

Lutheran Spokesman



¹⁶ So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; ¹⁷ for the Lord our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed. ¹⁸ And the Lord drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. We also will serve the Lord, for He is our God."

Joshua 24:15-18

“The Good Shepherd Security System”

How many locks do you have on the doors of your house? If you live in a rural community you may not even lock your doors at night. But if you live in a large city, a dead-bolt lock might not be enough. You may need a home security system.

Security is something everyone desires, especially in the home. Parents want to provide security for their children, and children want to feel secure. When you feel secure, you are able to sleep well. When you're secure, you don't jump at things that go “bump” in the night.

With humans there is no such thing as the ‘perfect’ security system. Locks can be picked and alarms can be by-passed. So, how can we ever have the security we all want for our family? With so many threats in our world how can anyone ever feel safe—even at home?

There is one threat to you and your family that is greater than a thief or a terrorist. There is one threat that walks

about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. The devil wishes to snatch all of Jesus' little lambs and sheep. We are no match against such an enemy (just ask King David or Peter). So how can we protect ourselves and our family against such a foe?

Jesus tells us of the security system He provides. “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand” (Jn. 10:27-28).

Snatch-less Security!

There it is! The Good Shepherd, who laid down His life for the sheep, says we are safe with Him. Jesus promises to give us eternal life. In following Him, He promises that we will never perish! Jesus promises His followers that no one is able to snatch us out of His hand—not even the devil! The eternal, almighty Son of God is the

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provider of snatch-less security.

Need more assurance of security? The Good Shepherd promises the protection of His Father. “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand” (Jn. 10:29).

This goes to the One-ness of the Father and the Son. The Son holds us securely in His hand and the Father holds us securely in His hand. This is the security every soul in every home needs.

The “Good Shepherd Security System” never fails. He neither “slumbers nor sleeps” (Ps 121:4). That’s something “ADT” or “Brink’s” can never guarantee!

Following the voice of our Good Shepherd, we need not fear things that go bump in the night. Following the Good Shepherd’s voice, we need not fear even death itself. We can say with

David, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me” (Ps. 23:4).

So, how many locks do you have on the doors of your house? Those locks are intended to keep mortal intruders out. Do you want your family to have eternal protection? Try the Good Shepherd Security System.

We might summarize that special Security System as follows: Through Bible readings, devotions, hymns, and prayers you and your family rest securely in the Savior’s loving hands now and into eternity!

Lord Jesus, who dost love me,
Oh, spread Thy wings above me
And shield me from alarm!
Though evil would assail me,
Thy mercy will not fail me:
I rest in Thy protecting arm. (TLH #554:5)

—*Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer*



The Paths Of God

Not many perhaps—except for history buffs or residents of Virginia—have ever heard of Matthew Fontaine Maury. But he’s an inspirational example of what can happen through private study of and trust in God’s Word.

In 1825, at age 19, Matthew Maury joined the US Navy as a midshipman. Of immediate interest to him were methods of navigation. When a leg injury left him unfit for sea duty, he devoted himself to the study of navigation, winds, and meteorology. In 1842 he became the Superintendent of the Depot of Charts and Instruments and two years later was appointed the first Superintendent of the US Naval Observatory.

But Matthew Maury also loved and studied the Word of God. One day while reading Psalm 8, something in verse 8 especially piqued his interest. There he read of “the fish...that pass through the paths of the seas.” Maury realized that there must be currents in the oceans even as there are rivers on land and wind circuits in the sky.

With full confidence in the truth of the Bible, Maury set about to discover those God-created paths in the seas. Using charts and log books, he plotted many of the ocean currents—including the Gulf Stream 40 miles wide and 2000 feet deep that runs out of the Gulf of Mexico in the Atlantic, the Japanese Current, the California Current, and

others.

Maury showed sailors how to use these ocean paths to their advantage—which dramatically reduced the length of their voyages. His uniform system of recording oceanographic data was used to develop charts for all major trade routes.

Maybe ocean paths are not your particular interest. The whole Bible is God's inspired account of what He has done and will do for mankind, from creation to final judgment.

The Path Which Jesus Trod

Especially it is the account of 'the path that Jesus trod' for our salvation. Rather than just being a victim trapped in the eddy of apathy or swept to-and-fro by the cross currents of man's rebellious pride and societal aspirations, God became incarnate in Christ to do His Father's business, walking the perfect walk, setting His face toward the cross at Jerusalem that the mighty stream of His divine blood might redeem and save lost sinners.

Christ's river of blood was so wide and deep that all 'sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains' (TLH, #157:1).

Which Christian can ever hear too much of it or mediate too long upon this love and mercy in dynamic action?

For the path that God ordained and Jesus trod leads out of death to glorious life—to eternal heaven, to God Himself! For those who follow it by faith the gate is narrow and the path difficult. That path is fraught with waterspouts of the flesh, the tempests of Satan, the wrong directions of the world.

Yet all along this path God has placed His road signs of encouragement and direction, found in His Word. Much

Psalm 119:14-16

"I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word."

time and anguish along the journey can be saved by study and obedience.

It is the path David trod and all the saints before us, with the chart and compass of God's Word in their hand and heart. Is it not unimaginable that they did not study and consult this chart daily and with great delight and application?!

On a monument erected to Maury's memory by the state of Virginia is a plaque that reads: "Matthew Fontaine Maury, Pathfinder of the Seas, the genius who first snatched from the oceans and atmosphere the secret of their laws. His inspiration, Holy Writ, Psalm 8:8; Ecclesiastes 1:6."

Was he a genius? Perhaps. But especially a simple, Bible-reading, Bible-studying, Bible-believing person who trusted and applied what God wrote.

May we all emulate his genius of faith, being pathwalkers in God's Word, even as we tread the homeward Way with joy and great expectation! Our inspiration? Holy Writ, Psalm 119:14-16.

—Pastor David Fuerstenau



Who can understand women?

“Who can understand women?”
Todd said in response to his pastor’s encouragement.

“God is not asking you to understand women,” his pastor replied, “He is asking you to understand one woman—your wife, Anne! Turn with me, Todd, to 1 Peter 3:7. The apostle directs us husbands with these words, ‘Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life,’ that your prayers may not be hindered.’ You see, Todd, God wants us husbands to live with our wives in such a way that we come to understand them. He has given us our wives, after all, to be our helpers. They cannot effectively help us, if we don’t understand and meet their needs. Can you think of some ways you might come to understand Anne better?”

“Well, I suppose I could spend less time in the garage when I am home and more time with her and the kids. I could also try to listen better. Anne has told me any number of times that I don’t seem to listen to her when she talks, but, pastor, it’s just that I have so many things to get done after work and there are only so many hours in a day.”

“Todd, you are a busy and ambitious man,” his pastor replied, “but your suggestions are important keys to helping you understand Anne, and also to put into practice what Peter urges us to do. When you give spending time with your wife a high priority, and when you listen carefully to her thoughts and concerns, you are telling



her that she is important to you. Without a doubt you will come to understand her better. At the same time you will be honoring her as the apostle says you ought to do. Are there other ways that you might honor Anne?”

“I do try to express my appreciation to her for everything she does for us at home. I remind the boys too that they should tell their mom ‘thank you.’ I have tried to set a good example for the boys also by opening doors for her. My dad used to tell me little things like that showed a woman that you respected her. But, pastor, what does Peter mean by calling wives ‘the weaker vessel’? I’m not so sure most women today would appreciate that comment.”

“That is a difficult phrase to explain, Todd, but I believe God is simply recognizing the fact that in most cases husbands will be bigger and stronger than their wives. It would be pretty easy, therefore, for men to force their wives to do things, rather than to motivate them with their love. The original words used suggest the idea of being delicate or fragile—like good china. The Lord is simply suggesting that you handle Anne with loving care.

“Notice Todd, how Peter introduces a spiritual element into our marriage relationships. We are to remember that our wives are ‘heirs together (with us) of the grace of life.’ God has entrusted Anne to your care to help her grow closer to her Savior. She should do the same for you. When both of you remember to include Jesus in your conversations and decisions, I believe you will find that any quarrels you have will be quickly resolved. Also remember to keep your

relationship in your prayers, Todd. God has given you your wife and your marriage as tremendous blessings. He has given you your sons as the fruit of your mutual love. The time and energy you expend to grow closer to Anne and strengthen your marriage will be time and energy well spent!”

“Thank you, Pastor; Peter’s words seem to be the right prescription for Anne and me!”

—Pastor Paul Nolting



Behold God’s Glory

“And he (Moses) said, Please, show me Your (God’s) glory! Then He said, I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you...But, He said, You cannot see My face, for no man shall see Me, and live. And the Lord said, Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; But My face shall not be seen” (Ex. 33:18-23).

Wouldn’t you love to see what Moses saw? If only we could see God like that, we could be great servants of God, too. Wouldn’t that be wonderful!?

Do you know what I find fascinating, though (and it is tremendously important for us)? When Moses gives his account of this event on Mt. Sinai, he does not say a single word about what he saw!

We long to hear a little bit about what God looks like. But Moses doesn’t say a word about that. What God looks like is of very little importance for us. Moses does tell us about something far more wonderful and valuable than God’s appearance—God revealed His Name to Moses! He shows us the inner nature and beauty of who and what God is. That is where we see the real glory of the Lord.

This is what Moses relates: “Now

the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, ‘The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children to the third and fourth generation. So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped” (Ex. 34:5-8).

God IS truly merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in mercy and truth. Moses experienced God’s overwhelming grace in action. After all that God had done for the people—freeing them from slavery; saving them at the Red Sea; providing for



them in the desert—the people turned against God. They made a golden calf and said, “This is Jehovah! This is the God who brought us out of Egypt” (cf. Ex. 32:8).

What an incredible insult and blasphemy against God! Yet God forgave them and still led them to the promised land. The people continued to complain and rebel all along the way, yet God continued to forgive them, provide for them, and lead them.

God is truly merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in goodness and truth!

Also Toward Us!

What a joy and relief it is to see God’s mercy in our own lives! Even as did the children of Israel, we too have seen God’s power; we have heard Him speak to us; we have experienced His love; yet we still sin against Him. Each of us is painfully aware of our own sins. But we can gaze at the glory of God’s grace, beholding that by His very nature God is “merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.”

Actually, we can behold God’s glory more clearly than Moses did. God revealed His name and His mercy

to Moses in words. Moses also saw God’s mercy in practice. We have all that plus more—we see Jehovah Himself come in the flesh to save us. We see Jesus who took our sins upon Himself and was willing to suffer and die in our place. We see God come in the flesh to save us and give us life with Him. That is the overwhelming glory of God that we see every time we open our Bible and every time we go to church or Bible study.

God also makes it clear that He does not excuse sin. He punishes the fathers and the children of those who reject His grace. God’s wrath was fierce against those who did not accept His grace through repentance and faith. But that makes God’s grace all the more amazing—that He is committed to forgiving us for Christ’s sake!

Because we see and know the glory of God’s grace in Christ, we can also look forward to seeing the visible manifestation of God’s glory in heaven. Then we will see not only God’s back, we will see God face to face. We will see God in His full splendor. That will be amazing!

Until then, let us fill our lives—our minds and hearts—with the glory of God’s grace and mercy in Christ. What incredible joy and strength we receive as we face each day and do the things God has called us to do.

So, when you sit down to read your Bible or to hear God’s Word proclaimed to you, begin with this short prayer, “Lord, please show me Your glory.”

Then open your eyes and ears to see and hear what glorious things God has to show you. It will never fail to be anything less than amazing!

—Pastor David Reim
(Pastoral Conference sermon abbreviated)

Studies in First Thessalonians

“...(We) wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come” (1 Thess. 1:10).

Chapter 1:1-10

Paul is writing to us—at long last!

God be praised, Pastors Paul and Silvanus and Timothy are writing to us, and they are telling us plainly that we belong to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! This certainly puts everything into perspective! At Thessalonica they recognize/acknowledge us as their co-partners in the family of God, the Holy Christian Church. Hallelujah!

“Is that so important?” we may ask. Yes, for members of God’s spiritual family enjoy recognizing all members of our tribe, with Jesus—Lord and Savior—as our elder Brother. How marvelous that Paul appreciated what this meant to his friends at Thessalonica!

To such persons the grace of God has clearly descended and dwelt, for between them and God the long war is finally over, and peace has been achieved (v. 2)! With the salutation “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (which is both prayer and benediction), our pastors often summon our hearts to attend to the Word of God, and we settle back in our pews to hear and to heed.

What is not so customary, however, is that the pastor goes on from there with an admission of how he feels about us (“we give thanks to

God...remembering your work of faith...”), how our conversion has affected our relationship (vv. 4-6), and how our Christian witness has impacted others in the USA and overseas (vv. 7-8)—though he often closes (v. 10) with encouragement to wait faithfully for Jesus to return.

We are nudged to ask, “Why? Why did Paul rehearse all these parameters for the Thessalonian Christians?”

Because almost two years had elapsed since they had been separated. He missed them, and Satan had made it impossible for Paul to get back to them earlier (1 Thess. 2:18, 3:5) to shepherd them through the tough times of being shunned by their synagogue friends. (Acts 17:1-9 gives a blow-by-blow account of the upheaval.) They were being persecuted, and Paul hurt for them.

Besides, since Paul was being maligned by the Jews, his fellow-Christians hurt for him, too! Both shepherds and flock were anxious for one another’s welfare, and when he could endure the suspense no longer, Paul sent Timothy over from Athens to assure these folks that he had not abandoned them—and neither had God.

Spiritual Bolstering!

That’s some of the background as to

why this letter gets so wonderfully personal. Paul admits that he prayed about them often (v. 2), and that the memories of how they had treated him were still sharp and clear (v. 3). He knew Satan was whispering at their windows, so he bolsters them with the facts: God had always been on their side (v. 4), and He had proved His love to them by doing His great miracle in their hearts (v. 5).

Further, when we get to those places where Paul mentions himself, he's not wandering off track, for he is counter-attacking the hostile Jews who were always throwing it up in their Christian faces that Paul and his buddies were fly-by-night preachers of no account, rabble rousers and revolutionaries (Acts 17:6-8).

Paul steps up to the plate: "When you hear such things, dear friends, just remember what kind of men we were among you (v. 5), and what manner of entry we had to you (v. 9). We stand on our record. You became followers of us

and of the Lord because we helped bring you to Jesus as your Savior, and in Jesus you have found a new reason for living. You changed into God's dear children in word and deed, so that you became ambassadors for Christ everywhere you had contacts (vv. 7-8), and folks could see what it's like to discard Satan and to serve the living and true God (v. 9).

"In sum, you folks have passed from death to life! You have a future in heaven! You will meet Jesus on the other side of your graves! You can face your Creator without fear that you are in for a bad time of it, for Jesus delivers you from the Judgment that awaits this world, a colony of Satan.

"I want you to know that I'm proud to know you and have you as my brothers and sisters! I'll see you as soon as I can, God willing!"

...More to come in the next installment in this series a couple months from now!

—Paul R. Koch



ILC Campus, Eau Claire: the Annex (Girls' Dorm) in front of Ingram Hall and South Hall



The Christian Citizen

—Fourth in a Series—

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: STEWARDSHIP OF THE LAND

How an individual views the origins of the Earth will affect how he views the use of it. We know that God has created all things and that the Earth and its environment are gifts from Him.

Because this truth is so widely discounted and rejected, we can expect many errant perspectives concerning the Earth. You can be sure that there is some false thinking afoot when a society champions the preservation of animals at the same time as it champions the killing of human babies.

We'll briefly consider a few misguided views concerning the Earth and then in contrast present also God's view.

The "Mother Earth" view: Some individuals who reject the truth of God's creation look to "Mother Earth" as the source of life. In this case, our planet must be protected at all costs. Furthermore, the things in the Earth—plants, animals, mankind—are all equally part of what the Earth has given us and should be accorded equal status with one another.

Under this perspective, we are brothers and sisters with the plants and animals. God's Word refutes this false thinking when it says, "Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things...[who] worshiped and served the creature

rather than the Creator" (Rom. 1:22-23,25).

The "Me First" view: Another approach to the environment is one that simply looks at "what's in it for me?" Some people show virtually no care for the resources God has placed in the world. They pursue whatever course will bring profit or prestige to themselves with no regard for the Earth's well-being.

Poachers are an example of those who operate with this view. Those who view the environment in this way forget that there is nothing in the Earth that is theirs. Rather, the Earth and everything in it belongs to God. He is the owner, and we are answerable to Him for its use. "The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein. For He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the waters" (Ps. 24:1-2).

The "Sky is Falling" view: Environmental issues are sometimes presented in a way that produces fear: "If we do this or don't do that, the world as we know it will cease to exist!"

It is important to understand that this view grows out of evolutionary belief. If someone believes that our existence is governed by random happenings and evolutionary process and that there is no eternal God who created all things and is preserving all

things, then it is a fearful prospect to see anything change. If one relies on the Earth as his god, then a change in the pattern of weather, the diminishing supply of a particular resource, and many other things will send you into unbelievable fear.

But true hope and confidence aren't in the durability of the Earth. These things are found in the faithfulness of the Creator who sustains the Earth. Confidence in God's preservation does not lead to a cavalier attitude concerning the environment. But living as stewards in the Earth, we do not need to be afraid that the Earth will fail to support our life and well-being. God will preserve the Earth until Judgment Day. "While the earth remains, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease" (Gen. 8:22).

God's View: A proper view toward the stewardship of our environment begins with Creation. "God blessed [Adam and Eve], and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth'" (Gen. 1:28).

God created mankind as the crown of all creation. He created the Earth and everything in it to serve mankind and his needs. The Earth and its resources are ours to administrate and use as a gift from God.

When we remember that everything on the Earth belongs to the Almighty God and that we are His stewards—caretakers—it will be a reminder to use what is His wisely.

It is neither wise nor is it faithful stewardship to carelessly use the resources that God has given us by pol-

"...God created mankind as the crown of all creation. He created the Earth and everything in it to serve mankind and his needs. The Earth and its resources are ours to administrate and use as a gift from God."

luting and destroying them. It is neither wise nor is it faithful stewardship of the resources God has given us to use them wastefully with no regard to their limitations. It is neither wise nor is it faithful stewardship of the resources God has given us to disregard alternative ways of meeting our needs that would have a lesser negative impact on our environment. It is neither wise nor is it faithful stewardship of the resources God has given us to sacrifice the quality of the Earth for self-indulgence and luxury when our needs could be met in a less destructive way.

As Christians we seek to be wise and faithful stewards of the resources God has given us. At the same time we should not be afraid to use those things which God has given us to use.

A proper and God-pleasing approach uses the gifts He has given, but does so with care and wisdom as wise stewards of a beautiful gift given to us for our time of grace.

"O LORD, You preserve man and beast. How precious is Your loving kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings" (Ps. 36:6-7).

—Pastor Wayne C. Eichstadt





**General Pastoral Conference
Immanuel Lutheran College
Eau Claire, Wisconsin
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In front of the student commons building, Pastors and Professors in attendance



ILC President John Pfeiffer—a fourth stooge??



Pastor Philip Matzke delivers his paper



Pastor Dennis Rieken's turn to speak



Pastors at careful attention



Break time: Pastors Dave Naumann, Ted Barthels, Paul Naumann, Mike Roehl, Norm Greve, Mike Schierenbeck, John Johannes



Prof. Michael Sydow's 40th anniversary in the ministry was noted; wife Kathy, mother Ruth

Civil Government

What do people most often like to talk about in their daily conversations?

Two areas of discussion high on the list are the weather and government (or politics). When the topic of government comes up, invariably individuals are either complaining or debating about something. Some of the issues of debate do not simply come down to human judgment and wisdom, but more importantly to the rights and wrongs of morality.

It is a sad commentary on society to find people trying to settle debates over issues of morality in civil laws and ethics in governmental affairs on the basis of personal opinion. In other words, they want to govern and be governed on the basis of what is right in their own (sinful) eyes (cf. Deut. 12:8; Prov. 12:15), rather than on the basis of God's unchangeable precepts or according to the dictates of their God-given conscience.

What can be confusing especially for unlearned Christians is to hear of disagreements and debates between religious leaders in christendom over the moral rightness or wrongness of various civil laws or government rule (for example, issues such as abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, stem cell research, and same-sex marriage). Some disagreements may involve whether or not a Christian can rightfully engage in some forms of civil disobedience.

Concerning the subject of the separation of Church and State, extremists



exist on both ends of the spectrum. On the one hand, some want freedom from God and religion in all matters relating to the State; on the other hand, others want religion taught and practiced in various civil agencies (for example—prayer in public schools).

In the period of the Reformation, confessional Lutherans were faced with some extremists (known as Anabaptists) who believed it was unchristian and sinful to be involved in civil functions. Also, not only did they hold that a Christian achieved perfect living by not engaging in various civil functions, but their conviction was that Christians should establish a theocracy, doing so even by means of overthrowing the civil government!

Drawing from what the apostle Paul revealed by the Spirit (see Romans 13:1ff), the Lutheran confessors declared their belief on this matter: "It is taught among us that all government

WE BELIEVE & CONFESS

THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

A CONFESSION OF FAITH PRESENTED IN AUGSBURG
BY CERTAIN PRINCES AND CITIES TO HIS IMPERIAL
MAJESTY CHARLES V IN THE YEAR 1530

Psalm 119:46

*“I will also speak of thy testimonies before kings, and shall
not be put to shame.”*

ARTICLES OF FAITH AND DOCTRINE

XVI. Civil Government

It is taught among us that all government in the world and all established rule and laws were instituted and ordained by God for the sake of good order, and that Christians may without sin occupy civil offices or serve as princes and judges, render decisions and pass sentence according to imperial and other existing laws, punish evildoers with the sword, engage in just wars, serve as soldiers, buy and sell, take required oaths, possess property, be married etc.

Condemned here are the Anabaptists, who teach that none of the things indicated above is Christian.

Also condemned are those who teach that Christian perfection requires the forsaking of house and home, wife and child, and the renunciation of such activities as are mentioned above. Actually, true perfection consists alone of proper fear of God and real faith in God, for the Gospel does not teach an outward and temporal but an inward and external mode of existence and righteousness of the heart. The Gospel does not overthrow civil authority, the state, and marriage, but requires that all these be kept as true orders of God and that everyone, each according to his own calling, manifest Christian love and genuine good works in his station of life. Accordingly Christians are obliged to be subject to civil authority and obey its commands and laws in all that can be done without sin. But when commands of the civil authority cannot be obeyed without sin, we must obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29)

in the world and all established rule and laws were instituted and ordained by God for the sake of good order.”

It is important to remember that this applies to “all government,” both good and evil. No matter what form our government takes, it is to be regarded as God’s representative which has been set up to maintain law and order for our blessing; and also that government officials are to be shown due honor, respect, and obedience.

In Article 16 where the Lutheran

confessors countered the religious extremists’ contentions forbidding involvement in civil government, they listed what is entirely permissible and even God-pleasing. Reading over this list, you find items that religious folks in various Christian denominations still today regard as sinful.

THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION states “that Christians may without sin occupy civil offices or serve as princes and judges, render decisions and pass sentence according to imperial and

other existing laws, punish evildoers with the sword (capital punishment), engage in just wars, serve as soldiers, buy and sell, take required oaths (Quakers oppose wars, soldiering, and oath taking—MG), possess property, be married, etc.”

Addressing the false notion of perfectionism—that a Christian can attain perfection for a period of time in his life (which is still taught by the Holiness bodies today)—THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION properly points to the gospel of Christ, which teaches that only through the imputed righteousness of Christ which is received through faith do we stand righteous before God.

Then also, the Lutheran Confession is quick to point out that Christian living involves bearing fruits of righteousness, namely, “accordingly Christians are obliged to be subject to civil authority and obey its commands.”

Article 16 also answers the question about when it is permissible and even necessary to engage in civil disobedience (in not going along with the laws

of the government). It is stated that “when commands of the civil authority cannot be obeyed without sin, we must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).” Not only are immoral laws on the books in our land (laws we cannot go along with such as permitting abortion, euthanasia, and same-sex marriage), but the time may come when civil laws would prohibit the church to preach against such sinful behavior—something else we will not go along with, for conscience reasons.

At the outset of our article, we pointed out that citizens have a propensity to complain about the government. Instead of complaining about the government, it would be God-pleasing for Christian citizens to do whatever they can to rectify what is amiss—such as, by informing our government representatives of our views, voting for those who best represent our principles of living, and praying for “all those who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence” (1 Tim. 2:2).

—Pastor Mark Gullerud



CROSS PURPOSES



IN UNITY OF FAITH

Recently, we had the privilege to preach at another of our CLC congregations. We also were able to sit in the pew to listen to two other pastors expound and teach the Word from the pulpit. We participated in the installation of still another pastor who is taking up the Lord’s work in a new loca-

tion. In a few weeks a seminary student will be ordained and installed as pastor of our sister congregation in Weslaco, Texas. Further, we were edified by attendance at the General Pastoral conference of the CLC in June.

Do we all appreciate the blessing that we enjoy in our fellowship?

Surely, we are not to sit in the pew and simply absorb what is taught and preached. We are to listen with watchfulness and care to what is taught. It is the Christ-believer's responsibility to "search the Scriptures" daily and regularly to "find out whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11).

Nevertheless, doing so reminds us again of what a blessing we have—in whatever CLC congregation we worship, we are hearing the same message. We know this from years of observation and listening. We know it also because the exercise of doctrinal discipline is still in vogue among us. Unlike many other church bodies in our day, there are consequences for a pastor who would depart from the Scriptures and from the Lutheran Confessions drawn from the Scriptures. He cannot continue as a pastor among us!

Confidence with vigilance is our attitude. Confidence without vigilance dare never overtake us!

Pastors of the CLC are no different in many respects than pastors of other church bodies. In that ministers of any fellowship are humans, they are sinners. All are subject to weaknesses of one sort or another. Every servant in any fellowship is subject to persuasion and emotion. All are subject to temptation. All are infected with the desire to be liked. Indeed every servant is "an earthen vessel—a clay pot (2 Cor. 4:7).

Our church body is made up of such pastors—as well as people in the pew—like unto those of other churches. So what then gives us cause for thanksgiving, and fills us with confidence? It is quite simple. Each of our pastors, teachers, and professors is instilled with a respect for the Scriptures as the inspired, holy Word



of God. No pastor among us enters the ministry with a hidden agenda, or with a doubt concerning the source of Truth. He is (among other things) reminded that his responsibility is "to preach the Gospel of our Lord among us in its truth and purity, and to administer the Sacraments in accordance with the inspired Word of God and the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as laid down in the Book of Concord of 1580, and to establish and maintain sound Lutheran practice at all times..." (Call form) At one's installation the question is asked, "Wilt Thou preach and teach the pure Word of God in accordance with the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and adorn the doctrine of our Savior with a godly and holy life?" There is no "wiggle room" in the divine charge or in the congregation's rightful expectations of that man who is to shepherd the flock of God.

When questions arise among us, we go to the Scripture to find the answer. In the pulpit the faithful servant will bring the law and the gospel. He will convict the sinner by the law of God so that the sinner, confessing his sin, may be assured of the grace that is in Christ Jesus—the grace whereby God has put

away sin for Jesus' sake. The faithful shepherd will let the gospel predominate. God neither desires nor does He ask for a single pastor who cannot honestly confess with Paul, "for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16)

Some outside our fellowship may wonder how we can speak with such confidence. So be it. It is so because where the Word of God is the foundation of faith and hope and teaching, where people stand committed to that Word, where there is a healthy respect of the Lord and for the sheep He has entrusted to the pastor's care, and where honesty before God and to one's vow is still important, there God's truth and God's promise inspire such confidence. We are convinced that our pas-

tors understand the seriousness of the responsibility, "Keep that which is committed to thy trust" (1 Tim. 6:20).

May it ever be so among us as Paul wrote the Word of the Lord to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it" (Col. 4:17)!

Dear friends, count your blessings, not the least of which in our church body is the privilege to call your pastor without resorting to a "pulpit committee" and without having to listen to his sermon through a filter.

To that end, may God's people love the Truth and pray for their pastor! May the people never desire anything but God's truth, and pastors never proclaim anything else!

—Pastor Daniel Fleischer



New Books On the Book of Books—Beware!

"Bible means 'Book.' The Bible, the 'Book of books,' is the Word of God, His final revelation to man. It is the court of highest appeal."

The various catechisms in use among us have some such description of the Bible. The one above is found in *Catechetical Helps* (Concordia Publishing House, 1970) by Erwin Kurth.

What moves us to write is something we read in a monthly gratis magazine favored editors of religious magazines such as the *Lutheran Spokesman*. The *METRO-LUTHERAN* is an ELCA publication. It defines itself as "an independent Voice for all Lutherans in 20 counties of East-cen-

tral Minnesota and West-central Wisconsin"; further, its masthead describes the magazine's purpose as "(providing) factual information reflective of activities and concerns existing among Lutheran people, their churches and their serving affiliates."

Perusing the magazine, it soon becomes clear it is not by and for Lutherans who are of the conservative bent. What caught our attention in the April 2005 issue was a book review section titled "Four Non-literal readings of Holy Scripture." The

review(er) features new titles which have recently hit religious bookshelves. The four books are *BIBLICAL AMNESIA* (Gustafson, 173 pages); *CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT FAIRY TALES* (Rigas, 473 pages); *READING THE BIBLE AGAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME* (Borg, 321 pages), and *RESCUING GOD FROM CHRISTIANITY* (Erlandson, 210 pages).

We can't share everything the review(er) says—are we surprised to hear that all comments are positive?—about these books. Catch the flavor from the following paragraphs:

“While ELCA—and most mainline Christian—clergy have known for at least 40 years that a literal, harmonized reading of the books of Scripture is problematic, the laity in most congregations have not become aware of the arguments until recently—in part, thanks to the assertions of a project called ‘The Jesus Seminar’.

“Two other realities, however, have propelled mainline Christian laypeople toward finding non-literal ways of understanding the Bible. One is the steady departure of young (and some

not-so-young) people from mainline congregations. Among other things, they maintain they can't reconcile Bible teaching with ongoing scientific discovery.

“The other factor is the rise of right-wing, conservative biblical religionists in the U.S., evidenced by the dynamics that helped bring in the current government. This has alarmed some folk.

“A steady stream of recent books have addressed the question, ‘Can we make sense out of the Bible without reading it literally?’ Four recent titles answer the question with a resounding YES!”

Thereupon the review(er) proceeds to speak positively, even glowingly, of the books mentioned above, one of whose authors (Borg) was a member of the Jesus Seminar group. All four authors “believe there is no real future for Christianity if believers are expected and required to take everything in the Bible at face value.” All the authors call on Christians to “read the Bible with new eyes.”

All of which prompts us to say that it's high time to blow the dust off the

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PURPOSE (CLC)

II. OUR SOURCE OF TRUTH

In our teaching and preaching we rely entirely upon the Bible, all the books of the Old and New Testaments. We regard the Bible as the very Word of God, verbally inspired (every word “God breathed”) and completely without error. Our mission is to communicate the words and message of the Bible faithfully. We believe there is no other divine source of true doctrine and instruction in the way of salvation and in God-pleasing living.

We regard as ungodly and destructive every effort by which man would change, add to, or set aside a single inspired word. God's Word is clear and sufficient in all matters of faith and life. We deplore the widespread unfaithfulness—found even in some professing Christian churches—which reduces the Bible to the status of a human document containing errors and myths.

2 Timothy 3:16-17, John 10:35, Jeremiah 23:28, Psalm 119:105

BRIEF STATEMENT (1932)

1. We teach that the Holy Scriptures differ from all other books in the world in that they are the Word of God. They are the Word of God because the holy men of God who wrote the Scriptures wrote only that which the Holy Ghost communicated to them by inspiration, 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21. We teach also that the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures is not a so-called “theological deduction,” but that it is taught by direct statements of the Scriptures, 2 Tim. 3:16, John 10:35, Rom. 3:2; 1 Cor. 2:13...

3. We reject the doctrine which under the name of science has gained wide popularity in the Church of our day that Holy Scripture is not in all its parts the Word of God, but in part the Word of God and in part the word of man and hence does, or at least might, contain error. We reject this erroneous doctrine as horrible and blasphemous, since it flatly contradicts Christ and His holy apostles, sets up men as judges over the Word of God, and thus overthrows the foundation of the Christian Church and its faith.

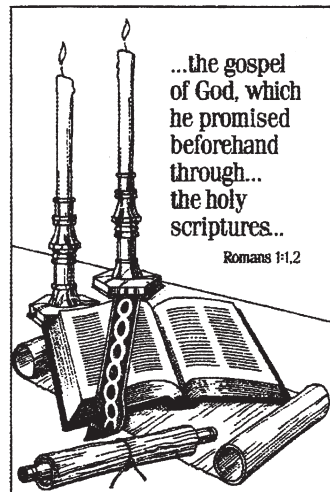
cover of far more worthy books about the Book of books. One such title is a book by Th. Engelder, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1944, entitled *SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE BROKEN*. The date alone indicates that some sixty years ago already there were great concerns about serious “leaks in the dam” on the doctrine of the divine inspiration—authority, reliability, clarity—of Holy Scripture.

Engelder’s 500-page hard-cover book provides a veritable flood of good information and “holy arguments” in support of Biblical inspiration and infallibility, all undergirded by the word of our Lord Christ Himself who first spoke the word used for the book’s title (see John 10:35).

Some quotes: “...*The Lutheran Church in America has evidently in its development reached definite cross-roads. It must decide whether it will adhere to the time-honored teaching of verbal inspiration and the inerrancy of the Scriptures or join the so-called progressive group, which without hesitation avows its belief that the Bible con-*

tains errors...May...our dear Lutheran Church defiantly say to all prophets trying to rob our sacred BOOK of its authority and reliability, ‘The Scripture cannot be Broken.’” (Preface, by W. Arndt)

“...*We must realize what the Church would lose if she surrendered Verbal Inspiration. We would lose our Bible. The battle for Verbal Inspiration is not a mock battle played by children. It is not some unseemly brawl among*



squabbling theologians...No, the Church is engaged in a life-or-death struggle. It is a battle for her most precious possession. *The Battle for Verbal Inspiration is a battle for the Bible.*" (Engelder, p. 410)

"...Beware, I say, of this 'divine-human Scripture.' It is a devil's mask; for at last it manufactures such a Bible after which I certainly would not care to be a Bible Christian, namely, that the Bible should henceforth be no more than any other good book, a book which I should have to read with constant sharp discrimination in order not to be led into error. In a word, it is unspeakable what the devil seeks by this 'divine-human' Scripture'." (Dr. C.F.W. Walther, p. 414)

"...Today Satan is striking not so much at individual doctrines, but rather at the foundation of all doctrines, at Scripture itself...By yielding up the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture the Church would abandon every Christian doctrine to the whim and caprice of men. Nothing could give Satan and the enemies of the Church greater pleasure than to find that here in the Lutheran Church of America, too, as in that of Germany, this truth is being questioned and denied. It may at

first sight seem an unwarranted statement, but it is actually so: the denial of the doctrine of inspiration overthrows the Christian theology...If the theologian gives up the inspiration of Scripture, the old mighty gegraptai ("It is written!"—ed.) has lost its force and value for him...A veritable deluge of all manner of skeptical questions concerning the origin and content of Scripture is unloosed, which cannot be checked and controlled." (Dr. Wm. Bente, p. 422)

Each of the above sixty-years-old-plus quotes may be dated, but they are timeless, not outdated!

Finally, Christian friends, it is the Bible reader—simple people like you and I—who lose if and when we succumb to the read-the-Bible-through-new-eyes mindset as suggested by these new books critical of the Book of books.

The concluding words in Engelder's classic book read: "*Taking up the battle cry gegraptai, as the Captain of our salvation sounded it against Satan, let us earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints and preserve unto the Church the precious doctrine of verbal inspiration.*"

—Pastor Paul Fleischer



Sunday School,
Zion Lutheran
Church, Atlanta
(Lawrenceville),
Ga. Nathanael
Mayhew is pastor

—The Bread of Life—

Daily Bible readings for home devotions

October, 2005

In the book of **Ruth** we see the other side of Israel's faith-life, a contrast to the book of Judges. It shows the true spirit of Israel and traces the genealogy of David, ancestor of our Savior-King.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>A thought from the reading</u>	<u>Hymn</u>
1	RUTH 1:1-14	Attracted by Naomi's way of life	397,1-3
2	1:15-22	And won over by her God	397,4-6
3	2:1-13	Boaz conducted himself admirably	622,1-2
4	2:14-23	In kindness and kinship under one King	623,3
5	3:1-18	A woman of worth joins a man of honor	471,1-3
6	4:1-22	May you prosper in Bethlehem!	471,4-6

The history of Israel as Kingdom of God consists of three periods:

1) guidance of the prophets (Moses to Samuel), 2) rule of the kings (Saul to Babylonian Captivity), and 3) reign of the high priests (Ezra to Christ). They all pointed to our Prophet, King, and High Priest of the Kingdom of God.

The book of **I SAMUEL** closes the first period and begins the second.

7	1 SAM. 1:1-28	Asked of the Lord and lent to Him	459,2
8	2:1-11	The Magnificat to another miracle-son	454,7-8
9	2:12-25	Eli's sons did not heed their father	421,1-3
10	2:26-36	Self-serving replaced with God-serving	421,4-5
11	3:1-21	Treasure what is rare and valuable!	296,1-4
12	4:1-22	Does God come to punish—or to bless?	14,1-5
13	6:1-7:1	Who knows what to do with God?	19,1-3
14	7:2-17	Thus far the Lord has helped us	33,1-3
15	8:1-22	They have rejected Me as their King	411,4-5
16	9:1-26	This one shall reign over My people	37,1-3
17	9:27-10:24	Long live the King!	73,1-2
18	12:1-25	Only fear the Lord, and serve Him...	73,3-5
19	13:1-15	But you have done foolishly	325,5-6
20	14:31-46	For he has worked with God this day	423,5-6
21	15:1-9	Sin equals unwillingness to obey	427,1-4
22	15:10-35	Obedience first; repentance is second-best	427,5-7
23	16:1-13	The Lord looks on the heart	429,1
24	17:20-37	Go, and the Lord be with you!	429,2
25	17:38-51	Their champion was dead, and they fled	265,1-5
26	18:1-16	Did Saul's daughter's love compensate?	258,1-3
27	19:1-17	Or did Saul's son's love redeem him?	258,4-5
28	20:27-42	May the Lord be between you and me	257
29	24:1-22	Let the Lord judge between you and me	238,1-3
30	28:3-19	Satan has his ways of deceiving men	261,1-3
31	31:1-13	So ends the tale of Saul's defection	260,1-6



#9: What is my status with God?

If God has made an impression on your heart, and if He has convinced you that Jesus has redeemed you from being eternally lost, and that Father God welcomes you into His family due to Jesus' living and dying for you, then you are ready to declare so before God and others by saying with confidence—

“I am sure that Jesus is my Lord and Savior, and I claim the gift of all His merits as my own. I am happy that He adopts me as one of His dear children. Through Jesus I am welcomed into the family of God's children! I have God's own word on it that He really wants me as His child: ‘God is not willing that any (including me) should perish, but that all should come to repentance’ (2 Peter 3:9).

“Depending on His love, I claim my place in God's family: ‘If you(I) confess with your(my) mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your(my) heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you(I) will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation’ (Romans 10:9-10). My Father assures me, ‘...you are all (including me) the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus’ (Galatians 3:20).

“If anyone asks who or what got into my heart and brought me around from fearing God to admiring and loving Him, from worrying about dying to peaceful confidence that I am headed for heaven, from being Satan's toy to being God's child—I can give God's own

answer, because ‘this is the work of God of God, that you (including me) believe in Him whom He sent’ (John 6:29). He assures me that He has been at work in my heart and life: ‘It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure’ (Philippians 2:13).

“This teaching of Scripture is called ‘conversion’ or ‘regeneration,’ words that mean God has come into my heart, convinced me by His Word that Jesus is God's gift to me, He is my Savior from Satan, and Jesus is my blessed assurance of God's favor.

“Because Jesus bore my punishment in His own body on the cross of Calvary, I will not be punished and I am free from a guilty conscience.

“Thanks be to God, I am free at last! Free at last!”

“And whosoever cometh,
I will not cast him out.”
O patient love of Jesus,
That drives away our doubt,
Which, tho' we be unworthy
Of love so great and free,
Invites us very sinners
To come, dear Lord, to Thee!
(TLH #276:4)

—Paul R. Koch



Pres. Pfeiffer congratulates the celebrant (see p. 13)

Announcements

West Central Pastoral Conference
September 13-15, 2005
10:00 a.m. Mountain time
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Cheyenne, Wyoming

Agenda:

- + Old Testament Exegesis (Malachi 2:5ff)—
Pastor James Sandeen
- + New Testament Exegesis (Romans
9:10ff)—Pastor Paul Fleischer
- + In what sense can we properly speak of a
church that is (in)visible?—Pastor Frank Gantt
- + Review of antinomian controversy—Pastor
Michael Roehl
- + Dealing with delinquent members (termi-
nate, excommunicate, etc.)—Pastor Peter
Reim
- + Study of birth control—Pastor Andrew
Schaller
- + Homiletical Study: Presenter's choice—
Pastor James Naumann
- + Study of words translated "reward", "repay",
"recompense", etc. (including apodidomi)—
Pastor George Dummann
- + The "little season" of Revelation 20—Pastor
Roland Gurgel
- + The importance of marriage as a public com-
mitment—Pastor Timothy Wheaton
- + A short and long list of essential memory
passages—Pastor Mark Gurath

Chaplain: Pastor John Klatt

—Pastor Mark Gurath, Secretary

South Eastern Pastoral Conference
October 11-13, 2005
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
West Columbia, South Carolina

Agenda:

- + New Testament Exegesis (Colossians
2:8ff)—Pastor Daniel Fleischer
- + Old Testament Exegesis (Genesis 1:14ff)—
Pastor Matthew Hanel
- + Isagogical Study of Nahum—Pastor Paul
Larsen
- + Study on the word "Hades" in the New
Testament—Pastor Todd Ohlmann
- + A Review of the Biblical Principles of the
Women's Role in the Home, Church, and
Society—Pastor Nathanael Mayhew
- + Greek word study on "receiving" and
"accepting" Christ—Pastor Dennis Rieken
- + Matthew 28:18-20 in light of the church
growth principles, foreign and domestic mis-
sions, and mission models—Pastor John
Schierenbeck

+ A Critical Review of the book "A Purpose
Driven Life"—Pastor Luke Bernthal

Chaplain: Pastor Vance Fossum

Communion Service Speaker: Pastor Karl
Stewart

—Pastor Nathanael Mayhew, Secretary

Installation

In accord with our usage and order, Nathan Pfeiffer, who was called by Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Hecla, S.Dak. to be its pastor, was installed on July 17, 2005. Assisting were Pastors George Dummann, Elton Hallauer, John H. Johannes, John M. Johannes, David Schierenbeck, and Professor John Pfeiffer.

—Pastor Michael Roehl

Announcement

Upon recommendation of the Reentry Committee, I have certified Lawrence Bade as eligible for a call into the preaching ministry of the Church of the Lutheran Confession. His name will be placed on the official CLC Roster.

*—Pastor John Schierenbeck,
President of the CLC*

Cover: John Fox

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