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lutheran spokesman

LENT



LET US FOLLOW
JESUS TO THE
CROSS.

- *Epiphany & Lenten Devotions
- *TEMPTATION
- *Problem of Pain I
- *Back To Fundamentals
- *Hendersonville, NC

CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

"Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them. And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus" (Mark 9:2-4).

A MOUNTAINTOP EXPERIENCE

We hear occasionally of people who have had mountaintop experiences—experiences which drastically altered the course of their lives.

No mountaintop experience can ever rival the one Peter, James, and John underwent as they accompanied Jesus to a high Palestinian mountain peak one day. The three disciples were prepared to have a prayer retreat with their Rabbi, but it turned into something far more grand.

Suddenly, without warning, Jesus' countenance was transformed before their very eyes. His clothes became whiter than anything they had ever seen. His face shone like the sun.

What was happening? Were the disciples hallucinating? Was the sunlight reflecting off of the snowcapped moun-

tains, making Jesus appear so dazzling?

Absolutely not! Those are the explanations of unbelievers who refuse to accept the miracles recorded in Scripture and who attempt to reduce the Bible to a collection of fables penned by superstitious, backward men.

The truth is that Peter, James and John saw exactly what is recorded in Scripture. The Holy Spirit inspired the holy writers' words and preserved them from writing anything inaccurate and fictitious.

Jesus—the Christ!

The three disciples knew Jesus was the Christ, the One whom God appointed to deliver them from sin and death. But they had never seen His true glory in such a dramatic way before.

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Now they had a full revelation of Jesus' nature. He is not only a great prophet and miracle-worker, but true God! He is the One who is qualified above any other to reconcile God and fallen man.

After beholding this great spectacle, the disciples caught sight of Moses and Elijah who were talking with Jesus. These two men were outstanding Old Testament figures. Through Moses God gave the Law. And Elijah was a prophet zealous for the Lord.

They spoke with Jesus concerning His work on the cross, which would bring salvation to all men. This great sight showed the disciples that Jesus was indeed the One whom the Old Testament prophets predicted would come. And it showed that the Old Testament prophets wholeheartedly supported Jesus' ministry.

Listen To Him!

In addition to these wondrous signs,

God spoke to those assembled high on the mountain top and said: "This is my Son, listen to Him." The Father gave His own testimony concerning Jesus. He is the Prophet greater than Moses, and everyone must listen to Him.

This mountaintop experience gave strength to the disciples who would soon descend with Jesus to the plain and there see Him rejected, reviled, and then slain on the cross. They had a glimpse of His glory and through it were equipped to deal with the trials which lay ahead.

We do not have to climb a mountain to see the same glorious sight the three disciples beheld. When we take time to open our Bibles and meditate on the Good News of the Word made flesh, our spirits will soar just like theirs did. We will see Jesus as He really is, and find strength to fight our battles and serve God with courage.

—Kurt Luebke

"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.'" (Mt. 3:15).

To Fulfill All Righteousness

The directions say: "Take water, call the child by name, pour or sprinkle water on the head of the child, saying, 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.'" That's found on the last page of *The Lutheran Hymnal*.

On one occasion a "foreigner"—for what difference does it make—asked his teacher: "See, here's some water.

What's standing in the way of my being baptized?" (Acts 8:36).

An overjoyed jailor, his life spared simply because his prisoners didn't choose to escape, heard an answer of salvation: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." His prisoners went to his home to have their wounds treated. But next? "And immediately he and all

"In His baptism Jesus united Himself with all mankind under the wrath and displeasure of God—with all those summoned to repentance by the Baptist's cry."

his family were baptized" (Acts 16:33).

John The Baptist

The people of Jesus' time knew of many purifications with water. The Law had prescribed a number of ritual washings. The traditions over the centuries had added many, many more. One religious party would try to outdo the other in the number and significance of purifications.

So in one sense, it was hardly a novelty that there was another purifier. But this one was different. His place of work was rather crude compared to others—right out there on the river bank. In his "system" of purification there was one who did the baptizing for another—one didn't do it to oneself. This baptism was performed by John, who received the name "Baptist" already from his contemporaries.

But the big difference was the word that was connected with the water—a genuinely radical message involving spiritual inventory and acknowledgement of spiritual responsibility. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" Bare your soul, he's saying. Confess your sins before the Father in heaven. He's coming with His ruling grace—the forgiveness of sins in His Son.

Yes, John baptized. But he had another mission. He stood between the old and new covenants to identify the Savior and prepare the way before Him. He's the one who said: "Behold! the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

Jesus' Baptism

Even John thought it a bit strange that Jesus would come to him to be baptized. To his way of thinking it should have been the other way around. But Jesus was there to fulfill all righteousness—to do what was perfectly right according to God's plan.

*In His baptism Jesus is identified by the Father as the One anointed as His suffering and redeemer Servant. His good pleasure rested upon the One who would serve by giving His life a ransom for the entire world.

*In His baptism Jesus united Himself with all mankind under the wrath and displeasure of God—with all those summoned to repentance by the Baptist's cry.

*The baptism of Jesus fulfills all righteousness. The Savior spoke against the background of the wrath of God announced by John against all unrighteousness and wickedness of man. In uniting Himself with mankind Jesus volunteers for the supreme act of love—that He would lay down His life for mankind so that they might have life and eternal salvation.

*In His baptism Jesus gives to the Sacrament its nature and saving character.

The instructions are rather easy. The ingredients are available worldwide. The miracle available in the use of water connected with God's Word is awesome. The effect is truly "out of this world."

—M. Sydow

As Lent Begins, Consider . . .

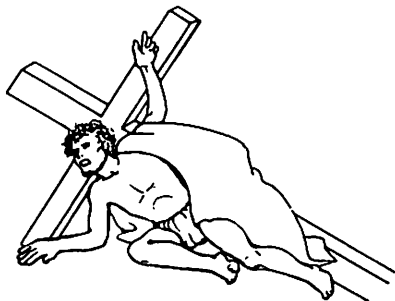
WEEPING THAT IS WORTHWHILE

Who does not recognize a tear? Who has never shed one? Before the infant laughs he cries. Many tears are shed before he dies. This world is a "vale of tears." In this life under heaven there is a "time to weep" as well as a "time to laugh" (Eccl. 3:4). Lent is a time for tears. On three different occasions during the final week of our Lord's passion tears were shed.

A Time For Tears

On Palm Sunday Jesus approached Jerusalem for the last time. When He saw the city He "wept over it" (Lk. 19:41). His were the tears of frustrated and rejected Savior-love.

When Peter was exposed before the fire in the courtyard of the high priest, he denied his Savior and was immediately convicted by the rooster, "the look," and the Word of the Lord. "Then Peter went out and wept bitterly" (Lk. 22:54-62). His were the tears of godly sorrow and repentance which leads to salvation (2 Cor. 7:10).



Later that day, as the condemned Jesus was being led to the place of His

crucifixion, tears were shed by some women who "mourned and lamented Him" (Lk. 22:27). Theirs were tears of pity for Jesus, which gush upward from the sentimental springs of the human heart.

Jesus rejected these tears: "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children" (Lk. 23:28). No doubt, to many the words of our Lord to these weeping women seem unnecessarily cruel. But Jesus knew that their weeping and wailing was filled with a sense of hopelessness. He was an "underdog" and the womanly instinct was to feel for Him as one who was being driven to His death, unable to escape the horrors of crucifixion.

These were the "daughters of Jerusalem"—among those who had rejected His peace. These women were not weeping for the sins of their leaders who were sending Jesus to the cross. They were not shedding tears because the city and the people who had killed the prophets of old were now about to murder THE Prophet, the anointed One, the Son of God sent for them.

But Jesus wishes they had been weeping for these reasons. He tries to turn their attention to their own sins and the judgment that was to come upon Jerusalem, so that their weeping might be truly worthwhile.

Mere Sentimental Emotion?

There is a lesson here for us as we begin our journey through Lent to Cal-

vary's hill. Many people will weep in the coming weeks as they watch "Jesus of Nazareth" and other moving television portrayals of the final days of the Lord's passion. (You and I may be among them.) Many of us will ache in our hearts as we hear the passion history read to us in our mid-week Lenten services. (Should it not be so?)

But let not the devil deceive us into thinking that any mere human sentimentality is worth anything at all. Jesus does not want to be pitied, but believed. He is not to be thought of as a helpless soul so that we are overwhelmed with sadness. He is to be loved as the Helper of our souls Who died to overcome our badness.

If we then are inclined to weep while viewing the sufferings and death of our Lord, may each one of us weep for himself as did repentant Peter. May our tears during Lent come forth not from mere sentimental emotion, but from thoughtful devotion, as we recognize in the extreme agony of Jesus the

punishment of our own sins against the holy God—the righteous for the unrighteous, the godly for the ungodly! For truly: "the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Is. 53:6).

The dear Savior Himself has declared that such weeping within over the wretchedness of our sins is worthwhile: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Mt. 5:4). Yes! For this reason He came to us, as He also says: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted . . . to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning . . ." (Lk. 4:18f, Is. 61:1-3).

O Jesus blest,
Our Help and Rest,
With tears let us entreat Thee:
Make us love Thee to the last,
Till in heaven we greet Thee.
(TLH 167:7) —Vance Fossum



Words With Big Meanings—

TEMPTATION

It is not a sin to be tempted, but it is a sin to succumb to temptation. When Eve was tempted in the Garden of Eden, she was holy and without sin, having been created in the image of God. She could have withstood temptation, but she did not. She compared the command of God with the lie of Satan and she chose to believe Satan rather than God. She sinned, and Adam sinned with her.

When Jesus, the second Adam, came into the world, He was holy and without sin, even though His mother Mary was a sinner. The devil tried to

get Jesus to sin, even as he had persuaded Adam and Eve to sin. But the devil did not succeed. Jesus "was in all points tempted as we are, yet without

“BESIDES PRAYER, THE ONE CHIEF WEAPON OUR GOD HAS GIVEN US AGAINST TEMPTATION IS ‘THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD.’ ”

sin” (Heb. 4:15).

Jesus was tempted, but He did not succumb to temptation. He overcame temptation, using the same means and method that God has given to us sinners so that we can withstand temptation. Jesus said: “It is written,” “it is written,” “it is written,” and “then the devil left Him” (Mt. 4:4-11). “He departed from Him until an opportune time” (Lk. 4:13).

The Devil's Methods

The devil, that invisible spirit being who was once a holy angel before he turned away from God, is the great tempter. As the “god of this age” (2 Cor. 4:4) he already has spiritual control of all the unbelievers. For he is “the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). The devil therefore aims his fiery darts of temptation especially at the Christians. He “walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). He tries to deceive new Christians like the Thessalonians, to whom Paul wrote: “I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain” (1 Thess. 3:5). But he also attacks veteran Christians like the apostle Paul himself, who called his “thorn in the flesh” “a messenger of Satan” (2 Cor. 12:7).

What is the devil's method? He can boldly speak bare-faced lies, or he can transform himself into an angel of light. He can accomplish his purposes either through the direct frontal attack of continuous persecution or through the in-

direct method of introducing false teachings that corrupt the Gospel. He can persuade Christians to commit some relatively minor crime for the fun of it and then lead them to dark despair because they have committed it.

We cannot avoid temptation in this world. But let us not blame God for these temptations. “Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am tempted by God’; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed”. (Js. 1:13-14). Eve was led into sin even when she originally had no evil desires. How much easier it is for us to be deceived, since we have within ourselves our sinful flesh which is in full agreement with the devil in all things!

Not only does the devil tempt us to sin through our own sinful desires. He also uses the suggestions and opinions of our unbelieving friends and neighbors as well as the fleshly ideas of our Christian acquaintances to lead us astray. Did not Jesus once address His own believing disciple Peter as “Satan” for suggesting that Jesus should avoid the hard way of the cross? (cf. Mk. 8:33) Therefore we dare not blindly follow even the views or guidance of experienced Christians, for it is possible that the devil may be speaking through them.

Our Weapons

How then should we handle temptation? Jesus said: “Watch and pray, lest

you enter into temptation” (Mk. 14:38). He has taught us words that we can address to our heavenly Father in Jesus’ name: “Do not lead us into temptation.” We are not strong enough on our own to resist any temptation. It is God who must keep us and strengthen us in the time of temptation.

Besides prayer, the one chief weapon our God has given us against temptation is “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (Eph. 6:17). This is the weapon Jesus used and the devil departed from Him. In the same way he will depart from us, for it is written: “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (Js. 4:7).

But the Word of God does not fend off the devil’s attacks like a magic charm. God wants us to use His Word with understanding and faith. With understanding, because the devil also knows how to quote the Bible for his evil purposes. With faith, because faith is “the shield . . . with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one” (Eph. 6:16).

The devil’s final and most vicious attack comes when we face death and dying in the knowledge of our many

sins and shortcomings, the weakness of our faith, and the littleness of our spiritual accomplishments. At this point the devil might attempt to exaggerate our faith and accomplishments so that we become proud of ourselves and put our trust in our own works, and that would be fatal. Or he may exaggerate our failings and our doubts in order to drive us to despair, and that also would be fatal.

What can we do in the face of such fiendish activity that threatens to overwhelm us in our last hours on earth? Who are we to fight against “the great dragon, that serpent of old, called the Devil, and Satan, who deceives the whole world” (Rev. 12:9)? There is only one way to overcome him. “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony” (Rev. 12:11).

Jesus poured out His holy, sinless blood for all of us sinners. He has been punished for our sin. His Word directs us to put our trust in Him alone for forgiveness and strength. There is no other Savior. There is no other Way or Truth or Life. “He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 Jn. 4:4).

—D. Lau



Editor's Note: As an assignment for the West Central Conference of the CLC, held in Watertown, SD in June 1987, Pastor John Klatt wrote on the subject: "A Devotional Approach to the Terminally Ill—Especially Those in Great Suffering." For the benefit of our readers we are sharing this essay under the title: "The Problem of Pain." Due to space limitations, it will appear in the *Spokesman* in two installments. Please bear this in mind, as Pastor Klatt will be referring to other purposes of pain and suffering in addition to those appearing in this first article.

THE PROBLEM OF PAIN

Why pain? Why is pain a stubborn fact of life? Why is pain the universal experience of mankind so that the wicked and the godly alike are afflicted?

A Bitter Heritage

These questions are not difficult to answer, for the Bible reveals the origin of pain and all forms of suffering which are so common to the world. They are part of the bitter heritage of Adam's fall.

From the perfect health of paradise, man proceeded to pain: from the pain of Eve in childbirth to the pain of Abel struck down by his brother. From the strength of paradise, man proceeded to that strength which is labor and sorrow.

But the questions which are easy to answer in general terms are not so easy to answer in specific cases. We know why there is such a thing as cancer which causes a painful death, but we don't know why a certain Christian is subjected to such an ordeal. The full answers to such questions God reserves to Himself, and we must be content to know in part.

The Balm Of The Word

Still, God has not left us without help even in cases which we do not understand. His Word provides strength to those staggering under the weight of extreme pain. The Spirit is able to give

comfort and relief where we are powerless. Using the resources of God's Word, we can help those who are suffering.

"(Christ) bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed" (I Pet. 2:24).

We can help the sufferer overcome the temptations which threaten him. The child of God who suffers may be tempted to doubt God's love. He may begin to listen to the voice of Satan telling him that his pain is evidence that God has forsaken him. He may begin to fear that God is punishing him for his sins. He may be tempted to give way to bitterness and even despair.

The sufferer needs assurance of God's abiding love in His Son Jesus Christ. We know that God will not punish us for our sins because Jesus bore our sins in His own body on the cross. God accepted the ransom payment of Christ's own precious blood. He told the world that He had accepted it when He raised Jesus from the dead and exalted Him to His own right hand (Heb. 1:3). The sacrifice of Jesus avails for the sins of everyone (Heb. 7:27).

The Purpose

"My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction; for whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights" (Prov. 3:11-12).

If the Christian's suffering isn't evidence of God's wrath, what does it mean? If it isn't intended to punish, what is its purpose?

The Scriptures teach that when God permits His children to suffer, He uses it to bless them. God sometimes uses suffering to correct a straying child. Pain is the great humbler. It stops us cold. By it God gets our attention.

Of this use of pain we have many examples in God's dealings with Israel in the Old Testament. Once God sent fiery serpents to their camp when they complained against Him. The unbelieving were destroyed by this plague, but the erring children were corrected; they repented and God healed them.

The Lord has used suffering to correct those we might think are beyond correction. Manasseh, king of Judah, "seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel." The LORD spoke to him, but he would not listen. Yet, after he was captured and carried away by the Assyrians, after he felt the pain of the nose hook and the bronze fetters, he repented. "When he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers" (2 Chron. 33).

The Lord loves His children so greatly that, when they stray, He is pre-



*all ye that labor and are
HEAVY LADEN*

pared to use extreme measures to bring them back.

"We also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Rom. 3:3-5).

God uses suffering also to teach patience. The New Testament word which is translated "patience" means a remaining under. By letting us suffer pain God teaches us to remain under the burdens He allows to be laid upon us, for in them we see the loving hand of God chastening us as His own dear children. He teaches us not to despise His chastenings but to accept them.

By letting us bear heavy burdens God strengthens our faith, for in suffering we learn that we do not have in ourselves or in anything we possess the resources to preserve our own life. We learn that our life is completely in the hands of Him who created and redeemed us.

(To be continued)

—John Klatt

BACK TO FUNDAMENTALS

After a game in which his team displayed poor blocking and tackling technique, the pro football coach took his accomplished players behind closed doors and bellowed to his insulted ranks: "Looks like we'll have to start at the beginning with you guys—back to fundamentals!" To the drawing board he went, unconcerned that he might insult their supposed intelligence.

Insult To Intelligence?

Some time ago we attended something construed as a gathering of "Christian" businessmen. One blatant remark made publicly at that gathering still rings in the ear: "For anyone to say that the Bible is the Word of God is an insult to intelligence."

Not that we were surprised to hear it. Though it still remains No. 1 on the best-seller list, the Bible is constantly being examined more closely than the Irangate transcripts if, perchance, some might uncover its blemishes. Who wants to believe any more that there is anything that is Absolute Truth?!

Is the Bible the Word of God? Or does it just "contain" the Word of God? Is the Bible factual in all its parts? Or is it fictional in a good number of places? Does the Bible contain unadulterated Truth? Or does it contradict itself here and there? Must the Bible be subjected to methods of interpretation similar to those used by students of the Odyssey and the Iliad? Is the Bible a book of cunningly devised fables and myths so that neither you nor I can separate the supposed chaff from the wheat?

In short, is the Bible the very Word of the living God to mankind, divinely inspired, infallible and errorless in all its words? Or is it another book of profane literature subject to the manipulations of human interpretation? If it is the former, then we can be certain that we have a letter from our heavenly Father which is a sure rule and trustworthy norm of faith for our life on this earth. If it is the latter, then no one can be blamed for looking to the Koran or the Veda or the sayings of Confucius or Ellen White or Mary Baker Eddy or Shirley MacLaine for sacred enlightenment.

Let The Spirit Speak!

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating." The more we study the Bible, the more convinced we become that it deserves top spot on anybody's best-reading list. The thing is that we must put all human prejudices aside, all our pet pre-conceived ideas and opinions aside, all opinions of skeptics aside, and then we must let God the Holy Spirit speak to us in the words of the Bible. He is the author of the Bible. He is its Interpreter. He is the Bringer of spiritual understanding.

Those parts of the Bible which are difficult (and there are not a few, particularly for the beginning reader) will, through prayer for the Spirit's enlightenment, be opened in fulfillment of the words of our Savior: "However, when He, the Spirit of

truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth . . ." (Jn. 16:13). Yes, there is Absolute Truth! When one is guided by the Holy Spirit in understanding the Bible, one will not feel that his intelligence has been insulted. Rather, he will find that the Holy Scriptures make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 3:15).

Let one part of the Bible interpret another part for you. Which is another way of saying, Let God the Holy Spirit do your interpreting of the Bible. Make sure that what some claim to hold as Bible truth is in keeping with what the Bible says in other places. To tear Bible passages out of their context as "proof passages" for this or that teaching is equally as undermining to the Christian faith as are aspersions cast on the reliability of biblical facts.

A Sure Word

Back to fundamentals with St. Peter. "We didn't follow any clever myths when we told you about the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and His coming. No, with our own eyes we saw His majesty. God the Father gave Him honor and glory when from His wonderful glory He said to Him: 'This is My Son whom I love and with whom I am delighted.' We heard that voice speak to Him from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

"And we have a more sure word of prophecy. Please look to it as to a light shining in a gloomy place till the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Understand this first, that no one can explain any written Word of God as he likes, because it never was the will of a human being that brought us God's Word, but the Holy Spirit moved holy men to say what God told them" (2 Pet. 1:16-21-AAT).

- 1. We have a sure prophetic Word
By inspiration of the Lord;
And tho' assailed on ev'ry hand,
Jehovah's Word shall ever stand.**
- 2. By pow'rs of empire banned and burned,
By pagan pride rejected, spurned,
The Word still stands the Christian's trust
While haughty empires lie in dust.**
- 3. Lo, what the Word in times of old
Of future days and deeds foretold
Is all fulfilled while ages roll,
As traced on the prophetic scroll.**
- 4. Abiding, steadfast, firm, and sure,
The teachings of the Word endure.
Blest he who trusts this steadfast Word;
His anchor holds in Christ, the Lord. (TLH #290)**

—Paul Fleischer

The Living Word Grows In Hendersonville



Members and Friends of Living Word Lutheran Church, after their Worship Service on June 7, 1987

On Reformation Day 1971 Pastor Fred Archer announced his resignation from the Lutheran Church in America and from his LCA congregation in Hendersonville, NC because of the doctrinal laxity of that church body. The following week, 41 of his former members met with him to study the Bible truth about "The Inerrancy of the Scriptures." Pastor P. F. Nolting, serving our CLC congregation in West Columbia, SC at the time, was invited to speak to the group.

Meetings on three consecutive Friday evenings dealt with "Lodgism," "Fellowship," and "The Place of Women in the Church." During

November and December of that year, Bible Class, Sunday School, and worship services were held every Sunday in a local Seventh Day Adventist Church. On December 12, 1971 the congregation organized with 34 charter members, choosing the name "Living Word" in thankful recognition of the living Word of God which had created their unity.

In March 1972 a parsonage was purchased for \$28,000 and partially converted into a chapel. Already in August of 1975 the congregation purchased and began remodeling a building that had once been an axehandle factory and later a sheltered workshop. In May

1977 Living Word received a loan of \$30,000 from her CLC brethren through the Mission Extension Fund, resulting in an interest savings on a commercial loan. On April 10, 1977 the congregation dedicated its beautiful house of worship to the Lord.

Up to that time, Living Word had merely *affiliated* with the CLC. In 1978 the congregation requested and received membership status in the CLC at its July convention.

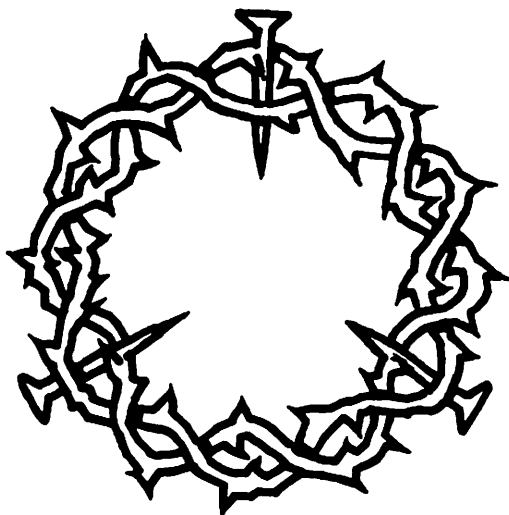
That same year, Pastor Archer accepted the call to serve Holy Trinity congregation in West Columbia, SC. Stephen Kurtzahn, a graduate of Immanuel Lutheran Seminary, Eau Claire, WI was ordained as pastor of Living Word. After five years of faithful service Pastor Kurtzahn accepted a call to the Dallas, TX area and in May 1984 Living Word's present pastor began serving.

From its very beginning, Living Word's mission spirit has moved its members to share the gospel of Jesus with others by doing mission work in Salisbury, NC, Spartanburg, SC, Washington, DC, and presently in Atlanta, GA.

Since Living Word is located in "Bible belt country" where Baptist teachings predominate, the congregation needs and requests the continued prayers of the CLC fellowship that the Lord keep it faithful to His word and dedicated to Christian living.

The congregation also encourages members and friends of the CLC to consider moving to this area nestled 2200 feet up in the forest-covered Blue Ridge and Smokey Mountains. As southern folk might say: "Y'all sho nuff come heah of a Sunday and help us praise the Lord Jesus, y'hear?"

—Robert W. Mackensen



"(They) twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. 'Hail, king of the Jews!' they said . . . Then they led him away to crucify him" (Mt. 27:29-31).



Daily
Devotions
For
March
1988

The traditional Gospel lessons for the Sundays of the church year again provide the themes for our daily psalm readings. The Gospel lesson for the second Sunday in Lent (Feb. 28) tells us of a Gentile woman who craved some crumbs of mercy from our Lord and was satisfied. Therefore our readings for March 1-5 exalt the Lord of Israel as the God of the whole earth, worthy of the praises of all.

The Gospel lesson for the third Sunday in Lent (March 6) concludes with Jesus' well-known saying: "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" The psalms for the following week, March 7-12, depict the thirsting of God's people for the waters of life that flow so bountifully in God's Word.

The feeding of the five thousand is the Gospel lesson for the fourth Sunday in Lent (March 13). The psalms for the next days, March 14-19, emphasize the Lord's merciful care of His undeserving people. Note, in particular, the contrast between God's kindness and Israel's disobedience presented in Psalm 78.

The fifth Sunday in Lent (March 20) is also known as Passion Sunday. The Gospel lesson portrays the increasing conflict between Jesus, the sinless Son of God, and the lying and deceiving Jewish leaders, who hated Him. Jesus honored God, but the Jewish leaders dishonored both Jesus and His heavenly Father. The psalms for March 21-26 summon us to honor God by believing He is what He says He is.

Palm Sunday (March 27) is the day of Jesus' ride into Jerusalem to rescue His people by suffering and dying in their place. Certain psalms written by David point ahead to the sufferings of the Son of David. We can be sure that the thoughts of the readings for March 28-31 were on Jesus' mind as He approached His death burdened with our sins.

Date	Reading	Theme	Hymn
1	Psalm 117	All the Gentiles are commanded to praise the Lord of Israel.	15
2	Psalm 86	All nations shall glorify the name of the Lord.	511
3	Psalm 64	All men shall declare the works of God.	14
4	Psalm 66	All the earth shall sing praises to the Lord.	20
5	Psalm 83	God's enemies will have to learn the hard way that He is Lord of all.	28
6	Luke 11:14-28	Those who hear and treasure God's Word are blessed.	48
7	Psalm 84	The living God speaks to us in His Word.	480
8	Psalm 63	Hunger is the best cook. Be hungry for God's Word.	462
9	Psalm 48	Let God's people be glad to hear His Word.	636
10	Psalms 42-43	Why be depressed? We have God's Word as our hope.	525
11	Psalm 27	We behold the beauty of the Lord in His Word.	18
12	Psalm 122	Let us be glad when we go to God's house to hear His Word.	638
13	John 6:1-15	Our Lord knows how to provide for our needs.	434
14	Psalm 34	Those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.	29
15	Psalm 65	The Lord crowns the year with His goodness.	567
16	Psalm 81	The Lord promises to fill our wide open mouths.	17

In connection with our "Back to Fundamentals" article in this issue, we want our readers to know of the recently revised edition of Dr. William Amdt's *Bible Difficulties* and *Does the Bible Contradict Itself?*

Long available in separate booklets, both books are now available in one paperback volume for \$8.95. Concordia Publishing House has seen to the reprinting.

This book clearly defends the inerrancy of the Bible and refutes the claims of those who suggest there are errors and contradictions in the Bible. Titled *Bible Difficulties & Seeming Contradictions*, the book has sections on miracles, historical difficulties, moral difficulties, and Scripture and Science.

In our opinion, this book deserves to be in our church libraries and, yes, in our Christian homes.

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17	Psalm 78:1-25	The Lord provided water and manna in the desert.	629
18	Psalm 78:26-55	The Lord forgave their sin and did not destroy them.	583
19	Psalm 78:56-72	The Lord in mercy gave them a king and a temple.	581
20	John 8:46-59	Jesus honored His Father, and His Father honored Him.	352
21	Psalm 88	We honor God by calling on Him in our hour of need.	141
22	Psalm 75	We honor God by letting Him avenge our enemies.	269
23	Psalm 29	We honor God by acknowledging His divine power.	582
24	Psalm 139	We honor God by praising His omniscience.	326
25	Psalm 76	We honor God by fearing His just anger.	43
26	Psalm 82	We honor God by behaving as His children.	580
27	Matthew 21:1-9	Jesus rode into Jerusalem to save His people from sin.	162
28	Psalm 70	Make haste to help us, O Lord!	148
29	Psalm 83	Jesus, Son of David, was deserted by His friends and plotted against by His enemies.	153
30	Psalm 52	David had his Doeg, and Jesus had His Caiaphas.	151
31	Psalm 41	Judas lifted up his heel against Jesus.	164

—D. Lau