



# LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

"FEED MY LAMBS" JOHN 21:15

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# Personal Mission Work

*What comes to mind when we assess our personal involvement in Christian mission work?*

Perhaps we think of our participation in the Mission Festival each year—when guest preachers speak to us on the topic of missions, we join in a congregational prayer for missions, and we contribute an extra measure of money for mission work. We might also think of our on-going support of missions through our individual prayers and our monetary contributions.

What about our personal witnessing to the unchurched or to those overtaken by error? One of our youths made a remark a short while ago that gave cause for further reflection on this important area of Christian living.

This young Christian made the observation that some of his acquaintances who belong to Reformed churches spoke quite openly and frequently to others about the LORD and their religious beliefs, whereas he did

not find this to be so much the case with young people in our fellowship.

Could this be said of adults in our midst as well?

While this is just one person's observation and while we are not given to comparing our level of sanctification with others, still this kind of remark can have the salutary effect of causing each of us to take a closer look at our use of the name of God for the benefit of others.

How much do we speak to one another in our daily conversations in our homes about Jesus, His works, and His ways?

When discussing different topics, issues, and concerns, how often do we find ourselves speaking of the LORD and His important truths out in the world?

In Martin Luther's explanation to

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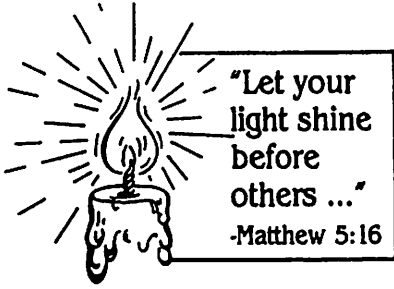
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Editor: Paul Fleischer, 710 4th Ave. SW, Sleepy Eye, MN 56085-1232, E-Mail to [pgflei@prairie.lakes.com](mailto:pgflei@prairie.lakes.com); Assistant Editor: Paul R. Koch; Artist: Matthew Schaser; Staff (Also District Reporters): James Albrecht, Theodore Barthels, David Bernthal, Warren Fanning, Joel Fleischer, Rick Grams (Minnesota), Mark Gullerud (Great Lakes), John Klatt, Paul Krause, Joseph Lau, Delwyn Maas, Bruce Naumann, David Reim, Peter Reim, Rollin Reim (Pacific Coast), David Schierenbeck, John Schierenbeck (South-Eastern), Michael Wilke, (West Central).

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manded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Mt. 28:19-20).

The apostle Peter reminds us of our high calling as children of God when he writes: “But YOU are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that YOU may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Pet. 1:9). (*our emphasis*)

the Second Commandment in which God reveals His will for us concerning our use of His name, the positive side of the commandment is expressed in these words: “but we should call upon His name in every trouble, pray, PRAISE, and give thanks.”

Speaking the praises of the Lord not only involves worshipful prayers and songs, but also speaking of Him to others.

It has often been rightly said that mission work—personal witnessing and testifying of the LORD—is not simply to be reserved for trained clergy. This is also the calling of every Christian, both young and old alike.

When He gave the Great Commission, Jesus was speaking to all His followers in every generation, saying: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have com-

In this world filled with darkness we who have been mercifully delivered from the darkened condition of unbelief that leads to eternal death are to shed the light of God’s saving grace in Christ Jesus.

When considering how wickedness abounds more and more in this world with every passing day, we wonder how long before Judgment Day will come. And we might also find ourselves at times asking why the Lord is delaying in His final coming.

Why? It is because there are still more precious souls that God would gather into His kingdom.

There are still lost souls in our area and beyond that the LORD would have us reach out to with the gospel message of salvation.

Speak to one another of Him who died to save us all!

—Pastor Mark Gullerud

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***“ . . . But speaking the truth in love, may (we) grow up into Him in all things, who is the head, even Christ.”—Ephesians 4:15***

## Speaking The Truth In Love

The truth hurts. Boy, don’t we know it! Think back on a time

when someone bluntly pointed out some flaw in us or some deficiency in

our work. How did it make us feel? It really hurt, didn't it? You may have tried to defend yourself, even if the charge was true. Human nature is always ready to fire back, perhaps with something equally hurtful.

Of course, such exchange is unlikely to produce anything worthwhile—quite the opposite! It certainly is not reminiscent of the kind of love Jesus desires to see among His followers.

When it is time to speak, we dare not speak less than the truth. However, we should hesitate to use the truth as a hammer. Christians want to speak the truth in love.

Among Christians the truth must be a commodity regularly traded, even when it results in confrontation. For many confrontation is uncomfortable, unpleasant, and to be avoided at all costs. However, resentment may grow if the situation is not faced.

Confrontation is unpleasant. It can feel like applying antiseptic to an open wound. Ouch! That stings! Yet it is better than letting the wound become infected. However, this fact does not give license to be mean or caustic. *Christian* confrontation starts and ends with love.

You cannot lovingly confront someone if you have a chip on your shoulder or if you expect the worst. Also, loving confrontation is not nagging. It states the point of concern and seeks to deal with it in a timely manner.

### **“I” Language**

There is no surer way of turning a discussion into a fight than to start off by accusing the other person. A far better approach is to use that which is

called “I” language. When using “I” language I am expressing how something makes me feel. If I use “you” language, it is probably going to sound condemning and puts the other person immediately on the defensive.

For example, there is a world of difference between saying, “I am uncomfortable arriving late at church. Is there anything I can do to help?” and “You always make us late for church. You don't even care, do you?”

It is vital to remember that we are dealing with someone we love. Our spouse or our children or our Christian friend is not our enemy.

It is a good idea to focus on the behavior of the person rather than on the person's character. Since we cannot read each other's heart, concentrate on the facts rather than on the motive. Few things are as hazardous as presuming to tell someone what he thinks or feels.

We want to understand each other, so it is important to speak clearly and to listen patiently and carefully. To resolve the matter, we turn to the Scriptures for guidance.

What it finally all boils down to is daily exercising ourselves in the Ministry of the Keys—honestly confessing our sins to each other and readily forgiving one another.

This is essential especially when there has been a confrontation. Our priority is not to prove that we are right, but to give and receive the very forgiveness of sins which Christ won on the cross.

Christ Himself has granted each believer the authority, privilege, and responsibility to forgive sins and open heaven's gates. No better expression of love can ever be given or received.

“And be ye kind one to another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:32).

—Pastor Delwyn Maas

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## **The Sound In The Night**

As I repose ready to drift off, the chorus of chirping and croaking ceases. The bush is pitch black and deadly still. The stillness then is broken by a screeching sound.

Is it some cat in a tussle with a black mumba or some other snake? Is it some cicada-like insect that, as it darts through the dark night, emits this shrill sound? I don’t know, but I do know “it” is out there. I have heard it again and again.

I also know something else is out there. And it is far more menacing and unnerving than the repetitive screech from the unknown source.

I know very well the source of this haunting, loathsome thing. As it hounds me, howling like a baying cur, I shrink back. And it is not just “out there.” It harasses me, dogging my steps, nipping at my heels.

What is this—some fanciful tale from African folklore? What beast could this be, you ask? It is the beast within me. I can remember well the words and the incidents, some fresh from perpetration while others long since past, yet remembered.

The screeching bush sound disturbs my sleep but little. I am well separated from whatever it is. But as to this other, it is quite different. I am not separated from it. It is with me not only in my room but in my life, and it lurks within me while I try to sleep. But my memory is good, and the beast comes

floating back like wretched debris from some nautical disaster washing up again and again and again on the shore of my conscious thoughts.

The sole comfort is “the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 Jn. 1:7). This I need to hear and read. To be reassured I need to hear it also from others than myself.

The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses . . . gives me peaceful sleep. This satisfies the longing for rest and the yearning for rightness with God. This solves the problems of fearful and fit-some sleep. Surpassing all human understanding, this has power that words cannot convey—and yet these words do.

Of course, they are not mere words, for with them comes the very author Himself to apply them to my heart as sweet balm to a grievous wound.

My memory is good, but I need to read and hear and ponder ever anew the words that pierce the darkness with the Light: “The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”

Perfect love does indeed cast out fear. He loves perfectly—He loves me, the imperfect and stress-torn. Such things are dispelled and supplanted by words of grace.

And one day He who has so lovingly spoken will evict once and for all the beast I so despise.

Maranatha.

—Missionary David Koenig

# Parables Of The Master

Luke 14:7-11

## A Precept Parable

The opening verse says it's a parable, but it just doesn't read like a parable. It reads more like a set of precepts about good manners at a Jewish wedding banquet. So . . . what are we to do when a Scripture doesn't gel? Ask the Spirit for enlightenment, and read the five verses again.

Soon our imagination kicks in as we picture an actual banquet with no place cards for the seating, so everyone scopes the room for a good spot. Is there an open seat at the head table? But that would be a faux pas. How about a seat close to the kitchen, on the hopes of being served first? Maybe that's OK . . . but few would choose a remote corner, too far away to be included in sparkling conversation, a corner too dark for the busy host to note your presence.

Aha! So this is a parable about attitude! Jesus is making a point about one's spiritual posture before God, even (especially!) in view of the great and wonderful marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9).

The company Jesus kept at that Sabbath supper (v. 1) needed help with more than their table manners. They needed enlightenment about God's standards for inter-personal relationships and God's preferential plans for heavenly seating. He brought home to them God's displeasure at human pride as well as His favor toward

humility.

Though the usual parable format ("The kingdom of heaven is like . . .") is missing, the lesson is clear: "For whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

That's one of God's steady standards; it works for angels, for Jesus, and for us. (By the way, Satan was the first to exalt himself, and we know what happened to him. Jesus had the opposite attitude, and, to be reminded of the attitude that produced a Savior, read Philippians 2:5-11.)

### Back To Basics

An eye-opener introduction eases us into the heavenly concept: "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place . . ." The situation is sketched in as the self-centered person plunks himself down at the head table, telling himself the awful lie that he merits some such honor . . . oblivious to the host with his own higher standards.

It's pretty basic: if you want to avoid the sting of public shame and exposure of your grubby selfishness, conduct yourself in such a manner that you do not prompt the host to unseat you from the dais and send you off to a corner. On the other hand, if you await the pleasure of the host, to your astonishment you may be offered a seat at

the head table.

It doesn't take long for an opportunist to figure the angles and jockey for position by hanging back in the crowd; but it takes the host even less to recognize his friend and save a special place for him in preference to the sham.

Oh, Lord, we hear echoes of "Depart from me, you workers of iniquity. . . I never knew you" and "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom . . ." And yet another: "Blessed are the poor in spirit . . . blessed are the meek . . ."

That's what this parable comes down to: the *attitude* which God's redeemed child has toward his redeeming Father and his fellowman: the low-

liness of heart, the meekness of spirit which simply cannot be pushy against others who are also invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And, of course, Jesus does not dull the point that it is the Host who will exercise His own judgment at His own table in His own house. "The first shall be last, and the last first."

And now we are faced with the HOW. HOW can a person change his inborn, inbred, Satan-fed, and world-nurtured natural self-seeking inclinations so as to become self-sacrificing and self-effacing and asking only for the crumbs from the Master's table? It's got to be a miracle.

God bless you.

—Prof. Em. Paul Koch

## Studies In Ephesians

### Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of Christ (See 3:8)

#### Chapter 2: 1-13

## Our Rags To Riches Story (Christ is the Key)

"All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags"—these words were Isaiah's sharpened needle in the self-righteous balloon of a disobedient Israel. Good works cannot avert the doom of people—even very religious people—who fall short in holiness before God.

That same doctrine also punctures the optimistic religious theories of people who claim that man has some inner

power or strength by which he can draw near to God or cause God to accept him. If any person is to be accepted before God, he must somehow escape the rags of his natural sinful condition.

The church in Ephesus seems largely to have been gentile (non-Jewish) in background. The Ephesians had come into the riches of God's kingdom, as

Paul had pointed out in the first chapter: “God . . . has blessed us;” “we have obtained an inheritance;” I heard of your faith . . . and love.”

But now Paul bluntly reminds them of the rags that formerly adorned their lives: “you . . . were dead in trespasses and sins.”

Dead, of course, is an absolute term. Sin and disobedience render a person helpless and incapable before God. Later Paul points out that these gentile people had “no hope, and [were] without God in the world” (v. 12).

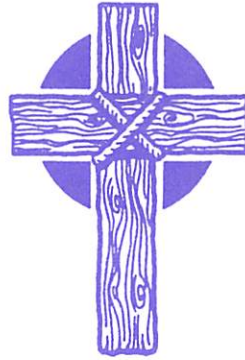
Still worse, they were spiritually dead to God though not spiritually neutral. Rather, man by nature is a spiritual rebel numbered with the ranks of that original rebel, Satan, and under his diabolical power.

Living apart from the true God, people wear—not robes of righteousness, but—the blood-stained uniform of disobedience and the rags of spiritual slavery.

Satan’s power and presence are so pervasive that the apostle calls him “the prince of the power of the air” (v. 2). Our success and salvation in spiritual matters is not due to a weakening or retreat of the foe’s ranks. The temptations, the influences, the assaults are all still as present as ever. And “we” (note the pronoun change from v. 2 to v. 3) cannot think ourselves different than any other person of this world: “We were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”

### Alive To God!

But here is where the story takes an amazing turn: even while the Ephesians (and we) languished in such ragged poverty, a great wealth of kind-



**Christ died for us.  
-Romans 5:8**

ness and love was directed toward each of us. In the first chapter we were reminded that this love was directed our way before we were born (“predestined”). It is a love that was demonstrated here in time with the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. And even while we personally were dead and revolting in our sin, God loved us and “made us alive” (v. 5) or “quicken” us.

“Made alive!”—to be alive is an infinitely wealthier state than to be dead! To be alive to God is to know Him in truth, to trust Him, to respond to Him. Alive to God we discover the abundance of His riches directed toward us: His “great love” (v. 4); His “rich mercy” (v. 4); the “exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness” (v. 7). God is rich in those qualities that spiritual human beings thrive on.

Those are nice words and noble sentiments, but are they real? How may we be certain that we have indeed escaped this carnal world?

The answer, and the key to our sure riches, is Christ. Paul is clear that Christ is the source and guarantee of our riches. The result of God’s great mercy is that He “made us alive



together with Christ.”

When Jesus rose from the dead, the work of redemption complete, we were “*raised together with Him*”—united with Him in our faith. When He ascended to the right hand of God, “*God made us sit together*” with Him by our faith. We are liberated from the futility of this world to “*seek those things which are above, where Christ is*” (Col. 3:1).

The riches of God’s gracious salvation flow to us through such Christward faith. (“*By grace are you saved, through faith*” v. 8). A true Christian spirit is not inclined to glory in self, but to glory in Christ. He is our all.

Our lives become fruitful in pursuing paths of service that our all-knowing God has already plotted out for us (v. 10). We are a people destined to be the salt and light for this corrupt

world, as Jesus proclaimed us to be (Matthew 5).

Rich in grace, we have also been made rich in our association, becoming the true Israel of God grafted into a people who enjoyed God’s grace for so many centuries. We have a real communion and fellowship in an Israel that is pure and true, not stubborn and disobedient.

Our relationship to this body of believers is not the external and superficial act of circumcision—of which the earthly Israel continually prided itself (v. 11-12). Our inclusion along with the Ephesians is effected by the infinitely priceless blood of Christ (v. 13).

In Him we have gone from the rags of unrighteousness to the riches of grace. These alone are riches that endure.

—Pastor Peter Reim

## Biblical Perspectives On The End Times

*Second in a Series—*

### THE LAND

#### The Land

What land? The Promised Land, the land that flowed with milk and honey (Ex. 3:8), the Land of Canaan that extended “from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates” and once was occupied by the Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites; the Hittites, the Perizzites, and the Rephaims; the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites (Gen. 15: 18-21). Today the

area from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates would include parts of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and all of Israel, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank.

#### The Patriarchs

The Lord God called Abraham and directed him to go to a land that He would show him. He promised to make him a great nation. A nation needs a homeland. After Abraham had

walked through the land which was occupied by the Canaanites, the Lord appeared to him and promised: "To your descendants I will give this land."

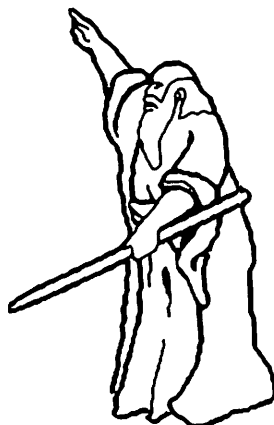
Nation and land go together. No nation, no need for land. But a nation needs land. After the initial promise of making Abraham a great nation and giving that nation a homeland, the Lord repeated that nation/land promise four times: Gen. 13:16-17; 15:18-21; 17:8; and 24:7.

After the death of Abraham, the nation/land promise was given to Isaac: "I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give your descendants all these lands: and in your seed all nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 26:4). But take note of these words of the Lord by which He states why He is passing that nation/land promise on to Isaac: "because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (Gen. 26:5). The Lord attached the condition of obedience to the land promise.

From Isaac to Jacob! When Jacob stopped at Bethel on his way to Haran, the Lord transferred the nation/land promise and the blessing of salvation to Jacob (Gen. 28:13-14). When Jacob returned to Bethel, the Lord repeated that promise (Gen. 35:11-12). Jacob died believing that promise (Gen. 48:4).

## Moses

Centuries passed. Israel had become a large nation in Egypt, but an enslaved nation. Moses was born, was educated in the very palace of Pharaoh, and assumed the role of a self-appointed deliverer. That rashness resulted in a forty-year banishment.



Then the Lord God appeared to Moses in the burning bush and announced to him: "I have come down to deliver them (My people) out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good land and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:8).

The Lord did deliver His people from Egypt. He was leading them to the Promised Land, but that generation never entered the Land because they murmured against the Lord. They brought upon themselves the curse of the Lord: "The carcasses of you who have murmured against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above" (Num. 14:29). The Lord God does indeed keep His promises, but it is only believers who receive the blessings of those promises.

## Joshua

The book of Joshua records the conquest and dividing of the Land. The inspired writer concludes the report with these remarks: "So the Lord gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their

fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. . . . Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass” (Josh. 21:43 and 45). But in his farewell address, Joshua warned Israel that they would perish from the good land the Lord had given them if they transgressed the covenant of the Lord their God (Josh. 23:16).

### **Solomon**

It was the task of David to consolidate the Kingdom with the result that Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the Euphrates to Egypt, (1 Kings 4:20-21). The Lord had fulfilled His nation/land promise made to Abraham and his descendants. But that promise was conditional. If you do as I command you, the blessing will continue for you and your descendants. But if you turn from Me, “I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them” (1 Kgs. 9:1-9). Faithfulness meant possession and enjoyment of the land; disobedience meant loss of the land.

### **Pre-exilic Prophets**

These were the prophets who brought the Word of the Lord to His People before the judgment of deportation and exile fell on the people. The message of the Lord communicated to the people was a call to repentance, reinforced by the solemn threat of national destruction including the loss of the Land. Those messages of judgment were followed by the Lord’s assurance that He would restore His people to the land He had given them and that He would fulfill His covenant to send the Messiah.

Judgment fell on the northern

tribes at the hands of the Assyrians in 722 B.C. There is an ominous threat recorded against these tribes by Hosea: “My God will cast them away, because they did not obey Him; And they shall be wanderers among the nations” (Hosea 9:17). That threat presupposes loss of the land.

In a letter that the Lord instructed Jeremiah to write to the captives in Babylon, He instructed them to “seek the peace of the city where I have



caused you to be carried away captive.” He then gave them the solemn assurance: “After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place” (Jer. 29:7-14). Despite this judgment of deportation from the land, Jeremiah declared that the Lord had kept His original promise of the land (Jer. 32:22-23).

### **Post-exilic Prophets**

In his prayer, Nehemiah also affirmed that the Lord had kept His land promise (Neh. 9:7-8). Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the people to rebuild the temple, but they make no mention of the land. Malachi brought the Old Testament Canon to a conclu-

sion, foretelling the coming of the messenger who would prepare the way for the Messenger of the Covenant. The issue of the Land had faded in importance. The Lord had made the nation/land promise to Abraham. He had fulfilled it in the days of Joshua and most gloriously in the days of David and Solomon. He had taken the Land away from His people because they had violated His covenant. He had restored the Land to repentant Israel. As always, being “in” or “out” of the Land was determined by obedience or disobedience.

### **New Testament Era**

Israel was in the Land when in the fullness of time God sent the promised Messiah to His People. John the Baptist said nothing of the Land. Jesus said not a word about the Nation of Israel possessing the Land. He did call the meek blessed, for they would inherit the earth. Neither did any of the apostles have as much as a word to say about the Land.

John preached a “baptism of repentance for the remission of sin” (Mk. 1:4). Jesus proclaimed: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe the gospel” (Mk. 1:14). In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus read the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the coming Messiah, closed the book, and announced that He was the fulfillment of that prophecy. Luke records one of the final words of our Lord that “all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me” (Lk. 24:44). On the Day of Pentecost Peter quoted the prophecy of Joel concerning the last days—the days of the Messiah—and

also the words of David in the 16th Psalm, proclaiming that all was fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah. Paul testified to the Corinthians that “all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us” (2 Cor. 1:20). All blessings spiritual and material are inseparably connected with Jesus, the promised Messiah.

What did the Nation of Israel do to their long-awaited Messiah? In the Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers (Mt. 21:33-44), Jesus reviewed the centuries-long unbelief of His people that culminated in the murder of the Son. That brought down upon the Nation the judgment of the Messiah: “The kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.” The Lord’s chosen People lost their status as the Covenant People of the Lord. Through the judgment upon the Nation by the Romans, they also lost the Land promised to Abraham.

But what of the restoration of Israel to Palestine in 1948 together with the reacquisition of Jerusalem in 1967? Was this a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy? Impossible, for all the promises of God are “Yes” and “Amen” in Christ Jesus. The Nation of Israel remains under judgment because it continues to reject Jesus as their promised Messiah. The blessing of becoming a nation as numerous as the sand and stars has been transferred to the Church. Jews remain wanderers among the nations. In His merciful governance of the nations (Acts 17:26), the Lord has provided a homeland for some of them in a restricted area of what was once The Promised Land. The policy of land for peace continues to diminish that “homeland.”

—Pastor Paul F. Nolting

## Appreciating Our Lutheran Hymns

1 Built on the Rock the Church doth stand, E - ven when  
2 Sure - ly in tem - ples made with hands, God, the Most  
3 We are God's house of liv - ing stones, Build - ed for

### Built on the Rock the Church doth Stand

A Hymn On and For the Church  
#467 in The Lutheran Hymnal

The congregations of the Church of the Lutheran Confession worship in a variety of settings. Most hold their services in their own houses of worship, which may be large or small, ornate or plain, traditional or modern in design. Others worship in a rented hall or perhaps even in the home of one of the members.

Our hymn reminds us that the setting in which we worship is not important, for the true God is not confined by temples made with hands. His dwelling place among mankind is in the hearts of those whom the Holy Spirit has brought to faith in Jesus Christ. *“He whom heav’n’s cannot contain Chose to abide on earth with men, Built in our bodies His temple.”*

And our Lord has promised to be present wherever His disciples gather in His name. Wonderfully, *“Now we may gather with our King E’en in the lowliest dwelling.”*

What matters is that God’s Word is truly taught and the sacraments rightly administered in our worship. *“His truth doth hallow the temple.”* Christ’s Church doesn’t depend on buildings or

on massive cathedrals with stained glass windows and pipe organs. It is built on the Rock who is Christ, and it stands because it is built on Him as its one foundation.

This is not to say that building churches is unimportant. *“Still we our earthly temples rear . . .”* The hymn beautifully expresses why our places of worship ought to be precious to us. *“They are the homes where He draws near And little children embraces. Beautiful things in them are said; God there with us His covenant made, Making us heirs of His kingdom.”*

The baptismal font reminds us of God’s grace given to us in Baptism. The altar reminds us of Christ’s sacrifice which we receive in Holy Communion. And the pulpit is the place where God’s Word is proclaimed. *“There sounds the Word that doth proclaim Christ yesterday, today, the same, Yea, and for aye our Redeemer.”*

This majestic hymn teaches us that there is no better place to be than God’s house where He is worshiped and His truth proclaimed.

—Pastor John Klatt

## LIVING OUR FAITH IN CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

One of the great faith-challenges facing us as Christians is to live and practice our faith. Within Christian marriage this means translating the God-desired, ideal “love” of Ephesians chapter five into a language of feelings, attitudes, and behavior which prove pleasing to God and a blessing to our spouse.

Some of the key areas emphasized by our Divine Marriage Creator and Counselor include:

- **Exercise Christian kindness and forgiveness in marriage**

*“Be kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph. 4:32).*

Pray for help to eliminate feelings and unkind words of sinful anger, bitterness, and sarcasm. Don’t hesitate to confess your wrongs and to ask forgiveness of your spouse. Avoid the temptation to take out your work and life stresses and frustrations on loved ones.

Consider the depth of Christ’s forgiving love for you and seek to emulate it.

- **In love be willing to “give in” and “give up” for each other**

*“Submit to one another in the fear of God” (Eph. 5:21).*

There are many areas of marriage—besides our religious convictions—in which husbands and wives can sacrifice and set aside their own interests and desires to serve and please one another.

Such a spirit reflects the love of Christ and strengthens the bond of marital love.

- **Express love and appreciation for your spouse often**

*“Her husband . . . rises up and calls her blessed . . . He praises her” (Prov. 31:28).*

Just as Christ in many words and ways has both spoken and shown His beloved Church how much He loves her, so husbands and wives, by words and actions, should tell one another often: “I love you.”

Dwell on things you admire and appreciate in your spouse, and tell them soon and often. Build one another up in faith and marital love.

- **Understand, appreciate, and utilize your differing gifts and roles**

*“Male and female He created them . . . and joined them together” (Gen. 1 & 2).*

While God created men and women alike in many ways (spiritually,



**They've Only  
Just Begun**

basic human feelings and needs), He also in His wisdom gave them distinctive, complementary, and compatible love-roles within the design of marriage. This includes the husband's humble love-leadership and sacrifice for his beloved, and the wife's cheerful love-submission toward her husband.

The recognition, appreciation, and carrying out of these God-given marriage roles will be a significant blessing to their marriage.

• **Learn to understand and communicate with each other**

*"Be swift to hear, slow to speak . . ." (Jms. 1:19)*

To say that silence enhances communication seems incongruous. Yet many relationships (including marriage) suffer because people do not truly listen to or try to understand each other.

Areas of disagreement will arise, even in the best of marriages. Learn to lovingly resolve issues without making them personal. Beware of being judgmental, or allowing anger or frustration to gain control.

Pray for increased love, kindness, and patience in your marriage.

• **Battle complacency and stagnancy in your marriage**

According to what someone has called "the seven years of the marriage cold," a husband's response to his wife's cold gradually deteriorates

from, "Honey, sit down and rest. What can I get you?" (first year) to "Can't you be quiet and quit that wheezing and hacking?" (seventh year). Such can be the temptation and effect of long-term familiarity.

The romantic excitement of young love can easily give way to taking each other for granted—or worse.

How can spouses rekindle the spark?

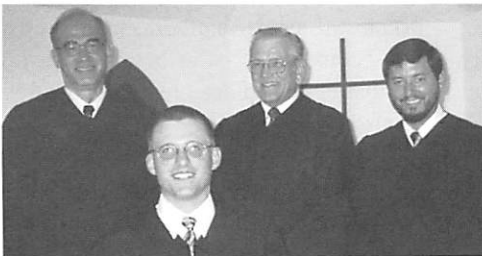
It is helpful to remember that God brought you together as husband and wife, and that He has a wonderful plan and purpose for every stage of your marriage. His plan will not be complete until your marriage union ends with the death of one spouse. Look to Him for daily help, joy, and renewal in every stage of your marriage.

Translating the marriage love of Ephesians chapter five into action is not easy. Every Christian husband and wife fails and falls short of these lofty marriage ideals.

Yet in Christ we find forgiveness for our marital failings; and with Christ we find both the strength and the motivation to love our spouses as He first loved us.

—Pastor David Schierenbeck

*(Special thanks to Pastor Schierenbeck for writing this helpful series in behalf of the Spokesman. We pray all will take his words to heart. —Ed.)*



On July 11, 1999 Stephen Sydow (front) was ordained and installed as pastor at Grace of Live Oak, Florida by Pastor Paul Larsen (center, who had also baptized the new pastor as an infant). Pastor John Schierenbeck (left) and Karl Stewart assisted.

## Psalm 128

*“LORD, grant me the blessing of family happiness.”*

A Psalm of Comfort

### Psalm 128

Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways.

When you eat the labor of your hands, you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.

Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house, your children like olive plants all around your table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD.

The LORD bless you out of Zion, and may you see the good of Jerusalem all the days of your life. Yes, may you see your children's children.

Peace be upon Israel!

In this “Song of ascent,” the psalmist teaches that a happy home doesn’t happen by accident. It’s a blessing God graciously bestows on those who are faithful to Him and who, in love for their Lord, strive to “walk in His ways.”

Why was the psalm included in the Songs of Ascents collection? Perhaps it was recognized that the Jewish pil-

grims (who were just getting established in the land) needed the comfort and admonition which this psalm offers. Did they wish to enjoy the blessing of a happy home in the land of Canaan? Did husbands and wives desire the blessing of marital happiness? Let them not follow the example of their stubborn, unbelieving forefathers who forsook the Lord. Let them remember their God, serve Him faithfully in love, and follow in the way of His commandments. If they did this, they would experience the blessing of family joy and happiness.

The Lord continues to bestow this precious blessing on Christian families today. Where godliness is “the crown of the home,” where the place of honor is set apart in the heart for Jesus, where He is invited in each day to be the honored Guest, He gladly consents to tarry with His blessing. And there is happiness.

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## SMORGASBORD

### • MARTIN GALSTAD, 1909-1999 (Pastor Rollin A. Reim, Reporter)

Just short of his 90th birthday, Martin Galstad of Lake Hamilton, Fla., received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Wisconsin Lutheran College, where five of his former students sit on the board of directors.

This recognition will seem appropriate to many, including numerous CLC constituents who benefited from his distinguished teaching and pastoral ministry.

After teaching at Dr. Martin Luther College for five years, Galstad withdrew from the Wisconsin Synod and helped in the formation of the CLC. He



became a founding member of Faith in New Ulm. In the transition period that followed, he supported his family (spouse Eunice ["Phoebe"], Gudrun, Marie, and John Martin) as a real estate agent. When the CLC founded Immanuel Lutheran College, he was called to teach a wide range of subjects with a major emphasis on philosophy of education and educational methods, a subject of life-long interest.

In 1964, at the age of 55, Galstad was called to the parish ministry of Immanuel congregation, CLC, in Winter Haven, Fla., where he served for 12 years. During the subsequent retirement time he affiliated with a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the church of his youth.

By any measure, Martin Galstad was a true scholar in the tradition of his namesake. Like Luther he was bold to examine any assumption in the spirit of the biblical text, "Test everything. Hold on to what is good." His hungry mind sought insights wherever they could be found, and his facile pen applied them with skill.

The first of a series of titles published by Haven Books is called *FINDINGS* (available at the CLC Book House). The title says much about his educational philosophy.

It also well sums up the spirit of this man who served his Lord among us those many years.

[From the editor:

*At the time the above was written, Martin Galstad lay seriously ill. Born at his parent's farm near Currie, Minnesota on July 30, 1909, he passed away on June 1, 1999 in Winter Haven, Florida. The funeral was conducted at the ELS church in that city. Survivors include his wife, two daugh-*

*ters, and one son.*

*Having sat at Galstad's feet in the classroom and for essays on the conference floor, I was one who appreciated his scholarship, approach toward teaching, and writings on educational philosophy. At the same time I was among those who regretted that he left the fellowship of Immanuel congregation and the CLC.]*

## • ESSAY SYNOPSES

Essays presented at delegate or pastoral conferences are the fruit of hours of study and preparation. Often attendees come away from these presentations saying (or thinking): "If only more of our people could have heard this essay!"

"The next best thing to being there" is a printed version, in full (preferably) or in part. Some pastors give synopses of conference essays for their Sunday bulletins or congregational newsletters. The bulletin of Berea Lutheran Church, Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota (David Schierenbeck, Pastor) contained synopses of essays delivered at the Minnesota Delegate Conference and the CLC General Pastoral Conference (both of which took place in June). We give you four of them:

*HOW CAN WE RETAIN MORE OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR CHURCHES* (by Mr. Tom McLaughlin, Berea Lutheran Church, Inver Grove Heights):

*One of the difficulties facing CLC churches (and we are not alone) is the retention of our youth—not only because they represent the future of our church, but especially out of love and concern for their souls. Such things as the ungodly world and its allurements, societal and peer pressure, and a view*

of Confirmation as an “end” in itself, all militate against their tender faith. Both faithful Christian parents (and faithful churches) need the comfort and motivation of our Lord’s promise: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). The author then focuses on ways to encourage our youth in church (and Bible Study) “involvement”—including the development of Christian education materials and programs involving modern computer technology.

A STUDY OF EPHESIANS 5:22-33 (by Pastor David Reim, Vernon, British Columbia):

This familiar and beautiful section of Scripture is read at most weddings and holds the key to a God-pleasing and blessed Christian marriage. Were this “divine counsel” followed by every husband and wife, the need of the incredible volume of words spoken and written on this subject by human experts and counselors would immediately disappear. The key is found in v. 21—a believer’s general attitude and life of humble submission to one another in the fear and love of God. Such a loving, caring, unselfish, and sacrificial spirit is produced alone by the Gospel and by the example of Christ Himself in His attitude toward and relationship with His beloved bride, the Church. Where the Spirit’s spirit prevails between husband and wife, both will in love carry out their respective roles in God’s marriage order with God’s blessing and in marital happiness. The Christian husband will in love “nourish and cherish” his wife as his own body (which she is), and the Christian wife will lovingly submit to and honor her husband with

the same spirit with which the Church submits to Christ.

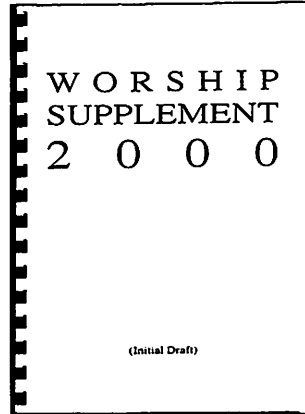
AN EXAMINATION OF GOD-PLEASEING MISSION STRATEGIES (by Pastor Andrew Schaller, Watertown, S.Dak.):

With the popularity of the current “Church Growth Movement,” which emphasizes outward mission methods and numerical church growth, we do well to reject such a focus in favor of the Spirit’s calling and counsel for Christ’s Church: “Go and make disciples of all nations”—by baptizing and teaching God’s Gospel Word (Matthew 28:19) which alone can make one “wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15). We dare not abandon God’s Word and the Means of Grace as God’s way of reaching and converting lost sinners to the faith. At the same time the “wrapping” of the Gospel gift (our services, approach toward visitors, evangelism programs, upkeep of the church building, reputation in the community, bulletins, use of technology, etc.) will, we pray, in no way hinder the Holy Spirit in His work or obscure our Gospel witness.

MAKE HIS PRAISE GLORIOUS (by Professor John Reim, ILC Music Instructor):

Without specifically spelling out the precise forms of worship, the Bible has many passages which speak of the importance and nature of true Christian worship—including praising, preaching, teaching, singing, communing, and praying (Hebrews 10:24-25, Acts 2:41-42, Colossians 3:16, Ephesians 5:19, Hebrews 13:15, 1 Timothy 4:13). These passages are best summarized in John 4:23-24: “Those who worship the Father must worship Him in spirit” (from a heart of faith) “and in truth”

(according to His Word). Much of our current worship form is solidly based on—even quoted from—Holy Scripture, and constitutes a tradition in use for many generations. Our current hymnal and liturgy (The Lutheran Hymnal) were adopted by the Synodical Conference (Missouri and Wisconsin Synods) in 1941. Basically they reflect our formal European (German) worship heritage. While treasuring this heritage and blessing, we do well to recognize that a changing language, a changing culture, and changing faith-responses to Christian life have led to new and changing poetical and musical expressions of God's unchanging Word in our day. Rather than dismissing them all as being "modern" (and therefore, wrong), a better approach would be to evaluate them on the basis of Scripture, as well as evaluating how much they edify and touch the heart of the hearer, and how well they communicate Gospel truth. Prof. Reim has undertaken an



evaluation of various Lutheran hymns and liturgies and is in the process of personally preparing a hymnal supplement to include alternate liturgies as well as many quality and favorite hymns already in use in our midst today. This supplement should be ready by Convention next summer.

If you were not present to hear these presentations, the essayist or your pastor may be contacted for unabridged copies.

## Announcements

### Anniversary

Zion Ev. Lutheran Church of Hidewood Township, S.Dak. will be celebrating its 100th anniversary with a special service on Sunday, October 17, 1999 at 4:00 p.m. The congregation has invited its former pastors who are still active in the public ministry to assist Pastor Andrew Schaller in this special service. A meal will be held in conjunction with the service. All are invited to attend.

Note: Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church of Watertown, S.Dak. celebrated its 40th anniversary with a special service at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 15, 1999.



### South Eastern Pastoral Conference

The South Eastern Conference will be holding its fall pastoral conference at Grace Lutheran Church in Live Oak, Fla. The dates are September

21-23, 1999. Pastor Stephen Sydow will serve as Chaplain and Pastor John Johannes will serve as the Communion Service Speaker. The following papers will be presented and discussed:

1. New Testament Exegesis, 2 Thessalonians 3:6ff — Pastor Paul Larsen
2. Old Testament Exegesis, Malachi 3:13-18 — Pastor Todd Ohlmann
3. Study of Genesis 3:16; "And he shall rule over you" — Pastor Thomas Schuetze
4. Isagogical Study of One of the Minor Prophets — Pastor Daniel Fleischer
5. Review of the CLC General Pastoral Conference Study on Religious Organizations (this was not assigned, but will be on the agenda for discussion)
6. Christian Day School Enrollment Policies Relative to Non-members—Pastor John Schierenbeck
7. The Background and Significance of the

Official Writings (Marburg, Schwabach, and Torgau Articles) That Prepared the Way for the Augsburg Confession  
—Pastor John Klatt

8. Book Review: *Wauwatosa Theology* or essayist's choice—Pastor Vance Fossum  
—Pastor Todd Ohlmann, Secretary

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**Minnesota Delegate Conference**

**Date:** Sunday, September 26, 1999

**Time:** 3:00 p.m.

**Place:** Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, Sleepy Eye, Minnesota

**Agenda:**

- \* "Reflections on school violence and parenting." — Dr. Jim Sydow, Grace, Fridley, Minn.
- \* Discussion of statements regarding applying Scriptural principles to organizations of this world and the American Legion in particular—Pastor Elton Hallauer, Moderator
- \* Business Meeting

—Pastor Rick R. Grams, Secretary

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**Pacific Coast Pastoral Conference**

**Place:** St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Vernon, British Columbia (BC), Canada

**Dates:** Tuesday-Thursday, September 27-30, beginning at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday

**Agenda:**

1. Old Testament Exegesis—(exegete's choice) Pastor Paul Naumann
2. New Testament Exegesis, 2 Thessalonians 3:4ff
3. "Is the 'chastisement' of the Lord a MEANS of strengthening faith?"—Pastor Rollin Reim
4. Book Review: "*The Structure of Lutheranism*" by Werner Elert—Horst Gutsche
5. Isagogics (essayist's choice)—Pastor Bertram Naumann
6. Report—Study of a portion of the Book of Concord (beginning with the Historical Introduction)
7. Booklet Review: "The Conversion Theology of Billy Graham in Light of the Lutheran Confessions" Pastor Terrel Kesterson
8. Book Report: "*What is Christianity? and Other Essays*," by F. Pieper—Warren Fanning
9. The History of the Lutheran Church in Canada—Pastor John Cobb

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SPOKANE, WA. 99206

Compliments of

**Conference Speaker**—Pastor Delwyn Maas

**Conference Chaplain**—Pastor David Naumann

—Pastor Michael Sprengeler, Secretary

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**THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN  
TODAY SEMINAR  
CHRISTIAN MEN'S  
CONFERENCE**

These events are being planned simultaneously for Saturday, October 2, 1999 at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota.

Here is an excellent opportunity for all area members—men as well as women—to spend a day of learning and growing in the Lord. All are invited to attend. If you did not receive brochures at church, contact Pastor Nolting in Mankato.

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**CLC Teachers' Conference**

The conference is set for October 13-15, 1999 at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota. The agenda will appear next month.

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**NOTICE:** In last month's announcement regarding the installation of Stephen Sydow as pastor at Grace of Live Oak, Fla., the name of former pastor Karl Stewart was inadvertently omitted as one who assisted in the installation.

—The Editor