

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

DEUTERONOMY 6:7

"You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."



PROVERBS 22: 6

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

MARK 10: 14B & 15

"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."



"FEED MY LAMBS" JOHN 21:15

The More You Know!

There has been a series of TV commercials running for several years entitled “The More You Know.” It tries to impress upon parents and young people the importance of education. It suggests that with enough education we can overcome all problems. The solution to the drug problem is education. The solution to teen pregnancy is education. The solution to child abuse and to the rise in suicide is education. Yet after years of intensive education the problems are not only not going away, but they are still increasing.

The trouble is, the world is trying to solve its problems with the wrong type of education. Educating kids about the dangers of drugs may have some value, but it doesn’t effectively prevent them from using drugs. These problems are really only symptoms of a greater, underlying problem—man’s separation from God due to sin. No education from the world can solve that.

There is only one type of education that will really help—Christian education.

In His high-priestly prayer Jesus said: “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (Jn. 17:3). That is real education—learning to know the only true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Such education is from the Holy Spirit who gives the knowledge about God which goes beyond the mind and into the heart to create and strengthen faith.

Reading, writing, and arithmetic are very good to know and help in many areas of life in this world. But you can make it through life without knowing those things. You cannot, however, make it through life as a child of God without knowing God the Father and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

Jesus came to solve all our prob-

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lems, beginning with the greatest of all. It is in “knowing” Jesus by faith that we are saved from sin and death and reconciled to God. “The More You Know,” the more Jesus will enable you to overcome all these other problems as well. The more you know about God—His holiness and glory, as well as His grace and mercy—the more you will live as His children in joyful thanksgiving.

Most importantly, the more you know God, the stronger you will be to stand against all; the perversions and false wisdom of the world. Christian education is what we need to make it in this world.

Just what do we mean by Christian education? Perhaps the first thing you think about is a Christian Day School. Christian Day Schools are certainly a tremendous blessing for our children and for our congregations. It would be wonderful if every one of our churches had a day school.

As we have said, Christian education is knowing the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. It is education in the Word of God. Christian education begins in the home with parents reading Bible stories to their children and teaching them God’s Word. It is leading and guiding children to apply God’s Word to every area of life. Christian education is also done when parents give their children an example of a God-

“Christian education begins in the home with parents reading Bible stories to their children, and teaching them God’s Word. It is leading and guiding children to apply God’s Word to every area of their life...”

centered life.

If parents have a Day School for their children, they are not relieved of their responsibility for the Christian education of their children. If the parents don’t have a Day School, it will require even more effort by the parents to provide a Christian education for their children. Especially if their children attend a public school, parents will need to teach God’s Word and show how it differs from much of what the children are learning in school (ethics, morality, truth).

Christian education does not end with school. All our life we must continue to “grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” If our Christian education stops, then we become more susceptible to the wiles of the devil and the deceptions of the world.

“The More You Know,” the better prepared you will be to face the world and to hold on to the faith. Let’s never stop learning.

—Pastor David Reim

Christian Education—A Recurring Miracle

Do you think that miracles still happen in our world today? According to one poll, the vast major-

ity of Americans, 82% of them, answered: Yes.

Though one doesn’t know what

some consider “miraculous,” the 82% are, nevertheless, correct. Everyday, perhaps without ever realizing it, we are witnesses to amazing miracles of God’s power.

Just the other night a series of powerful storms swept through the area. For about one-half hour straight the rain poured down in buckets. That hardly seems miraculous until you ask where all that water comes from.

Actually, it’s part of a process that goes on day in and day out, largely without our being aware of it. Each day the sun lifts millions of tons of water into the atmosphere through evaporation. Each day, in turn, frontal systems deposit the moisture around the globe.

One writer said that if God would have set up gigantic steam engines around the world, pumping water from the oceans and spraying it across the earth, the sound would be deafening, and we’d probably pay more attention to it. Instead, God performs the miracle in what appears to be a very natu-

ral way.

At this time of year many of us have been harvesting vegetables from our garden. Do you ever stop and think of what a miracle that is? A tiny seed is pushed into the ground. It germinates and grows into a plant. In the weeks that follow, the plant absorbs light and heat from the sun and drinks in water from the earth. In a miraculous way that one seed is multiplied—sometimes a million-fold!

There are other miracles that are even more astounding. But since they recur day after day we tend to take them for granted.

A Greater Miracle

The same is true of what has to be one of God’s greatest miracles.

Quietly, without fanfare and hidden from sight, God continues to perform a miracle deep within human hearts.

The miracle? Faith.

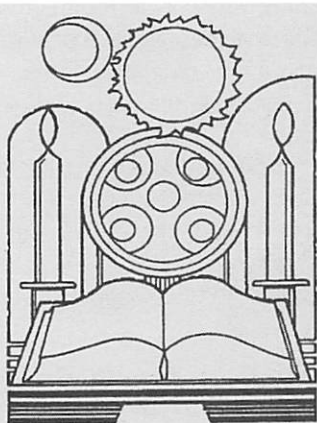
The means? His Gospel.

The outcome? Not mere temporal good, but eternal gain that actually defies description.

This is why Christian education is really about miracles—not the flashy kind that draw attention and make headlines, but rather the quiet and unassuming miracles that affect eternity.

Jesus Himself was more interested in the latter. One time He healed a deaf-mute by placing His fingers into the man’s ears and touching the man’s tongue (cf. Mark 7:31ff). He said, “‘Ephphatha,’ that is, ‘be opened,’” and the man could speak and hear, perhaps for the first time in his life.

Next thing you know, Jesus “commanded them that they should tell no one.” Why? Because Jesus did not care



*The Fear of the Lord is
the beginning of Wisdom*

to be known as One Who merely healed bodies; after all, His much greater miracle was His role in the eternal salvation of souls!

A Great Opportunity

Sometimes people wonder whether the time and expense of providing a program of Christian education are worth the while. It costs money to operate a Christian Day School. It takes a lot of volunteer time and dedication to run a Sunday School. It even takes a determined effort to conduct regular devotions at home.

Are these things really worthwhile? That depends. It depends on whether we remember that through

them God continues to perform the miracle of creating, building, and sustaining faith.

Put it this way: If Jesus would be visibly present to bless your children every Sunday, or school-day, or evening at the supper table, you'd want them there, wouldn't you? Well, Jesus is present. He is in the midst of those gathered in His name. He is there to touch hearts and to bless lives through His Word. It all seems so natural, but when we think carefully about it, it is a miracle!

In addition, one day we'll recognize that the results too are nothing short of an absolute miracle.

—Pastor James Albrecht

“And God remembered Noah . . . and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters abated” — Genesis 8:1

PUDDLES OF TROUBLE

Troubles, troubles, troubles. While walking down the sidewalk of life, we're constantly stepping into puddles of trouble. Life can seem to be an on-going series of problems, and sorrows, and tragedies. Yes, even for the Christian, the troubles of life can at times appear to be overwhelming.

After forty days and forty nights of uninterrupted rain, Noah and his family found themselves stuck in the middle of the biggest puddle the world has ever known. The storm was over. But there they were, floating aimlessly around atop a world completely covered by water. We can imagine Noah and his family waiting a little nervously on board the ark for the LORD to show them what was going to happen next.

Days and months passed, but the water wasn't drying up. Perhaps Noah thought that the LORD had forgotten

them. After all, what difference would eight more people dying make to the billions that had already perished in the flood? In more ways than one Noah was in a puddle of trouble—a puddle that he hoped would dry up very soon.

As our Bible verse tells us, “God remembered Noah.” When the time was right, God sent a wind to dry up the waters covering the earth. As a result the water abated and Noah and his family were once again able to place their feet securely on dry land. What a joy and relief!

We too hope and pray that our puddles of trouble will evaporate quickly. But troubles never seem to go



away. There are troubles with spouses, troubles with children, troubles with finances, troubles within our congregations . . . and the list goes on. In despair we may cry: "Has God forgotten me?"

Children Of God

But God remembered Noah; and God remembers us. In truth, He never for a moment forgets us. If we think honestly about it, we must admit that the LORD has sent us many good and gracious winds—winds that have made our troubles of the past disappear and become forgotten. And yes, we have His promise that He will continue to stay by our side, and that He will not forget us. In the last chapter of Matthew, Jesus tells us: "Lo, I am with you always . . ." (Mt. 28:20).

To the child of God, life is an on-going series of blessings. God doesn't want us to be sad. But when He does

permit trouble to touch our lives, we can be sure that our loving LORD will work even the bad to turn for our good: "All things work together for good to them that love God . . ." (Rom. 8:28).

The real question for the Christian is not, "Has God forgotten me?", but rather, "Why does God remember me in the first place? Why does God remember a sinful reprobate like me?" By all rights God could erase me out of His memory!

God remembers me for the sake of His Son. Noah had faith in the promised "offspring of the woman"—the One Who would crush the head of Satan! We today have faith in that same mighty Savior—Jesus Christ! On the cross Jesus defeated Satan! He took away our sin! He has won for us, and for all people, eternal life! Because of what Jesus has done for us, God will never forget us. How could He? By faith in Christ Jesus we have become the children of God.

The rainbow was God's sign to Noah that the world would never again see such a devastating flood. Christ is our rainbow. He is our promise that God will lead us safely through this life to that better life to come! Praise His name!

—Pastor Michael Wilke



Shown on their graduation day this spring from Immanuel Seminary: Pastor Stephen Sydow (now serving Grace of Live Oak, Fla.) and Pastor David Schaller (now serving Redeemer of Sister Lakes, Mich.).

LESSONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

“That We Might Have Hope” (Rom. 15:4)

First Samuel, Chapter Sixteen

David Anointed King

Things were not looking good for the Israelites. Saul, their first king, whose reign had begun with such promise, had disobeyed and turned against God. Saul, the earthly king they had pleaded with God to let them have, would not have to bear the consequences of his actions. Samuel, the prophet of God, was now given the task of anointing Saul's successor.

It was not a job Samuel was looking forward to. In 1 Samuel 16:1 the Lord says to Samuel: “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.”

There may be several reasons why Samuel was reluctant to anoint Saul's successor. Primarily, he seemed to have feared Saul's wrath if he found out what Samuel was doing. Saul was known for his mood swings and volatile temper. Once, after making a foolish oath, he had come very close to having his own son Jonathan killed. It would not take much for his anger to be turned against Samuel. So Samuel responded to the Lord: “How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me.”

One would think that, after serving God for so many years and seeing God's power and protection, Samuel

would not have feared Saul when given an assignment by almighty God. It may remind us of other servants of God who were reluctant to follow His commands—such as Moses at the burning bush and Jonah in going to Nineveh. These men struggled to obey God because of their sinful flesh which blinded them to seeing God's ability to remove all obstacles.

We too have a sinful flesh which causes us to doubt God's power and protection at times. Let us pray for strength to obey with confidence the commands our God gives us.

Samuel was told by the Lord to make a sacrifice to Him in Bethlehem, and to have Jesse and his sons assist him. From among this family the Lord would choose the next king. Those living in Bethlehem trembled when they heard Samuel was coming to town. No doubt they feared that Samuel was coming to execute a judgment on their town as he had done to King Agag of the Amalekites (cf. 1 Samuel 15). Samuel assured them he was coming in peace, and the sacrifice was arranged.

An Important Lesson

When everyone was gathered, Samuel saw Jesse's eldest son, Eliab, and was sure this was the one the Lord had chosen. His outward appearance

was what Samuel expected in a king. But God had not chosen Eliab, and Samuel learned an important lesson that day.

The Lord told Samuel: "The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

It is wise that we take these words to heart as well. How often haven't we made the mistake Samuel made and formed a judgment about someone based on physical appearance alone?

Too often in today's world "image is everything." Those who can package themselves to fit a popular image often become popular. For example, the average height of elected U.S. presidents is much taller than the average height. Why is that? Perhaps you can recall the televised Nixon-Kennedy debates. Kennedy's more camera-friendly image gained him many supporters, while the majority of those who listened to the debates on the radio felt Nixon's arguments were more convincing.

Isn't it wonderful that God does not judge according to outward appearance? He sees the condition of our hearts. In believers He sees the wonderful robe of righteousness gained by Christ's atoning sacrifice for sin.

In our country today an enormous amount of time, energy, and money is

spent on altering one's physical appearance for a variety of reasons. As Christians, let us not forget to tone and exercise our hearts so they are fit and attractively filled with the Holy Spirit. On the day we die, it will not matter what our outward appearance is like, but it will matter what is in our heart.

After Eliab passed by, six other of Jesse's sons were brought. None was the chosen one of God. So Samuel asked Jesse: "Are these all the sons you have?" Jesse said he had one more, the youngest, who was busy tending the sheep. Jesse didn't even mention this son by name. It seemed David wasn't his father's choice either. But he was God's choice, and so Samuel anointed him king.

David is described as being healthy-looking and handsome. This tells us that sometimes God does use those with fine outward appearances to do His will.

But it was the condition of David's heart that made him the right choice. David means "beloved," and in this case the name fit perfectly. God loved David's humble, obedient heart. He saw in David a heart of faith in the Savior to come and a heart of reliance on the Lord as his Shepherd.

May God grant us a heart such as this!

—Prof. Joseph Lau



Immanuel High School graduates celebrate their day last Spring.

Biblical Perspectives On The End Times

THE MILLENNIUM

One Thousand Years

This numerical expression occurs six times in the first seven verses of Revelation 20. It occurs in only two other places in the Bible: “For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night” (Ps. 90:4), and “Beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Pet. 3:8). In the last two passages the thousand years are indeed a thousand years, but the holy writers inform us that our God does not experience the length of years as do we mortals. For our God a thousand years is but as a day, yea, as but a watch in the night. But what about those “one thousand years” in Revelation 20? Are they a literal thousand or are they a symbol of a fixed period of time?

A good place to start in answering this question is the very first verse of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It reads thus: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and SIGNIFIED it by His angel to His servant John.” Jesus had a message for His servants. The message was to deal with events that were shortly to come to pass. But that message was to be revealed through SYMBOLS: Jesus SIGNIFIED that message. This immediately

alerts us to the fact that the “thousand years” in Revelation may well be a definite period of time whose length may be either an exact thousand years or a longer or shorter period of time.

Numbers In Revelation

Numbers are very important in the reading and understanding of the Revelation. But they are not always numbers used literally, as in a financial report. The numbers may be used symbolically. Seven is such a number. Bible students have found that the book of Revelation can be divided into seven parts. John wrote letters to seven existing churches in Asia Minor. He named these seven churches. They then appeared before the eyes of John as seven golden lampstands whose pastors were pictures as seven stars in the right hand of the Lord. There were seven churches, lampstands, stars—not six or eight, but seven!

Yet there is more to those “sevens” than just an establishment of quantity. Quality is also indicated, especially when you realize that the “church year” of the Old Testament believers followed the order of seven.

There are more sevens—“seven Spirits of God,” (3:1), “seven lamps of fire” (4:5), “seven seals” (5:1), the Lamb having “seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth” (5:6). The Lord Jesus is described in sevens,

“ . . . The KEY that shut Satan in the bottomless pit and the CHAIN that bound Him for a thousand years are the GOSPEL of our Lord’s victory over Satan. . . . That victory manifested itself in the binding of Satan so that he could no longer deceive the nations.”

as is both His saving and punishing work—seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls.

There are other fascinating numbers—twenty-four elders sitting on twenty-four thrones. There are twelve gates, twelve angels, twelve tribes, twelve foundations, twelve apostles, twelve pearls in the New Jerusalem. The tree of life bears twelve fruits. The Mother of the Child wears a garland of twelve stars (12:1).

There are 144,000 sealed, twelve thousand from each tribe (7:4; 14:1.3). There are four living creatures (4:6), as there are four angels, four corners of the earth, and four winds of the earth (7:1).

There is the fascinating three and a half—expressed as 42 months or 1260 days, or three and a half days, or a time, times and half a time.

Then the individual numbers—the number of man—666 (13:18); the river of blood from the winepress of the Lord that was up to the horses’ bridles and extended for 1600 furlongs or 184 miles (14:20); the army of two hundred million horsemen coming from the Euphrates (9:16).

Numbers and more numbers. Are they all to be taken literally? Or do some have symbolic significance?

Is perhaps seven the number of God at work, ten and its multiples the number of completion, twelve the number of the Church—twelve tribes and twelve apostles, four the number of the earth? What about the split seven, the three and a half? And once again, what about the one thousand years in Revelation 20—literal or symbolic?

Events Occurring During The Thousand Years

Remember that the Lord Jesus SIGNIFIED events “that must shortly take place” (1:1). Millennialists believe in a future reign of our Lord here on earth either after His coming (Premillennialists) or immediately before His coming again (Postmillennialists). That would place the Millennium some two thousand or more years after John wrote concerning “things which must shortly take place.”

John reports that he saw an Angel coming down from heaven with the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. The Angel laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. Now what do you come up with if you take the words of this vision literally? You have a metal key for a pit that has no door. Next, you have a chain to bind a spirit being. How do you picture in your mind the binding of a bodyless spirit with an iron chain? The message is clear! Satan is being restrained for a thousand years so that he cannot deceive the nations as he did in Old Testament times. The nations of antiquity such as the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the

Greeks, as well as the smaller surrounding nations as the Philistines, were helpless prey for the Devil.

The KEY that shut Satan in the bottomless pit and the CHAIN that bound Him for a thousand years are the GOSPEL of our Lord's victory over Satan. The very first prophecy described the coming Savior as the Headcrusher (Gen. 3:14). John, who pictured the binding of Satan with a key and chain, had previously expressed this same truth in plain language: "For this purpose the Son of man was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn. 3:8). Shortly before our Lord began His final campaign against Satan He said: "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out (Jn. 12:31). Previously Jesus had testified: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Lk. 10:18). The Apostle Peter tells us that our Lord, before He left His tomb, "preached to the spirits in prison" (1 Pet. 3:9). His message was a proclamation of victory. That victory manifested itself in the binding of Satan so that he could no longer deceive the nations.

While Satan was bound, the martyrs reigned with Christ. John saw thrones occupied by souls unto whom the right and responsibility of judgment were committed. These souls are identified as martyrs who had been beheaded "for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands." Beheaded, yet reigning! And that during the "thousand years"!

Then comes the final chapter! Satan will be released. He will resume

his work of deceiving the nations. That final alliance of anti Kingdom of God kingdoms of this world is called "Gog and Magog." They will be as numerous as the sand of the sea. They shall storm "the beloved city," the congregation of believers, but shall fail utterly, for fire shall come from heaven to devour them. "And the devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

And then comes the final judgment which results in the final separation of those whose names are written in the Book of Life from those who insist on being judged according to their works. Their final destiny is the lake of fire.

That's it! During the "thousand years" Satan is bound. The martyrs, who appear to have lost everything, are reigning with Christ. Satan's last effort results in complete failure. He ends up in the lake of fire, as do all his followers. This is what is going on right now and has been going on since the Day of Pentecost. When are the "thousand years"? Future, past, or present? We're living in the "thousand years" day after day. So the "thousand years," which is the cube of ten and so the symbol of fullness or completeness, is the present—the New Testament era. The entire chapter 20 of Revelation has not a word in it of an earthly reign of Christ or a thousand years of earthly triumph for the Church. All this is religious fiction. The Augsburg Confession dismisses this religious fiction as "Jewish opinions." The Kingdom of God is not of this world; the "millennium" is of this world—the product of human dreams.

—Pastor Paul F. Nolting

Psalm 127

“LORD, bless my undertakings with success.”

A Psalm of Instruction

Psalm 127

Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep.

Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is His reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but shall speak with their enemies in the gate.

This psalm is one of two said to have been written by King Solomon (the other being #72). In it he stresses that, when man undertakes to do something, success depends on more than hard work and sweat. The unseen, all-important factor is that God must bless what he does. This is true with respect to both house-building (vv. 1-2) and family-building (vv. 3-5).

The instruction this psalm gives would have been very appropriate—and necessary—for the Jewish pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem in the days following the exile. The temple was being rebuilt at that time. The nation of Judah was also just getting back on its feet. A two-fold temptation confronted them: 1) To rely too much on their *own* strength and ability for success in these ventures; and 2) To become discouraged or depressed, thinking the assignment that lay ahead of them was too difficult to tackle. As

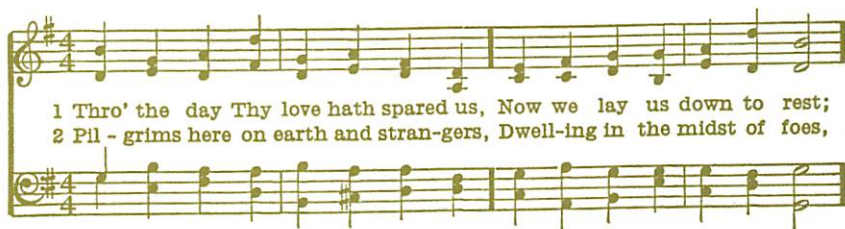
they chanted this song along the road to Jerusalem, they would have been reminded and encouraged by Jehovah's promise that the success of their undertakings didn't depend on their might and skill, but on Him, their almighty and all-merciful Lord.

The psalm has great application for our lives today. It applies to all endeavors—whether small or great—which we Christian, heaven-bound, pilgrims undertake throughout the duration of our trek. Whether it be the planting of a tree in the ground or the planting of our children in the garden of the Lord; whether it be the construction of a house made of wood and stone or the building of God's heavenly kingdom through the preaching of the Gospel; whether it be a secular business enterprise or the spiritual enterprise of building a Christian home or family or marriage. “All depends on our possessing God's abundant grace and blessing.”

Labors carried on in His name are never in vain! Knowing this, we may lay our worries aside. ●



Appreciating Our Lutheran Hymns



Through the Day Thy Love Hath Spared Us

An Evening Hymn

#553 in The Lutheran Hymnal

From the human perspective King David had every reason to suffer from insomnia. His beloved albeit traitorous son Absalom had deposed him from being king of Israel and was reigning in his stead in Jerusalem. David himself had been forced to flee for his life. On top of that, word reached David that Absalom had been advised to pursue his father immediately—while David and his loyal entourage were weak and weary (2 Samuel 17:1,2,21).

As David fled, he offered the divinely inspired prayer preserved for us in Psalm 3: “LORD, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me.”

But even when his situation seemed hopeless, David was able to rest: “I lay down and slept; I awoke . . .” (3:5). How could he? “You, O LORD, are a shield for me . . . the LORD sustained me . . .” (3:3,5).

Thomas Kelly echoes these words of David in this month’s hymn (writ-

ten in 1806) from the “evening” section. We are reminded that it is God who “*through the day . . . hath spared us*” by His love, and that there is no better “*Guardian*” than He to keep us “*through the silent watches*”—“*sweet it is to trust in Thee.*”

But let us not stop with God’s TEMPORAL care. Rather, at the end of every day recall with King David God’s ETERNAL care: “Salvation belongs to the LORD. Your blessing is upon Your people” (Ps. 3:8). We are but “*pilgrims here on earth and strangers,*” as Kelly penned. Our eternal abode is above with our God who “*preserves us from dangers*” and grants us “*repose in His arms*” while here on earth.

We can join with King David in the assuredness of faith and sing with Thomas Kelly that just as God grants us earthly rest, so He will also grant us “*rest with (Him) in heav’n at last*” forever!

—Pastor Paul Krause



CLC EXPLORATORY SERVICES

This is a list of "start-up" congregations who are being served by an off-site pastor. Some meet in homes, others in rented facilities. Also included are our two CLC exploratory missions in Gold Canyon, Ariz. and Grand Rapids/Cadillac, Mich. Visitors are warmly welcomed. Those who are considering a move or are just traveling through the area are encouraged to contact these groups and worship with them.

LOCATION	PASTOR IN CHARGE	LAY PERSON TO CONTACT
Alaska, Juneau	David Naumann 907-225-2842	
California, Stockton	Michael Sprengeler 510-886-3252	
Colorado, Colorado Springs	James Naumann 719-336-5773	Chuck Seelye 719-685-5848
Florida, Orlando	John Schierenbeck 941-299-4084	Paul Kuehne 407-277-2183
Florida, Coral Springs (North Ft. Lauderdale)	Paul Larsen 941-423-1822 or 941-423-2728	Bob Doriot 305-429-0063
Michigan, Cadillac	Walter Schaller 231-779-1934	Bob Remus 616-832-2687
Minnesota, Kimball (St. Cloud area)	John Ude 612-784-8784	Reuben Streich 320-453-7562
Missouri, Kansas City	Todd Ohlmann 314-225-3458	Jim Priebe 816-781-4702
New Mexico, Albuquerque	Norbert Reim 602-974-8911	Robin Vogsland 505-892-6934
North Dakota, Fargo	Theodore Barthels 218-847-2080	Gary Pansch 701-277-1727
Ohio, Columbus/Cleveland	Mark Bernthal 517-792-9390	
Texas, Amarillo	James Naumann 719-336-5773	Local Contact 806-358-3717
Texas, Killeen	Thomas Schuetze 972-733-4535	Eric Rachut 254-853-2867
Texas, Weslaco (Rio Grande Valley)	Daniel Fleischer 361-241-5147	Buddy Hovda 956-565-2851
Washington, Withrow	Terrel Kesterson 509-327-4203	
Wisconsin, Onalaska (LaCrosse area)	Michael Sydow 715-839-9569	Kirby Pabst 608-781-0835
Wisconsin, Fairchild	Gordon Radtke 715-834-6280	

SMORGASBORD

• **‘THE END TIMES’**—With the impending turn of both the century and the millennium, we wanted to offer something on these pages touching on eschatology, or the “End Times.”

Once again we see how the Lord provides. Retired Pastor Paul F. Nolting has, over his years of ministry, made this subject a special area of personal interest and Scripture study. Besides presentations to congregations he was serving, Pastor Nolting has presented seminars to sister congregations on the subject of prophecy in general, and on prophetic books of the Bible such as Daniel and Revelation in particular.

More recently Pastor Nolting has been writing tracts on different “end time” subjects for the benefit of the congregation where, in his retirement, he holds membership—Messiah of Eau Claire. We were delighted when he offered these writings to us so that they might be shared with an even wider audience.

In this issue (see “The Millennium”) we begin the Nolting series of up to a dozen articles on the ‘End Times.’ These troubling days (with false prophets seeking to deceive the very elect—Matthew 24:24) the Nolting articles lend a solid biblical interpretation and a reassuring Christian perspective to believing children of God.

• **A CHRISTIAN WITNESS** (*from the bulletin of Resurrection Lutheran Church, Corpus Christi, Texas; Daniel Fleischer is pastor*)

A Christian witness begins first of all with a knowledge of the truth of God drawn from the Bible. One can hardly testify to that of which he knows nothing. A Christian cannot testify to the love of God in Christ unless he has first of all been brought to a knowledge of that love through the Word of God through which the Spirit of God works. Conversely, a Christian who has been brought to a knowledge of Christ and who through faith has seen the great things of God cannot help but testify. In the fourth chapter of Acts we read how Peter and John reacted to the leaders who sought to shut them up. In the face of great risk they said: “For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” They spoke the Word of God with boldness.

That witness will include the testimony against sin. Our secular society would like nothing better than that God’s people remain silent. Our secular society protects the right to speak and act as it chooses, while denying the same right to those who proclaim the Truth of God and stand for something.

Therefore, it does not like to hear that there is only one way to heaven, namely, through faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. It will go to great lengths to deny that Truth and ridicule—if not bring accusation against—such as dare to be “politically incorrect.” It has never been different, but surely we must recognize that ours is a confused and mixed-up generation.

Unfortunately, Christians contribute to the confusion when they do

not practice what they preach. A Christian witness is more than just words. Indeed, how one lives says as much as how one speaks, if not more. To live contrary to how one speaks surely undermines the words.

For example, it is contradictory to use the name of Jesus in prayer and praise but then to use that same blessed name in cursing (James 3). What does the expression of love mean if it is not backed up with action? Or the verbal confession of faith that is not supported by a life of faith? Just what is one's confession if he speaks truth but does not live it? Who can know? "Do as I say and not as I do" is not a Christian confession or witness. Can the confessing Christian stand for truth, but, when it is inconvenient to do so, flirt with error or even make common cause with it?

God forgive us and help us to speak and live in such a manner that, when the day is done, it can be said of us as it was of Peter and John. The people "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4).

Whether that recognition brings us good or ill in our society is of little consequence. The blessing and peace is in having been with Jesus who promises: "Whosoever therefore confesses me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32).

• **'VATICAN, LUTHERANS END CENTURIES-OLD DISPUTE'**
(Don't believe it!)

The above title (minus the parenthetical remark) was the heading for a column which appeared in the June 12th *New Ulm (Minn.) Journal*.

We admit that we have not seen a

copy—or even a review—of the document which is supposed to be a settlement of a long-standing and major dispute between Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism. Yet we say without hesitation that the Lutherans who are in on the settlement do not speak for us. Indeed, we have plenty of reason to doubt that they were men whose consciences, like Luther's in the Reformation, were bound to the Word of God. It is far more likely that the participating Lutherans were men (and women?) bent on compromise for the sake of outward harmony and unity.

We subtitle the newspaper heading therefore: "Don't believe it!"

The newspaper article which reported the end of the dispute contains this quote from a participating Roman Catholic Cardinal: "It (the document supposedly ending the 'dispute') is not a document of compromise. It's a document based on truth, but in a spirit of reconciliation." We are all for truth, and even for reconciliation, rightly understood. Yet our concern would be: what was used as the basis for truth and for the supposed reconciliation? Was the Bible and only the Bible—apart from papal decrees, documents, and 'tradition'—used as the objective source and norm for determining the outcome? Again, there is every reason to doubt it.

These Catholic/Lutheran discussions (Lutherans participating are those belonging to the Lutheran World Federation, which includes chiefly the liberal ELCA) have been going on for some years. Previous "agreements" arrived at haven't received the headlines this one has. Why the national attention this time? We assume it's

because it's the central doctrine of the Bible, the doctrine of justification—the teaching of how a sinner is saved—where a resolution has supposedly taken place after these many centuries.

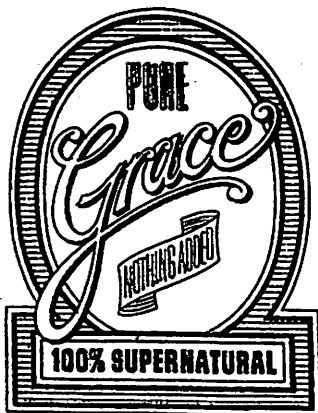
It would be worthy of national—and international—attention if Rome indeed did an about-face in this area. Fact is, since the supposed agreement was announced the Vatican has issued a statement which in so many words denies that the “Lutheran agreement” is “a repudiation of the past.” For truth to have won the day and honest reconciliation to have taken place, the past which needs repudiating, at least as far as we are concerned, is what was said at the Council of Trent (1545-1563). At that official Council of the Roman Catholic Church, the (scriptural!) doctrine of justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ was anathematized (condemned).

We have spoken to a fellow pastor who has read the document. His report is that the agreement “sounds good” but “can be interpreted in different ways.” That supports our initial skepticism. It takes a trained ear sometimes to sift through the theological jar-

gon—especially in doctrinal writings intended to achieve agreement between one-time opposing parties. When it comes to Lutheran/Catholic dialogue, for example, it needs to be remembered that there have always been two definitions for the word *grace*. To Luther and his true heirs *grace* has always referred to a quality in God (His undeserved love for sinners); by contrast, Catholicism has consistently defined ‘grace’ as a quality infused into man, albeit by the Spirit. This is not insignificant. The theological difference is as far-reaching as any other doctrinal disagreement you might name.

The Reformer himself understood well that a proper (scriptural!) understanding of *grace* gets to the nub of the matter as to how poor sinners are saved before holy God. When he, led by the Spirit, came to understand that *grace* is a quality in God which moved Him to rescue and redeem sinners, Luther saw no other recourse but that a church be formed which would keep this doctrine central in all its teaching and preaching. He wrote (and with him we confess): *Nothing in this article [that sinners are justified by grace alone through faith in Christ alone] can be given up or compromised, nor can any believer concede or permit anything contrary to it, even if heaven and earth and things temporal should be destroyed. For as St. Peter says, “There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). (Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article I, paragraph 5).*

The number of those who, confessionally-speaking, are true heirs of the Lutheran Reformation is decreasing



March 29, 1998

4:35 p.m.



steadily. We ourselves are but a small voice in the visible Lutheran community. Nevertheless, God help us to stand fast on all teachings of Scripture, including on “the doctrine by which the church stands or falls”—the doctrine of justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone apart from the works of the law!

(Adapted from the bulletin of Grace Lutheran Church, Sleepy Eye, Minn. Paul Fleischer is pastor.)

• **‘THANK YOU’**

A year ago now (July, 1998) the *Spokesman* carried a report on a tornado which devastated the small Minnesota community of Comfrey, just 15 miles from your editor’s home city of Sleepy Eye. The same tornado damaged other cities (Hanska, St. Peter, LeCenter etc.) and destroyed farm sites along a ninety mile swath through the southern part of the state.

Thanks to a neighborly American



The West Central Delegate Conference met at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Bowdle, S. Dak. June 4-6, 1999.

spirit which rallied people and financial resources to aid in the cause, the area has rebounded. The severely damaged city of Comfrey, for example, decided to rebuild, using funds contributed by such as our own CLC people who contributed over \$3,800.00 through a fund established and disseminated by Grace congregation, our CLC church in Sleepy Eye.

Almost a year later a card of appreciation has been received by Grace Church. See the cover of the card opposite. The message on the inside reads: *"You have touched us . . . whether it was through a donation of money, goods, or your time. We are most grateful.—Community of Comfrey, MN."*

Announcements

Minnesota Pastoral Conference

Place: Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Detroit Lakes, Minn.

Dates: Tuesday-Thursday, October 26-27, beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday

Agenda:

- * Old Testament Exegesis, Obadiah—Pastor Wayne Eichstadt
- * New Testament Exegesis, 2 Thessalonians 1:6ff—Pastor Stephen Kurtzahn
- * A study of issues related to dying which could be assembled into pamphlet form—Pastor Norman Greve
- * A Homiletics "Booster Shot" (Essayist's choice)—Pastor Theodore Barths
- * Studies in Luther—Pastor Paul D. Nolting
- * At what point does questionable practice in an element of a church body become divisive of fellowship?—Pastor John Ude
- * Group discussion to review the study on the American Legion (1999 CLC General Pastoral Conference) [1998 CLC Convention Resolution, p. 95]—Moderator, Pastor Paul Fleischer

Chaplain: Pastor Roland H. Gurgel

—Rick R. Grams, Secretary

West Central Pastoral Conference

Date: September 14-16, beginning at 10:00 a.m. (CDT) on Tuesday through noon on Thursday.

Place: Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Ipswich, South Dakota

Agenda:

- 1) New Testament Exegesis: Romans 8:1-11
—Rev. George Dummann
- 2) Old Testament Exegesis: Genesis 9:1-7
—Rev. John Johannes

- 3) A Study of 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 and Application of These Verses in Present Day Circumstances—Rev. Michael Schierenbeck
- 4) Balancing the Value of Sermon Preparations with Other Pastoral Obligations—Rev. Peter Reim
- 5) A Study of Key Reformers Who are Less Familiar—Rev. Timothy Wheaton
- 6) Does Scripture Speak of "Degrees of Glory" in Heaven?—Rev. James Naumann
- 7) Devotions for Sick Calls—Rev. Andrew Schaller
- 8) Matthew 12:1-13 and the Application of Moral Principles to Practical Cases—Rev. Steven Sippert
- 9) A Study of the Qualifications for Membership Commonly Used in Our Constitutions—Rev. Michael Wilke
- 10) Book Reviews:
 - a) Reviewer's choice of an ancient Church History resource (carry-over)—Rev. David Fuerstenau
 - b) *Making Love Last Forever* by Gary Smalley—Rev. Frank Gantt
- 11) Discussion of the American Legion

Conference Chaplain: Rev. John Hein

Conference Speaker: Rev. Michael Roehl

—Rev. Michael Schierenbeck, Secretary

Installation

In accord with our usage and order, Stephen Sydow, who was called by Grace Lutheran Church of Live Oak, Florida to be its pastor, was ordained and installed on July 11, 1999. Pastor John Schierenbeck assisted.

—Pastor Paul Larsen

Eligible For Call

John M. Cobb of Wildwood, Alberta, Canada, successfully passed the colloquy and is declared eligible for call into the ministry of the Church of the Lutheran Confession.

—Daniel Fleischer, President

Clarification

The inclusion of the name of Michael Wagnitz in the clergy roster in the *CLC Directory* was in error. The recent report in the *Spokesman* of his installation implied that he was installed as pastor of Resurrection congregation of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. He was installed as vacancy pastor as part of the colloquy process. The process was not completed and he is no longer serving.

—Daniel Fleischer, President

Time of Service

Holy Cross Ev. Lutheran Church in Phoenix has changed its time of Sunday service to 9:30 a.m. year around. Bible Class and Sunday School follow the service (Sept.-May).

—Pastor Delwyn Maas

Change Of Address

Pastor John H. Johannes
1784 Will Wages Rd.
Dacula, Georgia 30019
Phone (678) 376-9948



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Full redemption and remission
To Thy precious name we owe.

Scan the annals of the ages
For the valours of the brave,
And Thy name alone is given
With the power alone to save.

Useless were our best endeavors,
Weak and helpless is our frame,
But the weakest are victorious
When they plead Thy saving name.

Savior, let us sing Thy story,
That the world may learn to love,
And to bow in adoration,
To Thy name - all names above.

— Dr. Norman Madson