

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

...SCRIPTURE teaches that God has already declared the whole world to be righteous in Christ, Rom. 5:19; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; Rom. 4:25; that therefore not for the sake of their good works, but without the works of the Law, by grace, for Christ's sake, *He justifies*, that is, *accounts as righteous*, all those who believe in Christ, that is, believe, accept, and rely on, the fact that for Christ's sake their sins are forgiven. Thus the Holy Ghost testifies through St. Paul: "There is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," Rom. 3:23, 24. And again: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law," Rom. 3:28.

THROUGH this doctrine alone Christ is given the *honor* due Him, namely, that through His holy life and innocent suffering and death He is our Savior. And through this doctrine alone can poor sinners have the abiding *comfort* that God is assuredly gracious to them. We reject as *apostasy from the Christian religion* all doctrines whereby man's own works and merit are mingled into the article of justification before God. For the Christian religion is the faith that we have forgiveness of sins and salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, Acts 10:43.

Of Justification (a portion of paragraphs 17 & 18)
THE BRIEF STATEMENT OF 1932



AUGUST 2007, VOL. 50 NO. 2

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

As we approach the beginning of another school year, it is fitting that we pause to consider the importance of Christian education.

However, sometimes I think we intend to associate “education” only with school. Due to the amount of time young people spend in school, certainly it is incumbent that parents are aware of what their children are being taught.

But doesn’t Christian education encompass more than school?

No doubt pastors and teachers have a tremendous influence on the growth of young people. However, it is often the case that children who do not receive Christian reinforcement at home fail to take to heart lessons learned at school, or they are filled with doubt as to what is the Truth.

Parents should view the Christian school as a help in carrying out their job in training “up a child in the way he should go” (Prov. 22:6). The responsi-

bility still lies with the parents.

I used to have a poster in my office which read, “The home is the first school, and parents are the first teachers.” So, as many of us prepare to send our young ones off to school this fall, let us reflect on our role in their spiritual education. The example set in our homes of Bible readings, devotions, prayers, and spiritual songs will educate our children as well—at the same time, neglecting these things also “educates” a child.

Can you think of a more important role for a parent than this—leading and educating by example?

Another aspect of Christian education I wish to touch on is the influence of peers in the lives of young people.

Whether we like to admit it or not, our child’s peers often influence our child more than the parents do, especially in the teen years. What a blessing it is to have our children surrounded by peers who know Christ as their

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Savior—in other words, whose worldview is rooted in God’s Word!

When, over the years, parents have asked me about sending their children to Immanuel Lutheran High School/College for an education, this has been one of my main “selling points.” Instead of having friends who might lead our children away from God’s Word, by God’s grace a positive peer pressure will help to drive them to His Word.

Young people today face so many temptations from the world around them. They need all the help they can get in warding off such destructive foes!

Permit me to extend some words of encouragement to young people as well:

- Do not underestimate the role that God would have you play in Christian education;
- Be a friend to your classmates, a Christian friend—someone who is going to give good advice regard-

less of popularity:

- Be an active part of the educational process;
- Assist your teachers in carrying out their work;
- Pray for your family and school;
- Diligently use the gifts God has given you to further His Kingdom work.
- Prioritize your life by putting “the one thing needful” first.

May the Lord richly bless this school year with parents, teachers, and students working together for the spiritual good of all.

I pray Thee, dear Lord Jesus
My heart to keep and train
That I Thy holy temple
From youth to age remain.
Turn Thou my tho’ts forever
From worldly wisdom’s lore;
If I but learn to know Thee,
I shall not want for more. Amen.
(TLH #655)

—Prof. Joseph Lau
Eau Claire, Wis.



“Back to School...”—

First School, Then Goliath

What young student has not been awed by the courage of David when facing Goliath? What Christian adult has never dreamed of confronting overwhelming challenges with such confidence and expertise? Youngster versus giant; one hard stone against one puffed-up head; one blaspheming pagan versus one faithful shepherd; one sling, one severed head—and the battle was the Lord’s.

Amazing as this victory was, I’ve always been more amazed at what

went before, for mere lads without training and experience do not generally take on Goliaths.

And neither did young David. He first went to school—granted, not a place we normally associate with ‘back to school’ every fall. David attended ‘King of Shepherds’ school, and received degrees in music, poetry, and prudent speech; he developed into a young man of valor with the necessary skill and discipline to fight against ferocious and threatening beasts.

In short, God was preparing him for future challenges and for his work as God’s servant—the anointed King of Israel.

In this school’s classroom, David developed and used skills against both lions and bears which were intent on grabbing lambs from his flock. When this had happened, young David had chased down the beast, attacked it, and rescued the lamb from its jaws.

Then, when the lion or bear rose up against David, he caught it by its chin, smote and killed it (1 Sam. 17:34-36). [Centuries later David’s descendant and Lord would also grab ‘the roaring lion’ by its head, defeat him on the cross, and so rescued from Satan’s maw many precious lambs and sheep whom He brought into His blessed sheepfold.]

We don’t know the specific species of lion and bear. It seems like David’s weapon was not a sword, but only a shepherd’s staff. And one can only guess at the technique used.

“...That God may teach him...”

But for a lad who chased them down—grasping and dispatching them face-to-face—putting down Goliath at a ‘safe’ stone’s-throw distance must have been like child’s play. David had concluded, “The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of the Philistine” (v. 37).

The courage, trust, and skill young David exhibited was remarkable. Most men would have run from these beasts or climbed the nearest tree (Israel’s soldiers certainly cowered before their enemy).

But David had attended school and



learned his lessons well—knowledge in animal behavior and physiology; development of physical skills and attainment of wisdom. Above all, he learned that daunting and dangerous problems of life can be courageously overcome; that even seemingly impossible tasks become easy when God is present to ensure success.

‘Tis the season for many to return to school. The temptation is to think of school classrooms, catechism classes, and Sunday Schools in terms of drudgery, boredom, and too much work. (This writer also remembers thinking of one of his public grade school teachers as an ‘old bear.’)

But who wants to be a Philistine? That very word—besides signifying a defiant enemy of God—has also come to mean ‘one uninformed in an area of knowledge,’ and ‘without intellectual or artistic values.’ Young David certainly was not that, for he had studied hard and learned well in green pastures at the feet of God.

And David continued his ‘school days’ throughout life. In Psalm 25 David prayed that God would teach him and show him His ways.

So also the very David-like Psalm 119 is full of such entreaties and inspired wisdom. “Blessed are You, O Lord!...Make me understand the way

of your statutes. So shall I meditate on Your wondrous works...You Yourself have taught me. How sweet are Your words to my taste...Your word has given me life...Great are Your tender mercies, O Lord."

Is there a better school than the one David attended? A better student example? Remember, first school, then the various Goliaths and Philistines of life. First skill, understanding, and

trust—then victory!

"You have dealt well with Your servant, O Lord, according to Your word. Teach me good judgment and knowledge" (Ps. 119:65f). "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the Lord our God" (Ps. 20:7)

—Pastor David Fuerstenau
Ketchikan, Alaska



Meditation on the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper—

"So he (Moses) cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree; when he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet." (Exodus 15:25)

Sweet Refreshment

The children of Israel were but six days out on their journey from Egypt to the Promised Land when they began to complain for the second time.

Forget that they had witnessed the mighty hand of the Lord as He had humbled Pharaoh through the ten plagues. Never mind that they had three days earlier crossed the Red Sea on dry ground and seen the Egyptian army totally destroyed. We might excuse those not in the front of the line for forgetting that the Lord God Almighty was leading them by the pillar of cloud and fire. So perhaps they had reason to complain when they came to the bitter waters of Marah.

The hope of refreshing water had been snatched from them—so who wouldn't complain?

Moses then cried out to the Lord Who in a simple manner turned the bitter waters into drinkable, sweet, refreshing water for all who came to

drink of it. The solution did not come about by thunder or lightning. Moses did not stretch out his hand over the water, waving his staff and crying, "abracadabra." No, the Lord showed Moses a tree; when that tree was cast into the water, it took away its bitterness.

Our lives are so similar to those of the children of Israel in their journey. So soon we too forget what great things the Lord has done and how marvelously He leads us through this life. Often He has by a mighty hand and by mighty works delivered us from one trouble or another, and when the next crisis arises, we so often complain. The waters of life become bitter, and we cry out that we are unable to drink of them.

The Tree of the Cross

Yet as bothersome and bitter as every-day life may be, greater can be the bitterness of soul. How quickly our



sins—past and present—can rise up before us, making bitter our soul. So easily we can fall prey to the thought and temptation laid before us by the devil: “If you truly are a child of God, how can you justify your sinful life? Surely a child of God does not do what you are doing and have done!”

At such times, and when one longs for the bitterness to go away, look no further than a special “tree” which—when it is tossed into the waters of life and soul—takes the bitterness away, refreshing and restoring the soul.

No, we speak not of an oak tree or a palm tree. We speak of the tree of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ on which He hung bodily, there shedding His blood for you, for me, for all sinners for the remission of their sins!

Of that broken body we, through faith, partake in the eating of the bread;

of that shed blood we, through faith, partake in the drinking of the wine.

Through this gracious and wonderful gift of Holy Communion we are personally assured of the forgiveness of all sins. How refreshing are those words of our Lord Jesus in the words of institution of the sacrament: “given and shed for you for the remission of sins.” And from Jeremiah 31:34, “For I will forgive their iniquity and their sins I will remember no more.”

Through this we have life eternal, since where there is no sin, there is no condemnation—and all this through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Since we have been given eternal life and been assured of it through the Lord’s Supper, the bitterness of earthly life is taken away—for we know that this mortal shall put on immortality and that the sorrows of this life cannot compare with the glory yet to come.

When we come to the Lord’s Table, we find no bitter waters; but through the tree of the cross of our Lord Jesus, His body and His blood, we find sweet refreshment for our souls and the firm assurance of eternal life.

—Pastor Roland Gurgel
Weslaco, Texas



A morning prayer while traveling through the wilderness of this world

Sometimes the title or the inscription of the psalm (that precedes the first verse) can be helpful for our understanding and for application of the Spirit’s message to our lives.

The inscription written by the psalmist may merely give instruction

for musical accompaniment or for the psalm’s use in worship. However, as is the case with this psalm, the inscription may give a context which opens a window to the heart.

This inscription records that King David wrote this psalm while in the

wilderness of Judah. He found himself in the wilderness—on the run from his enemies—on more than one occasion. Since David here refers to himself as the king, it is likely that this was one of the saddest of occasions in David’s life—the time when his own son Absalom drove him out of Jerusalem in an attempt to steal his father’s throne.

One might well understand that David was in the wilderness in more than one sense. David’s life was filled with distressful problems, but so many of them began within his own home, with his own children. To discover that a child whom he dearly loved had become his enemy had to be a desolate feeling.

On occasion we too may find ourselves feeling quite lost in the wilderness of this world. More than that, we may find ourselves feeling the same desolation which David experienced—feeling alone and in desperate circumstances.

Distressing problems may strike very close to home. One may feel betrayed by someone within his own household. Have we not all found ourselves awake in the night watches, wondering, “Why?” or “What shall I do now?”

Through His servant David’s distress, the Spirit took opportunity to give us this prayer—meditations that would direct our hearts to the comfort and assurance that is found only in our LORD God.

David’s prayer appears to be one offered as he woke early from a night of rest. He awoke with a confidence that the Lord was his God. This confidence flowed from a remembrance of the worship which David had cherished in the sanctuary of the tabernacle (v. 2). There David had learned of the Lord’s great power and glory.

THE PSALMS
THE CHRISTIAN’S
PRAYER BOOK
—Please read Psalm 63—

Finding himself once again in the wilderness, David found himself suffering with a great spiritual thirst which only the Lord could quench (v. 1). That morning David awoke as a refugee in the wilderness and also as a refugee refreshed by the Lord, filled with spiritual joy and confidence.

More Precious than Life!

David realized the Lord’s lovingkindness was more precious than any thing he possessed—more precious than life itself and a greater feast than the richest delicacies of a kingly feast (v. 3-5). And so David praised the Lord for that blessing which no one could take from him, a blessing that was with him wherever he might be even in the bleakest wilderness and facing life’s most distressing moments.

The protecting care of the Lord filled David’s thoughts in those sleepless night watches (v. 6-8). David felt secure under the shadow of the Lord’s wings. How could his enemies prevail against him? They were bound to fail. Indeed, they would fall before the Lord (v. 9-10). But those who rely upon the Lord as their God and swear allegiance to His name will be triumphant.

What a wonderful prayer to pray each morning—particularly when we are confronted with special difficulties in our lives! That is when all those moments spent in the Lord’s house

become all the more precious. There our faith was nourished and fortified that we might know that the lovingkindness of our God extends to every aspect of our lives. “He who did not spare His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32)

This lovingkindness of God is more precious than life itself. Sometimes it takes the moments of trial in the wilderness of this world to cause us to remember that “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Rom. 8:18).

Yes, it is almost inevitable that we shall be faced with sleepless watches in the middle of the night; yet that is when we ought to meditate, not upon how dreadfully distressing our plight is but rather, like David, upon the faithfulness of our God.

Then we also will be led by the Spirit to rejoice in the LORD, as we stay safe under the shadow of His almighty wings. Indeed “If God is for us, who can be against us...Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (Rom. 8:31,35,37).

These are the assurances of faith we possess as redeemed and justified children of God. With these assurances of faith in an almighty, ever merciful, and forgiving God, we are empowered—as David was—to rise each morning with a song of praise on our lips, confident that wherever we are and whatever we must face, we shall proceed with the Lord’s blessing as He promises to preserve us unto eternal life.

—Pastor Theodore Barthels
Austin, Minnesota



**Noting the 75th Anniversary of the
“Brief Statement of the Doctrinal
Position of the MISSOURI SYNOD”
(1932-2007)**

**A Trumpet Which Gave—and Gives!—a Clear Sound
(See 1 Corinthians 14:8)**

Brief Statement
Of Justification

Introductory Thoughts:

The doctrine of justification is the cardinal or chief doctrine of Scripture. In the Lutheran confessions we read,

“the word justify here means to declare righteous and free from sins...for the sake of Christ’s righteousness which is imputed (credited) by God to faith”

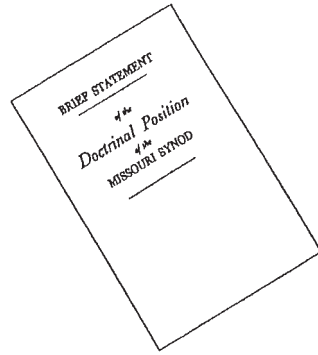
(*Formula of Concord*, Thor. Decl. III, para.17).

Historically this doctrine is unique to Lutheranism. Upon it every other doctrine of Scripture stands or falls. The doctrine of justification is, according to Martin Luther, “the master and prince, the lord, the ruler, and the judge over all kinds of doctrines; it preserves and governs all church doctrine and raises up our conscience before God. Without this article the world is utter darkness and death...” (*What Luther Says*, Vol. II, p. 703).

No other church has had such a clear and certain statement of eternal salvation of the sinner as the Lutheran Church which faithfully confesses Holy Scripture. This doctrine was distorted by Rome before the Reformation as well as after. In his defense of this doctrine, as well as his teaching of it, Martin Luther said, “The papacy is shaken and shattered nowadays through the preaching of justification...” (*WLS*, Vol. II, page 717).

Another staunch defender of this doctrine was the “other Martin,” Martin Chemnitz. Because salvation by works or by works plus faith is the natural religion, it is necessary carefully to reiterate this doctrine for the comfort and assurance of troubled sinners. In recent times apostate Lutheranism has tried to strike an accommodation with Rome on this doctrine.

It is appropriate then that we review for our learning and our comfort what Scripture says. We appreciate the forthrightness and clarity of the *Brief Statement*, and confess it as our own. With Luther again we say, “Of this article nothing may be yielded or conceded, though heaven and earth and whatever will not abide, fall to ruin; for



there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved...” (*WLS*, Vol. II, p. 718).

Brief Statement text [with comment].

Of Justification

17. Holy Scripture [*all Scripture IS the Word of God*] **sums up all its teachings regarding the love of God to the world of sinners** [*no exceptions*], **regarding the salvation wrought by Christ, and regarding faith in Christ as the only way to obtain salvation** [*there is no eternal salvation apart from faith in Christ*] **in the article of justification. Scripture teaches that God has already declared the whole world** [*without exception*] **to be righteous in Christ** [*objective justification*], **Rom. 5:19; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; Rom. 4:25; that therefore not for the sake of their good works, but without the works of the Law, by grace** [*alone*], **for Christ’s sake** [*alone*] **He justifies, that is, accounts as righteous, all those who believe in Christ** [*subjective justification— what God has declared in Christ becomes the sinner’s own through faith in Christ*], **that is, believe, accept, and rely on, the fact that for Christ’s sake their sins are forgiven. Thus the Holy Ghost testifies through St. Paul** [*through the inspired Word*]: **“There is**

no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” Rom. 3: 23,24. And again: “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law,” Rom. 3:28.

18. Through this doctrine [*teaching*] alone Christ is given the *honor due Him* [*this doctrine is rejected by many because it pierces their pride*], namely, that through His holy life and innocent suffering and death He is our Savior. And through this doctrine alone can poor sinners have the abiding *comfort* that God [*Who is faithful to His Word and promise!*] is assuredly gracious to them. We reject as *apostasy* [*falling away*] from the Christian religion all doctrines whereby man’s own works and merit are mingled into the article of justification before God. For the Christian religion is the faith that we have forgiveness of sins and salvation through faith in Christ Jesus [*there is no other name unto salvation; whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins*”], Acts 10:43.

19. We reject as apostasy from the Christian religion not only the doctrine of the *Unitarians* [*Unitarians deny and reject the Triune God and are not Christian*], who promise the grace of God to men on the basis of their moral efforts [*work righteousness is the natural religion*]; not only the gross work-doctrine of the papists [*Roman Catholicism*], who expressly teach that good works are necessary to obtain justification; but also the doctrine of the *synergists* [*Synergists believe that man “works with” God and thus contributes something to his conversion and/or salvation*], who indeed use the terminology of the Christian Church and say that man is justified “by faith,” “by faith alone,” but again mix human works into the article of justification by ascribing to man a cooperation with God in the kindling of faith and thus stray into papistic territory. [*By contrast, remember the third article of the Creed, and hold that fast which has been given to us!*]

—Pastor Daniel Fleischer
Corpus Christi, Texas



The Discourses of Christ

Christ Overcomes the World—John 16:25-33

Spiritual Clarity

“In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (v. 33). With these

words, Jesus closes his Upper Room address to His disciples. Soon they would be on their way to the Garden of

Gethsemane.

When we hear Jesus saying, “I have overcome the world”—our sinful nature says, “Perhaps so, but He surely had a strange definition of ‘overcome.’” To the disciples, the next few hours would seem to be more like defeat than triumph for their beloved Lord.

They did love Him—a fact which He not only acknowledged but, in fact, assured them that also the Father recognized (v. 27). It was a love that grew out of the faith that Jesus had indeed come from the Father, the Lord God of Israel. They were now ready to boldly affirm their allegiance to Him—or so they thought.

But Jesus’ talk of “going away” and of “not seeing and sorrowing” and then “seeing, and having joy”—it all seemed vague and enigmatic (His “figurative language”—v. 25). They were unsettled and deeply upset by this and failed to see in His departure the silver lining that He seemed to see.

So now the Lord told them what was happening in more concrete terms: “I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father” (v. 28).

A collective light of comprehension began to dawn over the Twelve: “Oh, now we see—You came from the

Father, to us, and now you’re going back to be with Him. Now we get it!....we think!”

Laying the Groundwork

That does say a great deal about Jesus. In plain speech, it tells us a number of Biblical truths: first, that Jesus is the true Son of God—in a divine sense, with a divine origin. Secondly, it tells us that Jesus is intimately aware of all that is known to or willed by God (“My doctrine is not mine, but His who sent me” Jn. 7:16).

A third thing asserted by these ‘coming and going’ statements was that Jesus had been sent to accomplish a divinely appointed task, and He was very near to accomplishing it—after which it would be fitting and better for all that He return to the Father in “the glory which He had with the Father before the world was” (17:5).

Despite their sudden ‘clarity,’ the disciples were not yet clear on Jesus, His work, or the events that were about to transpire. They would not be equipped to fully appreciate that atoning work until it was complete and until the Holy Spirit (the ‘Comforter’ of chap. 14:16 & 26) was poured out in special measure on the Church.

Yet Jesus was laying the ground-



Class Day, ILC, Eau Claire, Wis., 2007. After delivering his “Manumission” in the field house, Louis the Lancer rides off on “Ronnie” the horse. More on pp. 19f.

work for that day. He assured them that, even in His apparent absence, they would have full and open access to the Father through their faith in Jesus: “in that day you will ask the Father in My name...” (The implication: God would hear their prayers for Jesus’ sake.)

Also “I (through the Holy Spirit) will tell you plainly about the Father.” Jesus had told many parables about the kingdom of God. Now the Spirit would give these apostles a clear revelation of God’s Word, which they would preach, record, and share with the Church: “Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21).

But until then, their self-confidence and conceit (based on what they thought they knew about Jesus) would soon melt away in confusion and fear—like some raw military recruits thinking they were ready for battle after having seen a couple of war movies.

They had no idea...betrayal...

arrest...the perfect Jesus passive in the hands of His coarse and corrupt captors...trial in Caiaphas’ kangaroo court...the governor’s unjust sentence...the bloody Jesus on the cross.

What sort of victory was that!? They scattered and fell away, leaving Him to die alone.

But even beforehand, Jesus had assured them that—no matter how things looked—He was not alone. His Father was with Him and approved of His work. The Father would raise the Son, and the sun would shine again.

And God would give Christians spiritual clarity. No matter how dark and threatening the world might appear, through Spirit-borne and Word-established faith we will see that Jesus has truly overcome the world. He has reconciled failures and sinners like us to the Father. He has opened up the whole vista of the Kingdom of Heaven for His disciples to see and understand.

—Pastor Peter Reim
Loveland, Colorado



Top left: ILHS, Mankato graduate Kasey Stelter with his family: Mark, Tina, Kymberly, Nick. All four children are ILHS grads! Nick taught in Valentine; Tina in Jamestown. More on pp. 21f.

Lower left: Herb & Bernice Geiger with graduating grand-daughters, Sara Purrington (left), Amanda Geiger



ILHS, Eau Claire: Pastor Delwyn & Mrs. Jody Maas, Holy Cross, Phoenix, with graduating daughter Heidi & family friend Peter de Leon



Global Warming

During the past several months global warming has taken center stage in the media.

Scientists have been talking about global warming for several years, but more recently it has become a subject—directly or indirectly—in almost every newscast on radio and/or television.

Much of what we hear about global warming is a matter of politics and media. There is disagreement in the scientific community as to the legitimacy of the alarmist concerns surrounding global warming. In the midst of on-going news coverage that tends toward an alarmist view of global warming and which could easily give rise to great fear and uncertainty, God's Word provides insight and confidence that allows us to approach the issue from a biblical perspective. Lest we be pulled into this alarmist mentality, we do well to turn to the light of God's Word regarding this issue and be illuminated with God's truth.

Take Account of the Scientific Worldview

As we listen to reports and concerns about global warming, remember that the scientists (and others) who are declaring that the Earth is in great danger are the same scientists who scoff at the truth of a six-day creation. This is worthy of note, not because these scientists are in error regardless of what they say, but because, as they approach science and the environment around

us, they do so without understanding God's role.

Approaching the Earth and its well-being from an evolutionary point of view denies that the almighty God who made heaven and earth is also preserving it with His power. Such an approach does not acknowledge or accept that the Earth and all its systems are upheld by the power and will of God.

Evolutionary "science" believes that the universe came into existence by random chance, that random chance set everything in motion, and that for the Earth to continue it must do so by random chance, as it supposedly is doing now.

If something (like global temperature) changes from a set pattern, this is very disturbing to the evolutionist, who depends upon what appears to be the Earth's constancy to maintain itself. By contrast, a child of God looks heavenward and rejoices to know that God who created all things is also sustaining all things and will do as He pleases according to His will.

GOD'S LIGHT

Hebrews 1:2-3



"...through [Jesus] also [God] made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power..."

Psalm 36:6

“O Lord, You preserve man and beast.”

Understand the Limits of Human Beings

Thirty years ago scientists warned about global cooling and a new ice age in much the same way as global warming is warned about now. Clearly human knowledge is limited. Many of the scientists who warn against global warming are similar to the meteorologists who appear on radio and television each day trying to guess tomorrow’s weather.

If they don’t have the knowledge and skill to accurately predict the weather within several hours, why would we suppose they can predict what will happen climatologically in the next five years, much less in 50 or 500 years?

Modern weather data doesn’t go back much farther than one hundred years. The trends that scientists are noting are being determined from a relatively short period of time. There is no way for limited human beings to know or understand the patterns and cycles that God has placed in our climate or what His will is for climate change.

To accomplish His judgment, God very dramatically changed the climate of the Earth at the time of the Genesis Flood. He may have reasons to change the Earth’s overall climate again for a shorter or longer period of time.

GOD’S LIGHT



James 4:13

“Come now, you who say, ‘today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year

there, buy and sell, and make a profit’ whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow.”

Scientists would do well to read the Book of Job chapters 38-41. For a time, Job too thought he knew more than God and knew better what should be done. To this God responded: *“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone...? Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place...? Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion? Have you given the horse strength? Have you clothed his neck with thunder?...”* [selected verses from Job 38-39]

After hearing the words of God, Job said: *“I know you can do everything...I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know”* (Job 42:1,3). (How refreshing such an attitude would be on the nightly news!)

Viewing Natural Disasters in a Different Light

A recent news story on global warming issued a distress call because of a recent report which said that due to global warming we could expect more floods, storms, famines, droughts, and other natural disasters. Since the evolutionary view depends upon Earth and its random continuation—and not upon a God who is in control!—there is no concept in the news that these things are a result of

the world being under the effect of sin and an almighty God who uses them for His purposes.

The wind and the sea obey Jesus (cf. Matthew 8:23ff), so we need not fear, imagining that the storms and natural disasters are out of control. God is controlling them for His purposes, and they will be with us until Judgment Day. When natural disasters strike, we are able to view them as reminders from God concerning our frailty, our need for His keeping—and that our true treasure is not in the frailty of the Earth.

GOD'S LIGHT

Romans 8:22



"...we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now."

Matthew 24:7-8

"Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."

We are stewards of the Earth

An evolutionary view also leads to the conclusion that plants, animals, and human beings are equal and "in this together." God's Word instructs us differently. God created mankind in His image and set human beings apart from the rest of His creation. Mankind is the crowning work of God's creation, and the resources of the Earth are given for human beings to use.

As with every other gift God gives, we are to be stewards of the Earth and

all that is in it. As the crown of God's creation, we have been gifted with the Earth for our use. We need not be fearful in using what God has given us.

Of course, as stewards of God's gifts, we have a responsibility to use the Earth's resources wisely and in a God-pleasing manner. We ought not be careless regarding God's amazing gifts. As wise stewards we will certainly look for ways to be careful in our use of the Earth, seeking to maintain it to the glory of God and for our blessing as well.

This is not a stewardship that comes from fear as if we were the ones who uphold the Earth, but rather a stewardship that serves the LORD our God.

GOD'S LIGHT

Genesis 1:27-28



"So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female

He created them. Then God blessed them, and God 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.'"

1 Corinthians 4:2

"Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful."

Understand the End of the Earth

An evolutionary viewpoint looks for the Earth to continue indefinitely for millions of years into the future, even as it has supposedly developed for millions of years in the past. This, we

know, is not the case. The days of this Earth are numbered, and the Earth will one day—Judgment Day—be destroyed.

GOD’S LIGHT

2 Peter 3:7



“But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”

Scientific Conclusions

True science does not lead to the same catastrophic—supposedly confirmed—conclusions that are typically heard. The following comes from Larry Vardiman, Ph.D., chairman of the Astro/geophysics department of the Institute for Creation Research.

“So, what can we conclude? I believe it is safe to say that:

- *Global warming appears to have been occurring for the last 30-50 years.*
- *This warming may only be a short-term fluctuation but could be a longer-term trend.*
- *Evidence is still inconclusive whether man is causing the warming.*
- *No ‘natural’ causes for global warming have been confirmed.*
- *One possible new theory is that galactic cosmic radiation (GCR) modulated by solar activity affects low-level cloud cover and is causing the warming.*

“Global warming may affect some parts of our society negatively but would likely benefit others. In fact, the

current warming trend may be returning our global climate closer to that prevalent in the Garden of Eden.

“Compared to climate changes which have occurred in earth history, a temperature rise of a few degrees is a small fluctuation which will not lead to a complete melting of the polar caps or another ice age. Earth has a stable environmental system with many built-in feedback systems to maintain a uniform climate. It was designed by God and has only been dramatically upset by catastrophic events like the Genesis Flood.”

Conclusion for the Child of God

As children of God and stewards of the Earth, we do well to take into account true science and seek to be responsible in our use of the Earth’s resources. At the same time, we do not need to fear as if there is no God in heaven controlling and sustaining all things. We do not need to fear as if the Earth will deteriorate and cease to exist or uphold life, because only God will destroy the Earth and that will be on Judgment Day. We are able to go forward with God’s sure promises:

GOD’S LIGHT

Genesis 8:22



“While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.”

—Pastor Wayne Eichstadt
(from the *Immanuel Home Messenger*, newsletter of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota)

The Word From Immanuel

*Chapel Talks to the student body of Immanuel
Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin*

To our young readers - This is for you!

“Familiarity Breeds . . . Acceptance?”

“But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin...” (Romans 7:23-8:3a)

Lord, grant each of us honesty and wisdom that we may discern between good and evil, truth and falsehood—and the strength to love the good and shun the evil. Amen.

All together now: “Familiarity breeds _____.” True to form, most of you who had a clue most likely said “contempt.”

The Truth is that familiarity does not always breed contempt. Far from it! Sometimes just the opposite occurs. Take that old pair of shoes or that old T-shirt that you have grown to love (even though it can be recognized as gross by other members of the household). In this case familiarity has bred acceptance.

Since some things that we accept can be classified as gross, we ought to be able to transfer this to our spiritual lives. Are there sins in our lives that we accept simply because it has long been our sin? Are there things in our lives that God would see as gross and disgusting? If so, how do we identify



them and eliminate them?

Yes, there is a familiarity that breeds acceptance. Sin has a way of making itself comfortable through use, just like an old pair of boots. Some doctors say that it's not the boot that breaks in, it's the foot. In our lives sin doesn't get better with use, we get worse. Then we may change the name of the sin to accommodate our conscience. It is now “borrowing” not “stealing”; it is not idolatry, it is

From the editor: This month's "Word From Immanuel" chapel talk has been chosen to coincide with our Spokesman report on the retirement of Professor Ronald Roehl (see p. 20). God bless His faithful servant in retirement.



At 2006 CLC Teachers Conference in Mankato, Chairman Seth Schaller (l.) and son Dan Roehl presented a plaque to retiring Prof. Ron Roehl

a “passion”; and we are not worshipers, just “huge fans.”

So let’s take a look at our lives with the above text as a backdrop. Paul points out earlier in the chapter that there is constant struggle between the “new man” and the “old Adam.” He goes on to tell us that most times we fail, saying “For what I will do, that I do not practice.” While that interests us and may give us some comfort, we are more interested this morning in these words, “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”

Paul makes no excuses, and we should not either. We also should see ourselves as wretched. We ought to loathe all sin in our lives.

It is at this point that we seem to understand what God says, but we fail to apply it. God specifically gave us the scriptures that we might apply them to our lives. It might be a tough thing to see every bit of gossip in our lives as loathsome, as wretchedly sinful—every rebellion against authority, every lustful look, every prideful thought. It might mean coming to terms with our laziness or our ridiculous waste of our time of grace here on Earth. God might want you to recognize obsession with your looks as the sin that it is—or your provocative style of clothing as the evil it is. He may want a person to recognize

that he loves possessions too much—or that he loves father, sister, brother, son, or wife more than he loves God.

What’s the big deal anyway? Why must we recognize each sin, especially the ones that have found a comfortable home in our hearts? The reason is Jesus Christ and His value in our lives. What Jesus did for us is diminished every time we fail to recognize every single damning sin. As soon as we downplay any sin, we then diminish Christ’s value to us, and His grace is reduced.

The fact is that Jesus came to save that which was completely unlovable. Whenever we kid ourselves about our comfortable sins, we tend to think of ourselves as sweet and cuddly like some little puppy. When Jesus refused the help of angels and allowed himself to be nailed to the cross, He was saying to the heavenly Father: “Place the full penalty of their guilt on me, and credit my perfection to them. Make me filthy; wash them clean.”

From time to time we may lose sight of the reality of things and begin to love the things of this world. We get comfortable and lose direction. Always God has to call us back; He has to remind us of how bad things really are here, and then He has to refocus us on the Life beyond.

This would all paint a very depressing outlook, if only our text did not end the way it does. We hear the question we should ask, and we hear the answer given. “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

The answer is that Jesus has already rescued us—and then Paul goes on to tell us how He did it. “There is now no condemnation to those who are in

Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin....”

Note that what we could not do because of sin and weakness, Jesus

did. We failed; He did not. This is the sweetest, the most wonderful thing you will ever hear. It comes through the pen of Paul from the Holy Spirit. This is the very heart of our faith and the faith of all Christians, and it speaks loudly for the hope that is in us. Jesus’ sacrifice frees us forever from all our sins. Thank you, Jesus!

—Prof. Ronald Roehl



May 19, 2007, Graduation in Eau Claire—

“It was a busy graduation...”

Graduation is seldom a sluggish or soulless endeavor, but a busy event carried out by industrious people. And this holds true not only for faculty and students but for parents and grandparents, friends of the graduates, choristers, musicians, and all sorts of facilitators of the varied festivities.

This year we got double dips of just about everything, including salutes in honor of retiring Professor Ronald Roehl. More of that later.

First things first.

What do you expect of a graduation at Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin? (You can get a God-less ceremony by going some-

where else!) Graduation Day at ILC is God’s creation, as ILC President Pfeiffer reminded us; so let’s rejoice in it and be glad for our God-given opportunities in life and for our God-filled gifts!

The theme of his address to the full-house assembly was “Ambitions.” When the sons of Zebedee (supported by their Mom) revealed their ambition to be heads of state in the Kingdom of God (Mt. 20:20-28), Jesus took opportunity to turn their ambitions right-side-up. Here lay their problem, for never is the contrast between man’s ways and God’s ways more glaring than in their value systems. Human



High School Graduates

brains do not compute as God's does. God's ways are not our ways, indeed, and His thoughts are higher than ours.

To illustrate: Jesus could be our Savior only by the route of humbling and self-sacrifice! How else can we serve Him but by the same attitude? Thus the terms "servant" and "service" are loaded with meaning for us, for we have been given the mind of Jesus Himself.

Only after His life of self-sacrificing service to the greatest cause could Jesus become "The Fortress For Us," the theme of the Spring Sacred Concert on Friday evening, May 18. The processional "A Mighty Fortress is our God" struck the keynote of the entire concert; we praised God, from Whom all blessings flow; we joined the women at Calvary in lament ("O Crucified Messiah") and in the stately cadence of Lenten songs. To brass accompaniment we praised Jesus; in chorale, madrigal, chantey, anthem, lullaby, and plaintive prayer we praised our Savior.

In the graduation service on Saturday morning, diplomas were awarded to two young men who have completed their Seminary training—Neal Radichel and Chad Seybt. Together with Ed Starkey they were presented to the Church as eligible for call into the pastoral ministry in our parishes.



**Prof. Pfeiffer (l.) and Sippert with
Candidates for Ministry:
Chad Seybt (l.), Neal Radichel**

There were no graduates from the four-year Pre-theological or Education programs this year. From the two-year Associate of Arts program four students were graduated; and from Immanuel High School thirty-three young men and women were given diplomas. It is not known how many of them intend to return to ILC for their college years.

Naturally, we hope to see many of them returning to ILC, students who truly want to give their best in service to their Savior by preparing for teaching and preaching ministries in our congregations. May they find their hearts turned to this ambition and filled with His love for others, souls who may yet join His family on Earth. Amen!

Ron Roehl Retirement

We acknowledge Professor Ronald Roehl's retirement after forty-seven years of service on the faculty of Immanuel Lutheran High School and College.

Although Class Day exercises (Friday afternoon) were devoted to the accomplishments of students, with awards for their achievements in academics and sports, some roasting and toasting were added for Prof. Roehl's benefit, too.

Banners with his likeness were hoisted, the student MC and his lightly disguised cohort managed to mangle Prof. Roehl's biography and thus in their brash way revealed the admiration and love in which Prof. R. Roehl is held among us.

A reception for the retiree was held in the Commons Dining Hall after Friday's closing concert, where smiles, hugs, and handshakes were bestowed



**Backing up their
Roehl
parents, mom
Eunice and
honoree Ron,
are Laurie
Marzofka,
Pastor Mike,
Prof. Ross,
Teacher Dan.**

on Ron and Eunice by students, friends, and colleagues.

At the tail-end of the Graduation Ceremony on Saturday, Pastor Theodore Barthels, speaking for the ILC Board of Regents, addressed the retiree: “Every year on graduation day we raise our hearts and voices in praise and thanksgiving to our God for all that He has provided to our dear graduates [and to the rest of us, too!] through His gift of Immanuel Lutheran College.... Professor Ronald L. Roehl, for nearly half a century you have been unselfishly devoted to this place you call ‘our beloved Immanuel Lutheran College’On behalf of our students past and present and our church body, we hereby testify that the Lord of the Church surely gave to ILC and to the CLC the very best when He led you to accept

the call to serve as a member of our faculty forty-seven years ago....We hope you find this monetary gift useful, gladly offered by many of your brothers and sisters in Christ throughout our church. Also please accept this plaque expressing our profound appreciation for your service to Immanuel, with the prayer that our Lord will continue His blessings upon you and your wife until you really retire in your heavenly home.”

The entire assembly, supporting these sentiments and prayer, arose in united testimony that we understand, that we approve, and that we too intend to use our blessings for the Lord’s glory, as long as He gives us life and breath! To this help us, dear Father in heaven! Amen!

—Paul R. Koch, reporter



June 10, 2007, Graduation in Mankato—

“It was a special day...”

It was a day for noting a milestone reached by God’s grace. It was a day of recognizing a stepping stone along the path of ongoing growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord. It was a day of reflection as parents, faculty,

and friends looked to past blessings and gave thanks to God.

It was a day of eager expectation to see the unfolding of young lives and new callings under the grace of God. It was June 10, 2007—graduation at



During and after the mortarboard toss on the church steps

Immanuel Lutheran High School in Mankato, Minnesota. Since all of the reasons for gathering centered on the Lord our God, how fitting that the service opened with the strains of “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”!

The class Bible verse chosen by the graduates considered past blessings and the expectation of future ones: “A man’s heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps” (Proverbs 16:9).

Valedictorian Natalie Schreyer addressed classmates, parents, and the assembly, observing that “in the moment” of each year—for several it was thirteen years of Christian education at Immanuel—things were not always easy, but when taken together the years were indeed a blessing and foundation upon which to build one’s life. Natalie heartily thanked the Lord as well as all those who made this education possible for her class!

Teacher Craig Owings addressed the class with the words, “Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass” (Psalm 37:5). Mr. Owings compared the graduates to good books: “They are fine company. They are interesting. They provide intellectual stimulation, laughter, and sometimes tears. And while I’m reading one, I can’t help but

wonder how it’s going to turn out.”

As graduates write their life-book, they cannot do so on their own strength. Rather, by committing themselves to the LORD, He will write His book through their lives. Committing one’s way to the LORD is the only thing worth living for. Everything else is too small!

The graduates had provided lists of their “fears” to the speaker: not knowing what happens after college, not finding employment, failure, dying or friends dying, not having a good spouse, financial problems, not knowing what God wants you to do with your life, not being able to defend God’s Word adequately...and more. “Dear graduating seniors, I entreat you: do not take counsel of your fears...’ In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us’ (Romans 8:37).” (The full graduation address is posted at: <http://immanuelmankato.org/school>)

In the end it was a day of celebration and thanksgiving. It was a day filled with confidence for the future as we commit our way to the Lord. It was a day of great joy as we live under His grace.

—Pastor Wayne Eichstadt

*“A man’s heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps”
(Proverbs 16:9).*

“Once in 500 Years Storm”

So the local paper proclaimed the rainstorm that moved through South Dakota on the first weekend in May. Within a 24-hour span approximately seven inches of rain fell in the Hecla, S.Dak. region. Totals in some areas around Hecla reached nearly ten inches of rain in the same period of time. It was reported that within only one hour two to three inches fell on Saturday evening.

The effect of this deluge could be seen region wide as gravel roads were washed out, some freshly planted crops were washed away, and basements in the Aberdeen area were filled with six feet of water. At Prince of Peace in Hecla, we arrived at church Sunday morning to find eight inches of standing water and sewage in the church basement.

We are thankful that the Lord spared us from any major structural damage. Carpets were pulled, plaster was torn off walls, and some other material that was stored at or near ground level was thrown away.

Through it all we were reminded once again of the certain promises of our God—“For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but



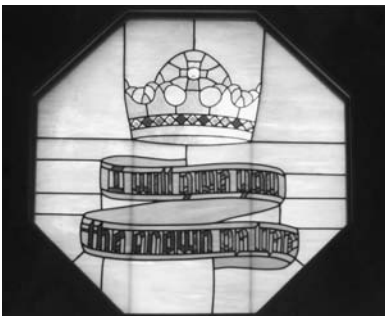
Church Basement



Looking west from the church

My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed,’ says the LORD, who has mercy on you” (Isa. 54:10).

—Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer



Stained glass window at St. Stephen, San Francisco, reads: “I will give you the crown of life.” Son of the church and designer, John Reim, ILC, notes: “Part of the thought behind the design was the fact that Stephen (Stephanos) is the Greek word for crown.” Quinn Sprengeler and Mary (Drews) Ryan assisted (in the 1980s).

From the Editor: Correction of some historical misinformation:

A reader has called our attention to some historical misinformation presented in the March 2007 issue.

The 1996 synodical Proceedings appearing on p. 15 of that issue—on the subject of “Sanctification” and “The Third use of the Law”—was presented in our accompanying storyline as the synod’s settlement of the Third Use of The Law controversy. That is mistaken information.

Settlement of the “third use” controversy actually occurred some twenty years earlier (see Proceedings of the 1976 and 1978 Conventions).

As our perceptive reader explains: “The 1996 Convention resolution had to do only with the reconciliation of the Colorado group with the CLC.”

We thank the reader for helping us—and, we pray, also you, our readers—through any confusion which our “storyline” comments may have caused.

Announcements

Installation

In accord with our usage and order, Paul Tiefel III, who was called by Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, Wis., to teach in the upper grades of the school, was installed on May 19-20, 2007.

—Pastor Paul Tiefel

Address:

Paul Tiefel III
633 Cochrane Street
Eau Claire, WI 54703
Phone 715-379-4878

Send Change of Address to :
Lutheran Spokesman
2750 North Oxford Street
Roseville, MN 55113



Side view of St. Stephen Lutheran Church (West Bay), San Francisco. Neal Radichel is pastor. (See also window, p. 23)

West Central Pastoral Conference
Berea Ev. Lutheran Church
Sioux Falls, S.Dak.
September 11-13, 2007

Agenda:

- Examination of 1 Corinthians 10:15-17 with application to our bulletin announcements (a complete unity of confession) – Pastor Mark Gurath
- Review of Bible Translations (perhaps something to hand out when asked about them) – Pastor Timothy Wheaton
- Examination of termination and excommunication with respect to appeals in connection with Article 6 (cf. 2006 Convention Proceedings) – Pastor George Dummann
- The Predestination Controversy (1900’s, relating to the formation of the ELS) – Pastor Peter Reim
- What may be said scripturally of the state of the soul upon the death of the Christian? – Pastor James Sandeen
- Overview/study of a Minor Prophet – Pastor John Klatt
- The Cost of Earning – Pastor Frank Gantt
- Is there a spiritual aspect to Eastern therapeutic practices (yoga, acupuncture) – Pastor James Naumann
- Review of another controversy from Bente’s Historical Introduction in the Book of Concord – Pastor Matthew Gurath
- New Testament Exegesis: Romans 10:1ff – Pastor Michael Roehl
- Old Testament Exegesis: Malachi 2:10ff – Pastor Eric Libby

Conference Chaplain: Pastor Andrew Schaller
Communion Service Speaker: Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer