

# LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

“...The Scripture Cannot Be Broken.” — John 10:35



**SOLA GRATIA**

**SOLA FIDE**

**SOLA SCRIPTURA**

# PREACHING TO PREACHERS

A happy announcement came to our desk regarding the availability of a much anticipated book of sermons. A reprint of *Preaching to Preachers* (original copyright 1952) had been in the works for a few years now within our CLC.

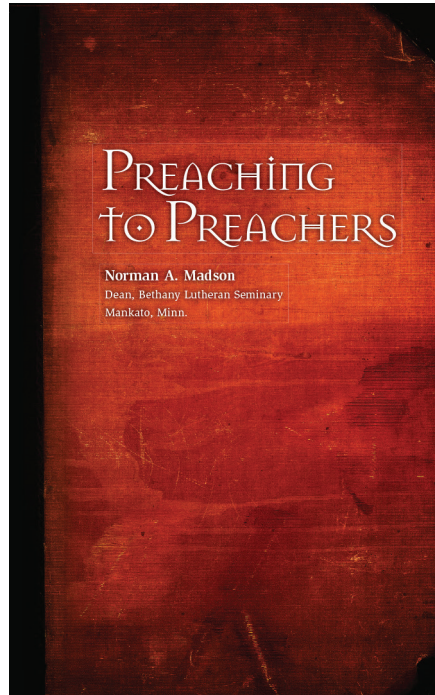
Pastor David Naumann, chairman of the synod's Board of Education and Publications, explains: "(We are) happy to announce the printing of a new edition of a very valuable series of devotional sermons by Norman A. Madson (1886-1962). Don't let the title fool you. Although the sermons were written and delivered primarily to those in the preaching and teaching ministries, every Christian home would benefit from these scripturally-based

and well-written devotions. Rev. Madson's application of Law and Gospel toward the servants in the public ministry will give you an insightful and instructive glimpse into the lives of your pastors and teachers as the gifts that God means them to be for you."

As for why the release at this time, we are told: "This fall (September 16, 1962) marks the fiftieth year since Rev. Madson's final sermon was preached at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minn. on the occasion of that congregation's 95th anniversary. His timely call to eternal glory came on December 9 of the same year."

Then this is said: "The new edition is now available at the CLC Bookhouse for \$14.95. Also available: *Morning Bells at Our Savior's*, a previously released

**Now Available!**



*Continued on page 20*

# Reformation or Fall Festival?

Pastor Jay Hartmann • Corpus Christi, Texas

While many in churched communities will soon gather to celebrate a “fall festival” or even a “festival of reconciliation”—in which Lutherans gather with Roman Catholics or others to downplay the insurmountable differences between the church bodies—in our synod we rightly gather to celebrate the gift of God’s Word in its truth and purity!

“...Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law” (Romans 3:28). In connection with this verse, Martin Luther wrote: “Suddenly I felt as if born anew, as if the gate to paradise had been opened.” Rightly so, for Luther is an example of someone who had been trapped in the bitter slavery and futility of the Law. Luther had been trapped in the Roman Catholic Church, which had all but abandoned the Word of God in favor of man-made doctrines.

Luther had long seen our Lord Jesus as a harsh judge whom he needed to appease by his good works. It was by a miracle of the Holy Spirit that Luther, like us, was brought to understand and believe that salvation is by God’s grace alone and not by human works or good deeds. “*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast*” (Ephesians 2:8–9). Luther then became a staunch defender of the true Christian faith based solely on the Bible.

Within our fellowship we do not gather on the festival of Reformation to celebrate a man, but rather to celebrate the gift our Lord gave back to His Church through a man—the Word of God in its truth and purity!

It is grace which separates the Christian faith from all other religions in the world. All of the world’s religions are based on human merits/good works for salvation. By nature man knows only this form of religion and tries to import such thinking into the salvation picture. In no uncertain terms our Lord assures us that salvation is by God’s grace (undeserved love!) alone—it cannot be a combination of God’s grace and man’s works.

Our Lord speaks of our salvation by grace alone when He says, “Eye

has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). That is how foreign the thought of salvation by grace is to natural man!

But yet we are freely given this grace and salvation. For by grace we have been saved (see Ephesians 2:8-9). Grace shows our salvation as a gift of God alone with no merit or worthiness in ourselves.

Faith is God’s gracious key by which we may access Christ’s merits that open the doors of heaven!

Now, there are a lot of different "faiths" in the world, but only one that saves—faith in Jesus Christ! The true and saving faith looks to and trusts in Jesus alone for forgiveness and salvation. *“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12).

Faith is a precious gift—it can’t be bought, earned, or chosen, it can only be given! Only the Holy Spirit can work this miracle in our hearts, leading us to understand and believe. Only the Holy Spirit can lead us to understand and believe that *“a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law”* (Romans 3:28).

God’s Word is the means through which this gift is bestowed on us. Sad to say, what Scripture teaches has become a matter of popular vote today. All around us we see the devastating effects of tampering with God’s Word. St. Paul foresaw that *“the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine...and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables”* (2 Timothy 4:4).

So, while many will gather again this year for a “Fall festival” or “festival of reconciliation” and not celebrate the Reformation as a testimony to the grace of God, on our part we will gather in our CLC churches to rejoice in our Lord’s certain mercy in restoring to us His Word in its truth and purity.

As Martin Luther was God’s chosen instrument to bring about the sixteenth century Reformation, so we today are God’s chosen instruments to continue the work started so long ago.

Let us carry forth the battle standard of the Reformation. May our battle cry ever be:



**“By Scripture alone! By grace alone! By faith alone!”**



# Making the Reformation Our Own

Pastor Michael Eichstadt • Hales Corners, Wisconsin

**R**emember your first car? Mine was a beige 1968 Pontiac Catalina with a 400 cubic inch V-8 under the hood. It wasn't in the best of shape. There was plenty of rust and other evidence of years on the road. But that didn't matter. I still treasured it because it was mine. I diligently washed it, changed the oil, and filled it with gas. After all, it was mine, and I depended on it to get me to and from school.

If something is our own, we usually take it more seriously. We pay attention to it and care for it.

So what about the Reformation? Do you have a sense of ownership toward it, or is it just another vehicle in the vast parking lot of history?

It's one thing to know the general outline of that tumultuous period from the nailing of the 95 Theses on the church door (A.D. 1517) to the formation of the Lutheran Church. It's quite another to make it our own.

**So what about the Reformation? Do you have a sense of ownership toward it, or is it just another vehicle in the vast parking lot of history?**

Martin Luther is the dominant figure of Reformation history, but to make the Reformation our own is to recognize that his torments of conscience over guilt and how sinners can achieve peace with God are our struggle too. Luther wasn't the only sinner or the only one unable to make things right with God through his own efforts. As Paul says: *"There is*

*no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...*"  
(Romans 3:23).

The legacy of the Reformation is the focus on Christ and the unequivocal proclamation from God Himself in Scripture that we are justified by grace through faith, not by the merits of our own goodness.

— We make the Reformation our own when we find forgiveness for the sins of today and confident joy for our future in Jesus' cross.

The Reformation was about struggles for the Word against those who wanted to keep it buried under suffocating layers of man-made teaching.

— We make the Reformation our own when we stand for the truth against all those who compromise the Word to avoid confrontation or in the name of political correctness.

The Reformation was about on-going education in the Word.

— We make the Reformation our own when we take our own spiritual growth seriously and spend time in the Word as individuals, families, and congregations; and when we willingly give of our time and financial means to support our congregations and schools.

Finally, the Reformation was about giving God the glory due Him as our loving Lord and Savior.

— We make the Reformation our own when we gladly gather with one another to sing His praises, present our prayers asking that His will be done in our lives, and work with one another in harmony to tell the world about Jesus who said: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life..."* (John 14:6).

Through faithful use of God's Word and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, may we daily make the Reformation our own, for its treasures will never rust or wear out.



*And what I do I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.*

(2 Corinthians II:12-15, ESV)

# Satan As an Angel of Light

Pastor Michael Roehl • Bismarck, North Dakota

**T**hose that study human beings and their shared weaknesses and limitations recognize that our eyes (or mind) often fail to recognize what is right in front of us. It's the old "hidden in plain sight" thing. On the basis of our text, we want to examine that concept in the realm of the spiritual and religious—how Satan, the god of this world, is attempting to disguise the truth of God's Word and thereby rob mankind of it.

## Guilt By Association

The first part of Satan's two-fold plan is "guilt by association."

For example, the fact that you were with someone who was doing drugs doesn't prove that you took drugs, but that's what most would think. Or if you were to see a young woman in garish clothing, late at night, calling out to passing cars on a street corner with known prostitutes, most would again assume that she too was caught up in that sinful lifestyle.

We need to be very careful when it comes to guilt by association. The Jews used it to condemn Jesus: *"And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them'"* (Luke 15:2). Again we read Jesus' words: *"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds"* (Matthew 11:19).

The Eighth Commandment reminds us of God's will that we "put the best construction on everything." "Association" probably invites us to

gently question; it does not give us the right to assume guilt.

Yet there is a far more clever means by which Satan is employing “guilt by association” against God’s children. Not long ago PBS aired a documentary on the Mormons. The two-part series was both kind and candid. The spokesmen for the Mormon Church were polite, gentle, and articulate. Their case was stated as matter-of-factly as I would consider humanly possible (considering what they were actually promoting as being true).

These dignified, well-dressed men and women were defending a religious organization that claims its members will one day be gods. They spoke glowingly of Joseph Smith (the writer of the Book of Mormon), baptisms for the dead, and secret temple rituals. All were devout adherents of a religion that claims to be Christian but is thoroughly work-righteous and therefore damning.

As I watched these kind, misguided souls with a mixture of sadness and revulsion, it occurred to me that that is exactly how the godless in our society see you and me and our religion. To the unconverted, there is probably little difference between one man who believes that the golden plates of the Book of Mormon ascended into heaven after their translation by Joseph Smith and the other man who believes that a crucified Jewish man named Jesus of Nazareth rose from the dead and ascended bodily into heaven.

Satan’s goal is to discredit the one true religion by raising up countless false and perverse cults. — Guilt by association.

Now change the channel and watch the aftermath of yet another “act of religious conviction” in the Middle East where a devout young follower of the prophet Mohammed kills himself and bystanders with high explosives in a local marketplace—all in the name of Allah. Thousands bow to the god and his prophet who supposedly condone such actions.

Change the channel again and you find yourself in Tibet watching a Buddhist monk light himself on fire or listening to one who believes that through meditation he is very close to being “assumed into the

**...There is little doubt that souls who have been caught up in these pagan religions are absolutely convinced of their “rightness.”**



deity.” Just another religion—and they are all pretty much alike. — Guilt by association.

This is how Satan is employing his “guilt by association” against the Christian Church today. Our text describes this when it speaks of Satan “transforming himself into an angel of light.” There is little doubt that souls who have been caught up in these pagan religions are absolutely convinced of their “rightness.” Tragically, what they are experiencing are demonic forces aping the truth of the one true God. —Satan masquerading as an angel of light.

## Hiding Christianity In Plain Sight

The devil is under no illusion that he will be able to destroy the Christian Church. Jesus Himself said that it's not going to happen and, while man often doubts the Savior's words, Satan is not so foolish. Therefore, if Satan was to have any success, he had to either discredit the Means of Grace or find a way to withhold God's Word from mankind.

Though the Bible was once rare and precious, the Bible market has now been flooded. Satan's fall-back plan is to hide the Bible in plain sight. Bibles are everywhere, but who now reads it?

Satan knows the truth. He knows the one true God and he knows that the one path to heaven is through faith alone in Jesus Christ. What better plan to discredit God's salvation plan than by erecting crude caricatures of the original? What better way to hide the shining gem that is Christianity than to cover the field with cheap imitations?

The message that Satan wants to drill into our sub-conscious mind is not so much “I want to become a Mormon, Muslim, or Buddhist” as it is, “Is my religion as nutty as all those others?” and “Am I as foolish as those poor misguided goofballs on television?”

In our text, Paul shows that the same forces were at work already in his day. He says: “*For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.*”

Note the ominous declaration pronounced here by the Holy Spirit through Paul over against all of the false religions that the devil has manufactured: “*...their end will correspond to their works.*” No matter how

peaceful or how convinced its proponents might appear, they and those who follow them share a common, terrible destination.

Paul's solution? Again from our text: *"And what I do I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do."*

Paul's mission was not to alter his message and his methods but rather to redouble his efforts in doing exactly what he had been doing—preaching the pure, sweet, life-saving Word of God.

Nothing but light can dispel darkness. God's Word has the incredible power to cleanse the human heart of the doubts and uncertainties that Satan relentlessly and cleverly tries to sow there. God's Word is more than just information. It is power—pure, raw, divine power—for in and through His Word God has promised to dispel the gloom and uncertainty of all that is false and impure.

It all comes back to the simple, central truth of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This is the truth that saves—that by His life and death Jesus has supplied the goodness that makes up for our sin. His perfection is not paid to us as our due; it is given to us as a gift.

The only way any human being can forfeit that full, complete payment is to reject or deny that Jesus did what He said He did. Believing, that payment is credited to your account. And since you possess Jesus' righteousness as your own, nothing and no one can prevent you from inheriting heaven and living for all eternity in the presence of your holy God.

You and I have been given this same priceless information, this same priceless gift. Hidden in plain sight? Not if we can help it. Guilt by association? Satan would like it to seem so.

The fact is that we have *salvation by association*—with Jesus Christ. Our Savior.

**... (What) Satan wants to drill into our sub-conscious mind is not so much "I want to become a Mormon, Muslim, or Buddhist" as it is, "Is my religion as nutty as all those others?"**



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

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*Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.* MATTHEW 6:1-4

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## Doing Good Pleases Our Lord

Pastor Thomas Schuetze • Coloma, Michigan

**I**t is Tuesday of Holy Week, three days before the death of Jesus. The Savior is sitting in the temple near the offering box, watching people put in their gifts. He sees many who are rich contributing large amounts. He observes a poor widow dropping in two small coins. He turns to His disciples and says: “Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury” (Mark 12:43).

We may wonder about Jesus’ assessment. Aren’t large monetary gifts worth more than pocket change?

Well, yes and no. A wallet full of twenties wields more buying power than nickels and dimes. Yet, when it comes to offerings given to God, their value is gauged by an altogether different standard—on the basis of the motives of the heart.

What motives of the heart does Jesus look for when Christians bring their gifts to Him? Our section from the Sermon on the Mount provides helpful instruction in this matter. (Please note that the words of counsel Jesus offers have broad application to all deeds of kindness done for Him both inside and outside the fellowship.)

## **WORD OF INSTRUCTION #1:**

**When you do a charitable deed, let your only concern be that your Father in heaven is watching.**

We Christians need not be concerned about whether other people see the good deeds we do and thank us for them.

Many in Jesus' day were doing just that. They were "trumpeting" their deeds of benevolence so that others would notice and regard them as good people. This stripped their charitable works of any value before God.

We face the same temptation to seek praise from others for kindly deeds, and maybe even feel slighted when no one pats us on the back. Therefore we need to pray that the Holy Spirit will help us to bear in mind that whatever good we do—whether giving a donation to our church, lending a helping hand to our spouse in the kitchen, doing a good turn for a colleague at work, or showing kindness to a classmate at school—it matters little if others do or don't appreciate it.

What makes the work precious in His sight is our doing so in love for Him who performed the greatest charitable deed of all: giving us His own dear Son. *"You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich"* (2 Corinthians 8:9).

## **WORD OF INSTRUCTION #2:**

**When you do a charitable deed, let it flow from a heart that seeks to glorify your Lord.**

As God's people we always want to keep in mind that worship involves much more than singing hymns of praise to our Lord.

Children glorify God when they gladly obey their parents for His sake.

Church members worship Him when they participate in a church work-day in order to beautify His house.

Employees serve their Lord when they do the best job they can for their boss at work.

Good works in God's sight are all actions flowing from hearts of faith

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in Him who redeemed us. How the Lord delights in deeds of love done out of gratitude for the tender mercies He has shown them in Christ! *“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”* (I Corinthians 10:31).

### **WORD OF INSTRUCTION #3:**

**When you do a charitable deed, be on guard against the selfish desire to receive a reward.**

Because of Christ’s good work of reconciling us to God by His blood, we are possessors already of every spiritual blessing (see Ephesians 1:3), and we seek nothing more.

However, the God of all grace promises to reward His believers for their labors of love done to Him. On the Last Day His Son will publicly declare them to be His own (Matthew 10:32) and announce in the hearing of all that the charitable deeds that were done He considered as having been done for Him (Matthew 25:40). What a gracious honor that will be!

On the other hand, those who perform charitable deeds in order to be seen by other people will have already received their reward in full—namely, having others admire them during their time on Earth.

*“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service”* (Romans 12:1). *“Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ”* (Colossians 3:23-24).



Bethel Lutheran Church, Morris, Minn. installed its new pastor, Candidate Mark Tiefel, on September 2, 2012. Participants included pastors (l-r) Wayne Eichstadt, Elton Hallauer (just retired from serving Bethel), Daniel Fleischer (retired), Norman Greve (installer), the new pastor, Paul Tiefel Jr. (father/preacher), John M. Johannes, John H. Johannes (retired), Matthew Gurath

# This We Believe

475TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE *SMALCALD ARTICLES*

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

## 7. Of Keys and Confession

(Part III - Articles VII & VIII)

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

In this section of his *Smalcald Articles* Martin Luther wrote:

*The keys are a function and power given to the Church by Christ to bind and loose sins, not only the gross and manifest sins but also those which are subtle and secret and which God alone perceives. So it is written, “Who can discern his errors?” (Ps. 19:12). And Paul himself complains (Rom. 7:23) that in his flesh he was a captive to “the law of sin.” It is not in our power but in God’s alone to judge which, how great, and how many our sins are. As it is written, ‘Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for no man living is righteous before thee’ (Ps. 143:2), and Paul also says in 1 Cor. 4:4, “I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted.” (Article VII)*

**What Holy Truth does Luther want to set forth?**

Notice that Luther does not speak against the abuses to the office of the Keys and Confession found in the Roman Catholic Church; he had previously dealt with those errors in his discussion of repentance.

Instead, he states here the

**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

simple truth of Scripture that the “keys” are a function and power that Christ has given not just to popes and priests but to the whole Church of Christian believers. All believers have the power from Christ and His Word to forgive and to retain sins!

**Luther does not “throw the baby out with the bath water.”**

Although there were many abuses connected with private confession in the Roman Catholic Church (which were also discussed earlier), in the following words Dr. Luther speaks of the high value and importance of such confession:

Since absolution or the power of the keys, which was instituted by Christ in the Gospel, is a consolation and help against sin and a bad conscience, confession and absolution should by no means be allowed to fall into disuse in the church, especially for the sake of timid consciences and for the sake of untrained young people who need to be examined and instructed in Christian doctrine.

However, the enumeration of sins should be left free to everybody to do or not as he will. As long as we are in the flesh we shall not be untruthful if we say, “I am a poor man, full of sin. I see in my members another law,” etc. (Rom. 7:23). Although private absolution is derived from the office of the keys, it should not be neglected; on the contrary, it should be highly esteemed and valued, like all other functions of the Christian church.

### **What false teaching does Luther address in this Article?**

Luther strongly affirms that—as with all matters of faith and doctrine—also in this area of confession and absolution it is true that “God gives no one his Spirit or grace except through or with the external Word which comes before.”

At the same time Luther denounces those whom he calls “Enthusiasts”—that is, those who claim to have some direct revelation from the Spirit and therefore put their own thoughts and teachings above the divinely inspired words of Holy Scripture.

*In short, enthusiasm clings to Adam and*

*his descendants from the beginning to the end of the world. It is a poison implanted and inoculated in man by the old dragon, and it is the source, strength, and power of all heresy, including that of the papacy and Mohammedanism. Accordingly, we should and must constantly maintain that God will not deal with us except through his external Word and sacrament. Whatever is attributed to the Spirit apart from such Word and sacrament is of the devil.*

### **What can we draw from this for us today?**

There is great comfort found in private confession, whether to a pastor or elder in the church or to a fellow believer. Such confession is not a practice to be forsaken simply because it has been and is being abused in the Roman Catholic Church.

The comfort and consolation comes from hearing the Word of God’s grace spoken to us directly and personally.

As God’s believing children we have the power to use these keys. When we use them, let us be sure that we speak only God’s Word to convict the impenitent of his sins; and then also proclaim God’s comforting Word of grace to *absolve* the penitent of his sins.

Then and only then will the Spirit be at work to lead a person to repentance; then and then only will the Spirit comfort and console those who repent.



# The Beauty and Joy of Christian Fellowship

(first of eight)



*“He has made everything beautiful in its time” (Ecclesiastes 3:11).*

FROM THE EDITOR:

Pastor Emeritus David Lau provided us with an explanation of what prompted him to write this new series beginning in this issue. He says:

“The CLC Board of Doctrine directed me ‘to search the CLC archives for essays concerning the blessings and “positive” aspects of church fellowship’ and on the basis of these materials ‘prepare tracts that help readers appreciate the blessings and beauty of our fellowship in Christ.’ Before I began to carry out this assignment, I felt I should get a good handle on the subject matter by attempting to write a more thorough presentation of what the Bible has to say on this topic. This longer presentation is now being offered to the readers of the *Lutheran Spokesman* in eight installments, beginning with this issue.”

We thank Pastor Lau for this series which promises to be a blessing to us all.



What could be more beautiful than God's creation as it was in the beginning, before sin spoiled it? Solomon in his God-given wisdom says: "*He has made everything beautiful in its time*" (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

Surely this includes the first human beings, our ancestors Adam and Eve. They were handsome and beautiful in mind and body, but above all they were beautiful in heart and soul because God created them "*in the image of God*" (Genesis 1:27). The Holy Spirit describes (even in our world of sin) certain persons as "*good-looking*" (David in First Samuel 16:12) and "*very beautiful*" (Sarah in Genesis 12:14).

How much more good-looking and beautiful Adam and Eve must have been when their inner beauty and perfection matched their outward appearance!

Combine this inner and outer human beauty with the perfection and holiness of a loving God, and the result is pure joy. Human beings living in perfect harmony and peace with God, with all of creation, and with themselves—who could want or ask for anything more than this? In the Garden of Eden we see the beauty and joy of a perfect fellowship between God and man and all creation.

Will we ever experience such beauty and joy again? Yes, God has

won for us such a Paradise through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Even as the first book of Holy Scripture describes the beauty and joy of Eden, so the last book of Holy Scripture describes what God has promised to us through the work of Jesus Christ. "*To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God*" (Revelation 2:7). Jesus' apostle John, in exile on the island of Patmos, saw it all in advance. This is his testimony: "*I saw a new heaven and a new earth... Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain*" (Revelation 21:1-4). "*And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face*" (Revelation 22: 3-4).

So there was beauty and joy in the beginning. There will be beauty and joy at the end.

But what about now? God's own Word teaches that even now, in this world of sin, we who love our Savior and trust in Him do indeed experience **the beauty and joy of Christian fellowship.**



(to be continued)



## The Morning Star of the Reformation

Pastor Nathanael Mayhew • Lawrenceville, Georgia

In our circles today the term "reformation" demands a connection to Martin Luther (1483-1546). However, it is noteworthy that many other reformers came before Luther.

Even as did John the Baptist, these reformers prepared the way of the Lord by pointing out the error and hypocrisy of the church of the Middle Ages. They stood up against the corruption and false teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. Many of these forerunners of the Reformation often suffered greatly for the truth of God's Word—even

losing life itself at the hands of church and civil leaders.

John Wycliffe (1320-84, a student and then a teacher at Oxford University) was among the first of these forerunners. Because of the importance and enduring influence of his work, Wycliffe (also spelled Wyclif) is remembered as "the Morning Star of the Reformation."

Wycliffe's teachings paved the way for future reformers because of these four points. He exposed the false teachings of the Roman church on the subjects of 1) indulgences and faith; 2) the

authority of the pope; 3) the separation of the church and the state; and 4) the authority of the Bible in all things.

Wycliffe's teachings would become the bedrock of Reformation theology in the years to come. His Bible-based ideas spread from his home country, England, to John Huss in Bohemia, and from there to Martin Luther in Germany.

Building on Wycliffe's ideas, Huss taught that the Holy Christian Church is the body of the elect, and Christ alone is its Head—not the pope! Luther, who read Huss, would further build on this foundational teaching. John Huss and Martin Luther both taught that the pope was the antichrist. Wycliff disputed the Roman doctrine of "transubstantiation" in the Lord's Supper—that the earthly elements are changed into the body and blood of Christ—and his correction of this teaching would reappear in Luther's theology as well. Luther rejected transubstantiation in favor of teaching the doctrine of the "Real Presence."

### **First Complete English Bible!**

While the afore-mentioned concepts were instrumental in leading up to the Reformation, one other one stands out—and it is the one that Wycliffe is best remembered for.

Wycliffe realized, believed, and

taught that Holy Scripture was the ultimate authority for faith and practice. (This point was later reemphasized by both Huss and Luther; it remains the foundation for Reformation theology to this day.)

The people needed to be brought the Word of God! Wycliffe stated, "Believers should ascertain for themselves what are the true matters of their faith, by having the Scriptures in a language which all may understand." Wycliffe himself would set out to see that this came to fruition! It was a time-consuming task that he worked on tirelessly (along with John Purvey, Nicholas of Hereford, and several others).

The English translation of the Bible was completed in the year 1382. Thus, it was England which saw the first complete Bible in the English language!

Sad to say, the Roman Catholic Church saw this as an assault on its power and authority. It attacked the publication of Wycliffe's English Bible. In the years to follow, the English government fell under the control of the church once more, and it was decreed that it was illegal to possess an English Bible! As a result, copies of Wycliffe's Bibles were hunted down and destroyed.

Still, the seed had been sown. In spite of the Roman Catholic Church's efforts to squelch

Wycliffe's teachings, those teachings spread across Europe into Bohemia, Italy, and Germany. The four main teachings we mentioned became the foundation of Reformation Lutheran theology in the years and centuries to come.

People around the globe have the opportunity to read the Bible in their own language. Translators continue to work in the footsteps of John Wycliffe. All this because the Lord raised up a man who recognized the authority of Holy Scripture and who knew that God's Word is intended for all people.

Wycliffe would never know how he paved the way for many who would follow after him. On our

part, however, let us thank God for raising up such a forerunner of the Reformation—and also many others who have stood fast on the saving truths of God's holy and infallible Word!

(EDITOR'S NOTE: As reported in the *Lutheran Cyclopedia*, Wycliffe never left the Roman church, but after his death, the Council of Constance, A.D. 1415, excommunicated him, and in 1427 his bones were burned and the ashes thrown into the Swift River. Similarly, John Huss (b. 1373?), was condemned as a Wycliffian heretic and burned alive at the stake on July 6, 1415, with his ashes cast into the Rhine River.)



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Continued from page 2

## PREACHING TO PREACHERS

book of sermons by Rev. Madson, and a book by Pastor Paul Fleischer entitled *Dean Norman A. Madson's Association with the Church of the Lutheran Confession*, which documents Rev. Madson's sound theology, doctrine and practice." [Note: The latter title also contains the scripturally power-full Madson sermon delivered for Immanuel's 95th anniversary.]

To give our readers a taste of Madson's solid biblical preaching, we reprint in this issue one of the Dean's chapel talks (dated Oct. 4, 1951) while he was still serving at Bethany Seminary, Mankato. Our fond hope, in fact, is that the out-of-print two-volume set of chapel talks titled *EVENING BELLS AT BETHANY* would also be reprinted soon in our circles.

Those who read *Preaching to Preachers* will surely be blessed! A hearty "thank you!" to those primarily responsible for its reprint—besides the Board: Editing by Paul R. Koch; Art Direction and Design by Matthew Schaser.



Norman A. Madson

- Pastor Paul Fleischer, Editor

Norman A. Madson, *Evening Bells at Bethany*,  
Vol. II, p.153ff.

## Ashamed of Being in a Minority?

*“Do not fear, little flock; for it is your Father’s  
good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.”* – Luke 12:32

### Fellow redeemed:

Occasionally we do hear over our radios, even from secular commentators, that which rings true to Scriptural truth. And we thank God for every such testimony. A few evenings ago Edward R. Murrow, having touched upon matters contended for by a despised minority, had this to say as his “word for the day” at the end of his broadcast (quoting John B. Gough): “What is a minority? The chosen heroes of this earth have been in a minority. There is not a social, political, or religious privilege that you enjoy today that was not bought for you by the blood and tears and patient suffering of the minority.”

It set us to thinking about men who would have to be classified as minority men. And while the list could be lengthened far beyond what we would have time to enumerate in this brief devotional, permit us to present at least four profiles this morning.

**PROFILE No. 1:** Our thoughts went back to that bit of pasture land in distant Dothan, where a little Hebrew lad was shamefully treated and sold into slavery because his ten brothers resented his telling the truth. While it took long years ere he saw the fruitage of his faithfulness, he did live to see the day when he preserved those very brethren a posterity in the earth and saved much people alive. He had heeded the divine injunction: “Buy the truth, and do not sell it” (Proverbs 23:23).

**PROFILE No. 2:** Our memory carried us back to the days of mighty Darius, who in his presumptuous arrogance had decreed, at the behest of his wicked counselors, that none other than the ruler of the Medes and Persians should be worshipped. That other Hebrew youth, who would bow his knee only to the God of Israel, was decidedly in the minority that night he spent in the lions’ den. But neither was he put to shame for taking seriously what he had learned at his mother’s knee: “You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve”

(Christ's quotation of Deuteronomy in Luke 4:8).

**PROFILE No. 3:** There rose up before us a lonely figure, “despised and rejected by men; a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3). Having preached one of His most searching sermons to His home city of Capernaum, He found the multitudes turning their backs on Him and muttering: “This is a hard saying: Who can hear it?” He was decidedly in the minority when He turned to His handful of followers with the question: “Do you also want to go away?” (John 6:67) But neither was He put to shame. His heavenly Father gave Him the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession (Psalm 2:8). He believed implicitly that His Father always heard Him.

**PROFILE No. 4:** A shackled prisoner in imperial Rome, ready to be executed as a criminal for going the errands of Jesus of Nazareth—writing his farewell letter: “At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me” (2 Timothy 4:16). Very much in the minority, to be sure, and yet able to sing, even in the face of death, the noblest swan-song ever penned: “The Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!” (2 Timothy 4:18)

Are you ashamed of being in the minority? Then may God grant you grace to do some serious rethinking, so that you may also, when truth is at stake, be numbered among the martyr heroes concerning whom Brorson has this to say in one of our treasured hymns:

**Despised and scorned, they sojourned here;**

**But now, how glorious they appear!**

**Those martyrs stand a priestly band,**

**God's throne forever near.**

**So oft, in troubled days gone by,**

**In anguish they would weep and sigh.**

**At home above the God of love**

**For aye their tears shall dry.**

**They now enjoy their sabbath rest,**

**The paschal banquet of the blest;**

**The Lamb their Lord, at festal board**

**Himself is Host and Guest. Amen.**

*(TLH #656:2)*

## CLC TEACHERS' CONFERENCE

Messiah Lutheran Church & School,  
Hales Corners, Wisconsin • October 17-19, 2012

Theme: "Masterpieces of Christ"  
(Ephesians 2:10)

Conference chaplain: Teacher Kyle Ochsner

### Partial Agenda:

- Speaking the Truth in Love—Giving and Receiving Criticism – Pastor Em. David Lau
- The Importance of Art in Children's Lives – Mr. Matthew Schaser
- Professionalism in the Ministry – Pastor Paul Nolting
- The Importance of Music in Children's Lives – Prof. John Reim
- Round-table Discussion on Attending Christian Music Concerts and Church Fellowship
- Study on the Decline of Christian Day Schools in the CLC – Mr. Norm Mackensen
- Break Out Sessions/Field Trip/Business Meeting

For more details, please contact the host congregation.

"Visitors welcome!"

## Pacific Coast Pastoral Conference

Trinity Lutheran Church, Spokane,  
Washington • October 9-11, 2012

### Agenda:

1. What does it mean that the gospel must predominate in our preaching, teaching, and in the care of our members? (from Walther's *Law and Gospel*). – Pastor Delwyn Maas
2. Objective and Subjective Justification (with special reference to recent discussions among confessional Lutherans). – Pastor Paul Naumann

3. Review of "Concerning Church Fellowship" (paragraphs 49-90): – Pastor David Naumann
4. A Study of 1 Corinthians 6:1-11 (practical application of "Do not sue the brethren") – Pastor Robert List
5. Review of the *Lutheran Study Bible* – Pastor Caleb Schaller
6. A discussion of the Gus Macker basketball tourney issue. – Pastor David Reim
7. Old Testament Exegesis – Pastor Steven Karp

Conference Chaplain: Pastor Terrel Kesterson

Communion Service Speaker: Pastor Michael Gurath

— Pastor Terrel Kesterson, Secretary

## Minnesota Pastoral Conference

Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, Red Wing, Minnesota • October 9-10, 2012

- Old Testament Exegesis: Habakkuk 1:7ff--Pastor John Johannes
- New Testament Exegesis: 1 Timothy 3:8-13--Pastor David Schierenbeck
- Church History: Martin Luther--His Rediscovering of the Gospel (1512-1517)--Pastor Norman Greve
- A Study of (modern?) Coptic Christianity--Pastor James Albrecht
- \* Homiletics: An Advent Series--Pastor Wayne Eichstadt
- Is There Scriptural Support for the Catechism Teaching that Jesus "Becoming Human" Is in Itself Not Part of His Humiliation?--Pastor David Baker
- Islam: Essayist's choice of topic--Pastor Theodore Barthels

Conference Chaplain--Pastor Eric Libby

(continued on back)

## Installations

According to our usage and order, Michael Schierenbeck, who was called as pastor of Living Hope Lutheran Church, Appleton, Wisconsin, was installed on Sunday, August 12, 2012.

— Pastor Michael Eichstadt

According to our usage and order, Sherman Carstensen, who was called as Principal and Teacher of Trinity Lutheran School, Watertown, South Dakota, was installed on Sunday, August 5, 2012.

— Pastor Andrew Schaller

According to our usage and order, Megan Rehm, who was called as lower grade teacher at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Winter Haven, Florida, was installed on Sunday, July 1, 2012.

— Pastor John Schierenbeck

According to our usage and order, Joshua Ohlmann, who was called by Messiah Lutheran Church of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, to teach Grades 5-6 Language Arts in its school, was installed the weekend of August 18-19, 2012.

— Pastor Paul Tiefel, Jr.

According to our usage and order, Mark Tiefel, who was called as pastor by Bethel Ev. Lutheran Church, Morris, Minnesota, was installed on Sunday, September 2, 2012.

— Pastor Norman Greve

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# LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

“...THE SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE BROKEN.” — JOHN 10:35

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