

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

"...The Scripture Cannot Be Broken." — John 10:35

REPORT ON THE 30TH CONVENTION OF THE CLC



*"Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ...
Be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord"*

1 CORINTHIANS 15:57-58

**Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD;
Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive to
the voice of my supplications. If You, LORD,
should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could
stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that
You may be feared. I wait for the LORD, my soul
waits, and in His word I do hope. My soul waits
for the Lord more than those who watch for the
morning—Yes, more than those who watch for the
morning. O Israel, hope in the LORD; for with the
LORD there is mercy, and with Him is abundant
redemption. And He shall redeem Israel
from all his iniquities. PSALM 130**

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 Vice President: Rev. Mark Bernthal (2014)*
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*Elected or Re-elected at this Convention

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Editor: Rev. Paul Fleischer; Asst. Editor: Prof.
 Em. Paul Koch; Business Manager: Mr. Benno
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Journal of Theology:

Editor: Prof. Steven Sippert;
 Asst. Editor: Rev. Em. Elton Hallauer;
 Circulating Editor: Mr. Benno Sydow;
 Contributors: Pastors Frank Gantt, Norman
 Greve, Terrel Kesterson, David Lau, Paul
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Rev. Wayne Eichstadt; Contributors: Pastors
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ILC Professorage Committee:

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Standing CLC Worship Committee:

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 Teacher Barry Hay, Mr. Matthew Schaser

CONVENTION DEVOTION



Convention Communion Service, Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Our Abundant Need... God's Abundant Grace

Pastor Thomas Schuetze • Convention Chaplain • Coloma, Michigan

Our Convention theme is: "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Be steadfast and immovable ... Always abounding in the Lord's work." So I decided to use the word "abounding" or "abundant" as a focal point for our devotions.

In this first devotion we will consider the Scripture truth that we sinful human beings have an ABUNDANT NEED for the pardoning grace of our God...and how our heavenly Father has supplied us, through Jesus His Son, with His ABUNDANT GRACE to meet our need.

Recently we observed Confirmation Sunday in our congregation. Our young confirmand was invited to pick out several Bible topics from a longer list and then write a short essay on each as a testimony of his faith. One topic he chose was on the two main doctrines of the Bible: The LAW and the GOSPEL.

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With regard to the LAW he shared the thought that God uses the Ten Commandments to bring home to our hearts the desperate need we have for a divine Redeemer to heal us of our sin-sickness.

In regard to the second great doctrine of the Bible, the GOSPEL, our young confirmand shared the thought that God uses such Bible verses as John 3:16 — “*God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*” Luke 2:10 — “*There’s born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, Christ the Lord.*” John 1:29 — “*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*”... for the blessed purpose of revealing to the world who our Redeemer is! His name is JESUS.

These two teachings are presented powerfully in our psalm. The psalmist confesses that if the God of holiness would keep tally of his sins, his situation would be hopeless. So he cries out from “the depths” of his ABUNDANT NEED. “*Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my plea for mercy.*” Then he finds sweet refreshment in the gospel assurance that “*with Him is ABUNDANT REDEMPTION, And he shall redeem Israel from all His iniquities.*”

I’m reminded of a vision God granted Isaiah when He called him as a prophet (see Isaiah chapter 6). Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on His throne in heaven, with the train of His robe filling the temple and six-winged seraphim hovering above. These angelic beings (holy as they were) considered themselves unworthy to stand in the presence of their LORD. So in reverential awe they covered their faces and feet with their wings and called out in praise of the Lord: “*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty. The whole earth is filled with His glory!*” The temple was shaken to its very foundation, and the sanctuary was enveloped in billows of smoke.

Isaiah was overcome with a profound sense of his unworthiness. If holy angels need to cover their feet and faces in the presence of the great God, what then will become of me, a poor sinful creature! “*Woe is me! I am ruined!*” he cried out. “*I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the Lord Almighty!*” How can I think that He could use me as one of His servants?

In the next scene Isaiah watched as one of the six-winged seraphs took a red-hot coal with a tongs from the altar, put the coal against

Isaiah’s lips, and said: “*This has touched your lips. Your iniquity is purged.*” This was God’s way of bringing home to His prophet the comforting GOSPEL truth that through the coming Messiah, who was to be wounded for his transgressions and bruised for his iniquities, his sins were atoned for. As one who trusted in this Messiah, Isaiah could go forward confidently and energetically. He could and did say: “*Here am I! Send me.*”

What marvelous application this has as we gather to discuss and plan the work to which the Lord has called us. As we look into the mirror of God’s Law, we may be inclined to feel as Isaiah did. Paraphrasing the psalmist, we too need to confess: “If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, how could we serve You aright? We’re not worthy! Woe are we, for we are a people of unclean lips!”

But then He comes to assure us in His GOSPEL, saying, in effect: “Through Jesus, My Son, in whom you have put your trust, I’ve made your sins which are as scarlet to be as white as snow. I have made you to be a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a HOLY nation, My own special people who can proclaim the praises of the One who called you from the dark night of sin into the sunshine of My gracious forgiving love.”

Yes, we too can say: “Here I am, Lord, send me! Bless the work I do in Your name in the interests of Your kingdom and the welfare of souls for whom You died.”

May our Convention then be a celebration of God’s ABUNDANT GRACE IN OUR ABUNDANT NEED! May the cross of Jesus be at the forefront of all we undertake. As we engage in God’s kingdom work in our committee meetings and floor discussions, may we not forget the reason we are here—namely, to herald the message that “*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*”

And let’s look to God in faith to bless our work—work He created us to do in Christ Jesus and had planned for us to do before we arrived here...in fact, even before we knew Him...for the praise of His holy, saving name!

ΑΩ

Remember the Ants and the Lizards

Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer · Spokane, Washington

In today's fast-paced life, there are choices to be made—especially in how a family makes use of its time. While the summer months were once a time to catch your breath and take a vacation, they're now a time for camps and sporting events.

As summer turns to fall, the hectic back-to-school schedule resumes. Again, a family is faced with choices of how to make use of its time. Of all the things we can afford to put off (yes, even sporting events!), the one thing we cannot afford to put off is the one thing needful—time with our God and Savior Jesus in His Word.

Our children grow up so fast. It seems as though one day we are bringing them home from the hospital and the next we are dropping them off for their first day of college. Christian parents and grandparents have such a small window of time to lay a solid, Scriptural foundation for the children that we need to make the most of the time God gives us with them!

In Proverbs 30:24-28 the divinely-inspired writer gives four examples of “*small but exceedingly wise*” creatures in God's creation who can teach us a thing or two, including the importance of Christian education.

Let's examine two of these creatures.

First the ant: “*The ants are a people not strong, yet they provide food in the summer*” (Proverbs 30:25).

Though we may not give a great deal of attention to ants unless they are infesting our homes, they are busy and hard workers. Working together, they make the most of their time, storing up food in the summer so they are prepared for the lean months that lie ahead.

If you have children living at home right now, you are experiencing the “summer months” of their lives. Now is the time to provide that faith-producing, soul-searching food of God's Word. Now is the time to share with them the one thing needful—the Holy Scriptures which are “*able to make [them] wise for*

salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15).

For our children the storm clouds of adulthood are looming on the horizon. All too soon they will leave the relative safety of home, having to make important decisions that will affect them materially and—more importantly—spiritually.

May God help us learn from the ants to provide spiritual food for our children now, in the safety of their “summer months” at home with mom and dad.

Another Example!

Another example given us is that of the lizard. Those small creatures seem to be everywhere—under rocks, climbing trees and walls, and they are even able to make it into homes. The writer says, “*The lizard you can take in your hands, yet it is in kings' palaces.*” The lizard was familiar not only in common homes, but it also found refuge in Solomon's palace in Jerusalem.

What can be learned from these small but exceedingly wise creatures of God?

Well, consider how easy it is to overlook or neglect the spiritual needs of our little ones—whether it be going to church and Sunday School or having devotions at home and praying together.

The disciples of Jesus certainly struggled with this. One day a group of parents brought their children to Jesus in hopes that He would lay His hands on their little ones. But we are told that the disciples “*rebuked them*” (Mark 10:14). Apparently the disciples did not think that the Master should be bothered by the little children.

They could not have been more wrong! Mark records that Jesus was “*indignant*” (think, ‘outraged’ or even ‘angry’) at this. “*Let the little children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belong the kingdom of God*” (Mark 10:14, ESV).

As lizards made their way into Solomon's palace, little children also enter the kingdom of God.

Think of that, dear reader—our little ones have been redeemed by Jesus! He shed His blood on the cross to save them from their sins too—just as He shed His blood for our “big people” sins. Through the water and Word of Holy Baptism, God brought those little ones into His kingdom. They are now subjects of the King of kings!

By His amazing grace, He has brought them into His palace and wants

them to live there with Him forever! "And He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands on them" (Mark 10:16).

As school resumes and our schedules get busy, may we never get too busy for Jesus and His eternally important Word—especially for our families! In that connection, remember the illustrations of the ant and the lizard!



DOCTRINE OF CONVERSION

The Five C's of Conversion

(C1 + C2 + C3 + C4) C5 = C6

Pastor David Fuerstenau • Ketchikan, Alaska

Conservative talk show host Mark Levin has remarked that "there is simply no scientific or mathematical formula that defines conservatism." The same, of course, is true for Christianity. Thus this writer asks your forbearance in suggesting the above devotional and spiritual formula for the Bible teachings about conversion, where five C's represent five different values.

Holy Scripture uses three figurative expressions to describe the sinner's coming to faith in Christ Jesus as Redeemer and Lord: The sinner turns away from sin to the Savior (Acts 11:21). The sinner is reborn, with a spiritual life, new attitudes, and a new relationship to God (John 3:3). And the sinner is quickened or made alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:1).

Such a conversion is instantaneous, for there is no middle or neutral ground between being spiritually dead and spiritually alive. It may be a long time before actual conversion occurs, but when it happens, it happens in a moment. One either has faith and is a child of God or does not have faith and is yet a slave of Satan. However, there are preparatory steps involved, and this brings us to the five C's ...

C1: CONVICTION — For anything positive to happen, the sinner must first be convicted of his sin and condemned status. He must realize his hopeless condition. He must be wounded before he can be healed.

This surely happened to the Jewish crowd of 3,000 who were "cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37) after Peter accused them of murdering the Lord of Glory. Yet, as did Felix (Acts 24:25), a person may well tremble in his sins before God but yet remain unconverted.

C2: CONTRITION — or sorrow over sin, which leads to repentance to salvation.

But not necessarily, not always. Judas expressed sorrow and regret for having betrayed His Master but he then turned on the path that led to suicide and hell. Peter had only to behold the 'look' of Jesus, and he went out and wept bitterly—not to his death but to his repentance and life.

Perhaps we do not often wet our pillows with tears as did David, yet he plainly tells us what God desires and does not despise—"a broken and contrite heart" (Psalm 51:17).

C3: CONTENTS — namely, the contents of the gospel.

This also is a preparatory operation, in which the sinner comes to an understanding of the basic 'good news' of salvation. He may not yet believe it in his heart, but he must reasonably know the historical facts in which to believe. In other words, the good seed of the gospel must be sown before it can germinate and sprout. Thus did many Samaritans believe in Jesus only after they had heard the woman's testimony about Him (John 4:39).

C4: CONFESSION — of faith. Once C's 1-3 are in place, the sinner has been made ready for a true confession of faith in Christ Jesus.

Remember that conversion is instantaneous and occurs the very moment that the sinner has the faintest longing for God's grace and forgiveness. With his lips he may not yet say anything. A sinful, forgiven woman said not a word but confessed Jesus by coming to Him and anointing His feet with her tears and drying them with her hair. On the other hand, the Samaritans proclaimed, "Now we believe... for we have heard for ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world" (John 4:42).

Outward confession does not always signify faith, but there is no true faith without confession.

C5: THE CONVINCER — the Holy Spirit, who supplies the energizing power in conversion.

THIRTIETH CONVENTION OF THE CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFSSION

The Spirit germinates the seed. He convinces sinners of the truths and wisdom of God in Christ. Many think that their coming to God is up to them, that they played a part, that they made a right decision to turn away from their sin and to accept Jesus. But how can a spiritually dead person do that? How can one who is spiritually blind see Jesus as Savior? How can one who by nature has hands clenched into fists of hatred toward God receive the blessing of God? Why would he even want them? This is impossible for anyone.

Even if the sinner decides to hear or read the message of God's condemning law and His saving gospel, he cannot bring himself to Jesus by his own reason or strength.

Once he hears or reads the Word of God, he has a chance, for law and gospel are the external means the Convincer uses to achieve C1 + C2 + C3 + C4. "No one can say that Jesus Christ is Lord except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:3). No one can enter God's Kingdom of Grace unless he has been born of the Spirit (John 3:5). No sinner can be saved unless washed and renewed by the Spirit (Titus 3:5).

The Holy Spirit is the Great Convincer, the Great Mathematician of our salvation, for He adds and multiplies knowledge into faith unto the riches of God's grace in Christ Jesus. Glory, honor, thanks and praise be to the Great C5!



Accepted as voting members at the recent CLC Convention were Pastors Mark Tiefel and David Pfeiffer, Teachers Sherman Carstensen and Joshua Ohlmann

Bible history includes accounts of some unusual military victories. The walls of Jericho fell at the sound of shouts and trumpet blasts. The Midianite army fled at the noise of trumpets blowing and pitchers breaking. God wanted His people to understand that their victories over their enemies were given to them, not won by them.

In 1 Corinthians 15 St. Paul tells of the greatest victory of all, the victory over sin, death, and hell. As the victories in Old Testament history, so this victory was given to us. Christ Jesus fought the battle and paid the price.

This victory that is ours as a gift of God is the basis for all our work as a church body. The pastors, teachers, and lay delegates were reminded of this by the theme chosen for the Convention, "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ... Be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:57-58).

Devotions

In his devotions as chaplain for the Convention, Pastor Thomas Schuetze (Faith Lutheran, Coloma, Mich.) reminded us that though we are weak, we can abound in the Lord's work. He provides abundant grace and strength for what He has given us to do. He has called us to an abundant harvest of souls and has promised us abundant success.

President's Message

President John Schierenbeck called upon us to "get back to the basics"—the simple gospel of forgiveness and life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Many of the things that we do and that we worry about are in vain and useless. But the work of the Lord

More Convention photos on line at www.lutheranspokesman.org

is never in vain because Christ has risen and lives to give power and success to the proclamation of the gospel.

We should not try to compete with those who teach a feel-good theology that cannot satisfy the needs of lost sinners. *“When we minister to someone who is dying, we soon get back to the basics of Jesus’ death for our sins and His resurrection victory over death. People want to hear about their resurrection through Christ. Everything else is vanity.”*

Convention Essays

The two essays delivered to the Convention were based on the two-fold admonition in 1 Corinthians 15:58.

In the essay entitled *Be Steadfast and Immovable*, Pastor Walter Schaller (Mt. Zion, Madison Heights, Mich.) directed us to the steadfastness of the Apostle Paul, who continued to proclaim the gospel in the face of persecution. Paul refused to be driven from the gospel, for it is the life-giving message of Christ’s victory over sin and death. We have that same message, the only source of life in this world. *“We see how crucial it is that we speak these gospel facts, this message of victory, out loud—with joy and conviction. And that we write and rewrite and restate these truths, these facts, again and again. For here is the power source of every believer and therefore of every Christian congregation and of our church body.”* One powerful tool for recounting and retelling the gospel facts and their meaning is the historic Lutheran hymns. *“They speak of the Savior’s victory...They do it with gratitude overflowing, applying these truths to heart and life.”*

In the second essay Teacher Neil Bernthal (Immanuel Lutheran School, Winter Haven, Fla.) showed what it means to abound in the Lord’s work by using the examples of biblical persons. Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Paul, and Jesus teach us that the work of the Lord involves a call, prayer, sacrifice, doing God’s will, and trusting Him. *“The work of the Lord is an all-consuming and all-encompassing force in our lives...the first thought in the morning...our first words when we greet others. It should be part of who we are and how we live. The work of the Lord should be the work of us.”*

Convention Worship Services

On Wednesday evening Convention delegates and visitors gathered for worship at Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire. Pastor Paul Naumann (Ascension, Tacoma, Wash.) preached the sermon on Romans 8:31-39. His theme was “In Christ We are Super-Conquerors.” We can be opposed, but we can’t be defeated; we can be

accused, but we can’t be condemned; we can be persecuted for Jesus’ sake, but we can’t be separated from Jesus’ love.

A Memorial Service during the last morning of the Convention remembered servants of the Word called home during the past two years: Pastor Robert Mackensen, Teachers Ona Wheaton and Dagne Gullerud. Also remembered were pastors’ spouses Anita Barthels (George), Kathleen Larson (Paul), Lois Mackensen (Robert), Erma (Schuetze) Tiefel (Waldemar), and Claudine Radtke (Gordon). Pastor Emeritus Daniel Fleischer spoke on Hebrews 11:8-16, *“With thanksgiving to our Lord, we remember those who have attained to the ‘Better Country.’”*

Convention Work

The business of the Convention is divided among seven floor committees, with each delegate assigned to one of them. Each committee meets, prepares its report, and brings it before the entire Convention which then votes to adopt, amend, or reject it. What follows are highlights of what the Convention adopted from each committee.

Board of Education and Publications

The Convention encouraged the Board to continue to look for and publish items that promote the kingdom of God. A reprint of *Preaching to Preachers*, a book of sermons by Dr. Norman A. Madson (1886-1962), is scheduled for publication in September, 2012.

The Board is responsible for the CLC website (clclutheran.org) by which the Lord has enabled us to reach many people in various parts of the world.

In response to a memorial the Standing Committee on Worship was directed to compile hymns and liturgies from the most recently published confessional Lutheran hymnals and make them available for study by CLC congregations. The Committee is to present its findings and recommendations to the 2014 CLC Convention.

Board of Regents (Immanuel Lutheran College)

Thanks to the Lord was expressed for improvements to the campus. The work of the ILC Professorage Committee was acknowledged, organizing volunteers to upgrade the faculty housing. The renovation of Ingram Hall is nearly complete. A new masonry entrance sign and

lighted cross will help identify ILC.

Thanks was offered to the Lord of the Church for recent ILC graduates who now serve in the CLC ministry and as lay members in our congregations. Gifts to the ILC Student Aid Fund and SAF Endowment Fund are encouraged. The Board was directed to actively promote the Associate of Arts program by which our young people can take basic liberal arts and science courses at ILC before going on to other institutions to complete a degree.

Professor Michael Buck has retired after serving for thirty-six years as teacher, coach, and athletic director. The Board was authorized to hire an Information Technology Manager to handle computer and network administration and maintenance.

Board of Missions

The Convention praised God for the gospel work done by six congregations that receive subsidy from the CLC. The Board has formed a Committee on Domestic Fields to explore and develop ideas for reaching new areas in the U.S. and Canada, especially in ways that we have not tried before.

Thanks was offered to the Lord for giving abundant opportunities for training pastors and assisting in mission work in foreign fields. We rejoice at hearing news of the spread of the gospel in Myanmar, Nepal,



India, and several countries in Africa. New places for exploratory missions efforts include Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Convention prayed for a Lutheran pastor in Pakistan who is suffering persecution for the sake of Christ. A total of \$25,000 was added to budgets to take advantage of opportunities to train as many as several hundred pastors.

Thanks was expressed for Missionary David Koenig's longtime faithful work, as he is stepping down from his position as full-time foreign missionary. Also acknowledged was the faithful support of his wife Mary.

Bedecked with "a Teddim Chin hat from Myanmar having their tribal colors," Missionary David Koenig addresses Convention delegates.

Board of Doctrine

Church Fellowship was declared with two Lutheran congregations: Steadfast Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tanunda, Australia, and the Lutheran Free Church, Uppland, Sweden.

The Board has asked Prof. Emeritus David Lau to prepare tracts on the blessings and positive aspects of church fellowship.

Board of Trustees

"We gratefully acknowledge the material gifts with which our Lord and Master has blessed us during the past two years. Let us continue to pray for His wisdom that we be faithful stewards of all His gifts from above."

The following Fiscal Year 2012 budget was adopted:

Education and Publications.....	\$10,000
Trustees	\$145,000
Missions	\$326,400
Regents	\$428,000
Total General Fund.....	\$909,400
ILC Revenue	\$887,000
Total FY12 Spending Plan	\$1,796,400

Membership

Living Hope Lutheran Church of Appleton, Wisconsin, was received as a member congregation of the CLC. The following were accepted as voting members of the CLC: Pastor David Pfeiffer (Ascension, Batavia, Ill.), Pastor-Elect Mark Tiefel (Bethel, Morris, Minn.), Teacher-Elect Sherman Carstensen (Trinity, Watertown, S.Dak.), Teacher-Elect Joshua Ohlmann (Messiah, Eau Claire, Wis.), Professor-Elect David Rodebaugh (ILC).

Attending the Convention were 61 pastors, 18 teachers, 11 professors, and 58 lay delegates.

The Convention expressed thanks for the dedicated service of outgoing CLC officers, President John Schierenbeck, and ILC President John Pfeiffer. It also offered prayer in behalf of newly-elected synod President Michael Eichstadt and newly-appointed ILC President Steven Sippert.

We heartily thank Pastor John Klatt, Rapid City, South Dakota, for serving as Convention Reporter for the *Lutheran Spokesman* — Editor

MEDITATIONS ON JESUS' SERMON ON THE MOUNT
MATTHEW CHAPTERS FIVE THROUGH SEVEN

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." MATTHEW 5:43-48

Love Your Enemies

Pastor Paul Krause • Markesan, Wisconsin

It has happened that in the process of pursuing a worthwhile goal something else happens which was also good.

Several inventions have happened in such an "accidental" way. Play-Doh was initially marketed as wall-paper cleaner to get rid of soot from solid-fuel stoves. Post-It notes came about when one man who had concocted a "low-tack" adhesive which remained sticky after several uses met another man who needed bookmarks that wouldn't slip out of place in his hymnal. The microwave oven, penicillin, Saccharin, Teflon, and popsicles have similar not-intended-but-still-resulting-in-good histories.

Such is not the case, however, with what we have in Matthew chapter 5.

The Pharisees had begun with the good goal of guiding their lives by the inspired words of the Bible—Moses and the prophets. But the devil, in concert with their sinful natures, had led the Pharisees away from that goal. The result was not something which was also good. Rather, the result was a catalog of man-made rules and regulations which bore little or no resemblance to the original Word of God.

What we have in the verses before us is similar to what came earlier in Matthew's fifth chapter. God had intended that His law serve as a

mirror to show us our sin. But when a Pharisee looked at the law, he saw a mirror which showed him how good he supposedly was!

What had happened? God's Word in the second table of the Law ("*Love your neighbor as yourself*," Leviticus 19:18) had been modified to read, "Love your neighbor, and hate your enemy." The original command was not intended to specify WHOM we are to love; rather, the point was to lay out WHAT we are to do—namely, to love our neighbor as ourselves.

And in our text Jesus identifies just what such loving our neighbor involves. It is not loving only those who are friendly toward us, for such loving would be no different from what anyone—even non-Christians—might display. No, being followers of Jesus means loving everyone, even our enemies—those who may be out to get us or to ruin us, and even those who may persecute us.

Having our enemy's eternal welfare as the top concern in our hearts and doing everything we can to lead such to know the Savior—this is what marks us as "*sons of our Father in heaven*" who makes no distinction between who gets the sun and the rain. "*He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*"

So it is that all, whether acquaintances or enemies, whether family or foe, need to come to know of their Savior through us!

As we move forward then with the good goal—with the scriptural resolve that to love our neighbor, even our enemy, as ourselves—may God keep us from going beyond to a goal which is not good, leaving His Word behind in the process!

Let us not fall prey to the thinking that being perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect means that we can be or even need to be holy before God based on our own efforts, or that our perfection mirrors our good works—as if with our sinful human natures we can do what is God-pleasing.

To be *perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect* means that we, by faith, find our complete holiness in His Son whose sinless life was offered in our place.

Thank God that for Jesus' sake He sees us as perfect, and in the message of the gospel gives us the strength we need to continue to strive to love our neighbor as ourselves!



“...The Word of God shall establish articles of faith and no one else, not even an angel.” (Luther, SA, Part II, Art. II)

5. Of Repentance

[Part III - Article III]

Pastor David Reim · Vernon, B. C. (Canada)

“Now He commands all people everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30).

If justification by grace alone is “the first and chief article” of faith [as Luther asserts in Part II, Art. I], then the teaching of repentance is of utmost importance, for that is the way sinners are prepared to receive God’s justification for themselves.

If the teaching on repentance is corrupted, justification and salvation are lost.

What error does Luther address in this Article?

To the casual observer, it may seem as though the only difference between the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church in regard to repentance is that the Catholic Church requires its members to confess to the priest while Lutherans are taught that they can confess directly to God.

When we look below the surface, however, we come to realize that

Planned series on the *Smalcald Articles*:

- #1 Of The Divine Majesty/Redemption/Salvation by Grace
- #2 Of The Mass
- #3 Of Cloisters/Papacy
- #4 Of Sin and the Law
- #5 Of Repentance (in this issue)**
- #6 Of The Gospel and Sacraments
- #7 Of Keys and Confession
- #8 Of Ordination/Traditions/Conclusion

the basic meaning of repentance is entirely different between Catholicism and Reformation Lutheranism.

From Scripture we learn that true repentance is being thoroughly convicted of sin by the law and then confessing those sins with confidence in God’s grace which forgives sins for Jesus’ sake.

The Roman Catholic Church, however, has turned repentance into a work by which sinners can merit God’s grace and forgiveness; therefore, in effect, leaving no place for Christ or faith.

How is this done?

Luther pointed out how Roman Catholicism erroneously divided repentance into three parts.

Contrition: Contrition became superficial because, even if a person was not sorry for his sins, if he could at least say that he wanted to be sorry, that could be counted as contrition.

Confession: Everyone was required to enumerate all his sins, which is impossible since we do not even know all our sins, much less remember them all. Yet if a person did not confess a sin, it could not be forgiven.

Satisfaction: Rather than being directed to Christ for comfort and forgiveness, a person was directed to his own works.

Luther writes, “He was told that the more completely he confessed, the more he was ashamed, and the more he abased himself before the priest, the sooner and the better he would make satisfaction for his sins, for such humiliation would surely earn grace before God.”

Then to make satisfaction for his sins, the penitent was directed again to his own works—for example to his saying five “Our Fathers,” or fasting for a day, and so on. Whatever penance was still lacking could be made up in purgatory.

What effect does this teaching have on the believer?

Such a teaching drove people to one of two extremes.

On the one hand, a person was driven to utter despair, anguish, and misery, for he could never know if he had done enough. Was he sorry enough? Had he done enough penance? Had he remembered to confess all his sins? That was the dreadful torture that Luther himself had experienced (see his testimony to that in TLH hymn #387:3).

Yet for all a person’s penance, he never came to true repentance.

To help alleviate such poor souls, the Roman Church added an even worse mockery to the teaching of repentance by its inventing of indulgences, through which people could purchase the cancelation of further “satisfaction” through works and money. Luther writes, “In time souls got to be so cheap that they were released at six pence a head.”

On the other hand, the Roman Church’s teaching led many to a self-righteous pride and arrogance shown by the Scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day. Some did not think they were guilty of any actual sins in thought, word, or deed, and so they supposedly had no need for repentance.

In fact, some were said to be so holy and full of good works that they could sell their good works to others because they had more than they needed to gain heaven.

What holy truth does Luther set forth?

Luther shows from Scripture: first of all, that all people are sinful and corrupt and need to repent; secondly, human penance is worthless for remitting any sin or its penalty; and thirdly, all people need the remission of sins in Christ.

True repentance, the Reformer teaches, is to “acknowledge sin—that is, to acknowledge that we are all utterly lost, that from head to foot there is no good in us.”

This repentance is not partial or uncertain, for it confesses that “We are wholly and altogether sinful.” Therefore it includes all sins, even those of which a person may not be aware.

The satisfaction for our sin is not uncertain, because it consists not of the sinful works which we do but of the sufferings and blood of the innocent Lamb of God who takes

away the sin of the world.

Dr. Luther is also quick to point out that it is also unscriptural and dangerous to say, “Once you have received the Spirit or the forgiveness of sin, or once they have become believers, they will persevere in faith even if they sin afterwards, and such sin will not harm them.”

The believer needs to continue in repentance, trusting in Christ for the forgiveness of sins, for we continue to sin daily and can drive the Spirit from our hearts.

How does this apply to us today?

Satan continues to attack the way of salvation from all sides.

May we hold to the true faith that we are unworthy sinners through and through and confess our guilt before God, with the confidence that His Son has paid for all sin in our place and gives full and free forgiveness.

Our only comfort and confidence is found in Christ’s merit not our own. May we ever be prepared to give answer for the reason for the hope that is in us—which is Christ’s atonement alone!

The Book of Concord *The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* [Tappert Edition]

Excerpts from *THE SMALCALD ARTICLES* Part III, Article III – Of Repentance.

This [the law], then, is the thunderbolt by means of which God with one blow destroys both open sinners and false saints. He allows no one to justify himself. He drives all together into terror and despair. This is the hammer of which Jeremiah speaks, “Is not My Word like a hammer which breaks the rock in pieces?” (Jer. 23, 29) This is not activa contritio (artificial remorse), but passiva contritio (true sorrow of heart, suffering and pain of death). (#2)

To this office of the law the New Testament immediately adds the consoling promise of grace in the Gospel. This is to be believed, as Christ says in Mark 1:15, “Repent and believe in the Gospel,” which is to say, “Become different, do otherwise, and believe my promise.” John, who preceded Christ, is called a preacher of repentance—but for the remission of sins. That is, John was to accuse them all and convince them that they were sinners in order that they might know how they stood before God and recognize themselves as lost men. In this way they were to be prepared to receive grace from the Lord and to expect and accept from him the forgiveness of sins. Christ himself says this in Luke 24:47, “Repentance and the forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations.” (#’s 4-6)

But where the law exercises its office alone, without the addition of the Gospel, there is only death and hell, and man must despair like Saul and Judas. As St. Paul says, the law slays through sin. Moreover, the Gospel offers consolation and forgiveness in more ways than one, for with God there is plenteous redemption (as Ps. 130:7 puts it) from the dreadful captivity to sin, and this comes to us through the Word, the sacraments, and the like.... (#’s 7-8)



WITH THE LORD

Pastor Robert W. Mackensen

OCTOBER 18, 1920 — APRIL 18, 2012

On October 18, 1920, Robert Warren Mackensen was God's gift to Henry and Laura (Bohnsack) Mackensen who resided in Hammond, Indiana. His Savior granted him ninety-one years of grace.

Brought up to know and confess Jesus as his Savior, Robert pursued the public ministry in the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Preparations for becoming a Christian pastor took place at Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, from which he graduated in 1945.

After his vicarage at Concordia Lutheran Church, Akron, Ohio, Pastor Mackensen proceeded to serve an LC-MS congregation in Missoula, Mont. (1945–49); as chaplain at a School for the Deaf, Delavan, Wis. (1949–55); and a quadruple parish of Kirby, Knapp, Danavang, and Shennington, Wis. (1955–59).



A significant change of direction would take place in Pastor Mackensen's ministry when, for reasons of conscience grounded in God's pure Word and doctrine, he became a charter member/pastor of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). Within this confessional fellowship the congregations he served were Trinity, Millston, Wis. (1959-'67), Our Redeemer's, Red Wing, Minn. (1967-'74), Salem, Eagle Lake, Minn. (1974-'78), Mt. Olive, Lamar, Colo. (1978-'84), and Living Word, Hendersonville, N.C. (1984-1989). As has been customary in the CLC, during retirement Pastor "Mack" served pastoral vacancies in Caledonia, Minn., Hales Corners, Wis., and St. Cloud, Minn.

At pastor's side all along the journey home was wife Lois (nee Harnack) whom he married on January 27, 1945. In 1989 they retired to Red Wing. Surviving are the four children given them by the Lord (Ruth Amundson, Laurie Gutzman, Sarah Schmidt, Norman Mackensen) who, in turn, are parents to nine grandchildren. Lois preceded her husband to glory with Jesus on October 12, 2010.

At their father and grandfather's request, the following statement was read by the pastor at the memorial service conducted on Friday, May 18, at Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church in Red Wing: "Stay close to your Jesus and to each other. I'll be waiting for you all."

For his comforting gospel message Pastor David Baker used the text chosen by his brother Robert: I Corinthians 15:54-58, with theme: "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"The miracle of Christian faith is not that Christians are given the ability to trust in some object but that they are given the ability to turn from trusting vain works and instead to trust CHRIST and His work alone for their salvation. The act of trusting in something is not miraculous, but the act of trusting in CHRIST as the Savior is miraculous, because no man can say that JESUS is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost...."

The above words are from an oft-quoted essay among us, "The Danger of Emphasizing FAITH at the Expense of the OBJECT of Faith, CHRIST," by Pastor Mackensen to his brethren in the CLC ministry in the early 1960's, reprinted in the *Journal of Theology*, February 1964.

Pastor Paul Fleischer reporting

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL MANKATO, MINNESOTA

Graduation – June 3, 2012

Pastor Wayne Eichstadt, reporting

*And as He stands in victory,
Sin's curse has lost its grip on
me. For I am His and He is
mine, bought with the precious
blood of Christ.*

('In Christ Alone,' arr.
Keith Getty, Stuart
Townsend)

With such words as those above, the assembly which was gathered for the graduation service of Immanuel Lutheran High School-Mankato joined with the graduates to sing their class hymn.



As melody lifted the hymn heavenward, the words of the hymn confessed the foundation on which the graduates' education had been built and upon which they will go forward in coming days and years.

How blessed are the young men and women who have received the prerequisite instruction of high school within the context of God's holy Word! How blessed when a graduating class—its members heading in a variety of directions—is confident in what matters most, sharing a future built on what truly conquers the world—namely, faith in Christ our Savior.

Pastor Paul D. Nolting served as liturgist and speaker for the worship service. Pastor Nolting urged the graduates to consider that "Defining Success is a Matter of Perspective." The Scripture text used was Psalm 37:4-5: "Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

Kayla Ann Busch, valedictorian, spoke on behalf of the graduates with the recognition that they would not have reached the day's milestone without assistance from parents, teachers, family and

friends, and all those who made their Christian education at Immanuel possible. The highest praise and thanksgiving was reserved for the Lord who worked through these earthly instruments to accomplish it all.

The closing hymn "Go My Children with My Blessing" sent the eleven graduates on their way with the Lord's benediction and into a bright future of life under His grace.

ILHS-Mankato Class of 2012: Kayla Busch, Jennifer Grabow, Leah Hagen, Nicole Hansen, Holden Herme, Jessica Jones, Evan Olmanson, Daniel Roemhildt, Sarah Roettger, Daniel Salmon, and Isaac Schmitt



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LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

"...THE SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE BROKEN." — JOHN 10:35

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