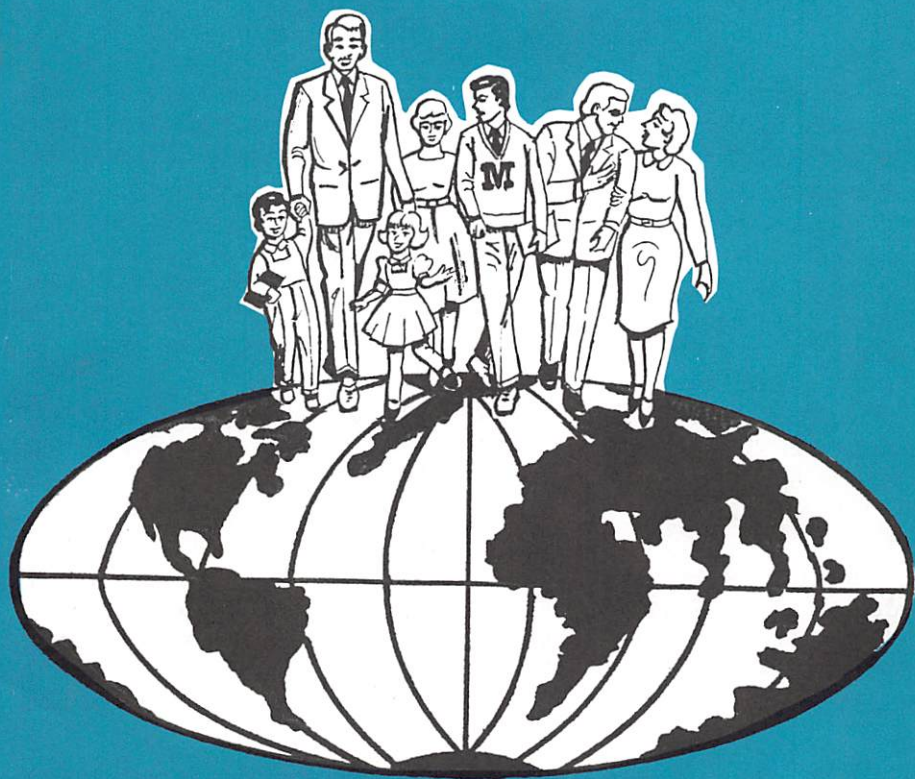


# lutheran spokesman

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GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PREACH  
THE GOSPEL TO ALL CREATION

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CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

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**“You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8).**

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## **GOD’S CHILDREN ON A MISSION**

The words above were Jesus’ last words to His disciples before He ascended into heaven. His disciples were to remember those words all their lives. Their life’s work was to be telling others about the Savior.

As we read through the Acts of the Apostles we find that these disciples and their co-workers did faithfully carry out their Lord’s command. Over the course of the next decades they carried the good news about Jesus to the ends of the earth.

### **The Helper**

But they did not begin immediately. Jesus had directed them first to “tarry in the city of Jerusalem” for a while (Lk. 24:49). Why the wait? If they were going to proclaim Christ to the

world, they were going to need help. For as they stood there watching Jesus ascend, these disciples were far from pillars of strength and wisdom. They were weak. They needed power from on high (Lk. 24:49). Their understanding of divine truth was inadequate. They needed to be guided into all truth and taught all things (Jn. 16:13, 14:26).

What His disciples needed Jesus provided. Ten days after His ascension, on the day of Pentecost, Jesus sent them a Helper, the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Triune God.

Acts chapter 2 gives a detailed description of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. First came the sound of a rushing, mighty wind. Next, the appearance of tongues of fire on each disciple’s

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head. Then “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (2:4).

A great crowd gathered and heard them speaking of the wonderful works of God. They heard Peter testify that Jesus, whom they had crucified, had risen—that Jesus was the Lord’s Christ. Some thought the disciples were drunk. Others however were pricked in their hearts, repented, and were baptized in Jesus’ name for the remission of sins. Three thousand were added to the Lord on that day. Thus Jesus’ first disciples began to carry out the great mission Jesus had given them.

### Our Life’s Mission

As we today follow this sequence of events, we do so with great interest, For we believe that when our Lord said “You shall be witnesses to Me” He was speaking to us, His modern-day disciples as well as to the disciples of that time. Though He has given us many jobs to do for Him in this life, we believe there is one job, one mission, that stands out above all the rest. That is the task of speaking to others about Him so that they too may believe in Him and be saved. This is our great mission to life. This is our mission as individuals, as congregations, as a synod.

How have we been carrying out this mission? Does it seem at times that we and others in our congregation are somewhat lacking in zeal to share the Gospel? Yes, we must confess that sometimes this is the case.

Sometimes we may be like Jesus’

disciples in their pre-Pentecost condition—spiritually weak, anemic. Sometimes we may lack the courage to stand up and speak for Jesus. Sometimes we may get caught up and carried along by the powerful currents of worldliness that surround us on all sides. Sometimes we may lose sight of that all important mission our Savior has given us. We find ourselves thinking less and less about the souls of others and what we can do to lead them to Christ.

This is not what our Lord hopes to see in us, nor is it what we hope to see in ourselves. We want to show and tell the world how much we love our Savior. We want everyone to know that they too may find eternal life in Jesus’ saving name.

But having begun before, and feeling our lack, how can we begin again? Like those pre-Pentecost disciples we need help. We need renewed power, courage, and wisdom.

And Jesus will provide it—if we but ask. We need to ask our Lord to send His Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with love for Him and zeal for the salvation of our fellow men.

Our prayer will be answered. The Lord will fill us with His Holy Spirit so that we too speak of Him as the Spirit gives us utterance.

Thou holy Fire, Comfort true,  
Grant us the will Thy work to do  
And in Thy service to abide;  
Let trials turn us not aside.  
Lord, by Thy pow’r prepare each heart  
*And to our weakness strength impart*  
That bravely here we may contend,  
Thro’ life and death to Thee, our Lord,  
ascend.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

—M. Thom

## *Tracing the Acts of the Apostles (Acts Chapter 9)—*

**“He is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15).**

### **PAUL—GOD’S CHOSEN VESSEL**

**I**t is hard to imagine what the New Testament or the early Christian church would have been like without the work of the apostle Paul. The first thirteen letters or epistles of the New Testament were written by Paul, and these letters are basic to our understanding of what Christianity is all about and who Jesus is and what He has done for us. The early centers of Christian teaching and mission outreach were all influenced directly by the energetic apostle Paul, whether we think of Jerusalem, Antioch, Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus, or Rome. From the ninth chapter of the book of Acts to the final chapter the apostle Paul is the chief missionary whose work Luke describes as he presents the account of how the Good News of Jesus traveled from Jerusalem to Rome.

I suppose that if Paul had refused to do the work that the Lord called him to do, the Lord would have found someone else. For Jesus said to the Jews: “The kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it” (Mt. 21:43).

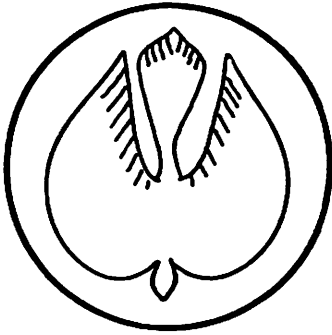
But the fact is that the Lord Jesus called Saul, later known as Paul, on the road to Damascus to be His “chosen vessel.” And Paul immediately responded by saying: “Lord, what do

You want me to do?” (Acts 9:6) God in His grace changed Paul in a moment from a fanatical self-righteous persecutor of Christians into a zealous missionary and defender of the Gospel of free grace. Later on Paul recognized that God had developed a special plan for him even before he was born. He wrote to the Galatians: “It pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles” (Gal. 1:15).

#### **Paul’s Experience of Sin and Grace**

Before the Lord Jesus appeared to Paul, the Old Testament Law was the center of his thinking. He had the same spirit that many other Jews and Pharisees of that time possessed: a “zeal for God, but not according to knowledge” (Rom. 10:2). In fact, Paul surpassed his contemporaries in his zeal for God and His Law. In his own description of himself he says: “Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless” (Phil. 3:5-6).

This background in strict



Pharisaism and obedience to God's law was part of God's plan for His chosen vessel. Just as God prepared Martin Luther to be the reformer of the church by his strict training as a zealous, conscientious monk and priest, so God prepared Paul by letting him experience to the fullest a religion in which he prided himself on his own obedience and zeal. But in one moment Paul's reliance on his obedience to the Law was shattered when the crucified and risen Son of God addressed him from heaven: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? . . . I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting" (Acts 9:4-5).

Three times in the book of Acts this dramatic account of Paul's conversion is presented (chapters 9, 22, 26). I think we can agree with one author that the conversion of Paul is one of the most significant events in world history, next to the incarnation, life, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of our Savior. From the time of his conversion on, the center of Paul's life was no longer the Law, but Jesus, whom he now recognized to be the Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of the world. From that time on Paul knew that Law righteousness cannot ever earn the favor of God. Only the righteousness

won and given by Christ enables us to stand as righteous before God. "I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having as my righteousness that which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ" (Phil. 3:8-9).

### **Paul: Greek, Roman, Hebrew**

God chose Paul to be His apostle and missionary and prepared him for his task by enabling him to be born as a Roman citizen, to be surrounded by Greek culture in Tarsus, the city of his birth, and to be educated by his Jewish parents and the famous teacher Gamaliel in the strictest type of Pharisaism.

Paul himself thought that his training had prepared him to be a teacher of his own people, the Jews. His very first witnessing as a Christian took place in the Damascus synagogues where "he preached the Christ, that He is the Son of God" (Acts 9:20). Yes, he "confronted the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this Jesus is the Christ" (Acts 9:22).

Later on, Paul did the same kind of testifying to the Jews in Jerusalem. "He spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 9:29). As a Pharisee and Old Testament scholar, Paul believed that his mission should be to convince his own people that Jesus had risen from the dead and was the promised Messiah. But the Lord Jesus had something else in mind for Paul. He said to him in a vision in Jerusalem: "Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your

testimony concerning Me” (Acts 22:18). Paul argued with the Lord briefly, suggesting that as a former persecutor of Christians he was well-qualified to testify to his former associates. But the Lord’s word was this: “Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles” (Acts 22:21).

### **Missionary to the Gentiles**

Yes, this was the Lord’s special mission for Paul. “He is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles.” The Lord already had twelve apostles to bring the Gospel to the Jews. He chose and prepared Paul for the very special work of being the first missionary to the Gentiles, the first teacher of Gospel truth in the Gentile world. Paul knew the Greek language and culture, he was a Roman citizen, and he had the proper background in the Hebrew Old Testament. After several years in Tarsus, he was called by the Christians in Antioch to go with Barnabas on a mission journey to the Gentiles. From that time on, he labored with all his strength to bring the Gospel of Christ to those who had never heard it. He endured many hardships and persecutions in his labors, but this also was part of God’s special plan for him.

How grateful we should be that the

Lord chose Paul to be His missionary to the Gentiles! For we also have been blessed by Paul’s preaching and New Testament writings. Our ancestors were no doubt first brought to Christ by persons who were taught by Paul’s students or successors. Of course we do not want to make the grievous mistake of some scholars, who call Christianity the invention of Paul rather than the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. Paul is not our Savior, as he himself was the first to admit. “Was Paul crucified for you?” he asked his admirers in Corinth (I Cor. 1:13). Paul preached Christ and Him crucified and risen.

Paul knew that he was Christ’s specially chosen missionary to the Gentiles. In his very last letter before his execution Paul said: “I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day (2 Tim. 1:11-12).

One of our joys on that Day will be to see our Lord Jesus together with His chosen vessel Paul, and to join this Christ-proclaiming missionary in worshipping our Lord forever and ever.

—D. Lau



**“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth” (3 John 4)**

## **WALKING IN TRUTH**

It is hardly a revelation to say that we live in a day when “truth” is under attack. As mankind advances in human wisdom and technology at a truly astounding rate, its secular wisdom teaches that all truth is relative; that there is

no such thing as objective truth. Thus becoming “wise” mankind become fools (cf. Rom. 1:22). The cultural consensus of late 20th century America is that “man does not and cannot know anything truly.” What such an idea means to our Christian faith is plain, for if man can know nothing truly, man can truly know nothing.

### Doctrinal Indifference

We must see this for what it is—a frontal attack against Bible-believers and all they hold near and dear. Here is how a recent writer in *Christian News* put it: “. . . Doctrinal indifference and religious unionism have become two prominent traits of the church in our time. Pure doctrine is viewed by many as a matter of small importance, while error in doctrine is deemed an innocent trifle. *We are told that the Christian who differs with us in doctrine merely sees truth from a different point of view, and that we should not deny him fellowship because he does not agree with us regarding the teachings of Scripture.*” (Our emphasis)

Indeed, the sad truth is that many churches and their followers are being seduced by Satan’s attacks against revealed truth. Where does this lead? The *Christian News* writer continues: “This sentiment threatens to flood the church. It is preached from thousands of pulpits, published in countless religious periodicals, and proclaimed in many radio and TV broadcasts. Pastors of different denominations form ministerial associations, exchange pulpits, officiate at one another’s weddings, and unite in joint worship endeavors. Such practice is praised as proof of true Christian charity and is held to be characteristic of American Christianity. Those Lutherans, however, who insist on pure doctrine, and who warn against error and false teachers are unpopular indeed. They are reproached, derided, ridiculed, and sometimes persecuted. They are called narrow sectarians, rigid legalists, and loveless fanatics. Nevertheless, Scripture commands us in many places to ‘earnestly contend for the faith’—for that pure doctrine ‘which was once delivered unto the saints’ and strongly warns against all false teaching.”

### Objective Truth

For us the Bible ever was and is objective Truth. “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth” says Jesus in John 17:17. The apostle John, both in his holy Gospel and in his epistles, often speaks of truth—truth as it is in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, our Savior. In his Gospel he quotes the Savior’s words: “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free” (8:32). He quotes Christ as saying: “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life . . .” (14:6) and tells of Christ’s promise to send the “Spirit of Truth” (15:26) who would “guide you into all truth” (16:13). And the forerunner of all our modern day skeptics, Pontius Pilate, is quoted by John as asking “What is truth?” in response to the Savior’s remark: “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice” (18:37).

After the crucified Savior rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, His

apostles and evangelists went out preaching Jesus as the incarnate Truth and His Word as divinely-inspired truth. They clearly taught that all human wisdom and philosophy could not stand as truth unless it coincided with Bible teaching. Any supposed human wisdom which conflicts with Holy Scripture was declared false and injurious, of the devil who is the father of lies because “there is no truth in him” (Jn. 8:44). On the other hand, it brought great joy—indeed “no greater joy”—to the apostles and evangelists than to “hear that my children walk in truth.”

As then, so now. To hold in simple faith to Jesus Christ (by whom grace and truth came—Jn. 1:14) and to His sacred teachings is to “walk in truth.” To live and walk by simple faith in Jesus and His Word of truth brings joy to our redeemed hearts and joy to the heart of God.

### “Drunks in a Fog”

What is here being said brings with it a prayer that our churches would escape the plague that is abroad in the land. Here is how one man described the plague of which we speak: “What, then, must be said of the mass of our churches today? For at no time, perhaps, since the Reformation have Protestant Christians as a body been so unsure, tentative, and confused as to what they should believe and do. Certainty about the great issues of Christian faith and conduct is lacking all along the line. The outside observer sees us as staggering on from gimmick to gimmick and stunt to stunt like so many drunks in a fog, not knowing at all where we are or which way we should be going. Preaching is hazy; heads are muddled; hearts fret; doubts drain our strength; uncertainty paralyzes action . . . We stand under divine judgment. For two generations and more our churches have suffered from a famine of hearing the words of the Lord. For us, too, the Word of God is in a real sense *lost*.” (J. I. Packer, *God Has Spoken*, p. 20)

To this the same writer adds this sad commentary: “Loss of conviction about the divine truth of the Bible has undercut teaching. Clergy are not sure what to inculcate as Christian truth; layfolk doubt whether what is taught in the Bible is worth learning. A spirit of unconcern about doctrine is abroad, a feeling that, since on so many issues it is anyone’s guess what is true, it cannot much matter whether one has an opinion about them or not . . .” (p. 28)

### A Light to Our Path

In the midst of such a plague, such an atmosphere of doubt and uncertainty, we give thanks that God in His grace has preserved us in a firm confession of His Truth. All that we teach, preach and believe has as its goal the proclamation, upholding and defending of the TRUTH that is in Jesus in whom alone we—and our children—have the certainty of forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. In the divinely-revealed, verbally-inspired and inerrant Word of Truth we have a sure and certain Beacon to guide us through this life to the Life to come.

As the opening sentence in the Formula of Concord (1580) puts it: “We believe, confess, and teach that the sole rule and standard by which all dogmas



and all teachers must be assessed and judged is nothing other than the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments, as it is written: 'Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.' "

—Paul Fleischer



### *Pilgrims on Earth—*



"By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Heb. 11:7).

## **NOAH—A RIGHTEOUS MAN**

*In the early chapters of the book of Genesis we find another one of God's "peculiar" people who was not afraid to declare the praises of the Lord. This child of God was not ashamed of living like an alien on this evil old earth. Who is he? Noah.*

### **A Corrupt Generation**

During Noah's day the world had plunged into deep moral and spiritual pollution. How did this come about? Genesis 6:2 says: "The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose." Instead of marrying fellow believers who loved and served God, the people began marrying simply on the basis of physical beauty

and sexual attraction. Because of this practice by those who should have known better, the circle of true believers shrank drastically until there were hardly any who had faith in their hearts.

Genesis 6:5 gives us more of a taste of the godlessness which permeated humanity when it says: "The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every incli-

nation of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.”

In the midst of such apostasy, Noah believed in Jehovah, the true God who had made a covenant of grace with the fallen children of Adam. Noah didn't just have an intellectual knowledge of God, but a living, active faith: “Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God” (Gen. 6:9).

It wasn't that Noah was intrinsically good. He possessed the same corrupt human nature of his peers. Noah's righteousness was imputed to him—that is, credited to him. This righteousness came from Jesus Christ, the promised “Seed of the woman” whom Noah believed would come and bring salvation.

Noah received the personal assurance that God counted him righteous when the Holy Spirit renewed his heart through the Gospel. As a child of God Noah knew that God looked upon him with favor because his sin was covered with the holiness of his Savior.

### **A Preacher of Righteousness**

Like his fellow pilgrims down through the ages, Noah found it impossible to be private about his faith in the Lord. Noah's new heart expressed thankfulness to God for His love and salvation in a variety of ways.

One way was by obeying the Lord's command to build an ark. This was not just a little fishing boat, but a huge vessel! According to Darrel Kautz, in his Bible study guide *Man's History from Adam to Abraham*: “The ark would have contained over 100,000 square feet of floor space, an area equal to considerably more than two football

fields or to over twenty-one college-size basketball courts. In terms of volume the ark contained over 1,500,000 cubic feet. This would be the equivalent of about 15,000 gross tons or the size of a light aircraft carrier . . .”

Noah was proclaiming his faith in an outrageous way, but sometimes that is the way faith operates. We can safely assume that during the decades it took Noah and his sons to build the ark, they were the recipients of many a snide comment and the brunt of numerous jokes. No doubt people came from miles around to look at the “religious fanatic” and his family working on a huge boat out in the desert!

But Noah used his contact with the contemptuous unbelievers of his day to preach! He pointed out their disobedience, warning them of the wrath to come if they continued in their folly. Surely he also reminded them of the promises of salvation which God had given to their ancestors in the Garden. He exhorted all to believe this wonderful promise and receive eternal life.

Unfortunately Noah didn't have much outward success from his long preaching career. His family remained faithful, but it doesn't appear that his preaching sparked any great reformation or turning to the Lord.

We in the CLC have learned and relearned the lesson that Noah must have learned. God doesn't require outward success from our preaching. The most important quality He desires as we proclaim His Word is faithfulness. May we continue to walk in Noah's footsteps in this regard!

### **Saved Through the Ark**

After 120 years of longsuffering,

God decided to follow through with His promise to destroy all life on the earth. God instructed Noah to take into the ark pairs of all the different kinds of animals which dwell on the face of the earth. After these creatures were gathered according to God's instructions, Noah and his family entered the ark and the Lord shut them in. After it had rained for 40 days and 40 nights, God caused a flood upon the earth so that all life was destroyed.

We can clearly see God's love in the midst of His wrath. On the one hand, the flood demonstrated His divine justice regarding sin and unbelief. On the other hand, He revealed His mercy by sparing the lives of righteous Noah and his family.

After one full year Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark were able to stand on dry land again. Noah showed his thankfulness to God for His great

deliverance by building an altar and sacrificing burnt offerings on it. God responded to this by making a covenant with all mankind and promising never to destroy all life on earth again by means of water. The lasting symbol of this covenant is the rainbow.

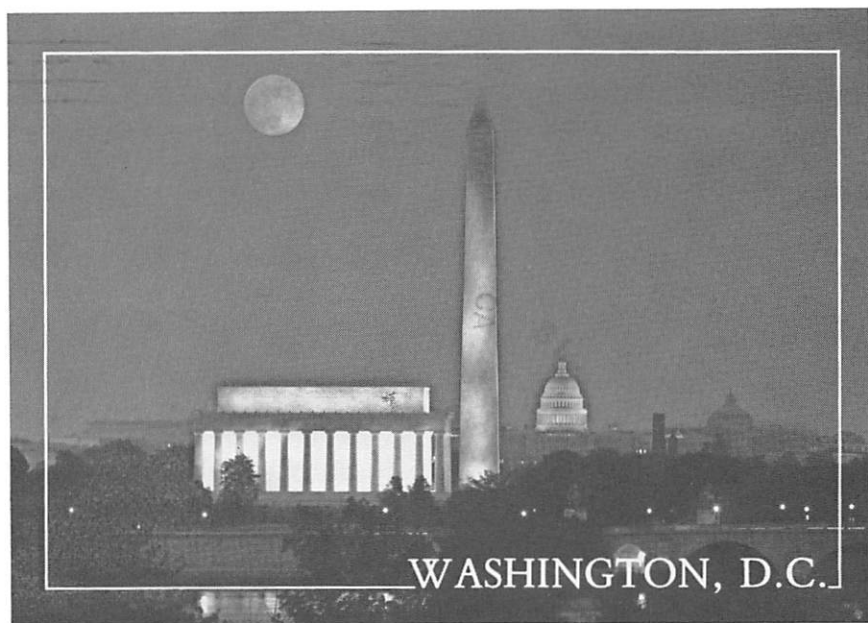
We can learn many things from Noah about being a true disciple of Jesus Christ. One lesson is that it isn't an exercise in futility to be a pilgrim of the Lord. At times our work seems overwhelming; often the pressures of cross-bearing seem unbearable, the insults and ridicule from unbelievers smart. But our Lord who called us into this unique way of life sees us through step by step just as He did Noah. Some day we will win the prize the Lord has in store for us, just as Noah did.

Don't give up, fellow pilgrim, for the best is yet to come!

—K. Luebke



At last summer's Convention, ILC Seminary Dean, Prof. L.W. Schierenbeck (left) reminisces with Pastor George Barthels of Okabena, Minnesota. Speaking for the synod as it recognized Pastor Barthels' 50 years in ministry, Prof. Schierenbeck stated: "We rejoice in the God who has given gifts to man—in the God who has gifted you . . . and made you so Gospel-centered . . ." Pastor Barthels has announced his retirement effective in June, 1989.



*Our "At Home" Missions—*

## **GIFT OF GOD LUTHERAN CHURCH Fairfax, Virginia**

Gift of God Lutheran Church had its beginnings in 1982. Families from the Washington D.C. area got in touch with Stephen Kurtzahn, then pastor of Living Word Lutheran Church in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Pastor Kurtzahn served the families of the area with monthly services until the end of 1983.

Pastor Paul F. Nolting was called and began serving in January 1984. Gift of God was received into membership by the CLC in the summer of 1984. Missionary-at-large Ralph Schaller was then called and began serving the congregation in November 1985. Pastor Michael Wilke has been the pastor since June of last year.

Fairfax is located in northern Virginia, sixteen miles west of the District of Columbia. The members are scattered throughout the Washington D.C. metropolitan area, with only the pastor residing in Fairfax itself. Several members live a considerable distance from Fairfax in other Eastern states.

Let us pray that the Lord of the church would lead many others to recognize the "gift" this mission congregation is—an oasis where they might hear the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ in the midst of the desert of this world's wisdom. We pray that the pastor and members of Gift of God continue to be a bold and courageous confessional Lutheran Christian congregation.



Pastor Ralph Schaller (left, now retired) and his successor, Pastor Michael Wilke, with a portion of the flock of Gift of God Lutheran Church.

*Concluding Thoughts On . . .*

## THE INFLUENCE OF TV—V

### Family Life

There is one other danger that can be seen through TV in general, that is, the deterioration of the family and home.

The television has a way of driving family members apart instead of bringing them together. For example, consider the Doe family once again. Mr. Doe comes home from work exhausted. He plops down in his easy chair and turns on the TV to relax. Meanwhile the kids are happy to see dad and want him to play with them. But Mr. Doe just snaps at them and says, "Be quiet, I'm watching the news." Then Mrs. Doe fixes supper and they decide to eat in front of the TV. After supper the kids want daddy to read some books to them. At first he just ignores them. When they keep

asking he says: "Not now, I want to see what happens next." Then it's time to put the kids to bed. He tells a little story and tucks them in. Then Mr. and Mrs. Doe see a good movie on and watch TV the rest of the night until they go to bed.

What is happening here? There is no family interaction and no communication. How much more enjoyable if the father would come home and play with his children whom he hasn't seen all day. That would get his mind off the day's work better, and that's what the children really need. They eat supper at the table where the family can talk about the day's affairs and whatever else might be on their mind. After supper they could sit down for a time of family devotion and read some other books before the children

are put to bed. This brings the family much closer together and strengthens them together in God's Word.

### Recommendations

So what can we do? It is clear that Satan does use the TV to influence our children and ourselves in many adverse ways. TV is by no means the only thing Satan uses to influence us, but it is one important way. God has entrusted our children into our care. He holds us responsible for their training. He tells us to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Whether they are watching TV or reading a book or playing with their friends we want to lead them to ask: What does God want me to do? This is our first responsibility as parents.

Parents will want to be very careful about the example they give their children. It is the most important part of teaching. If a show isn't good for our children to watch, then it is not good for the parents either. Children will be much more ready to believe if they have a good example from their parents.

More important than simply limiting the shows our children watch is watching with them. There is no show on TV that will be good every time. Be critical. Point out any problems to your children and discuss them. This will have many benefits. It will turn the bad influences into a useful learning tool. It will help to increase their Christian sensitivity. It will help them learn to recognize Satan's influence for themselves.

That is one great need our surveys pointed out. Very few of the children showed any indication that they rated TV programs according to the things

that were good or bad in them. They simply rated them according to whether they liked them or not (which is to be expected). We can help them to be more discerning about what they watch.

Another benefit is that God's Word can be brought to bear on our children's lives in connection with something they are interested in. Informally talking about things that are on their minds can be a very effective and productive way of teaching God's will to our children.

Another suggestion is giving children alternatives. Urge them to play outside; give them other games and hobbies to do; encourage reading; most libraries have some good videos for a VCR. This will involve much more work for the parents, but it will be very worthwhile. No one said parenting is supposed to be easy, but the rewards will be great.

Above all, do more things with your children. They need the love and interest shown in doing things with them. Many problems with rebellious children come from a lack of interaction with parents. Children are crying out for attention.

### Some Divine Advice

Finally, we want to think about what we want to entertain us. Our "new man" of faith hates what God hates and loves only what God loves. But our "old man" wants to hold on to the enjoyment of watching and thinking according to the sinful flesh. We will want to "Put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new

man which was created according to God, in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:22f). We need to turn to God in contrition and repentance to drown the old man and find God's forgiveness. And we want to help our children do the same.

We all tend to defend our favorite shows even though we know they really aren't very good. We hear it said: "You are over reacting." But when it comes to TV as well as to every other area of life, let us take the apostle Paul's advice to heart: "Do this, know-

ing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in licentiousness and lewdness, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts" (Rom. 13:11-14).

—David Reim



## Daily Devotions for May 1989

Date	Scripture	Theme	Hymn
1	Psalm 76	Serve God, the Great Deliverer	23:1-2
2	Psalm 81	Oh my people, hearken to Me and My ways	23:3-4
3	Psalm 91	God is our Refuge and Fortress	24
4	Psalm 47	God is gone up with a shout	214:1-2
5	Psalm 23	Jesus, My Good Shepherd	214:3-4
6	Psalm 33:1-12	God is to be praised for His goodness	214:5-6
7	Psalm 33:13-22	We can place all confidence in God	217:1-2
8	Psalm 63	Our God quenches our spiritual thirst	217:3-4
9	Psalm 80:1-7	Lord, turn not Thy face from us	219:1-3
10	Psalm 80:8-19	A prayer that the Lord protect His vineyard, the Church	219:4-6
11	Psalm 121	God's protection keeps His children safe	222:1-2
12	Psalm 66	"Come and hear, all ye that fear God"	222:3-4
13	Psalm 146	Trust not in princes in whom is no help	223
14	Psalm 68:1-19	Publish the tidings of God's goodness!	226:1-2
15	Psalm 68:20-35	To the Lord belong issues of life and death	226:3-4
16	Psalm 82	God shall judge the earth in righteousness	226:5-6
17	Psalm 101	"I will sing of mercy and judgment" in the Lord	226:7-9
18	Psalm 40	In all things, at all times may "the Lord be magnified"!	228:1-2
19	Psalm 30	Praise God for His healing	228:3-4
20	Psalm 99	The Lord is great in Zion—worship Him!	228:5-7
21	Psalm 136:1-9	Giving thanks for God's mercies	244
22	Psalm 136:10-26	God delivers from all our enemies	238:1-3
23	Psalm 145:1-9	The Lord is gracious and full of compassion	238:4-6
24	Psalm 145:10-21	All good things come from the Lord	243:1-2
25	Psalm 104:1-13	Safe under God's providential care	243:3-4
26	Psalm 104:14-35	The earth is full of the Lord's riches and wisdom	243:5
26	Psalm 54	The Lord delivers from all trouble	458:1-2
27	Psalm 96	Give to the Lord the glory due unto Him	458:3-4
28	Psalm 20	We will remember the name of the Lord our God	458:5-6
29	Psalm 26	Lord, I love to go to Your House	458:7-9
30	Psalm 47	God reigns over the heathen	451:1-2
31	Psalm 21	We will praise the power of the Lord	451:3-4



**CLC GENERAL PASTORAL  
CONFERENCE**

**Date:** June 20-22, 1989

**Place:** Immanuel Lutheran College,  
Eau Claire

**Ministers of the Conference:**

Chaplain: Walter Schaller

Communion Service: Mark Gullerud

Program Committee: John Pfeiffer,  
Michael Roehl, Paul Tiefel

Excuse Committee: James Albrecht,  
Vance Fossum, Wayne Mielke

**Program:**

\* Old Testament Exegesis: Michael Eichstadt

\* New Testament Exegesis: David Lau

\* How May We as Pastors and Teachers  
Develop and Better Employ the Gift of  
Counseling: John Schierenbeck

\* Study of I Corinthians 14:33-35  
(I Timothy 2:8-15): Bertram Naumann

\* Propositions on the Doctrine of the Call of  
Public Servants of the Word:  
Lester Schierenbeck

\* What Pastors and Congregations Might  
Expect of One Another: Rollin Reim

\* Board Reports

—*Daniel Fleischer, President*

**Mission Contact in Southern California**

A Bible study group is being organized in Southern California by members of the CLC. An updated list of potential participants is needed. Everyone is urged to please send the names and telephone numbers of all family members and friends who are in the area. They will be invited to our next gathering. Please send the information to: Norm and Gail Mackensen, 504 Avenue G, #14, Redondo Beach, CA 90277. Telephone (213) 316-7275.

**Directory Changes**

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