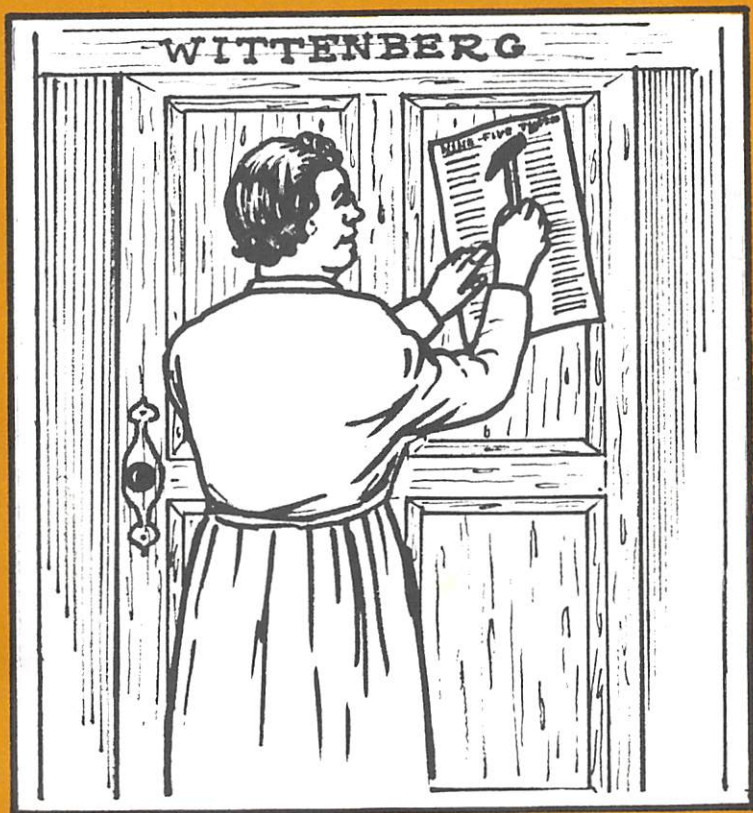


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lutheran spokesman



OCTOBER 31, 1517

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CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

"The judgment of the Lord rests upon the churches of this land, and we are not exempt. Yes, the Lord has given us a blessing . . . but we are in grave danger of throwing it away . . ."

REFORMATION PAST AND PRESENT

The man whom God raised up in the history of His Church to lead His people back to the saving Gospel wrote these words as part of his little hand-book for teaching children: ". . . and that again a new man should daily come forth and arise who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever."

It is one thing for Lutherans to gather together sometime close to the end of October and attempt to keep their children's minds on the history of the Reformation rather than on "tricks or treats." But it is quite another matter for parents and children alike to focus on what the Reformation is all about today.

Need For Reformation

It may help us all to recall that the need for reformation is not nearly so much the outward celebration of an annual event as it is the need to begin each day.

The Reformation past was a vast movement involving whole nations over many years of history. The reformation present, on the other hand, is a personal and daily celebration. Each of us are to face each new day under the renewed grace of God alone. Forgiveness for the past has been earned by Christ on the cross, and the new man needs to come forth each day and take over against the sins of yesterday.

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The person who depends on history and singing "A Mighty Fortress" once or twice does not know what real reformation is. And that also includes all in this fellowship who can take pride in our own confessional past but largely ignore the on-going nature of this festival.

A *Spokesman* editorial out of the past regularly comes to memory, the gist of which is well worth repeating. Concerning a then four-year-old CLC, the lead article began: "We are not a strong church body. We are weak, and we are sick. We are an offshoot of the Synodical Conference, a dying church, a tree cut down under the judgment of God. We are not the cream, the saving of the best.

"We have been conditioned to think that if a church has the correct presentation of the doctrine that it must be a good church. But this is not so. We are judging by external appearance. What we see does not tell us how deep are the ulcers of the stomach, how far advanced the cancer in the lungs, how far developed the cirrhosis of the liver.

"The judgment of the Lord rests upon the churches of this land, and we are not exempt. Yes, the Lord has given us a blessing, a great one, and an unde-

served one. He has also given us another opportunity, but we are in grave danger of throwing it away if we look to ourselves, if we think we have purified ourselves of all the weaknesses of the present age. . . . It is always fatal to boast 'we are Abraham's children.' " (May, 1965, Vol. 7, #12.)

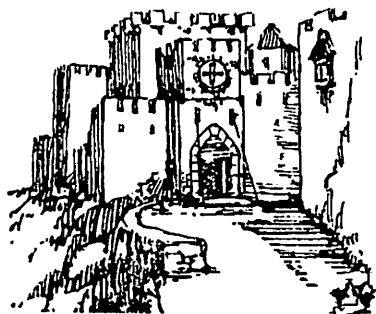
Beginning With Me

But now let us resolve as we celebrate Reformation past also to encourage one another: "Lord, let the Reformation, glorious in history, begin anew in me each day . . ."—and the blessings of God on our fellowship will continue.

Reformation is a present, on-going, daily battle with that unholy trinity of Satan, world, and self. We will feel a part of Martin Luther and the Reformation past never so much as when we, together with him, by Word and Sacrament, make it the rule that the new man daily comes forth and arises who shall live before God in righteousness and purity (His—and ours by faith alone!) forever.

Reformation past? Celebrate it with gusto. Reformation present? Begin it anew right now.

—B. J. Naumann



A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

THE REFORMATION AND FALSE SECURITY

When we think of Martin Luther's contributions to Christian teaching, no doubt the first thing we think of is the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ alone, as explained by the apostle Paul in his letters to the Romans and Galatians. Martin Luther taught sinners, terrified by the demands of God's Law and the laws of the Roman Catholic Church, to trust in Christ alone for salvation. In Christ they would find security. In Christ they would find true assurance of eternal life and peace of mind and conscience. Martin Luther himself found security in Jesus Christ after many years of insecurity, and he was eager to share what he had found with other troubled sinners.

But at the same time we should not forget the reverse side of Luther's reformation activities. As zealous as he was to direct troubled sinners to Jesus Christ and His Gospel for spiritual security, so zealous was he to shatter the false security of thousands of sinners who trusted for their salvation in themselves or their works or their external connection with the Church. In other words, as Martin Luther built up through Gospel preaching the true security in Christ that sinners need to have for their assurance of salvation, so he at the same time destroyed the carnal security of the many who had misplaced their confidence in that which could not save them.

False Security through Indulgences

For example, one of the main points of Luther's 95 *Theses* in 1517 was to make people understand that the buy-

ing of indulgences from peddlers like John Tetzel could not assure them of the forgiveness of sins. Thesis 32 says it in plain language: "Those who believe that they can be certain of their salvation because they have indulgence letters will be eternally damned, together with their teachers" (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 31, p. 28). Luther found Biblical basis for his position in the phrase repeated by the Old Testament prophets: "They have healed the hurt of My people slightly, saying, 'Peace, peace!' when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14). Luther became angry when he realized that the common people were being deceived into thinking they would go to heaven on the basis of the purchase of a piece of paper.

Thesis 92: "Away then with all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, 'Peace, peace,' and there is no peace!"

Theses 94 and 95: "Christians should be exhorted to be diligent in following Christ, their head, through penalties, death, and hell, and thus be confident of entering into heaven through many tribulations (Acts 14:22) rather than through the false security of peace" (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 31, p. 33).



Luther would say, and he has said: "Faith is a divine work in us which changes us and makes us to be born anew of God. It kills the old Adam . . . and brings with it the Holy Spirit . . ."

False Security through Sacramentalism

The Roman Catholic teachers of Luther's time put great emphasis on the so-called seven sacraments. They taught, for example, that the Lord's Supper had value for the recipient regardless of his own attitude towards God or what he was receiving in the Sacrament. But here, too, Luther pointed out the danger of false security. He said in a writing of 1519: "It is not enough that the sacrament be merely completed; it must also be used in faith. And we must take care lest with such dangerous interpretations the sacrament's power and virtue be lost on us, and faith perish utterly through the false security of the outwardly completed sacrament" (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 35, p. 63).

As Biblical basis Luther could point to the many references in the Gospel of John to faith in Jesus. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already" (Jn. 3:18). Our Lord Jesus did not say: He who is baptized will be saved. But He said: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark

16:16).

False Security through False Faith

As the Reformation proceeded on its course and the people began to hear so much about faith, Luther noticed that many were beginning to misunderstand what faith really is. They thought that they could sin as they pleased at the same time that they believed in Jesus for forgiveness and salvation. Therefore Luther and his co-worker Philip Melancthon pointed out in 1528: "Many who hear that they should believe, so that all their sins will be forgiven, fashion their own faith and think they are pure. Thus they become secure and arrogant. Such carnal security is worse than all the errors hitherto prevailing. . . . True faith cannot exist where there is not true contrition and true fear and terror before God. . . . Faith without contrition is presumption and carnal security" (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 40, pp. 293-296). As Biblical support for this statement they quoted Ephesians 5:5: "No fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."

In a similar way Luther wrote in the



Smalcald Articles of 1537: "The Holy Ghost does not permit sin to have dominion, to gain the upper hand so as to be accomplished, but represses and restrains it so that it must not do what it wishes. But if it does what it wishes, the Holy Ghost and faith are certainly not present" (*The Smalcald Articles*, Part III, Article III, paragraph 44).

False Security Today

If we examine the attitudes of people in our world and look into our own hearts as well, I think we will admit that false security still presents a real danger for us. Are there some who suppose they are sure of eternal life because there is a piece of paper somewhere that lists them as members of a true-teaching congregation? Is their assurance of salvation based in part on their regular contributions to this congregation or their regular church attendance? Luther would say: Repent of your false security, and trust in Christ alone!

Are there those among us who think of baptism as an automatic ticket to heaven? Are there those who trust in their external association with Christians as sufficient for salvation? Do we assume that all those who have been

baptized and all those who partake of the Lord's Supper are sure to inherit eternal life? Luther would say: Put aside this false sacramentalism, and depend on Christ's suffering and death and resurrection as your only hope!

Are there those among us who minimize the need to fight against the sin in our lives? Are there those who ridicule the desire of earnest Christians to find out what God wants them to do and to strive to do it as God gives them strength? Is such piety considered fanaticism among us? Are there those among us who are beginning to believe the lie of universalism, that God is so good that He will never punish anyone eternally, and that therefore we can depend on this boundless love of God without concern for our own faith and life?

Luther would say, and he has said: "Faith is a divine work in us which changes us and makes us to be born anew of God. It kills the old Adam and makes us altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers; and it brings with it the Holy Spirit. . . . Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that the believer would stake his life on it a thousand times. . . . Pray God that He may work faith in you" (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 35, pp. 370-371).

—D. Lau



"We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

THE IMPULSE TO PREACH

From the beginning our God was forging a new people to live and preach in an "old" world—one filled with wickedness and rebellion. His calculated response to this iniquity was a radical deliverance from its clutches through the atoning death of His Savior Son. He wanted and He wants everyone to hear about this redemption, since Jesus ransomed everyone through His atoning sacrifice.

God could have come up with any number of plans to spread the message of human redemption. He could have entrusted the Word to the angels and dispatched them here and there in the world to preach the Gospel. It was certainly possible for the Son Himself to stay here on the earth and be the Preacher to mankind in a great world missions program. Perhaps He could have overtaken the media of whatever century in a miraculous coup of His almighty power and spoken to mankind that way. Some have even suggested that God should demonstrate His presence visibly and certainly everyone would be impressed (and saved) by the big "WOW."

But what does God do? He entrusts His durable Word to fragile yet forgiven failures. He also empowers them with an impulse and urgency to spread the Gospel. His people were witnesses to extraordinary and miraculous events in connection with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. How could they

help but speak of what they had seen and heard? And we know that's exactly how they felt: "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:10).

Trouble

Well, the "old" world doesn't understand the "new." The forces of selfishness and prejudice don't like to hear of free salvation through the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ. They would like to preserve restrictive traditions of works-salvation, which also just happen to promote personal prestige and financial security.

So when the Word started to spread around the city of Jerusalem, the religious establishment of that time—the Pharisees and Sadducees—felt threatened. They sought to squelch the Word about Jesus immediately.

It all started when John and Peter used the power of Jesus' name to heal a crippled man. Folks wanted to know how they could do that. So they told them. Remember the impulse. They were arrested for their efforts. In court the next day they were asked to tell by what power they did what they did. And Peter and John told them, too. They couldn't help it. They wanted their captors to know about the one "name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

The "long story" is in your Bibles—Acts chapters four and five. To make

the long story a bit shorter, suffice it to mention that they were released with a command not to preach in the name of Jesus anymore. You know what they did! They were arrested again. But an angel let them out of prison. They were captured a third time and brought before the council.

Obedience

The trial really only involved one issue. They had been told not to preach about Jesus. They had disobeyed the council's demand. Peter stated the reason for their actions: "WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN" (Acts 5:29). The disciples had a higher authority guiding them.

This principle was nothing new. King Saul learned his lesson after altering what God had told him to do. Samuel told him: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams" (I Sam. 15:22). Saul lost his kingship because of his disobedience.

The example of this "impulsive" obedience to God rather than man is a regular topic in our Catechism instruc-

tion in connection with the 4th commandment. What do you do if your parents tell you to shoplift from a store? What do we do if the government would tell us not to worship? What if your peer group wants you to experiment with drugs or sex? We ought to obey God rather than man.

There's more at stake than just saying "No" to sin. Doing what God says strikes at the root of our entire being and is the foundation of all our behaviors. We have God's Word on what His will is for His people. We don't have to guess. We are told we can be confident that what God wills for us is always good. Obeying God is a way of life for His people, not just a way of staying out of trouble. Obeying God rather than men will occasionally get us into trouble with men. That's no problem. The "old" is powerless over the "new."

Can you believe it? After this last episode with the council the disciples "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name" (Acts 5:41). Imagine it! Being thrilled to suffer for being obedient to the Lord God.

—M. Sydow



Against Lethargy In Liturgy—Second In A Series . . .

DRAWING NEAR UNTO GOD

"Now we may gather with our King, E'en in the lowliest dwelling." It is not news to us that, when we gather for worship in the name of the Triune God, we are in His presence, in His very

house. But when we hear the same words week after week, we can easily lapse into a kind of "automatic worship" and miss much comfort and joy.

At the beginning of our service,

The Confession of Sins

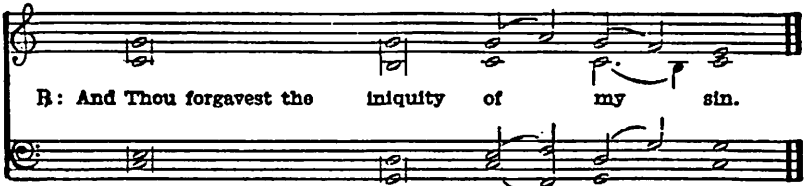
Minister: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God, our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

All may kneel

V: Our help is in the name of the Lord.



V: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.



after we affirm that we are gathered in the name of the Triune God, we hear the invitation: "*Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins . . .*" What does it mean to draw near, to be in God's presence?

Some Biblical Examples

It was a frightening thing for Simon and his friends that day by the Sea of Galilee. They were professional fishermen who had used their best knowledge, experience, and efforts all night long, but had come up empty. Then Jesus told them to put out into deep water in the daytime and let down their nets.

Now, they had heard Jesus speak, and speak with authority, about the Kingdom of heaven. But what qualified this carpenter to instruct the sons of Jonah and Zebedee about fishing techniques and procedures? Yet, even

though they "knew better," these fishermen followed the advice of Jesus and let down their nets as He told them.

You know the rest. They caught so many fish that their nets were breaking. When Simon saw this evidence that Jesus was not just a good teacher, but King of Creation, he fell to his knees and said: "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" (Luke 5)

When Moses realized at the burning bush that he was in the presence of God, he hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. (Exodus 3)

When Adam and Eve heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden, they hid from the LORD among the trees of the garden. Of course, we know they ducked for cover because they had just sinned against God. Peter and Moses were also aware that sin separates people from God, and Isaiah knew it too: "Your iniquities

have separated you from your God" (Is. 59:2).

We also are aware of the distance our sins have put between us and God. Like the prodigal son coming home in Jesus' parable, as we "draw near with a true heart" we come confessing our sins unto God our Father. (Luke 15)

An Amazing Invitation

But what an amazing invitation is given to us! Not "You miserable wretches!" But "Beloved in the LORD!" With such kindness and love our heavenly Father sought out Adam and Eve in the garden when they scurried for cover.

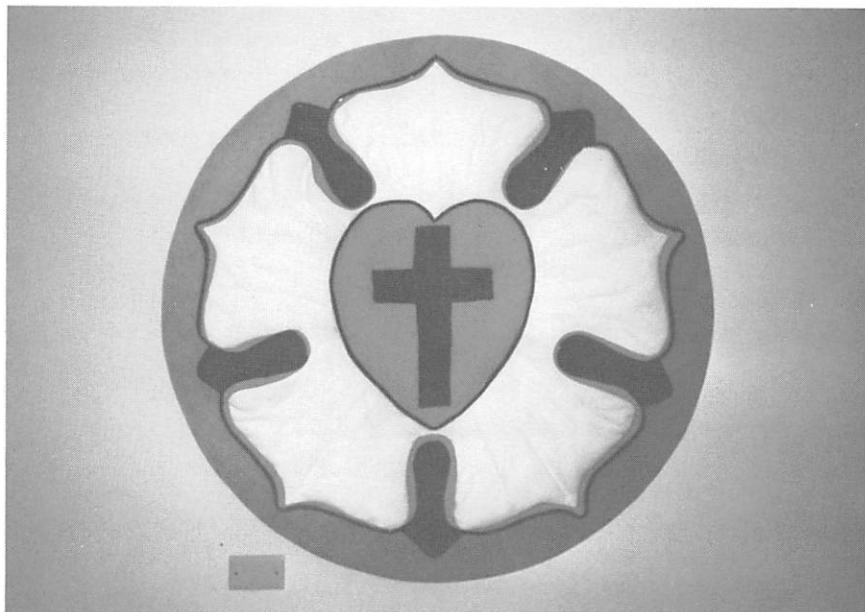
And so He also seeks us. It is only this kindness that will put a stop to our restless running from one hiding place to another. The thundering of His holy Law makes us aware of our sins and in-

iquities, but it is His wonderful promise of grace and forgiveness that invites and entices us to confess our sin and seek His mercy.

"Our help is in the name of the Lord . . ." "I said, I will confess my transgressions . . ." Even before we confess our sins we are reminded by Psalm 124:8 that the almighty Maker of heaven and earth is also the source of help and rescue. And when David reports the result of his confession: "Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin," he holds before our eyes the same promise. (Ps. 32:5)

What a marvelous greeting awaits us as we enter the sanctuary each Sunday! Not only are we "Beloved in the Lord" to one another. We are surely beloved by the LORD Who so graciously invites us to draw near, week after week!

—Paul Schaller



A Quilted Luther Seal in The Fellowship Hall at Gethsemane Church, Spokane, WA

The Sacraments: Fellowship Considerations

Most people who call themselves Christians know very little about scriptural fellowship principles. Fellowship principles are the guidelines that Scripture gives for our dealings with others in religious matters.

Many may have read passages like Romans 16:17-18: "Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them." But they are unaware of how those passages apply to their own religious life. If another person calls himself a Christian, they feel free to enter into all types of religious activity with him without regard for the divisions and offenses which may exist. Those safeguards which God has provided against error are unused.

In Baptism

Fellowship is involved in the Lord's Supper and can be involved in Baptism. Increasingly often, young parents find themselves far from their home church or any sister congregation when their child is born. Not wishing to wait the weeks or months, or to risk the long trip with an unbaptized child, they may be strongly tempted to take the child to any available pastor to have it baptized. They overlook the perfectly acceptable alternative of baptizing the child themselves and having the baptism ratified in the home church later.

The other area where fellowship principles apply to baptism involves sponsors. The use of sponsors is a custom of human origin. It arose from the

need to provide both physical and spiritual care for the child if the rest of the family perished due to persecution, war, plague, or some other disaster. Such situations were not rare.

Today that need has decreased to the point where some congregations make no official provision for sponsors. Witnesses are the only requirement. But when sponsors are chosen, scriptural principles are to be followed. Besides being a witness, the sponsor is also to pray for the child and to see to its Christian training if necessary. Especially in regard to the duty of Christian training, the sponsor is to be of the same belief as the parents.

It is neither logical nor scriptural to ask a person to be in charge of the religious training of one's child when that person must be avoided in religious matters because his religious beliefs are different.

In The Lord's Supper

Partaking of the Lord's Supper is an act of worship. The same limitations that control our attendance at church services apply. We are not to commune in those churches which teach or practice contrary to the teachings of Scripture. Scripture says: "Avoid them," not "Commune with them."

"There are scriptural fellowship considerations in connection with the sacraments. We are to be aware of them and to be guided by them."

There is also the matter of churches and pastors who permit, and even encourage, all who are in attendance to partake of the Lord's Supper. They seem to have little real concern for the spiritual welfare of visitors who wish to commune. No effort is made to prevent people from eating and drinking judgment to themselves by communing unworthily. Do the communicants believe that Jesus' sacrifice of Himself brought about the forgiveness of sins? Do they believe that they receive the true body and blood of Jesus in the sacrament? Do they even understand the basic beliefs of Christianity? "He who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body" (I Cor. 11:29).

In many churches today there is little or no attempt to instruct visitors from other church bodies in the truth

and the need for doctrinal agreement. "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10).

It is out of love for guests at our services that our pastors insist that all who commune at our altars have been properly instructed in the truths of Scripture and accept these truths also in regard to the meaning, power, and blessings of the Lord's Supper. Those who do not accept our beliefs are asked to commune with those who believe as they do.

There are scriptural fellowship considerations in connection with the sacraments. We are to be aware of them and to be guided by them.

—K. Olmanson



Opening Devotion For A Christian School—

"For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come" (I Timothy 4:8).

JUNK FOOD OR SOLID FOOD?

Dear boys and girls, parents, teachers, and friends of Christian education:

I want to talk to you this morning about reasons we have to give thanks to God for such a school as ours. To learn these things we need to pay attention to

what God says in His Word and not look only at the outward things. We don't judge the "best school" by how many kids go there, or by how big the school building is or if it has a gym or not. There are more important things to

consider.

The Bible teaches that we have both a natural body and a spiritual body (see I Cor. 15:44). Both of these bodies were given to us by God, as the Bible also teaches when it says: "So God created man in His own image . . . The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being" (Gen. 1:27, 2:7). You and I are different from the animals. They have a body, like we have a body, but they do not have a spiritual body, an eternal soul. We not only have a natural body of flesh, muscles, bones, and blood, but we have a spiritual body. We not only get hungry and thirsty for food and drink, but that part of us which is our spiritual body yearns to know God and be like God.

We know what to do to satisfy the appetites of our natural body, but by ourselves we don't know how to satisfy our spiritual appetites. Ever since sin came into the world, we have all kinds of wrong ideas about what our souls need. This is why God gives us His Holy Spirit when we are baptized. He makes us want to hear and learn the Word of God to feed our spiritual bodies.

Junk Food

Don't you imagine that, because God has given us both a natural body and a spiritual body, He wants both of our bodies to grow? And don't you think that God wants us to take good care of both of our bodies? Surely He does. God wants us to eat good and healthy foods for our natural bodies, not just candy and cracker jack, potato chips and soda and other "junk food."

He wants us to eat meat and potatoes and vegetables too. God also wants us to exercise our natural bodies so that we can run and jump and play ball and do calisthenics during physical education class.

But don't you think that, since God has given us a soul or spiritual body too, He wants us to take good care of that also? Surely He does. In fact, the Bible says that taking care of our spiritual soul and life is most important of all. In the first Bible passage I read God tells us that physical training "profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things . . ." And why is this so? Because taking care of our natural, physical body is good for this life only. But if we are healthy in our spiritual body, our soul, then we are better off for this life *and* for the life to come, which we will live forever in heaven with Jesus, our Savior.

The Bible tells us, sadly, that many people don't care about or take care of their most important body, their spiritual body, but they give it all kinds of "junk food" instead. They don't let the Holy Spirit feed their spiritual bodies so that that body is starving and even dead or dying while they are still living.

Many people feed their spiritual bodies things which are poison. They believe in gods which are not the true God. They listen to man's words and wisdom rather than to God's Word. They believe in witches and ghosts and evil spirits and such things because they do not have the Holy Spirit living in them. In the public schools it is against the law to teach children about God. Some teachers in those schools even make fun of God's teachings in the Bible. Therefore the students get a lot of "junk food" for their spiritual

bodies—a kind of "food" which leaves their most important body undernourished, sick, and crippled, lacking the daily vitamins that come from "eating" God's Word and His holy teachings about Himself and the world.

Solid Food

This is why a school like ours is such a wonderful school! Our Christian school gives you the chance to feed and exercise your natural body *and* your spiritual body. Our school may not have a gymnasium like those other schools. But you still get plenty of bodily exercise on our playground, during phy ed class, and sometimes you may use the gyms of other schools to exercise your physical bodies and play sports.

But at our school you get what is most important for you and most important to God. You are trained in godliness when the Holy Spirit comes to you in the Word of God. You have Bible stories and prayer every day. Your Christian teachers teach you about math, and science, and music, and English, and history, and geography, and *how these things glorify God!*

In that way you are feeding and exercising your spiritual bodies. You are being prepared not only for a good and happy life here in this world, but you are also being prepared for the life which really counts in the world to come. In our school you not only learn about things of this world and this life, but you learn about faith in God and Jesus, about love and trust and hope in Him; about having patience to wait for the gifts God wants to give you; about how to comfort yourself if you or

someone in your family gets sick or even dies; yes, you learn how to pray and worship God—not just any god, but the true God and your Savior, Jesus Christ. In short, you learn about the Christian life which ends in heaven with Jesus, not only about life in this world which ends in dust and ashes.

When you grow up maybe you want to be a professional baseball or football player, or an airplane pilot or astronaut, or a professor, lawyer, doctor, farmer, or pastor or teacher. But no matter what you want to be you will be much better off if you have a healthy spiritual body and are exercised as a Christian. People who do these things and are not believers in Jesus have nothing to look forward to when they die. They're gone and are separated from Jesus forever in hell. But no matter what you want to be, if you are healthy in your spirit and soul, when you die you have God's promise that you will live forever with Jesus in eternal happiness and joy.

That is why we all want to thank God every day for giving us this Christian school. It feeds and trains not only the bodies, but the souls of our children. It prepares them not only for this life but for the life to come. And like God's Word tells us, that is what really counts, isn't it? May God bless our school, its children and teachers as we now open our school for another year. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

(Editor's note: This was the sermon for the opening service at Gethsemane Lutheran School, Spokane, Washington on September 1, 1988. The Spokesman editor is the pastor.)

YOUR MEF FUNDS AT WORK



Laying The Foundation

On June 11th Peace Thru Christ Lutheran Church, Middleton, WI invited members from other CLC congregations to come and help in the construction of its new church in suburban Madison. "Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified," says the LORD.

These words from Haggai 1:8 were patterned on oak by Duane Riggert for all those who joined us on that day. (If he missed you in his effort to distribute them, he would like to share one with you.) We did not ourselves go to the mountains for the wood. Others spanned those distances. But the wood was brought. The temple has taken shape. And we certainly glorify God for the outpouring of Christian love shown by the many who came to help in this MEF-funded building project.

A Busy Week

That week of June 6-11th was a busy and exciting week for Peace Thru Christ. It began on Monday with the cement walls for the crawl space. By Thursday night the crew of volunteers stepped back to look at the completed outline of their new structure. The feeling of thankful accomplishment filled the quiet. Friday the roof sheeting was put on.

It's a small congregation—especially in the size of half of its members (of the 60 souls, 26 are children). Nevertheless there was a lot of going and bringing that week. From Monday to Friday a total of 462 volunteer hours were logged. And on Saturday the congregation was joined by a number of volunteers from other congregations of the Church of Lutheran Confession to



Duane Riggert Confers With Jack Mayhew



Volunteers Swell The Crew

put up the shingles.

With the 50 people present on that day those volunteer hours doubled. It was a hot, dry day, even by the summer's standards, especially on a dark, hot roof. But it was obvious that everyone there was more concerned about thanking Jesus than about staying comfortably cool.

There was one person who not allowed to do much building on that Saturday. He was too busy going up and going down—going here and going there. Everyone was calling for Jack. Jack Mayhew, a carpenter from our sister congregation in Valentine, Nebraska was living with his family in a pickup camper to guide this volunteer project.

He never tired of just coming and going on that Saturday. But he was glad to be able to build too in the weeks following.

The exterior of the temple was all built by the middle of July. There still was a great deal to be done inside. (The goal was to be ready for dedication of the building in August.) With the dry wall all in place it is taking the shape with which we pray the LORD will be pleased. More important yet, we pray, is that as the LORD has prepared thankfully willing hearts, so He would take pleasure in preserving His temple in our hearts and yours so that He who saved us may be glorified.

—John Ude, Pastor



Your Offerings Have Built A House To The Lord

The Influence Of Television—II.

Let's look at some specific ways in which Satan influences children through television in a negative way. In our survey we found that, for the most part, children are not watching only the shows made specifically for children. They also watch the evening sitcoms and family shows and things like that. In giving examples we will try to deal with a variety of shows that children are watching. Our purpose is not to condemn or condone any particular show. We simply want to mention several of Satan's influences in varying degrees in order to make parents think seriously about what children are watching.

Violence

Violence is the influence most talked about. There are many magazine articles and books warning parents about the dangers of children watching violence on TV. Violence permeates TV shows today. I can't think of one cartoon that does not have some elements of violence in it. Many cartoons are nothing but violence from beginning to end.

Along with the cartoons several violent evening shows are also very popular. Even shows like *Walt Disney* often have violent scenes in them. *Sesame Street* doesn't have people involved in violence, but at times the characters are violent with each other, making the children laugh.

How does all this affect children? Seeing characters on *Sesame Street* hitting each other is not going to have as

great an effect as watching a show with lots of killing. But any violence has the potential of giving a bad influence.

Here are some actual quotations from two six-year-olds, found in an article in *Parent's Magazine*. When asked why *GI Joe* was their favorite show, one boy's response was: "Because it has a lot of fighting." "What is the character GI Joe himself like?" "He fights." "Who would you like to be like when you grow up?" "I want to be like Rambo because he has a big gun. And when I grow up I want to shoot bad guys." "What happens to the bad guys you shoot?" "They die." "And what happens to you?" "Nothing." Then the children armed themselves with guns and grenades and ran down into the basement to play at war and killing.

This is not an uncommon finding and these are by no means unusual kids. Children everywhere love playing with guns and to pretend at wars and killing. Do we want our children to play such games? Is this a God-pleasing thing? A three-year-old girl shocked her mother one day. She asked if they could get a gun to knock down their dog. Her mother, startled by the question, told her that guns are very bad. They kill people and that makes us very sad. The daughter responded, "Well, they do that on TV."

Many studies conducted at universities across the country have concluded that children who watch a lot of violent television have a distorted idea that violence is the key to power. To many youngsters violence is the equivalent of

power. It is the way to obtain and exercise it. These studies show that children who watch a lot of violence on TV are more willing to use violence as an effective solution to conflict. They are more inclined to agree that it is "almost always right to hit someone if you are mad at them for a good reason."

God's Word

God says: "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer" (I Jn. 3:15). Jesus says: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth . . . Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy . . . Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God: (Mt. 5:5ff). "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who spitefully use you and persecute you" (Mt. 5:44).

TV promotes the idea that we should fight for what is right. Satan wants to bring up children thinking in this way.

Closely related to this is the idea of revenge. TV violence often gives the idea that it is all right to seek revenge, to take the law into one's own hands, to fight for something one feels is right. But God teaches: "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give

him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:19-21).

This influence can also be seen in us as adults. How many times do we cheer at a movie or show when the bad guy gets it? God makes His view clear: "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles" (Prov. 24:17).

It is interesting how most violent cartoons try to make them seem better to parents by tacking on some moral lesson on the end. But does this make all the violence all right? If anything it makes it worse, strengthening the idea that if one has a good reason for violence it is all right.

One other problem that could be mentioned in regard to violence is that it tends to make children have an exaggerated sense of danger and mistrust. Violence on TV often increases a child's fear of many different things. Violent, scary shows often cause children to have nightmares.

We will not be able to isolate our children from the violence of the world, but we have to make every effort as parents to counteract it with what God teaches.

(To be continued)

—David Reim

"Never Too Young"

A devotional booklet by this title, written by Mary and Kurt Koenig, is available from the CLC Bookhouse. The cost is \$1.25 plus postage. This is a series of 15 devotions for children 10 years old and younger to acquaint them with life for a child in Nigeria, and instill zeal to reach out with the Gospel.

A VCR on the CLC's mission in Nigeria is available from the Video Tape Ministry. To borrow the tape, contact Mr. Harvey Callies, manager of the CLC Bookhouse.

"Great Words Of The Bible"

It is not always easy for the lay person to explain certain biblical words concisely and correctly. Here is a tool to help understand such words as justification, chastisement, love, hope, redemption. A total of 20 words are explained in this reprint, in booklet form, of the *Spokesman* series on "Words With Big Meanings." The booklet may also be used as an evangelism tool, or as a gift for friends. Orders should be placed through the CLC Bookhouse.

Daily Devotions for November 1988

November is the month that has been chosen for our national Thanksgiving celebration. For this reason many of the suggested hymns for our devotions this month are from the section in The Lutheran Hymnal entitled, "Harvest and Thanksgiving" and "The Nation."

These hymns reinforce the earnest message of Deuteronomy, Moses' last words to the Israelites before his death. Can we find anywhere else in Scripture such strongly worded warning against idolatry and pride and self-sufficiency and ingratitude? Moses loved the children of Israel. He wanted God's blessings to be poured out on them continually. He assured them that from their midst would one day come God's great Prophet, the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ. Moses knew that Israel was God's very special chosen nation. Yet he also knew that of those to whom much is given, much is expected. To those who respond to God's abundant grace with continued gross idolatry there can be no judgment other than God's fierce curse, as pronounced by Moses in Deuteronomy 28 and other passages in this book.

The message of the New Testament is the same. God is good. God so loved the world. Jesus died for all. "But he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). "If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed" (I Cor. 16:22).

Date	Scripture	Theme	Hymn
1	Dt. 10:1-10	God in His mercy forgives our sins for Jesus' sake.	32
2	Dt. 10:11-22	Why should we not serve our Lord and hold fast to Him?	640
3	Dt. 11:1-9	Let us take the time to ponder the <i>good things</i> our God has done for us.	
4	Dt. 11:10-21	Praise to the Lord for His boundless blessings!	44
5	Dt. 11:22-32	God delights in blessing His obedient people.	17
6	Dt. 12:29-13:5	Beware of the lying wonders of false teachers.	20
7	Dt. 13:6-18	God does not look with kindness on false teachers.	261
8	Dt. 16:18-17:7	God does not look with kindness on false teachers.	260
9	Dt. 18:9-14	In God's eyes idolatry is as evil as murder.	238
10	Dt. 18:15-22	Witchcraft, astrology, soothsaying are not God's will.	446
11	Dt. 18:15-22	Jesus is the Prophet that God promised to Israel.	364
12	Dt. 19:15-21	Government is God's servant to punish evil-doing.	577
13	Dt. 20:1-9	David believed this promise of God when he faced Goliath.	447
14	Dt. 20:10-20	No mercy can be shown to Devil, World, and Flesh.	451
15	Dt. 21:15-23	Jesus was given our sins and curse on the cross.	153
16	Dt. 24:10-22	We honor our Lord by helping the poor and needy.	440
17	Dt. 26:1-11	Our firstfruits belong to the Lord who blesses us.	573
18	Dt. 26:12-19	God's people gladly listen to His voice.	575
19	Dt. 28:1-14	How generous the Lord is in His blessings!	570
20	Dt. 28:15-44	How fearful the Lord is in His curses!	607 (1-9)
21	Dt. 28:45-68	God threatens disaster upon disaster to those who hate Him.	607 (10-19)
22	Dt. 29:1-13	God's actions prove Him to be worthy of our worship.	36
23	Dt. 29:14-29	Woe be to those who arouse the Lord's anger!	580
24	Dt. 30:1-10	The Lord has compassion on those whom He chastises.	581
25	Dt. 30:11-20	Why do men choose death when God wants them to live?	355
26	Dt. 31:1-13	If God is with us, we need not be afraid!	579
27	Dt. 31:14-29	Yet God's people are always in danger of rebellion.	582
28	Dt. 31:30-32:22	What a great evil it is to be unthankful to the God of our salvation!	19 (1-3)
29	Dt. 32:23-43	The Lord wants His people to know that He alone is their God.	19 (4-6)
30	Dt. 32:44-52	The Lord wants us always to hallow Him.	38
31	Dt. 33:1-29	God assures us that He loves and blesses His people.	521

—D. Lau



Ordination-Installations

As authorized by Pres. Fleischer, I ordained and installed David R. Naumann as Pastor to the joint parish of St. Paul's, Ponsford, and Mt. Olive, Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. The rites were performed in Detroit Lakes on Sunday, July 10, 1988 at 7:30 p.m. with Pastor Elton Hallauer assisting the undersigned.

—*B. J. Naumann*

Authorized by President Daniel Fleischer the undersigned ordained and installed Michael Wilke, graduate of Immanuel Lutheran Seminary, as pastor of Gift of God Lutheran Church of Fairfax, VA. Assisting in this action was Ronald Rust, president of Gift of God. (June 12, 1988)

—*R. E. Schaller, Missionary at Large*

Installations

With authorization from the President, the undersigned installed Susan Carstensen (August 7) and Robert Snell (August 28) as teachers at Berea Lutheran School, Inver Grove Heights, MN.

—*Pastor David Schierenbeck*

As authorized by Pres. Fleischer, I installed Teacher David W. Bernthal as Principal and teacher of Redemption Lutheran School in Alderwood Manor, WA. The rite was performed during the regular Sunday service at 10:00 a.m., August 28, 1988 with the Rev. Maynard J. Witt assisting.

—*B. J. Naumann*

As authorized by President Daniel Fleischer, I installed Miss Pamela Schulz as lower grade (K-4) teacher, and Mrs. Rhoda Eserhut as part-time teacher for grades 3-4 in Luther Memorial School of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin on August 14, 1988.

—*J. Johannes*

Changes Of Addresses

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Minnesota Pastoral Conference

Dates: November 2-3, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Place: Bethel Lutheran Church, Morris, MN

Agenda:

Homiletical Study of Ephesians 6:10-17—
Pastor Robert List

Exegesis of Revelation 2:18-29—Pastor
John Pfeiffer

How to Utilize Better the Gifts and Wisdom
of Retired Pastors and Professors in our
Midst—Pastor L. D. Redlin

The Incursion of Fundamentalism into
Politics—Pastor Douglas Libby

Isagogical Study of Jeremiah—Pastor
Elton Hallauer

A Study of the Concepts: "Degrees of
Heaven; Degrees of Hell"—Pastor Daniel
Fleischer

—*Rick R. Grams, Secretary*