous thing may happen. The more we stay away from Jesus' Word and the worship of God, the less we may think we need Jesus and His Word. Suddenly, there is no spiritual life in us.

We need to consciously and prayerfully sit down and measure our priorities. We need to confess, as we did in our Lenten services: "forgive our neglect of fellowship and of the means of grace." We need God to put a new and right spirit within us. At the cross of Christ there is forgiveness and new life.

Wanting To Come

There are many reasons why the child of God **wants** to come to Sunday School and church. The chief reason is the desire to hear, learn, and taste of the Word of God that we may grow thereby. While Mary sat at Jesus' feet listening to His words, Martha had so many other things that had to be done. Finally, Jesus had to say: "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her" (Lk. 10:41f). The Word of God is central to our worship services and needs to be the central part of our lives. Your church attendance and Bible study are a reflection of your attitude toward the Word.



We also come to church to worship and praise God for His gracious acts. Worship is a response of the believer toward God. "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise. Be thankful to him, and bless his name" (Ps. 100:4). Our worship services need to capture the joy and praise of people who have been forgiven of all their sins.

Finally, coming to church is a mutual strengthening process. We are not alone. We are a part of the Body of Christ and members one of another. Many people feel the need of the support system which the congregation can and should be. Often times this is what people are looking for in a church.

"I Was Glad . . ."

In our individual-oriented age we often do not fully realize the value of our interaction in a worship service or in an informal gathering. Hebrews 10 therefore encourages us: "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner (habit) of some, but exhorting one another,

and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (Hebr. 10:24f).

"I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord" (Ps. 122:1). May the Holy Spirit give us a faith—in the summer months as well as all year around—that hungers and thirsts for Jesus' life-giving words. Please do not use this to look at others, judging their

motives and hearts. To do this may result in a whining self-righteousness and remove true joy from your own worship. Use this time for deep self-examination and with a prayer to recommit yourself to Jesus.

This is a very personal and sometimes painful process, but it is the essence of Christian growth and maturity.

—J. Schierenbeck

Joining Hands—

Opportunities

By the time this issue of the *Lutheran Spokesman* appears in print, we will know if they pulled it off. Sunday, May 25, is the date when it is hoped that 6 million Americans will join hands from Los Angeles to New York in a *Hands Across America* effort to take a stand against hunger and homelessness in America. The brochure encouraging us to be one of the 6 million participants pleads: "While efforts continue to alleviate the hunger of starving millions in Africa, the number of hungry Americans, particularly children and the elderly, continues to grow. Millions of Americans go hungry every day. Millions are homeless. For them, too, there *must* be hope . . . and relief. HANDS ACROSS AMERICA is our opportunity . . . to demonstrate and celebrate our strength and our compassion. . ." For the privilege of holding hands in line, people are expected to contribute some money to the cause.

We do not write to criticize or find fault. True, there are questionable motives evident at times in the efforts of secular groups and organizations to ease the famine and hunger problems at home and abroad. And we do wonder, at times with good reason, if the donated funds reach the stated goal of alleviating shortages of food, drink, and medical supplies in one country or another. Nevertheless, though the method may at times be suspect, who would argue with the avowed intent?

Pure Religion

As children of God through faith in His Son, we know what "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father" is. It is "to visit orphans and widows in their trouble." It is not to turn aside from our worship services "a poor man (who may come) in filthy clothes." It is not to dishonor the poor, but to be free of partiality. It is to do *more* than say to a brother or sister who is naked and destitute of daily food the following: "depart in peace, be warmed and filled." It is to beware of heaping up treasures in the last

days, living in pleasure and luxury while many of our fellow human beings wonder where their next meal or water will come from.

These examples of what constitute “pure religion” come from the epistle of James. James’ divinely-inspired message to the children of God is, in a nutshell: faith without works is dead. James teaches that, while faith in Jesus Christ alone saves, that faith is never alone! To understand this is to grasp the essence of Christianity. To understand James is to understand what lies behind the Savior’s words: “I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink . . .” (Mt. 25:35ff)

As Christians we want to beware of giving impressions that good deeds save. But we also want to beware of giving the impression that good works don’t matter! Helping others in their need is a fruit of faith which the Savior will note on the day of judgment. His words, quoted from Matthew’s Gospel, bear this out.

Within The Household Of Faith

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10). Our CLC Convention is set for next month. Our synodical boards will be reminding the delegates of opportunities the Lord affords us as we “join hands across America” to help the poor and needy in our midst.

For example, the Board of Missions will tell us what we have been doing and can continue to do for orphans in India (Project Kinship) and for other poor and needy there and in Nigeria. The Board of Trustees will report on needs of sister congregations for church homes, and of opportunities to respond to increased salary and Pension Fund needs. The Board of Regents of Immanuel College, Eau Claire, will be reporting on opportunities we have to assist needy students so none need to be turned away for lack of means to finance a Christian higher education. Search the Convention *Prospectus* for these and similar opportunities to do good to those who are of the household of faith.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the Savior teaches, among other things, that it is a poor witness to Him and His cause when church-connected people, like the priest and the Levite, spurn opportunities to help the poor and needy. On the other hand, the Samaritan, a “blood-enemy” of the man who fell among the thieves, was held up as an example for us to follow. “Go and do likewise” said Jesus.

All of this serves to introduce a new series beginning in this issue by Pastor David Lau called “Helping the Poor and Needy.” As true as it is that God expects this of us, another article in this issue—“Liberation Theology” by Pastor Paul Schaller—helps us keep the balance. Pastor David Koenig has something to say to us about “Global Opportunities” in his continuing series on “Be Doers of the Word . . .”

The main thrust of our Christian calling is to preach Jesus, the Savior of poor and needy sinners. When His grace (see Pastor Michael Sydow’s article

on that word!) and compassion for sinners fills our hearts, those hearts will be compassionate toward others in their spiritual and material need.

Yes, the sorrow and the sufferings
Which on every hand we see
Channels are for gifts and offerings
Due by solemn right to Thee;
Right of which we may not rob Thee,
Debt we may not choose but pay,
Lest that face of love and pity
Turn from us another day. (TLH 442:4)

—Paul Fleischer

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Words With Big Meanings—

GRACE

Grace . . . oh yes, isn't that being socially smooth? And it seems there's such a thing as a "grace period"—that means the due date for a bill payment has been advanced a bit. And a person in another's bad graces better watch out!

The world isn't big on the word **grace**. That's okay, too. That way it's less likely to be confused with the Bible word: **GRACE**. Talk about words with big meanings. Here's one of the littlest with one of the biggest meanings of all.

"By Grace I'm Saved . . ."

This word is very precious to believers. It tells why God would take all that time and go to all those pains to provide something good for human beings.

The definition most learn already in Catechism serves well for our understanding of grace: "undeserved kindness." It's in the general category with God's love, good will, and mercy. Without the quality of grace on God's part, there's no reason in all the world for Him to

save mankind. Why should He? No one likes Him. In spite of all the evidence He left of His power and Godhead, people prefer a lie and their idols. Sin is a continued confession that God had some terrible ideas about human behavior. Now, why should God take time for us rebellious creatures?

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us . . . when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son. . ."(Rom. 4:8, 10) Is there any doubt that this is *grace*? **". . . being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"**(Rom. 3:24).

" . . . Grace Free And Boundless"

Oh yes, God was certainly kind.

“WITHOUT THE QUALITY OF GRACE ON GOD’S PART, THERE’S NO REASON IN ALL THE WORLD FOR HIM TO SAVE MANKIND. . . . GOD HAS DONE US A REMARKABLE FAVOR—EVEN WILLING TO SACRIFICE HIS OWN SON SO THAT HUMAN BEINGS HAVE THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.”

And yes, we don’t deserve what He has provided for our salvation. God has done us a remarkable FAVOR—even willing to sacrifice His own Son so that human beings have the forgiveness of sins.

There’s another emphasis we can’t ignore. *Grace* also means God has done it all!

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast” (Eph. 2:8, 9).

Ooo. That hurts! At least when our sinful nature thinks on it. We don’t like it when we can’t take the credit for our own accomplishments—even our salvation. But God eliminates human behavior and human effort from the pardon picture. It’s still the way it’s been. **“There is none righteous, no, not one” (Rom. 3:10).** “Not of works . . .” the passage says. Our works claim falls flat.

Well, of course, it would have to. Because if works would work, then we wouldn’t need any grace. That’s not my idea. **“And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace; but if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work” (Rom. 11:6).**

“By grace! None dare lay claim to merit. . . .” (Hymnal 373)

Grace—There And Here

Our God wraps our whole life in His grace. Very often these are expressed with other words used together with *grace*.

Election of grace. Grace is one of the reasons God chose people already in eternity to come to faith. Christ’s redemptive work is the other. And we’ve already noted how God expressed His grace in time through the sacrifice of His Son. When arguing the Jewish question, the apostle Paul remarked: **“Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace” (Rom. 11:5).** God did not make His choice on the basis of people’s faith, or His seeing that they might some day believe.

Time of grace. This particular phrase isn’t in the Bible. But it’s a good one. It describes the period of life here on this earth during which our God confronts people with the Gospel. In prohibiting murder God is protecting people from shortening one another’s time of grace. It is during our lifetime God is about His business of restoring that righteous and holy image which Adam and Eve lost for us.

Means of grace. Here’s another phrase which isn’t part of the biblical wording. But it is a very useful description of how the Holy Spirit brings

the blessings Christ earned to individuals here and there in the world. The "means" are like tools—what is used to get the job done. The "means of grace" is the tool the Holy Spirit uses to create and sustain faith. The MEANS OF GRACE is the Gospel—in Word and Sacrament. The Spirit uses the good news of Christ dying for our sins to change people from unbelievers into believers. When the Gospel invitation

comes ("Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved") the Holy Spirit is coming right along to convert and regenerate.

So, the next time your pastor greets you as he begins his sermon, take particular note: "Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 1:1). You don't deserve it. I don't either.

—M. Sydow

Helping The Poor And The Needy—I

Poverty in Ancient Times

In God's original creation there was no poverty. Adam and Eve lived in a world where all their needs were met by God's perfect creation. But after sin entered the world, God warned that the consequences of sin would include a cursed ground, hard toil, thorns and thistles, and sweat. Making a living would not be easy for sinful mankind.

Still there is no mention of poverty in the world before the flood. After the flood God decreed that "every moving thing that lives" was to be food for the human race. At the same time God established the pattern of seasons as well as day and night to enable man to sow and harvest in order to take care of his needs.

The first mention of poverty in Scripture is in Genesis 12:10; there was a severe famine in Canaan and Abram was forced to move to Egypt. This famine was only temporary,

however, for soon we are informed that both Abram and his nephew Lot became very rich in livestock, silver, and gold. This earthly prosperity continued in the days of Isaac, although in his time also there was at least one famine.

The Lord blessed Jacob also when he worked for his stingy uncle Laban, and after he moved back to the land of Canaan. Hard times came to Jacob and his family when the seven years of famine arrived after the seven years of plenty. But God, through Pharaoh's dreams and Joseph's interpretation, had made provision for this famine in advance. There was grain in Egypt, and the sons of Jacob did not starve. Joseph moved Jacob and his whole family to Egypt, and there they prospered and multiplied. God Himself helped the poor and the needy children of Israel through Joseph.

The Example of Job

The book of Job gives us another

“THERE WAS POVERTY IN (ANCIENT TIMES), AND GOD-FEARING MEN LIKE JOB CONSIDERED IT THEIR DUTY TO HELP THE POOR AND NEEDY.”

picture of ancient times before the days of Moses. From this book it becomes clear that there was poverty in those days, and that God-fearing men like Job considered it their duty to help the poor and the needy. Job himself had been very wealthy, as we know, but recognizing his wealth as a gift from God, he had generously supplied the needs of the poor.

But when God, for His own reasons, took everything away from Job and afflicted him with a horrible disease, his “friend” Eliphaz seemed certain that God was punishing Job because of his failure to help the needy. Eliphaz recklessly charged: “You have stripped the naked of their clothing. You have not given the weary water to drink, and you have withheld bread from the hungry. . . You have sent widows away empty, and the strength of the fatherless was crushed. Therefore snares are all around you, and sudden fear troubles you” (Job 22:6-10). Eliphaz drew the conclusion from Job’s problems that he must have been guilty of great crimes. In his mind one such great crime was not helping the poor and the needy.

But Job replied: “I have kept His way and not turned aside” (Job 23:11). He agreed with Eliphaz that a failure to help the poor and needy is a great crime. He said: “Some remove landmarks; they seize flocks violently and feed on them; they drive away the donkey of the father-

less; they take the widow’s ox as a pledge. They push the needy off the road, so that the poor of the land are forced to hide. . . They cause the poor to go naked, without clothing; and they take away the sheaves from the hungry” (Job 24:2-10).

But Job claimed that he himself was not guilty of any such thing. He said: “I delivered the poor who cried out, and the fatherless and he who had no helper. . . I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. . . I was eyes to the blind, and I was feet to the lame. I was a father to the poor. . . I broke the fangs of the wicked, and plucked the victim from his teeth. . . Have I not wept for him who was in trouble? Has not my soul grieved for the poor? . . . If I have despised the cause of my manservant or my maidservant when they complained against me, what then shall I do when God rises up? When He punishes, how shall I answer Him? Did not He who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same One fashion us in the womb? If I have kept the poor from their desire, or caused the eyes of the widow to fail, or eaten my morsel by myself, so that the fatherless may not eat of it; if I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing, or any poor man without covering; if his heart has not blessed me, and if he was not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have raised my hand against the fatherless, when I saw I had help in the gate; then let my arm fall from my

“EVEN THOUGH THE SPECIFIC DETAILS (OF THE LAW OF MOSES) NO LONGER APPLY TO US, HELPING OTHERS IN THEIR NEED IS SURELY STILL GOD’S WILL FOR US TODAY.”

shoulder, let my arm be torn from the socket” (Job 29:12-17; 30:25; 31:13-22).

The Bible declares Job to be a righteous man. We have no reason to disagree with his claims. Of course he himself came to realize that in comparison with the holy God he was vile and he had no right to complain about God’s treatment of him. Yet we have no reason to dispute his testimony that he helped the poor and the needy.

Surely it is clear that helping the poor and needy is a part of natural law that was written in man’s heart from the beginning. Note especially Job’s emphasis on the fact that the same God had made both Job and his servants, and that therefore they were entitled to equal considerations. Since all human beings are descendants of Adam and Eve, who were created in the image of God, they are to be treated as fellow-human beings. We are to love others as we love ourselves.

Under the Old Testament Law Code

The Israelites who had been so prosperous in the days of Joseph became slaves in Egypt by God’s design. They themselves became the poor and the needy, although their later statements in the wilderness indicate that they always had enough to eat in Egypt. For example, they then reminisced: “We sat by the pots of meat and . . . we ate bread to full”

(Ex. 16:3). “We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic” (Numbers 11:5).

God also saw to it that they escaped from Egypt, they did not go out empty-handed. He influenced the Egyptians to give them gold and silver as pay for their hard toil.

Their experience of God’s mercy and kindness and salvation in Egypt was to have a lasting effect on their attitude towards the poor and the needy in their midst. God said to them through Moses at Mt. Sinai: “You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. . . If you lend money to any of My people who are poor among you, you shall not be like a moneylender to him; you shall not charge him interest. If you ever take your neighbor’s garment as a pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down. . . Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat. . . In like manner you shall do with your vineyard and your olive grove” (Ex. 22:21-26; 23:10-11).

The details of the law of Moses do not apply to us today, for we are living in the New Testament. Yet is it clear that God’s laws made many

special provisions for helping the poor and the needy. Even though the specific details no longer apply to us,

helping others in their need is surely still God's will for us today.

—D. Lau

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“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: for men will be . . . having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” [2 Timothy 3:1ff]

LIBERATION THEOLOGY—A FORM OF GODLINESS?

Liberation! Who could be against that? The Declaration of Independence lists “liberty” as one of the “inalienable rights” which God has given to people on earth.

Liberation! It's a word that stirs the heart. Perhaps some think of friendly troops parading through a town, with cheering people lining both sides of the street and waving from second-story windows. Of course, what some call “liberation” may not be welcomed by others who see it as no more than exchanging one prison for another.

But no matter how it is viewed, “liberation” always means that there *was* some kind of prison, or oppression.

Liberation From What?

In our day we sometimes hear about something called “liberation theology.” It has been around since the late sixties, right after the so-called “God is dead” movement. We might hear about the oppressed people in “third-world” countries. A number of Catholic bishops in South America have spoken out from time to time about how the people in their areas are oppressed. Their prison is

poverty, we are told, and God's purpose in entering the world was to end that. Political change and redistribution of wealth is called for in the name of Christ.

After all, it is said, didn't Jesus say in Nazareth that He had been sent to preach good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, and relief for the oppressed? (Cf. Luke 4)

But after three years of Jesus' working in Palestine in the power of the Spirit, there were some who looked around and said: “Obviously we still need liberation. We are still under the thumb of Rome. Our resources are still going out of the country. We are still poor, still oppressed, still exploited. We must look elsewhere for a liberator.” Others said, “We are pretty well off with the present regime, and we must get rid of anyone who upsets things, or we might lose our place and our nation.”

So both rich and poor turned against Him who had the power to fill them with bread, but did not; who had the power to destroy the wealth of the temple merchants, and did. Rich or poor, they turned against the Savior because He did

not bring the kind of "freedom" that they wanted. They were gauging their position only in material things—money, property, privilege, health, friends, etc.—and not according to where they stood with God!

Concern For The Poor—Indeed!

The apostle Paul, on the other hand, whom the Savior turned toward Himself, wrote: "I know what it is to be in need and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well-fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all things through him who gives me strength" (Phil. 4:12-13). Paul's strength came from the knowledge of God's love in Christ, Who had accomplished his freedom from sin and death on the cross. "The kingdom ours remaineth" was the joy of Paul's heart.

Did Paul, then, have no concern for the poor? He had great concern, even making long journeys to Jerusalem to bring offerings for the poor. But the freedom that Paul preached in Jesus' name was not brought about with alms for the poor. Nor was it brought about by political power. It was a freedom already accomplished by Jesus (Gal. 5:1)

It is *sin* which clings to us and seems to shackle us at times in our lives. It is the finger of *death* which reaches in, touching this part of our life and that part, this part of our body and that part, boxing us in. It is the *devil's* work in this world to use

all manner of trouble and oppression to break our spirit and lead us into misbelief, despair, and other shame and vice.

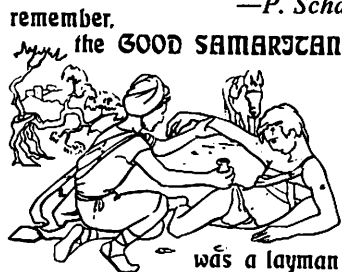
These are the things which oppress and imprison us, and cause all kinds of suffering, no matter what our situation in life. This is the prison from which Christ would liberate us. In Paul's words: "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Rom. 7:24f)

Modern-day liberationists often seem to turn against Christ just as the unbelievers of old did, pushing aside the substitutionary atonement of Christ on the cross for a message of "God suffers in all the crosses of the oppressed." Many do have a *form* of godliness in their expression of concern for the poor, but they seek the *power* through man's revolutionary acts, ignoring the accomplishments of God's revolutionary acts in Christ.

Such thoughts may seem far away, but they are not, for our flesh shares these same weaknesses: lacking compassion for the poor, despising them; or lacking faith in the gospel, ashamed of it.

May God keep us in His *grace*.

—P. Schaller



Be Doers Of The Word, And Not Hearers Only

#4 Tent-making

Is it only the theologically-trained who may witness overseas of the Lord Jesus? No! There is a growing movement afoot called "tent-making." This harkens back to the times when the apostle Paul labored with his hands for his living while spreading the Gospel in the Mediterranean Sea region: ". . . we were not idle when we were with you, we did not eat anyone's bread without paying, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, and we might not burden any of you" (2 Thess. 3:7-8). In Acts chapter 18 we read how Paul stayed with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth and how they worked together. "By trade they were tentmakers."

Like Aquila And Priscilla

Down through the years some tremendous outreach with the Gospel has been carried on by ordinary laymen who, like Aquila and Priscilla, have received their living from a secular job while evangelizing those around them in a foreign country. Although William Carey of Calcutta, India was theologically trained, he labored at a secular job during his ministry because the support from back home in England was not forthcoming. This evidently did not hamper his outreach.

During the 17th century, in the

early days of the modern missionary movement, Moravian Christians were sheltered on the estate of Count Zinzendorf, who was one of the wealthiest nobles of his day. Groups of Moravians went abroad together, supported their communities by farming, hunting, tanning, shoe-making, textiles, handcrafts, pottery, carpentry, watchmaking, book-binding, and so forth. They even carried on export/import and their own shipping. While they did this they carried on intensive mission work. One in every sixty Moravians went overseas to spread the Gospel.

The result? Today in the mountainous jungle region of Nicaragua one of the groups oppressed by the communist Sandinistas is the Miskito Indians. The largest Christian denomination in many of the tribal areas of the Miskitos is the Moravian church. The present day Moravian church is the result of the harvest reaped so many years ago by zealous laymen as well as theologically trained ministers who lived their faith. Count Zinzendorf conceived the purpose of the church to be evangelizing in Christian and heathen lands. If there were not enough trained ministers to go, then the laymen would go. And they did in dramatic numbers, laboring night and day with their hands to spread

the Good News of the risen Christ.

We have all heard stories of those who have served in the Peace Corps, which just recently celebrated 25 years of service by American citizens overseas. Those intrepid Americans have served their country well in conveying by word and deed the concern of America for the upbuilding of those less-advantaged in foreign countries. The greatest need of all is for the Gospel. One could hardly be any less-advantaged than to be without the Word of Life in the heart. You could work overseas and witness to Christ at the same time.

One Need: Qualified Teachers

We still are looking for any qualified teachers who could teach in Nigeria under a government contract and assist our brethren in the Nigerian CLC. While it appeared for a time that only teachers in agricultural subjects would be hired, new information reveals that even more fields of teaching are being filled by expatriate teachers. If you would be interested in "tentmaking" in Nigeria as a teacher, consult the undersigned.

If you are a teacher of English, you could go as a "tentmaker" to the People's Republic of China which is closed to Christian missionaries. Because they desire to have English taught their people, they would permit you more freedom to witness than they do their own people. Over 700 universities and colleges, plus 100,000 junior and senior high schools, offer classes in English. In addition to this, hundreds of thou-

sands of Chinese citizens are studying English through night schools, and on radio and television. There are certain private agencies in the US that contract with the government of Red China to provide English teachers.

Perhaps your qualifications are not in the arena of teaching. There are still many opportunities. There is more than one agency which will assist an individual to find a job overseas. One organization which acts as a liaison between the individual and the job opportunities is "Global Opportunities." For a modest fee one can obtain every two weeks a computer print-out of job opportunities in your specific field(s).

When we see so many in unbelief all around the world and without a Gospel witness in their midst, can we really leave any stone unturned in our attempt to reach out to them? Obviously we do not have the trained ministers to send hither and yon. We teach the universal priesthood of all believers. The Word's spread in our midst does not depend alone on the called minister. Why should our outreach with the Word to foreign lands depend alone upon our trained ministers?

Tentmaking worked for Aquila and Priscilla as they taught Apollos; it worked for Paul at Corinth and Thessalonica and Ephesus; it worked for Carey in Calcutta; it worked for the Moravians the world over. Perhaps. . .?

—D. Koenig

Daily Devotions For July 1986



Chapter by chapter John's Gospel takes up themes basic to our Christian faith. Let us consider some of those chapters and some of those themes in the weeks ahead.

Date

John Chapter Three

1 John 3:1-21

Jesus teaches Nicodemus about . . .

Regeneration or New Birth (v. 3-8)

2 Romans 3:9-20

You *must* be born again.

3 I Peter 1:22-2:3

You must be *born* again.

4 I Corinthians 2:1-14

The *Spirit* gives birth to God's children.

5 Titus 3:3-8

Born of *water* and the Spirit.

Salvation (v. 14-17)

6 Numbers 21:4-9

A picture drawn by God in the sands of time.

7 Romans 5:12-21

All humans are fatally poisoned by sin's bite.

8 I John 4:9-15

God's appointed remedy for sin: His own Son.

9 II Timothy 1:8-10

Like the uplifted serpent, Christ uplifted meant death vanquished.

10 Hebrews 2:14-18

Like the snake Moses made, Christ was made like us.

11 Acts 20:17-21

God's deliverance is received by looking to His Substitute with repentance and faith.

12 II Corinthians 5:17-21

God's love freely offers salvation to all—for Christ died and rose for all.

Faith (v. 16-21)

13 Romans 5:1-11

Whoever believes in Him shall not perish . . . but have eternal life.

14 Romans 6:15-23

Whoever believes in Him is not condemned,

15 Romans 8:31-39

but whoever does not believe stands condemned already.

16 John 12:37-48

Whoever lives by the truth . . . (v. 21)

17 Titus 2:11-14

Now consider once more Jesus' words to Nicodemus.

18 John 3:1-21

The Person and Work of Jesus the Christ (v. 22-36)

19 John 3:22-36

The testimony of John the Baptist about Jesus.

20 Luke 7:18-28

He must become greater, I must become less.

21 Luke 2:1-14

He is the One who comes from above.

22 Colossians 1:13-20

He is above all.

23 Matthew 7:24-29

He does not speak as one from the earth.

24 Matthew 11:25-30

He testifies to what He has seen and heard.

25 Galatians 3:26-4:7

He is the One whom God has sent.

26 John 8:12-20

He speaks the words of God.

27 John 1:29-34

To Him God gives the Spirit without limit.

28 Matthew 17:1-7

The Father loves the Son.

29 Matthew 28:16-20

The Father has placed everything in His hands.

30 I John 5:9-13

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life.

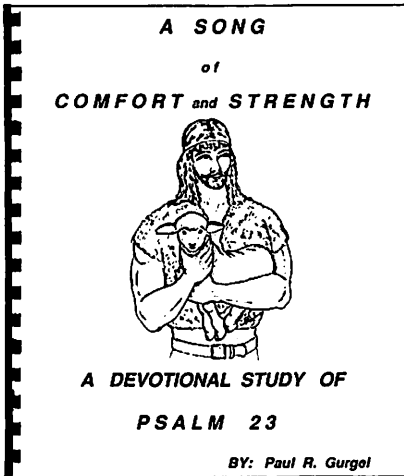
31 John 3:22-36

Now consider again John's testimony.

Hymns suggested for use with the above devotions: 245, 297, 371, 375, 376, 377.

You are encouraged to choose one or two and commit the stanzas to memory through daily usage.

—W. V. Schaller



Devotional Study

A devotional study of Psalm 23 entitled "A Song of Comfort and Strength" has been prepared by Pastor Paul Gurgel. The meditations are based on Luther's "God, My Shepherd" and Spurgeon's "The Treasury of David."

The devotions are attractively printed and spiral bound in an 8½ by 11 large-print format, totalling 40 pages. Hand-drawn, original pictures by a local CLC artist are included.

"A Song of Comfort and Strength" may be ordered individually, or preferably in bulk by congregations, from the CLC Bookhouse in Eau Claire or directly from Pastor Gurgel at 1800 E. Kemp, Watertown, SD 57201. The price is \$4.00 per copy.

Summer Service Time

Trinity Lutheran Church in Millston, WI will be holding Sunday worship services at 9:00 a.m. during the summer months.

—Mark Gullerud, Pastor

Change Of Address

Pastor Michael J. Roehl
Route 4, Box 201
Live Oak, FL 32060

Spokesman Deadline

The editor reminds that the *first of the month preceding the month shown on the cover* is the deadline for material submitted for the next issue. In other words, material intended for the June issue should be in the editor's hands May 1, etc.

Minnesota Delegate Conference

The Minnesota Delegate Conference will be held Sunday, June 29, 1986 beginning at 3:00 p.m. at Faith Lutheran Church, Nicollet, MN. The conference agenda will consist of a discussion of the *Prospectus* for this summer's CLC Convention.

—Dan Ohlmann, Secretary

West Central Delegate Conference

Dates: June 3-5, 1986 beginning at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday through 12 noon on Thursday.
Place: Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Valentine, NE

Agenda:

- A Study of the Religion Involved in the American Legion—Pastor Paul D. Nolting
- Euthanasia—Mr. Dennis Ahrens
- A Devotional Study of Colossians 3:8-17—Pastor Greg Kesterson
- A Devotional Study of the Wisdom and Prayer of James 1:5—Pastor James Albrecht
- Confronting the Pro-Abortionist—Teacher Mark Kranz
- A Study of God's Ministry for Women—Mr. John Wiechman
- The Convention Prospectus
- Conference Speaker—Pastor Paul F. Nolting
- Conference Chaplain—Pastor Roland H. Gurgel

—Paul D. Nolting, Secretary