

# The Lutheran Spokesman

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**“THE SCRIPTURE  
CANNOT  
BE BROKEN.”**

**JOHN 10:35**

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# THE WORD — Use It Or Lose it!

“Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” So Shaphan the Scribe explained as he delivered that very special book to King Josiah. It was the “Book of the Law of the Lord given by Moses” (2 Chron. 34:14,18).

The fact that the book had been lost indicates the extent of the neglect which had occurred. Josiah’s great-grandfather, Hezekiah, had carried out a reformation and restored temple worship during the first month of his 29-year reign.

But Josiah’s father and grandfather “did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel.” It was during their combined reign of 57 years that God’s Word had become lost.

Could such a thing happen in our country? Could God’s Word be lost? To a large extent it has been lost! Even though a majority of homes may have a copy, or several, the Bible has

been lost to most people.

Think about it. How many of those Bibles are never opened? It is to be feared that regular use of the Bible in private or family study is rare. Isn’t there room for much improvement also in our own use of the Bible?

Of course, people can hear the Word of God when they attend worship services. Indeed they can. But how many pews are empty each Sunday? Even in our CLC, Sunday church attendance averages just below 50 per cent of the membership. In many other churches the attendance falls far below that. The Word is not heard by the person who is absent.

Increasingly, even when people attend worship services, they do not hear God’s Word. More and more they are being entertained, encouraged to involve themselves in improving society, and urged to support particular political activities. The Law and the Gospel have been crowded out of many pulpits by concern for the

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affairs of this world.

Why? In Josiah's day the religious leaders had failed to do their duty. Fear, indifference, personal popularity? For one reason or another, they turned away from God's Word and will.

### God's Word, A Solid Basis

Today also many religious leaders have abandoned God's Word. Many pastors and teachers have absorbed worldly philosophies. Instead of encouraging trust in God's Word, many find fault with it and lead their people to doubt what should be their sure guide in this life and a solid basis for their hopes for eternity.

We could use a reformation today too. We have no king to tear down the idols, demolish the heathen temples, and direct the country back to the Word of God. But we can see to it that the Word has the important place in our lives that God means it to have. (History tell us that if we do not use the Word, we will lose it.)

The apostle Paul urged the Colossians: "Let the Word of Christ

dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16). That Word is to abound in us. That can happen only when the Word is used — used prayerfully, thoughtfully, and often. And that should be our desire. The Lord encouraged us to do so when He promised: "Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it" (Lk. 11:28).

He wants us to absorb His Word into our lives. He wants us to be so aware of what it says that it is our constant companion and guide. It is to be present in mind so that we may consult it for every decision in what to do or to believe. It is to be a ready source for comfort and encouragement in the face of life's cares and crises, dangers and disappointments. It is to be our shield against the influence of the world which would draw us away from the Word, the Savior, and salvation.

May the Lord carry out a reformation in the heart of each of us so that we may receive the full blessings the Lord promises to those who use His Word.

—Pastor Keith Olmanson

## ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ *The River Of Lost Souls*

**F**orty-three miles west of Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Lamar, Colorado flows a river called the "Purgatoire" (French for purgatory). The word is actually an abbreviation of the stream's Spanish name, "El Rio de Las Animas Perdidas in Purgatorio" which means: "The River of the Souls Lost in Purgatory."

That watercourse possibly received this unusual name in 1598 from a

Spanish search party. They found evidence along the river's bank indicating that most members of a former expedition had been slain by hostile Indians. Since no priest had been present to give their fallen comrades final absolution of sins, the saddened search party concluded that the souls of those men were forever lost in purgatory.

That name, "The River of the Souls Lost in Purgatory," brings to our

attention two errors of the Roman Catholic denomination from which Luther's reformation has set us free.

### **Contradicts The Bible**

The first error is that when Christians die, instead of going to heaven, most of them enter a place of purging where their remaining sinfulness is cleansed. This man-invented doctrine of purgatory blasphemes our Lord Jesus. It teaches that our Savior's holy life and valuable death were not sufficient to pay for all the sins of all people. Purgatory contradicts the clear statement of Scripture that "...the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (I Jn. 1:7).

According to the Bible, a dead person's soul is either in heaven with Jesus or in hell without Jesus. If there really were a purgatory, the penitent thief on the cross would surely have needed extra cleansing. Yet Christ said to him: "Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Lk. 23:43).

At Luther's time the Dominican monk, John Tetzel, urged Christians to pay money in order to get their loved ones out of purgatory. Luther strongly objected to the false idea that paying money could remove sins. Years later he declared in his Smalcald Articles, "Therefore purgatory, and every solemnity, rite, and commerce connected with it (buying Masses for the dead) is to be regarded as nothing but a specter of the devil."

### **All Believers Priests**

The second Roman Catholic error which floated to the surface on "The River of Lost Souls" was the search party's mistaken belief that only a

priest has authority to forgive sins. The Bible teaches that our Lord Jesus gave this right to forgive and retain sins to *all* Christians. He declared to *all* of His disciples: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (Jn. 20:23).

At Corinth in Greece the case of a church member guilty of incest was dealt with by the *congregation* (I Cor. 5). God considers *every* believer in Jesus to be a spiritual king and priest. Peter wrote to the Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor: "Ye are...a royal priesthood" (I Pet. 2:9). Whenever a lay-person reproves sin or shares the Gospel with others, his words are as valid before God as those of an ordained minister or priest.

In 1520 Martin Luther wrote in his *Letter to the Christian Nobility*: "All Christians are truly of the spiritual estate and there is no difference among them...Baptism, gospel, and faith make us spiritual and Christian people...Because we are all priests of equal standing, no one must push himself forward and take it upon himself, without our consent and election, to do that for which we all have equal authority."

The Lutheran Reformation has provided us with many blessings. Two of them are: the certainty that there is no purgatory and the certainty that all Christians have authority to forgive and retain sins. Fortunate is the person who is nourished by Scripture truth in a church with the Lutheran Confessions instead of being slain by religious error on the banks of a Purgatoire river.

—Pastor Robert Mackensen

Background for a familiar Luther quote—

## **“A Simple Layman Armed With Scripture...”**

*The blessings which have come to us as a consequence of Luther’s Reformation are many. One of the greatest and most basic of these blessings, from which most of the others spring, is Luther’s upholding of the authority of Holy Scripture.*

One of the classic statements of the Reformer on this subject was made in the year 1519. What prompted it?

### **Rome Challenged**

Two years earlier Luther had posted his 95 Theses on the door of the Castle Church, Wittenberg, Germany. Because of the politically and religiously incorrect “notes” he had struck (in many of his theses the young monk had dared to challenge papal authority!), a crescendo was building to silence this “son of iniquity.” Only a hundred years earlier (A. D. 1415) the Bohemian theologian, John Huss, had been burned at the stake for challenging Rome. Would it come to this for Luther?

The Roman Church would, in charity, first seek to convince him by oral debate to retract and/or recant. Early in 1519 the pope sent Cardinal Miltitz to “fix” things with Luther. Miltitz asked Luther to accept, for one thing, the new papal decree on indulgences. Luther said that there was not a word on it in Holy Scripture.

Then the same year Rome sent Prof. John Eck to debate Luther at Leipzig. The Duke gave Luther safe conduct. Luther prepared himself through in-depth



**Martin  
Luther  
Translating  
The  
Bible.**

study of Scripture and the religious writings of the church. He became more convinced than ever that the *institution* of the papacy was the Antichrist—a system which corrupts the truth that is in Christ.

In July 1519 the noteworthy Leipzig Debate took place. For a week Carlstadt (representing the “Lutherans”) and Eck debated the depravity of man. Finally it was Luther’s turn. He and Eck debated vigorously whether the papacy was of human or divine institution. Like Huss before him, Luther contended that Peter neither was nor is the head of the Holy Catholic Church.

### Standing Firm

Though continually on the receiving end of name-calling (“Saxon Huss!” “Spreader of the Bohemian virus!” cried Eck), Luther stood firm: “By divine law we are forbidden to believe anything which is not established by divine Scripture or manifest revelation. One of the canon lawyers has said that the opinion of a single private man has more weight than that of a Roman pontiff or an ecclesiastical council if grounded on a better authority or reason...”

Eck countered: “If you defend (heretics like Huss), then you are heretical, erroneous, blasphemous, presumptuous, seditious, and offensive to pious ears respectively...”

“Let me talk German,” demanded Luther. “I am being misunderstood by the people. I assert that a council has sometimes erred and may sometimes err. Nor has a council authority to establish new articles of faith. A council cannot make divine right out of that which by nature is not divine right. Councils have contradicted each other, for the recent Lateran Council has reversed the claim of the councils of Constance and Basel that a council is above a pope. **A simple layman armed with Scripture is to be believed above a pope or a council without it.** (Our Emphasis) As for the pope’s decretal on indulgences, I say that neither the Church nor the pope can establish articles of faith. These must come from Scripture. For the sake of Scripture we should reject pope and councils.”

“But this is the Bohemian virus!” cried Eck. Luther didn’t back down, though Eck pressured him with the familiar retort: “Are you the only one that knows anything? Except for you is all the Church in error?”

We thank God that, with conscience bound in Holy Scripture, young Luther stood firm, before Eck in Leipzig and before the Emperor at Worms in 1521. We cherish the heritage of Scripture alone, grace alone, faith alone that has by grace come down to us.

*This Reformation issue brings our readers some messages from “laymen armed with Scripture.” In these latter days, with a growing lack of respect for Holy Scripture all around us, may we all—by their words and example—be encouraged to “spread the Bohemian virus.” May we appreciate our Lutheran heritage and be ardent students of God’s Word. May we humbly but firmly speak and defend its clear teachings though, like the Reformer, we too may be on the receiving end of name-calling or other personal attacks.*

—Pastor Paul Fleischer

(Quotes taken from *Here I Stand, A Life Of Martin Luther* by Roland H. Bainton)



# READY TO ANSWER: "MY REFORMATION HERITAGE"

*(The above was the general theme for the Joint Reformation Festival Service of CLC congregations held on October 25, 1992 at Zion Lutheran, Ipswich, SD. Three different laymen served as the festival speakers. In the spirit of the Lutheran Reformation we offer these messages, somewhat abbreviated.)*

## Why I Am A Christian

(By Grace Alone)

*"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). I was born into a Christian, God-fearing family. My mother was raised in the German Lutheran Church. My dad was baptized into the church when I was about 12. I think Dad was the first adult I had ever seen baptized...*

Through grace God moved my parents to baptize me as an infant. They, through God's Word, gave me my first link to God. Throughout Sunday School I guess I was not always the best kid in the class, but I do remember a teacher that I had. She always had a stern word when I was over the line, but was often quick to smile when I did something right. I often think of her and know that God knew what it took to keep me treading in the right direction. I received the same strong direction from Pastor (Vernon) Greve in Confirmation Class.

Sunday School and Confirmation Class both made me realize that I was a sinner and fell dreadfully short of the glory of God. "Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (Rom. 3:20). Confirmation Class also taught me God gives the forgiveness of sins through the body and blood of Jesus

Christ. Again, the grace of God and His infinite wisdom has kept me in His faith. "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Eph. 1:7).

I was in the Army and in Viet Nam for most of my service time. When a person is in a war zone there is a

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**Even though I had no personal pastor (in Viet Nam), I had the Word of God in a pocket Bible and in sermons sent from home. God's grace kept His Word with me.**

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comfort in the fact that God has your Guardian Angel there with you. There were many times that I interrupted myself during an attack with a prayer to God. I vividly remember two nights very well.

The first was shortly after I arrived

in Nam. Charlie (the nickname for the enemy) had sent in quite a few mortars. Then it was quiet for a few minutes. Everyone had left the bunkers. I had leaned against a sandbag wall and was thanking God for His protection in my first attack. Suddenly a few more mortars were dropped in. I headed for the bunker and finished the prayer there!

The second night was shortly before I was to leave Nam. I was on CQ (in charge of quarters), which required that I stay up all night in the company office with another person, the CQ Runner. About 1:30 in the morning I heard what I thought was a mortar (incoming round, which by this time I could distinguish from other sounds even in my sleep), but it sounded different. We always waited until we had a confirmed hit in the compound before we sounded the alarm. This incoming round sounded like it had been coming forever before it hit. When it did hit, it was not a mortar but a 122 rocket, which was much more severe than a mortar. The concussion flipped me right over a desk. The CQ Runner was standing at the other end of a long hall. He rolled end-over-end right by me. The next instant we hit the alarm and were in the command bunker.

I thanked God again for saving me and asked Him to let me live to go home. I can tell you that He was listening. The rocket had hit a huge metal container and totally destroyed it—and one side of the shop I worked in. It could have hit the tin-roofed

office building I was in, but through God's grace I lived safely through Nam and returned to the world (GI's called home the "world" because Nam was a place most of us could only describe as "hell".)

Even though I had no personal pastor over there, I had the Word of God in a pocket Bible and in sermons sent from home. God's grace kept His Word with me. I was also dating Pastor Greve's daughter at that time and knew that there would be no future with her without the church and God's Word. "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the LORD" (Prov. 18:22). When I came home I married Carla, a God-fearing Christian woman. This again brought stability into my life. We have a family of five children. Through God's grace we have led them to God.

To answer the question: Why am I a Christian? I would have to say that God has chosen me for His own and has provided the faith within me to believe this. God has made my heart willing to do His commands. God has given Jesus to me to take my sins away. So it's all God's grace that has led me to believe all this and in the Triune God: the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "Fear thou not for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am Thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is. 41:10).

*(Floyd Wenner,  
St. Luke, Lemmon, SD)*





# Why I Am A Lutheran Christian

(By Faith Alone)

*...Why do we gather each year here in Ipswich or Aberdeen? So we get the privilege of hearing about the truths of the Reformation one more time, and thank the Lord for the great heritage of Lutheran teachings that He has blessed us with. All of this repetition is necessary because we are sinful humans who are tempted to forget what is the one thing needful.*

I am a Lutheran because through the gift of faith I have been led to believe God's Word and that the Lutheran Confessions that came out of the Reformation accurately reflect that Word.

First of all, my faith is a gift from God Himself: "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8). It can't be said any plainer than that. That faith was created in my heart when I was baptized as an infant. My faith grew as I was taught the truths of Scripture from my youth. That faith then made me able to

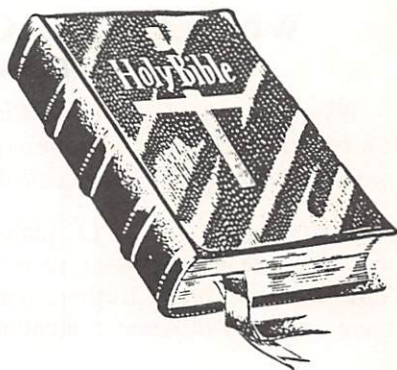
**My faith grew as I was taught the truths of Scripture from my youth up. That faith, then, made me able to apprehend as my own the truths of Scripture and to see that these Scriptures are taught by the Lutheran Confessions.**

apprehend as my own the truths of Scripture and to see that these Scriptures are taught by the Lutheran Confessions. Through my faith I could say: "what these Confessions say, the Bible says."

One of the most basic things that was brought back by Luther was that

God's Word formed the only rule of faith. In other words, what you believe can only be measured by God's Word. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 says: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The Bereans did the same thing that Luther did, namely, to compare what was taught with Scripture. As a result they were led to the truth, the same as Luther was. If you use any other kind of measuring stick, you will end up with something other than the true and saving faith.

Prior to the Reformation, the rule of faith was presented as not so much God's Word as it was the proclamations of the Roman church. Those were the dark ages. They were dark from a spiritual standpoint because the light of the Word of God was not allowed to shine to its full brightness,



having been covered over by the church. So Luther, who was the primary author of our Confessions, set to work writing these Confessions using, not the traditions and proclamations of the church, but God's Word alone. Then the light of the Scripture shone with its true brilliance once again. And so I repeat: through my faith I can say: "What the Bible says, these Confessions say." Since these Confessions are Lutheran, I therefore am a Lutheran.

Simply saying "I am a Lutheran" these days might get you labeled as an ultra-liberal, a universalist, or at best a marginal Christian that believes many of the liberal teachings (errors) of the day. These errors aren't anything new. They are merely the same old skeletons cloaked with some new, fashionable garb. When you say "I am a Lutheran" to someone, you must surely explain further, to distinguish yourself from liberal Lutheranism and lay claim to Lutheranism as taught by Luther. Several weeks ago, Pastor Hartman began our series of Bible Classes in Watertown with a rundown of some of the heresies being taught in the ELCA seminaries now. I was

aware that they are denying creation as it is presented in Genesis, Moses as the author of the Pentateuch, and other errors. But it took my breath away to hear that some of those seminaries have begun to call into question the virgin birth of Jesus, the deity of Christ, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead—and the list goes on! A little leaven truly does leaven the whole lump! They are on an interstate highway doing 65 mph toward heathenism, if they aren't there already!

So make yourself plain when you confess you are a Lutheran by telling them you are a Lutheran by confession and not in name only. One good, effective way to do that would be by giving them this little book to read (*Statement of Faith and Purpose of the CLC*). This is powerful stuff! If they read it they will surely have a good idea what true Lutheranism is, and therefore what you believe. Use it to help tell others that these are the truths of Scripture. They are taught by the CLC, and that "by faith alone" we are CLC Lutherans.

(David Klatt,  
Trinity, Watertown, SD)



## Why I Am A CLC Lutheran Christian

(By Scripture Alone)

*Why am I a CLC Lutheran Christian? Why are YOU a CLC Lutheran Christian? Surely it is not by our own decision. The one given fact that any of us are Christians is that we were called by the Holy Spirit.*

The fact that we are "CLC Lutherans" is not really important, or is it? Within the realm of Lutheranism, there are many different contentions

concerning the authenticity of the Bible and its inspiration by God. It never used to be that way, but man in his wisdom has found it necessary to

question this fact. There may be no other single difference, no more important or significant fact, that distinguishes our mission as a church body than to witness that the BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD, and to proclaim its message to all people.

The Bible does not represent the Word of God. The Bible is not just a "good book," a book where you can pick and choose an answer to your questions. The Bible does not float in the wind with what you think, or what I think, or what your friends think. The Bible is not full of myths. The Bible tells you, among other things, how the world was created, who has the right to take a life, who has sinned, who will be saved, who is the head of the household, and finally that each of us will be judged by a righteous God.

I went to my catechism for some ideas and had to go no further than the inside of the front cover. Glued to it is a copy of the little booklet — *Statement of Faith And Purpose of the Church of the Lutheran Confession*. This book states our ONE source of truth: (Article II was read here).

No other religion or movement has a book that will offer you eternal salvation by faith alone in a Savior. Salvation is not based on what I can do to guarantee myself eternal life, but rather on what has already been done FOR me. Not because I deserve it, but because of a merciful God, who would have all men to be saved. There is not emptiness in this book, rather comfort and peace from the knowledge I need not depend on my own reason or good works. But that my sins have been fully forgiven. Forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are offered to me as a GIFT of God

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**There may be...no more important or significant fact that distinguishes our mission as a church body than to witness that the BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD and to proclaim its message to all people.**

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through the Means of Grace. The sacraments offer and seal unto us forgiveness of sins, eternal life and salvation. No other book but the Bible can totally condemn me for what I am by nature, and yet offer me such grace and great rewards.

There truly is hope for all who believe that God's Word in the Bible is inspired and flawless. The Bible says in 2 Peter 1:21: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Sadly much of Lutheranism, and the world for that matter, does not adhere to the same truth. Bible truths are rejected. Jeremiah wrote: "The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?" (8:9) Evolution prevails over Creation. Abortion is a woman's choice and hers alone. If I do good deeds and am an all around good guy, I will surely be saved. Our children must be taught about safe sex. It is a lifestyle choice to have two mommies or two daddies. Pornography in book form is being sold as literature! What has happened to our values?!? I submit these are not only family values, but rather GOD'S values that are being reformed to what man thinks is best. Human reason

with all its best intentions can only lead us down the path of destruction.

Denying the fact that the Bible is not wholly inspired by God leads one to make these decisions with no continuity. Once we say "this is outdated" or "that does not apply" we start to unravel the very core that holds all our morals as Christians together. YES—God created the world; YES—Abortion is murder; YES—good works are filthy rags; and YES—premarital sex is sin.

Why am I a CLC Lutheran Christian? I believe that people still need to hold firm to the truths of the Bible and, in turn, to their own Christian convictions. There still is a right and a wrong...Stand up for what you believe—at home, school, work, and at play. The apostle Paul wrote: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (1:16)

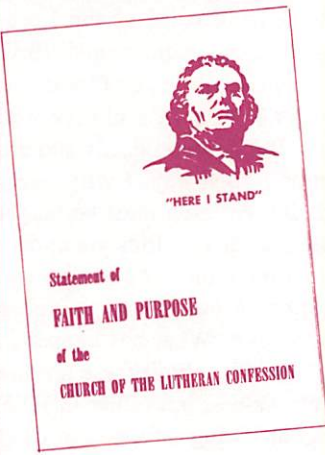
Yes, I am a CLC Lutheran Christian. I'm proud of that fact. I have been blessed by the mercy of God. I am a

CLC Christian because my faith is grounded in the Bible which does not waver on anything! I am humbled because I am a CLC Christian. I am a sinner and better than no man; yet because I believe that Holy Scripture IS the truth, I know that I have a Savior. Be thankful for God's mercy bestowed on us as a synod. We are not to judge our synod as more pleasing to God than any other. Remember, synods are made of people, and people are judged not against each other, but individually by God. Pray that God's Word in its purity is always taught among us, for Satan will try to misguide us; but our faith will have no more secure an anchor than holding fast that in Holy Scripture alone do we find eternal life.

Martin Luther wrote:

Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word  
Curb those who fain by craft and sword  
Would wrest the kingdom from Thy Son  
And set at naught all He hath done. (TLH  
261:1)

*(Mark Fleischer, Our Savior's,  
Jamestown, ND)*



Statement of  
**FAITH AND PURPOSE**  
of the  
**CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION**

II. OUR SOURCE OF TRUTH

In our teaching and preaching we rely wholly upon the Bible, the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We regard this Book of Books as the Word of God, verbally inspired and wholly without error as written by holy men of God. We consider our mission to be that of communicating the words and message of this Book to those who will hear them; and we know of no other divine source of true doctrine and instruction in the way of salvation and in God-pleasing living.

We therefore reject as sacrilegious and destructive every effort by which the intellect or science of man would modify or set aside a single inspired word. We deplore the wide-spread apostasy, now common even in former "conservative" church bodies, which reduces the Bible to the status of a human document containing errors and myths.



By request—an essay (excerpts only due to space limitations) delivered at the West Central Delegate Conference, Watertown, SD in June, 1993.

## FURTHERING LAY MEMBER INVOLVEMENT IN CHURCH WORK (LOCALLY AND SYNODICALLY)

(The writer had introduced his topic, and then reviewed the life of King David and his fall into sin. He continued:)

...Our heavenly Father has made us kings, given us a job to do, along with power and wealth to get the job done. So with purpose, power and provision, we are all set, ready for battle. Many of us, however, have fallen into the same sin as David. We have become lazy, shirking our responsibilities and laying down our arms. We comfort ourselves with the ease we feel is our right. We have slipped off our lofty thrones in the kingdom, and gone back to play with the world, where Satan can sift us like wheat.

So how do we get ourselves up out of the bog hole and back on the road? As before, we need to get to the root of the problem, work on that and everything else will fall into place. The state of the country is the state of the church. The state of the church is the state of the family. The state of the family is the state of the man, and the state of the man is the state of his heart.

Here is where God builds and Satan destroys. Here is where the battle rages with the crashing of armor, beating of wings and the tearing and scratching of tooth and claw. Here is where the hosts of heaven are locked in bitter and deadly

conflict with the powers of darkness.

Christ's victory at Calvary was final. Nothing Satan can do will ever change the fact that his head has been crushed and Jesus is Lord of all. But now the keys to the kingdom of heaven and the application of Christ's victory to the world have been given to the church on earth.

Since Satan is powerless against the Head, he attacks the members of the body, hoping to yet, before the end, vent his hostility and rob the finished work of Christ of its full effect among men. Those who have not learned to put on the whole armor of God are a piece of cake. Those who have ceased to use their weapons are losing their battles.

One might say, "So what? If I lost a few battles, I'm still saved." I Cor. 10:12: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Losing a battle with Satan, or giving in to temptation means that we have denied our Lord by our actions, or words, or thoughts. Finally we will deny Him with our hearts too. Besides destroying our own soul, we are a stumbling block to the kingdom. We reject and actually hinder the great work of making disciples of all men. Our neighbor is not saved by our denying Christ, but by preaching Him.

Our battles are not won by having a Bible and knowing a few things



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*The state of the country is the state of the church. The state of the church is the state of the family. The state of the family is the state of the man, and the state of the man is the state of his heart. Here is where God builds and Satan destroys.*

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about it. Neither are they won by good intentions, church attendance at the right building in town, or by throwing money in the plate. Rather, they are won by using our weapons, and those weapons are the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and fervent prayer.

These are the only weapons that work, and they always work. Paul tells us that God will not allow us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, but with the temptation also makes a way to escape. That way of escape is through His holy Word, which is sharper than any two-edged sword. The devil must fall back immediately when we thrust at him with a confident, Spirit-filled "Thus saith the Lord..."

Jesus used these very weapons when He was tempted after forty days in the wilderness. Some would say, "Well, of course, Jesus was able to resist temptation. He was true God and used His Godly powers." This is true. He did. But what we need to realize is that the same power is also at our disposal if we would only use it. Jesus used the sword of the Spirit which is available to us also.

In Philippians 2:12 Paul says to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. This means taking our Bible and reading, meditating, memorizing, digging, asking questions,

praying, learning and growing. For too long we in the pew have not done this. We have lazily been sitting on the bench, relying on some outside, educated entity to spoon-feed our religion to us. This is not right. Intelligent and competent people who could serve their Lord in such great capacities remain spiritual babes all their lives, scurrying under the robes of the pastor when there is work to be done.

What kind of rinky dink, push me pull you army of the Lord are we? The men are to be the spiritual leaders in the family and in the church. They are to advance boldly against Satan whenever he is found in the midst, taking the lead with confidence in all spiritual warfare. But we are hamstrung by our failure to prepare and train, our failure to pick up our Bibles, arm ourselves, and become strong.

The Christian needs to open the Book and read it for himself daily. He needs to meditate on its meaning and application for every situation in life. He needs to hum its music while milking the cow or paying the bills. It must become a part of him, wedged deep in his heart of hearts, so he can use it effectively, as Jesus did, against the fiery darts of Satan.

If any man will hear these words of admonition, if any man will do this,

that man's home will become the powerful Spirit-filled unit God intended it to be. In a world of chaos, peace will reign beneath its roof, and a sweet harmony of love and joy will ring through its halls...

We can tell people that this is what God expects and longs for, we can tell them that the answer to any sin problem, any fear, tear, or depression problem, in fact any problem in their lives, family, church, or country can be found on its pages. But from there on, the only thing to do is for me to read my own Bible. The Word itself has power.

People will begin to read their Bibles after those few, who will read

their Bibles, read their Bibles. All that means is that it starts with me. I have no new program, no new approach for the 90's. Just the same old eternal and all powerful Word of God working in the hearts of men, making life and producing abundant fruit.

With David I must cringe at the words, "Thou art the man." I must repent of my laziness and wandering ways and pray, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation and uphold me with Thy free Spirit." Then, and only then, will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.

*(Jonathan Wiechmann,  
St. Luke, Lemmon, SD)*

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**  
**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Sleepy Eye, Minnesota**  
June 1993



**Staff Shown In Picture: Autumn Lendt, Scott Theneman, Dori Theneman, Mary Maas, Lois Maas, Lana Romberg, Pastor P. Fleischer, Kris Arndt.**

## Announcements

### Installations

As authorized by President Fleischer, I installed Barry Hay as the principal of Immanuel Lutheran School of Winter Haven, Florida on August 15, 1993.

—*Pastor Terrel Kesterson*

I installed Theodore L. Quade Jr. as Teacher/Principal of Messiah Lutheran Church, Hales Corners, Wis. on August 29, 1993 with the permission of President Fleischer.

—*Pastor John Ude*

On Sunday, July 25, 1993 the undersigned installed Mr. Scott D. Theneman as Upper Grade Teacher and administrative assistant of Gethsemane Lutheran School, Spokane, WA.

—*Pastor Robert S. List*

### Change of Address

Scott Theneman  
N. 717 Argonne Rd. #24  
Spokane, WA 99212  
Phone (509) 891-6570

### Minnesota Pastoral Conference

**Date:** November 3-4, 1993 beginning at 10 a.m.

**Host:** Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, Red Wing, Minnesota

**Chaplain:** Pastor David Schierenbeck

#### Agenda:

- \* New Testament Exegesis of Jude 5ff—  
Pastor Wayne Mielke
- \* A Comparison of PRASSO and POIEW as  
used with Reference to Sinning—Pastor  
Vance Fossum
- \* A Study of the Davidic Messianic Psalms—  
Pastor Rick Grams
- \* A Study of the Scriptural Terms regarding  
the Foreknowledge of God—Pastor Elton  
Hallauer
- \* The History and Value of Communion  
Registration—Pastor Keith Olmanson
- \* How Should a Christian View the State-  
sponsored Lottery?—Pastor Douglas Libby
- \* Homiletical Study—Pastor Daniel Fleischer  
—*Rick R. Grams, Secretary*

### Minnesota Delegate Conference

**Date:** October 24, 1993 beginning at 3 p.m.

**Place:** Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church,  
Sleepy Eye, Minnesota

#### Agenda:

- \* How Should a Christian View the Movie  
Rating System?—Pastor David Schieren-  
beck
- \* A Pastor's Involvement in the Financial  
Affairs of a Congregation—Pastor L. D.  
Redlin
- \* Business Meeting

—*Rick R. Grams, Secretary*

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
N. 4704 WALL ST.  
SPOKANE, WA 99205

Pastor Paul Schaller  
N. 4724 Wall  
Spokane, WA 99205



*Minnesota Lutheran*

### CLC Teachers' Conference

**Place:** Immanuel Lutheran School, Mankato,  
Minnesota

**Time:** Wednesday-Friday, Oct. 20-22, 1993,  
beginning at 10:00 a.m.

#### Program:

Whole Language—Marcie Schierenbeck  
Values Taught in Textbooks—Ross Roehl  
Math Manipulatives—Leif Olmanson  
Classroom Volunteers—Discussion—  
Coordinators Messiah Eau Claire  
Faculty

Hymns—Lane Fischer

Implication of Ordination of Teachers—  
John Schierenbeck

Book Review: *The Birth Order Book* by Dr.  
Kevin Leman—Gerhardt Mueller

Textbook Review—Science—Immanuel,  
Mankato Faculty

Title Fives—Barry Hay, Beth Johannes,  
Marie Olmanson, Mary Thom, Laila  
Fleischer

**Communion Service:** Wednesday 7:30 p.m.,  
speaker—Pastor John Pfeiffer—St. Paul's,  
Austin, Minnesota

—*Leif Olmanson, Program Chairman*